

Answers to selected questions concerning cross-border transaction reports for external sector statistics

- FAQs -

Cross-border transaction reports are used for compiling the balance of payments for the Federal Republic of Germany and the European monetary union. They provide the bodies responsible for economic and monetary policy as well as associations and enterprises with comprehensive and reliable information on Germany's external transactions.

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1) Who is subject to reporting requirements and what information has to be provided?

Pursuant to section 26 of the Foreign Trade and Payments Act (*Außenwirtschaftsgesetz, AWG*) in conjunction with section 59 et seq of the Foreign Trade and Payments Regulation (*Außenwirtschaftsverordnung, AWW*), all residents in Germany – natural and legal persons whose place of habitual abode, place of residence or domicile is in the Federal Republic of Germany – have to report payments of more than €12,500 or the equivalent which they receive from non-residents or from residents for the account of non-residents (incoming payments) or make to non-residents or to residents for the account of non-residents (outgoing payments).

The reporting threshold of €12,500 does not apply when calculating the transactions to be reported on forms Z8, Z11, Z12 and Z13.

2) What do the terms “resident” and “non-resident” mean and how do these differ from the terms “German” and “foreign”?

The terms “resident” and “non-resident” do not refer to “nationality” but to the official domicile or place of habitual abode of the enterprise or person in question (residency principle). For example, a German who has been living abroad for more than one year is to be regarded as a "non-resident", whereas a foreign national who has been living in Germany for more than one year is to be regarded as a "resident".

3) What does “payment” mean?

Payments include credit transfers, cash payments, payments made by direct debit, cheque or bill as well as the contribution of assets and rights in enterprises, branches and permanent establishments. Furthermore, nettings and clearings, which are generally to be reported in gross terms, are also deemed to be “payments”. For example, if amounts owed are offset against each other in a netting procedure, the gross amounts on which the clearing or netting is based are to be reported as incoming and outgoing payments under the debit and credit items specifying the underlying transaction. Generally speaking, the balances to be netted do not have to be reported.

4) Which cross-border transactions are exempt from reporting requirements?

- Payments received for exported goods
- Payments made for imported goods
- Payments and repayments of loans and deposits with an originally agreed maturity of up to 12 months
- Financial institutions' long-term credit transactions with non-residents

5) Are pure account transfers subject to reporting requirements?

Pursuant to section 59 et seq of the AWV, pure account transfers (from a domestic account to an account abroad or vice versa) are not subject to reporting requirements. Please note that payments made from an account abroad to non-residents or to a non-resident's account abroad are to be reported on form Z4 in line with the underlying transaction.

6) Is cash carried abroad or back into Germany subject to reporting requirements pursuant to the AWV?

No, pursuant to the AWV, cash carried is not subject to reporting requirements.

For more information about cash controls and regulations governing the declaration of the movement of cash at the EU's external borders and within the EU, see http://www.zoll.de/english_version/faq/a1_movement_of_cash/index.html.

7) Which forms should be used?

Forms Z1, Z4, Z8 and Z10 to Z15 should be used.

- Z1, Z4 – forms for individuals, enterprises, financial institutions and public authorities
- Z8 – form for maritime shipping companies
- Z10 – form for individuals, enterprises, financial institutions and public authorities
- Z11 to Z15 – forms for financial institutions

8) Where can the forms be obtained?

Form Z1 is available from financial institutions. The other forms are available free of charge from Servicezentrum Außenwirtschaftsstatistik (Service Centre for External Sector Statistics), 55148 Mainz / Germany or as a download from the internet. Some forms can also be obtained from retailers and financial institutions.

Reporting hotline: 0800 1234 111 (freephone when calling from within Germany)

9) Why can annex Z1 to the AWV not be printed from the internet?

The payment order for external transactions (annex Z1 to the AWV) is used for outgoing payments via resident financial institutions¹. The original payment order is an optically readable form which can be scanned by financial institutions. The form is provided solely as a read-only specimen on the Bundesbank's website because if it is printed out using standard inkjet or laser printers, it can no longer be read by machine.

