



E M E N

European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network

Crossing borders for financial and business development services

**D2.17 Survey report on professionalisation needs of migrant
entrepreneurs' associations**

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1. Executive summary

The present document presents the **results of a survey on the professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations in Europe**. The survey has been conducted by **UNITEE**, the leader of Community of Practice 3 (**CoP3**), as part of the **EMEN project** (European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network: crossing borders for financial and business development services), undertaken in the framework of the COSME programme (2014-2020). It has seen the participation of **34 organisations**, both migrant entrepreneurs' associations and support mechanisms, that are all members of CoP3.

The aim of the survey is to **gather actionable information** from migrant entrepreneurs' associations active on the ground on their level of professionalisation and needs. The information obtained through the survey will be used as a starting point to develop **a set of training modules for migrant business associations**, in order to achieve the final desired objective of professionalisation: in this way, they will better be able to represent the interest of their members and contribute to their insertion into the wider business ecosystem.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in migrant entrepreneurship support in Europe. This interest has especially manifested itself through a series of initiatives undertaken by international organisations – such as the OECD, the European Commission and the EESC – to map and understand the phenomenon and its support mechanisms. One main aspect that emerged from the overview was the lack of synergies across borders. The EMEN project aims exactly at addressing this issue, by bringing together relevant players at European, national and regional levels to form transnational networks that will work together and exchange knowledge and best practices, with the final aim of developing, sharing and promoting support schemes not only for individual migrant entrepreneurs but also for social and inclusive enterprises benefitting migrant entrepreneurs.

In this context, the present survey deals with a topic that so far has been underanalysed: the **specific professionalisation needs of migrant entrepreneurs' associations**. In many cases, the low level of professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations can risk hindering the growth of enterprises and their belonging to the general business ecosystem they operate in.

For this reason, the survey has been realised in a pragmatic way, looking for actionable insights into the behaviours and weaknesses of participating migrant entrepreneurs' associations. In designing the survey, we have looked at all the **main aspects relevant to the management of a business associations**, from finance to communications, up to the services they provide, to gather direct insights on the ground.

The results of the survey show a complex and differentiated environment of migrant entrepreneurs' associations. Nevertheless, some general observations are possible and point at a path to develop successful training: first of all, **all training should be customisable**, taking into account the difference of sizes and characteristics that migrant entrepreneurs' associations experience. Secondly, **the most pressing problems were identified in objective factors**, such as the difficulty of obtaining financing and growing the membership, or in improving communications and outreach. A third point that emerged from the survey is the **perceived importance of lobbying and engaging** with the public authorities, even if many organisations are not able to act in that regard yet. Furthermore, there is the possibility to **broaden the menu of services** provided by the members, through a process of long-term strategic development. Finally, also **the exchange of**

good practices across borders looks as if it is something that would be very interesting for participating associations.

Such insights will be the starting point of a process that, through the organisation of training, will lead to the development of migrant entrepreneurs' associations.

2. Introduction

The present document is the report from a survey on the professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations that was realised in the month of December 2017 by UNITEE – the New European Business Confederation, as leader of the CoP3 (Community of Practice) in the framework of the EMEN project (European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network). The survey has seen the participation of more than 30 business organisations and support associations, all members of CoP3, that have accepted to share their expertise and ideas.

The following pages start by giving a general overview of the state of the art of migrant entrepreneurship in Europe, in order to describe the context in which the EMEN project acts. Then, the project itself, and its expected outcomes, are described. After this general overview, the document focusses more specifically on the professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations and explains how the current project innovates. An in-depth presentation of how the survey was designed and the characteristics of the respondents will follow. Finally, the results of the survey will be presented, in a reasoned way, together with some conclusions that can be drawn from them with the aim of designing the final training.

3. State of the art of migrant entrepreneurship in Europe

Recent years have seen a strong development of research and literature on migrant entrepreneurship, both theoretical and practical, that have contributed to shedding light on the phenomenon. These studies have focussed on determining the characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs and their benefits to the wider society. At the European level it is possible to identify studies published by the main international institutions that offer a comprehensive view of the concept and the state of the art of research and practices, systematising existing knowledge and support mechanisms: the OECD (which even set up a dedicated Working Party on the issue),¹ the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)² and, more recently, the European Commission.³

The first aspect, shared by all three documents, is the **extent** of migrant entrepreneurship. Specifically, the OECD found that “migrants have notably higher rates of self-employment in Belgium, France, the Nordic countries, and particularly, in central and Eastern Europe”.⁴ On average, the rate of migrant entrepreneurs as a percentage of total employees is slightly higher than the same rate for natives in OECD countries, amounting to circa 12%. Even if inside this average the situations varies wildly from country to country, in general it is possible to say that

¹ OECD, *Open for business: Migrant Entrepreneurship in OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, 2010

² See e.g. EESC, *Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the contribution of migrant entrepreneurs to the EU economy*, Rapporteur Brenda King, 2012

³ European Commission, *Evaluation and analysis of good practices in Promoting and Supporting Migrant Entrepreneurship*, Guide Book, 2016

⁴ Taken from OECD, *Open for business*, *op. cit.*

migrants tend to be more entrepreneurial than their native counterparts. Also, a clear and steady increase appears in the number of migrant entrepreneurs in the past 20 years.

Another aspect emerging from the research conducted is a clear overview of the **benefits** of migrant entrepreneurship on a wide spectrum, from economic to social. Nevertheless, there are also many challenges present that need to be taken into account by all practitioners and policy-makers who want to correctly grasp the phenomenon and carry out the right actions. While some obstacles to the development of migrant-owned enterprises are consistent with those experienced by natives, many others are specifically faced by migrant entrepreneurs, thus hindering their growth and development. These challenges are of a particular interest for the EMEN project, since its main aim is to reduce the obstacles to the fair and sustainable development of migrant enterprises through the establishment of a supportive ecosystem.

3.1 Benefits of migrant entrepreneurship

Migrants form an important entrepreneurial resource pool and make a major contribution to business dynamism. A European study⁵ confirms the importance of giving support to migrants wishing to establish their own businesses. Focusing on entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities rather than specifically migrants, it found that ethnic entrepreneurs contribute to the economic growth of their local area, often rejuvenate neglected crafts and trades, and participate increasingly in the provision of higher value-added services. They offer additional services and products to immigrants and the host population, and in many cities create an important bridge to global markets. In addition, ethnic entrepreneurs create employment for themselves but also, increasingly, for immigrants and the native population.

As a consequence, migrant entrepreneurship is also instrumental in reducing unemployment and helping to tackle illegal employment. It provides access to employment for the more vulnerable groups in society (e.g. women or young migrants) and helps to elevate them from the poverty and social exclusion trap. Indeed, what makes entrepreneurship increasingly present in integration policy proposals is not only about job creation, but also about enhancing upward mobility, developing social leadership, increasing individuals' self-confidence by enabling them to become active agents of their own destiny, increasing the social cohesion of migrant communities, and revitalising streets and neighbourhoods through innovation in social and cultural life.

By further categorising, the importance of migrant entrepreneurship for the European society can be articulated across the following lines:⁶

- **Job creation:** Migrant entrepreneurs create their own jobs, but they also create jobs for others. This can benefit relatives, friends and acquaintances. Creating jobs helps alleviate unemployment among migrants. The same holds for providing apprenticeships, which in some countries is seen as an important vehicle for a labour market career;
- **Economic integration:** migrant entrepreneurs contribute different forms of social capital to migrant communities. Because of their links to suppliers and customers, they constitute useful bridges to other communities, thus improving chances of upward mobility. Moreover, migrant entrepreneurs often act as self-appointed leaders for their communities;

⁵ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, *Promoting Ethnic Entrepreneurship in European Cities*, 2011

⁶ See for an overview UNITEE, 'The New Pioneers: Discovering the Potential of NEW Europeans', *The New European* 5, Summer 2015

- **Social integration:** they show that immigrants from less-developed countries are not necessarily restricted to filling vacancies on the job market. They can be active agents and shape their own destinies by setting up their own businesses;
- **Opening up new market niches:** they use their expert knowledge, directly or through networks, to expand consumer choice by providing goods and services that indigenous entrepreneurs are less likely to offer;
- **International trade:** through their transnational networks and their belonging to two or more cultures, migrant entrepreneurs are in an ideal position to create bridges across markets and nations. As such, they can act as powerful vectors for the increase of international trade, creating links between countries and continents;
- **Local renewal:** Migrant businesses add vitality to neighbourhoods. By providing jobs and role models, they are a focus for local social networks, creating social capital, and improving living conditions in otherwise disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

3.2 Barriers to migrant entrepreneurship

Notwithstanding their many benefits, migrant entrepreneurs (especially newcomers) still face a number of barriers and challenges, both external and internal, that hinder their way to growth and long-term success. If some of them are somewhat common to what all entrepreneurs experience, the research and exchange of practices has so far identified certain aspects that are specific to migrant entrepreneurs. Such barriers and obstacles are manifold and often interrelated, leading to difficulty in accessing and making use of the right financial and business development services. They can be grouped as follows:⁷

- **Excessive focus on ethnic markets.** Migrant entrepreneurs are disproportionately prone to provide ethnic and minority goods and services to their ethnic communities and the native population alike. If this has the advantage of acting inside a niche market, the negative aspect is that it increases competition in tiny markets, thus making it difficult to grow in a satisfactory way;
- **Limited capacity to build a necessary asset base to start businesses.** In the life of migrant entrepreneurs there is a clear disruption in one's economic life, affecting the possibilities to save capital over longer periods;
- **Lack of role models in the migrant communities.** Without role models stemming from the same communities, perceptions and prejudgements about starting small entrepreneurs, or the lack of understanding on the possibility to become entrepreneurs for a lot of young people from migrant communities, hinder the development and growth of new businesses;
- **Insufficient human capital.** Migrant entrepreneurs often suffer from a lack of knowledge and managerial skills and from failure by migrant entrepreneurs to comply with rules and regulations or to fit in with existing legalisation, often designed for larger enterprises;
- **Bureaucratic hurdles.** Very often it is difficult for perspective migrant entrepreneurs to enter a level playing-field to access the market, for reasons including practical aspects, such as difficulties in obtaining recognition of qualifications and difficulties in being able to start as early as possible e.g. before official status is obtained;

⁷ M. V. Desiderio, *Policies to support migrant entrepreneurship*, MPI – Migration Policy Institute, 2014.

