5th EDITION ENIG

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND COVID-19: NEW GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES?**

*Date*: May 23, 2023

*Place*: EDC Paris Business School, 74/80 rue Roque de Fillol, 92800 Puteaux

*Research laboratory:* OCRE



**Call for papers**

**Presentation**

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Since that date, our lives have experienced major upheavals; curfew, confinement and telework then punctuated our respective daily lives. If these conditions have had an influence on our social life (Mena et al. 2022), they have also strongly affected economic life (Tang et al., 2021; Khlystova et al., 2022). According to the OECD (2021a), the pandemic and the associated restrictions have led to the most serious global recession for almost a century: the GDP of the countries of the OECD zone, for example, fell by 1.8% in the first quarter of 2020, then 10.6% during the second. This unprecedented recession has also had a singular influence on entrepreneurial activity. Indeed, among the SMEs that remained open from May to December 2020, between 55% and 70% recorded a drop in their turnover (OECD, 2021b).

France was also seriously affected by this unprecedented crisis. In 2020, French GDP decreased by 7.9% while the added value of companies decreased by 8.1% (INSEE, 2021). This deterioration of the indicators is explained in particular by the confinements and the evolving measures (curfews and travel restrictions). The first lockdown was a shock for all sectors; the cessation of activities was sometimes sudden and the managers of SMEs could not anticipate it. The second lockdown also had significant repercussions. However, some sectors were strongly affected (accommodation and catering), while others took advantage of this period to develop (home delivery) (INSEE, 2021). More broadly, in 2020, the total number of business creations in France reached a new record with 848,200 creations, i.e. 4% more than in 2019 – and this despite the health crisis linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. (INSEE first, 2021). This finding underlines that while the pandemic has been a brake on economic activity, it has also brought new opportunities (Liguori and Winkler, 2020; Messeghem et al., 2022) – i.e. new needs allowing to develop alternative entrepreneurship (sustainable, social, hybrid, etc.) and to generate a profit (Hansen et al., 2011). The opportunities brought about by the health crisis are particularly linked to the digital transition (OECD, 2021a).

Indeed, many SMEs had to quickly change their business model (Sharma et al., 2022), in particular by integrating dematerialization and online sales (OECD, 2021b). Exploiting these opportunities then enabled some SMEs to bounce back and use the crisis as a lever for growth (Calabrò et al., 2021). In the entrepreneurship literature, recent work has also focused on the consequences of the crisis (Gregurec et al., 2021; Belitski et al., 2022; Newman et al., 2022) and on the resilience capacity of SMEs (Académie Entrepreneurship and Innovation, 2020; Janssen et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2022). The question of the pursuit of opportunities has ultimately been little explored in this specific context (Lungu et al., 2021), while opportunities contribute to strategic renewal and the maintenance of competitive advantages (Chabaud and Messeghem, 2010). To fill this gap, we propose to study the COVID-19 crisis as a generator of entrepreneurial opportunities. In view of the recommendations of Kuckertz and Brändle (2022), we highlight three areas of research:

1. **Entrepreneurial opportunities and COVID-19**: the health crisis has brought new opportunities as new needs have emerged. However, the conditions for the emergence of these opportunities are still unclear. The objective is to highlight the contextual determinants that favored the creation or discovery (Alvarez and Barney, 2007) of new opportunities. This highlights, for example, the role of public authorities (Narula, 2020). In France, what has been the influence of restrictive measures (travel restrictions and curfews) on entrepreneurship? Have the two confinements changed entrepreneurial commitment? The question of opportunities also leads to adopting a procedural approach. For Shane and Venkataraman (2000), opportunity pursuit includes the identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities. Since the 2000s, this process has been widely studied in general entrepreneurship (Chen and Liu, 2020; De Massis et al. 2021; Healey et al. 2021). Researchers have highlighted key elements to better understand the drivers of opportunity pursuit. However, little work has been carried out in a particularly uncertain context, such as that of the COVID-19 crisis. The idea is then to better understand how an entrepreneur identifies, evaluates and exploits entrepreneurial opportunities in a crisis situation. The upstream phase (identification and evaluation) can lead to exploring entrepreneurial vigilance (Kirzner, 1973; Tang et al., 2012; Bilal et al., 2022), while the downstream phase (operation) suggests revisiting the effects of entrepreneurial orientation (Covin and Slevin, 1989; Wales et al., 2020; Liu and Xi, 2022).
2. **New modes of entrepreneurship in times of crisis**: the health crisis has amplified entrepreneurial dynamics. For example, it has boosted digital entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2021), pushing many SMEs on the path to digitalization (OECD, 2021a). Social entrepreneurship (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021) has also seen a boom, as the majority of French entrepreneurs have prioritized the social and/or environmental impact of their business. Finally, necessity entrepreneurship (Kuratko and Audretsch, 2022) and hybrid entrepreneurship (Demir et al., 2022) have also been revived, as the first confinement led to the implementation of partial unemployment in all sectors ( DARES, 2021). While female entrepreneurship still needs to be stimulated, entrepreneurial activity in general has boomed during the health crisis. In this context, should we face a renewal of entrepreneurial commitment? Are there new entry or exit strategies in entrepreneurship? Should entrepreneurs revisit their postures to create value (economic, social or environmental)?

