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# Entrepreneurial citizenship in urban regeneration in the Netherlands

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## ABSTRACT

In the Netherlands, active citizenship in the context of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods seems to have evolved into 'entrepreneurial citizenship'. The concept of entrepreneurial citizenship combines top-down and bottom-up elements. National and/or local governments promote an ideal citizen with entrepreneurship skills and competencies to create more responsible and entrepreneurial citizens' participation in government-initiated arrangements. At the same time, bottom-up behavioural practices from citizens who demand more opportunities to innovatively apply assets, entrepreneurial skills, strategies and collaboration with other stakeholders are initiated to achieve their goals and create societal-added value. The aim of this paper is to better understand the origins of 'entrepreneurial citizenship', and its meaning in the Dutch context of urban regeneration. To do this, we will review the relevant international literature and combine insights from studies on governance, active citizenship, social and community entrepreneurship and urban neighbourhoods. We will also analyse how entrepreneurial citizenship can be locally observed in the Netherlands as reported in the literature.

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## 1. Introduction

European countries struggle with a continuous decline in trust in the government and parliament among their citizenries (Norris 1999; Dogan 2005; European Commission 2018). In the Netherlands, trust in the government and parliament is, in general, higher than in most of the other European countries (Bovens and Wille 2008; European Commission 2018). But despite a positive public opinion on the functioning of the Dutch democracy, there is much political dissatisfaction among citizens. Many Dutch citizens believe that politicians listen inadequately, are too focused on their own interests and wonder whether politicians know what is going on in society (Den Ridder and Dekker 2015). More than half of the Dutch population (55%) believes that citizens should have more influence on policy, for example, through referendums (Den Ridder and Dekker 2015). Citizens increasingly show a critical attitude towards government performance, and governments increasingly need to operate in a context of diminished possibilities for top-down interventions (Norris 1999; Durose, Greasley, and Richardson 2009; Geurtz and Van de Wijdeven 2010). In light of these developments,

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various levels of government in the Netherlands aim to facilitate and cultivate local and direct democracy by developing means to increase citizens' engagement with policies and issues concerning their living environment, across various domains (Action Plan Strengthening Local Democracy and Governance, Ministry of the Interior 2018). This has resulted in various manifestations and ways of framing the concept of active citizenship. In this paper, we focus on active citizenship in the context of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. Urban regeneration is an inherently local process, which has a direct effect on citizens' lives, and active citizenship is often directed at seeking solutions for problems in the neighbourhood. In the context of urban regeneration, active citizenship seems to have evolved into a form of 'entrepreneurial citizenship', both in policy rhetoric and in daily practices. Interestingly, this development is not solely top-down but seems to be a mix of top-down and bottom-up developments. On the one hand, governments encourage citizens to be active and entrepreneurial and to take responsibility for maintaining the quality of life in their neighbourhood. On the other hand, entrepreneurial citizens themselves also demand more responsibilities and more opportunities from governments to have a say in developing and organising (services in) their own neighbourhood (Hoekema 2007; Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013; Ham and van der Meer 2015). The aim of this paper is to better understand the origins of 'entrepreneurial citizenship' and its meaning in the Dutch context of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods, both from the perspective of the government and the citizen. In order to trace the origins of the concept of 'entrepreneurial citizenship', we first outline the development towards a more entrepreneurial society in general. We then discuss how citizenship is redefined in an increasingly entrepreneurial society and provide a conceptualisation of entrepreneurial citizenship. Next, we discuss the rise of entrepreneurial citizenship in urban regeneration in the Netherlands. In the final section, we provide conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## 2. The development of an entrepreneurial society

Van Beek (1998) speaks of the development of an entrepreneurial society in which he points to the increased appreciation for entrepreneurship in the Netherlands since the early 1990s. Van Beek (1998), states that until the end of the 1970s, entrepreneurs were seen as the ones who had the power and the means to take good care of themselves at the expense of others and especially at the expense of the environment. This perception of entrepreneurs led to the development of policies aimed at protecting employees through social security arrangements and protecting the environment through commandments and prohibitions for the conduct of enterprises. He observes that during the early 1990s a remarkable change in the perception of entrepreneurs occurred. Entrepreneurs were no longer perceived as exploiters and even became role models. According to Van Beek (1998), this new appreciation for entrepreneurship is more about an attitude than about actually starting an enterprise. Attitudes that have traditionally been linked to entrepreneurship, such as the pursuit of independence, making investments and taking risk became more popular. This increased appreciation for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial attitudes would also apply to the public sector. All matters which require a collective responsibility such as healthcare, education and

