



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSISTEM

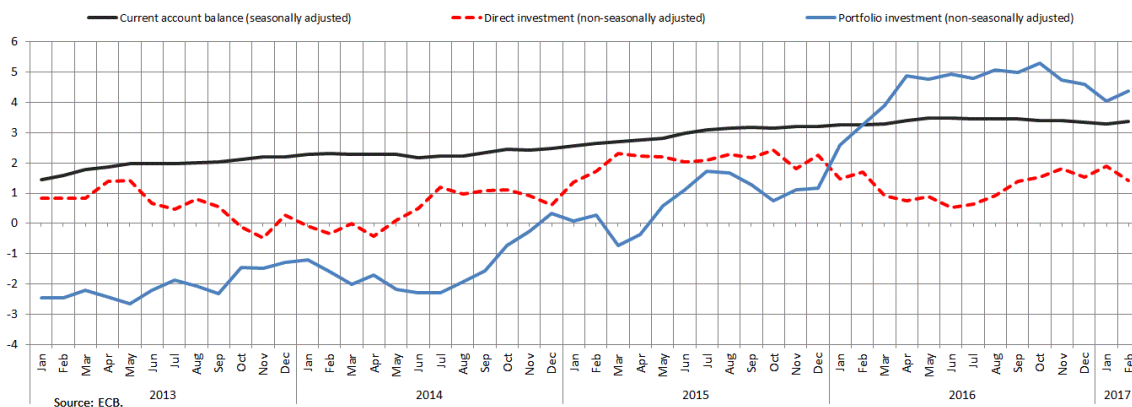
PRESS RELEASE

21 April 2017

Euro area monthly balance of payments (February 2017)

- In February 2017 the current account of the euro area recorded a surplus of €37.9 billion.¹
- In the financial account, combined direct and portfolio investment recorded net acquisitions of assets of €149 billion and net incurrences of liabilities of €76 billion.

Chart 1: Balance of payments of the euro area: 12-month cumulated transactions
(as a percentage of GDP)



¹ References to the current account are always to data that are seasonally and working day-adjusted, unless otherwise indicated, whereas references to the capital and financial accounts are to data that are neither seasonally nor working day-adjusted.

Current account

The *current account* of the euro area recorded a surplus of €37.9 billion in February 2017 (see Table 1). This reflected surpluses for *goods* (€29.5 billion), *services* (€9.5 billion) and *primary income* (€4.2 billion), which were partly offset by a deficit for *secondary income* (€5.4 billion).

The 12-month cumulated current account for the period ending in February 2017 recorded a surplus of €360.2 billion (3.4% of euro area GDP), compared with one of €341.2 billion (3.2% of euro area GDP) for the 12 months to February 2016 (see Table 1 and Chart 1). This was due to increases in the surpluses for *goods* (from €344.0 billion to €368.6 billion) and *primary income* (from €53.7 billion to €79.5 billion). These were partly offset by a decrease in the surplus of *services* (from €70.7 billion to €49.5 billion) and an increase in the deficit for *secondary income* (from €127.1 billion to €137.4 billion).

Financial account

In February 2017 *combined direct and portfolio investment* recorded net acquisitions of assets of €149 billion and net incurrences of liabilities of €76 billion (see Table 2).

Euro area residents recorded net acquisitions of €95 billion of *direct investment* assets as a result of net acquisitions of both *equity* (€19 billion) and *debt instruments* (€76 billion). *Direct investment* liabilities also increased by €95 billion as a result of net acquisitions of euro area *equity* (€4 billion) and *debt instruments* (€91 billion) by non-euro area residents.

As regards *portfolio investment* assets, euro area residents made net acquisitions of foreign securities amounting to €54 billion. This resulted from net purchases of *long-term debt securities* (€34 billion), *short-term debt securities* (€11 billion) and *equity* (€10 billion). *Portfolio investment* liabilities recorded net reductions of €19 billion as a result of net sales/amortisations of euro area *long-term debt securities* (€26 billion) and *equity* (€4 billion) by non-euro area residents. These net sales/amortisations were partly offset by net acquisitions of euro area *short-term debt securities* (€10 billion) by non-euro area residents.

