U.S. Current-Account Deficit Widens in 2021

U.S. International Transactions

The U.S. current-account deficit, which reflects the combined balances on trade in goods and services and income flows between U.S. residents and residents of other countries, widened by $205.5 billion, or 33.4 percent, to $821.6 billion in 2021. The widening mostly reflected an expanded deficit on goods. The 2021 deficit was 3.6 percent of current-dollar gross domestic product, up from 2.9 percent in 2020.

- Exports of goods increased $332.9 billion to $1.76 trillion, while imports of goods increased $502.3 billion to $2.85 trillion.
- Exports of services increased $65.6 billion to $771.2 billion, while imports of services increased $80.9 billion to $541.2 billion.
- Receipts of primary income increased $132.9 billion to $1.09 trillion, while payments of primary income increased $146.5 billion to $915.9 billion.
- Receipts of secondary income increased $3.6 billion to $170.0 billion, while payments of secondary income increased $10.9 billion to $305.1 billion.
- Net financial-account transactions were −$687.1 billion, reflecting net U.S. borrowing from foreign residents.

The increases in all major categories of current-account transactions in 2021—following COVID-19-related declines in 2020—partly reflect the economic recovery. The full economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be quantified in the statistics, because the impacts are generally embedded in source data and cannot be separately identified. For more information, see “U.S. International Transactions, Fourth Quarter and Year 2021.”

BEA statistics—including gross domestic product, personal income, the balance of payments, foreign direct investment, the Input-Output Accounts, and economic statistics for states, local areas, and industries—are available at www.bea.gov. Email alerts are also available.
Note. The next release of U.S. international transactions will be on June 23, 2022.
Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce