

## THE POLISH CONSUMER AND BNPL. PROFILE AND MOTIVATION

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### Abstract

BNPL can lead to an expansion of consumption, but also to household over-indebtedness. The aim of the article is to define the profile of the BNPL user in Poland based on responses to a survey conducted using the CAWI technique among BNPL clients in Poland in August 2024. The relations are identified by use of Pearson  $\chi^2$  tests while Cramer's V coefficient provides for the measuring of dependencies between respective demographic, economic and behavioural features and reasons for BNPL usage. The results indicate that BNPL in Poland is mainly used by young women. BNPLs are chosen by consumers with a secondary or higher education and most often not because they lack the financial means to make purchases, but for the opportunity to try the product without paying for it and to better manage the household budget. During the interest-free period, people with relatively better education and less debt at banks and non-bank loan companies settle their obligations.

**JEL classification:** G21, G23, G51

**Keywords:** BNPL, Buy Now Pay Later, Deferred Payments, Consumer Profile, Responsible Lending, Responsible Borrowing

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## INTRODUCTION

More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of consumers in Poland already know what deferred payments are (Comfino, 2024). Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) is a service whereby the customer completes the transaction at a date later than possession of the good. Payment for the purchased good takes place only after it has been received and inspected, and provided the purchaser accepts it and does not return it. As a rule, the BNPL service is free of charge, as long as payment is made within a certain period of time (usually 30 days in Poland). After this, it is possible to spread the outstanding payment into instalments (Waliszewski et al., 2024b; Sng & Tan, 2022). There is also an option where, on the day of the end of the interest-free period, the consumer's credit card is charged, which de facto means an extension of the interest-free period. However, a study by Quality Watch for the Polish Credit Information Bureau (BIK, 2023a) shows that as many as half of those using deferred payments in Poland in 2022 did not wait until the last appointed day and settled their obligation as soon as their salary appeared in their account. It is most often made online, although the BNPL service is also provided in traditional shops. The amount of a single transaction under the BNPL formula usually does not exceed a few hundred euros and mainly applies to purchases of clothing, electronics, white goods/appliances and footwear (BIK, 2023a). The relatively short period between purchase and payment is primarily determined by the intention to immediately verify the consumer's ability to pay. If the consumer manages his/her budget wisely, he/she should settle the obligation with the funds from the upcoming salary. A second reason for using a relatively short grace period between purchase and payment is psychological. In this context Siemens (2007) argues that a longer delay between purchase (benefit) and payment (cost) results in lower perceived fairness of the transaction and reduces the motivation to use this form of financing again. In the BNPL business model, the seller does not have to wait for payment as they have a contract with the BNPL provider and receive the funds immediately after the sales transaction is completed (Xing et al., 2019). For the consumer the use of the BNPL service does not incur additional costs. This applies if the purchaser settles his/her obligation within the defined period. If the time limit is exceeded, additional fees or charges are incurred. Deferred payment costs are borne by the vendor. The institutional spectrum of BNPL providers is quite broad. It primarily includes FinTechs, start-ups, lending companies, banks and their subsidiaries, payment institutions, as well as sales platforms (Waliszewski et al., 2024a; Waliszewski et al., 2024b). In turn, the risk of over-consumption leading to a debt spiral is a threat (Allcott et al., 2022). To some extent, BNPL providers contribute to this by presenting it not

as a credit (an additional obligation or debt), but as the user's own (future) money (Aalders, 2013). Similar conclusions are reached by Cook et al. (2023), emphasising that BNPL applications present the service in terms of a facility rather than a liability. Vendors that support their business with BNPL offerings improve their competitive position by broadening their customer spectrum. With BNPL the value of the shopping basket is increased (Ang & Maesen, 2024) and the proportion of abandoned baskets is reduced (PYMNTS, 2024). Disadvantages include apparent sales if a large proportion of goods are returned after the interest-free period. BNPL stimulating the development of e-commerce leads to an increased carbon footprint due to the intensification of the flow of goods (Dubisz et al., 2022).

There is no consensus on whether deferred payment is a new form of payment or a type of debt instrument. Legislative changes in the European Union (CCD II Directive) are moving towards bringing BNPL under a regime similar to that characterising consumer credit. Nevertheless, for the time being, the following features can be identified that distinguish BNPL from loans offered to consumers (Waliszewski et al., 2024b; Skowroński, 2023):

- most often the lack of application of a typical credit-worthiness assessment procedure (the decision is usually based on behavioural scoring),
- no reporting of amounts resulting from BNPL purchases to national credit information systems - repayment of a BNPL loan therefore does not contribute to building a positive credit track record,
- no commissions, fees or interest if payments are made on time - although there is also an interest-free period for credit cards, there is a commission for issuing the card or there is a monthly fee for using it,
- BNPL is offered not only by banks or non-bank lenders, but also by non-financial entities.

A determinant of the scale of BNPL use is the dynamics of e-commerce development (Cornelli et al., 2023). BNPL, in turn, contributes to the growth of the consumer credit market due to the fact that part of the liabilities is converted into instalment loans. Factors negatively affecting the scale of BNPL offerings, on the other hand, include the rise in interest rates, the weakening of GDP growth and the deterioration in consumer sentiment, reflected, for example, in consumer confidence index readings (Waliszewski et al., 2024b).

Given the growing importance of the BNPL market and its dynamic development, but also its impact on the consumption and indebtedness of young households in particular and the different concepts of its regulation, it is reasonable to ask who uses deferred payments and for what reasons. The aim of this article is to define the profile of the BNPL user in Poland based on the responses to the survey. Achieving this objective

requires an examination of the correlational relationships between demographic, economic, behavioural features and variables characterising motives for using deferred payments. This association is formulated on the basis of an empirical survey conducted using the CAWI technique in August 2024 among 350 BNPL users in Poland. The survey was carried out by the research agency Biostat on behalf of PayPo, one of Poland's leading BNPL service providers. The questions concern both the demographic characteristics and the financial situation of the respondents. Of particular interest is the extent to which BNPL users are customers who use credit products from banks and non-bank lenders. This is the context in which the dominant function of deferred payments can be read: to what extent they can be treated as an additional option for financing purchases and to what extent consumers are persuaded to use this service by non-financial benefits.

The answers and conclusions are important for two types of stakeholders: BNPL providers and supervisory institutions. Providers can modify the product charter, emphasising features important to users, improving functionality and security. For regulators, the information provided by the survey can help in profiling the reporting mode and designing requirements for the inclusion of BNPL in the credit assessment procedure.

