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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS IN NORWAY AND THEIR STAY-AT-HOME PEERS

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The level of self-employment among immigrants is often higher than among natives. The purpose of this paper was to test empirically whether selective migration with respect to entrepreneurial characteristics may explain this difference. The relevant hypotheses were tested comparing representative samples of Russian immigrants in Norway and their stay-at-home counterparts. Data from the Russian population came from the 2008 GEM study, while data on Russian immigrants in Norway were collected through a specially designed postal survey. The analysis revealed some demographic dissimilarity between the two groups, as well as a presence of selective migration with respect to entrepreneurial characteristics. This study demonstrates immigrants (as compared to non-migrants) are more likely to report intentions to start a business. Moreover, they possess relatively large amount of specific human capital, social capital and self-confidence relevant for entrepreneurship. The paper concludes with proposed practical implications and suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; immigration; Russian; selective migration; self-employment; brain drain.

1. Introduction

While the stock of immigrants is boosting in the western countries, entrepreneurship has been increasingly recognized as a viable method of improving the living conditions for them. Immigrants, often blocked from the general labor market, may survive and achieve some economic mobility by becoming self-employed. Through this type of activity, they may actively participate in the local social life and join important social networks. At the same time, the host countries are also expected to benefit from immigrant self-employment. Immigrant entrepreneurs are argued to cease demand for social benefits, revitalise declining regions and industries, stimulate international trade and bring a variety of new ideas and products to the market. Not surprising, politicians in developed countries,

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1 including Norway, have started to promote initiatives encouraging immigrants to establish
2 businesses in their new country of residence.

3 The question that seems to be essential in theoretical debates on immigrant entrepre-
4 neurship is: “Why do some ethnic/immigrant groups have higher rates of business par-
5 ticipation than others?” (see, for example, Flap *et al.*, 2000; Waldinger and Chishti, 1997).
6 In different contexts researchers have investigated the role of culture, social and human
7 capital, discrimination, blocked mobility, opportunity structure, or a combination of sev-
8 eral. It has also been suggested that especially “entrepreneurial” persons may be selected
9 during the migration process. However, the selectivity question represents a major
10 knowledge gap in the field of immigration studies (Gans, 2000). The purpose of this paper
11 is to test empirically whether selective migration with respect to entrepreneurial charac-
12 teristics does exist and to propose explanations for the phenomenon under scrutiny.

13 This paper also seeks to contribute to the debate considering the flows of skilled
14 migrants from less to more economically developed countries. This process, also called
15 “brain drain,” has received a gradually growing interest both in sending and receiving
16 countries. This paper compares Russian immigrants in Norway to a representative sample
17 of their stay-at-home peers, applying a previously underutilized method on the rarely
18 studied group of immigrants from a specific country.

2. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

22 It has often been observed around the globe that immigrants of a certain origin are under-
23 or overrepresented among the self-employed.^a Cultural predisposition (Weber, 1958),
24 blocked mobility on the labor market (Zhou, 2004), middleman minority position
25 (Bonacich, 1973), extensive social capital (Potocky-Tripodi, 2004; Caulkins and Peters,
26 2002; Fratoe, 1988; Portes and Zhou, 1992), use of ethnic resources (Light, 1984), and
27 mixed embeddedness (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1998) have been proposed as possible expla-
28 nations to this phenomenon.

29 Waldinger’s interactive model (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990) emphasizes the interaction
30 between opportunity structures and ethnic group characteristics. Opportunity structures
31 include market conditions and the routes through which access to business is obtained.
32 Access to business-ownership is defined by the number of vacant ownership positions, the
33 extent to which natives are vying for these slots and by government policy toward
34 immigrants. Group characteristics include resource mobilization and predisposing factors
35 such as blocked mobility, aspiration levels and selective migration. It is argued that some
36 immigrant groups may be pre-selected, first of all, with respect to prior buying and selling
37 experience.

38 Indeed, immigrants do not represent a random sample of the population from which
39 they came (Feliciano, 2005). It has been reported that immigrants are different from the

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42 ^aThe terms ‘entrepreneurs’, ‘business owners’ and ‘self-employed’ are often used interchangeably in the literature
43 on immigrant businesses (Rath and Kloosterman, 2003). In the theoretical section, we apply the exact terms used
by the referred authors.

1 home country population with respect to their average skills (Borjas, 1999), education
2 (Feliciano, 2005), health (Landale *et al.*, 2000), personality factors (Silventoinen *et al.*,
3 2007) and occupational background (Suzuki, 2002). In some cases, the unskilled persons
4 endowed with relatively low human capital dominate the migration flows (Borjas,
5 1999). Alternatively, most skilled professionals are argued to migrate extensively from
6 Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Mansoor and Quillin, 2006; Ushkalov and
7 Malakha, 2000). It is suggested in this paper that selective migration may have an effect
8 that has not been taken into account sufficiently by the existing studies on immigrant
9 entrepreneurship.

