

Good practices in vocational guidance: Berufsinteressen Check (BIC)



WHAT?

The “career interest check” (Berufsinteressen Check - BIC) is a vocational interests and skills assessment designed to support career orientation counseling. Designed by psychologists, it measures interests, strengths and weaknesses, values, and professional goals. Variants of the BIC have been designed for students close to receiving their secondary school leaving certificate, younger students, adults in education, and refugees and other migrants.

WHO?

The tool was designed by a private company, the Society for Psychological Aptitude Diagnostics and Management Consulting (Gesellschaft für psychologische Eignungsdiagnostik und Unternehmensberatung - gepedu GmbH)


IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE?

The gepedu career interest check (BIC) and related check of job interests and competences (Berufsinteressen und Kompetenzen Check - BIKOC) appear to be used by a number of educational institutions, reaching thousands of end users according to the company website. Gepedu furthermore won an E-Learning Journal Award 2021 for their online career matching services.

TARGET GROUP?

The test was designed for students and young adults with special needs, particular those with a migration background and low German language skills. A separate module is available for students with a medium to high level of education (BIC Plus). There is also a module especially for refugees (BIC Fl), which includes questions about migration, the social environment, etc.

ELEMENTS OF GOOD PRACTICE:

- Impact local level 
- Impact national level 
- Impact EU level
- Transferability 
- Quality assurance 
- Innovative practice 

WHERE?

The gepedu career interest check was developed and implemented in Germany.

ORGANISATIONS IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICE

The tool was developed for educational institutions and schools in the field of competence assessment and for companies in the field of personnel selection.

METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The career interest test is short and simple. It takes between 20-60 minutes. During development, special attention was paid to minimizing the demands on concentration and language comprehension. For example, responses can be made using smileys to avoid cultural misinterpretation of images. The test is also available in 9 languages (German, English, French, Russian, Romanian, Turkish, Tigrin, Arabic, Persian).

The tool asks about career-related interests and what people want from the world of work. This involves the interests and motivations related to the pursuit of occupational activities in twelve areas (including crafts - wood; metal and construction; production and assembly; crafts - sewing; auto and transportation; cosmetics and fashion).

The evaluation is carried out without reference values, which is intended to avoid misinterpretations due to culturally determined differences or different school and education systems in the countries of origin.

LESSONS LEARNED

Gepedu is a private company, and accordingly, public evaluations of their materials and services do not appear available.

RELEVANCE FOR VET VOICES

Several aspects of the Gepedu BIC tool could serve as inspiration for VET Voices:

- Relatively short length of 20-60 minutes - shorter than the 90-minute Check.Work test. VET Voices should aim for 20 minutes as a maximum until results are available, in order to maintain the interest of those who are using the tool on their own.
- The test and occupation profiles include “exclusion criteria”, which are critical aspects of each occupation that a user must at least somewhat like/accept, in order to be matched to that occupation.
- The test and occupation profiles also include “working conditions”, which are different than interests - for example, a software programmer must remain seated for long periods. VET Voices does not anticipate including working conditions in the self-evaluation use flow itself, but might consider including working conditions in the occupation profiles.
- After taking the BIC test, the user receives a profile summarising potentially promising fields with information on “detailed interests” and “working conditions”. VET Voices also aims to generate profiles, both for the users themselves and for VET professionals (e.g. which can be easily exported to PDF and sent to the user’s job counsellor).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Main website: https://www.gepedu.de/beruf_karriere/berufstest
- Example evaluation report: https://www.gepedu.de/documente/musterauswertungen/Muster_BICFL_lang.pdf
- Full list of career orientation tests and materials: https://www.gepedu.de/documente/broschueren/gepedu_Testverfahren_2021_03_31.pdf