

Invitation Letter to BTSF National Contact Points seeking applications for BTSF training activities to strengthen EU law enforcement in Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) fields

Working the IMSOC

Using IMSOC components to achieve the next level of collaboration between competent authorities

CONTRACT 2020 96 04 - Phase 1

Valid as of 12/10/2023

1. Course objectives.....	2
2. Training dates and locations.....	3
3. Selection criteria for participants	4
4. Country allocations	6
5. Face-to-face logistical arrangements.....	8
6. Virtual Classrooms	Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.
Annex 1: Background and main topics covered in training	9
Annex 2: Legislation and guidance	11
Annex 3: Agenda	12
Annex 4: Training material, outcomes and dissemination activities	13
Annex 5: Contractor contact details	14

1. Course objectives

General objective

The overall objective of this programme is to provide the European Union (EU) Member States (MS) and neighboring non-EU countries with high-level effective training supporting effective participation in CODEX activities for EU MSs.

Specific objectives

- Strengthen the capacity of EU Member States (MS) to participate actively in Codex Alimentarius work
- Enable MS delegates to actively contribute to Codex work by improving their understanding of Codex: procedures and organisation (Commission, Executive Committee, Subsidiary bodies, Electronic Working Groups);
- Enhance MS delegates' understanding of EU coordination, EU objectives and vision on Codex;
- Enhance negotiation skills in a multilateral environment through practical examples.

2. Training dates and locations

The 2nd Face-to-face training course will be delivered in November 2023 with approximately 30 people in the session. The course consists of 3 working days. The course agenda is attached (Annex 3)).

Table 1: Training dates and Location

Year	Training session	Course title	Locations*	Date	Registration deadline
2023	1	Working the IMSOC– using IMSOC components	Alicante, SPAIN	13-15 June 2023	22 nd May 2023
	2	Working the IMSOC– using IMSOC components	Rome, Italy	21-23 November 2023	6 th November 2023

For organisational purposes, names of participants should be communicated at the latest 30 days before each workshop. A reminder will be sent to NCPs before each event.

3. Selection criteria for participants

- Participant must:
1. Fulfil the eligibility criteria
 2. Meet the minimum requirements
 3. Be selected using the evaluation criteria

1. Eligibility criteria for Course on the use of IMSOC and other systems for the Effective enforcement of Official controls on consignments in the INTRA-EU trade

Competent authority officials organizing, implementing and enforcing legislation on official controls and competent authorities carrying out the official controls on consignments in the INTRA-EU trade (central, regional, local veterinary units).

Only **eligible participants** should be further assessed against the minimum requirements below.

Participants must meet the minimum requirements below to ensure they can follow and fully participate in this course. Participants who do not meet the minimum requirements should not be proposed for the training.

2. Minimum requirements for Course on the use of IMSOC and other systems for the Effective enforcement of Official controls on consignments entering the Union	Yes/No
<p>Participant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have experience in official controls within a competent authority (central, regional, local veterinary units) with a minimum of 3 years of professional experience particularly in the field of official controls carried out on consignments in the INTRA-EU trade, or • Have experience of setting up and implementation of legislation on official controls and controls carried out on consignments in the INTRA-EU trade 	Yes

The evaluation criteria should be used as a tool to prioritise participation (higher score indicates higher priority), but there is no minimum score necessary.

3. Evaluation criteria for Course		Enter Score
a)	<p>Experience in a official controls within a Competent Authority in areas of consignments in the INTRA-EU trade</p> <p>Scoring</p> <p>less than 3 years = 0 points; ≥ 3 years = 5 points; 5 - 10 years = 10 points; > 10 years = 12.5 points</p>	
b)	Experience in implementing official controls legislation and legislation on imported consignments in the INTRA-EU trade within a Competent Authority	

	<p>Scoring no experience = 0 points; < 2 years = 5 points; 2-5 years = 7.5 points; > 5 years = 10 points</p>	
c)	<p>Contribution towards efficient official controls and harmonised implementation of the official controls legislation at INTRA-EU trade.</p> <p>Scoring no experience = 0 points; < 2 years = 5 points; 2-4 years = 10 points; > 4 years = 12.5 points</p>	
d)	<p>During the course, participants will be provided with a training package to be used as support dissemination material. Commitment to disseminate the knowledge received is a prerequisite for course participation.</p> <p><u>Scoring</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment to distribute the training material among their colleagues = 5 points; 2. Point 1 plus preparing and giving presentations based on the training material for the staff of national Competent Authorities/uploading training material to national Competent Authorities' intranets/websites = 10 points 3. Points 1, 2 plus preparing informative articles in the professional national journals = 15 points 4. no commitment = NO INVITATION 	
Maximum total score		50

4. Country allocations

A total of 32 seats will be allocated according to the tables below. Please note that the number of allocated seats for each country may vary.

