

Explanatory notes and lists

This statistical series on the international investment position and external debt contains corresponding stock data on the balance of payments (see statistical series on the balance of payments statistics). It presents Germany's international investment position and external debt, the external positions of enterprises in Germany as well as the external position of the Bundesbank.

International investment position and external debt

Structure and content

The "international investment position (i.i.p.)" captures the financial assets and liabilities of residents vis-à-vis non-residents at market value at the end of a given reporting period. Thus, the i.i.p. provides information not only on the volume and structure of financial assets held abroad by residents, but also on financial assets held in Germany by non-residents.

The i.i.p. and the balance of payments (see statistical series on the balance of payments statistics) are reconciled in an integrated statement. The difference between the opening and closing i.i.p. value of a given period is determined by financial account transactions, the valuation effects arising from market value or exchange rate fluctuations, and a variable referred to as "other changes", which contains statistical (or accounting-based) changes in financial assets and liabilities. These include, for example, write-downs on uncollectible credit claims, changes in sector classifications, changes in the functional category of a financing instrument or changes in the reporting group. In practice, statistical discrepancies may also occur if transaction and stock data stem from different sources.

"External debt", on the other hand, shows only the financial liabilities of residents to non-residents with a repayment obligation such as payments of principal and/or interest. It includes financial instruments such as debt securities and loans. By contrast, financial instruments with no repayment obligation, such as shares or mutual fund shares, are excluded. External debt is therefore a subdivision of the liabilities included in the i.i.p. accordingly, stocks are marked to market and valued at the applicable exchange rates as at the respective reporting date.

Sources and legal bases

Various sources are used to determine the i.i.p. and external debt in addition to the monthly stock reports on external assets and liabilities held by enterprises, households, general government and monetary financial institutions, recourse is made to the monthly securities holdings statistics, which contain the securities holdings reported by German custodians, and the capital market statistics on securities issuance by German issuers. The annual stock data of German and foreign direct investment enterprises are also used. Items for which there are no stock data are calculated by cumulating balance of payments transactions. This applies, in particular to German unlisted shares or real estate ownership by Germans outside Germany or by non-residents in Germany. Lastly, there are the external assets and liabilities taken from the accounting system of the Bundesbank.

With respect to securities components in the stock statistics and in the corresponding flow account of the balance of payments statistics, the positions of private non-banks cannot always be ascertained with the desired accuracy as the transactions conducted abroad are not comprehensively reported.

When securities are traded via international brokers and clearing houses, it is also difficult to identify the country in which the actual purchaser of a German security is resident. To correct these regional distortions, the geographical breakdown of the IMF's Coordinated Portfolio Investment Survey (CPIIS) is applied to German securities liabilities.

Since the publication of data for the second quarter of 2014 and the revised figures for previous years in September 2014, the methodology and classifications used for the i.i.p. have been in line with the revised standard of the International Monetary Fund (IMF): IMF (2009), Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, Sixth Edition (BPM6). The reporting obligations of the Bundesbank are also laid down in Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 of 12 January 2005 and Guideline of the European Central Bank 23/2011 of 9 December 2011, as last amended.

Publication of results

The i.i.p. is published in this statistical series and on the internet on a provisional basis at the end of each quarter with a time lag of one quarter. The results as at the end of the previous year, which are compiled based on more detailed data sources compared with the provisional calculations, are published in the annual i.i.p. press release (in September).

Revision policy

Germany's i.i.p. data for the previous quarter are normally revised upon publication of data for the current quarter. In exceptional cases, data for earlier periods may also be revised. As with the balance of payments figures, all quarterly figures for the preceding four years are revised in March of each year. Each September, all quarterly figures for the preceding three years are revised owing to the availability of more detailed data sources on direct investment. In this context, the revised i.i.p. data are reconciled with the balance of payments figures, which may make further revisions necessary.

External positions of enterprises

Structure and content

The external assets and liabilities arising from the loans and trade credits of domestic enterprises (including investment companies but not their money market funds) at the end of a reporting period are recorded in "external positions of enterprises".

