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# The yaspa Index 2026

An annual study on consumer  
awareness of the term 'Pay by Bank'

# Introduction

The Yaspa Index was launched in 2025 to track consumer familiarity with the term 'Pay by Bank', and to understand how language, trust, and payment behaviour evolve over time. Last year's research suggested early momentum, alongside a clear warning: without consistency and education, awareness would struggle to compound. **The 2026 findings make that warning harder to ignore.**

Despite continued growth in open banking-powered payments across the UK, our research indicates that consumer familiarity with the term 'Pay by Bank' has fallen sharply year on year. This report explores what that decline tells us, why it matters, and what the industry must do next to build confidence in a payment method that's already delivering value across multiple sectors including iGaming and eCommerce.

**Pay by Bank** sits at the intersection of simplicity and trust. It's a payment method that lets consumers authorise a payment directly from their bank account to a business with clear, secure steps and no need for card details or manual transfers. In the UK, more than **16.5 million** consumers are now connected to open banking services ([www.openbanking.org.uk](http://www.openbanking.org.uk)), and this adoption continues to grow as platforms embrace bank-initiated payments in more experiences.

And yet, as this year's Yaspa Index shows, the industry still lacks a single, consistently recognised name for this behaviour at checkout. Over the last few years we have seen terms such as Pay by Bank, instant bank transfer, account-to-account and open banking payments used interchangeably, often leading to confusion rather than clarity.

When Yaspa published the 2025 Index, we saw early signs of growing familiarity with the term Pay by Bank, and we highlighted a clear risk: without alignment across the industry, that familiarity would struggle to compound.



Kate Marsden, CMO

**2,157**  
UK customers surveyed  
Research conducted online  
in January 2026  
YouGov

The 2026 findings bring that risk into sharper focus. Despite continued growth in open banking-powered payments across the UK, consumer familiarity with the specific phrase Pay by Bank has **fallen significantly since 2025**. This wasn't what we expected to see. But it is an important signal, and one the industry should not ignore.

From our perspective at Yaspa, this doesn't undermine the value of Pay by Bank as a payment method. On the contrary, once consumers experience it, they consistently value the speed, simplicity and security it offers. The challenge lies not in the experience itself, but in how that experience is described, repeated and recognised over time.

Consumers won't actively choose a payment method they do not understand or recognise, particularly when more familiar options such as cards or digital wallets are presented alongside it. That is why language matters. **Familiarity builds trust, and trust builds adoption.**

The Yaspa Index exists to track this exact issue. Not to criticise progress, but to provide a clear, data-led view of how consumer understanding is evolving and where greater alignment could unlock further growth for everyone involved.

I hope this year's report continues the conversation we started in 2025. If the industry can come together around clearer, more consistent language - both verbal and graphic - we have a real opportunity to build confidence in Pay by Bank and help it become a truly mainstream payment choice.

As always, I would welcome your thoughts and perspectives on how we take this forward, for the benefit of both businesses and consumers.

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# Familiarity with the term 'Pay by Bank'

**This section of the Yaspa Index focuses on consumer familiarity with the term 'Pay by Bank', tracking how recognition of the phrase changes year on year.**

**In the 2025 Index, 55% of respondents said they were familiar with the term\***, suggesting solid consumer awareness of open banking-powered payments. However, those findings also came with a note of caution. While many respondents recognised the phrase, we doubted whether they associated it with the specific open banking payment experience the industry refers to.

Understanding how familiarity has evolved since then is critical to adoption.

The first question in our 2026 survey asked respondents whether they were familiar with the specific phrase Pay by Bank in the context of online payments.