Table 2: Suggested allocation for EU Member States and Candidate Countries

	country / suggested allocation					
Member States	Austria	1	Germany	1	Poland	1
	Belgium	1	Greece	1	Portugal	1
	Bulgaria	1	Hungary	1	Romania	1
	Croatia	1	Ireland	1	Slovakia	1
	Cyprus	1	Italy	1	Slovenia	1
	Czechia	1	Latvia	1	Spain	1
	Denmark	1	Lithuania	1	Sweden	1
	Estonia	1	Luxembourg	1		
	Finland	1	Malta	1		
	France	1	Netherlands	1		
Total Member States						27
Candidate Countries	Albania	0	North Macedonia	0	Turkey	0
	Montenegro	0	Serbia	1		
	Total Candidate Countries					
Global participation EU Member States and Candidate Countries						28

Table 2: Suggested allocation for other non-EU Countries

	country / suggested allocation					
EFTA/ EEA/Countries with special agreements	Iceland	1	Norway	1	Switzerland	
	Lichtenstein		UK (Northern Ireland)			
	Total EFTA/EEA/Countries with special agreements					2
Global participation other non-EU Countries						2

In addition to the numbers indicated above, each country will be requested to indicate additional participants for a reserve list to be used should one or more countries not meet the proposed quota.

For logistic organizational reasons, it is kindly requested that the names of participants shall be communicated at the latest within 30 days from the workshop. A reminder will be sent to NCPs before event.

Deadline for receiving completed registration forms from the NCPs: 6th November 2023, Monday.

Should you consider that the number of allocated seats is insufficient to meet your country's training needs, please contact the Project Manager at Contractor OPERA email 20209604eusps@btsftraining.com as soon as possible, providing an explanation.

5. *Face-to-face logistical arrangements*

In the face-to-face training sessions, the European Commission will fund in full the visa, travel, accommodation, meals, and field visit costs for all training participants. No daily allowance will be paid on top of this. Any other costs are to be paid by the participants themselves. Participants will arrive at the training venues on Monday morning and training will commence on Monday afternoon. The return travel will be on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning according to flight connections. The OPERA team will liaise further with the nominated participants for all logistics and practical aspects.

The Contractor will guarantee the application of the safety and hygiene measures during the training, and it is requested that the participants to respect the measures in place also outside of the training activities.

Opera will provide all necessary information as well as the important websites for further information.

Annex 1: Background and main topics covered in training

Background

The legal basis of the IMSOC Implementing Regulation derives from the general food law (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002), the animal health law (Regulation (EU) 2016/429), the plant health law (Regulation (EU) 2016/2031), and the official controls regulation (Regulation (EU) 2017/625).

The official controls regulation requires the European Commission, in collaboration with EU countries, to set up and manage a computerized information system for official controls (IMSOC)* to manage, handle and automatically exchange data, information and documents in relation to official controls.

The IMSOC is to integrate the 4 existing information systems managed by the Commission, namely:

- the rapid alert system for food and feed (RASFF) established by General Food law;
- the animal diseases information system (ADIS)* to be established by the Animal Health Law;
- the system for notifying and reporting the presence of pests (EUROPHYT)* to be established by the Plant Health Law;
- and the TRACES* system (referred to in the Official Controls Regulation).

The purpose of the IMSOC Regulation (Regulation 2019/1715) is:

- to set out in the same act all rules on the functioning of the IMSOC and its 4 components;
- and to set out rules for the exchange of data, information and documents between IMSOC's components and in certain cases, with other systems such as EU countries' national systems, information systems of non-EU countries, and international organizations.
- To allow EU Member States to exchange information on official controls of food, animals and plants in order to prevent food fraud

The regulation lays down the rules for the functioning of the IMSOC and its system components in relation to the computerized handling and exchange of information, data, and documents necessary for the performance of official controls.

IMSOC components include:

- the rapid alert system for food and feed (RASFF);
- the computerized information system for the notification and reporting of animal diseases (ADIS);
- the electronic system (EUROPHYT) for notifying outbreaks such as the presence of quarantine pests;
- the computerized system for data, information and document exchange (TRACES).

The regulation's scope covers official controls to verify compliance with food and feed law, animal health and welfare, plant health and animal-by products rules. It specifically covers: procedures for notifications and additional information for the RASFF set up by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002; procedures for the EU's computerized system for reporting diseases under Regulation (EU) 2016/429; rules for submitting notifications under Regulation (EU) 2016/2031; rules for computerized data and document handling in the IMSOC necessary under Regulation (EU) 2017/625, concerning: the common health entry document (CHED)* and instructions for its use; cooperation between customs and other authorities; electronic certificates and electronic signatures for official certificates; standard formats for information exchange concerning requests for assistance and

recurrent notifications; technical tools and procedures for communication between the designated liaison bodies; the proper functioning of the IMSOC, requirements on TRACES for the issuance of the COI, on official controls and relevant checks on imported consignments of organic products, notification requirements in the case of suspected or established non-compliances on imported consignments as laid down in Regulations (EU) 2021/2306 and 2021/2307. Official controls on organic products entering the Union from third countries, intended to be placed in the Union market as organic or in-conversion products, include interactions between TRACES COI and CHED under Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and its associated Delegated and Implementing Acts. Finally, Regulation (EU) 2021/2305 lays down requirements for organic products and in-conversion products exempted from official controls at border control posts.

