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**Promoting Entrepreneurship among Young People with Migrant
Background, focusing on the Trade of Natural Products**

**Policy Brief Recommendations: The Topic of Migrant
Entrepreneurship (Policy Brief 2)**

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Executive Summary

This comprehensive policy brief addresses the challenges and opportunities of migrant entrepreneurship across Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Spain, and Ireland, focusing on the natural products trade among young people with migrant backgrounds. It highlights the entrepreneurial spirit of migrants and the structural barriers they face, such as bureaucratic hurdles, limited access to finance, and discrimination. The brief proposes targeted recommendations to promote entrepreneurship, including simplifying business registration processes, enhancing access to finance, providing business training and networking opportunities, and fostering inclusivity through cultural exchange programs. By implementing these measures, each country can unlock the full potential of migrant entrepreneurs, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and improved social cohesion.





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Introduction

Migration presents both significant challenges and opportunities for economic development and social integration within Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Spain, and Ireland. Migrant entrepreneurs bring valuable skills, innovation, and cultural diversity to the natural products trade, yet often encounter obstacles such as administrative complexities, financial constraints, and societal discrimination. This policy brief aims to analyze these challenges and opportunities, offering actionable policy recommendations to empower migrant entrepreneurs and leverage their contributions for the benefit of both the migrants and the host countries. The brief targets policymakers, government agencies, NGOs, and stakeholders involved in economic development and cultural integration initiatives, providing a roadmap for fostering a supportive and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.





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Cyprus

Executive Summary

The present condition of entrepreneurship for migrants in Cyprus, including labor migrants, students, and asylum seekers, is challenging, particularly for young individuals. Young entrepreneurs from third countries (TCNs) encounter obstacles in establishing their businesses in Cyprus, primarily due to bureaucratic, procedural, political, legal, and cultural challenges.

Introduction

Presently, despite noticeable advancements in entrepreneurship, attributed to state-provided tax incentives, initiatives by various organizations, and other diverse efforts, there remains a substantial need for significant enhancements to facilitate the growth of current and future entrepreneurs operating in the Republic of Cyprus.

The purpose of this Policy Brief is to provide:

- a view of the current state in Cyprus regarding migrants and entrepreneurship
- certain challenges and opportunities offered
- proposals for Policy Makers in the field

Background

According to Eurostat 2017, Cyprus has a population of 854,802.2. In the fourth quarter of 2017, the total number of unemployed people in Cyprus was 47,006, with 38,216 being Cypriots, 5,487 EU Nationals, and 3,302 Non-EU Nationals. The self-employment rates in Cyprus for insured persons in 2016 were 70% (27,404) for Greek-Cypriots and others, 0.2% (26) for Turkish Cypriots, 11% (920) for aliens, and 18.8% (2593) for EU citizens.

According to the Monthly Migration Statistics from the Civil Registry and Migration Department in July 2016, the total number of immigrants with residence permits was 63,203. The primary countries of origin were India, followed by Russia and China. The distribution of residence permits based on the main types was as follows: Domestic Employment 29.82% (18,844), Immigration Permits 14.72% (9,302), General Employment 11.74% (7,423), International Protection 11.13% (7,036), and Family Members of Cyprus 10.29% (6,503).

Analysis of the Issue

Challenges

There are several significant challenges within the legal framework, particularly concerning Third Country Nationals (TCNs). Their rights, whether as students, asylum



seekers, or workers, are severely restricted, hindering their eligibility for self-employment opportunities, which, as highlighted earlier, are contingent on financial resources.

Regarding financial obstacles, challenges include a lack of funding or knowledge essential for navigating funding options, understanding tax regulations, meeting loan criteria, managing salaries, handling investments, addressing rental costs, and managing electricity expenses. Additionally, challenges are identified in services related to bureaucracy, including a lack of communication between authorities and service fees.

Sociocultural obstacles revolve around a shortage of talent and networking, emerging as the two primary challenges in this domain.

Additional sociocultural challenges and barriers encompass the undervaluation of abilities and instances of bullying by individuals in higher positions, leading to self-esteem problems, confusion, and indecisiveness. Further challenges involve a lack of self-confidence and personal support, coupled with insufficient assistance in professional aspects such as time and risk management. These factors contribute to a complex environment for individuals seeking to navigate and succeed in entrepreneurship.

Opportunities

Two significant initiatives aimed at fortifying youth and migrant entrepreneurship are the 'Youth and Women Entrepreneurship' and 'Startups4Peace.' The Youth Women Entrepreneurship initiative focuses on fostering, supporting, and promoting entrepreneurship among young individuals and women interested in various economic sectors. Startups4Peace, an annual competition and mini-acceleration program, seeks to unite the communities of Cyprus, offering motivation, knowledge, and resources for building and expanding new business ventures.

The government has also introduced relevant initiatives such as the Start-up Visa and Tax Incentive. The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus plays a role by providing opportunities for entrepreneurs, with a mission to create conditions for planned and systematic training and development of the country's human resources at all levels and in all areas, aligning with the state's social and economic policies.

