

FranchiseInsights.com has reported Business Startup Sentiment Trends data with monthly surveys since January 2020. The Small Business **Startup Sentiment Index™** (SSI) is derived from a monthly survey of individuals who have recently inquired about businesses or franchises for sale on the digital assets of [FranchiseVentures](#). This survey was conducted March 24-31, 2022.

**April 4, 2022**

## Small Business **Startup Sentiment Index™** (SSI)

### Access to Funding Tops Worries, but Business Startups Undaunted

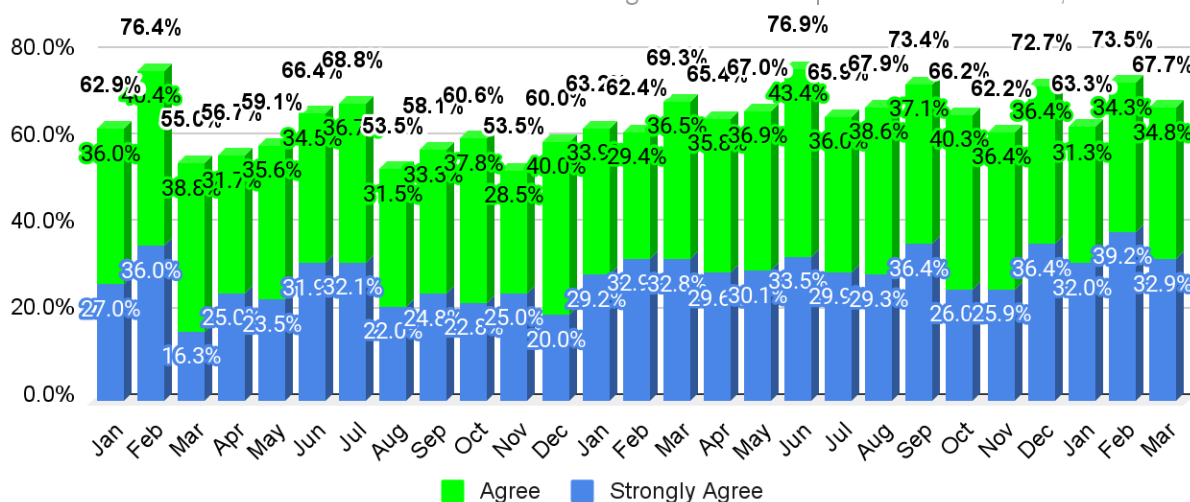
- Now 80.5% of aspiring owners see business conditions as the same or getting better for startups in coming months
- About 22.4% say that the pandemic is no longer a factor, but a record 48% say that it reduced the amount of capital they have to invest

### STARTUP SENTIMENT: OFF LAST MONTH HIGHS

After a month of invasion, inflation, and market volatility, business startups begin to settle into the new reality. Despite all the uncertainty, 52.9% of aspiring business owners responding in March were resolute about starting their businesses within the next three months. Further, 80.5% of these survey respondents see business conditions about the same or getting better in the next three months. Currently, 67.7% of would-be entrepreneurs agree or strongly agree that **"now is a good time to start a business"**, just down from 73.5% in February. [FranchiseInsights.com](#) compiles monthly the **Small Business Startup Sentiment Index™** (SSI) of individuals who have recently inquired about businesses for sale.

### Survey Respondents Say Now is a Good Time to Start

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™, Mar 2022



The survey was conducted March 24-31, 2022. This entrepreneurial optimism parallels the ongoing [surge in new business applications](#) which began in September 2020 as

