

# METRO INTERNATIONAL OWN BUSINESS STUDY

10,000 VOICES, 7 KEY FINDINGS



**10,000**  
PEOPLE  
SURVEYED



OVER  
**800** BUSINESS  
OWNERS  
SURVEYED



**10**  
COUNTRIES  
CHINA / CZECH REPUBLIC / FRANCE /  
GERMANY / NETHERLANDS /  
PORTUGAL / ITALY / ROMANIA /  
RUSSIA / TURKEY

## WHY THIS STUDY

METRO has a clear commitment – to be the Champion for Independent Business. That is why we initiated the “OWN BUSINESS DAY”, a day dedicated to business owners and their accomplishments. On the occasion of this year’s Own Business Day, METRO has commissioned an international study. This study takes a closer look at:

**HOW PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD  
THINK ABOUT INDEPENDENT  
BUSINESSES**

**HOW OWNERS OF INDEPENDENT  
BUSINESSES LOOK AT THEIR  
OWN EXPERIENCE**

## METHODOLOGY

In each of the 10 countries, 1,000 members of the general public were surveyed online, about 100 of whom are business owners. Respondents were recruited from survey panels and each country’s results are representative of the wider population on age and gender.

# 7 KEY FINDINGS

## 1 PEOPLE VALUE INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES\* AND THEIR OWNERS.

The study shows that own businesses are seen as contributing economically and to the community more than non-independent businesses.

METRO also found out that more consumers prefer to get their products or services from independent businesses.

When asked about the attributes people associate with independent business owners, the following characteristics top the list of responses:

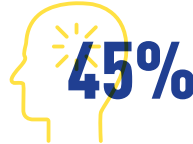
**40% CONFIDENT**  
**38% HARD-WORKING**  
**35% CREATIVE**  
**29% ORGANISED**  
**28% PASSIONATE**

Multiple answers were possible

### KEY MOTIVATORS FOR THIS ARE:



People's wish to support businesses run by members of the local community



The belief that independent businesses offer better quality

This figure is highest in France (58%) and lowest in Turkey (36%)



A preference for buying from people who they know personally

Multiple answers were possible

Another fact that underlines how well people think of entrepreneurship:

**83%** OF ALL RESPONDENTS WOULD BE PROUD IF THEIR CHILD STARTED A BUSINESS

## 2 MANY PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS – AND MONEY IS NOT THE MAIN REASON.

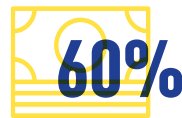
**48%** OF ALL RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN STARTING THEIR OWN BUSINESS.

This number is even higher in Turkey (74%), Romania (71%) and China (58%).

THOSE MOST INTERESTED ARE YOUNG, WELL-OFF AND LIVING IN CITIES. MORE SPECIFICALLY:



of all respondents are between the ages of 18 and 24



of respondents with a household income over 100,000 USD



of respondents living in cities

Aloña Martiarena,  
Assistant Professor of  
Entrepreneurship at IE  
Business School - IE  
University, Spain

“THOSE WITH A HIGHER INCOME ARE MOST LIKELY TO THINK THEY WILL BE ABLE TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS – THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE EXISTING EVIDENCE THAT FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND LIQUIDITY CAN BE CRUCIAL FOR TRANSITIONS TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP.”

THIS DESIRE IS NOT ALL ABOUT THE MONEY. IN FACT, SELF-FULFILMENT IS A MUCH STRONGER FACTOR. THE MAIN REASONS GIVEN FOR WANTING TO START A BUSINESS ARE:

I would be able to earn a living doing something I am passionate about

40%

I like the idea of being my own boss

37%

I would get satisfaction from the achievement of growing my own business

35%

I could turn my hobby into my profession

28%

I would enjoy the responsibility of running my own business

26%

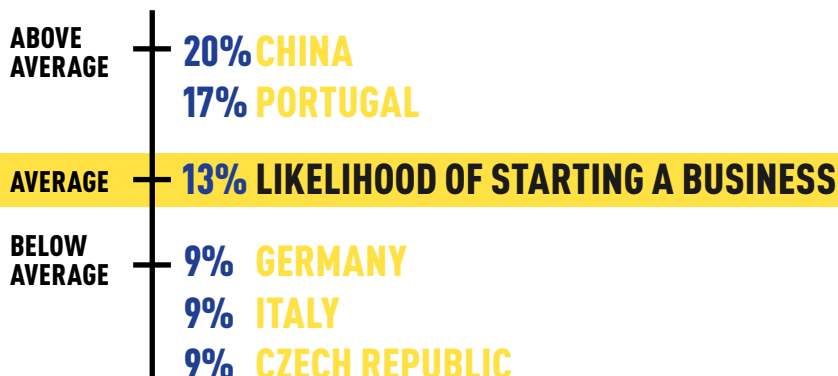
Base – all who want to start a business  
Multiple answers were possible

Professor Dr.  
Alexander Chepurenskiy,  
Director of the Department  
of Sociology, Faculty of  
Higher Social Science  
at Higher School of  
Economics, Russia

“THE STUDY REVEALS THAT THE MOST-VALUED BENEFITS OF OWNING ONE’S OWN BUSINESS ARE FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE, RATHER THAN PROFIT AND STATUS.”