housing, have been reframed in terms of individual responsibility and giving space to citizens 'own initiative'. The development that Van Beek (1998) observes is not limited to the Netherlands. Several scholars point to the emergence of a two-way societal movement of 'the becoming social of entrepreneurship and the becoming entrepreneurial of the social' (Steyaert and Hjorth 2008, 2). The latter is sometimes referred to as the 'entrepreneurialisation' of society and social life, indicating that entrepreneurial thinking, the core of capitalism, is no longer limited to business practices but enters the private lives of people more and more (Foucault, Davidson, and Burchell 2008; Bröckling 2015; Marttila 2015; Rossi 2017). Different studies from different disciplines show how entrepreneurship has become part of domains in which it previously was not part of. For example, the literature on developments within the domain of educational policy shows how entrepreneurial skills and competencies have become integrated into school curricula (see, for example, Peters 2001; Down 2009; Dahlstedt and Fejes 2017). The same applies for studies focussing on the changed meaning of paid work in western societies in which is observed that employees are increasingly expected to be flexible and to work on their employability by updating their knowledge, networking skills and by timely switching careers if there are no jobs available within their sector (see, for example, Sennett 1998; Beck 2000; Stam and van der Vrande 2017). This paper focuses on the domain of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. Also in this domain, there is an increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship and on the importance of entrepreneurial skills and competencies of citizens. In particular, in urban regeneration policy, encouraging entrepreneurship to enhance the local economy is seen as a contribution to reducing poverty in disadvantaged neighbourhoods especially in times of limited economic growth (Teasdale 2010; Bailey, 2012; Williams and Williams 2017). For politicians and policy-makers (local) entrepreneurs are considered potential drivers of local and community development, mainly because entrepreneurship is often associated with economic growth and prosperity, and a diverse set of positive characteristics are attributed to being an entrepreneur (Baumol, Litan, and Schramm 2007; Anderson and Warren 2011; Mason et al. 2015). Commonly identified traits and activities of entrepreneurs are: showing initiative, leadership, taking risks, being flexible, creative, being independent, having a strong work ethic, a daring spirit and being responsible (see also Keat 1991; Rose 1990; Gordon 1991; Du Gay 1996, 2004; Carr and Beaver 2002). Steyaert and Hjorth (2008) observe that particularly, social entrepreneurship has increasingly become an instrument for urban regeneration because it is perceived as an 'all-encompassing solution at a moment where faith in the more traditional models of non-profit, governmental and voluntary solutions is waning' (p. 7). In the context of deprived neighbourhoods and urban regeneration policies, the 'celebration' of entrepreneurship has resulted in ambivalent opinions. On the one hand, stimulating entrepreneurship in deprived neighbourhoods is seen as a crucial element in strengthening economic development through the creation of jobs and increased labour productivity, as well as increasing social inclusion (Blackburn and Ram 2006; Welter, Trettin, and Neumann 2008; Lyons 2015). On the other hand, residents in deprived communities are often viewed to lack key entrepreneurial attributes, skills and social capital (OECD 2003; Williams and Huggins 2013, 168). In the context of urban regeneration, entrepreneurship also emerges in policies 'to help citizens to help themselves', not only in the Netherlands but across different European countries (Kleinmans and van Ham 2017). In

the Netherlands, citizens have increasingly become key players in maintaining the quality of life in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods. Until 2015, the Dutch national government took a leading role in large-scale urban regeneration programmes and provided a top-down, national policy framework and big amounts of funding. From 2015 onwards, due to welfare cuts and processes of devolution and decentralisation, the Dutch national government withdrew from urban regeneration and implicitly moved responsibilities to local governments, housing associations, health-care organisations and citizens, to collaborate with each other to maintain the quality of life in urban neighbourhoods. In neighbourhoods where citizens perceived the effects of the welfare cuts, by the decline in public service provision, the rise of vacant buildings and unemployment rates, entrepreneurial citizens find opportunities to develop initiatives and to collaborate with different stakeholders to regain control over developments in their neighbourhood and maintain the quality of life (Verheije et al. 2014). In light of the above developments, the entrepreneurialisation of society increasingly leads to the entrepreneurialisation of citizenship in the context of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods.

