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# MigrEntrepreneur

## State of the Art Report Austria

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## 1. Introduction

Numbers about Entrepreneurship is a powerful driver of economic growth and job creation: it creates new companies and jobs, opens up new markets, and nurtures new skills and capabilities. Within the EU, migrants represent an important pool of potential entrepreneurs, and may face specific legal, cultural and linguistic obstacles.<sup>1</sup> The promotion of migrant entrepreneurship is incorporated in the Europe 2020 strategy, including a blueprint for joint action to remove barriers and create a supportive environment.

The Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2020 and the Small Business Act aspire to unlock Europe's entrepreneurial potential; ease the creation of new businesses and create a supportive environment for existing entrepreneurs to thrive and grow.<sup>2</sup> The plan provides common policy framework and supporting measures which help EU countries as they further develop and strengthen their national integration policies for third-country nationals through tailored business training and mentoring.

For migrants, employment is not only a source of income, but also a pivotal activity to improve their integration in a broader sense. The inclusion in the labour market introduces the person in a diverse environment and fosters relationships with local citizens. Needless to say, having a salary, makes possible to fulfil primary needs and have resources for more socially related activities. Many migrants already have experience in self-employment or a high innovation potential and are good at developing ideas, as they had to adapt to what were sometimes the most adverse living conditions. Therefore it is important to promote an integration that allows immigrants to develop possible ideas in entrepreneurship.<sup>3</sup>

A possible definition for a migrant entrepreneur could be:

“a foreign-born business owner or a member of an ethnic minority born in the receiving country, who seeks to generate value through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying new products, processes or markets.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants_en)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/action-plan_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://projectmile.eu/2019/12/03/focus-topic-n2-migrants-entrepreneurship/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://projectmile.eu/2019/12/03/focus-topic-n2-migrants-entrepreneurship/>

Some words that will be use throughout the report:

Nationals = national-born with national-born parents

Non-nationals = Migrants = People with a migrant background

1st generation = foreign-born = born in another country

2nd generation = national-born with foreign-born parents

EU-Nationals, Third-country nationals = Non-EU nationals

The **MigrEntrepreneur project (MigrEnt)** aims at presenting best-practice examples of entrepreneurial learning and start-ups of migrants or refugees, integrating successful approaches into educational measures possible to empower migrants, provide them with skills, which are recognised also in other states, if they plan to move. The focus of the project is the entrepreneurial learning. “Entrepreneurship education prepares people to be responsible and enterprising individuals. It helps people develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to achieve the goals they set out for themselves. Evidence also shows that people with entrepreneurial education are more employable.”<sup>5</sup>

Austria as one of the five European partners on the project is represented by the **IFA Association**. IFA (International Young Workers Exchange) is the leading organization in Austria around international work experience of vocational trainees. Founded in 1995 by the Austrian Economic Chambers, the Federation of Austrian Industries and the Junior Chamber Austria, IFA is a focal point for information and consulting for young people, businesses and educational institutions in the international work placements in the European VET system.

This State of the Art report will be examining the landscape in Austria around the topic of migrant entrepreneurship. Through this scope we will take a look first on the demographics focused on non-nationals’ self-employment and in the general support of entrepreneurial activities in Austria and take a glimpse in its capital city, Vienna. Lastly we will focus in best practices of entrepreneurial support and learning in the migrant context.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/support/education\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/support/education_en)

## 2. Data / statistics

During 2018, a total 3.9 million people immigrated to one of the EU-27 member states. From those, 1.4 million previously resided in the EU and migrated to another member state, and an estimated 2.4 million moved from outside the EU. Austria has one of the highest EU rates of immigration inside the EU borders. In 2018, 62% of the migrants were residents in another EU-27 member state, while the rest moved from a third-country. In total 105.600 people moved to Austria in 2018. <sup>6</sup>

