

THE EMERGENCE AND SCOPE OF MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROMOTION AT THE EU-LEVEL

Kevin Van Hove

Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, SBE, (kevinhove@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the evolution of the target group and objectives of the European Commission's enterprise/entrepreneurship policy since the end of the 1970s, with particular attention to the promotion of migrant entrepreneurship. Secondly, it explores the tools available at the EU-level to promote migrant entrepreneurship and the limitations of this policy. Following a study of academic and EU sources, the research shows that the EC's enterprise/entrepreneurship policy evolved from primarily targeting larger companies, into a policy with extra interest for SMEs and finally the whole society, including migrants. Promotion of migrant entrepreneurship is i.a. limited by the principle of subsidiarity.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Migrant Entrepreneurship, Smes, EU, Entrepreneurship Policy

GÖÇMEN GİRİŞİMCİLİĞİNİN AB DÜZEYİNDE TEŞVİK EDİLİŞİNİN DOĞUMU VE KAPSAMI

ÖZET

Bu makale; 1970'lerin sonlarından bu yana Avrupa Komisyonu'nun girişim/ girişimcilik politikasının hedef kitle ve amaçlarındaki gelişimi göçme girişimciliği odaklı olarak incelemektedir. İkinci olarak, makale kapsamında Avrupa Birliği (AB) düzeyinde göçmen girişimciliğini teşvik etmek için kullanılan araçları ve göçmen politikasının sınırlarını araştırmaktadır. İlgili literatürün ve AB tarafından sunulan kaynakların araştırılması sonucu Avrupa Komisyonu'nun AB girişimcilik politikasının büyük ölçekli şirketleri hedefleyen bir politika yürütürken, KOBİ'ler ve ardından tüm toplum odaklı ve göçmenleri de kapsayıcı bir politika olarak gelişmeye başladığı gözlemlenmektedir. AB göçmen girişimcilik politikası yetki devri prensibi ile sınırlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeleri: Girişimcilik, Göçmen Girişimciliği, Kobiler, AB, Girişimcilik Politikası

1. Introduction

The constantly changing opportunity structure is considered crucial in understanding both the obstacles and opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs to start their own business (Rath & Eurofound, 2011). While market conditions and economic trends determine to a very large extent in which segments these kind of businesses occurs they themselves are embedded and enmeshed in institutions. This institutional context determines on a macro-level to a large extent the opportunity for businesses in general both on a national, sectorial and local level (Kloosterman et al., 1999). Immigrant entrepreneurs may benefit from agency-oriented policy measures who target the mainstream population in general or migrants in particular, aiming at the improvement of the personal capability of individual. They may also benefit from (opportunity) structure- oriented policy measures who aim to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and innovation and as such promote a more favourable opportunity structure (Desiderio & Mestres-Domenech, 2011; Desiderio, 2014; Marchand & Siegel, 2014; Rath & Eurofound, 2011).

The opportunity structure of nascent immigrant entrepreneurs is not merely influenced by entrepreneurship policies but also by policies in various other fields, among which economic, migration, migrant integration, education and labour market policies. Economic policy for instance covers the system for setting levels of taxation and government budget, the money supply and interest rates, purchasing power and the level of privatisation. Migration policies may stimulate or restrict certain forms of migration for certain migrant groups and implement more flexible or stricter policies with regard to the issuance of work permits, including professional cards. Migrant integration policies may support a certain group of migrants in the integration in the host society and hereby use a categorical or more inclusive approach towards migrants.¹ In a similar way, labour market policies may or may not support the labour market integration of migrants. Education policies may stimulate the capabilities of migrants and as such raise their chances on the labour market. Nonetheless, in what follows the focus will primarily be on entrepreneurship policies.

