



The Role of Women in the Competitiveness of Exporting SMEs

Lithuania Country Report

2026 m.

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Study objectives and methodology

The study examines the role of women in exporting SMEs, focusing on their participation in decision-making, leadership and export functions. It looks beyond the numerical representation of women to the quality of their involvement in strategic processes, the barriers they encounter in career progression, and the organisational and cultural factors shaping their trajectories. A further objective was to compare export and non-export functions, and male and female professionals, to provide an evidence base for policy and support measures targeting exporting SMEs.

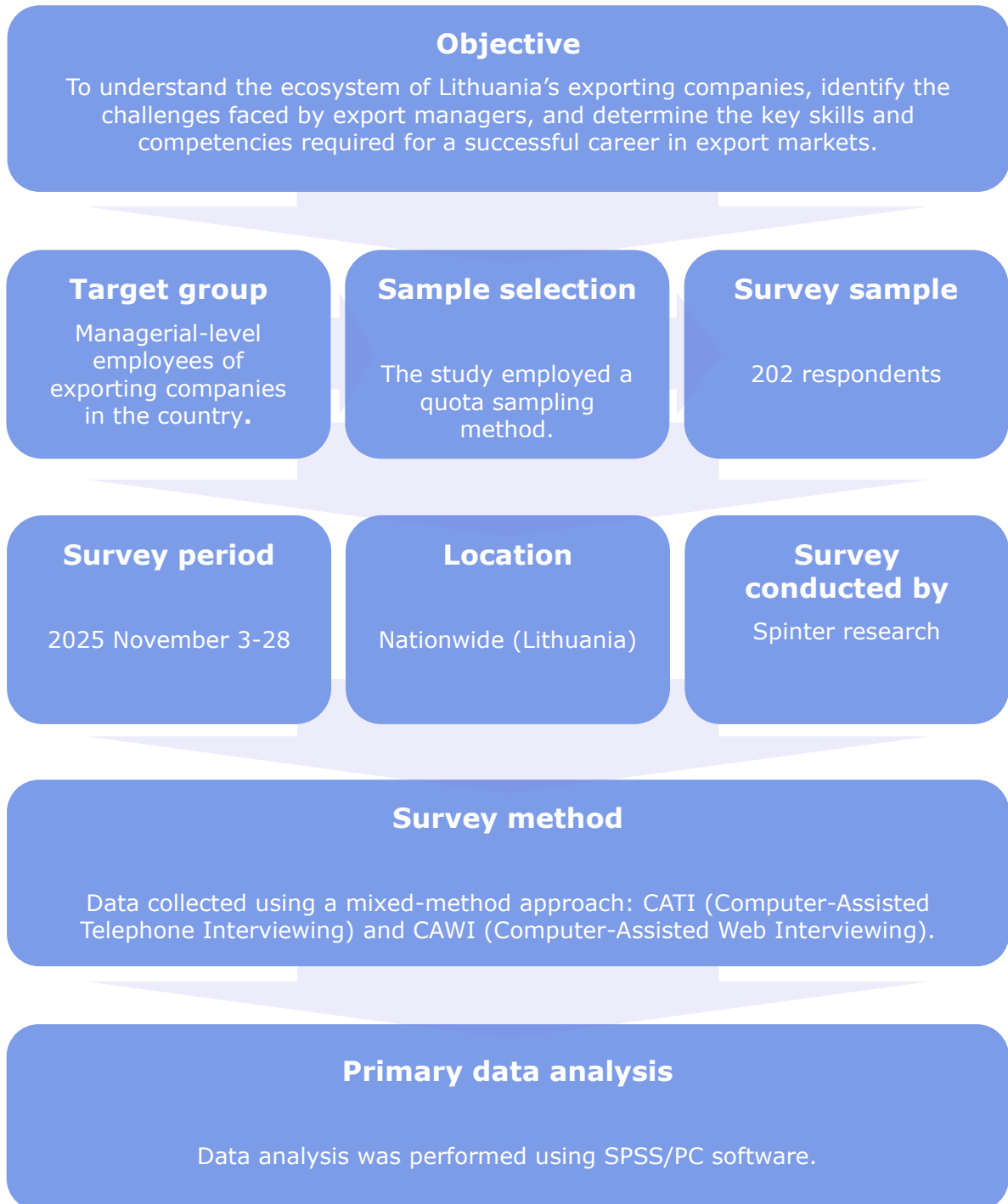
The quantitative part consisted of a structured survey administered to managers and professionals working in exporting SMEs. The survey collected detailed information on company characteristics (size, turnover, export intensity, sector), respondents' roles and responsibilities, ownership, decision-making authority, career progression, perceived obstacles, competence profiles, training and experiences of gender-related stereotypes. This design supports systematic comparison across gender, department, and organisational level, giving a statistically grounded view of women's participation in export-related management.

The qualitative component complemented the survey with in-depth interviews. These interviews explored individual career pathways, organisational cultures, informal norms, and lived experiences that cannot be fully captured through closed-ended survey questions. Attention was given to how women perceive their access to responsibility, how decision-making authority is negotiated in practice, and how stereotypes or structural expectations influence professional choices. The interview data allowed for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms behind the quantitative patterns, helping to interpret why certain differences emerge and how they operate in everyday organisational contexts.

By combining survey-based approach with interview-based depth, the study offers a comprehensive picture of women's roles in exporting SMEs. The mixed-method approach ensures both comparability across respondent groups and contextual insight into the structural and cultural dynamics shaping gender equality in export-oriented business environments.

Phase 1. Survey

1. Survey methodology



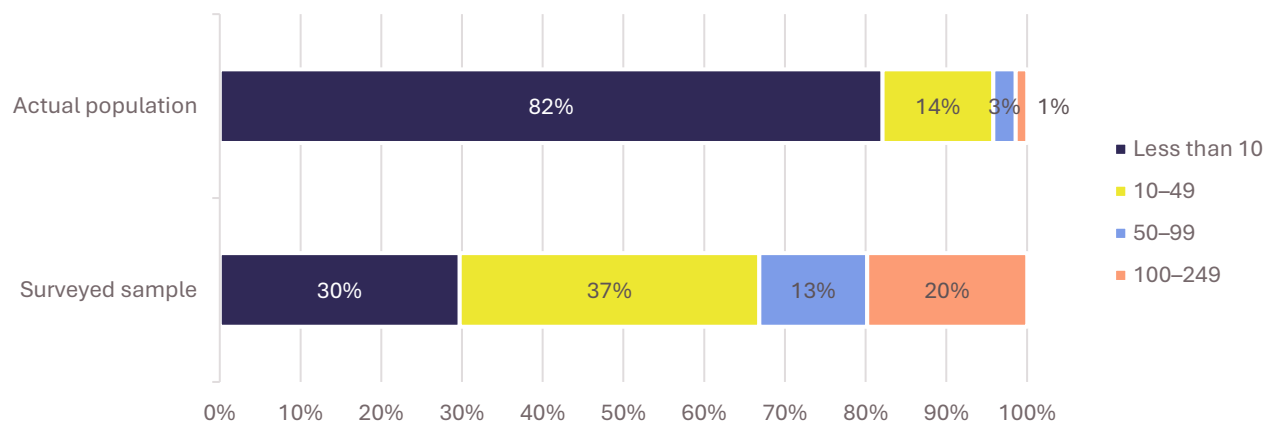
2. Surveyed companies

Characteristics

Lithuanian business landscape is largely dominated by micro enterprises. The structure of business population (see Figure 1) clearly shows that very small enterprises dominate among all SMEs: companies with fewer than 10 employees account for more than four fifths of all firms, while medium-sized enterprises represent only a marginal share. This distribution provides the main rationale for including very small companies in the sample survey. Given their overwhelming prevalence in the real economy, excluding these firms would significantly limit the relevance and external validity of the findings, particularly when assessing decision-making, leadership roles, and export-related dynamics in the SME segment.

Against this background, the achieved sample covers a broad range of firm sizes (see Figure 1). While very small enterprises form a substantial part of the respondents, the sample also includes a notable share of small and medium-sized companies, with representation across the 10–49, 50–99 and 100–249 employee groups. This ensures that the analysis captures perspectives from different organisational scales, while still reflecting the central role of very small firms in the overall business population.

Figure 1 Surveyed companies and actual SMEs population by size

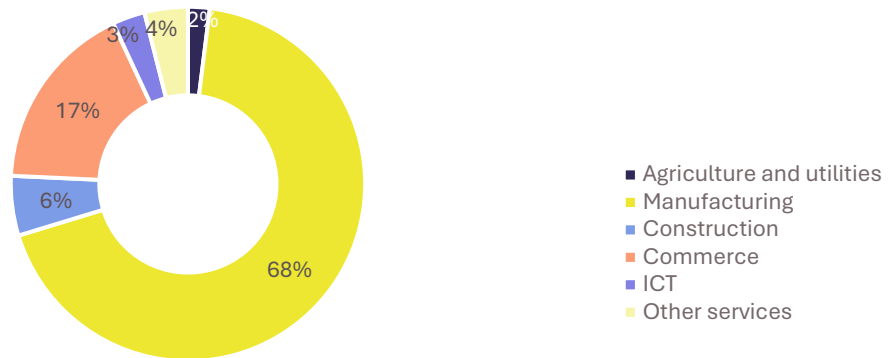


Sources: Sodra and Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: Actual population N=103,993, surveyed sample N=202

The sample is concentrated in manufacturing, reflecting the sector's role in export activity. Manufacturing is the largest group in the sample, followed by commerce, while construction and ICT appear to a more limited extent and agriculture, utilities and other services account for small shares (see Figure 2). This reflects the analytical focus of the study on exporting and internationally active firms, for which manufacturing plays a central role due to its higher propensity to engage in foreign markets and structured export activities.

Figure 2 Surveyed companies by sector

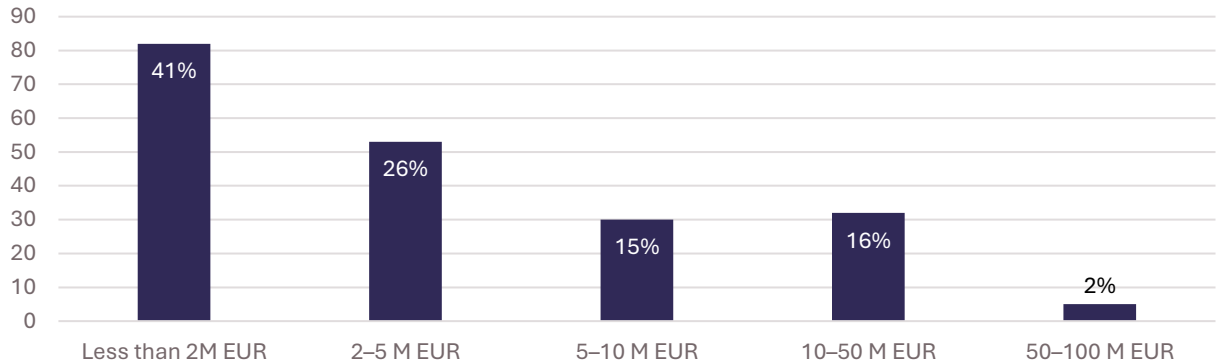


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Most surveyed firms operate at a modest financial scale, though larger firms are also represented. A substantial share report annual turnover below EUR 2 million while firms in the EUR 2–5m, 5–10m and 10–50m brackets together exceed 40 proc. of respondents. Only 2 proc. report turnover above EUR 50 million (see Figure 3)

Figure 3 Surveyed companies by revenue level

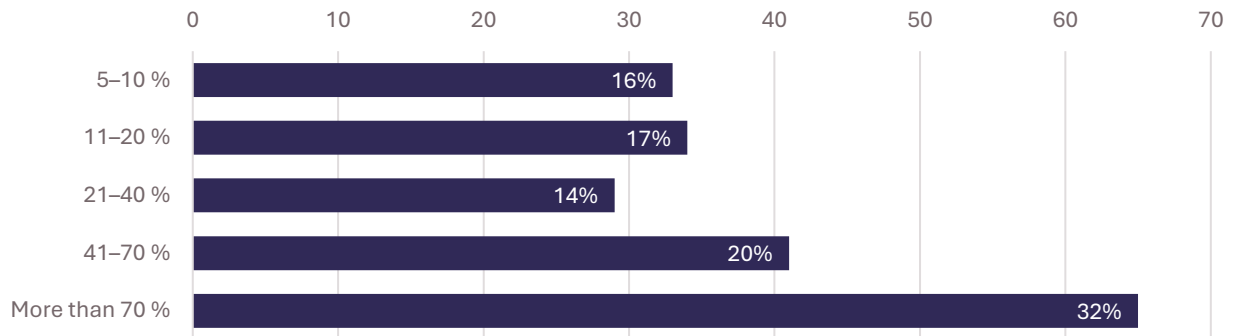


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

For most respondents, exporting is a core business activity rather than an occasional one. Around one third of firms derive more than 70 proc. of turnover from exports, identifying a sizeable group of highly export-dependent businesses (see Figure 4). For these firms, international markets are central to strategy and day-to-day decision-making - the processes this study sets out to examine.

Figure 4 Surveyed companies by share of exports in turnover

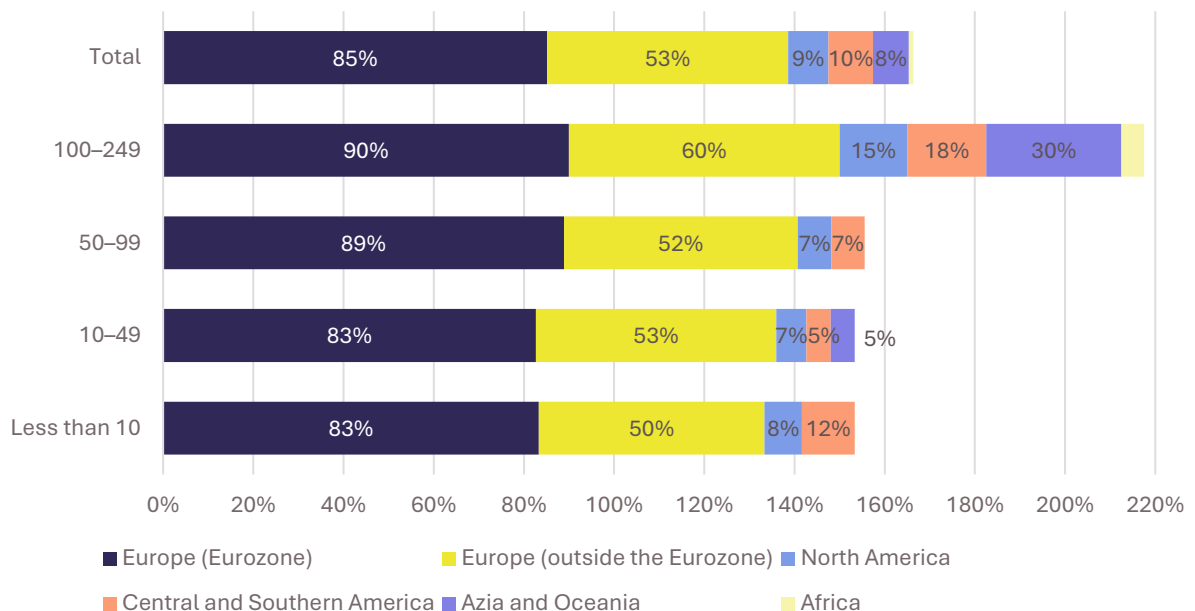


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Exporting SMEs concentrate on European markets, with geographic reach widening as firms grow. Exports to the Eurozone and the rest of Europe account for most foreign-market activity across all size groups. Beyond Europe, medium-sized firms (100–249 employees) report stronger engagement with North America, Asia and Oceania, whereas smaller firms diversify more modestly (see Figure 5). Regional proximity, regulatory familiarity and established trade links anchor SME exports to Europe, while international diversification rises with firm size, resources and experience.

