BUDGET SYSTEM AND CONCEPTS AND GLOSSARY

The budget system of the United States Government provides the means for the President and Congress to decide how much money to spend, what to spend it on, and how to raise the money they have decided to spend. Through the budget system, they determine the allocation of resources among the agencies of the Federal Government. The budget system focuses primarily on dollars, but it also allocates other resources, such as Federal employment. The decisions made in the budget process affect the nation as a whole, State and local governments, and individual Americans. Many budget decisions have worldwide significance. The Congress and the President enact budget decisions into law. The budget system ensures that these laws are carried out.

This chapter provides an overview of the budget system and explains some of the more important budget concepts. It includes summary dollar amounts to illustrate major concepts. Other chapters of the budget documents discuss these amounts, and more detailed amounts, in greater depth. A glossary of budget terms appears at the end of the chapter.

Various laws, enacted to carry out requirements of the Constitution, govern the budget system. The chapter refers to the principal ones by title throughout the text and gives complete citations in the section just preceding the glossary.

THE BUDGET PROCESS

The budget process has three main phases, each of which is interrelated with the others:

(1) Formulation of the President's budget;
(2) Congressional action on the budget; and
(3) Budget execution.

Formulation of the President's Budget

The Budget of the United States Government consists of several volumes that set forth the President's financial proposal with recommended priorities for the allocation of resources by the Government. The primary focus of the budget is on the budget year the next fiscal year for which Congress needs to make appropriations, in this case 2003. (Fiscal year 2003 will begin on October 1, 2002 and end on September 30, 2003.) The budget also covers at least the four years following the budget year in order to reflect the effect of budget decisions over the longer term. It includes the funding levels provided for the current year, in this case 2002, so that the reader can compare the budget estimates to the most recently enacted levels, and it incl+udes data on the most recently completed fiscal year, in this case 2001, so that the reader can compare budget estimates to actual accounting data.

The President begins the process of formulating the budget by establishing general budget and fiscal policy guidelines, usually by the spring of each year, at least nine months before the President transmits the budget to Congress and at least 18 months before the fiscal year begins. (See the Budget Calendar below.) Based on these guidelines, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) works with the Federal agencies to establish specific policy directions and planning levels for the agencies, both for the budget year and for at least the following four years to guide the preparation of their budget requests.

During the formulation of the budget, the President, the Director of OMB, and other officials in the Executive Office of the President continually exchange information, proposals, and evaluations bearing on policy decisions with the Secretaries of the departments and the heads of the other Government agencies. Decisions reflected in previously enacted budgets, including the one for the fiscal year in progress, and reactions to the last proposed budget (which Congress is considering when the process of preparing the upcoming budget begins) influence decisions concerning the upcoming budget. So do projections of the economic outlook, prepared jointly by the Council of Economic Advisers, OMB, and the Treasury Department.

In early fall, agencies submit their budget requests to OMB, where analysts review them and identify issues that OMB officials need to discuss with the agencies. OMB and the agencies resolve many issues themselves. Others require the involvement of the President and White House policy officials. This decision-making process is usually completed by late December. At that time, the final stage of developing detailed budget data and the preparation of the budget documents begins.

The decision-makers must consider the effects of economic and technical assumptions on the budget estimates. Interest rates, economic growth, the rate of inflation, the unemployment rate, and the number of people eligible for various benefit programs, among other things, affect Government spending and receipts. Small changes in these assumptions can affect budget estimates by billions of dollars. (Chapter 2, "Economic Assumptions," in the Analytical Perspectives volume of the budget provides more information on this subject.)

Statutory limitations on changes in receipts and outlays also influence budget decisions (see Budget Enforcement below).

Thus, the budget formulation process involves the simultaneous consideration of the resource needs of individual programs, the allocation of resources among the agencies and functions of the Federal Government, the total outlays and receipts that are appropriate in relation to current and prospective economic conditions, and statutory constraints.

The law governing the President's budget specifies that the President is to transmit the budget to Congress on or after the first Monday in January but not later than the first Monday in February of each year for the following fiscal year, which begins on October 1. This gives Congress eight to nine months before the fiscal year begins to act on the budget.

In some years, for various reasons, the President cannot adhere to the normal schedule. One reason is that the current law does not require an outgoing President to transmit a budget, and it is impractical for an incoming President to complete a budget within a few days of taking office on January 20th. President Clinton, the first President subject to the current requirement, submitted a report to Congress on February 17, 1993, describing the comprehensive economic plan he proposed for the Nation and containing summary budget information. He transmitted the Budget of the United States for 1994 on April 8, 1993. President George W. Bush similarly submitted an initial document, *A Blueprint for New Beginnings A Responsible Budget for America's Priorities,* to Congress on February 28, 2001, and transmitted the Budget of the United States for Fiscal Year 2002 on April 9, 2001.

In some years, the late or pending enactment of appropriations acts, other spending legislation, and tax laws considered in the previous budget cycle have delayed preparation and transmittal of complete budgets. For this reason, for example, President Reagan submitted his budget for 1988 forty-five days after the date specified in law. In other years, Presidents have submitted abbreviated budget documents on the due date, sending the more detailed documents weeks later. For example, President Clinton transmitted an abbreviated budget document to Congress on February 5, 1996, because of uncertainty over 1996 appropriations as well as possible changes in mandatory programs and tax policy. He transmitted a Budget Supplement and other budget volumes in March 1996.

Congressional Action [1]

Congress considers the President's budget proposals and approves, modifies, or disapproves them. It can change funding levels, eliminate programs, or add programs not requested by the President. It can add or eliminate taxes and other sources of receipts, or make other changes that affect the amount of receipts collected.

Congress does not enact a budget as such. Through the process of adopting a budget resolution (described below), it agrees on levels for total spending and receipts, the size of the deficit or surplus, and the debt limit. The budget resolution then provides the framework within which congressional committees prepare appropriations bills and other spending and receipts legislation. Congress provides spending authority for specified purposes in several regular appropriations acts each year (traditionally thirteen). It also enacts changes each year in other laws that affect spending and receipts. Both appropriations acts and these other laws are discussed in the following paragraphs.

In making appropriations, Congress does not vote on the level of outlays (spending) directly, but rather on budget authority, which is the authority provided by law to incur financial obligations that will result in outlays. In a separate process, prior to making appropriations, Congress usually enacts legislation that authorizes an agency to carry out particular programs and, in some cases, limits the amount that can be appropriated for the programs. Some authorizing legislation expires after one year, some expires after a specified number of years, and some does not expire. Congress may enact appropriations for a program even though there is no specific authorization for it.

Congress begins its work on the budget shortly after it receives the President's budget. Under the procedures established by the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, Congress decides on budget totals before completing action on individual appropriations. The Act requires each standing committee of the House and Senate to recommend budget levels and report legislative plans concerning matters within the committee's jurisdiction to the Budget Committee in each body. The Budget Committees then initiate the concurrent resolution on the budget. The budget resolution sets levels for total receipts and for budget authority and outlays, both in total and by functional category (see Functional Classification below). It also sets levels for the budget deficit or surplus and debt.

In the report on the budget resolution, the Budget Committees allocate the amounts of budget authority and outlays within the functional category totals to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the other committees that have jurisdiction over the programs in the functions. The Appropriations Committees are required, in turn, to allocate amounts of budget authority and outlays among their respective subcommittees. The subcommittees may not exceed their allocations in drafting spending bills. The other committees with jurisdiction over spending and receipts may make allocations among their subcommittees but are not required to. The Budget Committees' reports may discuss assumptions about the level of funding for major programs. While these assumptions do not bind the committees and subcommittees with jurisdiction over the programs, they may influence their decisions. The budget resolution may contain "reconciliation directives" (discussed below) to the committees responsible for tax laws and for spending not controlled by annual appropriation acts, in order to conform the level of re-

[1] For a fuller discussion of the congressional budget process, see Robert Keith and Allen Schick, Manual on the Federal Budget Process (Congressional Research Service Report 98–720 GOV, August 28, 1998) and Introduction to the Federal Budget Process (Congressional Research Service Report 98–721 GOV, January 2, 2001).

ceipts and this type of spending to the levels specified in the budget resolution.

The congressional timetable calls for the whole Congress to adopt the budget resolution by April 15 of each year, but Congress regularly misses this deadline. Once Congress passes a budget resolution, a member of Congress can raise a point of order to block a bill that would exceed a committee's allocation.

A concurrent resolution, such as the one on the budget, is not a law and, therefore, does not require the President's approval. However, Congress considers the President's views in preparing budget resolutions, because legislation developed to meet congressional budget allocations does require the President's approval. In some years, the President and the joint leadership of Congress have formally agreed on plans to reduce the deficit or balance the budget. These agreements were reflected in the budget resolution and legislation passed for those years.

Appropriations bills are initiated in the House. They provide the budget authority for the majority of Federal programs. The Appropriations Committee in each body has jurisdiction over annual appropriations. These committees are divided into subcommittees that hold hearings and review detailed budget justification materials prepared by the agencies within the subcommittee's jurisdiction. After a bill has been drafted by a subcommittee, the committee and the whole House, in turn, must approve the bill, usually with amendments to the original version. The House then forwards the bill to the Senate, where a similar review follows. If the Senate disagrees with the House on particular matters in the bill, which is often the case, the two bodies form a conference committee (consisting of Members of both bodies) to resolve the differences. The conference committee revises the bill and returns it to both bodies for approval. When the revised bill is agreed to, first in the House and then in the Senate, Congress sends it to the President for approval or veto.

The President can only approve or veto an entire bill. He cannot approve or veto selected parts of a bill. In 1996, Congress enacted the Line Item Veto Act, granting the President limited authority to cancel new spending and limited tax benefits when he signs laws enacted by the Congress. However, in 1998, the Supreme Court declared the authority provided by the Act to be unconstitutional.

