

Opening New Labor Pathways from Colombia to Spain:

A Scalable Finance and Ecosystem Support Model



Initial Financing

Grants & investment

Worker Placement

& Repayment

Recycled Capital

Reinvestment & Scaling

OVERVIEW: Labor Mobility Partnerships (LaMP) proposes a pilot initiative to catalyze safe, legal labor mobility pathways from Colombia to Spain by aligning employer demand with workers (including nationals, migrants and refugees) through market-driven mechanisms.

The model combines cross-border financing with coordinated ecosystem support to address the financial, regulatory, and operational barriers that prevent workers from accessing training, certification, and formal employment. Designed as a proof of concept, the initiative aims to demonstrate a scalable, replicable approach that can grow across sectors, geographies, and levels of investment.

Aligning Spain's labor shortages with Colombia's talent

Spain faces acute and accelerating labor shortages in sectors such as **elderly care, trucking, and electrical installation**, driven by demographic aging and workforce attrition.



Conversely, Colombia is home to large populations of underemployed and displaced workers, including migrants, refugees, and nationals, who possess relevant experience and strong motivation but lack access to affordable financing, recognized certification pathways, and coordinated migration systems.

As part of this effort, LaMP mapped and strengthened connections among operational partners in Spain and Colombia, and developed an innovative financial and integrated solution to address the costs and complexity that have historically kept many promising labor pathways out of reach.

Impact on livelihoods and economic opportunities

For underemployed and displaced workers in Colombia, access to safe, legal labor mobility pathways can be transformative. By enabling workers to obtain recognized certification and secure formal employment in Spain, these pathways offer substantially higher and more stable incomes, and in some pathways even higher (approximately four to five times higher for electricians and three times higher for truck drivers and elderly care workers). Beyond immediate income gains, participation strengthens household economic security, reduces reliance on informal or precarious work, and generates lasting benefits through remittances, skills acquisition, and long-term upward mobility.



Higher
Incomes



Economic
Stability



Remittances
sent Home



Upward
Mobility

Integrated Pathways Solution



This solution has been designed in collaboration with local stakeholders, service providers and workers. Its components create a durable labor mobility infrastructure rather than a one-off placement program.

Key Components



Across occupations, projected earnings significantly exceed upfront training and migration costs, supporting affordability for workers, reliable repayment, and long-term economic integration. The design is flexible and can adapt to additional sectors, skill levels, and origin countries as employer demand evolves.

Financial Model

PATHWAYS FUND

Recuperable finance component:

- Uses Income Share Agreements (ISAs) or similar capital instruments
- Finances training, certification, legal processing (both in origin and destination countries), travel, and initial resettlement
- Repayments are linked to income and designed to be flexible
- Capital is recycled over time, enabling reinvestment or investor exit

ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT GRANT

Non-recuperable market-building component:

- Time-bound, grant-funded support that strengthens and aligns the labor mobility ecosystem
- Supports participant outreach, employer engagement, accompaniment and coordination across stakeholders
- Designed to phase out as employers, training institutions, and financial actors absorb costs in a mature ecosystem

Scale and Sustainability

This solution:

- Can launch small pilot funds to demonstrate proof of concept
- Can grow into larger blended-finance mechanisms as performance data accumulates
- Can accommodate a wide range of donor and investor participation, from catalytic grants to patient, return-seeking capital

Over time, this solution is designed to attract employer co-investment and government or multilateral participation, reducing reliance on grant funding.

From Concept to Pilot

This initiative sits at the intersection of labor shortages, livelihoods, and innovative finance. It moves beyond short-term pilots toward a market-based infrastructure for safe, legal labor mobility benefiting workers, employers, investors, and governments alike. LaMP welcomes active partnerships and invites organizations ready to collaborate and contribute to pilot this initiative.