

Atradius Payment Practices Barometer

# B2B payment practices trends France 2025



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## About the Atradius Payment Practices Barometer

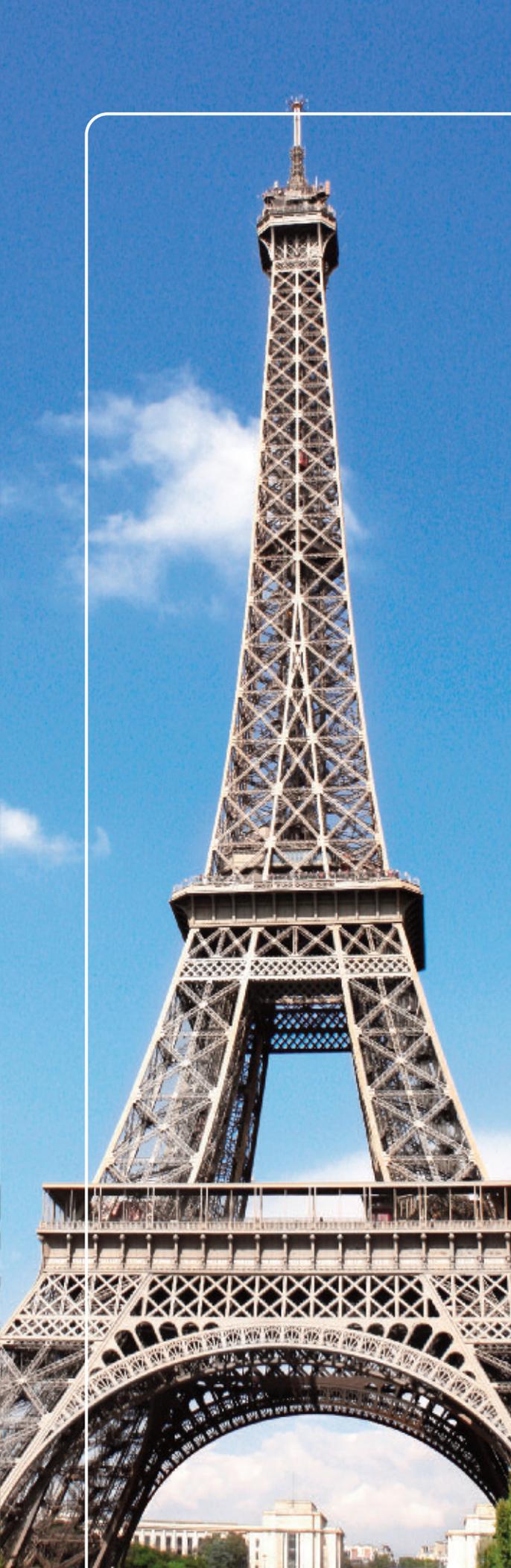
The Atradius Payment Practices Barometer is an annual survey of business-to-business (B2B) payment practices in markets across the world.

Our survey gives you the opportunity to hear directly from businesses trading on credit with B2B customers about how they are coping with evolving trends in customer payment behaviour. Staying informed about these trends is vital because it helps to identify emerging shifts in customer payment habits, allowing businesses to address potential liquidity pressure and maintain smooth operations.

Businesses operating in – or planning to enter – the markets and industries covered by our survey can gain valuable insights from our reports, which also shed light on the challenges and risks companies anticipate in the coming months, as well as their expectations for future growth.

This report presents the survey results for **France**.

The survey was conducted between the end of Q1 and the beginning of Q2 2025. The findings should therefore be viewed with this in mind.



# B2B payment practices trends

## Financial headwinds mount as customer payment risk looms

Companies in France face growing challenges over business-to-business (B2B) customer payments, with 45% of firms reporting a deterioration in payment behaviour during the past year. Overdue payments currently affect an average 52% of all B2B credit sales, these delays linked to customer financial difficulties, inefficiencies in processing payments, or intentional holdbacks. Bad debts are also a key concern, an average 7% of B2B invoices being written off as uncollectible, with the construction sector hardest hit.

The worsening payment behaviour of B2B customers is highly likely a reflection of recent shifts in trade credit strategies. 40% of businesses in France have relaxed their credit terms aiming to attract and retain clients, boost short-term sales, and prevent loss of market share. This comes with risks in a challenging economic environment and can lead to delayed payments. Around three in five companies have increased trade credit offerings to support demand, which has led to longer payment terms, typically ranging between 31 and 60 days from invoicing.