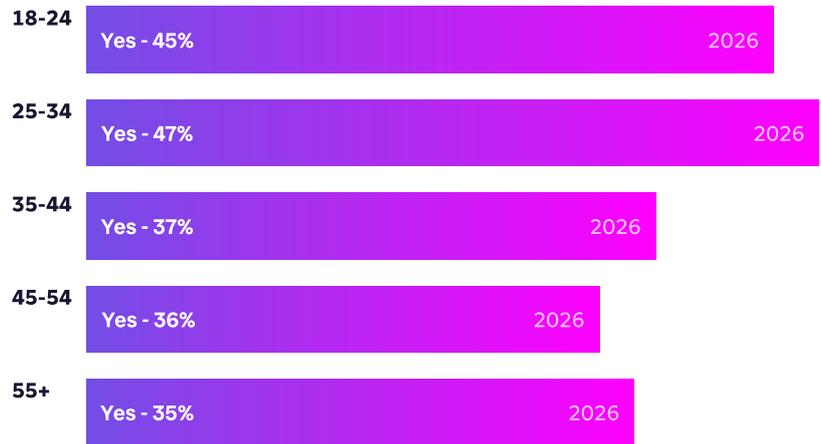
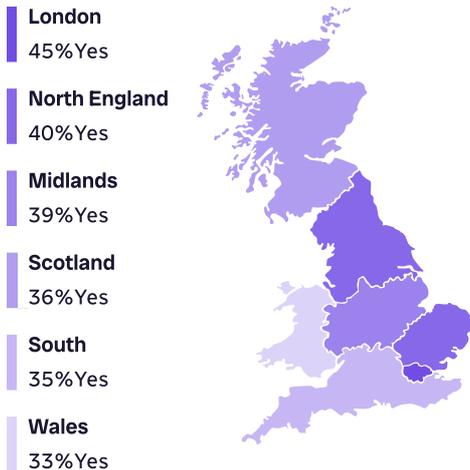
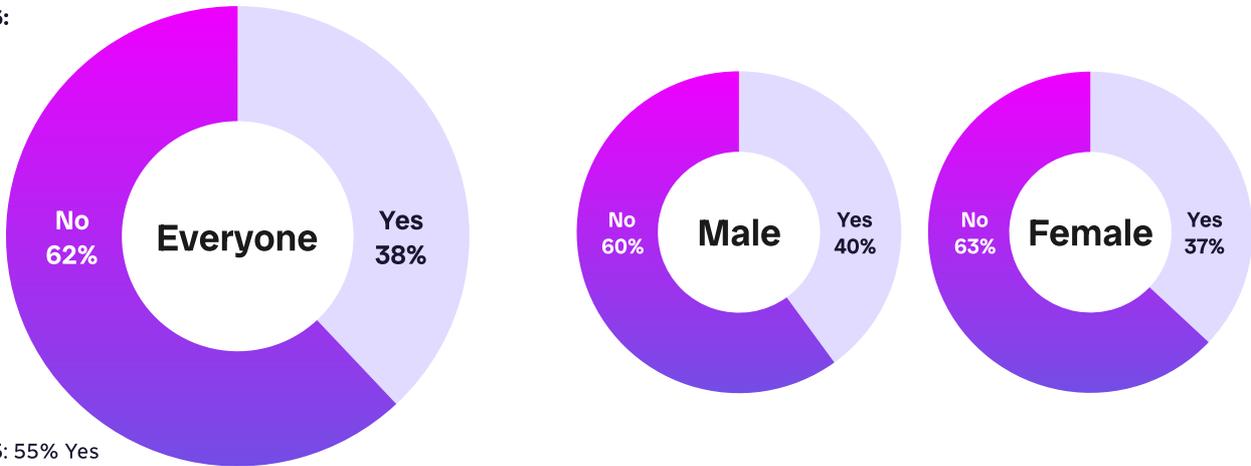
Pay by Bank refers to a payment initiated through open banking, where funds move directly from a consumer's bank account to a business without the use of cards or manual bank transfers. For consumers, it offers a familiar and secure banking journey. For merchants and operators, it provides faster settlement, reduced fraud risk, and lower costs.

\*The 2025 research was conducted as a separate piece of work and was not part of a formally commissioned longitudinal study

# Question 1

In the context of online payments, are you familiar with the specific phrase 'Pay by Bank'?

2026:



**In 2026, 38% of respondents said they were familiar with the term 'Pay by Bank', while 62% said they were not.**

This represents a **significant decline compared to 2025**, when 55% of respondents reported familiarity.

The direction of travel is clear, and unlikely to be what the industry would have expected. Given the increasing visibility of open banking payments across eCommerce, financial services, and regulated industries, awareness might reasonably have been expected to rise. Instead, it has fallen sharply.

