

# Small Business Credit Survey: 2026 Atlanta Insights



Federal Reserve  
Bank of Atlanta

Community and  
Economic Development

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Owners of small employer firms (firms with one to 499 employees) were surveyed in the fall of 2025 for the Small Business Credit Survey (SBCS).<sup>2</sup> This brief highlights key findings for 131 Atlanta–Sandy Springs–Roswell MSA, from now on referred to as “Atlanta,” small employer firms (“firms”).<sup>3</sup>

## Firm Conditions & Financing

For the third year in a row, more than half of Atlanta’s firms (58 percent in 2025) reported poor or fair financial conditions, with a two percentage-point increase from the prior year. In 2025, more firms said they experienced a decrease in revenues the prior 12 months than in 2024, while the share of firms reporting revenues increases stayed the same. Sixty-eight percent of firms applied for financing in the prior 12 months, most frequently citing the purpose of business expansion. Among firms that applied for financing in 2025, loan applications increased two percentage points, and firms seeking credit cards decreased 12 percentage points compared with 2024.

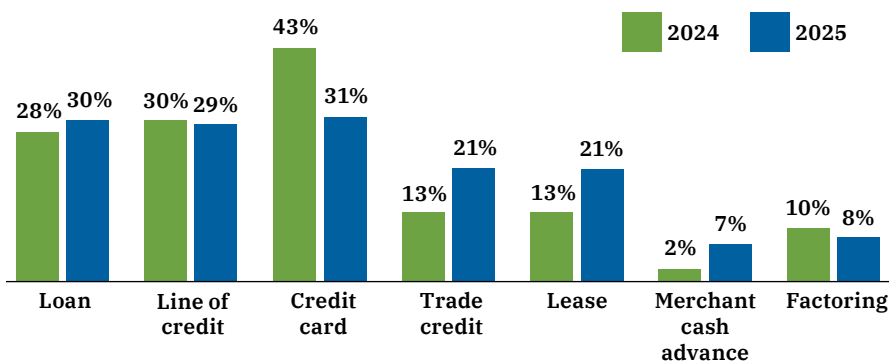
## Revenue Change in the Last 12 Months (N=127) 2024-2025



## 2023-2024



## Financing & Credit Products Sought in the Last 12 Months (N=131)



68%

applied for any type of financing in the prior 12 months compared with 70% in 2024 (N=131)

58%

reported that 2025 financial conditions were poor or fair compared with 56% in 2024 (N=131)

54%

reported applying for financing to expand their business compared with 35% in 2024 (N=86)



To read the 2026 report, scan the QR code or click [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta or the Federal Reserve System.

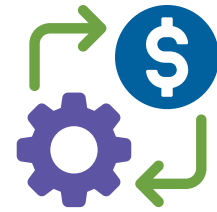
<sup>2</sup> The SBCS is a national sample of over 6,500 small businesses focused on firms’ financing and debt needs and experiences. The national report and corresponding appendix data including all variables used for this brief are available at [www.fedsmallbusiness.org/survey](http://www.fedsmallbusiness.org/survey).

<sup>3</sup> See demographic details on page 2. Note that data are weighted to be representative of all small businesses in Atlanta and that not all yearly comparisons included are statistically significant, partly owing to sample size. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding and, for some figures, respondents could select more than one option.

## SBCS 2026: Atlanta

### Challenges in 2025

The top operational challenge for Atlanta firms in 2025 was reaching customers and growing sales, increasing four percentage points from 2024. Since 2024, the portion of firms that reported issues with supply chains remained consistent, while the portion that cited hiring or retaining qualified staff increased.<sup>4</sup> Firms continued to face financial challenges with increased costs, paying operating expenses, and uneven cash flow.<sup>5</sup> Firms with financial challenges responded by raising prices (59 percent), using personal funds (56 percent), or using cash reserves (41 percent).<sup>6</sup>



### Top Operational Challenges (N=127)

56%

Reaching customers/growing sales compared with 52% in 2024

55%

Hiring or retaining qualified staff compared with 45% in 2024

31%

Supply chain issues, same as 2024



### Top Financial Challenges (N=131)

76%

Increased costs of goods, services, and/or wages compared with 71% in 2024

51%

Paying operating expenses compared with 59% in 2024

51%

Uneven cash flow compared with 46% in 2024

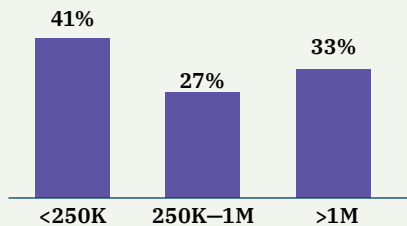
### Firm Demographics (N=131)<sup>7</sup>

Atlanta employer firms consisted of the following demographic groups:

#### Industry



#### Annual Revenues



75%

Have 1-9 employees



73%

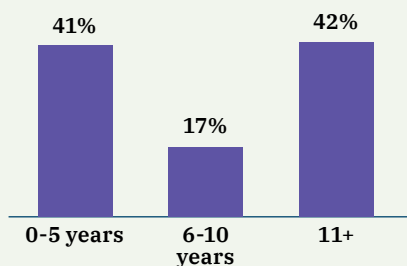
Men-owned or equally owned



27%

Women-owned

#### Age of Firm (Years)



#### Race/Ethnicity of Owner(s)



<sup>4</sup> Other operational challenges included utilizing technology (26 percent), complying with government regulations (18 percent), and ensuring health and safety of customers or employees (14 percent).

<sup>5</sup> Other financial challenges included weak sales (43 percent), increased costs associated with tariffs (42 percent), making payments on debt (39 percent), and credit availability (37 percent). "Increased costs associated with tariffs" was added as a response option in 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Other actions taken in response to financial challenges included reduced costs (40 percent), took out debt (39 percent), downsized operations (28 percent), and making a late payment (21 percent) N=126.

<sup>7</sup> Percentages and sample sizes include only weighted responses from employer firms. The population data used to generate state and MSA level weights come from the US Census Bureau's 2022 Annual Business Survey (gender, race/ethnicity), 2023 Business Dynamic Statistics (firm age), and 2023 County Business Pattern (industry and firm size).