Individual agency and socio-spatial change in regional development: Conceptualizing governance entrepreneurship

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Abstract

Although scholars and practitioners increasingly highlight the role of individuals in initiating socio-spatial change processes in regional development, there is still little conceptual and empirical knowledge concerning this phenomenon. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to gain a deeper theoretical understanding of entrepreneurial individuals in local and regional governance and to provide a more comprehensive framework for investigating individual agency and socio-spatial change. In concepts of local and regional governance, the role of individuals has been overshadowed by the focus on institutional and organizational structures. Policy and institutional entrepreneurship literature stresses the importance of individual capabilities for identifying windows of opportunity and promoting policy and institutional change. However, it reveals some shortcomings concerning the influence of entrepreneurial individuals in governance itself. By combining both strands of literature, the concept of governance entrepreneurship is introduced here. It accentuates the role of entrepreneurial individuals in initiating change in local and regional governance by establishing or transforming actor constellations, interaction modes, or decision-making processes.
making territories. Finally, the interrelatedness of the concepts of institutional, policy, and governance entrepreneurship is discussed in order to gain a deeper understanding of these different types of transformative agency.

**KEYWORDS**
governance entrepreneurship, institutional entrepreneurship, key individuals, local governance, policy entrepreneurship, regional governance, socio-spatial change

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

The socio-economic transformations that take place in cities and regions all over Europe (Iammarino, Rodríguez-Pose, & Storper, 2018) not only exacerbate spatial disparities but also raise the complexity and fragmentation of local and regional governance arrangements (Uitermark & Duyvendak, 2008). In regions undergoing socio-spatial transformations, the local actors simultaneously have to deal with increasing challenges and with decreasing financial and human resources. In this context, scholars, practitioners, and journalists have been noticing the role of entrepreneurial individuals in change processes (Cocks, 2013; Gailing & Ibert, 2016; Rothhaas, 2018). Particularly in peripheralized regions, traditional organizations with rigid structures increasingly seem to fail to react adequately to emerging pressures and fall short in meeting local demands (Sotarauta & Suvinen, 2018). Thus, the individual engagement of politicians, service professionals, or community activists receives increasing attention in the context of socio-spatial change processes on the local and regional level.

Against this background, the question “how [and by whom] influence is gained in modern governance emerges as crucial” (Sotarauta, 2010, p. 397). However, until now, governance literature has focused mainly on the role of institutions and collective decision-making processes, whereas there had been little theoretical attempt to integrate the role of entrepreneurial individuals into local and regional governance. Although the shift from traditional forms of government to more networked modes of governance included a wider perspective on state and non-state actors shaping complex processes of interaction (Pierre, 2005; Gupta et al., 2015), knowledge about the possible influence of individuals on local and regional governance has thus far remained superficial. On the one hand, this could be due to the dominance of conceptual frameworks focusing on the role of institutions in governance research (Cocks, 2013). On the other hand, it could also be due to pragmatic reasons, as “interaction-oriented policy research would be impossible if explanations had to be sought at the individual level in every case” (Scharpf, 1997, p. 12).

The concept of entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, 1961), apart from other approaches such as leadership (Sotarauta, 2016) or brokerage (Leick & Gretzinger, 2018a; Sabatier, 1993), however emphasizes the role of entrepreneurial individuals (or groups of individuals) in decision-making and processes of change (Gailing & Ibert, 2016). Policy and institutional entrepreneurship are central concepts in policy research as well as in organizational and management studies and have particularly received broad attention in studies focusing on (trans-)national changes in the environmental, economic, or health sectors (Huitema & Meijerink, 2010; Levy & Scully, 2007; Mintrom & Luetjens, 2017; Mintrom, Salisbury, & Luetjens, 2014; Reimer & Saerbeck, 2017). Urban and regional research has long remained rather silent on policy and institutional entrepreneurship, but recently, scholars have increasingly begun to draw on these concepts to investigate the role of entrepreneurial individuals in regional economic development (Miörner & Tripp, 2017; Sotarauta, 2017; Sotarauta & Suvinen, 2018) or urban regeneration (Catney & Henneberry, 2016; Cocks, 2013; Svensson, Klofsten, & Etzkowitz, 2012).
Indeed, the concepts of policy and institutional entrepreneurship provide some interesting insights into understanding the ways in which entrepreneurial individuals may shape socio-spatial change on the local level. However, these concepts reveal some limitations in explaining the role of entrepreneurial individuals in local and regional development, as they tend to generalize processes of change and thereby overlook the ways in which entrepreneurial individuals change the governance system itself. By taking an actor-centred perspective on governance (Benz, 2010; Kooiman, 2003; Scharpf, 2000) and critically reviewing the literature on policy and institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009; Kingdon, 1995), the paper argues for a more differentiated perspective on individual agency in socio-spatial change processes. The envisaged contribution of this paper is twofold: First, it aims for a deeper understanding of the less obvious, underlying changes made by entrepreneurial individuals in local and regional governance. Therefore, it introduces the concept of governance entrepreneurship, in addition to policy and institutional entrepreneurship. Second, the paper wants to go beyond a descriptive level of presenting the "who" and the "how" and provide a more comprehensive framework for analysing the roles of entrepreneurial individuals in socio-spatial change. For this purpose, the three concepts of institutional, policy, and governance entrepreneurship are linked by discussing their correspondences and differences.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows: The next section critically discusses the concepts of local and regional governance, policy entrepreneurship, and institutional entrepreneurship in order to gain a more nuanced view on individual agency in local and regional development. Based on these insights, the following section develops the concept of governance entrepreneurship and discusses its interrelation with policy and institutional entrepreneurship. Finally, the conclusion draws attention to the conceptual value of the framework and provides an outlook onto the potential for future research.