3 ONLY FEW OF THOSE INTERESTED IN OWNING A BUSINESS THINK THEY WILL ACTUALLY BE BUSINESS OWNERS ONE DAY.

Compared across markets, this figure falls to single digits in Germany, Italy and the Czech Republic (9% all). This number is higher in China, where 1 in every 5 would-be business owners think they will actually start a business.



Base – all who want to start a business

The study detected a considerable **ENTREPRENEURIAL GAP**, a discrepancy between those wanting to create a business and those who think it is likely they will actually end up doing so:

13%

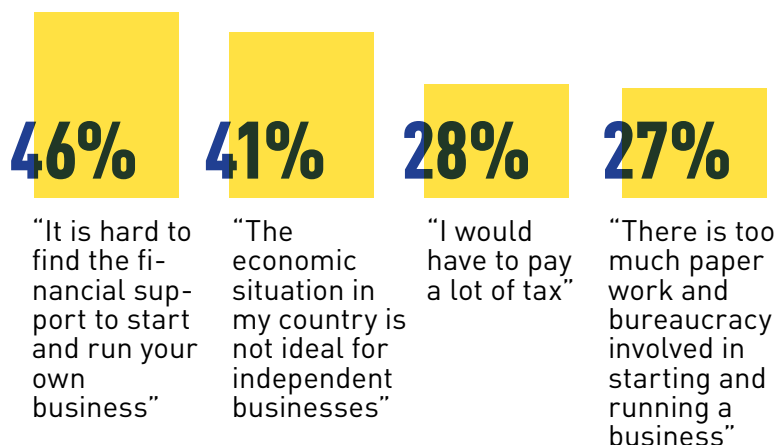
of those who are interested in owning a business, stated their chances of doing so are ‘very likely’.

Aloña Martiarena,  
Assistant Professor of  
Entrepreneurship at IE  
Business School - IE  
University, Spain

“FROM A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST’S PERSPECTIVE, MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INCLUDING THE PERCEIVED DESIRABILITY AND THE SELF-PERCEPTION OF OWNING THE NECESSARY SKILLS FORM THE INTENTION TO START ONE’S OWN BUSINESS.”

## 4. POLICY HAS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS FOR INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES.

Among those who would like to start a business, perceived barriers related to the political environment are the most off-putting :



Base – all who want to start a business

There are big differences between countries in whether national governments are seen as doing enough to support independent businesses:

**A VAST MAJORITY OF THE FRENCH AND CHINESE PUBLIC (80% OF BOTH) EXPRESS CONFIDENCE IN THEIR GOVERNMENTS. BY CONTRAST, ONLY 18% OF ITALIANS AND 24% OF ROMANIANS HAVE CONFIDENCE HERE.**

Lamia Kamal-Chaoui,  
Director, OECD Centre for  
Entrepreneurship, SMEs,  
Local Development and  
Tourism

**"POLICY HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN CREATING A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR ALL BUSINESSES TO THRIVE. DUE TO SIZE CONSTRAINTS, SMALL INDEPENDENT FIRMS ARE OFTEN DISPROPORTIONALLY AFFECTED BY MARKET FAILURES AND BARRIERS, SUCH AS REGULATORY BURDENS AND HIGH COSTS OF TAX COMPLIANCE. CONDUCIVE FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS AND POLICIES THAT ENABLE ENTREPRENEURS TO ACCESS STRATEGIC RESOURCES, SUCH AS FINANCE, SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE, ARE KEY TO THE CREATION AND GROWTH OF SMALL INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES."**

## 5. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND TAXES TOP THE LIST OF GREATEST THREATS TO THE SUCCESS OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES.

When asked about the biggest threats to the success of their businesses, business owners named the economic situation and rising taxes the most.



33%

"The general economic situation in my country"



31%

"Rising taxes"

Business owners also named other concerns related to healthcare, competition and financial burdens in general.



29%

"Falling ill or being unable to work"



27%

"Increasing competition"



23%

"Rising costs"

## NUMBER OF BUSINESS OWNERS CONCERNED ABOUT...

### GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION



### GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION



Base – all business owners

## 6 THE BIGGEST BENEFIT OF OWNING A BUSINESS: BEING YOUR OWN BOSS.



of all business owners say that being their own boss is the biggest benefit of owning a business.



of all business owners value the opportunity to earn a living doing something they are passionate about.



of all business owners appreciate flexibility.



of all business owners appreciate the responsibility that comes with running an own business.

## 7 MOST BUSINESS OWNERS WOULD START THEIR OWN BUSINESS AGAIN: 9 OUT OF 10

### THE VAST MAJORITY OF BUSINESS OWNERS ARE HIGHLY POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR DECISION TO START A BUSINESS:



would become a business owner again if they could go back in time.

If you want to know more about the study results, please contact:

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\* Independent Businesses as defined in the study: "Independent Businesses" or "Own Businesses" are privately owned firms – meaning they are usually owned by the person or people who run the business. They are usually not part of the stock market, a wider enterprise, or group of companies. They operate in many different sectors, and examples include restaurants, hotels, catering companies, small traders and service companies such as hairdressers or tattoo parlours.