

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR MIGRANTS AS A PATH TO SOCIAL INCLUSION: THE CASE OF SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

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Abstract

Europe has always attracted migrants despite the serious socioeconomic problems, such as unemployment and exclusion, they encounter. Labour market integration has been a policy priority in the EU. The important role of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education has been widely acknowledged in that context since the development of entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial skills can have multiplier effects for both migrants and hosting economies. Entrepreneurial competences are among the key competences for Lifelong Learning, setting out skills that contribute to the enhancement of employability, personal development, and active citizenship. This paper focuses on European Union recent policies and initiatives related to entrepreneurship education for migrants.

JEL Classification: O15, F22, I24, I25, J68

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Competence, Social Inclusion, Migrant Entrepreneurship, Life Skills, Policies

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1. Introduction

The pressing need for migrants' social inclusion is broadly recognised since it affects not only them but also the cohesion of society (Levitas *et al.*, 2007) but what is the real meaning of the term and what are the means to achieve it? According to the European Union (EU) Employment and Social Affairs Directorate, social inclusion refers to “... *the development of capacity and opportunity to play a full role, not only in economic terms but also in social, psychological, and political terms...*” The means to achieve this are linked to the creation of prerequisite conditions, through the development of policies related to employability, housing, health improvement, poverty elimination, and skills and competences enhancement. In the same vein, literature on entrepreneurship education claims that entrepreneurship education can contribute towards skills and knowledge acquisition, the creation of employability opportunities, and ultimately, socio-economic well-being and elimination of inequalities. Based on a critical review of theoretical and policy literature, this paper¹ will attempt to answer the question: Does the entrepreneurship education of immigrants contribute to their social inclusion and how? The review on relevant EU policies and initiatives will be followed by a discussion focusing on competence-oriented methods to effectively enhance immigrants' social integration.

2. Socio-political background

According to official data of the International Organization for Migration (2019), the global number of international migrants was 272 million (3.5% of the world's population) in 2019. It has been proven that some countries strongly attract immigrants from developing economies. More specifically, the top destination country is the United States, one of the seven most developed economies (G7), with 50.7 million international migrants, while Northern America, along with Europe, host more than half of all international migrants (141 million). On the other hand, the three largest countries of origin of international migrants are India (with 17.5 million migrants living abroad), Mexico, and China (with 11.8 million and 10.7 million respectively), all three characterised as developing economies (UN, 2021).

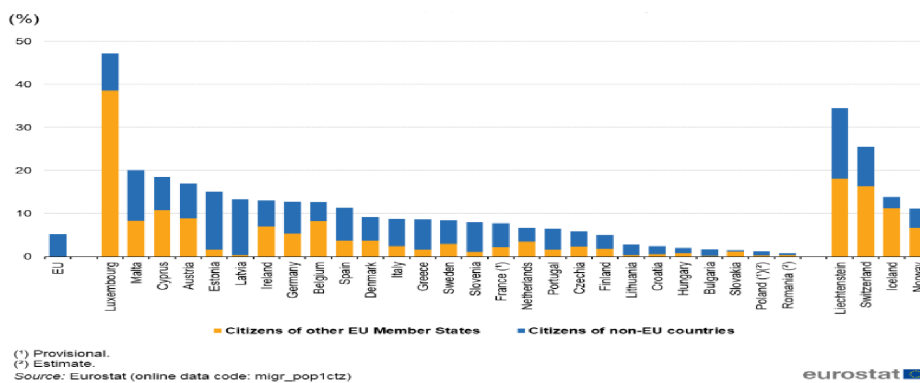
Europe has always been a top destination for migrants. However, during the last decade, an unprecedented influx of immigrants and refugees, mainly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and even from African countries, albeit at a lower rate, has been recorded. Besides the political turbulence in some countries of Asia and North Africa, the causes should be sought elsewhere, for example, in climate change, which triggers unemployment and lack of economic prospects, i.e., two of the most important 'push' factors of international migration. The proximity of Eu-

1. This paper is based on previous work presented in the 16th European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship - ECIE 2021, 15-17/09/2021, Lisbon, Portugal.

rope to Africa and Asia seems to play a key role in it being selected as a destination. On the other hand, the ‘pull’ factors for migration towards Europe should not be underestimated. Most European citizens enjoy a high standard of living. Moreover, the previous existence of migrant communities in European countries plays a crucial role (Migali *et al.*, 2018). These communities tend to help potential migrants to gather valuable, discrete, and unofficial information through social media; this transforms the nature of such networks and, thereby, facilitates migration (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012).

