

## Identification of good practices

This is the template for collecting existing good practices in which any kind of validation of people’s prior learning experiences was part of the integration process. It could be processes concerning non-national candidates or national ones. The important purpose of this template is to identify successful stories and to explain how the experience that you present can be adapted or can be useful when dealing particularly with the validation of migrant or refugee candidates. Please do not surpass a max of 3 pages in total.

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### Questions to be replied:

#### 1. The VNIL/VPL practice in your country/institution

- a) Briefly, how does it work? How long has it been operational?
- b) Which are the **strengths and the areas for improvement** of this practice?

a) The process described in the following relates to migrants in Germany. The project “Be In” (ZBBS e.V.) offers refugees qualified help in matters of labour market integration. At the beginning the counsellor and the client define the goals of the process. This usually includes identification, documentation, and self-assessment of the clients’ transversal (Competence Cards) and vocational skills (Career Cards and my-professional-experience.org). If the client has gathered extensive experience in at least one of the 5-8 professional action fields of a profession, the counsellor recommends to the PES agent to have the client’s vocational skills assessed using the MYSKILLS test. Depending on the results the PES agent tries to place the client in training, internships or a job. Very good results across multiple professional action fields of the profession can result in a recommendation to apply for the external examination at the authorized bodies (i.e. chambers of crafts, industry or commerce) and thus certification.

b)The Competence Cards, Career Cards and the Website my-professional-experience.org are free instruments that were developed and published between 2015 and 2019. The project was led and financed mainly by the Bertelsmann Foundation, responsible Manager was Martin Noack. All three instruments are free for the organisations as well as for the user.

The Competence Cards help to identify informal learning results and correspond with the demands of the public employment services. Further the results do not only help setting up CV’s and other application papers but as well they function as a psychological enhancement as the client recognizes her/ his own capabilities. This can lead to a boost of self-confidence that is darely needed during the process of finding work, especially in a new country.

The Career Cards help on the one hand to faster identify former working fields of the client and/ or support clients with the possibility of faster orientation on the German Labour market if a (new-)orientation is necessary.

Finally the website my-professional-experience.org gives a deeper insight in the working fields of persons in 30 professions.

Afterwards it is possible to undergo a even more detailed examination of professional knowledge and skills through the PES-tool “My skills”, likewise brought to existence by the Bertelsmann Foundation. The testing however is not free for the PES and therefore not open for every client. It

depends on the suggestion of the PES agent.

If a person had good results in “My skills” she or he can seek for certification in cooperation with the chambers. Often persons do not get the full certification after testing. And here we come to the zones of improvement:

Until today there is no broad system of further training that people from other countries get the chance to receive a certification that is fully equivalent to a German training.

## 2. The candidate

a) Key details of the **candidate** of this case study (if applicable): age, gender, country of origin...

b) What **qualifications and/or experience** did the candidate bring to the VNIL/VPL process?

a) The candidate Mr S. was about 47 years old when he came with his family as a refugee to Germany. In his home country Syria, he worked for 20 years as a mechanical engineer in a power plant.

b) Mr S. had a university degree as mechanical engineer plus many years of experience. In his career he started as a small employee and became with further trainings over the years the second boss in the power plant, responsible for more than 200 employees.

## 3. What was the **outcome** of the process? (e.g. access to or credits within a course, part or whole diploma BA/MA, create a job opportunity and/or a social opportunity...)

Mr S. gained full acknowledgement of his university degree and is allowed to use the title “Mechanical Engineer” (ger.: Maschinenbauingenieur) in Germany. Still he couldn’t find work. With the help of the Competence Cards, Ramona López supported Mr. S. in setting up the application papers and Mr. S. wrote many applications. A testing set of the Career Cards supported in identifying the several different fields of work, that Mr S. performed in Syria (Mechanical engineer, self-employed car mechanic plus the management of the olive farm, that the family owned).

As soon as my-professional-experience.org launched, he underwent the testing. As the professions refer to the contents of dual trainings, he answered the questions of “Skilled Metal worker – specializing in structural engineering” and “Industrial electrician – specializing in industrial engineering”. This came closest to his field of experience.

After adding the detailed results of my-professional-experience.org to his applications, it did not take long until he had an interview at a elevator company. After an internship of two weeks, he was hired as service technician.

## 4. Impact and sustainability

a) What was the impact of the process for the candidate? (i.e. further study, a job, etc)

b) How are the processes and impact sustained and how are they integrated into existing structures and processes?

a) After more than three years in the new country, Mr S. finally found work to support his family and be more satisfied again.

b) After more than one year Mr S. still works for the company. Both sides are highly satisfied with the situation. The company found a skilled worker and Mr S. access to the German labour market.

## 5. Relevance and Transferability to VINCE:

a) Are there any aspects of your practice that are adapted to the needs of refugees or people with a migrant background - what makes these aspects special?

b) Are there any aspects of your practice that could be adapted to these groups of learners? What adaptations would be needed?

a) All three instruments were designed to fit the needs of counsellors supporting migrants. They follow a subject-oriented approach that aim at making the participants aware of their own competencies, skills, and abilities and support them in structuring their further professional development. Consultation with all three instruments focusses on identifying and documenting existing potential and reinforces a resource-oriented instead of the weakness-oriented point of view; one might call it a bottom-up approach.

The 49 Competence Cards are customized to meet both the immigrants’ and the counsellors’ needs. They offer a flexible, low-threshold introduction to the topic of skills assessment. They are particularly suitable for immigrants and refugees but can also be used for other target groups with low levels of language proficiency. They illustrate social, personal and some method skills. On their front side, the cards use simple language descriptions, a visualization and for each skill description

translations into nine languages: German, French, Russian, Arabic, Farsi, Turkish and Tigrinya . On their rear side, they provide a second description in simple language, plausibility check questions and referrals to other cards in the set.

For the identification of professional working fields and concrete professions in which clients already gained substantial experience, Bertelsmann Stiftung has developed and published the Career Cards, which offer orientation on the labour market and prepare further vocational skills assessment.

The 48 Sector Cards provide an overview of all the occupational fields of the German VET system. On the front of the Sector Cards, in total 156 of the 327 VET recognized trades are visualized with a photograph, displaying people who exercise typical professional actions. The 48 sectors like "Construction", "Health", or "Economy" are translated into eight frequently spoken languages of current immigrants to Germany, from English to Russian and even Tigrinya. The backsides of the Sector Cards provide useful information for the counsellor, for example, on the different sub-areas of activity and on existing professional qualifications from I-VET to C-VET and event to academic professions in the respective field.

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**SEND YOUR FILLED IN FORM TO [vince@eucen.eu](mailto:vince@eucen.eu) BY 10 APRIL 2019**