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World Bank and IMF Launch Quarterly Online Public Sector Debt Database

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today launched the online [Quarterly Public Sector Debt Database](#), which offers access to public sector debt statistics for 30 emerging market and developing countries and will be updated every three months.

Increased focus on public sector debt sustainability and fiscal consolidation globally has heightened interest in public sector debt statistics. This database is unique in bringing together public sector debt statistics that otherwise are only available from individual countries in a range of different formats, providing policymakers and market participants with information suitable for cross-country comparisons.

The database promotes consistency and comparability across countries through standardized treatments of coverage, valuation, and classification, including clearly defined tiers of debt where appropriate for central, state and local government as well as public corporations.

The database, maintained by the World Bank, is available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/qpsd>. Participation in the database is voluntary, and while initially it covers selected emerging market and developing countries¹, the intention is to expand the range of countries covered in the future.

“We expect that policymakers and analysts will find this online database, updated on a quarterly basis, to be a valuable tool,” said Shaida Badiie, Director of the World Bank’s Development Data Group. “For the first time, they will have easy access to a one-stop shop that offers comprehensive public sector debt data that is timely and of high quality. We hope that this will contribute to sound macroeconomic policymaking, and that more countries will join this initiative.”

“This database meets an important need for comparable statistics in the crucial area of public sector debt,” said Adelheid Burgi-Schmelz, Director of the IMF’s Statistics Department. “Today’s launch is a further step forward in our effort to provide comprehensive data on countries’ public

¹ Countries initially covered are: Albania, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Kenya, Lithuania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tonga, Turkey and Uruguay.

sector debt positions. The participation of so many countries is testament to their commitment to international standards and transparency in this area.”

Background Information

The public sector comprises the central government, state and local government, as well as public financial and nonfinancial corporations. All participating countries provide data for central government, while other parts of government are also reported as available.

The tables cover gross debt by type of instrument, maturity, currency of denomination, and residence of the creditor.

In support of the database, a guide to assist countries to improve their statistics has been developed. The draft of the *Public Sector Debt Statistics: Guide for Compilers and Users* is now available at <http://www.tffs.org/psdstoc.htm>. It covers a range of issues including classifications, data presentation, guidance on compilation issues, and discussion of analytical tools. After a public comment period, the draft is currently being finalized. The preparation of the *Guide* has been guided by the Task Force on Finance Statistics, a task force consisting of nine international organizations—the Bank for International Settlements, Commonwealth Secretariat, European Central Bank, Eurostat, IMF, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, UNCTAD, and the World Bank. The *Guide* is planned to be released in early 2011.

The database is a companion to the [Quarterly External Debt Database \(www.worldbank.org/qeds\)](http://www.worldbank.org/qeds), which has been maintained by the World Bank since 2004. Together, these two databases help users to gain a more complete picture of debt, showing both the domestic and external aspects.

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