

## A Call for Smarter Integration: What Family Businesses Expect from the EU



of business leaders from family businesses headquartered in France agree that “family businesses are under-recognised as drivers of EU competitiveness”.

This view is also shared by 63% of non-family business leaders.

### Top threats to competitiveness

Family businesses headquartered in France point to rising and volatile energy prices as the top threat to their competitiveness, whilst for non-family firms their biggest concern is skilled labour shortages.

	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders
#1	Rising/volatile energy prices	Shortage of skilled workers
#2	Shortage of skilled workers	Cybersecurity threats (e.g. data breaches, ransomware, cyberattacks)
#3	Competition from outside the EU	Rising/volatile energy prices
#4	Cost of administrative and compliance burdens	Cost of administrative and compliance burdens
#5	Geopolitical risks (e.g. war, sanctions, supply chain shocks)	Unpredictable trade conditions (e.g. delays, supply chain disruptions)

Family businesses headquartered in France also appear more resilient to external pressures. Only 56% say economic and geopolitical instability is making it harder to stay competitive, compared to 63% of non-family firms.

## Summary of key findings amongst French family business leaders

1. More than two thirds of family businesses headquartered in France agree that they are under-recognised for their contribution to the EU’s competitiveness.
2. Energy costs top the list of concerns for family businesses headquartered in France, while non-family firms are more focused on labour shortages and trade risks.
3. Many family businesses are committed to investing in EU markets, while also eyeing strategic global opportunities in the USA, China, and Switzerland.
4. While current use of EU tools is limited, future intent to engage with funding and the Single Market is strong. Advancing a more integrated Single Market and enhancing access to funding are key.
5. Reducing administrative complexity in EU frameworks is the top priority across the board, as businesses feel bureaucracy is holding them back.

## What will make businesses more competitive?

Reducing administrative burdens is the top priority for both family and non-family business leaders. Family businesses headquartered in France would also welcome greater access to public procurement, and the introduction of centralised digital portals to manage regulatory compliance.

Percentage of business leaders who say the following will make their company more competitive		
	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders
Reducing administrative burdens on our company	57%	61%
Expanding access to public procurement opportunities	54%	48%
Creating faster or more transparent approval processes for permits, subsidies or certifications	54%	60%
Introducing a single digital portal to handle regulatory submissions, or business administration	54%	48%
Simplifying sustainability reporting frameworks to make them more practical for the company I work for	51%	48%
Offering tailored advisory services to help navigate compliance requirements	47%	59%
Adjusting regulatory thresholds to reflect the characteristics of the company I work for	46%	49%
Release new regulation only with a trial phase/sunset clause	41%	43%

Total sample size France n=600; family business leaders n=480; non-family business leaders n=120.

The data are taken from the study “**A Call for Smarter Integration: What Family Businesses Expect from the EU**” prepared by Edelman Data & Intelligence (DXI) for the Foundation for Family Businesses.

The non-profit Foundation for Family Businesses is the most important sponsor of academic research around family businesses. It is a primary point of contact for politicians and the media in matters related to economic policy, legislation and taxation.

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To the study:



