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## **Non-EEA (European Economic Area) Entrepreneurs Face No Additional Barriers than their EU Counterparts, when Starting a Business in Ireland.**

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# **Department of Business & Social Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee**

**Non-EEA (European Economic Area) entrepreneurs face no additional barriers than their EU counterparts, when starting a business in Ireland.**

**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Business Programme**

**By Anthony Garvey T00134482**

The work submitted in this study has been compiled and analysed by Anthony Garvey and is wholly and completely the individual work of this student.

Supervisor:  
Course Tutor:  
Data Submitted

**Ann Fitzgerald  
Dr Clare Rigg  
29-08-2008**



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**Do ethnic minority entrepreneurs (EMEs) seeking to start up a business in Ireland operate on a level playing field with their EU counterparts? Or are there unique barriers that EMEs face and if so, what are they and how do we tackle them?**

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**This dissertation examines all of these questions and reveals whether racism or red tape, lack of finance or language skills is suffocating ethnic entrepreneurship more.**

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**It explores the very latest research papers, and reports and combines both qualitative and quantitative data, with a series of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire aimed squarely at entrepreneurs.**

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**The dissertation discovers that EMEs do indeed face a number of unique barriers that prevent, impede and often stop them from starting up in business and the report concludes by making several recommendations on policy issues that will harness the power of EMEs for the benefit of the Irish economy.**

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background, Rationale and justification for this research

I first became interested in the whole area of non-European Economic Area<sup>1</sup> (EEA) entrepreneurship in January 2001.

I remember reading a newspaper report about nineteen Moldavian nationals who had arrived in Ireland to take up jobs with a meat packing firm in Kildare. They landed at Dublin Airport with valid passports, visas and work permits, issued by the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment.

When immigration officials contacted the meat packing company to check the permits, they were told the jobs had been withdrawn due to the BSE crisis. The men claimed they had not been informed the jobs were no longer available and immigration officials told them they would be put up in a hotel while the issues were sorted out. Hours later they were taken to Mounjoy prison and locked up for the night.

I watched the news on RTE in horror the following evening as the men arrived in court, handcuffed to police officers. The nineteen, many of them highly qualified professionals, had not been charged with anything. They had simply come to Ireland to work. Behind the scenes a local businessman subsequently secured all the men new jobs with different companies in Ireland and the judge eventually released them.

#### 1.2.1 Research Question:

Almost seven years later in November 2007, I was on the lookout for a topic for my dissertation and the Moldavian story re-entered my mind. I was reading the Sunday Business Post over breakfast and came across an article which said that non-EEA nationals would become “important in contributing to Ireland’s pool of potential entrepreneurs”.

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<sup>1</sup> The EEA is made up of the 27 members states of the EU, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

The thrust of the article was that there were 420,000 non-Irish nationals living in Ireland and that it made economic sense to support diversity in Irish society.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

I thought how ironic it was given the government's stance on the Moldavian workers a few years earlier.

For me, the article threw up as many questions as it did answers and finding some of those answers was the reason I chose this research topic.

For example, I wondered how had Ireland, dominated for years by persistent outward migration, adapted to its new role as a nation marked by strong inward migration trends?<sup>2</sup>

I wondered had all the new support structures I had read about in the Sunday Business Post article, helped ethnic minority entrepreneurs (EMEs) in any way to start their own businesses and had it made any difference that the Irish Government had appointed a Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan in June 2007?

And what about entrepreneurs from outside the EEA who came, or wanted to come, to Ireland to work and live – did EU enlargement offer them hope that a pluralist Ireland had left behind the 'lock-them-up' days of 2001 or had the arrival on Irish shores of a swathe of entrepreneurs from the new accession states signalled the end for those outside the EEA?

## 1.2 Research question and research objectives

### 1.2.1 Research Question:

I wish to test the hypothesis that:

Non-EEA entrepreneurs face no additional barriers than their EU counterparts when starting a business in Ireland.

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<sup>2</sup> CSO figures show Ireland recorded 12 straight years of net migration from 1996 to 2007.

## 1.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- To establish if EMEs face any unique barriers, real or perceived, to setting up a business in Ireland;
- To provide a coherent and balanced analysis of the current status of ethnic minority entrepreneurship in Ireland, with particular emphasis on the three areas:
  - Finance;
  - Business permission;
  - Training and Enterprise Agencies
- To draw conclusions as to the likely effect these additional barriers have, if there are any, on the current and future levels of entrepreneurship in Ireland;
- To make recommendations as to the remedial action, if any, that needs to be taken to redress any difficulties there may be.

In the following chapters, I shall explore these themes, and will begin first, in the next chapter, by analysing some of the available literature on the topic.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I set out my research question and objectives and reasons for choosing it. In this chapter, I shall examine some secondary research, and analyse some of the studies, research papers and media coverage on the topic. This material has been derived from a number of sources including the Internet, magazines, newspapers, books and academic journals.

Much of the literature and commentary from an Irish perspective is very recent. This is because for Ireland, immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon, as we have traditionally been a net exporter of people.

Because the whole area of non-EEA entrepreneurship is relatively new, many of the support structures set up to help are also very new, the Institute for Minority Entrepreneurship, for example was only launched in March 2006.

A good starting point for our literature review is work by GEM research (2007) which reveals that 80,000 people in Ireland reported that they had set up a new business in the past three and a half years. Combining this figure with those actively attempting to open up a new business, over 200,000 individuals or just over 7% of the adult population were new business owners or early-stage entrepreneurs. This level of relative early stage entrepreneurial activity put Ireland 7th within the OECD.

The Central Statistics' Office's (CSO) Equality in Ireland report (2007) shows that almost 117,000 non-EEA migrants are permanently resident in Ireland, more than double the number in 2000 which was just 57,000. Currently these figures represent a little under 3% of the total population in Ireland of 4.4 million.



Assuming the recent demographic trends continue, the CSO say, Ireland's population is expected to exceed 5 million by 2021 and inward migration is expected to range from 25,000 – 51,000 per annum, a significant proportion of the Irish population. A closer look at the CSO figures reveals that Ireland recorded its first positive net migration flow in decades of just over 8,000 people in 1996 and it has continued every year since then, to record sizeable net migration.

Although in the year to April 2008, the number of immigrants fell by almost 26,000, a 24% drop on the previous year, due mainly to the fall off in employment in the construction industry, net migration was still a healthy 38,500 people. Notably inward migration is dominated by people between the ages of 25-44, the age at which, according to the GEM Report research, people are most likely to start a new business.

In a significant development in October last year, Forfás set out a vision for a world class entrepreneurial environment in Ireland. 'Towards Developing an Entrepreneurship Policy for Ireland' (October 2007) sets out a profile of Ireland's entrepreneurial culture and provides a blueprint to drive entrepreneurship in Ireland.

"Entrepreneurship is one of the cornerstones of a modern, fully developed economy and the lifeblood of thriving local communities. To encourage it," the report continued, "we need to tackle the barriers to entry, monitor the environment and look at financial requirements for entrepreneurs."

The report identifies key areas for development relating to culture, education and entrepreneurship among women and immigrants. "The problems faced by potential entrepreneurs, who are relatively recently arrived into Ireland are more acute than those faced by many other entrepreneurs due to greater difficulties with access to relevant knowledge, information and networks as well as difficulties in developing relationships with a bank or other financial institution," the report says.

I shall now look at some of the literature in the key areas of finance, business permission and red tape and training and enterprise agencies, as per my research objectives identified in Chapter 1.

## 2.2 Finance

According to the European Commission's Annual Progress Report on Growth and Jobs (2006), "unlocking the business potential particularly of SMEs" is one of the four priorities of the revised Lisbon Agenda.

Access to finance, the report says is "particularly difficult" and among the groups the report identifies which may be starved of funds are ethnic entrepreneurs, who with no proof of an enterprise background and often engaged in "small scale, service-based businesses", might be seen as "high risk" by the banking community.

'Immigrant Micro-Entrepreneurs in Ireland' (2006), a report from Ireland's only micro-finance<sup>3</sup> institution, First Step Finance, argues that access to finance, for start-up and for growth, is the "single greatest problem faced by ethnic minority entrepreneurs". It claims that many ethnic minority businesses rely on co-ethnic networks for initial financing but that the level of finance that may be available to them may be very small.

Further evidence of this comes from the Europa report, 'Young, Women, Ethnic Minority and Co-entrepreneurs' (2000) which notes that financial constraints at start-up are one of the factors contributing to an "over-concentration of ethnic minority businesses in low entry threshold activities".

The TASE Transnational Partnership report, 'Supporting Entrepreneurship as a mechanism for Social Inclusion' (2006) looks at sources of financing for entrepreneurs and SMEs in the three partner countries, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Spain.

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<sup>3</sup> Micro lending differs from conventional bank lending in that generally there is no need for collateral. In Ireland First Step Finance manages a Bank of Ireland loan fund which provides finance of less than €25k to individuals who wish to start and develop their businesses.

It argues that lenders tend to avoid providing financing to certain types of SMEs, “in particular, start ups and very young firms that typically lack sufficient collateral”, or firms whose activities offer the possibilities of high returns but at a substantial risk of loss.

When funding their businesses, according to the Emerge Report, many EEA entrepreneurs seek out finance from the high street banks or look to release equity from their homes, but for EMEs this can prove “problematic”.

Many EMEs have no Irish property to use as collateral and most have no track record of saving with a mainstream bank.

“While banks maintain that all applicants are treated equally and that lending criteria are consistently applied,” the report argues, “these factors present de facto barriers to ethnic minority entrepreneurs securing loan finance.”

The Report also argues that a bank’s ability to act locally, financing what it sees as potentially viable businesses is limited because of the “centralised and regimented” lending function, leaving little or no discretion to local bank managers.

The onset of the credit crunch, where banks have become concerned about lending money to each other, never mind to customers with a high risk profile, reduces the EMEs chances of funding still further.

### **2.3 Red Tape and Business Permission**

According to the Europa Report, one possible explanation for problems with administrative and regulatory requirements is that “language related issues” are seen as holding back EMEs by over half of the organisations surveyed who provide specialist support for ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

The Emerge Report analyses the path to start-up for both EEA nationals and EMEs in Ireland and argues that for the former group, the path is “relatively straightforward”.

<sup>3</sup> Switzerland, an EFTA state is not part of the EEA

Analysis of secondary sources, such as BASIS<sup>4</sup>, the official Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment website, reinforces this contention, as the site is easy to navigate and all the information a budding entrepreneur needs on finance, taxation, compliance and employment issues are easily accessible from a single web site.

Add into the mix the Tánaiste Mary Coughlan's commitment in August 2008 to prioritise further cuts in red tape to "reduce the administrative burden on Irish business by 25%" and we are left with an impression of a system that while not perfect for budding EEA entrepreneurs, is improving all the time.

The regulations for setting up in business are exactly the same for all EEA citizens, whether they come from one of the 27 member states of the EU or from three of the four EFTA<sup>5</sup> states - Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway.

By comparison the Emerge Report argues rules for EMEs setting up a business in Ireland are "unduly burdensome".

Any EME wishing to establish a business in Ireland must first seek the permission from the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR) and the business permission (although renewable) if granted, is valid for a period of just one year.

Further, any non-EEA national wishing to start a business in Ireland must transfer capital of €300,000 to Ireland and they must also commit to employing two EEA nationals, according to the 'Business Permission' guidance from the DJELR.

Emerge's annual report in 2005 asserts that many Irish entrepreneurs start their businesses on a 'shoe-string budget of just €5,000'. This is 60 times less than the amount of money an EME is required to have to start-up in business, and because of this the report argues, many non-EEA migrants are prevented from engaging in entrepreneurial activity in Ireland.

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<sup>4</sup> BASIS outlines the basic information EEA citizens need to start a business, such as incorporating a company or registering a business name with the Companies' Registration Office (CRO).

<sup>5</sup> Switzerland, an EFTA state is not part of the EEA

Further supporting secondary evidence for this contention comes from Chinedu Onyejelem, Founder and Editor of the Multicultural Newspaper, Metro Éireann.

Onyejelem argued in his keynote speech at the Development and Intercultural Education Project (DICE) in June 2008 that the majority of ethnic minority businesses in Ireland were small in scale, employing two people or less and would therefore be much more likely to be adversely affected by the DJELR regulations.

An examination of some of the rules applied by our European partners reveals that the DJELR requirements for EMEs are not unique and are almost a mirror image of the UK standards.

According to Mondaq, the UK require that an EME entrepreneur be able to show that they have at least £200,000 available in the UK when they start up their business and that they will create two full time jobs for people settled in the UK.

Spain appears to be even better value for aspiring EMEs, according to information from the Spanish Embassy. Non EEA nationals are required to make an investment of around \$100,000 (€64,000) to obtain a work permit and this may also be conditional on the employment of an unspecified minimum number of EEA nationals.

One of the big differences is that, unlike the Irish Government, there is some evidence that the UK has tried to attract high quality EMEs to work in Britain. The British government ran the successful 'Highly Skilled Migrant Programme' (HSMP) until April 2008 (now replaced by Tier 12345), an initiative designed to attract 'exceptional and highly skilled individuals' to the UK.

According to the British Home Office website, applicants didn't need a specific job offer, or a detailed business plan, nor did they need to invest in the UK or generate UK jobs, they simply needed to be looking for work and have the qualifications the UK deemed desirable for their economy. The Irish Government has never operated such a scheme.

The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) in 'Barriers Facing Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs' (2005), expressed concern that there was "anecdotal evidence" the DJELR provisions were being flouted by "some people" who were operating businesses in Ireland without permission.

They argued that the Companies Registration Office (CRO) and the Revenue Commissioners happily register and take taxes from EMEs respectively without checking with the DJELR whether the company has permission to trade in the first place and that this must change so that EMEs knew exactly where they stood in relation to the law.

## 2.4 Training and Enterprise Agencies

According to the Europa report, there is typically a "very low level of penetration" of EMEs by mainstream business support agencies, which the report attributes to poor awareness among EMEs of the existence and services of training and development agencies.

The report further suggests that any policy initiative which is aimed at EMEs must take into account that "diversity that exists between ethnic minorities, as well as between generations within established communities" and that this has implications for the design and provision of the relevant services.

The Emerge Report identifies specific early stage training as "particularly necessary" for ethnic minority business people who are unfamiliar with the Irish business environment.

It suggests a national information campaign should be launched to promote the enterprise options for members of ethnic minorities. It further suggests that state agencies should be mobilised to ensure that "outreach activities are developed to engage ethnic minority communities."

The Report of the Small Business Forum identified a number of specific recommendations to facilitate and develop an entrepreneurial environment for potential EMEs including:

- 3. ➤ Increasing awareness of supports available;
- Developing the business, management and marketing skills of EMEs;
- Integrating EMEs into business networks

According to Sean O' Sullivan from Enterprise Ireland at a talk given at the IT Tralee in February 2008, EMEs tend to rely "almost exclusively" on co-ethnic social networks when starting their businesses.

These networks provide access to markets, customers, finance, labour and advice, according to O' Sullivan and thereby facilitate the start-up process for many ethnic minority entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, he added, despite their great value, these networks tended to be very 'socially closed' with little circulation of new information from the business community outside.

Finally Monder Ram in his work *Ethnic Minority Enterprise: Policy & Practice*, (2001) suggests a three pronged approach to help EMEs which includes:

- Showing more sensitivity, credibility and awareness if EMEs are to be encouraged into the mainstream;
- Adopting an engagement strategy, with EME representation across small business support structures with mechanisms to influence policy and practice;
- Strengthening networks in ethnic minority communities at a local level.