● **Difficulty in joining the mainstream business community.** As a general remark, migrant-owned enterprises experience a series of hurdles that make it difficult for them to join the mainstream European support organisations. This is due to a series of factors, which relate to the sheer size of the companies (which are smaller on average), the lack of understanding between the host culture and the immigrant culture, some mutual mistrust of business organisations and their ability to represent all their members' interests, and the tendency of some immigrant communities to close themselves off into monoethnic clusters;

● **Insufficient access to finance.** Many starting entrepreneurs with a migrant background find it very hard to launch because of the impossibility to receive credit from banks or venture capital. This can be due to an insufficient financial culture and to a lack of credit history on the part of recently moved migrants, who therefore end up being excluded from traditional financing paths by risk-averse banks. Therefore, even if some progress has been made to improve access to microcredit, they very often tend to rely only on informal ways of obtaining finance, such as family and friends; a process that in the long term reduces the life span and the growth rate of migrant-owned enterprises.

● **Lack of growth and short lifespan.** As a consequence of all the points above, migrant enterprises, even if they are proportionately more in number than their native-owned counterparts, tend to have a shorter lifespan and to experience a slower and lesser growth, if any.

3.3 Existing support mechanisms in Europe

In view of the above-mentioned issues and challenges, in recent years, impressive efforts have been deployed to document and systematise best practices and to create support mechanisms. The consensus among practitioners is that providing effective support for migrant entrepreneurs depends on establishing a comprehensive ecosystem of support services for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) which pays due attention and provides proper services for this specific target group. Previous studies, including the work of COPIE,⁸ the EU's report on Ethnic Migrant Entrepreneurship 2008,⁹ the already quoted OECD paper and the UNHCR/SPTF study of 2016¹⁰ show that the necessary components of an ecosystem to support migrant entrepreneurship are:

- an entrepreneurial culture
- a policy environment conducive to promoting and facilitating (migrant) entrepreneurship
- outreach to migrant communities and linking them to mainstream organisations
- branding and signposting so that prospective and existing entrepreneurs can easily identify sources of help
- a menu of services including:
 - counselling, coaching and mentoring
 - training
 - workspace

⁸ See www.cop-ie.eu

⁹ IMES, FACET, *Entrepreneurial Diversity in a Unified Europe, Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship and Migrant Entrepreneurship*, 2008

¹⁰ UNHCR Social Performance Task Force, *Serving Refugee Populations: the next financial inclusion frontier*, 2016.

- networking among businesses
- access to finance
- the possibility of mainstreaming specific migrant entrepreneurship development and promotion programmes

Along these lines of actions, in recent years the EU and its Member States have been behind the development of a wide array of support mechanisms and programmes for migrant entrepreneurs. One of the first examples of a comprehensive effort to systematise knowledge and foster the exchange of best practices has been the *European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants* (CLIP).¹¹ Founded in 2006, it brings together 30 large and medium-sized cities. Its first report, published in 2011, not only provides a useful first categorisation of policies supporting ethnic entrepreneurship, but also offers a first inventory of policies at the local level, presenting some initiatives taken in the member cities of the network. In sum, the report pointed out the wide array of types of support to ethnic/migrant entrepreneurs: in some cases there were specific programmes for them; in others, there were only generic programmes to be found, that did not distinguish between migrants and natives. Another remark that was made was that, notwithstanding the big difference between various programmes, the majority of them consisted of measures to increase the capability and skills of individual entrepreneurs, either in form of financial support (microcredit), skills building (training and language classes), finding customers or building networks. On the other hand, far fewer cities addressed support to migrant entrepreneurs from the legal and bureaucratic point of view.

Building on this document and other pieces of research, in 2016 the European Commission published one of the most complete and up-to-date overviews of best practices on migrant entrepreneur support: the Guidebook *“Evaluation and Analysis of Good Practices in promoting and supporting migrant entrepreneurship”*.¹² The study presents 22 best practices, selected from an initial database of 193 support schemes across all EU countries and external countries participating in the COSME programme. On the one hand the document points out the many initiatives taken across Europe in the field of migrant entrepreneurship support, signalling a clear step forward since the CLIP report; on the other hand it highlights the fragmented nature of support programmes, which makes it difficult for them to achieve the holistic approach recognised as needed to have a real impact. In order to address these shortcomings, the European Commission suggested the creation of synergies, in order to scale up efforts and pool resources. In the document, the Commission also called for outcomes to be measurable and clear, in order to be effective.

Based on the outcomes of its own research and on the best practices highlighted, the European Commission has recently opened a series of calls dedicated to projects supporting migrant entrepreneurship. The first call of this kind, released on 2016 in the framework of the COSME programme, was specifically dedicated to migrant entrepreneur support schemes. The declared aim of these calls is “to bring together relevant players at national and regional levels into transnational networks, to work together based on the existing evidence of what is effective and to achieve better impact”,¹³ therefore countering the lack of a functioning ecosystem and transnational synergies. A second and a third call are currently ongoing under the AMIF (Asylum,

¹¹ J. Rath, Eurofound, *Promoting Ethnic Entrepreneurship in European Cities*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2011.

¹² European Commission, *Evaluation and analysis of good practices in Promoting and Supporting Migrant Entrepreneurship*, Guide Book, 2016

¹³ EASME, *COS-MigrantsENT-2016-4-02: Migrants Entrepreneurship Support Schemes*, 2016

Migration and Integration Fund):¹⁴ their objective is more general and not limited to just migrant entrepreneurship, as they aim at “supporting actions to contribute to the efficient management of migration flows and the implementation, strengthening and development of a common Union approach to asylum and immigration”, and at “raising awareness on migrants’ contributions to EU societies”, but they also include migrant entrepreneurship, under the policy priority of social inclusion and active participation.

The aim of the European Commission to more decisively support migrant entrepreneurship as expressed in the above-mentioned calls has fostered the creation of a series of projects that share the objective of creating European networks, exchanging best practices and fostering the development and improvement of skills of existing support mechanisms, as well as – in the longer term – working to establish new ones. Projects like Entry Way, Fresh Start, YOU-ME, MEGA, MAGNET¹⁵ and, of course, EMEN all provide initiatives aimed at adopting a transnational, European approach to migrant entrepreneurship support. Two different approaches are evident in the consortia set up by the projects and, more generally, in the whole support ecosystem: on the one hand, some of them provide services directly to perspective entrepreneurs; on the other, others have as their main target support mechanisms, which they aim at put together and reinforce.

4. The EMEN project in the context of migrant entrepreneurship support in the EU

In the context of the situation described above, the present document plays a vital, even if preliminary, role as part of the **EMEN project (European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network: crossing borders for financial and business development services)**, one of the projects selected for support under the 2016 COSME call on migrant entrepreneurship support mechanisms. The EMEN project aims to bring together relevant players at European, national and regional levels to form transnational networks that will work together and exchange knowledge and best practices, with the aim of developing, sharing and promoting support schemes not only for individual migrant entrepreneurs but also for social and inclusive enterprises benefitting migrant entrepreneurs. These exchange networks, which are the building blocks on which the project is based, take the form of three **Communities of Practice (CoPs)**, which are learning communities focusing on the most important elements of a supportive ecosystem for migrant entrepreneurs. Each of the three CoPs is guided by a leading organisation and is dedicated to one specific aspect of the support to migrant entrepreneurs: (1) *coaching and mentoring*; (2) *access to finance*; and (3) *professionalisation and diversity management*.

In particular, CoP 3 is dedicated to the interrelated issues of the **professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs’ associations** and **diversity management in mainstream business support organisations**. Its aim is to stimulate the integration of migrant entrepreneurs into mainstream business associations, such as chambers of commerce. CoP3 will do this by favouring the exchange of best practices and knowledge among the different participants, who come from

¹⁴ DG HOME, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), *Call for Proposals to support awareness raising and information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration in selected third-countries (AMIF-2017-AG-INFO)* and *Call for Proposals in the area of Integration of Third-Country Nationals (AMIF-2017-AG-INTE)*, 2017

¹⁵ For a complete list of approved projects, refer to EASME

different backgrounds. It is based on the belief that business associations should be integrated organisations which involve migrant entrepreneurs both in their service delivery and in their management.

CoP3 approaches this task from two angles:

1. **Work with migrant entrepreneurs' associations to improve their professionalism**, so that they can form effective partnerships with mainstream business associations;
2. **Work with mainstream business associations to improve the way they manage diversity**, in order to improve the migrant-friendliness of their services and the integration potential of their structures.

Intended outcomes of COP 3's action are that migrant entrepreneurs' associations are **better able to articulate and represent their members' needs to national authorities and the wider business community** and, conversely, that **mainstream business associations will be proactive in including migrant entrepreneurs in their management and service delivery**.

5. Professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations

The focus of CoP3 provides a new approach to the support to migrant entrepreneurship, compared to the existing mechanisms presented in **chapter 3**. In particular, it divides the actions taken into two different, but interrelated paths: the **professionalisation of existing migrant entrepreneurs' associations** and the **extent of diversity management in mainstream business organisations and business chambers**.

The present document is especially focussed on the former. The focus on the role of migrant entrepreneurs' associations in contributing to the growth and development of their members is fundamental for the creation of a fully supportive ecosystem: as mentioned in the overview of challenges, the difficulty of joining mainstream business associations, the low level of professionalism and the niche characteristics of the ones they start themselves are all very relevant factors.

In fact, the low level of professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations can risk hindering the growth of enterprises, on the one hand by reducing their access to support mechanisms that are open to all entrepreneurs, notwithstanding their origin; and secondly, by putting them outside the reach of mainstream business associations.

The work of CoP3 addresses this point. It starts from recognising the importance of professionalisation of business associations to multiply their impact: the most important work on the topic is done by **Sequa**, a German organisation that organises training and research on the professionalisation of mainstream BMOs (business membership organisations).¹⁶ Nevertheless, the specificity of migrant business associations has not yet been satisfactorily considered in research and practice. Indeed there is currently a lack of insight into the issue: not enough studies and analyses have been made on the professionalisation needs of migrant entrepreneurs' associations, and the increasingly rich ecosystem of support does not provide any specific forms of training or examples to address these needs.