2 | THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | An actor-centred perspective on local and regional governance

In the literature on regional development, the importance of governance has been widely acknowledged (Kim & Jurey, 2013), as it allows us to observe the complexity of the interactions of diverse institutions and actors on local as well as regional levels. This paper draws upon an analytical governance perspective that understands local and regional governance as a system in which a variety of actors from different domains of political and socio-economic life is engaged in public decision-making processes (Benz, 2010; Denters, 2013; Fürst, 2001). Thus, it looks beyond institutional boundaries and searches for processes and relations through which actors coordinate their actions and exchange resources to promote defined policy objectives (Pierre, 2005). Hence, governance is marked both by horizontal connections and by hierarchical, competitive, and cooperative modes of interaction, all of which can lead to positive as well as negative outcomes (Fürst, 2004).

The local and regional governance concept and its characteristics are not clearly defined, and operationalization is rather rare (Willi, Pütz, & Müller, 2018). However, a heuristic model that is often combined with a local or regional governance perspective is that of actor-centred institutionalism (Mayntz & Scharpf, 1995; Mose, Jacuniak-Suda, & Fiedler, 2014). The model is used here to operationalize an actor-centred perspective on governance and to interrelate the terms of institutions, policies, and governance. It refers to “strategic actions and interactions of purposeful and resourceful individual and corporate actors and to the enabling, constraining, and shaping effects of given (but variable) institutional structures and institutionalized forms” (Scharpf, 1997, p. 34). The model distinguishes between noninstitutional factors (such as demographic change, economic transformation, or digitalization), institutional factors as well as actors, and their interaction modes (see Figure 1). Specific combinations of these elements lead to different policy outcomes comprising goals and instruments. Noninstitutional and institutional factors influence actors but do not fully determine them in their actions (Scharpf, 1997).¹ Institutions are understood as structural preconditions, which in turn are defined as formal and informal systems of rule that guide the behaviour of actors. In this sense,
formal institutions can include, for instance, laws and public regulations (e.g., planning documents, community strategies, or agreements), whereas informal institutions refer to norms, values, or beliefs (e.g., growth-oriented development; North, 1990; Pattberg, 2017).

As the governance perspective is generally problem orientated, a variety of state and non-state actors with different backgrounds are included in policy processes interacting or collaborating in specific constellations (Fürst, 2004). These actors interact in different forms of organization, such as hierarchy, networks, or concurrence. Actors are characterized by specific action capabilities and orientations. In this context, the term capabilities refers to all action resources (e.g., social, physical, and financial) that support or limit competencies and participation of actors in policy processes and enable them to influence the outcome of a given interaction. The action orientation of actors influences their perceptions and preferences, which are based on beliefs and values (Mayntz & Scharpf, 1995; Scharpf, 1997). Although Scharpf (1997) conceptualized his model for both individual and corporate actors, the focus of his explanations is on the interaction of corporate actors, such as organizations or associations. However, he concedes that one must be able “to revert to the individual level whenever it becomes empirically necessary to do so” (Scharpf, 1997).

By taking an interaction-oriented perspective on policy research, actor-centred institutionalism gives equal weight both to the interactions of purposeful actors and to the formal and informal institutions surrounding them (Scharpf, 1997). In this context, institutions are defined as the rules and regularities that constrain but also enable the actors in a governance system. However, the model particularly emphasises the importance of purposeful actors and their behaviour for understanding processes in public decision-making. As the actor constellations and interaction modes are influenced but are not fully determined by institutions, it can be assumed that these specific constellations (and interactions) themselves can become a central object of change pursued by the actors involved. In general, institutions are seen as more persistent over time, whereas governance arrangements are considered to be more flexible. Following this argumentation and defining governance as a system of various state and non-state actors that are engaged in public decision-making processes, governance arrangements and interactions should not be seen as an institution and must thus be addressed separately to achieve a more comprehensive explanation for socio-spatial change.