Figure 5 Export markets by company size



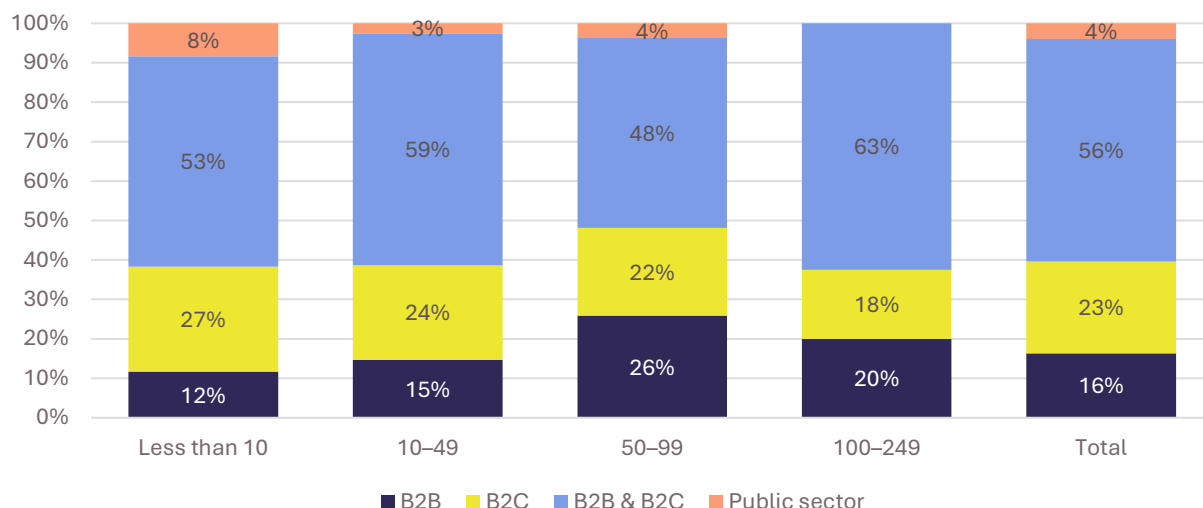
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: Respondents were able to choose multiple answers hence sum of percentages is more than 100. N=202

A combined B2B–B2C model is the most common mode of operation, particularly among larger firms. More than half of firms sell to

both businesses and consumers, rising to nearly two thirds among firms with 100–249 employees; pure B2B is smaller but meaningful and is most prominent among 50–99-employee firms; B2C-only accounts for roughly one fifth to one quarter across most size groups, and public-sector engagement is marginal (see Figure 6). Hybrid models predominate, with size-related shifts in the B2B/B2C balance pointing to stronger specialisation in mid-sized firms.

Figure 6 Business type by company size



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Most exporting SMEs sell abroad directly, and this pattern holds across all firm sizes and turnover levels. Direct exporting - where the company sells straight to foreign customers rather than through a middleman - makes up the majority of international sales in every size and revenue group (see Figure 7). The other channels are secondary. The smallest firms lean more on indirect exporting (selling through agents or distributors) and on digital sales (online and e-commerce), both of which lower the cost and risk of entering a new market. More demanding approaches - export partnerships, contractual agreements, and investing directly abroad - appear mainly in larger, higher-turnover firms. In short, direct exporting is the foundation for SMEs, while the more complex methods of entering foreign markets become realistic only as firms grow and gain the resources to manage them.

Figure 7 Export type by company size

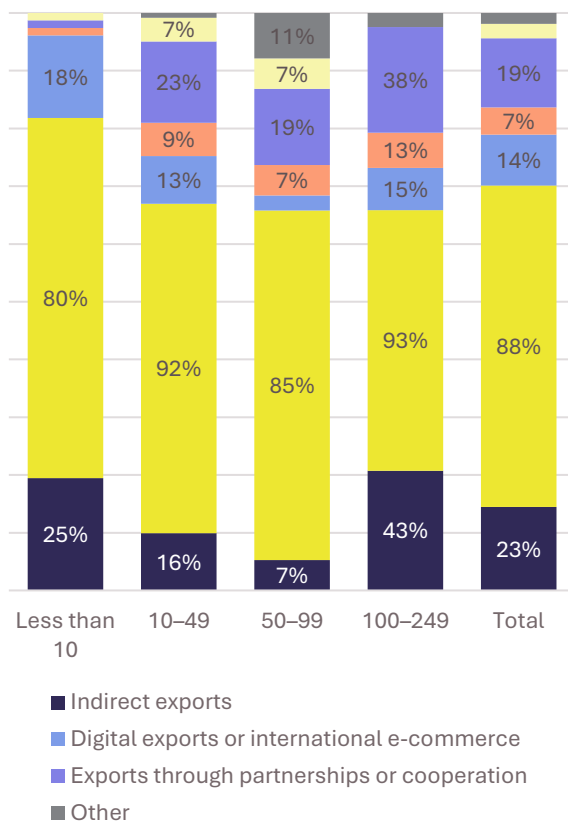
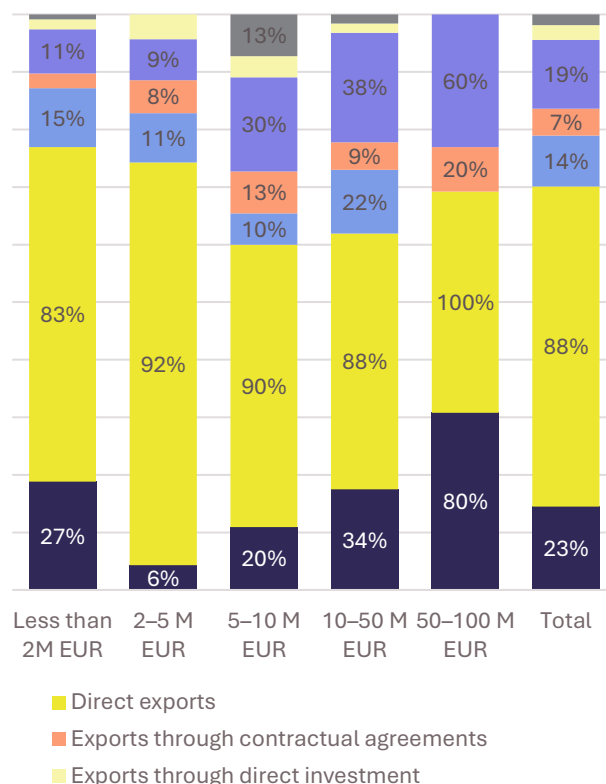


Figure 8 Export type by revenue level



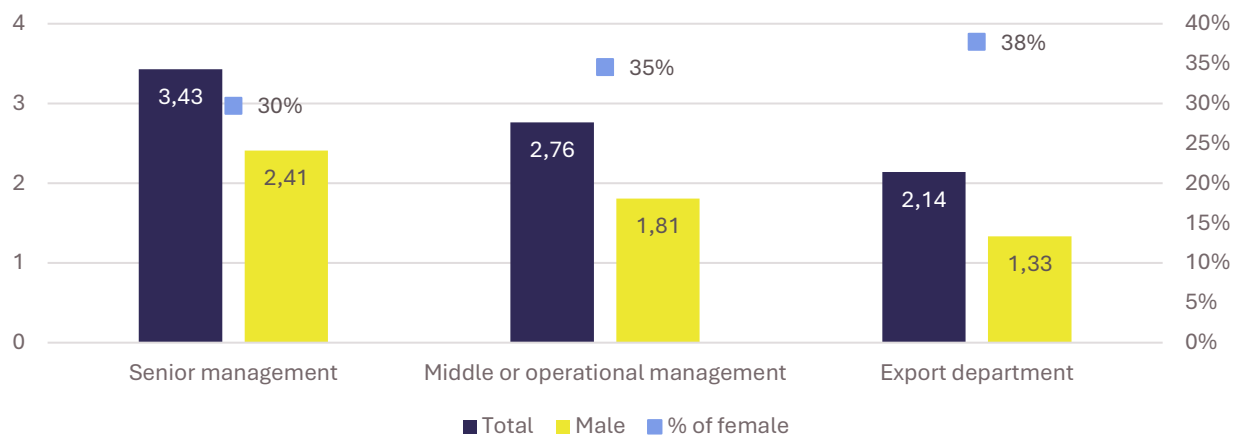
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: Respondents were able to choose multiple answers, hence sum of percentages might be more than 100. N=202

Organisational structure

SME management layers follow a familiar shape: senior teams are largest, export departments leanest. On average, senior management teams are the largest, followed by middle or operational management, with export departments typically the smallest by headcount (see Figure 9). This reflects common SME structures, where strategic leadership is shared among several people, operational management is moderately staffed and export functions remain relatively lean.

Figure 9 Average numbers of total employees (and male employees) in senior management / middle or operational management / export department. Share of female employees in each category (secondary axis)



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

At the same time, women's representation rises moving down the management hierarchy. Women account for around 30 proc. of senior management, approximately 35 proc. of middle or operational management and close to 38 proc. of export departments. Their presence across all three layers is therefore substantial, but thinner at the most senior level. Combined with the smaller size of export teams, the higher female share there suggests exports may act as an entry or development area for women, even if absolute numbers remain modest.

The pattern points to a structural feature rather than a simple pipeline effect. Women are present in senior management, but their relative weight is greater in middle management and export functions than at the top.

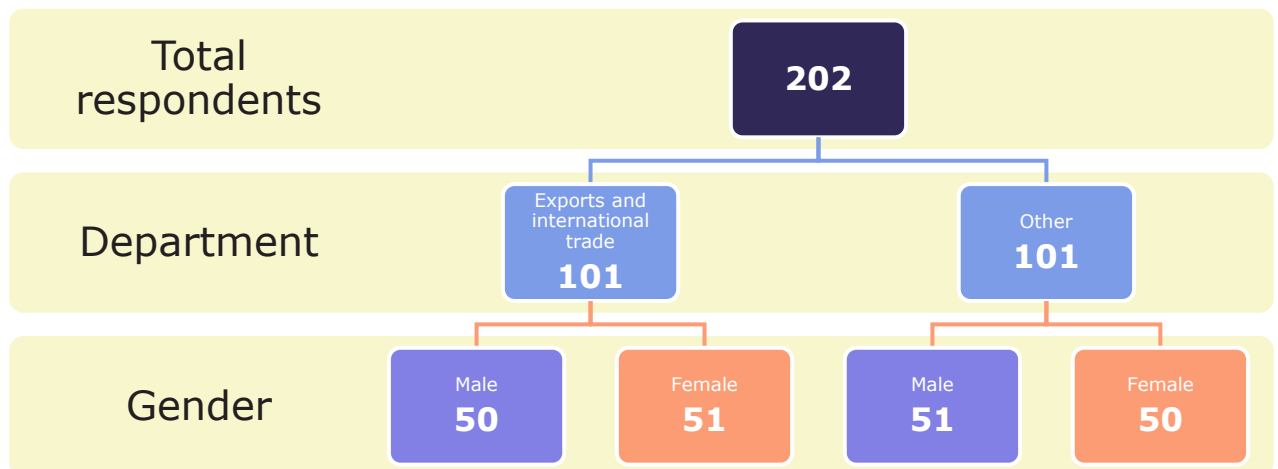
3. The respondents

The profile

The respondent base is split evenly between export and non-export roles, supporting balanced comparison. Out of 202 respondents, exactly half work in export and international-trade functions and half in other departments (Figure 10). This even split allows the analysis to compare those directly involved in exporting with those in broader managerial roles.

Gender representation within each group is close to balanced. Among both export and non-export respondents, men and women are present in broadly similar proportions, which reduces the risk of gender bias and supports conclusions on gender, leadership and decision-making.

Figure 10 Classification of collectives



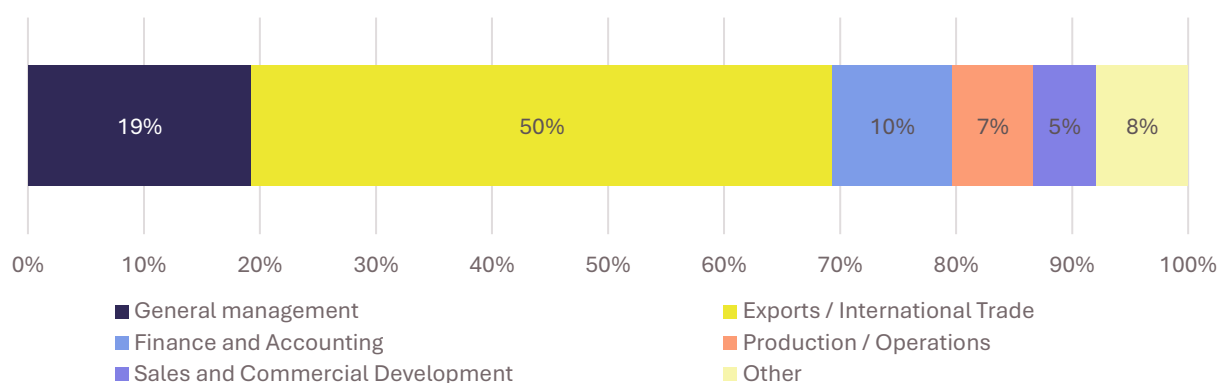
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Export and international-trade roles form the largest functional group, complemented by general management. Half of all participants work in exports and international trade (see Figure 11), keeping the findings anchored in international-market experience, while nearly a fifth come from general management, adding a strategic perspective.

It should be noted that distinctions between departments can be ambiguous, particularly in very small companies. In such cases, employees in managerial positions often cover multiple portfolios simultaneously, making a strict division into standard departmental functions less meaningful. Nevertheless, respondents were asked to self-identify their role within the company and to select the option that best reflected their actual responsibilities.

Figure 11 Distribution of respondents by department within the company



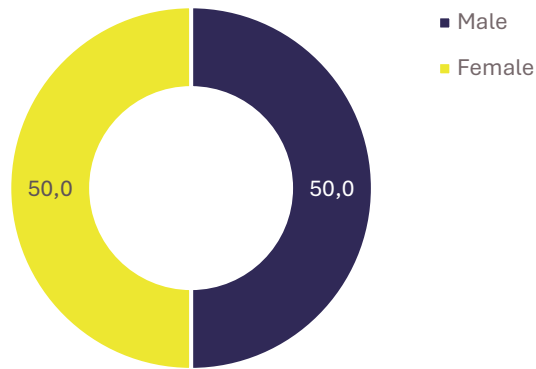
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

The age structure of respondents (see Figure 13) is clearly concentrated in the middle age groups, which are typically associated with established professional experience and decision-making responsibility within

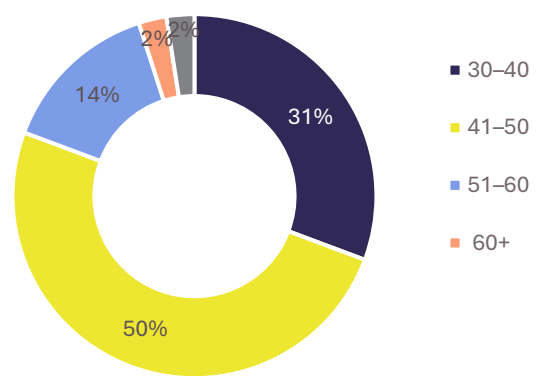
companies. Half of all respondents are aged between 41 and 50, while a further 31 proc. fall into the 30–40 age group. This indicates that the survey largely captures the views of individuals who are actively engaged in management and strategic roles during a core phase of their careers.

Figure 12 Distribution of respondents by gender



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

Figure 13 Distribution of respondents by age

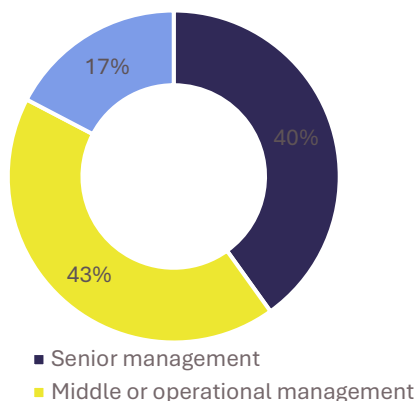


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

Older age groups are much less represented in the sample. Respondents aged 51–60 account for a relatively small share, while those aged over 60 are only marginally present. Non-response on age is minimal. Overall, the age distribution suggests that the findings predominantly reflect perspectives of mid-career managers and executives, which is consistent with the study's focus on current leadership, operational decision-making, and export management practices.

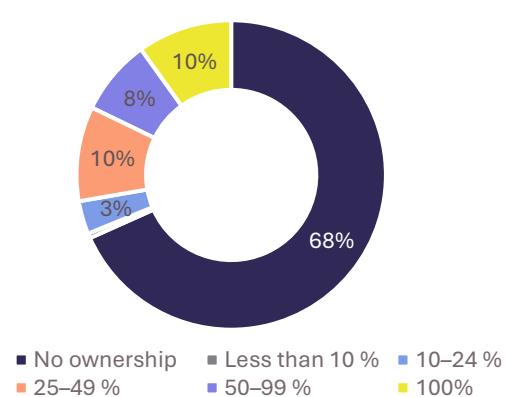
The sample is firmly management-level. Four in ten respondents are in senior management and an even larger share in middle or operational management (see Figure 14), so the majority are directly involved in decision-making and day-to-day management.