Main topics covered in this training

- Overview regulatory framework IMSOC (with references to Intratrade: COI, AHL, OCR)
- Use of IMSOC in the INTRA-EU trade (with reference to INTRAs and COI)
- Notifications received through TRACES (rejections/connection to iRASFF)
- Notifications submitted via TRACES (notification of non-compliant organic or organic in-conversion products via OFIS) – handling of non-compliant organic and in-conversion organic consignments
- New developments planned for iRASFF and TRACES applications
- New legal framework about COI- How this is applied in IMSOC (new legal and system requirements)
- Gathering intelligence by using all relevant tools (TRACES NT, e.g. RASFF Window and how you possibly combine info from the various tools
- AAC system: management of non-conformities

Annex 2: Legislation and guidance

The legislative basis for the official controls and other official activities to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products, is Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (the “Official Control Regulation”).¹

The Official Control Regulation also lays down the regulatory framework for organizing and performing official controls. It provides for a more risk-based approach than the previous framework, by sharpening enforcement tools and by integrating more consistently the system of official controls in EU, with an aim to increase the intensity and frequency of official controls in a more efficient way, thus making the overall control system more effective.

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1715² lays down the rules for the functioning of the information management system for official controls and its system components including reporting on animal transport controls and enforcement (‘the IMSOC Regulation’). TRACES is one of the four components of IMSOC.

A central consideration is, of course, compliance with Regulation (EC) No 2017/625. The contents of this document focus on controls in relation of consignments moved between Member States. The document may be used as a reference document, however, it does not constitute an audit standard and is not legally binding.

This legislative and guidance framework, and the reporting and information sharing possibilities laid down in it, combined with regular training should ensure that Member States notify incidents and coordinate their responses appropriately, using well-established communication channels.

Article 130 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products (Official Controls Regulation) provides the legal instrument for this initiative in the fields of food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health.

The new organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and its associated Delegated and Implementing Acts, applicable from 1 January 2022, lay down rules that reflect the changing nature of the rapidly growing organic sector. The new Regulation is better designed to prevent fraud and particularly lays down sophisticated new rules on controls on consignments involved in INTRA-EU trade between member states of organic and organic in-conversion products, by making use of the relevant IMSOC components.

Annex 3: Agenda

Annex 4: Training material, outcomes, and dissemination activities

Training material

Option: All participants will receive the training material well in advance of the training. The material will include additional pre-recorded material for offline studies. Preparatory videos will introduce the specific topic and provide background information to participants.

All participants will receive a Dissemination Kit electronically to enable them to actively disseminate course knowledge upon their return from BTSF training. Participants attending face-to-face courses will receive the information on the USB key.

In accordance with SANTE.F's policy on "going paperless", and in accordance with the Commission's Green Deal, printed copies would only be available to participants upon prior request.

Dissemination Kit

This contains the following training materials:

- All course presentations
- Study notes on field trips and group activities/discussions and conclusions thereof
- The course syllabus
- The training information sheet
- Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in the course
- Additional references for further study
- Written guidance on how to actively disseminate course knowledge to colleagues upon participants' return to their home countries, different methodologies/examples/best practice
- Other information and material delivered at the course such as quizzes, FAQs etc.

Dissemination questionnaire

Two to three months after the respective training session, participants will receive a standard questionnaire requesting information on the dissemination activities of the participant after the training, and details on differences in the approach adopted in day-to-day work following the training.

Self-assessment test

Furthermore, the programme will include an anonymous knowledge test to be carried out at the beginning and at the end of each training session in order to measure the impact of the training on the understanding of the participants of the subjects taught.

Participants are expected to agree to carry out the above tests and to reply to the surveys and questionnaires.

For Virtual Classrooms

Participants agree to be registered in the BTSF Academy and agree to be recorded during VC training sessions and to take a group photo of the participants and tutors at the end of the training. Videos and photo will be published in the BTSF Academy in the corresponding training course section and will be visible only to registered users of the BTSF ACADEMY.

Please find more information regarding data protection here:

<https://btsfacademy.eu/training/mod/page/view.php?id=417>

Annex 5: Contractor contact details

The project is managed by OPERA Srl.



Project manager:

Claudio BOMPARD

Training coordinator:

Mary GIANNIOU

Separate notifications will be sent to National Contact Points and Codex contact points and will contain the names and contact details of the Event Manager and Assistant Event Manager as well as logistical details on the event.

All official communication between National Contact Points, Codex contact points, and the project will be maintained through the functional e-mail address 20209604eusps@btsftraining.com or by phone to +39 06 8073315 telephone number.

All information on BTSF training can be found at the [BTSF Academy](https://btsfacademy.eu) website (<https://btsfacademy.eu>) and at <http://www.opera-btsftraining.eu/underway-projects/food-safety-crisis-preparedness/>. The website will be regularly updated with details of forthcoming sessions