



## Vienna

<b>Title of the Initiative</b>	StartWien – A Programme for New Migrants to Help Them Settle In and Facilitate Their Integration in Vienna
<b>Initiative Duration</b>	October 2008 – Ongoing
<b>Submitted by</b>	Dr. Ursula ELTAYEB, Head of Project Management
<b>Comments by the Jury</b>	<p>Vienna’s initiatives in the fields of environmental, energy and social issues demonstrate a clear capacity to innovate, on a continuing basis, in many policy directions. On the environmental front, Vienna adheres to a set of very clear and coherent green standards for public procurement (Okokauf) and has become a leader in the production and use of renewable energy for, for example, the operations of Vienna’s wastewater treatment plant.</p> <p>But given the large scale of migration from other counties to Vienna - an experience shared by so many other cities - the “Start Wien” programme for new migrants stands out in terms of its innovativeness, relevance and potential for replication. The programme offers all new migrants a ‘One Stop Shop’ service, involving different departments and social services, individually tailored orientation meetings, language services and more advanced information and coaching services. It reaches the target group immediately after arrival, looks at the needs of each individual, provides clear information, and provides a single entry point to access an array of social services.</p> <p>Many cities could do well to learn from Vienna’s approach which helps migrants at the critical stage of establishing a new life and a new home while also overcoming</p>

the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness associated with the lack of coordinated and coherent response by different departments and services that make life miserable for those seeking help from public services.

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*Vienna has a population of 1,714,142 people and covers a land area of 415 sq km.*  
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## StartWien - A Programme for New Migrants to Help Them Settle In and Facilitate Their Integration in Vienna

### Background Information

Vienna is a city of immigration: 20% of the population have a nationality other than Austrian, 11% of the citizens were not born in Austria but have been naturalised, 13% have at least one parent who was born abroad, i.e. 44% of the Viennese population have a migration background.

The first two years are crucial for the successful integration of people who migrate to Vienna. To have a good start in a new country, it is vital to learn the language, to know about the structures and systems, and to know your rights and duties but also to feel welcome and have equal rights as a new member of society. The City provides sustainable long-term measures to facilitate good relations between all citizens in Vienna.

New migrants are provided with the most important information about life in Vienna as early as possible in their mother-tongues to help them find their way around Vienna. This is also a big advantage for public authorities because the project provides new migrants with vital information and they do not have to contact authorities, advice centres, and other institutions individually, and al-

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ready know who to contact for specific inquiries.

## Goals of the Initiative

1) Reaching the target group immediately after their arrival in Vienna –

The project has been developed in close cooperation with the Immigration Department of the City of Vienna. New migrants should use the offers of Start Wien immediately after receiving their first residence permit in the form of a one stop shop. A joint database provides for the quick transfer of data to issue the Vienna Education Booklet, invoicing the Vienna language vouchers, recording the attendance of German language classes and information modules, and compiling statistical data throughout the duration of the project.

2) Considering the individual needs of each migrant and the diversity of the target group

In cooperation with the course providers, German language courses are continuously adapted to meet the needs of the migrants. Staff members, who work in the project, have a migration background and a high intercultural competence. They know the systems and structures in the countries of origin as well as those in Vienna and Austria.

3) Introducing an instrument for the quick and simple exchange of information

between authorities, organisations, and institutions that are responsible for migrants during the first few years after their arrival in Vienna – joint development of the Vienna Education Booklet where all important courses are recorded to see at one glance which steps and measures would be feasible and should be recommended next.

4) Reducing unnecessary contacts with authorities and appointments with advice centres

by providing new migrants with relevant information in their mother tongues quickly and efficiently (e.g. school registration of children, childcare institutions, entry into the labour market, legal regulations for the extension of residence permits, healthcare, support for pregnant women, intercultural com-

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munication in everyday life, waste separation, and much more).

## Parties and Partners to the Initiative and Resources Used for Implementation

- Municipal Department 17 – Integration and Diversity
- Municipal Department 35 – Immigration
- Vienna Employment Promotion Fund
- Information Centre for Migrants
- Public Employment Service Vienna
- Vienna Chamber of Labour
- Vienna Economic Chamber
- Vienna Public Learning Centres
- Call Centre as a hotline for information about the project and making appointments for startcoaching or information modules
- Course providers and educational institutions for the acquisition of the German language
- Experts from advice centres and educational institutions
- Representatives of immigrant communities
- Experts on the relevant topics for the (further) training of staff members

**The resources used for implementing the initiative include:**

The yearly costs of the project are around EUR 400,000 (the language vouchers not included); the project is financed by the City of Vienna and part of the budget of Municipal Department 17 – Integration and Diversity.

The project has been developed and implemented in cooperation with existing organisations – use of expert know-how at hand, existing offices, building on existing projects and offers.

Municipal Department 17 has 65 staff members with many different mother tongues and from several countries of origin who have intercultural competence and experience in working with migrants – some of the staff members work in the Start Wien project to avail of human resources at hand and save costs. Only very few additional staff members had to be hired for the project.

