

## TEMPLATE FOR FAMET COUNTRY STUDIES

Maximum number of pages: 20

Minimum number of pages: 15

Font: Time New Roman

Font size: 11

Spacing: each partner should decide on the spacing

## Section 1: Introduction

### Subsection 1: AIM OF THE REPORT

This report is part of a wider study of the Fostering Adult Migrant Entrepreneurial Training and Qualification (FAMET) project. The project consists of partners from Denmark, Spain, Poland and Italy. The focus of the project is on migrant/refugee entrepreneurship education and lifelong learning. The project aims at doing away with discrimination barriers and obstacles using education and training. The project hopes to achieve this aim by creating, developing and enhancing the knowledge, skills, competencies and capacity of migrants and refugees.

The first task, in the bid to develop the entrepreneurial capacity of migrants and refugees, is to understand the needs and competences required by migrant groups in the EU represented by the FAMET partners. To achieve this task, each FAMET partner has conducted country studies that will highlight opportunities, challenges and competences needed by migrants and refugees to become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is an avenue by which migrants and refugees can establish themselves economically as well as provide employment opportunities. Migrant entrepreneurship will contribute positively to the GDP of EU member states. As highlighted in the Entrepreneurship 2020 action plan, 52% of start-ups in Silicon Valley, are created by immigrants. Hence it is an important initiative that deserves attention.

In the EU Migrant entrepreneurship is being promoted. Such initiatives include the entrepreneurship 2020 action plan, EU networks for exchange of best practice in migrant entrepreneurship, and EU projects on entrepreneurial capacity building for young migrants<sup>1</sup>. However, at the national level the initiatives vary. Some national level initiatives are available only to immigrants than refugees. In other cases the initiatives are available for both. Despite the existence of these initiatives, most migrants are either unaware of the opportunities available for them, face market entry barriers that discourages their participation in the national entrepreneurship landscape or lack the competences to become an entrepreneur. As a result, there is the need for study that will provide a close to accurate picture of the entrepreneurship related needs of migrants in EU member states.

This report provides that picture. The report is based on the outcomes of focus groups conducted by FAMET partners namely, Aalborg University Denmark, Crossing Borders Denmark, Euronet Italy, MEUS, Spain, Danmar Poland and Kainotomia, Greece. Each partner conducted focus group interviews with 10 migrants/refugees, 5 organization dealing with migrants and 2 migrants that currently own businesses. In all insights from 51 respondents have been gathered. The interviews have been transcribed and analyzed to extract insights on the opportunities, challenges and competence needs of Migrants. In this report, analysed insights from Spain is represented. The insights gathered from this report will be used to understand the migrant needs which will result in the development of training modules for a certified training programmes for migrants. The training programme will be available for migrants online where they can on part-time basis follow the course which will equip them with competences to become entrepreneurs.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants_en)

## **Subsection 2: Overview of national initiatives on migrant entrepreneurship**

There are some national initiatives regarding entrepreneurship such as Venture Friends, National Bank of Greece Business Seeds Program, Youth Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme, Qbility etc. However, while most entrepreneurship support programs by the government and private sector are generally available to the entire young population of Greece regardless of citizenship status, in reality, migrants, and in particular newly arrived migrants, find it challenging to access and benefit from these programs due to fundamental obstacles such as language barriers. There have been some initiatives, by both the government and the EU, that promote migrant entrepreneurship (see below) but they are significantly fewer.

## **Subsection 3: Profile of the respondents of the report.**

### **Migrant Interviewees**

1. Eddie is a 38 years old man, from Albania, that came to Greece 8 years ago and currently works as a cook assistant in Athens, Greece
2. Nasim is a 40 years old man, from Syria, that came to Greece 10 years ago and currently works as an interpreter in Athens, Greece
3. Aldo is a 27-year-old man from Albania, that came to Greece 23 years ago and currently works as a factory worker in Larissa, Greece
4. Flamur is a 25-year-old man from Albania, that came to Greece 15 years ago and currently works as a cook in Larissa, Greece
5. Ilir is a 30-year-old man from Albania, that came to Greece 25 years ago and currently works as a dishwasher in Larissa, Greece
6. Kristo is a 26-year-old man from Albania, that came to Greece 6 years ago and currently works as a barman in Larissa, Greece
7. Anastasia is 26-year-old woman from Albania, that came to Greece 19 years ago and currently is a university student in Thessaloniki, Greece
8. Josephine is 29 years old woman from Cameroon, that came to Greece 20 years ago and currently is a postgraduate student in Thessaloniki, Greece
9. Ghaida is a 38 years old woman from Syria, that came to Greece 3 years ago and currently is unemployed
10. Blerina is a 49-year-old woman from Albania, that came to Greece 20 years ago and currently is a dishwasher in Larissa, Greece

### **Interviewees from organizations working with migrants:**

1. Lydia is a 27-year-old woman, from Greece, working in a community center for women in Thessaloniki, Greece whose beneficiaries are mostly refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking women and their children
2. Myrto is a 25-year-old woman, from Greece, working in a youth organization in Drama, Greece that works with young people that are at risk of marginalization and social exclusion, among them young refugees and migrants.
3. Hasan is a 23-year-old man from Kurdistan, working as a Site Manager Support in an NGO in Thessaloniki which supports migrants/refugees providing them with several services such as food distribution, maintenance facilities and legal guidance.