The article is divided into 5 parts. The first contains a review of the current literature on the subject. The second section presents data and methodology. The third analyses the results of the empirical study that are then discussed while the fifth part contains the conclusions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Some of the key issues relating to BNPL are the determinants of consumer uptake of this service and the profile of the consumer using deferred payments. Answers are therefore sought to the questions of who is reaching for BNPL and why.

A survey conducted among Polish consumers by Quality Watch for the Credit Information Bureau indicates that in 2022 already 15% of online shoppers had used deferred payments, and twice as many customers planned to do so. This information fully corresponds to data from other markets, where this share is as high as 50% (BIK, 2023b). The share of people who are familiar with the BNPL service or have heard of it is growing dynamically year on year (BIK, 2023a). BNPL is mainly used by young consumers, i.e., so-called Millennials (born 1980-1994) and Generation Z (born 1995-2009), as confirmed for the Polish market by Credit Information Office, i.e. the BIK (2023b) and for the UK market by Kollwe and Makortoff (2021). Gerrans et al. (2022), investigating preferences for BNPL among young adults and the impact of knowledge and propen-

sity to plan and save on the extent to which deferred payments are used, conclude that financial knowledge reduces the perceived advantages of BNPL (Lusardi & Messy, 2023). The results of the study by Arisandy et al. (2023), analogous to the previously mentioned studies, indicate that the majority of Buy Now Pay Later customers are young adults (Millennials). This group is dominated by married consumers. Two-thirds of consumers using BNPL are male. Generation Z has the worst BNPL repayment rate (the share of non-performing loans is 34.16%), with mainly unemployed people defaulting. The particularly high use of BNPL by Generation Z, leading to over-consumption, is also highlighted by Lia and Natswa (2021). The less knowledge, the greater the perceived benefits and risks. Coinciding with these results are the conclusions of Powell et al. (2023), who found that consumers under the age of 25 spend less time analysing the terms and conditions of BNPL transactions and are less likely to plan their purchases. Purchases are impulsive and these consumers have lower levels of subjectively perceived financial wellbeing and are more financially vulnerable. The Australian Securities and Investments Commission also indicates that BNPL users are predominantly young people (as many as 67% are consumers under the age of 35) and tend to be low-income individuals who do not work full-time (ASIC, 2020). Ji et al. (2023) suggest that a large proportion of young people using BNPL (especially in China and such European countries as France and Sweden) do not have a credit card or credit score. In this context, the BNPL service takes on the characteristics of inclusivity. A study by Fook and McNeil (2020) among young women (18-25 years) in New Zealand found that BNPL users are more likely to make impulsive purchases than those who do not use the service. BNPL can therefore lead to over-consumption. From excessive impulsive or compulsive consumption it is a small step to losing control over household liquidity. New BNPL users experience a sharp increase in bank overdraft fees and interest and credit card charges compared to non-users. BNPL is therefore a driver of household debt growth, often leading to over-indebtedness (de Haan et al., 2024). Ziemia (2024), citing a survey of Polish consumers conducted by Comfino (2024), indicates that BNPL is used mainly by women (84%), people aged 18-44 (approx. 85%), living in large cities, spending an average of PLN 204 on purchases at one time (larger purchases are made through instalment payments). BNPL consumers tend to use this service regularly. There is also a noticeable trend that the value of the shopping basket increases with age (excluding retirement age). Approx. 2/3 of transactions involving BNPL in Poland are made remotely. Summarising this part of the literature review, it can therefore be concluded that the characteristics of users are mainly: age (young people), place of

residence (large cities), gender (women), stability and income (irregular and rather low income), and level of technological sophistication (Internet users).

The second important question concerns the motivation to defer payment. Psychological research conducted in the UK market shows that consumers' experience of BNPL is very much positive, as they perceive the service in terms of savings, while the ease of the transaction is less important (Relja et al., 2024). The Quality Watch study for the Polish Credit Information Bureau, described earlier, identified a hierarchy of motivations for consumers using deferred payments. Among these reasons are the ability to postpone payment (51% of respondents mentioned this motivation), convenience and speed of purchase (29%), the desire to see the products and select some of the goods from the shopping basket before making payment, the ability to return the goods without having to wait for a return transfer (13%), the desire to see the product before paying for it (20%), an easier form of return (21%), and the lack of funds to pay at the time of purchase (27%). This last factor is steadily becoming more important. This study also shows that the incentive to use the BNPL option is the amount of the purchase. For relatively smaller amounts, consumers opt for immediate payment. Triwidisari et al. (2017) demonstrate that a factor positively correlated with impulse purchases made online is the use of social media, in particular Instagram. This relationship is attenuated by the level of financial literacy. Impulsive shopping, on the other hand, favours the development of BNPL. The use of deferred payments makes it possible to come into possession of goods that the consumer could not have owned without BNPL. However, it has been shown that after a short period of increased wellbeing, associated with obtaining the commodity, lower subjective assessments of consumers' overall wellbeing emerge by increasing their stress related to money management, as well as decreasing their expected future financial security (Lupşa-Tătaru et al., 2023). In-depth interviews conducted by Which? (2022) with 30 BNPL users from the UK revealed the following reasons for using BNPL: low cost, ease of use, high level of security, clarity of communication from BNPL providers, lack of access to an alternative form of financing the purchase and the intention to spread the cost of purchasing goods over time. BNPL also allows Millennials and Generation Z to purchase more expensive or better quality products to meet their increasingly sophisticated needs. A survey conducted by the Australian Financial Industry Association (AFIA, 2022) found that 54% of BNPL users chose the service because of the lack of interest costs. The same number of respondents noted the benefit of having more control over their household budget and the ability to align repayment terms with their pay date. Ji

et al. (2023), studying the Chinese market, highlight the role of BNPL as liquidity insurance and a tool for consumption growth. The thesis of an increase in average monthly consumption due to BNPL is confirmed by Bian et al. (2023). A study by Comfino (2024) found that the predominant motive for using BNPL is the lack of funds to purchase a good (38.2%), the intention to try out the product (31.5%), ease and convenience (19.8%), the possibility to increase consumption (17.8%) and the intention to avoid interest costs (9.7%). In contrast, a study on Anglo-Saxon markets (the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia) by de Best (2024) shows that the most important rationale for using BNPL is ease and convenience (indicated by 46% of respondents), followed by flexibility in managing the household budget (44%) and the absence of interest costs (41%). Analogous to the summary presented earlier regarding the characteristics of BNPL users, the reasons most often indicated by consumers for choosing BNPL can be listed. These include convenience, speed, the ability to purchase goods that these consumers could not afford, the lack of interest for the period between purchase and payment, and the ability to try out goods without having to pay for them.

