



Counseling session

Strengthening the Partnership between Belgium and Georgia through Temporary Mobility of Entrepreneurs

Across Europe and partner countries, fostering innovation-driven partnerships while supporting well-managed migration remains a key policy priority. The Entrepreneurial Mobility Link (EMLINK) project addresses this by **piloting a temporary mobility model connecting Georgian start-ups with Belgian partners**. Implemented between 2023 and 2025, EMLINK supported entrepreneurs through **tailored training, mentoring, and direct engagement with Belgium's innovation ecosystem**. By combining mobility with structured support, the project enabled participants to develop practical skills, explore new markets, and build partnerships.

From Vision to Reality

Counseling session



The Unloop (former Sidekick) team—a digital platform providing mental health support and therapy services—was supported through the project in refining its product, validating it with Belgian research partners, and further developing its research-based model. During this process, the company built a dedicated team and is now actively exploring broader European collaborations. It also reported a **significantly improved understanding of EU and Belgian markets**, including regulatory requirements, pricing strategies, business-to-business sales processes, and investor expectations.

By linking entrepreneurship, innovation, and private-sector engagement with migration objectives, EMLINK contributed to Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) III priorities and reinforced cooperation between Belgium and Georgia.

“We are now collaborating with several startups in Belgium, and our current goal is to apply for a European Horizon grant.”
participants of EMLINK programme.

A Tailored Pathway to Partnership

EMLINK combined **capacity development with hands-on experience**. Through a structured acceleration course, one-to-one mentoring, and a study visit, **entrepreneurs developed practical skills while directly engaging with potential partners**. The programme focused on **matching** start-ups with relevant stakeholders, **creating opportunities** for durable cooperation rather than one-off exchanges. This targeted approach helped participants move quickly **from initial contacts to concrete cooperation**. By integrating training, mentoring, and mobility, EMLINK created a **coherent pathway** that supported both **business development** and **cross-border engagement**.



From Mobility to Lasting Impact

A key achievement of EMLINK is **turning short-term mobility into sustained cross-border cooperation**. Start-ups established partnerships with Belgian actors, including pilot projects, advisory relationships, and research collaborations. Several entrepreneurs continued **working with partners beyond the project, while others expanded into new markets**. Four out of ten start-ups achieved growth or partnerships. Two, both led by women, took steps to establish a presence in Belgium, reflecting a gender-sensitive approach. The project strengthened links between Belgian and Georgian innovation ecosystems, enabling ongoing collaboration.



Exchange mission to Belgium

Lasting Change in Innovation Cooperation

EMLINK shows that entrepreneurial mobility can foster cross-border cooperation while supporting migration objectives. Tailored support and ecosystem exposure help participants build partnerships and expand. Sustained mentoring and follow-up are key to long-term impact. As a pilot, EMLINK offers a strong proof of concept for scaling similar initiatives.

About the MPF

This grant project is part of the EU-funded Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), managed by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) to support the external dimension of the EU's migration policy. MPF funds projects that promote dialogue and cooperation on migration and mobility between EU Member States and partner countries outside the EU.

About the project

EMLINK connects start-ups with international partners through structured mobility, training, and mentoring. By linking entrepreneurship with migration policy objectives, it promotes innovation, market access, and cross-border collaboration.

About the evaluation

Findings are based on project monitoring and participant feedback collected throughout implementation.



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ICMPD

International Centre for
Migration Policy Development