



Needs assessment Capacity-building activities

RESPONSIBLE OF THE EVALUATION

Evaluation Department
Deputy Directorate for Sustainability and Evaluation
ICEX Spain Trade & Investment

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TYPE OF EVALUATION

Needs

TIME OF THE EVALUATION

Ex ante

CODE

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EVALUATION STARTED IN YEAR

2017

EVALUATION COMPLETED IN YEAR

2020

Table of contents

1. Objective of the evaluation >
2. What are capacity-building activities aimed at companies? >
3. Evaluation phases >
4. Evaluation questions >
5. Evaluation fact sheet >
6. Customer segmentation >
7. Perception of ICEX as service provider >
8. Conclusions and recommendations by company type >
9. Differences in demands by gender >
10. Compliance with the recommendations >
11. Procuring information >

> NEXT PAGE



1 Objective of the evaluation

Ex ante needs assessment of capacity-building activities aimed at companies in order to optimise its effectiveness and relevance for all types of companies and professionals.

2 What are capacity-building activities aimed at companies?

We understand these to be activities intended to provide timely, accurate and up-to-date information on the international environment that helps improve companies' decision-making, lasting no more than one day and enabling interaction between participants and speakers.

The activities identified by ICEX within the scope of this evaluation are mainly concentrated in four broad categories:

1. Business training activities. Workshops and seminars on sectoral market analysis.
2. ICEX Dinamiza. Free training and information sessions and activities that promote the services provided by ICEX and the Secretariat of State for Trade, generally organised in coordination with the Territorial Directorates of Trade.





3. Workdays in Sector- and Non-Sector-Based Promotion Plans. Collective trips made to a target market by several companies belonging to the same sector or macro-sector, with the aim of making direct contact with the agents in the target market.
4. Multi-sector workdays organised by ICEX.

3 Evaluation phases

Phase 1

Qualitative (discussion groups and in-depth interviews). Commissioned in early 2016 to gain an in-depth understanding of the needs of the beneficiaries of the workdays and seminars organised by ICEX. Completion: February 2018.

Phase 2

Quantitative (proprietary methodology). Commissioned in May 2018, but with the start postponed until September 2019, in order to estimate interest in and willingness to pay for the proposed formats, content and participation models arising from Phase 1. Results: July 2020.



4. Evaluation questions

1. What needs do professionals in companies and institutions have in order to maximise the effectiveness of transferring specialised information?
2. What objective barriers do these professionals face in obtaining this specialised information?
3. What capacity-building services could ICEX offer to professionals through short-duration events that allow interaction with speakers and between attendees in order to overcome those objective barriers?
4. What is the level of interest in and willingness to pay among professionals for the proposals identified?



5 Evaluation fact sheet

Phase 1

Universe: 4,927 unique professionals who have participated in a capacity-building activity.

Time frame: 2016.

Time frame: 2016.

Sample: 58 unique professionals.

Sampling method: estratified sample by size, macro-sector, autonomous community, the ICEX activity in which they participated, degree of internationalisation and value obtained from participating in the activity.

Fieldwork: from April to September 2017.

Methodology: qualitative methods. Discussion groups, in-depth interviews and comparative mini-groups.



Phaes 2

Universe: 9,626 unique professionals who have participated in a capacity-building activity.

Time frame: 2018.

Sample: 1,615 unique professionals.

Sampling method: simple random sample.

Response rate: 16.78%.

Fieldwork: between September 2019 and March 2020. The campaign had to be halted before the scheduled date due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Methodology: product testing. A proprietary quantitative methodology was applied, based on an analysis of the differences between the distribution tails of individual standardised preferences. The analysis was carried out by service proposal and by customer type. This analysis consisted in: customer diagnosis, interest in and willingness to pay for each proposed improvement.



6 Customer segmentation

Segmentation technique: hierarchical clustering based on the characterisation variables included in the survey and variables collected from INFORMA.

There are 8 well-defined customer types:

- Type 1. Micro-enterprises in the midst of rapid international expansion that offset their limited financial and human resources with a corporate culture focused on the international market and the talent of their staff and know that they need to strengthen their analytical abilities and develop e-commerce.
- Type 2. Growing SMEs that have recently increased their international presence and have the same abilities as larger companies. Although they are comfortable with their production capacity, they face a lack of resources and staff in the commercial area and need to strengthen their analytical abilities and develop e-commerce.
- Type 3. Growing SMEs and micro-enterprises not necessarily committed to certified quality, with production and commercial structures abroad, which report a lack of resources and staff in the commercial area and need to strengthen their analytical abilities and develop e-commerce.