2.2 | Sketching out the specific role of individuals in local and regional governance

Four characteristics of governance processes on the local and regional scale are outlined in order to show why investigating entrepreneurial individuals in governance contributes to a deeper understanding of socio-spatial change processes on the local scale. First, local and regional governance networks often include a relatively small number of stakeholders, and interactions are often based on trust, social proximity, and face-to-face contacts between a limited number of actors (Beer, 2014). Second, it is often individuals that provide an important impetus for place-based
polices (Baumgartner, Pütz, & Seidl, 2013; Leick & Gretzinger, 2018b) or the creation of place-sensitive visions for the future (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007; Garud & Karnøe, 2001) by providing their ideas, knowledge, or personal networks (Mayer & Baumgartner, 2014). Third, local and regional decision-making processes are embedded in multi-level and multisectoral governance structures. As governance-related local policymaking takes place in multiactor networks that cross traditional vertical and horizontal jurisdictional boundaries and cut across state and non-state spheres, individuals have the advantage of being more flexible and faster in navigating through complex and changing actor constellations than organizations or associations (Catney & Henneberry, 2016; Denters, 2013; Sotarauta, 2017). Individuals holding different political or societal functions may particularly act as intermediaries between different groups of actors or function as catalysts between the local and the national level. Fourth, non-state actors from civil society or economy with individual objectives increasingly emerge on the local and regional governance stage and influence decision-making processes (Uitermark & Duyvendak, 2008). In general, the range of individuals included in decision-making processes is more diverse on a local level than on a national government level, as the accessibility to local policymaking is low threshold compared with the national scale (Denters, 2013).

2.3 The concepts of institutional and policy entrepreneurship—Definition and limitations

In the quest for a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of entrepreneurial individuals in socio-spatial change processes, the next chapter discusses the institutional and policy entrepreneurship literature. Before discussing both strands of literature, the term entrepreneurship, which is central for both concepts, is explained briefly. The term entrepreneurship originally emerged in the field of economics, viewing entrepreneurs as innovators that recombine resources to open new markets or introduce new technologies (Schumpeter, 1961). Policy and organization sciences, however, delineated the concept of entrepreneurship much more broadly by focusing on changes in the public and political sphere. Among different notions of agency, entrepreneurship is the concept that addresses the personal capabilities and attributes of individuals as well as their embeddedness in environmental contexts and institutional settings (Gailing & Ibert, 2016; Galanti, 2018). From this angle, entrepreneurs are characterized by the ability to purposefully alter the structures in which they are embedded. As a minimal definition, entrepreneurship thus describes a type of transformative agency (Tuominen & Lehtonen, 2018) that highlights the perception and realization of opportunities by purposeful individuals (Schneider, Teske, & Mintrom, 1995).

Despite these similarities, policy entrepreneurship and institutional entrepreneurship originated in different strands of literature, which leads to different implications concerning the changes intended by entrepreneurial individuals. Whereas the concept of policy entrepreneurship emerged from the multiple streams model proposed by Kingdon, 1995 as an explanation for policy change, the literature on institutional entrepreneurship is closely associated with DiMaggio’s (1988) reintroduction of actors’ agency in institutional analysis. Kingdon (1995) introduced the term policy entrepreneurs based on the multiple streams model that involves the three streams of problems, policies, and politics within the policy process. Only when these streams come together, policy change may occur. Policy entrepreneurs are defined as actors who recognize the concurrence of these streams and “are willing to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation, money – to promote a position in return for anticipated future gain” (Kingdon 1995, p. 179). Mintrom and Norman (2009) specify potential targets of policy entrepreneurs and define them as key individuals who strive to initiate policy change and take advantage of “windows of opportunity” to promote new ideas. The entrepreneurs’ strategies are manifold and range from defining problems and building coalitions to leading by example in order to introduce or adapt policies (Mintrom & Norman, 2009).

In contrast, the term institutional entrepreneur refers to “change agents who initiate divergent changes [...] that break the institutional status quo in a field of activity” (Battilana et al., 2009, p. 67). They mobilize resources, power, and competences and aim at transforming established institutions, removing existing ones, or introducing new ones (Levy & Scully, 2007; Weik, 2011). As DiMaggio stated, these “new institutions arise when organized actors with
sufficient resources see in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly” (1988, p. 14). Accordingly, institutional entrepreneurship refers to the breaking of institutional status through the introduction of new and changing institutions or the removal of prevailing institutions, which are understood as formal rules or laws, or as informal norms and values (Battilana et al., 2009; Weik, 2011).