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology & Data Collection Methods

### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we looked at what has been written on the topic of ethnic minority entrepreneurship to date and we examined the results of the significant studies and research papers on the topic. The aim of this chapter is to explain the thinking behind my research methods and approach to this thesis, to facilitate replication by other students should they so wish.

### 3.2 Research Approach and Design

In terms of research approach, I decided to pursue the interpretivist paradigm. I looked at the other main approaches (positivism, critical and post-modern) and discounted them after thinking carefully about how I planned to proceed with my research.

I realised I did not want to produce a generalised theory or get as close as possible to some 'perfect truth'. Rather I wanted to become personally involved in interpreting the data, leading the discussions in places, understanding people's views and giving my subjective, yet well supported opinion and recommendations.

Deciding whether to use a quantitative or a qualitative approach, or a combination of both techniques, was my first task. Quantitative research is indirect and abstract whereas qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'. Sherman and Webb (1998)

I decided to use elements of quantitative data in the research, but the majority of the project would be qualitative data. Domegan and Fleming (2003) suggest that research designs can be causal, descriptive or exploratory and I chose to focus on both descriptive and exploratory.



Specifically in terms of research methods, I used a triangulation or multi-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches, in the process of collecting and analysing data which included:

- A questionnaire (quantitative)
- Semi-structured interviews (qualitative)
- Document analysis (qualitative)

### 3.3 The Questionnaire

In the Harnessing the Potential Report (2007), Emerge revealed that it had attracted 268 enquiries from members of ethnic communities seeking to avail of their training courses. Emerge subsequently delivered pre-enterprise, start-up and growth training to 207 non-EEA participants who were interested in starting their own business.

By the end of the programme in June 2007, the report said, 68 participants were in business. This figure compared very favourably to the 24 businesses that were in operation before the courses started.

I got in contact with Emerge to see if they would allow me to send a questionnaire to the 207 participants on their pre-enterprise courses and they agreed to send the questionnaire out on my behalf. This questionnaire, marked 'original questionnaire' is in Appendix 3.

I hoped I would get some good quantitative data which would paint a general picture of the barriers non-EEA entrepreneurs face and I proposed using SPSS to help me interpret them.

I had anticipated with the support of Emerge, I would get responses from some of the 68 companies still operating successfully. I had also hoped that I would get some level of response from the 139 participants who, having completed the pre-enterprise training, had decided not to pursue a career in business, giving me some interesting data on why they are no longer in business or why they decided not to start up in the first place.

I worked closely with Emerge who sent the questionnaire out twice to all 207 participants and sent out an email reminder to them as well. The response however was derisory. Only 2 of the 207 questionnaires were returned completed to me.

It was time for a rethink.

The Young Entrepreneur Programme (YEP) was in full swing and I was struck by the quality and quantity of the mentors. There were over 20 high calibre entrepreneurs who were giving up their time to give advice and encouragement to students as well as providing tips for business plans and presentations.

As I looked through the list of mentors, I noticed not one of them was from outside the EEA. And then it came to me.

I redesigned my questionnaire so that it would appeal to two different audiences – entrepreneurs from the EEA, and EMEs.

I sent my revised questionnaire, which consists of ten simple questions, to the high calibre EEA entrepreneurs who were helping out at the YEP (Names of the EEA entrepreneurs I sent the questionnaire to are in Appendix 4). Then I persuaded Emerge to let me have the details of the 68 companies who had completed their pre-enterprise and start-up courses and were still running successfully. I got the contact details of the EME who had started the company and decided I would contact them personally.

I ended up with 23 completed questionnaires, 11 from entrepreneurs from within the EEA and 12 from entrepreneurs outside the EEA.

Although there was a very high calibre of respondents (See appendix 2 for all the returned questionnaires) it is a relatively low sample size and response rate (26%) so there may be some issues over reliability and validity. However the response rate does compare most favourably with the 1% response rate achieved from the original survey.

### **3.4 Semi-structured Interviews and Document Analysis**

To gain a clear picture of the issues facing EMEs I carried out an extensive literature review (Chapter 2) looking at Government and agency reports, books, journals and magazines, which helped to generate questions for inclusion in the final questionnaire.

I also carried out five semi-structured interviews which are written up in Appendix 1. I have drawn material from these interviews and used it when presenting the results of my research findings (Chapter 4).

I made a careful personal selection of the individuals I wished to interview and the order in which they were interviewed.

The idea was that after interviewing the five, I would get a rounded 360 degree view of the issues and concerns facing EMEs. The five interviewees in the order they were interviewed were:

- Sean Cronin, CEO, Selatra (EEA entrepreneur);
- Dr Alvina Grosu, CEO, Culturewise (EME);
- Ken Germaine, Chairman, Emerge (Business Training for Ethnic Minorities);
- Conor Lenihan TD, Minister for Integration;
- Patricia Callan, Director, Small Firms Association

### **3.5 Data Analysis Process**

The questionnaires were created in Microsoft Word and details of the surveys sent out and returned were maintained in Microsoft Excel. Data was coded, edited and entered into a statistical package, SPSS where a number of tests were carried out to establish the strength of association between various variables.

These tests include both the chi square test and Pearson's correlation.

Simple and cross tabulation were both used and tables were generated to display graphically the research results. This process allowed me to test some of the four key objectives of my research (Chapter 1) and construct some reasoned and well grounded conclusions (Chapter 5).

#### 4.1 Introduction

Finally I was careful to keep in mind any ethical issues that may have arisen. I believe it is my role as the researcher to be respectful of people's ethics, morality, privacy and personal values and I approached my research with these issues in mind.

#### 4.2 Quantitative Findings

I used SPSS, the statistical analysis tool, to process the quantitative results and will begin with the results of the demographic questions. I asked the survey respondents, all of whom are entrepreneurs, working in Ireland, their gender, nationality and age and the gender results are outlined below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Are you Male or Female?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	8	34.8	34.8	34.8
	Male	15	65.2	65.2	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

A large majority of the respondents (65%) were male, reflecting the general gender profile of entrepreneurs. Although there has been an increase in percentage terms in the number of women in early-stage entrepreneurship in the past decade, absolute numbers remain low. According to the GEM Report (2007), Women make up just 4.3% of entrepreneurs within the EU area.

Table 4.2 below shows the ages of the respondents and they are grouped into five categories. The majority are aged between 35 and 45. This is to be expected, reflecting other research studies which estimate the average age of an entrepreneur to be 37.6 years (Madsen 2004).

# Chapter 4

## Presentation and Analysis of Results

### 4.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters we examined how the research for this study was conducted and we explored and analysed the findings of other studies on the subject. The aim of this chapter is to present and analyse the quantitative and qualitative data which make up my research findings. These findings will then be interpreted in the next chapter in order to answer my research question.

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Table 4.2 below shows the ages of the respondents and they are grouped into five categories. The majority are aged between 35 and 44. This is to be expected, reflecting other research studies which estimate the average age of an entrepreneur to be 37.6 years (Madsen 2004).

Testing for the central tendency reveals that the mean, the median age and the mode are all 35 to 44 age bracket.

**Table 4.2 Ages of Participants**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 19-24	1	4.3	4.3	4.3
25-34	8	34.8	34.8	39.1
Valid 35-44	9	39.1	39.1	78.3
44+	5	21.7	21.7	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

A full break down of the individual nationalities of the respondents is given in appendix 5. For the purposes of meaningful analysis however, I have grouped the nationalities into five different regions as in Table 4.3 below and have further narrowed the groupings in table 4.4 below by focusing purely on EEA and non-EEA entrepreneurs.

**Table 4.3 Nationality per Region**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid EEA	11	47.8	47.8	47.8
Africa	4	17.4	17.4	65.2
Asia	2	8.7	8.7	73.9
N & S America	2	8.7	8.7	82.6
Rest of Europe	4	17.4	17.4	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.4 Nationality EEA vs non EEA**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid EEA	11	47.8	47.8	47.8
non-EEA	12	52.2	52.2	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

I asked the respondents what the biggest barrier was they faced when they were considering setting up in business and the answers are listed below in Table 4.5. For ease of presentation and to facilitate better analysis, I grouped the reasons, listing the top five choices as per table 4.5 below and putting the remaining choices into the category 'other'. The full table outlining all the barriers entrepreneurs faced is in appendix 5.

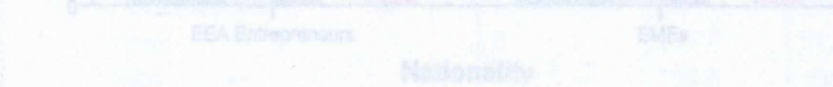
(Please note that there are 30 replies even though there were only 23 respondents. This is because a number of entrepreneurs specifically cited more than one barrier as their biggest challenge and for that reason I decided to include them in the analysis.)

**Table 4.5 What was the biggest barrier you faced when considering setting up in business?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Financial Risk	13	43.3	43.3	43.3
	Lack of business information	5	16.7	16.7	60.0
	Personal confidence	3	10.0	10.0	70.0
	Business Culture	2	6.7	6.7	76.7
	Legal compliance	2	6.7	6.7	83.3
	Other	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

By cross tabulating this question with nationality, we can discover what the biggest barriers faced by EEA entrepreneurs and EMEs were respectively when starting a business in Ireland and comment on the similarities or differences encountered. This cross tabulation is represented in bar chart 4.1 below:



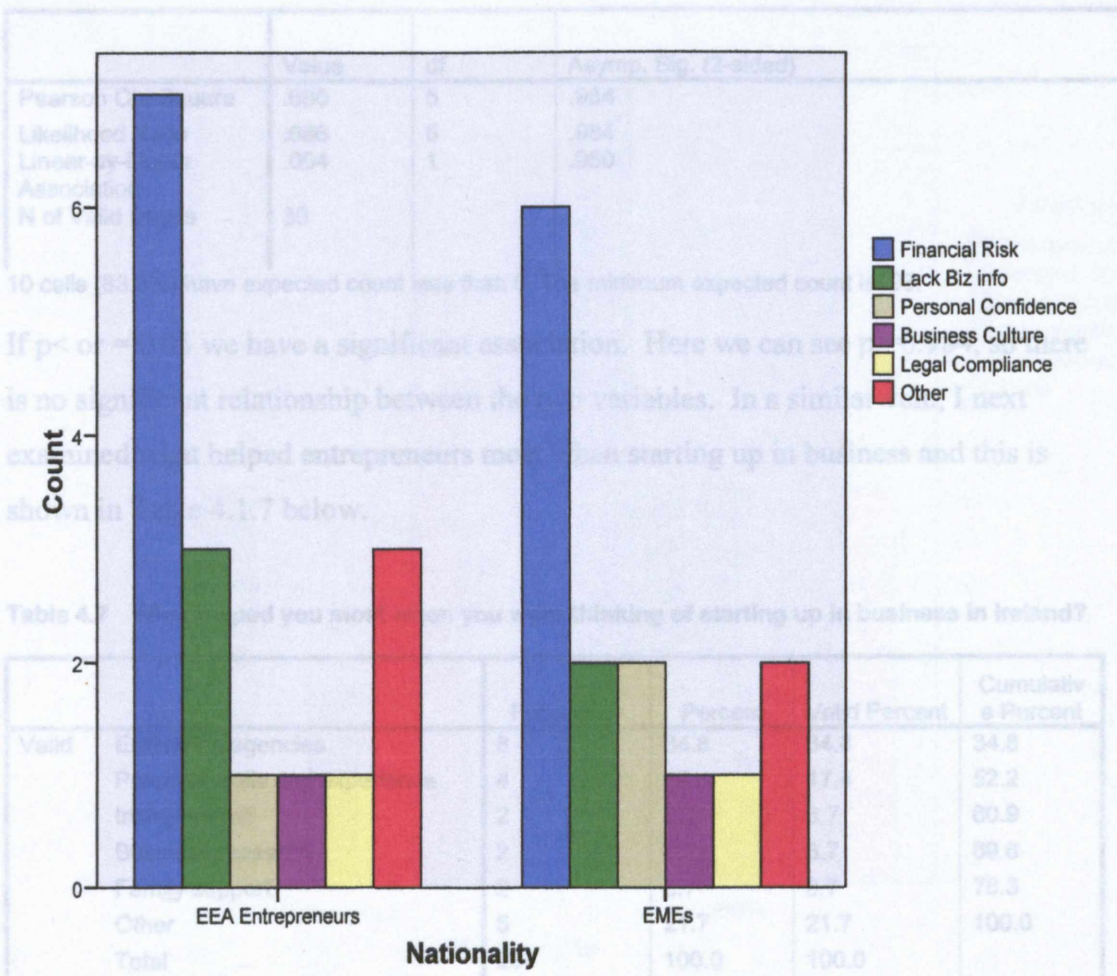
Source: SPSS

From the chart we can see that both for both EEA entrepreneurs (44%) and EMEs (43%) financial risk is the single biggest barrier they face when setting up in business and the percentages within their samples are practically identical.

A lack of business information was also of concern, ranking second in terms of barriers to starting up in business with both EEA entrepreneurs (19%) and EMEs (14%).

Also worth noting from the chart is the high levels of EMEs who chose a 'lack personal confidence' as their biggest barrier (14%). Only 6% of EEA entrepreneurs listed this as their biggest barrier. Both business culture and legal compliance also appeared as issues, both scoring under 10% for both category of entrepreneur. I carried out a chi-square analysis on the findings which are shown in Table 4.6 below to see if the two variables are significantly associated:

**Chart 4.1 - Cross tab Nationality and Biggest Barrier to start up**



Source: SPSS

From the chart we can see that both for both EEA entrepreneurs (44%) and EMEs (43%) financial risk is the single biggest barrier they face when setting up in business and the percentages within their samples are practically identical.

A lack of business information was also of concern, ranking second in terms of barriers to starting up in business with both EEA entrepreneurs (19%) and EMEs (14%).

Also worth noting from the chart is the high levels of EMEs who chose a ‘lack personal confidence’ as their biggest barrier (14%). Only 6% of EEA entrepreneurs listed this as their biggest barrier. Both business culture and legal compliance also appeared as issues, both scoring under 10% for both category of entrepreneur. I carried out a chi-square analysis on the findings which are shown in Table 4.6 below to see if the two variables are significantly associated:



**Table 4.6 Chi-Square Tests – Nationality and Biggest Barrier**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.680	5	.984
Likelihood Ratio	.686	5	.984
Linear-by-Linear Association	.004	1	.950
N of Valid Cases	30		

10 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93.

If  $p < \text{or} = 0.05$  we have a significant association. Here we can see  $p = 0.984$ , so there is no significant relationship between the two variables. In a similar vein, I next examined what helped entrepreneurs most when starting up in business and this is shown in Table 4.1.7 below.