- Type 4.** Growing micro and small enterprises that are aware of R&D&I, with a limited international presence that has been developed mainly recently, and that face a lack of resources and staff in the commercial area. They are aware that they need to strengthen their analytical abilities and develop e-commerce.
- Type 5.** Medium-sized companies experiencing growth and with extensive international experience, with commercial and production structures abroad, which rate themselves above the rest of the companies in almost all respects. Their strong production capacity, together with a business culture oriented towards international markets, enables them to adapt quickly to market trends, and they see their areas for improvement in the development of e-commerce, which also requires them to improve their analytical abilities.
- Type 6.** Large companies in a growth phase with extensive international experience that need to improve the development of e-commerce, which requires them to attract talent in order to enhance their analytical abilities as well, although their strong financial and production capacity, together with a business culture oriented towards the international market, enables them to adapt to market trends.
- Type 7.** Professionals seeking to improve their personal knowledge of internationalisation.
- Type 8.** Micro-enterprises and, to a lesser extent, self-employed individuals, with little international experience and generally no presence in foreign markets, who rate themselves low in all respects, but see analytical abilities and their network of contacts as key assets for growth.



7 Perception of ICEX as service provider

The aspect that is distinctively associated with ICEX is specialised knowledge of the company's sector in the destination country, whereas the aspect related to CECO (ICEX Business School) is the specialist speaker, together with financial institutions and business schools.

The topics associated with ICEX (together with the Chambers of Commerce, regional bodies and local bodies) relate to support for internationalisation and market information, in particular access to and the identification of markets and opportunity sectors.

The topics associated with CECO (ICEX Business School) (alongside specialised companies and business schools) are the alignment of human resources (talent), the legal aspects of international trade and international taxation.

In general, companies participating in ICEX capacity-building activities do not usually use other services, nor do they have a clear willingness to pay for these services.



8 Conclusions and recommendations by company type

- Type 1.** These clients need to be able to plan their participation in order to interact with other attendees with similar interests, and they are interested in practical and topical subjects (Industry 4.0, circular economy, international marketing, support instruments, digital marketing, negotiation techniques and legal matters) to enhance their growth in the international market. They are inclined to engage customised services, which they have used little or are simply unaware of.
- Type 2.** These clients require content to consolidate their international strategy (legal matters, NHC, general foreign trade operations, negotiation techniques, intangibles, FTAs) and require advice in order to successfully carry out their digital transformation.
- Type 3.** These clients need to improve their knowledge of finance, legal matters, support instruments, international marketing, sustainability and digital transformation, both for staff in Spain and in their overseas network. They also need to be able to plan their participation in order to interact with other attendees with shared interests. In general, they have not used ICEX services, possibly due to a lack of awareness.
- Type 4.** These clients need to improve their knowledge of intangibles, international marketing, NHC and financing, and are aware of the need to broaden their knowledge of innovation, sustainability, financing and the platform economy. They seek this knowledge primarily from other companies that belong to the same segment of the same value chain, or that share common interests.



- Type 5.** These clients need to expand their knowledge of e-commerce, the protection of intangibles in the platform economy, digital marketing, financing, legal matters and digital transformation. They require that staff in their overseas network be able to access training in the host country.
- Type 6.** These clients need to keep up to date with FTAs, Industry 4.0, NHC, legal matters, the general operational aspects of foreign trade and support instruments, both for their staff in Spain and abroad. They value interaction with companies in their own value chain and with complementary companies in view of increasing digitalisation, and they are inclined to engage customised value-added services.
- Type 7.** These clients need to keep up to date with digital marketing, general foreign trade operations, the circular economy, financing, international marketing and e-commerce, in focused and practical formats such as design thinking. They require personalisation through bilateral meetings, as well as being able to interact with companies belonging to the same segment of the same value chain and with companies from complementary sectors due to increasing digitalisation.
- Type 8.** These clients need to broaden their knowledge of legal matters, intangibles, negotiation techniques, FTAs, support instruments, the circular economy and digital transformation. These companies value having access to the list of attendees before the activity and the possibility of interacting with companies that belong to the same segment of the same value chain, as well as with companies in complementary sectors, due to increasing digitalisation.



9 Differences in demands by gender

Differences in content demands

Non-decision-making individuals of both genders clearly demand sustainability-related content, particularly women aged 21 to 30.

The profile that almost exclusively demands Industry 4.0 content corresponds to men aged 21 to 40 who hold positions with decision-making influence.

Differences in format demands

Women show a stronger preference for shorter training formats or formats that do not require continuous long-term attendance. In particular, women in positions with prescriptive authority or influence within companies demand modular training formats more than men do, especially those aged between 31 and 50.

Single-day in-person courses are also particularly demanded by women over 40 who hold positions with prescriptive authority.

Meanwhile, men over 51 who identify themselves as strategic decision-makers show a stronger preference for expert panel formats



10. Compliance with the recommendations

The recommendations set out in this evaluation have been accepted as necessary and feasible by both the organization and those responsible for providing the capacity-building activities. During the challenging year 2020, some recommendations drawn from the first qualitative phase were implemented. The implementation of the remaining recommendations, drawn mainly from the quantitative phase, will enable us to introduce improvements in the delivery of these activities, bearing in mind that the improvement process is ongoing, thanks to other evaluations that are either already underway or will be launched if necessary.

11. Procuring information

The following public tender was issued for the qualitative phase of this evaluation.

- File: 302/2016
- Company awarded the contract: ABAY ANALISTAS ECONÓMICOS, S.L.

The fieldwork and descriptive analysis of the quantitative phase were carried out by means of a below-threshold contract awarded to the company WEBTOOLS, S.L.

