Research objective
Objective is to investigate the causal mechanisms between regional conditions and entrepreneurial activity at the individual level on the one hand, and entrepreneurial and regional economic development on the other hand.

Partial research questions
1. How do levels of entrepreneurial dynamics differ across regions and how has it developed in the Netherlands since 1988?
2. Which factors determine regional and national differences in entrepreneurial levels, and to what extent?
3. How and to what extent do regional conditions influence individual behaviour and performance in the start-up process?
4. What is the impact of regional conditions on regional levels of entrepreneurship through individual entrepreneurial activity and how do differences in regional conditions affect economic development via entrepreneurial processes in three contrasting Dutch regions?

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) research program is an annual assessment of the national level of entrepreneurial activity. Initiated in 1999 with 10 countries, GEM expanded to 42 countries in 2007.

The research program, based on a harmonized assessment of the level of national entrepreneurial activity for all participating countries, involves exploration of the role of entrepreneurship in national economic growth. The methodology allows exploring several types and phases of entrepreneurship.

In the PhD project we use the individual data (some 300,000 observations in the adult population) for 2001-2006 to derive several measures on entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial activity for 125 European regions.

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Conclusion

Some Results

Netherlands

- Independent entry rates
  - Explanation of regional & time variation:
    - Growth value added (+)
    - Unemployment rate (-)
    - Relaxation Establishment Act (+)

- New subsidiaries rates
  - Explanation of regional & time variation:
    - Degree of urbanisation (+)
    - Population growth (+)
  - Controlling for individual level characteristics (for three regions indicated in the map):
    - Observed differences in early-stage entrepreneurial activity rates become non-significant
    - Observed differences in perceived opportunities to start-up remain significant (Region of Groot-Amsterdam highest)
    - Oost-Groningen has relatively more people perceiving to have the skills and knowledge to start a business
    - Region of Twente has the highest rate of innovation oriented early-stage entrepreneurial activity

Europe

- Total early-stage entrepreneurial activity rates
- Ambitious early-stage entrepreneurial activity rates

- Controlling for individual level characteristics:
  - Gross regional product (U-shape)
  - Perceived opportunities for starting business (+)
  - Perceived capabilities to start a business (+)
  - Fear of failure when it comes to start a business (-)
  - National degree of employment protection / social security level (-)

- Controlling for individual level characteristics:
  - Population density
  - Gross regional product (U-shape)
  - Perceived capabilities to start a business (+)
  - Fear of failure when it comes to start a business (-)
  - National degree of employment protection / social security level (-)