Based on the literature review and the empirical findings to date, four hypotheses can be formulated:

- H<sub>1</sub>: BNPL are mainly used by young people.
- H<sub>2</sub>: BNPL users make relatively little use of credit products.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Lack of cash is not the main reason for using BNPL.
- H<sub>4</sub>: BNPL users use non-bank loans more often than non-users.

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In August 2024, deploying the CAWI approach, a survey among 350 Polish BNPL users was carried out by the research agency Biostat on behalf of PayPo, one of the leading institutions in Poland providing BNPL services. Respondents were selected taking into account 2 socio-demographic criteria: gender and age according to data on socio-demographic characteristics of BIK customers as at 31.12.2023. The sample had the same structure by age and gender in accordance with the data of users according to BIK. The survey covers respondents using all types of providers of this service, both onsite and online. The survey was holistic in nature, without focusing on any segment of the BNPL market. No age, gender, spatial or any sociodemographic related characteristics were applied to limit the research sample. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the surveyed population by socio-demographic characteristics.

**Table 1: Characteristics of BNPL users**

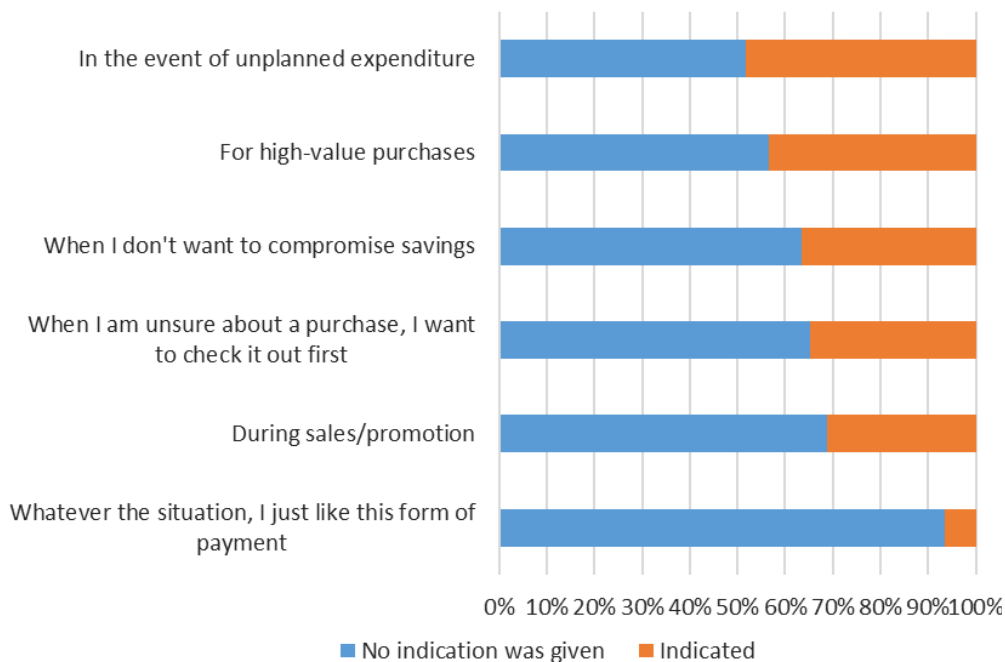
Variable	N=350	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Women	208	59%
Men	142	41%
<b>Age</b>		
From 18 to 24 years	36	10%
From 25 to 34 years	111	32%
From 35 to 44 years	115	33%
From 45 to 54 years	59	17%
From 55 to 64 years	19	5%
65 years and more	10	3%
<b>Education</b>		
Basic	3	1%
Basic vocational	13	4%
Secondary vocational	53	15%
Secondary general	48	14%
Post-secondary	29	8%
Higher	204	58%
<b>Net income (per capita)</b>		
Less than 2000 PLN	20	6%
From 2001 to 3000 PLN	73	21%
From 3001 to 4000 PLN	80	23%
From 4001 to 5000 PLN	63	18%
From 5001 to 6000 PLN	55	16%
More than 6000 PLN	49	14%
I refuse to answer	10	3%
<b>Number of persons in the household</b>		
1	33	9%
2	89	25%
3	108	31%
4	83	24%
5 and more	37	11%
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Village	67	19%
City with up to 20 k citizens	34	10%
City 20-100 k	74	21%
City 100-200 k	38	11%
City 200-500 k	54	15%
City with more than 500 k citizens	83	24%

Source: Authors own work based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPo.

The issue of penetration of banking and non-banking customers and deferred payment users is presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1 illustrates the utilization of banking credit products by BNPL users, while Figure 2 reflects the utilization of non-banking credit products by BNPL users.

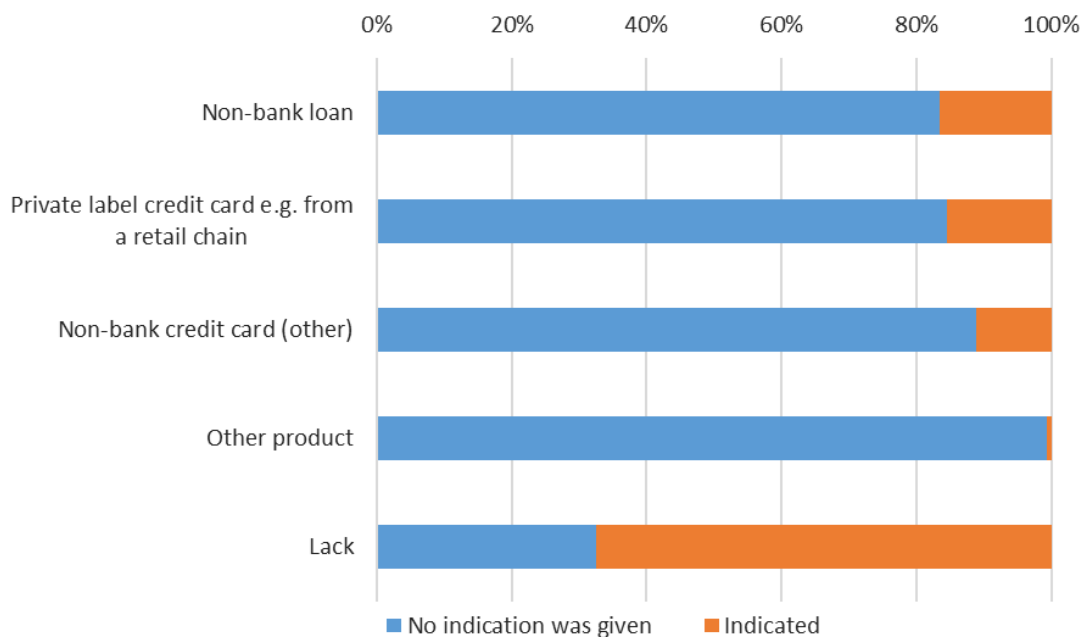
**Figure 1: Utilisation of banking credit products by BNPL users**



Note: Multiple-choice question

Source: Authors own compilation based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPal.