**Table 4.7 What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Enterprise agencies	8	34.8	34.8	34.8
Personal skills and experience	4	17.4	17.4	52.2
Irish goodwill	2	8.7	8.7	60.9
Business research	2	8.7	8.7	69.6
Family support	2	8.7	8.7	78.3
Other	5	21.7	21.7	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

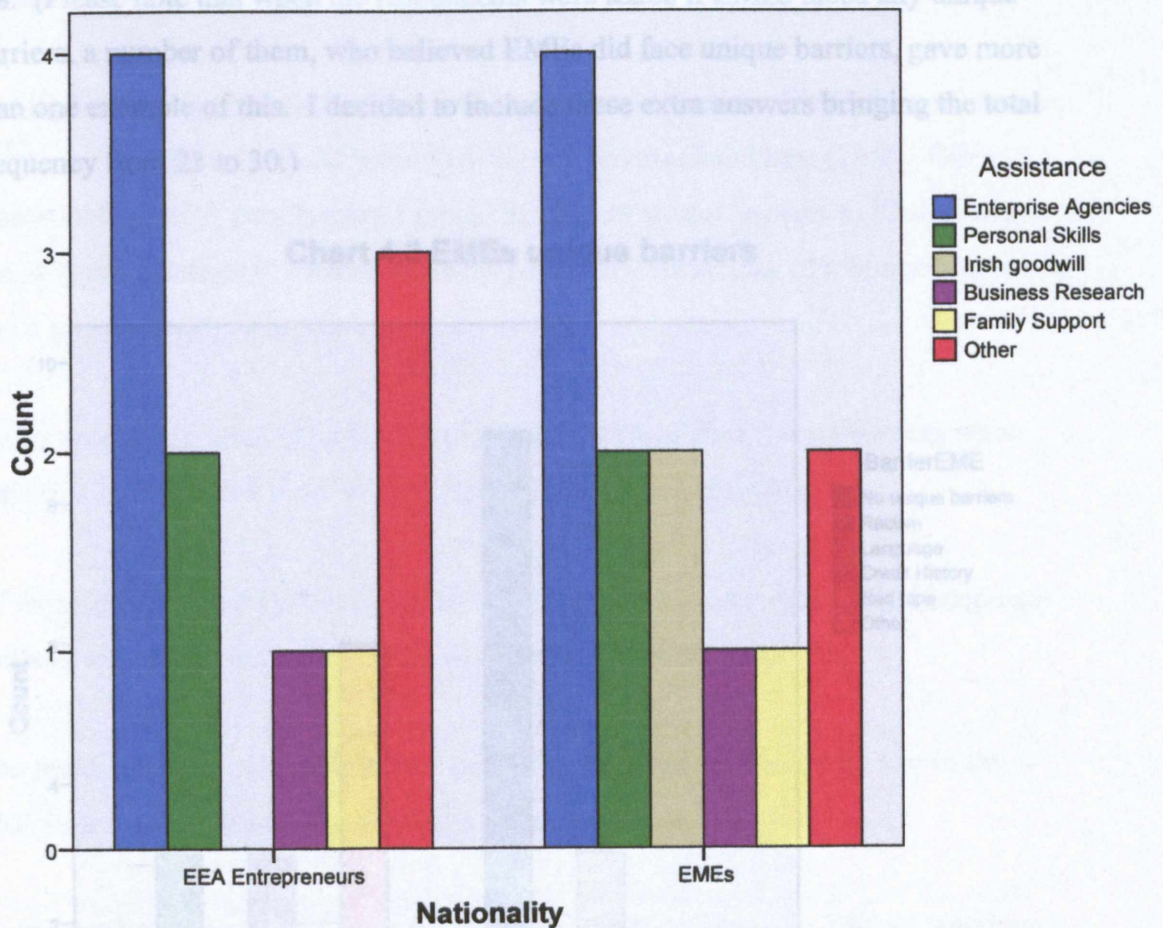
Again by cross tabulating the question with nationality, we can examine whether the initial requirements of EEA entrepreneurs and EMEs differ significantly when starting up in business, shown in Chart 4.2 below:

Also scoring highly among both groups is the entrepreneur's own personal skills and business experience (18% for EEA entrepreneurs) and (17% for EMEs) respectively. Worth noting is the high rating among EMEs of Irish goodwill as the most significant positive factor in helping their business succeed (17%), a factor that wasn't mentioned by any of the EEA entrepreneurs. Again a chi-square test failed to reveal any association between the two variables.

I asked the respondents if they felt ethnic minority entrepreneurs faced any unique challenges when setting up in business. By cross tabulating with nationality, we can see whether EEA entrepreneurs believe EMEs face unique difficulties and whether the EMEs experienced unique these difficulties when setting up in business in Ireland.



**Chart 4.2 Biggest business assistance**



Source: SPSS

Both EEA entrepreneurs (36%) and EMEs (33%) rate the assistance of enterprise agencies as the single biggest help they had in starting up in business.

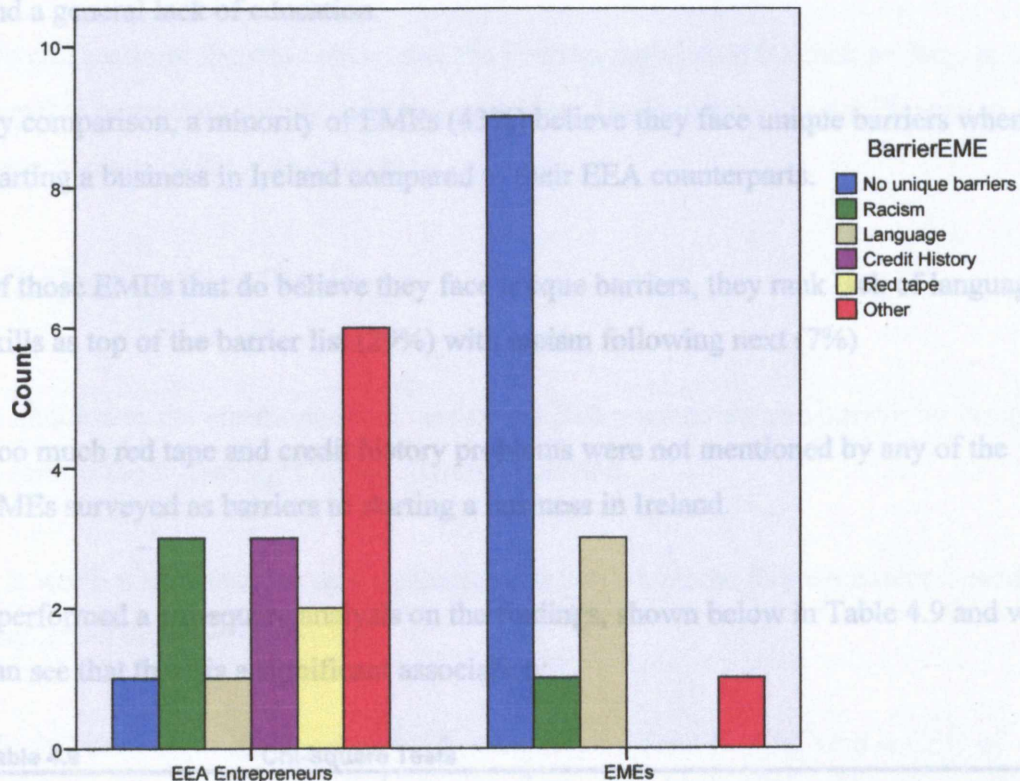
Source: SPSS

Also scoring highly among both groups is the entrepreneur’s own personal skills and business experience (18% for EEA entrepreneurs) and (17% for EMEs) respectively. Worth noting is the high rating among EMEs of Irish goodwill as the most significant positive factor in helping their business succeed (17%), a factor that wasn’t mentioned by any of the EEA entrepreneurs. Again a chi-square test failed to reveal any association between the two variables.

I asked the respondents if they felt ethnic minority entrepreneurs faced any unique challenges when setting up in business. By cross tabulating with nationality, we can see whether EEA entrepreneurs believe EMEs face unique difficulties and whether the EMEs experienced unique these difficulties when setting up in business in Ireland.

This information is set out graphically in chart 4.3 below and is also displayed in table 4.8. (Please note that when the respondents were asked if EMEs faced any unique barriers, a number of them, who believed EMEs did face unique barriers, gave more than one example of this. I decided to include these extra answers bringing the total frequency from 23 to 30.)

**Chart 4.3 EMEs unique barriers**



Source: SPSS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Chi-Square	16.500(a)	5	.005
Likelihood Ratio	12.427	5	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.817	1	.003

**Table 4.8 Nationality & Unique Barrier EME Cross-tabulation**

	Nationality		Unique Barrier EMEs						Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Nationality	EEA	Count	1	4	1	2	2	6	16
		% within Nationality	6.3%	25.0%	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Nationality	EME	Count	8	1	4	0	0	1	14
		% within Nationality	57.1%	7.1%	28.6%	.0%	.0%	7.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	9	5	5	2	2	7	30
		% within Nationality	30.0%	16.7%	16.7%	6.7%	6.7%	23.3%	100.0%

Source: SPSS

The results show that the vast majority of EEA entrepreneurs (94%) believe EMEs do indeed face unique barriers to setting up in business.

The highest scoring unique barriers EEA entrepreneurs believe EMEs face are racism (25%), an absence of a credit history (13%) and too much red tape (13%). Other reasons which EEA entrepreneurs scored heavily as unique barriers to EMEs (within the 38% other category) include business permission rules, lack of a business network and a general lack of education.

By comparison, a minority of EMEs (43%) believe they face unique barriers when starting a business in Ireland compared to their EEA counterparts.

Of those EMEs that do believe they face unique barriers, they rank lack of language skills as top of the barrier list (29%) with racism following next (7%)

Too much red tape and credit history problems were not mentioned by any of the EMEs surveyed as barriers to starting a business in Ireland.

I performed a chi-square analysis on the findings, shown below in Table 4.9 and we can see that there is a significant association:

**Table 4.9 Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.556(a)	5	.005
Likelihood Ratio	19.427	5	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.617	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	30		

a 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93.  
Source: SPSS

So we can conclude that nationality may be important in deciding whether EMEs face unique barriers to setting up a business in Ireland. I carried out further analysis to test the strength of the relationship. The Pearson correlation coefficient measures the linear relationship between two variables as shown in Table 4.10 below:

**Table 4.10 Correlations Pearson Correlation**

		Nationality	BarrierEME
Nationality	Pearson Correlation	1	-.545(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	30	30
BarrierEME	Pearson Correlation	-.545(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	30	30

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS

We can see from the table above that the Pearson correlation is  $-.545$ , so there is a negative correlation between the two variables. I will analyse the significance of these findings in the next chapter.

## 4.2 Qualitative Findings

In addition to the questionnaire, I carried out five semi-structured interviews designed to shed some further light on my research question.

It is worth noting that the very deliberate order in which the five were interviewed may affect the overall findings.

Firstly I decided to interview an EEA entrepreneur, Sean Cronin, who is CEO of Selatra Games. I wanted to hear from him what it was like setting up in business and if he felt there were any unique barriers for EMEs when setting up in business.

Next I interviewed an EME, Dr Alvina Grosu and asked her the same questions. I was able to bring in common themes I had explored with Sean Cronin in my earlier interview.

Having heard from entrepreneurs at the coal face, I then interviewed Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, an organisation which facilitates the training and development of EMEs. I wanted to know if the government was doing enough for entrepreneurs and EMEs in particular and if the barriers EMEs faced were real or perceived.

Conor Lenihan, Minister for Integration was next. I wanted to hear his vision for the future and what his holistic view of entrepreneurship was.

Finally I spoke to Patricia Callan, Director of the Small Firms Association (SFA), who has lobbied hard for certain inequalities the SFA believes EMEs face to be redressed. Callan had the opportunity to address some of the issues raised by Conor Lenihan in the preceding interview.

All five interviews are in appendix 1 in their entirety. In analysing them, I plan to use the same headings I used for the literature review to help focus my findings and achieve my research objectives.

### **4.2.1 Finance**

Sean Cronin, CEO of Selatra had been thinking about running his own business for some time. When the company he was working for made the decision to pull out of Ireland, they effectively financed his dream:

“Logica made the decision to outsource to India and began by scaling down their involvement in Cork,” he says. “I was lucky in the sense that as it was a phased redundancy. I was the last one to go, I literally did turn out the lights,” smiles Cronin. “That gave me time to approach the relevant government agencies, the employees I wanted and get a good business plan together. And I had a good lump sum from Logica which I knew would be the capital I needed to start off in business.”

Start up capital wasn't a problem either for Dr Alvina Grosu, MD of Culturewise although she does highlight the fact that funding in general for EMEs can be difficult: “I was fortunate that I had built up some savings to see the company through its early stages of development,” said Grosu. “But I am aware that mainstream funding has provided difficult for many EMEs who have had to rely on micro financing or friends and relatives to get started.”

Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, says that despite the credit crunch, the flow of money to finance new businesses has not stopped:

“The banks are still giving away money if the plan is good enough. They don’t discriminate, they are equally miserable to everyone,” Germaine jokes. “If a business plan is poorly written, it doesn’t matter what country the budding entrepreneur is from, they won’t get the loan,” he says.

Conor Lenihan, Minister for Integration, echoes these sentiments applauding the financial institutions for their efforts in make funding “more accessible” to EMEs:

“The banks have adjusted very well to the new demographics,” he says. “AIB for example, hired in consultants and tasked them with targeting ethnic communities as potential new customers.”

Sean Cronin believes the government should step forward and help to provide more financial assistance to early stage start-ups to get them up and running, whatever the ethnic make-up of the entrepreneur might be:

“The government could relax the rules on seed funding to encourage small investments of up to €20,000. Easing the tax burden in the first few years would be another positive step they could take,” he says.

## **Business Permission and Red Tape**

Patricia Callan, Director of the Small Firms Association (SFA) believes that the government should review the regulations governing EMEs setting up businesses in Ireland. Any non-EEA National wishing to do so must apply for permission to the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform and also undertake to employ at least two EEA nationals in the business and transfer capital to the state of at least €300,000.

“These requirements are excessively onerous and stop many migrants from engaging in entrepreneurial activity. The majority of small-business start-ups in Ireland are funded with less than €20,000. Small businesses often tend to operate as sole traders for a number of years before getting established and taking on employees, so the requirement to employ two people before your business starts trading is also a significant difficulty. The plain fact is the existing business permission rules need to be overhauled,” she says.

While agreeing with Callan's position, Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, is quick to point out that there are also exceptions to the rule:

"The regulations are unduly cumbersome. We believe the quality of the business proposal itself should be the determining factor as to whether business permission is awarded," he said.

However Germaine points out that there are many exemptions from the rule including the spouse of an Irish national, parents of an Irish-born child, dependant relatives of EEA nationals, or those who have been granted refugee status.

"Also if you have lived and worked in Ireland for over five years, you can claim long term residency and the business permission conditions will be waived," he says.

Germaine also points to the lack of coordination between the various different government agencies as another flaw in the system:

"Although immigrants from outside the EEA are supposed to secure business permission from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform before starting a business, Companies' House do not check to see if you have permission when registering a company, nor do the Revenue Commissioners' check up when it comes to filing tax returns," he says.

Dr Alvina Grosu, founder of Culturewise Ireland, a training company that specialises in cultural diversity awareness, arrived in Ireland in 2001 from Moldova and was initially stuck in the Irish asylum process, unable to take work of any kind.

"When I came to Ireland first, I was practically unemployable. I was highly qualified with a PhD, specialising in cross-cultural psychology, but because it took a full two and a half years for the system to recognise my qualifications, I spent a lot of my time working as a waitress."

Patricia Callan believes that there are many non-nationals looking to start a business in Ireland, but she argues, they do not operate on a level playing field:



Eventually she secured a renewable visa, but because of the incredibly lengthy delay in authenticating her qualifications, for thirty months Grosu was unable to apply for jobs which matched her education, training and work experience.

“Without recognition from the Minister, my qualifications in Ireland were as good as useless,” says Grosu. “And it seems the higher the qualification, the longer the process takes, which means that those with the most transferable and most readily sought after skills are the ones being kept out of the Irish workforce the longest.”

Minister for Integration Conor Lenihan leans forward in his chair, his eyes fixed firmly on my notepad as I write. I press him specifically on EMEs and on business permission rules. I put it to him that these requirements are inordinately onerous but Lenihan appears unconvinced:

“You think they’re overly restrictive, do you?” he said, scratching his chin. “Well I suppose we could look at them again, but to tell you the truth the Irish labour market has changed dramatically since enlargement. My primary focus is not on attracting new entrepreneurs from outside the EU, it’s on making the best use of indigenous entrepreneurs and developing budding entrepreneurs from the EU states who have made Ireland their home.”