As a result of on-going processes of European integration (as of the 1950s) and federalisation within a number of EU Member States, policies and programmes influencing the opportunity structure of migrant businesses in the EU may both originate from the supranational (EU), national (national government), regional (regional government), as well as at the local level (municipality). Moreover, policies and programmes influencing entrepreneurship are not limited to these originating from public institutions but equally encompass policies and programmes originating from a whole list of other institutions, such as business associations, universities or NGOs. Acknowledging that multi- level entrepreneurship policies influence the opportunity structure of (nascent) migrant entrepreneurs hereby following an analysis of the European Commission's Enterprise/ Entrepreneurship policy will be made through the following research questions:

- What is/are the objective(s) of the enterprise/ entrepreneurship policy?
- What is/are the target group(s) of the enterprise/ entrepreneurship policy? Does it include a special reference to migrant entrepreneurs?
- What are the tools and limits of this (migrant) entrepreneurship policy?

2. Evolution Of The European Commission's Enterprise/ Entrepreneurship Policy And The Emergence Of Migrant Entrepreneurship Promotion

Despite their contrasting logics, since the early 1980s neoliberalism and the social democratic project of the (neo-) Keynesian era have existed concurrently in the European Union. The neo-liberalist project has been given expression with the common market, and a monetary policy based on price stability and an anti-inflationary mandate rather than on growth and development, and the Stability and Growth Pact, which makes state-sponsored development targeted at the eradication of specific internal inequalities or the protection of particular sectors in society, by deficit spending increasingly difficult. Alongside a rhetoric of globalism, a discourse on competition

¹ Whereas *categorical policy* refers to a specific separate policy domain which is set up to supply measures, *inclusive policy* is realized within the general policy of different policy domains, largely by general measures.

and individual entrepreneurialism developed. The social democratic project has been given manifestation at the regional scale through geographical redistribution programs and social funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) (See Hay & Rosamond, 2002; Dinan, 2004; Mitchell, 2006).

In line with the conception that that employment creation could be most easily realised by a focus on large enterprises, until the 1980s, the EEC's enterprise policy was mainly intended to attract large companies to Europe. Low wages, qualified labour, logistics, a booming market and on top of that some investment subsidies would encourage American and Japanese headquarters to realise huge green field investments in Europe. The Chemical and the automotive industry were two sectors that created a great deal of employment. These industries are now however largely delocalizing their plants to other countries where they find highly skilled, cheap labour, a booming market and investment subsidies. As these industries no longer create jobs, but remain important in terms of job maintenance, most regions have developed a retention policy. This retention policy mostly consists of attempts to embed companies in the region by tightening their links with research centres, universities, incubators and policy makers.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the European Economic Community (EEC) experienced an economic downturn. Unemployment was high and the neo-Keynesian approach of deficit spending led to budgetary and monetary problems in a number of countries. While reports, for instance from the American economist David Birch indicated that small firms created more jobs than large firms (Aernoudt & Van Rompuy, 2015: 5; Autio, 2017: 5) various countries started formulating SME policies. The European Commission (EC) launched an SME task force, which would later on lead to the creation of a separate DG devoted to SME policy. The starting point of a classical SME policy is the neo-classical approach, i.e. that one should reduce imperfections or negative external effects in the market place. The goal of the SME policy is thus to strengthen the existing base of small enterprises by ensuring they can compete in the market place and that they are not prejudiced because of their small size relative to large firms through direct measures. Analysis of the policies set up at regional, national and European levels however made clear that only a few SMEs appeared willing to accept support and this for a number reasons; the support provider did not understand the owner's business, external support was perceived as threatening for the personal autonomy, measures ignored the heterogeneity of small firms or the specific character of localities and the application procedure was burdensome. Rather than concluding that its SME policy was inefficient, the EEC posited that its SME policy could not be efficient in the absence of an entrepreneurial society (Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 4-5).

In the last decades growing political interest in SMEs has been translated into a more ambitious 'entrepreneurship policy'. While maintaining its SME policy of the 1980s and 1990s, since the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 the EU has increasingly given interest to generating a favourable environment for the creation and development of innovative enterprises and particularly SMEs². *"Representing 99% of all businesses in the EU, and having created around 85% of new jobs and providing two-thirds of the total private sector employment in the EU, the European Commission considers SMEs and entrepreneurship as the backbone of Europe's economy and key to ensuring economic growth, innovation, job creation, and social integration in the EU"* (EC, 2015b). The vast majority of these SMEs are micro enterprises. They account for almost 93% of all enterprises in the non-financial business sector (EC DG Growth, 2016).

