

## Better Training for Safer Food

BTSF Newsletter is prepared by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) and issued six times a year.

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New BTSF newsletters are here. This edition is bringing to us:

- Interview with Ines Escudero Sanchez, presenting a new Export Help desk
- New training possibilities
- Behind the scene management of the BTSF trainings

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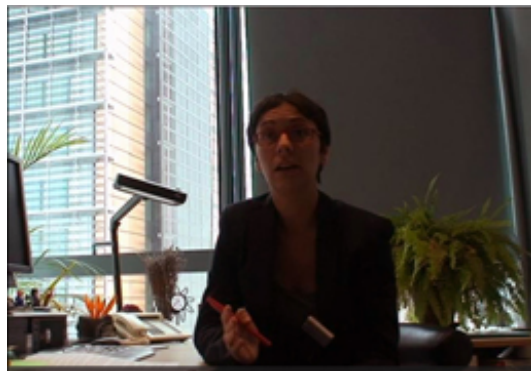
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## Interview - The EU Export Helpdesk: a one-stop-shop for exporters to Europe



[See the video](#)

*A key element in the diversified approach of BTSF to training provision is a higher degree of integration of BTSF activities with the policies of DG TRADE. However, one aspect of DG TRADE's work has long featured in BTSF as an important subject within third country workshops; namely the Export Helpdesk. May 2013 sees DG TRADE launch a revamped version of the Helpdesk and we spoke to Ines Escudero Sanchez, the DG TRADE Export Helpdesk coordinator to get her views on the functions of the Helpdesk and the new elements which have been introduced.*

### BTSF: First of all, what exactly is the Export Helpdesk?

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** It's basically a free, easy-to-use, online service on how to export any good to the EU. It aims to help businesses in developing countries to access the EU market. We see it as a one-stop-shop at which firms can get all of the information and advice they need within a few clicks.

### BTSF: How can the Export Helpdesk make it easier for developing countries to access the EU market?

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** We can not change the rules but we can explain them. That is already a big help for them! They know the EU is an interesting market (500 million consumers with 25% of the world's GDP) and they also know Europe does not produce the same things as they do, such as coffee, cotton or tropical fruit. In addition, they know that the EU gives them preferential access. However, they often do not know how to make the most of this. So how can they capitalise on this? At the Export Helpdesk we explain how.

### BTSF: What kind of information does it provide?

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** It answers the questions which, how, how much and who. Which EU requirements and standards apply to their product, how much it will cost them to enter the EU,

how to benefit from preferential duty and pay less to enter the single market, and who in Europe is already buying their product and from whom.

In other words, exporters can find the technical and specific EU requirements we have in order to protect consumers' health and rights or the environment. The Helpdesk sets out import tariffs and preferential agreements that, in many cases, allow them to export duty-free and quota-free, it explains rules of origin and, finally, it provides statistics on trade flows between the EU and all other countries.

However, the main characteristic of the Export Helpdesk is that it is product-specific and country-specific. Via a simple input form, exporters can apply all this information to their case. And all of this is available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and Arabic.

### **BTSF: Is the Helpdesk also of interest to importers?**

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** Absolutely. Importers need to be aware of these issues as well. Import requirements, national taxes and country-specific duties are key data for estimating costs and negotiating prices. Last year, 20% of our users connected from Europe.

### **BTSF: Why has the Helpdesk been re-launched?**

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** To improve the usability and the content. We wanted to make it easier and more in-depth so we have significantly improved our system for searching for information. Now, businesses and business support organisations can access all key data in one click at the "My Export" link. In addition, we have made the information we provide more detailed and we also provide much more substantial explanations of how the EU market works.

### **BTSF: How does My Export work?**

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** At My Export, you fill in a form stating which product you want to export (using the EU code which you can find online), from which country and to which country in Europe. You should also add a simulation date; this is relevant if seasonal quotas apply. By clicking on "search" you will have all of the relevant information at your fingertips. This includes a list of EU import requirements applying to your product, an explanation of each requirement, relevant legislation, documentation to complete, contact details of competent authorities and VAT and excise duty in the destination country. You will also find the import tariff applying to your case, whether you can benefit from a preferential trade arrangement or discount tariff and any quotas or anti-dumping measures which apply. If you benefit from a preferential tariff, you will be able to see the Rule of Origin and the documents you need to fill in to prove it. All of this in just one click!.

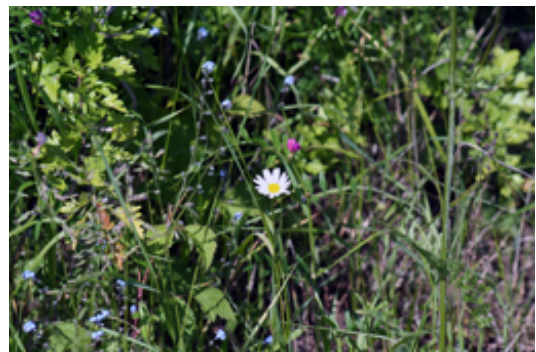
### **BTSF: What are the other main features of the new Helpdesk?**

**Ines Escudero Sanchez:** New pages have been added in order to give users a clearer understanding of how the EU market works, including sanitary and phytosanitary, environmental and technical requirements, as well as marketing standards. The new Helpdesk also gives tips on how to better get to grips with the relevant EU legislation. A new key feature is that we list all of the EU's preferential trade agreements with developing countries, explain them and identify the applicable rules of origin. This is very concrete and practical information for exporters that cannot be found anywhere else. In support of the Helpdesk, we have produced a three minute video to allow users to see clearly how it works and we will soon publish a series of 100 factsheets giving an overview of EU requirements and rules of origin for different product types.

