

Explanatory notes

Banking statistics

Acting on the basis of section 18 of the Bundesbank Act, and the Regulation of the European Central Bank of 24. September 2013 on the consolidated balance sheet of the monetary financial institutions (MFIs) sector (ECB/2013/33), the Bundesbank collects from MFIs the statistics on banking and monetary matters that it needs to fulfil its tasks. This publication includes following individual sets of statistics: monthly balance sheet statistics, borrowers statistics and external positions. Besides the borrowers statistics, which is collected on a quarterly basis, all mentioned statistics are on a monthly basis.

The most important banking statistics figures are published by the Bundesbank in the Statistical Section of its Monthly Report in sections II Overall monetary survey in European monetary union, IV Banks, VI Interest rates and VII Capital market.

Mainly the data from the monthly balance sheet statistics and the borrowers statistics are published in this Statistical Series. Detailed figures from further banking statistics are published within the Statistical Series "Investment Funds Statistics", "Securities Issues Statistics", "Capital Market Indicators", "Statistics on payments and securities trading".

Monthly balance sheet statistics

The monthly balance sheet statistics form the nucleus of the banking statistics. They cover the assets and liabilities of banks, broken down by balance sheet items. The figures are to be reported monthly, in the form of a statistical balance sheet reflecting the position in the books as at the end of the month. In addition, supplementary returns are required in which the major balance sheet items are classified by the debtors' and creditors' economic sector, by type and by maturity. Moreover, a number of off-balance-sheet data are to be reported as additional items, for example contingent liabilities, lending commitments, savings turnover, debits to non-banks' giro accounts. Since January 1999, the calculation of the minimum reserve requirement has been shown in an Annex to the monthly balance sheet statistics. The figures obtained from processing the data returned by institutions subject to the reporting obligation are not published¹ as they appear on the data collection forms, but are aggregated to yield the time series given in this Statistical Series.

Borrowers statistics

Banks' lending operations to enterprises and households in Germany reported in the monthly balance sheet statistics are broken down further by economic sector in the quarterly borrowers statistics. These statistics are intended to provide information on the pattern of, and changes in, lending operations with the principal groups of private borrowers. In addition, housing loans (mortgage loans secured by residential real estate, and other non-mortgage housing loans) are shown separately in these statistics.

Since March 2026, the data have been collected and published on the basis of the classification of economic sectors (WZ 2025) used by the Federal Statistical Office.

Corpus of reporting credit institutions

Up to the end of 1998, all credit institutions were required to report monthly balance sheet statistics and borrowers statistics. Since the start of European monetary union on 1 January 1999, all credit institutions which meet the MFI definition have been required to report (MFIs are all institutions whose business is to receive deposits and/or close substitutes for deposits (for example, by issuing debt securities) and, for their own account, grant credit (including by investing in securities); in the German banking statistics they are also referred to as banks). Essentially, specialised credit institutions (investment companies that are subject to a separate reporting requirement, central securities depositories, housing enterprises with savings facilities and institutions only conducting guarantee business) were exempt from this requirement and still are. Banks (MFIs) which maintain branches abroad must draw up and file three different reports for the monthly balance sheet statistics:

- one report for that part of the institution which is located in Germany (the head office and the domestic branches),
- separate reports for the branches abroad, by country

¹ Regarding the number of institutions subject to reporting obligation see Table I.1 at page 6

- of domicile, and
- one report for the entire institution (consolidated return for the domestic part and the branches abroad).

Reports relating to the borrowers statistics have to be made only for the domestic part of the institution.

Banks in Germany

The reports from banks in Germany with no legally dependent branches abroad and the partial reports from banks with a network of branches abroad containing the data on their domestic branches are consolidated to yield reports on "Banks in Germany (MFIs)". This corpus of reporting institutions forms the core of the banking statistics. It provides the data for the overall monetary survey, from which the figures for the monetary aggregates are derived. This is why the tables presenting the data on this corpus of reporting institutions constitute the largest part of the Statistical Series Banking Statistics.

Foreign branches and foreign subsidiaries

The reports for the balance sheet statistics on German banks' foreign branches are identical in form to the reports for banks in Germany. They are supplemented by reports on the individual legally independent subsidiaries of German banks in other countries ("foreign subsidiaries"); these reports are significantly shorter in terms of their classification by item, sector and maturity. Altogether, the reports provide information on the extent to which German banks' transactions with residents and non-residents are conducted from abroad.

Building and loan associations

Up to the end of 1998, building and loan associations constituted a discrete group of reporting institutions; its data were published in separate tables. Since January 1999 these institutions have been included as MFIs both in the statistics of all banks' transactions and in the German contribution to the overall monetary survey of the euro area. The particular features of the building and loan associations are shown in separate Tables (see section III of this Statistical Series and Table IV.12 in the Statistical Section of the Monthly Report).

Money market funds

The money market funds set up by investment companies are likewise classified as MFIs. The data on money market funds collected for the statistics on investment companies,

however, are not included in the presentations of all banks' transactions, but only in the German contribution to the overall monetary survey of the euro area. Data on money market funds are published in the Statistical Series "Investment Funds Statistics".