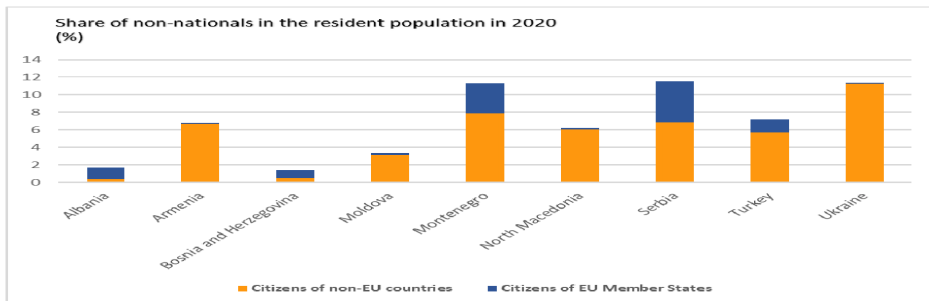
The percentage of third-country nationals residing in EU Member States on 1 January 2021 represented 5.3% of the EU-27 population (23.7 million). Besides, 13.7 million nationals of an EU country lived in another EU Member State on 1 January 2021, as illustrated in Figure 1. Clearly, there are significant differences in the rates of migrants in EU countries.

Figure 1. Share of non-nationals in the resident population, 1 January 2021 (%)



Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Fig06_Share_of_non-nationals_in_the_resident_population,_1_January_2021_\(%25\)_rev.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Fig06_Share_of_non-nationals_in_the_resident_population,_1_January_2021_(%25)_rev.png)

Equally important differences can be observed in immigration rates in South-Eastern Europe countries that do not belong to the EU. According to the ‘Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography’ of the European Commission, in 2020, Ukraine, Montenegro and Serbia were the countries with the highest rates of immigrants. On the other hand, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina seem to be extremely unattractive to migrants; while these countries receive extremely low rates of immigrants in their territory, they seem to attract mostly immigrants from EU countries.

Figure 2. Migration in non-EU countries of South-Eastern Europe in 2020

Source: <https://migration-demography-tools.jrc.ec.europa.eu/atlas-migration/data?selection>

The significant differences in the rates of migrants in European countries could be attributed to different pull factors in every country. ‘Push’ factors seem to play a crucial role as well, dramatically changing migration flows in the course of this year. More specifically, it appears that the outbreak of the war in Ukraine has drastically changed the refugee / migration flow into Europe, greatly affecting migration rates in countries such as Poland (Duszczuk & Kaczmarczyk, 2022). Nevertheless, apart from Poland, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, other countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe seem to be affected. Only in the Czech Republic, refugees from Ukraine had exceeded 460.000 persons by November 2022. Other countries that attracted large numbers of refugees from Ukraine are Slovakia, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Therefore, countries which were not traditionally host countries for immigrants or refugees are now considered as such (UNHCR, 2022).

As one would have expected, countries’ reactions to immigration have been contradictory. Countries with a long tradition in receiving migrants, such as Germany, seemed more prepared in terms of integration policies and actions and they were also more open to the new populations since the role of refugees and migrants in the country’s economic growth was highly valued. It should be noted that expected growth is closely related to the existence of a favourable environment, understanding migrants’ profile, and providing them with appropriate education (ESPON, 2018). This has raised a discussion among EU countries about turning the challenge into an opportunity for growth through entrepreneurship, since the positive aspects of migrant entrepreneurship could outweigh potential obstacles. Even though there has been a debate in relevant literature over the correlation between entrepreneurship and economic growth, the view that the two are positively correlated eventually prevailed (Sarri & Trichopoulou, 2018). According to the Global Report 2019/2020 for the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor “...*entrepreneur-*

ship is a uniquely powerful mechanism for economic and social development, generating incomes and jobs while enabling and enriching individuals and communities. Truly, an engine for change..." The significance of entrepreneurship tends to be greater when vulnerable population groups get involved. According to the European Network 'Cities for Local Integration Policy' (CLIP), apart from financial benefits, such as economic growth of the local area, creation of new jobs (according to OECD, in 2016 approximately 28% of the self-employed immigrants in the EU hired employees) and connection of the local markets to global ones, ethnic entrepreneurship may have other aspects related to the revival of lost trades and arts and the provision of higher added value services (Rath, 2011).