The euro area net *financial derivatives* account (assets minus liabilities) recorded positive net flows of €5 billion.

Other investment recorded increases of €34 billion in assets and €117 billion in liabilities. The net acquisition of foreign assets by euro area residents is mainly attributable to the *MFI sector (excluding the Eurosystem)* (€28 billion). The net incurrence of liabilities is largely explained by the *MFI sector (excluding the Eurosystem)* (€58 billion), by the *Eurosystem* (€32 billion) and by *other sectors* (€28 billion).

In the 12 months to February 2017 *combined direct and portfolio investment* recorded increases of €848 billion in assets and €227 billion in liabilities, compared with increases of €1,170 billion and €651 billion respectively in the 12 months to February 2016. This resulted from a significant decrease in the *direct investment* activity of both euro area residents abroad and non-residents in the euro area, with

the net acquisition of assets decreasing from €760 billion to €438 billion and the net incurrence of liabilities decreasing from €582 billion to €285 billion.

According to the monetary presentation of the balance of payments, the [net external assets](#) of euro area MFIs decreased by €243 billion in the 12 months to February 2017, compared with a decrease of €65 billion in the 12 months to February 2016. This reflected an increase in the surplus in the *current and capital account* balance (from €328 billion to €355 billion), which was offset by net financial transactions by non-MFIs. In particular, the cumulated transactions in portfolio investment liabilities issued by non-MFI euro area residents showed a shift from net purchases of *debt securities* by non-euro area investors (€24 billion) to net sales/amortisations (€227 billion).

In February 2017 the *Eurosystem's* stock of *reserve assets* increased by €28.7 billion to €735.7 billion (see Table 3). This is mainly explained by positive price revaluations of *monetary gold* (€21.9 billion) and exchange rate developments (€5.2 billion).

Data revisions

This press release incorporates revisions to the data for the period of January 2017. These revisions have not significantly altered the figures previously published.

Additional information

- Time series data: [ECB's Statistical Data Warehouse \(SDW\)](#)
- [Methodological information](#)
- [Monetary presentation of the balance of payments](#)
- [Next press releases:](#)
 - Monthly balance of payments: **19 May 2017** (reference data up to March 2017);
 - Quarterly balance of payments and international investment position: **5 July 2017** (reference data up to the first quarter of 2017);

Annexes

- Table 1: Current account of the euro area
- Table 2: Balance of payments of the euro area
- Table 3: Reserve assets of the euro area

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Table 1: Current account of the euro area

(EUR billions unless otherwise indicated; transactions; working day and seasonally adjusted data)

	Cumulated figures for the 12-month period ending		2016										2017		
	Feb. 2016	Feb. 2017	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
CURRENT ACCOUNT	341.2	360.2	28.3	30.8	37.3	33.2	31.1	28.1	29.9	31.6	22.5	27.3	24.4	26.1	37.9
<i>Memo: as a percentage of GDP</i>	3.2	3.4													
Credit	3,619.4	3,654.4	295.7	294.6	298.4	298.7	297.9	297.0	301.9	303.5	307.4	315.6	312.2	313.0	314.2
Debit	3,278.2	3,294.2	267.5	263.7	261.1	265.5	266.9	268.9	272.1	271.9	284.9	288.4	287.8	286.8	276.3
Goods	344.0	368.6	28.1	33.0	33.4	32.2	33.2	29.4	30.5	32.9	27.8	30.2	31.0	25.5	29.5
Credit (exports)	2,097.9	2,129.5	170.3	173.5	173.2	172.4	174.3	172.7	175.2	176.4	176.9	181.8	183.7	182.8	186.7
Debit (imports)	1,753.9	1,760.8	142.2	140.5	139.8	140.2	141.1	143.2	144.7	143.6	149.1	151.6	152.6	157.3	157.2
Services	70.7	49.5	7.2	7.0	4.6	5.2	5.2	6.2	6.6	6.6	-1.3	-2.4	-1.4	3.7	9.5
Credit (exports)	780.7	790.4	66.8	64.9	63.8	65.0	64.2	65.1	65.5	66.4	67.0	66.6	66.2	67.2	68.5
Debit (imports)	710.1	740.9	59.7	57.9	59.2	59.8	59.0	58.9	58.9	59.8	68.3	69.0	67.5	63.5	59.0
Primary income	53.7	79.5	4.3	3.0	8.1	5.8	2.7	5.4	6.9	5.8	8.9	12.4	5.2	11.0	4.2
Credit	636.5	627.0	50.0	47.5	52.6	52.4	50.7	50.5	52.5	51.5	54.5	58.4	52.3	53.9	50.2
Debit	582.9	547.5	45.7	44.6	44.5	46.6	48.0	45.1	45.6	45.7	45.6	45.9	47.1	42.9	45.9
Secondary income	-127.1	-137.4	-11.2	-12.1	-8.7	-10.0	-10.0	-12.9	-14.1	-13.6	-12.9	-13.1	-10.5	-14.0	-5.4
Credit	104.2	107.5	8.6	8.6	8.8	8.9	8.7	8.8	8.8	9.1	9.0	8.9	10.1	9.1	8.8
Debit	231.3	244.9	19.8	20.7	17.5	18.9	18.7	21.7	22.9	22.8	21.9	21.9	20.6	23.1	14.2