4. Mohammad is a 23-year-old-man from Syria, working in an NGO in Thessaloniki which supports refugees in Northern Greece with basic necessities, educational & community activities.
5. Dimitra is 26-year-old woman working in a Greek organization in Athens that deals with the reception and the social inclusion of migrants and refugees.

### Migrant Entrepreneurs Interviewees

1. Gentjan is a migrant entrepreneur from Albania that came to Greece 30 years ago and currently owns a flower shop in Larissa, Greece
2. Marrieta is a migrant entrepreneur from Albania that came to Greece 29 years ago and currently owns a shoe repair shop in Larissa, Greece

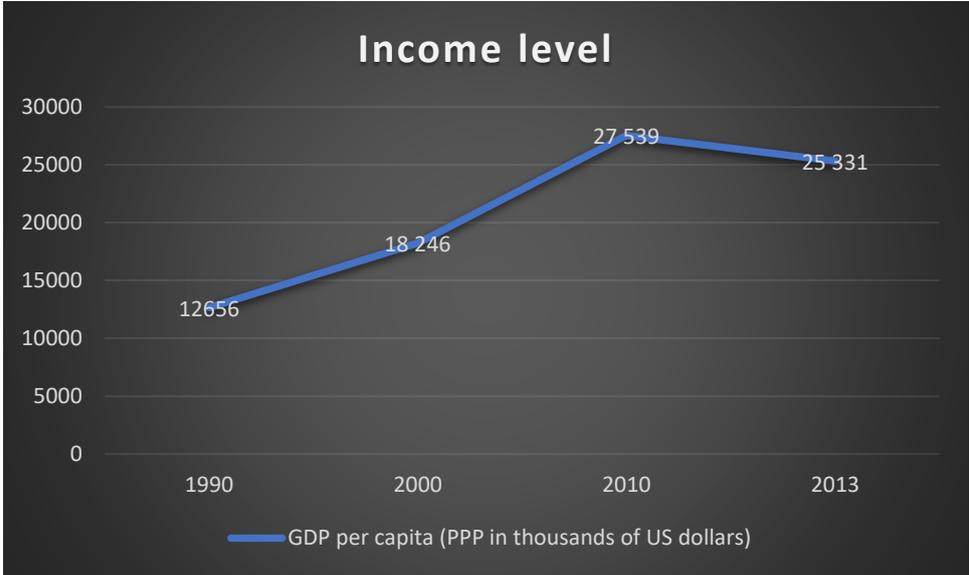
## Section 2: State of the Art based on indicators on Migrant entrepreneurship per country

Indicators									
Number of migrants	1.363.514 (12.7% of the total population) <sup>2</sup>								
Educational Level	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>Educational Level</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Educational Level</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tertiary</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p><i>Migration Profile_Greece. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.southeast-europe.net/document.cmt?id=967">http://www.southeast-europe.net/document.cmt?id=967</a></i></p>	Educational Level	Percentage	Primary	54%	Secondary	35%	Tertiary	11%
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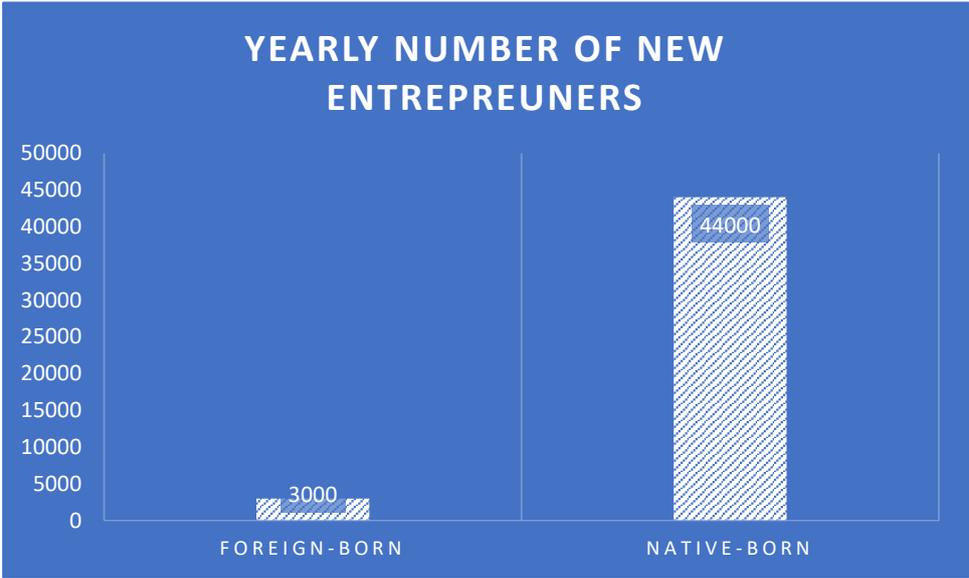
<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/GRC/greece/immigration-statistics>