For 20 of the last 21 years, including 2002, appropriations bills have not been enacted by the beginning of the fiscal year. When Congress does not complete action on one or more appropriations bills by the beginning of the fiscal year, it usually enacts a joint resolution called a "continuing resolution," which is similar to an appropriations bill, to provide authority for the affected agencies to continue operations at some specified level up to a specific date or until their regular appropriations are enacted. In some years, a continuing resolution has funded a portion or all of the Government for the entire year. Congress must present these resolutions to the President for approval or veto. In some cases, Presidents have rejected continuing resolutions because they contained unacceptable provisions. Left without funds, Government agencies were required by law to shut down operations with exceptions for some activities until Congress passed a continuing resolution the President would approve. Shutdowns have lasted for periods of a day to several weeks.

As explained earlier, Congress also provides budget authority in laws other than appropriations acts. In fact, while annual appropriations acts control the spending for the majority of Federal programs, they control only one-third of the total spending in a typical year. Permanent laws, called authorizing legislation, control the rest of the spending. This category of spending includes interest the Government pays on the public debt. It also includes the spending of several major programs, such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, unemployment insurance, and Federal employee retirement. This chapter discusses the control of budget authority and outlays in greater detail under BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OTHER BUDGETARY RESOURCES, OBLIGATIONS, AND OUTLAYS.

Almost all taxes and most other receipts result from permanent laws. The House initiates tax bills, specifically in the Ways and Means Committee. In the Senate, the Finance Committee has jurisdiction over tax laws.

The budget resolution often includes reconciliation directives, which require authorizing committees to change permanent laws that affect receipts and outlays. They direct each designated committee to report amendments to the laws under the committee's jurisdiction that would change the levels of receipts and spending controlled by the laws. The directives specify the dollar amount of changes that each designated committee is expected to achieve, but do not specify the laws to be changed or the changes to be made. However, the Budget Committees' reports on the budget resolution may discuss assumptions about how the laws would be changed. Like other assumptions in the report, they do not bind the committees of jurisdiction but may influence their decisions.

The committees subject to reconciliation directives draft the implementing legislation. Such legislation may, for example, change the tax code, revise benefit formulas or eligibility requirements for benefit programs, or authorize Government agencies to charge fees to cover some of their costs. In some years, Congress has enacted an omnibus budget reconciliation act, which combines the amendments to implement reconciliation directives in a single act. These acts, together with appropriations acts for the year, often implement agreements between the President and the Congress. They may include other matters, such as laws providing the means for enforcing these agreements, as described below.

Budget Enforcement

The Budget Enforcement Act (BEA), first enacted in 1990 and extended in 1993 and 1997, significantly amended the laws pertaining to the budget process, including the Congressional Budget Act, the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act, and the law pertaining to the President's budget (see PRINCIPAL BUDGET LAWS, later in the chapter). The BEA constrains legislation enacted through 2002 that would increase spending or decrease receipts. The BEA expires after 2002. The Administration will work with Congress to develop appropriate controls to ensure that enacted legislation is consistent with the proposed funding levels. Enforcement could include discretionary caps and PAYGO, a joint budget resolution that is signed by the President, or some other form of controls on legislative action.

The BEA divides spending into two types—discretionary spending and direct spending. Discretionary spending is controlled through annual appropriations acts. Funding for salaries and other operating expenses of Government agencies, for example, is usually discretionary because it is usually provided by appropriations acts. Direct spending is more commonly called mandatory spending. Mandatory spending is controlled by permanent laws. Medicare and Medicaid payments, unemployment insurance benefits, and farm price supports are examples of mandatory spending, because permanent laws authorize payments for those purposes. The BEA specifically defines funding for the Food Stamp program as mandatory spending, even though appropriations acts provide the funding. The BEA includes receipts under the same rules that apply to mandatory spending, because permanent laws generally control receipts. The BEA constrains discretionary spending differently from mandatory spending and receipts, as explained in the following paragraphs.

The BEA defines categories of discretionary spending and specifies dollar limits ("caps") on the amount of spending in each category. The categories and their amounts are determined by negotiations within Congress, and between Congress and the President, each time the BEA is amended. Amounts cannot be shifted from one category to another, and the BEA provides no incentive for appropriating less than the cap levels. Thus, the caps tend to be targets for the amount of spending in each category. The caps apply to both budget authority and outlays—except in the case of the highway and mass transit caps, which apply only to outlays.

The categories have varied from year to year under the original and amended versions of the BEA. The current categories, except for the one called "Other Discretionary," were added by amendments to the BEA by other laws. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA–21) (Public Law 105–178) added categories for highway and mass transit spending for 1999 through 2003. The Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–291) added a category for conservation spending for 2002 through 2006.[2]

[2] In addition to specifying caps for this category, the BEA specifies minimum levels of spending for six subcategories. The subcategories are not binding and are not enforced by sequestration.

Because the BEA itself expires after 2002, the categories in later years will apply to budgets for those years only if an extension of the BEA is enacted and those categories are retained. In some years prior to 2000, the BEA divided discretionary spending into the major categories of national defense, international, domestic spending, and violent crime reduction. The *Historical Tables* volume of the budget provides comparable data for the major BEA categories for 1962 through 2007.

The BEA includes general requirements for OMB to adjust the caps up or down for changes in concepts and definitions, to accommodate appropriations designated by the President and the Congress as emergency spending, and to allow a limited amount of leeway when the level of budget authority does not exceed the budget authority cap but the estimate of outlays resulting from the budget authority exceeds the outlay cap.

The BEA also specifies cap adjustments for certain programs for various reasons. For example, the caps must be increased up to a specified dollar limit to accommodate appropriations for continuing disability reviews by the Social Security Administration. This adjustment was included in the BEA because it was determined that the reviews reduce overall spending by eliminating benefit payments to ineligible individuals.

The caps adjustments required for the highways and mass transit categories are designed to ensure that spending levels are consistent with the level of receipts that are earmarked for those programs. The highways and mass transit caps on outlays were based on estimates, at the time TEA–21 was drafted, of gasoline excise taxes and other receipts credited to the Highway Trust Fund each year. The TEA–21 amendments require OMB to adjust these caps up or down for the difference in the amount of receipts actually collected in the past year and for Treasury's reestimates of the amount the Government expects to collect in the budget year. For 2003, the law requires OMB to make a downward adjustment, due to lower than expected collections of receipts. (See Chapter 14, "Preview Report," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget for additional information.)

The cap adjustments required for the conservation spending category are designed to encourage Congress to appropriate up to the cap level. If appropriations for a given year in the conservation spending category are less than the caps, the BEA requires OMB to increase the caps for the following year by the shortfall. And, if appropriations for a given year in a subcategory of the conservation spending category are less than the specified level for that category, the BEA requires OMB to increase the minimum level for the following year by the shortfall.

In order to link the full cost of resources used with results achieved in support of budgeting and managing for performance, the Administration also proposes to fully accrue pensions and retiree health benefits for Federal employees. This additional funding does not constitute additional program level; instead, it ensures that the budget recognizes and accurately measures the full costs of existing programs. The Administration's budget requests sufficient funding by account for this conceptual budget change (see Chapter 1, "Budget Performance Integration" and Chapter 14, "Preview Report," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget).

The following table shows the adjusted caps for 2000 through 2002. The Preview Report (described below) explains the cap adjustments.

Table 25–1. DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS

(In billions of dollars)

	2001	2002	2003
Highways:			
Budget Authority	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outlays	27	29	28
Mass transit:			
Budget Authority	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outlays	5	5	6
Conservation spending:			
Budget Authority	N/A	2	2
Outlays	N/A	1	2
Other discretionary:			
Budget Authority	661	706	N/A
Outlays	652	731	N/A
Total discretionary:			
Budget Authority	661	708	2
Outlays	684	767	35

N/A means that this category was not applicable in the specified year.

If the amount of budget authority provided in appropriations acts for a given year exceeds the cap on budget authority for a category, or the amount of outlays in that year exceeds the cap on outlays for a category, the BEA requires a procedure, called sequestration, for reducing the spending in that category. A sequestration reduces spending for most programs in the category by a uniform percentage. The BEA specifies special rules for reducing some programs and exempts some programs from sequestration entirely. In some years (including 2002), the caps have been circumvented by designating funds as emergency spending (such as spending for the decennial census) and by using advance appropriations to spread budget authority over more than one year, when there is no programmatic purpose for doing so.

The BEA does not cap mandatory spending or require a certain level of receipts. Instead, it requires that all laws enacted through 2002 that affect mandatory spending or receipts must be enacted on a ***"pay-as-you-go" (PAYGO)*** basis. This means that if a law increases the deficit or reduces a surplus in the budget year or any of the four following years, another law must be enacted with an offsetting reduction in spending or increase in receipts for each year that is affected. Legislated increases in benefit payments, for example, would have to be offset by legislated reductions in other mandatory spending or increases in receipts. Otherwise, a sequestration would be triggered at the end of the session of Congress in the fiscal year in which the deficit would be increased. The BEA sequestration procedures require a uniform reduction of mandatory spending programs that are neither exempt nor subject to special rules. The BEA exempts Social Security, interest on the public debt, Federal employee retirement, Medicaid, most means-tested entitlements, deposit insurance, other prior legal obligations, and most unemployment benefits. A special rule limits the sequestration of Medicare spending to no more than four percent, and special rules for some other programs limit the size of a sequestration for those programs. As a result of exemptions and special rules, only about three percent of all mandatory spending is subject to sequestration, including the maximum amounts allowed under special rules.

