

Vienna offers €35 million support package for businesses

Ludwig/Ruck/Hanke: City of Vienna and Vienna Economic Chamber agree urgent action to support companies – especially small companies – and their employees affected by the coronavirus. For details, visit www.wien.gv.at/coronavirus and www.wko.at/coronavirus

Vienna, 15/03/2020

The City of Vienna and the Vienna Economic Chamber have moved to bolster businesses in Vienna with a support package in response to the challenging situation brought about by the coronavirus. “We are providing swift and unbureaucratic support. Our aim is to protect businesses and their employees from hardship,” said Mayor Michael Ludwig, Vienna Economic Chamber President Walter Ruck and City Councillor for Economic Affairs Peter Hanke in a joint statement on Sunday. This support will focus on one-person businesses as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. The first package includes:

- €12 million of guarantees to boost the liquidity of Viennese SMEs
- €20 million emergency fund for one-person businesses and micro-enterprises
- €3 million increase for the waff budget to support labour foundations

“Vienna will stand together through this difficult time; we will take decisive action to mitigate the impact of this crisis as best we can,” said Mayor Ludwig emphatically.

“Together with the City of Vienna, we are today launching the largest support initiative for Viennese entrepreneurs in the history of the Vienna Economic Chamber. Small enterprises and one-person businesses in particular need rapid support in this extraordinary situation,” affirmed President Ruck.

“Our job now is to help. Business can rely on us. We will do everything in our power to help businesses in Vienna stay afloat,” said Councillor Hanke.

€12 million to boost the liquidity of Viennese SMEs

As part of a support initiative for small and medium-sized enterprises in Vienna, the WKBG (Wiener Kreditbürgschafts- und Beteiligungsbank) will grant additional guarantees of up to 80% to banks for bridging loans (working capital financing). Applications for guarantees should be made through the company’s house bank (see www.wkbg.at for an overview and application form).

The City of Vienna and the Vienna Economic Chamber will each contribute €5 million to make €10 million of additional guarantees available in this new underwriting initiative from the WKBG, in order to provide swift and unbureaucratic support to the Viennese economy in the form of bridging loans.

- Simple applications, rapid processing
- Liability: up to 80% for loans from €5,000 to €500,000 from house banks

This will facilitate lending of more than €12 million. The City of Vienna and the Vienna Economic Chamber will also bear the costs (processing fees and premiums) for WKBG liabilities.

€20 million emergency fund for one-person businesses and micro-enterprises now live

The City of Vienna and Vienna Economic Chamber have moved swiftly to provide an additional €10 million to the Emergency Fund of the Vienna Economic Chamber, which was established to provide support in crises. As a result, Vienna-based one-person businesses and micro-enterprises that have fallen on hard times as a result of the coronavirus pandemic can draw on a total of €20 million of funding. One-person businesses and micro-enterprises with up to 10 employees severely affected by the crisis (i.e. > 50% loss of revenue) can apply for support from the fund.

Details of this support will be published in the coming days. Information will be published on www.wien.gv.at/coronavirus and www.wko.at/coronavirus.

The Vienna Business Agency's specialist team will offer their advice and support to the Vienna Economic Chamber in order to facilitate and accelerate the processing of applications. The aim is to operate an unbureaucratic system and disburse funds immediately upon receipt of the application.

waff ramps up funding for labour foundations

More and more Viennese businesses are in urgent need of support to cope with overstaffing. In response, the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff) and Public Employment Service (AMS) have made various support options available. These range from setting up a labour foundation at companies forced to make redundancies to helping employees gain qualifications during training leave or while on reduced working hours.

The Vienna Employment Promotion Fund is collaborating with the Public Employment Service in the search for suitable means by which individual companies can communicate with works associations. If, despite the efforts of everyone involved, a company falls into insolvency, the City of Vienna is prepared to establish labour foundations through the waff. The new measures include:

- Immediate budget increase of €3 million
- Aimed at boosting labour foundation financing
- Financial security provided in the form of training grants and benefits during participation in labour foundation activities
- Career orientation
- Training and professional development
- Support on the job hunt

City of Vienna: Information offensive: wien.gv.at/coronavirus

The city administration is using all media channels at its disposal to communicate the latest information on the coronavirus and ongoing support options to the people of Vienna as effectively as possible, in real time. Both digital and analogue media are being used as well as letters from city hall, info screens on public transport, digital video boards in council buildings – and, of course, social media.

The website www.wien.gv.at/coronavirus includes a comprehensive FAQs section on COVID-19 along with a news ticker reporting the latest information from the city administration and other reliable sources.

The website www.wien.gv.at/coronavirus supports the people of Vienna in their efforts to help their fellow citizens. For instance, the site offers practical assistance to people looking to help their neighbours and do their bit for their community. The website is also supplemented by a new service hotline at +43 1 4000 4001, which offers practical help for elderly people and people with pre-existing medical conditions in Vienna, who currently require additional support.

You can find the City of Vienna's information service at:

- www.wien.gv.at/coronavirus
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/wien.at
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/stadtwien
- Twitter: @Stadt_Wien

Economic Chamber: Information for companies: wko.at/coronavirus

The Vienna Economic Chamber is also working to update businesses in Vienna on current measures and the latest developments. The Vienna Economic Chamber provides up-to-date information, guidance, FAQs and a chatbot function at www.wko.at/coronavirus, as well as a coronavirus hotline at +43 (0)590900 4352.

Vienna Economic Chamber info service:

- www.wko.at/coronavirus
- Hotline: +43 590900 4352
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/WKOWien
- Twitter: @WKOWien
- Email: info@wkw.at

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