A considerable number of literature reviews show that within the broad base of studies on policy and institutional entrepreneurs, two questions have been dominating the debates so far: Who are the entrepreneurs and how do they change policy or institutions (Brouwer & Huitema, 2017; Christopoulos & Ingold, 2011; Garud et al., 2007; Mintrom & Norman, 2009; Pacheco, York, Dean, & Sarasvathy, 2010)? In this context, the special interest of the literature lies in the variety of applied strategies, such as framing, theorization, collaboration, or lobbying (Pacheco et al., 2010). The institutional conditions under which these entrepreneurial strategies may be successful has however attracted less attention in earlier literature. Although conceptualizations have been proposed to classify structural and institutional factors, there is still no systematized knowledge about the relation between context and agency (Zahariadis & Exadaktylos, 2016).

As noted, the concepts of policy and institutional entrepreneurship originated in different strands of literature. Meanwhile, however, the distinction between policy and institutional changes has become blurred in conceptual and empirical entrepreneurship literature. Petridou, Narbutaitė Aflaki, and Miles (2015) and Green (2017) also draw attention to these shortcomings and argue for a refinement of the concept of entrepreneurship to specify the range of changes initiated by individuals. Bakir and Jarvis (2017) attempt to outline the linkages between policy and institutional entrepreneurship and propose comprehending institutional entrepreneurship as a part of policy entrepreneurship, when policy entrepreneurs seek to implement and translate ideas and policies into formal rules or established practices. However, both concepts should rather be seen as mutually affecting each other because institutional change can represent a crucial moment in policy change, and changes in policies, in return, can have an effect on institutions (Galanti, 2018).

### 2.4 | Empirical evidence: Institutional and policy entrepreneurship in local and regional development

In the following section, the theoretical discussion is supplemented by an in-depth review of empirical studies dealing with institutional and policy entrepreneurship in local and regional development. The aim of this review is to take an actor-centred perspective and to read between the lines in order to identify changes induced by entrepreneurial individuals. Table 1 offers an overview of five selected entrepreneurship studies in urban and regional development, illustrating the contextual factors mentioned above (noninstitutional and institutional), the actor constellations, the interactions, and the changes described. The studies introduce a variety of entrepreneurial individuals that emerge in the state and non-state sphere and range from local officials to religious leaders and private contractors. Compared with articles dealing with institutional or policy entrepreneurship in the national or international perspective, the number of papers dealing with the local or regional scale is rather small (e.g., Bernhard & Wihlborg, 2014; Frisch-Aviram, Cohen, & Beeri, 2018; Leick & Gretzinger, 2018b; Sotarauta, 2017). The case studies that are discussed here were selected for two reasons: First, they discuss the role of entrepreneurial individuals considering (non-)institutional contexts from a local and regional perspective, and second, they unfold the variety of socio-spatial changes regarding decision-making and interaction processes.

The noninstitutional contexts presented in the studies can be classified as fundamental and/or complex challenges (Battilana et al., 2009). Cities and regions have to deal with economic transition, which includes phenomena such as deindustrialization or new emerging economic paths (Cocks, 2013; Miörner & Trippi, 2017); furthermore, they struggle with environmental disasters, such as floods (Böcher, 2015), or attempt to make a shift in planning principles (Klein Woulthuis, Hooimeijer, Bossink, Mulder, & Brouwer, 2013; Petridou, 2018). The selected studies describe the institutional context to varying degrees, referring to institutional and organizational thin and thick structures. The study of Petridou (2018), for instance, systematizes the relation of institutional preconditions and personal...
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<td>Böcher, 2015</td>
<td>Socio-economically weak region, natural disasters, tensions of tourism/environment</td>
<td>Existing concepts for regional flood prevention, intensive political debates, and (supra-)national funding</td>
<td>Charisma, persuasiveness, acceptance, political experience, expertise, and anticipation</td>
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<td>Cocks, 2013</td>
<td>Deindustrialization, economic, and population decline</td>
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<td>Miörner &amp; Trippl, 2017</td>
<td>Established economic paths, rapidly growing new path of digital game industry</td>
<td>Diversified regional innovation system but lack of educational agencies and support for emerging industries</td>
<td>Expertise, organisational, place-specific knowledge, persuasive power, and personal interest</td>
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<td>Path dependence and policy/institutional entrepreneurship</td>
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resources and strategies. Whereas formal institutions, such as concepts or support structures, are illustrated quite vividly, and informal institutions, such as planning cultures or traditions, are rather mentioned implicitly in the studies.

