

## The Role of Mexican Migrant Entrepreneurs in the Creation of Small and Medium-sized Businesses in the U.S.

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### INTRODUCTION

This report aims to identify the main characteristics of Mexican immigrant-owned small and medium-sized businesses established in the United States, and the opportunities and challenges they face. Several research centers and think tanks have addressed this issue before, but most studies have provided quantitative and qualitative information from a generic Hispanic or Latino perspective.<sup>1</sup> None has focused specifically on businesses owned by Mexican immigrants—i.e., any first generation migrant entrepreneurs who were born in Mexico but are currently living in the U.S. This report fills in that void by focusing on Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs through an analysis of the characteristics of their business endeavors, the types of industries in which they operate, their support networks, the transnational links they cultivate, and the challenges they face by virtue of being immigrant-owned businesses.

The rest of this report is organized as follows. The first section explores the role that immigrants in general have played in the U.S. entrepreneurial ecosystem over the last decade and provides some figures demonstrating immigrants' relevance to business creation in the U.S. The second section centers on the role of Hispanic or Latino immigrant entrepreneurs by analyzing their demographic profile, characteristics of

their firms, and the target markets to which they direct their products and services. The third section delves further by analyzing this information specifically for Mexican migrant entrepreneurs with businesses in the United States. The fourth and fifth sections address two additional issues that have characterized traditional Mexican migration—the establishment of transnational ties, and the integration of networks across the border—examining how this networking behavior develops and evolves in the case of Mexican migrant entrepreneurs. The sixth presents the challenges Mexican migrant entrepreneurs face due to current U.S. immigration policies. Finally, policy implications and conclusions are offered.

### ROLE OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S. ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

The creation of successful businesses by lower-skilled and skilled migrants from Mexico is a topic considerably less explored in the literature. There is, however, growing awareness of their importance for the U.S. economy. Thus, it is worth analyzing the characteristics of these businesses, since many of them have contributed significantly to the revitalization of several urban and suburban areas of the United States. To comprehend the dimensions of Mexican migrants' entrepreneurial activity, it is important to understand first the role that



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migrants in general play in the American business creation ecosystem. Most statistics show that entrepreneurial migration contributes to the growth of the U.S. economy, consumption, and tax revenue, but also through investment and business creation. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy (2018), there are 30.2 million small businesses, defined as firms employing fewer than 500 employees. This corresponds to 99.9% of businesses in the United States. Of these, 8 million are minority-owned businesses.

Migrants are often singled out as particularly entrepreneurial when compared to the overall U.S. population. Fairlie (2012a), for example, refers to immigrants as major drivers of new business creation. Today, they account for 30% of all new entrepreneurs in the United States, up from 13.3% in 1996 (Fairlie, Morelix, and Tareque 2017). However, while it is known that immigrants open businesses at a higher rate than the native population, there is little information about the types of businesses they create (Fairlie 2008). In effect, Starr (2012) and Kallick (2015a) state there is little research about how to support immigrants' efforts to create small and medium-sized businesses because of a dearth of systematic knowledge on what kinds of businesses they prefer to invest in and thereby of the impact that removing obstacles to immigrants' businesses creation could have on the development of local economies. Further, the entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants has often been perceived as displacing a significant number of native workers, even though immigration to the U.S. has increased in recent decades and immigrant business creation activity—and presumably job creation—with it (Kallick 2015a). Indeed, the role played by small firms is crucial to the U.S. economy given that, according to Wiens and Jackson (2015), small firms are a more relevant source of net employment growth (8.6%) than large firms, particularly after the 2008 financial crisis.

