

April 2016

FDI increases by 25% in 2015, with corporate and financial restructuring playing a large role

- **In 2015, global FDI flows increased by 25%** to USD 1.7 trillion, reaching their highest level since the global financial crisis began in 2007.
- **Part of this increase was the result of financial and corporate restructuring** rather than of new, productive investments. For example, global FDI flows were boosted by record levels of FDI inflows in the United States in the first half of 2015 which were partly driven by cross-border M&As designed to reduce companies' US tax obligations.
- **OECD FDI inflows almost doubled** compared to 2014, mostly due to large inflows in Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States. Investors from those countries were also responsible for the 35% increase in OECD outflows. These countries appear among the top destinations and top sources of FDI worldwide in 2015.
- **OECD FDI flows for resident special purpose entities (SPEs) decreased** in 2015 by around 10%.
- **FDI inflows to the G20 as a whole increased by 26%**. FDI flows to OECD G20 economies increased by 81% but were partly offset by a 13% drop in FDI inflows to non-OECD G20 economies. As a result of these changes, the share of the non OECD G20 countries in global inflows dropped from about one-third to just over one-fifth.

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Did you know?

Detailed FDI statistics by partner country and by industry for 2014 are available in the online **OECD FDI database** (see pre-defined queries). You will find detailed information on inward and outward FDI flows, income and positions by main destination or recipient country, and by industry sector, as well as detailed information for resident SPEs. Find also information on inward FDI positions by ultimate investing country, and on FDI by main industry sector cross-classified by region.

1 Recent developments

Global FDI flows¹ increased by 25% in 2015, to USD 1 730 billion. This was the highest level recorded since 2007 and the start of the financial crisis. Figure 1 shows global FDI flows from 1999 to 2015 and includes a focus for recent quarters Q1 2014-Q4 2015 and half year trends. The measure was constructed using FDI statistics on a directional basis whenever available, supplemented by measures on an asset/liability basis when needed.² Aside from the 3% drop observed in 2014 (see [FDI in Figures – April 2015](#)), global FDI flows have been on an upward trend since 2012 and have never been so close to their pre-crisis level, although they remain about one sixth below (USD 1 730 billion compared to USD 2 091 billion in 2007).

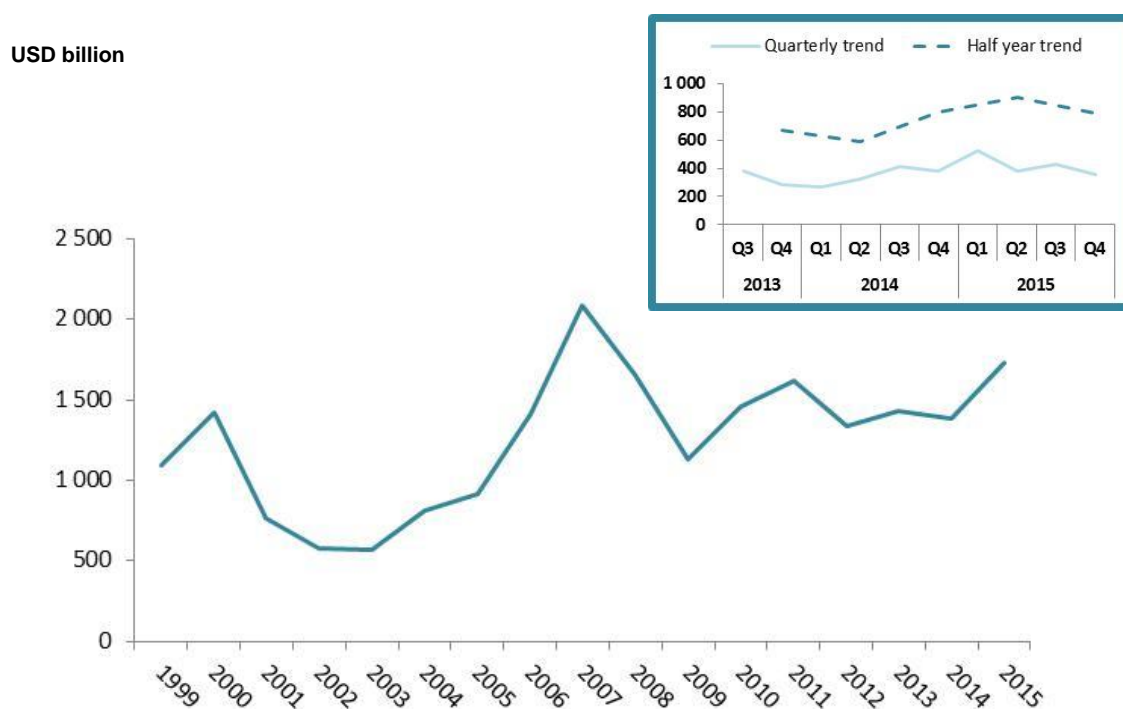
¹ By definition, inward and outward FDI worldwide should be equal. However, in practice, there are statistical discrepancies between inward and outward FDI. Unless otherwise specified, references to 'global FDI flows' refer to the average of these two figures.