### Interpreting the decline

This drop doesn't suggest that Pay by Bank as a payment method is failing. On the contrary. According to the [FCA](#), open banking payments in the UK have continued to grow 53% year-on-year through 2025. Rather, the data points to a disconnect between usage and recognition.

Consumers may be completing Pay by Bank transactions more often, but they aren't consistently associating those experiences with a single, repeatable term. Without that association, familiarity does not build over time.

This reinforces a challenge identified in the 2025 Index and shows that it has intensified rather than improved.

### Demographic patterns

As before, familiarity varies modestly by age, gender, and region. Younger demographics continue to show higher levels of recognition than older generations, and familiarity remains broadly consistent across UK regions. Gender differences are relatively narrow.

However, the most notable shift in 2026 is that declines are visible across all groups, rather than being isolated to a specific audience. This points to a market-wide issue with terminology and communication, rather than a lack of awareness within a single demographic.

# Payment behaviour, familiarity, and decision drivers

**The second part of the survey looks beyond awareness of Pay by Bank to build a clearer picture of how consumers actually behave when paying online.**

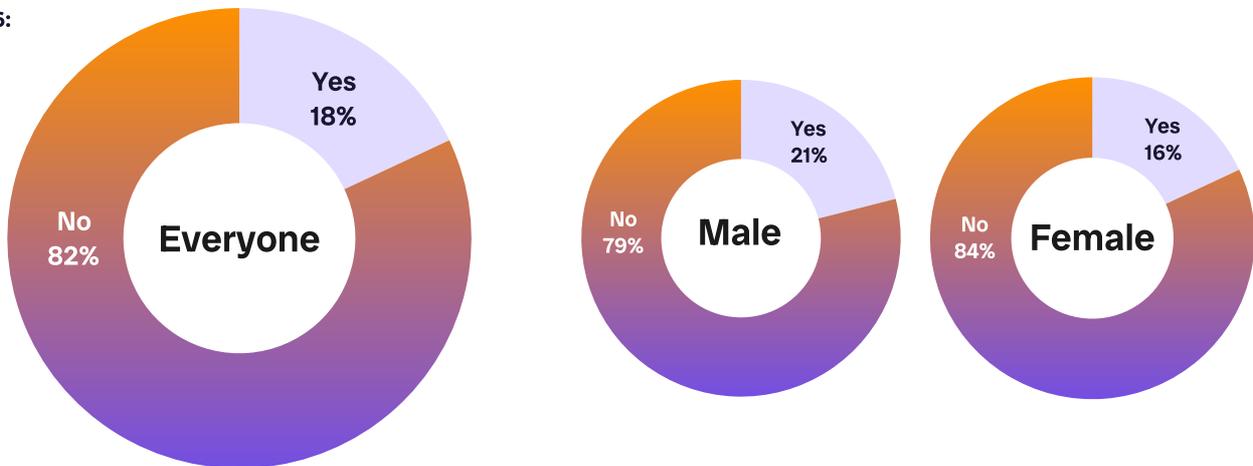
It explores their exposure to newer payment methods, the payment-related terms they recognise, and what they prioritise when faced with multiple options at checkout.

Taken together, these questions help us understand not just what consumers say they know, but how that knowledge influences real-world decision-making. They also highlight a growing gap between what consumers value most in a payment experience and what they clearly recognise or understand.

## Question 2

Within the last year, have you made a payment for goods or services that required you to scan a QR code with your smartphone?

2026:



**Question 2** of our 2026 survey explored the adoption of QR code payments, which continue to grow in visibility across retail, hospitality, and entertainment environments. QR codes offer a simple, contactless way for consumers to initiate payments using their smartphone, often linking directly to a digital payment journey.

In the past 12 months, 18% of respondents reported having made a payment that required them to scan a QR code, while the majority had not. This indicates that, while QR code payments are now a familiar part of the payments landscape, they still haven't reached mass adoption among UK consumers.

Similar to last year, adoption is heavily skewed towards younger demographics. Millennials and Gen Z are significantly more likely to have used QR codes for payments, reflecting greater comfort with mobile-first interactions and app-based payment flows. By contrast, uptake among older generations remains limited, with the lowest levels of usage seen among the Silent Generation.