All these adjustments to drive growth have increased exposure to customer credit risk. The policy of more lenient credit strategies has directly contributed to an increase in Days Sales Outstanding (DSO) for many companies. In response, businesses have turned to invoice financing to accelerate cash flow and reduce liquidity pressures. This is especially critical for sectors like construction, where stock build-ups tie up liquidity and reduce operational flexibility. Inventory management has become a key concern as well because excess stock limits an ability to reinvest.

Days Payables Outstanding (DPO) has remained stable, but companies still face challenges in bridging liquidity gaps, and many are turning to bank loans as a supplementary funding source. To manage customer payment risks, most firms use a combination of internal provisions and outsourced credit risk management. Those relying on a single approach typically prefer outsourced solutions, recognising the need for specialized expertise to protect financial health in today's increasingly volatile market.

Key figures and charts on the next page



# Key figures and charts

## France

% of the total value of B2B invoices paid on time, overdue and bad debts

(change vs. 2024)



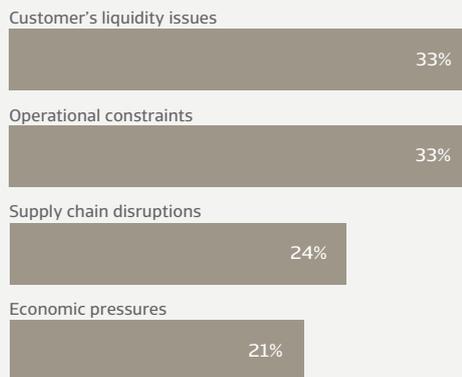
Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025

## France

What are the top 4 reasons your B2B customers pay invoices late?

(% of respondents - multiple response)



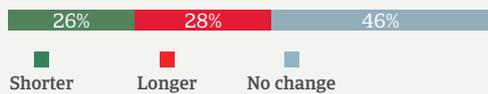
Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025

## France

% of respondents reporting changes in Days Sales Outstanding (DSO)\* over the past 12 months

(% of respondents)



\*average amount of time to collect payment after a sale

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025

## France

What are the main sources of financing that your company used during the past 12 months?

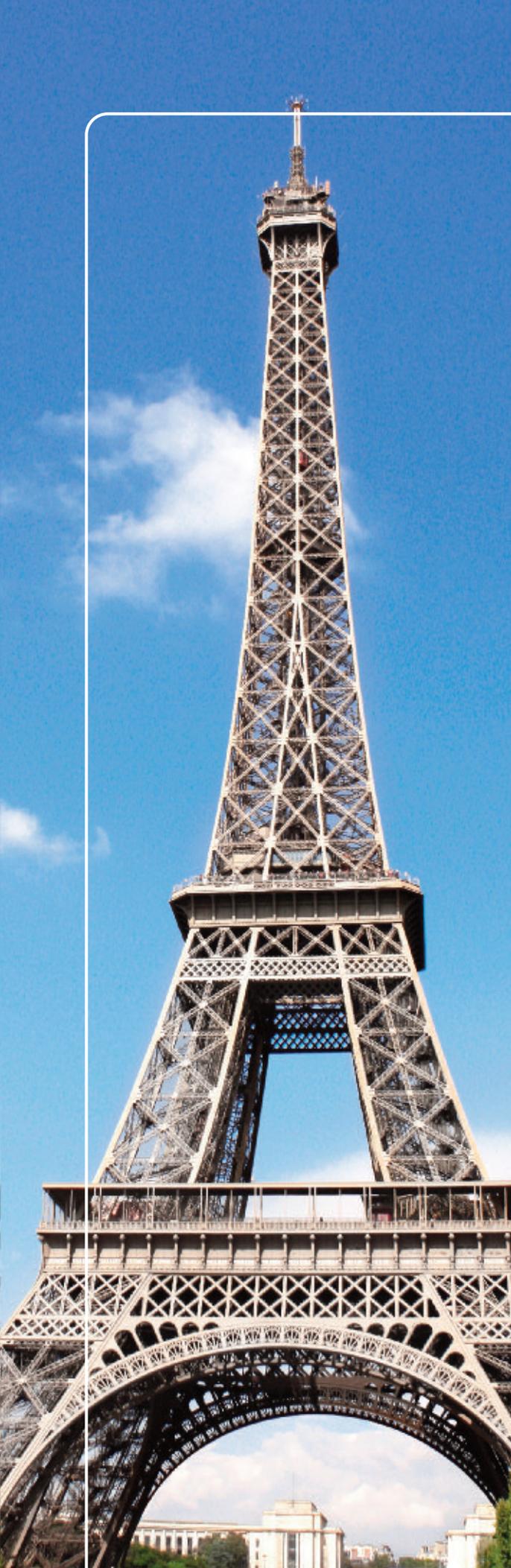
(% of respondents - multiple response)