Too much red tape is another issue that infuriates many entrepreneurs as Sean Cronin reveals:

“The amount of bureaucracy and the amount of form filling we had to do to get financing is unreal,” Cronin says. “It’s got to be incredibly difficult for ethnic minority entrepreneurs.”

Minister for Integration Conor Lenihan disagrees: “The truth is it’s the absence of red tape that makes our economy one of the easiest in Europe for entrepreneurs to start up a business. It can all be done online,” he says.

Patricia Callan believes that there are many non-nationals looking to start a business in Ireland, but she argues, they do not operate on a level playing field:

“Ethnic minorities in Ireland are an untapped pool of entrepreneurial ability and sadly they will remain untapped as long as they continue to drown in red tape and come up against excessive regulatory barriers.”

## **Training and Enterprise Agencies**

“I approached the county enterprise boards first, but they have their favourite buddies,” says a frustrated Sean Cronin, CEO of Selatra. “When they get allocated their budgets, they hand them out in the first three months of the year and then it’s all gone, you have to wait until the following year. And they try and fob you off by getting you to do endless feasibility studies,” he says, shaking his head.

“There are some great people working in the enterprise agencies but they are swimming in red tape,” Cronin continues. “First of all there’s a bit of an old boy network operating at the Government agencies, so even if you understand the business culture, you’ve got to break into that clique.

“A lot of business in Ireland is done with people you know or people who have been recommended to you. If you don’t have that network to rely on, as an immigrant entrepreneur looking to start up in Ireland, you can find doing business very difficult indeed.

Dr Alvina Grosu, echoes these sentiments:

“As Moldavians coming to Ireland, we are unaware for example, of the existence of the golf course culture, the old boy network or even the Chambers of Commerce or Enterprise boards that provide networking opportunities and funding when setting up in business. These services are not widely publicised among our community and we only hear about them through word of mouth.”

It was when she discovered Emerge, which provides free training to entrepreneurs from ethnic minority backgrounds that she signed up for the programme.

The course gave Grosu a good understanding of the way the system works in Ireland, the importance of people contact and the financial side of business and although she had "absolutely no idea about business", she felt there might be an opportunity to put her psychology expertise to good effect by offering intercultural training in Ireland.

When she had completed the ten week Emerge course, she secured mentoring support and an employment grant from South Cork Enterprise Board and Culturewise Ireland was born in July 2006.

Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, says Dr Grosu's experiences are not unusual:

"What we found was that EMEs had a lack of understanding of the formal and informal rules of doing business, whether it was health and safety laws, or tax returns or just the mechanics of setting up in business," Germaine says. "They also had little awareness of the agencies to help with funding or organisations such as the SFA or IBEC. On top of that we found that some had difficulty with written English and others had problems understanding Irish accents."

Patricia Callan, Director of the SFA, cites as an example of best practise, the work carried out by Emerge, but bemoans the absence of a specifically designed mainstream programme that targets the particular problems ethnic minority entrepreneurs face:

"Ideally this would give EMEs help and assistance on issue such as racism, social exclusion, language difficulties and problems presented by cultural differences," she says.

"Emerge has addressed many of these issues over the past two years but what is needed now is a commitment from Government, in line with the recommendations of the Small Business Forum Report to provide mainstream funding for the programme and to roll-out the training modules and best practice to potential ethnic entrepreneurs throughout Ireland."

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion, Interpretation, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

There were four clear objectives presented at the beginning of this dissertation which I have listed below:

Table 5.1 Do EMEs face Unique Barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No Unique Barriers	0	39.1	39.1	39.1
Valid Unique Barriers	14	80.9	80.9	80.9
Total	14	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: SPCS  
 When asked 'Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers EMEs faced (table 5.2), racism and language came joint top followed by credit history and red tape (7%). Other reasons which got on Business permission rules, lack of a business network and a general lack of Training and Enterprise Agencies.

- To establish if EMEs face any unique barriers, real or perceived, to setting up a business in Ireland;
- To provide a coherent and balanced analysis of the current status of ethnic minority entrepreneurship in Ireland, with particular emphasis on the following three areas:
  - Finance;
  - Business permission;
  - Training and Enterprise Agencies
- To draw conclusions as to the effect any 'unique barriers' are having and to make recommendations as to the action that needs to be taken to redress any difficulties.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No unique barriers	0	30.0	30.0	30.0
Valid Unique Barriers	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
Total	7	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: SPCS

Having presented a summary of the current evidence in the form of a literature review (Chapter 2), outlined my methodology (Chapter 3) and presented the results of my qualitative and quantitative research (Chapter 4), I will in this chapter examine and analyse the results, draw some conclusions and make recommendations.

And finally, I will be able to reveal the result of my research question which was to test the hypothesis that:

'Non-EEA entrepreneurs face no additional barriers than their EU counterparts when starting a business in Ireland'.

## 5.2 Objective 1

To establish if EMEs face any unique barriers, real or perceived, to setting up a business in Ireland:

### 5.2.1 The Questionnaire:

Both EEA entrepreneurs and EMEs concluded by a strong majority in my questionnaire (table 5.1 below) that EMEs do indeed face unique barriers to setting up in business in Ireland:

**Table 5.1 Do EMEs face Unique Barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No Unique Barriers	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
Unique Barriers	14	60.9	60.9	60.9
Total	23	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: SPSS

When pressed as to the specific barriers EMEs faced (table 5.2), racism and language came joint top (17%) followed by credit history and red tape (7%). Other reasons which got a mention include business permission rules, lack of a business network and a general lack of education (note: frequency is 30 not 23 because some entrepreneurs listed more than one unique barrier).

**Table 5.2 Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No unique barriers	9	30.0	30.0	30.0
Racism	5	16.7	16.7	46.7
Language	5	16.7	16.7	63.3
Credit History	2	6.7	6.7	70.0
Red tape	2	6.7	6.7	76.7
Other	7	23.3	23.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

Intriguingly the results showed that while the vast majority of EEA entrepreneurs (94%) believe EMEs face unique barriers when setting up in business, a minority of EMEs (43%) believed they faced extra difficulties. (see Chapter 4)

## 5.2.2 The Interviews:

Looking through the five semi-structured interviews gives us some further evidence:

Irish born Sean Cronin, CEO of Selatra, says it must be “incredibly difficult” for EMEs to be successful in business in Ireland and that the “old boy network” still operates when it comes to securing funding. Cronin says he himself found navigating red tape tricky and that it must be even more difficult if, as an EME, you may not be fully acquainted with the Irish business culture.

Dr Alvina Grosu, a highly skilled psychologist from Moldova, had to work as a waitress while she waited 30 months for the Irish system to recognise her qualifications from her home country. She echoes Cronin’s sentiments, describing Ireland’s business culture as “unique”, again mentioning the “old boy network”. She also mentions that while she funded the initial phase of her business through personal savings, she was aware that “mainstream funding has proved difficult for many EMEs”.

Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge highlighted the “overly cumbersome” business permission rules and said that EMEs had a “lack of understanding” of the formal and informal rules of doing business in Ireland. He also mentioned some EMEs had difficulties with written English.

Backing up Germaine on business permission rules was Patricia Callan, Director of the SFA who argued that the requirements are “excessively onerous” and “stop many migrants from engaging in entrepreneurial activity.”

Even Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan who offered a robust defence of the Government’s business permission rules, agreed that EMEs face unique barriers to doing business in Ireland: “Language is their main barrier,” he says. “Because we are a high-knowledge, high valued-added economy, the command of English is a key requirement for entrepreneurs to advance in society and in our workforce. If an entrepreneur wants to succeed in business in Ireland, good English is a prerequisite.”

Having analysed this evidence and analysed a wealth of data, information and reports on this topic in the literature review, I conclude that EMEs do indeed face unique difficulties when starting their businesses. I shall now explore in Objective 2 some of the possible unique barriers in more detail.

### 5.3.2 Business permission

## 5.3 Objective 2

In assessing whether business permission and capital requirement rules are preventing

To provide a coherent and balanced analysis of the current status of ethnic minority entrepreneurship in Ireland, with particular emphasis on the following three areas:

- Finance;
- Business permission;
- Training and Enterprise Agencies

### 5.3.1 Finance

I asked the questionnaire respondents what the biggest barrier they faced was when they were considering setting up in business. 43% of all respondents chose 'finance' as the top answer. When that result was cross-tabulated with nationality, the results were practically identical for both groups (EEA entrepreneur 44%, EME 43%).

We can say with some certainty that finance is a problem for all small businesses and is certainly not a problem unique to EMEs.

Where EMEs may suffer uniquely is through their inability to access funding because of a lack of credit history. This was highlighted in the Emerge Report in our literature review (Chapter 2) while in our questionnaire, poor credit history was rated the second highest 'unique barrier' EEA entrepreneurs believed EMEs faced, scoring 13%, behind racism which top scored with 25%

The Emerge Report puts it succinctly:

“While the banks maintain that all applicants are treated equally and that lending criteria are consistently applied, a lack of a credit history presents a de facto barrier to ethnic minority entrepreneurs securing loan finance.”

### 5.3.2 Business permission

In assessing whether business permission and capital requirement rules are preventing EMEs from flourishing in Ireland, I believe it is helpful to analyse some of the statistical data available on the subject.

The recent CSO Quarterly Household Survey (Q1 2008) reveals that 236,000 people were ‘lone’ self employed (working on their own, without any employees) representing about 11 per cent of the total workforce of 2,135,000.

The same survey concluded that 84,000 non-Irish nationals from outside the EU 27 aged 15 or over were in employment in the Irish economy. The GEM Report 2006 concluded that roughly 7% of the adult population is actively planning or had recently started a new business.

Allowing for a small number from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway, part of the EEA (but not included in the CSO statistics) we can surmise (using the 11% yardstick) that roughly 8000 self employed non-EEA nationals are working in the Irish economy.

While a significant number of these would reasonably be expected to be contractors, particularly in the construction sector, it would not be unreasonable in my view to expect a reasonable percentage to be EMEs.

The official figures differ starkly from this analysis. Table 2.1 shows just 1% of the 8000 self employed non-EEA nationals have applied for and been granted business permission, so we can only conclude that, as the NCCRI mentioned in the literature review (Chapter 2), EMEs are setting up in Ireland without heeding the official rules:



**Table 5.3: Non-nationals who applied for and received business permission in Ireland 2003-2007 Source: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform**

Applications for Business

Permission

Year	Applications Received	Permission Granted
2003	251	134
2004	350	97
2005	629	99
2006	1,179	108
2007	249	80

**Dáil Éireann - Volume 643 - 06 December, 2007 Written Answers**

Although Patricia Callan, SFA Director and Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, both argued that the business permission rules were onerous, based on the evidence, I am not persuaded that the rules are preventing EMEs from flourishing for the following reasons:

- business permission was not identified by EMEs as a significant barrier to start-ups in my questionnaire;
- the business permission rules are broadly in line with our European partners;
- there are many exceptions to and exemptions from the rules and;
- EMEs are disregarding the rules and setting up in business anyway

**5.3.3 Training and Enterprise Agencies**

When the respondents were asked what helped them most when they were starting up in business, the overwhelming answer was training and enterprise agencies. When I cross-tabulated this answer for nationality, the results were practically identical - EEA entrepreneurs (36%) and EMEs (33%).

In the semi-structured interviews, there was some anecdotal evidence of enterprise agencies not promoting their services sufficiently to potential EMEs:

“Their services are not widely publicised among our community and we only hear about them through word of mouth.” said Moldavian national, Dr Alvina Grosu. Ken Germaine, Chairman of Emerge, echoed those sentiments:

“What we found was that EMEs little awareness of the agencies to help with funding or organisations such as the SFA or IBEC,” he said

### **5.4 Objective 3**

To draw conclusions as to the effect any ‘unique barriers’ are having and to make recommendations as to the action that needs to be taken to redress any difficulties.

#### **5.4.1 Finance:**

Citizens from EEA nations have been free to live in Ireland and start businesses for a number of years. Many may have built up good credit histories or own their homes which boosts their chances of securing business funding. I believe for many potential EMEs, this lack of credit history is a significant barrier to starting up a business in Ireland.

I am persuaded by Selatra CEO Sean Cronin who argues that the government should help to provide more financial assistance to early stage start-ups to get them up and running, whatever the ethnic make-up of the entrepreneur might be: “The government could relax the rules on seed funding to encourage small investments of up to €20,000. Easing the tax burden in the first few years would be another positive step they could take,” he says. I think both of these actions would have a positive impact.

I believe the availability of micro-finance in Ireland needs to be stepped up and applications for grants and loans should be proofed to the needs of EMEs.

Small Business Forum Report to provide mainstream funding for the Emergent entrepreneurs through the training modules and best practice to potential ethnic entrepreneurs throughout Ireland.

#### **5.4.2 Business Permission:**

I believe certain elements of the business permission scheme should be revisited. The capital requirement for example, should be reduced to take account of currency movements – the recent movements of sterling mean it is now €50,000 more expensive for an EME to set up in business in Ireland than it is in the UK. This gap should be closed by reducing the financial requirements for EMEs in Ireland accordingly.

Entrepreneurs face no additional barriers than their EU counterparts when starting a business in Ireland.

I also believe that the business permission system should be made more transparent. Over 50 per cent of those applying in 2003 received permission, while less than 10 per cent received permission in 2006 and the actual numbers of successful applicants fell to their lowest level in five years in 2007.

I believe that by incorporating best practice and by relaxing and modifying some of

The UK has shown that it can continue to attract high potential EMEs through a number of innovative schemes and I believe the Irish Government should also look at these schemes with a view to replicating them in Ireland.

acknowledged by entrepreneurs as a world-class environment in which to start and

#### **5.4.2 Training and Enterprise Agencies:**

I am not persuaded by the ‘I didn’t know the enterprise agency existed’ argument we heard from Dr Grosu and Ken Germaine (section 5.3.3). We have already seen from the literature review and semi-structured interviews that a sizeable proportion of the new wave of immigrants to our shores are well educated and that on-line portals such as [www.basis.ie](http://www.basis.ie) provide anyone with access to a computer with all the information they need for starting up a business in Ireland.

This information is available in a wide range of languages, so a budding entrepreneur, whether from an ethnic minority background or otherwise, is only one click away from the information they need.

However I am persuaded by SFA Director, Patricia Callan's argument that there should be a commitment from Government, in line with the recommendations of the Small Business Forum Report to provide mainstream funding for the Emerge programme and to roll-out the training modules and best practice to potential ethnic entrepreneurs throughout Ireland.

## **5.5 Judgement**

My research question was designed to test the hypothesis that:

Non-EEA entrepreneurs face no additional barriers than their EU counterparts when starting a business in Ireland.

Having weighed up all the evidence, it is clear that EMEs do face additional and often significant barriers to setting up a business in Ireland.

I believe that by incorporating best practice and by relaxing and modifying some of the existing rules and regulations, we can encourage the development of a rapidly growing, highly entrepreneurial migrant population and in the words of the Forfás report, build an Ireland recognised for its "strong entrepreneurial culture and acknowledged by entrepreneurs as a world-class environment in which to start and grow a business".

**-ends-**

Anthony Garvey

## **5.6 Reflections on the Research Process**

It has been fascinating to be involved in researching such a real, live and dynamic project that is evolving as I write.

From the nerve tingling anticipation waiting for the Minister of Integration in the Dáil to the spontaneous whoop of excitement when my SPSS programme unearthed a chi-square correlation after I plugged in my data, it has truly been a pleasure in all aspects from start to finish.