² See Notes for tables 1 and 2 on page 12 for details. Data are as of 13 April 2016.

FDI flows peaked in the first quarter of 2015 due to inward FDI flows to the United States hitting a record-level (at USD 200 billion) and due to Hong Kong, China's net incurrence of FDI liabilities of USD 71 billion. Global FDI flows fluctuated during the last three quarters of 2015 but remained above USD 350 billion in each quarter. FDI flows increased by 15% in Q3 2015 and decreased by 17% in Q4 2015, representing an overall decrease of 12% in the second half of 2015 compared to the first half of the year. However, the level recorded in the second half of 2015 remained stable compared to the second half of 2014.

Nevertheless, some of the increase in global FDI flows in 2015 is the result of financial and corporate restructuring rather than productive investment. For example, the global increase was largely due to FDI inflows to the United States hitting record levels in 2015, which were not just driven by the country's improved economic performance but also by cross-border M&As designed to reduce companies' US tax obligations (see [FDI in Figures – October 2015](#)). In addition, record levels of FDI inflows to Hong-Kong, China, Switzerland and Ireland as well as record levels of outflows from the Netherlands (excluding flows from resident SPEs), Switzerland and Ireland also played a large role in the global increase. While companies in these countries were involved in cross-border M&As, corporate and financial restructurings can also impact FDI flows for these countries because they are common destinations for redomiciled companies, and they often play a large role in intragroup lending³. In addition, for the first time since the financial crisis, inflows to the OECD and the non-OECD G20 countries diverged: inflows to the OECD surged but those to the non-OECD G20 dropped.

Figure 1: Global FDI flows from 1999 to 2015 (USD billion)



Source: OECD International Direct Investment Statistics database

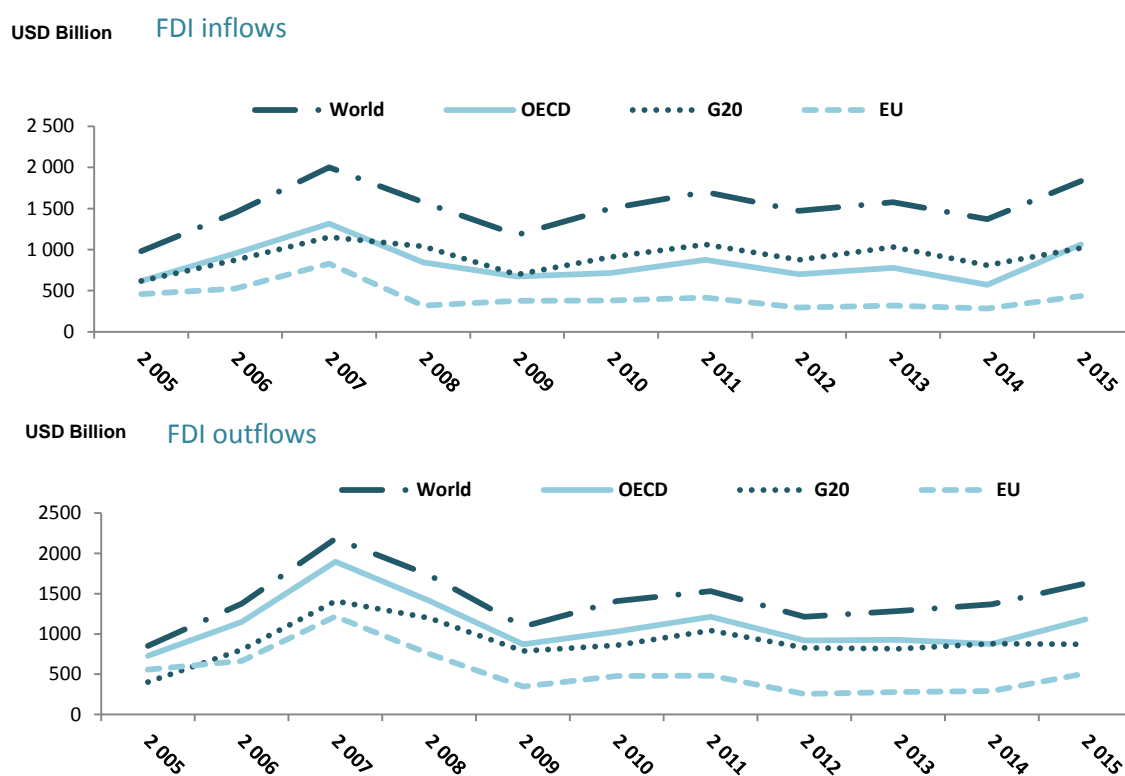
³ See more details on redomiciled companies and corporate inversions at: www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/surveysandmethodologies/documents/pdfdocs/Redomiciled,PLCs,in,the,Irish,Balance,of,Payments.pdf and www.bea.gov/scb/pdf/2015/02%20February/0215_corporate_inversions_and_the_international_and%20national_accounts.pdf

