Mutual Learning Programme Database of National Labour Market Practices

Bulgaria - MyCompetence Platform

This database gathers practices in the field of employment submitted by European countries for the purposes of mutual learning. These practices have proven to be successful in the country concerned, according to its national administration. The European Commission does not have a position on the policies or measures mentioned in the database.

Source of national practice	Peer Review on "Competence Assessment System: MyCompetence", Sofia (Bulgaria), November 2019
Title of the policy or measure (Original language)	MyCompetence
Title of the policy or measure (English)	MyCompetence Platform
Country	Bulgaria
Name of the responsible body	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP)
Geographical scope of the responsible body	National
Name(s) of other organisations involved (partners/sub-contractors)	Bulgarian Industrial Association (BIA), Bulgarian Public Employment Service (Public Employment Agency, PEA), Ministry of Education and Science (MES), National Agency for VET (NAVET)
Start year of implementation	2009
End year of implementation	Ongoing
EU policy relevance	The MyCompetence online platform contributes to the implementation of labour market policies and priorities from the New Skills Agenda for Europe, the Council recommendation on Upskilling Pathways for adults (2016), and for the provision of better opportunities for those with low levels of skills, knowledge and competencies (Country specific recommendation, June 2019 (1)). The practice is in line with Guideline 6 of the European Employment Strategy – Enhancing labour supply and improving access to employment, skills and competences. (1) See https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/

National labour market context	The Bulgarian economy stabilised after the economic crisis in 2008 and is now in an advanced phase of expansion and experiencing gradual growth. The GDP increased by 3.5% during 2018 (2). In 2018 the economic activity rate of individuals in the age group 15-64 years old was at 71.1%, while the employment rate was at 67.7%. The employed work mainly in the services sector (61.5%), in industry (30.2%) and the agricultural sector (30.2%) (3). The unemployment rate for individuals aged 17-74 was at 5.2% in December 2018, which is slightly below the EU-28 average (6.6%). According to the Bulgarian PES, the unemployment rate dropped by one percentage point compared to 2017 (4). (2) See on The European Job Mobility Portal (3) Ibid (4) Ibid
Policy area	Active labour market policies,Education and training systems,Labour market participation,Skills supply, productivity and lifelong learning

Specific policy or labour market problem being addressed	The Bulgarian job vacancy rate has increased, and employers face difficulties in finding candidates to fill vacancies. Applicants are over- or underqualified or do not hold the right skills and competences for the job. On the one hand, the rate of individuals with secondary and tertiary education is growing, while there is a decline in the working age population. Furthermore, due to the challenges of the future of work, workers and jobseekers are constantly required to acquire new skills or update their existing knowledge.
	In the past six years the percentage of employers that highlighted difficulties with filling vacancies has increased respectively by 34% (construction), 25% (manufacturing), 20.5% (retail) and 19.2% (services).
	Skills mismatches are both vertical (overqualification (5)), and horizontal. In 2018 23.6% of the Bulgarians aged 20-64 years old with tertiary education were overqualified for their occupation. The sectors worst affected are manufacturing (36.6%), construction (25%), wholesale (36.1%) and transport (36%) (6). In the same year, horizontal mismatch (7) was 26.7% for individuals aged 15-34 with ISCED level 3-8 and 29% for age range 25-34 and ISCED level 5-8. In the last group, horizontal mismatch affected mostly graduates in the area of 'humanities, languages and art' (51%), 'engineering' (47.9%) and 'science, mathematics and computing' (35.6%).
	MyCompetence online platform encompasses a number of tools to make jobseekers' and workers' skills more transparent and visible, such as sector competence models for 25 industrial economic sectors, job description and assessment tools. Online training is available to fill skills gaps (1). It seeks to support and increase labour market participation. It provides information about skills and competences needed for the successful performance of job positions, thus contributes to better matching demand and labour supply.
	With opportunities for assessment and training to fill skills gaps, it can contribute to reduce the number of inactive/unemployed persons, to bridge the transition from education to employment, and to support employed people in further career development. MyCompetence provides information for forecasting skills and competences needs in the sectors covered and to elaborate curricula and education standards more relevant to job requirements.
	(5) Overqualified workers are those individuals who hold a tertiary education certificate but work in occupations where tertiary education level is not needed. See more on Methodological Note (6) See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/experimental-statistics/skills (7) Horizontal mismatch refers to those individuals that are working outside their field of education. See more on Methodological Note