On average in 2018 the number of people with a migrant background living in Austria was 2.02 million, less than a quarter of the total population (8.86 million). According to the official demographics, 1.49 million are first generation migrants, meaning they were born in another country (foreign-born residents). The remaining 530.000 were born in Austria to foreign-born parents. <sup>7</sup>



Table 1: Foreign Citizens – TOP-20-Nationalities on 1.1.2019

The biggest group of foreign population living in Austria is German citizens with 192.400 people, corresponding to 16% of the non-nationals, followed by Serbian (8.5%) and Turkish citizens (8.2%). The next most found nationalities are Romania, Bosnia/Herzegovina and Hungary.

<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1275.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Integrationsbericht\\_2019/Migration-Integration-2019.pdf](https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Integrationsbericht_2019/Migration-Integration-2019.pdf)

Per January 2019, 720.000 people lived in Austria being citizens of another EU-27 member state (8% of the total population). Breaking down the graphic above most frequent EU-nationalities are:

- EU-15 nationalities (EU before 2014): Germany mostly and much lesser Italy
- EU-11 nationalities (newest EU members after 2004) ranked: Rumania, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Czech Republic

The other 700.000 are third country nationals, making another 8% of the total population. As shown the graphic above, the most often non-EU nationalities in Austria are:

- o third county nationalities ranked: Serbia, Turkey, Bosnia/Herzegovina, Syria, Afghanistan, Russia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Iran, Iraq

### Types of employment

In 2018, from the 4.3 million of the active working force in Austria, one quarter were people with a migrant background. As seen in the graphic below, this 1 million people are differently active in the labour market than the Austrian nationals. Foreigners or foreign-born people tend to be primarily workers (49% of the migrant labour market) while Austrians are mostly employed or civil servants (62% of the national labour market).

Migrationshintergrund	Erwerbstätige insgesamt in 1.000	Angestellte, Beamtinnen und Beamte, Vertragsbedienstete, freie Dienstnehmer/-innen			Selbstständige außerhalb der Land- und Forstwirtschaft
		Arbeiter/-innen in % aller Erwerbstätigen gleichen Migrationshintergrunds			
Insgesamt	4.319,1	26,2	61,8	9,0	
Ohne Migrationshintergrund	3.316,0	21,2	65,6	9,4	
Mit Migrationshintergrund	1.003,1	42,9	48,9	8,0	
EU-Staaten vor 2004/EFTA	147,0	15,2	72,0	12,2	
EU-Beitrittsstaaten 2004	149,2	42,3	49,4	8,1	
EU-Beitrittsstaaten ab 2007	126,3	52,0	39,5	8,4	
Ehem. Jugoslawien (außerhalb der EU)	281,7	54,5	41,3	4,2	
Türkei	127,2	53,0	40,5	6,5	
Sonstige Staaten	171,7	34,1	54,3	11,6	

Q.: STATISTIK AUSTRIA, Mikrozensus-Arbeitskräfteerhebung, Jahresdurchschnitt über alle Wochen. – Bevölkerung in Privathaushalten. – Differenz auf 100% sind Selbstständige in Land- und Forstwirtschaft.

Table 2: Work Status of the working population according to migration background

Regarding the self-employment quotas: 8% of non-Austrian working citizens are self-employed, a proportion similar to the Austrians' self-employed percentage (9.4%). The largest portion of migrant entrepreneurs in Austria is people from other EU member states. 2018 were almost 400.000 self-employed and/or entrepreneurs in Austria. 20% of them were people with a migrant background.