The PAYGO rules do not apply to increases in mandatory spending or decreases in receipts that are not the result of new laws. For example, mandatory spending for benefit programs, such as unemployment insurance, rises when the population of eligible beneficiaries rises, and many benefit payments are automatically increased for inflation under existing laws. Likewise, tax receipts decrease when the profits of private businesses decline as the result of economic conditions.

The BEA requires OMB to make the estimates and calculations that determine whether there is to be a sequestration and report them to the President and Congress. It requires the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to make the same estimates and calculations, and the Director of OMB to explain any differences between the OMB and CBO estimates. The BEA requires the President to issue a sequestration order without changing any of the particulars of the OMB report. It requires the General Accounting Office to prepare compliance reports.

The BEA requires OMB and CBO to publish three sequestration reports—a "preview"' report at the time the President submits the budget, an "update" report in August, and a "final" report at the end of a session of Congress (usually in the fall of each year). The preview report discusses the status of discretionary and PAYGO sequestration, based on current law. This report also explains the adjustments that are required by law to the discretionary caps and publishes the revised caps. (See Chapter 14, "Preview Report," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget.) The update and final reports revise the preview report estimates to reflect the effects of newly enacted discretionary and PAYGO laws. The BEA requires OMB and CBO to estimate the effects of appropriations acts and PAYGO laws immediately after each one is enacted and to include these estimates, without change, in the update and final reports. OMB's final report estimates trigger a sequestration if the appropriations enacted for the current year exceed the caps or if the cumulative effect of PAYGO legislation is estimated to increase a deficit or reduce a surplus. In addition, CBO estimates the effects of bills as they move through Congress for the purpose of the Budget Committees' enforcement of the budget resolution within Congress. OMB provides advisory estimates on bills that might have significant consequences as they move through Congress.

From the end of a session of Congress through the following June 30th, discretionary sequestrations take place whenever an appropriations act for the current fiscal year causes a cap to be exceeded. Because a sequestration in the last quarter of a fiscal year might be too disruptive, the BEA specifies that a sequestration that otherwise would be required then is to be accomplished by reducing the cap for the next fiscal year. These requirements ensure that supplemental appropriations enacted during the fiscal year are subject to the budget enforcement provisions.

Budget Execution

Government agencies may not spend more than Congress has appropriated, and they may use funds only for purposes specified in law. The Antideficiency Act prohibits them from spending or obligating the Government to spend in advance of an appropriation, unless specific authority to do so has been provided in law. Additionally, the Act requires the President to apportion the budgetary resources available for most executive branch agencies. The President has delegated this authority to OMB, which usually apportions by time periods (usually by quarter of the fiscal year) and sometimes by activities. Agencies may request OMB to reapportion funds during the year to accommodate changing circumstances. This system helps to ensure that funds are available to cover operations for the entire year.

During the budget execution phase, the Government often finds that it needs to spend more money than Congress has appropriated for the fiscal year because of circumstances that were not anticipated when the budget was formulated and appropriations enacted for that fiscal year. For example, more money might be needed in order to provide adequate assistance to an area stricken by an unusually severe natural disaster. Under such circumstances, Congress may enact a supplemental appropriation.

On the other hand, changing circumstances may reduce the need for certain spending for which Congress has appropriated funds. Under the requirements of the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, the President cannot simply decline to spend appropriations. The President may propose deferrals or rescissions. Deferrals, which are temporary withholdings, take effect immediately unless overturned by an act of Congress. The President may only defer funds to provide for contingencies, to achieve savings made possible through changes in requirements or greater efficiency of operations, or as otherwise specifically provided in law. He may not defer funds for policy reasons. In 2001, over $1.9 billion in deferrals were proposed, and Congress overturned none. Rescissions, which permanently cancel budget authority, take effect only if Congress passes a law approving them. The law may approve only part of a rescission. If Congress does not pass such a law within 45 days of continuous session, the President must make the funds available for spending. The President may propose a rescission for any reason. In total, Congress has rescinded about one-third of the amount of funds that Presidents have proposed for rescission since enactment of the Impoundment Control Act. In 2001, no rescissions were proposed.

Budget Calendar

The following timetable highlights the scheduled dates for significant budget events during the year.

Between the 1st Monday in January and the 1st Monday in February	President transmits the budget, including a sequestration preview report.
Six weeks later	Congressional committees report budget estimates to Budget Committees.
April 15	Action to be completed on congressional budget resolution.
May 15	House consideration of annual appropriations bills may begin.
June 15	Action to be completed on reconciliation.
June 30	Action on appropriations to be completed by House.
July 15	President transmits Mid-Session Review of the budget.
August 20	OMB updates the sequestration preview report.
October 1	Fiscal year begins.
15 days after the end of a session of Congress	OMB issues final sequestration report, and the President issues a sequestration order, if necessary.

COVERAGE OF THE BUDGET

Federal Government and Budget Totals

Table 25–2. TOTALS FOR THE BUDGET AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

(In billions of dollars)

	2001 actual	Estimate	
		2002	2003
Budget authority			
Unified	1,960	2,085	2,163
On-budget	1,604	1,721	1,789
Off-budget	356	364	374
Receipts:			
Unified	1,991	1,946	2,048
On-budget	1,484	1,429	1,503
Off-budget	508	517	545
Outlays:			
Unified	1,864	2,052	2,128
On-budget	1,517	1,691	1,762
Off-budget	347	362	367
Surplus/Deficit (-):			
Unified	127	–106	–80
On-budget	–33	–262	–259
Off-budget	161	156	179

The budget documents provide information on all Federal agencies and programs. However, because the laws governing Social Security (the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and the Federal Disability Insurance trust funds) and the Postal Service Fund exclude the receipts and outlays for those activities from the budget totals and from the calculation of the deficit or surplus for Budget Enforcement Act purposes, the budget presents on-budget and off-budget totals. The off-budget totals include the transactions excluded by law from the budget totals. The on-budget and off-budget amounts are added together to derive the totals for the Federal Government. These are sometimes referred to as the unified or consolidated budget totals.

Neither the on-budget nor the off-budget totals include transactions of Government-sponsored enterprises, such as the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae). Federal laws established these enterprises for public policy purposes, but they are privately owned and operated corporations. Because of their close relationship to the Government, the budget discusses them and reports their financial data in the Appendix to the budget and in some detailed tables.

The *Appendix* includes a presentation for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for information only. The amounts are not included in either the on-budget or off-budget totals because of the independent status of the System within the Government. However, the Federal Reserve System transfers its net earnings to the Treasury, and the budget records them as receipts.

Functional Classification

The functional classification arrays budget authority, outlays, and other budget data according to the major purpose served such as agriculture, income security, and national defense. There are nineteen major functions, most of which are divided into subfunctions. For example, the Agriculture function comprises the subfunctions Farm Income Stabilization and Agricultural Research and Services. The functional classification is an integral part of the congressional budget process, and the functional array meets the Congressional Budget Act requirement for a presentation in the budget by national needs and agency missions and programs.

The following criteria are used in establishing functional categories and assigning activities to them:

- A function encompasses activities with similar purposes, emphasizing what the Federal Government seeks to accomplish rather than the means of accomplishment, the objects purchased, the clientele or geographic area served, or the Federal agency conducting the activity.
- A function must be of continuing national importance, and the amounts attributable to it must be significant.
- Each basic unit being classified (generally the appropriation or fund account) usually is classified according to its primary purpose and assigned to only one subfunction. However, some large accounts that serve more than one major purpose are subdivided into two or more subfunctions.

Chapter 26, "Detailed Functional Tables," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides detailed information on government activities by function and subfunction.

Agencies, Accounts, Programs, Projects, and Activities

Various summary tables in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provide information on budget authority, outlays, and offsetting collections and receipts arrayed by Federal agency. Chapter 27 of that volume, "Federal Programs by Agency and Account," consists of a table that lists budget authority and outlays by budget account within each agency and the totals for each agency of budget authority, outlays, and receipts that offset the agency spending totals. The *Appendix* provides budgetary, financial, and descriptive information about programs, projects, and activities by account within each agency. The *Appendix* also presents the most recently enacted appropriation language for an account and any changes that are proposed to be made for the budget year.

Types of Funds

Agency activities are financed through Federal funds and trust funds.

Federal funds comprise several types of funds. Receipt accounts of the ***general fund,*** which is the greater part of the budget, record receipts not earmarked by law for a specific purpose, such as almost all income tax receipts. The general fund also includes the proceeds of general borrowing. General fund appropriation accounts record general fund expenditures. General fund appropriations draw from general fund receipts and borrowing collectively and, therefore, are not specifically linked to receipt accounts. ***Special funds*** consist of receipt accounts for Federal fund receipts that laws have earmarked for specific purposes and the associated appropriation accounts for the expenditure of those receipts. ***Public enterprise funds*** are revolving funds used for programs authorized by law to conduct a cycle of business-type operations, primarily with the public, in which outlays generate collections. ***Intragovernmental funds*** are revolving funds that conduct business-type operations primarily within and between Government agencies. The collections and the outlays of revolving funds are recorded in the same budget account.

Trust funds account for the receipt and expenditure of monies by the Government for carrying out specific purposes and programs in accordance with the terms of a statute that designates the fund as a trust fund (such as the Highway Trust Fund) or for carrying out the stipulations of a trust where the Nation is the beneficiary (such as any of several trust funds for gifts and donations for specific purposes). ***Trust revolving funds*** are trust funds credited with collections earmarked by law to carry out a cycle of business-type operations.