Figure 14 Distribution of respondents by position in the company



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

Figure 15 Distribution of respondents by ownership of the company

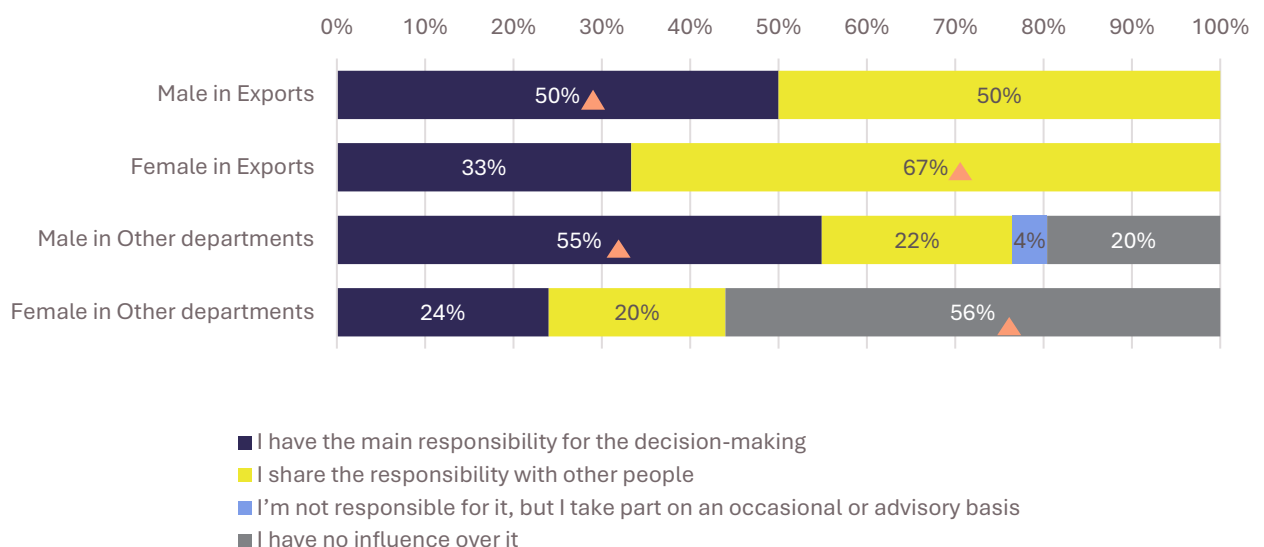


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

Most respondents hold no equity, but those who do often hold meaningful stakes. More than two thirds report no ownership (see Figure 15). Among owners, around one tenth report full ownership, a comparable share holds 25–49 proc., and a further group holds majority but not full ownership (50–99 proc.); stakes below 10 proc. are rare. Owner-respondents therefore tend to be influential rather than marginal, which is worth bearing in mind when interpreting governance and decision-making findings.

Women in export roles participate actively in decision-making, but more often share authority than hold it alone. In export functions, men are split fairly evenly between sole and shared responsibility, whereas women lean toward shared responsibility. The gap is wider outside exports, where men most often hold the main responsibility and women most often report little or no influence (see Figure 16). Export-related roles thus appear to bring women closer to decision-making than some other departments. The contrast may also partly reflect differences in self-assessment, with some research noting that women tend to rate their own role in top-level decision-making more conservatively than men.¹

Figure 16 Respondents' perceived participation in the decision-making regarding international strategy of the company



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

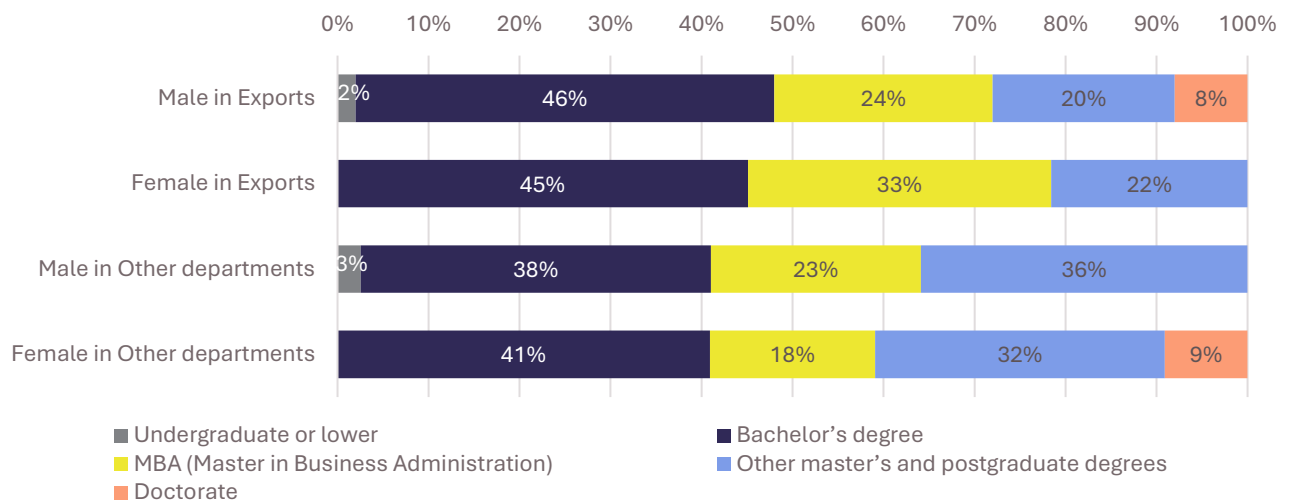
Respondents are highly educated across all groups, with bachelor's and master's degrees predominating. In export roles, men and women show similar profiles: around half hold a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification and a substantial share have postgraduate education, with

¹Innovation Agency Lithuania (2025). Moterų verslumo tyrimas 2025.

https://inovacijagentura.lt/site/binaries/content/assets/analitika/tyrimai/moteru-verslumo-tyrimas_2025.pdf

MBAs and other master's degrees relatively common among women in exports (see Figure 17).

Figure 17 Educational level of respondents involved in company's international strategy by the department



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

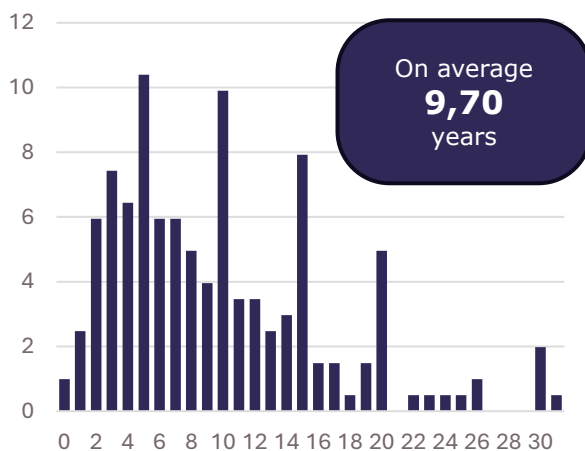
Note: N=162

Across all groups, respondents with only undergraduate or lower education are rare and only noticeable among male respondents. This also links to previously mentioned higher self-confidence among man: **women tend to rely more on formal education, feel more confident in the labour market and top managerial positions if they have the adequate educational background.** Overall, the results suggest that both export and non-export functions are staffed by highly educated professionals, and that women involved in exports are strongly represented among those with advanced business and postgraduate qualifications.

Professional career

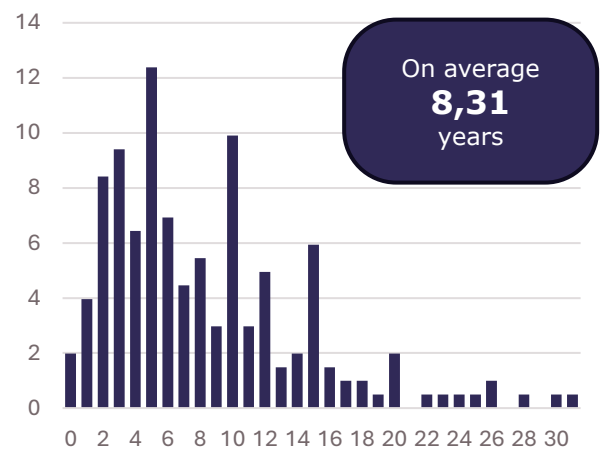
Respondents bring considerable organisational experience. On average they have spent close to ten years at their current company (9.70 years) and just over eight years in their current position (8.31 years) (see Figure 18 and Figure 19). The long company tenure alongside somewhat shorter time in role suggests internal mobility over time and points to a relatively stable management cohort, which strengthens the reliability of the insights on decision-making and export strategy.

Figure 18 Distribution of respondents based on years at the company (proc. of respondents)



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

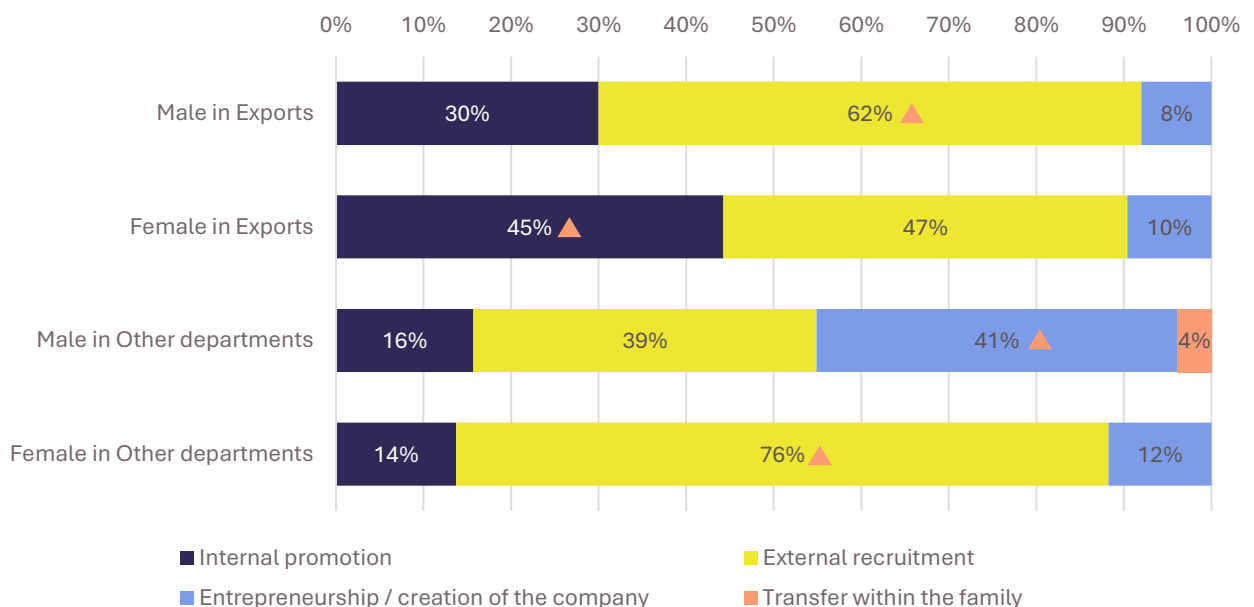
Figure 19 Distribution of respondents based on years in current position (proc. of respondents)



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania
Note: N=202

Routes into current roles differ by gender and department. In export roles, external recruitment is the most common entry route for both men and women, but women in exports rely more on internal promotion than men, who more often enter through external recruitment (see Figure 20). This suggests women in export functions more often progress within organisations than are hired directly into their roles.

Figure 20 Respondents by type of access to current position



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202 Multiple answers available, sum might be higher than 100 proc.

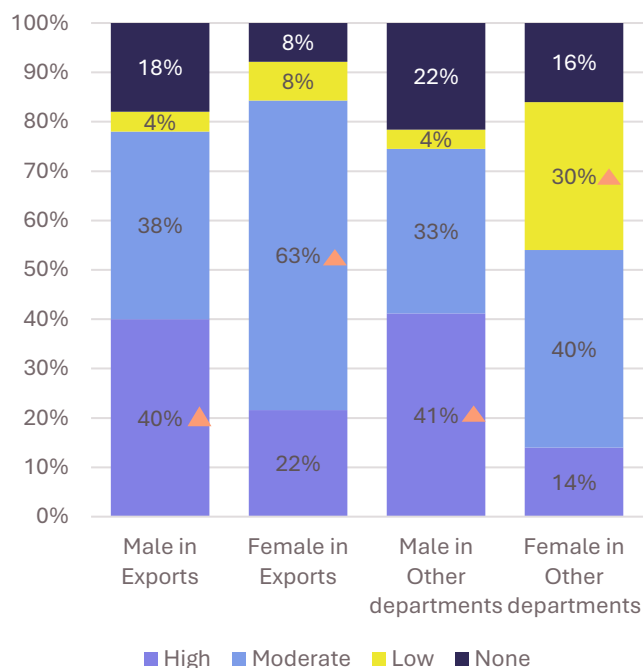
▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

Outside exports, women's access is dominated by external hiring, while men more often enter through entrepreneurship. Men in other departments show a higher share accessing their position by founding or co-founding a company, while internal promotion is limited outside export roles for both genders. Export departments therefore appear to offer clearer internal progression - particularly for women - whereas other departments rely more on external recruitment or entrepreneurial entry, differences that may shape gender balance in leadership over time (see Figure 21).

Perceived progression opportunities vary by gender and department. Women in export functions most often describe their opportunities as moderate and are less likely to rate them as high, suggesting steady rather than rapid advancement (Men in export roles hold more polarised views, while women outside exports are more likely to perceive low progression opportunities).

Company size also shapes perceived progression. Moderate opportunities dominate across all sizes (see Figure 22). Smaller firms are more often associated with limited progression, reflecting flatter structures, while medium-sized firms (50–249 employees) show higher shares reporting moderate-to-high opportunities, consistent with clearer career ladders.