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a familiar phenomenon worldwide. A high rate of migrants already tends to show a strong interest in entrepreneurship within host societies. In Australia, 30% of small businesses are owned by migrants and in Germany, in 2015, 44% of the owners of newly established enterprises were foreigners (Sarri & Trichopoulou, 2018). Although, according to the official data of the EU, in 2018, the percentage of self-employed migrants in the EU lagged, compared to that of EU natives, by 1.9 percentage points (13% vs. 14.9%) (OECD / EU, 2019), IOM (2019) claims that, in general, immigrants tend to have higher entrepreneurial activity compared to natives. Additionally, in countries such as the United States, migrants have disproportionately contributed to innovation (IOM, 2019). There is a massive trend among migrants to have the willingness to run their own business as - in addition to the financial impact - the implementation of business projects and activities may also positively contribute to the picture citizens form about them. According to Eurobarometer surveys, many European citizens express a positive view of entrepreneurship and the role of entrepreneurs in creating new jobs (Sarri & Trichopoulou, 2012). Nevertheless, the fact that ethnic businesses tend to fail more frequently than those established by natives might imply the existence of a series of problems that migrants face at the outset. One of the main obstacles of migrants' entrepreneurship is related to difficulty in accessing financial resources from official financial institutions (Desiderio, 2014). What is more, migrants usually encounter other challenges, such as regulatory barriers to starting a business and lack of preparation for everyday life in the new country (UNCTAD, UNHCR and IOM, 2018). At the same time, neither their lack of nor disconnection from entrepreneurship education should be overlooked.

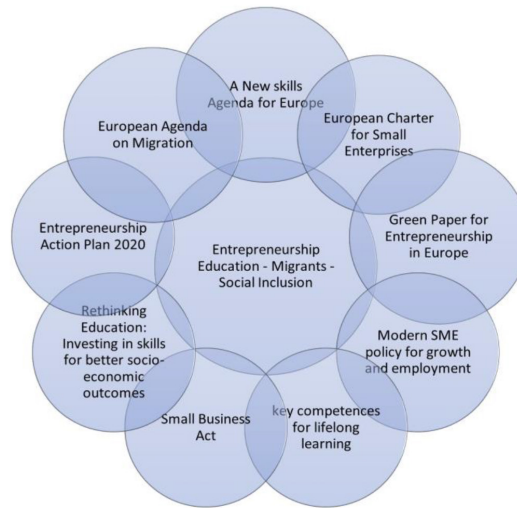
3. Policies and Initiatives in the sector of Entrepreneurship Education

The significance of migrants' inclusion into host societies has been broadly acknowledged by international organisations, governments, the academic world, and civil society, as a lever for local economy growth. At an international level, the recent establishment of the United Nations Network on Migration and the

introduction of the Global Compact on Migration have become milestones in the field of global migration governance. The Global Compact on Migration is founded on a set of 23 objectives linked to an equal number of commitments, and are followed by a range of actions, which, in many cases, include skills development, education, and entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, the Global Compact agreement is non-legally binding; it represents a near-universal consensus on issues requiring sustained international cooperation and commitment for the creation of conditions that will enable all migrants to enrich host societies through contributing to sustainable development at the local, national, regional, and global levels (IOM 2019; also see Boutsiouki, 2022).

