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At the end of 2020, General Government debt amounted to €6,960.0 million, or 54.3 per cent of GDP, an increase of €1,257.2 million over 2019.

## Structure of General Government Debt: 2020

In 2020, the Financial Corporations sector held the biggest share of debt with 60.5 per cent, followed by Households and Non-Profit Institutions Serving Households (NPISH) with 19.1 per cent. The share of the Rest of the World was 18.2 per cent, an increase of 6.1 percentage points over the debt held in 2017. The Non-Financial Corporations sector held 2.2 per cent of the debt (Table 1).

Debt securities, which include Malta Government Stocks and Treasury Bills, are by far the preferred debt instrument for General Government, with €5,945.1 million, or 85.4 per cent, of the total debt in 2020. Other debt instruments are Loans and Currency, with 7.8 per cent and 6.8 per cent, respectively. The increase reported under Debt securities (€1,030.0 million) mainly relates to the financing of the Government's COVID-19 measures, while the increases in Loans (€135.7 million) and Currency (€91.9 million) mainly represent the EU loan from the temporary Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE) instrument and the issuance of the 62+ Malta Government Savings Bonds, respectively (Table 2).

Almost all the debt owed by the General Government Sector is in national currency. The stock of debt in foreign currencies has decreased considerably over the years and in 2020 it amounted to €0.1 million (Table 3).



The apparent cost of debt, which is the interest rate applicable to the whole nominal debt, was 2.7 per cent in 2020, compared to 3.7 per cent in 2017. This measure of the cost of debt reflects the interest rates prevailing at the issuance date and, given that the composition of debt is predominantly long-term, the indicator is not very sensitive to the more recent low interest rate scenario (Table 4).

For 2020, the market value of the total General Government debt is estimated at €8,178.4 million, compared to the nominal value of €6,960.0 million. Market debt increased by €1,245.8 million over 2019, slightly lower when compared to the increase of €1,257.2 million in nominal debt (Table 5).

For the year under review, the time structure of the debt by initial maturity shows that €3,228.7 million, or 46.4 per cent, was issued with a maturity of 15 to 30 years. This was followed by debt issued for 1 to 5 years (13.3 per cent), 5 to 7 years (13.1 per cent), less than 1 year (10.2 per cent), 10 to 15 years (9.8 per cent), 7 to 10 years (6.0 per cent) and more than 30 years (1.1 per cent) (Table 6). The average remaining maturity of total debt for 2020 was 8 years 8 months, 3 months shorter than in 2019 and 9 months shorter than in 2017. In 2020, the biggest share of debt by remaining maturity was in the 1 to 5-year category with €1,904.2 million, followed by the 7 to 10-year (€1,351.9 million) and the less than 1-year (€1,169.1 million) categories (Table 7).

Government guarantees on borrowing amounted to €1,172.6 million in 2020, or 9.1 per cent of GDP, an increase of €182.4 million over 2019. The majority of Government guarantees are issued towards the Non-Financial Corporations sector, which accounts for 63.3 per cent of the total guarantees. The Financial Corporations, Rest of the World and NPISH sectors benefitted from 33.9, 2.0 and 0.8 per cent of Government guarantees, respectively. The Government guarantees are contingent liabilities, contingent on the actual call of the guarantee, and therefore these do not form part of General Government debt (Table 8).

