

Chapter 8

Entrepreneurial Initiatives With Re-Migrants

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ABSTRACT

This chapter describes the development of a program designed for Colombians that, after living several years abroad, decided to return. These re-migrants received support of national government and the Center for Entrepreneurship Development at the Universidad Icesi (CDEE-Icesi) to identify new entrepreneurial ideas, even to start operations and generate income to meet their personal needs in the process of reintegration to the country. The entrepreneurial educational model based on competences designed by CDEE-Icesi, was the focus of the whole training process, and the support phases were done by Centro Alaya based on SBDC's methodology. The high proportion of participants that were able to start their own enterprise and the entrepreneurial success cases in the first months of operation, allows the CDEE-Icesi to show to the Colombian Foreign Ministry (the funding body for this project) the validity of the integrated approach model, for the process of reintegration of Colombians who are returning to the country.

INTRODUCTION

Human migration has existed throughout history, in parallel with the evolution and development of the societies, their resources and their opportunities, affected by the occurrence and magnitude of many factors: environmental, economic, cultural, religious, political, demographic, social, racial, power, among others; which are not always associated with the ideal of the identification of a better opportunity in the condition of life, or a better development of their skills and knowledge, or a better level of personal satisfaction.

The International Organization for Migration (2016) defines migration as “the geographic movement of people across a specified boundary for the purpose of establishing a new temporary or permanent

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residence”. The concept can be interpreted at the national levels (change country), or at the regional level (Change Department/Province/State) and even at the city level (Change city within the same state).

The conquest and colonization of Latin American was an immigrants process (especially by Europeans) who left their country and settled in America under different situations and objectives. Subsequently these immigrants moved inside the American territories in a process of “Opening and moving the border”. The labor needs over the years generated enforced migrations from Africa (basically as slaves) and from Asia (in situations close to slavery). Later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there were Europeans and Asians migrating in search of job opportunities and development that the American countries offered, and then the American inter migration started in which citizens of an American country moved to another American country, and later with globalization process the migrations process was worldwide.

Labour migration, defined by the International Labour Organization (2008), as the displacement of people into a host country under the understanding that they will work there for a certain period of time, linked to the new labor market, is a growing phenomenon due to various motivations, including: unemployment and lack of opportunities to generate adequate income in the original country, conflict by violence, conditions of life that seems to offer the recipient country, opportunities for social services, currency advantages, vulnerability, insecurity, racial-social- religious or political persecution, among others.

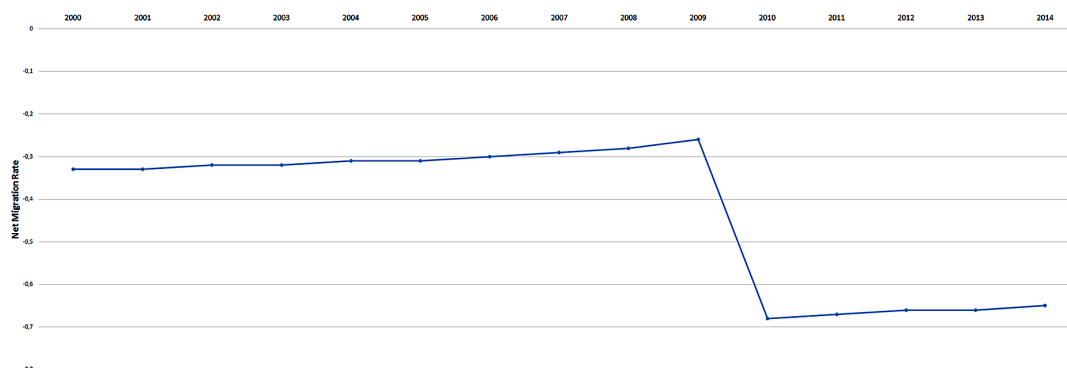
In Colombia, the first big wave of emigration occurred in the period 1965-1975 (Cárdenas, 2006), and the selected countries were: Venezuela, United States, Ecuador and Panama (Cardona, 1980). In many cases, migrants had a low educational level and they were oriented to field works and other jobs requiring little training. In the mid-70s, the migratory flow was diversified and migration to the United States began to include professionals and skilled labor and migration to several European countries was also encouraged, with varying levels of readiness and training of migrants (Guarnizo, 2004).

In the late eighties and nineties, the internal conflict factors associated with the problems of drug trafficking, insecurity and economic crisis accelerated the migration processes of Colombian people, and it involved people of all socio economic levels and all skill levels. It is estimated that by the end of the 90s more than 80% of Colombian migrants were concentrated in the US, Spain and Venezuela.

The net migration rate of Colombia, which in 2014 (CIA World Factbook, 2015) was -0.65 migrants / 1,000 inhabitants, has remained negative for the past 15 years as indicated by Figure 1. This indicator does not identify the characteristics of the migrants neither the reasons for migration.

Figure 1. Net migration rate (migrant/1000)

Source: CIA World Factbook (2015).



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