10 The human capital model (Sjaastad, 1962) assumes migration occurs if the rate of
11 return on the investment in migration is greater than the interest cost of funds for
12 investment in human capital. The favorable selectivity of migrants occurs if the wage
13 differential between the destination and origin is greater for the high-ability workers
14 (Chiswick, 1999). Highly skilled immigrants are likely to move from countries where
15 payoff to human capital is low to countries where the payoff is high (Borjas, 1999). The
16 inherent uncertainty associated with entrepreneurial venturing violates the assumption
17 about the return on migration, which underpins these models. It is therefore unclear to
18 what extent this “wealth-maximizing” (word used in Borjas, 1991) reasoning may be
19 applicable to potential entrepreneurs. In 2007, only a few^b Russians received permission to
20 enter Norway based on their documented intention to start a business. In the same year,
21 254 professionals, 234 students and 658 family members received such permission
22 (Utlendingsdirektoratet, 2008). It is therefore doubtful that many entrepreneurs rationally
23 choose to migrate to another country because they perceive it is more profitable to create a
24 business abroad. Other theories of migration, such as dual labor market theory, world
25 system theory and the “new economics of migration” approach (for review, see Massey
26 *et al.*, 1993) also fail to predict if (and under which circumstances) self-selection of
27 entrepreneurs occurs.

28 In the context of entrepreneurship studies, selective migration still lacks both theor-
29 etically sound elaboration and empirical evidences. Clark and Drinkwater (1998)
30 suggested that immigrants, as a self-selecting group, may be “in some sense more entre-
31 preneurial than the native-born.” However, based on the analysis of a large sample of
32 Britain’s ethnic minorities, the authors rejected this conjecture. Based on ethnographic
33 analysis, Kasdan (1965) suggested dominating family structure in the home country
34 explains the differences in entrepreneurial behavior among immigrants to the United
35 States. The author argues that the social structure of a traditional Basque community
36 maximizes the chances for entrepreneurial personality types to immigrate. In this study,
37 risk-taking and acceptance of change were associated with entrepreneurial personality.
38 Maxim (1992) suggested similar psychological processes underlie both the decision to
39 migrate and the decision to become self-employed.

40 Levie (2007) suggested immigrants may be positively selected with respect to their
41 attitudes toward new business activity. Immigrants may be less risk-averse compared to
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43 ^bThe exact number, which is less than 5, is not revealed here protecting respondents from identification.

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1 their stay-at-home peers because they have made a bold decision to move into a new
2 unknown country. Indeed, low risk aversion is associated with both higher propensity to
3 migrate (see, for example, Heitmueller, 2005), and entrepreneurial behaviour (for the
4 review, see Shane, 2004).

5 In the same vein, Dana and Morris (2007) argued that the very act of emigrating may
6 be reflective of some entrepreneurial values, such as individualism, achievement, com-
7 petitiveness, risk taking and strong work ethics. Immigrants may also be more confident of
8 their own human capital and their ability to succeed in a new uncertain environment.
9 Utilizing the UK GEM data, the author arrived at inconclusive results about the presence
10 of self-selection. It seems a proper assessment of the effects of selectivity requires data on
11 both the population in the sending country and on immigrants from this specific country
12 (Feliciano, 2005).

13 Dissatisfaction is argued to play a central role both for migration and business start-up
14 decisions. On the individual level, dissatisfaction with previous work is positively
15 associated with self-employment (Brockhaus and Horowitz, 1985). At the same time,
16 immigrants (prior to migration) tend to be less satisfied with their jobs, educational
17 institutions and life in general (Silventoinen *et al.*, 2007; Hanna and Pearson, 1990).

18 Based on the conjectures cited, one may expect that relatively more “entrepreneurial”
19 individuals will choose to move abroad. It is suggested in this paper that the presence of
20 selective migration is easier to detect when comparing early-stage entrepreneurial activities
21 which are less influenced by particular post-migration conditions. Thus, the following
22 hypothesis was developed for this study:

23 *Hypothesis 1:* The proportion of persons involved in early-stage entrepreneurial activities
24 is higher among immigrants than among the population in their home country.

25 Immigrants may be pre-selected with respect to their human capital relevant for
26 entrepreneurship. Becker (1993) distinguishes between general and specific human capital.
27 General human capital, often measured as years of education and work experience, relates
28 to the factors expected to increase the individual’s productivity for a wide range of work-
29 related activities. Specific human capital, on the other hand, is applicable only to a specific
30 domain. In the entrepreneurship literature, specific human capital is usually measured as
31 managerial, industry specific and self-employment related experience (Bosma *et al.*,
32 2004; Cooper *et al.*, 1994).

