

Corporate bankruptcies – France • March 2023

At the end of March, the number of corporate bankruptcies increased but remained below its average pre-pandemic level

- The rise in the number of corporate bankruptcies initiated in fall 2021 continues. Over one year (between April 2022 and March 2023), it reaches 45,120 against 30,285 a year earlier (see Figure 1, as well as Tables A and B).
- This upward trend also affects the various sectors of the economy (see Figure 2). It is more pronounced for SMEs (excluding microenterprises and indeterminate sizes).
- The number of annual corporate bankruptcies nevertheless remains significantly lower than the average level recorded over the 2010-2019 period, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (59,342 corporate bankruptcies, see Figure 1). Indeed, the number of corporate bankruptcies had been particularly low since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, due to the adoption of regulations temporarily granting additional time to both assess and report insolvency, and, later, cash support measures to avoid the occurrence of insolvency.

To find out more: data on business start-ups are reported by the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE): [Business births on the INSEE's website](#)

A – Corporate bankruptcies by sector

Bankruptcies in number of legal units, year-on-year change (%)

Business sector	Aggregate over previous 12 months ^a (raw data)							
	2019	Feb. 23	Feb. 23 /Feb. 22	Feb. 23 /2019	Mar 22	Mar 23 prov.	Mar 23 /Mar 22	Mar 23 /2019
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (AZ)	1,414	1,200	10.7 %	-15.1 %	1,092	1,155	5.8 %	-18.3 %
Industry (BE)	3,435	3,304	69.3 %	-3.8 %	2,020	3,394	68.0 %	-1.2 %
Construction (FZ)	11,089	8,900	40.7 %	-19.7 %	6,448	9,167	42.2 %	-17.3 %
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G)	11,137	9,745	55.6 %	-12.5 %	6,570	10,049	53.0 %	-9.8 %
Transportation and storage (H)	2,097	1,830	46.0 %	-12.7 %	1,291	1,863	44.3 %	-11.2 %
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	6,840	5,933	101.9 %	-13.3 %	3,231	6,104	88.9 %	-10.8 %
Information and communication (JZ)	1,277	1,291	47.2 %	1.1 %	925	1,323	43.0 %	3.6 %
Financial and insurance activities (KZ)	1,086	1,021	52.2 %	-6.0 %	703	1,066	51.6 %	-1.8 %
Real estate activities (LZ)	1,631	1,426	14.9 %	-12.6 %	1,244	1,428	14.8 %	-12.4 %
Advisory & Business support activities (MN)	5,813	5,043	33.6 %	-13.2 %	3,840	5,192	35.2 %	-10.7 %
Education, human health and social work services, Arts, entertainment and recreation, Other service activities (P to S)	5,140	4,346	62.3 %	-15.4 %	2,858	4,297	50.3 %	-16.4 %
All firms^b	51,145	44,124	51.5 %	-13.7 %	30,285	45,120	49.0 %	-11.8 %

Source: Banque de France – database: Fiben. Data available early April 2023: final for February, provisional for March.

Calculation: Banque de France – Companies Directorate – Companies Observatory.

^a Aggregate number of corporate bankruptcies over previous 12 months compared to the same aggregate one year before and in 2019 (January to December 2019).

^b The line « All firms » includes legal units whose business sector is not known.

B – Corporate bankruptcies by firm size

Bankruptcies in number of legal units, year-on-year change (%)

Aggregate over previous 12 months^a (raw data)

Size	2019	Feb. 23	Feb. 23 /Feb. 22	Feb. 23 /2019	Mar 22	Mar 23 prov.	Mar 23 /Mar 22	Mar 23 /2019
SME, among them	51,119	44,087	51.5 %	-13.8 %	30,263	45,081	49.0 %	-11.8 %
Micro-enterprises and unknown firm's size	48,747	40,876	49.1 %	-16.1 %	28,473	41,736	46.6 %	-14.4 %
Very small firms	1,478	2,015	93.8 %	36.3 %	1,124	2,081	85.1 %	40.8 %
Small firms	650	902	88.3 %	38.8 %	509	952	87.0 %	46.5 %
Medium-sized firms	244	294	84.9 %	20.5 %	157	312	98.7 %	27.9 %
ISE – Large Firms	26	37	76.2 %	42.3 %	22	39	77.3 %	50.0 %
All firms	51,145	44,124	51.5 %	-13.7 %	30,285	45,120	49.0 %	-11.8 %

Source: Banque de France – database: Fiben. Data available early April 2023: final for February, provisional for March.

