

7. Net lending/net borrowing

- In 2011, the balance of the general government sector was negative (net borrowing) in 24 out of 32 countries. Ireland and the United States recorded net borrowing above 10% of GDP. In contrast, Norway was a net lender (positive) at 13.6% of GDP.
- Net lending of the combined household and NPISHs sector was positive in 24 out of 28 countries in 2011.

Net lending/borrowing is one of only two balancing items in the SNA where the reference to “net” is not in juxtaposition to “gross”: in other words it is not in reference to lending net of depreciation. If it is positive it is described as net lending and if negative, as net borrowing. It reflects the amount of financial assets that are available for lending or needed for borrowing to finance all expenditures – consumption expenditure, gross capital formation and capital transfers – in excess of disposable income. Its importance as an economic concept is best illustrated by the fact that net lending/net borrowing of general government forms one of the two Maastricht excessive deficit criteria (with an additional adjustment to reflect net streams of interest payments resulting from swaps arrangements and forward rate agreements) used by the European Commission to assess the soundness and sustainability of public finances.

Definition

Net lending or borrowing can be measured identically as the balancing item in either the capital or financial accounts. It can therefore be derived as saving less acquisitions plus disposals of non-financial assets plus capital transfers receivable minus capital transfers payable. Or it can be derived as the difference between net acquisition of financial assets and net incurrence of liabilities. Financial assets (and liabilities) include: Monetary gold, Special Drawing Rights, Currency and Deposits, Securities, Shares and other equity, Insurance Technical Reserves (including net equity of households in pension funds, see Sections 14 and 16) and Other accounts receivable and payable (such as trade credits and advances for work in progress or to be undertaken).

Although it can be derived via either approach it is important to note that, in practice, achieving this equivalence is one of the most difficult tasks in compiling national accounts.

Another important point worth making in this context concerns contingencies. Many types of contractual financial arrangements do not give rise to unconditional requirements either to make payments or to provide other objects of value. These “contingencies” are not recorded as financial assets in the SNA. If an event occurs (and a feature of contingencies is that they may not), for example, transactions in financial assets related to the realisation of the contingency, the transactions are recorded in the accounts in the usual way. A simple example of a contingency is an overdraft facility on a bank account. The existence of the facility does not of itself create a financial asset (of the bank) and liability (of the account holder). But any borrowing that subsequently occurs in relation to the facility will.

Comparability

Generally the comparability of statistics on net lending and net borrowing is good, especially for EU countries. That said, the difficulty that many countries face in reconciling the two approaches to measurement gives some indication of the care needed. Comparability, or rather the care needed when interpreting cross-country data, is perhaps a bigger issue at the sectorial level. Again, this is not fundamentally a question of conceptual differences but real differences in the types of institutions included within institutional sectors: for example in some countries hospitals are outside of the general government sector – see also Section 28.

Source

OECD (2013), *National Accounts of OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/2221433x>.

Online database

OECD (2013), “Detailed National Accounts: Simplified non-financial accounts”, *OECD National Accounts Statistics* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00010-en>.

Further reading

Eurostat (2002), *ESA95 Manual on Government Deficit and Debt*, European Communities, Luxembourg, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/Annexes/ei_naga_a_esms_an1.pdf

Lequiller, F. and D. Blades (2007), *Understanding National Accounts*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264027657-en>.

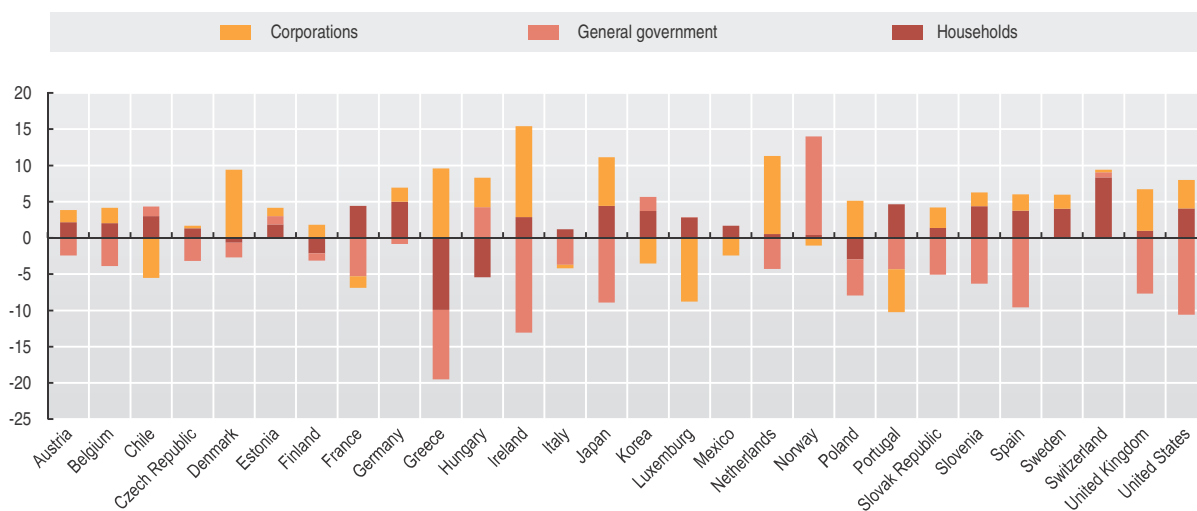
Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

Table 7.1. **Net lending/net borrowing by institutional sector**
Percentage of GDP

