

**OPINION OF THE HIGH COUNCIL OF PUBLIC FINANCE ON THE  
STRUCTURAL BUDGET BALANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS FOR 2014**

May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015

**On Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the High Council of Public Finance (Haut Conseil des Finances Publiques, HCFP) adopted an opinion concerning the structural budget balance of French public administrations for the year 2014.**

**Main conclusions of the HCFP's opinion:**

*The general government balance amounts to €-84.8 billion in 2014, that is -4.0 % of GDP. The structural budget balance is valued at -2.1 % of GDP, using the reckoning conventions of the public finances programming law of December 29<sup>th</sup> 2014, which is from now on the reference for the High Council.*

*The High Council notices that the structural deficit in 2014 is lower by 0.4 point of GDP than the programming law's estimation. This difference is partly the result of a lower than expected public expenditure growth, which is among others due to a strong fall in local investment and to the ongoing reduction of interest payments.*

*Compared to 2013, the improvement in the structural balance amounted to 0.6 point of GDP in 2014, instead of 0.1 point of GDP in the programming law, i.e. a difference of 0.5 point of GDP. Cumulated on the years 2013 and 2014, the difference only amounts to 0.2 point of GDP (structural improvement of 1.4 points, instead of 1.2 points in the programming law).*

**The full version of HCFP's opinion is available in French on its website: [www.hcfp.fr](http://www.hcfp.fr)**

*The High Council of public finance (Haut Conseil des finances publiques, HCFP) is required to assess the realism of macroeconomic forecasts presented by the Government and to check the consistency of the structural balance trajectory with French commitments to reach structural balance in the mid-term. The HCFP is an independent body from the government and parliament. It is attached to the French supreme audit institution (Cour des comptes) and chaired by the Head of the Court.*