These questions invite us to explore the new profiles of entrepreneurs, the role of creativity or the new strategies that are put in place in times of crisis. It would also be relevant to analyze in more detail the different modes of entrepreneurship, emphasizing their conditions of emergence and/or development within an ecosystem.

1. **Resilience capacity of SMEs and adaptation to the shock:** the health crisis has led to a sudden cessation of activities and a decline in turnover for SMEs. However, while some businesses closed, others quickly pivoted and showed resilience (Santoro et al., 2020); this enabled them to maintain a level of performance sufficient to finance current activity and deploy a new entrepreneurial strategy. In this context, what were the strategic levers to pivot? How have classic economic models been redesigned? Have certain models particularly withstood the crisis? To help SMEs resist and bounce back, support structures (such as incubators) have played a key role. However, these structures have also had to face a challenge insofar as they have sometimes had to rethink their own business model. Consequently, how did the support structures approach this strategic shift? What was their role during and after the confinements? How have they helped entrepreneurs rethink their business models and bounce back in the long term? The question of rebound is central, both for traditional businesses and for family businesses. The latter, with their unique characteristics, are known to have strong social capital (familiness) that can help them resist external shocks (Hadjielias et al., 2022). So, have family businesses withstood the shock better than traditional businesses? Did they bounce back? How to characterize this rebound?

To discuss these questions, we invite you to participate in the 5th ENIG conference. All topics in entrepreneurship are welcome. For example, you can mention the following topics (non-exhaustive list):

* Agricultural entrepreneurship
* Family entrepreneurship
* Entrepreneurship and innovation
* Critical entrepreneurship
* International entrepreneurship
* Entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship and health
* Digital entrepreneurship
* Entrepreneurship and performance
* Business takeover/succession
* Entrepreneurial ecosystem
* Entrepreneurial legitimacy
* Entrepreneurial opportunity
* Knowledge in entrepreneurship
* Financing of entrepreneurship
* Business support

**Call for publications**

The best papers from the conference will be pre-selected for publication in a journal classified by the FNEGE. In addition, we have given avenues for research but all contributions dealing with the global theme will be examined. You can consult the call for publications for more details.

**Terms of submission**

Three types of papers can be submitted:

* Long summary (500 words max)
* Short paper (3000 words max)
* Full paper

**Submission process and registrations**

Submissions and registrations will be made on [SciencesConf](https://enig2023.sciencesconf.org/). Registration costs are 80 euros.

If you have any questions, you can contact Dorian Boumedjaoud at the following address : dboumedjaoud@edcparis.edu.

**Instructions to authors**

Submissions can be written in English or French.

Short papers must respect the following structure:

* Introduction (750 words max)
* Theoretical framework (500 words max)
* Methodological framework (500 words max)
* Results (500 words max)
* Discussion (750 words max)

All papers must meet the following criteria:

* Single line spacing and 2.5cm margins
* Times New Roman 12
* All authors must send two versions of their paper: **a complete version and an anonymized version**

**Important dates**

*Receipt of communications:* March 17, 2023

*Notification to authors:* March 31, 2023

*Receipt of revised communications:* April 28, 2023

For any questions, you can send a message to Dorian Boumedjaoud

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We warmly thank our partners. For more information, you can consult their respective sites:

* [Académie de l’Entrepreneuriat et de l’Innovation](https://entrepreneuriat.com/)
* [AIREPME](https://airepme.org/)
* [FNEGE](https://www.fnege.org/)
* [Labex Entreprendre](https://labex-entreprendre.fr/)

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