In the 2000s, the Commission's DG devoted to SME policy merged with the DG Industry and became DG Enterprise and Industry. Benchmarking and best practices became basic instruments at European level, intended to influence regional and national policies. Despite maintaining its SME policy of the 1980s and 1990s, various subsidy programmes were closed. The EU posits that an optimal combination between the focus of the SME policy of the 1980s and 1990s and its entrepreneurship policy as of the 2000s seems to be the most efficient way to create value for public and private money (Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 5-6). At the beginning of 2015, DG Growth (full name: DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs) was created to restructure DG Enterprise and Industry. Most of the activities of DG Growth- except for the problem of access to finance- are concentrated on environmental issues, and are realised mainly through benchmarking exercises. The multiannual SME programmes have become multiannual programmes for enterprises and entrepreneurship, and they now focus on entrepreneurship and innovation (Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 7).

Table 1: Comparison Between SME Policy And Entrepreneurship Policy, Which Jointly Set Out The Commission's Policy At Present

² The EU defines SMEs as companies employing less than 250 people, with a turnover of maximum of 50 million EUR or a balanced sheet total of maximum 43 million EUR. A distinction is further made between micro (< 10 employees), small (< 50 employees) and medium enterprises (< 250 employees), each with different maxima as regards turnover and balanced sheet total (EC, 2003).

	<i>SME policy</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship policy</i>
Basic assumption	Market imperfection	Entrepreneurial gap
Objective	Help SMEs overcome inconveniences not encountered by big enterprises	Encourage people to set up a business or to think entrepreneurially
Target group	Enterprises, mainly exiting firms	Individuals, entrepreneurs
Specific criteria	Picking winners; high growth sectors	Particular segments possible: women, ethnic groups, young persons
Levers	Financial (investment subsidies, R&D, export assistance)	Mainly non-financial support
Focus on	Business environment	Entrepreneurial culture

(Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 17).

In generating an environment conducive to entrepreneurship, the Commission makes a distinction between the business climate and the entrepreneurial culture. The business climate concerns the conditions within which firms are created and developed, such as the administrative, fiscal and financial environment for enterprises. The entrepreneurship culture involves motivation issues, which are related to attitudes and culture, specific target groups and the failure and bankruptcy problem, and capacity, which is linked to education, training, research, and innovation (Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 15).

The Commission claims that to make entrepreneurship the growth engine of the EU's economy, "Europe needs a thorough, far-reaching cultural change. For this reason, the principle of "think small first" must become the touchstone of European and national policies, under a co-ordinated action at European, national and regional levels (EC, 2013). In literature and policy making entrepreneurship development is commonly seen as a solution for the problems created by the economic crisis (Vasilescu, 2014). A Eurobarometer report on entrepreneurship shows this vision is shared by the majority of the Europeans, as 87 % consider entrepreneurs as job creators, while 79 % agree that entrepreneurs create new products and services that benefit all (EC, 2012). The Commission however underlines the need for an enterprise mentality in Europe. The 2014 GEM Report shows that the EU is the region where starting a venture was the least seen as a good career choice (Singer et al., 2015). In 19 EU countries,³ a majority of the respondents preferred being an employee to being an employer, most strikingly in Sweden (74%), Finland (73%), Denmark, Slovenia and Belgium (65%), Germany and the Netherlands. The lowest preference given to working as an employee was to be found in Lithuania (32%) and Bulgaria (40%) (EC, 2012). Since 2004, the share of people preferring self-employment to being an employee has dropped in 23 EU member countries and in comparison, to the USA and China much less people prefer to work as self-employed in the Union (EC, 2013)

Table 2: Comparison Between Business Climate And Entrepreneurship Culture

<i>Business climate</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship culture</i>
Macro-economic conditions	Attitudes
Easy access to finance	Culture
Taxation issues	Failure and bankruptcy issues
Exploitation of the internal market	Education
Employment and environmental legislation	Training
Administrative burden	Research and Innovation

(Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015: 15)

³ Since the data date from 2012 they apply to 27 EU countries. Croatia, which joined in 2013, is hence not included.

