

MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP: DEVELOPMENTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE

UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA, 27-28 APRIL

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS




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PLACE



The number of international migrants continues to grow steadily all around the world, representing around 3.6% of the global population (UN DESA, 2022). Europe has historically been a central player in global migrations, increasingly so because of the appealing living and working conditions of many European countries and the ease of movement within the European Union (UN DESA, 2020).

Migration dynamics and policies in this region have been, and can be projected to be further influenced by, climate change (Bednar-Friedl et al., 2022), war and conflicts (OECD, 2022), and demographic issues such as ageing and birth decline (Mongelli & Ciscar, 2018).

Migration generates the presence, in the same territory, of people from different cultural backgrounds, enacting different cultures of entrepreneurship and exploiting a variety of opportunities, resources and business strategies (Guercini *et al.*, 2017). As a result, there is mounting evidence of the positive contribution that migrant entrepreneurs can bring to host countries' economies (OECD, 2021).

Over the last decade, several European initiatives have been launched to support migrants engaging in entrepreneurial activities, so as to help them to fully exploit their potential (European Commission, 2012; OECD, 2021). In fact, besides the risks and challenges associated with launching a new business, migrant entrepreneurs may lack historical roots and emotional attachment to the territory and, due to their connection to ethnic and diasporic networks, might have diverse degrees of embeddedness with respect to local or transnational networks, which can provide access to ideas, resources, markets, and technologies (Kloosterman, 2010; Ram et al., 2017; Honig, 2020).

A pressing issue for policy-makers is thus represented by the ways in which immigrants can be socialised into the local “social networks that connect entrepreneurs, advisors, investors, and workers and that allow the free flow of knowledge and skills” (Spigel, 2017: 56). The development of support services and activities to sustain migrant entrepreneurs into entrepreneurial ecosystems, such as those implemented by incubators and other services for business/entrepreneurship support, could thus be one important enabling factor (e.g., Bolzani & Mizzau, 2019; Harima et al., 2018). However, while many new programmes have recently been launched by mainstream incubators or other actors to sustain migrant entrepreneurship start-up and growth (Rath & Swagerman, 2016; Solano et al., 2019; Buenfil van Rijs et al., 2021), the academic knowledge in this domain is still scant, fragmented and disconnected from the policy debate.

The workshop aims to share experiences of policies and practices of entrepreneurial support initiatives for migrants (e.g., pre-incubation, incubation, or acceleration programmes), thus generating new evidence, increasing awareness of potential strengths and weaknesses of such initiatives, and stimulating academic-policy-practice dialogue to improve policy and practice.

The workshop is open to scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners interested in the topic of the conference and able to present and share their experiences.

As for scholars, please note that the conference is interdisciplinary, and open to contributions from economics, political sciences, sociology, anthropology, and other relevant disciplines and sub-disciplines.

A non-exhaustive list of potential topics is the following:

- How do migrant entrepreneurs develop social networks in the local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and how do entrepreneurial support programmes influence this process?
- How does diversity within entrepreneurs, for instance linked to individual characteristics (e.g., gender, nationality, race) and venture type (e.g., high-growth, survival, lifestyle), influence their awareness of, entrance into, and performance in entrepreneurial support initiatives?
- How do policy-makers reach decisions about policies that support migrant entrepreneurs? How are these policies implemented on the ground (e.g., centralisation of decisions, identification of responsible units and staffing, etc.)?
- What are the decisions that managers of entrepreneurial support programmes take with respect to how to select participants, how to treat them in light of available training competences and resources, and how to assess their performances?
- To what extent is the “super-diversity” of migrant entrepreneurs represented in entrepreneurial support policies and initiatives?
- What types of entrepreneurial support initiatives targeted to migrants can be identified, and do they differ from initiatives addressing native entrepreneurs?
- To which extent and under which conditions are entrepreneurial support programs focused on migrant entrepreneurs emphasizing their transnational embeddedness?



The deadline to submit proposals is **28th February 2023**.

Abstracts should be max. 500 words, and clearly indicate: title, author(s) and affiliations, motivation and background, methods, potential contribution. Proposals for the conference should be sent to: migencube@unibo.it.

Authors will be notified of paper acceptance/rejection on **6th March 2023**.

Authors will be requested to confirm their participation in the conference by **15th March 2023**.

The Conference Proceedings will be published with an ISBN. Moreover, the organizers intend to invite the authors of the best proposals to take part in a special issue in a peer-reviewed entrepreneurship or management journal that is being identified.

Practical information

Participation in the workshop is completely **free of charge**.

The light lunch on 27th and 28th April, and the workshop dinner on 27th April, are offered to participants thanks to the contribution of the MIG.EN.CUBE project.

Participants will cover any other expenses connected to travel and accommodation.

The workshop will be held downtown Bologna, in the heart of the city!



Auditorium Enzo Biagi- Biblioteca
Salaborsa
Piazza del Nettuno, 3 - 40121 Bologna (Italy)

Tentative programme

The workshop is organised as a policy-practice-academic forum. The tentative programme for the event is the following:

27 April, 2023	10:00-12:30 Academic-policy-practice keynotes and roundtable 12:30-14:00 Light lunch 14:00-16:30 Working groups 17:00-19:00 Social activity free “ Mygrantour ” discover Bologna 20:30 Workshop dinner
28 April, 2023	9:00-13:00 Academic papers presentations and coffee break 13:00-14:00 Light lunch

The final program will be made available in the section “Events” at the website of the [project MIG.EN.CUBE](#).

Organizers

Scientific committee

Daniela Bolzani - Department of Management - University of Bologna (Italy)

Benson Honig - DeGroote School of Business - McMaster University (Canada)

Monder Ram - Aston Business School - Aston University (United Kingdom)

Rosana Reis - Department of Economics, Markets, and Society - Institut Supérieur de Gestion (France)

Vittoria Scalera - Amsterdam Business School - University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Organising committee

Francesca Regoli - Department of Management, University of Bologna (Italy)

Giuseppe Simone - Department of Management, University of Bologna (Italy)