



## Exceptional service for people seeking guidance

The IQ NRW web app is an innovative contribution towards the digitalisation of guidance on recognition and job training.



### **IQ | GOOD PRACTICE** in a nutshell

#### **Addressees for transfer:**

Employment authorities, advice centres, education providers, companies

#### **NRW IQ web app for guidance on recognition**

The web app offers access to a database via a browser. It can be used to register, process data, and manage the advisory process. The app assists with the advisory process, independent of the location and time of both those seeking recognition and offering advice. It provides a foundation for digital and phone-based advice and can also be used for face-to-face services.

#### **Project:**

IQ NRW – Mobile Anerkennungs- und Qualifizierungsberatung (Mobile Advice on Recognition and Job Training)

#### **Provider:**

Westdeutscher Handwerkskammertag (West German Chambers of Crafts and Skilled Trades' Council), WHKT Düsseldorf

#### **Project contact:**

Ursula Hein  
WHKT / Volmerswerther Str. 79  
40223 Düsseldorf | 0211/3007724  
ursula.hein@iq-netzwerk-nrw.de

#### **Provision:**

More information on the IQ NRW web app is available at [www.iq-netzwerk-nrw.de/startseite-webapp-erkennungserstberatung](http://www.iq-netzwerk-nrw.de/startseite-webapp-erkennungserstberatung)

All previously published IQ Good Practice examples can be found at [www.netzwerk-iq.de](http://www.netzwerk-iq.de)

### **Starting point/challenge**

Until 2017, registering at the mobile advice centre for recognition and job training in North Rhine-Westphalia was only possible via a third party. Advice was offered at job centres, employment agencies, advice centres, continuing education institutions, and fairs. The aim of those running the IQ advice on recognition and job training in NRW was to offer an additional, wide-ranging service as an alternative for less mobile skilled workers. Those seeking guidance should not have to spend time on an in-person advisory session. At the same time, the advisory services were to be offered at a wider range of locations, which was a particular challenge for the less mobile advisory staff.

### **Putting the IQ NRW web app into practice**

In reaction to the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, a digital tool was developed that could collect important preliminary information on an individual, their professional development, necessary certificates and documents, without the need for an in-person appointment, and make this information available to advisers. Translating the questionnaires into ten languages and adapting the questionnaire to the IQ documentation was both highly ambitious and challenging. Interested parties can register for guidance via the website of the Network IQ NRW. After clicking the registration button, the process can be completed step by step. Ideally, the questionnaire is fully completed in the user's native language and the uploaded documents contain all necessary details. Generally speaking, advice will then be provided by email, phone, or video chat. Originally intended as a preliminary step to getting advice by phone or email, the web app took on extra significance during the pandemic and was



therefore fully revised by the IT and advisory team in 2020. There are only minor changes to the registration procedure. Instead of giving consent on paper this is now done digitally, and several questions in the data sheet have been rephrased to aid comprehension. The individual cases are read by the advisers directly in the web app and are permanently available to all advisers there in the relevant working area throughout the advisory process. Closed cases can also be accessed. The app now permits full management and documentation of the guidance process.

### **Conclusion**

The web app has been in successful use since 2017 and is increasingly used by both those seeking advice and advisers themselves. Since its extensive development in 2020, the app allows foreign qualifications to be assessed and recognised, even under the challenging pandemic conditions.

# Advice by app but still tailored to the individual

## Social education worker Viktoria A. received professional advice on recognition in written form

At the moment, with the coronavirus pandemic making face-to-face advice challenging or impossible, the web app becomes extra important, as it enables contact from anywhere and at all times. The current challenge is to encourage people who prefer face-to-face meetings to use the phone and email for advice. This applies to both people seeking advice and cooperation partners. Viktoria A. personally experienced the benefit of using the new tool. She began the recognition procedure using the web app. "As soon as I made contact with the recognition adviser, I knew I'd come to the right place," says the social education worker from Hungary.

"The procedure was explained to me in English, in a detailed and clear manner. I was able to upload all documents and got



initial advice by email." She was also given help to apply for a recognition grant. The application procedure for recognition took one year. "During this time I had regular written contact with my advisor, who always supported me in a professional and focused manner." Viktoria A. has since received her legally valid recognition notice from the district government. Viktoria A. says that for her the effort of the recognition procedure was very much worthwhile. She recommends using the IQ Network web app, also because it does not actually rule out face-to-face contact. "I was really happy to be able to meet my adviser in person."

Three questions for Ursula Hein, project manager of the "Mobile Recognition Advice" subproject at the West German Chambers of Crafts and Skilled Trades' Council in the Network IQ NRW

## "Recognition advice with just a few clicks"



### What is innovative about the concept?

The coronavirus pandemic presented us all with new challenges. Both within the team and in the advisory sessions new forms of communication which did not involve face-to-face contact had to be rapidly found. We are glad that we were able to fundamentally develop the app in 2020, digitalising both

guidance and administrative processes. We can see what stage the procedure is at, record the result of the guidance, easily add follow-up contacts, and view statistical data at all times. The data conforms to the highest security standards. All questions relating to the recognition procedure and job training opportunities can thus be easily answered without the need for an in-person ap-

pointment.

### Is the concept easily transferable?

The app can be used as a digital tool throughout Germany. In North Rhine-Westphalia, in addition to people directly seeking guidance, the tool is also used by employment authorities, job centres, and integration points, who refer their clients to the app. Authorities that provide recognition also recommend our advisory services and registration via the web app. The Düsseldorf district government's State Examination Office for Medicine, Psychotherapy, and Pharmacy recommends the web app as a source of guidance for necessary training courses.

### How long-term is the concept?

The web app supports the guidance work on several levels as part of the broader digitalisation process. It allows people to register for and obtain advice digitally. In the future, it can be embedded in a network with our cooperation partners and recognition authorities as part of a comprehensive digitalisation process.

### Publication details

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**Authors:** Christiane Tieben-Westkamp (ebb GmbH), Ursula Hein (West German Chambers of Crafts and Skilled Trades' Council (WHKT Düsseldorf))  
**Editor:** Christian Zingel (ebb GmbH)  
**Photos/Illustration:** WHKT Düsseldorf, Julia Schlax (RockAByte GmbH)  
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### Network IQ

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