

Immigrants Business Plan: Brussels, November 25th – 28th 2010

Our host partner EU WAREHOUSE organized workshops on financing, public support and marketing from a migrant business founder's perspective with illustration, introduction on EU-policies in the field of migrant entrepreneurship, exercise/game, etc.

We had also a presentation and a workshop on Business Plan. It was very interesting to experience two different perspectives: (migrant) business founder's approach (reflections, questions, etc.) and coach's work (structured project, financing...).

Based on two other presentations, it was also interesting to wonder how and to what extent migrant business founders should think about marketing/markets/products and being inside or outside the ghetto.

The guided tour on the Matongé district allowed us to meet migrant entrepreneurs (move from theory to practice).

On Saturday morning the French team from Corsica had also prepared a presentation regarding the question how the instrument "business plan" can be a valuable instrument or might also be an obstacle with regards to the objectives / goals / expectations of the migrant entrepreneur himself / herself.

The team from Corsica team pointed out, that many of their clientele wanted to start with their business directly, because they want/need to make money. A lot of people have already had a business in the countries of origin, but don't really see that it works differently in France. A network is needed and collaborating with the environment is very important. But the juridical, social and fiscal structures of the host country usually pose the biggest obstacles.

The business plan used in their work is used as a useful tool, but it takes much time to explain it (and it is also not called “business plan” within the coaching process!). The general idea is to show more the usefulness of the system instead of threatening the future entrepreneur. The colleagues also underlined, that the adaptability to the client is a vital factor of the success of the coaching process.

After feedback and conclusion the group was invited to take a guided walk with Medoune through the Matongé in Elsene.

In the steering group meeting we discussed how to proceed in detail with our work plan, ideas for the next meetings and how to put our “products” in action.

EU WAREHOUSE had prepared a model how to produce the final guidelines, done by the whole group. A structure for the creation of the web-based tool for our guidelines was proposed. We are supposed to create a web-based tool, which will be made accessible via download and on CD in an English version and in the languages of the partner countries. So, I thought it might be a good idea to do it in the form of web based - booklet, where every organisation has to contribute an equal part, corresponding to our expertise and to the topic of the project. We will use a clickable directory, which could be used in the Internet and also on CD-ROM. We agreed on the following: each organisation is responsible to write 3 pages with content, so that we will have final guidelines with 21 pages, plus an introduction and some annexes.

The fifth IBP meeting gave the opportunity to partners and learners from two projects to meet and share experience and content on business founding/entrepreneurship on a migrant and/or woman’s side: it was very interesting to compare both perspectives and backgrounds.

This meeting was also the last opportunity to work on IBP deliverables (what is done and what has to be done) before the end of the project : each partner left with a precise idea/state of art.

The last IBP forthcoming meeting will take place in Tübingen in June 2011.