If I had it to do again, I would have loved to have pursued the participant observation method with some of the 207-strong group who took part in the pre-enterprise training group organised by Emerge.

I am just as interested in the motivations and experiences of the 139 individuals who, having completed the training course, decided not to start their own businesses, as the 68 that finally did.

That small point aside, it has truly been a fantastic experience.

Anthony Garvey

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"I always worked for multinationals," said Sean Cronin, CEO of Selatra Games, cocking his head to one side nostalgically. "The support structures are fantastic. But I guess deep down I always dreamt of running my own business, working without a safety net, no back-up."

## APPENDIX 1

Until October 2002 Sean was MD of Logica's Cork facility which he had grown into a €4.7M revenue business. Cronin managed the centre which developed Mobile Subscriber products and SMS services for global markets, supporting 19 network operators. But when Logica announced its decision to close the Cork plant as part of a global restructuring, Cronin was left with a significant amount of time on his hands.

## THE INTERVIEWS

"Logica made the decision to outsource to India and began by scaling down their involvement in Cork. Of course it was very sad, but I was lucky in the sense that as it was a phased redundancy, I was the last one to go, I literally did turn out the lights," smiles Cronin. "That gave me time to approach the relevant government agencies, the employees I wanted and get a good business plan together. And I had a good lump sum from Logica which I knew would be the capital I needed to start off in business."

While working in Logica, Cronin had spotted a gap in the market to become an aggregator of mobile games:

"Mobile phone games at the time were black and white and there were very few companies writing pieces of content specifically designed for mobile handsets. It was a full year before any colour applications appeared. Because I worked for one of the global giants, I understood the mobile standards that were being agreed by the handset manufacturers and network operators, so I understood the way the technology was going to move and how that would subsequently affect software developers. That gave us a significant advantage over our rivals in terms of getting the right product to market at the right time."

## Sean Cronin Interview

“I always worked for multinationals,” said Sean Cronin, CEO of Selatra Games, cocking his head to one side nostalgically. “The support structures are fantastic. But I guess deep down I always dreamt of running my own business, working without a safety net, no back-up, no support.”

Until October 2002 Sean was MD of Logica’s Cork facility which he had grown into a €4.7M revenue business. Cronin managed the centre which developed Mobile Subscriber products and SMS services for global markets, supporting 19 network operators. But when Logica announced its decision to close the Cork plant as part of a global restructuring plan, Cronin knew that this was his big opportunity.

“Logica made the decision to outsource to India and began by scaling down their involvement in Cork. Of course it was very sad, but I was lucky in the sense that as it was a phased redundancy, I was the last one to go, I literally did turn out the lights,” smiles Cronin. “That gave me time to approach the relevant government agencies, the employees I wanted and get a good business plan together. And I had a good lump sum from Logica which I knew would be the capital I needed to start off in business.”

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“Mobile phone games at the time were black and white and there were very few companies writing pieces of content specifically designed for mobile handsets. It was a full year before any colour applications appeared. Because I worked for one of the global giants, I understood the mobile standards that were being agreed by the handset manufacturers and network operators, so I understood the way the technology was going to move and how that would subsequently affect software developers. That gave us a significant advantage over our rivals in terms of getting the right product to market at the right time.”

Cronin set up Selatra at the end of 2002 and has built it into a global distributor of mobile entertainment content. Selatra's services are used by mobile content retailers in over 60 countries and the company recently celebrated its sixth birthday with compound year on year revenue growth of 350% for the past four years.

Selatra raised its initial funding from its founders and Enterprise Ireland. Venture capital firm, 4th Level Ventures and Mianach, a business expansion scheme, backing technology firms, subsequently got involved and now both hold interests in the company.

Was it an easy process starting up getting the assistance he needed to start up in business, I ask?

"Hugely frustrating on many levels," Cronin says. "I approached the county enterprise boards first, but they have their favourite buddies. When they get allocated their budgets, they hand them out in the first three months of the year and then it's all gone, you have to wait until the following year. And then they try and fob you off by getting you to do endless feasibility studies," he says, shaking his head.

And was the dealing with Enterprise Ireland, one of Selatra's founding investors any more straight forward?

"There are some great people working in the enterprise agencies but they are swimming in red tape," Cronin says. "The amount of bureaucracy and the amount of form filling is unreal. Being on the Genesis programme helped because we were able to meet entrepreneurs in similar positions to ourselves and the added kudos of being on the programme made it easier for us to secure support from the government agencies."

How does he feel ethnic minority entrepreneurs cope when trying to navigate through this bureaucratic minefield and does he think they face any unique barriers?

"It's got to be incredibly difficult for them," Cronin says.

“First of all there’s a bit of an old boy network operating at the Government agencies, so even if you understand the business culture, you’ve got to break into that clique. I’m not sure if the barriers they face are particularly unique, he says. A lot of business in Ireland is done with people you know or people who have been recommended to you. If you don’t have that network to rely on, as an immigrant entrepreneur looking to start up in Ireland, you can find doing business very difficult indeed, but I think that barriers applies whether you are from Nigeria or the Netherlands,” he says.

Has he had dealings with many ethnic minority entrepreneurs in Ireland?

“Raomal is the only one in our industry that I have encountered,” he says, referring to the flamboyant Raomal Perera, the founder of Valista and current CEO of Empower, the HR software firm. “In my experience, EMEs have succeeded in small businesses, like car valeting, where the capital requirement is not so high.”

And is there anything the Government can do to help EMEs, I ask?

“The government should focus on encouraging entrepreneurship in general and not get tied into dealing offering special supports to specific segments or minorities,” Cronin says.

“For example the government could relax the rules on seed funding to encourage small investments of up to €20,000 without having to make immediate repayments or having to form fill for a month. Easing the tax burden in the first few years would be another positive step they could take,” he says.

-ends-

## Alvina Grosu

“When I came to Ireland first, I was practically unemployable. I was highly qualified with a PhD, specialising in cross-cultural psychology, but because it took a full two and a half years for the system to recognise my qualifications, I spent a lot of my time working as a waitress.”

There is no hint of bitterness from Dr Alvina Grosu as she speaks frankly about her experiences. Grosu, founder of Culturewise Ireland, a training company that specialises in cultural diversity awareness, arrived in Ireland in 2001 from Moldova and was initially stuck in the Irish asylum process, unable to take work of any kind.

Eventually she secured a renewable visa, but because of the incredibly lengthy delay in authenticating her qualifications, for thirty months Grosu was unable to apply for jobs which matched her education, training and work experience.

“The system for authenticating psychologist’ qualifications obtained outside the EEA is that the individual must apply directly to the Department of Health and Children to have their qualification approved and they must provide at their own cost, authenticated translations of any documentation not in the English language,” Grosu explains.

The Minister for Health and Children then has the final say on authentication and usually seeks advice from the Irish Psychological Society, the professional body for psychologists in Ireland.

“Without recognition from the Minister, my qualifications in Ireland were as good as useless,” says Grosu. “And it seems the higher the qualification, the longer the process takes, which means that those with the most transferable and most readily sought after skills are the ones being kept out of the Irish workforce the longest.”

Bordering Romania to the West and the Ukraine to the North, East and South, Moldova’s principal economic partner is Russia. According to Grosu, the culture, the law and the economic system in Moldova are very different to Ireland.



In delivering her programmes, Dr. Grosu works with a network of Irish and non-Irish specialists that complement her own skills and experience and Grosu already counts some heavy hitters, such as Bank of Ireland and the HSE, among her client list who value intercultural competencies as a necessity for living and working in modern Ireland.

"I was well educated, so the command of the English language wasn't a problem and I was also fortunate that I had built up some savings to see the company through its early stages of development," said Grosu. "But I am aware that mainstream funding has provided difficult for many EMEs who have had to rely on micro financing or friends and relatives to get started."

In December 2007, Grosu was one of three winners chosen from over 200 entrants of the inaugural Emerge Ethnic Entrepreneurial Business Plan Competition.

"I spotted a niche for this type of group training which is unique in Ireland," says Grosu. "My advice to EMEs who may be in the early stages of immigration is to get involved with their local community and seek out the agencies, such as the enterprise boards that are there to help them."

**-ends-**

## Ken Germaine interview

I am soaking wet as the rain hammers down inexorably on a gloomy night in Dublin in early June 2008. I am already 15 minutes late for my meeting with Ken Germaine, the newly appointed Chairman of the development partnership, Emerge, as I make my way into the lobby of the Conrad Hotel.

Emerge was an ambitious initiative established in 2005. Founded by EU money, it was created to offer a nationally coordinated and locally delivered training programme addressing some of the specific needs of ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

From October 2005 to June 2007, Emerge provided pre-enterprise and start up training to a total of 207 participants who were interested in starting their own businesses or were at an early stage of development.

By the end of the programme 68 participants were in business compared with 24 at the start of the programme. I am keen to ask Ken what he puts the success down to and whether he feels ethnic minority entrepreneurs face any unique barriers compared to their EU counterparts when setting up in business in Ireland.

A man sits in a comfortable chair in the lobby of the Conrad, warming himself by the fire and I approach cautiously.

“Ken?” I venture.

“That’s right,” he replies.

“Sorry I’m late,” I say, taking off my overcoat and putting it on the seat beside him.

“The weather was awful and I had great difficulty getting a taxi. I just want to say I really appreciate you seeing me at such short notice.”

The man pauses, looking me up and down.

“Who are you?” he says bluntly, just as his wife returns with their drinks.

Before I can reply, another man, soaked to the skin, taps me on the shoulder.

“Anthony?” he enquires, extending his hand. “Ken Germaine. Sorry I’m late, brutal weather. I couldn’t get a taxi for love nor money.”

We grab a seat and I explain to Ken what my thesis is about. I mention that I have already interviewed Dr Alvina Grosu and tell him I had expected her to reveal that the road to business success for EMEs in Ireland was paved with obstacles and barriers, but she had said no such thing. His reply was somewhat surprising:

“She’s quite right of course,” he says, pausing to order us coffee. “Many of the problems faced by EMEs, when starting and growing their businesses, are exactly the same as those faced by small businesses in general.”

But what of the language and education difficulties we hear so much about, I enquire?

Germaine shakes his head.

“Many commentators identify language and education as problems for EMEs, but the truth is the vast majority of migrants coming to work and live in Ireland speak excellent English, although written English tends to be a bit trickier for them,” he says. “Many among our migrant intake have primary degrees, with many more again having Masters and PhDs. We’re very fortunate to be able to attract such a highly skilled workforce to our shores,” he says.

What about the need to revisit business permission regulations that prevents members of the immigrant communities from starting a business in Ireland? I ask.

“It’s clear that the regulations are unduly cumbersome and we believe the quality of the business proposal itself should be the determining factor as to whether business permission is awarded,” he said. “The system is also very slow and there are many people awaiting judgements from the Department.”

However Germaine points out that there are many exemptions from the rule including the spouse of an Irish national, parents of an Irish-born child, dependant relatives of EEA nationals, or those who have been granted refugee status.

“Also if you have lived and worked in Ireland for over five years, you can claim long term residency and the business permission conditions will be waived,” he says.

So does he feel that immigrants coming to Ireland get a fair deal? “They don’t discriminate, they are equally miserable to everyone,” Germaine jokes. “If a business “The system is completely unbalanced, it doesn’t operate transparently and it has changed little over the years,” he says. “We’ve been promised a new immigration bill from the Government for some time now. Our immigration system was abused in the past by oil rich sheiks in the ‘passports for investment’ scheme and it is the very same system that two years ago locked up in Mountjoy, an eminent senior surgeon from Nigeria, who was working at one of Ireland’s top hospitals, simply because immigration officials claimed to have doubts over his re-entry visa.”

Germaine also points to the lack of coordination between the various different government agencies as another flaw in the system:

“Although immigrants from outside the EEA are supposed to secure business permission from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform before starting a business, Companies’ House do not check to see if you have permission when registering a company, nor do the Revenue Commissioners’ check up when it comes to filing tax returns,” he says.

I mention my interview with Dr Grosu. She had said to me that a significant barrier for Moldavians starting businesses in Ireland was their lack of understanding of the “unique way” business is done here.

Germaine nods his head.

“What we found was that EMEs had a lack of understanding of the formal and informal rules of doing business, whether it was health and safety laws, or tax returns or just the mechanics of setting up in business,” he says. “They also had little awareness of the agencies to help with funding or organisations such as the SFA or IBEC. On top of that we found that some had difficulty with written English and others had problems understanding Irish accents.”

And did any of the EMEs he spoke to, encounter any discrimination from the banks, I ask?

“The banks are still giving away money if the plan is good enough. They don’t discriminate, they are equally miserable to everyone,” Germaine jokes. “If a business plan is poorly written, it doesn’t matter what country the budding entrepreneur is from, they won’t get the loan,” he says.

I tell Germaine I am meeting the Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan in due course. Is there anything I should encourage him to do to help the plight of EMEs?

“Encourage him to roll out the pre-enterprise programmes we created for ethnic minority entrepreneurs across the country,” says Germaine. “Some work has already started on this, but there is a great opportunity to build on the work we have done,” he says.

-ends-

As I look over my research notes, I recall how Lenihan’s appointment as Minister for Integration was viewed in some circles as risky, in particular because of a radio interview he gave in May 2005.

The interview itself ran smoothly enough. It explored the Government’s position on the plight of a number of Turkish workers who were having payments due to them withheld by their employer, OAMA Construction. Fighting the corner of the employees was Socialist Party TD Joe Higgins. At the end of the interview, Higgins began to take Lenihan to task over other areas of Government policy. Thinking the microphone was turned off Lenihan, in a reference to the Turkish workers, told Higgins to “stick to the kebabs”. Lenihan later apologised in the Dáil for his remarks.

Further on in my notes, I observed how Lenihan had a shorter than average honeymoon in his new position. He had generated further negative headlines in his first few months in office when, in August 2007, he effectively stopped Sikhs from joining the police force by banning them from wearing the turban.

## Conor Lenihan

It's Tuesday, the 24th June 2008 and I wait patiently in the warren-like interior of the Dáil for Conor Lenihan, the Minister for Integration or to give him his full title, the Minister of State with special responsibility for Integration Policy at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Education and Science and Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

Politics runs in the Lenihan family. Conor is son of the late Brian Lenihan TD, his brother Brian is Minister for Finance and his aunt is Deputy Mary O'Rourke.

Lenihan's office is cold in every sense of the word. No heat emerges from the white dormitory-styled radiators and there are no photos to be seen of Lenihan's wife, Denise Russell or their three children. An austere lion paperweight guards Lenihan's immaculate desk while a haunting abstract painting on the wall by Carmel Benson seems to peer at me disapprovingly as I ready myself for the interview.

As I look over my research notes, I recall how Lenihan's appointment as Minister for Integration was viewed in some circles as risky, in particular because of a radio interview he gave in May 2005.

The interview itself ran smoothly enough. It explored the Government's position on the plight of a number of Turkish workers who were having payments due to them withheld by their employer, GAMA Construction. Fighting the corner of the employees was Socialist Party TD Joe Higgins. At the end of the interview, Higgins began to take Lenihan to task over other areas of Government policy. Thinking the microphone was turned off Lenihan, in a reference to the Turkish workers, told Higgins to "stick to the kebabs". Lenihan later apologised in the Dáil for his remarks.

Further on in my notes, I observed how Lenihan had a shorter than average honeymoon in his new position. He had generated further negative headlines in his first few months in office when, in August 2007, he effectively stopped Sikhs from joining the police force by banning them from wearing the turban.

Lenihan argued that the onus was on the immigrant coming to Ireland to change, “to adapt to our way of doing things”. This led many commentators, for example the political sociologist, Dr Ronit Lentin, to argue in Metro Eireann, Ireland’s only multicultural newspaper, that Lenihan was more interested in ‘assimilation’ than ‘integration’.

