

EU remittances back on the increase in 2010

More than 70% of outflows sent to third countries

International migration receives growing attention, as it has large implications for growth and welfare in both countries of origin and destination. Eurostat regularly publishes data related to workers' remittances and compensation of employees. Workers' remittances are mainly related to migrants who tend to stay for a long time, whereas compensation of employees is linked to cross-border and seasonal workers.

After a temporary decrease in 2009, compensation of employees is back on the increase in 2010 at 46.9 bn euro. Outflows of workers' remittances also rose to 31.2 bn, compared with 30.4 bn in 2009 (+3%). Despite the growing trend, total outflows of remittances and compensation of employees in the EU at 78.1 bn in 2010 remained 1% below their 2008 record level of 79.2 bn euro.

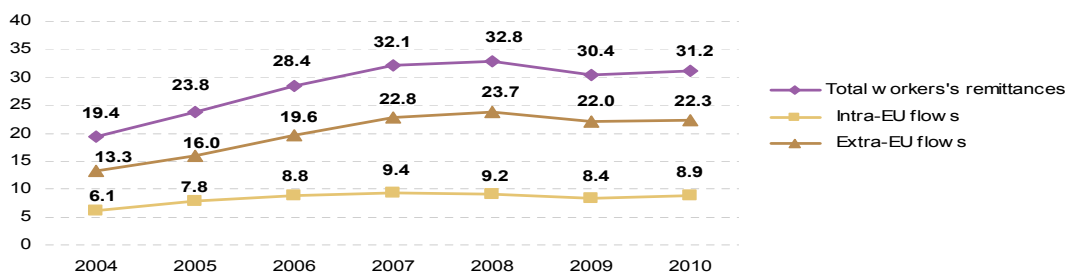
Remittance outflows from the EU grow by 3% in 2010

In 2010, total outflows of workers' remittances from the EU reached 31.2 bn euro, an increase of 3% compared to the previous year and 61% compared to 2004. Despite the rise in 2010, total EU27 outflows remain 5% under their highest levels of 32.8 bn in 2008. Remittance outflows are mainly directed towards non-EU countries. In the wake of the financial crisis, the share of extra-EU remittances remained stable: they were around 72% of the total in 2008, 2009 and 2010. During the downturn in the global economy,

extra-EU remittance outflows declined more modestly (-7% in 2009) than intra-EU outflows (-9% in 2009). Their recovery in 2010 was however also more timid: +1% for extra-EU vs. +6% for intra-EU.

In 2010, remittance outflows remained close to 2009 levels in the majority of Member States. The highest increase was recorded in Poland, where it continued also in the first two quarters of 2011.

Figure 1: Workers' remittances total outflows from EU27 Member States, in billion euro



Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop remit](#))

EU27 top remitting countries: Spain, Italy, Germany, France and the Netherlands

As in previous years, the outflow of workers' remittances in 2010 was highest in **Spain** at 7.2 bn euro or 23% of total EU27 remittances, **Italy** (6.6 bn or 21%), **Germany** (3.0 bn or 10%), **France** (2.9 bn or 9%), and the **Netherlands** (1.5 bn or 5%). These five Member States accounted for nearly 21.2 billion euro, or 68% of total EU remittances (Table 2). This might not be surprising given that 66% of all the 32.5 million foreigners in the EU resided in these five Member States in 2010 (Table 1).

Spain is the largest sender of remittances to non-EU countries. Spanish outflows of remittances to non EU countries were 89% of their total in 2004, but they fell to 82% in 2009. In the other big remitters - Italy, France and Germany remittances to non-EU countries showed a stable increase from 77%, 54% and 63% of total

Table 1: Foreign* citizens in the EU, 2010

Country	Foreign citizens
Germany	7 130 919
Spain	5 663 525
France	3 769 016
United Kingdom	4 362 000
Italy	4 235 059
Netherlands	652 188
EU-27	32 489 000

* Foreigners in this table are defined as persons who are not citizens of the country in which they reside

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [migr_pop1ctz](#))

outflows in 2004 to 81%, 72% and 67%, respectively, of the total in 2010.

In Ireland (81%), Luxembourg (80%), Slovakia and Estonia (both 67%) the lion's share of remittance outflows in 2010 was attributed to intra-EU flows, i.e. flows to other Member States.