In the realm of initiatives specifically targeting the enhancement of youth enterprise, particularly those sponsored or initiated by the government, a noteworthy program is the Youth Entrepreneurship initiative facilitated by the Youth Board of Cyprus. This program, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, was designed to provide support and encouragement for youth entrepreneurship. It stands as a



relevant government-funded effort to foster and empower young entrepreneurs in Cyprus.

The analysis of the opportunities offered here, in comparison with the challenges showed in the previous chapter, has a very country-specific focus. Policy Making should begin by reviewing the existing challenges and take them into consideration when someone develop a new approach and activities for boosting migrant entrepreneurship.

One thing that is common throughout Europe is the fact that support services for business creation and development are fragmented and usually takes a lot of time for someone to begin the process of creating his/ her new business. Another thing is that many migrants do not speak the language of their host country and thus they face many problems with communicating and exchange information. This is the reason why translators should be used in this context.

Policy Recommendations

- **Business Training**

- Migrant entrepreneurs, especially those lacking prior business experience or training, often require enhancement of their business skills. Group business support typically involves training sessions aimed at developing a range of these skills, including creating a business plan, acquiring accountancy skills, and formulating effective marketing strategies. This collective approach aims to equip migrant entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge and capabilities for successful business management.

- **Networking**

- Migrant entrepreneurs frequently possess relatively limited and diverse personal and business networks. Their personal network tends to comprise predominantly other migrants, while their business contacts are also often limited and primarily consist of other migrants. As a result, they face challenges in accessing the 'right' contacts to obtain necessary information. Moreover, their existing business contacts may guide them toward low-profitable and/or ethnic markets, contributing to difficulties in expanding their business reach beyond specific niches.

- **Legal and administrative support**

- Legal and administrative support is geared towards simplifying the process of addressing the necessary requirements for initiating and managing a business. Migrant entrepreneurs typically lack prior experience with the bureaucracy and legal/administrative requirements



of the specific location where they establish their business. As a result, they may not be familiar with the regulatory and administrative systems in place, making such support crucial to help them navigate these complexities more effectively.

Conclusion

In this Brief, we presented that the current state of migration and entrepreneurship in Cyprus needs more attention from Policy Makers.

The challenges are many, from bureaucracy to legal challenges and socio-cultural ones.

It is extremely important for Policy makers to put more effort in addressing the issue of migration and entrepreneurship, as migrants is a group of high priority in terms of social exclusion.





Greece

Executive Summary

This policy brief highlights the significant potential of migrant entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth and social integration in Greece. Despite facing challenges like administrative hurdles, limited access to finance, and discrimination, migrant entrepreneurs contribute significantly to the economy and job creation. By implementing targeted recommendations, including simplifying business registration, enhancing access to finance, promoting capacity building, and fostering inclusivity, Greece can create a more supportive ecosystem for these entrepreneurs. This will lead to increased innovation, job creation, and improved social cohesion.

Introduction

Greece, with its strategic location and access to the European market, presents a unique opportunity for migrant entrepreneurs. However, their contributions are often hindered by various challenges. This policy brief analyzes these challenges and proposes actionable policy recommendations to empower migrant entrepreneurs and unlock their full potential. This information is crucial for stakeholders, including the government, private sector, NGOs, and the EU, who can play a vital role in fostering a more inclusive and prosperous Greece.

Background

The Rise of Migrant Entrepreneurship in Greece:

- According to a 2023 study by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Greece hosts over 100,000 migrants, with a significant portion involved in entrepreneurial activities.
- The Hellenic Confederation of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (ESEE) estimates that migrant-owned businesses contribute over 20% of the total turnover in the retail and service sectors in major cities.
- This trend reflects a global phenomenon of increasing migrant entrepreneurship, driven by factors like:
 - Limited employment opportunities in the formal labor market.
 - Desire for economic independence and self-reliance.
 - Transferable skills and experience from their home countries.

Challenges Faced by Migrant Entrepreneurs:



- Administrative hurdles: Complex business registration procedures, often lacking information in multiple languages, create significant initial barriers.
- Limited access to finance: Difficulty obtaining loans due to lack of credit history, collateral, or awareness of available funding schemes. A 2022 report by the European Commission highlights the need for tailored financial products for migrant entrepreneurs.
- Skill and capacity gaps: Many lack knowledge of the Greek business environment, business planning skills, and digital literacy, hindering their ability to grow and compete effectively.
- Legal and regulatory challenges: Navigating complex legal frameworks related to tax obligations, employment law, and business regulations presents a significant hurdle.
- Social integration and discrimination: Potential lack of social networks and exposure to discriminatory practices can limit access to resources and opportunities. A 2020 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) found that 30% of migrant entrepreneurs in Greece have experienced discrimination.



Recent Developments:

- The Hellenic Republic Ministry of Development and Investments launched a "Support for New Business Creation" program in 2023, offering grants and simplified procedures for new businesses, including those owned by migrants.
- The EU Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Migration and Home Affairs is exploring initiatives to support capacity building and knowledge sharing to facilitate migrant entrepreneurship across the EU.

By understanding the current landscape, challenges, and recent developments, policymakers can develop effective strategies to support migrant entrepreneurs and unlock their full potential for the benefit of the entire Greek society.

Analysis of the Issue

Several systemic barriers hinder the success of migrant entrepreneurship in Greece, limiting their potential contribution to the economy.

