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Understanding entrepreneurship in the local context

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Understanding Entrepreneurship in the Local Context

Population decline, ageing and density

Heike Delfmann

1. The regional context greatly influences the relationship between population change and new business creation.
2. Dutch urban areas are more resilient. They are able to absorb the effects of strong population decline better than rural regions with regard to new business creation.
3. Due to low intensity competition in population declining regions, the positive effect of new business creation on employment change is larger than it is in growing regions.
4. Rurality is a contextual phenomenon rather than an absolute: even though England's countryside has a much lower population density than the Dutch countryside has, both should be considered to be rural based on people's perception and spatial mobility.
5. Population ageing has no substantial effect on the creation of new businesses, neither on the start-up rates nor on the reasons for start-up.
6. The main reason for entrepreneurs for starting a new business in the context of rurality and ageing has little to do with profit maximizing, but rather with maximizing personal happiness.
7. In the case of rural entrepreneurship, the firm location choice is above all a residential choice.
8. Local businesses create and enhance social capital by providing opportunities for inhabitants to interact and develop a sense of community identity.
9. Local businesses are also a public good: the local benefits of entrepreneurship extend beyond the private good, emphasizing the importance of local entrepreneurship regardless of their economic impact.
10. Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods adds 'colour' to the numbers.