Lenihan when he arrives for our interview is both charming and cautious. He engages easily and smiles confidently, yet he peers at the notes I scribble as he answers my questions. He tells me how proud he is of being re-elected to Dáil Éireann in May 2007 and how his new cabinet post is an office with teeth:

“We have a real budget, about nine million euro and a clear plan of what we are going to do with it,” he purrs. “I’m looking at setting up a task force in the autumn, with direct appointees from the migrant community, to see how we should chart our course for integration in the years ahead.”

How does he rate the value of the contribution migrants have played in the success of the Irish economy?

“I think the contribution migrants are making to modern Ireland is tremendous and we all benefit through the greater diversity that new Irish communities bring to our society,” he says. “The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) say that migrants have added 3.5% to our Gross Domestic Product which is hugely positive. Migrant entrepreneurs coming to Ireland are typically more qualified than many of our existing population. In a global labour market, having a highly skilled pool of migrant labour, that has chosen to come, work and live here, is a great asset.”

I press him specifically on EMEs and on business permission rules. Currently the requirements for EMEs setting up a new business in Ireland are that they have €300,000 in capital and hire two EEA employees. I put it to him that these requirements are inordinately onerous as many of the new enterprises are small in scale. Lenihan appears unconvinced.

“You think they’re overly restrictive, do you?” he said, scratching his chin. “Well I suppose we could look at them again, but to tell you the truth the Irish labour market has changed dramatically since enlargement.”

Lenihan leans forward in his chair, his eyes fixed firmly on my notepad as I write.

“So my primary focus is not on attracting new entrepreneurs from outside the EU, it’s on making the best use of indigenous entrepreneurs and developing budding entrepreneurs from the EU states who have made Ireland their home.”

By enlargement, Lenihan is referring to the relatively recent enlargement of the European Union in 2004 to include Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and most notably for the Irish economy, Poland. More Polish workers have arrived in Ireland to work since enlargement than any other country in the EU.

Ireland threw open its borders and its labour markets without restrictions to the citizens of the ten new EU members in 2004, although it has adopted a more cautious approach to workers from Bulgaria and Romania, when they joined the newly enlarged EU in 2007.

I explain to Lenihan that the Irish business permission rules are based on long standing UK rules – the UK requires that an EME also employ two EEA citizens and have £200,000 to finance the business – but that because of currency movements in the past year, (sterling has depreciated substantially in value relative to the euro) it is now €50,000 more expensive to set up in business in Ireland than in the UK. Would he consider bringing us back in line with the UK position to attract more EMEs?

“What we will do is bring all the permissions, work permits and green cards under one roof so that they operate much more smoothly and efficiently. I want to abolish re-entry visas for example (currently there are 60,000 issued every year). But in terms of attracting more EMEs I’d have to say the newly enlarged EU is providing much of the labour we need,” he says, seemingly unconvinced.



“I would agree that it is important that we start building business relationships with all countries such as Poland, Nigeria and Romania. I spent part of my working life in Poland for example, and we’re seeing a number of smaller companies from Poland starting up in business here, because it is easier for them to get up and running quickly here, than it is in Poland.”

I ask Lenihan if there are any particular barriers EMEs might have to face when I explain to him that as part of my research, I have carried out a survey, asking both EU entrepreneurs and EMEs their views on the barriers to setting up in business in Ireland and that some of the difficulties which have been identified include red tape when starting up a business, access to funding and racism.”

“If you’ve been speaking to NGOs, they tend to hype up all the negatives,” Lenihan says. “The truth it’s the absence of red tape makes our economy one of the easiest in Europe for entrepreneurs to start up a business. It can all be done online.”

Lenihan also applauds the financial institutions for their efforts in make funding “more accessible” to EMEs.

“The banks have adjusted very well to the new demographics. AIB for example, hired in consultants and tasked them with targeting ethnic communities as potential new customers.”

As for racism, he considers this to be of concern, but minor in scale:

“95% of migrants are here because they're part of the EU and are entitled to work here,” he says, dismissively. “We've the highest minimum wage in Europe and the strongest protection of workers, so my job is to make sure those coming to live and work in Ireland, become fully integrated into Irish society.”

I ask him if he considers immigration to have been a factor in the Lisbon no-vote:

“One post-Lisbon poll showed 8% of the population voted ‘no’ because of immigration issues,” he says.

“While I’m not sure if these findings are true, they are interesting. But by contrast, all the Eurobarometer statistics show high levels of social and working contact between immigrants and our existing population, a good indication of integration, with over three quarters of the population happy our culture has been enriched by their arrival.”

2006, Callan has just finished giving an interview on RTE’s main evening news, as I ask Lenihan if there are any particular barriers EMEs might have to face when setting up in business in Ireland:

The unions are up in arms at proposals from the SFA to cut the minimum wage by €1, ”Language is the main barrier,” he says. “Because we are a high-knowledge, high valued-added economy, the command of English is a key requirement for 2008 during entrepreneurs to advance in society and in our workforce. If an entrepreneur wants to succeed in business in Ireland, good English is a prerequisite.”

“Figures from Eurostat show that we have the second highest minimum wage in the EU,” Callan explains coolly as we begin our interview. “By cutting the minimum wage we will help regain some of our competitiveness and boost employment.”

-ends-

Callan reveals that the SFA has strong views on entrepreneurship and ethnic minority entrepreneurship in particular, and believes the government can do more to create the right environment in which entrepreneurs flourish:

“We believe promoting entrepreneurship, including ethnic minority entrepreneurship, should become a top priority of government,” Callan says. “The importance of entrepreneurship to the Irish economy is underscored in the GEM reports and the Small Business Forum Report. It is particularly important to nurture entrepreneurship during an economic downturn, such as the one we are currently experiencing, when traditional contributors to economic growth are in decline.”

Callan believes that there are many non-natives looking to start a business in Ireland, but she argues, they do not operate on a level playing field:

“The latest CSO figures show that non-natives make up over 12% of our population. Most are in the 24-44 years age bracket, which is when the majority of people set up in business” she says.

## Patricia Callan

Patricia Callan, Director of the Small Firms' Association (SFA), the national organisation representing the needs of small enterprises in Ireland, is no stranger to controversy. Appointed to succeed Pat Delaney at the helm of the SFA in March 2006, Callan has just finished giving an interview on RTE's main evening news, as I wait patiently to talk to her.

The unions are up in arms at proposals from the SFA to cut the minimum wage by €1, effectively slashing the wages of the lower paid by 11 per cent. What makes the proposal all the more controversial is its timing, coming as it does in July 2008 during the complex and difficult negotiations between unions, employers and Government to broker a national pay agreement.

"Figures from Eurostat show that we have the second highest minimum wage in the EU," Callan explains coolly as we begin our interview. "By cutting the minimum wage we will help regain some of our competitiveness and boost employment."

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Callan believes that there are many non-nationals looking to start a business in Ireland, but she argues, they do not operate on a level playing field:

"The latest CSO figures show that non-nationals make up over 12% of our population. Most are in the 24-44 years age bracket, which is when the majority of people set up in business" she says.

“With fewer than 30% of indigenous Irish falling within this age bracket, non-national entrepreneurs will become increasingly important to our economy. Ethnic minorities in Ireland are an untapped pool of entrepreneurial ability and sadly they will remain untapped as long as they continue to drown in red tape and come up against excessive regulatory barriers.”

Callan points to the Government’s White Paper on Regulation which estimates the cost of excessive regulation to Irish business at close to €600 million and says the negative impact on ethnic minority entrepreneurs is particularly acute, as their businesses tend to be smaller in size, often one or two person operations.

“It can be incredibly time consuming staying on top of the seemingly endless stream of employment law, which affects each company whether it employs thousands or just one person,” Callan says. “Research carried out among our members has shown that a small Irish company with a workforce of eight devotes half of one person’s time filling out forms, many of which are duplicates for different government agencies.”

Callan also believes that the government should review the regulations governing EMEs setting up businesses in Ireland. Any non-EEA National wishing to do so must apply for permission to the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform and also undertake to employ at least two EEA nationals in the business and transfer capital to the state of at least €300,000.

“These requirements are excessively onerous and stop many migrants from engaging in entrepreneurial activity. The majority of small-business start-ups in Ireland are funded with less than €20,000. Small businesses often tend to operate as sole traders for a number of years before getting established and taking on employees, so the requirement to employ two people before your business starts trading is also a significant difficulty. The plain fact is the existing business permission rules need to be overhauled,” she says.

I mention that I have interviewed Conor Lenihan, the Minister for Integration and that he feels the rules are adequate as they stand.

“He would say that wouldn’t he,” Callan sniffs airily.

Callan bemoans the absence of a specifically designed mainstream programme that targets the particular problems ethnic minority entrepreneurs face:

“Ideally this would give EMEs help and assistance on issue such as racism, social exclusion, language difficulties and problems presented by cultural differences,” she says.

Callan cites as an example of best practise, the work carried out by Emerge, a partnership of several organisations including the SFA, funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, who have come together to promote and drive ethnic minority enterprise.

“Emerge has addressed many of these issues over the past two years but what is needed now is a commitment from Government, in line with the recommendations of the Small Business Forum Report to provide mainstream funding for the programme and to roll-out the training modules and best practice to potential ethnic entrepreneurs throughout Ireland.”

As the interview comes to a close, Callan points out that Irish society is changing and that we must adapt to take advantage of a new Ireland:

“The development of new ethnic minority communities in Ireland is a relatively new phenomenon. Many migrants who come to Ireland want to be self-employed and self-sufficient. We should do everything we can to assist and encourage them in achieving this goal.”

**-ends-**

Arun Kapil is CEO of Green Saffron, an environmentally friendly Indian family business bringing small, frequent shipments of the freshest, high quality spices direct from India to their base in East Cork.

1. Name

Mr. Arun Kapil

2. Male/Female

Male

3. Nationality

Indian

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

35-44

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

None. The support I received in Ireland was far more than I had been used

## APPENDIX 2

# THE QUESTIONNAIRES

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

Support and goodwill of the local Irish community, mixed with a total generosity of (their) spirit and willingness to encourage.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

Language. Willingness to adapt. But things are changing so quickly on a national, let alone, international level. There are more Indians, for example, coming to these glorious shores with hard driven, full-on work ethics.

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?

Structure, infrastructure, more mature banking systems, a fuller appreciation of cashflow, paying on time and a cultural shift to planning for the long-term.

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

No. Every individual has his or her own hang-ups, distractions, inner-battles they need to conquer, no matter what their ethnic, religious or cultural backgrounds which they need to overcome those before they can even consider running a business. Ethnicity means nothing in business, unless you want it to.

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?

I think generalisations are tricky and governments should focus more of their attention and energy on spotting, assessing and nurturing the talent of those INDIVIDUALS who are offering and contributing positively to its society and they should be less worried about cyclopsianic political correctness. Be more concerned with reality, and less so with the latest 'marketing spiel' of the moment. Short-term short sightedness satisfies an immediate need, but does not perpetuate a positive (role) model for its society.... Does that make sense? Or am I just going on again?!!

**Arun Kapil is** CEO of Green Saffron, an environmentally friendly Indian family snack business bringing small, frequent shipments of the freshest, high quality spices direct from India to their base in East Cork

1. Name

Mr. Arun Kapil

2. Male/Female

Male

3. Nationality

Indian

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

35-44

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

Having to quickly adapt to the totally different way of conducting business in Ireland. The business culture, in my humble experience, was that much more 'de-regulated' than I had been used to.

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

Support and goodwill of the local Irish community, mixed with a total generosity of (their) spirit and willingness to encourage.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

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**Anandaraman Narayanan is CEO of Shree Foods, a provider of ethnic Indian snack foods.**

**1. Name**

Anandaraman Narayanan

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Indian

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Initially Permission to do business in Ireland. I had to wait 5 years to get the long term residency before I could start a business.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

As I am an IT person, I had analysed a lot of information on the web before I started the business and was able to see the pitfalls & success stories of business in Ireland through various discussion boards. The business start-up course in Emerge also helped to think through the head rather than just having a heart for the business.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

There is a general feeling that business owners from Asian countries would not concentrate on quality and are here to make a quick buck. That is the reason most non-European entrepreneurs tend to open business which is targeted at their own community where it is not too difficult to get the 'TRUST' element.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

More funding from the local council should be available, not as loans, but for consultancy. There is a need to handhold new entrepreneurs at least for a year. If a few business consultants could be appointed in each council who could visit the new entrepreneurs and provide them free consultancy, it would help more business to sustain and even prosper.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Visas are a major issue both for the entrepreneur, his family and his employees (if the trade is dependent on ethnic food, takeaway or restaurant). Most people arrive here to work find it difficult to get permission to start a business in Ireland.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

Neither. Ethnic minorities find it extremely difficult to start businesses in Ireland. This should be analysed and any specific barriers for ethnic entrepreneurs should be removed. Once they are removed then they become like any other entrepreneur and the government does not have to concentrate on ethnic or EU from there on.



**Angela Hope is CEO of Hope & Benson, a manufacturer of contemporary handmade handbags based in Leitrim.**

**1. Name**

Angela Hope

**2. Male/Female**

Female

**3. Nationality**

British

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44 (just!)**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Financial issues. Taking the leap from leaving a salary behind to go it alone.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

The support of the Enterprise Agency (Co. Leitrim) in terms of courses, mentoring and grants. They still help me a lot in all of these areas.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Maybe due to the support of the various agencies (Enterprise Ireland etc.) and the fact that 'Irish' is a strong brand to promote

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

I think it depends on the sector of business you are in. In the craft/design sector it would be great if there were more group stands taken at overseas trade shows under respected banners such as 'Crafts Council of Ireland' 'Irish Export Council' etc.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

No, there are no unique barriers when setting up business in Ireland. Not in my experience. I think the type of people who are prepared to move to another country and take a gamble by setting up a business are inherently entrepreneurial and likely to succeed.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I don't think the energy should be placed on 'attracting' entrepreneurs from any ethnic sector. Rather put the energy into supporting those who are here and keen to run a business in order to grow and maintain those which exist.

**Max Stoliarov is CEO of Mercapital Commerce, an IT consulting and public relations company**

1. Name

**1. Name**  
Max Stoliarov

2. Male/Female

**2. Male/Female**  
Male

3. Nationality

**3. Nationality**  
Russian

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**  
18 - 24

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**  
Bureaucracy, Capital

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**  
The idea that that everything in Ireland is possible and personal confidence.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**  
Understanding of European mentality, business and market is a bit different from all other countries outside EU. Visas for non EU countries may cause barrier to set up business in Ireland.

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**  
Lower Taxes

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**  
No, there are no unique barriers when setting up business in Ireland

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**  
Definitely, but I would attract both sides. This will develop economy and competition, which is always good for final user and increase quality of services and goods.

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**  
I think they should affect both equally. Ethnic, Irish and European entrepreneurs are all important in Ireland's economy. Every entrepreneur is unique and they all contribute something to the country.