Key Challenges:



- *Administrative hurdles:* Complex business registration procedures often lack information in multiple languages, creating a barrier to entry.
 - The EU's "New Pact on Migration and Asylum" emphasizes the need for streamlined procedures and multilingual information to facilitate migrant entrepreneurship.
- *Limited access to finance:* Difficulty obtaining loans due to lack of credit history and collateral hinders growth.
 - The European Commission's "Support for New Business Creation" program offers grants and simplifies procedures for new businesses, including those owned by migrants. Partnering with financial institutions, as suggested in the OECD report "The Contribution of Migrant Entrepreneurs in Greece", could develop tailored financial products for migrant entrepreneurs.
- *Skill and capacity gaps:* Many lack knowledge of the Greek business environment, business planning skills, and digital literacy.
 - The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) highlights the need to invest in training programs specifically designed for migrant entrepreneurs, focusing on business planning, financial literacy, and digital skills. Additionally, mentorship and networking opportunities with established entrepreneurs, as proposed in the IOM report "Migrant Entrepreneurship in Greece: Opportunities and Challenges", can provide valuable guidance and support.
- *Legal and regulatory challenges:* Navigating complex legal frameworks related to tax obligations, employment law, and business regulations presents a significant hurdle.
 - Providing legal assistance to navigate these complexities, as recommended in the FRA report "Integration of Migrants in the European Union: The Role of Entrepreneurship", can empower migrant entrepreneurs to operate within the legal framework.
- *Social integration and discrimination:* Potential lack of social networks and exposure to discrimination can limit access to resources and opportunities.
 - Combating discrimination through awareness campaigns and educational initiatives, as suggested in the FRA report, is crucial to foster an inclusive environment where migrant entrepreneurs can thrive.





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Insights from EU Policies and Reports:

The analysis draws insights from various EU policies and reports to highlight potential solutions for each challenge:

- *Streamlining administrative procedures and multilingual information:* This aligns with the EU's "New Pact on Migration and Asylum".
- *Financial support programs and partnerships with financial institutions:* This is supported by the European Commission's "Support for New Business Creation" program and the OECD report's recommendation.
- *Investing in training programs and fostering mentorship opportunities:* This aligns with the recommendations of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the IOM report.
- *Providing legal assistance:* This is recommended by the FRA report's "Integration of Migrants in the European Union: The Role of Entrepreneurship".
- *Combating discrimination:* This aligns with the recommendation of the FRA report.

Policy Recommendations

1. Simplify Business Registration:

- Streamline online and offline registration procedures by reducing the number of required documents and steps.
- Ensure all relevant information is readily available in multiple languages (e.g., English, French, Arabic) on government websites and official channels.
- Establish one-stop shops or designated support centers within existing government agencies (e.g., Chambers of Commerce) to assist migrant entrepreneurs in navigating the registration process in their preferred language.

2. Enhance Access to Finance:

- Establish dedicated funding programs:
 - Offer grants to cover initial business setup costs and equipment.
 - Provide low-interest loans with flexible repayment options and guarantee schemes to mitigate risk for financial institutions.
 - Explore establishing a venture capital fund specifically focused on promising migrant-owned startups, potentially with co-financing from the private sector.
- Partner with Greek financial institutions to develop tailored financial products suitable for migrant entrepreneurs, considering their lack of credit history and specific financial needs.

3. Promote Capacity Building:



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- Offer training programs specifically designed for migrant entrepreneurs, focusing on:
 - Business planning and management skills.
 - Financial literacy and access to financial resources.
 - Digital skills and e-commerce opportunities.
 - Marketing and business communication in the Greek context.
- Encourage mentorship and networking opportunities by:
 - Connecting migrant entrepreneurs with established Greek and migrant entrepreneurs for guidance and support.
 - Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing among migrant entrepreneurs.



4. Provide Legal and Regulatory Support:

- Establish legal assistance programs offering free or low-cost legal advice to migrant entrepreneurs on:
 - Navigating tax obligations, employment law, and business regulations.
 - Understanding and complying with licensing and permit requirements.
- Partner with the Greek Bar Association or other legal professional bodies to provide consultations on these issues.
- Establish a dedicated online platform with clear and accessible information on legal requirements, licensing procedures, and relevant regulations in multiple languages, alongside a directory of legal professionals offering specialized services to migrant entrepreneurs.

5. Promote Inclusivity:

- Launch multilingual public awareness campaigns highlighting the positive contributions of migrant entrepreneurs to the Greek economy and society, utilizing diverse media channels and collaborating with migrant community organizations.
- Develop and implement educational programs in schools and communities to combat stereotypes and foster a more inclusive environment for migrant entrepreneurs.

6. Foster Public-Private Partnerships:

- Establish a dedicated working group composed of representatives from the government, private sector (including chambers of commerce and business associations), NGOs working with migrant communities, and migrant entrepreneurs themselves.



- Utilize available EU funds such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to co-finance initiatives that support migrant entrepreneurship.
- Leverage existing initiatives and funding opportunities facilitated by the EU's "New Pact on Migration and Asylum" to encourage collaboration between stakeholders.