The Federal budget meaning of the term "trust," as applied to trust fund accounts, differs significantly from its private sector usage. In the private sector, the beneficiary of a trust usually owns the trust's assets, which are managed by a trustee who must follow the stipulations of the trust. In contrast, the Federal Government owns the assets of most Federal trust funds, and it can raise or lower future trust fund collections and payments, or change the purposes for which the collections are used, by changing existing laws. There is no substantive difference between a trust fund and a special fund or between a trust revolving fund and a public enterprise revolving fund. The Government does act as a true trustee for some funds. For example, it maintains accounts on behalf of individual Federal employees in the Thrift Savings Fund, investing them as directed by the individual employee. The Government accounts for such funds in ***deposit funds,*** which are not included in the budget. (Chapter 16, "Trust Funds and Federal Funds," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides more information on this subject.)

Current Operating Expenditures and Capital Investment

The budget includes all types of spending, including both current operating expenditures and capital investment. Capital investment includes direct purchases of land, structures, equipment, and software. It also includes subsidies for capital investment provided by direct loans and loan guarantees; purchases of other financial assets; grants to state and local governments for purchases of physical assets; and the conduct of research, development, education, and training. (Chapter 7, "Federal Investment Spending and Capital Budgeting," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides more information on capital investment.)

RECEIPTS, OFFSETTING COLLECTIONS, AND OFFSETTING RECEIPTS

In General

The budget records money collected by Government agencies two different ways. Depending on the nature of the activity generating the collection, they are recorded as either:

- ***Receipts,*** which are compared in total to outlays (net of offsetting collections and receipts) in calculating the surplus or deficit; or
- ***Offsetting collections or offsetting receipts,*** which are deducted from gross outlays to produce net outlay figures.

Receipts

Receipts are collections that result from the Government's exercise of its sovereign power to tax or otherwise compel payment and gifts of money to the Government. Sometimes they are called governmental receipts. They consist mostly of individual and corporation income taxes and social insurance taxes, but also include excise taxes, compulsory user charges, customs duties, court fines, certain license fees, and deposits of earnings by the Federal Reserve System. Total receipts for the Federal Government include both on-budget and off-budget receipts (see the table, "Totals for the Budget and Federal Government," which appears earlier in this chapter.) Chapter 4, "Federal Receipts," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides more information on receipts.

Offsetting Collections and Receipts

Offsetting collections and receipts result from either of two kinds of transactions:

- ***Business-like or market-oriented activities with the public.*** The budget records the proceeds from the sale of postage stamps, the fees charged for admittance to recreation areas, and the proceeds from the sale of Government-owned land, for example, as offsetting collections or receipts. They are deducted from gross budget authority and outlays, rather than added to receipts. This treatment produces budget totals for receipts, budget authority, and outlays that represent governmental rather than market activity.
- ***Intragovernmental transactions.*** The budget also records collections by one Government account from another as offsetting collections or receipts. For example, the General Services Admin-

istration records payments it receives from other Government agencies for the rent of office space as offsetting collections in the Federal Buildings Fund. Intragovernmental offsetting collections and receipts are deducted from gross budget authority and outlays so that the budget totals measure the transactions of the Government with the public.

A table in Chapter 21, "Outlays to the Public, Net and Gross," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget, shows the effect of offsetting collections and receipts on gross outlays for each major Federal agency.

Although offsetting collections and offsetting receipts both offset gross budget authority and outlays, the budget accounts for them differently, as explained in the following sections.

Offsetting Collections

Some laws authorize agencies to credit collections directly to the account from which they will be spent and, usually, to spend the collections for the purpose of the account without further action by Congress. Most revolving funds operate with such authority. For example, a permanent law authorizes the Postal Service to use collections from the sale of stamps to finance its operations without a requirement for annual appropriations. The budget records these collections in the Postal Service Fund (a revolving fund) and records budget authority in an amount equal to the collections. In addition to revolving funds, some agencies are authorized to charge fees to defray a portion of costs for a program that are otherwise financed by appropriations from the general fund. In such cases, the budget records the offsetting collections and resulting budget authority in the program's general fund expenditure account. Similarly, intragovernmental collections authorized by some laws may be recorded as offsetting collections and budget authority in revolving funds or in general fund expenditure accounts.

Sometimes appropriations acts or provisions in other laws limit the obligations that can be financed by offsetting collections. In those cases, the budget records budget authority in the amount available to incur obligations.

Where accounts have offsetting collections, the budget shows the budget authority and outlays of the account both gross (before deducting offsetting collections) and net (after deducting offsetting collections). Totals for the agency, subfunction, and budget are net of offsetting collections.

While most offsetting collections credited to expenditure accounts result from business-like activity or are collected from other Government accounts, some are governmental in nature but are required by law to be treated as offsetting. The budget labels these "offsetting governmental collections."

Offsetting Receipts

Collections that are offset against gross outlays but are not authorized to be credited to expenditure accounts are credited to general fund, special fund, or trust fund receipt accounts and are called offsetting receipts. Offsetting receipts are deducted from budget authority and outlays in arriving at total budget authority and outlays. However, unlike offsetting collections credited to expenditure accounts, offsetting receipts do not offset budget authority and outlays at the account level. In most cases, they offset budget authority and outlays at the agency and subfunction levels. Offsetting receipts are subdivided into three categories, as follows:

- ***Proprietary receipts from the public.***—These are collections from the public that arise out of the business-type or market-oriented activities of the Government. Most proprietary receipts are deducted from the budget authority and outlay totals of the agency that conducts the activity generating the receipt and of the subfunction to which the activity is assigned. For example, fees for using National Parks are deducted from the totals for the Department of Interior, which has responsibility for the parks, and the Recreational Resources subfunction. Proprietary receipts from a few sources, however, are not offset against any specific agency or function and are classified as undistributed offsetting receipts. They are deducted from the Government-wide totals for budget authority and outlays. For example, the collections of rents and royalties from outer continental shelf lands are undistributed because the amounts are large and for the most part are not related to the spending of the agency that administers the transactions and the subfunction that records the administrative expenses.
- ***Intragovernmental transactions.***—These are collections of payments from expenditure accounts that are deposited into receipt accounts. Most intragovernmental transactions are deducted from the budget authority and outlays of the agency that conducts the activity generating the receipts and of the subfunction to which the activity is assigned. In two cases, however, intragovernmental transactions are classified as undistributed offsetting receipts. They appear as special deductions in computing total budget authority and outlays for the Government rather than as offsets at the agency level agencies' payments as employers into employee retirement trust funds and interest received by trust funds. The special treatment for these receipts is necessary because the amounts are large and would distort the agency totals, as measures of the agency's activities, if they were attributed to the agency.
- ***Offsetting governmental receipts.***—These are collections that are governmental in nature but are required by law to be treated as offsetting and are not authorized to be credited to expenditure accounts.

User Charges and Fees

User charges are fees assessed for the provision of Government services and for the sale or use of Government goods or resources. The payers of the user charge must be limited in the authorizing legislation to those receiving special benefits from, or subject to regulation by, the program or activity beyond the benefits received by the general public or broad segments of the public (such as those who pay income taxes or customs duties). User charges are defined and the policy regarding user charges is established in OMB Circular A–25, "User Charges" (July 8, 1993). The term encompasses proceeds from the sale or use of government goods and services, including the sale of natural resources (such as timber, oil, and minerals) and proceeds from asset sales (such as property, plant, and equipment).

User fees are a subset of user charges that are authorized to be utilized solely to support the program or activity for which it was levied. User fees are more limited in coverage than user charges. They do not include the sale of natural resources and assets, and they must be earmarked for the activity they finance by being credited to special or trust receipts accounts (as receipts or offsetting receipts) or to expenditure accounts (as offsetting collections). User charges that are credited to the general fund of the Treasury are not user fees by definition, because they are not utilized solely to support the program or activity for which they were levied.

The terms user charges and user fees do not refer to separate budget categories for collections. The budget records user charges and user fees as receipts or as offsetting collections or offsetting receipts, depending on whether the fee results primarily from the exercise of governmental powers or from business-like activity (unless the law requires governmental receipts to be classified as offsetting).

See Chapter 5, "User Fees and Other Collections," in the Analytical Perspectives volume of the budget, for a more detailed discussion of user charges, user fees, offsetting collections and receipts.

BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OTHER BUDGETARY RESOURCES, OBLIGATIONS, AND OUTLAYS

Budget Authority and Other Budgetary Resources

Budget authority is the authority provided in law to enter into legal obligations that will result in immediate or future outlays of Government funds. In other words, it is the amount of money that the law allows the Government to commit to be spent in current or future years. Government officials may obligate the Government to make outlays only to the extent they have been granted budget authority. The budget records budget authority as a dollar amount in the year when it first becomes available. Under the circumstances described below, unobligated balances of budget authority may be carried over into the next year. The budget does not record these balances as budget authority again. They do, however, constitute a budgetary resource that is available for obligation. In some cases, a provision of law (such as a limitation on obligations or a benefit formula) precludes the obligation of funds that would otherwise be available for obligation. In such cases, the budget records budget authority equal to the amount of obligations that can be incurred. (In a major exception to this rule, the budget authority recorded for the highway and mass transit programs financed by the Highway Trust Fund is the amount of budget authority (in the form of contract authority, which is described below) provided in authorizing statutes, even though the obligation limitations enacted in annual appropriations acts restrict the amount of obligations that can be incurred.)

In deciding the amount of budget authority to request for a program, project, or activity, agency officials estimate the total amount of obligations they will need to incur to achieve desired goals and subtract the amounts of unobligated balances available for these purposes. The amount of budget authority requested is influenced by the nature of the programs, projects, or activities being financed. For current operating expenditures, the amount requested usually covers needs for the year. For major procurement programs and construction projects, the Government generally applies a full funding policy. Under this policy, agencies must request an amount to be appropriated in the first year that they estimate will be adequate to complete an economically useful segment of a procurement or project, even though it may be obligated over several years. This policy is intended to ensure that the decision-makers take into account all costs and benefits fully at the time decisions are made to provide resources. It also avoids sinking money into a procurement or project without being certain if or when future funding will be available to complete the procurement or project.