- 51% Invoice financing
- 48% Bank loans
- 45% Trade credit
- 35% Internal funds

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025





# Looking ahead

## Companies brace for rising insolvencies amid uncertain economic landscape

Our survey finds that 54% of French companies anticipate a rise in B2B customer insolvencies in the months ahead as the trading landscape becomes increasingly unpredictable with the pressure of US protectionist policies and ever-evolving trade tariffs. This pessimism is particularly prominent among construction companies. The overall expectation across sectors of deteriorating customer credit risk aligns with a negative outlook for Days Sales Outstanding (DSO), which may lead to slower payment collections that directly impacting working capital.

Many companies, however, are hopeful that faster inventory turnover could help mitigate the impact of slow payments, and they expect quicker movement of stock as a consequence of more lenient trade credit policies. While this shift is expected to sustain sales performance, it comes with weaker profitability expectations due to the trade-off between liquidity challenges and sales growth. French companies are also bracing for increased pressure on supplier relationships, because suppliers may demand faster payments to alleviate their own cash flow concerns.

Despite this, businesses anticipate relatively stable Days Payables Outstanding (DPO) as they prioritize maintaining strong supplier relationships and managing liquidity pressures.

To mitigate the impact of payment risk during the coming months, most French businesses plan to continue relying on a combination of internal provisions and outsourced credit risk management. However, beyond this dual approach, the preference of French companies is shifting towards outsourced risk management solutions, recognizing the need for expert support in dealing with the growing complexities of credit risk in the current unpredictable business environment.

Looking ahead, companies in France expect to face significant business risks. Among the major concerns expressed are protectionist trade policies, rising geopolitical tensions, increasing regulatory burdens, and environmental concerns. These risks are likely to have a lasting impact on financial health, and French firms acknowledge the need to take proactive steps to manage liquidity to stay afloat in the evolving market landscape.



# Key industry insights

## Agri-food

Agri-food companies currently sell around 40% of their B2B sales on credit, with more firms recently extending trade credit than those tightening or maintaining previous levels. While average payment terms have remained stable, ranging from 30 to 60 days, fewer companies have reported stricter terms than those offering more leniency. B2B customer payment behaviour is mixed, with nearly equal numbers of companies reporting faster, slower, or unchanged settlement speeds. Nevertheless, 42% of B2B invoices are paid late, often due to financial pressures on customers or cash flow constraints. Bad debts affect an average 4% of B2B invoices.

Days Sales Outstanding (DSO) trends vary, with many companies reporting either consistent or slower payment collections, while some are seeing faster cash inflows. Inventory levels have largely remained stable, though more companies report stock build-up than faster turnover, an indication of locked-up liquidity. 56% of companies report stable Days Payables Outstanding (DPO) to protect supplier relationships, though a significant number say suppliers are demanding quicker payments due to cash flow pressures. Despite cautious expectations for sales and profitability, most businesses expect insolvency risks to remain steady. Liquidity remains under pressure, with invoice financing widely used and a combined approach to risk mitigation confirmed.

### France - Agri-food

Top 5 challenges companies face when offering credit to B2B customers

(% of respondents - multiple response)



Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025



# France - Agri-food

## Key industry figures

Main sources of financing used by the industry over the past 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

56%

Trade credit

51%

Invoice financing

43%

Internal funds

41%

Bank loans

Expected change in insolvency risk of B2B customers over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

37%

Increase

56%

Remains as current

7%

Do not know

Top 3 challenges businesses in the industry expect to face over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents - multiple response)

43%

Ongoing geopolitical developments

43%

Increasing regulations

39%

Volatility of costs of finance

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025





# Key industry insights

## Construction

Managing cash flow has become increasingly challenging in the construction sector. With 46% of B2B sales made on credit, more firms have expanded trade credit to support ongoing projects and client relationships, despite increased exposure to customer payment risks. Most businesses are offering longer payment terms, typically ranging from 30 to 60 days. The consequence of the strategy has been a stronger impact of customer late payments and defaults on the sector. Most companies say B2B customers are paying more slowly, with nearly 60% of invoices now overdue. Bad debts are also rising, affecting around 9% of B2B invoices.

