

# Republic of Cyprus

## Rating report

**Strong fiscal outlook:** Cyprus has a strong fiscal consolidation track record based on consistent fiscal surpluses, exceeding fiscal targets, and marked debt-to-GDP ratio reduction. Steady improvements in public finances driven by dynamic fiscal revenues are strengthening fiscal buffers and enhancing fiscal flexibility to cope with external headwinds as well as demographic and climate-related challenges. Commitment to fiscal discipline, a robust growth outlook, and strong fiscal performance underpin a favourable debt trajectory.

**Robust economic growth outlook:** Strong private demand is expected to drive economic growth, supported by the decline in inflation, lower interest rates and low unemployment. The strong performance is driven by solid growth prospects in key sectors such as financial and business services, tourism, trade, transport as well as in the ICT sector which is helping to increase economic diversification. Downside risks stem from rising international tariffs that could lead to slower economic growth in key EU trading partners.

**Reduction in financial system risks:** The steady decline in private sector debt and non-performing loans (NPLs) reflect the strengthening of the private sector financial position throughout the Covid-19 and cost-of-living crises. Strong profitability and improved loan-loss absorption capacity further reinforces the resilience of the sector.

**Rating challenges include:** i) the small, open and externally dependent economy, relatively more vulnerable to shocks due to the high dependence on foreign workers, oil imports and external demand; ii) an external position characterised by large imbalances reflecting large import needs, moderate savings and high repatriation of profits by foreign-owned companies; and iii) lingering albeit improving vulnerabilities in the banking sector, as reflected in relatively higher NPLs compared with the EU average.

**Figure 1: Cyprus's sovereign-rating drivers**

Risk pillars		Quantitative		Reserve currency*	Political risk**	Qualitative****	Final rating
		Weight	Indicative rating	Notches	Notches	Notches	
Domestic economic risk		35%	a	EUR	Cyprus	0	A-
Public finance risk		20%	aaa			2/3	
External economic risk		10%	c			-1	
Financial stability risk		10%	aaa			- 2/3	
ESG risk	Environmental factors	5%	bb-			[+1]	
	Social factors	7.5%	a	0			
	Governance factors	12.5%	a+	- 1/3			
Sovereign Quantitative Model***		a+				-2	
Additional considerations						0	

\*The reserve-currency quantitative adjustment applies to currencies in the IMF's Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket.

\*\*The political-risk quantitative adjustment is based on the World Bank's Political Stability & Absence of Violence/Terrorism index.

\*\*\*The Rating Committee approved an indicative rating of 'a+'.

\*\*\*\*The qualitative scorecard analyst adjustments, capped at one notch per rating pillar, are weighted equally with an aggregate adjustment rounded to the nearest integer. For details, please see Scope's [Sovereign Rating Methodology](#). Source: Scope Ratings.

### Foreign currency

Long-term issuer rating/Outlook

**A-/Positive**

Senior unsecured debt/Outlook

**A-/Positive**

Short-term issuer rating/Outlook

**S-1/Stable**

### Local currency

Long-term issuer rating/Outlook

**A-/Positive**

Senior unsecured debt/Outlook

**A-/Positive**

Short-term issuer rating/Outlook

**S-1/Stable**

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## Credit strengths and challenges

### Credit strengths

- Prudent fiscal management, favourable debt trajectory
- Strong growth potential
- Structural reform momentum

### Credit challenges

- Externally dependent, concentrated economy
- Large external imbalances driven by Special Purpose Entities
- Legacy of the financial crisis

## Outlook and rating triggers

The Positive Outlook reflects Scope's view that risks to the ratings are tilted to the upside.