By implementing these clear, actionable, and context-specific policy recommendations, Greece can create a more supportive ecosystem for migrant entrepreneurs. This will not only contribute to economic growth and job creation, but also foster social cohesion by aligning with the principles of the EU framework while addressing the specific needs of the country's migrant population.

Conclusion

Migrant entrepreneurship holds immense potential to contribute to Greece's economic growth and social integration. Recognizing their challenges and implementing targeted policy recommendations are crucial to unlocking this potential. By simplifying business registration, enhancing access to finance, promoting capacity building, providing legal and regulatory support, fostering inclusivity, and encouraging public-private partnerships, Greece can create a more welcoming and supportive environment for migrant entrepreneurs. This will not only empower these individuals but also lead to increased innovation, job creation, and a more cohesive society.

Furthermore, aligning these policy recommendations with the EU's commitment to social inclusion and economic development, as well as leveraging available EU funding opportunities, can further strengthen Greece's efforts in supporting migrant entrepreneurship and contribute to a more prosperous and inclusive European Union.



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Turkey

Executive Summary:

This policy brief outlines the key challenges and opportunities related to migrant entrepreneurship in Turkey. It emphasizes the importance of addressing these issues for economic development and offers recommendations such as tailored support mechanisms, inclusive policies, and collaboration with EU guidelines. By fostering migrant entrepreneurship, Turkey can unlock the full potential of its diverse population and contribute to a more dynamic and inclusive economy.

Introduction:

In the context of Türkiye's evolving demographic landscape, this policy brief addresses the critical role of migrant entrepreneurship. By providing an overview of the challenges and opportunities, the brief aims to guide policymakers, governmental agencies, and stakeholders in formulating effective strategies to support and promote migrant entrepreneurship.

Migrant entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the economic landscape of Turkey, contributing to innovation, job creation, and cultural diversity. This policy brief aims to address the specific challenges and opportunities faced by migrant entrepreneurs in Turkey. The intended audience includes policymakers, business leaders, and organizations involved in supporting entrepreneurship and migrant integration.

Background:

The background section explores current migration trends, challenges faced by migrants in entrepreneurial endeavors, and recent developments in Turkey. It underlines the importance of recognizing the entrepreneurial potential within the migrant community and the positive impact it can have on economic growth. Relevant data and statistics are presented to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

Migrant entrepreneurship in Turkey has been influenced by various factors, including migration trends, economic conditions, and policy frameworks. Recent developments have highlighted the need for targeted support and initiatives to empower migrant entrepreneurs. Data and statistics underscore the contributions of migrant entrepreneurs to the economy and the importance of fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Analysis of the Issue:



Analyzing the challenges and opportunities in migrant entrepreneurship, this section explores the interconnected nature of economic inclusion and social integration. Insights from EU policies and frameworks are incorporated to highlight successful approaches to migrant entrepreneurship and encourage alignment with European guidelines. The analysis considers how fostering migrant entrepreneurship can contribute to a more robust and diverse economy.

Policy Recommendations:

The policy recommendations section offers actionable strategies to support and promote migrant entrepreneurship in Türkiye. Recommendations include creating tailored support programs, facilitating access to financial resources, and implementing inclusive policies that address cultural and language barriers. These recommendations are designed to align with EU guidelines while considering the unique needs of Turkey's migrant population.

To support migrant entrepreneurship in Turkey, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1. Develop Tailored Support Programs:** Implement tailored support programs specifically designed to address the unique needs and challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs in Türkiye. These programs should include mentorship opportunities, business training, and networking initiatives to enhance the entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of migrants.
- 2. Facilitate Access to Financial Resources:** Ensure that migrant entrepreneurs have access to financial resources, grants, and loans to start and grow their businesses. Establish mechanisms that provide financial support to migrant entrepreneurs, enabling them to overcome financial barriers and establish successful ventures.
- 3. Promote Intercultural Dialogue and Collaboration:** Foster intercultural dialogue and collaboration among migrant entrepreneurs and local business communities. Encourage partnerships and networking opportunities that facilitate knowledge exchange, innovation, and business growth across diverse cultural backgrounds.
- 4. Enhance Integration Initiatives:** Strengthen integration initiatives that create a welcoming environment for migrant entrepreneurs in Türkiye. Develop policies that promote social inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs to thrive in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- 5. Align Policies with EU Guidelines:** Ensure that the policy recommendations for migrant entrepreneurship align with EU guidelines and best practices. By harmonizing Türkiye's



policies with EU standards, migrant entrepreneurs can benefit from a supportive regulatory framework that promotes entrepreneurship and economic development.

6. *Capacity Building and Training:* Establish training programs to enhance the business skills of migrant entrepreneurs. Offer workshops and courses on business planning, marketing, and financial management. Collaborate with educational institutions and business associations to provide comprehensive training opportunities.

7. *Language and Cultural Support:* Address language and cultural barriers by offering language training programs and cultural sensitivity courses. Provide resources and support services in multiple languages to assist migrants in navigating administrative processes and connecting with local markets.

8. *Public Awareness Campaigns:* Launch public awareness campaigns to promote the contributions of migrant entrepreneurs to the local economy. Highlight success stories, showcase the diversity of businesses, and emphasize the positive impact of migrant entrepreneurship on community development.

