



EU Customs Competency Framework for the Customs Profession

Role Descriptions – Supportive Functions

January 2014

Definition Functional Domain “Supportive Functions”:

Functions in support of Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs activities.

Examples of supportive functions within a Customs Administration could be: HR and Training, Finance, IT, Communication, Legal, Logistics etc. Under such supportive functions, the following expert areas may exist:

- 1) HR experts
- 2) Training experts
- 3) Finance experts
- 4) IT experts
- 5) Public Relations experts
- 6) Legal experts

Roles covered within the “Supportive functions” functional domain:

- **Management Roles:**
 - Senior Manager
 - Middle Manager
 - Line Manager
- **Expert Roles:**
 - Senior Expert
 - Expert
- **Operational Roles:**
 - Team Lead
 - Customs Officer
 - Customs Officer Trainee

This means that the role of Strategic Manager was excluded from this functional domain:

- **Strategic Manager:** The Strategic Management level will always be a cross-functional one. This means that the role of Strategic Manager will be covered in a separate document. The idea is that the strategy is set at a national level and takes the available resources i.e. people, materials, and budget into account. This strategy will then be put into practice by the Administration’s management team (Senior Management, Middle Management and Line Management), who will translate it to a more functional level (“What does this mean for me/my department?”).

Special note:

The specific competencies and proficiency levels assigned to people working in a certain supportive function may differ depending on the nature of the supportive function. In the roles described in this document the main focus was on the element of delivering support. This needs to be taken in to account when “nationalising” these roles.

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Senior Manager within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Senior Manager</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT, ...)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A person holding a senior management role typically leads a part of the organisation in line with the policies and strategies as set out and approved of by the strategic management. This role requires him or her to focus on guaranteeing the overall coordination, cooperation, and performance of his or her part of the organisation. Compared to middle management, there is relatively less focus on operational planning, coordination and team management. There is relatively more focus on maintaining a dashboard of the performance of the different sections of the part of the organisation he or she is managing. He or she is also responsible for adjusting/refining actions to improve performance, where needed.</p> <p>He or she, and the team(s) under his or her management will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Senior Manager within an Supportive function are focused on guaranteeing the overall coordination, cooperation and performance of his or her department based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. He/she will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indirectly maximises business compliance through the effective management of the support function(s) under his or her command. 2. Builds and maintains a service and support oriented mind-set within his or her team. 3. Ensures and follows up periodically on overall performance and tracks progress to meet strategic objectives. 4. Reports performance and progress to his or her manager, who will usually be at the strategic management level. 5. Translates the strategic guidelines and objectives received from the strategic management to more tactical guidelines and objectives specific for his or her department or Customs region. He or she is responsible for clearly communicating these measures and objectives to his or her Middle Manager(s) and ensures effective two-way communication with lower levels to capture feedback. 6. Ensures on-going professional development, both on a personal level and for his or her team(s). 7. Ensures that team members operate & communicate with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity. 8. Captures reflections and suggestions for potential process improvements to increase operational efficiency, evaluates the suggestions, and implements the best process improvements. 9. Ensures effective coordination and communication with other departments relevant for the support function under his or her command. 10. Might be called upon to contribute to the development of national strategies, especially when there is a dependency on the supportive function under his or her command. 11. Builds a network with other Customs Managers and employees within the European Union; assists in and participates to international project groups. 	

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Dealing with Operational Risk	2	Customs Legislation	2	Act as a Role Model	4
Drive for Results	4	Customs Procedures	2	Strategic Agility	3
Teamwork	3	Support for Customs	4	Visionary Leadership	3
Professional Networking	3	Customs Business Understanding	2	Innovation	2
Coaching & Mentoring	3			Entrepreneurship	2
Knowledge/experience sharing	3			Negotiating	3
Coping with Stress	4			People Management	3
Handling Conflict	2			Conflict Management	3
Adaptability to Change	2			Change Management	4
Decision Making	4			Financial Management	2
Analytical Thinking	3			Communication Management	2
Interpersonal Relations	3			Policy Design	1
Time Management	3			Political Awareness	3
Priority Setting	4			Customs Trends	3
Processing Information	2			Strategic Supply Chain Management	2
Written Communication	4			Managerial Courage	4
Oral Communication	4			Process Management	2
Reporting	3				
Creativity	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Problem Solving	3				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Middle Manager within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Middle Manager</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT, ...)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A person holding a middle management role typically leads and steers multiple teams. Often, but not necessarily, there is an intermediate management layer that manages each separate team (Line Management). In some cases, it could be that a person in a Middle Management role manages a single team. A Middle Manager is the link between the Senior Management and the Line Management.</p> <p>He or she, and the team(s) under his or her management will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Middle Manager within a Supportive function are focused on guaranteeing the overall operational coordination of his or her department and ensuring a high level follow up of the operational performance by acting as the link between the Strategic/Senior Management and the Line Management with his/her operational teams. He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. A Middle Manager will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Translates the tactical guidelines and objectives received from his/her Senior Manager into more tangible operational objectives and measures. He or she is responsible for clearly communicating these measures and objectives to his/her Line Manager(s) leading the operational team(s) and ensuring effective two-way communication with lower levels to capture their feedback. 2. Maximises his or her team's performance by organising & dividing the work according to the specific expertise of the members of his or her team. 3. Provides flexibility and adequate conditions to the people working under his or her management to maximise efficiency. 4. Verifies the quantity and quality of the work products delivered by his or her team(s). 5. Indirectly maximises business compliance through the effective management of his or her team(s). 6. Ensures and follows up periodically on overall performance, tracks progress to meet strategic objectives. 7. Reports performance and progress to his or her Senior Manager. 8. Ensures the development of strong technical knowledge both on a personal level and for his/her team(s). 9. Ensures that team members operate & communicate with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity. 	

