

Balance of payments – France • April 2020

Current account balance deteriorated as trade in goods and services shrank

The current account deficit stood at 5.4 billion euros in April 2020 after a deficit of 2.8 billion euros in the previous month, i.e. a deterioration of 2.6 billion euros (seasonally and working-day adjusted data). This deterioration was the result of a very sharp contraction in trade in goods and services, affecting exports more strongly than imports.

The energy deficit narrowed by 1.2 billion euros, but the deficit in non-energy goods widened by 2.1 billion euros, resulting in a deficit for goods of 4.0 billion euros. While usually in surplus, services recorded in April a deficit of 0.5 billion euros. This deficit was mainly due to a zero balance in travel and a poor performance in consulting and R&D services, which recorded a deficit of 1 billion euros.

In the financial account (non-seasonally adjusted), direct investment remained almost balanced, while portfolio investment and financial derivatives recorded net outflows, which were offset by net inflows in loans and deposits.

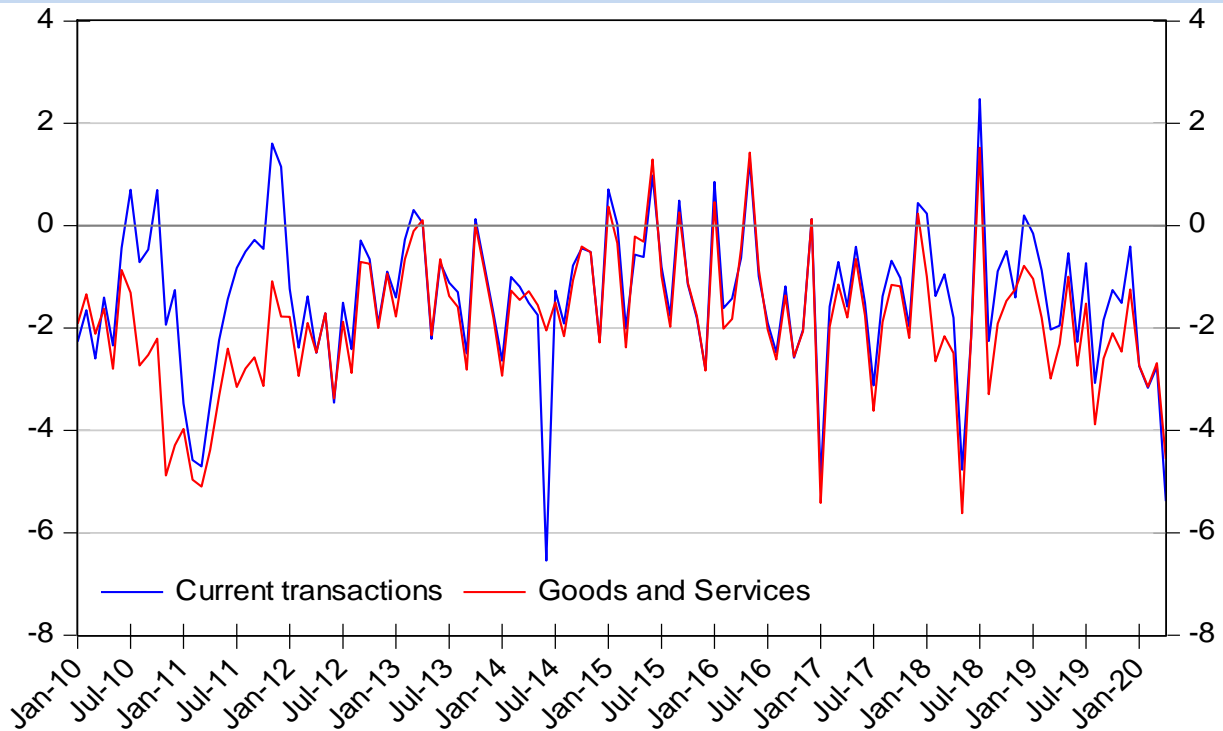
France's balance of payments

(EUR billions)	2018 (a)	2019 (a)	Mar-20 (b)	Apr-20 (b)
Current account (seasonally and working-day adjusted)	-13.2	-16.2	-2.8	-5.4
<i>Goods (1)</i>	-48.1	-46.8	-3.2	-4.0
Energy	-43.4	-42.7	-2.7	-1.5
Goods excl. Energy	-4.6	-4.2	-0.4	-2.5
<i>Services</i>	24.8	21.6	0.5	-0.5
Travel	14.5	10.8	-0.7	0.0
Transport services	-6.9	-5.0	-0.2	-0.4
Professional and management consulting services, Research and development and Technical services, trade-related and other business services	7.6	7.2	0.7	-1.0
Other services (2)	9.6	8.6	0.7	0.8
<i>Primary and secondary income (3)</i>	10.1	9.0	-0.1	-0.8
Capital account (not adjusted)	2.1	1.9	0.2	0.0
Financial account (not adjusted)	-23.3	-28.8	-33.4	-1.7
<i>Direct investment</i>	57.1	4.2	-0.2	0.2
- Abroad	118.3	49.8	2.4	2.5
- In France	61.2	45.6	2.6	2.2
<i>Portfolio investment</i>	9.4	-93.0	-67.2	27.5
- Assets	29.0	53.2	-59.1	24.7
- Liabilities	19.6	146.2	8.1	-2.8
<i>Financial derivatives</i>	-25.9	3.7	-26.7	10.5
<i>Loans and deposits(4)</i>	-74.4	53.4	59.5	-38.3
<i>Reserve assets</i>	10.4	2.8	1.1	-1.5
Net errors and omissions	-12.2	-14.6	-29.6	3.0

(a) Yearly 2019 data (b) Provisional data
(1) to (4) See methodological notes on page 2.

Source and production : BANQUE DE FRANCE – DGSEI

Current account - Goods and services balance



The series shown on this chart have been seasonally and working-day adjusted

Methodological notes relating to page 1 table