UNHCR Fact Sheet\_Greece. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/77120>

<p>Income level for migrants</p>	<div data-bbox="416 338 1385 913" data-label="Figure">  <table border="1"> <caption>Income level (GDP per capita PPP in thousands of US dollars)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>GDP per capita (PPP in thousands of US dollars)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1990</td> <td>12656</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000</td> <td>18246</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>27539</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>25331</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p><i>Migration Profiles Greece. Retrieved from <a href="https://esa.un.org/migmgprofiles/indicators/files/Greece.pdf">https://esa.un.org/migmgprofiles/indicators/files/Greece.pdf</a></i></p>	Year	GDP per capita (PPP in thousands of US dollars)	1990	12656	2000	18246	2010	27539	2013	25331
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<p>Number of migrant entrepreneurs compared to the rest of the population.</p>	<p>According to Labrianidis and Hadziprokopiou, the accuracy of official data on migrant entrepreneurship is limited while their reliability is problematic: immigrants do not appear as a separate category of entrepreneurs and there is no distinction between “migrants” and other foreign nationals such as investors. In addition, there is no account of the migrants who acquired Greek citizenship and the data does not disaggregate at regional or municipal level. The findings from their study is as follows: <i>Only 2.8% are employers and barely 8.2% are self-employed or work in a family business, while the actual share of migrant entrepreneurs should be lower: non-wage earners are found mostly among developed country nationals, thus making the participation of nationals of the countries that immigrants come from, even lower.</i><sup>3</sup></p>										
<p>Number of migrant entrepreneurs with 10 employees and more</p>	<p>There are no specific data on the personnel of the migrant businesses. However, it is estimated that the 52,4% of the total businesses do not have officially employed staff.<sup>4</sup></p>										

<sup>3</sup> Labrianidis, L., & Hadziprokopiou, P. (2010). Migrant Entrepreneurship in Greece: Diversity of Pathways for Emerging Ethnic Business Communities in Thessaloniki. *Journal Of International Migration And Integration / Revue De L'integration Et De La Migration Internationale*, 11(2), 193-217.

<sup>4</sup> Hadziprokopiou, P., & Fragkopoulou, G. (2016). ANTIMETΩΠΟΙ ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΚΡΙΣΗ: ΠΡΟΚΛΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗ ΜΕΤΑΝΑΣΤΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΘΗΝΑ ΣΕ ΜΙΑ ΕΠΟΧΗ ΥΦΕΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΙΤΟΤΗΤΑΣ (Dealing with Crisis: challenges for migrant entrepreneurship in Athens on a time of recession and austerity). *Greek Review Of Social Research*, 145(145).

<p>Number of new migrant entrepreneurs per year.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>YEARLY NUMBER OF NEW ENTREPREUNERS</h3>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Yearly Number of New Entrepreneurs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FOREIGN-BORN</td> <td>3000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NATIVE-BORN</td> <td>44000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>Last estimation: 2001-2003 <sup>5</sup></p>	Category	Yearly Number of New Entrepreneurs	FOREIGN-BORN	3000	NATIVE-BORN	44000
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<p>Number of policies aimed at promoting migrant entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Aiming to enhance migrant entrepreneurship, two new laws (Law 4605/2019 and 4608/2019) were recently passed by the Greek Parliament. In particular, Law 4605/2019 (Government Gazette 52 A / 1.4.2019) expands on the one hand the investment activities that grant a residence permit with the addition of intangible assets and on the other hand the circle of persons who are entitled to receive these permits.</p> <p>Also, Law 4608/2019 (Government Gazette 66 A / 25.4.2019) regulates, among other things, immigration issues regarding strategic investments.</p> <p>Other initiatives that promote migrant entrepreneurship at national level are:</p> <p><i>The National Integration Strategy: Promoting Entrepreneurship</i> aims to facilitate and inform the citizens of third countries on the development of micro-entrepreneurship (startup businesses) through legislation: a) on issues of entry and residence (visa and residence permit), b) simplify the process of establishing small businesses of "national character"</p> <p><i>Interculturalism</i> is also promoted by a multitude of steps. For example, the former "Department of Information, Awareness-raising and Social Cohesion" of the Social Inclusion Directorate was renamed to "Department of Interculturalism, Information</p>						

<sup>5</sup> Publishing, O. (2011). *International Migration Outlook 2011*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