Entrepreneurial actors broaden or reorganize actor constellations in governance arrangements both vertically and horizontally. The horizontal expansion of the actor spectrum is achieved by the activation and inclusion of state and non-state actors in the policymaking process. Within these processes, it can also be noted that individuals, for instance, from industry and commerce, extend their reach towards policy fields that otherwise may have been regarded as belonging to public actors (Klein Woolthuis et al., 2013). In a similar vein, personal multilevel actor networks play a crucial role in the acquisition of support and attention for entrepreneurial actors or in the mobilization of resources (Böcher, 2015; Klein Woolthuis et al., 2013; Svensson et al., 2012). Entrepreneurial individuals reorganize actor constellations horizontally by activating, mobilizing, or convincing partners across different levels of governance (Böcher, 2015; Miörner & Tripl, 2017). By doing so, they often draw upon their personal networks and skip levels vertically or break with hierarchical structures in order to get resources that are not available on the local scale.

Related to the above, the review further shows that entrepreneurial actors tend to use cooperative modes of interaction rather than hierarchical modes. Building coalitions, establishing networks, and initiating partnerships turned out to be among the central strategies of entrepreneurial individuals (Böcher, 2015; Cocks, 2013; Miörner & Tripl, 2017). The entrepreneurs initiate or adapt temporal, flexible, and situational cooperation between state actors, between non-state actors, or between state and non-state actors. Additionally, Petridou (2018) reveals that in a participatory planning process in Sweden, the public bureaucratic actors rather strive towards consensus and team building than towards coalition building, which in turn is often achieved by actors in more conflictual situations. In total, there is evidence that entrepreneurial individuals attempt to overcome hierarchical patterns in decision-making processes (Frisch-Aviram et al., 2018) and accelerate new horizontal and vertical networks. However, the extent to which these shifts can lead to permanent changes in the interaction modes of actor constellations in governance remains unclear.

The conceptual weakness of policy and institutional entrepreneurship studies addressing different effects and changes becomes more evident when focussing on empirical studies. The term “change” remains rather fuzzy and ambiguous in entrepreneurship literature. The studies reveal a multifaceted, multiscalar, and processual picture of changes ranging from formal and informal institutions and policies to new paths of development. Miörner and Tripl (2017) provide a nuanced perspective on changes of institutional and structural support structures in Sweden. They mention the multidimensionality of change processes, referring to institutional, organizational, industrial, and policy changes. Nevertheless, it seems that there is much more work required to specify changes in terms of entrepreneurial effects.

Ultimately, the studies reveal that policy or institutional changes on the local and regional scale often accompany a change in governance or, in other words, coincide with a relational change in public decision-making processes. Entrepreneurial actors initially make a situational change of governance arrangements (constellations and modes) in order to expand their agency in governance when striving to achieve policy or institutional change. Within an existent field of governance, this includes the change of traditional procedures to new modes of interaction, for example, towards building consensus in participatory processes (Petridou, 2018) or the introduction of new tools, for example, a comparative bidding approach (Cocks, 2013). However, this can also lead to more expansive effects and a fundamental change of governance, such as the implementation of new governance territorialities, that is, regional governance (Böcher, 2015) or fields of governance, for example, sustainability (Klein Woolthuis et al., 2013). Nevertheless, these aspects are conceptually still underdeveloped in literature, and little is known about the contribution of entrepreneurial individuals to governance changes. The paper argues that these aspects must be further theorized and classified, as this might be an important step towards offering a more comprehensive view on individual agency on the local and regional scale.

2.5 | Linking policy and institutional entrepreneurship and governance

Studies on policy and institutional entrepreneurship have been exploring complex policy processes involving various actors, different scales, and different strategies. Nevertheless, little attempt was made to systematize policy and
institutional entrepreneurship in terms of governance. About 15 years ago, Crouch (2005) has made a first conceptual step forward with his theoretical discussion of institutional entrepreneurship and governance, concluding with a neo-institutionalist research programme towards pursuing institutional change on a national level. Despite the recent claims of some scholars of studying policy and institutional entrepreneurship with a governance perspective in mind (Green, 2017; Sotarauta & Pulkkinen, 2011), only a few studies on entrepreneurship explicitly take into account territorial governance concepts. These concepts may include (trans-)national governance (Boasson & Huitema, 2017), multilevel governance (Catney & Henneberry, 2016; Perkmann, 2007), and urban or regional governance concepts (Böcher, 2015; Lowndes, 2005).

