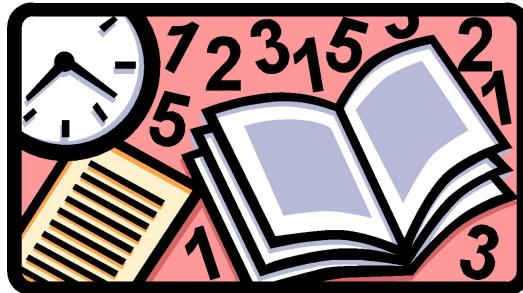


Lecture 2

National Accounts

Measuring Output and Income

- Gross Domestic Product
- Approaches for Calculating GDP
- Other Variables of National Accounts
- Nominal and Real GDP
- Price Indexes
- GDP Gaps



Major Variables of National Accounts

The main indicators of aggregate output and aggregate income in the economy can be found in the

National Income and Product Accounts (NIPA) System, proposed in the late 1920s by the group of U.S. economists from NBER, headed by the future Nobel prize winner Simon Kuznets.

The major measures of aggregate output are:

- **Gross Domestic Product**
- **Gross National Product**
- **Net Domestic Product**
- **Net National Product**

The major measures of aggregate income are:

- **National Income**
- **Personal Income**
- **Disposable Personal Income**



Gross Domestic Product

The main measure of aggregate output is gross domestic product

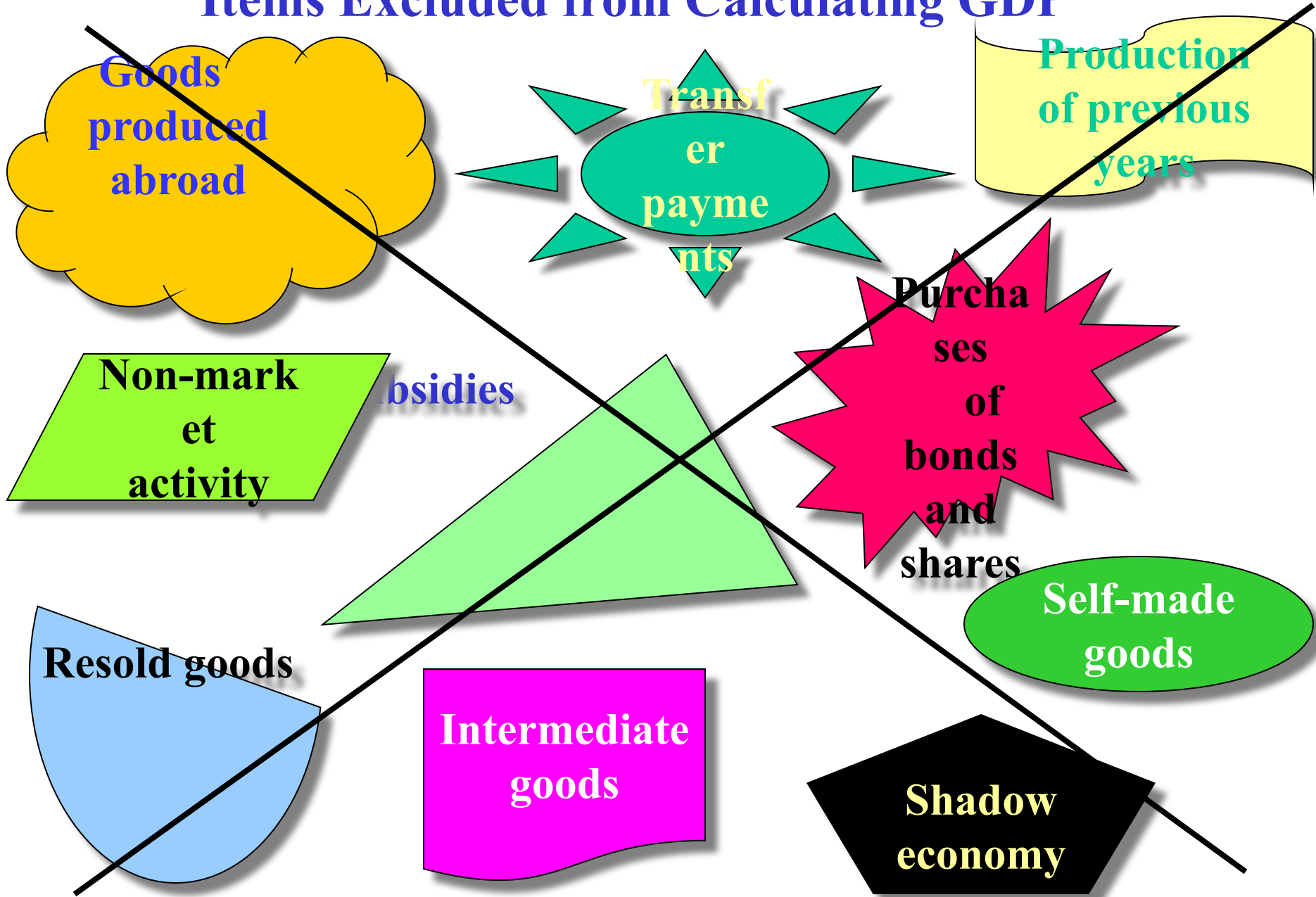
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total market value of all final goods and services produced within the country (by domestic economy) during a one-year period.