Some studies (Fairlie 2008; Fairlie 2012a; Fairlie 2012b; Kallick 2015a; Kallick 2015b) have found that immigrants account for a higher share of business creation activity in the U.S. than native citizens and that immigrants are more likely than their U.S.-

born counterparts to be business owners. In a recent Kauffman Foundation study, Fairlie et al. (2017) found that the rate of new entrepreneurs is 0.52% for immigrants compared to 0.26% for the native-born population. However, Kallick (2015b) points out that many of these immigrants start businesses that, in the long term, do not survive or are eventually abandoned for various reasons, such as language difficulties (Dávila, Mora, and Marek Zeitlin 2014), lack of financing, or lack of experience dealing with bureaucracy. Moreover, immigrants often start businesses because they cannot find formal employment in corporations, a trend referred to as necessity-driven business creation. Once those immigrants find a formal job, they tend to leave their business ventures behind.

A welcoming environment also matters. Some U.S. cities have established public and social policies that foster immigration and thereby entice immigrants to settle and start businesses, sometimes in areas experiencing urban decay. Interestingly, Fairlie (2008, p.2) points out that “immigrant business ownership is geographically concentrated in a few states,” namely California, New York, Florida, New Jersey, and Texas. In another study, Kallick (2015a) presents case studies of three cities—Philadelphia, Minneapolis–St. Paul, and Nashville—finding some commonalities that encourage immigrant business creation, such as having pro-immigration mayors and a number of nonprofit groups that assist immigrants in developing business plans, navigating city regulations and bureaucracy, or connecting with financing sources.

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## HISPANIC/LATINO ENTREPRENEURS IN THE UNITED STATES

Among immigrants in the U.S., Hispanics or Latinos—these terms will be used interchangeably—play a significant role in the creation of businesses. Morelix et al. (2018) state, “the prevalence of immigrants among Latino entrepreneurs is high; they own about 51 percent of all Latino-owned employer businesses in the U.S.” (p. 15). The number of Hispanic immigrant

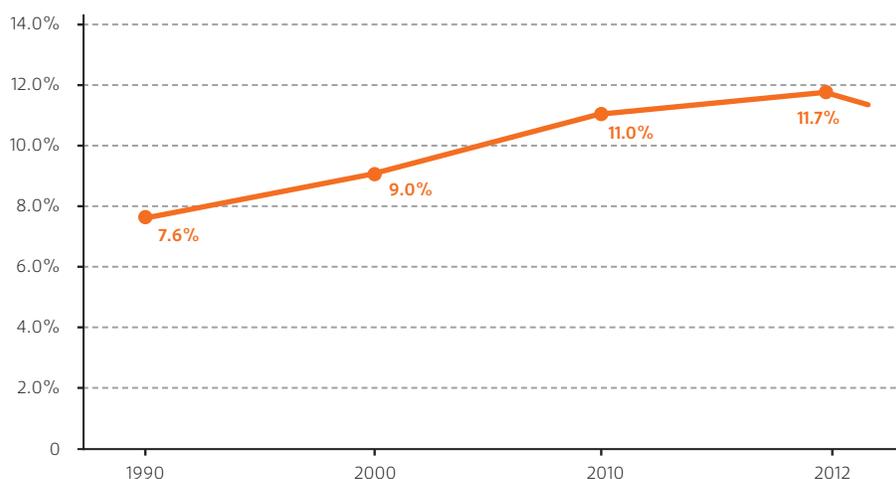
entrepreneurs, particularly those from Mexico, who are self-employed—a definition linked with entrepreneurship—more than quadrupled between 1990 and 2012 (Dávila, Mora, and Zeitlin 2014).

It is important to analyze the motivations behind the creation of these businesses. Fairlie et al. (2017) found that opportunity entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial activity by people who were not unemployed before starting their businesses) is much lower than necessity entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial activity by people who cannot find work) among Latinos than among whites and Asians. Nonetheless, Fairlie et al. (2017) also state that “the opportunity share increased for immigrants and the native-born in 2016” (p. 19) in the U.S.

Another important distinction to be made is that between business creation and job creation. In terms of job creation, it is necessary to differentiate between businesses that hire employees and so-called “solopreneurs”—businesses where the creator is both the proprietor and the sole product or service provider. It is not known how many solopreneurs there are in the U.S., but as undocumented migrants find it harder to find work, they are likely to become solopreneurs. It is estimated that 40–50% of Latino immigrant firms have more than 50 employees, although they tend to create fewer jobs than businesses operated by other ethnic groups (Dávila, Mora, and Marek Zeitlin, 2014), have smaller total sales numbers (Rivers et al., 2017), and generate less revenue than small businesses owned by other immigrant groups (Starr, 2012).