Aims and objectives of the policy or measure	• To balance labour market demand with labour supply in terms of skills, knowledge and competences of the Bulgarian workforce. • To influence policies and reforms in the areas of employment and education.
Main activities/actions underpinning the policy or measure	MyCompetence delivers the following services on the online platform (https://mycompetence.bg/): • **Models of Sector Competences:** this section includes a description of knowledge, skills and competences for 'key job positions'. 'Key job positions' are considered crucial for a sector and for the success of an enterprise. They are described in terms of competences, skills and knowledge. Competence models are developed for key positions in 25 economic sectors including automotive, building, dairy and chemical industries; construction, cosmetics, electric vehicles, electrical engineering, electronics, energy, facility management, furniture, machine building, meat processing, mechatronics and automation, metallurgy, mining and quarrying, retail, security and safety, soft drinks, software industry, tourism, transportation, and wholesale. • **Competence Assessment:** MyCompetence includes online tools to allow users to assess or self-assess competences and identify gaps that need to be filled. The assessment provides a detailed report that highlights suitable job positions for the user as well as the gaps that need to be filled. Additionally, it provides recommendations for further training. • **E-learning**: the platform offers online training courses to develop key competences. It also supplies learning materials for self-study and additional information about certificates and training providers. On completion of a training course, users get a certificate that can be included in their Europass CV. Additionally, the platform offers an online library for competence development and assessment and statistical data about the 25 sectors covered. MyCompetence is principally addressed to workers and jobseekers as well as other labour market stakeholders (8). Users access a personal profile linked to Europass. This allows users to generate a Europass CV from the information included in the personal profile. (8) Other users of MyCompetence platform include the Bulgarian PES, employers, HR managers, competence assessors, education and training institutions, recruitment agencies and training providers.
Geographical scope of policy or measure	National

Target groups	Entrepreneurs and start-ups,Large enterprises (250 employees or more),Long-term unemployed (more than 12 months),People not in education, employment or training (NEETs),Older workers and unemployed (aged 50 to 64 years),Small and medium-sized enterprises (1 - 249 employees),Young people (aged 16 to 25 years)

Outputs and outcomes of the policy or measure	**Outputs** • By the end of 2019 the MyCompetence website reached 2.5 million visits. • Registrations have tripled since 2014. It has around 45 000 registered users, including employees, jobseekers, educational institutions and employers. The platform is visited and used primarily by HR managers, students, university teachers and jobseekers. • 25 Sector Skills Committees were established with over 300 participants. They are composed by employers, managers, social partners, representatives of government institutions, education and training institutions and other parties concerned. • By the end of 2019 the MyCompetences online tool included 541 competency profiles for key positions in 25 economic sectors, 20 online tools for assessment and self-assessment of competences, 47 online training courses for acquisition of key competences, 1 000 competences described in a National Classification of Competences, an online catalogue of competencies grouped by occupations. • E-modules were developed to support HR departments and specialists to develop company competence models, job analysis, audit and assessment and for individuating learning shortages and training needs. **Outcomes** • By the end of 2019 26 000 users completed a self-assessment or engaged in an online training course. Managerial competences, emotional intelligence and social competences were the most recurrent competences assessed. Team management, recruitment, leadership and emotional intelligence were the most popular courses. • MyCompetence competence models are used by the National Agency for VET (NAVET) for describing professions as an element of the standards for vocational education, so that they are relevant to labour market. Furthermore, NAVET experts consult with the Sector Skills Committees to gather additional knowledge about features of existing and new professions. • The Public Employment Service (PES) uses MyCompetence as a supporting tool to improve the quality of its services, through incorporating the e-module 'Jobseeker Personal Profile' into its national database. MyCompetence is also compliant with ISO 9001:2015 (9) for the quality of the services delivered. (9) ISO 90001 is an international standard that highlights the requirement for quality management systems. See