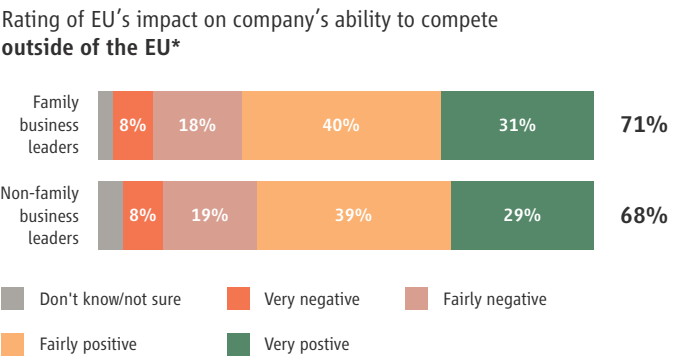
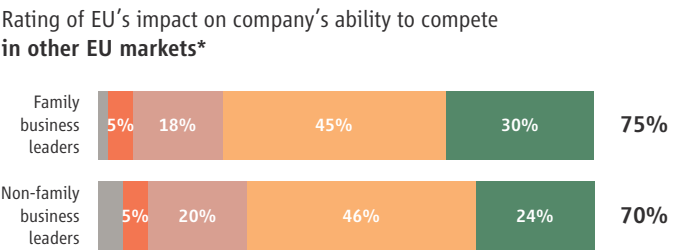
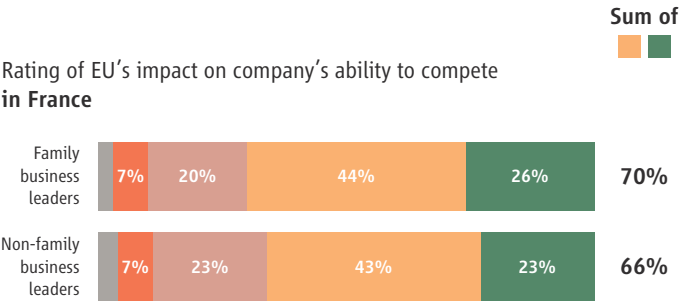
Usage of EU policies

Family businesses headquartered in France show an appetite to engage more with EU initiatives/frameworks, even if current uptake is moderate. Intent to access schemes linked to EU funding, the Single Market, and innovation funding all outpacing their current usage, meaning that implementing effective frameworks with reduced complexity will be critical for the EU.

	Percentage of business leaders who currently use this		Percentage of business leaders who do not currently use this but plan to use this	
	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders
Trade agreements between the EU and non-EU countries	24%	28%	25%	24%
EU-funded support or grant schemes	24%	18%	24%	35%
Support for compliance with EU sustainability or reporting standards	24%	18%	29%	28%
Access to the EU Single Market	23%	23%	30%	32%
Business advisory services or training funded by EU or national programs	22%	17%	29%	29%
EU innovation funding	21%	20%	30%	33%
National or regional government support linked to EU funding	20%	18%	34%	23%
Participation in EU-supported clusters of business networks	18%	18%	31%	27%

Impact of EU policies

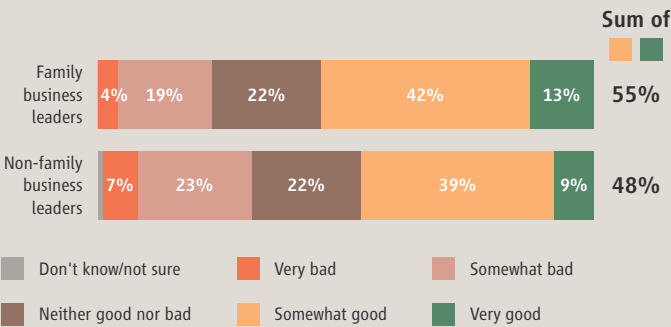
Both family and non-family businesses headquartered in France view the EU as a positive driver of their competitiveness, especially across the Single Market and beyond. Family firms in particular are most likely to say the EU enhances their ability to compete within the EU, making the effective delivery of frameworks all the more critical.



\*Sample is based on businesses that operate internationally only. See “Demographic Supplement” for a note on the base size.

Single Market loyalty

Family business leaders are more likely to say France is a good market to invest in (55%) than non-family business leaders (48%).



Outside of France, business leaders show a strong investment focus on nearby EU markets, citing them as their top choices both in the next 12 months and 5 years. Other large economies including the USA, China and the UK also gain attention.

Next 12 months		
	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders
#1	NET*: EU countries (54%)	NET*: EU countries (57%)
#2	USA (9%)	USA (9%)
#3	China (6%)	Switzerland (6%)
#4	UK (4%)	China (5%)
#5	Canada (3%)	UK (5%)
Next 5 years		
	Family business leaders	Non-family business leaders
#1	NET*: EU countries (49%)	NET*: EU countries (46%)
#2	USA (10%)	China (11%)
#3	China (6%)	USA (8%)
#4	UK (4%)	UK (8%)
#5	Switzerland (4%)	Vietnam (6%)