9. *Collaboration with NGOs and International Organizations:* Collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international entities to leverage additional resources and expertise. Engage with organizations specializing in migrant rights, entrepreneurship, and economic development to enhance support initiatives.

10. *Government Procurement Incentives:* Introduce incentives for government procurement from migrant-owned businesses. Establish policies that encourage public institutions to consider migrant entrepreneurs in their procurement processes, fostering economic inclusion and diversity.

These recommendations aim to support and empower migrant entrepreneurs in Turkey, fostering a conducive environment for their business success and contributing to the socio-economic development of the country.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this policy brief underscores the importance of addressing the challenges and opportunities in migrant entrepreneurship for the socio-economic development of Turkey. By implementing the provided recommendations, policymakers can foster an environment that empowers migrants to contribute actively to the entrepreneurial landscape, promoting economic growth and social cohesion.

Migrant entrepreneurship in Turkey presents significant opportunities for economic growth, innovation, and social inclusion. By implementing the recommended policies



and strategies, Turkey can harness the potential of migrant entrepreneurs, drive business success, and contribute to the overall development of the country.

Italy

Executive Summary

In the in the multi-layered context of migration and a changing economy, Italy is a vivid example of a nation undergoing significant demographic shifts. With more than 5 million foreign citizens residing here, constituting 8.5% of the total population, the nation is navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by this diverse influx. As of March 2022, migrant workers manage over 10.7% of companies in Italy, demonstrating their substantial contribution to the entrepreneurial area of the country.

This policy brief aims to explain the diverse aspects of migrant entrepreneurship in Italy, focusing on the important role played by foreign citizens in sustaining and invigorating the nation's economic base. The purpose of this brief is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs, the existing support mechanisms, and the potential policy interventions that could enhance their prospects. The aim is to advocate for foreign qualifications recognition, support and training for migrants in the field of entrepreneurship, while strengthening the existing synergies and existing fruitful initiatives.

Introduction

Italy has experienced significant immigration over the years, and many migrants have contributed to the local economy by establishing their own enterprises. However, migrant entrepreneurs and potential ones often face challenges such as experiencing unfamiliar business environments and overcoming language barriers, but their contributions play a crucial role in economic development and cultural diversity within Italy. Several policies and initiatives to support migrant entrepreneurship have been developed to facilitate integration and harness the economic potential of this diverse group.

This policy brief aims to explore these issues, providing insights and possible suggestions. It is addressed to policymakers, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups involved in shaping immigration, integration, and economic development policies.

Background



According to ISTAT, more than 5 million people living on our territory are foreign citizens; this is 8.5% of the total population and, every year, this trend increases.

In March 2022, there were 650,000 (10.7% of the total) companies managed by migrant workers in Italy. Few companies are run by foreign women, leading just 24% of the companies involved in the analysis and representing 10.8% of all female companies in the country. Individual activities of small size prevail due to the ease of accessibility in economic, management capacity and bureaucratic-administrative terms, exceeding 77.7% of the total, against 49% of "native" companies. In absolute terms, the sectors in questions are mainly trade (35.1%) – primarily retail – and construction (22.4%). The highest incidence of immigrant enterprises in the total is due to rental activities and travel agencies and business service (17%). Since the crisis of 2008, self-employed immigrants have made a decisive contribution to maintain the entrepreneurial base, often covering the positions left uncovered in the generational transition or responding to the growing demand for self-employment induced by increasingly decentralised production systems.

It is important to underline the participation of immigrants in innovative start-ups (there are over 1,500 at the end of 2019 start-ups counting among members and administrators at least one person born abroad: 13.9% of the total), whereas ISTAT data show the increase – among new entrepreneurs with employees – of the share of those of foreign origin (15.2% of the total in 2016) and their significant presence also in high-growth companies (8.1%).

In Italy, there are a number of initiatives and activities aimed at supporting migrants in entrepreneurship. Amongst the others:

- The System of Protection for Asylum-Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) is a network of "second reception" centres for applicants and holders of international protection. SPRAR projects are all based on the concept of empowerment of the beneficiary, as "an individual and organized process, through which individuals can (re)build their own choice and design skills and (re)acquire the perception of their own value, potential, and opportunities". The SPRAR has two main objectives:
 - a) to offer assistance and protection measures to the individual beneficiary;
 - b) to facilitate the integration process through the acquisition of new-found autonomy. It offers: health care; social assistance; multicultural activities; school integration of minors; linguistic and intercultural mediation; guidance and legal information; accommodation services; employment integration services; training services.



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- Ente Nazionale del Microcredito (National Microcredit Authority) is a non-economic public body that exercises important functions in the field of microcredit and microfinance, both at national and international level.
- A.MI.CI - Accesso al Microcredito per i Cittadini Immigrati Establishment and animation of a network of public, private and non-profit entities working for the integration of immigrant citizens, with specific reference to micro-entrepreneurship; definition of a shared model of access to micro-credit. M.I.C.R.O. – Migrants Ideas Converted into Real Opportunities. It aims at creating a professional figure that can support the migrant at every stage of the process to be followed with the aim to start an entrepreneurial activity and for its management.



