

BARCELONA DECLARATION FINAL

TURNING MIGRANTS INTO JOB CREATORS!

Call to action in support of migrant entrepreneurship to facilitate social integration and to create job opportunities for all

Europe is facing important social challenges due to immigration. According to Eurostat, the number of people residing in the EU with citizenship of a non-member country was 22.3 million in 2018, and Eurobarometer states that immigration remains the most important issue for 38% of European citizens. European society must confront this issue based on the European Union founding values, notably the Universal Human Rights Declaration and its commitment to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We want to emphasize the great entrepreneurial potential of migrants. Those who leave their countries starting a path full of uncertainty, risks, obstacles and dangers are mentally prepared to undertake the challenge of starting their own business. A Harvard Business School study proves that migrants contribute twice as much to entrepreneurship as native-born citizens do, and they create more successful businesses.

We also want to highlight the benefits of unleashing migrant entrepreneurial potential for the European socio-economic wealth. Firstly, as entrepreneurs, migrants generate new economic activity creating new jobs. Secondly, migrants bring new knowledge and expertise enriching local business communities. Thirdly, companies led by migrants establish links in their countries of origin opening new markets. Finally, entrepreneurship facilitates migrant' communities' integration into daily life strengthening social cohesion.

However, migrants grapple with barriers that do not affect natives when trying to start their own business in the European Union, including restrictive administrative regulations, limited knowledge of business regulatory frameworks, cultural differences, lack of social capital, access to finance restrictions, xenophobia and racism, among other issues.

It is time to align all concerned actors working together on implementing effective measures to remove such barriers in order to guarantee equal opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs: creating a business should help them to exercise their vocation, fulfil their professional potential, create jobs and allow them to settle down in European society adding value to its economy.

CALL TO ACTION

We call the **European Commission and Member States** to facilitate migrants to set up new businesses, homogenizing the different regulations existing in the European Union and streamlining the administrative processes to obtain the right permits leveraging new technologies' potential.

We call **public bodies, political parties and business organizations** to step up clear statements and measures against racism and xenophobic behaviour, and to enhance the participation of migrant entrepreneurs and their representative institutions in defining, implementing and assessing entrepreneurship and migration policies and support actions.

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We call **migrant entrepreneurs** who have launched their business successfully to actively participate in institutions connected to entrepreneurship and migration, sharing their experience, becoming role models for others and promoting networks that will ease newcomer's social inclusion.

We call the **media** across Europe to give visibility to migrant entrepreneurs' success stories, promoting entrepreneurship among their communities, improving the perception native people may have and enabling their integration.

We call **public administrations and financial authorities** to invest more resources in inclusive and social entrepreneurship programs to scale up sustainable capacity building services and financial instruments that support migrant entrepreneurs to create and grow their businesses, such as entrepreneurship training, microfinance and volunteer mentoring.

We call **entrepreneurship support organizations** to increase their focus on migrant targets, promoting their participation in entrepreneurship programs, tailoring service offers to their specific needs and involving people with migrant background as consultants, trainers and mentors.

We call **financial institutions** to enable migrant entrepreneurs' access to the resources they need to create and grow their businesses, developing ad-hoc financial products meeting their needs, focusing on their potential instead of their lack of credit history and streamlining the procedures to get the funds.

We call all **consumers and users** to acknowledge migrant entrepreneurs' products and services, include them in their buying decisions, and thus help them to establish a customer base.

We are strongly convinced that all concerned actors working together in recognizing migrant entrepreneurship potential, enabling migrants to become self-employed, enhancing capacity building services and financial instruments to support them to start and grow their own business and giving visibility to those who are successful, will make the European society stronger, fairer, more inclusive, more internationalized and with more jobs for all.

Barcelona, July 2019