### 3. Redefining citizenship in the entrepreneurial society

It can be argued that entrepreneurship, or an entrepreneurial attitude, has always been part of citizenship like discussed in Weber's study on 'the Protestant Ethic'. However, some scholars argue that the expansion of the welfare state after World War II made the Protestant ethic diminish. Weber ([1905] 2001) observed in his well-known book 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' that the Protestants devotion to work and their abstention from spending their earnings was an intrinsic part of the Protestants vision of a pious life. For Weber ([1905] 2001), the Protestant ethic with its focus on self-discipline, responsibilities and duties, fostered entrepreneurship and stood at the beginning of the rise of modern capitalism. In the Netherlands, many institutions that have developed into public institutions (such as housing associations, schools, hospitals, libraries, youth clubs and community centres) started as 'private (citizen) initiatives' in the nineteenth century by religious groups and the middle-class elite that in the course of the twentieth century became nationalized (Burger and Veldheer 2001; Dekker 2004). Van Doorn and Schuyt (1982), claim that the post-war growth of the welfare state made the Protestant ethic, but also the socialistic notion of collective solidarity, more or less redundant. Social rights stood at the base of the expansion of the post-war welfare state and created according to Marshall (1992) a new definition and practice of citizenship. These rights (also referred to as 'social citizenship') include the right of citizens to economic and social security through education, healthcare, housing and other services (Marshall 1992). Social rights made everyone, regardless of their position in society, entitled to live a worthy life. Van Doorn and Schuyt (1982) criticise the expansion of the welfare state and point to the resulting dependency relations between citizens and government which according to them created a widespread attitude of 'welfare consumerism' (p. 13). According to Van Doorn and Schuyt (1982), the expansion of social services and benefits created welfare dependency and stood in the way for citizens to be entrepreneurial and responsible. The type of criticism that Van Doorn and Schuyt (1982) show towards welfare state arrangements is also dominant in discourses on

active citizenship as Verhoeven and Tonkens (2013) show in their research on the type of ‘talk’ used by the Dutch national government to encourage active citizenship. According to Verhoeven and Tonkens (2013), the implementation of the Social Support Act in 2007 was at the heart of the active citizenship discourse in the Netherlands. The Social Support Act aims to promote participation and active involvement of all groups in society including vulnerable groups like elderly or disabled people. Verhoeven and Tonkens (2013) label the Dutch way of encouraging active citizenship as ‘responsibility talk’. This type of talk blames citizens for misusing social welfare services and being irresponsible, not caring enough for each other and their neighbourhood. In this talk, because of their slackness, the government needed to spend too much money which led to necessary welfare cuts. Therefore, the citizen is the one to blame and the one who should solve the problem. This process of making citizens responsible for tasks that used to be the responsibility of state agents is also called ‘responsibilization’ (Rose 1999; Garland 2001; Ilcan and Basok 2004; Clarke 2005; Lacey and Ilcan 2006; Taylor 2007; Peeters 2013; Hammett 2018). Lacey and Ilcan (2006) describe the process of responsibilization as ‘a shifting of responsibilities from governmental agencies and authorities to organizations and individual citizens for their own service provisions – citizens are not only active in this service provision, but are increasingly responsible for it’ (p. 39). Lacey and Ilcan (2006) discuss the notion of responsibilization from a governmentality perspective like many other scholars who wrote on this subject (see, for example, Rose 1999, 2000; Lemke 2001). From a governmentality perspective, responsibilization is perceived as a top-down ‘governance technique’, a way for governments to influence their citizens’ behaviour in the desired direction. However, the literature discussing ‘responsibilization’ as a governance technique does not provide us with enough material to understand bottom-up developments, such as why sometimes citizens themselves demand more involvement and responsibilities from the government or why some citizens think they can provide better public services than the government. Gofen’s (2015) study on citizens’ entrepreneurial role in public service provision provides some more insight into this matter. Gofen (2012, 2015) introduced the concept ‘entrepreneurial exit’ referring to ‘a proactive exit in which citizens, dissatisfied with the form or quality of a public service, end or ignore their relationship with a governmental provider of the service. Simultaneously, they create an alternative rather than choosing among existing possibilities’ (p. 405). Gofen (2015) identified three different motivations for citizens practising entrepreneurial exit. The first motive refers to citizens who reject government involvement in the service provision and take full responsibility for the provision themselves. The second motive refers to citizens who disapprove a specific aspect of the provision and take responsibility by providing this specific function. The third motive refers to citizens who try to put pressure on governments by temporarily replacing the public provision themselves. Gofen (2015) studied ‘entrepreneurial exit’ within the Israeli context and identifies a movement that mainly develops bottom-up. In the Netherlands, many citizen initiatives and community enterprises seem to be driven by similar motivations (see, e.g., Hoekema 2007; Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013; Ham and van der Meer 2015). We will return to this observation in section 4, in the context of Dutch urban regeneration. Sterk, Specht, and Walraven (2013) present the development of citizen initiatives in the Netherlands as a new form of societal value creation in which citizens themselves try to