33 As far as entrepreneurship is concerned, the amount of specific human capital is
34 especially important. To actually start a venture is probably the most effective way of
35 learning specific entrepreneurial tasks such as initial organizing, establishing of relation-
36 ships with key stakeholders, allocation of human resources, adjusting to market changes
37 and facilitation of communication within the organization. Therefore, it is argued that
38 immigrants coming from countries with high rates of self-employment will be over-
39 represented among the self-employed in the host countries. Such immigrants are predis-
40 posed toward entrepreneurship because of the home country traditions for
41 entrepreneurship and because of the relevant training they have received before migration.

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1 The relationship between the level of self-employment in the country of origin and sub-
2 sequent entry into self-employment after migration has been empirically demonstrated
3 (Cobas, 1986; Ekberg and Hammarstedt, 1999; Yuengert, 1995). Others have failed to
4 find support for such a relationship (Van Tubergen, 2005).

5 The validity of these conflicting results may be questioned if the process of migration is
6 selective with respect to entrepreneurial experience. Entrepreneurs (at least the successful
7 ones) may be more likely to migrate than the rest of the less developed country's popu-
8 lation because they possess the necessary financial capital. Successful entrepreneurs may
9 also be more likely to travel abroad (as tourists or on business). Their eventual travels
10 perhaps provide them with information facilitating the migration decision. This conjecture
11 accords to the theory of asymmetric information as applied to migration decision making
12 (see Stark, 1991).

13 Summing up this discussion, the following hypothesis was formulated:

14
15 *Hypothesis 2:* Immigrants possess more specific human capital relevant for entrepreneurial
16 activities than their stay-at-home peers.

17 Not only the level of specific human capital, but also individuals' awareness about
18 their abilities, may influence the decision to start a business. Both perceived self-efficacy
19 (Krueger *et al.*, 2000) and perceived behavioral control (Kolvereid, 1996) are important for
20 prediction of entrepreneurial intentions. By the same token, self-reported competences are
21 predictive of entrepreneurial performance (Chandler and Jansen, 1992). The link between
22 confidence in one's skills/abilities and entrepreneurship has been illustrated empirically
23 using GEM data (Arenius and Minniti, 2005; De Clercq and Arenius, 2006). It has been
24 suggested that immigrants may be self-selected with respect to their confidence in entre-
25 preneurial skills (Levie, 2007). Thus, the following hypothesis was developed:

26
27 *Hypothesis 3:* Immigrants are more confident in their abilities relevant for entrepreneurial
28 activities than their stay-at-home peers.

29 Social networks may be viewed as consisting of two components: the personal net-
30 works (i.e. individual, level relationships) and cultural embeddedness (Fadahunsi *et al.*,
31 2000). Focusing on the individual level, this paper emphasizes the importance of knowing
32 other entrepreneurs when making a decision to start a business. It is argued that the
33 presence of entrepreneurs among parents (Constant and Zimmermann, 2006) and peers
34 (Arenius and Minniti, 2005) increases the individual's likelihood of becoming a business
35 owner. Immigrants may be pre-selected with respect to the quality and quantity of their
36 personal networks relevant for entrepreneurial activities. It is well-established in the field
37 of social psychology that friendship and peer affiliation are influenced by perceived or
38 actual similarity in attitudes, traits and values (Byrne, 1971; Newcomb, 1956). Particu-
39 larly, friends are argued to demonstrate similar perceptions of need for achievement and
40 autonomy (Secord and Backman, 1964). Both these needs are traditionally argued to
41 predict entrepreneurial behavior (for a review, see Shane, 2004). It is possible social
42 groups characterized by relatively high needs for achievement and autonomy will include
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1 many potential entrepreneurs and, simultaneously, many potential migrants. In this case,
2 one may suggest that:

3 *Hypothesis 4:* Immigrants are more likely to report personally knowing other entrepreneurs
4 as compared to their stay-at-home peers.
5