The high rates of migrant self-employment may indicate very different situations. The scope, size and the nature of the businesses created by migrants obviously varies. Some migrants start a business because they lack other employment alternatives: a small store, restaurant, day care, or laundry. Such ventures may not directly provide as much value added, since they typically employ less than five people and have limited growth potential.<sup>8</sup>

A relatively high number of people with international migration experience in Austria are active entrepreneurs. Due to language barriers, discrimination and difficulties in employers' recognition of foreign qualifications, migrants are often disadvantaged in finding employment. These barriers make it more attractive for many immigrants to use their skills as self-employed and entrepreneurs, rather than as employees in the labour market. Moreover, in some regions, immigrants benefit from the support of ethnic communities. These networks can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and goods between countries and facilitate access to labour, and start-up capital information for setting up a business.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.european-microfinance.org/sites/default/files/document/file/Entrepreneurship-Migrants-OECD-2010.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://projectmile.eu/2019/12/03/focus-topic-n2-migrants-entrepreneurship/>

## Newly founded companies

In 2018, Austria counted a bit more than 39.000 new enterprises in total. 15.5% of the founders were non-nationals, most of them being of German citizenship. One tenth of the non-national entrepreneurs were citizens of the EU-27 and 1.500 (3.8%) were third-country nationals.

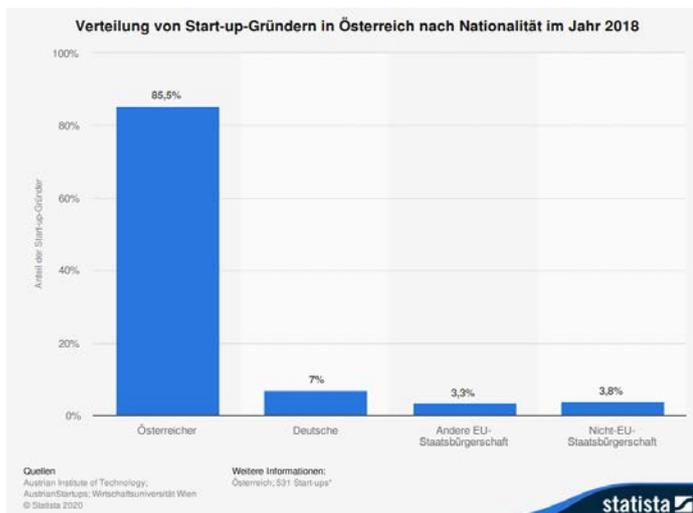


Table 3: Distribution of start-up founders in Austria according to nationalities in 2018

## Sectors

Popular sectors in which migrant companies are founded are services (such as cleaning, restaurants, or food production), as well as retail trade and manufacturing (clothing, leather ware, shoes, and textile production, or repairs) and transport. The majority of enterprises with a migration background can be assigned to the category of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME). About a quarter of the enterprises do not have any employees, about half of the enterprises have between one and nine employees.<sup>10</sup>

## Vienna

In a 2019 Start-Up Cities Index of the best cities worldwide to start a business, Vienna ranked in the first place. The general high quality of life, the effective commuting routes, the good-quality healthcare and the low office costs are some of the key factors, to which Vienna was chosen as the ideal city for a start-up.<sup>11</sup> The city is profiling as a very attractive hub for start-ups and investment, thus attracting more

<sup>10</sup> <https://projectmile.eu/2019/12/03/focus-topic-n2-migrants-entrepreneurship/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.peopleperhour.com/content/startup-cities/>

international entrepreneurs. Parallel to the start-up innovation-driven world, runs the everyday world of the small day-to-day businesses.

Taking a look in the demographics per January 2019, Vienna has 1.9 million people population, with one third having been born in another country. In the capital reside 573.000 people with a non-Austrian nationality. Citizens of the EU-27 member states come up to 251.000, while most of the non-natives are third country nationals (56%, 322.000).