Source: ECB.

Table 2: Monthly balance of payments of the euro area

(EUR billions unless otherwise indicated; transactions; non-working day and non-seasonally adjusted data)

	Cumulated figures for the 12-month period ending						January 2017			February 2017		
	February 2016			February 2017			Net	Credit	Debit	Net	Credit	Debit
	Net	Credit	Debit	Net	Credit	Debit						
CURRENT ACCOUNT	342.2	3,629.3	3,287.1	361.5	3,661.9	3,300.5	3.1	285.3	282.2	27.9	292.1	264.2
Goods	347.6	2,107.5	1,759.9	370.3	2,137.1	1,766.8	9.3	168.1	158.7	27.6	177.6	150.0
Services	70.2	781.5	711.4	48.1	791.1	743.0	0.8	61.9	61.1	5.7	58.9	53.2
Primary income	52.4	636.1	583.7	77.5	626.0	548.5	8.9	47.2	38.2	8.2	47.2	39.0
Secondary income	-128.1	104.1	232.2	-134.4	107.8	242.2	-16.0	8.1	24.1	-13.6	8.4	22.0
CAPITAL ACCOUNT	-14.6	46.4	61.0	0.9	31.4	30.5	-0.2	2.0	2.2	1.2	2.8	1.6
	Net	Assets	Liabilities	Net	Assets	Liabilities	Net	Assets	Liabilities	Net	Assets	Liabilities
FINANCIAL ACCOUNT ¹⁾	338.1	981.5	643.4	350.9	1,137.1	786.2	11.8	379.1	367.4	-3.2	189.8	193.0
Direct investment	177.5	759.5	582.0	153.4	438.4	285.0	16.9	108.2	91.3	-0.2	95.1	95.3
Equity	160.4	615.2	454.9	222.8	405.5	182.8	13.2	102.6	89.4	14.6	18.7	4.1
Debt instruments	17.1	144.2	127.1	-69.4	32.9	102.3	3.7	5.6	1.9	-14.7	76.4	91.2
Portfolio investment	341.4	410.4	69.0	468.2	409.7	-58.5	12.5	43.6	31.2	73.0	53.8	-19.3
Equity	-131.1	-1.6	129.5	-108.3	80.8	189.1	3.9	24.3	20.4	13.6	9.6	-4.0
Debt securities	472.5	412.0	-60.4	576.5	328.9	-247.6	8.6	19.3	10.8	59.5	44.2	-15.3
Short-term	58.5	8.5	-50.0	-55.9	1.8	57.7	-27.0	-5.3	21.8	0.1	10.5	10.4
Long-term	413.9	403.5	-10.5	632.3	327.0	-305.3	35.6	24.6	-11.0	59.4	33.7	-25.7
<i>Memo: Direct and portfolio investment</i>	518.9	1,169.9	651.0	621.6	848.1	226.6	29.3	151.8	122.4	72.9	148.9	76.0
Financial derivatives	102.5			0.9			2.3			5.0		
Other investment	-288.3	-295.9	-7.6	-284.1	275.6	559.7	-14.8	230.2	244.9	-83.0	34.0	117.0
Eurosystème	0.9	0.3	-0.6	-153.0	2.3	155.3	31.3	-4.5	-35.8	-34.5	-2.2	32.3
MFIs (excluding the Eurosystème)	-255.8	-310.1	-54.3	-97.7	249.7	347.4	-23.2	236.3	259.6	-30.0	28.1	58.1
General government	26.3	-5.3	-31.6	-3.7	-6.9	-3.2	-0.7	-2.9	-2.2	4.2	3.0	-1.3
Other sectors	-59.8	19.1	78.9	-29.8	30.4	60.2	-22.1	1.2	23.3	-22.7	5.2	27.9
Of which: currency and deposits	-282.8	-322.5	-39.7	-383.4	108.7	492.1	-89.8	128.2	218.0	-61.1	29.8	90.8
Reserve assets		5.1			12.5			-5.1			2.0	
Errors and omissions	10.5			-11.5			8.9			-32.2		