**Noemi Beres is founder and CEO of Reservacar, a specialist for car rentals at airports, such as Dublin Airport, throughout the world**

**1. Name**

Noemi Beres

**2. Male/Female**

Female

**3. Nationality**

Hungarian

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

25-35

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

I don't think I had any "barrier" when I was setting up the business. Probably I was my own barrier. I was working at the same place for 3 years, it was comfortable, I got used to it. It was hard to give up the regular paycheques, the daily routine, such as getting up, going to work, finishing at 4, coming home.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

The lack of bureaucracy, because it's not complicated to set up a business here, compared to Hungary. I needed only 3 days, and my business was up and running. It is really easy to do. On the internet I found useful information about setting up business in Ireland, and I found books too. They were very useful as well.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Probably education is the reason, because many people who come from Central and Eastern-Europe have MA degrees in business, in arts etc. They couldn't find a job in their home countries, but here in Ireland if you save up enough money, you can start a business. They are really hard-working too, another factor in their success.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Maybe I was lucky, but for me it was easy enough to set up my business. I wouldn't change anything.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I don't think there are any unique barriers. The only thing that I can think of is language. English isn't their first language and it makes it a bit harder to express themselves as they would wish, although I wouldn't consider it as a barrier.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I think they should attract both equally. Ethnic, Irish and European entrepreneurs are all important in Ireland's economy. Every entrepreneur is unique and they all contribute something to this country.

**Jose Ospina** is a self employed project manager in West Cork working primarily on social enterprises.

**1. Name**

Jose Ospina

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality:**

Colombian

**4. Age**

45+

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Lack of local and national knowledge, contacts and absence of trust/faith from agencies contacted who believe social enterprises are not legitimate enterprises

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

The European Commission and European Networks. The EU provided funding and events where networking could take place. The European Networks provided contacts in other EU countries but also in Ireland itself. Also, income secured from European projects helped fund start up of business.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

The greater knowledge and availability of EU partnerships and co-operation opportunities, and funding opportunities for these partnerships.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

More official recognition of the potential role of social enterprises would help. In general terms, a network that links them to persons in position of knowledge in the different national and local authority agencies for networking and joint ventures.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I found there seemed to be an often unspoken distrust and unwillingness to work with persons who were not known or unfamiliar and a possibly an assumption that whatever they had to say or offer was not really appropriate or relevant. That is an unwillingness to consider seriously a different approach that what was usual, unless this approach was suggested by somebody who is trusted.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I think ethnic minority entrepreneurs have a vital role to play in the development of social enterprises in Ireland, as these enterprises will primarily be needed and are likely to benefit the immigrant community. So recognising the legitimacy of immigrant entrepreneurs promoting social economy initiatives seems fundamental. If EMEs are resident in Ireland, it would make sense to encourage them to develop and get better integrated, as this will help integrate their communities also.

**Jenni Timony** is CEO of Doolittles, a supplier of quality sandwiches to over 200 outlets in Ireland

1. Name

Jenni Timony

2. Male/Female

Female.

3. Nationality

Irish

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

25-34

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

Funding.

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

Persistence, not taking 'no' for an answer and a belief in the need for my product.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

They are hungrier and are used to trying harder to succeed. In a buoyant economy, we get too complacent.

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?

Reduce the amount of bureaucracy.

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

Probably some racism, and they might find it difficult to get credit references etc if they have not been based in Ireland for long.

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?

The government should be doing more to support entrepreneurs of all nationality. Diversity will lead to increased choice, which is great for the consumer.

**Peter Anny-Nzekwue** is Editor of Xclusive Magazine, Ireland's only African lifestyle monthly magazine

1. Name: Peter Anny-Nzekwue

2. Male/Female: Male

3. Nationality: Nigerian

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+: 35-44

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business? Publishing is a capital intensive project and getting enough money to cover the cost of start-up was quite challenging. Initially, I thought it was going to take a walk to any of the major banks and obtain a loan, so it was a shock when I didn't get a chance. I had to raise some money from personal savings and took a soft loan from a personal credit loan company, with a very high interest repayment.

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?: Attending a Start-your-own-business training with EMERGE was helpful, as that put me through business start-up technicalities like writing a Business plan, preparing Cash flow projection. Also, I would say, being approved under Back to Work Allowance Scheme was helpful because at the initial start-up stages, when things were extremely rough, I relied on such payment to get by with my family.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries? I don't really think European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland more than people from other countries. They are in more established businesses probably because they have been in the business for longer, or have built enough finance before venturing into the businesses of their choice. Most ethnic entrepreneurs, particularly from Africa, have to scratch out money to start up a business, and struggle for a long time to establish, with many of them failing. Business does better with investment capital.

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland? Finance. There is not much the bank can do because by nature they don't want to put money where they are not guaranteed returns. I think the buck stops with the government. If they could make grants available to all budding entrepreneurs it would go a long way and they should also create tax rebates for new businesses.

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland? No, if you mean unique barriers within the Irish system. But as Africans our business culture is totally different from the Europeans. Here things are strictly done by the book, so an African, with an African mindset going into business here would find it complicated at the initial stages. Outside that, I think it is a level playing ground for everyone who wants to set up business in Ireland.

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract EMEs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead? Of course they should do more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs and this could be in the aspect of grants. The Government's Back to Work Enterprise Scheme is a good idea and should be sustained, though there are elements within the social welfare office that use high-handedness to undermine this good intention: all Social welfare officers should be re-oriented.

Tomasz Sapalski is CEO of My Amber, an importer of Baltic jewellery

**1. Name**

Tomasz Sapalski

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Polish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

25-34

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Getting information about how to set-up a company step-by-step. There is information in Revenue how to register for an income tax, there is an information on CRO website about the name registration, another information in Irish Patents Office, etc. However there is no one place that can guide you step-by-step "If you want to open a restaurant, you need to do steps 1,2,3,4,5" and so on.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

DCEB course, knowing right people.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Very good legislation, low taxes, simplicity. Usually to start a business you have to have some business knowledge from the country you live. So people from Europe can legally live in Ireland for years, working first and then open their businesses. People from other countries don't have an opportunity to stay in Ireland legally for number of years, so they don't consider making a business here.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Create an organization to help foreign entrepreneurs to make contacts with Irish businesses. Place I can go and say "I am looking for a place to open a shop in Dublin. Where can I get information about landlords having commercial properties to rent?" etc.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Yes, as they don't have the local knowledge. And that makes a huge difference as most businesses in this country is made through references.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

The Irish Government should do the homework and see what businesses helped Ireland to develop more. If Ireland gets more jobs/money/development from EU companies, then help them, otherwise help the ethnic minorities.

**Vincent Lynch is CEO of Donseed, a supplier of workplace management solutions**

**1. Name**

Vincent Lynch

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
25-34**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Knowing what needed to be in a business plan in order to get funding. The YEP initiative developed a really good financial model which should be the basis of the business plan. The narrative around a product, benefits, target market, route to market, sales team etc can then be built around the numbers.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Speaking with local entrepreneurs and the local Enterprise Ireland representative. Subsequently, finding a company that would do a proof of concept of our solution, share the results with us and allow us to quote them in the market we were targeting.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

UK and German nationals in my opinion are the more likely to succeed in Ireland, due to the similarities in cultures to doing business. University Erasmus and the IDA inward investment programmes are also contributing factors. Irish people shouldn't be afraid of doing business in Europe. In my view, if your product has a place in a foreign market then with the right strategy often with a local partner who know the lie of the land there is no reason why you can't succeed.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

A difficult but good question. Promoting Ireland as a good place to set up business through incentivised grant aid is one way to attract more entrepreneurs into Ireland. I understand from speaking with some European entrepreneurs that Ireland appears to have a strong local & national government grant structure and incentives.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Funding can be more difficult to achieve do to a lack of credit rating and proven track record in the Irish market are probably leading barriers. Partnering with a local organisation in some shape or form can be a good way to overcome this.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

Enterprise Ireland offices abroad are effective in helping Irish companies abroad. I think the idea / product should be the driver and the nationality should be secondary.



**Tom Tansley is** a director at rooftop.ie, a video production company specialising in video for the web

**1. Name**

Tom Tansley

Tom Tansley

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

35-44

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Time. Not enough to concentrate on core business

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Innovation Centre

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Hunger to succeed

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Less red tape re accounts/banks/revenue

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

May not have as big a network.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

They should just attract entrepreneurs no matter what creed, colour or culture.

**Hamilton Niculescu is CEO of StudVio deSign, a provider of high quality video and photography**

**1. Name**

Hamilton Viorel Niculescu

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Romanian

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

25-34

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Lack of information about the paperwork I needed to have done before I would start

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

My experience with computers and camcorders, I guess

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

They have approximately the same way of thinking and cultural backgrounds, and being close to their country makes it easier to assess market needs, plus freedom of movement

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

A bigger support from the State when starting-up

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I would like to think NO, but unfortunately sometimes that is true

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I think the Government should be aware of the fact that every business is part of a link, no matter how small that is. Break that, and support the consequences. I would not say that the Government should attract businesses from specific nationals, but instead they should support more any person willing to start a business in Ireland. Look at the so much blamed construction industry: they accused the labours that came from Romania, Poland, Turkey, etc. for taking Irish people's jobs, and they did a lot to hit that sector. What now? Once the building industry started to go down, so did other related businesses, and in the end the whole Irish economy. Of course, there are other factors as well that led to this, but the Government should know that it did it's part. Again, supporting new and existing businesses is just common sense at a time when people are not so willing to take risks anymore, and a lot of foreign people are thinking to relocate back to their native country or to other countries. Once they are gone... well, I am sure you know the answer to this better than I do.

**Claudia Igbrude is MD of Nieriu, a Dublin based retailer of high quality skincare products**

**1. Name**

Claudia Igbrude

**2. Male/Female**

Female

**3. Nationality**

Nigerian

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

35-44

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

The uncertainty of the risk involved (knowing there won't be a steady salary - Information- where to find it.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Starting support groups that the Enterprise boards have set up helped enormously. They have been a tremendous help from the training courses they Support from my family and friends, the internet.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Probably because they understand the locality more and understand the systems of business.   
 Probably because they understand the locality more and understand the systems of business.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Make information more accessible and available.

Make information more accessible and available.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Since most ethnic minority entrepreneurs come from very different environments, they also have to understand their new environment generally before focusing on the business aspect. Other than this, most of the ethnic minorities face similar barriers as other minority groups such as women, homosexuals, etc.

Since most ethnic minority entrepreneurs come from very different environments, they also have to understand their new environment generally before focusing on the business aspect. Other than this, most of the ethnic minorities face similar barriers as other minority groups such as women, homosexuals, etc.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

The government should do more to attract or encourage smaller businesses not necessarily just ethnic minorities.

**Justine Negri is MD of Sole Recruitment, an employment agency based in Clare**

**1. Name**

Justine Negri

**2. Male/Female**

Female

**3. Nationality**

South African

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

25-34

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

The uncertainty of the risk involved (knowing there won't be a steady salary – especially in the very beginning)

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

The amazing support groups that the Enterprise Boards have set up helped enormously. They have been a tremendous help from the training courses they provide, the mentors available and the seminars that are held

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

The government play a very active role in encouraging individuals to start their own business (just look at the Enterprise Board and Enterprise Ireland website to see the offers/features/benefits available).

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

It took me about 3 months to get a licence to recruit and the high (and in my opinion) unnecessary cost of advertising in a national paper every single year to renew this licence is needless

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I was born and brought up in South Africa and I can't say that I had any difficulty going through the ropes of starting up the business. Garda checks were done on me in South Africa and during my time in Ireland, but apart from the obvious like different accent etc, I can't say I had any trouble setting up. The challenges came after....

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I think it is up to the individual to have the drive and determination to devote themselves to setting up a business. As mentioned, I think the Irish Government is very tolerant and open to new businesses, concepts, inventions etc. The individual is the barrier in most cases – as it is not easy to set up a business (as per my answer in question number 5)

**Monique Meche** is director, Government Affairs, European and Emerging markets for Cisco. She drives the company's public policy agenda across Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

1. Name  
Jonnyond James

2. Male/Female  
Monique Meche

3. Nationality  
2. Male/Female  
Female

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44

3. Nationality  
Irish  
What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44  
No knowledge of sales strategy...

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?  
Being female and being young.

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

Business connections in the ICT industry in Ireland and with government.

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

Not sure, but familiarity with English language and European culture likely a plus.

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?

Easier conditions for granting work visas

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

No  
Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?  
Should encourage foreign entrepreneurs since the country would like to promote foreign exports... This is a two way process.

They should do a bit of both. In reality is that there is a significant ICT skills shortage in Ireland, so they should do more to encourage engineers from other countries to live/work here.

**Jennylynd James is MD of award winning Caribbean Enterprises, the award winning creator of Caribbean food.**

**1. Name**

Jennylynd James

**2. Male/Female**

Female

**3. Nationality**

American

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

35-44

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Lack of knowledge of how to set up a business... No knowledge of sales strategy...  
No clarity in immigration requirements for foreign nationals

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Dublin City Enterprise Board subsidised training programmes and business networks.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

No barriers exist with immigration. Irish consumers may be more familiar with Europeans than other foreign nationals.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Clarity in immigration requirements for foreign nationals to set up a business

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Requirement to show access to 300,000 euros in funds in order to get a business visa and Irish business people and consumer have no experience in working with foreign nationals

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

Yes the government should encourage foreign entrepreneurs since the country would like to promote foreign exports... This is a two way process.

**Joe Gantly is** Chief Executive Office of SenSL, manufacturer of low light detectors and imaging systems.

1. Name

**1. Name**  
Joe Gantly

2. Male/Female

Male

**2. Male/Female**

3. Nationality

Male

**3. Nationality**

25-34

Irish

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

Getting the confidence of other people to believe in us.

45+

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

experience of the food business and having a good background in food.

**Raising Finance.**

what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

come tiger has been an influence - housing tide and all that and we are more embracing of change than say the French or the Spanish

Enterprise Ireland

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

the moment and in fact in my school it was frowned upon. People thought that unless you were going to do medicine or law or what ever you were a waster. Schools need to involve people

Do not understand the question.

would be ready to help coach the kids and people like me are only too delighted to do it. It's all down to education. Giving kids alternatives. I was

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

at maths and English and all that stuff. So basically I sat down the back of the class and drank.

Finding a faster way of getting IP out of third level institutions

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

anxiety and I'm sure the banks are negative towards them. But if we embraced these entrepreneurs rather than look down our

No

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I do not believe there should be any differentiation between ethnic, Irish or EU

do a very good job with having Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia and other organisations.

Really its down to people. The person who wants to set up has to try and find a way.

Education is a big thing and this is the most important.

**Sully (Colum O' Sullivan)** is joint MD of Cully and Sully, makers of high end foods for the retail market.

**1. Name**

Sully (Colum O'Sullivan)

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
25-34**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Getting the confidence of other people to believe in us.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Having good experience of the food business and having a good background in food.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

I think we have a very positive attitude and we truly believe we can take on the world. Also the celtic tiger has been an influence – floating tide and all that and we are more embracing of change than say the French or the Spanish

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

I would teach business in schools. It is not really being taught at the moment and in fact in my school it was frowned upon. People thought that unless you were going to do medicine or law or what ever you were a waster. Schools need to involve people who have set up businesses already to help coach the kids and people like me are only too delighted to do it. It's all down to education. Giving kids alternatives. I was USELESS at school, but business and food fascinated me. I loved agriculture, but I was crap at maths and English and all that stuff. So basically I sat down the back of the class and dreamt.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I suppose they probably do unfortunately and I'm sure the banks are negative towards them. But if we embraced these entrepreneurs rather than look down our noses we would do so much better.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I think they should but I'm not sure it's the governments place. I think the government do a very good job with having Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia and other organisations. Really its down to people. The person who wants to set up has to try and find a way. Education is a big thing and this is the most important.



**Veneta Ivanova Karadimova is an entrepreneur currently running her own hairdressing business who has completed the Emerge pre-enterprise programme.**

**1. Name**

Veneta Ivanova Karadimova

**2. Male or Female?**

Female

**3. Nationality**

Bulgaria

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Arriving in Ireland with no connections or network was the biggest barrier.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Organised business and right place could be a reason. The permanent rising of hairdressing needs of this kind of services.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from your country?**

The main reason for success in most well developed European countries is that there are good status of economy, compared to Bulgarian economy.