This pattern suggests that QR code payments are often adopted through exposure rather than intent. Younger consumers are more likely to encounter QR codes in everyday contexts such as food ordering, events, and entertainment, whereas older consumers may continue to favour more established payment methods that require less behavioural change.

For businesses, this highlights both an opportunity and a challenge. QR code payments can offer a modern, cashless, and secure point-of-sale experience, particularly in environments such as online retail, land-based casinos, bookmakers, and hospitality venues. However, broader adoption will depend on how clearly these payment journeys are explained and how confidently they are positioned.

As with Pay by Bank, familiarity plays a crucial role. Without clear prompts, reassurance, and education around how QR code payments work and why they are secure, many consumers will continue to default to methods they already recognise and trust.

## Question 3

Which of the following payment-related terms are you familiar with?

### 'BACS'

Yes - 77%

2026

### 'Faster Payments'

Yes - 47%

2026

### 'Account-to-account payments'

Yes - 39%

2026

### 'Open banking'

Yes - 24%

2026

### None of the above

Yes - 11%

2026

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Account-to-account payments	45%	41%	41%	40%	36%
Open banking	29%	33%	34%	24%	16%
BACS	37%	72%	82%	86%	85%
Faster Payments	33%	51%	57%	50%	44%
None of the above	25%	10%	10%	8%	10%

**Question 3** explored consumer familiarity with a range of payment-related terms, including both long-established bank payment rails and newer terminology associated with open banking. The results offer important insight into how consumers understand the language used to describe modern payment methods, and where gaps in recognition remain.

The most widely recognised terms continue to be those that have been part of the UK payments ecosystem for decades. BACS remains the most familiar term, recognised by 77% of respondents, followed by Faster Payments, which 47% said they were familiar with. This is notable given that most consumers rarely interact directly with these systems or actively consider them when making a payment.

By contrast, familiarity with terms more closely associated with open banking remains significantly lower. Account-to-account payments were recognised by 39% of respondents, while only 24% said they were familiar with the term open banking. These figures suggest that while open banking-powered payments are becoming more common in practice, they're still not clearly understood or recognised by name.

The data also highlights differences across demographics. Awareness of account-to-account payments and open banking is higher among males than females, and familiarity tends to be stronger among younger age groups. Older demographics are less likely to recognise these terms, reinforcing the idea that exposure to newer payment concepts remains uneven across the population.

Taken together, these findings underline a key challenge for the industry. Familiarity appears to be driven less by relevance or usage, and more by longevity and repetition. Traditional bank payment terms benefit from decades of exposure, while open banking terminology has yet to achieve the same level of recognition, despite increasingly sitting behind everyday payment journeys.

For online retailers and iGaming operators, this represents both an opportunity and a risk. Open banking enables instant deposits and withdrawals, enhanced fraud prevention, and stronger compliance measures, all of which align closely with consumer priorities around security and speed. However, if the language used to describe these payments is unfamiliar or inconsistent, those benefits may not be fully appreciated by consumers.

## Question 4

What are the three most important factors you consider when choosing how to pay online?

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### Security

Yes - 77%

2026

### Ease

Yes - 56%

2026

### Familiarity with the payment method

Yes - 45%

2026

### Speed

Yes - 39%

2026

### Points & rewards offered by the payment provider

Yes - 13%

2026

### Flexible payment terms (e.g. the option to pay monthly)

Yes - 12%

2026

### Loyalty to the payment brand

Yes - 5%

2026

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**Question 4** explored the factors that most influence how consumers choose to pay online. The 2026 results show a strong level of consistency with last year, reinforcing that when it comes to payments, consumers continue to prioritise confidence and simplicity above all else.

**Security** and **ease of use** remain the two most important considerations for consumers when selecting a payment method. This reflects an ongoing expectation that online payments should be both safe and frictionless, with minimal effort required to complete a transaction. As concerns around online fraud, data security, and financial vulnerability continue to shape consumer behaviour, these findings underline the importance of robust security measures that do not come at the expense of user experience.

**Speed** also continues to play a significant role in payment choice. A substantial proportion of respondents identified speed as a key factor, highlighting the value consumers place on quick, seamless transactions. This is particularly relevant in environments such as iGaming and eCommerce, where delays or complex payment flows can interrupt the experience and lead to frustration or abandonment.