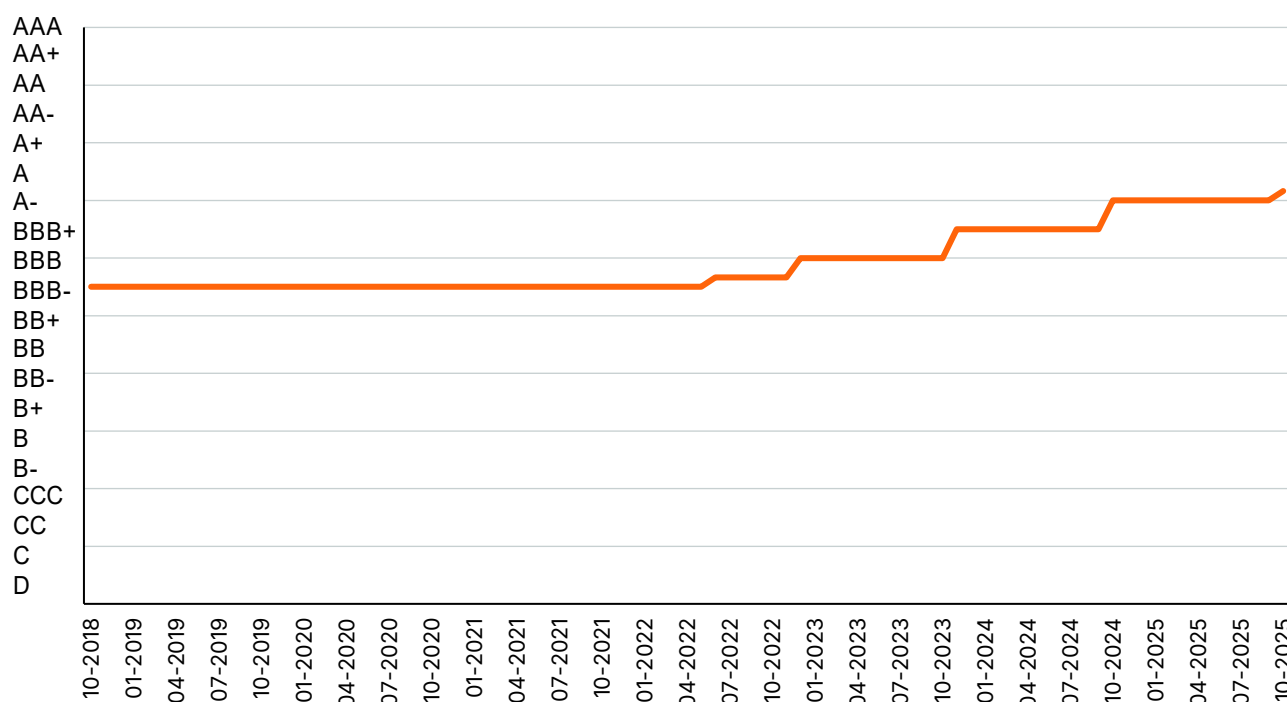
### Positive rating-change drivers

- Continued improvement in fiscal dynamics leading to a material decline in government debt
- Significantly stronger macroeconomic stability due to, for example, lower external imbalances, enhancing resilience against external shocks
- Further improvement in financial sector resilience occurs, for example, with a prolonged reduction of non-performing loans towards EU average.

### Negative rating-change drivers

- The fiscal outlook material worsens due to, for example, a loosening of the fiscal stance challenging the expected decline in general government debt
- Macroeconomic stability weakens significantly due to, for example, more pronounced external imbalances, undermining the shock absorption capacity
- The financial sector outlook weakens due to, for example, the resurgence of banking sector vulnerabilities

Figure 2: Rating history



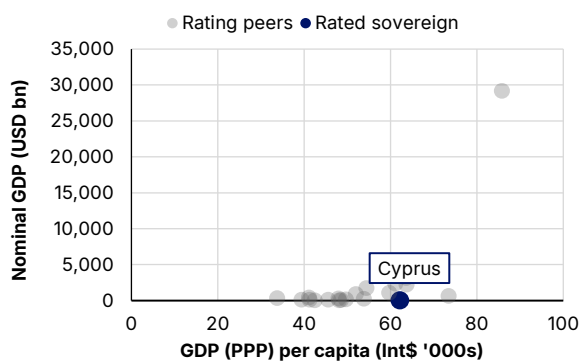
Foreign-currency long-term issuer rating. Positive/Negative Outlooks are treated with a +/-0.33-notch adjustment. Credit Watch positive/negative with a +/-0.67-notch adjustment. Source: Scope Ratings.

