

# Press release

**There is no silver bullet for strengthening regional propensity to start a business**

**For the first time, IfM Bonn has analysed regional start-up ecosystems in terms of commercial and freelance start-ups**



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**Bonn, 6 September 2022.** Successful start-up ecosystems are characterised by a good transport and telecommunications infrastructure, a high population density, a high proportion of foreign citizens, and numerous qualified employees. IfM Bonn researchers found this out and published results in their study: "Start-up activity at district level and in independent cities: What characterises successful start-up ecosystems?". In order to answer this question Dr Rosemarie Kay and her team examined differences in the design of regional start-up ecosystems at the district level based on extensive data. For the first time, business start-ups in trade and the liberal professions were considered together.

"At first glance, cities seem to offer start-up founders better locational factors than rural regions. At the same time, there are also cities in Germany whose population has a below-average propensity to start a business. These are Wolfsburg (Lower Saxony), Bottrop (North Rhine-Westphalia), St. Wendel (Saarland) or Jena (Thuringia)," reports the head of the study. In contrast, the IfM researchers found eleven rural districts where the propensity to start a business was above average in recent years. These outstanding rural districts include Marburg-Biedenkopf (Hesse), Miesbach, Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen and Garmisch-Partenkirchen (all Bavaria) as well as the districts of Görlitz (Saxony), Dahme-Spreewald, and Teltow-Fläming (Brandenburg).

According to Dr Rosemarie Kay, there is no silver bullet for developing an excellent regional start-up ecosystem. Nor do regional start-up ecosystems have to be outstanding in every respect to be associated with a high propensity to start up. "Rather, we have found that specific strengths can compensate for specific weaknesses. In the case of the district of Görlitz, for example, where many Polish-born construction workers are self-employed, the border location seems to have a positive effect. In other districts, universities or tourist offers can

compensate the regional weaknesses. In other words, the bundle of framework conditions conducive to start-ups can vary greatly from region to region. Ultimately, a good start-up ecosystem depends on a favourable interplay of different factors," summarises Dr Rosemarie Kay. This interplay can stabilise start-up activity in a region even during a crisis, as another IfM study analysing the COVID-19 pandemic shows.

The studies " Start-up activity at district level and in independent cities: What characterises successful start-up ecosystems" and "Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on commercial start-up activity in 2020 - a regional analysis" are available on the Institute für Mittelstandsforschung website ([www.ifm-bonn.org](http://www.ifm-bonn.org)). IfM Bonn will also publish the annual NUI region ranking results in the coming weeks. In addition to business start-ups, this also considers new settlements in a region.

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