Days Sales Outstanding (DSO) has worsened as a result, with more firms seeing slower cash collection and increased pressure on liquidity. These issues are compounded by rising inventory levels, often tied up in slow-moving or unfinished work. To protect cash flow, many firms have delayed payments to suppliers, extending Days Payables Outstanding (DPO), although others prioritise supplier relationships. Invoice financing remains a key source of financing for many. Nearly 70% of firms expect insolvency risks to rise. With cautious expectations for sales and profitability, construction companies are strengthening strategic payment risk mitigation, while bracing for ongoing economic and supply chain disruptions.

### France - Construction

Top 5 challenges companies face when offering credit to B2B customers

(% of respondents - multiple response)

Handling economic shifts impacting customer payments

41%

Managing impact of costs of finance on the business

37%

Assessing customer creditworthiness

32%

Late payments and bad debts

32%

Maintaining customer relationships

29%

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025



# France - Construction

## Key industry figures

Main sources of financing used by the industry over the past 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

66%

Invoice financing

51%

Bank loans

36%

Trade credit

27%

Internal funds

Expected change in insolvency risk of B2B customers over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

69%

Increase

30%

Remains as current

1%

Do not know

Top 3 challenges businesses in the industry expect to face over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents - multiple response)

36%

Ongoing geopolitical developments

33%

Increasing regulations

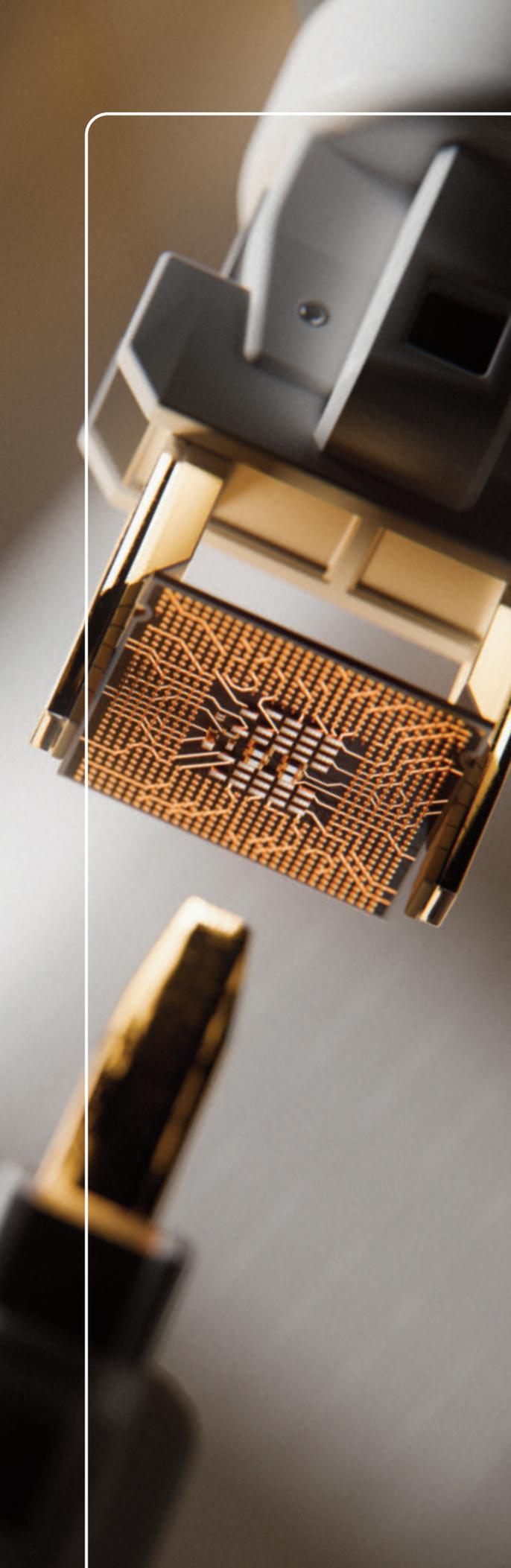
30%

Lack of skilled workforce

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025





# Key industry insights

## Electronics and ICT

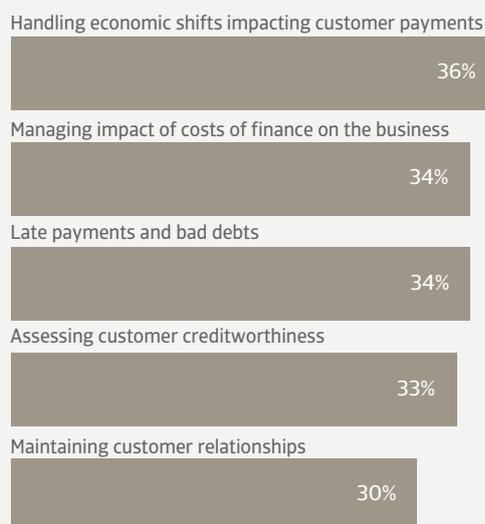
