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Figuring it out: Configurations of high-performing entrepreneurial ecosystems in Europe

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is an important driver of economic development, but its success depends on a large set of interdependent factors and actors: an ecosystem for entrepreneurship. Is there one way to a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem or are there different paths? This paper applies Qualitative Comparative Analysis to identify and analyze configurations of successful regional entrepreneurial ecosystems in Europe. We test two rivalling causal logics: one stating that all entrepreneurial ecosystem elements need to be present and the weakest link is the most important constraint, and the other arguing that elements are substitutable. High entrepreneurship outputs can be realized with a small variety of entrepreneurial ecosystem configurations. But the higher the entrepreneurship output, the more convergence there is to an all-round entrepreneurial ecosystem.