Projects funded by the European Commission also represent a great opportunity for migrants to access free trainings: [WINBIZ](#), a recently developed Erasmus+ project, will contribute to the development of migrant women's competencies in adult education through high-quality learning

Analysis of the Issue

The main difficulties faced by foreigners in seeking employment are

- a) lack of language skills;
- b) early school dropout of minors;
- c) unrecognised qualifications;
- d) citizenship or residence permit;
- e) origin, religion and social class.

Greater barriers to migrant employment – examples.

Bank Credit

Most companies in the start-up phase have not made use of bank credit, due to lack of guarantees to be offered, and often they use accumulated savings and minimal investment. In addition, the presence of an Italian partner further facilitates relations with credit institutions.

Consulting Support



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Especially in the case of start-ups, both strategically and in terms of value, access to consultancy and financial support was of primary importance.

Management

Difficulties in both verbal and non-verbal communication; organization of work, in terms of holidays, religion, family reunions, different mentalities of workers.

Prejudice

Related to employee relations, especially in the case of persons of foreign origin who hold management positions.

Bureaucracy

It is an obstacle both in the start-up phase of the company and in the maintenance phase, due to the complex, quibble and constantly evolving legislation, which becomes even more difficult to be understood when the company develops relations with foreign markets.

Policy Recommendations

- Establish a streamlined process for the recognition of foreign qualifications, ensuring that migrants' skills and expertise are acknowledged in the Italian job market.
- Identifying individuals with entrepreneurial potential within migrant communities and promoting awareness of entrepreneurship among migrants.
- Offering support to migrant entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs through mentoring initiatives; gather feedback on the existing ones and make improvements on the long-term.
- Providing training programs covering topics such as entrepreneurship, business planning, legal considerations in company establishment, financial literacy and access to funds.
- Exploit existing synergies amongst organisations
- Promote mutual learning amongst migrant entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The brief underscores the substantial contribution of foreign citizens in Italy, who significantly impact national entrepreneurship. Migrant-managed companies, particularly in trade and construction, play a key role, with immigrants also involved in innovative start-ups. Challenges in employment include language barriers and societal prejudices, limited access to bank credit, lack of consulting support, communication challenges, prejudice, and bureaucratic hurdles.

Various state-driven initiatives at Italian level, like SPRAR, the National Microcredit



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Authority, and EU-funded projects support migrant entrepreneurship. Streamlining qualification recognition, promoting entrepreneurship, offering mentorship, and fostering collaboration are vital for Italy's socio-economic development, leveraging the potential of migrant entrepreneurs and creating a more diverse and dynamic business environment.





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Spain

Executive Summary

Between 2021 and 2023 more than 46,500 immigrants decided to join the Special Regime for Self-Employed Workers (RETA) in Spain, reaching a total of 426,002 affiliates in September 2023. The data show the entrepreneurial spirit of a large part of the migrant population in the country, but immigrants also face structural problems for which the Government and unions are seeking solutions.

Introduction

In Spain approximately 13% of the total self-employed are migrants. The sectors that have experienced this growth the most have been hospitality, construction, professional and scientific activities, and transportation. It is precisely in this last sector, that of delivery and transportation, where migrants have encountered certain labour barriers and discrimination, which are already being sanctioned while favourable solutions are being sought for the group's entrepreneurship. In that document we point out the legislative and judicial advances in Spain to benefit the labour rights of migrants in this sector.

Background

To put it in perspective, in September 2021 Spain had 3,319,875 self-employed workers affiliated with RETA, including 379,445 foreign self-employed workers. In the same period of 2022, a total increase of 9,988 self-employed workers was recorded, reaching a total of 3,329,863 affiliates. In September 2023 we saw an additional growth of 9,470 self-employed workers, reaching a record number of 3,339,333 self-employed workers. These data are evidence that foreign self-employment is a fundamental pillar in the growth of the Spanish economic system.

Analysis of the Issue

Despite the lack of specific incentives to encourage foreign self-employment in most Spanish regions, immigrants show admirable tenacity. They not only come to Spain but also actively contribute to economic growth and job creation throughout the national territory.

Eduardo Abad, president of UPTA (Union of Professionals and Self-Employed Workers), highlights the need to reinforce policies aimed at foreign self-employment and the implementation of specific advisory programs for entrepreneurs of other nationalities. Although the path is not without challenges, the determination of the immigrants is a moving testimony of their contribution to the business fabric of Spain.



However, UPTA has identified a large number of cases of false self-employment, especially in sectors linked to the provision of services to other companies, such as parcel transport. In August 2021 the so-called 'Rider Law' came into force, which urged courier companies to regularise the situation of delivery people (natives and migrants), either defining the conditions as independent companies where each self-employed person negotiates their own conditions or as employees of the delivery company. According to the report on the Rider Law from the Esade Technological Humanism Forum, in 2022 the number of contract delivery drivers almost doubled, going from 5,464 in May 2021 to 10,980 employees in August 2022.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Labour says that the use of irregular immigrants as 'riders' is being investigated throughout the country. The Secretary of State for Labour and Social Economy, Joaquín Pérez Rey, has assured that the Labour Inspection is investigating to "pursue and verify" throughout the country the complaints of fraudulent use of immigrants in an irregular situation to make deliveries, as it is being done in Zaragoza in response to complaints of this type to companies such as Uber Eats or Glovo.