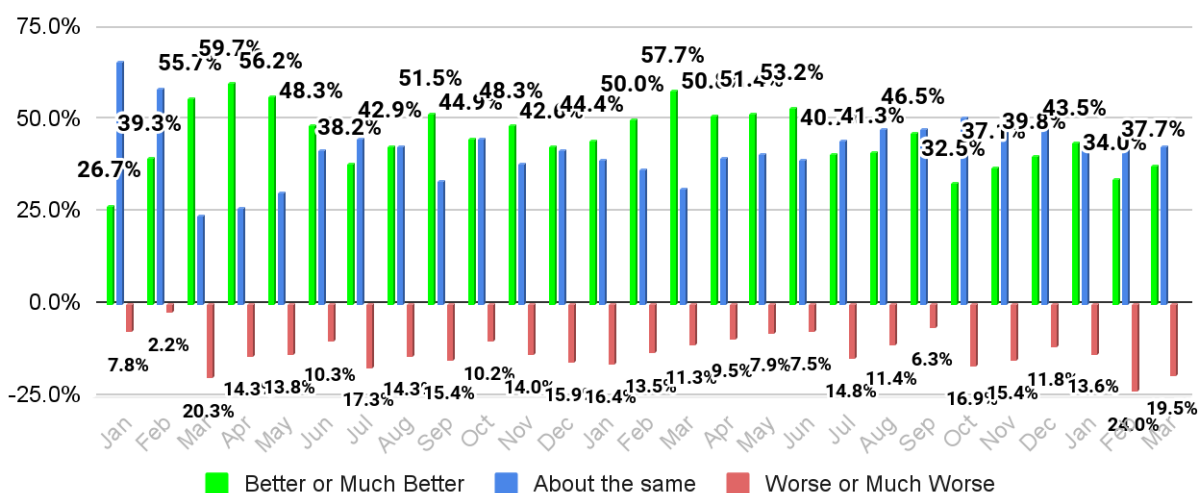
reported by the US Census Bureau, and continues today. These optimistic views on conditions for business startup aligns with a March uptick in sentiment seen in [The Conference Board's Survey of Consumer Confidence](#).

## OUTLOOK ON BUSINESS CONDITIONS SPLIT

Partly as a reflection of confidence in **current** conditions, only 37.7% of respondents believe that in three months, conditions will be **“better or much better”** than now, compared to the 50-60% readings at the height of the pandemic. A minority see conditions **“worse or much worse”** in the same time frame, at 19.5%, while in stark contrast, **80.5% see conditions staying the same or getting better**.

Now 80.5% See Business Conditions the Same or Getting Better, 19.5% Worse

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



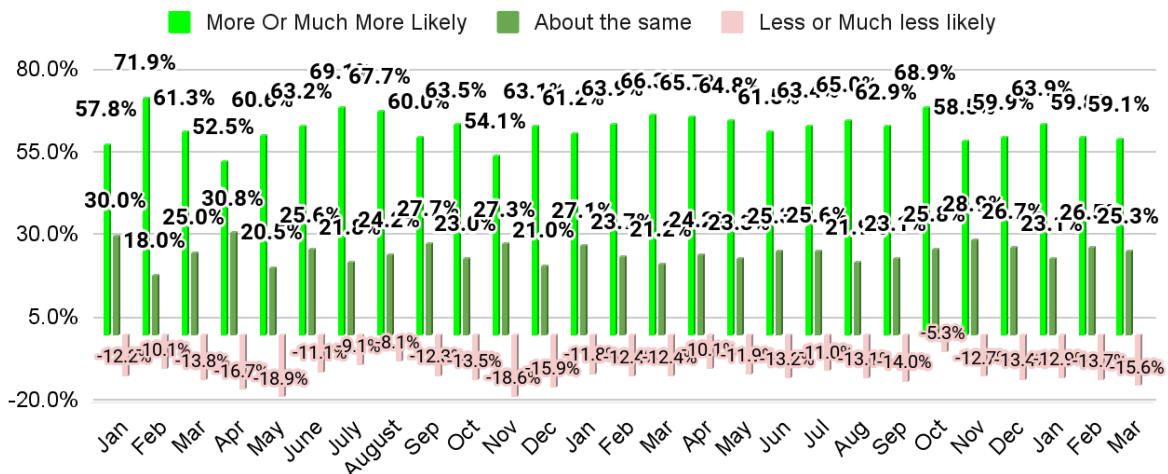
## SENTIMENT ABOUT STARTING “NOW” VS. THREE MONTHS AGO

Positive sentiment means slightly fewer respondents are more upbeat now about starting or buying their business than they were three months ago. In March, 59.1% of those responding indicated that they were **“more or much more likely to start a business now than three months ago”** compared with the recent high of 68.9% in October 2021.

The percentage of survey respondents who were **“less or much less likely to start a business than three months ago”** came in at 15.6%, an increase from the 12.0% average over the prior 12 months. That is the highest reading since November-December, 2020, as Covid surged.