solve societal issues. According to Sterk, Specht, and Walraven (2013), this development is often (bottom-up) initiated by entrepreneurial citizens and social entrepreneurs who together are representing a new civil society. Entrepreneurial citizens are capable of being 'change makers' and work together with different stakeholders to create societal change (Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013). Hoekema (2007) rather speaks of 'citizen-politicians' by which he refers to individuals who from time to time participate in interactive policy and planning processes and sees this as a personal 'life project'. For Hoekema (2007), this individual is an 'entrepreneurial citizen'. A common denominator in the conceptualisations of entrepreneurial citizens of Sterk, Specht, and Walraven (2013) and Hoekema (2007) is collaboration with various stakeholders and aiming for societal change. Hoekema (2007) states that the advent of the entrepreneurial citizen is related to changes in the institutional order. The well-known shift from 'government' to 'governance' assumes that the national government can no longer intervene effectively in a top-down manner and is increasingly dependent on the market and civil society, making the relationship between the traditionally distinct spheres of the state, the market and civil society become more horizontal and based on cooperation and negotiation (Rhodes 1996; Peeters 2013). Also, citizens' increased average level of education, the request for more involvement from civil society and the market when it comes to organising society and the rise of communication technologies such as the internet, have opened up less hierarchical structures with different stakeholders being (or demanding to be) drawn into the policy process (Castells 2000). Public policy then becomes the responsibility of both government and civil society, adding new roles, expectations and responsibilities to citizens and including them as partners in governance (Meijer 2016). Durose, Greasley, and Richardson (2009) note that in the literature 'there has been a clear focus on the organisational impact of governance, but less on the demands now made, of and by, citizens and how citizens themselves reflect and respond to these changing demands' (p. 212). This is why we argue that entrepreneurial citizenship is a relevant and distinctive concept because it can be understood as simultaneously bottom-up and top-down. When conceptualised top-down, entrepreneurial citizenship refers to the ways in which national and/or local governments (or other established institutions) address citizens as if they were (social) entrepreneurs and expect citizens to adopt typical entrepreneurial skills and competencies in the management of their daily lives and in response to institutional requests to participate in the design, management or delivery of public services (see, e.g., Osborne, Radnor, and Strokosch 2016). When conceptualised bottom-up, entrepreneurial citizenship refers to behavioural practices exerted by citizens who demand more responsibilities and opportunities from governments (or other key institutions) to have a bigger say in organising (local) society, and innovatively apply various entrepreneurial and collaborative skills, assets and strategies to achieve their goals and create societal-added value.

The predominantly entrepreneurial 'action element' and the aim to create societal-added value in an innovative way makes entrepreneurial citizenship rather different from active citizenship. Entrepreneurial citizenship stems from dissatisfaction with government functioning and public service delivery and is driven by the aim for (social) change (Ham and van der Meer 2015). Entrepreneurial citizens aim to achieve societal-added value in their direct living environment and seek innovation in the way in which

they can deliver (public) services themselves. They develop initiatives that are public oriented, but in order to maintain such an initiative and create societal-added value on the long run, thinking about how to generate profits and creating a business model is almost inevitable (Van der Zwaard et al. 2018). As such, entrepreneurial citizens incorporate a commercial element in their initiative from which profits are gained to be reinvested in the initiative and the locality. Citizen initiatives that creatively manage to combine generating profits and achieving social impact are more likely to succeed (Van Meerkerk, Kleinhans, and Molenveld 2018). As shown in the literature, active citizenship as a concept has developed as a critique of citizens consumerist and 'lazy' behaviour and reflects (moral) duties and responsibilities that are imposed upon citizens top-down. Hence, entrepreneurial citizenship not only refers to duties and responsibilities but even more to opportunities taken by citizens to create societal-added value, requiring a different relationship with government(s) which is based on horizontal co-production rather than citizens responding to government-initiated arrangements.

As a conceptual starting point for the remainder of this paper, we provide the following definition of entrepreneurial citizenship. The concept of entrepreneurial citizenship combines a top-down induced citizen ideal from national and/or local governments promoting entrepreneurship skills and competencies to create more responsible and entrepreneurial citizens' participation in government-initiated arrangements, with bottom-up behavioural practices from citizens who demand more opportunities to innovatively apply assets, entrepreneurial skills, strategies and collaboration with other stakeholders to achieve their goals and create societal-added value.