7 **3. The Context of Immigration to Norway**

8 During the first years after World War II, when foreigners temporally displaced by war left
9 Norway, the immigrant population in the country was exceptionally small. From 1950–
10 1960, the refugees of the war, former prisoners of the Nazi camps located in Norway and
11 citizens of other Nordic and OECD countries migrated to Norway. In the beginning of the
12 1970s, when other European countries began to close the borders for working migrants,
13 this group started coming to Norway, forming the first significant wave of immigration.
14 The initial intention of the policymakers was to invite immigrant workers for short periods
15 of time covering the cyclical excessive demand for labor. However, appreciating the high
16 standard of living in Norway, the absolute majority of guest workers never left the country.
17 As early as 1975, new laws restricting immigration of unskilled workers were introduced.
18 When these restrictive laws were applied, the immigration did not stop, but continued
19 through family reunion, international education programs and employment of pro-
20 fessionals. The families of working migrants formed the second wave of immigration to
21 Norway. From 1970–1975, Turks, Moroccans and Pakistanis constituted the majority of
22 not-Western immigrants in Norway. The third, and by far the largest wave of immigrants,
23 consists of refugees who started arriving in the end of the 1970s and still continues to fuel
24 the migration process. Because isolated local conflicts usually cause sporadic flows of
25 refugees, this type of migrants arrived to Norway in large ethnically homogenous groups.
26 Evolution of the Norwegian migration process from working migrants and family reuni-
27 fication to refugees is much like the processes observed in Germany (Wilpert, 2003),
28 France (Ma Mung and Lacroix, 2003) and other European countries.

29 In 2007, there were 341,830 first generation immigrants in Norway (7.3 percent of the
30 population). When the persons born in Norway by two non-Norwegian parents are
31 included, immigrants account for 8.9 percent of population. When children with one
32 Norwegian and one foreign parent are added, the respective figure rises up to 13.4 percent
33 (Statistics Norway, 2007). The immigrants are unevenly distributed around the country
34 with the largest concentration in the Oslo region.

35 When immigrant entrepreneurship became an observable and significant phenomenon in
36 Norway remains unclear because of a lack of systematic historical and statistical data. In the
37 beginning of the 1980s, immigrant-owned shops and restaurants in central Oslo started
38 attracting the attention of the public. In 1986/87, there were 127 “ethnic” shops owned by
39 non-western immigrants in Oslo that constituted 44 percent of all small shops retailing daily
40 goods. Between 1989 and 1997, non-western immigrants established 300 shops, 200 smaller
41 outlets selling daily goods and simple food and 160 restaurants (Tjelmeland and Brochmann,
42 2003). Systematic national level statistics on self-employed immigrants first became
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1 available in 2001. The level of self-employment among immigrants is constantly growing,
2 but still remains low compared to the average self-employment level in the country.

3 Immigrants from Denmark, Sweden and Pakistan represented about one-third of all
4 self-employed immigrants in Norway in 2006. Together with immigrants from Great
5 Britain, Iran, Poland, Vietnam and Turkey, these groups accounted for almost 50 percent
6 of all self-employed migrants (2007).

7 Empirical evidence reveals striking intergroup differences with respect to the percent-
8 age of self-employed (Vinogradov and Kolvereid, 2007). In 2004, as much as 12.7
9 percent of the immigrants from Faroe Islands and 10.2 percent of the immigrants from
10 Hong Kong were self-employed. At the same time, just under 2 percent of the immigrants
11 from Tanzania, Thailand and Ghana were self-employed. When divided by the world
12 regions, immigrants from Western countries (West European countries, USA, Canada,
13 Australia and New Zealand) demonstrated the highest average level of self-employment
14 while immigrants from Africa and Eastern Europe are underrepresented among
15 self-employed.

16 Russians (11,338 first generation immigrants), who are the focus of this paper, con-
17 stitute the 15th largest immigrant group in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2007). In 2008, the
18 main reasons for granting permission to enter Norway from Russia were work (48 percent
19 including seasonal work), education (23 percent), family reunion (24 percent) and asylum/
20 humanitarian reasons (5 percent) (Utlendingsdirektoratet, 2009). This group demonstrates
21 one of the highest rates of population growth with twice as many immigrants living in
22 Norway in 2008 as compared to 2003. The absolute majority of Russian immigrants
23 belong to the first generation and over 85 percent of them came to Norway during the last
24 ten years. Among Russians, the influence of factors related to inter-cohort heterogeneity,
25 intergenerational relationships and long-term influence of the host country environment is
26 considered to be relatively weak. Thus, Russians in Norway represent an appropriate case
27 for a quasi-experimental research design.

28 29 **4. Data and Method**

30 **4.1. Data**

31 To test the hypotheses, a representative sample of Russian immigrants in Norway was
32 compared to a sample of the Russian population. Despite the large number of Russians
33 residing abroad, entrepreneurship among immigrants from Russia, and more broadly
34 speaking, from the former USSR, is not often described in the literature. Rare exceptions
35 are studies conducted on immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Israel (Lerner and
36 Hendeles, 1996; Mesch and Czamanski, 1997).

37 In entrepreneurship studies, *gender* is one of the most frequently used control variables.
38 Men are reported to have higher propensity to become self-employed both among natives
39 (see, for example, Cowling and Taylor, 2001) and immigrants (Butler and Herring, 1991;
40 Razin and Scheinberg, 2001; Bates and Dunham, 1993). In Norway, only 34 percent of
41 immigrants from Russia are men while the gender proportion in Russia is nearly 50/50.
42
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1 Because of the skewed demographic of the immigrant population in Norway and the
2 expected differences in entrepreneurial activities, male and female respondents were
3 analyzed independently.

