



Policy recommendation

EVA – A European Entrepreneurship VET Model and Assessment Framework for Ethnic Minorities

The Erasmus+ funded EU-project EVA (A European Entrepreneurship VET Model and Assessment Framework for Ethnic Minorities) ran from September 2016 until September 2018.

The EVA platform has been developed for migrants and ethnic minorities start uppers. The platform is for online use.

The main objective of the project was to develop and test a European Entrepreneurship VET Model and Assessment Framework for Ethnic Minorities. This in the context of the lasting refugee issue in Europe: The rising number of migrants and refugees as well as the pressing need and wish to integrate these persons socially and financially as rapidly and effectively as possible.

The EVA project group recommends the stakeholders to apply this new tool within the VET system for assessing and developing the entrepreneurship competencies of migrants and ethnic minorities. The platform can be used as a self-study tool or in combination with counselling or training.

The EVA tool has been developed for migrants and ethnic minorities who have a basic knowledge of the host country's language and who will be able to navigate and understand the platform in this language. The tool does not require specific knowledge or experience with the host countries labour force.

While using the EVA platform potential entrepreneurs of migrants and ethnic minorities will have an opportunity to get an overview of all important institutions, (local) actors and supporting initiatives that can provide potential entrepreneurs with necessary information concerning the specific regulations and rules for setting up a business in different European countries. Users will:

- learn what the main steps are towards starting their own business
- compare and upgrade their existing skills, experiences and knowledge
- improve their language skills by learning important business terms
- train their entrepreneurship competencies with the help of the EVA Enterprise Simulator

The platform aims at helping migrants and ethnic minorities to conceptualise their competencies and skills, to define a new professional business project and to gain more self-confidence. Moreover the EVA project supports social integration of migrants and minorities by giving them a chance to start their own business and contribute to the development of their new home society.



The EVA platform www.eva-project.eu exists in English, Danish, German, Greek, Italian and Maltese.

In order to make lower the barriers for migrant start uppers, within the EVA project, the project group developed the EVA platform.

The project group was led by:

VIFIN (Videnscenter for Integration) from Vejle/Denmark.

Other members of the project group were:

CSCI (Consorzio Scuola Comunità Impresa) from Novara/Italy

Landeshauptstadt Magdeburg, Magdeburg/Germany

Politecnico di Torino, Turin/Italy

SOS (Solidarity Overseas Services), Malta

SYNTHESIS – Centre for research and education, Nicosia/Cyprus.

The EVA platform takes the potential entrepreneurs through a series of steps on their way to becoming an entrepreneur:

Assessing and evaluating the person's mind set, competencies and attitude towards being an entrepreneur

In this part, the users are taken through a series of tests and questions to clarify their entrepreneurial potential and to determine in which fields they can improve their entrepreneurial skills.

Collection of training materials

The results of the tests will then orient the users to a collection of training materials and/or refer them to where they can receive training. The users can find information, knowledge and further training in the appropriate areas of becoming an entrepreneur and starting their own business. The training materials consist of existing and already tested materials from various sources put into the context of migrant entrepreneurship.

Enterprise Simulator

In an online and safe environment, the users now have the possibility to test their previous and acquired knowledge by being taken through the process of becoming and being an entrepreneur. A virtual environment is utilized to motivate and engage the user, making it not simply a test, but a simulation of real life situations.

In addition, the project uses an underlying system of recognition and certification of competencies based on digital badges (www.badgecraft.eu), which will provide users with recognition of their competencies upon their completion of the simulator.



Recommendations

From the experiences and results of the project, the recommendations of the consortium are:

- For stakeholders (such as training organisations, job centres, language centres, etc. working with migrants), to focus on entrepreneurship as a potential path to self-support.
 - This can be done by informing about the possibilities on offers and training in competencies needed, all of which can be done with support from the EVA platform.
- To work with ethnic entrepreneurship using a multi-faceted approach, involving screening of competencies and mindset, working with business development and business forming in the country, and training of soft skills needed to enter the field – both regarding cultural knowledge and customer orientation.
 - We suggest using a counselling approach in combination with training, which can be done in the EVA tool. This two-sided approach offers personal assessment and counselling in combination with a self-study approach, that offers a lot of flexibility.
 - We see a need for materials and training that are culturally adapted to migrants and their language level.
- To screen closely the potential migrant entrepreneurs – and possibly lead them in the right direction, even if it is not entrepreneurship.
 - We suggest a screening of the individual regarding their entrepreneurship competencies, in order for them to have realistic expectations about their success as entrepreneurs. This includes assessing mindset and previous competences, as it is done in Discover Your Enterprise Skills in the EVA tool.
 - Use internships with existing business owners to give insight into being an entrepreneur. If the individual through screening/internship shows to be not suitable for entrepreneurship, the task might be to guide them in another suitable direction.
- Introduce support measures for potential migrant entrepreneurs.
 - We suggest a national focus on entrepreneurship as a potential way for migrants to become self-supported. This includes viewing it as an equally appropriate route as other jobs.
 - Establishing support measures, like education in entrepreneurship competencies and teaching on the national business context. This can be done locally (job centres, municipalities, etc.) and through national measures.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



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