

# Questionnaire on food companies' needs in terms of export skills

## // PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The following questionnaire has been developed for the needs of the EU-funded ERASMUS+ project "ESCAPE" (Enhancing Sales Capacity for Agri-food Products in Europe). The ESCAPE project aims to develop a new training programme for students working towards a Master's Degree in Food Science, who wish to develop additional skills in international business and sales. A new educational method and content, comprising modules focused on sales and business skills, will be proposed based on this questionnaire.

Your responses to the following questions will allow for the project partners to tailor the content of the training to concrete needs as expressed by professionals.

## // CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. The data you are providing will be kept by the project consortium until the end of the project.

## // CONSENT

I have read the information above and understand it completely. I agree to participate in this research. International sales are important for my company's performance and aims - otherwise I should not continue completing the questionnaire.

## QUESTIONS

*\*Compulsory*

## // CONTACT DATA

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation / company\*: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## // GENERAL DATA

**Respondent's position in the company (tick all that apply) \***

- Entrepreneur / Owner
- CEO (Chief Executive Officer)
- Managing Director
- Export Manager
- R&D Manager
- Sales Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Regulatory Affairs / Quality Manager
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Sector (tick all that apply) \***

- Meat and processed meat products
- Fish and seafood products
- Fruits and vegetables
- Oils and fats
- Dairy and cheese products
- Bakery, pasta
- Animal feed
- Alcoholic beverages
- Non-alcoholic beverages
- Canned products
- Biscuits, cakes, chocolates and sweets
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Size (tick all that apply) \***

- Small (< 50 employees)
- Medium (50-250 employees)
- Large (> 250 employees)

**// EXPORT ORGANISATION**

**Which are the positions and functions included in your export department? (tick all that apply) \***

- My company does not have an export department
- My company does not have personnel working specifically on exports
- A quality manager is involved
- A marketing manager is involved
- An international sales representative is present abroad
- A sales assistant is involved
- A regulatory affairs manager is involved
- An expert in customs and international logistics is available
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please give a brief description of how your export department is organised and of your exporting process (optional)

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## // COMPETENCES AND SKILLS NEEDED

**Would you recruit a newly graduated food engineer in order to develop your exports? Why or why not? (E.g. what is missing from their profile?) \***

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**If you were to reinforce your workforce in the context of developing your international sales, which profile would you recruit? (choose up to 3) \***

- A technical regulatory profile
- A sales administrative profile with expertise in customs included
- A sales representative based at home (France, Italy, The Netherlands...)
- A sales representative based abroad
- A product development profile (R&D)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe your ideal candidate (optional)**

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**A person recruited by my company should be knowledgeable in the following fields (choose up to 3) \***

- Existing financial support that companies could apply for
- Consumer trends in the target countries (marketing and market research)
- Adapting the products for target markets (developing product offers)
- Market access conditions on the target markets (accreditation, health regulations...)
- Admissibility of the product on the market (import schemes, customs pricing...)
- Legislation (labelling, product composition rules...)
- Importer networks and distribution channels
- Logistics solutions and their cost (international commercial terms)
- Sales and distribution techniques and networks in selected foreign countries
- Protection of intellectual property rights
- Functioning of international trade
- International trade policy (free trade agreements)
- Promotional tools
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**In order to develop its exports, does your company rather need generalist profiles or specialist profiles? \***

- My company needs a generalist / multitask profile
- My company needs specific competences
- My company needs both generalist and specific competences
- I don't know
- What other skills do you look for in recruits? (choose up to 3) \*
- General people skills
- Management skills
- Autonomy
- Team Player
- International mobility
- Mastering one or more foreign languages
- Digital communication skills
- Analytical skills and ability to summarize
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Did we miss anything? Do you have any comments or suggestions on issues to consider when training young food engineers to work in exports?

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## // CONTACTS

If I have a question about my participation in this study, I can contact the project coordinator, Laura Marley from ANIA, the French Food and Drink Federation ([lmalley@ania.net](mailto:lmalley@ania.net)), or Maurizio Notarfonso from FEDERALIMENTARE, the Italian Food and Drink Federation ([notarfonso@federalimentare.it](mailto:notarfonso@federalimentare.it))