**8. What one change would make it easier for you to set up in business in Ireland?**

Change the total cost for starting up a business, they are so high now.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

Not really.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

All businesses should be given a chance.

**Emmanuel Anifowose is an entrepreneur currently running his own business who has completed the Emerge pre-enterprise programme.**

1. Name

Emmanuel Anifowose

1. Name

Emmanuel Anifowose

Male

2. Male or Female

Male

Irish

3. Nationality

Nigeria

45+

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

45+

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

The financial resources to tide me through the start-up phase, work experience in the Sector and the business environment and lack of relevant evaluation of state of health before proceeding to start business

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

Emerge training and awareness programmes

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

Clash of civilisations

8. What one change would make it easier for you to set up in business in Ireland?

Continued Government support, work-experience, continuous training, building financial capital and persistence

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

No

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?

Both

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?  
There should be no additional barriers in the way of ethnic minorities setting up in business, so there should be legislation in place to remove any form of discrimination to counter that effect. The best businesses should be encouraged, wherever the entrepreneur come from.

**Michael Carey is CEO of Jacob Fruitfield Food Group**

**1. Name**

Michael Carey

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
45+**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Only real barrier was my own motivation to make the leap into entrepreneurship. My senior management employment status was a set of comfortable golden handcuffs. Other barriers such as access to funds, finding the right opportunity, building a team were real, but were overcome once the decision to go for it was made.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Advice and support from people I knew in the food industry. Probably 50 or 60 people agreed to meet me for coffee and to chat through my plan and my options. Nobody who was asked for advice failed to give their time to those discussions.

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

I'm not aware that is a fact. There is no obvious reason why that should be, the Americans are very entrepreneurial, the Indians are very successful entrepreneurs wherever they live.

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

Provide a structure/framework for entrepreneurs to support each other, ensuring that the key decisions being taken are not without an opportunity to discuss with others of similar attitudes. I was lucky to have a strong network in the food industry when I started, and continue to build a close network through the EOY programme, membership of the Young Presidents Organisation, active involvement in Bord Bia etc. All of these structures provide strong support when we are going through big changes. Many entrepreneurs do not have that sort of support, and should have.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

There is racial discrimination in all aspects of life in Ireland, and entrepreneurship is no different. New arrivals also suffer from a lack of a useful network of support.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

There should be no additional barriers in the way of ethnic minorities setting up in business, so there should be legislation in place to remove any form of discrimination to counter that effect. The best businesses should be encouraged, wherever the entrepreneur comes from.

Alan Escorcia is CEO of Freeflow, an inventory management company

**John Beckett is CEO of Airtight Technology Ltd**

**1. Name**

John Beckett

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+**

25-34

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

I set up my first business at 17, so credibility and cash flow were the biggest barriers.

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

A complete lack of risk adversity and an ability to sell. *be much better*

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

Perhaps cultural differences or a lack of understanding of how to sell in this market? I do not have enough information on the subject to put forward an informed opinion.

*8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in*

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

*More seed capital and access to mentors.*

Reduce government bureaucracy.

**9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

I have no experience of this, but I would assume that the difficult accounting and other CRO-related document filing poses a significant challenge.

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

I believe the focus should be on Irish/EU entrepreneurs who are, according to this email, more likely to succeed in the market. However, I would also like to see ethnic minorities represented on the entrepreneurial stage, so a split 80/20 between Irish/EU and ethnic grant funds might work.

**Alan Scroope is CEO of Freeflow, an inventory management company**

**1. Name**

Alan Scroope

**2. Male/Female**

Male

**3. Nationality**

Irish

**4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+  
35-44**

**5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?**

Financial risk

**6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

Being educated here help me understand the landscape much better

**7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

As above

**8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?**

More seed capital and access to mentors.

**9 Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

We are somewhat racist in our DNA so that may hinder them. Also not being educated here

**10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?**

The latter. Attract Irish and EU entrepreneurs

1. Name

2. Main reason

## APPENDIX 3

3. Nationality

4. Age - are you

# THE QUESTIONS, OLD AND NEW

5. Are you currently running a business?

6. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

7. What other barriers did you face?

8. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

9. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from your country?

10. What one change would make it easier for you to set up in business in Ireland?

## Original Questionnaire

1. Name

2. Male/Female

3. Nationality

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

5. Are you currently running a business? *When you were considering setting up in business?*

6. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

7. What other barriers did you face? *more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?*

8. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

*What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?*

9. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from your country?

10. What one change would make it easier for you to set up in business in Ireland?

*should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?*

## Final Questionnaire

1. Name

2. Male/Female

3. Nationality

4. Age - are you 18-24, 25-34, 35-44 or 45+

5. What was the biggest barrier you faced when you were considering setting up in business?

6. What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?

7. In your opinion, what is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?

8. What one change would make it easier for entrepreneurs to set up in business in Ireland?

9. Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?

10. Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead?



## Appendix 4

List of EEA Entrepreneurs  
To whom I sent my questionnaire:

- > John Beckley, The Hub
- > Alan Berrington, Deira
- > Jim Breen, Pulse Learning
- > Michael Carey, Jacob Fruitfield
- > Pádraig O'Connell, The Hub
- > Brian Fallon, Duffie
- > Mike Fitzgerald, Alborado
- > Joe Gently, Send
- > Aidan Heavry, Tullow Oil
- > Vincent Lynch, Donseed
- > Brian McCarthy, Foxco
- > Monica Meche, Cisco Systems
- > Brian Mahigan, Kerry Group
- > John Rice, IAM Media
- > Alan Scroope, Freeflow
- > Colum (Sully) O' Sullivan, Cully and Scully
- > Tom Tansley, Rooftop
- > Jenni Timony, Doolittles
- > Aevann Upton, Spin South West

# APPENDIX 4

# THE EEA ENTREPRENEURS

## **Appendix 5**

### **List of EEA Entrepreneurs To whom I sent my questionnaire:**

- John Beckett, Eirtight Technologies
- Alan Berrington, Delpac
- Jim Breen, Pulse Learning
- Michael Carey, Jacob Fruitfield
- Pádraig O'Céidigh, Aer Arann
- Brian Fallon, Daft.ie
- Mike Fitzgerald, Altobridge
- Joe Gantly, Sensl
- Aidan Heavey, Tullow Oil
- Vincent Lynch, Donseed
- Brian McCarthy, Fexco
- Monica Meche, Cisco Systems
- Brian Mehigan, Kerry Group
- John Rice, JAM Media
- Alan Scroope, Freeflow
- Colum (Sully) O' Sullivan, Cully and Scully
- Tom Tansley, Rooftop
- Jenni Timony, Doolittles
- Aevann Upton, Spin South West

## Appendix 1 – SPSS

Table 4.1 Are you Male or Female?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	9	34.6	34.6	34.6
	Male	15	65.3	65.3	100.0
	Total	24			

Source: SPSS

# APPENDIX 5

Table 4.2 Nationality - per individual country

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ireland	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
	India	2	8.7	8.7	47.8
	UK	1	4.3	4.3	52.2
					56.5
	South Africa	1	4.3	4.3	7.1
	Russia	1	4.3	4.3	62.6
	USA	1	4.3	4.3	67.0
	Hungary	1	4.3	4.3	81.3
	Poland	1	4.3	4.3	85.7
				100.0	
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

# THE SPSS READOUTS

Table 4.3 Ages of Participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	4.3	4.3	4.3
	2	5	21.7	21.7	26.0
	3	9	39.1	39.1	65.2
	4	6	26.1	26.1	91.3
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

Table 4.4 Nationality per Region

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EEA	11	47.8	47.8	47.8
	Africa	4	17.4	17.4	65.2
	Asia	2	8.7	8.7	73.9
	N & S America	2	8.7	8.7	82.6
	Rest of Europe	4	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

## Appendix 1 – SPSS

**Table 4.1 Are you Male or Female?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	8	34.8	34.8	34.8
	Male	15	65.2	65.2	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.2 Nationality - per individual country**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ireland	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
	India	2	8.7	8.7	47.8
	UK	1	4.3	4.3	52.2
	Nigeria	3	13.0	13.0	65.2
	Romania	1	4.3	4.3	69.6
	Colombia	1	4.3	4.3	73.9
	South Africa	1	4.3	4.3	78.3
	Russia	1	4.3	4.3	82.6
	USA	1	4.3	4.3	87.0
	Hungary	1	4.3	4.3	91.3
	Poland	1	4.3	4.3	95.7
	Bulgaria	1	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.3 Ages of Participants**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	4.3	4.3	4.3
	2	8	34.8	34.8	39.1
	3	9	39.1	39.1	78.3
	4	5	21.7	21.7	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.4 Nationality per Region**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EEA	11	47.8	47.8	47.8
	Africa	4	17.4	17.4	65.2
	Asia	2	8.7	8.7	73.9
	N & S America	2	8.7	8.7	82.6
	Rest of Europe	4	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.5 Nationality EEA vs non EEA**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EEA	11	47.8	47.8	47.8
	non-EEA	12	52.2	52.2	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.6 Statistics – Mean, Median & Mode**

N	Valid	23
	Missing	0
Mean		2.78
Median		3.00
Mode		3

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.7 What was the biggest barrier you faced when considering setting up in business?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Financial Risk	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
	Business Permission	1	4.3	4.3	43.5
	Business Culture	2	8.7	8.7	52.2
	Lack business information	3	13.0	13.0	65.2
	Persuading others	1	4.3	4.3	69.6
	Lack of network	1	4.3	4.3	73.9
	Red tape	1	4.3	4.3	78.3
	Personal Confidence	3	13.0	13.0	91.3
	Gender	1	4.3	4.3	95.7
	Legal compliance	1	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Time	23	100.0	100.0	
	Total	9	39.1	39.1	39.1

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.8 What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enterprise agencies	7	30.4	30.4	30.4
	Personal skills and experience	4	17.4	17.4	47.8
	Irish goodwill	2	8.7	8.7	56.5
	Business Research	2	8.7	8.7	65.2
	Good education	1	4.3	4.3	69.6
	Family support	2	8.7	8.7	78.3
	Mentors	1	4.3	4.3	82.6
	Similar business culture	1	4.3	4.3	87.0
	Good business network	1	4.3	4.3	91.3
	Lack of red tape	1	4.3	4.3	95.7
	Well trained workforce	1	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	23	100	100	100

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.9 What was the biggest barrier you faced when considering setting up in business?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Financial Risk	13	43.3	43.3	43.3
	Lack of business information	5	16.7	16.7	60.0
	Personal confidence	3	10.0	10.0	70.0
	Business Culture	2	6.7	6.7	76.7
	Legal compliance	2	6.7	6.7	83.3
	Other	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.10 Nationality \* Bigbarrier Crosstabulation**

		Bigbarrier						Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Count	7	3	1	1	1	3	16
	% within Nationality	43.8%	18.8%	6.3%	6.3%	6.3%	18.8%	100.0%
2	Count	6	2	2	1	1	2	14
	% within Nationality	42.9%	14.3%	14.3%	7.1%	7.1%	14.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	13	5	3	2	2	5	30
	% within Nationality	43.3%	16.7%	10.0%	6.7%	6.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.11 What helped you most when you were thinking of starting up in business in Ireland?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enterprise agencies	8	34.8	34.8	34.8
	Personal skills and experience	4	17.4	17.4	52.2
	Irish goodwill	2	8.7	8.7	60.9
	Business research	2	8.7	8.7	69.6
	Family support	2	8.7	8.7	78.3
	Other	5	21.7	21.7	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.12 Nationality \* Assistance Crosstabulation**

		Assistance						Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1
Nationality 1	Count	4	2	0	1	1	3	11
	% within Nationality	36.4%	18.2%	.0%	9.1%	9.1%	27.3%	100.0%
2	Count	4	2	2	1	1	2	12
	% within Nationality	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	8	4	2	2	2	5	23
	% within Nationality	34.8%	17.4%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	21.7%	100.0%

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.13 Nationality \* Assistance Crosstabulation Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.161(a)	5	.827
Likelihood Ratio	2.930	5	.711
Linear-by-Linear Association	.098	1	.755
N of Valid Cases	23		

a 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .96.

**Table 4.14 Nationality & Unique Barrier EME Cross-tabulation**

		Unique Barrier EMEs						Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1
Nationality 1	Count	1	3	1	3	2	6	16
	% within Nationality	6.3%	18.8%	6.3%	18.8%	12.5%	37.5%	100.0%
2	Count	9	1	3	0	0	1	14
	% within Nationality	64.3%	7.1%	21.4%	.0%	.0%	7.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	10	4	4	3	2	7	30
	% within Nationality	33.3%	13.3%	13.3%	10.0%	6.7%	23.3%	100.0%

**Table 4.15 Chi-Square Tests Nationality and Unique Barriers for EMEs**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.556(a)	5	.005
Likelihood Ratio	19.427	5	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.617	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	30		

a 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93.

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.16 Correlations Pearson Correlation Nationality & Barriers EME**

		Nationality	BarrierEME
Nationality	Pearson Correlation	1	-.545(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	30	30
BarrierEME	Pearson Correlation	-.545(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	30	30

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.17 What is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Business Culture	11	37.9	37.9	37.9
EU Acceptance	3	10.3	10.3	48.3
More ambitious	2	6.9	6.9	55.2
Better eudcated	2	6.9	6.9	62.1
Language skills	2	6.9	6.9	69.0
Other	9	31.0	31.0	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	
Total	38	100.0		

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.18 What one change would make it easier for you to set up in business in Ireland?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Funding	6	26.1	26.1	26.1
Tax Incentives	3	13.0	13.0	39.1
Less Red tape	4	17.4	17.4	56.5
Access Mentors	2	8.7	8.7	65.2
More training	3	13.0	13.0	78.3
Other	5	21.7	21.7	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.19 Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs or should they be devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs or both?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Focus on EME only	2	8.7	8.7	8.7
Focus on EU only	3	13.0	13.0	21.7
Focus on Both	18	78.3	78.3	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.20 Statistics Age**

N	Valid			23
	Missing			0
Mean				2.92
Median				3.00
Mode				3

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.21 Do EMEs face Unique Barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No Unique Barriers	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
Unique Barriers	14	60.9	60.9	60.9
Total	23	100.0	100.0	100.0



**Table 4.22 What is the reason more European entrepreneurs succeed in business in Ireland than business people from other countries?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business Culture	7	30.4	30.4	30.4
	More accepting of EU	2	8.7	8.7	39.1
	More ambitious	2	8.7	8.7	47.8
	Better educated	2	8.7	8.7	56.5
	Speak the same language	2	8.7	8.7	65.2
	Government action	2	8.7	8.7	73.9
	Mistrust of EMEs	1	4.3	4.3	78.3
	Self Belief	1	4.3	4.3	82.6
	Work ethic	1	4.3	4.3	87.0
	Immigration Laws	1	4.3	4.3	91.3
	Proximity	1	4.3	4.3	95.7
	No reply	1	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.23 Should the Irish Government be doing more to attract ethnic minority entrepreneurs, devoting their energies to attracting Irish and EU entrepreneurs instead or both?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EMEs	2	8.7	8.7	8.7
	EEA	3	13.0	13.0	21.7
	Both	18	78.3	78.3	100.0
	Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

**Table 4.24 Do you think ethnic minority entrepreneurs experience any unique barriers when setting up in business in Ireland?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No unique barriers	9	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Racism	5	16.7	16.7	46.7
	Language	5	16.7	16.7	63.3
	Credit History	2	6.7	6.7	70.0
	Red tape	2	6.7	6.7	76.7
	Other	7	23.3	23.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

