

Press release

Moscow, June 10, 2025

Results of the AEB Annual Survey

"Strategies and Prospects for European Companies in Russia"

Expectations of the European business in Russia remain positive for the second year in a row. After reaching a record low of 80 pts on a scale from 0 to 200 in 2022, the AEB annual Business Climate Index has shown a strong recovery since: to 116 pts in 2023 and to 127 in 2024. In 2025, the Index reached 127 points again, indicating that the business environment remains stable and businesses are now showing cautious but steady optimism.

AEB CEO Tadzio Schilling comments on the survey's findings:

"The stabilization of the Business Climate Index at 127 points confirms that European companies in Russia have reached a certain equilibrium in the new economic reality. After two years of active recovery, business has entered a phase of stabilization - companies have adapted their operating models, found alternative supply chains and learned to work under the conditions of the remaining restrictions.

The fact that the index has not decreased speaks of the business environment's stability: despite the continuing difficulties and uncertainties regarding the future noted by companies, market participants remain cautiously optimistic. The overwhelming majority of surveyed foreign companies operating in Russia note the importance of their Russian division for global business and are optimistic about Russia's long-term economic prospects, despite modest expectations regarding the short-term economic development forecast.

However, the lack of further growth of the Index also reflects objective challenges: sanctions continue to pose an obstacle to business, and local regulatory changes require constant flexibility from companies. Also, current GDP figures clearly point towards a marked cooling of the Russian economy."

Summary of the key findings

Assessment of the business environment and development prospects

- The surveyed foreign companies operating in Russia noted the high potential of the Russian market (63% of respondents), its large size (52%) and positive dynamics (51%) as reasons for entering the Russian market. The same factors remain relevant as reasons for the current presence of companies on the Russian market.
- In 2024, the Russian economy continued to recover from the 2022 crisis. More than half of the companies (56%) noted that their turnover increased compared to the previous year. Thus, the trend towards increasing company turnover has continued for the second year.
- There is a negative trend in expectations regarding the development of the economy and company activities during the first 3 months of 2025. 52% of companies noted that their business developed as expected compared to targets (in 2024 - 55%). But 34% (versus 17% in 2024) said that things are going worse than expected – a twofold increase in negative assessments, 12% (versus 25% in 2024) reported better-than-expected results.
- Forecasts for the development of the Russian economy in the short term have become less positive compared to last year: 50% of companies responded that they expect the Russian economy to grow in the next 1-2 years (last year this figure was at the level of 64%). However, estimates of medium-term (3-5 years) prospects have improved (65% of companies expect growth vs. 60% in 2024).
- Expectations for the development of the Russian economy in the long term (6-10 years) have improved significantly – 82% of companies expect growth vs. 66% in 2024. Thus, compared to last year, the dynamics have changed - businesses have become less optimistic in their assessments of short-term prospects, but more positive in their medium-term and long-term expectations.
- 45% of respondents expect an increase in investments by foreign companies in Russia in the next 2-3 years (compared to 23% in 2024 and 11% in 2023).

Barriers to business

- For 79% of respondents the most significant barriers to the activities (production/service provision) remain restrictions due to the US, EU and other sanctions towards Russia.
- Geopolitical uncertainty worries 67% of businesses.
- Restrictions due to Russia's countermeasures have become slightly less noticeable for foreign companies in Russia (35% of respondents noted them in 2025 vs. 39% in 2024). In addition, the number of companies that noted regulatory challenges in the Russian market has decreased (27% in 2025 vs. 35% in 2024).

- Among the barriers for business, companies named as well: difficulties with making payments and settlements, reputational risks for business from working in Russia, refusal of foreign partner companies to do business in Russia, high FX volatility, macro-economic uncertainty, difficulties with logistics and supplies (incl. lack of materials and components).
- 30% of companies noted high interest rates among significant barriers, 26% - growing protectionism/import substitution.

Impact of sanctions

- 87% of companies (vs 80% in 2024) were affected by sanctions and countermeasures. The greatest negative impact on business in Russia in 2024 was caused by sanctions targeting Russian financial organizations, export and import restrictions, freezing of Russia's currency assets / SWIFT disconnection, transport and software restrictions.
- 71% of respondents do not expect positive changes regarding sanctions towards Russia in 2025. Despite the existing difficulties in doing business, 67% of companies (vs 66% in 2024) are not considering closing their business in Russia.
- 62% of AEB members surveyed said that Russian business is important or very important for their global business.
- Companies see new opportunities for business development in the Russian market: 50% hope to increase the market share for their business, 39% see prospects for business expansion in Russia, 32% see the opportunity to attract new consumer segments.

Sustainable development, technological development and HR issues

- About half of the survey participants (48%) answered that their company has developed and adopted a sustainable development strategy. In 23% of the surveyed companies, a sustainable development strategy is under development (vs 15% last year). Another 6% plan to develop a sustainable development strategy in the near future.
- 60% of companies note the significant or even critical impact of technologies on their competitiveness. Among the most popular technological solutions that have been actively used in the business environment are CRM systems (66%), Cloud Computing & Cloud Services (62%), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems (56%). 35% actively use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML).
- Companies noted a number of HR challenges: first, the need to increase salaries to retain employees (66% of companies noted that they faced such a problem) and a lack of staff (52%). As a solution for the lack of staff, most companies increase salaries to attract personnel (81%), and also hire young specialists and take trainees (50%).

About the survey

The survey "Strategies and Prospects for European Companies in Russia" was conducted by the Association of European Businesses (AEB) for the eighteenth time, since 2011. The current survey was conducted in April-May 2025. 100 companies took part in the survey this year. Representatives of companies from various countries took part in the survey: Russia (19%), Germany (18%), Switzerland (10%), USA (9%), France (7%), Netherlands (5%), Great Britain (5%), Italy (5%), Belgium (4%), Austria (3%), Japan (3%), Turkey (2%), Finland (1%), Sweden (1%), Hungary (1%), Denmark (1%), etc. It is worth noting that many Russian AEB member companies have a share of European capital, were founded by citizens of European countries and/or have European roots.

The AEB comprehensive Business Climate Index remained at the 2024 level – 127 points out of a possible 200 (remaining in the zone of positive expectations).

About the Association of European Businesses

The Association of European Businesses (AEB) was founded in 1995. AEB is an independent non-profit organization. The Association brings together over 380 member companies from the EU member states, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and other countries operating in the Russian Federation. The AEB includes more than 80 sectoral and intersectoral committees, subcommittees and working groups, whose activities are aimed at protecting the interests of members of the association.

The full survey is published on the AEB website: [AEB Annual Survey](#)

For more information, please contact the AEB Communications Manager/Press-Secretary Elena Demicheva via email ed@aebrus.ru or phone +7-965-216-43-62