

Pan-Canadian Strategy for Francophone Immigrant Women in Minority Communities: Breaking Down Barriers for Equitable Integration

Explanatory Sheet

Chapter 10: Entrepreneurship

Issues

Limited access to entrepreneurship

- Lack of appropriate resources and support.
- Barriers related to family responsibilities.
- Need for specific programs to promote financial independence.

The need to adapt services to cultural and linguistic diversity

- Need to strengthen the entrepreneurial succession among immigrant women so that they see entrepreneurship as an option.



Repreneurship is the transfer of a viable business between a transferor (owner) and a transferee (future owner). The aim is to ensure the company's longevity, respecting its history while adapting to current trends. Taking over a business involves economic, human and social dimensions, and requires support to ensure a smooth transition.

Barriers related to immigration status and family responsibilities

- Current programs do not always meet the specific needs of Francophone immigrant women.

Access to an entrepreneurial network

- Need access to a network of Francophone entrepreneurs to gain support and opportunities.



48%

have experienced a great deal of financial insecurity.

45%

have had great difficulty due to the lack of initial funding.



To learn more on the Pan-Canadian strategy, visit
immigration.affc.ca/en

Consultation Highlights

40%

had moderate difficulties due to limited access to the local professional network.

39%

had moderate difficulty understanding the social and cultural conventions of the business world.

35% have had great difficulty in finding partners.

30% have had a lot of difficulties and **28%** have had moderate difficulties accessing training and support programs.

International Monitoring

Possible Solutions

- **Launch awareness campaigns and promote women's entrepreneurship among Francophone immigrant women as an engine for economic and social integration that contributes to society.**
- **Promote networking and mentoring initiatives.**
- **Initiate a dialogue to support the development of regional and Canada-wide Francophone business incubators and accelerators, in which women and visible minorities are actively involved.**
- **Adapting the service offering to an entrepreneurial model that favours flexipreneurs and the social economy.**
- **Evaluate the possibility of supporting pathfinder projects aimed at supporting entrepreneurship specifically for Francophone immigrants.**
- **Offer entrepreneurial support for Francophone immigrant women from visible minorities.**
- **Evaluate opportunities for collaboration and the most promising ways of offering financial support for entrepreneurship to Francophone immigrant women.**

Examples of initiatives:

- **WINECON**, in the Netherlands, seeks to make entrepreneurship more inclusive by encouraging the participation of women and first-generation migrants. This initiative is supported by a new law on civic integration, which aims to facilitate the involvement of migrants in Dutch society.
- **Forward-Inc**, also in the Netherlands, offers entrepreneurial training programs, start-up and growth support, as well as networking and mentoring, to help newcomers succeed in the business world.
- In the United States, social enterprise **Mona** supports entrepreneurship, particularly among immigrant women, by facilitating access to capital, distribution opportunities, product investment, marketing and design support through its multi-channel platform.
- **Kiva** is an international participatory microcredit initiative that supports a variety of projects that do not qualify for traditional financing, including those of immigrant and refugee women.
- In Canada, **Evol** offers support to female entrepreneurship.

Objective 10: Develop entrepreneurial service offerings for Francophone immigrant women.

Recommended Strategies

Run entrepreneurial awareness campaigns targeting Francophone immigrant women

Set up an entrepreneurship preparation service at the pre-start-up stage and adapt services to the specific needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Promote women's entrepreneurship in the social economy as an engine of economic and social integration that contributes to society.

Offer entrepreneurial support services by and for Francophone immigrant

Develop networking, mentoring and incubator/accelerator initiatives with a special focus on visible minority women. Set up targeted funding programs to support immigrant women entrepreneurs in various sectors.



Training and access to resources

Create collaborations with various partners to offer financial support adapted to Francophone women entrepreneurs, covering business start-ups, expansions and takeovers. Implement entrepreneurship services through local organizations to equip women, reduce the risk of business failure and overcome isolation.

Create collaborations with various partners to offer financial support to Francophone women entrepreneurs (start-up, expansion, takeover, etc.)

Expand an entrepreneurship training program for specific women in the various stages of their project's maturity, similar to that of the École des entrepreneurs du Québec: **Fair-e**. This program is offered in six provinces across the country. With asynchronous training and individual coaching, a training program aimed more specifically at immigrant women would equip them to reduce the risk of business failure and isolation.

Winning Practices

Evol is dedicated to the development of diverse and inclusive entrepreneurship, and its mission is to contribute directly to the creation, growth and acquisition of businesses that wish to generate a positive impact on society. One of the selection criteria for access to financing is that the company be run by at least one person from a community under-represented in entrepreneurship (women, racialized people, immigrants, First Nations and Inuit, LGBTQ2+, people with disabilities and linguistic minorities), and that this person or these persons hold at least 25% of the shares and votes, as well as a strategic position within the company.