Figure 21 Perceived career progression options by respondent segments

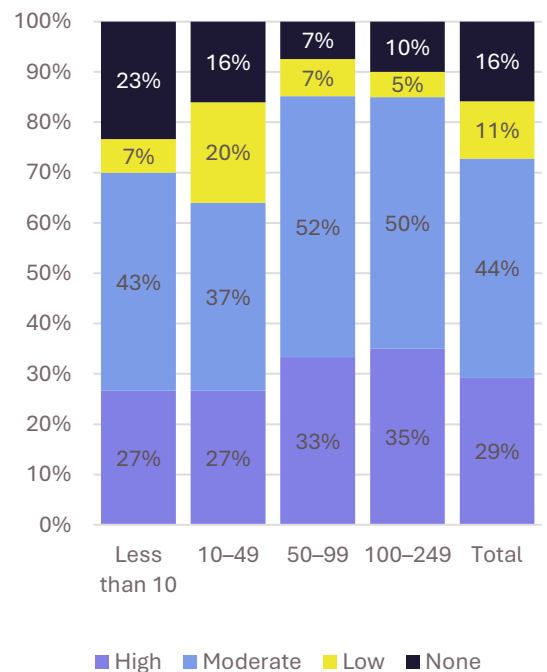


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

Figure 22 Perceived career progression options by company size



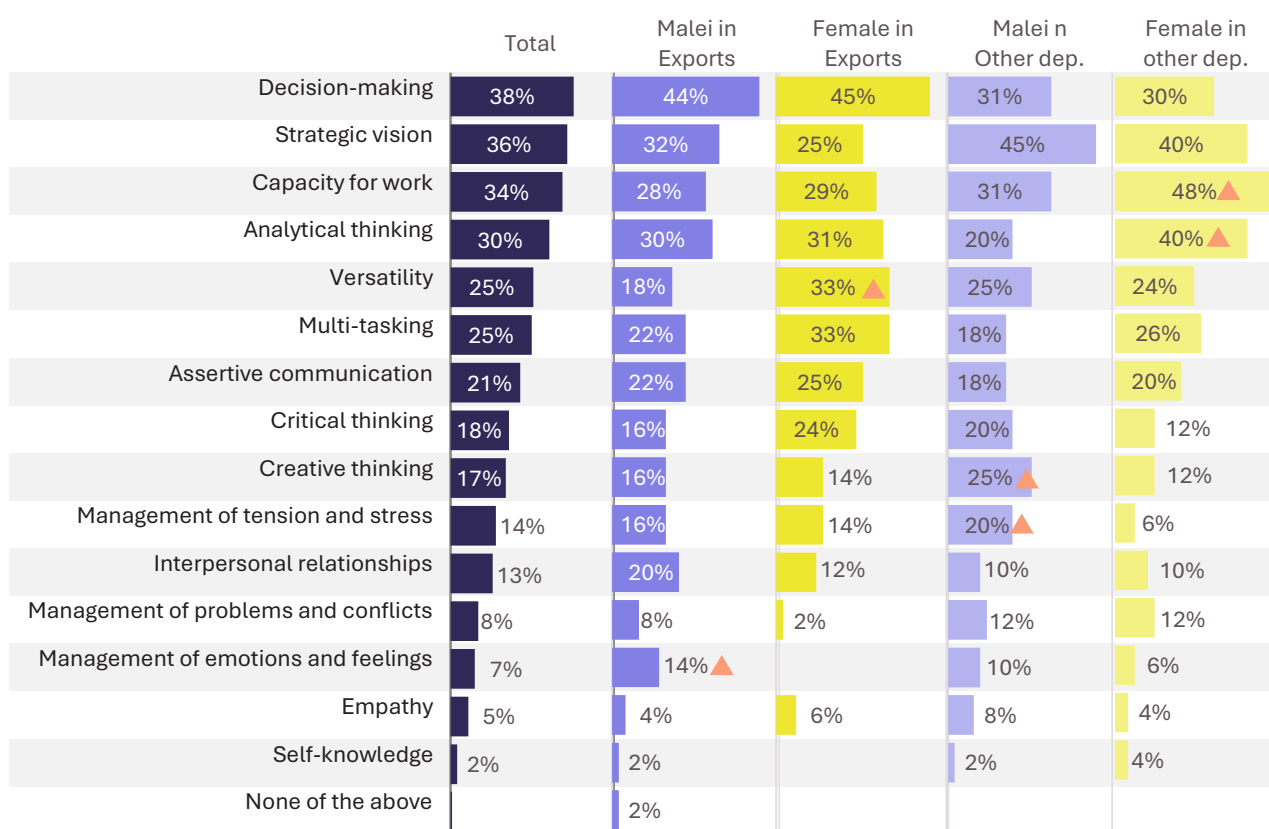
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Respondents most value cognitive and decision-oriented skills. Decision-making, strategic vision and capacity for work are the most frequently cited competencies overall, with analytical thinking also ranking highly (see Figure 23) - consistent with the sample's managerial profile.

Skill priorities differ by gender and department. In export functions both men and women rank decision-making first; women place relatively more emphasis on versatility and multi-tasking, men on managing pressure and stress. Outside exports, strategic vision stands out (especially among men), while women attach more value to capacity for work and analytical thinking. Export roles appear to reward operational breadth - particularly for women - while non-export roles emphasise strategic orientation and sustained performance.

Figure 23 Most values professional skills by respondent segments



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

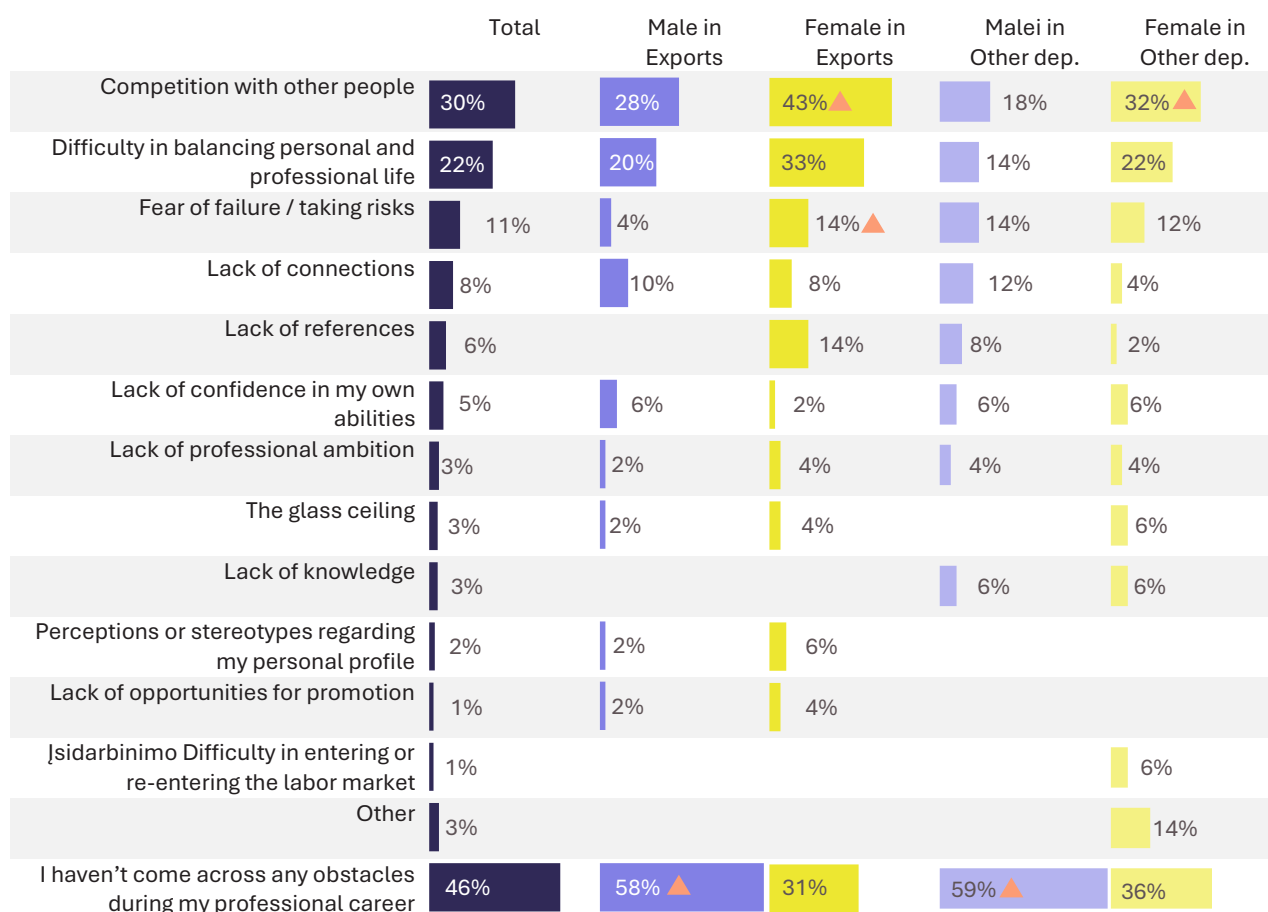
Note: N=202 Multiple choices available, sum might be higher than 100 proc..

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

Perceived barriers to progression reveal both shared and gendered challenges. Competition with others is the most cited barrier overall, followed by difficulty balancing work and personal life (see Figure 24). Women in export functions are significantly more likely to cite competition and work-life balance as obstacles, and women more often than men cite fear of failure.

Men more often report encountering no obstacles at all. Outside exports, women again cite competition more than men and point more often to structural constraints such as the glass ceiling or difficulties re-entering the labour market. Men in both export and non-export roles are more likely to report no career obstacles. The contrast points to a gendered perception of career pathways, with women more attuned to barriers related to competition, risk-taking or structural limits.

Figure 24 Main obstacles / barriers to career progression by respondent segments



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202 Multiple choices available, sum might be higher than 100 proc..

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

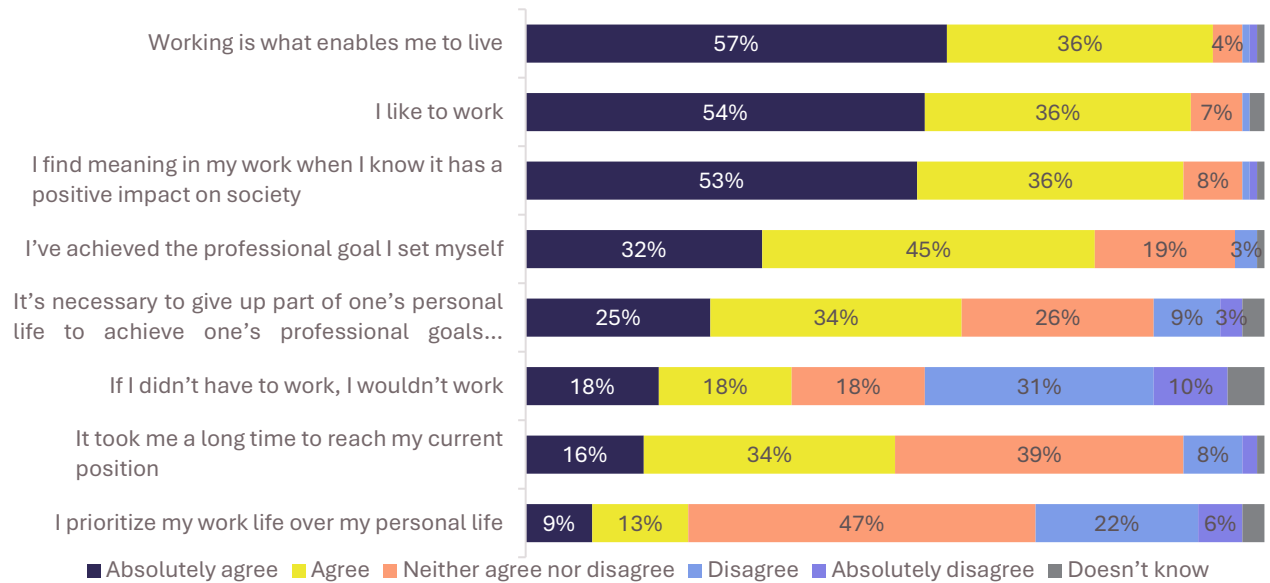
Professional attitudes

Respondents report a generally positive, engaged relationship with work, alongside clear work-life boundaries. A majority agree that working enables them to live and that they like to work, and more than half find meaning in work through its positive impact on society (see Figure 25), suggesting purpose is an important part of professional motivation.

Attitudes are more divided on achievement and sacrifice. Fewer respondents strongly agree that they have achieved their professional goals, with a large neutral group, and opinion is split on whether reaching professional

goals requires giving up part of one's personal life. High neutrality on the time needed to reach one's position points to varied career paths rather than a single trajectory. Also, respondents generally resist prioritising work over personal life. A majority disagree that they prioritise work over personal life, and a substantial share say they would not work if they did not have to - indicating that work is meaningful but not an overriding priority.

Figure 25 Positioning on career axis



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

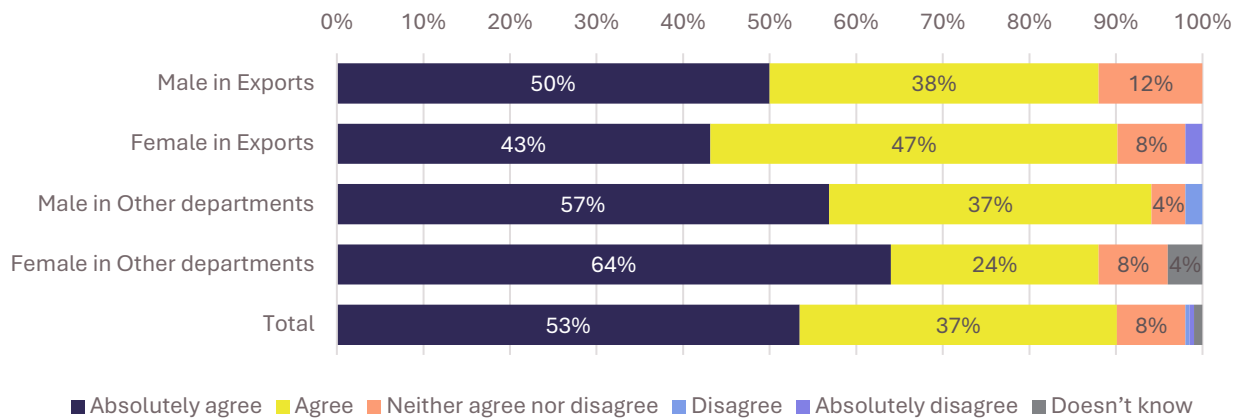
Note: N=202

A sense of purpose is widespread and most pronounced among women outside export departments. Women in non-export roles are the most likely to strongly agree that their work has a positive social impact, ahead of men in similar roles and of export-function respondents (see

Figure 26). Export-role respondents - especially women - tend to express this in more moderate terms, suggesting non-export functions may be more closely associated with socially meaningful outcomes, or with a stronger perception of them.

Figure 26 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [PURPOSE]

Q: I find meaning in my work when I know it has a positive impact on society



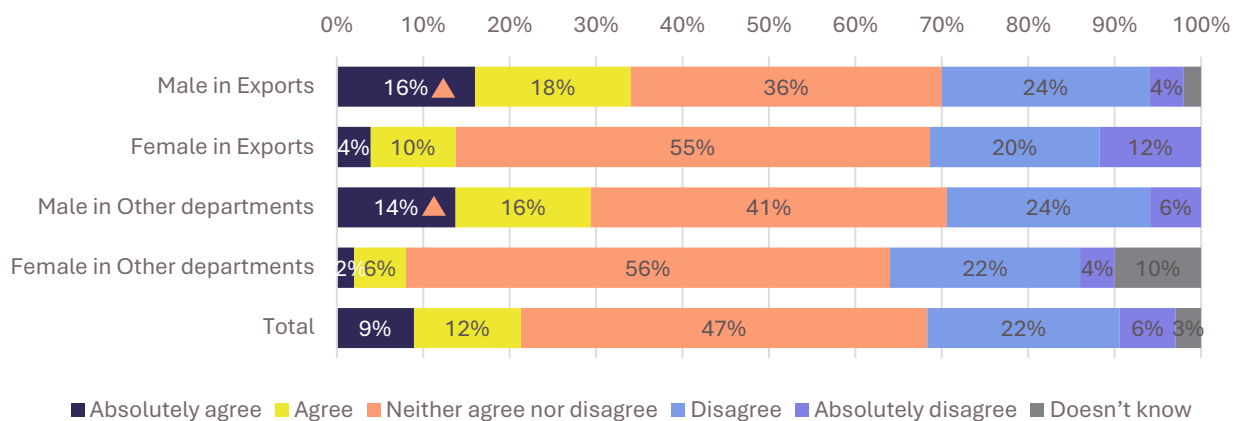
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

In contrast, attitudes towards prioritising work over personal life are broadly skeptical across all segments (see Figure 27). Neutral positions dominate, and disagreement clearly outweighs agreement in every group. Women, regardless of department, are particularly unlikely to state that they prioritise work over personal life, reinforcing earlier findings that work–life balance is a key consideration. Men in exports and in other departments are slightly more inclined to agree with prioritising work, but even among them, strong endorsement remains limited.

Figure 27 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [PRIORITY]

Q: I prioritise my work life over my personal life



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

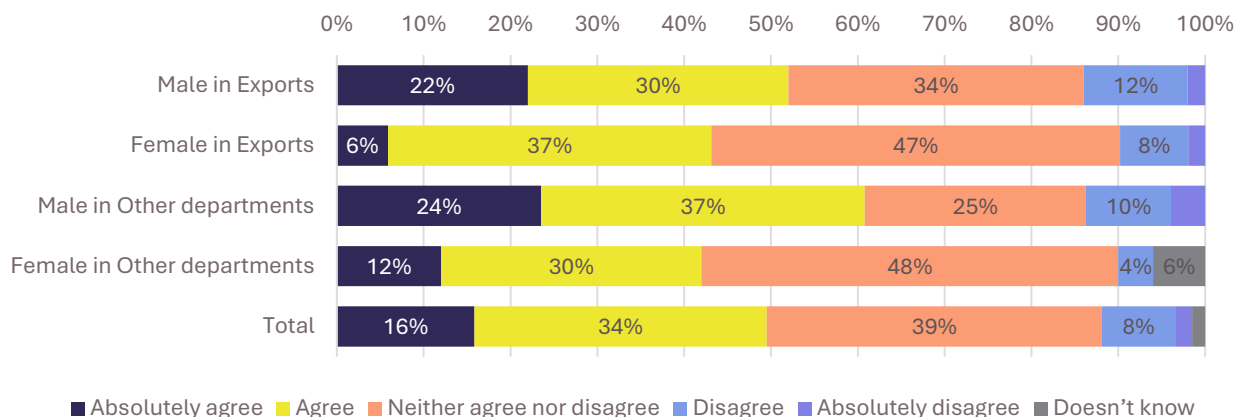
Note: N=202

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

Women more often report that reaching their current position took a long time. Women in both export and non-export roles are more likely to agree it took a long time to reach their position, with high neutrality (see Figure 28). Men are more polarised, with sizeable shares both agreeing and disagreeing. These patterns are consistent with women perceiving more obstacles and slower progression.