Table 2: Outflows of workers' remittances from EU Member States, in million euro

	2008			2009			2010		
	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU
Belgium	397	43	354	441	51	390	446	53	393
Bulgaria	23	14	9	10	6	4	7	1	6
Czech Republic	618	394	224	602	372	229	689	404	285
Denmark	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Germany	3 079	1 000	2 079	2 995	976	2 018	3 035	987	2 048
Estonia	1	1	0	2	2	0	3	2	1
Ireland	c	c	c	c	c	c	516	416	100
Greece	891	127	764	908	125	783	1 081	97	984
Spain**	7 898	c	c	7 149	c	c	7 198	c	c
France	3 392	1 222	2 170	2 846	782	2 065	2 872	815	2 057
Italy	6 382	1 216	5 166	6 753	1 191	5 563	6 572	1 225	5 347
Cyprus	77	53	24	84	42	42	116	55	61
Latvia	3	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lithuania	368	136	232	352	164	188	344	194	150
Luxembourg	74	55	19	67	52	15	69	55	15
Hungary	89	48	41	73	41	33	80	44	36
Malta	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Netherlands	1 560	348	1 212	1 492	383	1 109	1 492	372	1 109
Austria	825	465	360	767	422	346	798	434	364
Poland	21	9	12	7	4	3	46	11	36
Portugal	580	78	502	559	75	484	567	86	481
Romania	235	136	100	168	79	89	206	106	100
Slovenia	27	0	27	24	0	24	25	0	25
Slovakia	10	0	10	5	4	2	3	2	1
Finland	20	7	13	18	0	18	18	0	18
Sweden	20	0	20	18	0	18	20	0	20
United Kingdom	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
EU27*	32 831	9 171	23 660	30 446	8 405	22 041	31 212	8 874	22 338

(:) = data not available

(c) = confidential or non-publishable

* The EU27 aggregate includes confidential data and estimates for missing Member States.

** Sum of quarterly data

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Major remittance corridors – outflows

In 2010 as in the previous surveyed years, the main recipients of remittances were outside the European Union: China, Colombia and Ecuador.

Table 3 presents the principal corridors of remittance outflows in 2008 – 2010 amongst the hundred possible destination countries for workers' remittances. These corridors tend to remain fairly stable over time.

In 2010, remittance flows from Italy to China account for the largest corridor, followed by flows from Spain to Colombia and Ecuador. Other important corridors include from Italy towards Romania and Philippines; from Germany to Turkey; from Spain to Bolivia; from France towards Morocco and Portugal; and from Greece to Albania.

Table 3: Major remittance corridors – outflows, in million euro*

Remittance corridors		2008	2009	2010
Italy	→ China	1 541	1 971	1 816
Spain	→ Colombia	c	c	c
Spain	→ Ecuador	c	c	c
Italy	→ Romania	768	824	869
Germany	→ Turkey	818	824	820
Italy	→ Philippines	923	801	743
Spain	→ Bolivia	c	c	c
France	→ Morocco	738	713	612
Greece	→ Albania	390	340	514
France	→ Portugal	881	453	467

* In order of officially recorded flows in 2010

(c) = confidential or non-publishable

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Inflows of remittances are important in certain EU Member States

Some of the EU Member States are also major recipients of workers' remittances. Total inflows had shown a steady increase of 88 % from 2004 (11.7 bn euro) to 2008 (22.7 bn). As for remittance outflows, this was followed by a temporary drop in 2009 (-18%). The trend was reversed in 2010 when EU27 remittance inflows recorded a 2% increase reaching 18.9 bn, compared with 18.6 bn in 2009. Remittance inflows come mainly from other Member States: in both 2010 and 2009, 65% of the inflows were intra-EU, 5% down compared to 2008. Showing a consistent trend in 2008, 2009 and 2010,

amongst the major recipients of remittances are notably Spain, Poland, Portugal and Romania. These four countries received over half of the remittance flows into EU27. An overview of remittances inflows by country from 2008 until 2010 is presented on page 4 (Table 5). Table 4 presents the major corridors of remittance inflows to EU Member States: to Spain from Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Italy, to Romania from Italy, Spain and the United States, to Portugal from France and Switzerland, to Poland from the United Kingdom and to Greece from the United States.

