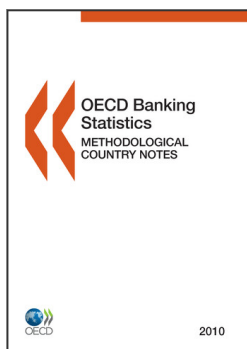


Foreword

This publication provides methodological country notes which complement the statistics published annually under the title Banking Statistics – Financial Statements of Banks. Statistics are based on financial statements of banks in each Member country and are presented in the standard OECD framework. Although the objective is to include in the analysis all institutions which conduct ordinary banking business, namely institutions which primarily take deposits from the public and provide finance for a wide range of purposes, the institutional coverage of banks in the statistics is not the same in each country. Moreover, differences across the countries are due to the availability of the data as well as the structural and regulatory features of national banking systems, accounting rules and practices, and reporting methods.

Considering the difficulties that may be encountered in the international comparability of the statistics, methodological notes were prepared to facilitate the comprehension and the interpretation of the data. In addition, the notes also provide some information on the banking system and the activities of banks in each OECD Member country.

The preparation of this publication benefited from the work of the Financial Statistics Section of the OECD Statistics Directorate but could not have been accomplished without the assistance of the members of the OECD Working Party on Financial Statistics and the national statistics and the national administrations which they represent.



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