While within the EC's entrepreneurship policy the entire population is targeted, it has also increasingly reached out to particular segments of the population who are underrepresented within the entrepreneurial population such as women, young people and migrants. Besides publicly recognising the general contribution of migrants to sustainable growth and the creation of new jobs in the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (EC, 2011), the EU Labour Force Survey (1998 – 2008) highlights the positive contribution of migrant entrepreneurs to employment. *Migrants are recognized as an important pool of potential entrepreneurs, as relative to natives they are more likely to start businesses and can substantially contribute to growth and job creation in the EU. It is a known fact that immigrants founded 52 % of start-ups created in Silicon Valley, USA, between 1995 and 2005. Israel owes much of its success to its immigrant population. However, in the EU these migrant businesses are mainly micro-businesses, with very few employees, a smaller turnover and low profits in comparison with indigenous businesses and fail more often due to a lack of information, knowledge and language skills* (EC, 2015). Apart from this, in many European countries, it has increasingly become the individual's responsibility to integrate effectively and the failure to do so has increasingly been projected as a matter of individual choice, under the discourse and practices of neoliberal governmentality. This is part of a broader delegation of responsibility to the individual immigrant for assimilating effectively into the labour market, the host nation and European society at large (Hay & Rosamond, 2002; Mitchell, 2006).

3. Main Tools At The EU-Level To Conduce Migrant Entrepreneurship

The realisation of the internal (single) market in 1993, which allowed goods, services, people and capital to move freely within the EU- created a new opportunity structure for the business sector, following an increase in liberalisations and privatisations of public services. Although the challenge of completing the internal continues, it has provided more opportunities for (migrant) entrepreneurs.

Migrant entrepreneurs have also been able to benefit from European entrepreneurship programmes. These programmes have been accessible on grounds of residence and hence include legally residing immigrants in one of the participating countries (EU, 2015). Today, access to finance for SMEs is at the core of the EU 2020 strategy and its major instruments COSME⁴, HORIZON 2020 and Regional Fund. COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, running from 2014 to 2020, with a budget of 2.3 billion EUR. It implements the Small Business Act (SBA), which reflects the Commission's political will to recognise the central role of SMEs in the EU economy⁵. COSME especially focuses on digital entrepreneurship and supports SMEs in the following areas: facilitating access to finance, supporting internationalization and access to markets, creating an environment favourable for competitiveness and encouraging an entrepreneurial culture. An example in case is the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program, which was launched in 2009 with 37 partner countries, within the framework of the Small Business Act (SBA) for Europe (EC, 2015).

HORIZON 2020⁶ is the EU Research and Innovation Program, running from 2014 to 2020. It allocates at least 3 billion EUR to highly innovative SMEs through the 'SME instrument' and 2.84 billion EUR to innovative companies and other organisations who find it difficult to access financing for high-risk new ideas or their development through the 'access to risk finance instrument' (EC, 2014). Moreover, 15.6 % of the economic, social and territorial cohesion fund was awarded to competitiveness, highlighting the EU's strong emphasis on competitiveness (EC, 2013c). Additionally funds are available through the Creative Europe project (loans to SME in cultural and creative sectors), Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (microloans up to 25,000 EUR to micro-enterprises and investments up to 500,000 EUR to social enterprises), the European Structural and Investment Funds, the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund. Direct funding grants are being allocated by the Commission or its executive agencies. More often however funding is channelled through local, regional or national authorities, or through financial intermediaries such as banks and venture capital organisations that provide funding through financial instruments. Direct funding grants serve as complementary financing and are meant to break even financially (EU Your Europe, 2017).