FDI flows by region

In 2015, FDI flows into the **OECD** area increased by 86% compared to 2014, from USD 572 billion to USD 1 063 billion, and FDI outflows were up 35% from USD 875 billion to USD 1 183 billion (Figure 2). FDI inflows to the OECD area accounted for 58% of global FDI inflows, compared to 41% in 2014 and 49% in 2013. FDI inflows received by the United States in the first quarter largely accounted for the increased share of the OECD area. OECD FDI outflows accounted for 73% of global FDI outflows, higher than in 2014 (64%) but comparable to 2013. FDI flows into **EU** countries increased by 54% (from USD 282 billion to USD 434 billion) and outflows increased by 75% (from USD 290 billion to USD 508 billion); however, these levels remain below levels reached before the financial crisis. FDI inflows to the **G20** as a whole increased by 26% from USD 808 billion to USD 1 020 billion while FDI outflows from the G20, at USD 871 billion, remained stable. However, the situation varies across G20 OECD and non-OECD sub-groups: FDI flows to OECD G20 economies increased by 81% but were partly offset by a 13% drop in FDI inflows received by the non-OECD G20 economies. FDI outflows from OECD-G20 economies decreased by 3% while FDI outflows from the non-OECD G20 economies increased by 4%.

The record levels of FDI flows the United States received in the first quarter of 2015 made it the largest recipient of FDI inflows worldwide in 2015, followed by China (the largest recipient of FDI worldwide in 2010-2014), Switzerland and Ireland (due to record levels of FDI inflows for both countries in 2015). The United States remained by far the largest source of FDI worldwide, followed by China, Japan, Switzerland, the Netherlands (excluding investments from Special Purpose Entities) and Ireland.⁴

Figure 2: FDI flows for 2005-2015 (USD billion)



Source: OECD International Direct Investment Statistics database and IMF.

⁴ Hong-Kong, China and Singapore are not listed as major FDI sources and recipients respectively because it is thought that these economies are not the ultimate destinations or sources of a significant amount of their flows; instead these flows pass through on their way to other economies.

FDI inflows by region

OECD FDI inflows almost doubled in 2015 (to USD 1 063 billion) compared to 2014, reaching their highest level since the beginning of the financial crisis. However, they remain 19% below their peak level in 2007 (at USD 1 316 billion). They increased by 55% in the first half of the year (to USD 571 billion) from the second half of 2014 and then dropped by 14% (to USD 492 billion) in the second half of the year.

The increase in the first half of the year was largely due to record levels of FDI inflows into the United States in the first quarter of 2015 (to USD 200 billion) due to some large cross-border deals⁵ (see [FDI in Figures – October 2015](#)). **In the second half of the year** FDI inflows to the United States dropped to USD 95 billion. **FDI inflows into the OECD as a whole dropped but remained high**, largely due to Ireland and Switzerland recording significant FDI inflows and net incurrence of liabilities respectively in the last quarter of 2015 (to USD 72 billion and USD 65 billion respectively). Overall in 2015, the largest OECD recipients of FDI inflows were therefore the United States (USD 385 billion), Switzerland (USD 121 billion) and Ireland (USD 101 billion). FDI inflows received by other major OECD recipients increased in 2015: FDI flows received by the Netherlands increased by 39% (from USD 52 billion to USD 73 billion excluding flows in resident Special Purpose Entities), they nearly tripled in France (from USD 15 billion to USD 43 billion), they recovered from net disinvestments in Germany (from USD -7 billion to USD 13 billion). In contrast, FDI flows dropped by 17% in Canada (from USD 59 billion to USD 49 billion), by 33% in Spain (from USD 33 billion to USD 22 billion), by 44% in Australia (from USD 40 billion to USD 22 billion) and by 25% in the United Kingdom (from USD 52 billion to USD 40 billion).

FDI financial flows consist of three components: equity capital, reinvestment of earnings, and intercompany debt.⁶ For the 20 economies that reported detail by FDI components⁷ for 2015, accounting for 72% of total OECD FDI inflows: total equity inflows more than tripled compared to 2014 and intercompany debt flows recovered from net disinvestments representing respectively 68% and 9% of total flows received by those economies, while reinvestment of earnings decreased by 13%, accounting for 23% of the total. The increase in equity capital was due to its role in the large M&A deals in the first half of 2015. However, the situation varies across countries. The increase of FDI equity flows was largely due to equity transactions in the United States which reached USD 225 billion and to a lesser extent to equity transactions in the Netherlands (USD 61 billion), in France (USD 37 billion), and in Ireland (USD 40 billion). Intercompany debt inflows were boosted by increases in the United States (USD 82 billion) but also in Germany and Ireland where debt inflows were up. Reinvestment of earnings fell, driven by decreases in the United States (from USD 50 billion to USD 43 billion). In Switzerland, the second largest OECD recipient of FDI flows in 2015, net incurrence of equity and debt liabilities both rose to USD 53 billion.