#### **4. The rise of entrepreneurial citizenship in urban regeneration in the Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, contemporary expressions of entrepreneurial citizenship are explicitly present in the context of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. In order to better understand entrepreneurial citizenship in this specific context, we need to understand what role citizens historically have played in Dutch urban regeneration in the first place.

##### **4.1. Citizens' engagement in Dutch urban regeneration**

Citizens' engagement in urban regeneration has for a long time been a top-down induced form of engagement also framed as 'citizen participation'. Although citizen participation has been a long time part of urban policy in the Netherlands, the level and nature of citizen participation in urban regeneration has changed and developed over time. Different forms of citizen participation follow each other up but can also coexist (Oude Vrielink and van de Wijdeven 2008; Boonstra and Boelens 2011; De Graaf, Van Hulst, and Michels 2015; Teernstra and Pinkster 2016). Starting in the 1970s, local governments informed citizens about urban regeneration policies and gave them the opportunity to have a say. However, citizens often only became involved after the policy had been established. During the 1990s, more interactive forms of policymaking arose and citizens were increasingly perceived as co-producers of policy and were given the

opportunity to think along with the government in the early stages of policy development. From the twenty-first century onwards, citizen participation in urban regeneration increasingly takes the form of citizen initiatives (Oude Vrielink and van de Wijdeven 2008; Drosterij and Peeters 2011; Van Houwelingen, Boele, and Dekker 2014). In 2003, the Dutch cabinet introduced an 'action programme' to modernise the government and stated that a modern conception of citizenship is also required. The cabinet during that time period thought of '*a citizen who is self-reliant, empowered and involved, which is not primarily expressed in the submission of requirements, complaints and appeals directed against the government, but rather in societal self-organization and initiatives*' (Action Programme 'Different Government', Ministry of the Interior 2003, 5). This conception of citizenship has been taken over on lower scale levels and more explicitly expressed in the form of entrepreneurial citizenship, like, for example, in the city of Rotterdam in which (ideal) residents of Rotterdam are presented as follows: '*The people of Rotterdam take the initiative and contribute towards the city's development. This has always been the case and will never change. The people of Rotterdam stand up for their city, their neighbourhood and their street. All over the city, you find entrepreneurial people who take on problems in society, identifying opportunities to bring about change.*' (Participation Guideline Rotterdam, 2013, 1). Thus, both national and local governments in the Netherlands promote the concept of entrepreneurial citizenship by picturing an ideal citizen with entrepreneurship skills and competencies, who feels responsible for solving problems that emerge in his/her direct environment and in doing so helps the government at the same time. The dominant thought is that if citizens feel more responsible for problems emerging in their direct environment and provide co-produced solutions for it, this might tackle the lack of trust and social cohesion, but also (welfare) consumerism, social exclusion and eventually narrow the gap between citizens and government (Tonkens 2008; Hurenkamp, Tonkens, and Duyvendak 2011; Bailey and Pill 2015). How can we now observe expressions of entrepreneurial citizenship, and under which conditions does it become manifest in urban neighbourhoods? In the following sub-sections, we will discuss citizen initiatives and community enterprises because they are a good example of how entrepreneurial citizenship is practised in urban neighbourhoods.

#### **4.2. Manifestations of entrepreneurial citizenship in the Netherlands**

According to Van der Zwaard and Specht (2013), the ability of citizens to improve their own neighbourhood depends on how they experience their neighbourhood and on a diverse set of individual competencies, including entrepreneurial qualities, motivation and commitment, social skills and specific knowledge. The competencies can differ in importance depending on the type of activity citizens are engaged. While the more 'traditional' voluntary sector requires competencies related to bureaucratic and organisational knowledge and skills, the 'new' citizen initiatives require more entrepreneurial and social skills (Van der Zwaard and Specht 2013). Citizen initiatives fit in our definition of entrepreneurial citizenship as they are actively promoted by governments and in practice often started by citizens with entrepreneurial skills who aim to create societal-added value. In the Dutch literature 'citizen initiatives' refer to citizens who organize themselves and take the initiative to address a certain (social) matter they

consider important instead of waiting for others to take the lead (Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013; Ham and van der Meer 2015). Tonkens and Verhoeven (2018) define citizen initiatives as: ‘collective, informal, social or political activities by citizens as volunteers that aim to deal pragmatically with public issues in their communities’ (p.2). Citizen initiatives cover almost all the social domains such as welfare, integration, safety, culture, but also more ‘physical’ domains such as landscape development, energy and mobility (Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013). This diversity also leads to a lack of numerical understanding of citizen initiatives. Citizen initiatives are not new, but have recently gained more public and political attention and seem to be increasing in number in the Netherlands.