Source: ECB.

1) Financial account: increases in assets and liabilities (+) and decreases in assets and liabilities (-).

Table 3: Reserve assets of the euro area

(EUR billions; amounts outstanding at the end of the period, flows during the period; non working day and non seasonally adjusted)

	Oct.16	Nov.16	Dec.16	Jan.17	Feb.17								
					Transactions	Exchange rate changes	Price changes	Other volume changes	Amounts outstanding	Transactions	Exchange rate changes	Price changes	Other volume changes
Reserve assets	717.3	706.6	707.7	-5.1	-3.4	7.8	0.0	707.0	2.0	5.2	21.5	-0.0	735.7
Monetary gold	403.1	386.5	380.8	0.0	-	7.7	0.0	388.5	0.0	-	21.9	0.0	410.3
Gold bullion	396.3	379.9	374.3	0.0	-	7.6	0.0	381.9	0.0	-	21.6	0.0	403.4
Unallocated gold accounts	6.8	6.6	6.5	0.0	-	0.1	-0.0	6.6	0.0	-	0.4	0.0	7.0
Special drawing rights	51.4	52.1	52.3	0.0	-0.5	-	-0.0	51.9	0.1	0.6	-	0.0	52.5
Reserve position in the IMF	23.9	23.3	23.1	-0.1	-0.2	-	0.0	22.8	-0.9	0.2	-	0.0	22.1
Other reserve assets	238.9	244.7	251.5	-5.0	-2.8	0.1	0.0	243.8	2.8	4.4	-0.3	-0.0	250.8
Currency and deposits	29.7	27.8	32.9	-1.0	-0.1	-	0.0	31.9	3.1	0.7	-	0.0	35.6
Claims on monetary authorities	21.1	21.8	24.9	0.4	-	-	-	25.4	3.4	-	-	-	29.3
Claim on other entities	8.6	6.0	8.0	-1.4	-	-	-	6.5	-0.2	-	-	-	6.3
Securities	204.7	213.3	214.7	-3.8	-2.7	0.1	-0.0	208.3	-0.4	3.7	-0.2	0.0	211.4
Debt securities	204.0	212.6	214.0	-3.8	-2.7	0.0	-0.0	207.6	-0.5	3.7	-0.2	0.0	210.6
Short-term	28.9	33.4	33.9	-2.0	-0.2	-0.0	0.0	31.7	3.7	0.6	0.0	-0.0	36.1
Long-term	175.1	179.2	180.0	-1.7	-2.5	0.1	-0.0	175.9	-4.2	3.1	-0.2	0.0	174.6
Equity and investment fund shares	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.0	-0.0	0.0	-0.0	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.0	0.8
Financial derivatives (net)	-0.1	-0.1	-0.0	-0.1	-	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.0	-	-0.1	-0.0	-0.2
Other claims	4.6	3.7	3.9	-0.2	-0.0	0.0	-0.0	3.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9

Source: ECB.