

Germany: MYSKILLS

Introduction

Title: MYSKILLS

Country: Germany

Developer: Bertelsmann Stiftung and German Federal Employment Agency

Type of tool: It objectively assesses vocational skills in 30 VET professions. It exists in six languages: German, English, Arabic, Farsi, Russian, and Turkish.

Target group: The test is suitable for all job seekers who have substantial experience in one of the 30 MYSKILLS professions but who do not have a German VET or HE degree. These are mainly refugees with a residence status, migrants and low-skilled workers without formal qualifications.

Organisation and description of the tool

MYSKILLS is a **digital** video- and picture-based **assessment tool for VET-skills**. The test takes four hours per profession.

MYSKILLS permits people without a professional qualification to have their vocational skills assessed through an objective, standardised, and reliable test. They can prove which typical job situations they are familiar with and whether they know exactly what to do in these situations. The result of the test reveals how competent a client is in which occupational fields of application. With the help of the test results, their job centre or employment agency counsellor can find a suitable job opening for the client. Alternatively, they can help the client to find the right path for gaining further qualifications.

MYSKILLS is used in all 156 German PES sites that have a test centre and is expected to serve 100.000 clients per year.

MYSKILLS is a **computerised** test that exists in **6 languages**: German, English, Arabic, Farsi, Russian, and Turkish. The test comprises around 120 items and takes about **four hours** per profession. **Trained psychologists** administer MYSKILLS in test centres of job centre or the employment agencies. The questions largely rely on **videos and photos**.

Implementation

MYSKILLS is currently available for the following **eight professions**:

- Building construction worker
- Cook
- Farmer
- Skilled metal worker
- Joiner
- Sales assistant for retail services
- Building and object coater
- Motor vehicle mechatronics technician

An additional 22 professions will be added continuously until mid-2019.

Implementation

The **exercises** follow a standardised model: the participants see videos and images of typical occupational situations and are then asked procedural questions. They are supposed to, for instance, put the work steps in the right order, identify errors in the illustrated situations, or answer technical questions about the work equipment or occupational safety. The test results document how well they do in the respective occupation field of application so it becomes clear in which areas a participant actually possesses relevant skills.

The skills tests thereby help placement personnel at labour agencies and job centres design a more **specific placement** and development strategy. The test results indicate whether and if applicable, in which occupational fields of application an early integration into the labour market is realistic, either directly or after further training. The tests results do not replace formal occupational qualifications and are not suitable as proof of comprehensive vocational action competence in an occupation that requires a formal degree, either. As tests of occupational action knowledge, they do not supplant the assessment of practical skills. Based on the test results, however, participants can better understand for which typical occupational fields of application in Germany they possess the relevant skills and where they might need some upskilling.

The skills tests supplement self-assessments with an initial third-party assessment and thus make **searching for a job** and custom-fit placement in a training programme, trial position, internships or jobs **easier**. In fact, the test results provide potential employers with an initial assessment of the applicant's skills and information about potential fields of application at the company. While this is not proof of occupational qualification, based on the test results, the occupational skills can be reviewed in practice and, if necessary, expanded by means of targeted training. The skills tests will be developed for 30 professions.

The **aim** is that, through testing (making informally or non-formally acquired competencies visible) career advisory and job market integration for unqualified refugees, migrants, and low-skilled workers will be improved.

Description of the target group

The test is suitable for all job seekers who have **substantial experience** in one of the 30 MYSKILLS professions but who do **not have a German VET or HE degree**. These are mainly refugees with a residence status, migrants and low-skilled workers without formal qualifications.

It is **voluntary** and **free of charge**. The test can be taken at the job centre or employment agency with a professional who is present at all times. MYSKILLS is designed to help clients find a job. On the basis of the result a counsellor can decide on an internship, additional training or an apprenticeship. The test has no impact on determining the status of refugees or job seekers.

Impact for assesseees

MYSKILLS is a **validation tool**, which means that a client can enter the labour market more easily with the result since this improves job perspectives. It offers a proof of acquired competences and provides a clear picture of where the client stands in the German labour market and what further adult education tracks might be necessary.

For the **counsellor** MYSKILLS offers reliable results in a fast way. No more than four hours per client is needed. Moreover, the result facilitates decision-making for the next steps: match-making to the labour market works much easier.

Also for **companies** this tool offers the advantage that they can actually see much clearer what a candidate can do. Some companies have already signalled their interest in using the test results as a personal development tool for their employees, so they can see where they stand, which training is still needed, who could be promoted etc..