In the non-OECD G20 countries, FDI inflows in 2015 increased by 30% in India compared to 2014 (from USD 34 billion to USD 44 billion) but declined elsewhere: by 69% in South Africa (to USD 1.8 billion), by 29% in Indonesia (to USD 16 billion), by 23% in Brazil (to USD 75 billion) and by 7% in China (to USD 250 billion). FDI flows to Russia reached particularly low levels in 2015 (they dropped by 63% to USD 11 billion), largely due to a drop in reinvested earnings (from USD 21 billion to USD 11 billion). FDI inflows in Saudi Arabia were USD 5.9 billion in the first three quarters of 2015, slightly below their level a year earlier⁸.

⁵ See www.actavis.com/news/news/thomson-reuters/actavis-completes-allergan-acquisition; and www.wsj.com/articles/medtronic-to-book-500-million-restructuring-charge-1443476397.

⁶ For more information on FDI components, please see the notes on page 12.

⁷ On a directional basis.

⁸ Argentina is excluded from the G20 aggregate FDI from Q2 2015 onwards. See note 1 on page 12 for more details.

FDI outflows by region

FDI outflows from the OECD area increased by 35% in 2015 compared to 2014 (to USD 1 183 billion). They were on an increasing trend since the first quarter of 2014, but dropped in the last quarter of 2015 (from USD 341 billion to USD 262 billion). However, the situation varies across countries. FDI outflows from Japan increased by 13% (to USD 129 billion) and rose to above USD 100 billion from three countries: Ireland (to USD 102 billion), the Netherlands (to USD 113 billion excluding investments from Dutch Special Purpose Entities), and Switzerland (net acquisition of FDI assets reached a peak at USD 122 billion). These developments were offset by decreases in outward investments from other major OECD investors: FDI outflows from the United States decreased from USD 337 billion to USD 320 billion; from Germany decreased from USD 99 billion to USD 76 billion; from France decreased from USD 43 billion to USD 35 billion. The United Kingdom recorded net disinvestments for the third consecutive year, of USD -61 billion. Major OECD investors in 2015 were therefore the United States, Japan, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Ireland, accounting for 66% of OECD outflows.

FDI financial flows consist of three components: equity capital, reinvestment of earnings, and intercompany debt.⁶ For the 20 economies who reported FDI components⁷ for 2015, accounting for 71% of total OECD FDI outflows: total equity outflows increased by 52%, accounting for one third of the total outflows and intercompany debt flows almost tripled (accounting for 16% of the total) while reinvestment of earnings decreased by 16% (47% of the total). The increase in equity capital flows was largely due to its role in the large M&A deals in 2015. As for FDI inflows, the situation varies across countries. The increase in FDI equity outflows was driven by increases from Ireland where equity outflows reached USD 60 billion mostly in the pharmaceutical sector (compared to net disinvestments in 2014), and to a lesser extent from Canada and the Netherlands where equity outflows increased by around 20% (to USD 37 billion and to 67 billion excluding resident SPEs respectively), from France where equity outflows more than tripled to USD 23 billion and from the United States where equity outflows more than doubled to USD 18 billion. Equity outflows from Germany were stable at about USD 60 billion. The increase in intercompany debt flows was driven by switches from negative debt flows in 2014 to positive debt flows, in particular in the Netherlands and the United States. The decrease in reinvestment of earnings was largely due to a 15% drop in the United States (to USD 294 billion) caused by a drop in earnings. In Switzerland, the second largest OECD investor in 2015, net incurrence of equity and debt liabilities rose to respectively USD 61 billion and USD 37 billion.

In the non-OECD G20 economies, FDI outflows from China increased by 53% (to USD 188 billion) while they dropped elsewhere: FDI outflows decreased by 57% from Russia (to USD 27 billion), by 48% from Brazil (to USD 13 billion), by 30% from India and South Africa (to respectively USD 6.9 billion and USD 5.3 billion) and by 12% from Indonesia (to USD 6.3 billion). FDI outflows from Saudi Arabia were USD 3.8 billion in the first three quarters of 2015, a level comparable to 2014.

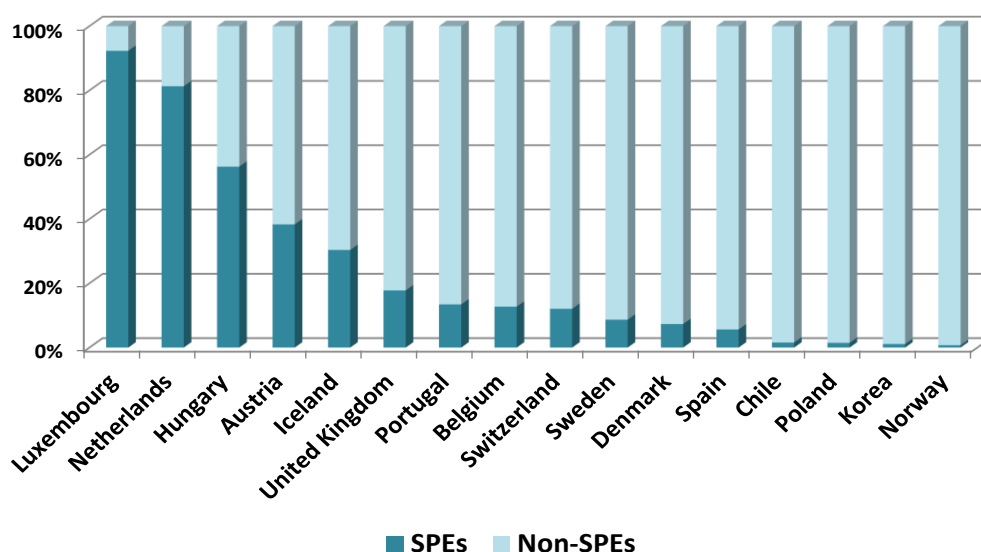
2 FDI in resident special purpose entities

