

Communications

P.O. Box, CH-8022 Zurich
Telephone +41 58 631 00 00
communications@snb.ch

Berne/Zurich, 17 February 2022

Results of the 2021 survey of Swiss companies on payment methods

In summer 2021, the SNB conducted its first comprehensive payment methods survey of companies, with a particular focus on cash usage. Around 2,000 companies operating in Switzerland participated in the survey, across all size categories, language regions and industries. The companies were asked questions relating to the acceptance and use of payment methods as well as to cash holdings and cash logistics. The survey was conducted online and ran from mid-May to end-July 2021. This new piece of research provides insights into how companies operating in Switzerland use payment methods and manage cash logistics. The results complement the findings of the SNB's [2017 and 2020 payment methods surveys](#) of households, thus contributing to a more comprehensive picture of the use of payment methods in Switzerland.

The payment methods survey of companies yields the following main conclusions:

On the receipts side, the needs of the customer play a key role in determining which payment methods are accepted by companies. Overall, 83% of companies accept payment against invoice, 68% payment by transfer and 60% payment in cash. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, one in ten companies restricted its acceptance of cash. At the same time, 16% stepped up their acceptance of non-cash payment methods. This came in response to both hygiene concerns and customer needs.

On the expenses side, transaction speed and supplier needs are the principal factors influencing the choice of payment method used by companies. For non-recurring payments, 79% of companies opt for transfers, 61% for payment against invoice, 40% for credit card settlement and 35% for cash. Payment method use by companies has changed little since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Press release

One-third of the companies surveyed report holding cash as a store of value. The majority of amounts indicated are for values of less than CHF 50,000. The proportion of companies with cash reserves in excess of CHF 1 million is 1%. A total of 58% of companies do not hold cash as a store of value.

The surveyed companies mostly use bank infrastructure for the supply and return of cash. Around one-third of these companies expect the local cash infrastructure to decline over the coming years, with fewer bank and post office branches and fewer ATMs at their disposal. Such a decline would impact the supply and return of cash for more than half of the companies surveyed. Some of these companies would scale back their cash usage as a result.

The report on the 2021 survey of Swiss companies on payment methods is available at www.snb.ch.