



L'Aquila, Italy
27-29 June



Rolf Sternberg, professor, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany

Entrepreneurship and Geography - some Thoughts about a Complex Relationship

ABSTRACT

The increasingly popular concept 'entrepreneurial eco-system' is symptomatic of the manifold connections between entrepreneurship research and geographical research. Over the past few years much progress has been made in understanding how entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurial attitudes unfold in a regional context - or in the context of other spatial scales. This geographical perspective on entrepreneurship fits well the contextual turn in (parts of) entrepreneurship research in recent years stressing the idea that, instead of the attributes an autonomous entrepreneur or a single firm, the environment they are acting in plays a more important role for entrepreneurship as a social and economic phenomenon.

However, both related academic disciplines still rather rarely cooperate in research projects and papers. This is surprising as, on the hand, economists and entrepreneurship scholars more frequently than in the past consider geographical aspects of entrepreneurship and, on the other, entrepreneurship meanwhile has become a popular topic for human geographers, and economic geographers in particular. Furthermore, other disciplines like psychology have discovered the rich relationship between geography and entrepreneurship as a potential rich research field.

The aims of this key note speech are threefold. First, it is sought to provide a better understanding of the meaning and nature of relationships between geography and entrepreneurship by summarizing the main results of previous research. Second, a research agenda is proposed that more explicitly than in the past considers the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the disciplines involved. Third, policy implications and challenges that emanate from insights into the described relationship are discussed.

Short Bio:

Rolf Sternberg is Full Professor in Economic Geography at the Institute of Economic and Cultural Geography, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany. He has studied economic geography and received his first degree (1984) as well a doctorate (Ph.D., 1987) and the habilitation (1994) from the University of Hannover. Between 1995 and 1996 he was a Full Professor of Regional Geography at the Technical University of Munich (Bavaria, Germany). Between 1996 and 2005 he was a Full Professor of Economic and Social Geography, University of Cologne, Faculty of Economics and Social Science.

Sternberg's main research interests are related to the spatial consequences of policy activities (e.g., technology policy instruments like science parks), to the impacts of networks between innovative actors (firms, research institutions, policy makers), regional development, new firm formation process



L'Aquila, Italy
27-29 June



and effects, and in the field of regional-sectoral clusters. Beside seven books he has published more than 200 articles covering journals like *Research Policy*, *Journal of Economic Geography*, *Regional Studies*, *Economic Geography*, *European Planning Studies*, *The Annals of Regional Science* or *Small Business Economics* (see www.wigeo.uni-hannover.de for a complete list of publications and research projects). Since 1998 he is the leader of the German team of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and, since 2011, he was also a member of the GEM Research and Advisory Committee (RIAC).

Sternberg has done research assignments for organizations like the OECD, the European Science foundation, the Ministry of Science, Research and Arts Baden-Württemberg or the Ministry of Education and Research North-Rhine Westphalia . He has acquired, among others, research grants from the German Research Foundation (DFG), EU Commission (DG Research, DG Technology, RISE), Volkswagen Foundation, Ministry of Science and Culture Lower Saxony, Federal German Ministry of Research and Technology, Federal German Ministry of Economic Affairs.

<http://scholar.google.de/citations?hl=de&user=0wOZa1MAAAAJ>