	Total			Corporations			General government			Households		
	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011
Australia	-2.6	-5.5	..	0.3	-4.8	..	-0.6	1.3	-4.2	-2.3	-2.2	..
Austria	-1.0	3.0	1.4	-3.9	-0.4	1.7	-0.2	-1.7	-2.4	3.0	5.1	2.1
Belgium	4.1	3.4	0.3	-2.1	0.6	2.1	0.4	0.3	-3.9	5.9	2.5	2.0
Canada	3.5	1.8	..	2.8	2.9	..	0.7	1.6	..	0.0	-2.7	..
Chile	..	..	-1.2	..	..	-5.5	..	..	1.3	..	..	3.0
Czech Republic	-4.3	-2.1	-1.6	-0.6	-1.1	0.3	-5.6	-2.4	-3.2	1.8	1.4	1.3
Denmark	3.1	3.0	6.8	2.4	1.7	9.4	1.2	5.0	-2.0	-0.4	-3.8	-0.6
Estonia	-4.8	-13.6	4.4	-4.1	-4.9	1.1	-0.1	2.5	1.1	-0.7	-11.2	1.9
Finland	8.5	4.7	-1.3	5.1	4.6	1.8	5.1	4.1	-1.0	-1.7	-3.9	-2.1
France	1.3	-0.8	-2.5	-1.1	-1.6	-1.6	-1.7	-2.4	-5.3	4.1	3.1	4.4
Germany	-0.2	6.5	6.1	-1.7	2.2	1.9	-3.1	-1.7	-0.8	4.6	5.9	5.0
Greece	..	-11.5	-9.8	..	3.9	9.6	-4.5 e	-6.0	-9.6	..	-9.4	-9.9
Hungary	-5.2	-6.9	2.9	-3.2	-0.6	4.1	-4.1	-9.5	4.2	2.2	3.1	-5.4
Iceland	..	..	..	..	..	..	-0.7	6.3	-5.6	..	..	..
Ireland	..	-3.6	1.1	..	3.9	12.6	1.0	2.9	-13.1	..	-10.1	2.9
Israel	-1.0	5.4	4.2	..	..	..	-6.4	-2.7	-4.4	..	..	..
Italy	0.4	-1.4	-3.0	-0.5	-1.4	-0.5	-3.2	-3.4	-3.7	4.1	3.5	1.2
Japan	1.2	3.6	2.2	3.7	4.0	6.7	..	-1.3	-8.9	3.5	0.9	4.4
Korea	1.7	0.8	2.1	-2.8	-8.3	-3.5	4.3	3.9	2.0	0.2	5.2	3.7
Luxembourg	..	1.9	-5.9	..	-0.5	-8.8	6.1	1.4	0.1	..	1.0	2.8
Mexico	..	-0.5	-0.7	..	-2.9	-2.3	..	0.2	-0.1	..	2.2	1.7
Netherlands	5.0	8.7	7.0	3.7	9.5	10.8	-0.3	0.5	-4.3	1.6	-1.3	0.5
New Zealand	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Norway	16.1	16.4	12.7	3.5	1.0	-1.1	13.3	18.3	13.6	-0.7	-3.0	0.4
Poland	-2.4	-3.1	-2.8	-3.4	-1.2	5.1	-5.3	-3.6	-5.0	6.3	1.8	-2.9
Portugal	-9.0	-9.5	-5.6	-6.5	-6.4	-5.9	-4.8	-4.6	-4.3	2.3	1.5	4.6
Slovak Republic	-7.2	-7.9	-0.9	-0.8	-2.6	2.8	-6.5	-3.2	-5.1	0.1	-2.1	1.4
Slovenia	-0.3	-2.8	0.0	-2.0	-7.0	1.9	-4.0	-1.4	-6.3	5.6	5.6	4.4
Spain	-3.5	-8.4	-3.5	-3.6	-8.1	2.3	-0.6	2.4	-9.6	0.6	-2.6	3.7
Sweden	4.9	7.3	6.1	0.0	4.0	1.9	1.6	2.2	0.0	2.9	0.6	4.0
Switzerland	8.2	13.1	9.2	2.2	8.1	0.4	-0.4	0.5	0.7	7.2	6.2	8.3
Turkey	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.8	-0.8	..	..	..
United Kingdom	-2.2	-2.8	-1.2	-2.2	3.9	5.8	0.4	-2.8	-7.7	-0.4	-3.8	1.0
United States	-2.5	-4.2	-2.6	-1.6	0.5	3.9	-1.4	-3.0	-10.6	0.5	-1.7	4.1
Euro area	..	..	..	..	..	..	-2.0	-1.4	-4.1	3.0	2.0	2.8
OECD-Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	1.9	5.7	2.1	-4.4	-9.1	-15.4	-6.7	0.9	1.8	13.0	14.0	15.7
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	..	9.6	4.1	..	-1.9	-5.4	..	8.3	4.2	..	3.1	5.3
South Africa	0.3	-5.3	-3.4	1.7	-2.2	1.6	-2.0	-1.4	-5.6	0.6	-1.7	0.6

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Figure 7.1. **Net lending/net borrowing by institutional sector**
Percentage of GDP, 2011

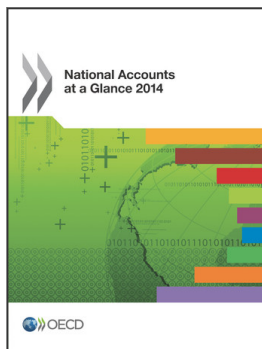


StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933001065>

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EXPENDITURE

8. Household consumption
9. General government final consumption
10. Investment
11. Exports and imports of goods and services



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