



Mingo Migrant Enterprises, Austria

What?

'Mingo Migrant Enterprises' is an integrated support scheme for entrepreneurs with a migrant background in Vienna. It provides business consultancy services in German and various other languages, and makes referrals to other mainstream business support schemes.

Why?

Austria has one of the highest proportions of foreign-born people in the European Union and many migrants settle in Vienna, where approximately 40% of the population has a migrant background. Approximately one-third of businesses in Vienna are owned by entrepreneurs with a migrant background. Mainstream business support schemes in Vienna, such as the parent initiative Mingo Enterprises, have had very little take-up by entrepreneurs from immigrant and ethnic minority communities. Reasons for this include ineffective outreach campaigns and a lack of services offered in minority languages.

Key Activities

Mingo Migrant Enterprises was developed by the Vienna city government with funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The project provides business consultancy and referral services in 14 languages using business advisors from ethnic minority groups. The advisors provide direct advice and referrals that improve the access of immigrants to mainstream training services (e.g. Mingo Services / Mingo Academy), start-up financing (e.g. Mingo Finance) and subsidised premises (e.g. Mingo Offices). Networking events are also organised to help immigrant and ethnic minority entrepreneurs grow their business and increase their knowledge of the local market. The project makes special efforts to reach potential clients through promotional campaigns in community-based media (e.g. minority language newspapers) and community networks and events. The use of business advisors from different ethnic minority groups is effective because clients have an increased level of trust with advisors from their own community and who can speak their language.

Impact

Between 2008 and 2011, approximately 800 enterprise founders received support from the scheme. Participants' feedback indicates that Mingo Migrant Enterprises is increasingly viewed as a useful one-stop shop for business support within immigrant and ethnic minority communities. In particular, the networking events are popular. The number of business owners from immigrant and ethnic minority groups applying directly to other Mingo programmes has risen sharply since Mingo Migrant Enterprises was launched (six-fold increase from 2008 to 2011), suggesting that it has increased awareness of mainstream support projects within these communities and thus fulfils the intended bridging function.

This case study was adapted from material published in: OECD/The European Commission (2013), The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264188167-en> [1]

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