Recently, some authors suggested introducing the term governance entrepreneurship in order to reflect upon the increasing range of actors involved in policymaking (Boasson & Huitema, 2017; Pattberg, 2017; Willi, Pütz, & Mayer, 2018). Pattberg (2017), for example, uses governance entrepreneurship for explaining the relevance of organizations in the transnational institutionalization process in the field of climate change. In his study, he defines governance entrepreneurs similarly to (informal) institutional entrepreneurs as “those individuals, groups of individuals and organizations that [...] aim at altering or diffusing norms and cognitive frameworks, worldviews or institutional logics” (Pattberg, 2017, p. 1439). The working paper of Willi, Pütz, and Mayer (2018) is also important to note, as it reveals the need for further conceptualization of entrepreneurship in regional development processes. It conceptualizes the term governance entrepreneurship as a subcategory of policy entrepreneurship. Based on the empirical results, the authors distinguish between the "realizing governance entrepreneurs" that contribute to regional development processes by implementing ideas and projects and the "enabling governance entrepreneurs" that rather influence processes indirectly by creating awareness of regional challenges. Although these studies deal with the term governance entrepreneur and take up elements of both governance and entrepreneurship concepts, they do not offer a conceptual contribution explaining how entrepreneurial individuals specifically influence and shape governance processes themselves, as they remain very close to the concepts of policy and institutional entrepreneurship.

2.6 | Synthesis

The theoretical discussion indicates the variegated influence of individuals in local and regional processes of change, as well as a further need for conceptualizing these different types of individual agency. By theorizing local and regional governance, the interlinkages of institutions, actors, and policies could be illustrated. Because actor-centred institutionalism takes into account the role of institutions for public policy processes but also points to the importance of actor constellations and interactions, it enables us to pay closer attention to and differentiate between the various changes caused by entrepreneurial individuals (Green, 2017). The discussion on policy and institutional entrepreneurship further revealed that the two approaches lead to interesting insights but also display some conceptual limitations regarding the analysis of the variety of processes of change. It has been demonstrated that the distinction between policy and institutional changes has diminished and, additionally, that there is a tendency to overlook changes in governance itself. Therefore, the paper argues for a third category, designated as governance entrepreneurship, that supplements the concepts of institutional and policy entrepreneurship in order to provide a more comprehensive framework for the analysis of socio-spatial change.

3 | DISCUSSION

3.1 | Framing the concept of governance entrepreneurship

The first research aim was to develop a more differentiated perspective on the agency of individuals in socio-spatial change by combining the theoretical lenses of local and regional governance, as well as policy and institutional
entrepreneurship. In order to meet this aim, the concept of governance entrepreneurship will now be introduced and explained. Local and regional governance changes can be facilitated either externally or internally by contextual factors or actors involved in the system (Arnouts, Van der Zouwen, & Arts, 2012). The term governance entrepreneurship sheds light on governance changes caused internally by entrepreneurial individuals. The findings of the in-depth review illustrate that governance entrepreneurship might occur as an underlying and enabling action when individuals in fact aim at policy or institutional change. In this case, governance entrepreneurship may rather be an unanticipated outcome (Sotarauta & Pulkkinen, 2011), as the entrepreneurs do not inevitably intend changes in governance in the first instance. However, it might be assumed that individuals may also aim at governance change in intentional actions. Governance entrepreneurship might be a crucial action for private actor groups, for example, economy or civil society, that are previously not authorized by an official position. This could imply, for instance, that individuals aim to establish a central position or formal function in decision-making processes in order to increase their impact and to articulate their needs. Governance entrepreneurship might also be strived for by established individuals with formal authority in order to further broaden their agency or to gain more power in a certain field (Cocks, 2013). This argument can be related to Boasson and Huitema (2017, p. 3), who describe one aspect of structural entrepreneurship as “acts aimed at enhancing governance influence by altering distribution of authority and information.”

Building upon the theoretical reflections, three conceptual dimensions of governance entrepreneurship can be identified: Governance entrepreneurs are characterized by the capacity and the willingness to transform actor constellations (a), interaction modes (b), and decision-making territories (c) in order to increase their agency.

First, the change of actor and network constellations can lead to a greater variety of actors, where actors from different fields take part in the decision-making process (Frisch-Aviram et al., 2018). This could also imply new balances of power, such as the appropriation of policy fields by new actor groups. When dealing with economic and structural transformation processes, it can, for instance, encourage new partnerships between economic and political actors or produce a juxtaposition of these groups. Apart from actor inclusion, the possibility of exclusion of actors also exists, if strategic aims are not shared and tensions arise (Nieth, 2019). Furthermore, entrepreneurial individuals on the local and regional level can achieve the vertical expansion of the actor spectrum based on personal contacts and networks to superior levels (Miörner & Trippl, 2017).