Budget authority takes several forms:

- ***Appropriations,*** provided in annual appropriations acts or permanent laws, permit agencies to incur obligations and make payment;
- ***Authority to borrow,*** usually provided in permanent laws, permits agencies to incur obligations but requires them to borrow funds, usually from the general fund of the Treasury, to make payment;
- ***Contract authority,*** usually provided in permanent law, permits agencies to incur obligations in advance of a separate appropriation of the cash for payment or in anticipation of the collection of receipts that can be used for payment; and
- ***Spending authority from offsetting collections,*** usually provided in permanent law, permits agencies to credit offsetting collections to an ex-

penditure account, incur obligations, and make payment using the offsetting collections.

Because offsetting collections and receipts are deducted from gross budget authority, they are referred to as negative budget authority for some purposes, such as Congressional Budget Act provisions that pertain to budget authority.

Authorizing statutes usually determine the form of budget authority for a program. The authorizing statute may authorize a particular type of budget authority to be provided in annual appropriations acts, or it may provide one of the forms of budget authority directly, without the need for further appropriations. Most programs are funded by appropriations. An appropriation may make funds available from the general fund, special funds, or trust funds, or authorize the spending of offsetting collections credited to expenditure accounts, including revolving funds. Borrowing authority is usually authorized for business-like activities where the activity being financed is expected to produce income over time with which to repay the borrowing with interest. Contract authority is a traditional form of budget authority for certain programs, particularly transportation programs.

Annual appropriations acts generally make budget authority available for obligation only during the fiscal year to which the act applies. However, they specify many exceptions that allow budget authority for a particular purpose to remain available for obligation for a longer period or indefinitely (that is, until expended or until the program objectives have been attained). Typically, appropriations acts make budget authority for current operations available for only one year, and budget authority for construction and some research projects available for a specified number of years or indefinitely. Many appropriations of trust fund receipts make the budget authority available indefinitely. Only another law can extend a limited period of availability (see Reappropriation below). Budget authority provided in authorizing statutes usually remains available until expended.

Budget authority that is available for more than one year and that is not obligated in the year it becomes available is carried forward for obligation in a following year. In some cases, an account may have carried forward unobligated budget authority from more than one year. The sum of such amounts constitutes the account's ***unobligated balance.*** Budget authority that has been obligated but not paid constitutes the account's ***obligated balance.*** For example, in the case of salaries and wages, one to three weeks elapse between the time of obligation and the time of payment. In the case of major procurement and construction, payments may occur over a period of several years after the obligation is made. Obligated balances of budget authority at the end of the year are carried forward until the obligations are paid or the balances are canceled. (A general law cancels the obligated balances of budget authority that was made available for a definite period five years after the end of the period, and then other resources must be used to pay the obligations.) Due to such flows, a change in the amount of obligations incurred from one year to the next does not necessarily result from an equal change in the amount of budget authority available for that year and will not necessarily result in an equal change in the level of outlays in that year. Conversely, a change in the amount of budget authority available in any one year may change the level of obligations and outlays for several years to come. [3]

Congress usually makes budget authority available on the first day of the fiscal year for which the appropriations act is passed. Occasionally, the appropriations language specifies a different timing. The language may provide an ***advance appropriation*** budget authority that does not become available until one year or more beyond the fiscal year for which the appropriations act is passed. ***Forward funding*** refers to budget authority that is made available for obligation beginning in the last quarter of the fiscal year (beginning on July 1st) for the financing of ongoing grant programs during the next fiscal year. This kind of funding is used mostly for education programs, so that obligations for grants can be made prior to the beginning of the next school year. For certain benefit programs funded by annual appropriations, the appropriation provides for ***advance funding***—budget authority that is to be charged to the appropriation in the succeeding year but which authorizes obligations to be incurred in the last quarter of the current fiscal year if necessary to meet benefit payments in excess of the specific amount appropriated for the year.

Provisions of law that extend the availability of unobligated amounts that have expired or would otherwise expire are called ***reappropriations.*** Reappropriations count as new budget authority in the fiscal year in which the balances become newly available. For example, if a 2003 appropriations act extends the availability of unobligated budget authority that otherwise would expire at the end of 2002, new budget authority would be recorded for 2003.

For purposes of the Budget Enforcement Act (discussed earlier under "Budget Enforcement"), the budget classifies budget authority as ***discretionary*** or ***mandatory.*** Generally, budget authority is discretionary if provided in an annual appropriations act and mandatory if provided in authorizing legislation. However, the BEA requires the budget authority provided in annual appropriations acts for certain specifically identified programs to be treated as mandatory. This is because the authorizing legislation in these cases entitles beneficiaries to receive payment or otherwise obligates the Government to make payment, even though the payments are funded by a subsequent appropriation. Since the authorizing legislation effectively determines the amount of budget authority required, the BEA classifies it as mandatory. As discussed later, the discretionary

[3] A separate report, "Balances of Budget Authority," provides additional information on balances. The National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, makes the report available shortly after the budget is transmitted.

and mandatory classification applies to the outlays that flow from budget authority, according to the classification of the budget authority.

The amount of budget authority recorded in the budget depends on whether the law provides budget authority in a specific amount or specifies a variable factor that determines the amount. It is considered ***definite*** if the legislation that provides it specifies a dollar amount (which may be an amount not to be exceeded). It is considered ***indefinite*** if, instead of specifying an amount, the legislation providing it permits the amount to be determined by subsequent circumstances. For example, indefinite budget authority is provided for interest on the public debt, payment of claims and judgments awarded by the courts against the U.S., and many entitlement programs. Many of the laws that authorize collections to be credited to revolving, special, and trust funds make all of the collections available for expenditure for the authorized purposes of the fund, and such authority is considered to be indefinite budget authority. In some such cases, only some of the amount of collections otherwise available is counted as budget authority, because the rest is precluded from obligation in a fiscal year by a provision of law, such as a limitation on obligations or a benefit formula that determines the amounts to be paid (for example, the formula for unemployment insurance benefits).

Obligations Incurred

Following the enactment of budget authority and the completion of required apportionment action, Government agencies incur obligations to make payments. Agencies must record obligations when they enter into binding agreements that will result in outlays, immediately or in the future. Such obligations include the current liabilities for salaries, wages, and interest; and contracts for the purchase of supplies and equipment, construction, and the acquisition of office space, buildings, and land. For Federal credit programs, obligations are recorded in an amount equal to the estimated subsidy cost of direct loans and loan guarantees (see FEDERAL CREDIT below).

Outlays

Outlays are the measure of Government spending. They are payments that liquidate obligations (other than the repayment of debt). The budget records them when obligations are paid, in the amount that is paid.

Agency, function, and subfunction, and outlay totals are stated net of related refunds to the Government, offsetting collections, and offsetting receipts for most budget presentations. (Offsetting receipts from a few sources do not offset any specific function, subfunction, or agency but only offset Government-wide totals.) Outlay totals for accounts with offsetting collections are stated both gross and net of the offsetting collections credited to the account. However, the outlay totals for special and trust funds with offsetting receipts are not stated net of the offsetting receipts.

The Government usually makes outlays in the form of cash (currency, checks, or electronic fund transfers). However, in some cases agencies pay obligations without disbursing cash and the budget records outlays nevertheless. For example, the budget records outlays for the full amount of Federal employees' salaries, even though the cash disbursed to employees is net of Federal and state income taxes, retirement contributions, life and health insurance premiums, and other deductions. (The budget also records receipts for the deductions of Federal income taxes and other payments to the Government.) When debt instruments (bonds, debentures, notes, or monetary credits) are used to pay obligations, the budget records outlays, as well as an increase in debt. For example, the budget records the acquisition of physical assets through certain types of lease-purchase arrangements as though an outlay were made for an outright purchase. Because no cash is paid up front to the nominal owner of the asset, the transaction creates a Government debt. In such cases, the cash lease payments are treated as repayments of principal and interest.

The measurement of interest varies. The budget records outlays for the interest on the public issues of Treasury debt securities as the interest accrues, not when the cash is paid. A small portion of this debt consists of inflation-indexed securities, which feature monthly adjustments to principal for inflation and semiannual payments of interest on the inflation-adjusted principal. As with fixed-rate securities, the budget records the interest payments on these securities as outlays as the interest accrues. The monthly adjustment to principal is recorded, simultaneously, as an increase in debt outstanding and an outlay of interest.

Most Treasury debt securities held by trust funds and other Government accounts are in Government account series (special issues). The budget normally states the interest on these securities on a cash basis. When a Government account is invested in Federal debt securities, the purchase price is usually close or identical to the par (face) value of the security. The budget records the investment at par value and adjusts the interest paid by Treasury and collected by the account by the difference between purchase price and par, if any. However, two trust funds in the Department of Defense, the Military Retirement Trust Fund and the Education Benefits Trust Fund, routinely have relatively large differences between purchase price and par. For these funds, the budget records the holdings of debt at par but records the differences between purchase price and par as adjustments to the assets of the funds that are amortized over the life of the security. The budget records interest as the amortization occurs.

For Federal credit programs, outlays are equal to the subsidy cost of direct loans and loan guarantees and are recorded as the underlying loans are disbursed (see FEDERAL CREDIT below).

The budget records refunds of receipts that result from overpayments (such as income taxes withheld in excess of tax liabilities) as reductions of receipts, rather than as outlays. The budget records payments to taxpayers for tax credits (such as earned income tax credits) that exceed the taxpayer's tax liability as outlays.

