



BUILDING INTEGRATION THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP (BITE), ITALY, GREECE, SWEDEN

What?

The Building Integration through Entrepreneurship (BITE) programme offers training and mentoring to immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa who start businesses with positive social and environmental impact. The programme is active in Italy, Greece and Sweden and is run by a consortium of research institutes, service providers, local authorities and NGOs and is co-financed by the European Union (DG GROW).

Why?

BITE was launched in 2018 with two objectives. First, the project seeks to foster the social and economic integration of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa into EU Member States. Second, it aims to boost the development of small businesses that have a positive social and environmental impact both in the entrepreneurs' country of residence and their country of origin.

Key Activities

The BITE consortium advertises the programme in its countries of operation in order to promote entrepreneurship, raise awareness of the programme and identify potential entrepreneurs of Sub-Saharan origin and encourage them to apply.

Successful candidates go through a business development and acceleration course. In a first phase, entrepreneurs participate in a management course (focusing on building entrepreneurial skills and shaping business projects). In a second phase, they receive one-on-one mentoring to develop their project and consolidate financial and economic plans to ensure long-term business sustainability. Participants are supported in this process by experienced professionals including financial advisors, certified accountants and communication experts. They also have the opportunity to interact with role models, i.e. successful entrepreneurs of African descent. To facilitate access to finance after programme completion, BITE created a

platform, Diasporabusiness.eu. On the website, interested impact investors can browse BITE start-ups by sector and country, and make contact with the BITE team to learn more about the projects and invest.

The BITE programme also developed learning supports available to all. First, it offers free instructional videos for immigrant entrepreneurs on key steps of business development (including finding a business idea, developing a business model, drafting a business plan and searching for financial resources). The videos are available in English and in French. Second, the project also developed a Toolkit for local authorities and civil society organisations that want to adopt the project's best practices. The toolkit includes a handbook and infographics on the project's structure and method, and is complemented by a recorded webinar including presentations of successful project participants.

Impact

Since 2018 the project has supported 100 immigrants entrepreneurs in Italy, Sweden and Greece out of around 360 applications. The Diasporabusiness.eu platform included 49 active businesses in search of funding as of July 2021. BITE has also made its methodology available as a free toolkit to facilitate replication of the programme and broaden its impact.

Source

- BITE (2021), BITE website, <https://integreneurship.eu/about-us/> [1].
- Etimos Foundation (2020), BITE - Building Integration Through Entrepreneurship, www.etimos.org/en/progetti/archivio-progetti/bite/ [2].
- BITE (2021), DiasporaBuisness website, www.diasporabusiness.eu/about-diaspora-business/ [3].

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Links

[1] <https://integreneurship.eu/about-us/> [2] <https://www.etimos.org/en/progetti/archivio-progetti/bite/>

[3] <https://portal.oecd.org/www.diasporabusiness.eu/about-diaspora-business>