

Gender Differences in Entrepreneurship under Business Demographics Statistics

STATISTICS DEPT., MOF
January 7, 2026

Abstract

This study draws on fiscal and taxation data and incorporates the internationally emerging concept of business demography to construct statistics on firm births and survival. Focusing primarily on sole proprietorships, it examines how entrepreneurs' gender, industry choices, individual characteristics, and background experiences influence business development and survival, with comparisons to international data. The main findings are as follows:

1. The share of female entrepreneurs has continued to rise. Over the past five years, more than 90% of the net increase in new entrepreneurs has been contributed by women, significantly narrowing the gender gap. Moreover, Taiwan's international ranking in female sole proprietorship entrepreneurship has continued to improve, indicating a simultaneous strengthening of entrepreneurial momentum and international competitiveness among women.
2. The entrepreneurial structure has become increasingly younger, with individuals aged 25–44 accounting for the majority of entrepreneurs. Those aged 25–34 have been the main drivers of growth over the past five years. At the same time, delayed marriage and childbearing, together with economic pressures, have led to an approximately 80% increase in entrepreneurship among unmarried individuals during this period.
3. Young and unmarried entrepreneurs tend to choose interest- or lifestyle-oriented industries such as sports and recreation services, cafés, and cellular phone retailing. In contrast, divorced entrepreneurs, facing greater economic and family caregiving pressures, prefer business models with low entry barriers, rapid cash flow, and greater time flexibility.
4. Entrepreneurship among both genders is highly concentrated in low-entry barrier industries such as food services and retailing. While most of the top ten sub-industries overlap, their rankings differ due to gender roles and resource endowments: women are more inclined toward e-commerce and

beauty-related businesses, whereas men are more concentrated in restaurants and technically oriented industries.

5. Certain industries exhibit a high degree of gender concentration. Women are predominantly engaged in yoga instruction, nail and eyelash services, and cosmetics retailing—sectors that balance personal interests with family needs—while men are mainly concentrated in motorcycle repair, domestic appliance repair, and motor vehicle beauty services, reflecting extensions of technical skills.
6. The proportion of part-time entrepreneurs has increased markedly, approaching 30% in 2023, representing the largest growth among entrepreneurial characteristics over the past five years. This trend reflects the growing perception of entrepreneurship as a flexible option that can coexist with salaried employment, facilitated by digital platforms and constrained wage growth.
7. Most entrepreneurs are first-time business owners, with a higher proportion among women. Meanwhile, over 60% have family members with prior entrepreneurial experience, and the share of first-time entrepreneurs with family support is relatively high, underscoring the critical role of family-based social capital in entrepreneurial decision-making and sustainability.
8. Whether the location of business operations overlaps with household registration reflects regional attachment and cross-regional operating patterns. In addition, firm survival analysis indicates that annual revenue, age, marital status, and industry are key determinants of survival. Compared with South Korea and the European Union, Taiwan's entrepreneurial activity shows a higher degree of industry concentration and a more clustered industrial distribution.