(1) Data on trade in goods are FOB-FOB values, which means without cost, insurance and freight. This expenditure is recorded in the services item. Exchanges of goods cover General merchandise published by the Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DGDDI) on one side, merchanting and methodological adjustments calculated by the Banque de France, on the other side. In order to ensure the comparability of French balance of payments with those of other countries and conformity with the international standards, the international standard for Balance of Payments statistics is released under the aegis of the International Monetary Fund. The key concept for the balance of payments is the concept of economic ownership which is consistent with the national accounts.

(2) Services other than travel (tourism and professional travels), transport services, professional and management consulting services, R&D and development and technical services, trade-related and other business services include manufacturing, maintenance and repair, construction, insurance and pension services, financial services, charges for the use of intellectual property, telecommunication, computer and information services, personal, cultural and recreational services and government goods and services.

(3) Income includes primary and secondary incomes. Primary income refers to the flows received by economic agents for their participation in the production process ("compensation of employees") or for the provision of financial assets ("investment income") or for the rental of natural resources ("rent"). Taxes and subsidies on products and production are also included in primary income. Secondary income records current transfers between residents and non-residents. A transfer is a transaction that involves the provision of a good, service, financial asset or another non-produced asset without receiving something of economic value in exchange.

(4) The "other investment" (loans and deposits) component of the financial account includes all transactions in financial assets and liabilities with non-residents that do not concern direct investment, portfolio investment, financial derivatives or reserve assets. In practice, this mainly concerns bank deposits and interbank lending, as well as loans and deposits made by insurance companies and all kinds of investment companies and funds.

On the Banque de France website a detailed [methodological note on balance of payments and international investment position](#) can be found. Highlights on specific topics are also available:

- [foreign direct investments \(English and French\)](#),
- [remittances \(French\)](#),
- [international tourism in France \(French\)](#),
- [international banking activity \(English and French\)](#),
- [banks foreign establishment \(French\)](#),
- [net foreign assets \(English and French\)](#),
- [business services \(French\)](#).

