

Revision policy for the balance of payments and the international investment position (i.i.p.)

The timing and frequency of revisions of the balance of payments and the international investment position are chosen in line with users' needs and the availability of the data.

When the provisional balance of payments data of the current reporting month are published, the corresponding data of the previous reporting month are revised (month-by-month revision). These corrections take account of new foreign trade figures from the Federal Statistical Office, late and revised reports on foreign trade and payments from parties required to report as well as other delayed information. The Federal Statistical Office revises foreign trade for the first time when it prepares the data for the second following month. Overall, six successive monthly revisions are carried out for each reporting month. An additional annual revision is made in October of the following year. These revised results are integrated into the balance of payments statistics when new balance of payments data are published.

The figures from the previous reporting year and the three preceding years are revised annually in the March issue of the Monthly Report. This annual revision generally incorporates new information stemming from secondary sources and late reports, and provisional estimates are revised or replaced. As a rule, methodological amendments for earlier periods are likewise carried out in the March issue.

Regional shifts in the balance of payments data may arise in the Balance of payments by region published annually in July. In addition, new data from secondary sources may be included (as a rule, these are BIS data on deposits by German

non-banks with banks abroad and data on expenditure on foreign travel in the previous year.)

In the case of the international investment position, the data for the previous quarter are revised with the publication of the current reporting quarter. Owing to the availability of more detailed data sources, all quarterly figures of the preceding year are revised in September with the publication of the international investment position for the preceding year-end. In addition, the quarterly and year-end figures for the three preceding years are revised and reconciled with the balance of payments figures. In this connection, further changes to the balance of payments data may likewise be necessary.

Unscheduled revisions of the balance of payments may also be made in addition to those already mentioned. In the event of fairly extensive revisions or the discovery of serious errors, an assessment is made on a case-by-case basis as to whether the analysis of the balance of payments is impaired as a result of the errors and therefore whether a correction is necessary in the next publication or whether it will suffice to make a correction at the next regular revision date.