Ham and van der Meer (2015) studied twelve citizen initiatives in the Netherlands and conclude that most citizen initiatives do not arise spontaneously, but are a response to government retrenchment or failure. One of the oldest examples of a citizen initiative in the Netherlands can be found in the ‘Opzoomerstreet’ in the Dutch city Rotterdam, where during the late 1980s residents who were tired of the drug-related problems in their neighbourhood collectively swept and refurbished their street. This received much attention and many other streets followed their example. Nowadays, an ‘Opzoomercampaign’ is organised every year (in collaboration with the local government) to encourage citizens to develop initiatives in their streets that facilitate encounters between residents and improves the liveability of the neighbourhood. This citizen initiative in the ‘Opzoomerstreet’ can be seen as a specific case of ‘entrepreneurial exit’ in which citizens dissatisfied with a public service provide an alternative one. Ham and van der Meer (2015) observed that the initiators of citizen initiatives nowadays are all entrepreneurs or people with entrepreneurial qualities. Also, Uitermark (2015) observed that citizen initiatives are often started and facilitated by people and communities that already have strong professional and/or social networks. In relation to this observation, different scholars warn for the ‘Matthew effect’ or use the ‘survival of the fittest’ argumentation, meaning that those who already possess a lot will benefit more than those who do not which will lead to more social inequality (Engbersen, Snel, and ‘T Hart 2015; Snel, Custers, and Engbersen 2018; Tonkens and Verhoeven 2018). Studies aimed at identifying active and non-active residents in urban neighbourhoods show mixed results. Engbersen, Snel, and ‘T Hart (2015) indicate that residents of relatively poor and ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in Rotterdam participate less in citizen initiatives than residents of more affluent and mainly white neighbourhoods. However, Van der Zwaard and Specht (2013) indicate that newly formed citizen initiatives attract more women, migrants and people with low education and low income in contrast to the traditional voluntary sector which mainly attracted old, white and highly educated men. Various arguments are put forward by national and local governments to further encourage the rise of citizen initiatives (The DIY Democracy, Ministry of the Interior 2013). For instance, citizens are expected to have more knowledge of their local environment than the local government and thus better able to identify and address the needs of their neighbourhood. Furthermore, citizen initiatives will not only contribute to more ‘customized’ social services but also by collaborating with each other and helping one another citizens will also feel less alienated from each other, which is assumed to create more solidarity and social cohesion within neighbourhoods (Veldheer et al. 2012). Likewise, taking more responsibility for improving the

neighbourhood would provoke feelings of ‘ownership’ leading to more self-sustaining communities, which is believed to improve the liveability and ‘vitality’ of a neighbourhood (Van der Heijden et al. 2011). Advocates of a bottom-up movement perceive citizen initiatives as ‘game changers’ by engaging in public and political affairs and challenging the traditionally distinct spheres of the state, the market and civil society (Sterk, Specht, and Walraven 2013; Rotmans 2014). Critics indicate that in practice citizen initiatives mainly serve policy objectives and question the assumed changes in governance and related power redistribution (Van Dam, Duineveld, and During 2014; Rijshouwer and Uitermark 2017). According to Van Dam, Duineveld, and During (2014), local governments welcome citizen initiatives that serve their own policy objectives but oppose those who do not. Their view closely relates to the study by Rijshouwer and Uitermark (2017) on community centres transforming to community enterprises in Amsterdam. They argue that in practice ‘civil society’s entrepreneurialism is only selectively and strategically appreciated to the extent it can be incorporated into broader, market-oriented policies’ (p. 272). These studies show that Dutch local governments do not always appreciate citizens entrepreneurialism and sometimes even discourage it. This observation indicates that entrepreneurial citizenship is not simply being promoted without a clear goal, it is being promoted in the pursuit of policy ambitions (Ossewaarde 2007; Koster 2015). Rijshouwer and Uitermark (2017) also show in their research that citizen initiatives highly depend on support from local governments or other formal institutions and need to compromise and adjust some of their goals to meet the requirements set by local governments. Citizen initiatives depending on funding from local governments sometimes need to compete with other initiatives and act more ‘business-like’ in order to be assured of receiving funding. They need to show that they will be able to proceed without funding in the future. Thus, in order to become successful, a citizen initiative needs to become more ‘professionalized’. Having a business model or assets are important features for citizen initiatives to become sustainable (Van der Zwaard et al. 2018).

