

Foreword

Entrepreneurship at a Glance is a new publication that presents key indicators on entrepreneurship. Until recently, most entrepreneurship research relied on ad hoc data compilations developed to support specific projects and virtually no official statistics on the subject existed. The collection of harmonised indicators presented in this publication is the result of the OECD-Eurostat Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme (EIP). The programme, started in 2006, is the first attempt to compile and publish international data on entrepreneurship from official government statistical sources. Indeed, to meet the challenge of providing new entrepreneurship indicators, while minimising costs for national statistical offices and burden on business, the programme focuses attention on exploiting existing sources of data instead of developing new business surveys.

Entrepreneurship is defined by the EIP as the phenomenon associated with entrepreneurial activity, which is the enterprising human action in pursuit of the generation of value, through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets. In this sense, entrepreneurship is a phenomenon that manifests itself throughout the economy and in many different forms with many different outcomes, and these outcomes are not always related to the creation of financial wealth; for example, they may be related to increasing employment, tackling inequalities, or indeed, increasingly, environmental issues. The challenge of the EIP is to improve the understanding of these multiple manifestations. The programme recognises that no single indicator can ever adequately cover entrepreneurship, and it has therefore developed a set of measures that each captures a different aspect or different type of entrepreneurship; these measures are referred to as EIP indicators of entrepreneurial performance. There are currently some 20 performance indicators and 25 countries covered in the EIP; extending the coverage to more indicators and countries is one of the main objectives of the programme.

The EIP takes a comprehensive approach to the measurement of entrepreneurship by looking not only at the manifestation of the entrepreneurial phenomenon but also at the factors that influence it. These factors range from the market conditions to the regulatory framework, to the culture or the conditions of access to finance. While some areas of determinants lend themselves more easily to measurement (for instance, the existence and restrictiveness of anti-trust law or the administrative costs to set-up a new business in a country), for other determinants the difficulty resides in finding suitable measures (e.g. venture capital and angel capital) and/or in comprehending the exact nature of their relationship with entrepreneurship (e.g. culture). The EIP aims to contribute to advance research on the less understood, less measurable determinants of entrepreneurship.

The publication is divided into two parts. The first presents conceptual and methodological issues related to the measurement of entrepreneurship and its determinants. In this first edition of Entrepreneurship at a Glance two topics are addressed: the quality and international comparability of entrepreneurship indicators computed from statistical business registers, and the operationalisation of the concept of green entrepreneurship for the purpose of measurement. Future editions of the publication will report on progress in measuring specific types of entrepreneurship, such as high-growth enterprises and social entrepreneurship, or specific determinants, for example entrepreneurial culture and capabilities. The choice of themes reflects the ambitions of the EIP to establish sound and comparable measures of entrepreneurship and its determinants.

The second part of the publication is broken down into eight sections, covering mainly indicators of entrepreneurial performance but also presenting a selection of indicators of determinants. The initial sections focus on structural data of the enterprise population (1) and on indicators of business demography (2 to 4). Timely indicators of entrepreneurship, which provide updated, although not fully comparable information on enterprise dynamics, are presented in a separate section (5). Section 6 looks at the gender dimension of entrepreneurship, while Section 7 provides examples of indicators for migrants entrepreneurs. The final Section (8) contains a selection of indicators of entrepreneurial determinants; these are drawn from a number of international sources.

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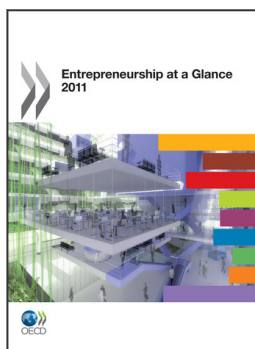
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