An important feature of the OECD Benchmark Definition 4th edition is to identify FDI flows and positions of resident SPEs separately. SPEs are entities with little or no physical presence or employment in the host country but that provide important services to the MNE in the form of financing or of holding assets and liabilities. MNEs often channel investments through SPEs in one country before they reach their final destination in another country. By excluding investment into resident SPEs, countries have a better measure of FDI into their country that is likely to have a real impact on their economy.⁹ Figure 3 shows

⁹ For more details see the OECD note on how MNEs channel investments through multiple countries.

the percentage of inward positions accounted for by resident SPEs at-end 2015 when available (at end-2014 otherwise).

Figure 3: Share of FDI into SPEs and non-SPEs, at-end 2015



Source: OECD International Direct Investment Statistics database

FDI positions excluding resident SPEs are now available for 16 OECD countries: SPEs are not significant in Korea, Chile, Poland and Norway, accounting for less than 5% of FDI in these economies, while resident SPEs in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Hungary, Austria and Iceland account for 30% or more of their inward investment. SPEs play smaller, but still significant, roles in investment for the United Kingdom¹⁰, Portugal, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark and Spain. Overall, FDI positions in SPEs hosted by these 16 countries represent 52% of their total inward FDI position at-end 2015.

FDI flows in and from SPEs are volatile because they are often involved in individual large deals. They dropped in 2015 (by around 10%) but the situation varies across countries. For example FDI flows into and from Luxembourg SPEs rose to respectively USD 226 billion and USD 265 billion in 2015, due to large increases in the third quarter of 2015. After large fluctuations in 2013 and 2014, FDI flows in/from resident Dutch SPEs further decreased in 2015 (to USD 18 billion and USD -35 billion). Large increases recorded in the third quarter were offset by large net disinvestments in the last quarter. Transactions in both quarters were largely with Luxembourg. FDI flows in/from Hungarian SPEs dropped to negative levels in 2015 (from USD 1.2 billion and USD 1.3 billion to USD -5.3 billion and USD -6.8 billion) due to large reimbursements of intercompany loans and to large net disinvestments in equity recorded in the last quarter of 2015, while flows in and from Danish and Polish SPEs remained negative. There were large net disinvestments in equity in Portuguese SPEs in 2015 (total inflows were USD -1.4 billion), compared to very limited inflows recorded in 2012-2014 (less than USD 0.3 billion). Investment flows in/from Austrian SPEs reached respectively USD 2.0 billion and USD 2.4 billion compared to less than 0.6 billion in 2014. Investment flows in/from Chilean and Icelandic SPEs remain very limited in 2015.

¹⁰ According to data reported in February 2015.

3

Spotlight: Return on inward FDI by sector

Rates of return indicate the gain or loss on an investment. In the context of FDI, it is an indicator that helps to analyse the profitability of enterprises. However, many other factors should also be taken into account, such as cyclical or structural factors or developments in that sector of economic activity. In addition, the MNE seeks to maximise its global profits in deciding where to invest, where to produce, and where to realise its income. As such, the global strategy of the investing enterprises can influence the country-by-country rates of return. The rate of return on FDI is defined here as the ratio of income on inward FDI (income on equity, or earnings, and interest from debt) over total inward FDI stock in each sector because investors receive income on the total stock of investment in a country and not just the most recent flows.

Historically, the analysis of rates of return was hampered by the lack of comparability in the valuations of positions. Specifically, positions reported on an historical cost basis likely understated the current value of the investments because the investments would likely have increased in value over time. This would result in higher rates of return on older investments compared to newer investments. With the implementation of the most recent international standards for compiling FDI statistics, more and more countries are reporting market value estimates of FDI positions; this enables an improved analysis of rates of return.

At-end 2015, the stock of inward FDI in the OECD¹¹ stood at USD 15.9 trillion. For many countries, preliminary estimates for 2015 show a decrease in their stock of inward FDI at-end 2015 from end 2014. However, in most cases, this is due to the strengthening of the US dollar as the national currency values of the positions actually increased. For example, the USD/EUR exchange rate increased 10% from 2014 to 2015, the USD/CAD rate increased 19%, and the USD/CZK rate increased 9%. This also happened for the positions of many countries at the end of 2014 when compared to end of 2013. For the 19 countries that reported FDI income for 2015, income on inward FDI decreased by 14% in 2015 compared to 2014. Earnings, representing 86% of total income payments, dropped by 16%.