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10. Captures reflections and suggestions for potential process improvements to increase operational efficiency, evaluates the suggestions, and implements the best process improvements.
11. Ensures effective cooperation and communication with other departments, when needed.
12. Builds a network with other Customs Managers and employees within the European Union and participates to international project groups.

Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Dealing with Operational Risk	2	Customs Legislation	2	Act as a Role Model	3
Drive for Results	4	Customs Procedures	2	Strategic Agility	2
Teamwork	3	Support for Customs	4	Visionary Leadership	2
Professional Networking	2	Customs Business Understanding	2	Entrepreneurship	2
Coaching & Mentoring	2			Negotiating	3
Knowledge/experience sharing	3			People Management	3
Coping with Stress	3			Conflict Management	3
Handling Conflict	2			Change Management	3
Adaptability to Change	2			Financial Management	1
Decision Making	4			Communication Management	2
Analytical Thinking	3			Political Awareness	2
Interpersonal Relations	3			Customs Trends	2
Time Management	3			Strategic Supply Chain Management	1
Priority Setting	4			Managerial Courage	3
Processing Information	2			Process Management	2
Written Communication	3				
Oral Communication	3				
Reporting	3				
Creativity	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Problem Solving	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Line Manager within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Line Manager</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A person holding a line management role typically leads (an) operational team(s). The team members of his or her team do not fulfil an official management role themselves. A Line Manager is the link between the Middle Management and the Customs Officers of his/her Team(s).</p> <p>He or she, and the team(s) under his or her management will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Line Manager within a Supportive function are focused on guaranteeing a good cooperation between the operational teams, ensuring the realisation of the operational objectives, and closely following up the performance of his operational team(s). He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. A Line Manager will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensures the realisation of the operational objectives based on the guidelines received from his/her Middle Manager. He/she will also capture feedback of his/her operational team(s) and share this feedback with his/her upper management, in particular with the Middle Management. 2. Directly manages a team of operational people working in a specific supportive function. 3. Builds and maintains a service and support oriented mind-set within his or her team. 4. Maximises his or her team's performance by organising & dividing the work. 5. Supports and develops team members and ensures that they continue to develop strong technical knowledge and skills in his or her domain. 6. Provides flexibility and adequate conditions to team members to maximise efficiency. 7. Ensures that team members operate and communicate with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity. 8. Verifies the quantity and quality of the work products delivered by his or her team. 9. Reports performance and progress related to operational objectives to his or her Middle Manager. 10. Captures reflections and suggestions for potential process improvements to increase operational efficiency and evaluates the suggestions. 11. Ensures effective cooperation with other departments within the Customs Administration, when needed. 12. Offers first line support regarding special cases for his or her team members. 	

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13. Builds a network with other Customs Managers and employees within the European Union.

Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Dealing with Operational Risk	3	Customs Legislation	2	Act as a Role Model	2
Drive for Results	4	Customs Procedures	2	Entrepreneurship	2
Teamwork	3	Support for Customs	4	People Management	2
Professional Networking	1	Customs Business Understanding	2	Conflict Management	3
Knowledge/experience sharing	2			Change Management	2
Coping with Stress	2			Communication Management	2
Handling Conflict	2			Customs Trends	1
Adaptability to Change	2			Managerial Courage	2
Decision Making	3			Process Management	2
Analytical Thinking	3			Visionary leadership	1
Interpersonal Relations	3			Negotiating	1
Time Management	2			Political Awareness	2
Priority Setting	2				
Processing Information	2				
Written Communication	2				
Oral Communication	2				
Reporting	2				
Creativity	1				
Technological Ability	2				
Problem Solving	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Senior Expert in a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Senior Expert</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A person holding a Senior Expert role has typically specialised extensively in a certain domain. He or she is required to act as a consultant on a daily basis for questions of other Customs employees and for complex enquiries and cases related to his or her specific expertise. Senior Experts have a relatively higher level of expertise compared to that of more junior Experts.</p> <p>He or she will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Senior Expert in a Supportive function are focused on developing extensive expert knowledge and skills and act as a consultant in solving complex cases based on his/her knowledge and experience. He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. A Senior Expert will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develops strong and focused technical, expert knowledge on a personal level and on a continuous basis in the field of his or her specific area of expertise. 2. Responds to queries related to complex or unclear cases in the area of his or her specific supportive function. 3. Builds and maintains a service and support oriented mind-set. 4. Organises own work effectively, thereby maximising own performance accordingly. 5. Builds and maintains very good working relationships and communicates proactively with his/her stakeholders. 6. Understands, cooperates, and communicates effectively with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity. 7. Is thorough and delivers high quality work products in a timely manner. 8. Reports status and relevant difficulties or issues to his or her manager in a proactive and timely manner. 9. Communicates suggestions and potential process improvements regarding his or her specific supportive function in order to increase operational efficiency and support provision to his or her manager. 10. He or she may be required to assist in policy development when related to his or her specific expertise. 11. Builds a network with other Customs Experts and employees within the European Union; assists in and participates to international project groups. 12. Helps Experts to build strong technical expert knowledge and provides support in solving complex cases. 	

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13. Ensures dialogue with relevant national, EU and international authorities and institutions, whenever needed.
14. Gives and/or supports training to other Customs employees in their specific domain.

Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Dealing with Operational Risk	2	Customs Legislation	3	Change Management	2
Drive for Results	2	Customs Procedures	3	Financial Management	1
Investigative Ability	2	Support for Customs	4	Communication Management	2
Teamwork	2	Customs Business Understanding	3	Policy Design	4
Professional Networking	4			Political Awareness	2
Knowledge/experience sharing	4			Customs Trends of the 21st Century	2
Coping with Stress	2				
Handling Conflict	2				
Decision Making	2				
Analytical Thinking	2				
Interpersonal Relations	2				
Problem Solving	2				
Processing Information	3				
Written Communication	3				
Oral Communication	3				
Data Management	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Working Virtually	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Expert in a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Expert</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A person holding an expert role is typically specialised in a certain domain. He or she is required to act as a consultant working on a case-by-case basis for enquiries related to his or her specific expertise. Experts have a relatively lower level of expertise compared to that of Senior Experts.</p> <p>He or she will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Senior Expert in a Supportive function are focused on developing extensive expert knowledge and skills and act as a consultant in solving complex cases based on his/her knowledge and experience. He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. An Expert will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develops strong and focused technical, expert knowledge on a personal level and on a continuous basis in the field of his or her specific area of expertise. 2. Responds to queries related to complex or unclear cases in the area of his or her specific supportive function. 3. Builds and maintains a service and support oriented mind-set. 4. Organises own work effectively, thereby maximising own performance accordingly. 5. Builds and maintains very good working relationships and communicates proactively with his/her stakeholders. 6. Understands, cooperates, and communicates effectively with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity. 7. Is thorough and delivers high quality work products in a timely manner. 8. Reports status and relevant difficulties or issues to his or her manager in a proactive and timely manner. 9. Communicates suggestions and potential process improvements regarding his or her specific supportive function in order to increase operational efficiency and support provision to his or her manager. 10. He or she may be required to assist in policy development when related to his or her specific expertise. 11. Builds a network with other Customs Experts and employees within the European Union; assists in and participates to international project groups. 12. Ensures dialogue with relevant national, EU and international authorities and institutions, whenever needed. 	