As concerns the EU, it has developed a range of targeted policies in an attempt to encourage national authorities to support migrants' inclusion and to take initiatives to promote entrepreneurship education as a means of fulfilling this purpose. Back in 2000, with the approval of 'The European Charter for Small Enterprises', Member States and the European Commission were invited to take action to support and encourage small enterprises in ten key-areas including education and training for entrepreneurship, considering small enterprises as one of the most promising sources of new jobs, innovation, economic dynamism, and greater social inclusion. Three years later, the EU Green Paper 'Entrepreneurship in Europe' highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship education one more time. It pointed out that education and training would contribute towards encouraging of entrepreneurship, by supporting the development of the awareness and skills necessary for developing an entrepreneurial mindset. Although evidence shows that ethnic minorities display high levels of entrepreneurial flair and even greater potential, the business support services available do not appear to effectively respond to migrants' specific needs. At the end of the same year, the public debate following the Green Paper 'Entrepreneurship in Europe' underlined that the objectives it set could be achieved on condition that additional initiatives are implemented with regard to educational procedures and methods, while it placed special emphasis on trainees' exposure to the business world, skill-oriented learning, and teachers' training on entrepreneurship. In 2005, Commission's Communication to European institutions, concerning the implementation of the Community Lisbon Programme 'Modern SME Policy for growth and employment', refers to the need for national strategies promoting entrepreneurial skills. Moreover, the ability of Member States to use resources from European Social Funds to reduce skill gaps, by improving business-related training and lifelong learning, is positively assessed even though doubts have arisen about the effectiveness of such actions. In addition, what was once again highlighted was the importance of networking among policymakers to identify and promote good practices that support ethnic entrepreneurs.

In the years that followed, there were constant references to EU policies and action plans that promoted entrepreneurship education, which often specifically targeted vulnerable population groups, such as migrants and refugees. More specifically, the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship was identified as an essential component of knowledge-based society and was included in the eight key-competences of lifelong learning declared in a European Parliament and Council Recommendation in 2006. In that text, special reference was made to migrants who have different learning needs due to educational disadvantages caused by their personal, social, cultural, or economic circumstances; for this reason, such migrants must receive special support to fulfil their educational potential. Two years later, the EU initiative 'Small Business Act' (2008) created a new policy framework integrating existing enterprise policy tools and building on the European Charter for Small Enterprises and the Modern SME policy through a set of 10 guiding principles for the conception and implementation of policies at both EU and Member State level. The eighth principle refers to the promotion of skills upgrading and to all forms of innovation in Small-Medium Enterprises, which are the most common type of ethnic businesses. Under this umbrella of applying the principles, the Commission undertook a series of actions that seemed to be less targeted but invited Member States to plan more specific actions, which, among others, foster cooperation with the business community, developing systematic strategies for entrepreneurship education at all levels and providing mentoring and support for immigrants who aspire to become entrepreneurs. In 2012, in the Commission Communication 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes', special reference was made to the importance of investing in business skills that not only enhance the development of new businesses, but also the employability of young people. In addition, the European Commission suggested that Member States should cooperate with the business community on developing strategies for entrepreneurship education and providing mentoring and support for migrants who wish to become entrepreneurs. The European Commission maintained its focus on the issue with the publication of the Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2020 (2013) and the New Skills Agenda for Europe (2016); both emphasised the need to promote entrepreneurship education and place entrepreneurial learning under the spotlight, ending up with a wide range of initiatives across Europe. From 2015 until today, in the frame of the European Agenda on Migration and its updates, many policy papers have been published by the EU. Apart from the other challenges posed by the immigration crisis, EU policy papers emphasised the fact that Member States should share migrant relocation fairly and responsibly as a necessary precondition for migrants' integration at local and regional level.

Figure 3. EU policy initiatives including migrant entrepreneurship education

Although for many decades and up until 2000 European policies mainly focused on the integration of migrants into paid employment, in the last two decades there has been wider recognition of the importance of migrant entrepreneurship, as well as of migrants' entrepreneurship education (Rath, 2011). In this context, several policies, initiatives, and actions have been developed and guidelines articulated in order for Member States to implement relevant projects in collaboration with private sector and civil society actors. Most of the host countries in Europe offer educational courses to newcomers mainly targeting the improvement of their language skills. In Greece, for instance, a wide range of agents participate in this effort, such as Migrant Integration Centres, the Integration Training Centres of Project HELIOS, public and private lifelong learning centres, the Modern Greek Language Teaching Centre of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Second Chance Schools and many Non-governmental organisations. However, when discussions focus on migrants' entrepreneurship education in Greece, the number of actors involved decreases, while it becomes even smaller in the case of competence-oriented entrepreneurship education. Moreover, the publication of *EntreComp* (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016) was followed by increasing interest in the implementation of competence-oriented entrepreneurship education projects for migrants across Europe. An interesting example comes from the project 'Fresh-start' in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, which provides 120 first-generation migrants with routes to social and economic inclusion by encouraging and supporting their entrepreneurial talents and teaching entrepreneurial competences (McCallum *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, the ELYME project in Italy, France, Belgium, and the UK is an entrepreneurship programme that offers migrants support in starting up their business or growing an existing one with the use of effective tools and methods for assessing their entrepreneurial skills and competences. Besides these two projects, six more relevant projects were approved, under the two calls for proposals for 'Entrepreneurial capacity building for young migrants', which covered the following seven countries: Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Poland, Spain, and Sweden.