For more information, please visit [www.exporthelp.europa.eu](http://www.exporthelp.europa.eu)

## **A wide variety of training approaches**

As BTSF goes through its eighth year, not only does it cover an ever wider scope of subjects, but its approach to training is becoming more varied. A diverse and flexible approach is essential to conveying a common understanding of all BTSF subjects, while also tackling the array of implementation issues which can arise in different national settings.



Such a broad spectrum of subjects presents its own challenges. At any time, in one BTSF area or another, new legislation is in the pipeline. A case in point is food labelling for which new requirements related to nutrition information, origin labelling of fresh meat, allergens and legibility are to be introduced from 2014, requiring training to adapt accordingly. EAHC must thus ensure a multi-faceted approach which enables the training to take account of all relevant legislative developments.

A key element in this is e-learning which enables control staff to get to grips with basic EU requirements in their own time. The first batch of modules on animal welfare at slaughter, food contact materials, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed is expected to be finalised

from 2013. Development of the second group of modules, covering welfare of poultry at slaughter, animal nutrition, health of aquaculture animals, the EU plant quarantine regime for imports and food hygiene and controls of fishery products, is also well under way.

A second innovation is the introduction in 2013 of sustained training missions in the EU. Such missions have always been an important part of third country training and they now complement standard workshops in the EU within the enforcement of sanitary and phytosanitary standards programme. When deficiencies are identified by the Food and Veterinary Office, experts are seconded to assess implementation of EU rules and support authorities in developing plans to improve compliance. In this way, BTSF is tailored to specific needs of Member States while ensuring a consistently high standard of implementation of EU rules.

Another aspect arises from the widening of the scope of EAHC's tasks to include measures covering external trade relations, market access for non-EU countries and trade-related assistance. This opens up possibilities for synergies between EAHC's BTSF work and that of Commission services operating in related areas, particularly the Directorates-General for Trade and Development and Cooperation (DEVCO). EAHC is now able to access funding sources controlled by these two DGs, such as the Aid for Trade budget and the Development Cooperation Instrument. This has already borne fruit in the shape of two new activities: one providing training and capacity building to enable third countries to participate effectively in the work of international standard-setting bodies; the other transferring SPS know-how and information on SPS legal frameworks to public and private sector bodies in developing countries.

EAHC is looking forward to working closely with DGs TRADE and DEVCO in the coming years to identify more opportunities for synergy between BTSF and existing programmes of those DGs. This will form part of an overall strategy which meets the needs of all beneficiary countries while providing an unambiguous understanding of relevant EU standards and legislation.

## BTSF Info Day, BTSF World and ISSB call to take place in Luxembourg



EAHC is holding the 2013 BTSF Info Day at the Hotel Parc Belle-Vue in Luxembourg from 9.30am on 4 June. It provides information on the international training courses and capacity building activities organised within the initiative and brings together potential contractors, BTSF national contact points and other organisations with an interest in the training.

The event begins with a general session covering BTSF policy and strategy. This comprises a brief introduction to BTSF and a presentation on the overall perspectives for BTSF, as well as the training programmes taking place in 2013. Following this, a Q&A session takes place.

The second part of the day is taken up by a session dealing with specific BTSF implementation issues. An outline is given of the operational guide for the launch of calls for tender aimed at identifying contractors to implement training programmes. Further presentations cover the way in which the training courses are evaluated and requirements for contractors in terms of reporting on training implementation. A second Q&A session, prior to the close of the event, enables participants to get more specific information.

For more information about the BTSF Info Day, please visit the [dedicated page](#).

The venue for the Info Day is:

Hotel Parc Belle-Vue,  
5, avenue Marie Thérèse,  
2132 Luxembourg



*Do you know where this is?*

Send your answer with the reference "May newsletter" to the [EAHC-BTSF-PROJECTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EAHC-BTSF-PROJECTS@ec.europa.eu) and participate to win BTSF USB key card.

## Two key players in EAHC's BTSF team



***Marc Vandebroeck and Udo Juterschnig are Project Officers in the EAHC BTSF team and play a vital role in the running of BTSF behind the scenes. Here, we look at the important contributions they make to ensuring that BTSF meets its objectives.***

As Project Officers, Marc and Udo are responsible for a large number of administrative steps, managing all phases of BTSF projects and contracts in coordination with the Senior Project Officer. This covers everything from planning, drafting and publication of calls for tender to evaluation of reports, preparation of payments in cooperation with the EAHC Financial Officers and disseminating results. They also serve as the contact point for all BTSF contractors.

The size of the task facing Marc and Udo depends on the numbers of calls to be launched and contracts running. They are currently managing around 40 contracts for each of which at least three technical reports must be assessed. This, added to the small size of the EAHC BTSF team, gives an idea of the responsibility which rests on their shoulders. Moreover, they have to ensure that all information in the documents they draft and deliver and the answers they provide to questions and requests from EAHC and DG SANCO colleagues or contractors is correct and precise.

A key part of Marc's and Udo's work is liaison with relevant Commission services and planning of the phases of the projects for which they are responsible, including organisation of launch and evaluation of calls and management and monitoring of contracts. They also prepare all documents related to the calls, ensuring their consistency, contribute to their publishing and publicising, answer questions from interested parties, organise the opening of tenders and set up evaluation processes.

Another relevant aspect of their work is gathering and analysis of information through project monitoring and dissemination of information and results. They also work with the EAHC IT Cell to set up and maintain the BTSF data management system.

Aside from this, Marc and Udo fulfil a range of other tasks. These include participating in internal and external meetings and missions, providing back-up in other areas of EAHC's work, assisting with transfer of projects from Commission services and drafting notes, minutes, progress reports and other requested documents. Their full commitment and high motivation are key for the success of BTSF.

## Upcoming Courses

For up-coming training sessions please check [BTSF calendar](#).