¹⁶ See <http://www.sequa.de>

The **survey** described in the following paragraphs, as part of the work of EMEN's CoP3, aims to close this gap. It was designed to get first-person information from the more than 40 members of the CoP on how migrant BMOs are managed, what their professionalisation needs are and how a supportive European ecosystem can meet their needs. The information collected through the survey will be used as the first step in the creation of a specific training programme addressing such needs, which will then be disseminated among all participating organisations. The survey will not be the only source of information foreseen; it will be complemented by other virtual and physical exchanges among the CoP's members. Nevertheless, as the first step, it is useful to start framing the issue. Also, the current work does not happen in a void: it is a systematisation largely based on the already quoted work by Sequa and on the own experience of **UNITEE**, the New European Business Confederation, the main organisation in Europe representing entrepreneurs with a migrant background and the leader of CoP3 in EMEN. Indeed, some of the work accomplished by UNITEE in the past years, at both the EU and the local level, has consisted of putting migrant entrepreneurs, and the organisations by which they are represented, in close contact with political authorities, policy-makers and local and European business organisations. Through the present survey, this work will be institutionalised and finalised, by increasing its impact and providing the most relevant information to all support organisations and, of course, migrant entrepreneurs.

6. Presentation of the survey and results

The survey presented in the following paragraphs was conducted by UNITEE, as the leader of CoP3, under the title "**EMEN survey on the professionalisation of ethnic business associations**" during the month of December 2017.¹⁷ The main rationale for the survey was to be pragmatic and provide actionable insights into the degree of professionalisation and the needs of migrant entrepreneurs' associations in Europe, in order to use it as the first step in the preparation of a series of training modules to be conducted in the following years. For this reason, its design and dissemination process has aimed to be as true to reality and to the point as possible, both in determining the organisations surveyed and in deciding the right questions to ask. In this process, fundamental inspiration has been provided by the first-hand experience of UNITEE in representing migrant entrepreneurs at the European level and by the multiannual work done by Sequa in the professionalisation of BMOs.

6.1 The participants in the survey

The survey presented in this document has seen the active participation of **34 organisations and associations**, based all around Europe and located in **7 countries**, working on a daily basis to represent migrant entrepreneurs at the local or national level. The respondents are **all members of CoP3**, as part of the EMEN project, which puts together practitioners of different kinds to foster exchanges between migrant business associations and mainstream business organisations. All the members have given their agreement to participate to the group. From the more than 40 members of the CoP, the 34 respondents selected are the ones that have most to say on the specific topic of the survey, either because they are themselves migrant entrepreneurs' associations or because they are support organisations with specific expertise on the professionalisation of BMOs. The survey does not take into consideration, on the other hand, the members who are mainstream

¹⁷ The full survey can be found at this link: <https://surveyhero.com/c/e391acd3>

business associations or provide other services to migrant entrepreneurs, since they will be the object of a second survey that will be explained in a second report.

6.2 The design of the survey

As mentioned above, the survey has been designed taking an operational approach, more than an academic one: it needs to provide practical information on the most pressing needs of migrant business associations. It will lead to the preparation of effective training for BMOs, that can be disseminated among members and practitioners.

As such, its structure has been dictated by both thoroughness and ease of use. It aimed to gain the most complete idea of the issue at hand as possible, by going through all the main aspects in the management of BMOs, without making it too complicated to answer. Given that the main target was managers and entrepreneurs, it was fundamental for them to be able to complete it clearly and in no more than **20-25 minutes**, in order to minimise the rate of incomplete answers. Also, the language of the survey was English, with some translation provided into other languages (such as Dutch, French or Turkish) for those respondents who did not have English as their first language. The survey also distinguishes between board members and employed staff, in order to have a clearer perception of the complexity and professionalism of its management.

A complete overview of the results is presented in **Annex 1**.

The structure of the survey is as follows. The **29 questions** were divided into groups of topics: after an introduction on the characteristics of the respondents, the questions were divided into topics relating to the different aspects of the management of BMOs that might be challenging or require external support, based on previous experiences.

- **1-4: Introductory personal questions about the respondent**
- **5-12: Questions about the organisation they represent**
- **13-14: Governance and management**
- **15-16: Finance**
- **17-19: Human resources and staff**
- **20-22: Development**
- **23-25: Lobbying/advocacy**
- **26-27: PR and communications**
- **28-29: Training**

6.3 Overview of the results

a. Data on the participants to the survey

The first interesting insight coming from the survey is about the **characteristics of the respondents and their position in the hierarchy of the organisation** they represent (questions 1-4). This is useful information since it is to be expected that the respondents were at least in some position of responsibility and awareness about their organisation's situation. Indeed, the majority of responses come from **board members** (48% of total) or **staff** (32%). External advisers (16%) and volunteers (4%) have a much lesser presence among the respondents. They are also at the **peak of their professional lives**: 46% of respondents declared an age between 35 and 44, and 23% between 45 and 54. Concerning their educational background, the majority of respondents appear

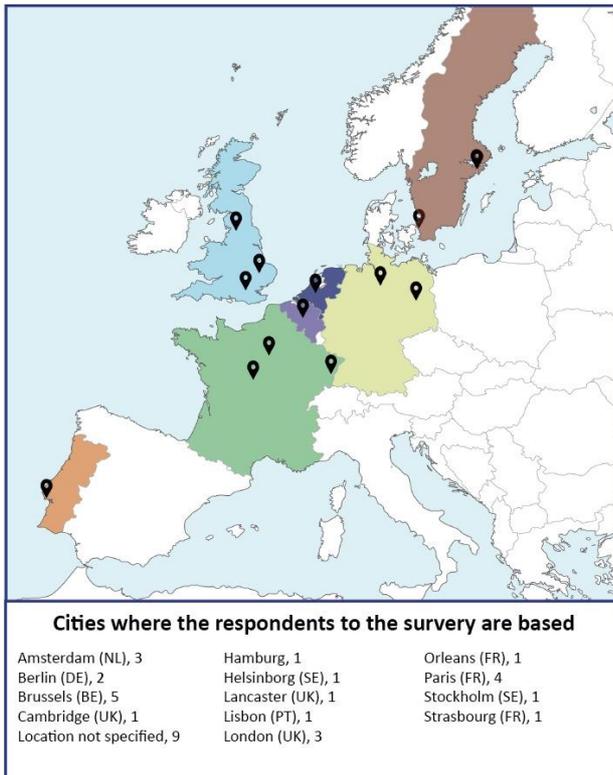
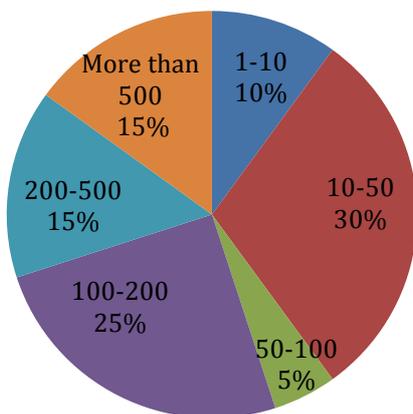


Fig. 1: Locations of the respondents in Europe

highly educated, even if the variance among the different levels of education is high, which testifies to a variety of backgrounds on the part of the respondents: 38.46% have a master's degree, 19.23% a PhD and the same proportion a bachelor's degree. The number of people with lower education or no education at all looks very residual, thus communicating, at least in part, that **the lack of professionalisation of the organisations does not derive from a lack of education in their hierarchies**. Finally, one last figure is quite revealing: almost three-quarters of the respondents (73.08%) are **male**, testifying to a lack of equality in the representation of women in migrant business associations.

The second section of questions (5-12) provides a more in-depth look at the **kind of organisations** surveyed. First of all, their location: as mentioned above, the participants who disclosed their location are based in **7 different countries and 12 different cities**.

Size of organisation's membership



Size of managing board

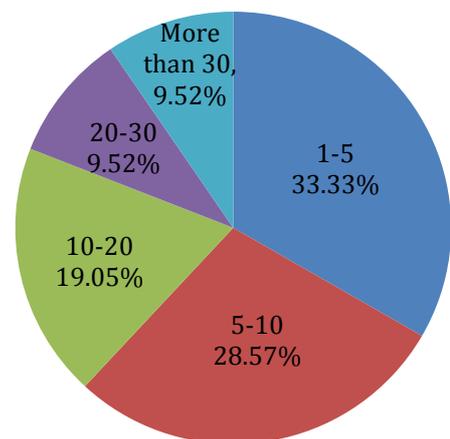


Fig. 2: Average sizes of participant organisations' membership and managing boards

The selection is very homogeneous: all cities are based in Western Europe and most of them (except Lisbon) in Northern Europe, with most organisations based in European hubs such as Brussels (5), Amsterdam (3) and Paris (3). This overview seems consistent with the presence of – or, in the case of Brussels, ease of access to – established ecosystems and funding mechanisms in those cities, together with bigger and more settled communities of migrants. Among them, the geographic scope is quite evenly divided among **national** (43%) and **supranational** (38%)

organisations. Also, the development of migrant business associations looks like a relatively **young phenomenon**: almost all organisations consulted (84%) have been founded after 2000, and 42.11% even after 2010.

An interesting aspect is the size of the associations' membership, which is **very heterogeneous and appears to tend to the extremes**: while 40% of respondents are very small, with less than 50 members, 55% are bigger, with more than 100 members, and 30% have more than 200. Notwithstanding the number of members, the majority of organisations seem to favour **smaller and (theoretically) more effective boards**, with 61% of them reporting **no more than 10 board members**. On the other hand, there is no particular relevant trend in the kind of members the associations consulted have: their members can be corporate, individuals, or other associations.

Another interesting point raised by the survey is the **ethnic composition** of the associations: almost the totality (95%) of organisations have described themselves as being "multiethnic in membership", which shows a process of integration already taking place in the selection and approval of members, which goes beyond the traditional ethnic niches. This process is not fully realised at all organisational levels, though: in particular, around 29% of boards are still **monoethnic**, which means that additional efforts to open up the management to diversity still have to be made.

b. Specific issues of professionalisation

On average, the respondents are quite confident about the **management** experience (questions 13-14) of their associations' board members, as a sum of time in management positions and knowledge: 15% judge it to be "very high", 30% "high" and 40% at least as "average". Notwithstanding the high levels of experience, the associations surveyed identify some **difficulties in their daily management work**. The main areas where they experience issues are **finance** (for 12 respondents), **collaborating with local and national authorities** (for 8) and **finding new members** (for 7). Other problems that were identified by fewer respondents were in the areas of communication, hiring skilled employees and successfully liaising with the existing members.

