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Dissertation Title: Effects Of Choice Of Country On The Success Of Accelerator-Based Technology Startups. A Comparison Of Ireland And Spain

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Abstract:

In this dissertation, the startup ecosystems in the Republic of Ireland and Spain are investigated, focusing on startups in the Internet and mobile applications sectors. The current compositions of the support networks available in both countries, specifically concentrating on accelerator and incubator programmes, are examined and the question of what makes a startup successful is evaluated.

These topics will be evaluated in terms of the following research questions:

- What programmes exist in Ireland and Spain to support early-stage startups?
- Is the country a key factor in the success of early-stage startup companies?

Why is this important? Ireland and Spain have suffered an economic recession in recent years. Their economies and wealth creation have in the recent past been dependent on somewhat artificial factors such as property transactions and speculation. Unemployment, especially youth and long-term, is a tremendous problem in both countries. These countries need to explore sustainable means of wealth creation to fuel their domestic economies. New Technology-Based Firms (NTBFs) "*provide sustainable secure, high-quality and highly-skilled employment opportunities*" (Löfsten & Lindelöf, 2005). As a consequence, it is important the formation of new companies in technology sectors is encouraged.

A number of studies investigating this subject and success factors have been found, but most of the literature refers to firms based in the United States or the United Kingdom. Some EU-wide high-level comparisons exist but nothing has been found specifically for Ireland or Spain.

In this study, a number of semi-structured interviews have been conducted with founders of startups based in Ireland or in Spain, and with accelerator and incubator programme managers, to paint a picture of the current startup ecosystems in both countries as well as to examine what level of support is being made available and how it is being utilised by startups.