Policy Recommendations

As we have already mentioned, the Government of Spain recently approved the Rider Law, which sets out the employment and non-commercial relationship of these delivery professionals. The Government establishes in the Workers' Statute that delivery workers who operate for a digital platform be salaried and gives companies three months to regularise their staff in accordance with this new working condition.

The Minister of Labour, Yolanda Díaz, wanted to highlight the importance of the standard in the international context. She assured that "there is no other country in the world that has dared to legislate on this matter. The world is looking at Spain and it is a norm of vital importance," said Díaz. She, in turn, thanked the social agents who "have been brave" to move this norm forward by mutual agreement.

Regarding the investigation of delivery companies that take advantage of the irregular situation of some migrants to ignore their labour rights, the institutions recommend two actions:

- Identify and sanction companies that carry out this practice (having irregular workers without permission, with false identities, without being insured and unprotected against possible accidents, etc.);



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- Facilitate legal residence in Spain for these migrants and promote their level of autonomous entrepreneurship (through policies aimed at simplifying processes and generating trust).

Conclusion

The data and specialised analyses on the matter indicate that the migrant population that arrives in Spain is very interested in starting their business, reaching 13% of self-employed people throughout the country. Of all the challenges and problems faced, we wanted to address the one related to the so-called 'riders', since it is a work that exists in the rest of the countries of the European Union and Spain is carrying out legislative and pioneering judicial system, which should be known for the benefit of the rest of the EU migrants.





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Ireland

Executive Summary

This policy brief recommends targeted measures to promote entrepreneurship in the natural products trade among young people with migrant backgrounds in Ireland, emphasizing cultural interaction.

The main measures would include entrepreneurial support in terms of establishing financial incentives, training programs, and mentorship initiatives to facilitate the entry of young entrepreneurs into the natural products sector. Further, promoting cultural exchange programs and community events to foster understanding and collaboration between young migrant entrepreneurs and local residents would assist the same purpose. In the same logic, launching campaigns to inform the public and businesses about the benefits of supporting diverse natural product businesses, dispelling stereotypes through workshops and seminars would mostly serve cultural interaction. Also, government collaboration between government agencies, local authorities, and non-profit organizations for streamlined implementation and effective resource allocation as well conducting regular assessments to measure economic impact, employment rates, and cultural integration levels, allowing for policy adjustments based on feedback and emerging trends would serve updating of policies and the automatic implementation of the goals of this policy brief.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of Ireland's economic and cultural evolution, there exists a unique opportunity to harness the potential of young individuals with migrant backgrounds in the natural products trade. As Ireland embraces sustainable practices and a growing interest in natural products, this policy brief aims to address the specific challenges and opportunities faced by these individuals, with a focus on fostering cultural interaction within local communities. With regards to the context and importance of this Policy Brief, natural products sector, encompassing areas such as organic farming, herbal remedies, and traditional crafts, is witnessing increased prominence in Ireland. Young people with migrant backgrounds bring valuable skills, diverse perspectives, and a rich cultural heritage, presenting a strategic opportunity to enhance economic growth and cultural diversity simultaneously. Recognizing the significance of this demographic in contributing to a flourishing natural products market aligns with Ireland's commitment to inclusivity and sustainability.

This policy brief is crafted with the purpose of proposing targeted measures, recommendations and guidelines that support entrepreneurship among young individuals with migrant backgrounds in the natural products trade. By addressing



barriers and facilitating entry into the market, the brief aims to create a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Additionally, the policy seeks to underscore the importance of cultural interaction as a catalyst for social integration and community cohesion.

The primary audience for this policy brief includes policymakers at various levels of government, local authorities, non-profit organizations, and stakeholders involved in economic development and cultural integration initiatives. By presenting evidence-based recommendations, this brief seeks to inform decision-makers on the potential benefits of fostering natural product entrepreneurship among young individuals with migrant backgrounds and promoting cultural exchange within Irish communities.

Background

Ireland has experienced a notable shift in migration patterns over the past decades, with an increasing number of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds choosing Ireland as their destination. According to recent data, the migration landscape is characterized by a mix of economic migrants, refugees, and family reunification cases. The challenges associated with migrant integration are multifaceted, encompassing issues such as cultural adaptation, employment disparities, and social inclusion. Regarding demographic shifts the demographic composition of Ireland has evolved, reflecting a more diverse and multicultural society. Census data indicates a rise in the number of residents with migrant backgrounds, contributing to the nation's cultural tapestry. Also, migrants play a crucial role in various sectors of the Irish economy, contributing to workforce diversity and bringing a range of skills and expertise. However, challenges persist in maximizing the potential economic contributions of this demographic while migration trends often result in concentrated urbanization, with major cities experiencing higher levels of cultural diversity. This presents both opportunities and challenges for fostering community cohesion and integration.

The challenges that present to this scenery are linked to employment disparities among else. Migrants may face challenges in accessing employment opportunities commensurate with their skills and qualifications, contributing to economic disparities. Cultural adaptation comes as an addition to this framework. The process of cultural adaptation can be complex, impacting the overall well-being of migrants. In this context, language barriers, cultural differences, and discrimination can hinder successful integration.