Main difficulties experienced in the management of the organisation



Fig. 3: Main difficulties reported by respondents in the management of the organisation

Going into greater depth on the **financial issues** (questions 15-16), it emerges that migrant entrepreneurs' associations rely heavily on private sources: membership fees are the favourite source (12 respondents), closely followed by private donations (9). Public donations and the sale of services on the market, on the other hand, still look very residual. Nevertheless, 65% of associations reported **being able to fully finance their activities on a yearly basis**, which, put in the context of the perceived lack of financing as a recurrent problem, testifies to good planning.

The results on **human resources and staffing** (questions 17-19) are coherent with what has been pointed out in the previous section on the size of the organisations surveyed. Here again it is possible to see **a clear polarisation**: the majority of them (57.89%) are **very small**, with not more than three employees. But 26.32% of them reported more than **20 employees**. All options in between look very rare. The working time of these employees also varies widely among organisations: only 15.79% of them rely solely on full-time staff, while the majority adopt a varying degree of solutions, ranging from the 36.84% of respondents who have 75-99% full-time employees to the 31.58% which have almost none. Finally, **volunteers do not appear as a favourite solution** for many organisations: answering to the question "how many volunteers do you employ on a regular basis?", only 42% of respondent gave a positive reply. The first conclusion that can be drawn from this overview is that **most migrant business organisations lack a formal, exclusive staff base**, and rely more easily on a certain combination of part-time staff and volunteers to pursue their daily activities.

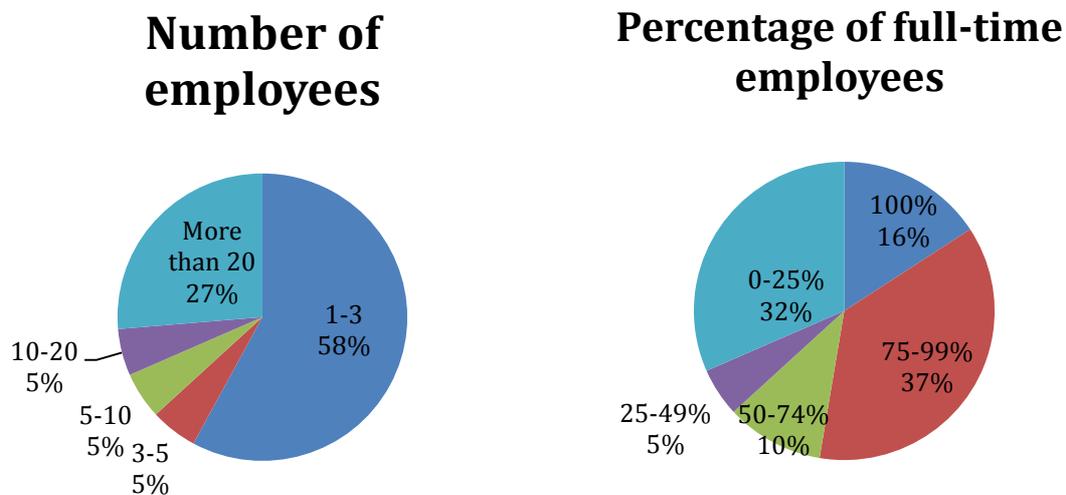


Fig. 4: Structure of human resources and staffing in respondents' organisations

Services provided to members

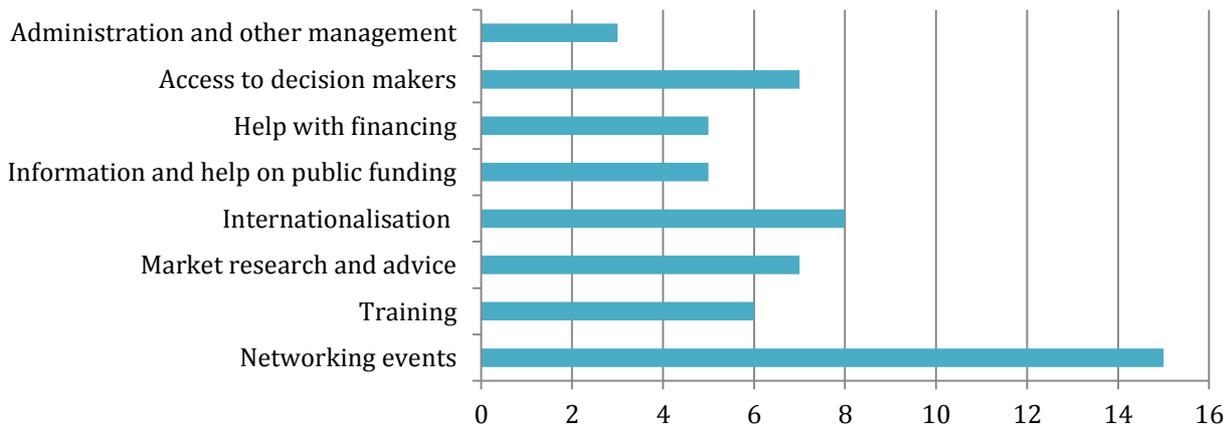


Fig. 5: Typology of activities undertaken by participating organisations

But what are these activities? It is important to keep in mind that the organisations surveyed are business associations, which therefore aim to provide services first and foremost to their members (questions 20-22). In this context, the activity that is the most commonly pursued by the organisations surveyed is the **organisation of networking events (15 responses)**. Other activities that are traditionally offered by business associations are also present, but they are somewhat more reduced in scope and frequency: they provide help with internationalisation of businesses (8 responses), offer access to decision makers (7) and market research and advice (7). A further aspect that was surveyed in this section is the existence of **strategic partnerships** with external institutions: 70.59% of all organisations confirm that they have at least one strategic partnership in place. These partnerships are undertaken with a variety of actors, even if they are still somewhat tilted towards the **private sector**: 10 respondents have indicated “other business membership organisations” as their main partners; 7 “civil society organisations” and 6 chambers of commerce. Only 6 of them have indicated partnerships with municipalities, while 5 with universities and research centres.

Building upon the previous section, particularly interesting for the outcome of the survey is the approach of migrant entrepreneurs’ associations concerning **lobbying and advocacy activities** (questions 23-25). Indeed, **three-quarters of them admitted that they conduct some form of lobbying and advocacy** activity towards at least one of the various government levels. Nevertheless, for the majority of them (50% of the total), these activities are limited to **PR and advocacy**, or, in other words, to making themselves known by the authorities. Only a fraction, 25% of them, are conducting **actual lobbying**, with the aim of changing or influencing legislation. This is confirmed by how respondents **judge their lobbying activities**: asked to state whether they were happy with their influence on politicians, policy-makers and policies, **all responses were divided between “no” and “partly”**, with just one respondent happy, but limited to the impact on politicians. Therefore, it should not be surprising that, when asked whether they would be interested in improving their impact on the three components, all respondents agreed that they would.

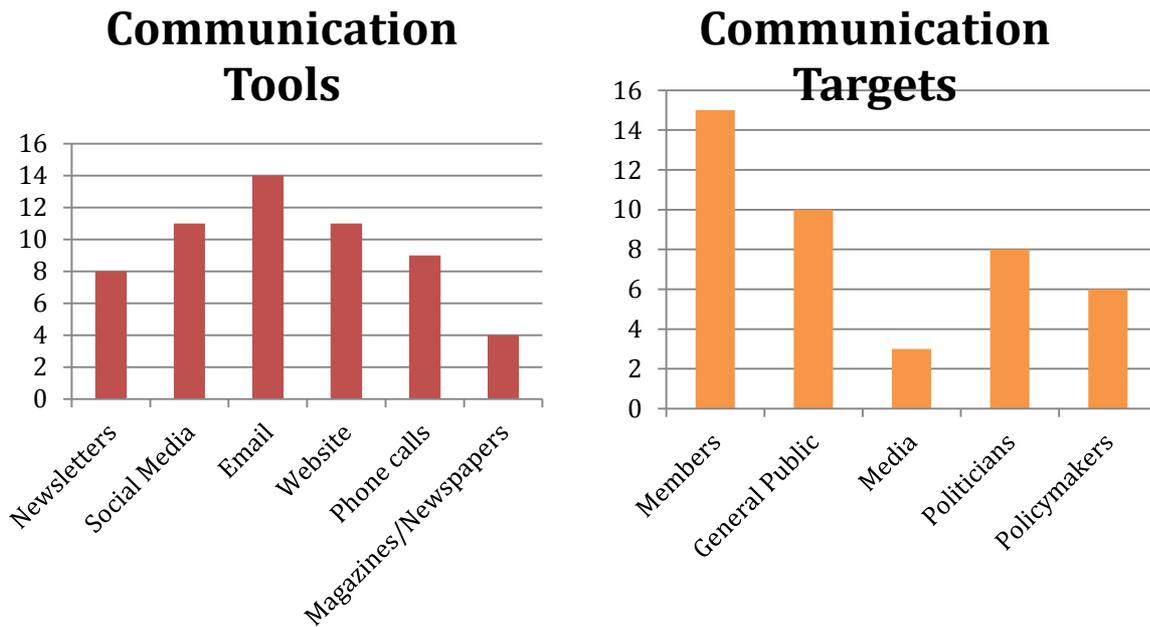


Fig. 6: How migrant entrepreneurs' associations use communication tools

Another point of interest in understanding the needs of business organisations is how they use **communication tools** (questions 26-27). From the survey responses, it emerges that the organisations considered, at least in principle, use a plurality of communication channels. In particular, digital tools are widely used and embedded into operations: if **direct emails** still top the list as the most widely used communication tools (14 responses), **websites and social media follow closely**, with 11 responses each. They are followed by direct **phone calls** (9) and **newsletters** (8). The only medium that is not used very much is advertising in magazines and newspapers. A partial explanation of the reliance on these channels of communications can be obtained through the analysis of who this communication is mainly targeted at. It emerges that associations, at the moment, mainly communicate with their members (15 responses). Another important, even if somewhat reduced, target is the general public (10 responses), with no particular specifications. Less attention is given to reaching out specifically to politicians (8), policy-makers (6) and media (4).