Multi-office banks

The figures of multi-office banks (ie German banks including their branches abroad) in the statistics are important for banking supervisors. The monthly balance sheet statistics of multi-office banks are comparable to banks' annual balance sheets, but do not coincide perfectly with them. Changes in banks' books due to end-of-year closing entries, valuations, value adjustments and the like are only reflected in the balance sheet statistics in the months following the end of the year.

■ Categories of banks

The data in the monthly balance sheet statistics and the borrowers statistics are broken down by the categories of banks indicated below (money market funds are not included in the breakdown by category of banks):

Commercial banks

Big banks

(Deutsche Bank AG, Dresdner Bank AG (up to Nov. 2009), Commerzbank AG, from January 1999, UniCreditbank AG (formerly Bayerische Hypo- und Vereinsbank AG), Deutsche Postbank AG (from December 2004 up to April 2018) and from May 2018, DB Privat- und Firmenkundenbank AG (created through the merger of Deutsche Bank Privat- und Geschäftskunden Aktiengesellschaft (acquiring institution) and Deutsche Postbank AG))

Regional banks and other commercial banks

(from January 1999, including the institutions of the former category "private bankers" and other banks which have been transferred to this category from the category "special purpose banks"). Until April 2018, including Deutsche Bank Privat- und Geschäftskunden Aktiengesellschaft (see explanatory notes for banking group „Big banks“))

Branches of foreign banks

Landesbanken

(including DekaBank Deutsche Girozentrale; up to the end of 1998, this category was designated "regional giro institutions")

Savings banks

Regional institutions of credit Cooperatives

(until June 2016)

Credit cooperatives

Mortgage banks

Banks with special, development and other central support tasks

(from July 2016 including DZ BANK AG Deutsche Zentral-Genossenschaftsbank, Frankfurt am Main)

Banks majority-owned by foreign banks

(a separate presentation of the banks majority-owned by foreign banks and included in other banking categories)

Foreign banks

(this category includes banks majority-owned by foreign banks (included in the other categories of banks) as well as the category "branches of foreign banks")

Building and loan associations

(including the legally dependent building and loan association divisions of Landesbanken)

■ Classification by sector

From January 1999, the classification by sector generally follows the European System of Accounts (with the current version). Natural persons are classified as residents or non-residents according to their place of residence or normal abode, and corporations according to the location of their registered office or head office.

Domestic banks are enterprises domiciled in Germany which conduct banking business as defined in section 1

(1) of the Banking Act and which meet the MFI definitions, including branches of foreign banks.

Foreign banks are enterprises whose registered office or head office is located abroad, and which are deemed to be banks in the country concerned. They also include branches of foreign banks abroad.

The sector "households" comprises self-employed persons (for instance, sole proprietors, persons managing (small) businesses, members of the professions, farmers, rentiers), employees (wage and salary earners, civil servants, pensioners and unemployed persons) and other individuals (housewives, infants, schoolchildren, students and persons not indicating their occupation). Non-profit institutions include, inter alia, churches and charitable associations (excluding institutions and associations operated by them), foundations (excluding industrial foundations), political parties and trade unions.

Besides central, state and local government, government also includes social security funds. Foreign government also includes international organisations including supranational banks.

For details, see Special Statistical Publication 1, Bankenstatistik Kundensystematik (available in German only).

■ Classification by maturity

The classification of assets and liabilities by maturity is based on the originally agreed maturity or period of notice and not on the residual maturity on the reporting date. Securitised assets and liabilities are classified on the basis of the maximum period to maturity under the terms of issue.

The maturity categories are defined as follows:

Short-term = overnight or with an agreed maturity or period of notice of up to and including 1 year (up to the end of 1998, liabilities repayable on demand or with a maturity or period of notice of less than 1 month are included in "sight liabilities").

Medium-term (from January 1999, only reported for unsecured lending) = with an agreed maturity or period of notice of more than 1 year up to and including 5 years (up to the end of 1998, of more than 1 year but less than 4 years).

Long-term (from January 1999, only reported for unsecured lending) = with an agreed maturity or period of no-

tice of 5 years or more (up to the end of 1998, of 4 years or more).

■ Notes on the figures

The most recent figures are in all cases to be regarded as provisional. Subsequent revisions appearing in the following update of the Statistical Series are therefore not specially marked.

Statistical breaks have been eliminated from the figures published. The figures have been adjusted for purely statistical changes without any underlying business transactions. These include, for instance, reclassifications owing to a change in the reporting method, changes in the corpus of reporting credit institutions (eg inclusion of additional banks, mergers or liquidations of banks, changes be-

tween categories of banks), value adjustments of foreign exchange positions, and corrections of errors. The statistical eliminations can be verified by comparing the absolute changes in the totals with the adjusted revisions.

To avoid the risk of indirectly publishing data relating to individual banks, revisions arising from valuation adjustments to receivables and securities portfolios, which the monetary financial institutions (MFIs) report separately for each reporting month, are, by contrast, not eliminated from the published figures on changes included in the statistics on the categories of banks; such valuation adjustments are revised each month only as an aggregate for all MFIs in Germany under "German contribution" in the table on the money stock and its counterparts (Table II.1 in the Statistical Section of the Monthly Report) and in the figures under "changes" in the table giving an overview of the assets and liabilities of MFIs in Germany (Table IV.1 in the Statistical Section of the Monthly Report).