

EMN France
Online workshop
‘Visas for start-ups and tech talents in the European Union’
21 October 2021

EMN France organized an online workshop on 21 October 2021, on the topic: "**Visas for start-ups and tech talents in the European Union**". This workshop was organized in cooperation with the Directorate General of Enterprises of the French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery, as well as Business France (the operator in charge of the international development of French companies, international investments in France, and the economic promotion of France), and the Immigration Directorate of the French Ministry of the Interior. This workshop gathered a lot of participants, including representatives of the French Ministries of the Interior, Economy, Finance and Recovery, Business France, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as representatives of EMN National Contact Points, national development agencies, science parks, entrepreneurs' organizations, and ministries from more than a dozen of Member States.

This workshop was structured into two presentation sessions and aimed at **presenting the information collected in the [2019 EMN study on migratory pathways for start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs in the EU](#), as well as the European and national schemes recently implemented in order to attract start-ups and international talents to Europe.**

This workshop was introduced by **Christelle Caporali-Petit**, Coordinator of EMN France, who also acted as moderator. This introduction served as an opportunity to recall that attracting start-ups, innovative entrepreneurs, and talents from third countries is a political priority at the national and European levels.

The first session was dedicated to **the presentation of two European initiatives, followed by the conclusions of the EMN study on migratory pathways for start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs in the EU.**

The first two presentations, by **Céline Gruffat**, Head of Innovative Projects and Start-ups at the General Directorate for Enterprises, of the Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Recovery, focused successively on **two European initiatives launched in March 2021**. The first, "**Scale-up Europe**", **launched by France in collaboration with the European Commission, aims to accelerate the emergence of European tech champions**. The 21 recommendations developed through a consultation involving more than 100 stakeholders (start-up creators, investors, researchers, business leaders and European institutional actors), and gathered in a manifesto ([Scale-Up Europe - Building global tech leaders in Europe](#)), set up attracting international talents as the most important factor for the growth of the EU tech ecosystem. The second initiative, "**EU Start-up Nations Standards**", **aims to accelerate the growth of European entrepreneurship**. This initiative presents eight standards for the creation and development of start-ups and innovative companies in Europe; 24 Member States signed a ministerial declaration ([EU Start-up Nations Standard of Excellence](#)) on 19 March 2021, through which they committed to respect and monitor these standards regularly. One of these standards concerns the need to attract and retain international talents in order to strengthen Europe's competitiveness on the international scene.

To conclude this session, **Christelle Caporali-Petit** presented **the main results of the 2019 EMN study on migratory pathways for start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs in the EU**. The objective of the first part of this presentation was to show that attracting start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs represents a policy priority in 17 Member States, whether it regards dedicated schemes with visas and/or residence permits or simplified admission criteria linked to the economic project brought forward. The existence of dedicated programs and websites, specialized information services, as well as consulting services and private-public collaboration structures all constitute attractiveness factors for this public. However, a number of challenges to attracting foreign start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs were also listed: cumbersome administrative procedures, lack of access to finance, strong competition between European countries themselves and with third countries to attract and recruit talents, and discrepancies among the policies of Member States.

The second session focused on **the best practices identified in Europe to attract start-ups, international talents, and innovative projects**.

Isabelle Burel, from the Sub-Directorate of Residence and Work at the Immigration Directorate of the French Ministry of the Interior, presented **the French scheme for foreign start-ups, based on the "Talent Passport" multi-year residence permit**. Her presentation focused on the continuous adaptation of the regulatory framework and administrative procedures to the needs of the market, in order to expand the pool of potential third-country candidates and increase the attractiveness of the scheme. For instance, she highlighted the expansion of the criteria used to define whether a company is "innovative" in 2020, as well as the dematerialization and simplification of the procedures for applying for a Talent Passport, implemented in 2021.

Sandrine Coquelard, Head of the Legal Department at Business France, summarized the **agency's actions to support start-ups and talents from third countries that want to settle in France**. Two services were presented: the Welcome Office, and its website "[Welcome to France - Helping you to settle in](#)", a welcome and information service for international talents and their families wishing to settle in France, created in 2017; and "[Welcome to La French Tech](#)", a service created in 2020 and dedicated to inform and provide support for the migration procedures and the installation of foreign start-ups in France.

Géraldine Renaudière, Migration Policy Analyst at the OECD's Directorate for Employment, Labor and Social Affairs, presented the project to develop an **EU talent pool**, a measure proposed in the Pact on Migration and Asylum and announced by the European Commission and the Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) in 2020. Contrary to the existing European schemes for worker mobility within the EU, this platform would include the profiles of third-country candidates in order to match them with employers located in the Member States. While this project is intended to be articulated with existing national and regional labor migration schemes, the speaker stressed that the details of its concrete functioning and implementation remain to be defined.

Finally, an exchange session between the participants of the workshop was dedicated to **the good practices and the challenges** identified in different Member States.

Céline Gruffat concluded the workshop by thanking the participants and stressing the interest of the topic of start-ups, which continues to be a political priority for France and the EU. The comparative approach between the Member States highlighted the possibility of disseminating good practices, as well as the need to better communicate on existing schemes.