



THARA

e Romengo than

A labour market project for Roma and Sinti in Vienna

2/2014 – 1/2015

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THARA e Romengo than

Thara e Romengo than (2/2014-1/2015) is the newest of a series of projects which have addressed the needs of the diverse Roma communities in Vienna, Austria, since 2005. THARA is financed by the Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

Target groups:

- Roma and Sinti of all ages living in Vienna
- Women and youth are the special focus groups of this project
- Multipliers and actors from public institutions, civil society organisations and NGOs
- The general public, both Roma and Non-Roma
- Journalists, scholars and students



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Main Objectives

- The integration of Roma and Sinti into the labour market in order to improve the socio-economic situation of Roma/Sinti in Vienna.
- To create awareness in society for the existing inequalities and discriminatory practices Roma and Sinti are faced with.
- To further the empowerment of Roma/Sinti by means of education and qualification, thereby improving their chances of gaining employment and/or creating other means of income.
- To foster the concept of upward mobility through education and vocational qualification in Roma/Sinti communities.

Activities of THARA e Romengo than

- Focus-Workshops for women and youths leaving school and/or apprentices
- Individual counselling (Job/career/social counselling)
- “Community Work” – communicating with Roma communities and mainstream players
- Thara “Biznis Club”
- Infotainment events
- Awareness-raising workshops for multipliers
- Thara Facebook platform as a means of growing the community of Thara friends and followers
- Thara Biznis Website
- Networking and contact-building in Roma communities and civil society organisations as well as governmental agencies



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Focus on Youth: Lehrlingscafés (Cafés for Apprentices)

- **Two workshops** (spring and autumn) for young girls and boys
 - who are in their last year of school and are thinking of starting an apprenticeship or continuing their education;
 - who have already begun an apprenticeship and need help, support or counselling.
- **Format:** A first evening in a relaxed setting with trainers and role-models, entertainment and information, the exchange of experiences between participants as well as excursions to businesses and career information centres.
- **Content:** Career counselling, how to find & apply for an apprenticeship, making a good first impression at your interview, help and support for vocational school, further education possibilities.
- Individual coaching and counselling as needed or desired.
- Additional funding for the Lehrlingscafés is provided by: <http://www.viel-falter.org/start.asp?ID=5&b=31>

Mit freundlicher Unterstützung von

Vielfalter.

Vielfalt als Chance. Möglichkeiten schaffen durch Bildung und Integration.

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Focus on Women

- Two workshops: (spring and autumn)
- Six workshop days
- Contents of the workshops:
 - Analysis of potential and competences
 - Career-planning
 - Gender and role-models
 - Personality development and strengthening of identity
 - Information about existing projects and qualification programmes for women and girls
 - Job application training
 - Individual coaching and counselling



Participants and trainers of spring workshop

Community Work

- Communication with the various and diverse Roma groups and associations in Vienna with the aim to inform as many members of the Roma communities about the activities of THARA,
- - but also to gather information about the needs of the communities.
- The community worker is present at Roma-events and regularly visits Roma-locations. Good personal relationships with various members of the Roma communities are of the essence.
- Networking with other institutions and agencies, projects, associations, relevant media outlets and NGOs working in similar fields is an important aspect of the “grass-roots” community work of THARA.



Roma Fest am Mexiko Platz



Counselling

- About 100 clients per year, mostly seen in individual counselling sessions, but also contacts via telephone and email.
- Clients sometimes face multiple problems such as:
 - Unemployment
 - Lack of German language skills,
 - Debt, financial problems
 - Residence and legal status,
 - Housing problems
 - Difficulties applying for jobs due to a lack of computer and language skills
- Lately, an increase of clients seeking information about further education and possibilities of having their foreign qualifications recognized has been recorded.
- THARA sometimes refers clients to other institutions or projects where they can find further assistance.



Awareness-raising Workshops

- 2 Workshops with about 30 participants in total
- **Trainers** are THARA employees and Romnja themselves; their personal narrative is an important aspect of the workshops as participants can ask them questions.
- **Participants** are mainly employees of other labour-market projects and/or institutions with a focus on the labour market, but can also be teachers, employees of women's NGOs and organisations which work in the health sector.
- **Content** of the Workshops: Three main topics:
 - An overview of Roma/Sinti history
 - Social and family structures
 - Traditional roles of family members

THARA on Facebook

- Social media have become an important part of THARA's communication and PR work.
- Since 2013, the friends and followers have grown from a few to currently around 450.
- Facebook is used as a means to notify friends and followers about events, jobs and education opportunities.
- All team members post regularly on Facebook.



New groups on Facebook page:

- 1.) Thara Jobportal - Job postings
- 2.) Group for youths with information specific to their needs (open apprenticeships, projects, etc.)

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Entrepreneurship / Small Business Coaching Workshops

THARA Roma Biznis (2013-14) offered:

- 5 workshops with 51 participants in total (either persons who wanted to found a business or to improve their business performance)
- The aim was to improve the participants' qualifications, disseminate relevant information and refer them to other institutions/organisations
- Workshop Topics: Microloans, public funding and mentoring programs, legal framework, social security and tax issues
- Thara worked closely with relevant players such as the Chamber of Commerce and Business Development Services, Business Agency Vienna, Labour Market Service (Business founding program)



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THARA Biznis Club

- Regular meetings of THARA clients who are either already in business or are hoping to found a small business or become single-person entrepreneurs.
- The aim is to exchange experiences, disseminate important information and connect the participants to other institutions and organisations which can help them achieve their goals.
- Issues often discussed are:
 - Microloans
 - Public funding
 - Mentoring programs
 - Legal questions
 - Social security and taxation
 - Advertising and PR



THARA Biznis Club Female Entrepreneurs' Breakfast
March 7, 2014

Thara Biznis Website

- www.thara-biznis.at
- Originally started three years ago, the website has been kept going since then.
- It is a platform for Roma and Sinti centred around the topics of employment and business.
- Information on the website is presented bilingually for the most part and organized in a simple and easy-to-read layout.
- Thara-Biznis features:
 - Announcements and links to current events, jobs and downloads
 - Links to government information in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
 - Downloads of various relevant information brochures.
 - Company yellow pages (20 branches)



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Thara Biznis Prize

Thara Roma Biznis (2013-14) initiated and awarded the prize focussing on Roma and Sinti entrepreneurs in Vienna (18 applications).

Prize was awarded in two categories:

- successful (Roma) business founders
- companies with a special focus on diversity

The aim was to highlight the success and diversity of (immigrant) entrepreneurs and to honour their efforts.



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„ I do not think, that Roma culture differs from other cultures that much. We like the same things as other people: music, family, a good life. We simply have a little bit more problems than others.“

Stojan Marincovic