**Figure 2: Utilisation of non-banking credit products by BNPL users**



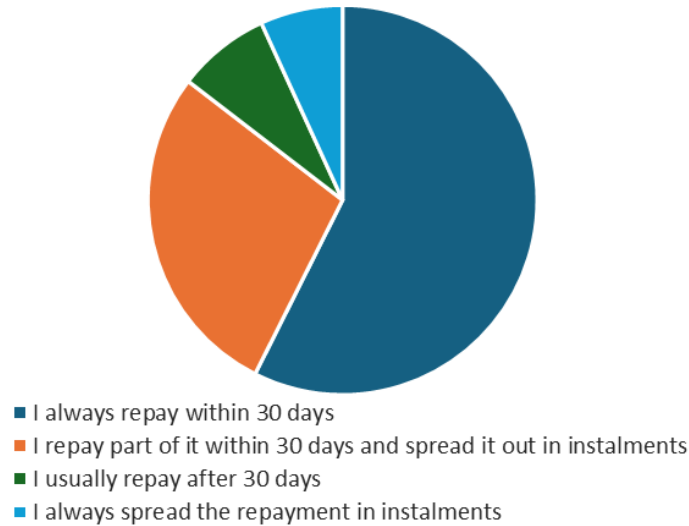
Note: Multiple-choice question

Source: Authors own compilation based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPal.

Additionally, users of deferred payment options were surveyed about the methods they use to repay

their deferred payments. The responses collected have been presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: How do you most often try to repay your obligations for purchases with BNPL?**

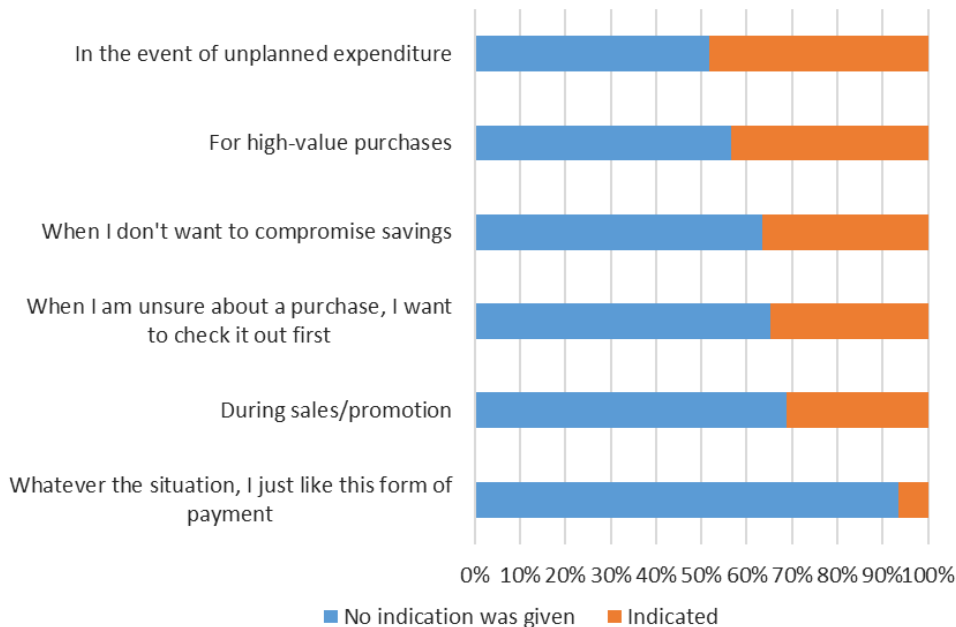


Source: Authors own compilation based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPo.

Users of deferred payment services were asked to specify the situations in which they typically choose to use BNPL options, as shown in Figure 4. Additionally,

they were inquired about the factors they find most valuable and appreciate when using BNPL, with the results being presented in Figure 5.

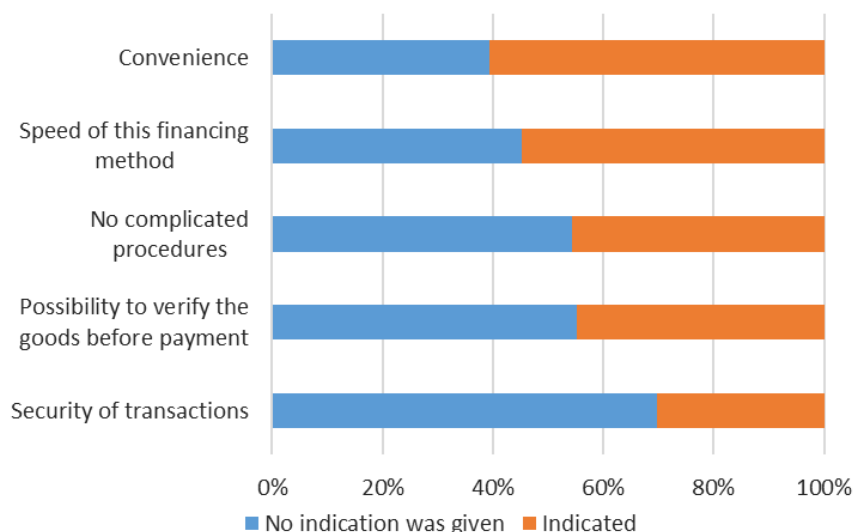
**Figure 4: In what situations do you use deferred payments?**



Note: Multiple-choice question

Source: Authors own compilation based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPo.

Figure 5: What do you appreciate most about BNPL?



Note: Multiple-choice question

Source: Authors own compilation based on an empirical study commissioned by PayPo.