⁴ With the single 'portal on Access to Finance, the COSME programme explicitly supports SMEs in facilitating access to finance, in different phases of their lifecycle. A wide range of financing is available: business loans, microfinance, guarantees and venture capital (EC, 2013b).

⁵ The SBA, was launched in 2008 and reviewed in 2011 to integrate the SBA into the Europe 2020 Strategy. It strives to foster SME development and remove obstacles to SME growth. It does not constitute a legal requirement but a series of guidance measures that can be adapted to suit each country's specific needs. This guidance is underlined by ten core principles: entrepreneurship, second chance, think small first, responsive administration, state aid and public procurement, access to finance, single market, skills and innovation, environment and internationalization. The SME Performance Review is one of the main tools used by the European Commission to monitor and assess countries' progress in implementing the Small Business Act (SBA) on a yearly basis (EC DG Growth, 2016).

⁶ Apart from this direct support to SMEs, the Horizon 2020 specific objective 'Innovation in SMEs' boosts the innovation capacity of SMEs, including through the Eurostars Joint Programme which will continue to promote transnational collaboration of R&D performing SMEs (EC, 2013d).

Additionally, in the last decade particular programmes have been set up to reach out to (potential) migrant entrepreneurs. Through the Blue Card directive (Council Directive 2009/50/EC)⁷ the European Commission aims to create a policy that helps to attract high qualified would-be entrepreneurs from non-EU countries and ensure that business support services reach all potential entrepreneurs.⁸

In 2010, the Commission presented its Europe 2020 Strategy which put forward three mutually reinforcing priorities, i.e. smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth. Two of the five headline targets make explicit reference to migrants. One headline targets states that “75% of the population aged 20-64 should be employed, including through the greater involvement of women, older workers and the better integration of migrants in the workforce”. Another EU headline target⁹ states that “20 million less people should be at risk of poverty” and considers minorities to be among the groups at particular risk (EC, 2010).

In 2011, the European Agenda for the Integration¹⁰ of Third- Country Nationals was presented, which called for a strengthened and coherent approach to integration, across different policy areas and policy areas and made mention of entrepreneurship with a view to the integration of third-country nationals. The proposed actions focused on the following key areas: integration through participation, more action at the local level and involvement of the countries of origin. Conform with Common Basic Principle 3 for Immigrant Policy in the EU, i.e. ‘*Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation, to the contributions immigrants make to the society, and to making such contributions visible, ‘integration through participation’ among other issues includes ‘participation in the labour market’. Hereby it mentions that “the important role of migrants as entrepreneurs and their creativity and innovation capacity should also be reinforced, with the support of authorities with information on the conditions to set up a business.”*’ (EC, 2011).

Within the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, adopted in January 2013, sets out a number of actions under three different action pillars:

- entrepreneurial education and training
- an environment where entrepreneurs can flourish and grow
- role models and reaching out to demographic groups that are underrepresented within the entrepreneurial population and especially founders of start-ups; i.e. women, seniors, unemployed, young people and migrants already present and residing in the EU based on best practices from the Member States (EC, 2016b).

The Action Plan¹¹ asserts that “*within this group of migrant entrepreneurs the more vulnerable groups of less qualified migrants should also be addressed, as they fail more due to a lack of information, knowledge and language skills... It is important that policies to encourage entrepreneurship in Europe take full account of the entrepreneurship potential represented by this group. For the creation of businesses and jobs represented by (highly) qualified migrants... National and European policies should also consider the potential of qualified migrants for the creation of businesses and jobs. In particular, support measures and policy initiatives should help attract talented would-be entrepreneurs wishing to create global companies based in Europe.*”

With regard to women, no specific mentioning is made of which specific profile should receive the most interest. With regard to the unemployed support, it mentions that “*given the significant number of unemployed people across Europe, entrepreneurship support schemes should be put in place to encourage business creation as a route of unemployment... Support should be targeted at groups with the greatest potential (such as unemployed workers with professional skills, women or young people) and should rely on close co-operation between employment services, business support and finance providers.*” Finally, the Action Plan considers seniors “*a valuable source for entrepreneurship... A growing cohort of well-educated, highly experienced adults is retiring every year and to date society has not been innovative in occupying them and benefiting from their know-how and skills. Engaging them in both business creation and in supporting new and existing entrepreneurs to maximize the*

⁷ Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom did not participate in the adoption of the Directive 2009/50/EC and are not bound by it or subject to its application (EU, 2009).