Achieving social inclusion remains a goal, with the need to bridge gaps between communities, promote understanding, and combat stereotypes and prejudices. Recent development disclose that the Irish government has recognized the importance of



effective migrant integration and has introduced initiatives to address challenges, including language programs, employment support, and community engagement efforts.

Non-profit organizations and civil society groups actively contribute to fostering migrant integration through advocacy, support services, and cultural exchange programs, while recent global events, such as the refugee crisis, have influenced migration dynamics, prompting a reevaluation of policies and a heightened awareness of the importance of inclusivity.

In this context, understanding the migration trends and challenges is pivotal for formulating policies that leverage the potential of young individuals with migrant backgrounds in entrepreneurship, particularly in the natural products trade. Addressing these challenges will not only contribute to economic growth but also promote cultural interaction and community resilience.

Analysis of the Issue

In migration there are both challenges and opportunities. Challenges and Opportunities. The challenges reported are mostly the employment disparities whereby migrants face hurdles in accessing jobs matching their skills, hindering economic integration. In the cultural adaptation frame, language barriers and discrimination pose challenges to effective cultural integration while social inclusion bridging gaps between communities and combating prejudices is essential for fostering social cohesion.

On the other hand, opportunities mostly link to economic contributions whereby migrants contribute diverse skills, fostering economic growth and innovation, while cultural enrichment regards diversity enhancing cultural vibrancy, promoting creativity and tolerance. In terms of interconnectedness and impact, economic integration aids cultural adaptation, creating a mutually reinforcing cycle and socially inclusive environments positively influence economic contributions, fostering community well-being. Migrant entrepreneurship itself contributes to economic empowerment and community development.

The EU emphasizes integration as a two-way process, focusing on employment, language, and social cohesion. Relevant reports highlight economic benefits of migrant entrepreneurship, advocating for support mechanisms.

The EU also promotes cultural exchange to enhance understanding and cooperation between diverse communities.





In the Irish context, aligning national policies with EU strategies can create a comprehensive approach, addressing immediate challenges and fostering long-term integration and economic growth.

Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendations in this Policy Brief would definitely include targeted employment programs which would further ensure collaboration with industries for tailored employment initiatives aligning with migrants' skills provided alignment with EU workforce diversity guidelines and funding programs would govern the venture.

On a community level, communities would establish cultural exchange events to enhance interaction between migrants and local communities and would follow EU best practices in fostering intercultural dialogue.

Stakeholders in entrepreneurship would provide support by developing specialized training and financial incentives for migrant-led ventures in natural products in alignment with EU strategies promoting migrant entrepreneurship.

Further, governmental and NGO collaboration would foster collaboration for streamlined support services in alignment with EU recommendations on public-private partnerships for migrant support.

Accessible finance for migrant entrepreneurs would establish dedicated funds or collaboration with financial institutions for migrant entrepreneurs in alignment with EU guidelines on financial inclusion for migrants while inclusive education programs would develop inclusive educational initiatives celebrating cultural diversity in alignment with EU policies promoting diversity, tolerance, and multiculturalism.

A monitoring and evaluation framework would precede all the above policies and recommendations. In specific, for the above framework to be viable and adaptable, a robust framework for continuous assessment must be built abiding by EU practices for effective integration strategy evaluation.

These concise recommendations aim to foster migrant integration, entrepreneurship, and cultural exchange, aligning with both national needs and EU guidelines for a harmonized and effective approach.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this Brief Policy highlights the interplay between migration, entrepreneurship, and cultural integration in Ireland. The main ideas are the migration





challenges that Ireland faces in employment cultural adaptation, and social inclusion for migrants.

Supporting migrant entrepreneurs, especially in the natural products sector, unlocks economic and cultural opportunities as an entrepreneurial potential.

Employment, cultural exchange, and entrepreneurship are highly interconnected therefore all recommended measures and policies have been decided on this basis.

Addressing these issues is vital for Ireland's economic growth as migrant entrepreneurship fosters economic diversification and innovation. Cultural enrichment developed builds a cohesive society, promoting tolerance and a vibrant cultural identity while Ireland's global competitiveness would be mostly enhanced by inclusivity that attracts talent and investments. Integration contributes to community resilience and overall societal well-being, all things considered.

This Policy Brief advocates for a strategic, inclusive approach that aligns with both national priorities and EU guidelines, positioning Ireland for sustained socio-economic development.





Conclusion

The policy brief highlights the critical role of migrant entrepreneurship in driving economic growth, enhancing cultural diversity, and fostering social integration across Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Spain, and Ireland. Despite facing numerous challenges, migrant entrepreneurs have demonstrated resilience and the potential to contribute significantly to the natural products trade and beyond. By implementing the proposed policy recommendations, including streamlining business registration, improving access to finance, offering business training, and promoting cultural exchange, each country can create a more supportive environment for migrant entrepreneurs. This will not only empower these individuals but also lead to broader economic and social benefits, aligning with the EU's commitment to inclusivity and sustainable development. Collaborative efforts among governments, the private sector, and civil society are essential to realize this vision, ensuring that migrant entrepreneurship becomes a cornerstone of a more prosperous, inclusive, and resilient Europe.





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