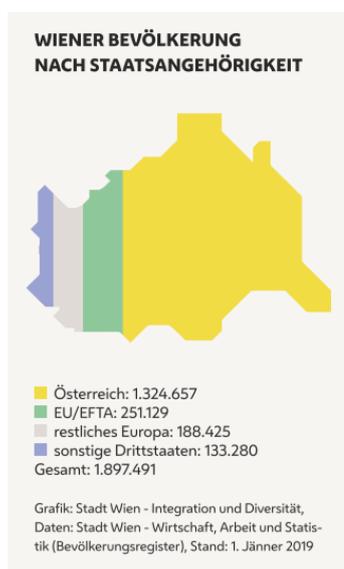


Table 4: Population in Vienna according to nationality

Vienna has experienced a growth in the number of international entrepreneurs in the last 30 years. Nowadays almost 40% of the Vienna-based companies have a migrant background.<sup>12</sup> The entrepreneurs come from more than 130 different nations. Most migrant companies in the city are active in traditional industries such as gastronomy, commerce and construction, while the majority of migrant entrepreneurs are between 24 and 44 years old.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000089238859/40-prozent-der-wiener-unternehmer-haben-migrationshintergrund>

<sup>13</sup> Wirtschaftsagentur-Studie, 2013

### 3. Funding/support Programs entrepreneurship

Innovation start-ups and their aspiring founders have access to subsidies and grants mainly from two agencies, the Austria Wirtschaftsservice (AWS), the promotional bank of the federal government and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), the national funding agency for industrial research and development. Both of them run funding programs around technological innovation and research and offer their services in German and English. Other funding or supporting programs include the annual Houska Prize of the B&C Industry Holding or the start-up and accelerating programs of the Impact Hub Vienna. The Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) has created a platform Gründungszenrum that offers start-up workshops mainly to WU students. An English version of the website is per Mai 2020 in progress.<sup>14</sup> The above mentioned institutions offer support to Austrian and international entrepreneurs with an innovation focus.

Around the day-to-day migrant entrepreneurship, there are initiatives both in the national and in the regional level. These initiatives usually do not focus on migrant entrepreneurship, they rather offer services to entrepreneurs in general and might provide additional information, guidance and assistance for other nationalities. Usually the first integration to the labour market is organised by the AMS and the ÖIF.<sup>15</sup>

The most important national institution for integration into the labour market is the **Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF)**, a partner of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The ÖIF offers integration services and promotes the linguistic integration of migrants who want to settle permanently in Austria. The focus of ÖIF lays more on the general incorporation into the labour market and less on the particular path of self-employment. The fund runs integration centres located throughout Austria offering information and counselling services.

Moreover **the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)** offers to unemployed people, who pursue self-employment, counselling sessions and workshops with a maximum of 6-months' time to come up with a business plan, prepare for the self-employment and accompanies them

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wu.ac.at/gruenden>

<sup>15</sup> Fast Lane Report Austria, 2016

in the first months of establishment. A joint program of AMS, ÖIF and WKO will be further examined in the last chapter.

The *Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO)* functions as the federal parent organization for the 9 state chambers and 110 trade associations for different industries. The WKO has a special program, that offers a solid basis and detailed information on (whether and) how to start a business. The platform [gruenderservice.at](http://gruenderservice.at) is entirely in German, though there is a 'Business Start-Up Glossary' in English to ease and support the international entrepreneurs.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the website of the WKO has a multilingual service in 10 languages: Arabic, English, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovenian, BKS (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian), Italian, Polish, Slovakian, Turkish. In the landing pages are current news and basic information on starting a company.

Some national WKO bodies are very active in the regional level. For example the Economic Chamber of Tirol, together with the AMS Tirol and other local institutions are partners in the EU program *MILE (Migrants Integration in the Labour market in Europe)*. MILE is a project funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and is a partnership of 7 public and private organisations from Italy, Austria, Spain and Greece. The project started in December 2018 and will end in May 2021. MILE aims to develop, implement and mainstream an effective model of services for the integration of third-country nationals into the labour market, based on multi-stakeholder cooperation and focusing on both employers' and migrants' needs.<sup>17</sup> The national coordinator for the Austrian partnership group is Verein Multikulturell (VM). VM is a Tirol-based non-governmental organisation founded in 1993 that promotes the development of social and professional skills of migrants and refugees in collaboration with the Government and other State institutions like the Chamber of Commerce of Tyrol, job centres, schools as well as social organizations and societies.