Interestingly, Latino immigrant entrepreneurship can have a deeper impact than other firms because they establish businesses in places other entrepreneurs might not. In various U.S. cities, immigrants are contributing to the revitalization of neighborhoods that were experiencing urban decay, launching grocery stores, beauty salons, restaurants, dry cleaners, retail stores, and other ventures in such areas (Kallick 2015b), which in turn increases housing prices (Vigdor 2013). Vigdor (2013, 2–3) found that “for every 1,000 immigrants that arrive to a county, 270 U.S.-born residents

FIGURE 1 — HISPANIC IMMIGRANT SELF-EMPLOYMENT RATE



SOURCE Author’s own elaboration, based on Dávila, Mora, and Zeitlin 2014

move there in response” to the revitalization caused by migration.

According to the New American Economy Research Fund (2017), the U.S. was home to almost 2.1 million Hispanic entrepreneurs in 2015, of which roughly two-thirds were immigrants. The report provides some examples of areas that have been revitalized (defined as experiencing increased consumer activity in local businesses) by the arrival of Hispanic immigrants. In fact, between 2015 and 2016, Asian and Hispanic immigrants experienced the largest increases in rates of new entrepreneurship among minority ethnic and racial groups (Fairlie et al. 2017). A study conducted by the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the consulting firm Geoscape (2017, 5) states that “between 2012 and 2017, the number of U.S. Hispanic-owned businesses increased by 31.6% compared to 13.8% for all firms and faster than any other race or ethnic group.”

But again, Hispanic entrepreneurs tend to have higher business failure rates than other racial or ethnic groups, and also have a strong likelihood of being low-income entrepreneurs. This can be explained to a certain extent by the concentration of traditional immigrants (low-skilled) among the U.S. Latino population, which increases the propensity toward low-

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income entrepreneurial ventures among Hispanic entrepreneurs (Fetsch 2016). In addition, Latino-owned businesses have the lowest rate of financial institution-based loans among all employer firms (Orozco et al. 2018). Studies show that Latino-owned businesses are 22% less likely to qualify for a loan than non-Latino-owned businesses (Salas 2016). Specifically, Hispanic immigrant firms have lower levels of startup capital than other immigrant groups (Fairlie 2012b). Lack of knowledge of the financing options available and lack of connections also limit Latino business owners (Aspen Institute 2017). Nonetheless, Orozco et al. (2018) report that Hispanic immigrant business owners tend to be more highly educated, with at least a four-year college degree, and more networked than native-born Latino entrepreneurs, which may explain their ownership of scaled firms. This illustrates the aforementioned distinction between Hispanic necessity-driven immigrant entrepreneurs and opportunity-driven immigrant entrepreneurs.

A sizeable percentage of Latino immigrant business owners are young—sometimes within the demographic referred to as millennials—and came to the United States as children (Orozco et al. 2018). Furthermore, their firms tend to be large, high-revenue firms with a large number of employees (Rivers et al. 2017).

According to Morelix et al. (2018), the top industries for Latino-owned businesses are construction, accommodations and lodging, and food services. Rivers et al. (2017) also found that Latino firms operate in very diverse sectors, including industries with the highest growth rates such as health care and social assistance, administrative support and waste, and other service-oriented industries. It is possible to infer that Hispanic immigrants and U.S.-born Hispanic entrepreneurs would enter the same sorts of industries since immigrants account for roughly half of all Latino-owned businesses (Morelix et al., 2018).