The data are broken down by type of loan, maturity, creditor and debtor country as well as by euro and foreign currency. Credit relationships with affiliated enterprises are presented separately. They do not include participating interests in foreign enterprises, non-residents' participating interests in the equity capital of domestic enterprises or securitised claims and liabilities vis-à-vis non-residents.

Sources and legal bases

External sector reporting serves as the basis for compiling the external positions of enterprises. It requires all resident non-banks¹ to report their claims and liabilities arising from loans and trade credits vis-à-vis non-residents. These reporting requirements are anchored in Section 11(2) of the Foreign Trade and Payments Act (Außenwirtschaftsgesetz) together with Section 66 of the Foreign Trade and Payments Regulation (Außenwirtschaftsverordnung).

Publication of results

The external positions of enterprises are calculated by the Bundesbank each month and published approximately five to six weeks after the end of the reporting month.

Revision policy

When publishing the provisional data for the current reporting month, the corresponding data for the previous month are generally revised (prior-month revision). These revisions contain late and correction reports from reporting parties on external transactions, and other information subsequently made available.

Annual revisions for the previous reporting year and the three preceding years are made in the March Monthly Report. Late reports are generally taken into account in these annual revisions. Methodological changes, including those for earlier periods, also tend to be implemented at this point.

External position of the Bundesbank

Structure and content

The "external position of the Bundesbank" records the institution's financial assets and liabilities vis-à-vis non-residents at the end of the month, marked to market and valued at the applicable exchange rates. It is part of the international investment position.

Reserve assets, including gold, are shown on the assets side. Other capital investment primarily includes intra-Euro-system claims, e.g. claims from TARGET2 balances. Portfolio investment mainly consists of long-term debt securities from issuers within the euro area. The Bundesbank's external liabilities comprise non-residents' credit balances at the Bundesbank as well as external liabilities related to euro banknote issuance and the counterpart of special drawing rights.

Sources and legal bases

The data for determining the external position of the Bundesbank are largely taken from the Bundesbank's internal accounting.

¹ Non-banks comprise all residents, excluding natural persons and monetary financial institutions (MFIs).

Since the publication of data for the reporting month of May 2014 in July 2014, the methodology and classifications used for the external position of the Bundesbank have been in line with the revised standard of the International Monetary Fund (IMF): IMF (2009), Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, Sixth Edition (BPM6). The reporting obligations of the Bundesbank are also laid down in Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 of 12 January 2005 and Guideline of the European Central Bank 2011/23 of 9 December 2011, as last amended.

Publication of results

The external position of the Bundesbank is calculated by the Bundesbank each month and published approximately one to two weeks after the end of the reporting month.

Revision policy

The published data on the external position of the Bundesbank is only revised as necessary.

■ Methodological notes

Territory

The domestic market comprises the economic territory of the Federal Republic of Germany. All other countries, including those participating in the euro area, are foreign markets.

The distinction between loans and currency and deposits

Transactions are assigned to loans or currency and deposits broadly on the basis of the sector of the domestic or foreign debtor: if the debtor belongs to the MFI sector (including monetary authorities), the holdings and transactions are assigned to the "Currency and deposits" item; if the debtor belongs to another sector (general government, enterprises and households), the relevant holdings and transactions are assigned to the "Loans" item.

Sectoral classification

The revised Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6) has brought sectoral classification into line with that of the System of National Accounts.² However, in order to ensure that balance of payments data would be consistent with the fifth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM5), the sectoral classification model was adopted in principle while nevertheless consolidating several heavily

subdivided sectors. The division of economic agents into institutional sectors adopted in this statistical series is very closely based on this manner of classification. Designations were largely retained in order to maintain consistency with previous sector designations. The sectoral classification is generally that of the domestic sector of the creditor or the debtor.

By contrast, the reporting requirements at European level³ subdivide the sectors to a greater extent than in this statistical series, although, when compared with the national accounts, some of the sectors here are also aggregated into groups.

² 2008 SNA.

³ See Commission Regulation (EU) No 555/12 of 22 June 2012 and Guideline of the European Central Bank 2011/23 of 9 December 2011.