As mentioned earlier, the aim of this article is to determine which user characteristics are most strongly associated with a particular behaviour. The matrix of

relationships investigated by groups of characteristics of BNPL users is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The relationships studied

Characteristics	Behaviour
<b>Demographic features</b>	
Gender	Choice of BNPL
Age	
Education	
Household size	
Residence	
<b>Economic features</b>	
Income	Choice of BNPL
Source of income	
Bank indebtedness	
Non-bank indebtedness	
<b>Behavioural features</b>	
Repayment timing	Choice of BNPL

Source: Authors own work.

In order to examine the relationships, a series of analyses are performed using Pearson  $\chi^2$  tests. Cramer's V coefficient, which belongs to the group of contingency coefficients, is used as a measure of dependency. It is defined as (Statystyka-pomoc.com, 2025):

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{X^2}{n * \min(k-1, r-1)}}$$

$X^2$  – test statistic for the chi-square test of independence,

$n$  – total number of observations,

$k$  – the number of columns in the contingency table,

$r$  – the number of rows in the contingency table,

The Cramer coefficient allows the strength of the correlation between two qualitative variables, of which at least one takes on more than two values. It takes values between 0 and 1. The lower its value, the weaker the relationship. For the purpose of evaluating the results obtained, the following interpretation is adopted (IBM, 2023):

$V \leq 0.2$  – weak relation (even despite statistical significance)

$0.2 < V \leq 0.6$  – moderate relation

$V \geq 0.6$  – strong relation

## RESULTS

### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The demographics are decomposed as follows:

Gender: Women (W); Men (M)

Age: < 34 years old (< 34); 35-44 years old (35-44); > 45 years old (> 45).

Education: Primary/Vocational (PV); Secondary/Post-secondary (SP); Higher (H).

Household size: 1 person (1P); 2 persons (2P); 3 Persons (3P); 4 persons and more ( $\geq 4P$ ).

Residence: Rural (R); Town <100k (T<100k); 100k < Town < 500k (T 100-500); City > 500k (C > 500k).

An analysis of BNPL users' behaviour based on different demographic dimensions leads to the conclusion that this form of paying for purchases is particularly appreciated by women - they like this formula, probably because of its convenience, intuitiveness and the feeling that shopping does not drain their budgets. The strength of this relationship for  $p < 0.01$  is weak. A kind of confirmation of this thesis is that for  $p < 0.05$  it is women who indicate that they use the BNPL because it prevents them from feeling that their savings are melting away. Also, a weak relationship, but for high statistical significance, is shown by the relationship between the number of people in the household and the choice of BNPL as a shopping support tool. It is preferred by households consisting of one person. Combining the above results, one would expect a particular interest in deferred payments on the part of single women. For the remaining relationships, correlations can be demonstrated but are identified with weaker statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) and are also weak relationships ( $V < 0.2$ ). Taking into account the age structure of the sample, it can be concluded that for the youngest segment of respondents, BNPL is simply an attractive form of support for the completion of purchases, using it during promotions. For middle-aged people, what matters is the opportunity to make purchases, the terms of which they find attractive and, were it not for deferred payments, they would not be able to afford it. The attitude to BNPL also depends on the level of education. The higher it is, the more one expects to settle a BNPL obligation during the interest-free period. It can also be concluded that people with higher education are less likely to choose deferred payments for unplanned expenses as opposed to those with secondary education. People with higher education are most likely to repay payments within 30 days. The attractiveness of deferred payments in terms of positive attitudes towards this instrument is represented by cohorts with a middle and higher education. Security of transactions is particularly important for men and 1-person households. Quite interestingly and surprisingly, no effect of place of residence on respondents' attitude towards BNPL is identified. The full survey results can be found in Appendix 1.

### ECONOMIC FEATURES

The economic characteristics of the analysed sample is decomposed as follows:

Income: Less than 3.000 PLN (<3k); 3.000-5.000 PLN ((3-5k)); More than 5.000 PLN (>5k)

Form of employment: Indefinite employment contract (IC), Other forms of employment (OF), Retired/unemployed (R)

Bank loans: None (NB), One (1B), Two (2B), Three or more ( $\geq 3B$ )

Non-bank loans: None (NN), One (1NB), Two or more ( $\geq 2NB$ )

Analysis of the structure of the surveyed sample based on its division according to the income criterion allows us to conclude that people with an average income are particularly fond of BNPL and treat it mainly as an instrument that makes shopping more attractive and easier. At the same time, it is a tool for increasing the value of shopping baskets, as the indicated group of respondents reaches for deferred payments in order to be able to check out the goods presented in online shops without involving financial resources. Adopting a weaker statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) reveals a relationship involving a relatively greater interest in BNPL on the part of middle-income earners due to unplanned expenditure. It appears that the form of employment has no significant effect on their attitude towards BNPL, their reasons for using this form of debt settlement and their timeliness of repayment.

This part of the survey also focuses on how respondents' existing debt influences whether and for what reasons they choose deferred payments. Those without debt with banks and non-bank loan companies settle their BNPL obligations during the interest-free period. This shows that this group of people is characterised by the fact that they treat BNPL not as a loan, but as an opportunity for rational budget management. They also value the convenience associated with this purchasing support. In turn people with multiple bank loans usually divide the repayment into instalments. On top of that consumers without non-bank credit or loans choose deferred payments more often for unplanned expenses and in the case of uncertainty about the purchase. The full results of the study can be found in Appendix 2.

### BEHAVIOURAL FEATURES

Those who repay within 30 days tend to like this form of payment and choose it when they want to try out a product first, but less often in the case of high-value purchases. This group of respondents does not seem to have any problems with repaying their obligations and sees BNPL as an attractive form of cash management. Unsurprisingly, consumers who are spreading their payment into instalments are doing so for the relatively high value of their shopping basket.

