

S M  
B Museum Europäischer Kulturen  
Staatliche Museen  
zu Berlin

## Special Exhibition Announcement

### **Doner, Delivery and Design – Entrepreneurs in Berlin** **A workshop exhibition on “immigrant economy”**

21.11.2009 – 28.2.2010 (opening: November 20, 7 pm)

Doner kebab was actually invented in Berlin, by a former “guest worker” from Turkey. In Germany this particular fast food has gone from strength to strength ever since, but it has already started conquering the rest of Europe as well. Berlin alone features ca. 1,600 doner kebab sellers who have long since ceased making their own spits, now mostly procured from professional manufacturers instead. Over the last 20 years the capital has witnessed the flourishing of a veritable doner kebab industry. This also includes supply contractors – to be found in the city’s Turkish yellow pages, as are the kebab shop furnishers.

All these entrepreneurs have two things in common: on the one hand they are part of the middle class, and hence of our society’s economic backbone. And on the other they have either immigrated themselves, or descend from immigrants. Approximately 33,000 of the over 200,000 members registered in both the Berlin Trade Corporation and Chamber of Industry & Commerce hold a foreign passport. Another estimated 12,000 small- and medium-sized businesses run by German nationals with a so-called migration background need to be added to this figure. The services rendered by all these self-employed are commonly referred to as the “ethnic economy”. But today this term no longer denotes a mere economic niche, which had often been the case in the 1960s and 70s, as the typical small shops have meanwhile been joined by a steadily growing number of other entrepreneurs in the service, media, fashion and exports industries. The potential of their labour has only found full recognition in recent years: it has become indispensable for Berlin’s economy as a whole, shapes day-to-day life in many of the city’s districts, and contributes to the sociocultural integration of Berlin residents. This is because these businessmen and –women are familiar with at least two cultures, and able to mediate between them. Owing to its fragility, however, this type of economy also requires political, financial and advisory support, if its stakeholders and beneficiaries are to thrive.

These topics will be touched upon in a small workshop exhibition mainly featuring photographs and a number of objects. The exhibition forms part of the provisional contribution jointly provided by the Museum of European Cultures and the Neighbourhood Museum Association for the EU project „*Entrepreneurial Cultures in European Cities*“ (2008-2010, [www.eciec.eu](http://www.eciec.eu)), and it relates to the project “Migration, Work and Identity” (2000-2003), which had also been assisted by the EU.

*Venue:*

Dahlem Museums, Lansstrasse 8, 14195 Berlin, Germany