Management and implementation arrangements	MyCompetence was initially developed by the Bulgarian Industrial Association (BIA), with the involvement of representatives of trade unions and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Bulgarian PES. The Ministry of Education and Science and the NAVET were also engaged in the conversation. Since September 2019, MyCompetence has come under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. The **National Competence Assessment Network** (NCAN) is responsible for the overall management of MyCompetence. NCAN is composed of the following: • The **National Competence Assessment Council** which is in charge of the promotion of MyCompetence. It is also accountable for the validation of competence models and provides suggestions for improving legislation and policies in the areas of education and employment. The Council has 24 members who are representatives of sector and regional associations such as BIA, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the NAVET, the Bulgarian Association for People Management and leading professionals. • The **Sector Skills Units (SSU)** is in charge of developing, validating and updating sector competences models. They validate assessment tools and online training courses. Each Sector Skills Unit is composed by Sector Skills Committees, sector advisors and relevant experts. The **Regional Competence Assessment Centres** are responsible for competence assessment at regional level. They support local PES, educational and state administrations. They also offer support to the National Council from the methodological side.

Key challenges	• **Tackling the challenges of the future of work.** The labour market is constantly evolving: the skills required for a job today might not be needed tomorrow. MyCompetence should be able to tackle these changes and adapt to the requirements of the job positions and the labour market. • **Targeting users with low digital skills**. It seems that there is limited use of the online platform by low-skilled individuals. Therefore, MyCompetence should focus on ways to be more inclusive. Furthermore, the platform could be improved to make its interface more intuitive and user-friendly. • **Integration of MyCompetence with skills forecasting systems**. Although skills forecasting systems in Bulgaria, are still in the development phase, competence models and job descriptions can be a useful reference point. • **Integration of MyCompetence with the VET system**. MyCompetence could offer insights for the design and review of VET curricula and education standards as well as for validating non-formal and informal learning and applying a credit system in VET.

Key conditions for success	**MyCompetence supports jobseekers and employees by providing a number of different services in a single online platform**. Users gain access to the platform with a User ID and a password. They can develop their profile, which can automatically be transformed in a Europass CV. Furthermore, the platform provides the opportunity to carry out self-assessments and attend online training courses. Therefore, MyCompetence supports jobseekers to gain an understanding of how to meet the needs of the labour market. **MyCompetence supports the Bulgarian PES in the identification of the skills and training needs of their clients.** It supports PES counsellors to understand clients' strengths, address training needs and match job offers to clients with the appropriate skills. **MyCompetence supports Bulgarian employers, especially SMEs.** Usually SMEs do not have a Human Resources department, and therefore MyCompetence supports them by providing information about skills and competences needed for job positions and identifying staff training needs. **MyCompetence is aligned to European Initiatives**, such as ESCO and the European Qualification Framework recommendation. MyCompetence adopts the ESCO terminology, key positions are comparable to ESCO and linked to the NQF (National Qualification Framework).
Method of assessment	
Type of assessment	No selection
Duration and frequency of the assessment	Not applicable. The measure has not yet been evaluated.
Further information on the assessment	Not applicable. The measure has not yet been evaluated.
Links to the website, background information and assessment material	[Website for MyCompetence Online tool](#)

Contact details	Dr. Elka Dimitrova, Director of Labour Market Policy and Labour Mobility Directorate, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy E-mail: Elka.Dimitrova@mlsp.government.bg Phone: +359 2 8119 509 Website: www.mlsp.government.bg Mrs. Stefka Limanska, Head of Vocational Qualification Unit within the Labour Market Policy and Labour Mobility Directorate, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. E-mail address: Stefka.Limanska@mlsp.government.bg Phone: +359 2 8119 541 Website: www.mlsp.government.bg
Keywords	Bulgaria; online tool; skills and competences; self-assessment; sector competence models; life-long learning; sector skills committees; education and training; key job positions; career guidance