## Domestic economic risk

### Overview of Scope's assessments of Cyprus's Domestic Economic Risk

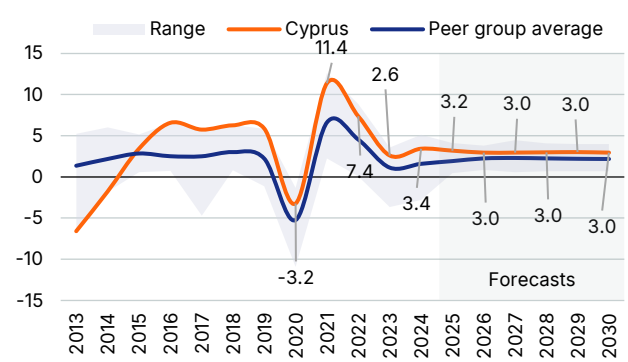
SQM <sup>1</sup> indicative rating	Analytical component	Assessment	Notch adjustment	Rationale
a	Growth potential and outlook	Strong	1/3	Strong growth potential supported by improving labour markets, foreign investment, and structural reforms
	Monetary policy framework	Neutral	0	ECB is a highly credible and effective central bank with an effective policy framework and transmission over the cycle
	Macroeconomic stability and sustainability	Weak	- 1/3	Small, open economy exposed to volatility; growth reliant on foreign funding and external demand

Figure 3: Nominal GDP and GDP per capita



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO), Scope Ratings

Figure 4: Real GDP growth, %



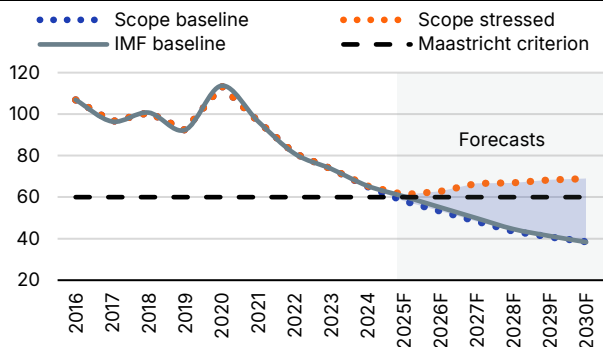
Source: IMF WEO, Scope Ratings forecasts

## Public finance risk

### Overview of Scope's assessments of Cyprus's Public Finance Risk

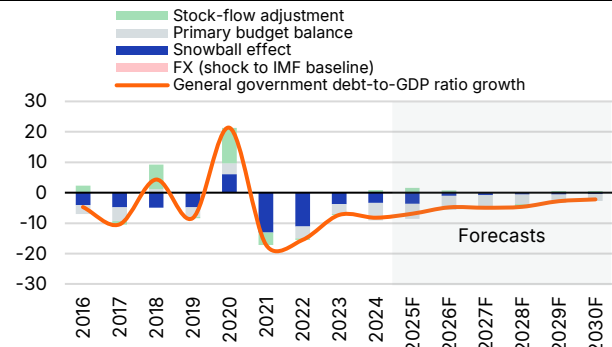
SQM indicative rating	Analytical component	Assessment	Notch adjustment	Rationale
aaa	Fiscal policy framework	Strong	1/3	Good record of effective fiscal consolidation and exceeding fiscal targets, strong fiscal outlook
	Long-term debt trajectory	Strong	1/3	Public debt on a firmly decreasing trajectory
	Debt profile and market access	Neutral	0	Low and stable interest payment burden, long average maturity and limited interest rate risk