- total ⇒ measures aggregate output;
- market ⇒ only official market transactions are included (self-made goods and shadow economy are excluded);
- value ⇒ measured in money (blns of pounds, dollars, rubles);
- all final goods and services ⇒ transfer payments (welfare benefits and subsidies) and financial transactions (purchases of bonds and shares) are excluded (because income is not created, but redistributed and nothing new is produced);

Gross Domestic Product

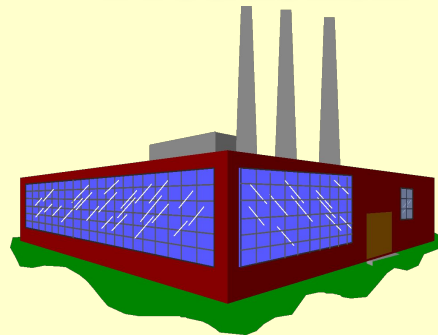
- **final** goods and services \Rightarrow in order to avoid double counting, *intermediate* goods (that form inputs for final product such as steel in car production or flour in baking bread) are excluded;
- **produced** \Rightarrow not redistributed or resold;
- **within** the country \Rightarrow i.e. *in the domestic economy*, no matter by what factors of production, either owned by the citizens of the country or by foreigners (goods and services produced by national factors abroad are excluded);
- during a **year** \Rightarrow only newly (currently) produced goods.

Items Excluded from Calculating GDP



How to Calculate GDP

Production



The theoretical base for measuring GDP is the model of circular flows, from which we learn that **aggregate output** is equal:

- to the **sum of expenditures**;
- to the amount of **aggregate income**;
- to the value of **aggregate product**.

