PRESS RELEASE

CEE Insolvencies: Stability on the Surface, Fragility Beneath and Rising Risks Ahead

Coface study highlights growing fragmentation across Central and Eastern Europe and a challenging outlook for companies

Hong Kong S.A.R, April 27th, 2026: While overall insolvency figures across Central and Eastern Europe stabilised overall in 2025, Coface's latest CEE Insolvency Study reveals a far more fragmented reality, with sharp divergences between countries and sectors increasingly shaped by diverging macroeconomic conditions.

Key takeaways:

- Insolvencies stable (+0.26%) but sharply fragmented
- Poland recorded the strongest increase, with insolvencies rising by 17.8%,
- Manufacturing, construction and transport are facing the strongest increase in business failures

At regional level, insolvency proceedings increased by only 0.26% in 2025, rising from 46,043 in 2024 to 46,161 in 2025. Inflation eased, interest rates began to decline, energy markets improved and wage pressures softened, offering partial relief to corporate margins. However, these improvements did not translate into a uniform recovery for companies across the region.

"*Headline numbers suggest stabilisation, but the underlying reality is far more complex,*" said **Mateusz Dadej, Regional Economist at Coface**. "*The gap between countries is widening and insolvency dynamics are increasingly shaped by national factors such as regulatory frameworks, fiscal policy and exposure to external demand.*"

Country-level divergence dominates the regional picture

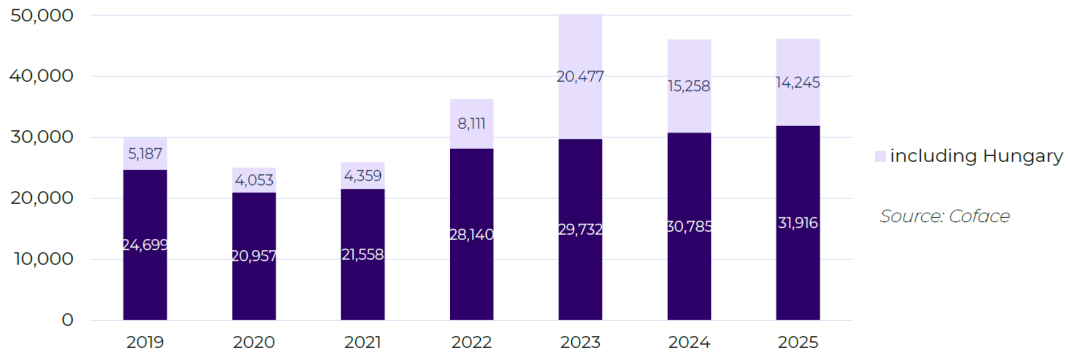
At country level, three distinct patterns emerged across the region in 2025. Insolvency trends diverged sharply across Central and Eastern Europe, with some economies recording double-digit declines while others show equally steep rises.

Poland recorded the strongest increase, with insolvencies rising by +17.8%, largely reflecting the expanding use of restructuring procedures rather than a sudden deterioration in business activity. **Slovenia** (+12.9%), **Serbia** (+9.6%), **the Czech Republic** (+8.7%) and **Romania** (+3.8%) also saw rising insolvency levels, driven by a combination of fiscal tightening, political uncertainty, weak external demand and worsening payment behaviour.

By contrast, **Croatia** (-18.6%), **Slovakia** (-14.5%), **Lithuania** (-13%), **Latvia** (-7.4%), **Hungary** (-6.6%) and **Bulgaria** (-6.2%) reported notable decreases, indicating a gradual normalisation after earlier spikes linked to the energy crisis, regulatory changes and the unwinding of exceptional measures from era of the pandemic.

Estonia (+1.1%) remained broadly stable, illustrating how apparent national resilience can still conceal ongoing sector-specific pressure.

Insolvency number across CEE countries



Persistent pressure in cyclical sectors

When viewed through a sectoral lens, insolvency patterns were more consistent across the region. The strongest increases in business failures were seen in **manufacturing**, **construction** and **transport**, reflecting their sensitivity to financing conditions and fluctuations in external demand. Although lower interest rates and easing inflation provided some relief, weaker pricing power and the delayed impact of previous cost shocks continued to put pressure on liquidity, particularly for smaller firms.

Outlook for 2026: Energy volatility reshapes the risk environment

Looking ahead, any apparent stabilisation is unlikely to last in 2026. Coface expects insolvency risks in Central and Eastern Europe to intensify in 2026 as a renewed energy shock weighs on households and corporations alike. A sharp surge in oil and gas prices is already feeding through to higher input costs, compressing margins and forcing companies to absorb or pass on rising expenses in an environment where demand remains fragile. As a net importer of energy commodities, the region remains particularly exposed.

Mitigation measures such as fuel price caps or tax reductions may offer short-term relief to household budgets. However, they come at the cost of higher fiscal pressure and potential risks to supply security. At the same time, rising insolvencies in Germany, the most important trading partner of the CEE region, increase the danger of spillover effects through trade and supply-chain linkages.

“There are supportive factors on the horizon, including accelerated absorption of EU funds and stronger external demand later in 2026,” said **Jarosław Jaworski, Regional CEO of Coface Central & Eastern Europe.** *“However, these positives are unlikely to fully offset energy volatility and external risks. As the operating environment becomes more challenging again, companies need to focus on liquidity management, cost control and counterparty risk.”*

Coface expects business insolvencies to increase across Central and Eastern Europe in 2026, as renewed cost pressures, external dependencies and economic policy uncertainty test corporate resilience throughout the region.

Read the full report here

MEDIA CONTACTS
COFACE ASIA-PACIFIC
Karen Yik: +852 2585 9121
karen.yik@coface.com

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