Figure 5: Contributions to change in debt levels, pps of GDP



Source: IMF WEO, Scope Ratings forecasts

Figure 6: Debt-to-GDP forecasts, % of GDP



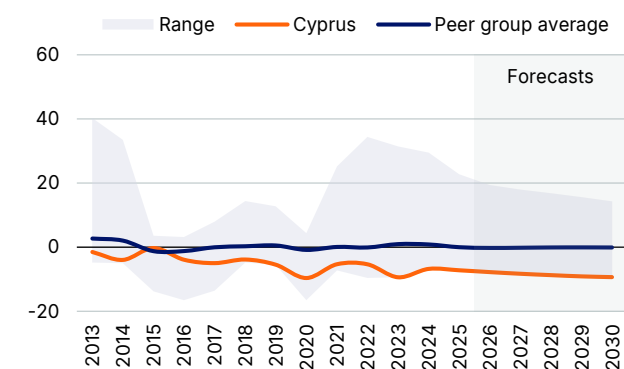
Source: IMF WEO, Scope Ratings forecasts

## External economic risk

### Overview of Scope's assessments of Cyprus's External Economic Risk

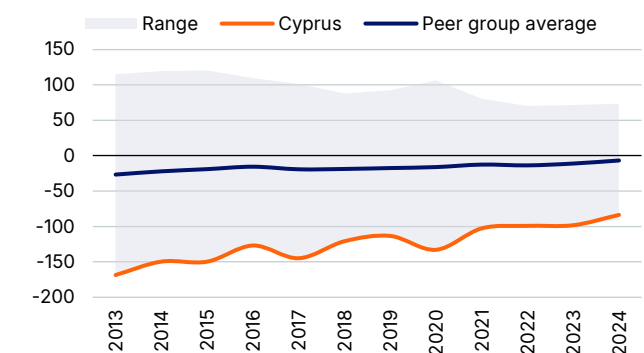
SQM indicative rating	Analytical component	Assessment	Notch adjustment	Rationale
C	Current account resilience	Weak	- 1/3	Large current account deficits relative to peers, largely driven by the negative primary account balance; moderate diversification of goods exports
	External debt structure	Weak	- 1/3	Large external debtor position and external financing needs; significantly lower imbalances once adjusted for Special Purpose Entities that have a limited link to the real economy
	Resilience to short-term external shocks	Weak	- 1/3	Large external gross financing needs raise liquidity and other risks; euro area membership bolsters resilience to shocks

Figure 7: Current-account balance, % of GDP



Source: IMF WEO forecasts, Scope Ratings

Figure 8: Net international investment position (NIIP), % GDP



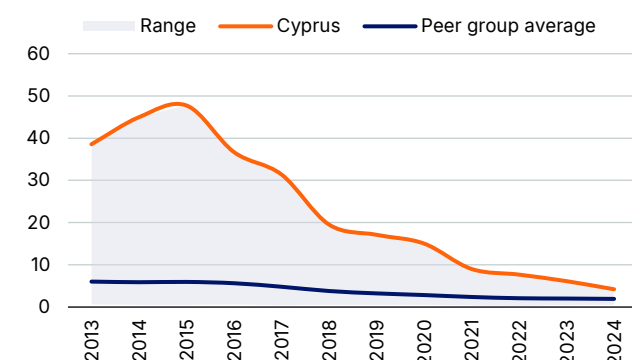
Source: IMF, Scope Ratings

## Financial stability risk

### Overview of Scope's assessments of Cyprus's Financial Stability Risk

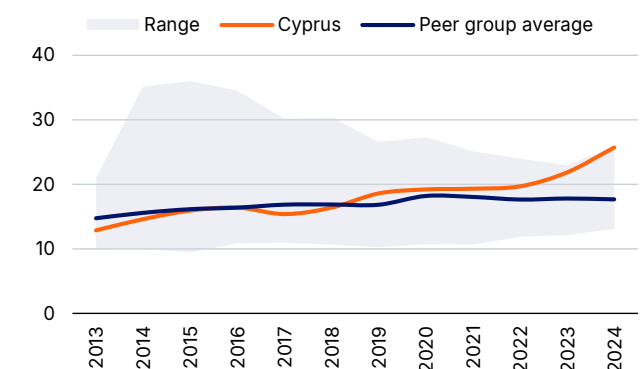
SQM indicative rating	Analytical component	Assessment	Notch adjustment	Rationale
aaa	Banking sector performance	Weak	- 1/3	Improving metrics, including strengthening asset quality albeit still high NPL ratio relative to euro area average and credit rating peers
	Financial sector oversight and governance	Neutral	0	Adequate oversight; reinforced NPL resolution frameworks
	Financial imbalances	Weak	- 1/3	Elevated private indebtedness and financial fragility of households pose risks

Figure 9: Non-performing loans (NPLs), % of total loans



Source: World Bank (WB), Scope Ratings

Figure 10: Tier 1 capital, % of risk-weighted assets



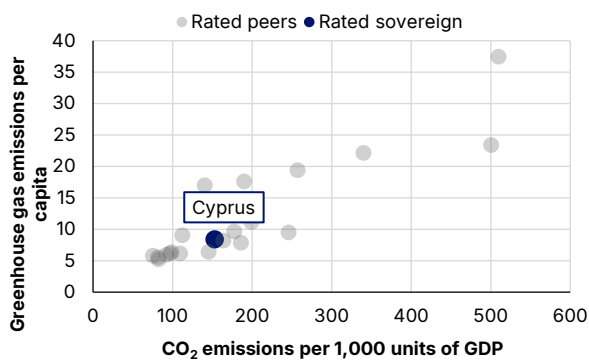
Source: IMF, Scope Ratings

## Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) risk

### Overview of Scope's assessments of Cyprus's ESG Risk

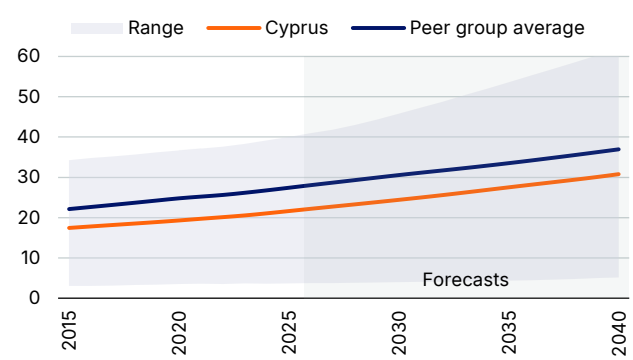
SQM indicative rating	Analytical component	Assessment	Notch adjustment	Rationale
a-	Environmental factors	Weak	- 1/3	Elevated transition and resource risks; high migration costs due to geographical constraints and service-based economy
	Social factors	Neutral	0	Weak youth employment, and education outcomes; good performance on social protection, health, and income equality
	Governance factors	Weak	- 1/3	Lingering geopolitical tensions and limited progress on reunification talks

Figure 11: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP, mtCO<sub>2</sub>e