**Table 3: Behavioural features**

In what situations do you opt for deferred payments?	Always within 30 days	Part within 30 days and part in instalments	Usually after 30 days	Always in instalments	V	p
For unplanned expenses	53.2%	43.9%	37.0%	37.5%	0.12	0.156
During sales/special offers	30.8%	32.7%	37.0%	20.8%	0.07	0.628
For expensive purchases	34.3%	58.2%	48.1%	54.2%	0.22	0.001**
It doesn't matter, I just like this form of payment	41.8%	26.5%	25.9%	20.8%	0.17	0.016*
When I'm not sure about buying, I want to try it out first	42.3%	34.7%	14.8%	20.8%	0.18	0.011*
When I don't want to touch my savings	4.5%	7.1%	11.1%	16.7%	0.13	0.095
What do you like most about 'buy now, pay later'?	Always within 30 days	Part within 30 days and part in instalments	Usually after 30 days	Always in instalments	V	p
Convenience	65.7%	58.2%	44.4%	45.8%	0.15	0.056
The speed of this method of financing	57.7%	54.1%	44.4%	45.8%	0.09	0.448
The easy, uncomplicated procedure	47.3%	41.8%	51.9%	41.7%	0.06	0.716
The security of the transaction	26.9%	35.7%	33.3%	33.3%	0.09	0.439
I don't have to tie up my own cash if I need to return the item	55.2%	31.6%	25.9%	33.3%	0.24	0.001***
I can try out the item before paying	33.3%	14.3%	22.2%	33.3%	0.19	0.005**

V – strength of the relationship, Cramer's V, p – level of statistical significance, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001

Source: Authors own work.

## DISCUSSION

Our research inspires the question of whether the profile of the Polish consumer using BNPL diverges from the characteristics of the deferred payment user described in other studies. It is also reasonable to determine the extent of the divergence in motivation and the potential directions of evolution of BNPL in Poland. As in other countries (Kollewe & Makortoff, 2021; Arisandy et al., 2023; Lia & Natswa, 2023; ASIC, 2020), Polish BNPL consumers are young people (mainly Generation Z and Millennials) which allows confirmation of H1. Against the background of CEE countries, Poland appears as a country with relatively high BNPL popularity. Its use corresponds to the interest it enjoys in the United States. The difference between Poland and the

tween Poland and the United States, however, is that in Poland the users are mainly well-educated people or consumers with secondary education (Cornelli et al., 2023). They point mainly to the attractiveness of this purchasing support. The results described in this article indicate that BNPL is mainly used by young women. This is also confirmed by the results of another study conducted in the Polish market (Comfino, 2024). The relatively higher popularity of BNPL among women is noted also in the US (CFPB, 2023) and UK markets (Woolard, 2019). Loomis and Cockayne (2024) state that ‘...demographically, the majority of BNPL users are young and women and its negative impacts are disproportionately felt by lower-income groups, making this a specifically gendered financial technology...’. In Po-

land, BNPL is used by small households. A similar consumer profile is presented by Marek (2024) and Chen et al. (2024), among others. The main reasons why consumers in Poland turn to BNPL are unplanned purchases, the high value of the goods purchased, the desire to take advantage of promotions as well as the intention to try the goods before paying for them. Lack of funds is not the most important reason for using BNPL which allows us to confirm H3. Similar reasons feature consumers in other countries (Adiprasetyo & Surjandy, 2024; Aidala et al., 2024). BNPL users in Poland value the simplicity, convenience and intuitiveness of this service, which is also recognised by consumers in other markets (Syifani & Mustika, 2024).

A confrontation of the characteristics of a typical BNPL user in Poland with those of consumers using deferred payments shows a strong convergence. What distinguishes Poland is the relatively small share of respondents who declare they are indebted (only 20-25% of them indicate that they use credit cards, instalment or cash loans). At the same time, the higher the indebtedness with banks and lending companies, the greater the propensity to spread payments into instalments, especially when using BNPL for relatively high-value purchases. Settling obligations during the interest-free period is linked to the motivation of using BNPL as a tool to check out goods without paying for them and to better manage the household budget. This in turn allows us to conclude that it is not insufficient purchasing power (despite the relatively high level of interest rates in Poland), but non-financial determinants that drive the BNPL market in Poland. This also is in line with H2. Nevertheless, the educational campaign conducted by the Polish Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (UOKiK) aimed at ensuring that BNPLs do not contribute to consumer over-indebtedness should be welcomed with full understanding (UOKiK, 2024).

As indicated by other research (Waliszewski et al, 2024c) of all the statistically significant factors underlying decisions to choose BNPL, the consumer's use of LendTech has the greatest impact, increasing the chance of using BNPL. This suggests that similar consumers constitute these two segments. The research analysed in this paper shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between having non-bank credit products and the use of deferred payments in cases of unplanned expenses or uncertainty about a purchase, which confirms hypothesis H4.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research, several key conclusions can be drawn. Women use deferred payments more often because they like this payment method and appreciate that they do not have to use household savings, while men value the security of the

transaction. Younger individuals tend to use BNPL during sales and promotions and generally enjoy this form of payment. People with higher education are less likely to use deferred payments for unforeseen expenses and more often reach for BNPL because they like this method. They also place less emphasis on transaction security. We also confirm a statistically significant relationship between education level and repayment time, with highly educated individuals most frequently repaying their BNPL obligations within 30 days, taking advantage of the interest-free period (grace period). Higher-income individuals use deferred payments more often because they like this payment method and want to test the product, whereas they are less likely to use BNPL for unexpected expenses. People from smaller households also tend to use deferred payments more frequently due to their preference for this payment form, and they particularly value its convenience.

The study does not reveal a statistically significant relationship between the source of income and the use of deferred payments nor between place of residence and BNPL usage. Furthermore, no important relation is found between having bank credit products and the use of BNPL. However, a statistically significant relationship is identified between having bank credit products and the repayment period - individuals without bank credit products are more likely to repay BNPL payments within 30 days, while those with multiple bank credit products more frequently opt for instalment payments. Additionally, individuals without non-bank credit products are more likely to use BNPL for unforeseen expenses and uncertain purchases. They also value BNPL for its convenience, immediate financing, and the ability to avoid blocking their own funds in case of a refund. A statistically significant relationship is also found between non-bank credit product ownership and repayment time - those without non-bank credit products tend to repay BNPL within 30 days more often than those who have such products.

Finally, the repayment time for deferred payments is linked to their use for high-value purchases, a preference for this payment method, and the desire to test products. Individuals who repay BNPL liabilities within 30 days are more likely to report that they enjoy this payment form and use it when they want to test a product, while they are less likely to use it for high-value purchases. Moreover, a strong relation is found between repayment time and the appreciation of not having to block personal funds in case of a return, as well as the ability to inspect the goods before making a payment.

Our results yield conclusions that may have important regulatory implications and for BNPL providers as well. The relatively low level of usage of bank credit products by the BNPL customers and the low share of

consumers using deferred payments who are also customers of non-bank lenders generates the risk of a relatively wide group of indebted people about whom we will not learn from official statistics. Hence, consideration should be given to broadening the spectrum of entities reporting to the BIK to include any deferred payment provider not yet included. Additionally, these insights can help financial institutions offering or planning to introduce BNPL services to better understand user motivations. Addressing the preferences and behaviour of different demographic groups can lead to more tailored BNPL solutions, improving user adoption and satisfaction.