⁸ In 2013 12,964 Blue Card Permits were issued in the EU, in 2014 13,869, in 2015 17,104 and 20,979 in 2016 (EC, 2017).

⁹ The other targets set are: 3% of the GDP should be invested in R&D; the 20/20/20 climate/energy targets should be met; and the share of school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree (EC, 2010)

¹⁰ In 2004, the EU adopted 11 Common Basic principles for Immigrant Integration Policy, who formed the foundations of EU initiatives in the field of integration. These principles were reaffirmed in 2014. Nonetheless, the EU has no competence to legislate in the field of Integration policy and mainly focuses on assisting national, regional and local organisations and authorities in identifying and sharing best practices and benchmarking on successful integration strategies with each other. The EU also supports integration actions through various funding programmes.

¹¹ This Action Plan and its key actions will be followed up by the Commission through the competitiveness and industrial policy and the Small Business Act governance mechanisms, including in their external dimension with the candidate, potential candidate and neighbourhood countries. The network of National SME Envoys shall, together with the EU SME Envoy play a particularly key role in ensuring that progress is made on the proposed measures. Member States are invited to report on progress on the key actions of this Communication at national level in the context of their National Reform Programmes in the framework of the European Semester (EC, 2013).

wealth of experience they possess that can be lost on retirement, cultivate intergenerational learning and ensure knowledge transfer... Those seniors who wish to start a business for the first time should benefit from the full range of existing support services.” (EC, 2013)

The key Actions for migrants, which ought to be implemented in the period 2014-2017, are the following ones:

- Propose policy initiatives to attract migrant entrepreneurs and to facilitate entrepreneurship among migrants already present in the EU or arriving for reasons other than setting up business, based on good practices from Member States
- Analyse the opportunity of proposing legislation to remove obstacles to qualified immigrant entrepreneurs to establish a business and obtain a stable residence permit (EC, 2013).

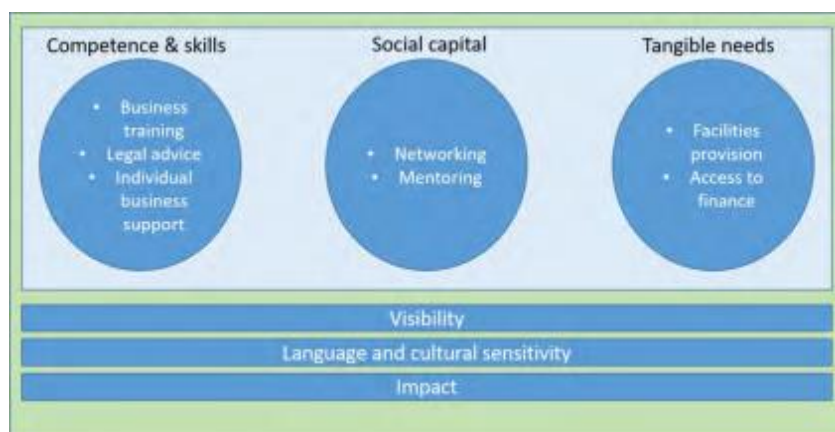
With a view to labour market integration, supporting entrepreneurship was made mention of by the Commission’s Action plan on the integration of third country nationals (EC, 2016). It asserts that *“notwithstanding the efforts made, third-country nationals across the EU continue to fare worse than EU citizens in terms of employment, education and social inclusion outcomes.”*

