

Compendium

Statistics for European purposes

How the EU uses national accounts data in the calculation of gross national income, used to set the EU budget and member contributions.

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1 . Introduction

The EU uses UK National Accounts data for a number of administrative and economic purposes. Gross national income (GNI) is one of the four measures used by the EU and is calculated in accordance with the European System of Accounts (ESA). GNI is used to set the EU budget and to calculate part of member states' contributions to the EU budget, and is based on the European System of Accounts 2010: ESA 2010.

2 . UK transactions with the institutions of the EU

Table 11.a shows payments flowing between the EU and the UK. The first part of the table shows the payments flowing into the UK in the form of EU expenditure. The second part of the table shows the UK contribution to the EU budget, which depends on UK GNI. An explanatory article detailing the UK [contribution to the EU budget](#) was published on 30 September 2019.

3 . Data to monitor government deficit and debt

The convergence criteria for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) are set out in the 1992 Treaty on European Union (The Maastricht Treaty). The treaty, plus the Stability and Growth Pact, require member states to avoid excessive government deficits – defined as general government net borrowing and gross debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP). The treaty does not determine what constitutes “excessive”. This is agreed by the Economic and Finance Council (ECOFIN).

Member states report their planned and actual deficits and the levels of their debt to the European Commission. Data to monitor excessive deficits are supplied in accordance with EU legislation.

The UK published the estimates of UK government debt and deficit in Table 11.a in October 2021.

Table 11a: UK government deficit and debt, calendar years 2014 to 2020

General Government deficit	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Deficit (£bn)	103.1	87.2	66.6	49.3	46.9	49.6	277.1
as % GDP	5.5	4.5	3.3	2.4	2.2	2.2	12.9
General Government debt							
Debt ¹ (£bn)	1,603.4	1,664.8	1,731.0	1785.9	1,837.0	1,890.7	2,204.8
as % GDP ²	85.5	86.0	85.8	85.2	84.5	83.8	102.3

Source: Office for National Statistics - UK government debt and deficit

Notes

1. Debt is recorded as at the end of December of each calendar year.
2. GDP - Gross domestic product.