

## 28. Net saving and net lending/net borrowing

- In 2011, 23 out of 32 countries recorded dissaving as well as a net borrowing position.
- Mexico recorded a positive saving, but a net borrowing (negative) position, which implies that capital expenditures were larger than savings in 2011.
- Hungary recorded dissaving but a net lending (positive) position. The latter turned positive thanks to a huge capital transfer (due to changes in pension law) that occurred in 2011.

The concepts of saving and net lending are introduced in Sections 6 and 7 respectively. However they are reintroduced in this section on General Government to reflect the particular importance these concepts have in the area of government finances. Saving is typically associated with the “Golden Rule” concept, namely that government current expenditures minus current receipts (such as taxes) should net out over the course of an economic cycle. Net lending/ borrowing reflects the fiscal position after accounting for capital expenditures. Net lending means that government is providing financial resources to other sectors and net borrowing means that government requires financial resources from other sector.

It’s important to note in this context that whilst general government saving and net lending/borrowing are important concepts in the SNA accounting framework and provide the basis for sound international comparisons, they are not necessarily the key fiscal measures targeted by governments. Some countries for example manage their budgets using broader notions that incorporate the positions of public corporations and others focus on more narrow concepts such as central government. The European Commission uses the net lending concept to monitor government fiscal surpluses/deficits with an additional adjustment to reflect net streams of interest payments resulting from swaps arrangements and forward rate agreements.

### Definition

Net saving = Net Disposable income minus general government final consumption

= Current receipts minus current expenditure (including depreciation)

Net-lending = Gross saving plus net capital transfers (receivable minus payable) minus gross capital formation minus acquisitions less disposals of non-produced non-financial assets

= Total general government revenue minus total general government expenditure

= Net acquisition of financial assets minus net incurrence of liabilities.

### Comparability

The biggest issue affecting comparability across countries concerns the scope of the government sector. In many countries, hospitals, for example, are classified outside of the government sector and are instead recorded as public corporations; on the grounds that they charge market prices for their services. This is an important point as the guidance provided in the SNA on the delineation of units between market and non-market providers (which refers to most output being non-market) provides scope for differences in country practices. EU countries have adopted a 50% rule for “most” in this context.

Another potential area where comparability may be affected relates to the determination of public ownership. The SNA requires that “control” be the determining factor and describes a number of criteria that can be used to assess this requirement. Recognising that this is non-trivial it includes a practical recommendation that a 50% rule relating to share ownership should be adopted. However, in practice, countries may still choose to measure ownership on the basis of other determining criteria.

Generally however the comparability of net-lending/ borrowing and saving figures for countries is very high.

Saving data for Chile correspond to gross saving.

In Ireland, in 2010, the government made massive capital transfers to Anglo Irish Bank, Irish Nationwide Building Society and EBS Building Society, which had a big impact on the government net lending figures. This kind of large one-off transactions may also affect the results for other countries, albeit usually to a lesser extent.

### 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](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>.

## 28. Net saving and net lending/net borrowing

Table 28.1. Net saving and net lending/net borrowing of general government  
Percentage of GDP