4 Data from Russia came from the GEM study conducted in 2008 (for methodological
5 details, see Bosma *et al.*, 2007). A regionally stratified representative sample of adults
6 was approached for face-to-face interviewing. The response rate was about 40 percent
7 in Russia. Data on Russian immigrants in Norway were collected using a specially
8 designed mail survey. The battery of questions considering entrepreneurial behavior and
9 intentions was borrowed directly from GEM, ensuring comparability of the two datasets.
10 Additional questions on home country and host country education, citizenship, migration
11 time, settlement intentions and migration motives were presented to the immigrant
12 respondents.

13 To identify potential respondents, phonetic analysis of first names was applied to the
14 Yellow Pages database. This method of sampling has previously been used in research on
15 immigrants (Bruder *et al.*, 2007; Dassler *et al.*, 2007; Min and Bozorgmehr, 2000; Shin
16 and Yu, 1984; Smallbone *et al.*, 2003; Shinnar and Cheri, 2008; Chaganti *et al.*, 2008;
17 Light *et al.*, 1994; Kasdan, 1965). In sum, 1330 female and 635 male respondents were
18 identified as having Russian-like first names and contacted.

19 Within six weeks after the initial mailing, 488 questionnaires were returned because the
20 address was not valid, 120 respondents reported they could not read Russian and 21
21 returned questionnaires were not filled. All these respondents are considered to be non-
22 contacts. Given that 543 questionnaires (of totally 1357 that apparently reached the
23 respondents) were returned, the response rate was 40 percent; that is within the frames of
24 normality for comparable surveys. As many as 406 (75 percent) respondents reported
25 coming to Norway from Russia.

26 For the purposes of this paper, immigrants younger than 18 years of age at the time of
27 migration were excluded because this exclusion increases the probability that the desti-
28 nation country was chosen by an immigrant and not by immigrant's parents. The final
29 sample included 796 male and 865 female non-migrants as well as 41 male and 302 female
30 immigrants aged 18–64. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

31
32
33 Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	Nonmigrants			Immigrants		
	N	Mean/%	Std. Deviation	N	Mean/%	Std. Deviation
<i>Female respondents</i>						
Age	864	40.06	13.205	302	41.3	9.046
Married/Cohabiting	864	52.5	—	302	77.2	—
Higher education	865	20.0	—	302	60.9	—
<i>Male respondents</i>						
Age	796	38.77	12.619	38	37.84	11.573
Married/Cohabiting	795	60.1	—	38	84.2	—
Higher education	796	16.1	—	38	71.1	—

43 *Note:* For nominal scales *mean* simply represents percentage of “yes” responses.

1 With respect to self-reported ethnicity, immigrant respondents represent relatively
2 homogenous group (most represented: 89 percent Russians, 7 percent Ukrainians and 1
3 percent Byelorussians). According to the recent census data, the population of the Russian
4 Federation consists mostly of Russians (80 percent), Tatars (4 percent) and Ukrainians
5 (2 percent) (GosComStat, 2002). In this study, 75 percent of the immigrants entered
6 Norway because of the family reunion, 14 percent entered as students and only one
7 respondent reported to be a refugee. Thus, the respondents migrated mainly voluntary.
8 The analysis of the business descriptions provided by the immigrant respondents revealed
9 that two-thirds of respondents had previous business experience in Russia and not in
10 Norway. Regarding other demographic characteristics, immigrants are much better edu-
11 cated and more likely to be married or cohabiting than their stay-at-home peers. Male
12 immigrants are slightly younger and female immigrants are somewhat older than non-
13 migrants. Mean duration of residence in Norway for immigrants of both genders was about
14 6 years. Self-employed immigrants were engaged in many diverse industries (trade,
15 consulting, construction, agriculture, personal services) with only medical services
16 attracting relatively large proportion of self-employed persons (22 percent).

17 To assess the possible response bias, 280 out of 729 non-respondents were randomly
18 selected and an attempt to contact them by telephone was made, resulting in 64 interviews.
19 No differences with respect to age and geographical distribution were observed between
20 respondents and non-respondents. However, non-respondents appeared to be significantly
21 more likely to be single, and were also more likely to report entrepreneurial intentions and
22 previous business ownership experience. This difference may be at least partly explained
23 by the fact that telephone interviews provided less “don’t know/refuse to answer”
24 responses as compared to the mail survey. Because non-respondents are even more
25 “entrepreneurial” than respondents, this response bias does not jeopardize the hypotheses
26 on positive selection of immigrants with respect to entrepreneurial characteristics.
27
28

29 **4.2. Measures**

30 A respondent was categorized as being involved in the early *entrepreneurial activities*
31 when responding positively to at least one of the following two questions:
32

- 33 (1) “Are you, alone or with others, expecting to start a new business within the next three
34 years, including any type of self-employment or selling any goods or services to
35 others?”
- 36 (2) “Are you, alone or with others, currently trying to start a new business, including any
37 type of self-employment?”