The perceived importance of communication and outreach is confirmed when the associations surveyed are **directly asked what sector they would like to receive training in from an external provider** (question 28). The **need to improve communication** appears clearly as the main necessity perceived by respondents, with 9 occurrences; the second most selected issue is “advocacy, lobbying and PR” (7). “Exchanges of best practices” (6) is in third position, while “human resources” (5), “networking events” (5), “financial education” (4) and “resource mobilisation” (3), even if some of them were previously indicated as main issues, obtain less interest as subjects for external training.

The sectors organisations would like to learn more about

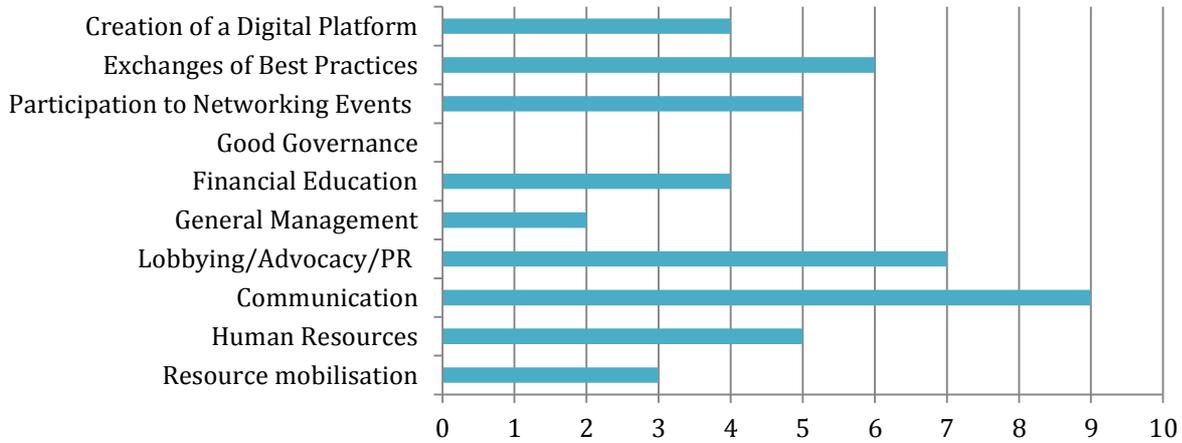


Fig. 7: What surveyed migrant entrepreneurs' associations consider as the most interesting subject upon which to receive training about from an external provider

7. Conclusions and closing remarks

The results of the survey presented in the previous paragraphs do not point at an easy and straightforward answer to what needs are of the utmost importance for all migrant entrepreneurs' associations in their road to professionalisation and development. Rightly so, as the environment of migrant entrepreneurs' associations is complex and differentiated. Nevertheless, there are some general observations that can be drawn from the results that can point in the right direction and can be used as inputs in the design of training which addresses professionalisation needs in the most efficient way.

- The polarisation in size of migrant entrepreneurs' associations calls for a strategy that considers the existence of some very big associations and others that are very small, which might affect their daily management strategies and the objectives they can actually achieve. All training designed should consider the possibility to be targeted and personalised depending on this matter.
- The lack of professionalisation does not appear to derive from a lack of expertise or education in the people composing the managing boards of the associations, nor in the skills to manage the resources they have. Instead, the most pressing problems were identified in objective factors, such as the difficulty of obtaining financing and growing the membership, or in improving communications and outreach, both towards members and beyond.
- In this regard, the existence of strategic partnerships with other representatives of the private sector is confirmed. The most successful of these practices should be advertised and exchanged, favouring the exchanges of best practices. On the other hand, there is an insufficient engagement with the public sector, and when this engagement exists, it is limited to the local level. Partnerships with the public sector should be encouraged and improved.

- Still on the public sector, almost all the associations surveyed recognise the importance of lobbying, PR and advocacy activities, and the majority of them do at least something on that dimension. Nevertheless, a real lobbying activity is still done by just a minority, and all associations consulted have expressed the wish to be able to influence more policy-makers.
- Some potential can be seen in the broadening of the services provided by migrant entrepreneurs' associations to their members, beyond the organisation of networking events. In general, this could be achieved through an enhanced process of strategic development that helps the associations identify the actions in which they can be more helpful to their members.
- As a general remark, the associations consulted mainly lack an infrastructure that allows them learn from each other and from external actors. This could be achieved through structured exchanges of best practices and networking events which could "open up" the horizons of individual associations to other inputs. This is even more impactful for smaller organisations, which could not have all the resources needed to implement their objectives successfully by themselves.

The present observations are the first outcome of the "**design-develop**" process started in CoP3. Starting from the information contained in the present survey, in the next months further exchanges and information gathering processes will be undertaken. The aim is to design a series of training modules targeted at migrant entrepreneurs' associations, in order to help them develop and professionalise: the final outcome will be to foster the **development and growth** of migrant entrepreneurs' associations and favour a closer relationship with mainstream business organisations.

A good training process, replicable and personalisable, should be comprehensive and consider the following aspects:

- The professionalisation level of the associations' board leadership
- Relevant and efficient strategic planning
- Professional management of associations
- Broad and effective offer of services to the members
- Impactful policy dialogue and agenda setting
- Structural cooperation with strategic partners in order to offer broader services to members

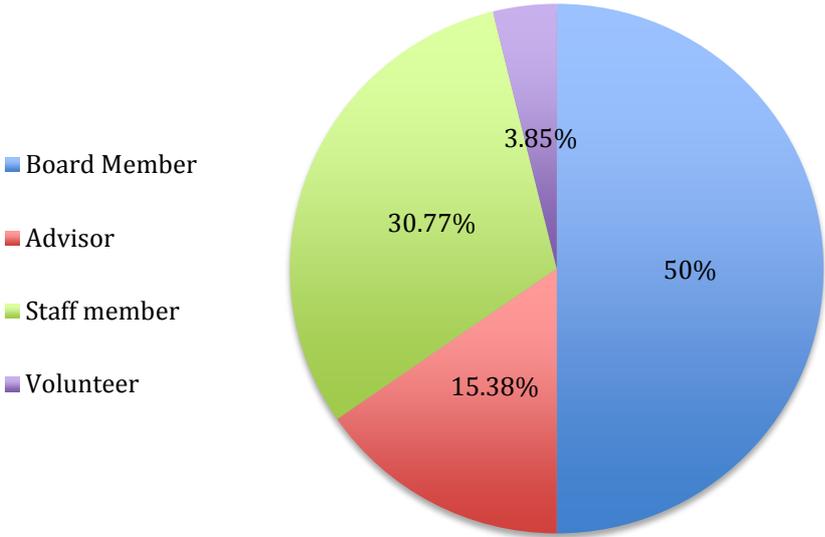
UNITEE together with the members of CoP3 will in the following months work on the design and delivery of training based on these guidelines.

8. Annex: graphical summary of survey results

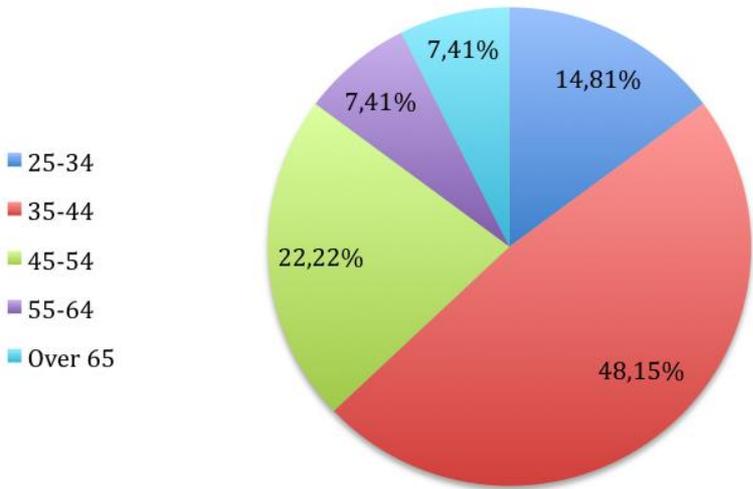
EMEN Survey on the professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurs' associations: questions and results (n=34)

- 1-4: Introductory questions

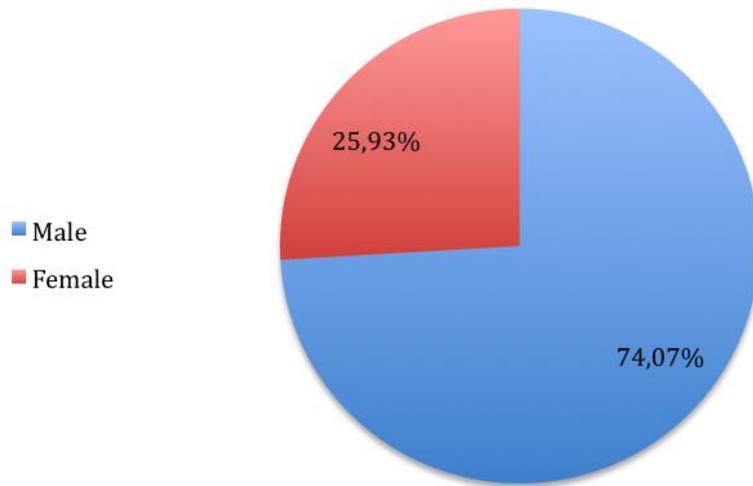
Question 1: what is your role in your organisation?



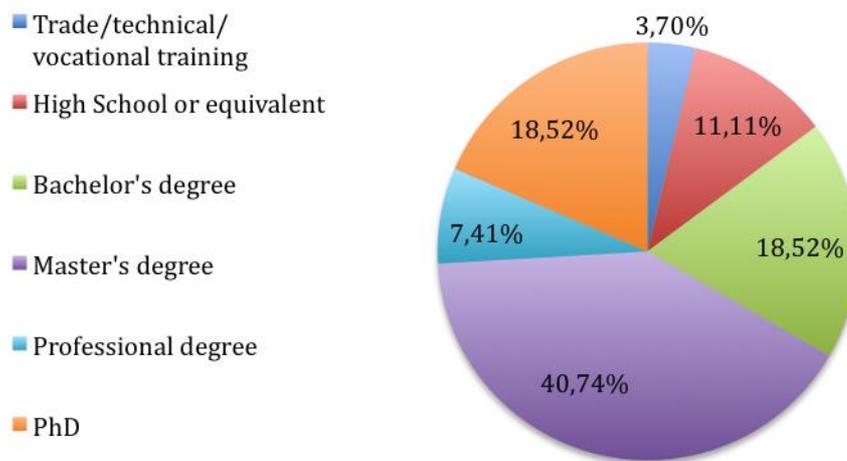
Question 2: What is your age?



