



EURO
CITIES



Do it in Barcelona

Attracting foreign entrepreneurs

Do it in Barcelona aims to attract foreign entrepreneurs to the city by providing them with support services for the development of their businesses.

The programme helps newcomers by ensuring they have knowledge of the new environments in which they find themselves and the tools that can guide them towards success.

Set up by Barcelona's development agency Barcelona Activa in 2009, the scheme is built on close cooperation between educational institutes, the city and regional governments, and business organisations.

This enables it to provide a broad range of services, starting from the person's arrival in Barcelona and learning of city procedures to fundraising and professional guidance for business creation.



To be successful in Barcelona, it's very important to build your local network. I attended 'Live and Set Up: Do it in Barcelona' to find out what opportunities the city of Barcelona offers to small start-ups. The session provided a very good overview of the commitment the city is making to attract, encourage and retain talent. I was impressed with the effort and thought that's been put into the project



Robert Merino, director of a training and consulting firm, originally from USA

cities in action

June 2013

where: Barcelona, Spain
what: economy
when: 2009+

Focusing on the individual

Because Do it in Barcelona focuses on attracting individual talent rather than corporations, it provides personalised services that are tailored to individual needs.

These can include services provided by other departments in Barcelona Activa:

- welcome: providing a welcome guide, legal permits guide and a one stop online service for dealing with city procedures;
- business set-up: providing entrepreneurs with work space, digital tools, coaching, networking, and practical advice on how to secure funding;
- work: providing professional guidance, a job database, resources and tips for applications and a platform linking foreign applicants with companies and recruitment agencies;
- research: providing information about the Catalan university and research system and a R&D search engine with calls for funding, information resources, news and events, and a helpdesk with personalised attention;
- study: offering a comprehensive guide to English-taught programmes, a housing search service and a foreign students' guide.

Spreading the word

Partnerships with business schools, chambers of commerce, trade fairs and hotel associations have helped to distribute promotional material to a wide range of people.

The Spanish Airports & National Air Navigation Authority even allowed the scheme's organisers to set up an area at Barcelona's El Prat airport where they could greet the large number of foreign visitors that arrive in the city every year.

Measuring success

Do it in Barcelona has also secured substantial funding from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund.

Since 2009, the Do it in Barcelona team has provided guidance to prospective entrepreneurs over 24,000 times.

In 2012 more than 2,500 new business projects used one or more of the services offered by Do it in Barcelona, while 2,544 foreign-born entrepreneurs used the coaching and networking service.

Despite the adverse effects of the economic crisis, Do it in Barcelona is proving to be an important talent attraction policy for the city.



Barcelona has faced the recession knowing that only innovation enables us to overcome this situation. We have to attract and retain more talent to create future jobs

Jordi William Carnes, deputy mayor of economic promotion, Barcelona