Outlays during a fiscal year may liquidate obligations incurred in the same year or in prior years. Obligations, in turn, may be incurred against budget authority provided in the same year or against unobligated balances of budget authority provided in prior years. Outlays, therefore, flow in part from budget authority provided for the year in which the money is spent and in part from budget authority provided in prior years. The ratio of the outlays resulting from budget authority enacted in a given year to the amount of that budget authority is referred to as the spendout rate for that year.

As described earlier, the budget classifies budget authority as discretionary or mandatory for the purposes of the BEA. This classification indicates whether appropriations acts or authorizing legislation control the amount of budget authority that is available. Outlays are classified as discretionary or mandatory according to the classification of the budget authority from which they flow. This classification of outlays measures the extent to which actual spending is controlled through the annual appropriations process. Typically, only one-third ($657 billion in 2001) of total outlays for a fiscal year are discretionary and the rest ($1,207 billion in 2001) consists of mandatory spending and net interest. Such a large portion of total spending is nondiscretionary because authorizing legislation determines net interest ($206 billion in 2001) and the spending for a few programs with large amounts of spending each year, such as Social Security ($429 billion in 2001) and Medicare ($214 billion in 2001).

Outlays for an account are stated both gross and net of any offsetting collections credited to the account, but function, agency, and Government-wide outlay totals are only stated net. (See Chapter 21, "Outlays to the Public, Net and Gross," in the Analytical Perspectives volume of the budget.) Total outlays for the Federal Government include both on-budget and off-budget outlays. (See the table, "Totals for the Budget and Federal Government" above.)

FEDERAL CREDIT

Some Government programs make direct loans or loan guarantees. A ***direct loan*** is a disbursement of funds by the Government to a non-Federal borrower under a contract that requires the repayment of such funds with or without interest. The term includes equivalent transactions such as selling a property on credit terms in lieu of receiving cash up front. A ***loan guarantee*** is any guarantee, insurance, or other pledge with respect to the payment of all or a part of the principal or interest on any debt obligation of a non-Federal borrower to a non-Federal lender. The Federal Credit Reform Act (FCRA) prescribes the budget treatment for Federal credit programs. This treatment is designed to measure the subsidy cost of direct loans and loan guarantees in the budget, when the loans are disbursed, rather than the cash flows over the term of the loan, so direct loans and loan guarantees can be compared to each other and to other methods of delivering benefits, such as grants, on an equivalent basis.

The budget records the estimated long-term cost to the Government arising from direct loans and loan guarantees in ***credit program accounts.*** The cost is estimated as the present value of expected disbursements over the term of the loan less the present value of expected collections.[4] For most credit programs, as with most other kinds of programs, agencies can incur costs only if Congress has appropriated funds sufficient to cover the costs in annual appropriations acts.

When a Federal agency disburses a direct loan or when a non-Federal lender disburses a loan guaranteed by a Federal agency, the program account outlays an amount equal to the cost to a non-budgetary ***credit financing account.*** For a few programs, the computed cost is negative, because the present value of expected collections over the term of the loan exceeds that of expected disbursements. In such cases, the financing account makes a payment to the program's receipt account in the Treasury general fund, where it is recorded as an offsetting receipt. In a few cases, the receipts are earmarked in a special fund established for the program and are available for appropriation for the program.

The agencies responsible for credit programs must reestimate the cost of the outstanding direct loans and loan guarantees, normally each year. If an agency estimates the cost to have increased, the agency must make an additional outlay from the program account to the financing account. If the agency estimates the cost to have decreased, the agency must make a payment from the financing account to the program's receipt account, where it is recorded as an offsetting receipt. The FCRA provides a permanent indefinite appropriation to pay the increased costs resulting from reestimates.

If the Government modifies the terms of an outstanding direct loan or loan guarantee in a way that increases the cost, as the result of a law or the exercise of administrative discretion under existing law, the agency must record an obligation in the program account for an additional amount equal to the increased cost and outlay the amount to the financing account. As with the original costs, agencies may incur modification costs only if Congress has appropriated funds to cover them. The Government may reduce costs by modifications, in which case the agency makes a payment

[4] Present value is a standard financial concept that allows for the time value of money, that is, for the fact that a given sum of money is worth more at present than in the future because interest can be earned on it.

from the financing account to the program's receipt account.

Credit financing accounts record all cash flows to and from the Government arising from direct loan obligations and loan guarantee commitments. These cash flows consist mainly of direct loan disbursements and repayments, loan guarantee default payments, fees and interest from the public, the receipt of subsidy cost payments from program accounts, and interest paid to or received from Treasury. Separate financing accounts record the cash flows of direct loans and of loan guarantees for programs that do both. The budget totals exclude the transactions of financing accounts because they are not a cost to the Government. Financing account transactions affect the means of financing a budget surplus or deficit (see Credit Financing Accounts in the next section). The budget documents display the transactions of the financing accounts, together with the related program accounts, for information and analytical purposes.

The FCRA, which was enacted in 1990, grandfathered direct loan obligations and loan guarantee commitments made prior to fiscal year 1992. The budget records the transactions associated with these direct loans and loan guarantees on a cash flow basis in credit liquidating accounts, which is the same way they were recorded before FCRA was enacted. However, this exception ceases to apply if the direct loans or loan guarantees are modified as described above. In that case, the budget records a modification subsidy cost or savings, as appropriate, and begins to account for the associated transactions as the FCRA prescribes for direct loan obligations and loan guarantee commitments made in fiscal year 1992 or later.

BUDGET DEFICIT OR SURPLUS AND MEANS OF FINANCING

When outlays exceed receipts, the difference is a deficit. The Government finances deficits primarily by borrowing. When receipts exceed outlays, the difference is a surplus, and the Government uses the surplus to reduce debt. The Government's debt (debt held by the public) is approximately the cumulative amount of borrowing to finance deficits, less repayments from surpluses. Borrowing is not exactly equal to the deficit, and debt repayment is not exactly equal to the surplus, because of the other means of financing such as those discussed under this heading. Some, such as the premium on debt buybacks, normally increase the Government's borrowing needs or decrease its ability to repay debt; others normally have the opposite effect or may be either positive or negative. In some years the net effect of the other means of financing may be significant relative to the borrowing or debt repayment.

Borrowing and Debt Repayment

The budget treats borrowing and debt repayment as a means of financing, not as receipts and outlays. If borrowing were defined as receipts and debt repayment as outlays, the budget would be virtually balanced by definition. This rule applies both to borrowing in the form of Treasury securities and to specialized borrowing in the form of agency securities (including the issuance of debt securities to liquidate an obligation and the sale of certificates representing participation in a pool of loans). In 2001, the Government repaid $90.1 billion of debt held by the public. This was the result of a $127.1 billion surplus in that year. The rest of the surplus was needed to finance direct loans disbursed in credit financing accounts, which are discussed below, and for smaller changes in the other means of financing. At the end of 2001, the debt held by the public was $3,320.0 billion. In addition to selling debt to the public, the Treasury Department issues debt to Government accounts, primarily trust funds that are required by law to invest in Treasury securities. Issuing and redeeming this debt does not affect the means of financing, because these transactions occur between one Government account and another and thus do not raise or use any cash for the Government as a whole. (See Chapter 13, "Federal Borrowing and Debt," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget for a fuller discussion of this topic.)

Debt Buyback Premiums and Discounts

Since 2000, the Treasury Department has bought back outstanding U.S. Treasury bonds as part of its efforts to manage efficiently the publicly held debt. Because interest rates are lower than the coupon rates on the bonds that Treasury bought back, the government has had to pay a premium over the book value of these securities.

The buyback premium is part of the cost of borrowing money for the period in which the debt was outstanding, like a coupon interest payment. However, while interest payments are normally recorded as budget outlays over the period in which the debt is outstanding, buyback premiums would have to be recorded in full when the debt was repaid. This would show the cost in a later year than when it was incurred and would make it appear that the buyback itself resulted in an additional cost to the government. It would also reduce the budget surplus, which could discourage buybacks, even though they impose no additional cost to the government. Moreover, under this accounting, the budget would record receipts if securities were bought at a discount (which would be the case when current interest rates were higher than the rates on outstanding securities). This would create a perverse incentive to buy back securities that were available at a discount to increase the recorded surplus, even though such transactions would yield no long-term gain to the government.

After consulting with the Congressional Budget Office and the House and Senate Budget Committees, OMB concluded that, on balance, the best option was to record payments for premiums or collections for discounts not as outlays or receipts, but as a means of financing the surplus or deficit, in the year of the buyback. This treatment clearly would not be appropriate for any non-financial Federal transaction or for most Federal financial transactions, which impose a cost on the government and allocate resources. Chapter 24, "Budget System and Concepts and Glossary," pages 457–58 in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the 2001 budget, discusses the basis for this conclusion in more detail, including an examination of the alternatives that were considered.

Exercise of Monetary Power

Seigniorage is the profit from coining money. It is the difference between the value of coins as money and their cost of production. Seigniorage adds to the Government's cash balance, but unlike the payment of taxes or other receipts, it does not involve a transfer of financial assets from the public. Instead, it arises from the exercise of the Government's power to create money. Therefore, the budget excludes seigniorage from receipts and treats it as a means of financing other than borrowing from the public. The budget treats profits resulting from the sale of gold as a means of financing, since the value of gold is determined by its value as a monetary asset rather than as a commodity.

Credit Financing Accounts

The budget records the net cash flows of credit programs in credit financing accounts, which are excluded from the budget totals and are called net financing disbursements. (See FEDERAL CREDIT above.) Net financing disbursements are defined in the same way as the outlays of a budgetary account and are therefore a means of financing other than borrowing from the public. Like outlays, they may be either positive or negative.