Question 3: What is your gender?

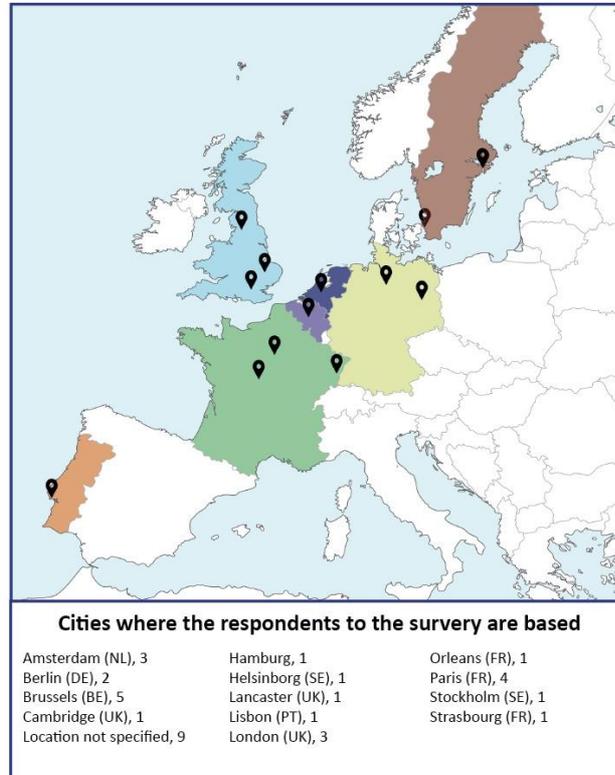


Question 4: What is your highest education level?

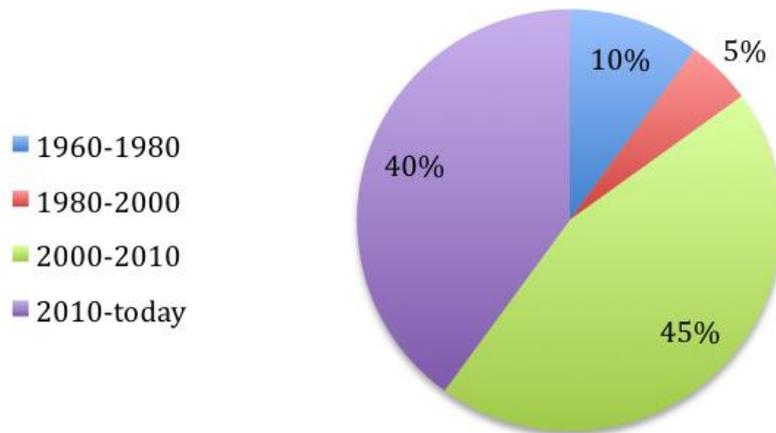


- 5-12: Questions about the organisations

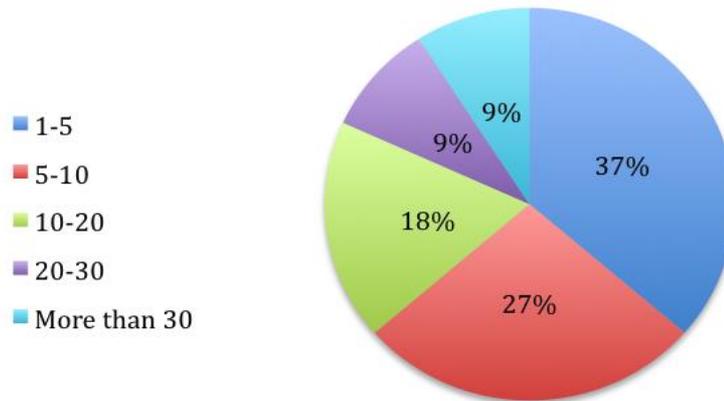
Question 5: In what city is your organisation based?



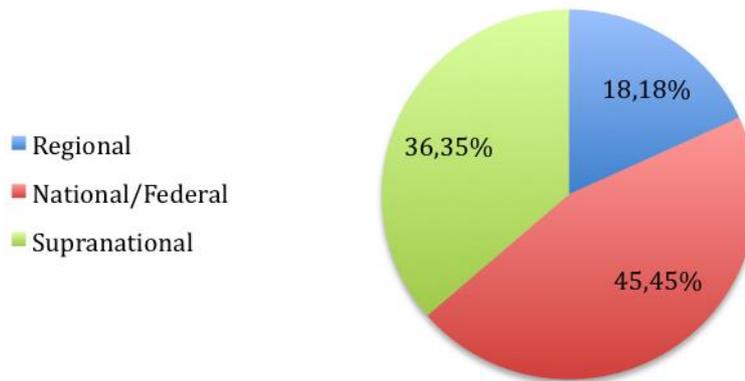
Question 6: When was your organisation founded?



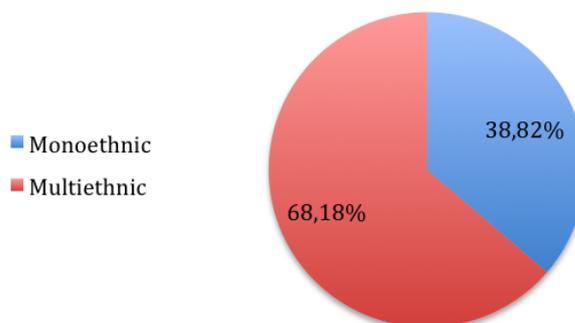
Question 7: How many people sit on the managing board?



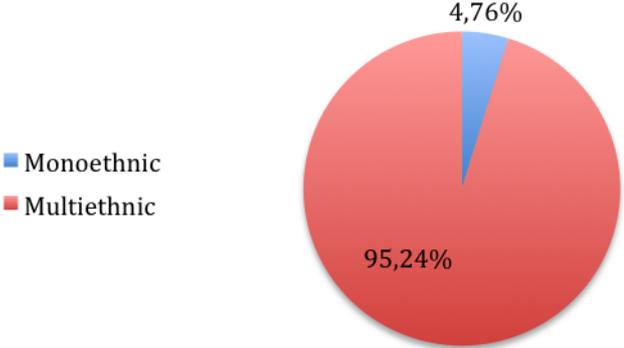
Question 8: What is the geographical scope of your organisation?



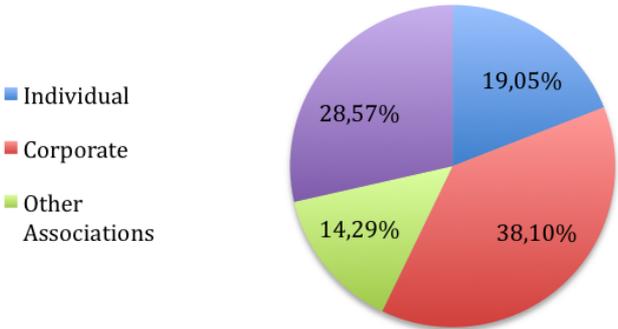
Question 9: What is the ethnic composition of your organisation's board?



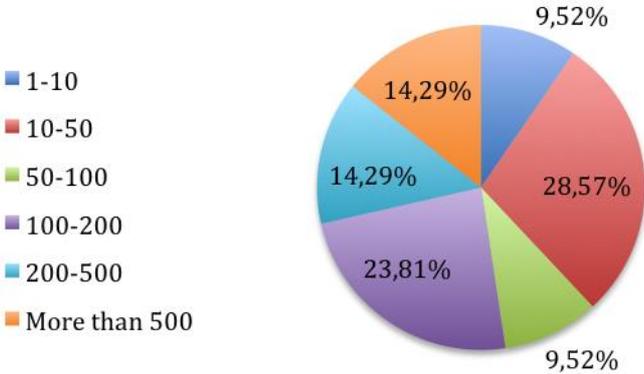
Question 10: What is the ethnic composition of the members?



Question 11: What type of membership does your organisation have?

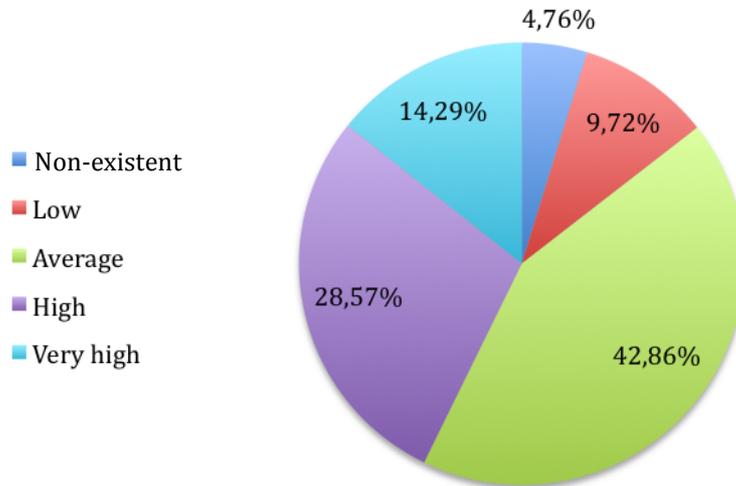


Question 12: How many members does your organisation have?