Source: European Commission (EC), Scope Ratings

Figure 12: Old-age dependency ratio, %



Source: United Nations (UN), Scope Ratings

## Reserve-currency adjustment

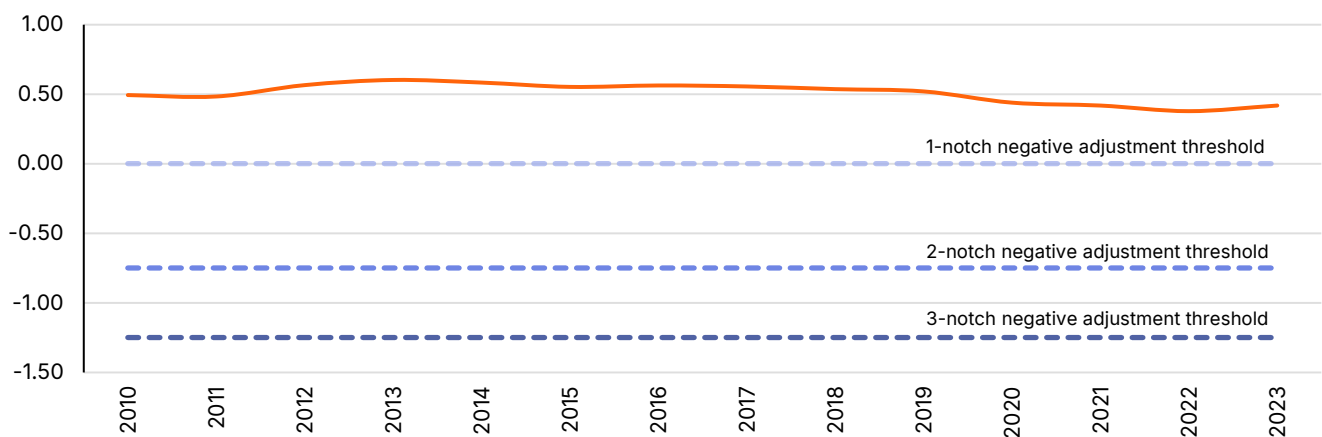
### IMF SDR basket and Scope reserve-currency adjustment

Currency	U.S. dollar	Euro	Chinese yuan	Japanese yen	Pound sterling	Other
IMF SDR basket weights, %	43.4	29.3	12.3	7.6	7.4	0.0
Positive adjustment, notches	3	1	1	1	1	0

Source: IMF, Scope Ratings

## Political-risk adjustment

Figure 13: WB Political Stability & Absence of Violence/Terrorism index, Cyprus, 3-year moving average



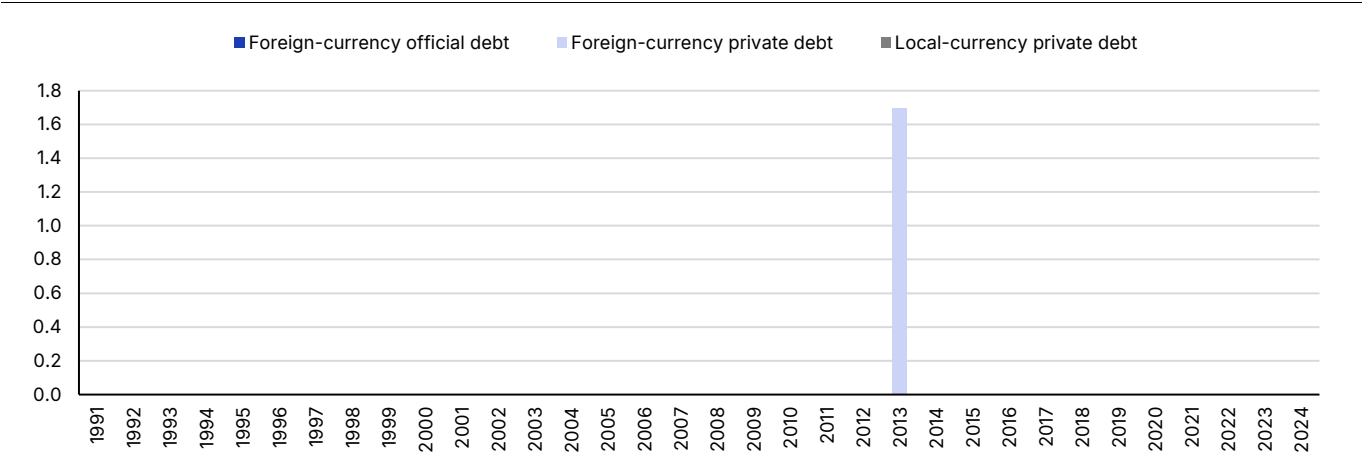
Source: WB, Scope Ratings

Additional considerations

No adjustment was applied to the rating from additional considerations.