## How likely are you to start a business now compared to 3 months ago?

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



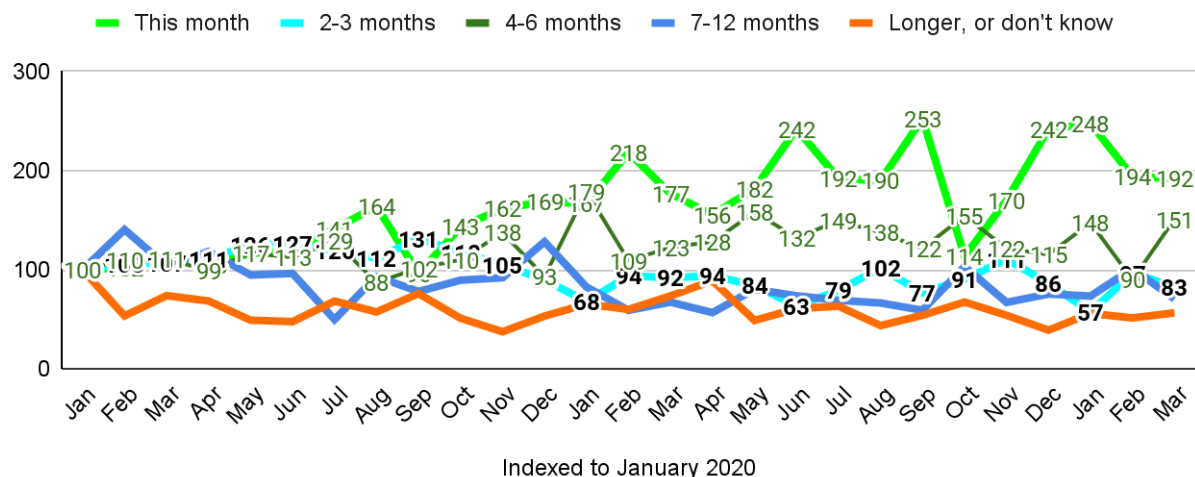
## STARTUP TIMING: 52.9% EXPECT START WITHIN NEXT 3 MONTHS

In March 2022, entrepreneurs expressing intent to start or buy ***“this month”*** settled at 192% of responses indexed to January 2020, from the peaks a few months earlier. The index of aspiring business owners planning startups in the ***“next 2-3 months”*** dipped to 83% in March, as compared to the twelve-month high in November seen at 111% of January 2020.

In summary, 52.9% of respondents expressed ***intent to start or buy their businesses “within the next three months.”*** Startup intentions in the ***“next four to six months”*** shrank to 12.9%, bringing the total with intent to start within 6 months to 74.5%.