	<p>and Awareness-raising ", with further specialization in intercultural issues and mediation, such as: a) setting specifications and procedures for the certification and the training of intercultural mediators, b) promoting, implementing and monitoring actions that encourage intercultural communication in all areas of social inclusion, as well as c) promoting social inclusion through the design and monitoring of intercultural programs.</p> <p><i>Solidarity Now (SN)</i> is a non-profit humanitarian organization active in the field of human rights and refugee work. The aim of the program, which is free of charge, is to provide participants with the knowledge skills necessary to take the first steps to starting a business and successful branding.</p> <p><i>TOPEKO: Local actions for vulnerable groups</i> aims to mobilize local actors to create jobs and provide a set of services facilitating the integration of the unemployed. The intervention was implemented locally by Development Partnerships (DPs), which operate as non-profit organizations with the participation of public and private actors. Assisted individuals were given three options consisting of secure (subsidized) wage employment, self-employment, and training and counselling services.</p> <p><i>The Trend Project</i>, which stands for Training Refugees in Entrepreneurial Skills in Digital Devices, is a program designed to train the trainers who work and train refugees on entrepreneurship.</p>
<p>Amount or number of financial instruments and credits for migrant entrepreneurs</p>	<p><i>The Regional Operation Program</i></p> <p>For the period 2014-2020, the Regions of the country are invited to manage the Regional Operational Programs (P.E.P.). These are multi-faceted programs, in which each of the Greek Regions is the subject of a regional program that includes projects and actions on a regional scale, utilizes local advantages and is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The action promotes the migrant entrepreneurship by providing information the possibility of mixed financing by banks and state grants.</p> <p><i>The COSME Program</i></p> <p>The European COSME Program (Competitiveness SMEs) for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises facilitate and support the migrant entrepreneurship at national level.</p> <p><i>The European Progress Microfinance Facility (Progress Microfinance)</i></p> <p>It was launched to increase the availability of microcredit i.e. loans below €25,000 for EU citizens to set up a small business. The microcredit providers may be private or public banks, non-bank microfinance institutions and not-for-profit microcredit providers.</p>

<p>%measure of Success rate of Migrant entrepreneurs</p>	<p>There are no specific data regarding the success rate of Migrant Entrepreneurs. However, migrant businesses have an average operating time of about 5.7 years, significantly lower than the natives (14.2 years) <sup>6</sup></p>
<p>Contribution of migrant entrepreneurs to GDP</p>	<p>Migrants in Greece have developed significant business activity either as employers or as self-employed. As a result, more jobs are being created, increasing the scope and quality of services offered and supporting sectors that otherwise would be weakened. This development has a positive impact, as the contribution of migrant entrepreneurs in economic to the GDP is estimated between 2.3% and 2.8% <sup>7</sup></p>

<sup>6</sup> Hatziprokopiou, P., & Fragkopoulos, G. (2016). ANTIMETΩΠΟΙ ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΚΡΙΣΗ: ΠΡΟΚΛΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗ ΜΕΤΑΝΑΣΤΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΘΗΝΑ ΣΕ ΜΙΑ ΕΠΟΧΗ ΥΦΕΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΙΤΟΤΗΤΑΣ (Dealing with Crisis: challenges for migrant entrepreneurship in Athens on a time of recession and austerity). *Greek Review Of Social Research*, 145(145)

<sup>7</sup> Mitrakos, T. (2013). Η συμβολή των μεταναστών στην ελληνική οικονομία: Μετά-ανάλυση των εμπειρικών ευρημάτων (The contribution of migrants to the Greek economy: A meta-analysis of empirical findings). *Social Cohesion And Development*, 8(2), 87-106.

## **Section 3: Opportunities available for migrants**

### **Subsection 1: A1, - Perspectives for Migrants per partner countries**

For migrants, employment through entrepreneurship is not only a source of income, but also an important aspect and a pivotal activity for their social inclusion in a local society context.

Through entrepreneurship, migrants are introduced to a diverse environment, the local culture of work, and the possibility of establishing relationships with local citizens. In addition, from a financial aspect, having an income, gives somebody the opportunity to cover primary needs and have resources for more socially related activities. Supporting migrants into developing their ideas in entrepreneurship is extremely important for promoting a balanced integration strategy.

However, through our interviews unfortunately there seems to be either a lack of information or tools for supporting migrant entrepreneurship in Greece. The majority of the migrants interviewed haven't heard of specific opportunities that were addressed specifically for supporting migrant entrepreneurship either coming from the private or public sector.

According to the interviewees, the opportunities given to them were clearly related to their cultural assimilation - whether it was knowledge of the Greek language or the development of a Greek social network. The 4 of the 7 Albanian interviewees spoke about the importance of their cultural adaptation to the Greek environment, degrading or even hiding their own cultural identity. However, in the case of their adaptation, they testify that more professional opportunities opened up to them.

