

Integration Through Enterprise



Objectives

Led by Scottish Enterprise Glasgow, this project works with refugee and migrant communities to define and tackle barriers to entry into business start up services. It aims to create a model for national dissemination that can be used to assist this vital group into self-employment and boost the number of new businesses in Scotland.

Activities

- Appointment of a Business Start Up Liaison Officer from the refugee community
- Identification of the barriers to self-employment for refugees and migrants
- Solutions to barriers to self-employment for refugees and migrants tested with Business Gateway
- Awareness raising of issues and solutions with Business Start Up Advisers
- Involvement in signposting databases and information guidance for refugees and migrants



Reza Cheshmehdmoost, Persian rug stockist
<http://www.little-persia.com>

Outcomes

- Awareness raising and dissemination of solutions to barriers to self-employment for refugees and migrants
- Increased numbers of refugees and migrants entering Business Gateway and creating new businesses in Scotland
- Sharing of best practice with transnational partners in Spain and Germany



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Strategic significance

It is essential for a 'Smart, Successful Scotland' that Scotland targets and utilises all of its available people resources. The refugee and migrant communities in Scotland are growing and a variety of established reports have identified significant mutual benefit of supporting the integration of refugee and migrant groups into the business creation process. Best Practice from Berlin has been incorporated into the project.



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Findings to date

There are over 5000 new citizens (refugees) living in Glasgow from over 30 different national origins as well as a mix of religions and ethnic groups, and with as many as 6000 asylum seekers the number is set to grow. History has shown that migrant populations often turn to self-employment and business start-up as a means of achieving financial security and future prosperity.

Barriers facing new citizens in the business start-up process can range from lack of appropriate management training to a limited insight into the business practices and customs of a new country. Perhaps the biggest barrier is access to finance. New citizens often have little or no capital to invest in a business and the absence of a credit record combined with housing in bad debt post-code areas can make access to private sector funding equally challenging.

Progress to date

To date the program has attracted 44 new citizens, each of whom is given the opportunity to undertake a pre-start diagnostic programme called Sirius. This helps assess the clients' training, planning and resource needs for business start-up. A range of training and one-to-one advice and support is available to assist with this process.

It is hoped that by September 2007, 25 businesses will have been established by new citizens and that many others will have taken steps towards self-employment.



Refugee Week Event in Govan



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