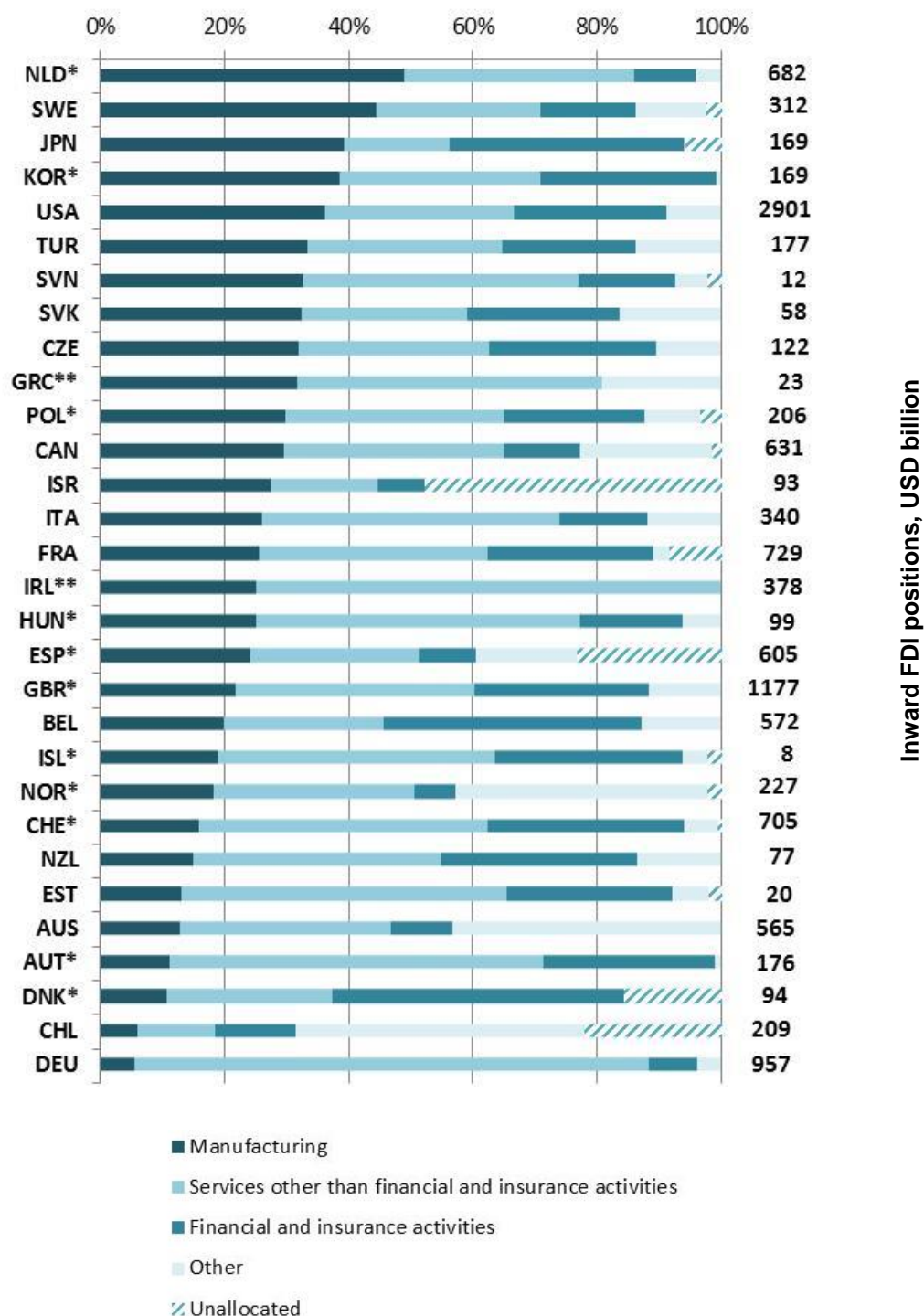
Figure 4 shows inward FDI stocks by sector at-end 2014 (at end-2013 if 2014 was not available) for the 30 OECD countries who have reported this information. Figure 5 shows the 2014 rates of return on inward FDI by sector for selected OECD countries who have reported information on FDI income by industry.

The importance of specific sectors varies across countries. The highest shares of FDI in manufacturing are in the Netherlands, Sweden, Japan and Korea. The highest shares (over 40%) in 'other', which includes primary industries such as mining and agriculture and also water and electricity, are in Chile, Australia and Norway. The highest shares (over 40%) of financial and insurance services are in Luxembourg, Denmark, Portugal and Japan (excluding FDI in Luxembourg, Danish and Portuguese SPEs).