¹ Exception: merchanting and SEPA credit transfers are to be reported on annex Z4 to the AWV, and securities and financial derivatives transactions are to be reported on annex Z10 to the AWV.

10) How can the reports be submitted?

In paper form (reporting forms Z4, Z8 and Z10 to Z15)

The completed forms should be sent by post (with sufficient postage) to

Deutsche Bundesbank
Servicezentrum Außenwirtschaftsstatistik
55148 Mainz / Germany

In paper form (reporting form Z1)

Z1 should be submitted to the appointed financial institution for it to be forwarded to the address shown above.

Electronically (via internet to the Deutsche Bundesbank's [ExtraNet](#))

The ExtraNet is the quick, easy and secure way of submitting your statistical reports. You have to [register](#) before submitting reports for the first time. The electronic form for balance of payments reports is based on certain agreements on file structure. Several [formats](#) and an [Excel application](#) are available to you. Files can be transmitted using an internet browser or, for larger volumes of data, using an automatic procedure.

11) When is the deadline for submitting reports?

For Annex Z1 to the AWV – sheet 1 (credit transfer) is to be submitted to the financial institution with sheet 2 (statistical report) when the payment is made (for financial institutions that forward their customers' Z1 reports to the Bundesbank electronically, the deadline is the third day of the following month or, if this is not a working day, the next working day).

Annex Z4, Z8, Z14 and Z15 to the AWV – the report is to be submitted to the Deutsche Bundesbank, Servicezentrum Außenwirtschaftsstatistik (Service Centre for External Sector Statistics), by the seventh day of the month following the month in which the payments were made or the transactions were concluded.

Annex Z10 to Z13 to the AWV – the report is to be submitted to the Deutsche Bundesbank, Servicezentrum Außenwirtschaftsstatistik (Service Centre for External Sector Statistics), by the fifth day of the month following the reporting month.

12) Is it possible to apply for an extension of the deadline?

Generally speaking, no exceptions can be made to the specified deadlines.

13) For how long should report documents be kept?

As proof of compliance with reporting requirements, report documents (eg copies of the reports submitted, confirmation from counterparties) should be kept for a minimum of three years. It should be possible to trace individual transactions from the documents.

14) What should be done if no report or an incorrect report is submitted?

If, by mistake, no report is submitted, a report should be sent as soon as possible. In the report, it is essential to state the month in which the transaction took place and not the month in which the report was compiled or submitted.

If an incorrect report has been submitted, this can be rectified by sending a correction report. If the reported amount was too high, this should be corrected by sending a report with the same month, same code, same country and a negative amount which corresponds to the difference (a report can be cancelled completely by specifying a revised amount equal to the original amount reported). If the reported amount was too low, a further report should be submitted specifying the amount that has yet to be reported.

Please note that the correction report does not contain all transactions from the report that was submitted originally but only those transactions that have to be rectified or are still to be reported.

15) Why is it necessary to have a company identification number for external reporting?

It is necessary to have a company identification number for external reporting if a reporting entity makes external transactions often or at regular intervals. By being assigned a company identification number, the reporting entity can have its reports submitted electronically once it has registered with the Bundesbank's ExtraNet. The company identification number makes it easier for the Bundesbank to communicate with the reporting entity.

16) How and where can reporting entities apply for a company identification number for external reporting?

Reporting entities can apply for a company identification number using an [application form](#) on the Deutsche Bundesbank's website. The completed application form can be sent to the Bundesbank at the following e-mail address szawstat-dtazv@bundesbank.de.

Please note that individuals should use the company identification number 00999995. Credit institutions are requested to state the appropriate bank identification code.

17) Is a telephone survey on travel expenditure patterns conducted on behalf of the Bundesbank?

Yes, a survey of households on German expenditure on foreign travel has been conducted since 2001 for compiling the balance of payments.