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## Innovation for the Initiative

The initiative should be considered evolutionary as it is partly based on lessons learned from experience and research:

- research on integration programmes for new migrants in other European cities with high levels of immigration.
- workshops with experts from advice centres for migrants and German language teachers for German as a first and second language to draw up the main pillars, contents and ideas for an integration programme.
- survey of about 50 immigrant communities on what they would consider helpful for the integration of new migrants and which type of information would be useful at the time of their arrival
- interviews with 135 new migrants to find out which measures they would consider important and useful
- analysis of target groups (number of people and countries of origin) to plan financial and human resources for the project
- (the results of these surveys have been incorporated in the content development of the project)
- as well as revolutionary as the StartWien project is a compact offer for new migrants in different and interdigitated steps and available in the mother tongues of the target groups (24 different languages) that has not existed before. Because of the cooperation with the immigration office in the form of a one stop shop the target group is reached immediately after immigration of new migrants (before starting StartWien people only asked for help or information when they were already confronted with problems).

The Vienna Education Booklet is an innovative product and an useful instrument for the quick and simple exchange of information between institutions, organisations and authorities that are responsible for migrants.

## Obstacles and Solutions to the Innovation

Frequent changes of the Law on Residence and Settlement in Austria ne-

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cessitate an immediate response and continuous updating of the contents and offers, and provision of migrants with information about the most important new regulations.

Advisors at Public Employment Services do not yet efficiently use the information provided in the Vienna Education Booklets – the Start Wien project management tries to find efficient ways of convincing all advisors at Public Employment Services of the advantages of the project.

## Outcomes and Assessments

Outcomes achieved are as follows:

The feedback of persons who attended the programme is very positive. New migrants feel welcome in Vienna, well informed and start with language courses as soon as possible.

86% of the target group has been reached since StartWien started.

More than 12,000 persons came to startcoaching and received the Vienna Education Booklet, more than 25,000 attended information modules and around 4,800 new migrants have been in second level startcoaching since the project started, even though the participation in the programme is voluntary.

The initiative StartWien, offered by the City of Vienna, is an important sign for new migrants, showing them that they are welcome in Vienna, that Vienna is interested in their qualifications and in their participation in social, cultural, economic and political issues, respecting their cultures, traditions and appreciating their mother tongues in supporting them with important information about their rights and duties, about systems and structures in their mother tongues.

The project has been presented as best practice example in different contexts at national and international level, and has been considered as an example for a nationwide integration programme by the Austrian State Secretary for Integration.

The Municipal Department 17 – Integration and Diversity has already received two awards for StartWien.

Assessments are as follows:

After one year period the project was evaluated externally in the form of

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interviews with clients and staff of the project. A further external evaluation is planned.

A joint database provides for the quick transfer of data to issue the Vienna Education Booklet, invoicing the Vienna language vouchers, recording the attendance of German language classes and information modules, and compiling statistical data about the target group (gender, age, nationality, level of education, mother tongue etc.).

## Methods Applied

Regular feedback groups or team sessions with cooperation partners, staff, trainers, language course providers for internal evaluation and improving steps

Second level start coaching is an important instrument of feedback (about start coaching, information modules, German courses etc.)

Regular further education and trainings for the staff

## Benefit to Other Cities

New migrants, who have just received their first residence permit from the Immigration Office are invited to attend a one-hour orientation meeting (start coaching) in their mother tongue, which is held by staff members of Municipal Department 17 (one stop shop).

At the start coaching, new migrants receive important information about their rights and duties, and they get to choose the best suitable German language course. They also receive the Vienna Education Booklet to record all the German language classes and other education and (further) training classes attended by the booklet holder to make it easier for authorities and advice centres to see at one glance which next steps would be feasible and should be recommended.

The Booklet also includes three Vienna language vouchers in the total amount of EUR 300. They can be used to pay a part of the German language classes with specific course providers.

For the vouchers to be valid, new migrants need the confirmation that they have attended one out of eight information modules per language voucher. Native

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speakers, who also have a migration background, hold the information modules in many different languages on the following topics: residence regulations, job and career, working environment, recognition of qualifications, education and further training, housing, healthcare, education system, and living together. Participants receive handouts in their mother tongues with important information and contact addresses. Childcare is also provided for the duration of the information modules.

To clarify further questions or if new migrants need more information about advice centres, making applications and dealing with authorities, or exchanging experiences with other new migrants they can attend a second level start coaching within two years after their arrival. The second level start coaching is held either in the form of group discussions or with individual appointments.

The programme is available in 24 languages:

Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Dari, English, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Pashtu, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovakian, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu

New migrants feel welcome and appreciated from the moment of their arrival, which contributes to the good neighbourly relations and positive climate in the city.

The comprehensive information package facilitates the easy and prompt participation of migrants in society. It is a great advantage for new migrants to get to know the structures and systems in their mother tongues at first. It is also an advantage for the City Administration because well-informed clients know which department or office to contact for specific inquiries. Or sometimes they already have all the information they need before making an application. New migrants tend to be happier and feel that they belong if they attend the best suitable German language classes, know what to do in a specific situation, know who to ask, and get in touch with other new migrants.

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