



EU Payments Observatory

The surge in late payments: An increasing barrier for EU companies

5 February 2025 10:00-11:00 (CET) Zoom

Late payments are a major obstacle to the competitiveness and growth of businesses across the EU, having particularly dire consequences for SMEs. Delayed payments significantly affect firms' ability to invest in expanding their product and service offerings, hinder efforts to enhance their sustainability performance, and impede their digital transformation strategies.

Despite the known consequences of late payments, the situation only seems to be worsening. The recently published 2024 Annual Report of the EU Payment Observatory highlights a concerning trend: in 2023, the share of enterprises struggling with late payments returned to 2019 levels, marking the sharpest rise in the past five years. Payment periods for Business to Business (B2B) transactions saw a marked deterioration, while Government to Business (G2B) transactions showed a smaller increase but continue to pose challenges. Adding to these worrying figures is the fact that larger companies remain among the least likely to pay on time, exacerbating pressures on smaller businesses that often lack the financial resilience to cope with payment delays. This year's report also delves into the negative impacts of late payments on access to external finance and firms' chances to succeed in intra-EU cross-border trade.

During this webinar, the EU Payment Observatory will present the key findings from its second Annual Report. The presentation will be followed by a panel debate, bringing together experts to discuss the implications of late payments and explore strategies to address this growing challenge for the competitiveness of the EU and its businesses.

Agenda

10:00 - 10:05

Introductory remarks

10:05 - 10:25

Presentation of the Annual Report 2024

CEPS and EY

10:25 – 11:00

Panel discussion

Hilary Marsh, Policy Advisor, Transform Trade

David Caro, President, ESBA

Moderated by **Tania Frazão Nunes**, Policy and Legal Officer, DG GROW