

## MARINGA

The Austrian Machinery Ring Association is an initiative driven by agricultural actors, usually organized as not-for-private-profit associations or farmers' cooperatives integrated under a common umbrella and initially directed at optimizing the use of agricultural equipment and at providing organized neighborhood help for farmers. In the course of time the Machinery Rings also engaged in providing their members, the farmers, with part-time freelance jobs in order to increase their income. But the operative scope was rather small, as services are only allowed among farmers. Servicing others like municipalities, private households or enterprises requires a trade license, whereas working for an enterprise disposing of a trade license, this is within the law. Thus, the Machinery Ring founded "Machinery Ring Service Cooperative" which is increasingly seen as a competitor by commercial enterprises especially in the sectors of waste management (especially in winter road service) and transport.

The **objective** is to report on the stakeholder and organizational structure of Machinery Rings in order to find out about advantages and drawbacks of both groups services provided by lump-sum farmers and machinery rings on the one hand-side and those of commercial enterprises on the other.

The **conceptual framework** we applied covers business, economic and legal aspects. The expertise of the University of Graz and BOKU Vienna concludes that there are no general or structural differences as to market or legal requirements for either group.

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