In August 2016, the Commission presented the first evaluation and analysis of good practices in promoting and supporting migrant entrepreneurship. It includes twenty European good practice case studies, followed by two international ones coming from Canada and Australia, two countries with a longstanding tradition of promoting and supporting migrant entrepreneurship. To assist the evaluation of migrant entrepreneurship support schemes, a benchmarking tool was developed which is structured along ten dimensions:

- 1) Visibility
- 2) Networking
- 3) Legal and regulatory advice
- 4) Individual business support
- 5) Group business training
- 6) Mentoring
- 7) Access to finance
- 8) Facilities provision
- 9) Language/ cultural sensitivity
- 10) Impact

Eight of these represent types of activities, while the remaining two represent overarching dimensions (language and cultural sensitivity and impact). The guidebook concludes that to *“provide a support scheme as effective and comprehensive as possible, at least one component from each group and the crosscutting dimensions should be included”*(EC, 2016b).

Figure 1: Categorisation Of The Ten Dimensions



(EC, 2016b, p. 43)

The publication of two calls for proposals in 2016, funded by the European Parliament and COSME, led to the start of eight European projects between June and October 2017. Four of them focus on supporting training and mentoring programmes for potential entrepreneurs in migrant communities. The target group are third-country

nationals staying in the EU and they run for two years. Four other projects focus on promoting networking and the exchange of best practice between support organisations working in the field of migrant entrepreneurship. The target group are organisations working with migrants and business support providers and the duration of the projects is three years (EC,2017b).

4. Limitations Of Migrant Entrepreneurship Promotion At The EU-Level

EU actions in the field of enterprises and entrepreneurship are subject to subsidiarity, i.e. except in the areas in where it has exclusive powers, the EU only acts where action will be more effective at EU level than at national level. The principle of subsidiarity equally applies to the fields of labour market policy¹², social (security) policy, fiscal policy related to income and corporate taxes, education, corporate law and migrant integration. As such, the EU, in practice represented by the Commission, conduces a business-friendly environment through assistance of the member states in developing SME-friendly policies, monitoring the progress in their implementation i.a. through benchmarking, sharing best practices and a number of financial instruments, within a multiannual framework that covers up to seven years, such as the COSME (Competitiveness for Enterprises and SMEs) Programme for the period 2014-2020. This assistance has added value to the work of Member States without raising issue of subsidiarity.

EU actions in the field of enterprise/ entrepreneurship policy is further complicated by the common rule of unanimity in most of the fields relevant to enterprise policy, in particular tax-related issues, and the ordinary legislative procedure, in which the European Parliament and the Council (of Ministers) share legislative power (Aernoudt & Van Rompaey, 2015).

5. Conclusion

This paper aimed to analyse the evolution of the target group and objectives of the European Commission's enterprise/ entrepreneurship policy since the end of the 1970s, with particular attention to the process towards recognition of migrants as an important pool of entrepreneurs at the EU-level in the last decade. Secondly, it aimed to explore the tools available at the EU-level to promote migrant entrepreneurship, as well as the limitations of this policy. The study was done by a thorough study of both the academic literature and sources provided by the European Commission, in particular by DG Growth.

The research shows that the EU's enterprise/ entrepreneurship policy evolved from primarily targeting larger companies, into a policy with extra interest for SMEs and finally the whole society. Within this context, migrants have become recognized as an important pool of potential entrepreneurs, as relative to natives they are more likely to start businesses and can substantially contribute to growth and job creation in the EU. While an action plan and projects have been set up to encourage migrant entrepreneurs, the promotion of migrant entrepreneurship at the EU-level is limited by the principle of subsidiarity, the common rule of unanimity in most of the fields relevant to entrepreneurship policy and the ordinary legislative procedure. Key action points for migrants are proposing policy initiatives and facilitating entrepreneurship for migrants, through support to training; and promoting networking and the exchange of best practice between support organizations working in the field of migrant entrepreneurship.

References

- Aernoudt R., & Van Rompuy, M. (2015). *Entrepreneurship, a way of life*. Intersentia, 4-7, 15, 17
- Autio, E. (2017). *Entrepreneurship support in Europe, trends and challenges for EU policy*. Report prepared for EU DG Growth, Erko Autio, Professor, Imperial College Business School London, February 3, 2016
- Desiderio, M. V. (2014). *Policies to support immigrant entrepreneurship*. Washington, DC, Migration Policy Institute
- Desiderio, M.V., & Mestres- Domenèch, J. (2011). *Migrant entrepreneurship in OECD countries*. OECD International Migration Outlook- SOPEMI
- Dinan, D. (2004). *Europe Recast, A History of European Union*. The European Union Series, Palgrave Macmillan
- EU (2009). *COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment*. Official Journal of the European Union, Retrieved 25 October 2015 from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009L0050&from=EN>

¹² The sovereignty of member states in labour market policies has however been restricted by the transfer of macro-economic policy to the European Central Bank and the Stability and Growth Pact which discourage fiscal policy.

- EU (2015). *Erasmus for young entrepreneurs*. Retrieved 1 November 2015 from <http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/index.php?lan=en>
- EU Your Europe (2017). *Business, Finance and Funding, Access to finance*. Retrieved on 1 June 2017 from europa.eu/youreurope/business/funding-grants/access-to-finance/index_en.htm
- European Commission (2003). *Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises*. Retrieved 1 November 2015 from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32003H0361&from=EN>
- European Commission (2010). *Communication from the Commission: Europe 2020- A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, Brussels
- European Commission (2011). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals*. Brussels
- European Commission (2012). *Flash Eurobarometer 354: Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond*. Brussels
- European Commission (2013). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Entrepreneurship 2020 action Plan: Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe*. Brussels
- European Commission (2013b). *COSME: Europe's programme for SME's leaflet*. Brussels
- European Commission (2013c). *Multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 and EU budget 2014: The figures*. Luxembourg
- European Commission (2013d). *HORIZON 2020: SMEs*. Retrieved 1 November 2015 from <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/area/smes>
- European Commission (2014). *Horizon 2020 in brief, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation*. Luxembourg
- European Commission (2015). *Migrant entrepreneurs*. Retrieved 3 November 2015 from http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants/index_en.htm
- European Commission (2015b). *Entrepreneurship and Small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs)*. Retrieved 3 November on <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/>
- European Commission (2016). *Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals*. Strasbourg
- European Commission (2016b). *Evaluation and analysis of good practices in promoting and supporting migrant entrepreneurship, Guide Book*. Luxembourg
- European Commission (2017). *State of the Union 2017, Ensuring effective legal pathways to Europe*. Brussels
- European Commission (2017b). *Migrant entrepreneurs*. Retrieved 15 November 2017 from http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/we-work-for/migrants_en
- European Commission DG Growth (2016). *Annual report on European SMEs, 2015/2016: SME recovery continues*. Brussels
- Hay, C., & Rosamon B. (2002). Globalization, European integration and the discursive construction of economic imperatives. *Journal of European Public Policy, Volume 9, Issue 2, 2002*, 147-167
- Kloosterman, R., Van der Leun, J., & Rath, J. (1999). Mixed embeddedness: (In)formal economic activities an immigrant business in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 23*, pp. 253-267.
- Marchand, K., & Siegel, M. (2014). *World Migration Report 2015: Immigrant entrepreneurship in Cities*. International organization for Migration
- Mitchell, K. (2006). Neoliberal Governmentality in the European Union: Education, Training and Technologies of Citizenship. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, June 2006 vol. 24*, 389-407
- Rath, J., & Eurofound (2011). *Promoting ethnic entrepreneurship in European cities*. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

Singer, S., Ernesto, Amoros, J., & Moska, Arreolo, D. (2015). *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014*. Babson, Global Entrepreneurship Research Association

Vasilescu, L. (2014). Accessing finance for innovative EU SMEs: key drivers and challenges. *Economic Review – Journal of Economics and Business, Vol. XII, Issue 2, November 2014, 35-47*