

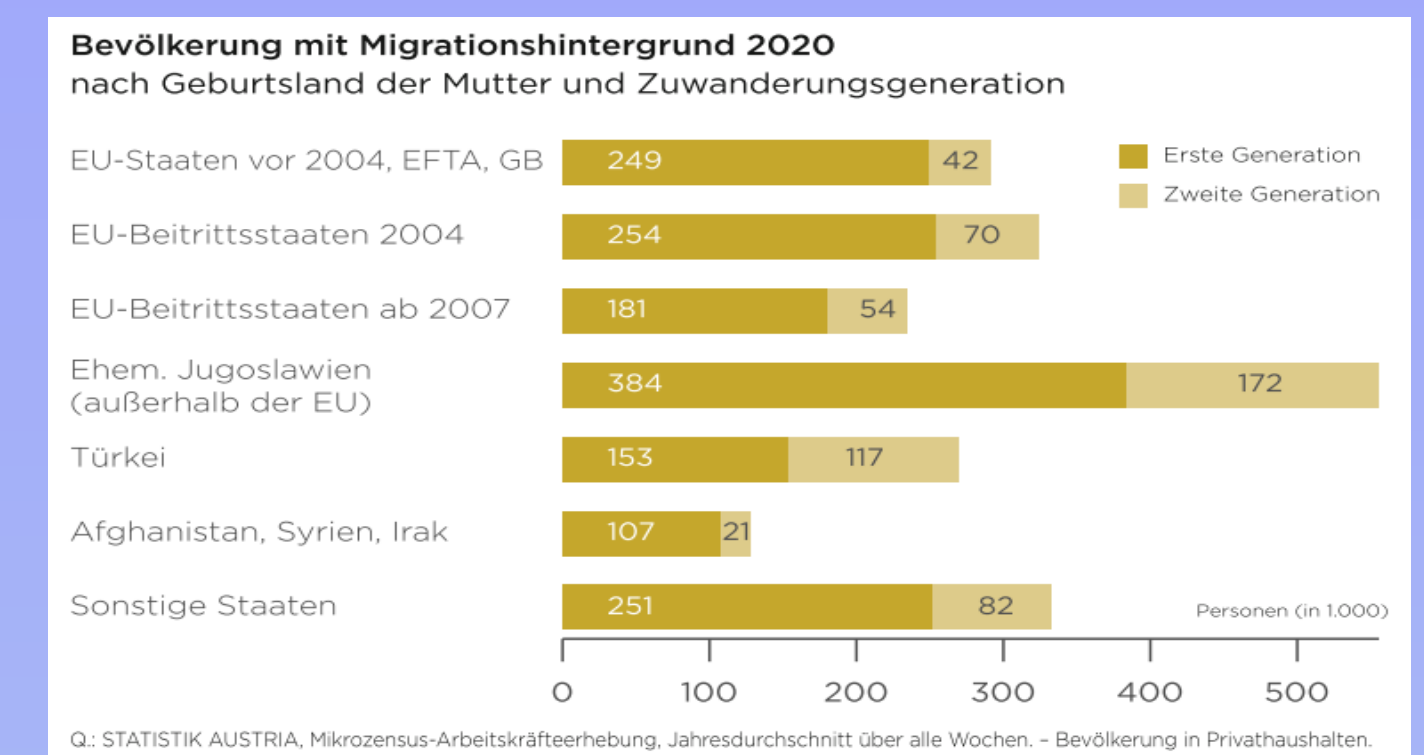
# Vienna meets the Balkans

## Communicative practices and commodification of culture in the city's migrant economy

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### 1. Introduction

- Migrants of Balkan origin are the largest group of incomers to Vienna (Statistik Austria, 2021) and shape the city's economy & appearance in particular districts (e.g., Märzstraße).
- These migrants to Vienna often become entrepreneurs due to lack of language skills & difficulties in accessing the Austrian labour market.
- Self-employment allows for a degree of autonomy and agency, as well as the chance of social mobility and advancement in the host society.
- The hospitality sector seems particularly attractive and accessible but also enables migrant entrepreneurs to commodify their home country's language and culture.