Figure 28 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [OBSTACLE]

Q: It took me a long time to reach my current position (OBSTACLE)

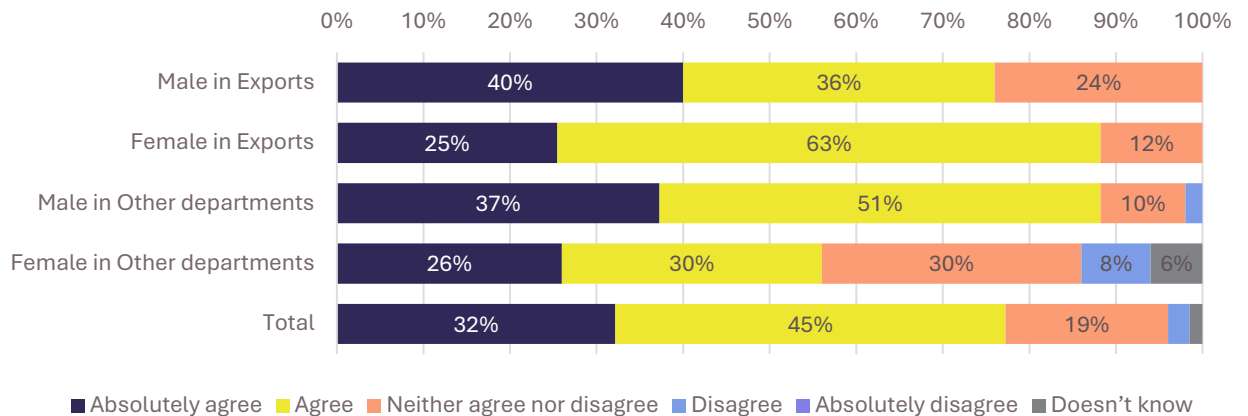


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Feelings of achievement are stronger among men, particularly in exports Men in exports and men in other departments are most likely to strongly agree that they have achieved the professional goals they set for themselves (see Figure 29). Women in exports, while largely positive, tend to express achievement through moderate agreement rather than strong affirmation. Women in other departments are the least convinced, with a sizable neutral group, indicating more uncertainty or dissatisfaction with career outcomes. This reinforces the picture of export functions as offering clearer or more visible markers of success, particularly for men.

Figure 29 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [ACHIEVEMENT]
Q: I've achieved the professional goal I set myself



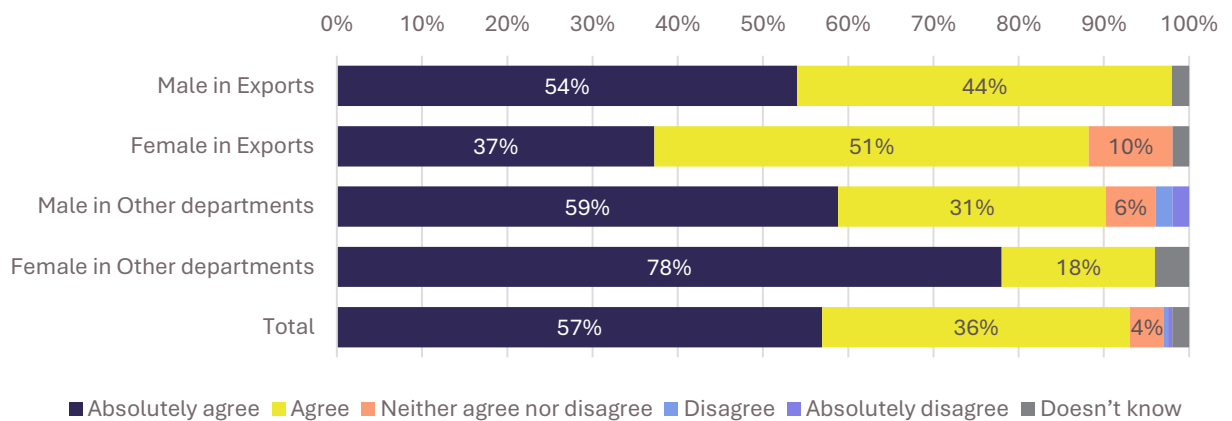
Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Work is valued both instrumentally and intrinsically. Respondents overwhelmingly agree that working enables them to live (Figure 30), most strongly among women outside export departments, while enjoyment of work is also high across groups (see Figure 31), especially among women in exports and men outside exports. Economic necessity and intrinsic satisfaction therefore coexist.

Figure 30 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [SURVIVAL]

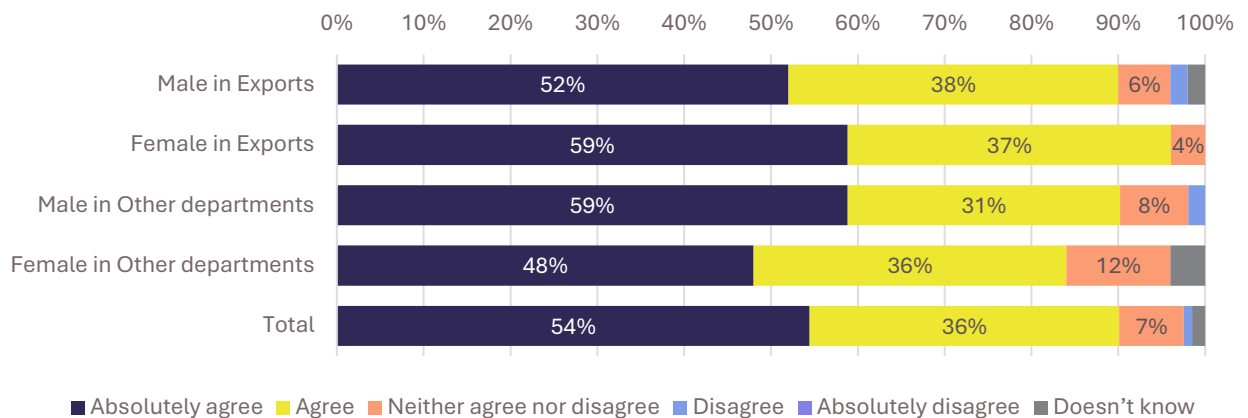
Q: Working is what enables me to live



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Figure 31 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [PLEASURE]
Q: I like to work

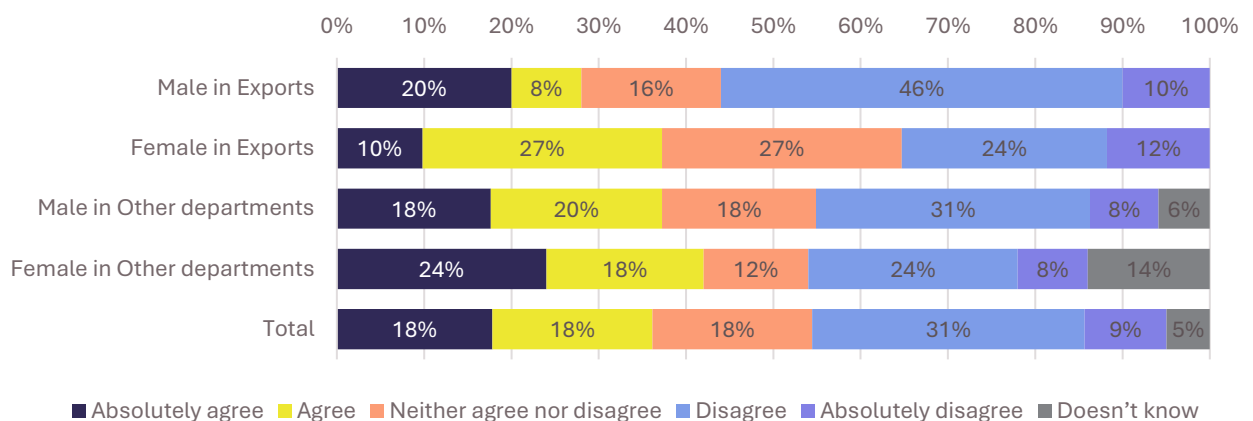


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Finally, the obligation dimension reveals important gender differences (see Figure 32). Men in exports are the most likely to disagree with the statement that they would not work if they did not have to, implying a stronger intrinsic attachment to work. **Women, particularly in export roles, are more divided, with higher neutrality and agreement, suggesting a more complex relationship with work that combines obligation, enjoyment, and external constraints.**

Figure 32 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [OBLIGATION]
Q: If I didn't have to work, I wouldn't work



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

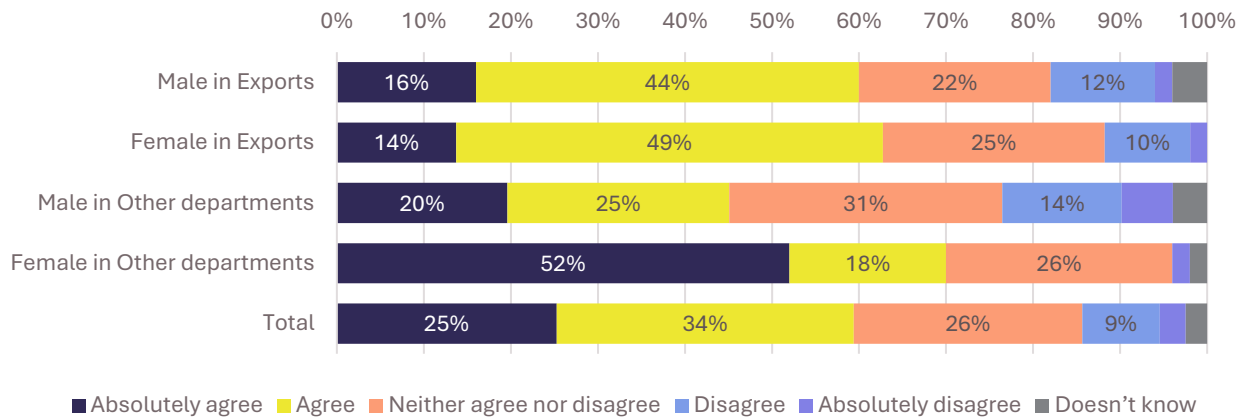
Note: N=202

Overall, the combined analysis shows that export roles are associated with clearer achievement narratives and stronger intrinsic motivation, particularly for men, while **women – especially outside exports – place greater emphasis on meaning, balance, and the long effort required to**

progress. Gender differences are therefore not expressed as simple oppositions, but as distinct configurations of purpose, achievement, and work-life priorities shaped by both functional context and career experience.

Figure 33 Positioning on career axis by respondent segments [SACRIFISE]

Q: It's necessary to give up part of one's personal life to achieve one's professional goals

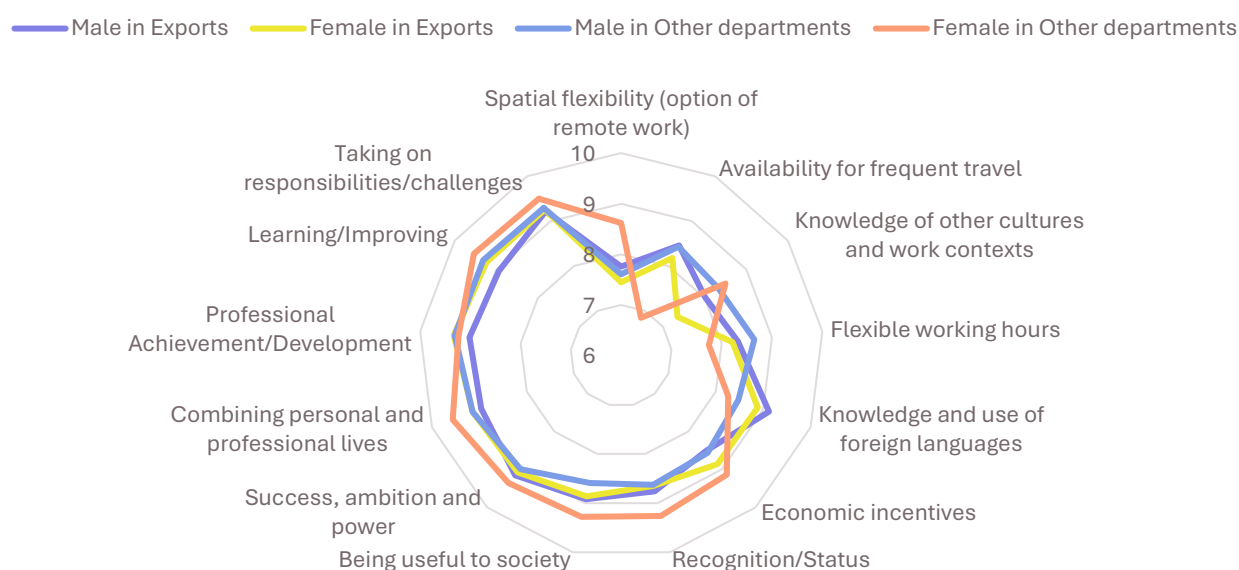


Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Learning and continuous improvement, professional achievement, and taking on responsibilities or challenges emerge as universally important across all segments (see Figure 34). These elements form a shared core of professional motivation, regardless of gender or department, suggesting that career advancement is widely associated with competence-building and active engagement rather than passive progression. Similarly, combining personal and professional lives scores highly for all groups, reinforcing earlier findings that work-life balance is not a peripheral concern but a central component of career quality.

Figure 34 Importance of professional development and work-life balance aspects by respondent segments



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=202

Clear gender-related differences appear in the emphasis placed on flexibility and balance-related aspects. Women, both in export roles and in other departments, consistently rate spatial flexibility, flexible working hours, and the ability to combine personal and professional lives more highly than men. This pattern is particularly pronounced among women outside export departments, who place the strongest emphasis on flexibility-related dimensions overall. These results align with earlier evidence showing that women perceive higher personal costs and constraints associated with career progression and therefore attach greater value to conditions that enable sustainability and balance.

Functional context further shapes priorities. Respondents in export roles – especially men – assign relatively higher importance to availability for frequent travel, knowledge of other cultures and work contexts, and foreign language skills. This reflects the concrete demands of international business and suggests that export professionals internalise mobility and cross-cultural competence as integral to career success. Women in export roles share these priorities but balance them more strongly with flexibility and work–life considerations, indicating a dual pressure to meet international demands while maintaining personal sustainability.

Differences are also visible in how success-related factors are framed. Men, particularly in exports, tend to rate success, ambition, power, and recognition slightly higher than women, pointing to a more traditional achievement-oriented interpretation of career advancement. Women, by contrast, place relatively greater emphasis on being useful to society and on personal development rather than status alone. This reinforces earlier findings that women’s career orientations are more strongly linked to purpose and meaningful contribution, especially outside export functions.

Taken as a whole, the results suggest that while professional development is a shared priority across all respondent groups, women and men navigate it through different value configurations. **Export roles amplify performance, mobility, and challenge-related priorities, whereas non-export roles – especially for women – strengthen the emphasis on flexibility, balance, and social usefulness.** These differentiated priority structures help explain observed gender gaps in career progression perceptions and underline the importance of context-sensitive career development and HR policies within exporting SMEs.