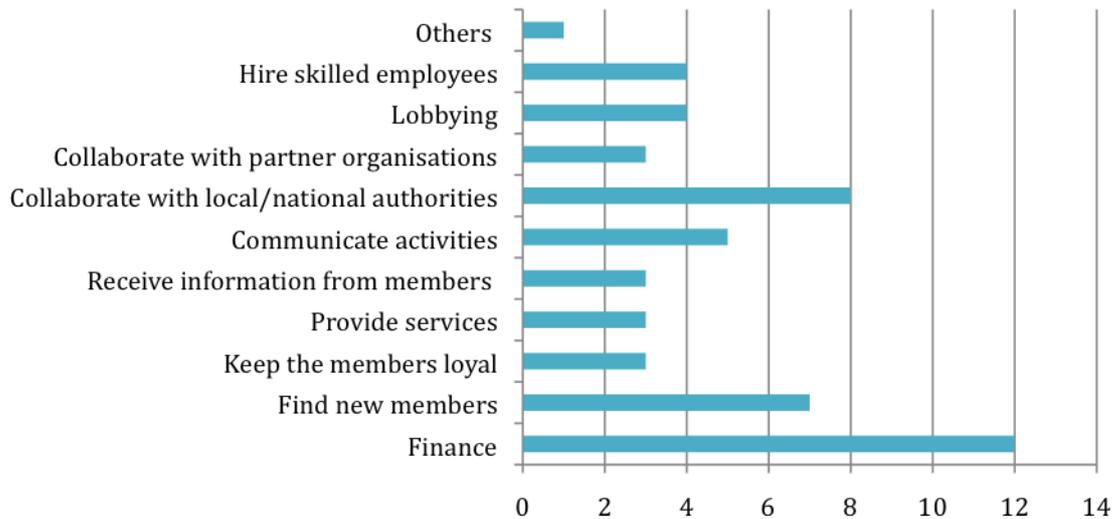


- 13-14: Governance and management

Question 13: What is the average experience of the board in managing business associations?

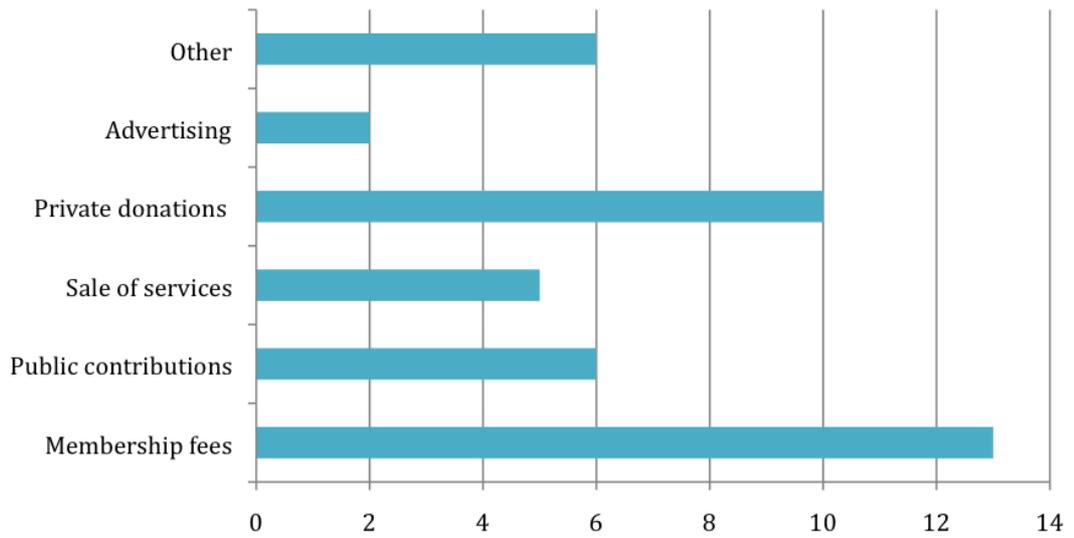


Question 14: What are the main difficulties you experience in the management of your organisation?

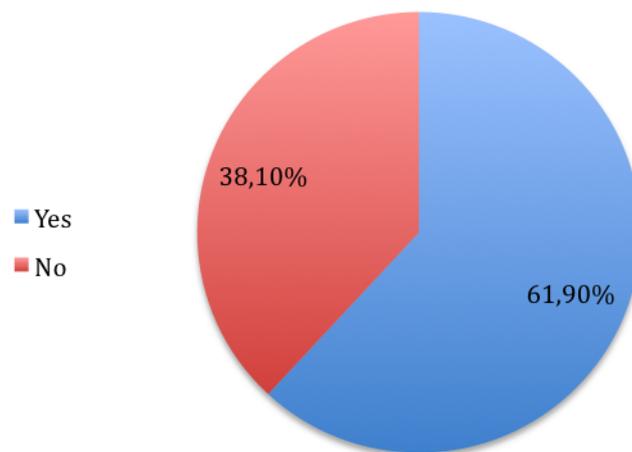


- **15-16: Finance**

Question 15: How is your organisation financed?

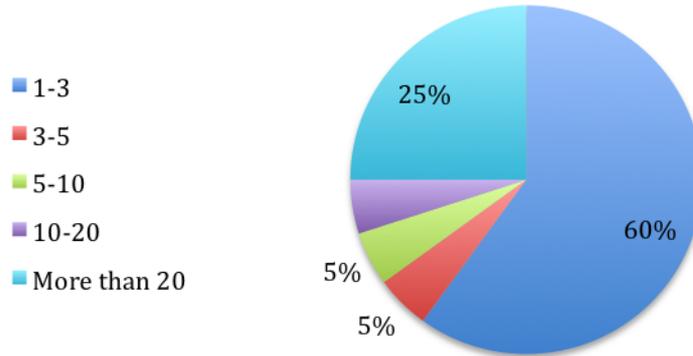


Question 16: Is your organisation able to fully finance its planned activities on a yearly basis?

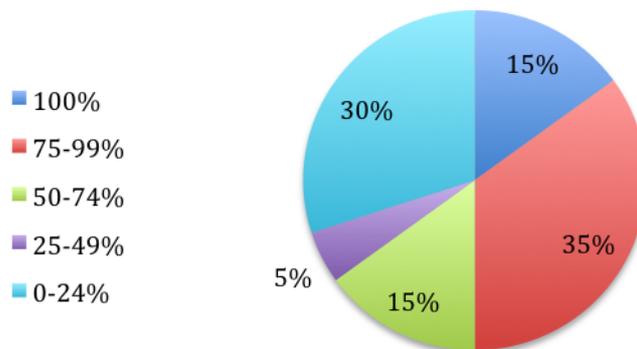


- **17-19: Human resources and Staff**

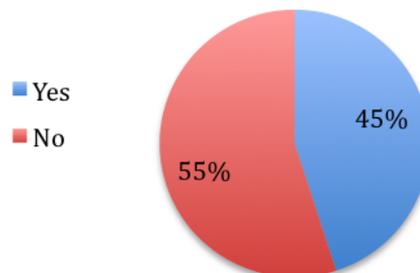
Question 17: How many employees work for your organisation?



Question 18: What is the percentage of full-time employees?

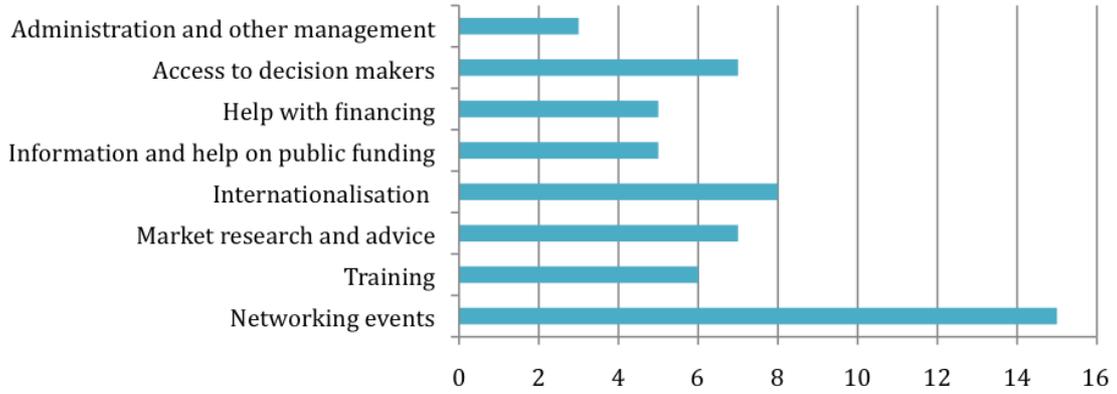


Question 19: Do you employ volunteers on a regular basis?

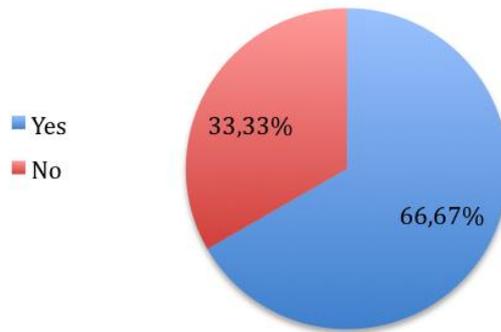


- **20-22: Development**

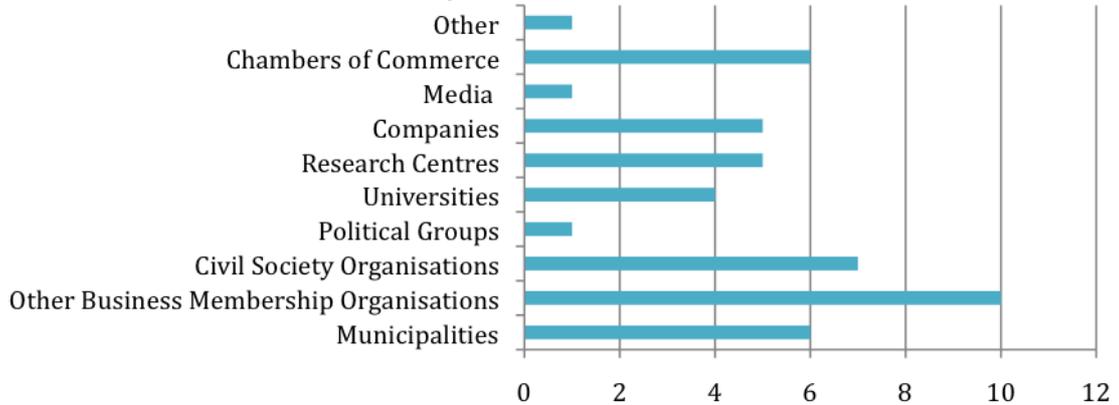
Question 20: What services do you provide to your members?



Question 21: Does your organisation have any strategic alliance in place?