The net financing disbursements result partly from intragovernmental transactions with budgetary accounts (the receipt of subsidy payments and the receipt or payment of interest) and partly from transactions with the public (disbursement and repayment of loans, receipt of interest and fees, payment of default claims, etc.). An intragovernmental transaction affects the deficit or surplus and the means of financing in equal amounts but with opposite signs, so they have no combined effect on Treasury borrowing from the public. On the other hand, financing account disbursements to the public increase the requirement for Treasury borrowing in the same way as an increase in budget outlays. Financing account receipts from the public can be used to finance the payment of the Government's obligations and therefore reduce the requirement for Treasury borrowing from the public in the same way as an increase in budget receipts.

Deposit Fund Account Balances

The Treasury uses deposit funds, which are non-budgetary accounts, to record amounts held temporarily until ownership is determined (for example, earnest money paid by bidders for mineral leases) or held by the Government as agent for others (for example, State and local income taxes withheld from Federal employees' salaries and not yet paid to the State or local government). Deposit fund balances may be held in the form of either invested or uninvested balances. To the extent that deposit fund balances are not invested, changes in the balances are a means of financing other than borrowing from the public. To the extent that the balances are invested in Federal debt, changes in the balances are reflected as borrowing from the public in lieu of borrowing from other parts of the public.

Exchanges with the International Monetary Fund

Under the terms of its participation in the IMF, the U.S. transfers dollars to the IMF and receives Special Drawing Rights (SDR's) in return. The SDR's are interest-bearing monetary assets and may be exchanged for foreign currency at any time. These transfers are like bank deposits and withdrawals. Following a recommendation of the 1967 President's Commission on Budget Concepts, the budget excludes these transfers from budget outlays or receipts. The budget does record interest paid by the IMF on U.S. deposits (as an offsetting collection). It also records outlays for foreign currency exchanges to the extent there is a realized loss in dollars terms and offsetting collections to the extent there is a realized gain in dollar terms.

Railroad Retirement Board Investments

The budget includes a special treatment for investments in equities and other private securities by the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust. The Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–90) requires purchases or sales of non-Federal assets by the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust to be treated as a means of financing in the budget.

Under longstanding rules, the budget treats investments in non-Federal securities as a purchase of an asset, recording an obligation and an outlay in an amount equal to the purchase price in the year of the purchase. Since investments in non-Federal securities consume cash, fund balances normally exclude the value of non-Federal securities. However, the investments in non-Federal securities by the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust are required by law to be included in the fund balances reported in the budget. Earnings on investments are estimated as described below.

Investments by National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust in private assets pose some challenges for budget projections. Equities and private bonds earn a higher return on average than the Treasury rate, but that return is subject to greater uncertainty. Sound budgeting principles require that estimates of future trust fund balances reflect both the average return and the cost of risk associated with the uncertainty of that return. (The latter is particularly true in cases where individual beneficiaries have not made a voluntary choice to assume additional risk.) Estimating both of these separately is quite difficult. While the additional returns that these assets have received in the past are known, it is quite possible that these premiums will differ in the future. Furthermore, there is no existing procedure for the budget to record separately the cost of risk from such an investment, even if it could be estimated accurately. Economic theory suggests, however, that the difference between the expected return of a risky liquid asset and the Treasury rate is equal to the cost of the asset's additional risk as priced by the market. Following through on this insight, the best way to project the rate of return on the Fund's balances is to use a Treasury rate. This will mean that assets with equal economic value as measured by market prices will be treated equivalently, avoiding the appearance that the budget could benefit if the Government bought private sector assets.

The actual and estimated returns to private securities will be recorded in subfunction 909, other investment income. The actual year returns will include interest, dividends, and capital gains and losses on private equities and other securities. The Fund's portfolio of these assets will be revalued at market prices at the end of the actual year to determine capital gains or losses. As a result, the Fund's end-of-year balance will reflect the amount of resources available to the Government to finance benefits. Earnings for the current and future years will be estimated using the 10-year Treasury rate and the value of the Fund's portfolio at the end of the actual year. No estimates will be made of gains and losses for the current year or subsequent years.

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

The budget includes information on civilian and military employment and personnel compensation and benefits. It also compares the Federal workforce, State and local government workforces, and the United States population. The budget provides two different measures of Federal employment levels—actual positions filled and full-time equivalents (FTE). One FTE equals one work year or 2,080 hours. For most purposes, the FTE measure is more meaningful, because it takes into account part-time employment, temporary employment, and vacancies during the year. For example, one full-time employee and two half-time employees would count as two FTE's but three positions. (Chapter 11, "Federal Employment and Compensation," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides more information on this subject.)

BASIS FOR BUDGET FIGURES

Data for the Past Year

The past year column (2001) generally presents the actual transactions and balances as recorded in agency accounts and as summarized in the central financial reports prepared by the Treasury Department for the most recently completed fiscal year. Occasionally the budget reports corrections to data reported erroneously to Treasury but not discovered in time to be reflected in Treasury's published data. The budget usually notes the sources of such differences (see Chapter 18, "Comparison of Actual to Estimated totals for 2001," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget for a summary of these differences).

Data for the Current Year

The current year column (2002) includes estimates of transactions and balances based on the amounts of budgetary resources that were available when the budget was transmitted, including amounts appropriated for the year. This column also reflects any supplemental appropriations or rescissions proposed in the budget.

Data for the Budget Year

The budget year column (2003) includes estimates of transactions and balances based on the amounts of budgetary resources that are estimated to be available, including new budget authority requested under current authorizing legislation, and amounts estimated to result from changes in authorizing legislation and tax laws.

The budget *Appendix* generally includes the appropriations language for the amounts proposed to be appropriated under current authorizing legislation. In a few cases, this language is transmitted later because the exact requirements are unknown when the budget is transmitted. The *Appendix* generally does not include appropriations language for the amounts that will be requested under proposed legislation; that language is usually transmitted later, after the legislation is enacted. However, this year the appropriations language presented in the *Appendix* includes the additional amounts required to implement the Administration's proposal to fully accrue pensions and retirees' health benefits for Federal employees. Some tables in the budget identify the items for later transmittal and the related outlays separately. Estimates of the total requirements for the budget year include both the amounts requested with the transmittal of the budget and the amounts planned for later transmittal.

Data for the Outyears

The budget presents estimates for each of the four years beyond the budget year (2004 through 2007) in order to reflect the effect of budget decisions on longer term objectives and plans.

Federal Employee Pensions and Annuitant Health Benefits

The budget presents the Administration's proposal to pay the full share of accruing employee pensions and annuitant health benefits for Federal employees in the regular budget schedules on a three-year comparable basis, as if the proposal had been enacted and effective in 2001 and 2002. However, in the budget *Appendix* and selected summary and other tables, budget totals are displayed that remove the effects of the proposed legislation in all years (see Chapter 14, "Preview Report," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget).

Allowances

The budget may include lump-sum allowances to cover certain transactions that are expected to increase or decrease budget authority, outlays, or receipts but are not, for various reasons, reflected in the program details. For example, the budget might include an allowance to show the effect on the budget totals of a proposal that would actually affect many accounts by relatively small amounts, in order to avoid unnecessary detail in the presentations for the individual accounts. Congress does not enact the allowances as such.

Baseline

The budget baseline is an estimate of the receipts, outlays, and deficits or surpluses that would occur if no changes were made to current laws during the period covered by the budget. The baseline assumes that receipts and mandatory spending, which generally are authorized on a permanent basis, will continue in the future as required by current law. The baseline assumes that the future funding for discretionary programs, which generally are funded annually, will equal the most recently enacted appropriation, adjusted for inflation. The baseline represents the amount of real resources that would be used by the Government over the period covered by the budget on the basis of laws currently enacted. (Chapter 15, "Current Services Estimates," in the *Analytical Perspectives* volume of the budget provides more information on the baseline.)

The baseline serves several useful for purposes:

- It may warn of future problems, either for Government fiscal policy as a whole or for individual tax and spending programs; or it may show the resources available for future use to reduce the publicly held debt, increase spending programs, or cut taxes.
- It provides a starting point for formulating the President's budget.
- It provides a "policy-neutral" benchmark against which the President's budget and alternative proposals can be compared to assess the magnitude of proposed changes.
- OMB uses it, under the BEA, to determine how much will be sequestered from each account and the level of funding remaining after sequestration.

PRINCIPAL BUDGET LAWS

The following basic laws govern the Federal budget process:

- ***Article 1, section 8, clause 1 of the Constitution,*** which empowers the Congress to collect taxes.
- ***Article 1, section 9, clause 7 of the Constitution,*** which requires appropriations in law before money may be spent from the Treasury.
- ***Antideficiency Act (codified in Chapters 13 and 15 of Title 31, United States Code),*** which prescribes rules and procedures for budget execution.
- ***Chapter 11 of Title 31, United States Code,*** which prescribes procedures for submission of the President's budget and information to be contained in it.
- ***Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–344),*** as amended. This Act comprises the:
  —Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended, which prescribes the congressional budget process; and
  —Impoundment Control Act of 1974, which controls certain aspects of budget execution.
- ***Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (Public Law 99–177),*** as amended, which prescribes rules and procedures (including "sequestration") designed to eliminate excess spending.
- ***Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 (Title XIII, Public Law 101–508),*** which significantly amended key laws pertaining to the budget process, including the Congressional Budget Act and the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act. The Budget Enforcement Act of 1997 (Title X, Public Law 105–33) extended the BEA requirements through 2002 (2006 in part) and altered some of the requirements. The requirements generally referred to as BEA requirements (discretionary spending limits, pay-as-you-go, sequestration, etc.) are part of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act.
- ***Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (as amended by the Budget Enforcement Act of 1997),*** a part of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, which amended the Congressional Budget Act to prescribe the budget treatment for Federal credit programs.

