

## EMEN – better support for migrant entrepreneurs

The European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network (EMEN) is a three-year project supported by the European Union's COSME programme. It aims to strengthen support for migrant from third countries who wish to set up their own businesses.

It will do this by networking organisations that support migrant entrepreneurship, so that they can learn from each other in three essential areas:

- Coaching and mentoring
- Access to finance
- Professionalism and diversity management

EMEN will capture the results of this learning and publish it on paper and on its website – [www.emen-project.eu](http://www.emen-project.eu)

The project will also hold four conferences and a number of workshops.

The project's principal working language is English, but other languages will be used where this is relevant and feasible.



The European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network (EMEN) project (no. 764369) has received funding from the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020)

## EMEN's partner organisations

EMEN's partner organisations comprise organisations that promote and support migrant entrepreneurs and associations of migrant entrepreneurs.

They are: AEIDL (European Association for Information on Local Development asbl), Diesis Coop, Social Impact gGmbH, Stichting Hoger Beroepsonderwijs Haaglanden en Rijnstreek, Research Unit Financial Inclusion and New Entrepreneurship (FINE), UNITEE aisbl, CECOP-CICOPA Europe, ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation), KMOP (Kentro Merimnas Oikogeinias kai Paidiou), REVES (Réseau Européen des Villes et Régions de l'Economie Social aisbl), ALDA (Association des Agences de la Démocratie locale), EURADA (Association Européenne des Agences de Développement) and Eurochambres.

### To join EMEN

EMEN's communities of practice are open to all organisations supporting migrant entrepreneurs. If you are involved in supporting migrant entrepreneurs and would like to join EMEN, you can:

- log onto our website at [www.emen-project.eu](http://www.emen-project.eu) and fill in an application to join one of the communities of practice
- send an e-mail to [emen@emen.eu](mailto:emen@emen.eu)



**EMEN**  
European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network

## A project to build strong support for Europe's migrant entrepreneurs

## EMEN's communities of practice

EMEN will establish three **communities of practice** (CoPs) which will share information and knowledge and disseminate good practice on three areas that are key to supporting migrant entrepreneurship in the short to medium term:

- 1 **Coaching and mentoring** – led by Farid Bidardel and Moritz Blanke of Social Impact gGmbH, Berlin
- 2 **Access to finance** – led by Klaas Molenaar of THUAS-FINE, The Hague
- 3 **Professionalisation** of migrant entrepreneurs' associations and **diversity management** in chambers of commerce – led by Adem Kumcu of UNITEE, Brussels)

The activities of each CoP will develop to meet their members' needs, under the guidance of their experienced leaders. They will operate continually via **online fora**, and will also meet physically at the annual conference of the whole project; and at workshops arranged on the margins of other events as appropriate to their theme.

A key methodology will be the structured **peer review** of existing good practices.

## What will the CoPs do?

Communities of practice (CoPs) enable their members to learn from each other. A CoP is nothing more complicated than a group of people who share a craft or profession. The concept was developed by Etienne Wenger in his 1998 book *Communities of Practice*. He develops the types of activity that members of such communities can undertake to improve the way they do their job:

- exchanges of news information and links to resources
- productive enquiries, for instance peer reviews
- building shared understanding through discussions and events
- producing assets e.g. by documenting practice
- creating standards and benchmarking
- formal access to knowledge, e.g. training and practice transfer
- study visits and guest speakers

## Why is migrant entrepreneurship important?

Migrants form an important entrepreneurial resource, and make a major contribution to business dynamism. The OECD found that "Migrants have notably higher rates of self-employment in Belgium, France, Nordic countries, and particularly, in central and Eastern Europe". Other studies show even higher propensities to migrant entrepreneurialism. A recent European study confirms the importance of giving support to migrants wishing to establish their own businesses.

Focusing on entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities rather than specifically migrants, it found that ethnic entrepreneurs contribute to the **economic growth** of their local area, often rejuvenate neglected crafts and trades, and participate increasingly in the provision of higher value-added services.

They offer **additional services and products** to immigrants and the host population, and create in many cities an important bridge to global markets. In addition, ethnic entrepreneurs are important for the integration of migrants into employment.

They create **employment** for themselves but also increasingly for immigrants and the native population.

## EMEN conferences

The partner organisations and the members of the communities of practice will come together to hold a conference four times during the project, in different European cities such as Berlin, Brussels and The Hague. This will enable the CoP members to get to know each other and discuss common issues with the other CoPs. The final conference will target a broader audience of policy-makers.

## Piggyback workshops



In addition, EMEN will seek to hold workshops as attached to other events, organised by the partners, the members of partners, or outside organisations. This will help us to get closer to migrant entrepreneurship support organisations across the whole of the EU.

EMEN will also be pleased to provide speakers at relevant events.