What was unpleasantly surprising, was what four of the interviewees mentioned as a common informal tactic that migrants use for creating a business. For avoiding all the extra bureaucracy and conditions, they find a Greek person of their trust and they open the business on her/his name, and after finishing with the establishment of it, the migrant entrepreneur run the business. Of course, this doesn't constitute an opportunity but more as a way to overcome the extra barriers posed for them during the launching procedure of their enterprise

### **Subsection 2: A2 – Perspectives for organizations working with migrants.**

Interviewees working in organizations, have responded that there are limited opportunities just directly for migrants, while there are some private and governmental initiatives.

According to two respondents, an initiative more appropriate for helping migrant entrepreneurs enter the business world in Greece is the Changemakers Lab. The Changemakers Lab is a platform which aims to form a sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship environment. The Lab has an accelerator programme that aims at making it easier for refugees to implement ideas for tech-enabled businesses. The Lab organises a Changemakers Summit, which is a networking event that gathers entrepreneurs, representatives from the government, other policy makers (e.g., Chamber of Commerce) and a wide range of stakeholders (NGOs and research centres). Our interviewees, mentioned some other initiatives and programmes – such as FAIE,

Singa and Ruta CECE – which are mostly networking events to enable migrant entrepreneurs to improve their network and establish contacts with policy makers, stakeholders and possible business contacts.

### **Subsection 3: A3 – Perspectives for migrants that have started business in the last three years**

The respondents' answers were quite opposite regarding the promotion of business opportunities in Greece. In one case, the entrepreneur received a business grant from the state which, as she admits, helped her greatly in her first entrepreneurial steps. At the same time, she was familiar with the cultural context of Greece and got a lot of help, mainly by her friendly environment, to get acquainted with the legal framework and to join Greek entrepreneurship.

In the other case, however, the entrepreneur was obviously more dissatisfied as he states that he faced a lot of issues with the bureaucracy and needed someone to advise him on how to manage it. The businessman in question was not very familiar with either the cultural context (he did not know the language well and faced communication problems) or the legal framework.

In conclusion, considering these two cases, it is understood that in Greece, the provision of opportunities is not a given and seems to exist mainly for people who have some basic business knowledge (e.g. legal framework) and/or are familiar with the cultural characteristics (e.g. language). Therefore, there does not seem to be much promotion of opportunities for migrant / refugee entrepreneurs who are unfamiliar with the Greek business environment, excluding them from the business world.

## **Section 4: Challenges faced by Migrants**

### **Subsection 1: A1, - Perspectives for Migrants per partner countries**

#### **Discrimination:**

The issue of racial discrimination was mentioned by all interviewees. Five interviewees have felt discriminated because of their ethnic background either by public services or employers while trying to enter the labor market. An Albanian respondent, although he is a second-generation migrant, admitted that an employer had offered him a lower salary purely because of his background. Another interviewee, from Syria, pointed out that there is a lack of trust towards migrants, as the phenomenon of racism is strong in Greece. He also said that he often experienced either rejection from work due to his background or negative behavior from his colleagues. A girl from Cameroon mentioned the strong existence of stereotypes, finding the whole focus group in agreement. Many times, in their work environments, racist hate speech is expressed through “funny” comments, making them feel uncomfortable. The issue of discrimination is a serious phenomenon in Greece and seems to be a major obstacle to the professional / entrepreneurial steps of migrants.

#### **Unequal access to financial resources**

Almost all interviewees agreed that one of the biggest problems regarding entrepreneurship is the difficulty of financing. According to the respondents, migrants have limited opportunities on getting financial aid for opening their business either from public or private sector. Most migrants come to Greece without property (capital / real estate), which makes it difficult for them to be “reliable” in the investors/loaners’ eyes. What stood out from the answers was what one migrant mentioned, that before 2010, for a migrant to open a business, he/she had to have 5000 euro in their bank account as collateral, but after 2010 the law changed and a migrant had to have at least 60.000 euro as a collateral in their bank account, making it extremely difficult for somebody to open a business. The low-paid jobs that are offered to migrants make the situation even more difficult. *“I have worked 2 jobs and without insurance,”* an interviewee said. Therefore, it is clear that in Greece, migrants face unequal access to financial resources.

#### **Lack of information transfer regarding legal and financial procedures**

As the legal framework for migrants is complicated, it seems that most of them do not know much. Nine out of ten interviewees don’t know information about the legal and financial procedures required for a business and they do not know the sources from which they could gather this information. Only one of the interviewees had heard of some programs promoting entrepreneurship and had seen some bank advertisements lending to young entrepreneurs, but none of them were purely migrant-oriented.

#### **Language barriers**

Language also plays a major role and is an extremely important challenge regarding migrant entrepreneurship. Migrants who do not know the language well are excluded from the country's professional and business activities and find it difficult to expand their social network. This hypothesis is confirmed by the testimonies of the interviewees, where there is a clear difference in the provision of opportunities between those who knew the language and those who did not.