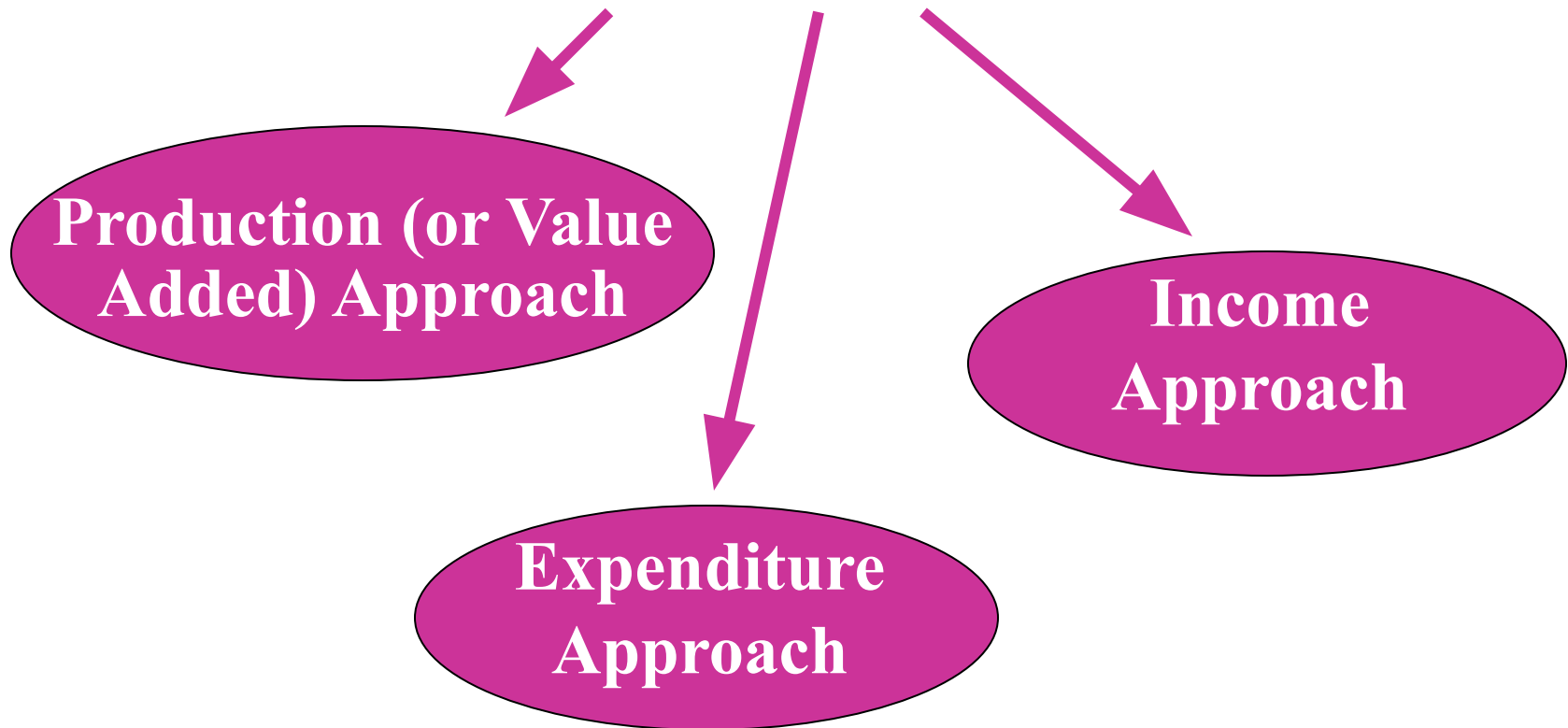


Incomes

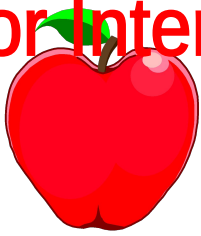
Expenditures

Methods for Calculating GDP

Thus there are *three methods* for calculating GDP:




Final or Intermediate?



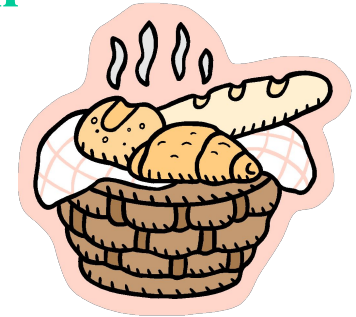
The Value Added

By definition GDP is the total value of *final* goods and services. But by appearance it is often impossible to judge if a good is final or intermediate (for example, apples bought by a person or apples bought by a firm producing juice).

Thus, to calculate the value of final product economists use the concept of *value added*.

To learn what does value added mean and why it can be used to measure the value of final product, let's examine the production process (for example, of bread). 