## MEXICAN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE UNITED STATES

Among Hispanics or Latinos, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans play an important role in terms of entrepreneurship. The U.S. Census Bureau (2017) reports that 63.2% of the Hispanic population in the United States were of Mexican origin in 2016. Mexico is among the top countries of origin for self-employed individuals in incorporated businesses (Kerr and Kerr 2018). In fact, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute (2012), “Mexicans in the U.S. account for 12% of small business owners—the largest among any immigrant group” (p.15).

Fairlie's report (2008) found that Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs constitute the largest share of business owners among all migrants. But he also remarks that “Mexican immigrants have a rate of business ownership substantially below the national average (6.5% compared with 9.5%). The large contribution to the total number of immigrant business owners is thus being driven by the large share of Mexican immigrants in the United States and not by higher business ownership rates” (p.14). All in all, Mexicans are the largest contributors to total U.S. business income among other immigrant groups (Fairlie 2012a). Dávila, Mora, and Marek Zeitlin (2014, 2) state that “entrepreneurship became so established among Mexican immigrants that by 2012 more than one in 10 such immigrants were entrepreneurs.”

Although immigrants from Mexico have migrated to non-traditional migration states in the United States (including places like Georgia, Nevada, and North Carolina) over the last decade, it is still evident that the sheer concentration of immigrants in places like New York, California, and Texas is responsible for the higher numbers of Mexican business owners in the U.S. overall. Nonetheless, little is known about the characteristics of Mexican immigrant-owned ventures. How large are these businesses? Are they rather medium and small enterprises? How sustainable are these companies? How long do they generally

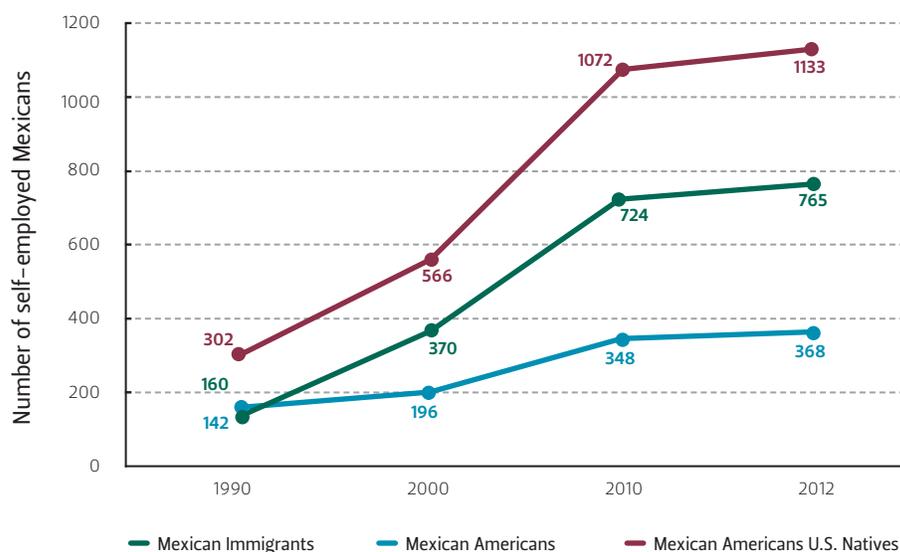
survive? Are they concentrated in specific sectors or are they rather distributed within different industries?

It is important to mention that the profile of Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs is very diverse in terms of their level of education, English proficiency, and social status. In the last decade, however, most of the Mexican entrepreneurs who have migrated to the U.S. are skilled and high-skilled immigrants with a higher socioeconomic status. The great majority are married, have school-aged children, possess higher levels of education, enjoy solid financial resources (as oftentimes they are dual-income households), and enter the United States with a professional or investor visa. They communicate mainly in Spanish but tend to be English-fluent (Rangel-Ortiz 2008 and 2012). In terms of age, Mexican migrant entrepreneurs who operate in the United States are more likely to be of working age (18–64 years old) than other immigrants and native-born entrepreneurs. Consequently, they participate in the labor force at higher rates than other groups (Zong and Batalova 2018).