Impact for assessees

MYSKILLS is an **improvement** on previous validation tools by:

- Being multilingual and culturally sensitive;
- Including videos and pictures rather than relying on written language only;
- Being reliable, objective and valid (rather than being based on self-evaluation);
- Assessing vocational competencies below the level of formal qualifications (namely at the level of the 4-7 occupational fields of application for each profession); and
- Being quick and affordable enough to allow it to be scaled up to a large number of clients nationwide.

Furthermore, this tool is linked to the **other innovative validation tools** for working with migrants, developed by Bertelsmann Stiftung. For example, if a client or a guide want to find out for which profession a MYSKILLS test would yield the most relevant results, he/she can visit my-professional-experience.org. Both instruments are highly scalable to other countries.

Link

www.myskills.de/en

Further resources


Videos:

- Introduction video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8NOIbA2gJg>
- Sample test items: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiFdVqggPgg> (in German)
- Interview with PES agent on MYSKILLS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_PhqxF5UXhY
- Interview with client and PES agent - sales assistant for retail services: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nhdf5Jalt70> (in German but subtitles available)
- Interview with client and employer - motor vehicle mechatronics technician: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ITw4MmBtWM> (in German but subtitles available)
- Interview with employer - cook: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5tgDZLd360> (in German)


A **short fiche in English** from the German PES is available also here:

- <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=18693&langId=en>

SAMPLE TEST RESULT



MYSKILLS
BERUFLICHE KOMPETENZEN
ERKENNEN



Bundesagentur für Arbeit
Agentur für Arbeit
bringt weiter.

Profession Skilled metal worker
Results Summary MYSKILLS

Name: @#Kundenname
Date of birth: @#Kundenge **Test date:** 12.02.2018 **Test language:** English

The test covers the occupational and practical knowledge of the qualified metal technologist in five central areas of expertise. Testing is carried out by asking questions on a PC relating to typical occupational situations. The areas of expertise and situations are derived from the prescribed training regulations and curricula. The results follow:

Practical professional knowledge

●●●● High	●●○○ Average	○○○○ Not provable
●●●○ Average to high level	●○○○ Not possible to average	

Manufacture building components with hand-held tools and machines

●●●● Create work pieces using manual drafting and mechanical methods such as sawing, drilling and sanding. Prepare supplies and materials, and select appropriate tools and clamping devices. Complete simple quality controls with appropriate measurement and testing devices.

Mill and turn individual parts with machine tools

●●●○ Make components using conventional turning and milling techniques. Plan the production stages using technical drawings and calculate the necessary cutting parameters. Set up machine tools and ensure their operational readiness. Supervise production and monitor quality standards.

Assemble and dismantle building components and metal constructions

●●○○ Installation of modules and constructions in the assembly line and on building sites by applying the appropriate mounting and connecting processes (screwing, gluing, sealing). Prepare parts to be mounted for assembly, and complete functional and quality controls. Transport and store finished modules.

Recast and separate sheets and pipes


●○○○ Manufacture sheet metal, pipes and profiles according to drawings, using manual and mechanical separation and recasting processes. Know the physical and technical properties of the materials, and be able to operate the necessary machines (e.g. folding and bending machines, guillotine shears, cutting torches). Check the manufactured work pieces using testing and measurement procedures.

Weld building components and modules


○○○○ Weld building components and modules using different hand-welding procedures (gas smelting, electro and inert-gas welding), according to the properties of the materials and construction requirements. Treat weld seams before and after completion, inspect their quality and protect them from corrosion.

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MYSKILLS
BERUFLICHE KOMPETENZEN
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Bundesagentur für Arbeit
Agentur für Arbeit
bringt weiter.

Profession Qualified metal technologist
Results Summary MYSKILLS

Notes on test content

The test consists of 100 questions on typical practical on-the-job situations. At least 20 questions are posed in a closed question format, per field of expertise. The test may take up to 4 hours. The test was developed by experts in various fields. The sub-division into various fields of expertise is oriented along the curricular content of the professional education and training, as well as occupational situations in practice. Practical job situations are represented via text, pictures and videos.

Notes on the interpretation of the results

The test covers practical professional knowledge, by posing questions regarding typical on-the-job situations and challenges.

This **cannot** be tested:

- Practical application and methodological competence
- Problem-solving skills
- Motivation, self-motivation and/or social skills
- German language skills

More information is available at:
<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/MYSKILLS>