- ***Government Performance and Results Act of 1993,*** which emphasizes managing for results. It requires agencies to prepare strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports.

GLOSSARY OF BUDGET TERMS

Advance appropriation means appropriations of new budget authority that become available one or more fiscal years beyond the fiscal year for which the appropriation act was passed.

Advance funding means appropriations of budget authority provided in an appropriations act to be used, if necessary, to cover obligations incurred late in the fiscal year for benefit payments in excess of the amount specifically appropriated in the act for that year, where the budget authority is charged to the appropriation for the program for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the appropriations act is passed.

Agency means a department or establishment of the Government.

Allowance means a lump-sum included in the budget to represent certain transactions that are expected to increase or decrease budget authority, outlays, or receipts but that are not, for various reasons, reflected in the program details.

Balances of budget authority means the amounts of budget authority provided in previous years that have not been outlayed.

Baseline means an estimate of the receipts, outlays, and deficit or surplus that would result from continuing current law through the period covered by the budget.

Budget means the Budget of the United States Government, which sets forth the President's comprehensive financial plan for allocating resources and indicates the President's priorities for the Federal Government.

Budget authority (BA) means the authority provided by law to incur financial obligations that will result in outlays. (For a description of the several forms of budget authority, see Budget Authority and Other Budgetary Resources earlier in this chapter.)

Budget totals mean the totals included in the budget for budget authority, outlays, and receipts. Some presentations in the budget distinguish on-budget totals from off-budget totals. On-budget totals reflect the transactions of all Federal Government entities except those excluded from the budget totals by law. The off-budget totals reflect the transactions of Government entities that are excluded from the on-budget totals by law. Under current law, the off-budget totals include the Social Security trust funds (Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Federal Disability Insurance Trust Funds) and the Postal Service Fund. The budget combines the on- and off-budget totals to derive unified or consolidated totals for Federal activity.

Budgetary resources mean amounts available to incur obligations in a given year. The term comprises new budget authority and unobligated balances of budget authority provided in previous years.

Cap means the legal limits for each fiscal year on the budget authority and outlays provided by discretionary appropriations.

Cash equivalent transaction means a transaction in which the Government makes outlays or receives collections in a form other than cash or the cash does not accurately measure the cost of the transaction. (For examples, see the section on Outlays earlier in this chapter.)

Collections mean money collected by the Government that the budget records as either a receipt, an offsetting collection, or an offsetting receipt.

Credit program account means a budget account that receives and obligates appropriations to cover the subsidy cost of a direct loan or loan guarantee and disburses the subsidy cost to a financing account.

Current services estimate—*see baseline.*

Deficit means the amount by which outlays exceed receipts in a fiscal year. It may refer to the on-budget, off-budget, or unified budget deficit.

Direct loan means a disbursement of funds by the Government to a non-Federal borrower under a contract that requires the repayment of such funds with or without interest. The term includes the purchase of, or participation in, a loan made by another lender. The term also includes the sale of a Government asset on credit terms of more than 90 days duration as well as financing arrangements for other transactions that defer payment for more than 90 days. It also includes loans financed by the Federal Financing Bank (FFB) pursuant to agency loan guarantee authority. The term does not include the acquisition of a federally guaranteed loan in satisfaction of default or other guarantee claims or the price support loans of the Commodity Credit Corporation. (Cf. loan guarantee.)

Direct spending—*see mandatory spending.*

Discretionary spending means budgetary resources (except those provided to fund mandatory spending programs) provided in appropriations acts. (Cf. mandatory spending.)

Emergency appropriation means an appropriation that the President and the Congress have designated as an emergency requirement. Such spending is not subject to the limits on discretionary spending, if it is discretionary spending, or the pay-as-you-go rules, if it is mandatory.

Federal funds group refers to the moneys collected and spent by the Government other than those designated as trust funds. Federal funds include general, special, public enterprise, and intragovernmental funds. (Cf. trust funds.)

Financing account means a non-budgetary account (its transactions are excluded from the budget totals) that records all of the cash flows resulting from post-

1991 direct loan obligations or loan guarantee commitments. At least one financing account is associated with each credit program account. For programs that make both direct loans and loan guarantees, there are separate financing accounts for the direct loans and the loan guarantees. (Cf. liquidating account.)

Fiscal year means the Government's accounting period. It begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th, and is designated by the calendar year in which it ends.

Forward funding means appropriations of budget authority that are made for obligation in the last quarter of the fiscal year for the financing of ongoing grant programs during the next fiscal year.

General fund means the accounts for receipts not earmarked by law for a specific purpose, the proceeds of general borrowing, and the expenditure of these moneys.

Intragovernmental fund—*see revolving fund.*

Liquidating account means a budget account that records all cash flows to and from the Government resulting from pre-1992 direct loan obligations or loan guarantee commitments. (Cf. financing account.)

Loan guarantee means any guarantee, insurance, or other pledge with respect to the payment of all or a part of the principal or interest on any debt obligation of a non-Federal borrower to a non-Federal lender. The term does not include the insurance of deposits, shares, or other withdrawable accounts in financial institutions. (Cf. direct loan.)

Mandatory spending means spending controlled by laws other than appropriations acts (including spending for entitlement programs) and spending for the food stamp program. Although the Budget Enforcement Act use the term direct spending to mean this, mandatory spending is commonly used instead. (Cf. discretionary spending.)

Means of financing refers to borrowing, the change in cash balances, and certain other transactions involved in financing a deficit. The term is also used to refer to the debt repayment, the change in cash balances, and certain other transactions involved in using a surplus. By definition, the means of financing are not treated as receipts or outlays.

Obligated balance means the cumulative amount of budget authority that has been obligated but not yet outlayed. (Cf. unobligated balance.)

Obligation means a binding agreement that will result in outlays, immediately or in the future. Budgetary resources must be available before obligations can be incurred legally.

Off-budget—*see budget totals.*

Offsetting collections mean collections that are deducted from gross budget authority and outlays, rather than added to receipts, and, by law, are credited directly to expenditure accounts. Usually, they authorized to be spent for the purposes of the account without further action by Congress. They result from business-type or market-oriented activities with the public and other Government accounts. The authority to spend offsetting collections is a form of budget authority. (Cf. receipts and offsetting receipts.)

Offsetting receipts mean collections that are deducted from gross budget authority and outlays, rather than added to receipts, and that are not authorized to be credited to expenditure accounts. Instead of being credited to expenditure accounts, they are credited to offsetting receipt accounts. The legislation that authorizes the offsetting receipts may require them to be appropriated in annual appropriation acts before they can be spent. Like offsetting collections, they result from business-type or market-oriented activities with the public and other Government accounts. (Cf. receipts, undistributed offsetting receipts, and offsetting collections.)

On-budget—*see budget totals.*

Outlay means a payment to liquidate an obligation (other than the repayment of debt). Outlays are the measure of Government spending.

Outyear estimates means estimates presented in the budget for the years beyond the budget year (usually four) of budget authority, outlays, receipts, and other items (such as debt).

Pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) means the requirements of the Budget Enforcement Act that result in a sequestration if the estimated combined result of legislation affecting mandatory spending or receipts is a net cost for a fiscal year.

Public enterprise fund—*see revolving fund.*

Receipts mean collections that result from the Government's exercise of its sovereign power to tax or otherwise compel payment and gifts of money to the Government. They are compared to outlays in calculating a surplus or deficit. (Cf. offsetting collections and offsetting receipts.)

Revolving fund means a fund that conducts continuing cycles of business-like activity, in which the fund charges for the sale of products or services and uses the proceeds to finance its spending, usually without requirement for annual appropriations. There are two types of revolving funds: Public enterprise funds, which conduct business-like operations mainly with the public, and intragovernmental revolving funds, which conduct business-like operations mainly within and between Government agencies.

Scorekeeping means measuring the budget effects of legislation, generally in terms of budget authority, receipts, and outlays for purposes of the Budget Enforcement Act.

Sequestration means the cancellation of budgetary resources provided by discretionary appropriations or mandatory spending legislation, following various procedures prescribed by the Budget Enforcement Act. A sequestration may occur in response to a discretionary appropriation that causes discretionary spending to exceed the discretionary spending caps or in response to net costs resulting from the combined result of legislation affecting mandatory spending or receipts (referred to as a "pay-as-you-go" sequestration).

Special fund means a Federal fund accounts for receipts earmarked for specific purposes and for the expenditure of these receipts. (Cf. trust fund.)

Subsidy means the same as cost when it is used in connection with Federal credit programs.

Surplus means the amount by which receipts exceed outlays.

Supplemental appropriation means an appropriation enacted subsequent to a regular annual appropriations act, when the need for funds is too urgent to be postponed until the next regular annual appropriations act.

Trust fund refers to a type of account, designated by law as a trust fund, for receipts or offsetting receipts earmarked for specific purposes and the expenditure of these receipts. Some revolving funds are designated as trust funds, and these are called trust revolving funds. (Cf. special fund and revolving fund.)

Trust funds group refers to the moneys collected and spent by the Government through trust fund accounts. (Cf., Federal funds group.)

Undistributed offsetting receipts mean offsetting receipts that are deducted from the Government-wide totals for budget authority and outlays instead of offset against a specific agency and function. (Cf. offsetting receipts.)

Unobligated balance means the cumulative amount of budget authority that is not obligated and that remains available for obligation under law.

User charges are fees assessed for the provision of Government services and for the sale or use of Government goods or resources. The payers of the user charge must be limited in the authorizing legislation to those receiving special benefits from, or subject to regulation by, the program or activity beyond the benefits received by the general public or broad segments of the public. (Cf. user fees.)

User fees are a subset of user charges (as defined above) that are authorized to be utilized solely to support the program or activity for which they were levied. (Cf. user charges.)