### **Bureaucracy**

All the interviewees spoke about the Greek bureaucracy, which brings obstacles both in their professional careers and in their lives. Bureaucratic hurdles usually relate to their residence permit or citizenship, which are very time-consuming procedures and for which applicants have to pay fees. As a result, their business is often suspended due to bureaucratic hurdles.

### **Lack of sustainable inclusion strategy and utilization of migrants' skills, background and entrepreneurial potentiality**

Another challenge that occurs from the focus group's responses is their inability to sustainably be included into society. According to one interviewee, as education in Greece requires a specific economic background, it is very difficult for a migrant to acquire the necessary skills in order to compete with the natives. Cultural assimilation - not inclusion – is a common phenomenon in Greece. Many of the respondents said that in cases where they hid their nationality (common for Albanians who do not seem to be very different from Greeks regarding appearance), they were treated more positively. All of the above, significantly affect the business activity of migrants in the country.

## **Subsection 2: A2 – Perspectives for organizations working with migrants.**

The majority of the participants of this focus group identified the same challenges as described in the previous section. An extremely important challenge that they were also focused on, was the lack of recognition of the qualifications that migrants already have and the lack of a holistic inclusion strategy on a national level which would also be implemented and adjusted on regional and local levels. Some of them that worked in migrant entrepreneurship projects added as challenges for migrants that began as entrepreneurs:

- the high dependency on labor-intensive and family/ethnic work practices
- the small market shares
- the limited profitability and expansion potential
- the higher failure rates

## **Subsection 3: A3 – Perspectives for migrants that have started business in the last three years**

As mentioned above, an important problem faced by one of the two cases was extreme bureaucracy.

The process of issuing both a residence permit as well as property titles are very time consuming and complicated. According to the interviewee, access to state funding was impossible and he had to seek funding through family loans. There were also language barriers. According to the entrepreneur, when he had to address to the public services in order to settle his bureaucratic duties, he did not receive any help from the employees, who were not willing to speak English.

Furthermore, both cases spoke of racism. They said people were reluctant to trust them because of their background. In fact, one entrepreneur said that many of his clients directly said that "*they preferred to give their money to a Greek*" or shouted at him that "*you Albanians come and take the jobs from the Greeks*". The other entrepreneur confessed that there was an issue with her Greek competitors, who in many cases sued her for trivial reasons.

## Section 5: Overview of condensed Migrant and refugee needs

### *Examples of possible needs to elaborate on as identified in the interviews*

#### **Legal reforms needed to enable more migrant entrepreneurs**

In Greece, although entrepreneurship is the backbone of the economy, it seems to be faced with a number of obstacles, such as high taxation, employment and insurance status and state of bureaucracy.

In terms of taxation, an endless cycle has been created, where taxation increases and so does tax evasion, leading to 1.6 percent of taxpayers, or 120,000 people, having to pay 2.7 billion euros or almost 30 percent of total income tax.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, the bureaucracy makes the situation even more difficult while there is poor protection of property in Greece and slow application of the rule of law. As a result, migrant entrepreneurs often face difficulties due to the lack of credit history / non-transferability of credit history from other countries, lack of stable residence status, lack of collaterals, etc.

All interviewees referred to these problems and pointed out that it is necessary to establish a legal and bureaucratic system that enhances rather than hinders the business activities of both migrants and natives.

#### **Needs for Information services**

Migrants and members of organizations that work with migrants mentioned the absence of information services both online and offline. There are no easy-accessible resources where a migrant can be informed about the migrant-oriented entrepreneurship programs and opportunities. For example, an NGO member pointed out that although there is an online platform where entrepreneurs can start a new business easily and in a very short period of time, the website is only available in Greek, making it hard for migrants that don't know the language to take advantage of this initiative. Therefore, it is necessary for the state to create more information services for migrants, taking into consideration their needs and their characteristics.

#### **Need for awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities for migrants**

While there are some entrepreneurship programs and few on migrant entrepreneurship, it is clear that there is a need to create more. According to the empirical research of Liargovas and Skandalis, the intention of migrants to become entrepreneurs depended mostly on family survival needs and the fact that the employment opportunities were quite limited for them. Also, the research showed that a limited number of sectors, such as retail trade, food & beverage services, and construction, attract more than 60% of all migrant entrepreneurial activities.<sup>9</sup> All of the participants agreed that more opportunities should be created in order

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<sup>8</sup> MIGRANT AND YOUTH SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP MY-SITE NATIONAL REPORT: GREECE 2018. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.solidaritynow.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Greece-National-Report.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Liargovas, P., & Skandalis, K. (2012). Motivations of migrant entrepreneurship in Greece: a factor analysis approach. *Journal Of Small Business And Enterprise Development*, 19(4), 627-639

to expand the business choices of migrants and to provide more incentives and tools to promote their active participation in Greek entrepreneurship.