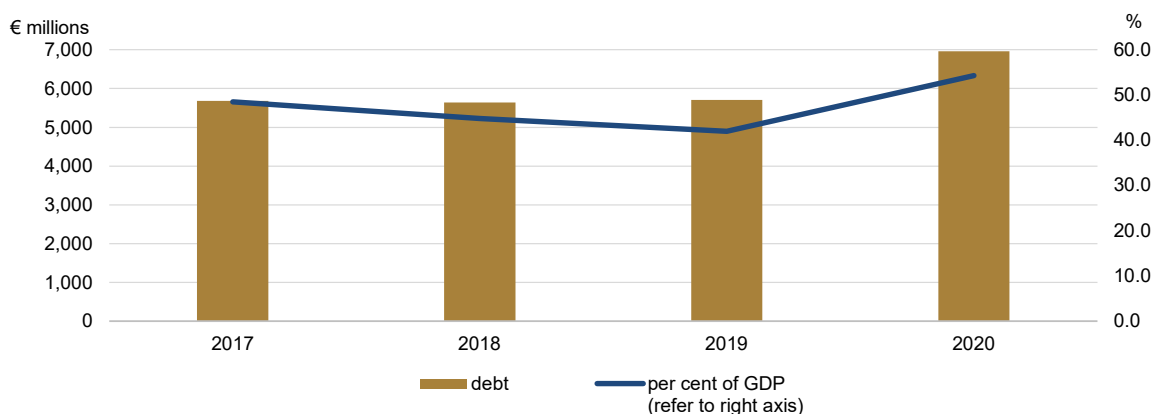
The General Government debt data reported in this release are consistent with the April 2021 Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) notification as published in news release [071/2021](#) dated 20 April ■

**Table 1. Structure of General Government debt by sector, year and debt holder**

		€ 000			
	Sector	2017	2018	2019	2020
Non-Financial Corporations	S11	57,566	77,482	119,001	156,610
Financial Corporations	S12	3,532,373	3,458,884	3,386,912	4,208,500
Households and NPISHs	S14+S15	1,401,372	1,367,129	1,331,990	1,331,624
Rest of the World	S2	687,094	735,999	864,902	1,263,286
<b>Total General Government Debt</b>		<b>5,678,404</b>	<b>5,639,494</b>	<b>5,702,804</b>	<b>6,960,019</b>
as a % of GDP		48.5%	44.8%	42.0%	54.3%

Source of GDP data: News Release 040/2021 dated 01 March 2021.

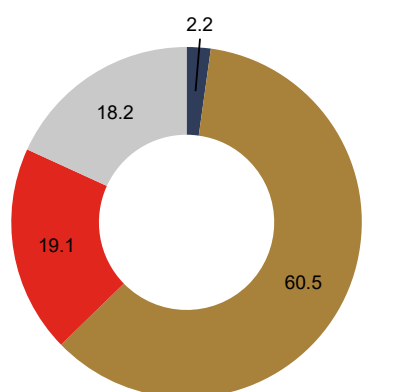
**Chart 1. General Government debt**



**Table 2. Structure of General Government debt by ESA code, year and instrument**

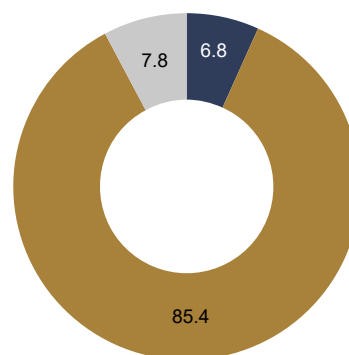
		€ 000			
	ESA code	2017	2018	2019	2020
Currency	AF29	177,826	277,013	379,020	470,878
Debt securities	AF3	5,153,961	4,999,421	4,915,450	5,945,125
Loans	AF4	346,618	363,060	408,334	544,017
<b>Total General Government Debt</b>		<b>5,678,404</b>	<b>5,639,494</b>	<b>5,702,804</b>	<b>6,960,019</b>

**Chart 2. Debt holders by institutional sector (%): 2020**



■ Non-Financial Corporations ■ Financial Corporations  
■ Households and NPISHs ■ Rest of the World

**Chart 3. Debt by financial instrument (%): 2020**



■ Currency ■ Debt securities ■ Loans

**Table 3. Structure of General Government debt by year and currency of issuance**

	€ 000			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Debt in national currency	5,678,296	5,639,406	5,702,727	6,959,963
Debt in foreign currencies	108	88	77	56
of which: US Dollar	0	0	0	0
Canadian Dollar	108	88	77	56