The role of Export Manager

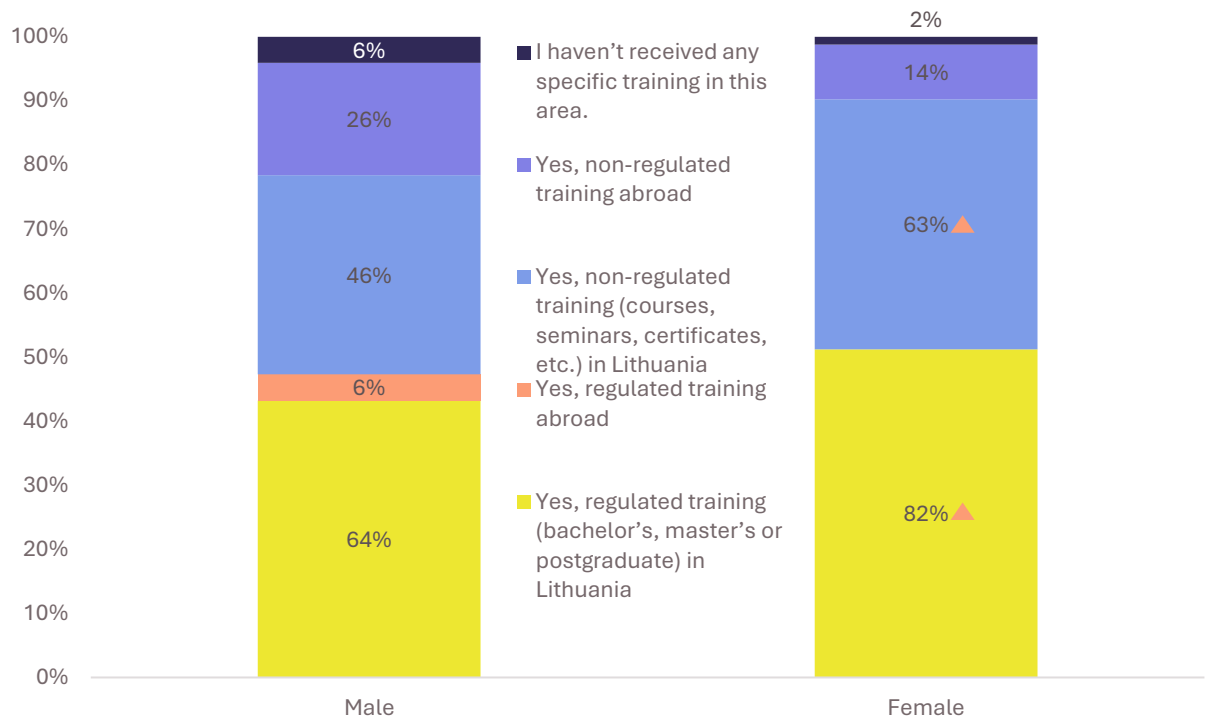
Export professionals are generally well prepared, with gendered differences in training pathways. Most men and women report regulated training in Lithuania, indicating that domestic higher education is central to building export competences (see Figure 35). This is more common among women, who are more likely than men to hold a bachelor's, master's or postgraduate qualification in the field.

Men show a more diversified training profile. Alongside regulated education, a substantial share of men report non-regulated training, both in Lithuania and abroad, pointing to greater use of shorter, practice-oriented formats and more international exposure. Women also undertake non-regulated training, but less often and less frequently abroad.

Women in export roles tend toward more formal, structured education; men combine formal and experience-based learning. A small minority report no specific training in foreign trade, slightly more often among men. The pattern is consistent with earlier research by the Innovation Agency and Vilnius University Business School, which found that women tend to pursue higher levels of formal and non-formal education before starting a business or taking on senior roles.²

Figure 35 Specialised training in foreign trade or internationalisation by gender

²Innovation Agency Lithuania (2025). Moterų verslumo tyrimas 2025 [Women's entrepreneurship study 2025]. https://inovacijuagentura.lt/site/binaries/content/assets/analitika/tyrimai/moteru-verslumo-tyrimas_2025.pdf



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=101 (only respondents involved in exports directly)

▲ Significantly higher than the overall rate (95 proc. confidence level)

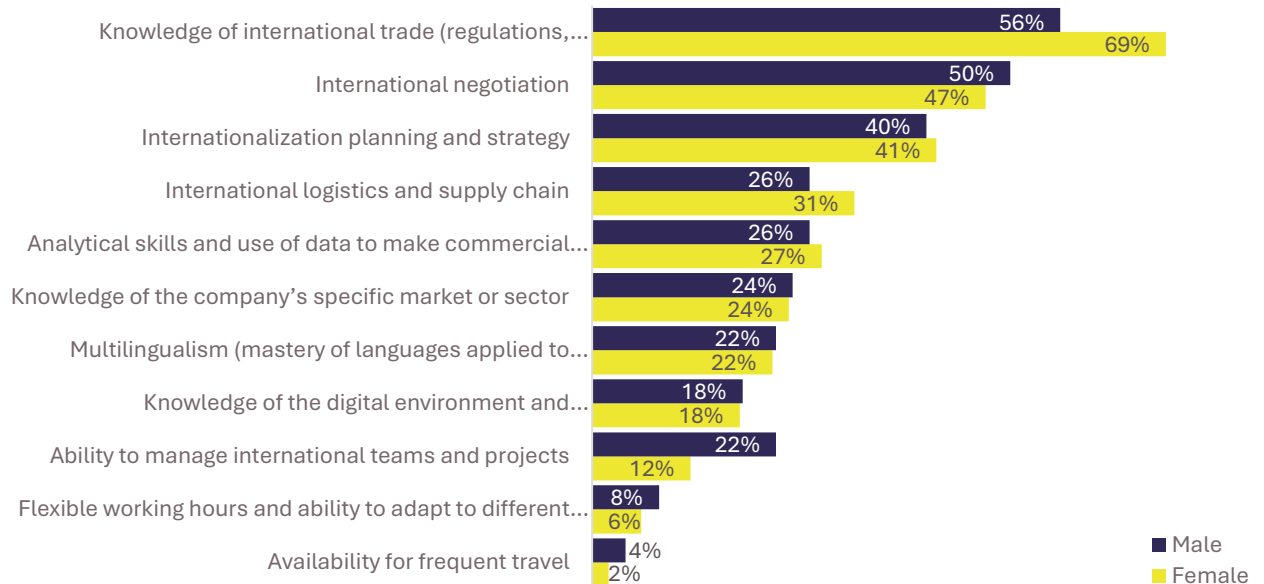
Men and women largely agree on the core competences of an export manager. For both, knowledge of international trade regulations, Incoterms and customs procedures is the single most valued competence (see

Figure 36), followed by international negotiation and internationalisation strategy - reflecting the compliance-heavy and strategic nature of export work.

Within this shared core, emphasis differs by gender. Women assign somewhat higher importance to knowledge-based and analytical competences - international trade knowledge, logistics and supply-chain management, and analytical skills for data-driven decisions - pointing to a focus on technical mastery. Men place relatively more weight on managing international teams and projects, a more coordination-oriented view of the role.

Differences in softer requirements are modest. Multilingualism and digital commercial tools are rated similarly by both, while women attach slightly more importance to flexible working arrangements and men to availability for frequent travel. Overall, women tend to prioritise formal knowledge and analytical capacity, men managerial coordination and mobility.

Figure 36 Most valued competences for export manager by respondent's gender



Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=101 (only respondents involved in exports directly)

Multiple choices available, sum might be higher than 100 proc..

Gender stereotypes remain a real experience for a notable share of women, varying by context. The most commonly reported stereotype is the assumption that men have greater technical or strategic knowledge, cited by around a third of women and more pronounced among those outside export departments (see Figure 37).

Figure 37 Perceptions or stereotypes about women's profile by female respondent segments

	Total Female	Female in Exports	Female in Other departments
Assumptions that men have more technical or strategic knowledge	33%	27%	45%
Belief that a woman with young children cannot assume positions of responsibility or ones with high demands	27%	31%	18%
It was assumed you couldn't travel for family or work-life balance reasons	25%	31%	9%
Self-limitation or a lack of confidence during selection processes in competition with men	22%	20%	27%
Paternalistic treatment or being constantly questioned during the decision-making	15%	18%	9%
Being undervalued within cultural contexts with poor recognition of the female role	14%	16%	9%
Being perceived as less authoritative or decisive during international meetings or negotiations	11%	6%	23%
Assignment of support or communication roles while men were designated to lead or negotiate	10%	12%	5%
None of these situations	36%	35%	36%

Source: Innovation Agency Lithuania

Note: N=73 (Female in Exports N=51, Female in Other departments N=22)

Multiple choices available, sum might be higher than 100 proc..

Women in export roles report stereotypes more linked to mobility and family expectations. They are more likely to report assumptions that they cannot travel for family reasons or that young children limit their capacity for demanding roles - pressures specific to international roles, where mobility is often treated as a prerequisite for advancement.

Perceptions of authority differ by function too. Women outside exports more often report being seen as less authoritative or decisive, while women in export roles more often mention paternalistic treatment or being questioned during decision-making. Export functions may offer more visibility and responsibility without removing gendered scrutiny.

Stereotyping is common but not universal. More than a third of women report none of these situations, indicating that organisational culture and leadership practices vary considerably across firms. The persistence of distinct stereotype patterns nonetheless points to a need for targeted approaches addressing both competence-based biases and role-specific expectations around availability and authority.

4. Survey conclusions

Responsibility, authority, and decision-making

Within export departments, both women and men are actively involved in decisions, but women more often describe their role as shared responsibility rather than sole authority, while men are more evenly split between the two. Outside export functions the gap widens: men are more likely to hold the main authority and women to report limited or no influence. Export functions appear to bring women closer to strategic discussion than some other departments, but full authority is still less often attributed to them - so increasing women's representation in export roles does not by itself guarantee equal strategic influence without formal leadership authority.

Career pathways and progression

In export functions, women more often reach their positions through internal promotion and men through external recruitment; outside exports, women's access is dominated by external hiring while men more often report entrepreneurship or company creation. Men therefore more often access authority through ownership or founder roles, and women through employment-based career ladders. Perceptions follow this pattern: women in exports most often describe opportunities as moderate, men more often as high, and women outside exports report the least favourable prospects. Smaller firms, with fewer hierarchical layers, appear to constrain progression for all employees, and women report these constraints somewhat more acutely.

Obstacles and the cost of advancement

Men are more likely than women to report having encountered no career obstacles. Women, particularly in export roles, more often cite competition, work-life balance pressures and fear of failure, while women outside exports also note structural constraints such as limited references or glass-ceiling effects. Attitudes toward work-life balance reinforce this: across all groups respondents value and find meaning in their work yet reject prioritising it over personal life, but women - especially outside exports - are more likely to feel that professional goals require sacrificing part of their personal life. This perceived higher personal cost may shape career decisions and retention in demanding roles.

Skills, training, and competence profiles

Men and women agree on the core competences for export management - international trade regulation, negotiation and internationalisation strategy - but differ in emphasis: women weight technical knowledge, logistics and analytical skills more heavily, men team management and project coordination. Training patterns are consistent: women in export roles more often report regulated academic education in the field, while men more often combine formal education with non-regulated training, including abroad,

and a small share of men report no specialised training. Women may therefore rely more on formal qualifications to establish credibility in export contexts.

Stereotypes and limiting assumptions

The most common stereotype reported is the assumption that men hold stronger technical or strategic knowledge. Women in export roles more often report assumptions about limited availability for travel due to family responsibilities, while women outside exports more often encounter doubts about their authority or decisiveness - reflecting both competence-based and availability-based biases. A substantial share of women report none of these stereotypes, indicating real variation across organisational cultures; where such assumptions persist, particularly around mobility and authority, they can slow women's entry into export roles and progression into positions of final responsibility.

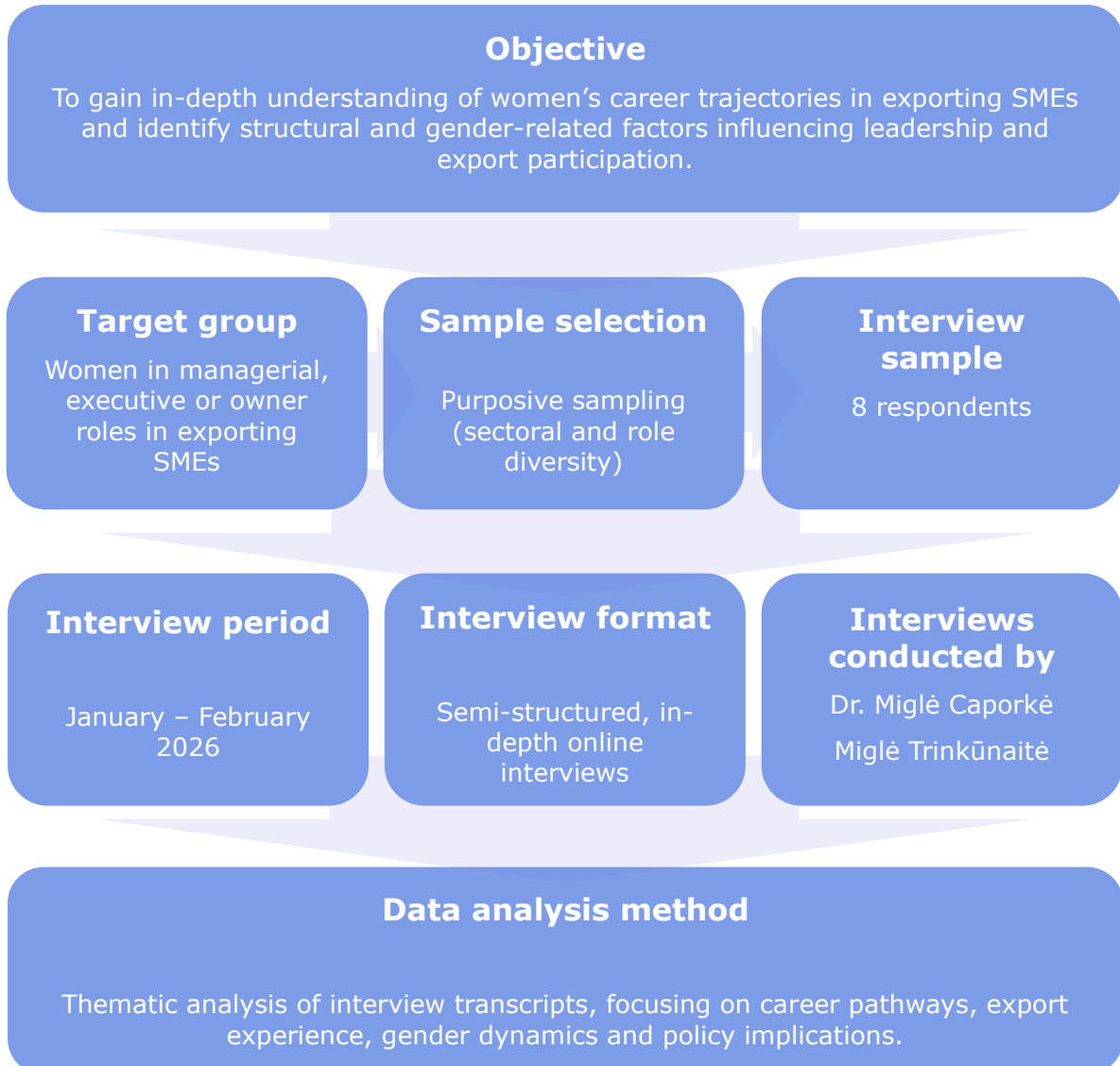
Overall assessment

The evidence presents a nuanced picture. Women are meaningfully represented in export departments and hold strong formal qualifications for international-trade roles, but they more often hold shared rather than sole authority, rely more on internal promotion, and report more obstacles and higher personal costs in progressing; men more often access influence through ownership or entrepreneurial pathways and more often report obstacle-free trajectories.

Export functions appear to offer comparatively stronger opportunities for women than some other departments, yet structural and cultural barriers persist, particularly at the most senior decision-making levels. Strengthening women's representation in senior leadership and in roles with final export responsibility is therefore a matter not only of equal participation but also of balanced governance and diverse strategic perspectives within exporting SMEs.

Phase 2. Interviews

5. Interview methodology



6. Summary of interviews

Experience

Professional experience among interviewed women in exporting SMEs is best described not as a linear upward trajectory, but as a layered and cumulative process shaped by transitions, adaptation and continuous learning. Most respondents did not follow a straightforward career ladder. Instead, they moved across sectors, functions and even countries before reaching leadership or export-related positions. Experience is framed less

in terms of years spent in one role and more in terms of resilience, exposure to complexity and the ability to grow through uncertainty.

Export activity is described as an accelerator of professional maturity. Working with foreign partners, operating in competitive environments and navigating cultural differences requires constant preparation and strategic thinking. Several respondents emphasised that language skills, cross-border negotiations and exposure to demanding markets significantly strengthened their competence and confidence. This aligns with survey findings highlighting most valued skills in exporting SMEs (see

Figure 36). Qualitative accounts suggest that export intensity itself fosters accelerated capability building.