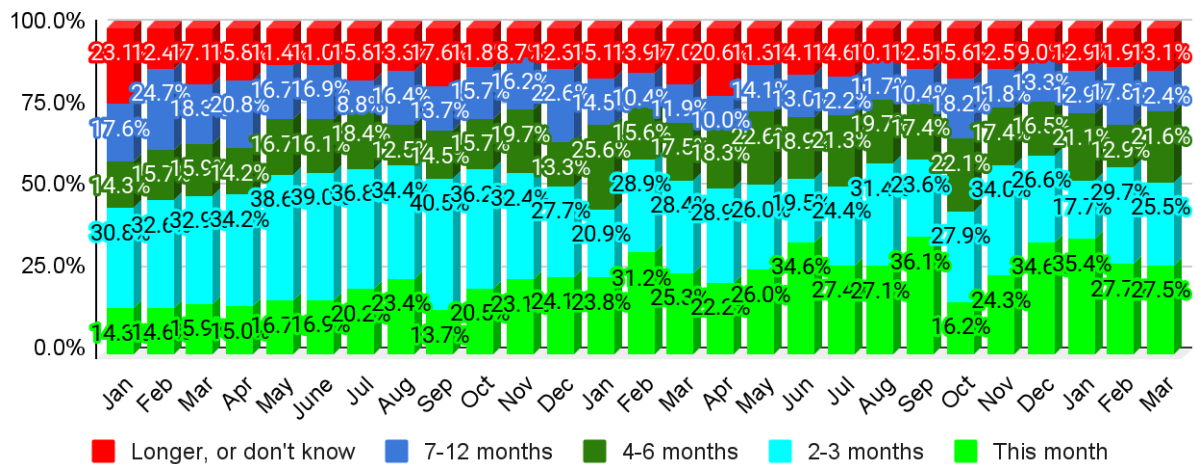
## Starts "This Month" at 4-Month High

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



# Startup Intent Within 3 Months at 52.9%

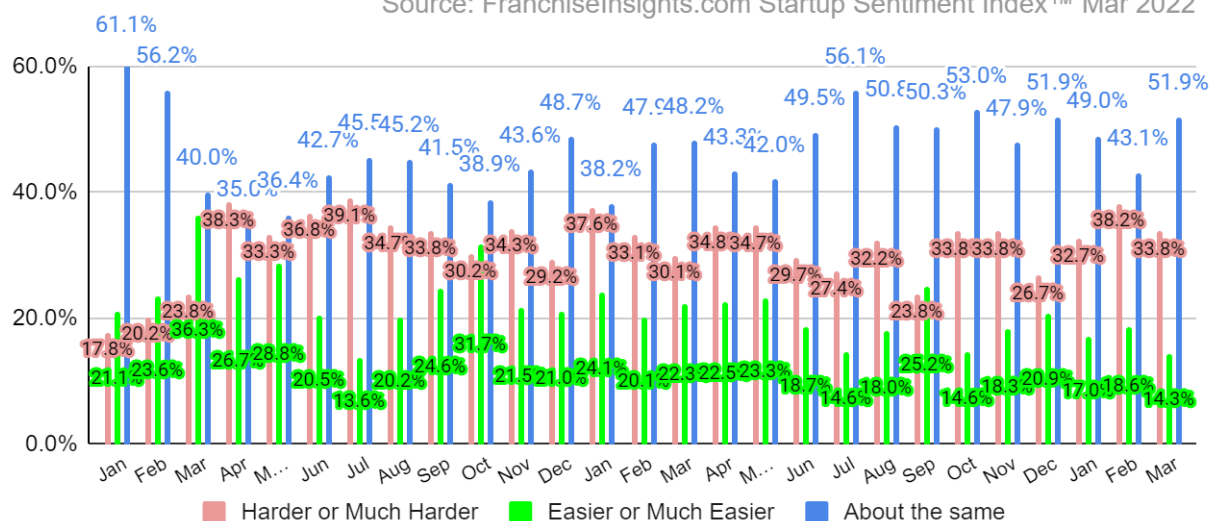
Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



## CONCERNS OVER FUNDING STILL PARAMOUNT

### 38.2% See Funding Harder or Much Harder Over the Next 3 Months

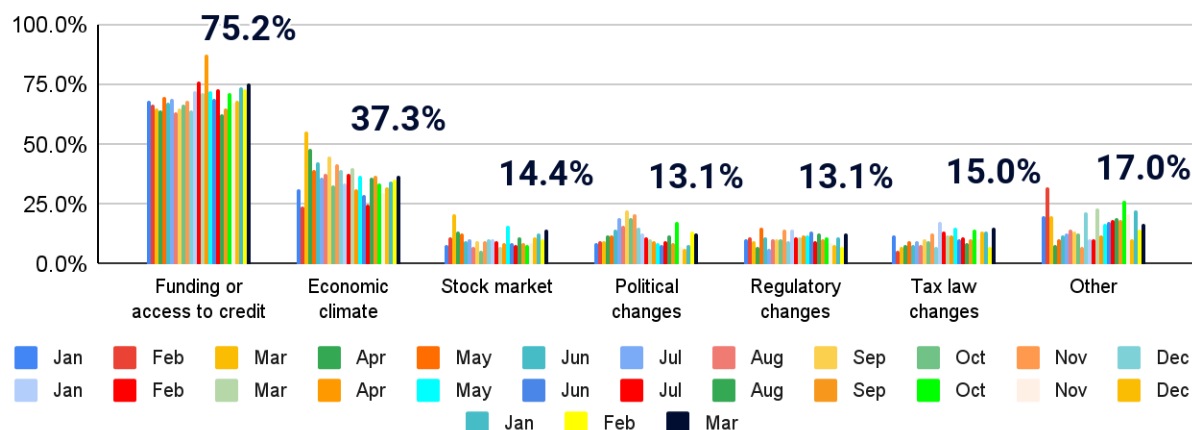
Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



While access to funding remains an oft-cited startup issue, prospective business owners have shown decreasing concern about availability of startup financing in recent months, with 33.8% seeing it getting **“harder or much harder”** three months from now. Almost 52% see access to funding in three months being **“about the same”** and a recent low of 14.3% see it getting **“easier or much easier”** despite all the news about increasing interest rates.

## Which of these factors will have the biggest impact in the next six months on your decision to start a business?

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



With other factors mostly flat or declining over the last several months, 75.2% of prospective business buyers cited **“funding or access to credit”** as the factor having the biggest impact on their decisions to buy or start a business, with the highest seen in April 2021 at 87.6%. Beyond the funding concern, **“economic climate”** is next highest at 37.3%, in somewhat of a downward to flat trend over the last two years.