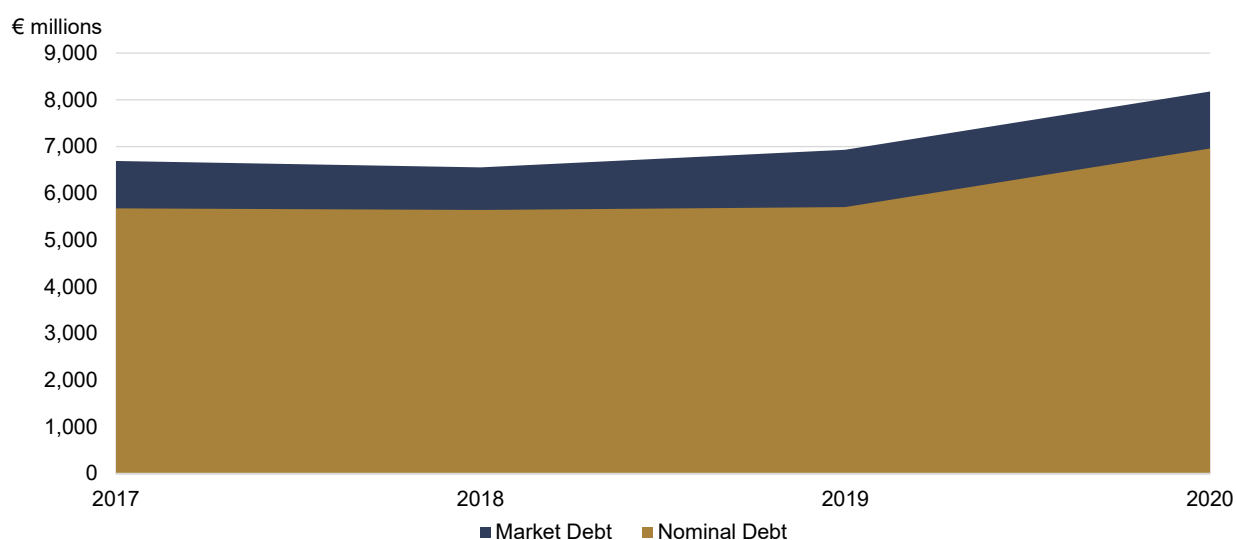
**Table 4. Apparent cost of debt by year**  
(%)

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Apparent cost of debt *	3.7	3.4	3.2	2.7

\* The apparent cost of debt may be defined as the interest rate applicable to the whole nominal debt

**Table 5. Market value of debt by year**

	€ 000			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Market value of total debt	6,689,081	6,551,096	6,932,528	8,178,353