Figure 4. Projects on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education for migrants and refugees funded by the E.U. or the U.N.

Participants from	Funded by	Project Name	Objective / Short Description	Target Group	Duration
Greece	U.I.A.	Curing the limbo	Improving the basic skills of refugees for finding employment, mainly in areas of exchange economy and the social entrepreneurship sector.	Refugees	2018-2021
UK, Greece, France, Austria & Italy.	Erasmus+	INSERT	Developing the competences of educators / professionals for the promotion of Social Entrepreneurship among adults with migrant background.	Adults with migrant background	2017-2019
Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus & Malta.	Erasmus+	MYSITE	Migrant & Youth Social Inclusion Through Entrepreneurship.	Migrants & Youths	2018-2019
Greece	UNHCR	Welcommon	Welcoming of migrants, social inclusion, education/training.	Migrants	2016-today
Greece, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Germany & Sweden.	AMIF	WEMIN	Implementing and promoting a pioneering integration model for migrant and refugee women of all ages in the communities involved, by addressing social, educational, and professional aspects of inclusion in eight countries throughout the EU.	Migrant and refugee women	2017-2019
Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece & Denmark.	Erasmus+	CRADLE	Linking entrepreneurial skills and foreign language through new practical language learning environments using EntreComp.	Include students from migrant backgrounds	2018-2019
Italy, Belgium, Germany & Finland.	Call: 'Entrepreneurial capacity building for young migrants' (EU)	ME4Change	Helping migrant entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses.	Immigrants	2017-2019
Italy, Germany, Spain, Greece & Sweden.	>> >>	EntryWay	Contributing to the support of economic integration of migrants through the provision of comprehensive entrepreneurship training and assistance.	Immigrants	2017-2019
Italy, Germany, Spain, Greece & Sweden.	>> >>	YOU-ME	Providing information, training, and mentoring support to migrants, especially young ones, coming from war-torn countries often with low educational background and/or lack of language skills, for helping them establish their own business.	Young Migrant Entrepreneurs	2017-2019
Poland, Austria The Netherlands & Italy.	>> >>	YMCB	Developing an innovative approach towards creating the appropriate ecosystem to support young migrants' entrepreneurship through a combination of education and training, mentoring and access to finance.	Young Migrants	2019-2021
Italy, Greece & Sweden.	>> >>	BITE	Contributing to the social and economic integration in EU Countries of newly arrived migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, by accompanying them in the creation of small businesses that have positive social and environmental impact in their Countries of residence, through a tailored business acceleration process.	Newly arrived migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa	2019-2021
France, Belgium, UK & Sweden.	>> >>	ELYME	Supporting entrepreneurship among migrants already permanently residing in the EU, for becoming self-confident, self-employed, and building a successful enterprise.	Migrants	2019-2021
Italy, Spain Germany, Austria & Finland.	>> >>	EUStartGees	Helping young refugees (18-25 years) to become self-employed and to build a successful enterprise, for achieving full inclusion in local countries' hosting community.	Refugees	2019-2021
Belgium, France, Germany & Netherlands	COSME	EMEN	Promoting and supporting migrants' entrepreneurship at all levels by sharing approaches and lessons learnt on migrant entrepreneurship across and between public administrations, business, and other public and private organisations.	Migrants	2017-2020

* Changes may have occurred in some of the projects above in terms of partners, duration, etc.