Trade credit now makes up 44% of B2B sales in the industry, with more companies expanding credit offerings than limiting them. This shift reflects efforts to stay competitive, but comes at the cost of increased exposure to late payments. Average payment terms, now between 30 and 60 days from invoicing, have lengthened for about half of companies, while customer payment behaviour has worsened. Nearly 55% of B2B invoices are now overdue and bad debts impact an average 8% of invoices. Most companies report longer payment collection times, pushing up Days Sales Outstanding (DSO) and straining cash flow.

This is further compounded by inventory build-up, which locks in liquidity and limits operational flexibility. While most firms have kept supplier payment times stable to protect key relationships, a significant number report delaying payments to conserve cash. Bank loans remain the primary financing source, but over-reliance may leave firms vulnerable if liquidity tightens. Looking ahead, 56% expect insolvency risk to rise. A cautious view of sales and profitability reflects this view. To manage customer payment risks, firms are leaning on internal provisions and outsourced credit management as they grapple with increasingly unpredictable market conditions. Regulatory demands and environmental compliance are also particular concerns.

### France - Electronics and ICT

Top 5 challenges companies face when offering credit to B2B customers

(% of respondents - multiple response)



Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France – 2025



# France - Electronics and ICT

## Key industry figures

Main sources of financing used by the industry over the past 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

51%

Bank loans

44%

Trade credit

36%

Invoice financing

34%

Internal funds

Expected change in insolvency risk of B2B customers over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents)

56%

Increase

39%

Remains as current

6%

Do not know

Top 3 challenges businesses in the industry expect to face over the next 12 months

(% of industry respondents - multiple response)