**Chart 4. Nominal debt compared to market debt**

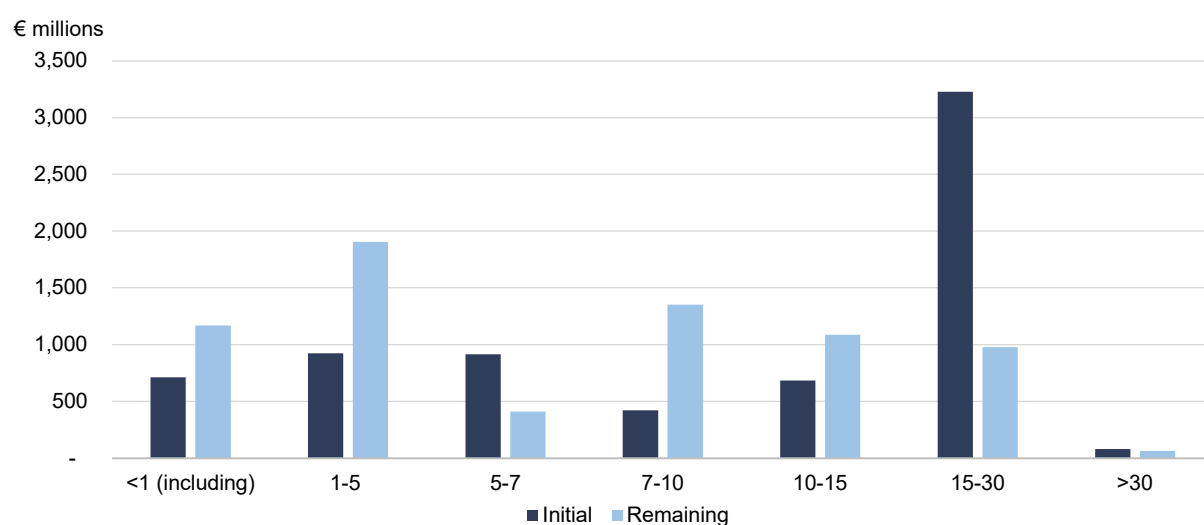
Maastricht debt is in nominal value, which is considered equivalent to the face value, and represents in some cases the value of right/commitment on principal resulting from a financial instrument i.e. the undiscounted amount of the principal that the government will have to pay to creditors at maturity. ESA2010 debt is in market value, based on the price of a security as determined dynamically by buyers and sellers in an open market and includes also accrued interest.

**Table 6. Structure of General Government debt by year and initial maturity**

	€ 000			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Initial maturity in years:				
<1 (including)	286,195	404,680	422,391	710,275
1-5	395,894	419,695	447,553	924,089
5-7	755,729	730,698	730,634	913,888
7-10	274,043	265,264	410,580	420,161
10-15	604,977	615,674	575,465	683,190
15-30	3,281,833	3,123,749	3,036,447	3,228,682
>30	79,734	79,734	79,734	79,734
<b>Total General Government Debt</b>	<b>5,678,404</b>	<b>5,639,494</b>	<b>5,702,804</b>	<b>6,960,019</b>

**Table 7. Structure of General Government debt by year and remaining maturity**

	€ 000			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Average remaining maturity of total debt, in years and months	9 years; 5 months	8 years; 10 months	8 years; 11 months	8 years; 8 months
Remaining maturity in years:				
<1 (including)	691,160	983,557	871,210	1,169,127
1-5	1,839,871	1,742,920	1,575,839	1,904,154
5-7	252,786	488,431	187,872	409,239
7-10	161,706	278,416	849,467	1,351,860
10-15	1,545,121	1,526,328	1,351,755	1,086,732
15-30	1,156,619	594,426	843,673	975,919
>30	31,140	25,417	22,987	62,987
<b>Total General Government Debt</b>	<b>5,678,404</b>	<b>5,639,494</b>	<b>5,702,804</b>	<b>6,960,019</b>