The highest shares (over 50%) in 'services other than financial and insurance activities' are in Germany, Austria, Estonia and Hungary. Generally, the share of FDI in manufacturing exceeds the share of that industry in a country's GDP, indicating the importance of FDI in manufacturing, while it is generally lower for 'services other than financial and insurance activities' (see [FDI in Figures – April 2015](#) for more details).

¹¹ Preliminary estimates using data at end-2015 when available, at-end 2014 otherwise.

Figure 4: Inward FDI positions by sector for OECD countries, at-end 2014¹



Notes:

1. 2014 or latest available year. Excluding position data for Finland and Mexico who did not report FDI position by industry and for Luxembourg and Portugal for which FDI positions by industry were reported as non-publishable. Total inward positions correspond to totals reported as part of FDI statistics by industry and can differ from total inward positions aggregates included in Table 2, which are derived from International Investment Position statistics. Differences can be due to various reasons, for example revision schedules or valuation methods.

*Data exclude resident Special Purpose Entities

**Inward FDI position in the financial and insurance sector at-end 2014 was negative for Greece and confidential for Ireland. Therefore, this sub-sector is not separated from services for those two countries.

Source: OECD International Direct Investment statistics database

The highest rates of return on inward FDI (all sectors) in 2014 are recorded in Ireland (14%), the Czech Republic (13%), Japan (10%) and Poland (10%). The highest rates of return in the manufacturing sector are in Ireland (25%), Austria (19%) and Chile (18%), compared to 4% in the Netherlands, who has the highest share of FDI in the manufacturing sector. The highest rates of return in 'other' are in Japan (18%) and the Czech Republic (18%), compared to 7% in Chile, who has the highest share of FDI in 'other'. The highest rates of return in financial and insurance services are in Norway (17%), Japan (11%) and the Czech Republic (11%), compared to 7% in Denmark, who counts among countries who have the largest share of FDI in this sector. The highest rates of return in 'services other than financial and insurance activities' are in Japan (18%), Chile (11%), Poland (10%) and the Czech Republic (10%), compared to 9% in Austria, who counts among countries who have the highest share of FDI in this sector.

Given the high volatility of FDI income, it would be useful to analyse rates of return over several years.¹² This should be possible as more historical data becomes available, as well as more coverage of FDI income by industry and instruments.

Figure 5: Rates of return on inward FDI by sector, selected OECD countries, 2014¹

	Manufacturing	Services excl. Finance and insurance	Finance and insurance	Other	Total	
					Rate of return	Inward FDI position, USD billion
IRL**	24.7%	5.8%		0.0%	14%	378
CZE	16.2%	10.0%	10.7%	17.5%	13%	122
JPN	5.1%	17.8%	10.7%	18.2%	10%	169
POL*	13.3%	10.3%	7.4%	3.5%	10%	206
HUN*	15.2%	8.4%	5.7%	3.9%	9%	99
EST	13.0%	7.9%	9.9%	4.7%	9%	20
AUT*	18.7%	9.1%	3.5%	7.7%	9%	176
SWE	7.6%	8.2%	8.1%	3.0%	7%	312
CHL	18.0%	11.3%	0.2%	7.4%	7%	209
DNK*	4.4%	3.0%	7.4%		7%	94
GBR*	5.1%	4.0%	8.1%	8.0%	6%	1 177
USA	6.2%	4.7%	5.7%	6.6%	6%	2 901
AUS	7.5%	2.0%	8.6%	4.8%	5%	565
NOR*	4.3%	2.8%	17.2%	5.2%	5%	227
NLD*	3.9%	6.2%	1.6%	9.3%	5%	682
BEL	6.5%	6.1%	4.4%	3.1%	4%	572
ITA	4.2%	2.9%	3.9%	2.1%	3%	340
ESP*	4.7%	4.2%	3.0%	0.1%	3%	605
SVN	12.7%	-2.5%	-17.7%	-7.3%	0%	12
ISL*	1.3%	4.1%	-9.3%	3.5%	-1%	8
KOR*	-0.7%	-0.9%	-0.2%	-0.7%	-1%	169
GRC**	-6.7%	-3.3%		5.0%	-2%	23

Notes: 1. Or latest available year. Total inward positions correspond to totals reported as part of FDI statistics by industry and can differ from total inward positions aggregates included in Table 2, which are derived from International Investment Position statistics. Differences can be due to various reasons, for example revision schedules or valuation methods.

*Data exclude resident Special Purpose Entities. **Inward FDI position in the financial and insurance sector at-end 2014 was negative for Greece and confidential for Ireland. Therefore, this sub-sector is not separated from services for those two countries.

Source: OECD International Direct Investment statistics database

¹² It would also be better to look at the return on equity, i.e. earnings, specifically rather than total income. However, earnings by industry are only available for a very limited number of countries in the OECD FDI database.