Despite a significant drop in March and partial rebound in the stock markets during the week of the survey, only 14.4% of entrepreneurs cited the stock market as having a significant impact on their business startup plans.

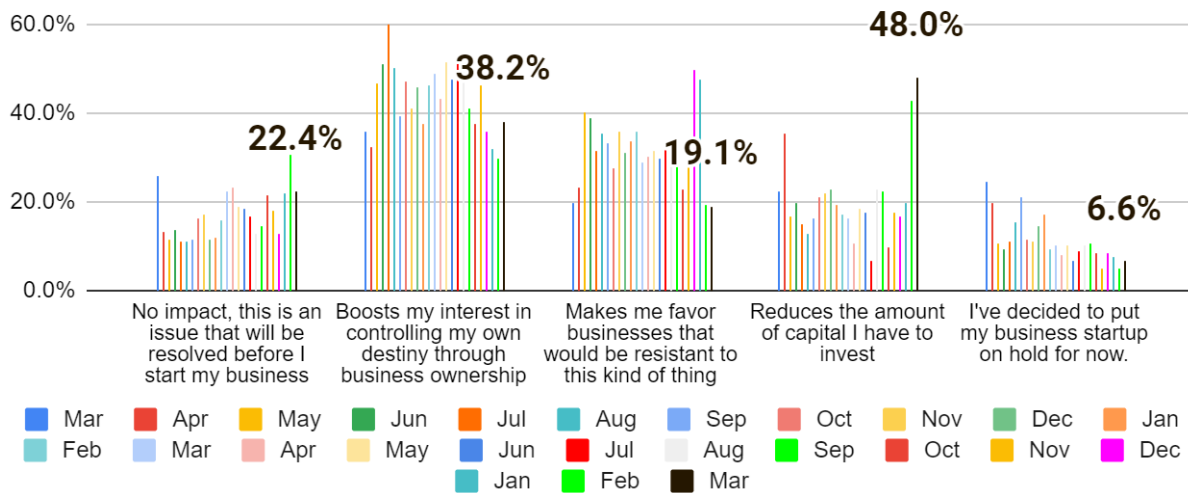
## ONGOING PANDEMIC DRIVES BUSINESS PREFERENCES

For two years, when asked how Covid-19 had affected their interest in starting a business or opening a franchise, respondents to the [FranchiseInsights.com](https://franchiseinsights.com) Small Business Startup Sentiment Index™ most often cited the desire for **“controlling my own destiny through business ownership.”** A few months into the pandemic, more began indicating a preference for **“businesses that would be resistant”** to shocks like Covid-19. This sentiment reached an all-time low in March at 19.1% of respondents, significantly down from December and January during the Omicron surge. The effectiveness of vaccines and decreasing deaths are clearly a factor in the latest poll.

Similarly, in March, the percentage putting their plans on hold at 6.6% held near the record low of 5.1% in February, and the percentage indicating that **“this is an issue that will be resolved”** before starting their businesses stood at 22.4%

## How does Covid-19 affect your interest in business ownership?

Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022



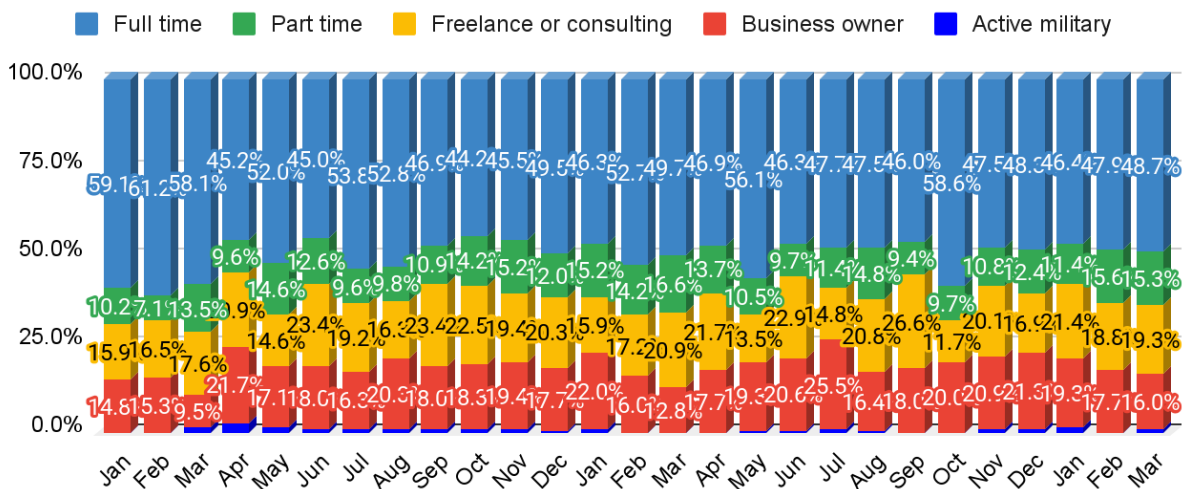
## GEN-Z REACHES RECORD 10% OF RESPONDENTS

