

Press release

26 May 2021

EU structural financial indicators: end of 2020

- [Number of bank branches](#) continued to decline in most EU Member States, by 8.62% on average
- [Number of bank employees](#) decreased by 1.55% on average
- [Degree of banking sector concentration](#) continues to differ widely across countries

The European Central Bank (ECB) has updated its dataset of structural financial indicators for the banking sector in the European Union (EU) for the end of 2020. This annual dataset comprises statistics on the number of branches and employees of EU credit institutions, data on the degree of concentration of the banking sector in each EU Member State and data on foreign-controlled institutions in EU national banking markets.

The structural financial indicators show a further decline in the number of bank branches in the EU, averaging 8.62% across Member States. Contractions were observed in 24 of the 27 countries, ranging from -2.28% to -30.66%. The total number of branches in the EU was 143,158 at the end of 2020, 82.8% located in the euro area.

In the course of 2020, the number of employees of credit institutions fell in 22 EU Member States, with an average drop of 1.55% across all countries. This decrease in the number of bank employees is a trend that has been observed in most countries since 2008.

The data also indicate that the degree of concentration in the banking sector (measured by the share of assets held by the five largest banks) continues to vary considerably between EU Member States. At the national level the share of total assets of the five largest credit institutions ranged from 31.60% to 97.03%, while the EU average was 67.25% at the end of 2020.

The structural financial indicators are published by the ECB on an annual basis.

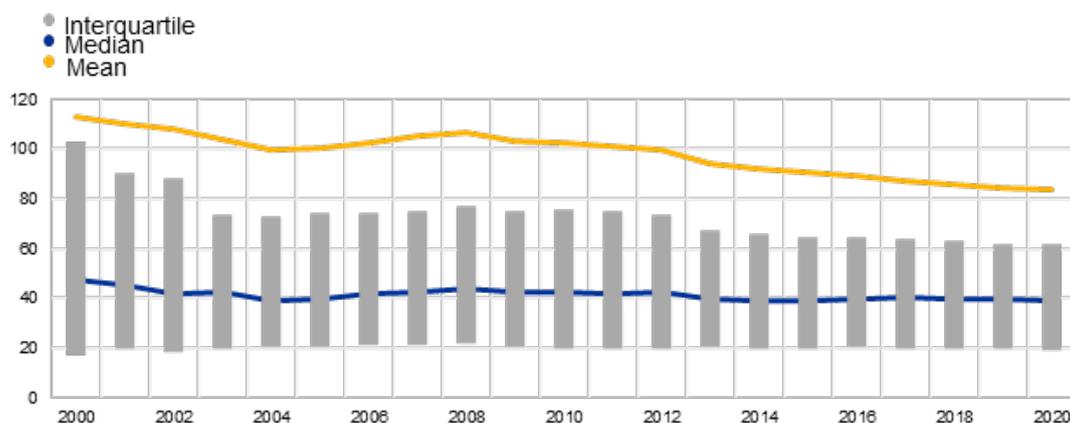
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Chart 1

Number of employees of domestic credit institutions

Thousands

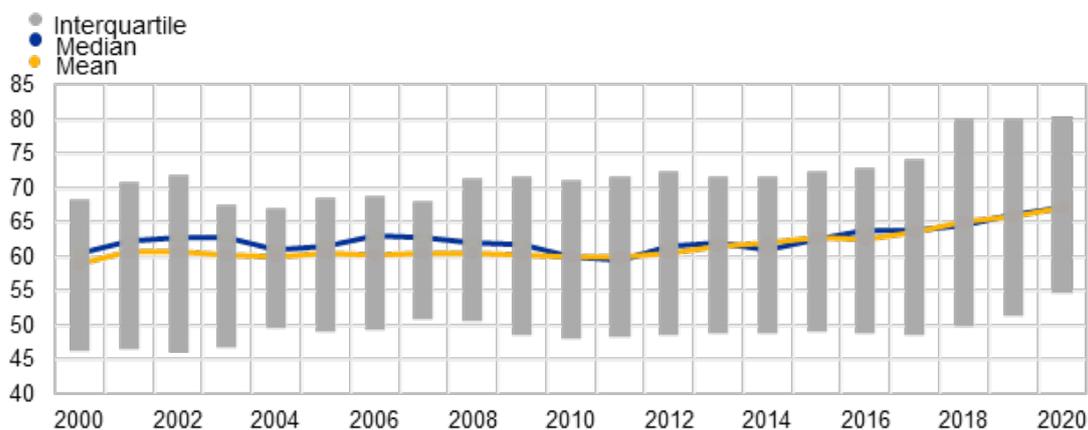


Notes: Interquartile ranges and medians are calculated across average country values. Data for EU27 countries are available.

Chart 2

Share of assets held by the five largest banks.

Percentages



Notes: Interquartile ranges and medians are calculated across average country values. Data for EU27 countries are available.

Annex

The United Kingdom has been reclassified as a non-EU country in the structural financial indicators as of 2020, following the country's withdrawal from the European Union on 31 January 2020. As a result,

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the business of UK credit institutions, insurance corporations and pension funds is no longer published and is also excluded from the compilation of EU aggregates and indicators.

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Notes

- **Tables** containing further breakdowns of structural financial indicator statistics are available on the [ECB's website](#).
- **Structural Financial Indicators data** are available in the [ECB Statistical Data Warehouse](#).
- Hyperlinks in the main body of the press release lead to data that may change with subsequent releases as a result of revisions.

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