Second, in terms of interaction modes, it could be observed that entrepreneurial individuals primarily tend towards cooperative interaction, the expansion of networks, or situational governing coalitions. This observation is also in line with Willi, Pütz, and Mayer (2018, p. 11) and their characterisation of the enabling governance entrepreneurs, which they describe “as highly networked, persistent in negotiations and able to operate across governmental levels and economic sectors.” By using strategies such as networking to strive for policy or institutional change, entrepreneurial individuals can also cause more permanent changes in interaction modes, for instance, from hierarchical governance to a more networked mode of governance. This can furthermore continue in flatter organizational structures and a more lateral governance regime (Frisch-Aviram et al., 2018) with greater openness towards participation.

The third dimension that might play a crucial role when investigating socio-spatial changes of cities or regions is rescaling. This aspect contributes to the change or the emergence of (new) decision-making spaces. New spatial references for policymaking and new governance territories, such as regional governance, can arise beyond administrative borders through the establishment of new constellations of actors (Böcher, 2015). In regions struggling with demographic and economic challenges, the territorial expansion of governance networks can increase the power and agency of local actors. Entrepreneurial individuals can contribute significantly to these processes in defining objectives (Willi, Pütz, & Müller, 2018) and shaping practices of regional governance.

Additionally, governance entrepreneurship and its manifestations seem to have different temporal dimensions that might be further conceptualized. The actions of governance entrepreneurs can cause a temporal situational shift in governance arrangements, for instance, when the capacity of the given actor constellation is not adequate to address an emerging challenge. However, it can also be assumed that governance entrepreneurship might lead to a deep and fundamental transition in governance arrangements that manifests as a new local or regional governance system.
3.2 | Combining policy, institutional, and governance entrepreneurship

In linking policy, institutional, and governance entrepreneurship, the second aim of the paper is addressed. The three concepts are considered as equal and complementary tools for explaining the influence of entrepreneurial individuals in socio-spatial change, as each of these concepts refers to different types of individual agency in regional development. Table 2 provides a summary and a simplified classification of said entrepreneurial roles, based on strategic and spatial dimensions.

Policy, institutional, and governance entrepreneurship share a number of key features. Each of the approaches focuses on individuals, their ideas, resources, and their capacity for recognizing and taking opportunities in moments of uncertainty (Schneider et al., 1995). The three concepts can be characterized together as the capturing of forms of "transformative agency" (Grillitsch & Sotarauta, 2019; Tuominen & Lehtonen, 2018) because they focus on individuals that realize and take emergent opportunities in order to change a status quo instead of reproducing or preserving it. From a regional perspective, the agency of entrepreneurial individuals is defined by various environmental contexts and institutional settings, which constrain their actions but also offer them a variety of opportunities (Grillitsch & Sotarauta, 2019). However, as individuals have a selective perception of potential opportunities and preferred actions of realization, they reflect upon different types of transformative agency.

Originating from different strands of literature, the concepts of institutional, policy, and governance entrepreneurship address these different types of transformative agency. Institutional entrepreneurship emphasizes the paradox of embedded agency (Garud et al., 2007) by focusing on the capability of individuals to change formal and informal institutions (such as rules, beliefs, and norms), although these institutions guide their perceptions and actions. Policy entrepreneurship stresses the temporal aspect and highlights the ability of individuals to recognize emerging "policy windows of opportunity" and to link problems, policy ideas, and politics (Mintrom & Norman, 2009). Governance entrepreneurship, in contrast, delineates the ability to recognize structural flaws, gaps, and potentials in governance arrangements and practices. Based on this knowledge, governance entrepreneurs, for instance, implement and change actor positions, networks, or forms of coordination. In contrast to the former two concepts, governance entrepreneurship also explicitly includes a spatial dimension of agency, when individuals affect rescaling processes by drawing upon individual relationships across territories and administrative borders and establish new governance networks. By doing so, they do not only raise their own opportunities but also broaden the "region-specific opportunity space" (Grillitsch & Sotarauta, 2019, p. 11).