	Net saving							Net lending/net borrowing						
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Australia	2.8	2.1	-2.2	-2.6	-2.5	-2.0	-1.0	1.3	0.4	-4.3	-5.9	-5.0	-4.2	-2.3
Austria	0.1	1.2	1.1	-1.8	-1.7	-0.3	0.2	-1.7	-1.0	-1.0	-4.1	-4.5	-2.4	-2.5
Belgium	0.4	0.2	-0.8	-4.7	-3.6	-3.2	-3.1	0.3	-0.1	-1.1	-5.6	-3.9	-3.9	-4.1
Canada	2.8	2.6	0.9	-3.1	-3.4	..	..	1.6	1.4	-0.4	-4.9	-5.6	..	..
Chile	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4.8	-4.0	0.0	1.3	..
Czech Republic	-0.6	0.5	-0.8	-5.1	-4.8	-3.7	-3.3	-2.4	-0.7	-2.2	-5.8	-4.7	-3.2	-4.4
Denmark	4.8	4.6	3.6	-2.6	-2.2	-1.4	-1.6	5.0	4.8	3.3	-2.8	-2.7	-2.0	-3.9
Estonia	5.3	6.1	1.6	0.0	0.1	1.3	2.1	2.5	2.4	-2.9	-2.0	0.2	1.1	-0.2
Finland	4.1	5.6	4.6	-2.0	-2.5	-0.6	-1.8	4.1	5.3	4.3	-2.7	-2.8	-1.0	-2.2
France	-1.1	-1.3	-1.9	-6.1	-6.0	-4.3	-3.9	-2.4	-2.8	-3.3	-7.6	-7.1	-5.3	-4.8
Germany	-1.0	0.8	0.7	-2.2	-2.4	-0.1	0.5	-1.7	0.2	-0.1	-3.1	-4.2	-0.8	0.1
Greece	-5.7	-6.2	-8.5	-14.0	-11.4	-11.6	-8.2	-6.0	-6.8	-9.9	-15.6	-10.8	-9.6	-9.0
Hungary	-7.2	-3.5	-3.3	-5.0	-5.8	-5.7	-3.4	-9.5	-5.1	-3.7	-4.6	-4.4	4.2	-2.1
Iceland	9.1	8.4	2.8	-7.4	-4.8	-4.1	-2.6	6.3	5.4	-13.5	-9.9	-10.1	-5.6	-3.8
Ireland	4.6	2.7	-3.0	-9.2	-9.1	-8.3	-7.5	2.9	0.2	-7.4	-13.7	-30.6	-13.1	-8.1
Israel	-1.8	-0.5	-2.7	-5.3	-3.9	-3.6	..	-2.7	-1.6	-4.0	-6.7	-4.8	-4.4	..
Italy	-0.5	0.3	-1.0	-4.0	-3.5	-3.3	-2.2	-3.4	-1.6	-2.7	-5.4	-4.3	-3.7	-2.9
Japan	-2.4	-2.1	-3.0	-8.8	-8.3	-8.5	..	-1.3	-2.1	-1.9	-8.8	-8.3	-8.9	..
Korea	8.0	8.6	7.2	4.5	5.2	5.4	..	3.9	4.7	3.0	-1.1	1.3	2.0	..
Luxembourg	4.8	6.4	5.8	2.7	2.7	3.1	2.4	1.4	3.7	3.2	-0.7	-0.8	0.1	-0.6
Mexico	2.6	2.1	3.1	0.5	1.2	2.4	..	0.2	-0.5	-2.4	-0.9	-1.4	-0.1	..
Netherlands	1.0	0.9	1.6	-3.5	-3.3	-3.3	-3.1	0.5	0.2	0.5	-5.6	-5.0	-4.3	-4.0
New Zealand	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Norway	19.4	18.5	20.1	12.0	12.2	14.7	14.9	18.3	17.3	18.8	10.5	11.1	13.6	13.9
Poland	-1.3	0.6	-0.4	-3.6	-4.6	-2.3	-2.0	-3.6	-1.9	-3.7	-7.5	-7.9	-5.0	-3.9
Portugal	-4.1	-2.8	-3.4	-9.1	-9.1	-7.2	-7.4	-4.6	-3.2	-3.7	-10.2	-9.9	-4.3	-6.5
Slovak Republic	-2.9	-1.8	-1.7	-6.7	-7.3	-5.0	-5.0	-3.2	-1.8	-2.1	-8.0	-7.7	-5.1	-4.5
Slovenia	1.2	3.2	1.9	-2.8	-3.0	-3.3	-2.6	-1.4	0.0	-1.9	-6.3	-5.9	-6.3	-3.8
Spain	5.1	5.2	-1.0	-7.1	-6.5	-7.3	-6.5	2.4	2.0	-4.5	-11.1	-9.6	-9.6	-10.6
Sweden	3.2	4.5	3.2	0.2	1.2	1.2	0.4	2.2	3.6	2.2	-1.0	0.0	0.0	-0.5
Switzerland	1.6	2.2	3.7	2.2	1.9	2.3	1.4	0.5	1.0	2.0	0.8	0.3	0.7	-0.2
Turkey	4.3	1.7	0.9	-3.6	0.1	1.8	..	0.8	-1.5	-2.3	-6.5	-2.9	-0.8	..
United Kingdom	-1.2	-1.3	-2.5	-7.7	-7.7	-5.9	-6.3	-2.8	-2.8	-5.0	-11.3	-10.1	-7.7	-6.1
United States	-1.9	-2.3	-5.4	-10.6	-10.5	-9.4	-8.3	-3.0	-3.6	-7.0	-12.7	-12.0	-10.6	-9.2
Euro area	0.1	0.7	-0.6	-4.6	-4.4	-3.2	-2.6	-1.4	-0.7	-2.1	-6.4	-6.2	-4.1	-3.7
OECD-Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.9	3.2	1.8	0.6	1.5	1.8	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	13.4	12.3	12.8	2.6	3.8	8.8	..	8.3	5.6	7.3	-4.0	-1.2	4.2	..
South Africa	0.8	2.2	1.8	-2.8	-4.1	-3.3	-4.3	-1.4	-0.6	-1.4	-5.2	-6.0	-5.6	-6.2