**Chart 5. Debt by initial and remaining maturity: 2020**

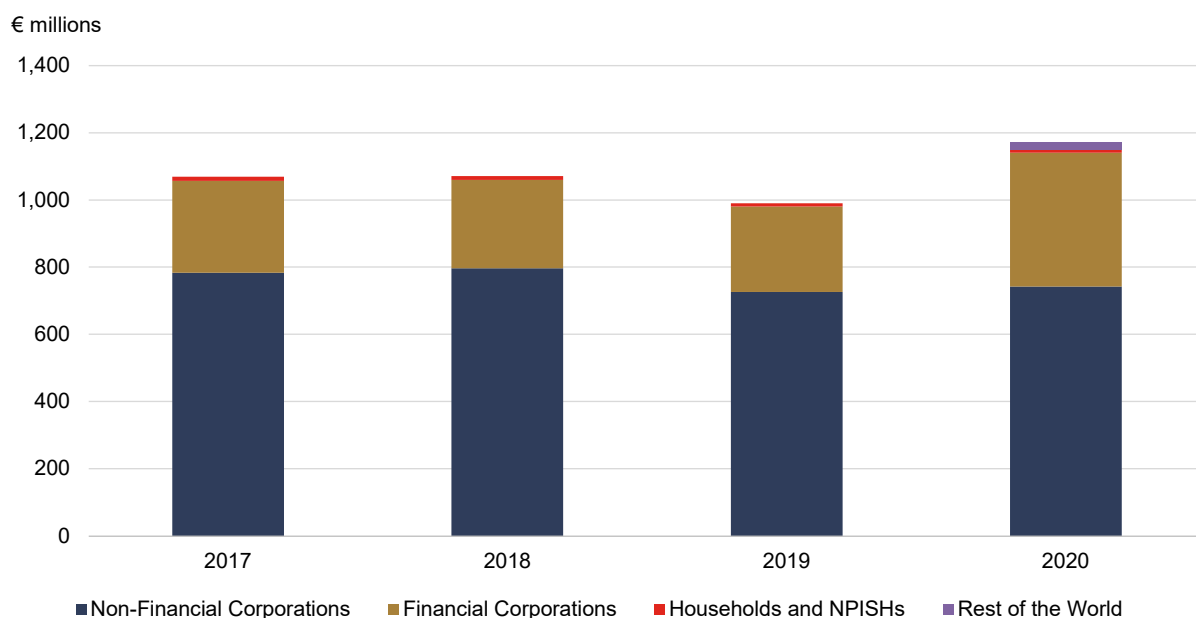
The initial maturity is the final payment date of a loan or a financial instrument as announced at the date of issuance, while the remaining maturity is the remaining time until the expiration or repayment of the loan or financial instrument.

**Table 8. Government guarantees by sector, year and holder**

		€ 000			
	Sector	2017	2018	2019	2020
Non-Financial Corporations	S11	783,341	796,683	725,864	742,470
Financial Corporations	S12	273,167	262,855	254,381	398,258
Households and NPISHs	S14+S15	12,784	11,523	10,011	8,860
Rest of the World	S2	0	0	0	23,044
<b>Total Government Guarantees</b>		<b>1,069,292</b>	<b>1,071,062</b>	<b>990,256</b>	<b>1,172,632</b>
as a % of GDP		9.1%	8.5%	7.3%	9.1%

Source of GDP data: News Release 040/2021 dated 01 March 2021.

**Chart 6. Government guarantees' beneficiaries by sector: 2020**



Guarantees are arrangements whereby the guarantor undertakes to a lender that if a borrower defaults, the guarantor will make good the loss the lender would otherwise suffer (ESA 2010 B5.1.1). Government guarantees include guarantees granted by EBU but exclude government guarantees provided to EBU.

## Methodological Notes

1. This release presents Government debt in line with the methodology defined in the Maastricht Treaty (Article 104). The basic conceptual reference framework for this exercise is the ESA 2010 Manual on Government Deficit and Debt (2019 edition) which is in turn based on the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA 2010). This compliance with the reference framework allows for the international comparability of the data.
2. General Government Sector (S.13 sector according to the ESA 2010 definitions) is made up of the Central Government Sector (S.1311) and the Local Government Sector (S.1313). The Central Government Sector includes the Budgetary Central Government, made up of Government Ministries and Departments and the Extra Budgetary Units (EBUs).
3. Figures in the tables presented may not add up due to rounding.
4. Data may be subject to revision.
5. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:  
Statistical Concepts: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/concepts.aspx>  
Metadata: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/reports.aspx?id=2>  
Glossary: [https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources\\_and\\_Methods/Unit\\_A2/Public\\_Finance/Pages/Structure-of-General-Government-Debt.aspx](https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_A2/Public_Finance/Pages/Structure-of-General-Government-Debt.aspx)  
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**European statistics comparable to data in this News Release are available at:**

[EUROSTAT Website/Homepage/Statistics Database](#)

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>Government deficit and debt (gov\_10dd)

>Structure of government debt (gov\_10dd\_sgd)

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