It is anticipated that the concepts have certain correspondences and that they mutually affect each other, as each of these types of transformative agency complement and continuously shape each other. Figure 2 takes up the model of actor-centred institutionalism in order to illustrate the interrelatedness of policy, institutional, and governance entrepreneurship. An example might be the inclusion of new actor groups from different domains in governance that accompanies the availability of increased social or financial resources. As a result, new opportunities for

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Entrepreneurial roles</th>
<th>Dimensions of socio-spatial change</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy entrepreneur</td>
<td>Seeks to promote policy change, creates new policy instruments, and realigns or replaces existing policies (Kingdon, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional entrepreneur</td>
<td>Aims at initiating institutional change and breaking institutional status by introducing new institutions or changing and removing existing institutions (Battilana et al., 2009; Weik, 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance entrepreneur</td>
<td>Intends or causes a shift in governance by implementing or transforming governance arrangements</td>
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</table>
policy entrepreneurship can arise, leading to new policy outcomes, which have not been considered before (Miörner & Trippl, 2017). Furthermore, as mentioned before, governance entrepreneurship can potentially involve profound transformations, for example, when a certain field transforms from a hierarchical to a more cooperation-oriented governance system. In the long term, this change in governance might also lead to an institutional change, when cooperation has been established as a regional norm that guides the behaviour of actors when dealing with emergent regional challenges.

It is furthermore important to note that individuals can take different entrepreneurial roles at different stages, so that governance entrepreneurs might become policy entrepreneurs or institutional entrepreneurs, and vice versa. For instance, policy entrepreneurs that aim for policy change may also simultaneously act as institutional entrepreneurs when they try to manipulate institutions in order to open windows of opportunity to promote policy instruments (Galanti, 2018). By taking multiple roles simultaneously or consecutively, individuals enhance their opportunities and might extend their individual agency. Following this argumentation, it is obvious that these three conceptual categories can overlap in practice and do not aim at describing static functions of individuals (or groups of individuals) but rather at outlining different flexible roles. By doing so, the framework helps to reveal how socio-spatial change emerges from the interaction of these three types of entrepreneurial individuals.

4 | CONCLUSION

The main objective of this article is to provide a more comprehensive framework for the analysis of individual agency in socio-spatial change by introducing the concept of governance entrepreneurship and linking it with the concepts of policy and institutional entrepreneurship. Bringing together these three types of transformative agency (Tuominen & Lehtonen, 2018) supports a deeper understanding of individual agency in socio-spatial change. The proposed framework provides a temporal and relational perspective on socio-spatial change that takes into account the engagement and relation of different entrepreneurial individuals over time. By doing so, the paper contributes to the recent discussion on individual agency and change processes in local and regional development. It also addresses the exigency of further conceptualization (Gailing & Ibert, 2016; Grillitsch & Sotarauta, 2019; Sotarauta, 2017).

The concept of governance entrepreneurship is built upon a combination of an actor-centred governance perspective (Scharpf, 1997) and institutional and policy entrepreneurship literature (Battilana et al., 2009; Kingdon, 1995; Mintrom & Norman, 2009). It stresses an underrepresented form of transformative agency in emphasizing the importance of changes in actor constellations, modes of interaction, and decision-making territories. Although these changes might be more subtle and moderate in nature than policy and institutional changes (Pattberg, 2017), it might be assumed that a suitable adaption and development of governance is a crucial factor for the successful implementation of new institutions and policies and a sustainable local and regional development. Hence, investigating governance entrepreneurship might also offer a better understanding of the reasons why attempts towards policy and
institutional change tend to succeed or fail. Additionally, the governance entrepreneurship perspective might benefit the exploration of unanticipated changes that may not originally have been intended by entrepreneurial individuals. The importance of unintended outcomes has been mentioned frequently in policy and institutional entrepreneurship literature (Battilana et al., 2009; Sotarauta & Pulkkinnen, 2011). However, no further explanation and classification of these outcomes has been given, and little is known about its effects on socio-spatial change processes. Considering these analytical values, it has to be stated that the term governance entrepreneur does not indicate any normative standpoint but rather serves as an analytical concept for further empirical research to direct and to differentiate the perspective on individual agency and socio-spatial change.

The paper also indicates that further in-depth studies and a systematic comparison of entrepreneurial individuals in governance processes are needed in order to gain more knowledge about the unknown "factor X" (Gailing & Ibert, 2016) in local and regional development. Further empirical research is necessitated to conceptualize, for instance, a typology of governance entrepreneurs that systematically takes into account the different dimensions of governance change (e.g., degree of formality and direction of communication). Additionally, much conceptual and empirical work is still required to investigate the interrelatedness of institutional, policy, and governance entrepreneurship. It is thus suggested that the proposed framework has great explanatory potential concerning the overarching question why, despite comparable structural and institutional preconditions, some cities and regions manage to initiate socio-spatial change processes, whereas others fail to do so.

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ENDNOTES
1 Through this assumption, the model strives to overcome the dichotomy of structure and agency that has been discussed as the structure–agency paradox in policy sciences (Giddens, 1984).
2 It must be highlighted that organizations or associations may also be initiators of change processes. It is not intended to reduce regional development to the actions of single persons but rather to shed light on their contribution to socio-spatial change.

REFERENCE


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