38 The presence of *specific human capital* was measured by asking the following
39 questions:
40

- 41 (1) “Have you, in the past 12 months, sold, shut down, discontinued or quit a business
42 you owned and managed, any form of self-employment, or selling goods or services to
43 anyone?”

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1 (2) “Have you, alone or with others, ever started a business in the past that you owned and
2 managed?” This question was supplied with a field where the respondents could
3 describe their previous businesses.

4 *Self-reported confidence* was assessed through the following two questions:
5

- 6 (1) “Have you the knowledge, skills and experience required to start a new business?”
7 (2) “Do you agree that a fear of failure would prevent you from starting a business?”
8

9 Finally, the respondents were asked if they “*personally know anyone who started a*
10 *business* in the past two years.” For these and the other previously discussed items,
11 included in the questionnaire, the following three alternative answers were available for
12 respondents: “yes”, “no”, and “don’t know/refuse to answer”.
13

14 4.3. Control variables

15 The following three control variables were included into analysis: age, education and
16 family status. *Age* is suggested to have a curvilinear relationship with the likelihood of
17 entrepreneurial behavior because age incorporates the positive effect of experience, wealth
18 and credibility and the negative effect of growing opportunity costs and resistance to
19 change — all increasing with age (see Shane, 2004, for the review).

20 In the general population, the level of *education* is usually demonstrated to be posi-
21 tively related to self-employment (see Shane, 2004, for the review). In immigration
22 studies, education obtained in the home-country, the host-country, as well as the total
23 educational endowment has been measured. Empirical tests provide inconsistent results
24 regarding the relationships between these three measures of education and propensity of
25 self-employment among immigrants (see Vinogradov and Kolvereid, 2007, for the
26 review). In this paper, education level was operationalized as the presence/absence of
27 higher education from the home country.

28 *Being married or cohabiting* has in previous studies shown to increase the likelihood
29 that a person is self-employed both among natives (see Shane, 2004, for the review) and
30 among immigrants (Clark and Drinkwater, 1998; Le, 2000; van Tubergen, 2005; Borjas,
31 1986).
32

33 5. Analysis

34 Chi-square statistics (Table 2) indicate that female immigrants are significantly more likely
35 to report intentions to start a business, being in a process of business initiation, recently
36 shutting down or previously owning a business, possessing relevant knowledge and per-
37 sonally knowing an entrepreneur. Female immigrants are also less likely to express fear of
38 failure. Thus, all the hypotheses developed in this text are preliminary supported.
39

40 However, as considering male respondents, the significant differences between immi-
41 grants and their stay-at-home peers were revealed only with respect to previous entre-
42 preneurial experience and self-reported knowledge and skills (see Table 3). Thus, the
43 hypothesis on selection with respect to the relevant specific human capital is supported

Table 2. Chi-square statistics, female respondents.

Hypothesis	Nonmigrants		Immigrants		Chi-square	Sig. (two-tailed)
	Count	%	Count	%		
H1	Intention to start a business					
	Yes	28	3.2	49	16.2	102.69
	No	797	92.2	209	69.2	
	Trying now to start a business					
	Yes	34	3.9	30	10.0	17.43
	No	818	94.7	262	87.6	
H2	In the past 12 months shut down a business					
	Yes	4	0.5	11	3.7	18.17
	No	838	97.0	279	93.6	
	Have ever owned a company					
	Yes	30	3.7	65	21.5	95.14
	No	781	96.2	234	77.5	
H3	Possess relevant knowledge					
	Yes	80	15.4	100	33.4	77.60
	No	359	69.3	113	37.8	
	Fear of failure would prevent from starting a business					
	Yes	250	48.3	143	47.8	8.80
	No	125	24.1	96	32.1	
H4	Personally knows an entrepreneur					
	Yes	171	33.0	143	48.0	24.60
	No	298	39.5	146	49.0	

also for males. The third hypothesis, regarding self-confidence, receives mixed support. On one hand, immigrants, compared to non-migrants, are more likely to report possessing relevant knowledge (42.1 percent against 22.6 percent). On the other hand, differences in reporting fear of failure were not significant. The hypotheses on intergroup differences in early stage entrepreneurial activities and personal contacts with other entrepreneurs are not supported for males.