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<sup>16</sup> [https://www.gruenderservice.at/site/gruenderservice/publikationen/schritte-und-glossar\\_EN\\_2020.pdf](https://www.gruenderservice.at/site/gruenderservice/publikationen/schritte-und-glossar_EN_2020.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> <https://projectmile.eu/the-project-mile/>

Lastly, some peripheral events that are worth mentioning around the topic of migrant entrepreneurship: in April 2019 took place the first **Integration Congress** in Vienna. With the title *Immigration as an Opportunity - What Migrant Businesses Bring to the Economy* the congress addressed topics such as the integration of refugees, education, labour market and the economy. Additionally in autumn 2019 the Danube Uni Krems has integrated a 2-semester course called “Migrant Entrepreneurship Support CP” that provides know-how in the design and implementation of support measures for migrants to start and develop their businesses. The course is interdisciplinary with modules in Krems, Berlin and Warsaw complemented with e-learning activities.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. Projects /Trainings

<b>Project 1:</b>	<b>Migrant Enterprises Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur)</b>
<b>Project Lead:</b>	Migrant Enterprises is a service of the Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur) that aims to increase the support measures offered by the City of Vienna for immigrant and ethnic minority communities with a tailor-made support. The Vienna Business Agency was founded in 1982 as the Vienna Economic Development Fund by the City of Vienna, the Vienna Chamber of Commerce (WKO Wien), the UniCredit Bank Austria AG as well as the Erste Bank AG.
<b>Contact Details:</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	The objective of Migrant Enterprises is to unlock the economic potential of migrants, increase their welfare and contribute to the positive economic development of Vienna. Migrant Enterprises set its fundamentals already in 2008 under the name Mingo and from 2013 it has been integrated in the overall business support scheme of the municipality. The target group includes start-ups, company founders and young entrepreneurs, as well as, one-person

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/de/studium/migrant-entrepreneurship-support.html>

	<p>businesses and micro-enterprises in the early foundation phase up to a maximum of three years after the founding.</p> <p>The services of Migrant Enterprises include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Free of charge founding, financing and expansion coaching</li> <li>o Free of charge bilingual workshops</li> <li>o Information on funding from the Vienna Business Agency</li> <li>o Contact point for our flexible and special hired office spaces</li> <li>o Information about services provided by the City of Vienna</li> <li>o Help and advice when dealing with official authorities and departments</li> </ul>
<b>Further Information:</b>	<a href="https://wirtschaftsagentur.at/beratungen/migrant-enterprises-6/">https://wirtschaftsagentur.at/beratungen/migrant-enterprises-6/</a>

All workshops and written information are available in 17 different languages (English, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Polish, Turkish, Russian, Slovakian, Hungarian, Czech, Spanish, Bulgarian, Romanian, French, Arabic, Farsi, and German). Some languages are covered internally by the Vienna Business Agency advisors; otherwise, external experts are hired to ensure the language coverage. The advisors in the team have a migrant background themselves and are hence capable of understanding specific cultural/socio-economic barriers and can provide support in the native languages of the migrant entrepreneurs.<sup>19</sup> As the coordinator Tülay Tuncel said in our interview on 20.5.2020, it is not that the people wouldn't necessarily understand German, it is that when it comes to such an existential topic such as starting an own company, people need to be able to communicate and reflect in their mother language. This strong cultural understanding is the strongest asset of Migrant Enterprises.

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<sup>19</sup> Evaluation and Analysis of Good Practices in Promoting and Supporting Migrant Entrepreneurship Guide book, Publications Office of the European Union, 2016

The entrepreneurial support offered by Migrant Enterprises is organised in 3 steps that function like a funnel, filtering the aspiring entrepreneurs, while also strengthening their vision.