Appendix 1. Sovereign default history

Sovereign default history, USD m



Depicted private-debt defaults may not always constitute a credit event under [Scope's credit-rating definitions](#).  
Source: [Bank of Canada-Bank of England Sovereign Default Database](#), Scope Ratings.

Appendix 2. Rating peers

Rating peers are related to sovereigns with an indicative rating in the same rating category or adjacent categories, as assigned by Scope's sovereign quantitative model after accounting for methodological reserve-currency and political-risk adjustments.

Peer group*
Bulgaria
Croatia
Estonia
Italy
Latvia
Poland
Portugal
Slovakia
Spain

\*Select publicly-rated sovereigns only; the full sample of sovereign-rating peers may be larger.

Appendix 3. Economic development and default indicators

IMF Development Classification	Advanced economy
5y USD CDS spread (bp) as of 7 October 2025	54

#### Appendix 4. Statistical table for selected SQM indicators

This table presents a selection of the indicators (24 out of 30 – with the governance indicator reflecting a composite of five indicators) used in Scope's quantitative model, in line with Scope's Sovereign Rating Methodology. The metrics and sources for the data presented here ensure comparability across global country peers and may therefore differ from data from national and other select international statistical series.

Pillar	Core variable	Source	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Domestic Economic	GDP per capita (PPP), Int\$ '000s	IMF	45.4	43.6	50.2	57.2	59.4	62.2
	Nominal GDP, USD bn	IMF	26	26	30	31	34	36
	Real growth, %	IMF	5.9	-3.2	11.4	7.4	2.6	3.4
	CPI inflation, %	IMF	0.5	-1.1	2.2	8.1	3.9	2.3
	Unemployment rate, %	WB	7.2	7.8	7.5	6.8	5.8	-
Public Finance	Public debt, % of GDP	IMF	92.3	113.6	96.5	81.0	73.6	65.4
	Net interest payment, % of government revenue	IMF	5.0	5.0	3.9	3.0	2.8	2.8
	Primary balance, % of GDP	IMF	3.1	-3.6	0.0	3.9	3.2	5.7
External Economic	Current-account balance, % of GDP	IMF	-5.5	-9.7	-5.4	-5.4	-9.5	-6.8
	Total reserves, months of imports	WB	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	-
	NIIP, % of GDP	IMF	-113.5	-133.1	-102.9	-99.3	-98.4	-83.8
Financial Stability	NPL ratio, % of total loans	IMF	17.1	15.0	9.0	7.7	6.1	4.2
	Tier 1 ratio, % of risk-weighted assets	IMF	17.1	18.3	19.0	18.9	19.3	23.4
	Credit to the private sector, % of GDP	WB	106.7	106.5	87.4	71.5	62.7	58.7
ESG	CO <sub>2</sub> per EUR 1,000 of GDP, mtCO <sub>2</sub> e	EC	175.5	171.3	158.2	156.7	152.9	-
	Income share of bottom 50%, %	WID	20.7	20.8	21.2	21.1	21.1	-
	Labour-force participation rate, %	WB	76.9	76.7	77.6	79.1	79.8	79.9
	Old-age dependency ratio, %	UN	18.9	19.3	19.7	20.1	20.6	21.1
	Composite governance indicators*	WB	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	-
	Political stability, index	WB	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	-

\*Average of the following five World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators: Control of Corruption, Voice and Accountability, Rule of Law, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality.

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## Applied methodologies

[Sovereign Rating Methodology](#), January 2025

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