40%

Adoption of sustainability practices

34%

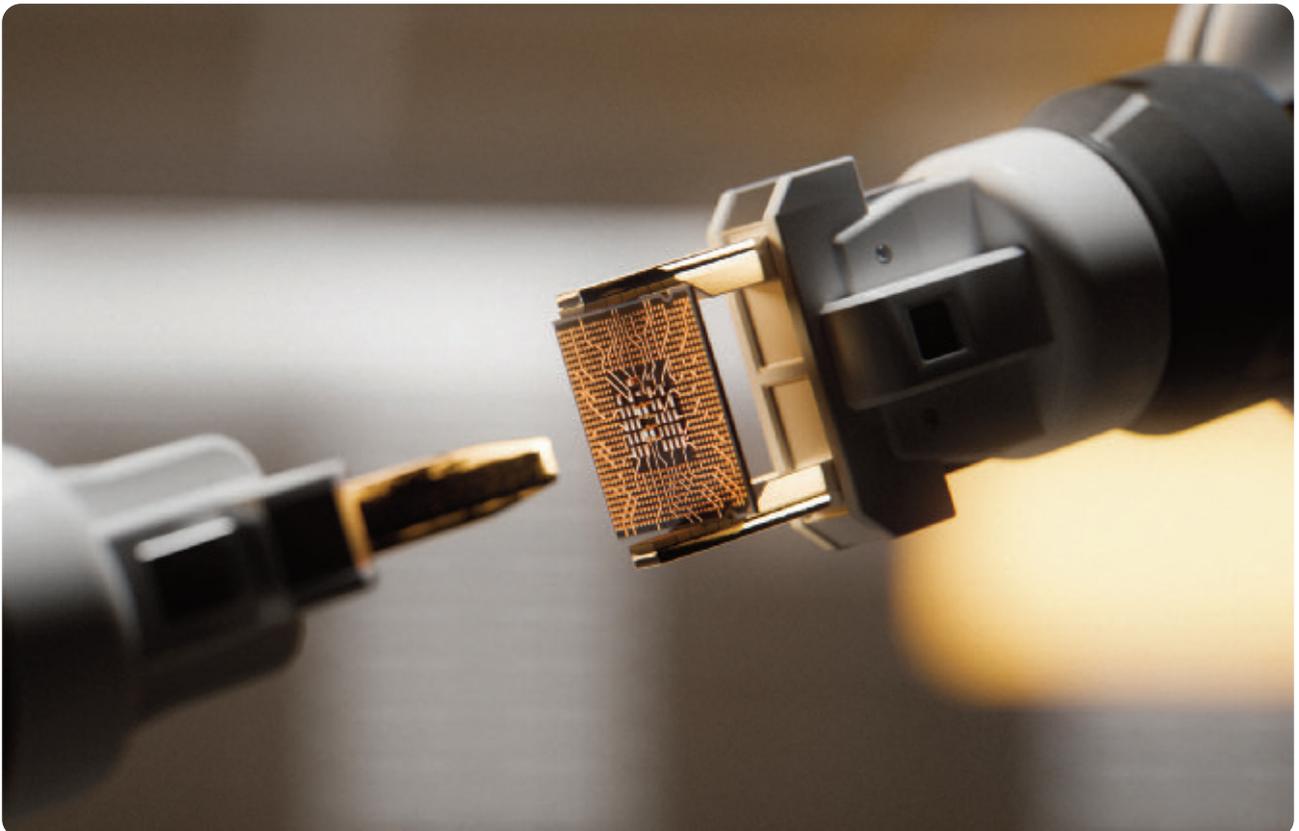
Increasing regulations

34%

Cybersecurity threats

Sample: all survey respondents

Source: Atradius Payment Practices Barometer France - 2025





# Survey design

Atradius conducts annual reviews of international corporate payment practices through a survey called the Atradius Payment Practices Barometer.

## Sample overview – Total interviews = 210

| Business sector           | Interviews | %          |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| Manufacturing             | 67         | 32         |
| Wholesale trade           | 64         | 30         |
| Retail trade/Distribution | 57         | 27         |
| Services                  | 22         | 10         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>210</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Business size             | Interviews | %          |
| SME: Small enterprises    | 35         | 17         |
| SME: Medium enterprises   | 67         | 32         |
| Medium Large enterprises  | 73         | 35         |
| Large enterprises         | 35         | 17         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>210</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Agri-Food                 | 70         | 33.3       |
| Construction              | 70         | 33.3       |
| Electronics and ICT       | 70         | 33.3       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>210</b> | <b>100</b> |

## Survey scope

- Basic population: Companies from France were surveyed and the appropriate contacts for accounts receivable management were interviewed.
- Sample design: The Strategic Sampling Plan enabled us to perform an analysis of country data crossed by sector and company size.
- Selection process: Companies were selected and contacted by use of an international Internet panel. A screening for the appropriate contact, and for quota control, was conducted at the beginning of the interview.
- Sample: N=210 people were interviewed in total. A quota was maintained according to four classes of company size.
- Interview: Computer Assisted Web Interviews (CAWI) of approximately 15 minutes duration.
- The survey was conducted between the end of Q1 and the beginning of Q2 2025.  
The findings should therefore be viewed with this in mind.

This is part of the 2025 edition of the Atradius Payment Practices Barometer available at

<https://group.atradius.com/knowledge-and-research>



# Interested in finding out more?

Please visit the [Atradius](#) website where you can find a wide range of up-to-date publications. [Click here](#) to access our analysis of individual industry performance, detailed focus on country-specific and global economic concerns, insights into credit management issues, and information about protecting your receivables against payment default by customers.

To find out more about B2B receivables collection practices in France and worldwide, please visit [atradiuscollections.com](http://atradiuscollections.com).

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