To assess the influence of control variables on the relevant differences between immigrants and non-migrants, seven logistic regressions were carried out (Table 4). In the majority of the cases, introduction of control variables did not remove the statistical significance of the differences between female immigrants and their stay-at-home peers. The only exception is the difference in self-reported fear of failure, which was not successfully predicted by the regression. Thus, for the female respondents the suggestion that

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Table 3. Chi-square statistics, male respondents.

Hypothesis	Nonmigrants		Immigrants		Chi-square	Sig. (two-tailed)	
	Count	%	Count	%			
H1	Intention to start a business						
	Yes	54	6.8	2	5.3	4.08	0.130
	No	686	86.2	30	78.9		
	Trying now to start a business						
	Yes	44	5.5	2	5.3	1.17	0.557
	No	744	93.6	35	92.1		
H2	In the past 12 months shut down a business						
	Yes	14	1.8	3	7.9	8.38	0.015
	No	764	96.0	33	86.8		
	Have ever owned a company						
	Yes	36	5.0	9	23.7	22.92	0.000
	No	690	94.9	29	76.3		
H3	Possess relevant knowledge						
	Yes	108	22.6	16	42.1	13.73	0.001
	No	297	62.1	12	31.6		
	Fear of failure would prevent from starting a business						
	Yes	191	40.0	14	37.8	0.22	0.896
	No	174	36.4	13	35.1		
H4	Personally knows an entrepreneur						
	Yes	176	36.8	18	47.4	2.22	0.329
	No	251	52.5	18	47.4		

demographic variables solely explain the intergroup differences in entrepreneurial intentions, relevant human capital, self-confidence and peer affiliation may be rejected.

In the male sample, the regression results suggest immigrants are more likely to report possessing relevant knowledge because they are relatively young and highly educated. Young people may be generally overconfident and higher education may provide a ground for additional self-confidence. Thus, the relevant hypothesis on selection is not supported by the regression analysis of male respondents. The only hypothesis that is supported by this analysis is the one suggesting that male immigrants have more specific human capital than their stay-at-home peers and the control variables included into the analysis do not explain this difference.

Several factors may explain why some hypotheses supported by the analysis of female respondents were not supported by the analysis of the male sample. First, the number of male immigrant respondents is low (41 against 302 female immigrants) which may disturb

Table 4. Logistic regression results.

	Entrepreneurial Intentions			Specific Human Capital			Self-Reported Confidence		
	Intention to Start a Business	Trying Now to Start a Business	In the Past 12 Months Shut Down a Business	Have Ever Owned a Company	Possess Relevant Knowledge	Possess Relevant Knowledge	Fear of Failure would Prevent from Starting a Business	Personally Knows an Entrepreneur	Confidence
<i>Female respondents</i>									
Immigrant (0 = no, 1 = yes)	1.88***	1.07***	2.07***	2.02***	0.95***	0.95***	-0.09	0.55***	
Age	-0.03***	-0.03**	-0.01	0.02*	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.03***	
Higher education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	-0.15	0.00	-0.09	-0.23	0.20	0.20	0.24	0.28*	
Married (1 = married or cohabiting, 0 = otherwise)	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.17	-0.03	-0.03	-0.19	0.08	
Model chi-square	59.81***	21.14***	14.71***	82.31***	37.38***	37.38***	5.49	38.179***	
Nagelkerke R ²	0.129	0.052	0.095	0.162	0.069	0.069	0.009	0.062	
<i>Male respondents</i>									
Immigrant (0 = no, 1 = yes)	-0.84	-0.78	1.86**	1.63***	0.14	0.14	-0.11	0.08	
Age	-0.06***	-0.04***	0.00	0.01	-0.02**	-0.02**	0.02***	-0.03***	
Higher education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	0.74**	0.70**	0.16	0.66*	1.28***	1.28***	-0.05	0.43*	
Married (1 = married or cohabiting, 0 = otherwise)	0.54*	0.29	-0.86	-0.68**	0.34	0.34	0.03	0.50**	
Model chi-square	23.05***	12.79**	7.95*	20.91***	35.93***	35.93***	9.67**	17.41***	
Nagelkerke R ²	0.070	0.044	0.053	0.074	0.101	0.101	0.025	0.045	

Notes: B values reported. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Dependent variables in columns.

1 the results. Second, the paths to migration and entry modes may be very different for men
2 and women. However, the results for females are considered to be somewhat more reliable
3 and generalizable than the results for males in this study, because females constitute the
4 majority of the Russian immigrants in Norway, and also because the female sample is of
5 better quality than the sample of males.