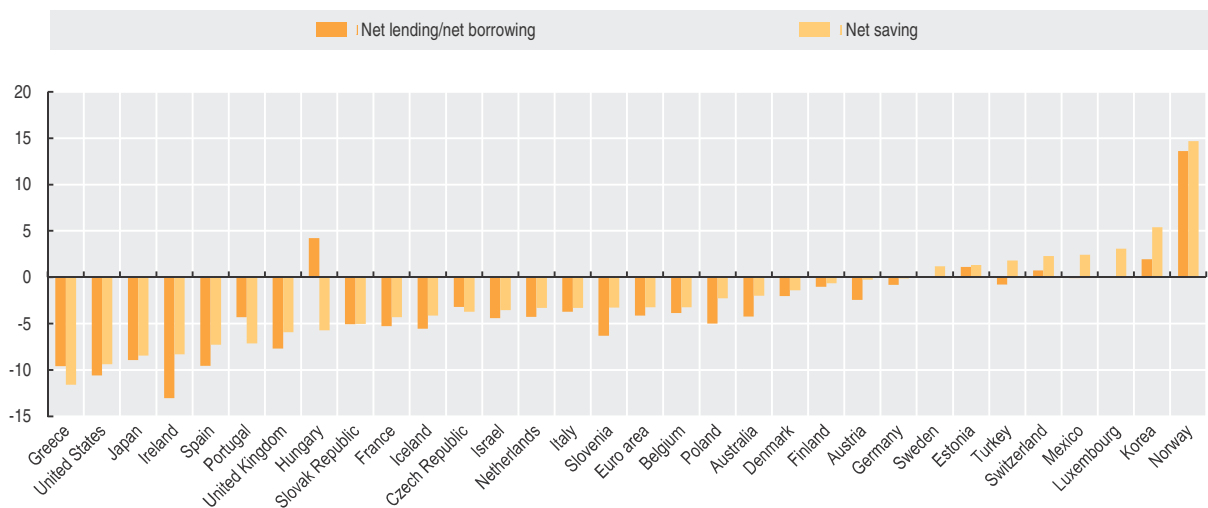

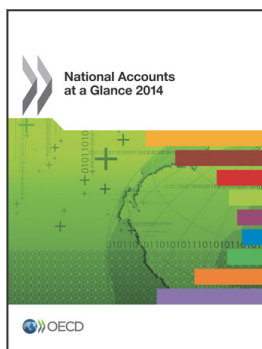
StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933002623>

Figure 28.1. Net saving and net lending/net borrowing of general government  
Percentage of GDP, 2011



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