The analysis that has been carried out has some limitations, which at the same time provide directions for further research. They are largely due to the spec-

trum and content of the questions included in the survey. Among other things, the question of determining the impact of BNPL and hedonic motivation on the impulsive buying behaviour and consequently household over-indebtedness needs to be deepened. It would be worthwhile to conduct the survey in question by age group and repeat it periodically in order to finalize whether certain behaviours are the domain of the age of the BNPL user or of a specific generation.

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Appendix 1: Demographic features

In what situations do you opt for deferred payments?	W	M	V	p	<34	35-44	>45	V	p	P/V	S/PS	H	V	p
For unplanned expenses	50.0%	45.8%	0.04	0.437	44.2%	52.2%	50.0%	0.07	0.412	46.4%	61.0%	44.1%	0.14	0.038*
During sales/special offers	31.7%	30.3%	0.02	0.774	28.6%	40.0%	23.9%	0.14	0.033*	20.3%	37.7%	32.4%	0.12	0.065
For expensive purchases	44.2%	42.3%	0.02	0.714	41.5%	41.7%	48.9%	0.06	0.493	47.8%	49.4%	39.7%	0.09	0.247
It doesn't matter, I just like this form of payment	40.4%	26.8%	0.14	0.009**	41.5%	33.9%	25.0%	0.14	0.036*	20.3%	37.7%	38.7%	0.15	0.018*
When I'm not sure about buying, I want to try it out first	35.6%	38.0%	0.02	0.640	36.1%	35.7%	38.6%	0.03	0.896	34.8%	36.4%	37.3%	0.02	0.933
When I don't want to touch my savings	4.8%	9.2%	0.09	0.107	4.8%	8.7%	6.8%	0.07	0.441	7.2%	2.6%	7.8%	0.09	0.277
What do you like most about 'buy now, pay later'?	W	M	V	p	<34	35-44	>45	V	p	P/V	S/PS	H	V	p
Convenience	60.1%	61.3%	0.01	0.826	55.1%	69.6%	58.0%	0.13	0.050	53.6%	67.5%	60.3%	0.09	0.227
The speed of this method of financing	54.3%	55.6%	0.01	0.809	51.7%	59.1%	54.5%	0.06	0.486	55.1%	62.3%	52.0%	0.08	0.296
The easy, uncomplicated procedure	47.1%	43.7%	0.03	0.524	45.6%	48.7%	42.0%	0.05	0.641	44.9%	50.6%	44.1%	0.05	0.612
The security of the transaction	26.0%	36.6%	0.11	0.033*	30.6%	33.0%	26.1%	0.06	0.566	39.1%	37.7%	24.5%	0.15	0.021*
I don't have to tie up my own cash if I need to return the item	49.5%	38.0%	0.11	0.034*	47.6%	47.0%	37.5%	0.09	0.275	40.6%	45.5%	46.1%	0.04	0.725
I can try out the item before paying	29.3%	23.9%	0.06	0.266	27.9%	27.0%	26.1%	0.02	0.957	20.3%	28.6%	28.9%	0.08	0.360

How often do you try to pay off your 'buy now, pay later' purchases?	W	M	V	p	<34	35-44	> 45	V	p	P/V	S/PS	H	V	p
	1P	2P	3P	≥4P	V	p	R	T (<100k)	T (100-500)	C (>500)	V	p		
Always within 30 days	60.6%	52.8%	0.09	0.376	60.50%	51.3%	60.2%	0.08	0.582	49.3%	55.80%	55.8%	0.14	0.028*
Part within 30 days and part in instalments	26.9%	29.5%	0.09	0.376	25.20%	33.9%	25.0%			26.1%	37.70%	37.7%		
Usually after 30 days	7.2%	8.5%	0.09	0.376	6.80%	9.6%	6.8%			13.0%	1.30%	1.3%		
Always in instalments	5.3%	9.2%	0.09	0.376	7.50%	5.2%	8.0%			11.6%	5.20%	5.2%		
In what situations do you opt for deferred payments?	1P	2P	3P	≥4P	V	p	R	T (<100k)	T (100-500)	C (>500)	V	p		
For unplanned expenses	42.4%	49.4%	50.00%	47.5%	0.04	0.883	44.8%	50.0%	48.9%	48.2%	0.04	0.925		
During sales/special offers	27.3%	33.7%	30.60%	30.8%	0.04	0.913	29.9%	36.1%	27.2%	30.1%	0.08	0.570		
For expensive purchases	39.4%	43.8%	40.70%	46.7%	0.05	0.788	52.2%	41.7%	45.7%	36.1%	0.11	0.238		
It doesn't matter, I just like this form of payment	54.5%	41.6%	33.30%	25.8%	0.18	0.008**	22.4%	39.8%	37.0%	36.1%	0.13	0.112		
When I'm not sure about buying, I want to try it out first	39.4%	37.1%	34.30%	37.5%	0.03	0.937	32.8%	32.4%	38.0%	43.4%	0.09	0.399		
When I don't want to touch my savings	9.1%	3.4%	10.20%	5.0%	0.11	0.203	9.0%	3.7%	8.7%	6.0%	0.09	0.426		

What do you like most about 'buy now, pay later'?	1P	2P	3P	≥4P	V	p	R	T (<100k)	T (100-500)	C (>500)	V	p
Convenience	75.8%	66.3%	61.1%	51.7%	0.15	0.038*	65.7%	63.9%	54.3%	59.0%	0.09	0.423
The speed of this method of financing	48.5%	51.7%	57.4%	56.7%	0.06	0.718	59.7%	59.3%	50.0%	50.6%	0.09	0.397
The easy, uncomplicated procedure	45.5%	46.1%	46.3%	45.0%	0.01	0.998	49.3%	48.1%	44.6%	41.0%	0.06	0.706
The security of the transaction	30.3%	27.0%	29.6%	33.3%	0.05	0.798	28.4%	30.6%	32.6%	28.9%	0.04	0.934
I don't have to tie up my own cash if I need to return the item	54.5%	51.7%	43.5%	38.3%	0.12	0.167	31.3%	47.2%	47.8%	49.4%	0.13	0.102
I can try out the item before paying	36.4%	34.8%	25.9%	20.0%	0.14	0.064	20.9%	28.7%	29.3%	27.7%	0.07	0.638
How often do you try to pay off your 'buy now, pay later' purchases?	1P	2P	3P	≥4P	V	p	R	T (<100k)	T (100-500)	C (>500)	V	p
Always within 30 days	72.7%	60.7%	60.7%	52.5%	0.09	0.489	47.8%	53.7%	63.0%	63.0%	0.11	0.209
Part within 30 days and part in instalments	24.2%	22.5%	22.5%	31.7%			34.3%	27.8%	22.7%	22.7%		
Usually after 30 days	3.0%	10.1%	10.1%	8.3%			6.0%	11.1%	7.6%	7.6%		
Always in instalments	0.0%	6.7%	6.7%	7.5%			11.9%	7.4%	6.5%	6.5%		

V – strength of the relationship, Cramer's V, p – level of statistical significance, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01  
Source: Authors own work.