Table 4: Major remittance corridors – inflows, in million euro*

Remittance corridors		2008	2009	2010
Spain	← Switzerland	c	c	c
Portugal	← France	983	887	899
Spain	← United Kingdom	1 105	640	880
Spain	← Italy	c	c	c
Romania	← Italy	2 202	1 210	876
Romania	← Spain	1 579	868	628
Poland	← United Kingdom	899	665	:
Portugal	← Switzerland	554	531	591
Greece	← United States	558	531	339
Romania	← United States	273	273	336

* In order of officially recorded flows in 2010

(c) = confidential or non-publishable

(:) = missing data

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Table 5: Workers' remittance inflows into EU27, in million euro

	2008			2009			2010		
	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU
Belgium	95	29	66	99	32	67	93	31	62
Bulgaria	694	455	238	718	476	242	760	505	255
Czech Republic	494	381	114	493	378	116	516	395	120
Denmark	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	41	39	2	41	39	2	41	39	2
Ireland	c	c	c	c	c	c	12	6	6
Greece	1 478	786	692	1156	537	620	929	518	411
Spain	5 344	c	c	4 826	c	c	5 376	c	c
France	797	204	593	770	192	578	755	186	569
Italy	432	268	164	413	266	147	435	197	238
Cyprus	101	47	54	63	11	53	72	11	61
Latvia	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lithuania	867	666	200	701	525	175	981	685	296
Luxembourg	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
Hungary	33	30	3	34	32	2	37	35	2
Malta	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Netherlands	180	72	108	182	108	74	182	108	74
Austria	354	240	114	364	250	115	345	234	112
Poland	3 192	2 918	274	2 633	2 412	221	2 725	2 494	231
Portugal	2 485	1 545	940	2 282	1 398	884	2 404	1 413	991
Romania	5 156	4 792	364	3 021	2 661	359	2 398	1 952	446
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	121	100	22	81	81	0	76	76	0
Finland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sweden	171	0	171	155	0	155	172	0	172
United Kingdom	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Total	22 653	15 871	6 781	18 618	12 164	6 456	18 970	12 284	6 686

* The EU27 aggregate includes confidential data and estimates for missing Member States

(c) = confidential or non-publishable (:) = missing data

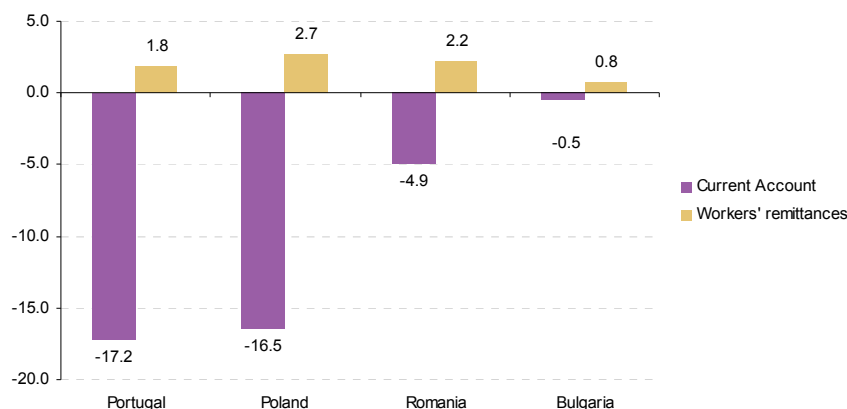
Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Without remittances the current account deficit of Bulgaria would be 158% higher

In the receiving country, remittances support national household consumption, but they also represent an important source of foreign exchange. In Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Portugal net remittances make a substantial

contribution to balancing a negative current account (see figure 1). Without remittances, the current account deficit recorded by Bulgaria and Romania in 2010 would have been 158% and 45% higher, respectively.

Figure 2: Current account and workers' remittances balances, in 2010 (in billion euro)



Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_q_c](#))

The net flows of workers' remittances

In 2010, as in the previous year, the EU as a whole remitted more than three times the amount it received from third countries (22.3 bn euro sent compared to 6.7 bn received). Most of the EU Member States are net senders of remittances and post negative balances, which are measured

as inflows minus outflows. In 2010 the exceptions to this rule were Poland, Romania, Portugal, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Sweden, Slovakia and Estonia, listed in order of decreasing importance of the net remittances received.

