Title: BEST FORM – Boosting EntrepreneurShip Tools FOR Migrants

[Best Form]

Project type: LLP / Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation
Ref. no.: 2010-1-PT1-LEO05-05164

Promoter /Coordinator: Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação - Consultadoria Empresarial e Fomento da Inovação, S.A, Portugal

Duration: 2 years
Actual stage: **Finalised**

Total value of the grant: **244.496 Euro**

Grant value for University of Pitesti: **20126.2 Euro**

Summary:

Immigrants have a special tendency for self-employment (and, consequently, for entrepreneurship). However, the way towards opening their own business is jeopardized by cultural and linguistic barriers, as well as by lack of knowledge of legislation (in tax and labour, for example) and of other entrepreneurial aspects.

Mainstream entities and migrant-oriented associations intend to contribute to surpassing these barriers, by offering business counselling for immigrants. Studies – such as those led by the European Network on Ethnic Minority Business – indicate that this assistance does not always fulfil the needs of immigrant entrepreneurs, since it does not usually tackle the mixed embeddedness (structural factors, cultural conditions and personal characteristics) to which immigrants are subjected in an efficient manner. As a result, immigrant entrepreneurs are not adequately accompanied in terms of business management, leading to a high rate of bankruptcy among immigrant entrepreneurs.

BEST FORM intends to enhance business advice in the countries involved and to ensure the long term sustainability of this activity. In this context, the aim is to apply the community-based business advice (CBBA) model and specially the training materials implemented under the EQUAL Program “Building Entrepreneurship” in United Kingdom (“Supporting Inclusion in Enterprise Development” project). This model consists in providing business advice through immigrant-oriented associations, by training local ethnic leaders to perform such tasks and by specially strengthening interpersonal, communicate on and client-advisory skills. Such model will be adapted according to each country reality, assessed through a needs analysis report.

Objectives:

BEST FORM intends to achieve the following aims:

(I) Apply in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Romania and Poland, the Community-based Business Advice (CBBA) model of approaching immigrant entrepreneurs;

(II) Adapt the content of CBBA training materials, as developed by ACBBA under the SIED project, according to the entrepreneurial and immigrant realities of those countries;

(III) Implement two pilot training courses for business advisers from national immigrant-oriented associations, in order to train new and existing business advisers;

Outcomes:

The main outcomes of BEST FORM will consist of two handbooks (one supporting the pilot training courses, the other being guidelines for future training courses), pilot training courses (implemented in 2 partner countries, in order to test the content adaptation of CBBA methodology) and an interactive tool. The handbooks and the interactive tool will be available in all languages of the countries involved.

As a result of this project, a consolidation of the business advice activity in each country involved, the acquisition of competences and tools in providing business counselling in an immigration context (improving the potential benefits of such activity) and the enhancement of long term sustainability of immigrant entrepreneurial activities is expected - which shall contribute to combating poverty and social exclusion among immigrant communities.

Partnership:

1.

Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação - Consultadoria Empresarial e Fomento da Inovação, S.A, Portugal (coordinator)

2.

XXI INVESLAN, S.L., Spain

3.

Association of Community Based Business Advice, United Kingdom

4.

UCODEP, Italy

5.

Uniwersytet Łódzki, Poland

6.

Universitatea din Piteşti, Romania

7.

Associação de Solidariedade Internacional, Portugal

8.

Insitute for Innovation in Learning, University of Erlangen Nuremberg, Germany