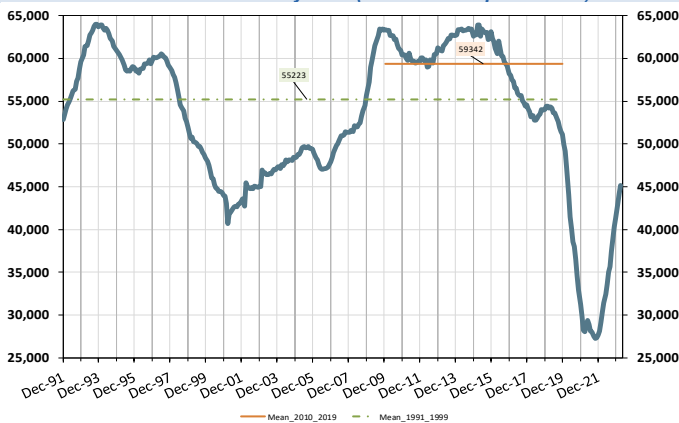
Calculation: Banque de France – Companies Directorate – Companies Observatory.

^a Aggregate number of corporate bankruptcies over previous 12 months compared to the same aggregate one year before and in 2019 (January to December 2019).

C – Changes in corporate bankruptcies

1 – Number of bankruptcies

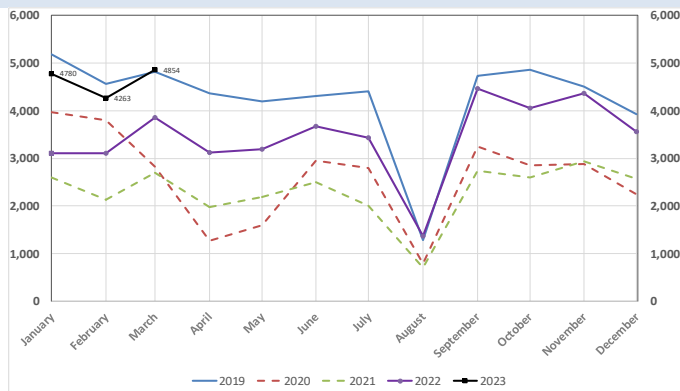
Cumulated over previous 12 months
From Dec. 1991 to February 2023 (+ March 2023 provisional)



Note: The dotted green curve represents the average value of the number of corporate bankruptcies over twelve months observed monthly between December 1991 and December 2019. The orange curve represents this average level over the period January 2010 - December 2019, which is a high for the observation period.

3 – Monthly number of bankruptcies

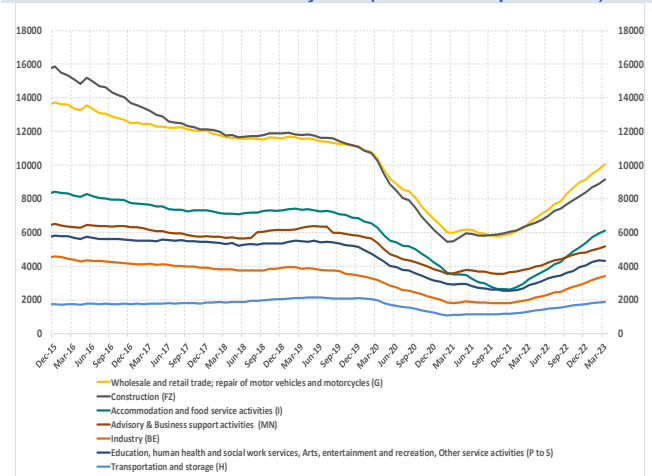
From Jan. 2019 to February 2023 (+March 2023 provisional)



Source: Banque de France – database: Fiben. Data available early April 2023: final for February, provisional for March.

2 – Number of bankruptcies by sector

Cumulated over previous 12 months
From Dec. 2015 to February 2023 (+ March 2023 provisional)



4 – Loan amounts of bankrupt non-financial firms over loan amount of all firms – by firm size

Cumulated over previous 12 months
From Dec. 2006 to February 2023 (+ March 2023 provisional)