Appendinx 2: Economic features

In what situations do you opt for deferred payments?	<3k		3-5k		>5k		V	p	IC	OF	R	V	p
	<3k	3-5k	3-5k	>5k	>5k	>5k							
For unplanned expenses	61.3%	44.8%	41.3%	0.011*	48.9%	48.3%	44.4%	0.03	0.884				
During sales/special offers	34.4%	34.3%	24.0%	0.169	33.0%	31.0%	19.4%	0.09	0.262				
For expensive purchases	40.9%	47.6%	38.5%	0.323	46.7%	37.9%	36.1%	0.09	0.242				
It doesn't matter, I just like this form of payment	22.6%	42.0%	36.5%	0.009**	33.5%	36.8%	38.9%	0.04	0.745				
When I'm not sure about buying, I want to try it out first	23.7%	44.8%	37.5%	0.004**	38.3%	34.5%	30.6%	0.05	0.599				
When I don't want to touch my savings	5.4%	6.3%	7.7%	0.799	5.3%	9.2%	8.3%	0.07	0.413				
What do you like most about 'buy now, pay later'?	<3k		3-5k		>5k		V	p	IC	OF	R	V	p
<3k	3-5k	3-5k	>5k	>5k	>5k								
Convenience	68.8%	57.3%	57.7%	0.163	61.2%	62.1%	52.8%	0.05	0.595				
The speed of this method of financing	62.4%	55.9%	47.1%	0.095	54.6%	56.3%	52.8%	0.02	0.931				
The easy, uncomplicated procedure	47.3%	45.5%	46.2%	0.962	46.3%	44.8%	44.4%	0.01	0.962				
The security of the transaction	29.0%	32.2%	30.8%	0.878	29.1%	33.3%	30.6%	0.04	0.763				
I don't have to tie up my own cash if I need to return the item	35.5%	50.3%	43.3%	0.078	41.0%	48.3%	61.1%	0.13	0.060				
I can try out the item before paying	20.4%	32.2%	24.0%	0.108	24.2%	34.5%	27.8%	0.10	0.187				
How often do you try to pay off your 'buy now, pay later' purchases?	<3k		3-5k		>5k		V	p	IC	OF	R	V	p
<3k	3-5k	3-5k	>5k	>5k	>5k								
Always within 30 days	53.7%	60.8%	55.8%	0.736	54.2%	60.9%	69.4%	0.08	0.586				
Part within 30 days and part in instalments	28.0%	26.6%	29.8%		31.3%	23.0%	19.4%						
Usually after 30 days	9.7%	5.6%	9.6%		7.5%	9.2%	5.6%						
Always in instalments	8.6%	7.0%	4.8%		7.0%	6.9%	5.6%						

In what situations do you opt for deferred payments?	NB	1B	2B	≥3B	V	p	NN	1NB	≥2NB	V	p
For unplanned expenses	47.8%	44.0%	50.0%	53.1%	0.07	0.653	52.5%	35.4%	50.0%	0.14	0.027*
During sales/special offers	24.4%	33.9%	25.7%	39.5%	0.13	0.117	29.2%	31.7%	43.8%	0.09	0.249
For expensive purchases	34.4%	43.1%	51.4%	46.9%	0.12	0.159	44.1%	40.2%	46.9%	0.04	0.766
It doesn't matter, I just like this form of payment	33.3%	36.7%	31.4%	37.0%	0.05	0.853	36.4%	28.0%	40.6%	0.08	0.301
When I'm not sure about buying, I want to try it out first	35.6%	30.3%	40.0%	43.2%	0.10	0.284	41.5%	26.8%	25.0%	0.15	0.021*
When I don't want to touch my savings	12.2%	6.4%	4.3%	2.5%	0.15	0.058	7.2%	6.1%	3.1%	0.05	0.669
What do you like most about 'buy now, pay later'?	NB	1B	2B	≥3B	V	p	NN	1NB	≥2NB	V	p
Convenience	66.7%	58.7%	62.9%	54.3%	0.09	0.386	67.4%	47.6%	43.8%	0.20	0.001**
The speed of this method of financing	52.2%	51.4%	58.6%	59.3%	0.07	0.613	59.3%	43.9%	50.0%	0.13	0.046*
The easy, uncomplicated procedure	41.1%	43.1%	47.1%	53.1%	0.09	0.408	44.9%	46.3%	50.0%	0.03	0.856
The security of the transaction	31.1%	26.6%	34.3%	30.9%	0.06	0.736	26.7%	32.9%	50.0%	0.15	0.022
I don't have to tie up my own cash if I need to return the item	54.4%	42.2%	38.6%	43.2%	0.12	0.182	50.8%	31.7%	34.4%	0.17	0.005***
I can try out the item before paying	32.2%	26.6%	25.7%	23.5%	0.07	0.611	29.7%	23.2%	18.8%	0.09	0.279
How often do you try to pay off your 'buy now, pay later' purchases?	NB	1B	2B	≥3B	V	p	NN	1NB	≥2NB	V	p
Always within 30 days	71.1%	58.7%	51.4%	45.7%	0.15	0.007**	65.3%	40.2%	43.8%	0.19	0.001**
Part within 30 days and part in instalments	17.8%	23.9%	35.7%	38.3%			22.4%	37.9%	43.8%		
Usually after 30 days	7.8%	11.9%	4.3%	4.9%			5.1%	14.6%	9.3%		
Always in instalments	3.3%	5.5%	8.6%	11.1%			7.2%	7.3%	3.1%		

V – strength of the relationship, Cramer's V, p – level of statistical significance, \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001  
Source: Authors own work.