6 7 8 **6. Conclusions**

9 This study demonstrates that at least female immigrants (as compared to non-migrants) are
10 more likely to report intentions to start a business. Moreover, they possess relatively large
11 amount of specific human capital, social capital and self-confidence relevant for entre-
12 preneurship. Male immigrants are also likely to demonstrate relatively large amounts of
13 the specific human capital relevant for entrepreneurship. Blocked mobility in the general
14 labor market can partly explain the high level of businesses experience. Because the
15 absolute majority of Russian immigrants have spent only a few years in Norway, it is
16 unlikely that these striking intergroup differences can be explained solely by the context of
17 the receiving country. It is also unlikely that blocked mobility thesis solely explains the
18 differences between immigrants and non-migrants with respect to self-confidence, fear of
19 failure and personally knowing other entrepreneurs. Unless the context of the host-country
20 changes the personality dramatically within a few years after arriving, one may conclude that
21 immigrants represent a self-selected group with respect to entrepreneurial characteristics.

22 These results cast doubt on the use of home-country self-employment level as a pre-
23 dictor of self-employment among immigrants in a particular destination country. The
24 presence of selective migration jeopardize the implicit assumptions on the representa-
25 tiveness of immigrants used in some comparative studies on immigrant self-employment
26 (see, for example, Hammarstedt, 2001; Yuengert, 1995; van Tubergen, 2005; Cobas,
27 1986; Ekberg and Hammarstedt, 1999).

28 The amount of immigrants' "skills" (Borjas and Bronars, 1989) and "quality of
29 migrants" (Borjas, 1987) has attracted much attention in the existing economic literature.
30 Earnings differential after correction for observed human capital characteristics is usually
31 used as a proxy of immigrants' "quality." This thesis suggests there is at least one more
32 dimension characterizing immigrants. Even earning less than equally educated natives,
33 immigrants may have skills that match those of natives if we take into account the
34 preferences for particular types of self-employment. In this context, the economists'
35 assumption that immigrants are income maximizers (Borjas, 1987) appears to be markedly
36 simplistic.

37 The findings regarding selective migration are not supportive for the "model of brain
38 circulation" proposed by Schmitt and Soubeyran (2006). This simple two-country, one-
39 sector model differentiates individuals according to two types of talent (entrepreneurs vs.
40 workers). The countries have different endowments of talent and all individuals choose to
41 be workers or entrepreneurs. Allowing migration generates incentives for the relatively
42 abundant type of individuals to move to the other country. Thus, entrepreneurs are
43 expected to migrate to the countries where their entrepreneurial talents are relatively rare.

1 However, our findings indicate entrepreneurs tend to migrate disproportionately from
2 Russia (relatively low level of business ownership and entrepreneurial aspirations) to
3 Norway (higher level of business ownership and entrepreneurial aspirations according to
4 GEM reports). Therefore, it is possible that migration of potential entrepreneurs leads to an
5 even larger gap between countries rather than leading to the equilibrium on the inter-
6 national labor market, at least in its sector including entrepreneurs.

7 In immigrant sending countries, the problem of “brain drain” becomes an increasing
8 issue. This study suggests the process of brain drain has more dimensions than has so far
9 been depicted. In addition to “scientific immigration” (Ushkalov and Malakha, 2000;
10 Tascu *et al.*, 2002) and immigration of skilled workers (Mansoor and Quillin, 2006),
11 entrepreneurs tend to be overrepresented among immigrants. In countries suffering from
12 low levels of entrepreneurship development, such as Russia (Astrakhan and Chepurenko,
13 2003; Aidis *et al.*, 2008), the outflow of potential entrepreneurs should attract more
14 attention.

15 This study indicates Russian immigrants are both willing and able to establish new
16 businesses. However, Russians have so far been underrepresented among the self-
17 employed in Norway. Partly, this can be explained by the fact that self-employment level
18 is generally low among women who constitute the majority of Russian immigrants in the
19 country. In addition, this study suggests immigrants may meet certain barriers when
20 actually starting a business. Thus, from the host country’s perspective, it is important to
21 pay attention to the entrepreneurial intentions of immigrants. It is possible that relatively
22 small interventions may cause a significant increase in the number of immigrant owned
23 new businesses.

24 This paper does not reveal the mechanisms underling the selection of potential entre-
25 preneurs in the process of migration. However, several suggestions may be made. First,
26 entrepreneurial immigrants may be pre-selected because immigration and business ven-
27 turing are associated with the same type of personality. Second, persons actively seeking
28 new opportunities through migration may affiliate with peers who actively seek oppor-
29 tunities through business venturing. Thus, the relevant social networks may facilitate both
30 immigration and entrepreneurship. Third, previous self-employment in the home country
31 may provide the financial capital needed to migrate. The failure to be able to identify the
32 reasons why immigrants are more entrepreneurial than their stay-at-home peers appeals for
33 more research in this area.

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