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Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Dealing with Operational Risk	2	Customs Legislation	2	Change Management	1
Drive for Results	2	Customs Procedures	3	Financial Management	1
Investigative Ability	2	Support for Customs	4	Communication Management	1
Teamwork	2	Customs Business Understanding	3	Policy Design	4
Professional Networking	3			Political Awareness	1
Knowledge/experience sharing	3			Customs Trends of the 21st Century	1
Coping with Stress	2				
Handling Conflict	2				
Decision Making	2				
Analytical Thinking	2				
Interpersonal Relations	2				
Problem Solving	2				
Processing Information	3				
Written Communication	3				
Oral Communication	3				
Data Management	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Working Virtually	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Customs Officer - Team Lead within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Customs Team lead</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A Customs Officer - Team Lead is involved in the day-to-day operational Customs activities. He or she has received all required training and has successfully passed all appropriate tests. Subsequently, he or she is responsible for own work. In addition to his or her day-to-day operational responsibilities, he or she will also manage the rest of the team in absence of the Manager (e.g. when this Manager is leading multiple teams on different locations).</p> <p>He or she will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Customs Officer – Team Lead within Supportive function are focused on maximising his/her own performance and supporting his/her Line Management in order to reach the operational objectives of his/her operational team within a Supportive function. He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. A Customs Officer – Team Lead will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directly manages a regional team of operational people in absence of his or her manager. 2. Effectively organises own work, thereby maximising own performance accordingly. 3. Develops strong technical knowledge on a personal level and on a continuous basis in the field of his or her supportive function. 4. Supports other team members and occasionally develops trainees to perform their tasks within his or her specific supportive function. 5. Operates and communicates effectively and with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity with Trade, other economic operators and private persons. 6. Delivers high quality work products in a timely manner. 7. Builds and maintains good working relationships with Trade, other economic operators and private persons. 8. Reports status and relevant difficulties or issues to his or her manager in a proactive and timely manner. 9. Communicates suggestions and potential process improvements regarding his or her specific supportive function in order to increase operational efficiency and support provision to his or her manager. 10. Effectively cooperates with other departments, whenever required. 11. Builds a network with other Customs Officers within the European Union. 	

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Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Drive for Results	2	Customs Legislation	2	People Management	1
Teamwork	3	Customs Procedures	2	Conflict Management	3
Analytical Thinking	3	Support for Customs	3	Managerial Courage	2
Interpersonal Relations	2	Customs Business Understanding	3	Process Management	1
Processing Information	2				
Written Communication	2				
Oral Communication	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Dealing with Operational Risk	2				
Coping with Stress	2				
Handling Conflict	2				
Decision Making	2				
Reporting	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Customs Officer within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Customs Officer</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A Customs Officer is typically involved in the day-to-day Customs operational activities. He or she is responsible for their own work but also has to work in teams and will therefore have an additional responsibility of ensuring the success of the team.</p> <p>He or she will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Customs Officer – Team Lead within Supportive function are focused on maximising his/her own performance and supporting his/her Line Management in order to reach the operational objectives of his/her operational team within a Supportive function. He/she will deliver on their responsibilities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus. A Customs Officer – Team Lead will focus on these core values by performing the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectively organises own work, thereby maximising own performance accordingly. 2. Develops strong technical knowledge on a personal level and on a continuous basis in the field of his or her supportive function. 3. Supports other team members and occasionally develops trainees to perform their tasks within his or her specific supportive function. 4. Operates and communicates effectively and with appropriate political awareness & sensitivity with Trade, other economic operators and private persons. 5. Delivers high quality work products in a timely manner. 6. Builds and maintains good working relationships with Trade, other economic operators and private persons. 7. Reports status and relevant difficulties or issues to his or her manager in a proactive and timely manner. 8. Communicates suggestions and potential process improvements regarding his or her specific supportive function in order to increase operational efficiency and support provision to his or her manager. 9. Effectively cooperates with other departments, whenever required. 10. Builds a network with other Customs Officers within the European Union. 	

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Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Drive for Results	2	Customs Legislation	2		
Teamwork	2	Customs Procedures	2		
Analytical Thinking	3	Support for Customs	3		
Interpersonal Relations	2	Customs Business Understanding	2		
Processing Information	2				
Written Communication	2				
Oral Communication	2				
Technological Ability	2				
Dealing with Operational Risk	2				
Coping with Stress	2				
Handling Conflict	2				
Decision Making	2				
Reporting	2				

EU Customs Competency Framework - Role Descriptions - Supportive Functions

Role Title	
<i>Customs Officer Trainee within a supportive function</i>	
Level	Functional Domain
<i>Customs Officer Trainee</i>	<i>Supportive functions (HR, Training, IT,)</i>
Role Description	
<p>A Customs Officer Trainee can perform activities under supervision and will typically shadow a Customs Officer. He or she cannot be held responsible for any actions taken.</p> <p>He or she will typically support the Customs staff during the overall execution of the core Customs operational activities.</p> <p>The main responsibilities of a Customs Officer Trainee within a Client Management Department are focused on absorbing knowledge from his/her Customs Officer colleagues and building a network with other Customs Officers within the European Union. He/she will perform these activities based on the Customs Core Values which are Strong Ethics and High Integrity, Public Service Commitment, Customer & Service Orientation, Continual Learning & Professional Development, Operational Excellence, Harmonised EU Attitude & Approach and European Safety and Security Focus.</p>	

Professional Competencies	Proficiency Level	Operational Competencies	Proficiency Level	Management Competencies	Proficiency Level
Drive for Results	1	Customs Business Understanding	1		
Teamwork	1	Customs Procedures	1		
Analytical Thinking	1				
Interpersonal Relations	1				
Processing Information	1				
Written Communication	1				
Oral Communication	1				
Technological Ability	1				