At the same time, interviews reveal that experience is often accumulated under heightened scrutiny. In male-dominated sectors such as engineering, logistics or manufacturing, professional legitimacy had to be demonstrated repeatedly. One respondent summarised her trajectory bluntly:

„reziumė – moteriai sunkiau“

(“in summary – it is harder for a woman”)

Another described the impact of maternity leave on professional continuity:

„motinystė, grįžti į rinką sunku, turi vėl įrodyti savo vertę“

(“motherhood – it is difficult to return to the market; you have to prove your value again”)

These experiences point to credibility penalties and repeated competence testing that shape how experience is lived and perceived.

This qualitative evidence may help explain patterns observed in the quantitative data. While the survey shows that women in exporting SMEs tend to have higher levels of formal education compared to men (see Figure 35), interviews suggest that qualifications can function as a compensatory mechanism for overcoming informal barriers. Similarly, as leadership representation remains uneven (see Figure 9), the interviews indicate that slower progression is less about competence gaps and more about structural

frictions, including maternity interruptions, informal gatekeeping and credibility thresholds.

It is important to note that not all respondents frame their experience as gender constrained. Some report that competence and market dynamics, rather than gender, shaped their careers. However, even in these cases, continuous self-investment and adaptability were central to professional growth.

Export activity and professional trajectory

Export activity plays a decisive role in shaping trajectories, acting as both an accelerator of competence and a filter for resilience. Export is rarely described as a marginal function; for several respondents it “anchored” them to a company or sector by offering scale and growth beyond the Lithuanian market. The small domestic economy was repeatedly cited as a structural push factor, making internationalisation as much a necessity as an opportunity.

Export-related roles are described as demanding but formative. Working with foreign partners required language proficiency, cultural intelligence and the ability to negotiate under pressure, and several respondents felt international markets sharpened their analytical thinking and strategic clarity - consistent with the survey (Figure 36). At the same time, financial risk, working-capital constraints and uncertainty recur as themes, with one respondent describing chronic liquidity management as a constant background stressor despite outward success.

Gender dynamics intersect with export activity in context-dependent ways. Some respondents encountered clear cultural barriers - for example, partners at an international trade fair addressing a respondent’s husband rather than her, despite her leading the company, or internal market-allocation decisions assigning women less desirable regions. Others found that in mature European markets competence is valued regardless of gender, and that female founders may even benefit from positive bias in some investment contexts. Export-related gender barriers therefore appear highly dependent on sector, geography and organisational culture.

Access to the current position

Access to leadership and export roles combines merit-based progression, self-initiative and, in several cases, negotiation with existing organisational cultures. Pathways are diverse: some women entered through formal public competitions, others through internal mobility, and several by founding their own companies when traditional routes were limited or misaligned with their values. Where formal recruitment applied, it was generally described as transparent, and competence and visibility were seen to create openings, particularly in export-oriented environments.

Access is not always frictionless. In male-dominated sectors, early leadership legitimacy was often tested: one respondent found proposals harder to push through and her authority questioned more in Lithuania than

abroad, and another was asked to serve as a nominal director - symbolic inclusion rather than substantive authority. Some respondents reflected that men were more readily assumed to fit leadership roles, while women had to demonstrate broader competence; others described their advancement as driven mainly by competence and persistence rather than gendered barriers.

Importance of training in career development

Training and continuous learning are central to career development across all interviews. No respondent described professional growth as static; formal education, executive programmes, sector-specific seminars, language acquisition and self-study were consistently presented as decisive enablers, particularly in export-oriented environments where staying competitive is seen to depend on ongoing learning.

Learning is linked not only to knowledge but to confidence and legitimacy. One interviewee noted that women often feel the need to “do extra” compared with male colleagues, implying that additional qualifications act as a credibility buffer - consistent with the Women’s Entrepreneurship Study finding that one in two female entrepreneurs believe they have to work harder than men to reach the same position.³

Access to training is uneven, and reliance on self-funding may reflect structural gaps. Some companies financed leadership or professional training, especially once respondents had proven their value, while in other cases - earlier in careers or in smaller firms - training was largely self-funded. Entrepreneurs reported institutionalising training for their teams once they became owners, suggesting a virtuous cycle, but where employer or institutional support is inconsistent, advancement depends heavily on personal resources, which may disadvantage those constrained by financial or family responsibilities.

Mentoring and role models in professional development

Mentoring is valued but rarely systematically available. Across interviews mentoring is described as valuable - sometimes transformative - yet for many respondents career progression occurred without structured mentorship, relying instead on self-navigation, observation and informal support networks. Several women stated explicitly that they had no mentors during key stages and, in hindsight, believe mentoring would have accelerated their development.

Where mentoring was present, its impact was substantial. One interviewee credited a long-term mentor with helping structure organisational

³ Innovation Agency Lithuania (2025). Moterų verslumo tyrimas 2025 [Women’s entrepreneurship study 2025]. https://inovacijuaagentura.lt/site/binaries/content/assets/analitika/tyrimai/moteru-verslumo-tyrimas_2025.pdf

processes and leadership practices, and even a single meeting with an experienced businesswoman was described as valuable for speaking openly with someone who had “been there.” Mentoring is seen to provide not only technical guidance but also confidence and validation.

Role models and communities matter, but reliance on personal initiative creates unequal access. In sectors where women are underrepresented, seeing other women succeed in leadership or export roles was described as motivating, and women’s professional communities created informal mentoring ecosystems that reduced isolation - consistent with the Women’s Entrepreneurship Study’s emphasis on informal networks, mentorship and community for female leadership development.⁴

Expectations and recommendations

Respondents frame their needs in terms of practical support rather than preferential treatment. Their expectations centre on mechanisms that reduce friction in international expansion, strengthen confidence and improve access to resources.

Structured mentoring and psychological support are a recurring expectation. Several interviewees stressed that women, particularly at early or high-growth stages, need trusted guidance and space for reflection, noting that women often stay silent about difficulties until they have already achieved status, which keeps earlier-stage struggles invisible. Community-based learning and peer exchange were highlighted as sources of confidence.

Access to finance and working capital is another central theme. Export activity requires upfront investment - travel, trade fairs, certification, market-entry costs - placing disproportionate pressure on smaller or founder-led firms; respondents pointed to the cost of international fairs, often unsupported for established small firms, and to chronic working-capital strain despite strong market positioning.

Respondents also raised early pipeline development and organisational culture. Encouraging girls and young women toward engineering, international business and export careers was mentioned as a long-term goal, while several emphasised that internal culture matters as much as skills supply: in environments described as male-dominated, formal equality policies are often absent and progression depends on informal dynamics. Expectations are pragmatic - transparent promotion criteria, access to export intelligence,

⁴ Innovation Agency Lithuania (2025). Moterų verslumo tyrimas 2025 [Women’s entrepreneurship study 2025]. https://inovacijagentura.lt/site/binaries/content/assets/analitika/tyrimai/moteru-verslumo-tyrimas_2025.pdf

targeted training, networks that open doors abroad, and visible, realistic success stories.

Overall, the interviews point to three priority areas for policy: institutionalised mentoring across career stages; gender-sensitive export-financing instruments, particularly for small and founder-led firms; and stronger integration of women into international trade networks and business missions.

7. Conclusions of qualitative phase

The qualitative evidence indicates that women in exporting SMEs do not lack competence, ambition or commitment; their trajectories are marked by continuous upskilling, cross-sector mobility and resilience, but experience is often accumulated under greater scrutiny and with fewer structural safeguards. Policy responses should therefore focus on reducing friction at transition moments - maternity return, first leadership appointment, first international expansion - rather than on generic encouragement. Five priorities follow.

- **Stage-sensitive mentoring systems appear to be among the highest-impact interventions.** Mentoring is valued but rarely institutionalised, and women navigate high-risk, capital-intensive export markets largely alone. Publicly supported programmes should match emerging female export managers and founders with experienced professionals, including cross-border mentors, and extend beyond early-stage entrepreneurs to growth-phase firms, which need different strategic guidance.
- **Export-financing instruments should be reviewed through a gender-aware lens.** Working-capital strain, high trade-fair participation costs and limited access to tailored instruments disproportionately affect small, founder-led firms. Targeted micro-grants for market testing, subsidised trade missions and flexible co-financing could reduce entry barriers - and should be accessible to service-based exporters, not only manufacturers, since the former receive less attention and are more often led by women.
- **Re-entry and continuity mechanisms should be strengthened.** Several respondents described needing to prove themselves again after maternity leave. Structured re-entry - refresher training, leadership-visibility initiatives and networking reactivation - could prevent stagnation at precisely the stage when international responsibilities often expand, supporting talent retention in export-intensive sectors.
- **Organisational culture remains a quiet determinant of access and authority.** Formal equality policies are often absent or symbolic,

while informal dynamics shape market allocation, mobility expectations and credibility. Policymakers could encourage transparent promotion criteria, voluntary gender audits in export-intensive firms, and equality standards in export-support eligibility - light-touch conditionality linked to export programmes rather than rigid quotas.

- **Visibility and ecosystem integration matter.** Participation in business networks, chambers and international associations repeatedly emerged as a catalyst for confidence, contacts and legitimacy. Public institutions should ensure women's representation in trade delegations, business roundtables and sectoral clusters, and showcase realistic success stories - including the challenges - to normalise non-linear trajectories.

Annexes

Annex 1. Survey questionnaire

ĮVADINIAI KLAUSIMAI

Kokias pareigas šiuo metu einate įmonėje?

Aukščiausio lygmens vadovas/-ė

Vidurinio ar vykdomojo lygmens vadovas/-ė

Tarpinio lygmens pareigos (mažesnių komandų vadovai, vyr. specialistai, ir pan.)

Darbuotojas/-a ar specialistas/-ė

Ar valdote įmonės akcijų?

Ne

Taip, mažiau nei 10 proc.

Taip, 10–24 proc.

Taip, 25–49 proc.

Taip, 50–99 proc.

Taip, 100 proc.

Kokiam struktūriniam padaliniui / skyriui vadovaujate?

Top vadovų komandai

Eksporto / tarptautinės prekybos

Finansų ir apskaitos

Inovacijų / MTEP

IT / skaitmenizacijos

Logistikos

Rinkodaros ir komunikacijos

Gamybos

Kokybės užtikrinimo / aplinkosaugos

Žmogiškųjų išteklių

Klientų aptarnavimo

Teisės / juridinių klausimų

Pardavimų ir komercinės plėtros (vidaus rinka)

Kita (nurodykite)

Kiek darbuotojų dirba Jūsų įmonėje?

Mažiau nei 10

10–49

50–99

100–249

250–499

500 ir daugiau

Kokia Jūsų įmonės metinė apyvarta?

€0–2 mln.

€2–5 mln.

€5–10 mln.

€10–50 mln.

€50–100 mln.

> €100 mln.

Kokią apytikslę dalį įmonės apyvartoje sudaro eksportas?

Neeksportuojame

Tik pradėdame

Mažiau nei 5 proc.

5–10 proc.

11–20 proc.

21–40 proc.

41–70 proc.

Daugiau nei 70 proc.

Jeigu 6 = a, b arba c – baigti apklausą

EKSPORTUOJANČIOS ĮMONĖS PROFILIS

Kokioje srityje veikia jūsų įmonė?

(Pasirinkti iš sąrašo)

Žemės ūkis, miškininkystė ir žuvininkystė (A)

Kasyba ir karjerų eksploatavimas (B)

Apdirbamoji gamyba (C)

Elektros, dujų, garo tiekimas ir oro kondicionavimas (D)

Vandens tiekimas nuotekų valymas, atliekų tvarkymas ir regeneravimas (E)

Statyba (F)

Didmeninė ir mažmeninė prekyba; variklinių transporto priemonių ir motociklų remontas (G)

Transportas ir saugojimas (H)

Apgyvendinimo ir maitinimo paslaugų veikla (I)

Informacija ir ryšiai (J)

Finansinė ir draudimo veikla (K)

Nekilnojamojo turto operacijos (L)

Profesinė, mokslinė ir techninė veikla (M)

Administracinė ir aptarnavimo veikla (N)

Viešasis valdymas ir gynyba; privalomasis socialinis draudimas (O)

Švietimas (P)

Žmonių sveikatos priežiūra ir socialinis darbas (Q)

Meninė, pramoginė ir poilsio organizavimo veikla (R)

Kita aptarnavimo veikla (S)

Namų ūkių, samdančių darbininkus, veikla; namų ūkių veikla, susijusi su savoms reikmėms tenkinti skirtų nediferencijuojamų gaminių gamyba ir paslaugų teikimu (T)

Ekstrateritorinių organizacijų ir įstaigų veikla (U)

Jeigu žinote, nurodykite tikslų įmonės EVRK kodą ar veiklos pavadinimą

Kam daugiausia skirti jūsų įmonės produktai ar paslaugos?

Įmonėms (B2B modelis)

Galutiniams vartotojams (B2C modelis)

Tiek įmonėms, tiek vartotojams (B2B ir B2C)

Viešajam sektoriui

Kita (nurodykite)

Kokios yra pagrindinės rinkos, į kurias eksportuojate?

(pasirinkite visus tinkamus atsakymo variantus)

Europa (euro zona)

Europa (už euro zonos ribų)

Šiaurės Amerika

Centrinė Amerika

Pietų Amerika

Afrika

Azija

Okeanija

Kaip šiuo metu eksportuoja jūsų įmonė?

(pasirinkite visus tinkamus atsakymo variantus)

Netiesioginis eksportas (*per eksporto tarpininkus (distributorius), eksporto konsorciumus ar verslo asociacijas*)

Tiesioginis eksportas (tiesiogiai tiekiamas prekės užsienio klientams arba per tiesioginius įmonės atstovus / pardavėjus užsienio rinkose)

Skaitmeninis eksportas (e. prekyba per kompanijos interneto puslapį, marketplace (Amazon, Alibaba, Etsy, ir kt.))

Sutartiniai įsipareigojimai (produkcijos ar marketingo licencijavimas užsienio kompanijoms, frančizės, privataus prekės ženklo (private label) gamyba, kiti tarptautinės gamybos grandinės įsipareigojimai)

Partnerystės / bendradarbiavimas (partnerystės su vietos verslais eksporto rinkoje, išskirtiniai platinimo ar kiti bendradarbiavimo susitarimai)

Investicinis eksportas (kompanija investuoja į gamybą užsienio šalyje, turi logistikos centrą ar sandėlį užsienyje, eksporto rinkose veikia kompanijos filialai)

Kita

RESPONDENTO PROFILIS

Jūs esate...

Vyras

Moteris

Nenoriu atsakyti

Jūsų amžius

Iki 30 metų

30–40 metų

41–50 metų

51–60 metų

Daugiau nei 60 metų

Nenoriu atsakyti

Kurioje šalyje gimėte?*

Lietuvoje

Europos Sąjungos šalyje

Ne Europos Sąjungos šalyje

Kiek laiko dirbate įmonėje?

___ metai ___ mėnesiai

Kiek laiko dirbate šiose pareigose?

___ metai ___ mėnesiai

Kaip pasiekėte dabartinę savo darbo poziciją?

Buvau paaugštintas(-a) pareigose (vidinė karjera įmonėje)

Buvau įdarbintas (išorinė karjera)

Įkūriau įmonę / susikūriau darbo vietą

Paveldėjau

Pareigas pasidalinome šeimos viduje

Kita

Kaip vertinate savo karjeros perspektyvas įmonėje?

Didelės – matau realias galimybes.

Vidutinės – vidinės karjeros galimybės ribotos.

Mažos – nematau realių galimybių kilti karjeros laiptais įmonėje.

Jokios – įmonėje nėra / nebėra galimybių kilti karjeros laiptais.

Ar dabartinėje pozicijoje dalyvaujate įmonės tarptautinės strategijos formavime?

Taip, esu tiesiogiai už tai atsakingas

Taip, dalinuosi atsakomybe su kitais vadovais / struktūriniais padaliniais

Konsultuoju tarptautinės strategijos klausimais

Nedalyvauju tarptautinės strategijos formavime

EKSPORTO VADOVO PROFILIS

Koks jūsų aukščiausias įgytas išsilavinimas?

Pradinis, pagrindinis, bendras vidurinis

Specialusis vidurinis / Vidurinis su profesine kvalifikacija

Aukštesnysis

Aukštasis – bakalauro laipsnis

Aukštasis – magistro laipsnis verslo administravimo srityje (MBA)

Aukštasis – magistro laipsnis kitoje srityje

Aukštasis – daktaro arba aukštesnis laipsnis

Ar esate įgiję išsilavinimą / dalyvavę mokymuose tarptautinės prekybos srityje?