### **A. Taster Course (Schnupperkurs)**

A study conducted 2013 on the name of the Vienna Business Agency has manifested that the migrant companies show a low urban mobility. Migrants tend to establish companies where they live. This geographical conclusion was translated in a seemingly simple, but clever idea to organise the start-up workshops directly in the districts where the most migrants live. In order to gain a broad spectrum and achieve high participation, the Vienna Business Agency cultivated a partnership with the Adult Education Centers (Volkshochschulen, VHS) in these districts. These taster courses as all other Academy workshops are free of charge and are organised as one-day workshops with maximum 15 participants. They are being held in different 17 languages and are open to all people who might have a business idea or not.

### **B. Orientation Conversation 1 to 1**

Around 500 talks annually

In the next step, the ones who have a business idea and are eager to proceed further are invited to an orientation conversation in the facilities of the Vienna Business Agency. This step is more of an individual business support and needs' assessment. The advisors don't follow a directory or specific guideline, they rather do a reality-check of business goals and personal ambitions versus life conditions and restrains. In this scheme they also review topics, such trade law, legal forms, social insurance or taxes, or location factors, depending on the idea and the needs of the aspiring founder.

### **C. Coaching Sessions**

1/3 of the orientation talks move on to the next and final step of the support program. The coaching sessions are farther offered in the mother language of the aspiring entrepreneur. In total there can be 4 meetings with an external consulting agency. This step is about the substantiation of the business: from the legal part, the starting capital, financing plan, etc. These consulting coaching sessions are paid by the Vienna Business Agency (150€/hour) and are offered as the final support package to the entrepreneurs.

The Vienna Business Agency is focused on supporting sustainable business foundations. Migrant Enterprises rely on their integration in the overall Viennese business promotion ecosystem and the variety of tailor-made services in different languages. One important factor is that it's free of charge, as this is very important for beneficiaries since many of them have limited resources and would rather spend them on their business than training/advice provision.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Evaluation and Analysis of Good Practices in Promoting and Supporting Migrant Entrepreneurship Guidebook, Publications Office of the European Union, 2016

<b>Project 2:</b>	<b>Mentoring for Migrants Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF)</b>
<b>Project Lead:</b>	<p>Mentoring for Migrants is a joint initiative of the ÖIF, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, and the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). The goal is to bring together experienced individuals from the business world – mentors – and people from a migrant background – mentees – and help them become integrated into the Austrian labour market.</p> <p>Mentoring is a professional relationship, in which an experienced entrepreneur assists another, often less experienced, entrepreneur, and can therefore provide valuable support based on practical experience. The mentorship includes skills and knowledge development, as well as helping to access a network that might enhance the mentee’s professional and personal growth. <sup>21</sup></p>
<b>Contact Details:</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	<p>The program was launched in 2008 on the initiative of the WKO in cooperation with the ÖIF and the AMS. The aim is to support labour market integration and/or start up a business for qualified people with a migrant background.</p> <p>More than 2,200 mentoring pairs have been formed all over Austria as part of the Mentoring for Migrants program. Mentors and mentees spend about six months working through activities together to enter the labour market. As experienced business people, mentors can give their partners valuable assistance, advice, and put them in touch with the right people. In 2020 have been already formed 96 mentoring pairs with mentees from 32 countries. 20% of the mentees are founders. <sup>22</sup></p>
<b>Further Information:</b>	<a href="https://www.integrationsfonds.at/weiterbildung/mentoring-fuer-migrantinnen">https://www.integrationsfonds.at/weiterbildung/mentoring-fuer-migrantinnen</a>

<sup>21</sup> Evaluation and Analysis of Good Practices in Promoting and Supporting Migrant Entrepreneurship Guide book, Publications Office of the European Union, 2016

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.integrationsfonds.at/weiterbildung/mentoring-fuer-migrantinnen>

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