Receipts on Each Stage of Production



Receipts of farmer from miller

\$.18

Receipts of miller from baker

\$.18 **\$.24** = **\$.42**

Receipts of baker from grocer

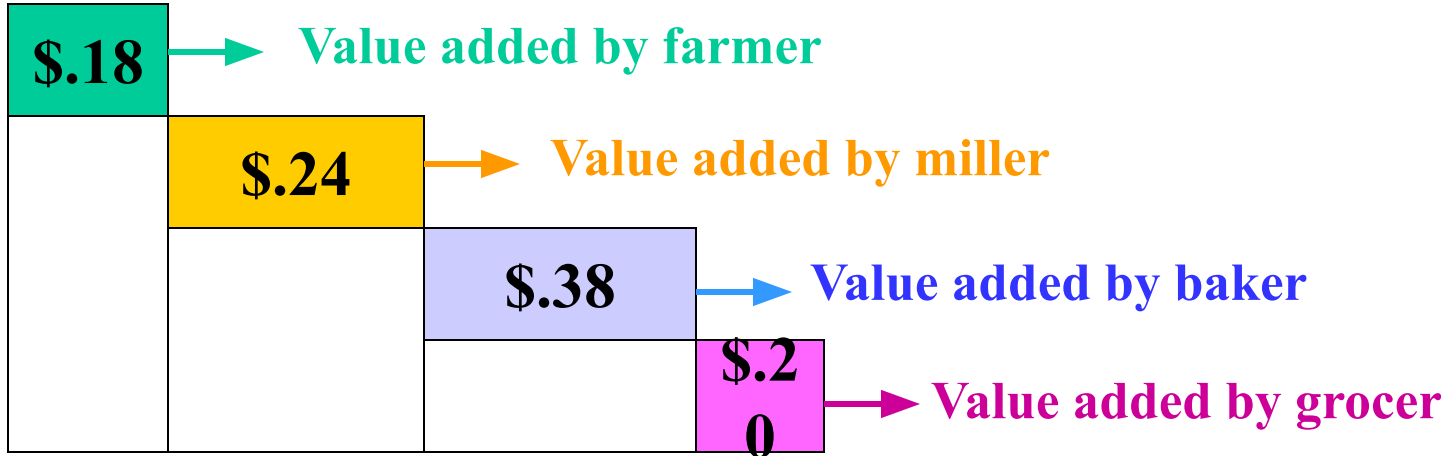
\$.18 **\$.24** **\$.38** = **\$.80**

Receipts of grocer from consumer

\$.18 **\$.24** **\$.38** **\$.20** = **\$1.00**

Total consumer expenditure

Value added (= income created) at each stage of production



Total value added = Total income created = Total consumer expenditure

The Value Added Approach

Thus, the value added of a particular firm can be calculated as:

$$\text{Firm's value added} = \text{Revenue} - \text{Value of intermediate goods purchased from the other firms}$$