(pasirinkite visus tinkamus atsakymo variantus)

Taip, įgijau išsilavinimą (bakalauro, magistro ar daktaro laipsnį) tarptautinės prekybos srityje **Lietuvos** aukštojo mokslo institucijoje

Taip, įgijau išsilavinimą (bakalauro, magistro ar daktaro laipsnį) tarptautinės prekybos srityje **užsienio** aukštojo mokslo institucijoje

Taip, esu dalyvavęs mokymuose / kursuose **Lietuvoje**

Taip, esu dalyvavęs mokymuose / kursuose **užsienyje**

Nesu įgijęs specifinio išsilavinimo / dalyvavęs kursuose

Kokios Jūsų nuomone yra svarbiausios kompetencijos / asmeninės savybės, norint tapti sėkmingu eksporto vadovu?

(Pasirinkite **tris** svarbiausias kompetencijas)

Tarptautinės prekybos žinios (geros teisinės žinios, muitų ir kitų procedūrų išmanymas)

Strateginio planavimo įgūdžiai

Geri derybiniai įgūdžiai

Tarptautinės logistikos ir tiekimo grandinių išmanymas

Gebėjimas naudotis skaitmeniniais įrankiais (CRM, e-prekybos (marketplaces) ir pan.)

Geras užsienio kalbų mokėjimas

Stiprios rinkos / sektoriaus žinios

Analitiniai gebėjimai

Gebėjimas valdyti tarptautines komandas

Pasiryžimas / galimybės dažnai keliauti

Lankstumas prisitaikant prie skirtingų darbo valandų, derinantis prie skirtingų laiko zonų.

Šeiminių įsipareigojimų nebuvimas

Kita (įrašykite)

Per jūsų profesinę karjerą eksporto srityje, ar teko susidurti asmeniškai ar pastebėti savo aplinkoje kurią nors iš žemiau pateiktų situacijų dėl to, kad esate moteris?

Daroma prielaida, kad Jūs ar kitos moterys negali keliauti darbo reikalais dėl šeiminių įsipareigojimų

Į Jus ar kitas moteris žiūrima kaip į mažiau autoritetingas ar prasčiau gebančias priimti sprendimus per tarptautinius susirinkimus ar derybas

Menkas moters vaidmens pripažinimas, nuvertinimas

Globėjiskas elgesys arba nuolatinis kvestionavimas sprendimų priėmimo procese

Vyrai laikomi labiau kompetentingi, turintys geresnius techninius ar strateginius įgūdžius ir žinias

Moterims skiriami pagalbiniai ar komunikacijos vaidmenys, kol vyrams deleguojama vadovauti komandai ar deryboms

Pasitikėjimo trūkumas atrankos procese, konkuruojant su kandidatais vyrais

Abejojama, ar moteris, turinti mažų vaikų, gali užimti atsakingas ar daug iššūkių keliančias pareigas

Nepatyrčiau

Kita

PROFESINĖ KARJERA

Iš žemiau pateikto sąrašo, kurie trys įgūdžiai buvo labiausiai vertinami jūsų karjereje?

(Pasirinkite **tris** svariausius įgūdžius)

Kūrybinis mąstymas

Universalumas, gebėjimas lengvai prisitaikyti

Sprendimų priėmimas

Efektyvus kelių užduočių valdymas vienu metu (multi-tasking)

Kritinis mąstymas

Darbštumas

Emocijų valdymas

Streso valdymas

Analitinis mąstymas

Strateginis matymas

Empatija

Savęs pažinimas

Atvira komunikacija

Tarpasmeniniai santykiai

Konfliktų valdymas

Nė vienas

Ką iš pateiktų variantų įvardintumėte kaip pagrindines kliūtis / iššūkius Jūsų karjereje, net jei jas ir įveikėte?

(Pasirinkite visus tinkamus atsakymo variantus)

Paaukštinimo galimybių stoka

Gyvenimo ir darbo derinimo sunkumai

Konkurencija

„Stiklinės lubos“ (nematomi barjerai, apribojimai, su kuriais susiduria moterys, siekdamos aukštesnių pareigų ir didesnės atsakomybės savo profesinėje karjeroje)

Ryšių trūkumas

Baimė rizikuoti

Žinių stoka

Kliūčių nepatyrė

Rekomendacijų trūkumas

Stereotipai dėl asmeninio profilio

Įsidarbinimo sunkumai

Ambicijos stoka

Neužtikrintumas dėl savo gebėjimų

Kita

Jei nurodėte stereotipus – su kuo jie buvo susiję?

(Pasirinkite visus tinkamus atsakymo variantus)

Lytimi

Amžiumi

Kilme / pilietybe

Odos spalva / etniškumu

Seksualine orientacija

Lytine tapatybe

Negalia

Religija / įsitikinimais

Nepatyrė kliūčių

Kita

Kiek sutinkate su šiais teiginiais?

Norint pasiekti tikslų reikia aukoti asmeninį gyvenimą

Darbas būtinas pragyvenimui

Nedirbčiau, jei nereikėtų

Man patinka dirbti

Darbą laikau svarbesniu nei asmeninis gyvenimas

Dabartines pareigas pasiekiau su sunkumais

Pasiekiau profesinį tikslą

Darbas prasmingas, jei naudingas visuomenei

Kiek šie aspektai svarbūs Jūsų profesinėje karjeroje?

(Įvertinkite skalėje nuo 0 iki 10, kur 0 – visiškai nesvarbu, 10 – labai svarbu)

Lankstus darbo grafikas

Asmeninio ir profesinio gyvenimo derinimas

Nuotolinio darbo galimybė

Ekonominės paskatos

Pripažinimas ar statusas

Profesinis tobulėjimas

Sėkmė ir ambicijos

Mokymasis

Atsakomybė ir iššūkiai

Naudingumas visuomenei

Galimybė dažnai keliauti

Užsienio kalbos

Kitų kultūrų pažinimas

ĮMONĖS ORGANIZACINĖ STRUKTŪRA

Apytiksliai, kiek žmonių dirba Jūsų įmonės aukščiausio lygio vadovų pozicijoje?

(Įskaitant top vadovų komandą, C-lygio vadovybę, valdybą ar kitus kolegialius valdymo organus, vienasmenius valdymo organus)

Kiek iš jų yra vyrai?

Apytiksliai, kiek žmonių dirba Jūsų įmonės vidurinio / vykdomojo lygio vadovų pozicijoje?

(Įskaitant departamentų vadovus, kitų struktūrinių padalinių ar filialų vadovus)

Kiek iš jų yra vyrai?

Kiek žmonių dirba eksporto skyriuje?

Kiek iš jų yra vyrai?

Annex 2. Interview questionnaire

ĮŽANGA - 5 minutės

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

- Surinkti pagrindinę asmeninę ir profesinę informaciją.
- Įrėminti interviuojamojo profilį Lietuvos eksporto sektoriaus kontekste.

[Amžius ir gyvenimo etapas] Papasakokite šiek tiek apie save ir kur esate asmeniniame bei profesiniame gyvenime.

[Ryšys su tyrimo tema] Kaip apibūdintumėte savo įmonę ir savo vaidmenį joje?

PROFESINIS KELIAS IR PATEKIMAS Į DABARTINĘ POZICIJĄ - 10 minučių

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Suprasti interviuojamojo profesinį kelią.

Identifikuoti karjeros lūžio taškus, pokyčius ir išmoktas pamokas.

Sužinoti, kaip interviuojamasis pateko į dabartines pareigas.

Koks buvo jūsų profesinis kelias iki dabartinės pozicijos?

Ar buvo momentų, sprendimų ar etapų, kuriuos laikote ypač reikšmingais?

Pavyzdžiai: asmeniniai – santykiai, motinystė; profesiniai – MBA studijos, darbo ar šalies keitimas, nuotolinių susitikimų ar darbo iš namų įsisavinimas per COVID ir pan.

Kokią reikšmę jūsų profesiniam keliui turėjo išsilavinimas ar mokymai?

Ar yra mokymų ar kursų, kuriuos laikote esminiais?

Ar jautėte poreikį nuolat mokytis? Kodėl?

Ar jūsų įmonė rėmė mokymosi poreikius, ar turėjote ieškoti alternatyvų savarankiškai?

Ar manote, kad darbas eksporto sektoriuje / eksportuojančioje įmonėje vienaip ar kitaip paveikė jūsų karjerą ar sprendimus? Kaip?

Minėjote, kad esate: XXXX. Kaip patekote į dabartines pareigas? Ar per atranką, pasitaikiusią galimybę, paveldėjimą...?

Kokie asmeniniai ar profesiniai įgūdžiai jums labiausiai padėjo arba buvo labiausiai vertinami per karjerą? Prašome pateikti situacijų pavyzdžių, kur šie įgūdžiai buvo itin svarbūs.

Žvelgiant atgal, su kokiomis kliūtimis ar sunkumais susidūrėte, net jei juos įveikėte? Pasidalykite konkrečiais pavyzdžiais – kokia buvo įtaka ir kaip su tuo susidorojote.

Ar jau pasiekėte savo profesinius lūkesčius, ar vis dar esate kelyje jų link? Kodėl?

Kokie aspektai ar sąlygos jums svarbiausi profesinėje karjeroje? Kodėl juos taip vertinate? Pasidalykite situacijų pavyzdžiais, kai šie aspektai buvo lemiami.

Ar kuris nors iš šių veiksnių kada nors lėmė didelius sprendimus – pavyzdžiui, darbo keitimą ar galimybės atsisakymą?

Pavyzdžiai, kurie gali būti svarbūs:

Darbo sąlygos: lankstus grafikas, galimybė dirbti nuotoliu, atlyginimas, finansinės paskatos, kelionių galimybės ir pan.

Asmeninės vertybės: pripažinimas, profesinis tobulėjimas, nauda visuomenei, iššūkiai ir atsakomybės, nuolatinis mokymasis ir pan.

Aplinka ar išteklių: pagalba derinant darbą ir asmeninį gyvenimą, pozityvi atmosfera, sektino pavyzdžio turėjimas, mentorystė, mokymų galimybės ir pan.

Kiti veiksniai: bet kas, kas daro įtaką ar palengvina karjeros kelią – tiek apčiuopiama (laikas, pinigai, lankstumas), tiek neapčiuopiama (pripažinimas, prasmė, įmonės kultūra).

LYTIS IR PROFESINĖ PATIRTIS - 10 minučių

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Išanalizuoti lyties įtaką karjerai ir darbo patirčiai.

Identifikuoti su lytimi susijusias kliūtis, palengvinančius veiksnius ir patirtis.

Ar jaučiate, kad jūsų karjeros kelias skyrėsi nuo kolegų vyrų? Jei taip, kaip manote, kodėl?

Kaip vertinate moterų atstovavimą jūsų sektoriuje ir tokiose pareigose, kaip jūsų?

Ar kada nors jautėte, kad moteriška tapatybė turėjo įtakos jūsų patekimui į profesiją, veiklai joje ar pripažinimui?

Kokiu būdu tai pasireiškė?

[Siekite sukurti pasitikėjimu grįstą atmosferą, kvieskite pateikti pavyzdžius ir eiti giliau.]

Per savo profesinę karjerą eksporto sektoriuje / eksportuojančioje įmonėje ar pastebėjote, ar patyrėte situacijų, kurios, jūsų manymu, buvo paveiktos dėl to, kad esate moteris? Prašome pateikti konkrečių pavyzdžių, kaip tai išgyvenote ir kaip tai paveikė asmeniškai bei profesiskai.

Pavyzdžiai:

Buvimas laikoma mažiau autoritetinga ar ryžtinga susitikimuose ar tarptautinėse derybose.

Priešprielaida, kad negalite keliauti dėl šeimos ar darbo–gyvenimo pusiausvyros priežasčių.

Prielaidos, kad vyrai turi daugiau techninių ar strateginių žinių.

Priskyrimas pagalbinių ar komunikacijos užduočių, kai vyrams patikima vadovauti ar derėtis.

Įsitikinimas, kad moteris su mažais vaikais negali prisiimti atsakingų ar labai reiklių pareigų.

Globėjiškas elgesys ar nuolatinis jūsų klausinėjimas sprendimų priėmimo procese.

Nuvertinimas kultūrinėse aplinkose, kuriose moterų vaidmuo prastai pripažįstamas.

Savęs ribojimas arba pasitikėjimo stoka atrankos procesuose, kuriuose konkuruojama su vyrais.

Būdama eksporto vadovė arba įmonės vadovė (CEO), ar galite apibūdinti situaciją, patirtą verslo santykių kontekste šalyse, kuriose lygybės standartai skiriasi nuo mūsų? **Svarbu įvardyti šalį.**

Ar kada nors turėjote mentorių?

Kaip vertinate mentorystės svarbą?

Ar, jūsų manymu, mentorystės turėjimas ar neturėjimas paveikė jūsų karjeros kelią?

Ar rekomenduotumėte kitoms moterims aktyviai ieškoti mentorių? Kodėl?

LYDERYSTĖ IR SPRENDIMŲ PRIĖMIMAS - 5 minutės

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Suprasti interviuojamojo lyderystės stilių.

Išanalizuoti jo (-s) vaidmenį sprendimų priėmime ir komandos valdyme.

Kaip apibrėžtumėte savo lyderystės stilių?

Kokios vertybės ar požiūriai jį pagrindžia?

Kokius įrankius ar įgūdžius laikote esminiais?

Kaip jaučiatės įgyvendindama(s) galią ar lyderystę savo organizacijoje?

NAUJA LYDERYSTĖ IR ORGANIZACINĖ TRANSFORMACIJA - 5 minutės

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Išnagrinėti požiūrį į naujus lyderystės stilius.

Identifikuoti realų ar potencialų poveikį žmonėms ir organizacijai.

Ar pastaraisiais metais pastebite pokyčius organizacijų lyderystės modeliuose? Jei taip, kokius?

Ar jaučiate judėjimą horizontalesnių, bendradarbiaujančių ar transformacinių modelių link?

Ar, jūsų manymu, šie nauji lyderystės stiliai duoda apčiuopiamos naudos? Kokios?

Pavyzdžiui: stipresnis priklausymo jausmas, didesnis matomumas, moterų įgalinimas, talentų išlaikymas, mažesnis nedarbingumas.

Kaip jūsų lyderystės stilius dera su šiomis tendencijomis?

LYGYBĖS PRIEMONĖS IR JŲ POVEIKIO SUVOKIMAS - 5 minutės

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Identifikuoti lygybės priemones ir įvertinti jų realų mastą.

Išnagrinėti institucinius įsipareigojimus ir lygybės kultūrą.

Kokias lygybės priemones ar protokolus, susijusius su lytimi ir įvairove, taiko jūsų įmonė?

Pavyzdžiai: lygybės planai, mokymai, atlygio auditas, priekabiavimo prevencijos protokolai ir pan.

Kaip vertinate šias iniciatyvas?

Ar, jūsų manymu, jos turi realų poveikį, ar labiau yra formalumas?

Ar pastebėjote kultūros pokyčių organizacijoje?

Ar vadovybės įsipareigojimas akivaizdus?

Ar darbo ir asmeninio gyvenimo derinimo politika iš tikrųjų yra dalijamasi atsakomybė?

Kaip tai veikia organizacijos kultūrą ir talentų valdymą?

Ar jaučiamas realus pokytis komunikacijoje, paaukštinimuose, darbo–gyvenimo balanse ir pan.?

Kokias veiklas, jūsų manymu, reikėtų skatinti labiau, kad būtų pasiekta pažanga?

APMĀSTYMAI IR ŽINUTĖ ATEIČIAI - 5 minutės

ŠIO SKYRIAUS TIKSLAI:

Surinkti strategines įžvalgas ir interviuojamojo nuomones.

Suteikti erdvės pasiūlymams.

Su kokiais iššūkiais, jūsų manymu, susiduria moterys, plėtodamos karjerą tarptautinėse rinkose ar su eksportu susijusiose pareigose?

Kokią patarimą duotumėte jaunai moteriai, siekiančiai vadovaujančių pareigų eksportuojančioje įmonėje?

Ar pastebite pokyčius naujų moterų kartų santykyje su ambicijomis ir valdžia? Ypač eksporto sektoriuje?

Kokių priemonių ar paramos, jūsų manymu, turėtų imtis viešosios institucijos, kad paskatintų moterų lyderystę eksportuojančiose įmonėse?

Pavyzdžiai: mokymai, stipendijos, tinklai, pripažinimas, darbo-gyvenimo balansas...

PABAIGA

Ar yra dar kas nors, ką norėtumėte pridėti apie aptartas temas?