Table 6: Net workers' remittances (inflows minus outflows), in million euro

Member State	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	-7 678	-9 044	-8 992	-9 839	-10 179	-11 828	-12 244
Italy	-2 476	-3 666	-4 279	-5 793	-5 949	-6 341	-6 137
Germany	-3 180	-2 926	-2 927	-2 997	-3 079	-2 995	-3 035
France	-2 119	-2 088	-2 580	-2 555	-2 595	-2 076	-2 117
Spain	-3	-634	-2 232	-3 139	-2 554	-2 323	-1 824
Netherlands	-516	-684	-372	-1 296	-1 380	-1 310	-1 310
Ireland	c	c	c	c	c	c	-504
Austria	-327	-327	-335	-430	-471	-403	-453
Belgium	-261	-315	-319	-265	-303	-342	-353
Czech Republic	0	109	67	7	-123	-108	-174
Greece	513	194	409	707	587	249	-152
Luxembourg	-49	-51	-61	-64	-71	-66	-67
Cyprus	-9	-5	13	14	24	-21	-44
Hungary	-30	-30	-42	-40	-57	-39	-43
Slovenia	9	5	4	3	-27	-24	-25
Finland	0	-14	-18	-18	-20	-18	-18
Latvia	0	0	-1	-3	-1	0	0
Estonia	9	7	6	20	40	39	39
Slovakia	c	c	c	c	111	76	73
Sweden	159	157	157	157	151	137	153
Lithuania	128	249	293	504	499	349	637
Bulgaria	336	353	316	612	671	708	753
Portugal	1 957	1 717	1 811	2 018	1 905	1 723	1 837
Romania	1 316	3 031	4 337	4 780	4 921	2 853	2 192
Poland	891	1 463	2 335	3 079	3 171	2 626	2 679

*Listed according to their size of net remittances in 2010 except confidential values

(c) = confidential or non-publishable

(-) = missing data

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Compensation of employees outflows increase by 2% in 2010

Compensation of employees mainly refers to cross-border and seasonal workers who usually come from neighbouring countries: the extra-EU flows are therefore negligible compared to intra-EU flows. The total outflow of compensation of employees from EU27 in 2010 amounted to €46.9 bn euro, of which 80% was sent to other

Member States. Compensation of employees' outflows have been increasing steadily since 2004. This trend was interrupted in 2009 (-1%) mainly due to a drop in extra-EU outflows (-9%), but 2010 brought again an increase in values (+2%) for both intra- and extra-EU compensation of employees outflows.

Table 7: Compensation of employees' outflows from the EU, in billion euro

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total compensation of employees	30.5	33.3	36.2	42.2	46.4	46.1	46.9
Intra-EU flows	24.6	26.9	30.1	34.7	36.3	36.9	37.5
Extra-EU flows	5.9	6.4	6.1	7.4	10.1	9.2	9.4

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

8.7 bn euro of compensation of employees from Germany

Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands were the countries with the largest outflows of compensation of employees in 2010. Together, these three Member States alone accounted for 47% of the EU27 total compensation of employees outflows. These figures reflect the significant number of border workers from neighbouring countries employed in these three countries. Significant outflows of compensation

of employees were also recorded in Italy, Belgium, Denmark and the United Kingdom (Table 8). While in the majority of Member States the outflows are primarily going to other EU countries, in Poland (1.1 bn euro, 96%), the Czech Republic (0.9 bn, 85%) and Italy (1.9 bn, 71%) they are directed towards mainly non-EU countries.

Table 8: Compensation of employees outflows from EU Member States, in million euro*