With regard to the psychographic characteristics of Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs, they possess a bicultural-bilingual mindset and a meritocratic orientation, evident in their adoption of the American way of life and business environment while preserving their Mexican values. In other words, they blend Mexican and American economic, social, and cultural principles (Rangel-Ortiz 2011). They attribute great importance to U.S. cultural awareness and adaptation in the sense of becoming more involved and active in their host country's economic, political, and social environment. These entrepreneurs understand that they have to accommodate their values and beliefs to the rules and social protocols of the host country.

The businesses these entrepreneurs launch tend to be small. They are often one person-owned and single-employee businesses. Oftentimes, they operate as mom-and-pop businesses, mainly retail stores and restaurants (Starr 2012). These businesses' target markets extend beyond their ethnic enclave, and their financial

**FIGURE 2 — SELF-EMPLOYED MEXICANS AND MEXICAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES**



**SOURCE** Dávila, Mora, and Zeitlin (2014).

capital is mainly raised in Mexico and invested in the U.S. (Rangel-Ortiz 2008 and 2011). Many Mexican entrepreneurs find it hard to establish or to scale their businesses because they prefer to keep full business control instead of sharing it with one or more business partners.

### IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS FOR MEXICAN IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

As Rangel-Ortiz (2012) observes, Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs face the challenge of understanding and assimilating to U.S. rules, codes of conduct, obligations, and duties. An efficient strategy to deal with such a challenge is to integrate their ethnic and mainstream networks. These networks vary in nature from being very tight-knit and mainly consisting of family and friends to more open and flexible networks. Oftentimes, the former constitutes the most important source of financial and social capital for these entrepreneurs. These networks also become a mechanism to gain social and symbolic power, since they “reunite micro, small, and medium-sized business owners, to promote their

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enterprises, share their ideas, concepts, [and] innovation” (Rangel–Ortiz 2008, 84). Furthermore, these networks guide and advise these Mexican entrepreneurs “on how to deal with failure, pressure, and demands of the social and physical environment” (Rangel–Ortiz 2008, 146). Although Rivers et al. (2015) suggest that Latino business owners lack significant professional networks, since only 33% of such entrepreneurs have business mentors, more than half belong to formal business organizations such as chambers of commerce, trade associations, or government business groups. In a social and economic U.S. context where Latinos find it more difficult to gain access to financing, turning to different ethnic and mainstream networks and organizations becomes more critical, as these connections can assist them in planning and executing their business start-up. Furthermore, networks within immigrants’ home countries may also foster export activity among Hispanic business owners, and by implication Mexican business owners, since a common language and cultural ties facilitate exports (Fairlie 2012b).

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### TRANSNATIONAL LINKS

The benefits of entrepreneurial activity by Mexican immigrants are not limited to the U.S. economy. Mexico also benefits from their activities as well through the execution of transnational transactions, particularly of a business and/or investment nature. A considerable number of these entrepreneurs commute back and forth between the United States and Mexico, maintaining social, emotional, and economic links with their country of origin and displaying “a dual sense of belonging, dual loyalty, and, in some cases possess[ing] dual political citizenship” (Rangel–Ortiz 2008, 2).

Many Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs simultaneously operate businesses in both Mexico and the United States, and many may even operate their business in Mexico but live with their families in the United States—in which case they tend to commute, sometimes weekly, to Mexico.

This transnational behavior has relevant implications, such as the disappearance of Mexican regional rivalries (Rangel–Ortiz 2008). Rangel–Ortiz (2008) refers to “a strong desire (need) to abandon Mexico geographically, but not emotionally, thus reinforcing the emergence of a Mexican transnational identity” (p. 145).

Transnational involvement by Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs has manifested in various ways, including through support for festivities like Cinco de Mayo parades and Passion of Christ processions during Holy Week in Passaic County, New Jersey (Forbes 2016). Some Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs have sponsored Mexican community activities in the New York–New Jersey–Connecticut tri-state area through *Mi Casa es Puebla*,<sup>2</sup> as well as made generous donations to different nongovernmental institutions such as the Instituto de Estudios Mexicanos Jaime Lucero at the City University of New York to support social causes such as immigrants’ access to better educational opportunities.