#### **4.3. A specific example: community-based (social) enterprises**

Community enterprises are a good example of entrepreneurial citizenship because community enterprises are led by citizens who make use of their entrepreneurial skills to generate profits which are reinvested in the community and the neighbourhood. Community enterprises are more commonly known and widespread in the UK than in the Netherlands. The Dutch version of community enterprises (‘bewonersbedrijven’) is also inspired by experiences in the UK. Bailey (2012) defines community enterprises as enterprises owned and managed by the community and similar to citizen initiatives, arise as a response to certain pressing social needs which remain unmet by the public and private sector. Kleinhans and van Ham (2017), state that a community enterprise is more like an organisation or a business rather than an ‘initiative’ because a community enterprise often has both a commercial and a social aspect. The commercial aspect refers to engaging in trade, but without the aim to maximize profits for private distribution. Surpluses are reinvested in the business and the community (Bailey 2012; Kleinhans and van Ham 2017). A community enterprise serves a ‘community of some kind’, is owned and managed by members of that community and has a

democratic governance structure (Somerville and McElwee 2011; Bailey, 2012). The enterprise part refers to the surplus that needs to be generated for the survival of the community enterprise in the long term. Community enterprises hold assets for the community benefit, generate income by exploiting them and use the surplus to provide social services for their area of benefit. The features of community enterprises like their social goals, governance structures and business-models can differ because the way in which they develop is often context-specific (Varady, Kleinhans, and van Ham 2015; Kleinhans et al. 2015; Kleinhans 2017). Kleinhans (2017), states that community enterprises in the Netherlands often arise in response to social and financial challenges in former urban regeneration target areas. According to Kleinhans (2017) the scope of their activities tends to be limited to the area in which they are based. Therefore, 'community' here mainly refers to a group of people living and/or working in the same area. Citizens who tend to be involved are mainly citizens who were already 'active' in other forms of community activism like neighbourhood councils. While community activism has traditionally a quite opposing nature to the established political order, according to Van Meerkerk, Kleinhans, and Molenveld (2018) the success of community entrepreneurship depends for an important part on support from institutional actors and for community enterprises in the Netherlands, reaching the level of independence is highly exceptional (see also Bailey, Kleinhans, and Lindbergh 2018). Nederhand, Bekkers, and Voorberg (2016) state that Dutch local governments highly influences the shape and outcome of citizen initiatives and community enterprises by making use of complex governance techniques. Van Meerkerk, Kleinhans, and Molenveld (2018) indicate that high levels of social capital, combined with strong entrepreneurial leadership and a strong business model highly determine the durability of a community enterprise. Based on the literature on citizen initiatives and community enterprises, we can conclude that both can be perceived as a manifestation of 'entrepreneurial citizenship' for several reasons. First, from a top-down perspective, local government facilitates citizen initiatives and community enterprises with the goal to create more responsible and entrepreneurial citizens who serve policy goals and objectives. Second, from a bottom-up perspective, to initiate a citizen initiative or community enterprise entrepreneurial skills are needed, including developing (business) strategies and collaborating with other stakeholders to create societal change. Third, to be able to stand on their feet, entrepreneurial citizens often need to incorporate a commercial aspect in their initiative from which they gain profits that are reinvested in the initiative/enterprise and the locality they serve. Thus, it seems that entrepreneurial skills and strategies are important at all stages of starting a citizens' initiative or a community enterprise to making it a durable initiative or enterprise.

## 5. Conclusions and directions for further research

We started this literature review with the aim to better understand the origins of entrepreneurial citizenship in the context of Dutch urban regeneration. We can conclude that the origins of entrepreneurial citizenship in general, lie in an overall-increased appreciation for entrepreneurship in society which has affected our conception of citizenship, but also the changed governance structures that created space for entrepreneurial citizenship to exist (Van Beek 1998; Hoekema 2007). We have found that even