Member State	2008			2009			2010		
	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU	Total	Intra-EU	Extra-EU
Belgium	2 364	2 276	87	2 538	2 406	132	2 611	2 473	138
Bulgaria	88	71	17	64	54	10	12	8	4
Czech Republic	1 669	210	1 458	1 372	140	1 232	1 027	156	870
Denmark	2 711	2 375	336	2 413	2 055	358	2 180	1 867	313
Germany	6 829	6 550	279	8 049	7 751	298	8 680	8 359	322
Estonia	65	52	13	54	46	8	69	60	8
Ireland	1 071	626	444	788	518	271	738	493	245
Greece	410	129	282	412	116	296	378	137	241
Spain	1 577	c	c	1 480	c	c	1 531	c	c
France	852	458	394	912	492	420	969	529	440
Italy	2 511	411	2 100	2 451	375	2 077	2 647	771	1 876
Cyprus	259	117	142	162	98	64	158	93	65
Latvia	37	1	36	31	0	30	33	0	33
Lithuania	53	50	3	92	54	38	73	57	16
Luxembourg	7 298	7 296	2	7 500	7 498	3	7 779	7 777	3
Hungary	954	805	149	797	672	125	834	703	131
Malta	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Netherlands	5 982	4 530	1 452	5 855	4 444	1 411	5 427	4 113	1 314
Austria	1 314	1 010	305	1 310	1 048	263	1 379	1 103	276
Poland	1 120	860	260	935	731	204	1 145	48	1 097
Portugal	266	144	122	370	190	180	371	207	164
Romania	66	50	15	46	34	11	67	49	18
Slovenia	263	70	192	129	51	77	94	38	57
Slovakia	99	85	15	100	90	10	52	45	7
Finland	291	166	125	308	176	132	323	184	138
Sweden	612	359	253	571	346	225	597	385	212
United Kingdom	2 208	1 785	423	1 607	1 229	378	1 734	1 377	424
Total EU-27	46 424	36 306	10 116	46 110	36 891	9 219	46 875	37 493	9 383

(c) = confidential or non-publishable

* Compensation of employees (including border, seasonal, and other workers)

** The EU27 aggregate includes confidential data and estimates for missing Member States.

Source: Eurostat (online data code : [bop_remit](#))

Main corridor of compensation of employees: Luxembourg - France

Table 9 shows the main corridors of compensation of employees' outflows. The only important corridor that does not involve neighbouring countries is the one between Germany and Romania, which probably reflects the significant numbers of seasonal workers. The salaries that the European Institutions pay to their employees are also recorded among the flows of compensation of employees; flows of salaries from the European Institutions are high in Belgium and Luxembourg as the Institutions are not considered residents in the countries where they are located.

Table 9: Major compensation of employees corridors – outflows, in million euro

Compensation of employees corridors			2009	2010
Luxembourg	→	France	3 414	3 541
Germany	→	Poland	3 298	3 507
EU Institutions	→	Belgium	3 090	3 226
Luxembourg	→	Belgium	2 138	2 202
Netherlands	→	Belgium	2 265	2 094
Luxembourg	→	Germany	1 940	2 029
Germany	→	Romania	1 583	1 949
Germany	→	France	1 841	1 856
Belgium	→	France	c	c
Denmark	→	Sweden	1 356	1 290
EU Institutions	→	Luxembourg	1 111	1 125

*In order of officially recorded flows in 2010 (c) = confidential or non-publishable

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [bop_remit](#))

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

DEFINITIONS

As part of the Balance of Payments (BPM5, *Balance of Payments Manual*, 5th edition, IMF 1993), two main kinds of transactions related to the temporary or permanent movement of people are defined and measured: namely workers' remittances and compensation of employees.

Workers' remittances are defined as transfers made by migrants employed and resident in the compiling economy to their relatives in their country of origin. Workers' remittances include household to household transfers in cash and in kind. Funds sent by migrants to their country of origin to purchase real estate or invest in local business are recorded not as remittances but as foreign direct investment transactions.

Compensation of employees refers to gross wages, salaries and other benefits earned by individuals in economies other than those in which they are resident, for work performed and paid for by residents of those economies. Compensation of employees includes salaries paid to seasonal and other short-term workers (less than one year), to the employees of embassies and of other territorial enclaves that are not considered part of the national economy and to cross-border workers (BPM5, 1993, p.70). The European Institutions (like the embassies) are considered as enclaves not belonging to the national economies where they are located, while their employees are considered to be resident in the country where they live. The salaries that the European Institutions pay to their employees are therefore recorded among the flows of compensation of employees.

The new edition of the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6, IMF 2008) introduces new definitions of remittances. "**Personal remittances**" as defined by BPM6 include "**personal transfers**" (which include "of which workers' remittances") and compensation of employees, but exclude taxes, social contributions and expenditure on transport and travel made by short term and cross border workers. BPM6 "personal transfers" are defined independently of the source of income and of the origin of the sending household.

Migrant transfers are, in BPM5, capital transfers related to all the financial and non financial assets that migrants bring with them when they move to the host country, or when they finally return to their home country. Under BPM6 these are no longer regarded as balance of payments transactions. Their values have always been insignificant in the EU Member States and are therefore disregarded in this paper.