Some other entrepreneurs maintain investment links with their home country by introducing products that have been successful in the U.S. to the Mexican market, by importing products from Mexico to the U.S., by partnering with Mexican farmers or small producers, or even by creating direct or indirect employment positions. In addition, some entrepreneurs collaborate with the Mexican Consulate in order to execute social programs that benefit the community where they operate.

Finally, Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs often actively participate in political events in Mexico. For example, some serve as official observers of municipal or state elections in order to enhance the transparency of these processes. Many also go to Mexico to vote.

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### CHALLENGES POSED BY U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICIES

As stated by Denhart (2015), “current immigration law limits the potential of what immigrants could contribute to America and its economy” (p. 239). In the specific case of Mexican migrant entrepreneurs, they have benefited from the opportunities

offered by U.S. visa programs such as the Treaty Investor visa (E-2), the EB-5 investor program, and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) professionals visa (TN), among others (Salamanca 2019). However, the use of these visas may be jeopardized by recent U.S. immigration policies, and by the particular context of the transitioning political relationship between Mexico and the U.S.

It is likely that the Trump administration will adopt stricter compliance terms for the E-2 and EB-5 visa programs. In the case of the EB-5 visa holders, the U.S. Congress increased the minimum amount investors are required to make from \$500,000 to \$900,000 (Federal Register 2019). There are also proposals to establish a limited period of stay on investor visas of a maximum of five years (Salamanca 2019). Additionally, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) plans to revise EB-5 visa forms and to require interviews with investors in order to capture more information from applicants, and it also plans to expand site visits to regional centers with the aim of securing the integrity of this visa program (Argueta and Siskin 2016). Temporary residence of up to five years can be detrimental to Mexican migrant entrepreneurs, since both E-2 and EB-5 visa holders need to have some measure of certainty in the form of a longer term stay authorization. In other words, many of these investors risk their assets to meet the required investment amounts that allow them to obtain these visas because they view it as a long-term commitment toward the local U.S. economy and to their own personal financial growth potential (Salamanca 2019). Thus, U.S. policies related to the duration of the visas must be reciprocal in terms of this long-term commitment (Naudé, Siegel, and Marchand 2017). Additionally, since these investments generally offer a return over the long term, the financial commitment implied by this type of visa should be backed by the certainty that the immigrant investor will be able to maintain it for at least the duration of time necessary for the investment to pay off.

As for the TN visas, the U.S. has been criticized for the extremely low number of TN visas granted to applicants from Mexico, especially given the high trade volume between Mexico and the U.S. (Verea 2014).

Furthermore, TN visa holders now face uncertainty due to the NAFTA renegotiations currently under way, which open the door to the possibility that this visa program may be cancelled altogether. Moreover, the Trump administration has issued a policy memorandum to more strictly enforce the qualifications applicants must meet in order to receive a TN visa. Since the TN visa does not require a sponsoring employer and is more flexible in terms of bureaucratic procedures, it has been particularly attractive for high-skilled immigrants who are more likely to become entrepreneurs in the U.S. in the long term due to their solid personal resources in terms of education, experience, and financial capital. The potential cancellation of this visa program thus affects such migrants' ability to pursue entrepreneurial activity in the U.S.

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### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Inflexible immigration policies not only affect traditional low-skilled migrants but also skilled and highly skilled entrepreneurs who come to the U.S. legally, and who face limited alternatives for obtaining permanent residence and eventually citizenship (Starr 2012). As Vigdor (2013) points out, more flexible immigration reforms would retain a significant number of jobs in different economic sectors, and if more foreign-born U.S. residents are eligible for citizenship, they will make even greater long-term investments in their communities.

Given the contribution of Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, to the U.S. economy, public policies should be reoriented to grant Mexican immigrants who complete an incubator program or a bachelor's degree at a U.S. university a "grace period" (Starr 2012). In other words, they could have at least a six-month period after completing a degree to start a business, before having to go back to Mexico due to the expiration of their visa. This would allow them to demonstrate their entrepreneurial spirit through the direct creation of jobs in the U.S.