though policymakers and politicians like to speak of entrepreneurial citizens and some literature mentions who can be considered an 'entrepreneurial citizen', it remains difficult to define 'entrepreneurial citizenship'. Based on our review of the literature on entrepreneurship and active citizenship, we have provided a definition of entrepreneurial citizenship. We believe that it was necessary to provide a definition because other concepts, such as active citizenship, citizen participation and responsabilization, mainly refer to top-down induced forms of governance in which the entrepreneurial character of citizenship practices is not well covered. We define entrepreneurial citizenship as a concept that combines top-down with bottom-up processes. On the one hand, national and/or local governments promote an ideal citizen with entrepreneurship skills and competencies to create more responsible and entrepreneurial citizens' participation in government-initiated arrangements. On the other hand, there are bottom-up behavioural practices from citizens who demand more opportunities to innovatively apply assets, entrepreneurial skills, strategies and collaboration with other stakeholders to achieve their goals and create societal-added value. Different from other concepts such as citizen engagement, responsabilization and active citizenship, the concept of entrepreneurial citizenship covers both top-down and bottom-up developments and gives entrepreneurship a central place in citizenship practices. In the Netherlands, the field of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods is a good example of how active citizenship has evolved into more entrepreneurial forms of citizenship. In urban regeneration, entrepreneurial citizenship is promoted top-down by governments but also manifests itself in many different bottom-up initiatives by citizens. In this paper, we focused on two specific manifestations of entrepreneurial citizenship that have received the most attention in the Netherlands namely, citizen initiatives and community enterprises. There are other ways in which entrepreneurial citizens organise themselves in urban neighbourhoods, for example, through co-operatives and collectives. These examples seem to have received less (policy) attention in the Netherlands as they are often not considered as 'new' or 'innovative' as citizen initiatives and enterprises are considered. The literature on citizen initiatives and community enterprises shows that entrepreneurial citizenship is not always valued by local governments, especially when it does not fit within existing policy frameworks. Entrepreneurial citizenship might be a citizen-ideal for (local) governments, but difficult to practice for entrepreneurial citizens. Different challenges for entrepreneurial citizens aiming to develop a citizen initiative or a community enterprise are reported in the literature, such as the continuing dependency on local governments for funding and the inability to become autonomous and to remain sustainable (Van Dam, Duineveld, and During 2014; Rijshouwer and Uitermark 2017; Van der Zwaard et al. 2018; Van Meerkerk, Kleinhans, and Molenveld 2018). Having a sustainable community enterprise requires high levels of social capital, combined with strong entrepreneurial leadership and a strong business model as Van Meerkerk, Kleinhans, and Molenveld (2018) showed in their research. This has raised the question of whether entrepreneurial citizenship is in practice citizenship for 'professionals' because entrepreneurial citizenship requires skills not everyone can meet or be able to develop. The effect of entrepreneurial citizenship on social inclusion and social inequality has however been insufficiently examined. Most of the literature on citizen initiatives and community enterprises have been focused on defining the phenomenon, identifying its distinctive characteristics and more recently the factors of success, but has not

reached the point to provide statistical information on the number and range of citizen initiatives and enterprises or their effect on, for example, liveability or social cohesion. Overlooking our discussion of entrepreneurial citizenship, we might conclude that it is not a 'new' phenomenon in the Netherlands. Many public institutions in the Netherlands started as 'private (citizen) initiatives' in the nineteenth century (Burger and Veldheer 2001; Dekker 2004). As these public institutions nowadays encounter various difficulties, citizens try to find new and innovative ways to locally provide (public) services themselves. However, the context in which contemporary entrepreneurial citizenship is developing is very different from the context in which the private initiatives during the nineteenth century had developed. During the nineteenth century, various public services were facilitated by different religious groups and the middle-class elite often motivated by the Christian inspired love for one's neighbour or the protection of one's own interests (Burger and Veldheer 2001). Today, entrepreneurial citizenship is developing in a context of welfare state retrenchments and in the midst of discussions about citizens' rights and responsibilities and the role national and local governments should take. This is being translated into policies that actively stimulate citizens to undertake initiatives and to take the lead in solving social problems which was during the nineteenth century, not the case (Hoogenboom 2011). Also, whereas churches, labour unions and associations were central places where citizens organised themselves, the neighbourhood now seems to have taken this place instead. Furthermore, citizen initiatives nowadays cannot rely on a continuous stream of funding from philanthropists or the government and therefore develop entrepreneurial strategies (such as generating profits and reinvesting these profits in the locality) in order to be able to stand on their feet. Thus, entrepreneurial citizenship does seem to incorporate elements that are significantly different from practices in the past, however, to what extent it can be considered 'new' is debatable. Whether the development of entrepreneurial citizenship will eventually lead to a more important and significant role for citizens in urban regeneration remains a question for further research. We encourage researchers to study further manifestations of entrepreneurial citizenship and to examine whether the initiatives entrepreneurial citizens develop become more professionalised and more sustainable over time. We have mainly focused on expressions of entrepreneurial citizenship in an urban context. In rural areas where due to population decline several public facilities are gradually disappearing, entrepreneurial citizens might be equally visible and important. We believe that providing a better understanding of the entrepreneurial citizen and their initiatives is essential, and an opportunity for scholars to further develop this cross-cutting field.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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