Foreigners or foreign population refer to persons who are not citizens of the country in which they reside, including persons of unknown citizenship and stateless persons.

DATA SOURCES

The data used for this publication are the main results of a new annual survey introduced by Eurostat in 2009. The data were compiled by the National Central Banks or by the National Statistical Offices of the Member States as part of their Balance of Payment Statistics.

Remittances vary widely in their importance to national economies, which may result in differences in the emphasis given by national statisticians to measuring and monitoring them. For net sending nations, which tend to be those with the largest and most advanced economies, the amounts transferred may be large in absolute terms, but their importance relative to total economic activity generally is small. For net receiving nations, the situation is often the reverse.

Data on remittances are very difficult to compile, because of the small size of individual transactions, the variety of channels - sometimes informal or illegal - that can be used, and the sometimes uncertain status of those who carry out these transactions. Individual remittance transactions often fall below reporting thresholds for banks and other financial institutions. Money transfer operators, who are the preferred vehicle of transfer for many migrants, may only settle *net* payments through the banking system, making it difficult to identify the underlying gross receipts and payments. In addition, remittance transactions are sometimes conducted outside the formal financial system, such as through hand-carry or through unlicensed transfer businesses, both of which usually bypass formal reporting systems. Capturing data via household surveys may also be difficult, especially for the migrant population that have no legal status. Illegal residents are more likely to use informal channels and are often difficult to contact or survey.

Faced with these numerous and varied difficulties in data collection, some countries have chosen to estimate remittances using econometric or demographic models. But models' results depend on the reliability of the source data and on assumptions about the relationships among variables; their output is therefore difficult to verify.

Different methods can also be used for compiling data related to compensation of employees. Here administrative data such as income tax and work permits might be available (in the sending country). However, illegal work does not show up in tax records. It may also be fairly difficult to assess the length of residence of the sender, which is a key factor for distinguishing between workers' remittances and compensation of employees.

The difficulties in the measurement of remittances can be illustrated by the level of the **asymmetries**, i.e. the discrepancy between intra-EU inflows (credits) and the mirror outflows (debits). Although in reality, and by any definition, the amounts sent and received should be the same, reported Intra-EU outflows in 2010, for example, at 8.9 Euro billion, were 28% lower than reported Intra-EU inflows, at 12.3 Euro billion. Such differences suggest that **statistics on remittances involve serious problems of coverage. Users need to bear this in mind when analyzing the data.**

Data related to **foreign citizens** used for this publication refer to the resident population of a specific country that does not have the **citizenship** of that country. "Foreigners" could however also be measured looking at the **country of birth** of the resident population. Both concepts are useful for measuring the stock of immigrants. These data are part of the annual **statistics** on international migration, supplied by the Member States to Eurostat according to the requirements of [Regulation \(EC\) n.862/2007](#) (OJ L199, 31/07/2007). The figures may include or not illegal migrants, depending on the country.

DISSEMINATION

The data on remittances used for this paper are those published in the dedicated table in Eurostat's database (domain Balance of Payments) in December 2011 based on the data reported by Member States at the end of September 2011.

The on-line table dedicated to remittances contains **annual data related to remittances and compensation of employees** for the years 1999-2010 with detail by partner, as reported by the EU Member States. The length of the published time-series and the geographical breakdown is different for each Member State. Where annual data were not available, annualised quarterly data were used. The EU27 aggregate was estimated only for the period 2004A-2010A. The EU27 aggregate takes into account confidential data and estimates for missing Member States.

Quarterly data related to remittances and compensation of employees are also collected regularly by Eurostat as part of the quarterly balance of payments; these data have less geographical detail, but are reported after 90 days (and disseminated after 110 days) following the reference period.

The World Bank produces and publishes [matrices covering bilateral remittances between 215 countries](#). The bilateral remittances are estimated by the World Bank mainly using migrant stocks.

Due to rounding, the figures shown in the tables included in this paper may not add up to an exact figure. All disseminated figures may be subject to revisions.

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on 'Balance of payments – International transactions':

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/balance_of_payments/data/database

Select: 'Workers' remittances and compensation of employees'

Further information about 'Balance of payments statistics':

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/balance_of_payments/introduction

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