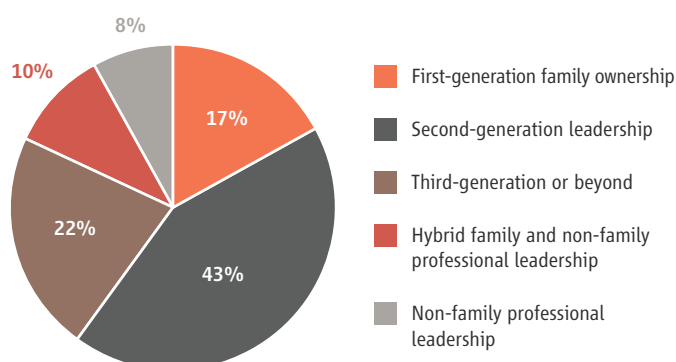
\*EU countries NET= total percentage who choose one of the 27 EU markets, with the exception of the market they are headquartered in.

## Demographic Supplement – Profile of German Family Businesses

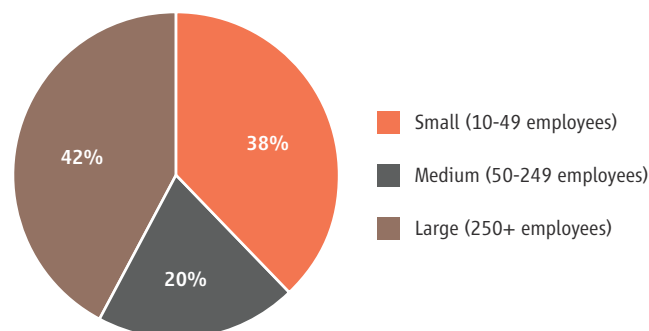
### Family involvement

	Percentage of French family businesses which confirmed family involvement in ...
Family members of current/previous CEO/owner currently active in executive management	63%
The company has a supervisory or advisory board	65%
Family members of the current or previous CEO/owner are active on the supervisory or advisory board	64%
There is a designated successor for executive management from the current or previous CEO/owners family	60%
There is a designated successor for the supervisory or advisory board from the current or previous CEO/owners family	55%

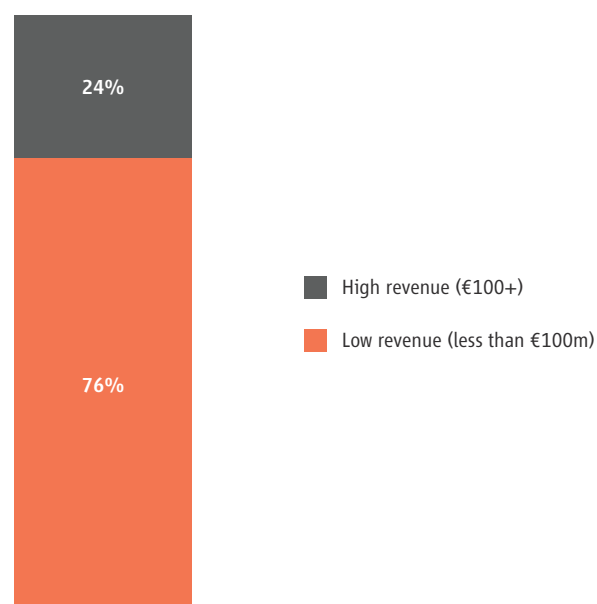
### Generational structure



### Business size



### Revenue in most recent financial year (annual)



### Sectors of industry

	Percentage of French family businesses in this survey
Business and Professional Services	13%
Information and Communication Technology	13%
Retail	12%
Transport and Logistics	12%
Manufacturing	10%
Construction	10%
Trade and Hospitality	9%
Health	8%
Education	6%
Energy and Utilities	5%
Other services	2%

Bases for all data included in this fact file are as follows, unless otherwise stated. French base sizes: Total French business leaders: n=600, family businesses headquartered in France: n=480, non-family businesses headquartered in France: n=120.

\*Total French business leaders whose business operates internationally: n=297, family businesses headquartered in France who operate internationally: n=238, non-family businesses headquartered in France who operate internationally: n=59.