### 2. Research questions



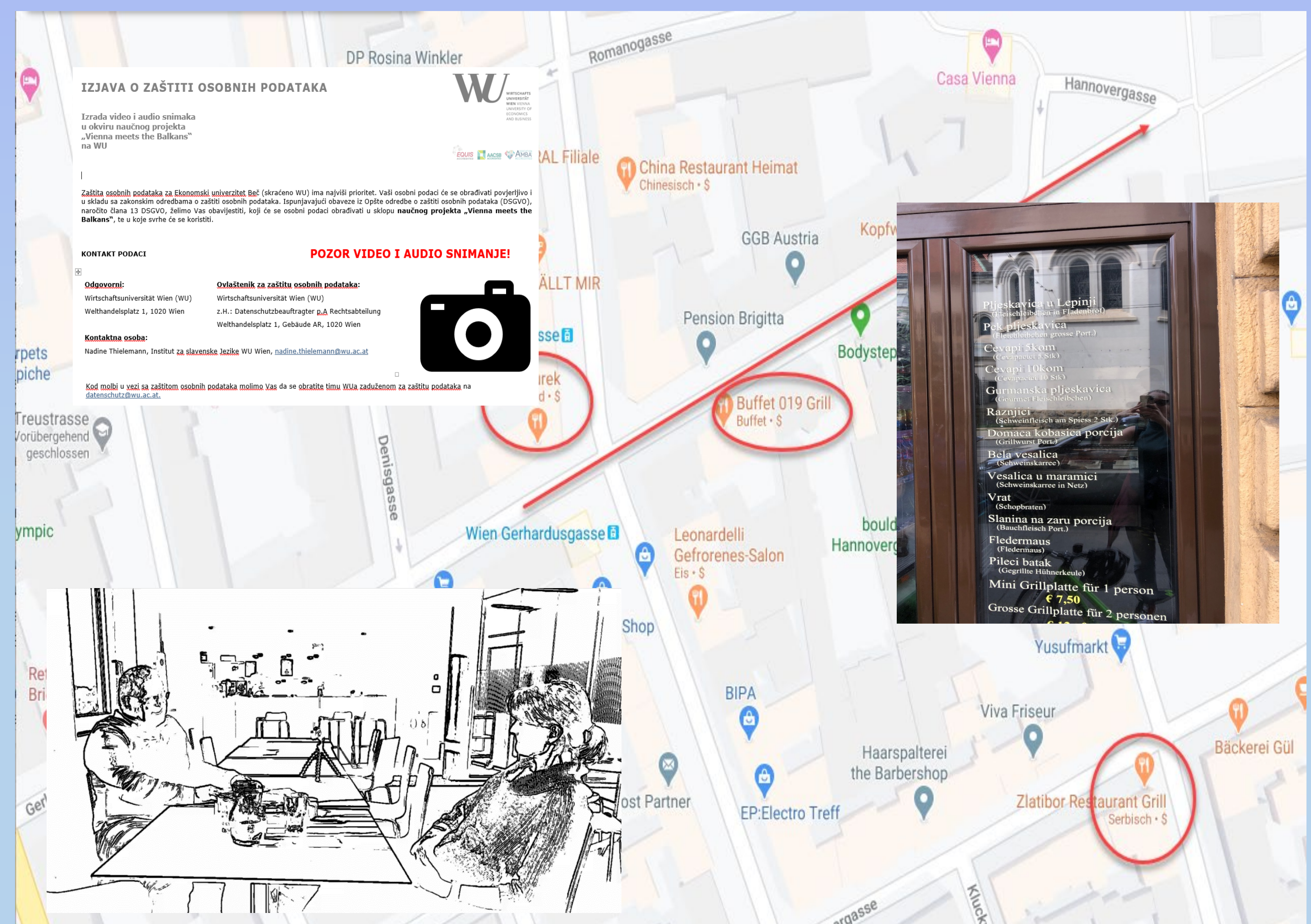
1. How do migrant businesses shape the neighbourhoods and communities in which they operate, creating sites of international encounter and enhancing urban development?
2. How do migrant entrepreneurs mobilise their cultural capital and linguistic heritage in order to achieve business success?

### 4. Research aims and objectives



- Reveal the linguistic and cultural resources mobilized by migrant entrepreneurs - commodification of language & culture;
- Reconstruct members' perspective on language, culture and communication, i.e. identity narratives by migrant entrepreneurs and perceptions by customers & clients;
- Detect the semiotic resources and communicative practices turning the districts into sites of intercultural encounters.

### 3. Data & Methods



- Analysis of **communicative practices** emerging in small Viennese businesses in the hospitality sector run by migrants of Balkan origin.
- Explorative and ethnographic approach relying on participatory and documentary methods.
- Triangulation of data & methods:
  - semi-structured narrative interviews, analysis of service encounters, participatory observation, semiotic landscapes;
  - Grounded Theory, Positioning, Membership Categorization Analysis, multimodal analysis.

### 5. Implications for practice

- With regard to several stakeholders (Key stakeholders include: City of Vienna, business development agencies, further and adult education colleges, migrant supporting NGOs and NPOs), e.g.:
- foregrounding resources rather than deficits with regard to migrant entrepreneurs, adopting & including migrants' perspectives;
  - tailoring support schemes to migrant entrepreneurs' actual needs based on the challenges they experience;
  - raising visibility of migrants' contribution to diversifying Vienna's local business landscape and to urban scaling;
  - reframing the relevant districts in city marketing by acknowledging the contribution of migrants' cultural heritage and its commodification.

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