Of the survey respondents, 48.7% are currently employed full-time, down from the recent high of 58.6% seen in October 2021. Current business owners made up 16% of respondents in March 2022, suggesting a desire to upgrade or complement their existing businesses. Combined, full-time workers and current business owners reached 64.7% of respondents, almost flat to that seen in the prior month.

About 19.3% of respondents were working for themselves as freelancers or consultants. Less than 1% of the aspiring entrepreneurs in the March survey were on active duty in the military.

## 48.7% of Aspiring Owners Leaving a Full Time Job

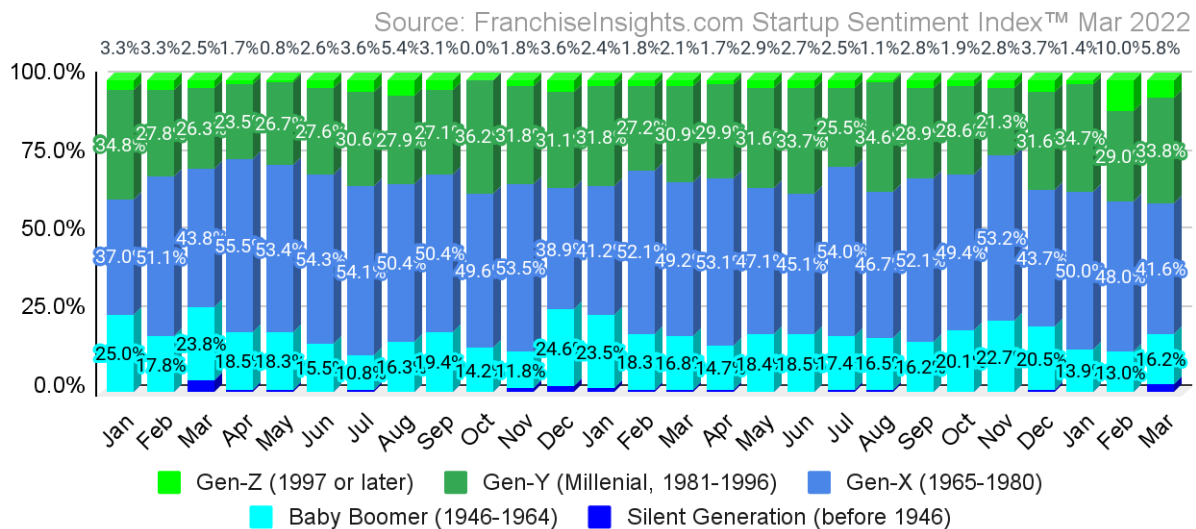
Source: FranchiseInsights.com Startup Sentiment Index™ Mar 2022





Gen-X (41.6%) and Millennials (33.8%) accounted for the highest percentages of survey respondents, and Baby Boomers rose to 16.2% in March. Again this month, Gen-Z at 5.8% was stronger than any month in the last two years except February 2022, the highest on record. For the next several years though, [millennials and Gen-X will drive business startups as they reach peak business startup ages](#) and Boomers age out of the workplace.

## Gen-Z Sees Second Strong Month, at 5.8% Percent of Respondents



See also a complete profile of the [generational demographics of aspiring business buyers](#) from a large demographic sample spanning 2018-2021. Further, analysis of [gender demographics of business buyers shows women making up an increasing percentage](#) of aspiring business owners, particularly in the post-Boomer age cohorts.

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[FranchiseVentures](#) is the leading demand- and lead-generation platform for potential franchisees to thousands of growing franchise systems in the United States and Canada. Its franchise directory brands include [Franchise.com](#), [Franchise Solutions](#), [Franchise Gator](#), [Franchise Opportunities](#), [Franchise For Sale](#), [SmallBusinessStartup.com](#) and [BusinessBroker.net](#), and together they provide the largest aggregation of prospective franchise buyers in the U.S.

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