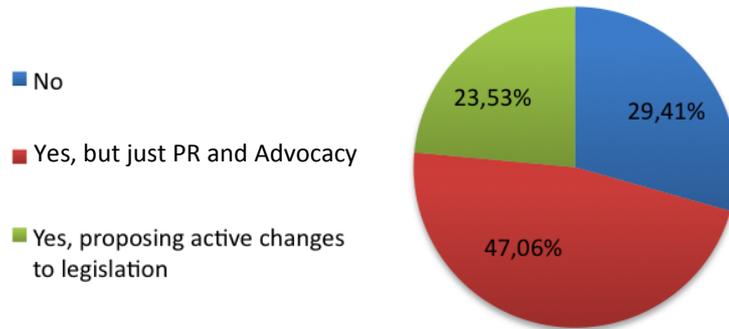


Question 22: If yes, with which kind of actors?

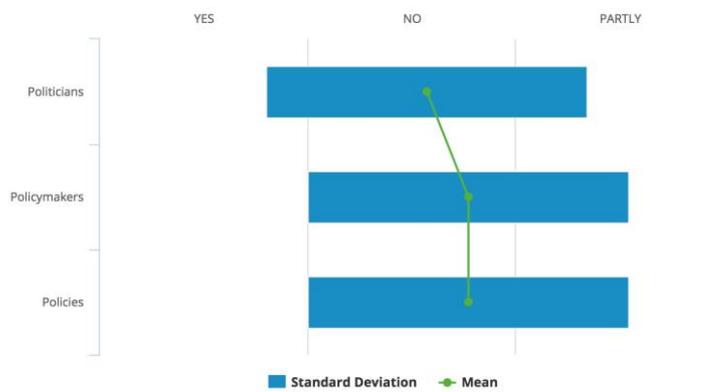


- 23-25: Lobbying/Advocacy

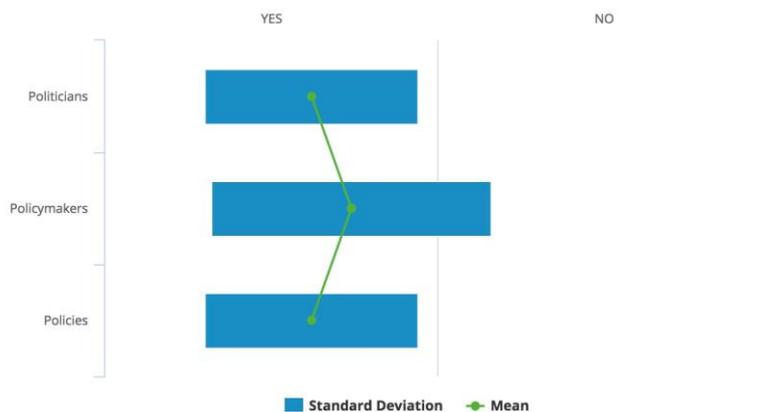
Question 23: Do you have lobbying activities at least one of the various government levels?



Question 24: Are you satisfied with the impact of your organisation on the following aspects?

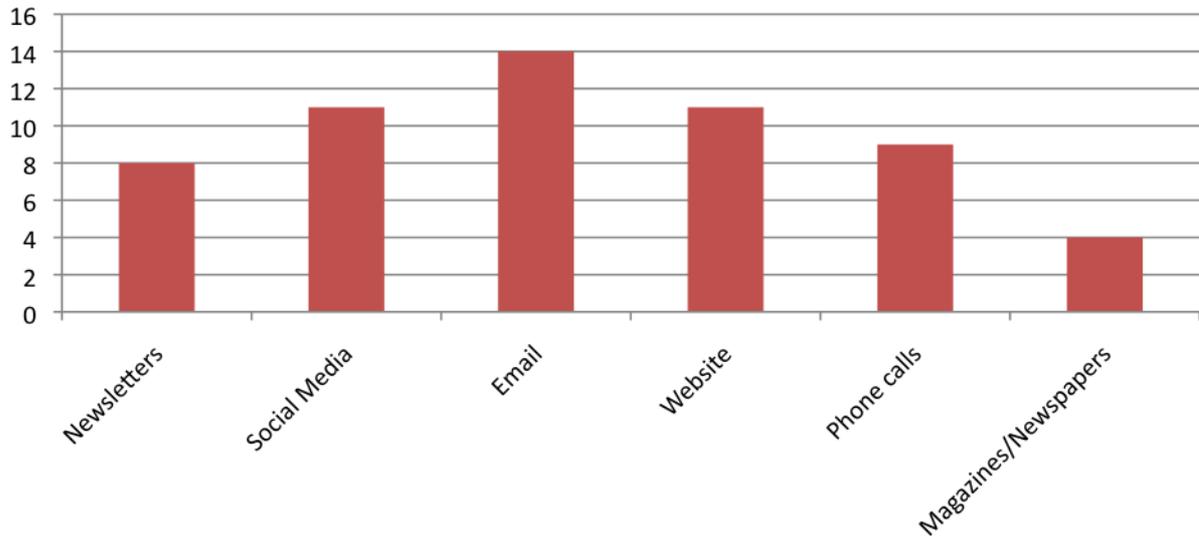


Question 25: Would you be interested in improving your organisation's impact on the following aspects?

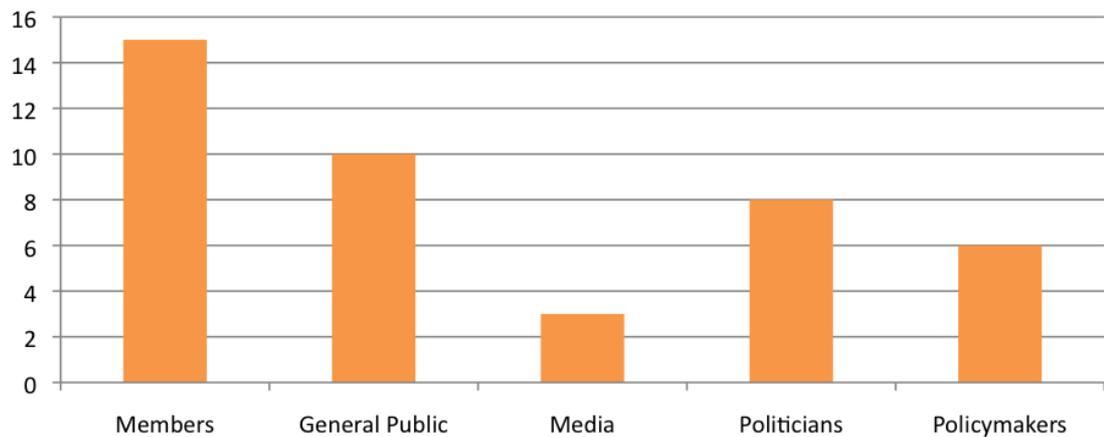


- 26-27: PR and Communications

Question 26: What external communication tools are in use in your organisation?

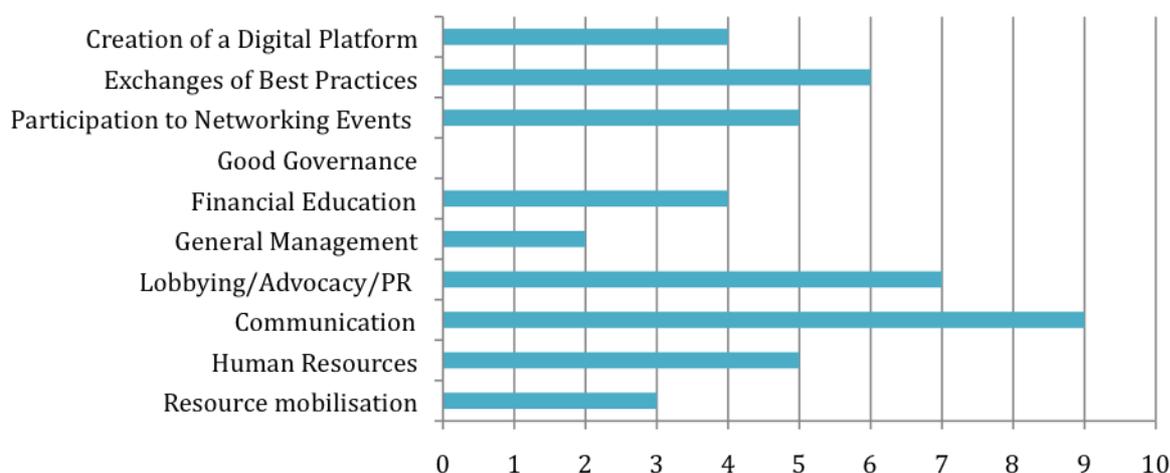


Question 27: Which audience does your communication effort mainly refer to?



- **28-29: Training**

Question 28: What would be the most interesting sector for your organisation to receive trainings in?



Question 29: Do you have any additional remarks or requests concerning training opportunities? (optional answer)

4 answers:

- Raising funding, EU Projects etc.
- no
- Compte tenu de notre spécificité comme une Plateforme de la diaspora Afro-européenne née de l'initiative d'un groupe des organisations des migrants et des diasporas africains et des praticiens du développement, notre souci premier est de disposer d'une cartographie (mapping) de nos membres présents et potentiels. Cela nous permettra de mieux exercer notre mission de plaidoyer en faveur de l'établissement des canaux de dialogue avec les décideurs nationaux, régionaux et internationaux en charge des politiques de développement. Dans ces conditions, accéder à des bases de données (data-base) sur les associations et plateformes de la diaspora africaine, globalement ou par catégories socio professionnelles, établies dans les pays de l'Union européenne nous aidera énormément à finaliser notre étude de cartographie (mapping) des cadres africains de niveau d'études supérieures, universitaires ou post-universitaires, y compris des chercheurs, par différents secteurs socio-professionnels, notamment des secteurs suivants: Santé, Finance, Justice, Education, Energie, Bâtiments et Travaux Publics, Industrie, Agriculture, Foresterie, Agro-industrie, Infrastructures, Commerce etc. C'est notre souci principal et nous recherchons une assistance urgente. Nous apprécierions un coup de main de votre part.
- As a European Network we're not directly dealing with migrant entrepreneurs. Therefore we're mainly interested in the exchange of Good Practices that can be beneficial for our members that are supporting this target group.