### **Need for mentorship**

As mentioned above none of the interviewees knew about any of the programs that promote migrant entrepreneurship. The legal and bureaucratic procedures required are also unknown. One interviewee from Albania mentioned that, in order to become a successful entrepreneur, knowledge on business and financial management is a very important skill. Most of the interviewees agreed with her and pointed out that it would be very useful to have mentoring facilities, that will guide them and motivate them to start their business.

### **Needs for entrepreneurial skill and competence acquisition**

The development of entrepreneurial skills is an important aspect of business evolution. Participants inside the focus group referred to this need with vigor, pointing out that it is necessary for any aspiring entrepreneur and especially a migrant one to obtain skills that will help him/her to deal with competitiveness.

The majority of the migrant interviewees (6/10) mentioned that the most important entrepreneurial skills are motivation and creativity. According to the respondents it is essential to have passion on what you do, learn as much as you can and be innovative. The second most popular skills among migrants were the capability of spotting opportunities and taking initiatives while other skills were mentioned too, such as:

- financial and economical literacy
- coping with uncertainty and risk
- social network development, reliability and
- problem-solving.
- business management

Among organization members and migrant entrepreneurs, the skills that prevailed were planning/management, as well as familiarity with the language and the culture of the host country. As both migrant entrepreneurs confirmed, in order for someone to start a business, she/he needs a business plan and in order to sustain the business he/she needs the right management. The same was mentioned by some organization members too. Furthermore, language and culture training are also very essential, as it will help migrants combat with the challenges that exist in Greece-as mentioned above. An NGO member stated that *“most migrants face troubles regarding communication, social customs and cultures”*.

### **Need for funding (financial support for migrants)**

As already mentioned, there are very few sources for migrant entrepreneurs' funding. As they rarely own any property or have sufficient income, it is very hard for them to acquire any kind of financial support both from the public and the private sector. It is a need of paramount importance, that has to be a priority in the state's agenda in order to facilitate migrant entrepreneurship.

## Capacity building for organizations dealing with migrants

Organizations that work with migrants should have the capacities needed to equip migrants with the necessary skills and facilitate their inclusion into society. Furthermore, as an interviewee working in an NGO stated: “*Members [of NGOs] should be fully committed to what they do and have the morality to do it right.*” Capacity building will not only benefit migrants but will also provide tools and motives to the members, bringing them closer to the organization. Many organization members, either working or volunteering, face difficulties on providing help to the migrants, especially regarding entrepreneurship, as they don’t have knowledge on the issue (policies, opportunities etc.). Some of the members are also migrants/refugees (such as two of our interviewees), which brings even more obstacles to their work, as they need familiarization with the environment, the language and the culture of the country they work in (in this case Greece).

## Section 6: Recommendations

### For migrant entrepreneurs:

#### 1. Learn the language

One of the main hurdles regarding migrant entrepreneurship is the language barriers. Although it is highly important to keep your cultural identity, it is also necessary to learn the language of the host country, or learn a language that is highly popular, such as English. This skill will not only help to communicate with services, funders and any other actor that affects your business activities but also to expand your network and thus to attract more customers.

#### 2. Have knowledge of laws

Legislation is an essential factor that inevitably affects entrepreneurship. Thus, it is really essential to know the laws of the host country, meaning to know the rights and the obligations you have.

#### 3. Make a perfect plan

Having a clear view of the business is very important. A business plan is highly recommended, as it won’t only facilitate the starting process but will also help to prevent risks and thus run a sustainable business.

#### 4. Seek consultation/mentoring

Learning about the business environment as well as the sector that your business activity will be focused at, is crucial. Consultation/mentoring can help you understand the business world better and be prepared for any obstacle that may rise. This can be achieved by taking advices from existing, successful entrepreneurs, by searching case-studies on the internet or by participating in consultation/mentoring programs.

## **5. Have patience and persistence**

Developing skills-virtues such as patience and persistence is extremely important, not only regarding entrepreneurship but also regarding life. Have in mind that nothing “blooms” from one day to another and it needs time and commitment in order to see the first successful results.

## **6. Be creative and innovative**

A common mistake that many entrepreneurs do is to use already applied ideas, that may have been successful in the past. This mindset is not very efficient regarding business. The most profitable businesses are the ones that introduced something innovative to the market. Hence, instead of just coping other ideas, hopping that they will bring the same results that brought to the other businesses, try to think outside the box and don't be afraid to put your personal identity to the business.

## **7. Learn the fundamentals of financial management**

Money is the main driving force of any business. Therefore, knowing how to manage the financial flow of your business is essential in order to maintain it healthy and profitable.

