



SCREENING IS CARRIED OUT BY THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (PES) IN BELGIUM WALLONIA (FOREM) TO ANALYSE THE EXTENT TO WHICH A JOBSEEKER HAS THE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR A SPECIFIC JOB

Screening to identify jobseekers' skills

Publication date: March 2024

BELGIUM

Screening is carried out by the PES in Wallonia (Forem) to assess the extent to which a jobseeker has the skills required for a specific job. The evaluation comprises a two-part assessment: firstly, an online multiple-choice test examines the cognitive skills necessary for a specific occupation (through the DOCIMO online assessment platform); and secondly, an interview with a vocational trainer to discuss the test results and identify the applicant's skills that could be improved and/or formally recognised. Screening applies to 65 jobs, including mechanics, electricians, jobs in the food industry, sales, and construction. These were selected as they have the highest number of job offers or jobseekers. Jobs with high relational and/or managerial dimensions are not suitable for this type of screening.

Name of the PES	Forem (Belgium, Wallonia)
Scope of measure (a pilot project or a national reform)	Regional: Belgian-Walloon PES (Forem)
When was the practice implemented? (including start and end date for pilot projects)	Since 2006
What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?	The screening was developed to help jobseekers to identify the skills that are valued by employers, but which they themselves still need to develop to get the job they want. The PES uses the results to gain insights into the match between jobseekers' skills and available jobs, in order to detect possible skills matches and mismatches.
Which organisation was involved in its implementation?	Belgian-Walloon PES (Forem)
Which groups were targeted by the practice?	The target groups for screening are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Jobseekers (directly targeted) looking for information on the skills and qualifications they need to secure their desired job, and ▶ Employers and businesses (indirectly targeted) experiencing difficulties in finding workers with relevant skills and qualifications.
What were the practice's main objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Screening evaluates jobseekers' suitability for roles, offers tailored coaching, and enhances jobseekers' skills. This results in more effective job placement.
What activities were carried out?	Forem assesses whether or not a jobseeker has the skills required for a specific job via several steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Jobseekers identify the job for which they wish to apply from the pool of available 65 jobs. ▶ Jobseekers are then assessed for the skills for that specific job, using the DOCIMO platform online tool ▶ Jobseekers take an online multiple-choice test, which lasts between 30 minutes and one hour and consists of 50-60 questions. ▶ The test measures the cognitive skills necessary in a specific occupation, rather than knowledge about the profession. ▶ Jobseekers are then interviewed by a vocational trainer at the PES. The interview presents the results of the test, identifies actions jobseekers can take to improve their chances of getting that specific job, and determines the skills they need to improve or have officially validated in order to get the desired job.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The vocational trainer considers the results of the online test, as well as the jobseeker's qualifications, training and work experience. ▶ The vocational trainer suggests further actions, such as training (formal/informal, technical, digital, job-specific) or language qualification. If jobseekers score well on the assessment for a specific job, the vocational trainer encourages them to apply, given their suitability, and, in some cases, to start the validation of their informal or non-formal learning. ▶ A follow-up interview is optional, depending on individual circumstances and preferences. ▶ The results of the screening can be used by employer advisers, as they select jobseekers to fill job vacancies, including occupations in short supply. Around ¾ of the 65 occupations covered by the screening tool are occupations in shortage. ▶ The results are not used to analyse skills, and/or the re/up-skilling needs of jobseekers as a whole. However, on an individual basis and after the screening, Forem identifies needs for the development or reinforcement of specific skills, more particularly digital and/or 'green' skills.
<p>What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?</p>	<p>Screening does not require many resources. Internal PES trainers and sector professionals contributed to the development of the online multiple-choice tests, as part of their roles (i.e. at no additional cost). Several promotional campaigns sought to inform jobseekers about screening. Currently, screening incurs an annual licence fee for the online platform. However, a transition to an internal site is being considered.</p>
<p>What were the source(s) of funding?</p>	<p>Screening is currently funded from Forem's budget.</p>
<p>What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?</p>	<p>Every year, 3,000 jobseekers use the screening tool.</p>
<p>What outcomes have been identified?</p>	<p>Trainers report that jobseekers rate the interview with the vocational trainer very positively. Employer representative bodies have requested access to the test to make suggestions and improvements. This enables proactive and continuous review of the tool, ensuring it remains up-to-date and useful.</p>
<p>What are the lessons learnt and success factors?</p>	<p>Several lessons have been identified by Forem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assess skills rather than knowledge. Accordingly, the questions assess the competencies that jobseekers will need in the labour market and represent real-world scenarios. ▶ Emphasise to jobseekers that the actions taken after the online test are more important than the test results. The test is not a certification, but, rather, a tool to help them. Some trainers do not give the specific result of the test to jobseekers, in a bid to underline the greater importance of the measures taken afterwards. <p>The test should be continuously improved. For example, Forem undertakes statistical analyses to identify questions where scores are always right or always wrong in order to improve them.</p>



Contact details for further information

ABBAOUY, Inès

Expert in International and Institutional Relations

Email: ines.abbaouy@forem.be

Phone: +32(0)71530736