**Familiarity** remains an important, though secondary, consideration. Consumers are more likely to choose payment methods they recognise and have used before, reinforcing the link between familiarity and trust. Even when alternative methods offer clear benefits, unfamiliar language or presentation can act as a barrier at the point of choice.

By contrast, loyalty schemes, points, and rewards continue to rank much lower in importance. While these incentives can support retention and engagement over time, the data suggests they play a limited role in the initial decision of how to pay. For most consumers, the fundamentals of security, ease, and speed far outweigh any additional rewards.

Taken together, the results highlight a clear message for payment providers and merchants. Consumers aren't looking for novelty at checkout. They are looking for reassurance, simplicity, and efficiency. Payment methods that can deliver on these priorities, and communicate them clearly, are best placed to earn trust and drive adoption.

In the context of Pay by Bank, these findings are particularly relevant. The method aligns closely with what consumers say they value most, but its success at checkout ultimately depends on how familiar and confident consumers feel when presented with it as a choice.

# Summary of results

The most striking finding in the Yaspa Index 2026 is not simply that familiarity with Pay by Bank has stalled, but that it has moved backwards. This does not reflect reduced adoption of open banking payments. Instead, it reflects an industry that has yet to align on how those payments are presented to consumers.

## **The impact of fragmented terminology**

Over the past year, open banking payments have continued to be described using a wide range of terms, including Pay by Bank, instant bank transfer, account-to-account payments, and open banking payments.

While each term may be technically accurate, the cumulative effect for consumers is confusion rather than clarity. Recognition does not compound when language changes from one experience to the next.

By contrast, card payments benefit from decades of consistent terminology and shared visual cues. The contactless symbol is a clear example of how the industry can align around a single marker that consumers recognise instantly, regardless of bank, merchant, or card scheme. More recently, Buy Now Pay Later providers have demonstrated how powerful clear, repeated naming can be in building consumer understanding.

Open banking payments have largely evolved behind the scenes, without the same collective focus on consumer-facing language or visual cues - like a trust mark or acceptance icon.

## **Why Pay by Bank still matters**

Despite the decline in awareness, Pay by Bank remains one of the most intuitive terms available. It clearly signals that a payment is bank-based and leverages existing consumer trust in their bank. The issue isn't the clarity of the phrase itself, but the lack of alignment and reinforcement behind it.

Without repetition and visibility, even intuitive language fades from recognition.

When familiarity declines, consumers default to more recognisable methods, even if they are slower or less efficient. Trust becomes harder to establish, particularly for higher-value transactions, and adoption relies on design nudges rather than confidence.

The 2026 findings amplify the warning signs identified last year. Without alignment, awareness will continue to fragment, regardless of how widely the technology itself is adopted.

# Conclusion: Rebuilding familiarity, together

## **The Yaspa Index 2026 highlights a pivotal moment for Pay by Bank.**

While the underlying payment method continues to scale and deliver clear benefits, consumer familiarity with the term has declined sharply. This strengthens a message first raised in last year's report: without consistent language, familiarity does not compound.

Consumers have been clear about what they want from payments. Security, ease, speed, and confidence. Pay by Bank delivers all four.

The challenge now is not technical, but collective. If the industry can align around a shared, consumer-facing term and reinforce it consistently, familiarity can still be rebuilt. Trust can still grow. And Pay by Bank can become a recognised and trusted choice, not just a functional one.

The question is no longer whether Pay by Bank works. It's whether the industry is prepared to stand behind it together.

# The yaspa Index 2026

This is just part of our ongoing conversation on Pay by Bank. We'd love to hear your views so please do get in touch with us via our website or social media. You can also stay up to date with our latest views and news at [www.yaspa.com/blog](http://www.yaspa.com/blog)

WINNER



Best Payment  
Solutions Provider 2026  
European iGaming Awards

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WINNER



Real-Time Payments  
Innovation 2025  
Payments Awards

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WINNER



Best Payment  
Facility 2025  
The Card & Payments Awards

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WINNER



Best Use of Data -  
Consumer 2025  
Open Banking Expo Awards

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