

POLICY BRIEF

Contemporary High-Skilled Mexican Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Texas

By: *Elizabeth Salamanca and Jorge Alcaraz*

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Between 1996 and 2015, the number of Mexicans with higher education migrating to the United States multiplied sixfold. Of particular concern is Texas, since it is among the top states which concentrate the highest percentage (73%) of Mexican high-skilled migrants. Mexican entrepreneurs are part of this new wave of migration, as their relocation to the U.S. has significantly increased. This migration has the potential to generate significant economic and social benefits to both societies if a genuine effort is undertaken by three main players: the U.S. government, the Mexican government, and migrants. Transforming this migration into a less damaging process is not only desirable but also feasible if the three parties evolve to take a proactive stance and establish strong links between them.

KEY FINDINGS

- The 3 main types of Mexican entrepreneurs in Texas are the Expat-Preneur, the Self-Made Entrepreneur and the Commuter, with qualitative analysis yielding 4 other typologies: the Well-Off Millennial, the Stubborn Millennial, the Comprehensive-Preneur, and the Tycoon Preneur.
- There are two types of business ventures undertaken by Mexican entrepreneurs: Bootstrap Entrepreneurial Ventures, primarily women-owned and founded between 2000-2010, operating in management services and are established outside of Texas, with 10 to 50 employees. Strategic Capital Allocation contains male-owned businesses founded between 2010-2019, mostly small businesses with 1-10 employees. These are established in Texas and operate in education, entertainment, finance, coaching, science, and engineering, with operations in Mexico and the U.S.
- Migration policies, certification processes, and social and institutional discrimination act as barriers to migrant integration in other states, while social and institutional discrimination is not a problem for migrants in Texas.
- In other states, the creation of employment positions by Mexican migrant entrepreneurs is higher (10 to 50 positions) than in Texas (1 to 10 positions).
- Mexican entrepreneurs living in Texas identified networks before arriving the U.S. while Mexican entrepreneurs living in other states identified them once in the U.S.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement friendlier migration policies to allow harnessing the talent of Mexican entrepreneurs and the economic revitalization they bring instead of generating an environment that disincentivizes entrepreneurial activity. More restrictive migration policies push entrepreneurs to look for other host country alternatives, and have a long-term effect on the U.S. entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Seize the existence of transnational initiatives that brought together high-skilled Mexican migrants living in the U.S. to recover their knowledge and experience around different topics with joint participation of business leaders, opinion leaders and representatives of the Mexican government.
- Establish links between the U.S. government, the Mexican government, and migrant entrepreneurs to set an example for other countries that are experiencing increasing high-skilled migration, since the demographic and talent shortage challenges that many developed countries are facing will prompt both developed and emerging countries to propose more accurate and contextualized high-skilled migration policies.

SOURCES AND FULL PAPER



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