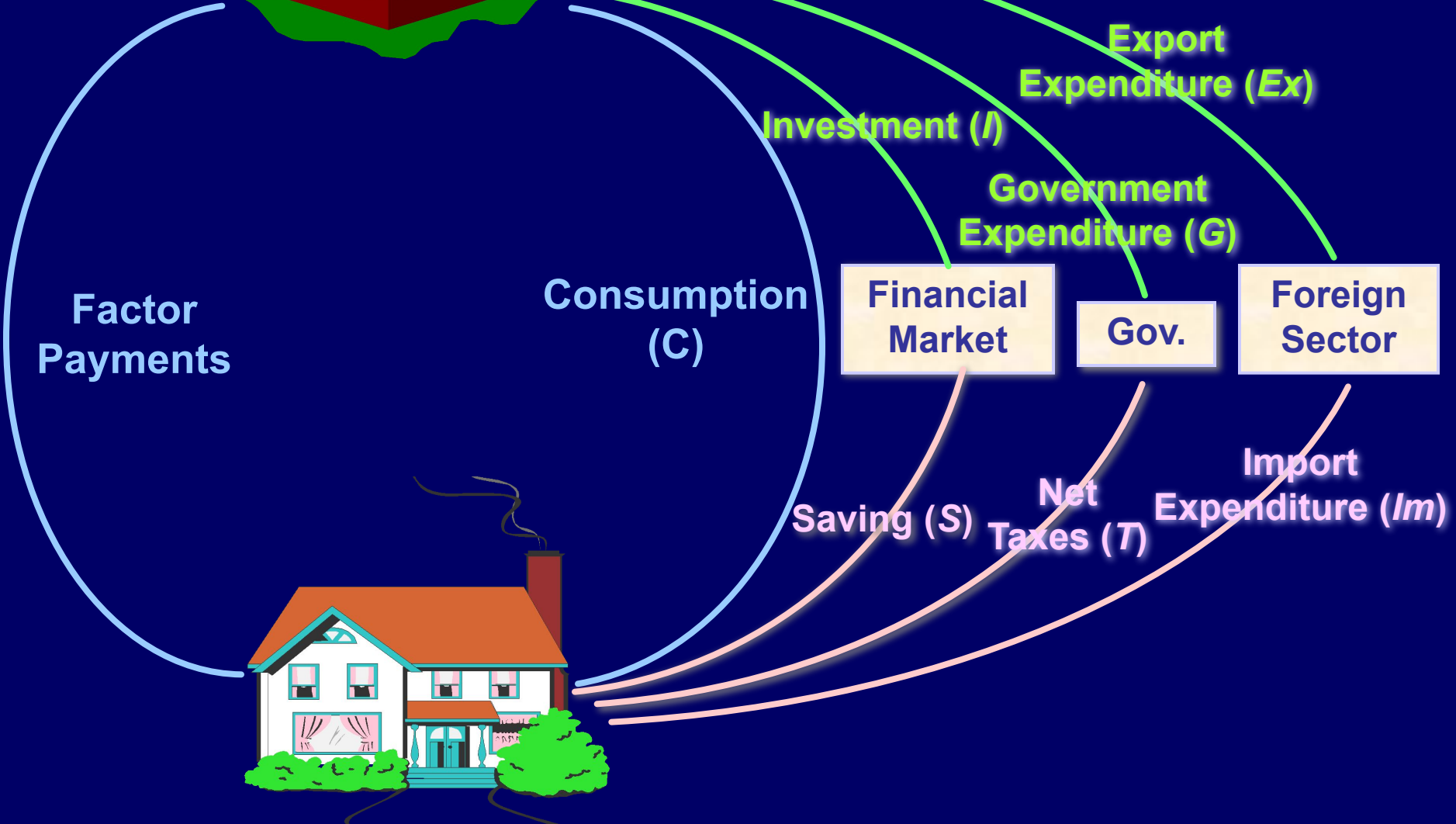
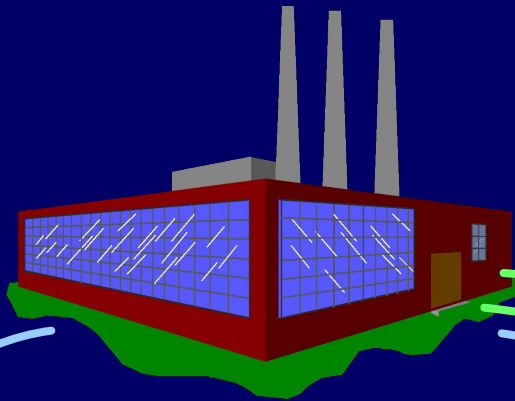
while the total value added in the economy as a whole is:

$$\text{Total value added} = \text{Value of total output (total sales)} - \text{Value of total intermediate product}$$

As the value of final goods is always equal to the sum of values added on all stages of production process, GDP can be measured as the sum of values, added by all the firms in the economy or in all the branches or large sectors of the economy (such as industry, agriculture, construction, etc).

$$\text{GDP} = \Sigma \text{ values added}$$

The Circular Flow of Income and Expenditure



The Expenditure Approach

The *expenditure approach* sums up spending of all macroeconomic agents:

- households – consumption spending C ;
- firms – investment spending I ;
- the government – government purchases of goods and services G ;
- the foreign sector – net exports NX :

$$GDP = C + I + G + \underbrace{(Ex - Im)}_{NX}$$

Consumption Spending

Consumption spending include expenditures made by households for:

- **current consumption** – purchases of non-durable goods (food, clothes, shoes, etc);



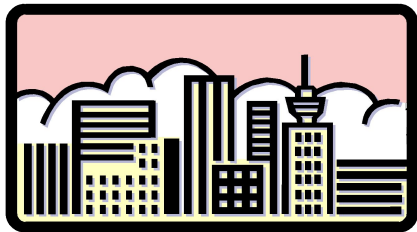
- **consumption of durable goods** (furniture, cars, refrigerators, TV-sets, etc) (except houses);



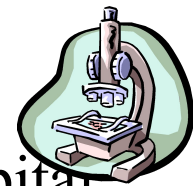
- **payments for services** (hair-cuts, entertainments, tourism, etc.).



