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MYSKILLS – New test makes professional knowledge visible

No qualification, no job – that's how it is for many people in Germany, even if they have already been working for years. But how can refugees and the unemployed be integrated more easily into the employment market without a professional qualification? That's where MYSKILLS comes in – a test which we have developed hand-in-hand with the Federal Employment Agency.

Frank Frick

Many people in Germany who are currently looking for a job already have several years' employment experience, but have not previously completed a training course. Although they may not have any formal qualifications, they nevertheless have professional experience under their belt. It is often the case also that refugees have professional skills but are unable to provide evidence of these. It is difficult for a facilitator at an employment agency or job centre or for a potential employer to assess their abilities - and this makes it harder for them to integrate into the labour market. The MYSKILLS test procedure now provides reliable evidence of what somebody can do in a particular profession.
MYSKILLS is being launched with tests for eight occupations and in six languages

For the moment, employment agencies and job centres are offering the computer-based test in eight occupations: car mechatronics technician, sales person, qualified metal technologist, joiner, chef, agricultural worker, skilled construction worker and buildings coating technician. This will be increased to 30 occupations over the course of the year. To ensure that language isn't a barrier, the test will be available not only in German but also in English, Russian, Turkish, Farsi and Arabic. Participation is voluntary.

Each test contains around 120 job-related questions and takes about four hours. Candidates are shown videos and images of typical workplace situations and are asked specialised questions about them. The test results are generated automatically and are ready to be discussed the following day in a consultation. A complex picture emerges of the areas in which the participant has a lot of practical experience and where he or she feels confident. The applicant can then include the test with a job application, which will give a prospective employer a better understanding of the applicant's professional know-how.

Results help to establish refugees in the job market

Detlef Scheele, Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Employment Agency, regards MYSKILLS as an important tool for consultants and mediators: “We want job seekers to have the best possible opportunities to obtain work. It is incredibly important for us to be able to see just how well-developed a refugee's or low-qualified job seeker's professional knowledge actually is. We can make better recommendations to employers, look for a suitable follow-up qualification, and thus gradually guide people towards acquiring a qualification.
Eventually, we want to turn people with basic vocational skills into recognised, qualified professionals. MYSKILLS is a first step in this process.

Jörg Dräger, Member of our Executive Board, sees MYSKILLS as both contributing to the social integration of refugees and to alleviating the shortage of skilled workers in many industries:

"Many refugees and job seekers have talents that a lot of companies are desperately looking for. We just have to bring them together, and MYSKILLS should help to do this. Up to now, there has not been a test that would provide so many informative, individual professional profiles so quickly."

Jörg Dräger, Member of the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Executive Board

We developed MYSKILLS in collaboration with the Federal Employment Agency. Our academic project partners are the Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (f-bb) and the German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF). A great many professional practitioners, such as trainers, vocational school teachers, examiners, master craftsmen, employers, professional associations and organisations were also involved.

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**Weblink**

- MYSKILLS website

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**Background Information**

Besides the English video about the MYSKILLS test, you can find the video in this YouTube playlist (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxyQdUGiPEsF7d2DY-QQZJoMK7ATk-o) also in German, Russian, Turkish, Farsi und Arabic. Please find more information on the MYSKILLS website (https://www.myskills.de/en/).
Recognizing and utilizing the potential of people with migrant backgrounds

Get a self-assessment of professional competence - 5 minutes!