Indicative sources: <https://www.emen-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/D3.1-Inclusive-Ecosystems-towards-a-comprehensive-support-scheme-for-migrant-entrepreneurs-in-Europe-FINAL.pdf>

<https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC109128>

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/supporting-entrepreneurship/migrant-entrepreneurs_en

Special provision has been made for funding all the above by the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Parliament and other financial sources. These funds are expected to effectively support initiatives targeting the improvement of linguistic and professional skills, and the access to services and the labour market.

In recent years, implementation of good practices supporting immigrant entrepreneurship shows that countries with a tradition of receiving immigrants pay greater attention and invest in migrants' social integration through the development of relevant actions and projects. According to the latest data from EU-funded projects, it seems that among EU countries, Greece, Italy, Germany, Spain, and Sweden implement a wide range of pertinent projects, followed by Belgium, France, Austria, the Netherlands, and Finland. The increased interest of these countries in migrant-oriented projects can be associated with their urgent need to establish favourable conditions for the socioeconomic inclusion of the large numbers of migrants entering their territory. However, not all European countries show the same willingness to foster migrant entrepreneurial education and activity. For instance, Malta, a country of southern EU, in spite of receiving a great migrant influx, too, does not participate in such projects; thus, its intentions to integrate migrant populations arriving can be questioned.

4. The role of migrants' entrepreneurship education in their social inclusion

It is widely accepted that education is of vital importance for the wellbeing of citizens and the development of societies. Education contributes to the creation of thriving economies and inclusive societies. Over the last decades, the importance of entrepreneurship education has been broadly recognised and, for this reason, several initiatives to include it in formal and non-formal education have been put in place (Sarri & Laspita, 2022). The objectives of entrepreneurship education are connected to the support of entrepreneurship and the development of entrepreneurial spirit, both of which are drivers for growth. Although there seems to be a point of agreement that the main incentives for entrepreneurship education are of an economic rather than a social nature, entrepreneurship education promotes entrepreneurship by influencing attitudes, values, and community culture in general (Mwasalwiba, 2010). According to Galor and Michalopoulos (2006), there is a remarkably close correlation between the evolution of entrepreneurial spirit and the transition from stagnation to growth. In addition, developing an entrepreneurial spirit can positively affect the way people think and act and the same could apply among vulnerable population groups, too.

In that perspective, entrepreneurship education can also affect the life of migrants. More specifically, the impact of entrepreneurship education on migrants'

socioeconomic inclusion can be approached from two different perspectives. The first one relates to the benefits of running a successful ethnic business. Migrants who are well-educated and have previous management experience are more likely to succeed as entrepreneurs. What is more, they have better prospects of widening the market where they operate as entrepreneurs (Basu & Pruthi, 2021). Furthermore, migrants' entrepreneurship leads to the creation of a stable income in the household. In addition, the entrepreneurial activity of migrants results in the creation of networks inside and outside the ethnic community and contributes to the enhancement of their self-esteem. Self-employment of migrants can increase respect of the native population towards the newcomers. According to the report of the European Migration Network 'Understanding Migration in the European Union' (2018), the percentage of EU citizens who have negative or very negative feelings towards immigrants is high and tends to increase over time (from 54% in 2014 to 57% in 2017). The same report notes that increased contact with immigrants tends to promote positive attitudes towards them. Consequently, the successful entrepreneurial activity of migrants, provided they receive appropriate education or at least participate in educational processes, could facilitate their frequent and substantial contact with natives, thus leading to the migrants' coveted approval by them, which is an important factor of social inclusion.

The second perspective is connected to the hypothesis that competence-oriented entrepreneurship education can lead to the acquisition of life skills and competences. According to the public debate following the Green Paper 'Entrepreneurship in Europe' (2003), entrepreneurship education should favour the development of a variety of useful skills and personality traits, such as opening to lifelong learning, proactive attitude, self-reliance, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills, which also constitute entrepreneurship skills and competences, according to the Entrepreneurship Competence framework published by CEDEFOP (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016). Lazear's theory (2005) holds that entrepreneurs should be jacks-of-all-trades, meaning that people should build multifaceted personalities by obtaining diversified skills and competences throughout their lives.