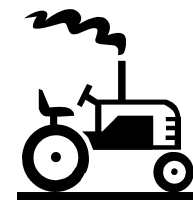
Investment Spending



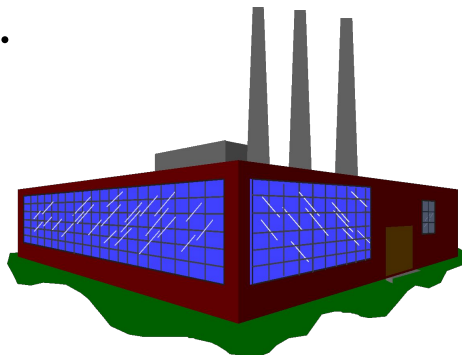
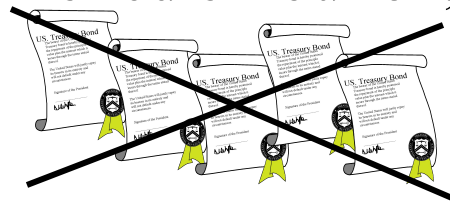
Investment spending represent expenditures by business firms and households to buy capital goods. It is the sum of expenditures for:



- purchases of *new equipment, machinery and tools*;
- *new nonresidential construction* (buildings, offices, hotels, factories, other commercial real estate);
- *new residential construction* (houses, cottages, flats);
- *inventory investment*.



Purchase of securities (bonds and shares) is not considered as investment spending, because represents redistribution, not creation of output).



Inventory Investment

Three first components of investment spending form domestic private *fixed investment*.

Inventory investment (I_{inv}) represent the annual net changes in the stock of inventories.

Inventories, held by firms, include:

- *raw materials*;
- *parts* (or semifinished goods);
- *unsold finished goods*,

$$\text{Inventory investment} = \text{Production} - \text{Sales}$$

If the changes in inventories are *positive* $\Rightarrow I \uparrow \Rightarrow \text{GDP} \uparrow$

If the changes in inventories are *negative* $\Rightarrow I \downarrow \Rightarrow \text{GDP} \downarrow$

