

New European Entrepreneurship

Issue Briefing

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DEFINITIONS

New Europeans are people who live and work in a European country but have ties that go beyond their current country of residence, thus possessing a dual or plural cultural and linguistic background.



Entrepreneurship can be an effective path towards integration: it enhances the feeling of belonging by contributing to a new community and by building new connections.



Key Messages

Economic Contribution

New European businesses are a direct source of job creation, trigger innovation and facilitate international trade thus fostering economic growth. They also contribute to reviving depressed streets and neighbourhoods. Their economic significance has been continuously increasing.

Social and Cultural Significance

Entrepreneurship offers a real opportunity to bypass the discrimination that New Europeans may face in the labour market. By creating jobs for others, including members of their own community, New European entrepreneurs also act as role models, enhance chances of upward mobility, and foster the economic incorporation and integration of migrants.

Lack of Acknowledgments

New European entrepreneurs' positive impact on European economies and societies is still insufficiently recognised by policymakers, researchers, and public opinion, as testified by the lack of data on this issue.

Challenges

New European entrepreneurs face many challenges that their peers might not, such as language barriers, reduced access to financing, no local business network, and administrative challenges that arise from not having European citizenship and not knowing the local regulatory environment.

EU Perspective

Although the European Union officially recognises the key impact of New European entrepreneurs, their potential to contribute to growth and jobs is absent from many European strategies.

Background

According to OECD data (1):

- Between 2011 and 2020, the number of migrant entrepreneurs has nearly doubled, going from 6% to 11% of all self-employed people in the EU.
- 12% of the migrants living in the EU are self-employed, which is slightly below the proportion of the self-employed non-migrants (14%).
- In 2020, 32% of self-employed migrants had at least one employee.
- Migrant entrepreneurs are increasingly working in sectors not traditionally associated with migrant businesses, and their skills levels are increasing.

Innovating the EU Labour Market

Migrant businesses are also key factors in the **development of innovative products and services** and in the **internationalisation of European SMEs**, as they form an **important bridge to global markets**. If there is a growing recognition of the contributions of migrant entrepreneurs, it is still insufficiently acknowledged: politicians at the **local, national, and EU levels neglect this policy field**, as evidenced by the lack of data. Until recently, academics have focused on the concentration of ethnic entrepreneurs in traditional sectors, and migrant entrepreneurs are still considered a drain on the economy by many Europeans.

1. OECD/European Commission (2021), The Missing Entrepreneurs 2021: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/71b7a9bb-en>.

UNITEE's Aims

Contributing to the fight against stereotypes and prejudices and fostering a change of mentality among Europeans so that the positive contributions of New European entrepreneurs in our societies are better known and acknowledged.

Supporting the recognition of New European entrepreneurship as an integral part of the EU's main employment and growth strategies, such as EU 2020 and the European Employment strategies, the COSME program, and the European integration policy for migrants.

Promoting initiatives and programs that better **support the creation and development of migrant businesses**, at the local, national and European levels. More attention should be given to existing New European businesses in order to strengthen their sustainability.

Encouraging the collaboration of all relevant stakeholders and the sharing of good practices in initiatives and programs that increase the human, social and financial capital of New European entrepreneurs.

Encouraging the relevant European institutions to collect appropriate and **harmonised data** on the social and economic importance of New European entrepreneurs.



Our Actions

By building the first professional network of New European entrepreneurs, UNITEE provides its members with the opportunity to share experiences and invest together for the benefit of their company and the European economy.

UNITEE supports New European business professionals by:

- ▶ Meeting European decision-makers to express New European entrepreneurs' concerns and positions, and to bring their contributions to light.
- ▶ Seeking to establish strategic partnerships with relevant European stakeholders to better represent its members.
- ▶ Promoting the contributions of immigrant entrepreneurs through modern communication channels (e.g. social media), and an online review (The New European).
- ▶ Engaging in debate and dialogue on immigrant entrepreneurship by organising conferences and roundtables.
- ▶ With the help of its members associations, supporting New European entrepreneurs in their professional and international development via seminars, trade missions, and networking opportunities.

The EMEN Project

This project established three Communities of Practice (CoPs) which, from 2017 to 2020, shared information, knowledge and good practice in three areas that are key to supporting migrant entrepreneurship in the short to medium term:

- Coaching and mentoring
- Microfinance
- Professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations and diversity management in chambers of commerce.