### **For state policies:**

#### **1. Tax reduction**

A reduction in tax rates would be extremely useful for the revitalization of entrepreneurship, especially for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, on which the activities of migrants are mainly based. Providing tax relief to SME would not only improve migrant entrepreneurship but would also help the overall economic development of the state, reducing tax evasion and increasing business activity in the country.

#### **2. Reduction and simplification of bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy is a major obstacle to migrant entrepreneurship and is therefore important to resolve. The digitization of bureaucracy, facilitating the access to all necessary information and the submission of required documents online, would be an important development in the decongestion of the bureaucratic system.

#### **3. Improvement of the Education System**

The education system is an important mean that can be used to prepare young people and to equip them with soft skills, such as problem solving, cooperation, leadership, emotional intelligence or financial management, which will not only have a positive effect in their -possible- later business activities but they will be useful

for their life in general. In the case of migrants, education plays an even greater role in their inclusion into society and will help them become familiar with the language, a very important skill, as mentioned above. Hence, education should be free and available to all while inclusive curriculums should be adopted, taking into consideration the migrants' needs.

#### **4. Change in Legislation**

Legislation often stands in the way of migrant entrepreneurship, as it is complex and volatile, depending on the ruling political party. Therefore, it would be very useful to define a stable and clear legal framework, which would promote the inclusion of migrants in the country's business activities, lift high collateral requirements and allow microfinance services to maintain their independence from banks, facilitating migrants' access to funding.

#### **5. Inclusion policy**

The government needs to develop an inclusion policy in order to expand the country's business environment. Public services must appoint interpreters and intercultural mediators and ensure that administrative documents are translated into many languages. Finally, supportive actions such as entrepreneurship programs that are designed based on the needs of immigrants, should be promoted.

## Section 7: Conclusion

Currently, in Greece there are approximately 1,3 million migrants. The majority of them has a primary educational level and a relatively low-income level. Migrant entrepreneurship is not very strong as only a small percentage of migrants actively pursue to open a business and even fewer manage to run a successful one.

After the conduction of interviews with three different focus groups (migrants, organization members that work with migrants and migrant entrepreneurs), we conclude to the following results:

Firstly, although there seem to be some opportunities given by the state, hardly anyone of the respondents knew about them. Migrant interviewees highlighted that there is an absence of means promoting entrepreneurship while migrant entrepreneurs pointed out that opportunities depend on the person's assimilation-not inclusion- speed in the Greek environment. Members of organizations referred to some initiatives but they also confirmed that there are very few opportunities for migrants in the business sector.

Important challenges have to be resolved in order to evolve migrant entrepreneurship in Greece. According to migrants, challenges such as discrimination, unequal access to financial resources, lack of information, language barriers, bureaucracy and lack of sustainable inclusion strategy hinder both their professional careers and their business development, as these major obstacles make them suspicious towards entrepreneurship. Members of organizations that work with migrants mentioned the lack of recognition of the qualifications that migrants already have, meaning that they enter the country as unskilled workers, a challenge that affects their wage and by extension their social and financial status. Migrant entrepreneurs also pointed out racism and discrimination and explained how the Greek market-both customers and competitor entrepreneurs- neither welcomed them nor accepted them and hence they often faced troubles maintaining their businesses.

In order to improve the participation of migrants in the Greek business world, their specific needs should be addressed. Two of the most significant challenges and paramount needs are their legal and their financial support. Migrants need a sufficient legislation system that protects and promotes their business activities as well as facilitates their funding options. Furthermore, more awareness is needed to be raised on migrant entrepreneurship in order to lift the stereotypes and help them be included in the market. There is also need to provide more information on migrants regarding business opportunities and more consulting/mentoring means to help them acquire skills and knowledge and run a sustainable business. The development of entrepreneurial skills is also important and therefore there is a need to create more migrant-oriented training programs. Finally, there is need to train members of organizations that work with migrants in order to be familiarized with the demands of the business world and to be able to offer effective help to those that wish to become entrepreneurs.

Consequently, changes should be done in order to create a fertile ground for migrant entrepreneurship. At individual level, it is highly recommended for migrant entrepreneurs to learn a language that will help them communicate -in this case either Greek or English. Other recommendations include the development of skills and attitudes, such as patience, creativity, business planning and financial management, which will help them enrich their knowledge and better maneuver in the -often unstable- market. At state level, a multitude of steps can be taken in order to facilitate and promote migrant entrepreneurship, such as tax and bureaucracy reduction, improvements on education system, legislation changes and inclusion policies.

In Greece, although entrepreneurship is a major element of the overall economy, it seems to be problematic after the strike of the economic crisis. Therefore, it is pivotal for new means to be found in order to revive

entrepreneurship. Migrant inclusion in business activities will not only be a great way to include foreign citizens and provide them with decent living and working conditions, pushing them away from crime, but it will also be very beneficial for the state's economic development, having more businesses running, increasing production, employing more staff and enhancing money flow in the country.

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