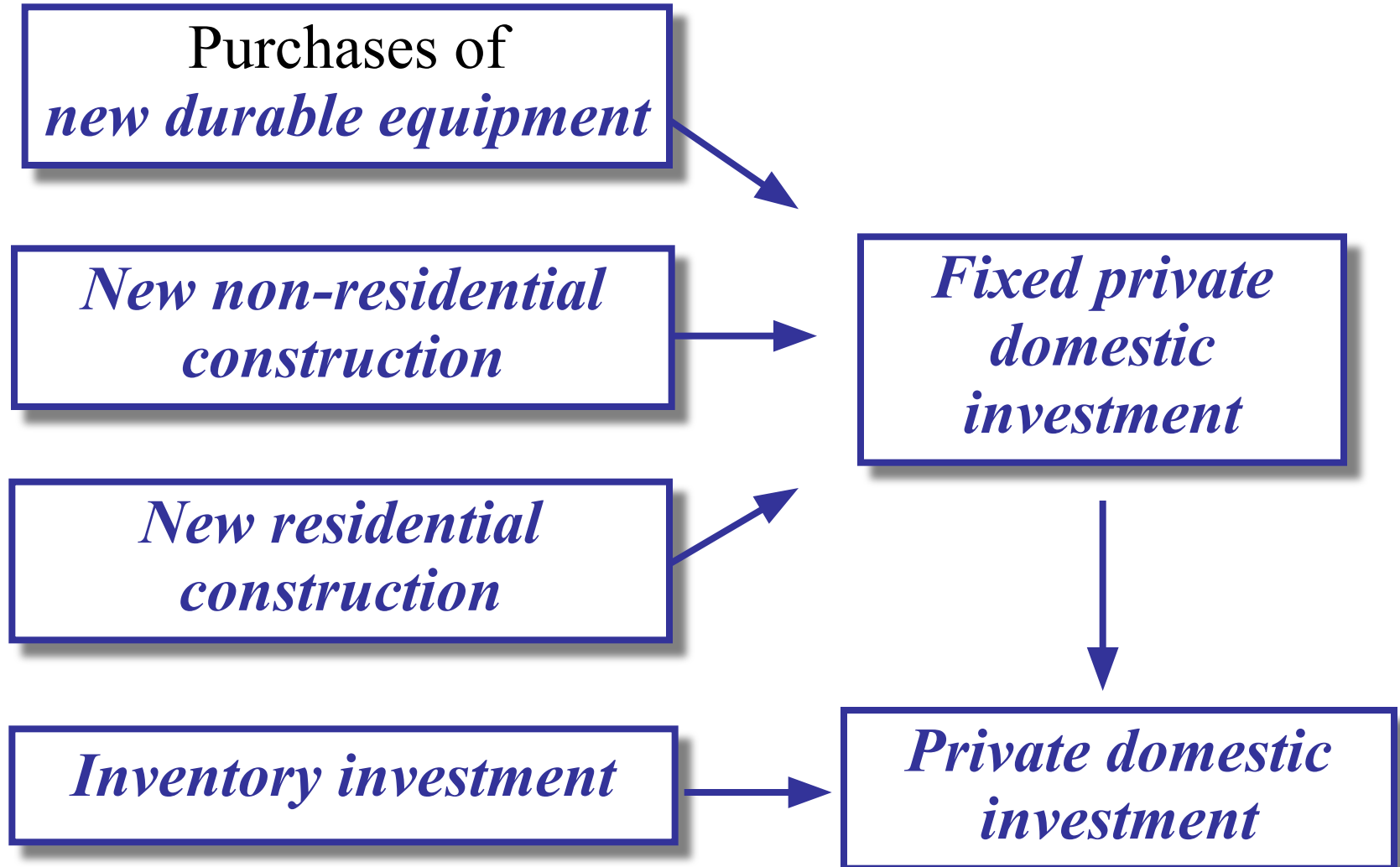
Example

<i>Beginning of the year</i>	<i>End of the year</i>
\$100	\$120
\$100	\$70

$\Rightarrow I_{inv} = +\$20 \Rightarrow \text{increase in GDP by } \20

$\Rightarrow I_{inv} = -\$30 \Rightarrow \text{decrease in GDP by } \30

Composition of Investment Spending



Gross and Net Investment

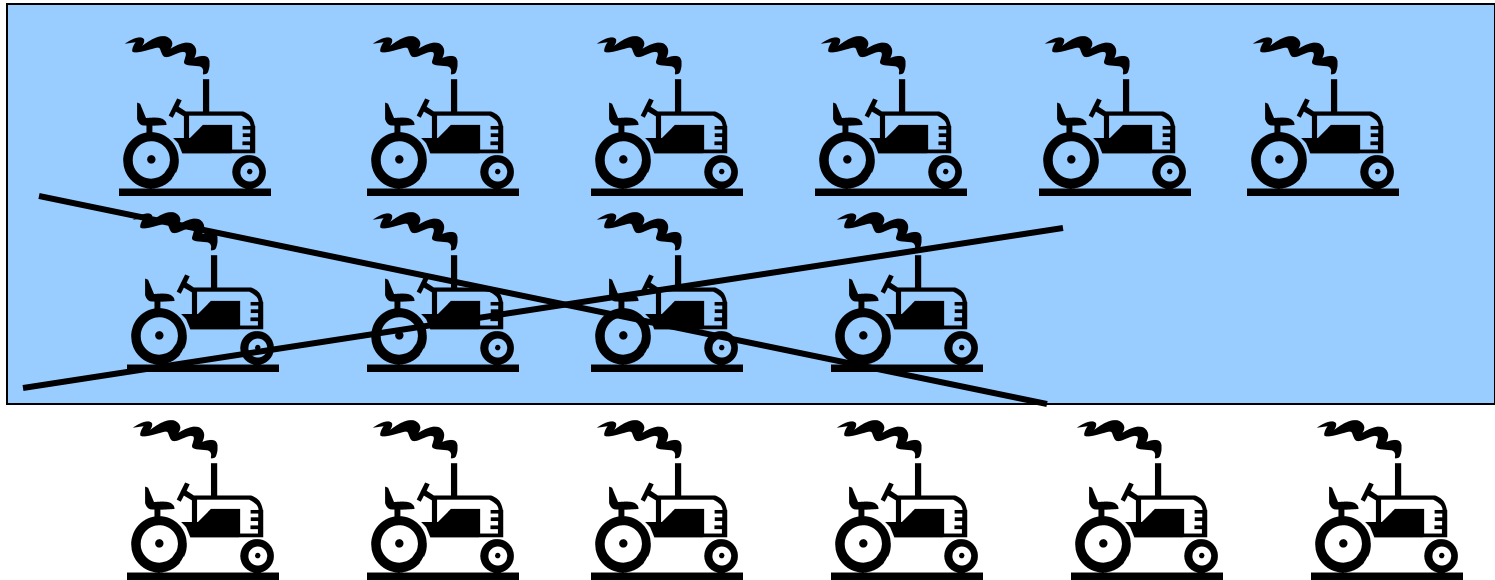
Investment spending are divided into:

