

# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2108/210810-cuba-business.html>

The government in Cuba is legalising the ownership of small and medium-sized businesses. This represents a monumental shift in policy from the communist-ruled country. State-owned companies have traditionally been the norm in Cuba, following the revolution in 1959 that brought Fidel Castro to power. He nationalised Cuba's industries to put them into state hands. The new policy allows entrepreneurs to operate businesses that have up to 100 employees. The change of heart from the government came after a month of street protests. Thousands of Cubans demonstrated against dire economic conditions. People also protested about a lack of food and the handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said he would introduce new initiatives to revitalise his country's economy. Cuba relies on tourism for much of its foreign currency reserves. Global restrictions on travel during the pandemic have severely impacted this sector. Another key industry in Cuba is the production of sugar. Bad weather has resulted in poor harvests and reduced revenues. These events have depleted the government's reserves of foreign currency, which means it has become difficult for the country to import food and medicine. Cuba expert O'Neill Diaz said "many entrepreneurs from the private sector have spent years striving, working and trying to contribute" to Cuba's economic well-being.

Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-58132000>  
<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210807-cuba-legalizes-small-and-medium-enterprises-in-boost-for-private-sector>  
<https://theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/10/cuba-legalizes-small-and-medium-sized-businesses/>

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. legalising   | a. Great in importance, extent, or size.  |
| 2. monumental   | b. A nation or territory considered as an organized political community under one government.                                     |
| 3. the norm     | c. Making something lawful to do.   |
| 4. state        | d. Extremely serious or urgent.   |
| 5. entrepreneur | e. A person who organizes and operates a business or businesses, taking on greater than normal financial risks in order to do so. |
| 6. dire         | f. Managing a situation or problem.   |
| 7. handling     | g. Something that is usual, typical, or standard.   |

## Paragraph 2

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 8. initiative   | h. Making great efforts to achieve or obtain something.   |
| 9. revitalise   | i. The limitation or control of someone or something.   |
| 10. reserves    | j. The process or period of gathering in crops.   |
| 11. restriction | k. An act or strategy intended to resolve a difficulty or improve a situation; a fresh approach to something. |
| 12. harvest     | l. Give something new life.   |
| 13. expert      | m. A person who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge of or skill in a particular area.             |
| 14. striving    | n. A supply of something not needed for immediate use but available if required.                              |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2108/210810-cuba-business.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. Entrepreneurs can now start any size of company in Cuba. **T / F**
2. There was a revolution in Cuba in 1959. **T / F**
3. Street protests prompted a change of heart from the government. **T / F**
4. People protested in the streets about food shortages. **T / F**
5. Cuba's president said there would be no further initiatives after this one. **T / F**
6. Cuba had a bumper sugar harvest this year. **T / F**
7. Bad weather has helped to reduce Cuba's foreign currency reserves. **T / F**
8. Entrepreneurs have worked to help Cuba's economic well-being. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <b>monumental</b>   | a. plans           |
| 2. <b>norm</b>         | b. managing        |
| 3. <b>operate</b>      | c. play a part     |
| 4. <b>protested</b>    | d. used up         |
| 5. <b>handling</b>     | e. gigantic        |
| 6. <b>initiatives</b>  | f. run             |
| 7. <b>severely</b>     | g. business person |
| 8. <b>depleted</b>     | h. demonstrated    |
| 9. <b>entrepreneur</b> | i. seriously       |
| 10. <b>contribute</b>  | j. standard        |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. This represents a monumental shift       | a. been the norm             |
| 2. State-owned companies have traditionally | b. the private sector        |
| 3. The change of                            | c. economic conditions       |
| 4. of Cubans demonstrated against dire      | d. his country's economy     |
| 5. People also protested about a            | e. in policy                 |
| 6. introduce new initiatives to revitalise  | f. of foreign currency       |
| 7. severely impacted this                   | g. food and medicine         |
| 8. depleted the government's reserves       | h. lack of food              |
| 9. difficult for the country to import      | i. sector                    |
| 10. many entrepreneurs from                 | j. heart from the government |



# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2108/210810-cuba-business.html>

- 1) What kinds of businesses can people now start in Cuba?
  - a) start-ups
  - b) online companies
  - c) small and medium-sized businesses
  - d) profit-making companies
- 2) When was there a revolution in Cuba?
  - a) 1959
  - b) 1958
  - c) 1969
  - d) 1968
- 3) What did Fidel Castro do to Cuba's industries?
  - a) he thanked them
  - b) he rebuilt them
  - c) he modernised them
  - d) he nationalised them
- 4) What did Cuba's government have a change of?
  - a) leadership
  - b) heart
  - c) mind
  - d) politics
- 5) What did people protest about besides the handling of coronavirus?
  - a) a lack of jobs
  - b) the climate crisis
  - c) a lack of food
  - d) gas prices
- 6) What new things did Cuba's president say he would introduce?
  - a) schools
  - b) initiatives
  - c) wifi access points
  - d) climate measures
- 7) What does Cuba rely on for foreign currency reserves?
  - a) dollars
  - b) banks
  - c) light manufacturing
  - d) tourism and sugar
- 8) What did bad weather result in besides reduced revenues?
  - a) floods
  - b) poor harvests
  - c) drought
  - d) disease
- 9) What is Cuba finding it difficult to import?
  - a) food and medicine
  - b) pesticides and chocolate
  - c) car parts
  - d) computers
- 10) What have entrepreneurs spent years contributing to?
  - a) the debate
  - b) GDP
  - c) an ideas forum
  - d) Cuba's economic well-being

## CUBA DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'Cuba'?
3. What do you know about Cuba?
4. Would you like to own a business?
5. What do you think of state-owned companies?
6. What do you think of communism?
7. Should any industries be nationalised?
8. How good an entrepreneur would you be?
9. What things would make you protest in the streets?
10. How has your government handled the pandemic?

*Cuba allows people to own private businesses – 10th August, 2021*  
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## CUBA DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'business'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. Would you like to visit Cuba?
15. What advice do you have for Cuba's president?
16. What can revitalise economies?
17. What do you know about Cuba's tourism industry?
18. What are your country's key industries?
19. Where do you think Cuba will be in 10 years from now?
20. What questions would you like to ask Cuba's leader?