From a more pragmatic point of view, one of the main deterrents for

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Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs in the U.S.—lack of financing—could be addressed by strengthening connections between traditional banks and microcredit organizations (Starr 2012). Ensuring financial access is one of the main mechanisms to foster economic and social contributions by immigrants (Fairlie 2012b). Accordingly, the Aspen Institute’s (2017) suggestion to hire more Latinos in key positions within the banking and finance sector would be beneficial, since many Mexican entrepreneurs do not approach these institutions due to a lack of knowledge of the U.S. banking system. Therefore, having a “familiar face” in these sectors could facilitate this approximation.

In the same vein, the failure of some of these Mexican immigrants’ businesses is linked to the lack of knowledge and experience dealing with local rules and practices. Thus, formal mentorship programs and immigrant integration programs sponsored by governmental and nongovernmental institutions could greatly alleviate some of these problems (Bluestein, 2015). The Aspen Institute (2017) identified key training areas that should be addressed through such a mentorship program, such as financial management, procurement readiness, business branding and marketing, effective networking, strategic planning, and the identification of suitable capital sources. From Mexico’s perspective, the successful stories of many Mexican entrepreneurs working and living in the U.S. should motivate the government to support productive business projects that generate jobs and sources of income for these migrants’ home communities in Mexico.

Additionally, Mexican immigrants are eager entrepreneurs when creating new businesses, but they encounter financing obstacles. This can be solved through different potential mechanisms. One option is to increase immigrants’ access to financing through less orthodox sources such as equity funding, debt, or a combination thereof. As noted above, mentorship programs can be crucial for the strategic direction of a business venture and

provide Mexican entrepreneurs guidance regarding the existence of governmental business support programs from which they can benefit. This must be accompanied by a change in entrepreneurs’ mentality in terms of searching for business partners, even if this implies the partial loss of control over the business. In addition, entrepreneurs should keep informed about governmental and nongovernmental initiatives that support small and medium-sized businesses. As part of this mindset change, it is necessary that Mexican entrepreneurs remain realistic in terms of their business growth possibilities, because while positive perceptions about business opportunities and scalability are necessary, they have to be consistent with the reality of the current business environment.

Another simple yet effective mechanism is the integration to professional networks, which may facilitate the implementation of business ventures through the transfer of knowledge, best practices, and key partnerships. Some Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs do belong to these networks, but they tend to rely on them for social purposes more than business ones. They need to take a more pragmatic approach toward these valuable professional associations.

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## CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of the information provided in this research report is to illuminate the profile of Latino and, particularly, Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs in order to inform decision-making by policymakers and business stakeholders. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data reveals the valuable and significant contribution Mexican migrant entrepreneurs make to the revitalization of several U.S. cities through businesses and job creation. Nonetheless, such contribution still has a tremendous potential to increase if the growth of these businesses is fostered over the long term. For now, a feature that contributes to its sustainability is the existence of Mexican

businesses targeting not only the ethnic but the mainstream market.

An important finding of this study is the lack of quantitative data about Mexican migrant entrepreneurs. While it is true that there are several solid studies based on reliable data about business activity, all of them refer to the Hispanic or Latino market as a whole without establishing differences in the behavior of the many subgroups that make up that market. The generation of specific information about the Mexican market is necessary and relevant given that Mexican immigrants constitute the majority of this Hispanic minority in the U.S., and due to the heterogeneous behavior of these sub-segments.

Future research should generate more precise quantitative information about the many Latino groups who are integrated in the U.S. entrepreneurial ecosystem so that more accurate comparisons can be established, as such findings can serve as an input for public policy enactment.

## ENDNOTES

1. The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent.

2. Mi Casa es Puebla is a Mexican governmental organization created to foster relationships between immigrants from the state of Puebla who are currently residing in New York, New Jersey, or California and their local community, and to support them on different social issues (health, education, etc.)

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