Notes for tables 1 to 2

Data are updated as of 13 April 2016.

p: preliminary data **(A):** asset/liability figure used for 2015 only **:** break in series

Tables 1 and 2 show FDI statistics at the aggregate level on directional basis except for selected countries for which the asset/liability series is used (see note 2). Data for 2015 for Finland, Poland and Switzerland correspond to asset/liability figures, while data for earlier years correspond to directional figures. For more information on the two presentations for FDI, see [Asset/liability versus directional presentation](#). FDI terms are defined in the [FDI Glossary](#).

Financial flows consist of three components: equity capital, reinvestment of earnings, and intercompany debt. Equity capital is often associated with new investments, such as greenfield or M&As, even though it can also reflect extensions of capital or financial restructuring. Nevertheless, equity capital flows are often taken as a sign of the amount of new investments related to FDI. Reinvestment of earnings is the portion of earnings that the parent decides to reinvest in the affiliate rather than receive as a dividend and can be an important source of financing for affiliates. This component of financial flows tends to be the least volatile. Changes in the reinvestment of earnings reflect both changes in the earnings of affiliates and in the amount of earnings that parents choose to distribute. The reinvestment ratio is the share of earnings that the parent reinvests. It can be an indication of the parent's perception of investment opportunities available to the affiliate: if the parent sees the opportunity to make profitable investments in its affiliates, the parent might choose to reinvest more money in them. However, many other factors can influence the share of earnings reinvested. For example, if the parent is in need of cash, they might pay higher dividends. The third component of financial flows—intercompany debt—is the most volatile component of financial flows and is often driven by the short term financing needs within a company rather than larger overall macroeconomic phenomena. As such, intercompany debt is often the most difficult aspect of financial flows to explain.

For the first time in this April 2016 edition, breaks in series were introduced in Table 1 in order to provide users with more complete historical series on FDI financial flows. Those breaks in series correspond for most countries to the implementation of OECD Benchmark Edition 4th Edition (BMD4) except for Germany, for which the whole data series is according to BMD4, and the breaks in series correspond to a different recording of transactions between fellow enterprises. Data used before the breaks in series correspond to unrevised BMD3 FDI aggregates.

For data in tables 1 and 2 back to 2005 in Excel format, see www.oecd.org/investment/statistics.htm.

1. OECD, European Union (EU28), World, G20 aggregates:

FDI outward and inward flows (Table 1) were compiled using directional figures when available. Missing quarterly directional figures were approximated using the ratio between annual asset liability and directional figures; or by distributing annual directional figures equally among the four quarters; or using unrevised historical data. When directional figures were not available and could not be approximated, asset liability figures were used.

FDI outward and inward stocks (Table 2) were compiled using directional figures when available. Missing directional figures were approximated using unrevised historical data. When directional figures were not available and could not be approximated, asset liability figures were used. Data for 2015 include positions at end-2015 or at-end 2014 when 2015 data are not available.

Resident SPEs from Austria, Belgium (FDI positions only), Chile, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway (FDI positions only), Poland, Portugal, Spain (FDI positions only) and Sweden (FDI positions only) are excluded.

The European Union aggregate corresponds to member country composition of the reporting period: EU15 for data up to and including 2003, EU25 for data between 2004 and 2006, EU27 for data between 2007 and 2012 and EU28 starting from 2013.

The government of Argentina declared a state of emergency in the national statistical system on 7 January 2016. As a consequence, Argentina's Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC) has temporarily suspended publication of certain official statistics under its responsibility, pending reorganisation and Argentina has been excluded from the calculation of the G20 aggregate from Q2 2015 onwards (see www.boletinoficial.gob.ar).

- Data series on asset/liability basis:** The data series is on asset/liability basis as opposed to directional basis for Israel, Korea, Norway (Table 1 only) and Spain (Table 1 only) and for the following non-OECD countries: Brazil, India, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.
- World aggregate:** are based on available data at the time of update as reported to the OECD and IMF. Missing data for countries for Q3 and Q4 2015 were estimated using the overall growth rate observed between, respectively, Q2 2015 and Q3 2015 and Q3 2015 and Q4 2015. Growth rates were calculated from data for OECD countries, for non-OECD G20 countries, and for 50 non-OECD and non-G20 countries in Q3 and 15 non-OECD and non-G20 countries in Q4. World totals for FDI positions are based on available FDI data at the time of update as reported to OECD and IMF for the year ended or the latest available year. By definition, inward and outward FDI worldwide should be equal. However, in practice, there are statistical discrepancies between inward and outward FDI. Unless otherwise specified, references to "global FDI flows" refer to the average of these two figures.
- Special purpose entities (SPEs):** Information on resident SPEs for Estonia and Sweden (FDI flows only) is confidential. This information is not yet available separately for Canada, Ireland and Mexico. The information is available separately for Austria, Chile, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. However, the information is not displayed in the tables for all countries, due to limited availability of historical data or to differences in data vintages. Resident SPEs are not present or not significant in Australia, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Turkey, and the United States.
- The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.
- Directional flows for Japan: only annual data reflect annual revisions, so the sum of quarters may not add up to the annual data.
- 2015 data for Saudi Arabia correspond to the first three quarters of 2015.

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