In the past, the acquisition of such skills depended on the different roles an individual would undertake, which shaped the diverse background that was considered necessary for successful entrepreneurial action. Nowadays, the situation has considerably improved because entrepreneurship education provides not only knowledge but also skills, competences, and attitudes. 'EntreComp' perceives entrepreneurship as a skill for the entire life of the individual, from their personal development to their social life and employment (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, irrespective of their economic, cultural or social focus, migrants with competence-oriented entrepreneurship education should be expected to be able to face the challenges of the future and to be equipped with adequate knowledge, skills and

attitudes essential for full participation in society. In other words, such migrants will be ready to seize opportunities and put their ideas to practice, transforming them into value for others.

Furthermore, according to UNICEF and WHO, the aim of life skills education is to equip individuals with appropriate knowledge on risk-taking behaviours and to develop skills, such as communication, assertiveness, self-awareness, decision-making, problem-solving, critical and creative thinking (Nasheeda *et al.*, 2018). In many cases, achieving this goal coincides with acquiring entrepreneurial skills and competences.

Entrepreneurship education can play a crucial role in the creation of an entrepreneurial culture and the welfare of enterprises. People who are exposed to entrepreneurship are more likely than others to establish and successfully run a new business, thus being able to create value for themselves, the economy, and society as a whole. In a more detailed analysis, it seems that entrepreneurship competences are largely in line with life competences 'LifeComp' (Sala *et al.*, 2020). Many of the fifteen sub-competences of the 'EntreComp' framework (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016) are compatible with the nine sub-competences of the 'LifeComp' framework (Sala *et al.*, 2020), a set of competences applying to all spheres of life that can be acquired through formal, informal, and non-formal education and can help citizens thrive in the 21st Century.

This could become more coherent, with a detailed overview of the two frameworks, where in the case of specific competences, such as self-awareness and self-efficacy, coping with uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk, and working with others, there is direct compatibility; this means that entrepreneurship competences are considered as life competences, too. In other cases, compatibility is indirect or should be sought in more than one competence. These observations could provide a safe path to reach the assumption that entrepreneurship education is a way of acquiring life skills and competences. Moreover, in the case of migrants, participation in entrepreneurship education would lead, among others, to their social integration and would help them reap not only the benefits of setting up and operating a business, but also those of developing appropriate competences that would better prepare them for inclusion in host societies.

5. Conclusions

The theoretical and literature review of the topic showed that, in the last two decades, the EU has made systematic efforts to develop policies and initiatives for ethnic entrepreneurship education. Based on the guidelines of official policy texts and on national strategies and making use of EU funding tools, each member state has implemented relevant actions and projects. The role of third sector institutions has been significant in this effort; they have had varying degrees of involvement and

contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship education interventions in order to boost ethnic entrepreneurship (Rath, 2011). Although policy texts go back to 2000, due to the last decade's migration crisis, new questions have arisen concerning the entrepreneurship education of ethnic groups, while discussions are taking place in an attempt to determine how to turn the particular challenge into an opportunity for member states.

This debate should certainly take into account not only the diversity of ethnic groups, but also the different causes of migration; for example, different measures must be put in place in the cases of forced displacements, mainly with regard to asylum seekers. So far, the review has shown that organisations that provide education courses on entrepreneurship primarily target acquisition of knowledge and generic skills relevant to the entrepreneurial activity. What is more, even in cases of competence-oriented education, there is criticism about a value-free education detached from everyday life and economic reality, a fact that could lead to another kind of impasse (Popovic, 2014). The answer to this criticism could be related to the new competence-oriented entrepreneurship education which targets, among others, the promotion of critical and sustainable thinking. Although there have been six years since the EntreComp's publication (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016), there are only few projects for migrants which have been implemented applying EntreComp as a tool, setting as an objective the acquisition of entrepreneurship competences instead of knowledge and some business skills. Thus, more efforts should be made in this direction, since the entrepreneurship education for ethnic groups of the population, although not a panacea, could pave the way to employability and acquisition of competences useful for participating in social and economic life, both of which are driving forces for social inclusion.

This paper contributes to relevant literature by showing that the entrepreneurship competences obtained by migrants through the educational process could also serve as life competences, contributing to their integration into the host society. Empirical evidence is scarce and fragmented. For this reason, the authors highly recommend that empirical research using appropriate competence-validation tools should be conducted in the future.

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