- *gross* investment (I_{gross});
- *replacement investment* (= *depreciation* = *capital consumption allowances* A): during production process capital wears out and must be replaced or repaired;
- *net* investment (I_{net}).

$$I_{gross} = A + I_{net}$$

Net investment is the base for increase in capital stock and thus in the productive possibilities of the economy.

The Role of Net Investment



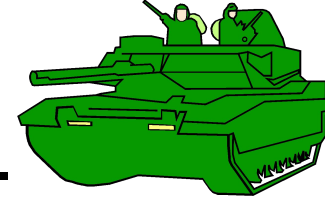
6
Gross Investment

4
Replacement Investment

2
Net Investment

Change in Capital Stock = + 2

Government Spending



Government spending consist of the government sector's purchase of goods and services. They **include** expenditures on:

- **goods** purchased to run government and the military (including purchase of investment goods for public enterprise and infrastructure and in order to produce public goods);
 - **payments to government employees** (civil servants, teachers, firemen) and the military for their personal services;
- and **exclude** transfer payments (welfare social benefits and subsidies, as they result from redistribution of previously received funds).

Government spending can be divided into:

- **government consumption** – the purchase of consumer goods and payments to government employees;
- **government investment** – the purchase of investment goods.



Imputed Value

It is a national accounting rule to calculate GDP by adding the market prices of all final goods and services, produced within the economy...

but there are some final goods and services, that are *parts of total output*, but are not sold and bought in the market.

The value of items that *have no market value* and *are not traded in the market*, but must be included in total output and income is called the *imputed value*.

Examples:

- some government services that enter GDP at their costs;
- rental payments that are paid by house owners to themselves





Net Exports

All the countries in our days are *open economies*, i.e. economies transacting with other countries (with the rest of the world). One of the major links between economies is international trade. Countries sell (export) domestically produced goods and services to the foreign countries and buy (import) goods and services produced abroad.



The value of domestic production that is sold to other countries is called *gross exports (Ex)*.

The value of foreign production that is purchased by the domestic economy is the country's *gross imports (Im)*.

The balance between gross exports and gross imports is called *net exports (NX)*.

The Diagram of Net Exports



-  Flow of Money
-  Flow of Goods and Services

The Expenditure Approach

Structure of US GDP, 2008

69,8%

14,9%

18,9%

-3,7%

Consumption Spending
(C)

Investment
Spending (I)

Government
Spending
(G)

Exports
(NX)

48,6%

25,5%

16,7%

9,1%

Structure of Russian GDP, 2008

The Income Approach

The income approach makes use of the fact that expenditures on GDP ultimately become income.

Thus, GDP represents the total sum of factor incomes, earned by the owners of economic resources, i.e. households. It consists of:

- **wages and salaries**, earned by workers of private firms;
- **rental payments**, earned by land and estate owners (including imputed rental payments for housing services, enjoyed by house owners);
- **interest payments**, earned by capital owners;
- **profits**, earned by entrepreneurs and firms' owners.

The sum of income earned by the factors of production owned by a country's citizens is called **National Income** (*NI*) or National Income at factor costs:

$$NI = \text{wages} + \text{rents} + \text{interest} + \text{profits}$$

Interest Payments

According to U.S. national accounts
interest payments is called “net interest”.

*Net interest = interest paid by firms – interest received by
firms + interest received from the rest of the world –
– interest paid to the rest of the world*

% %

The Types of Profits

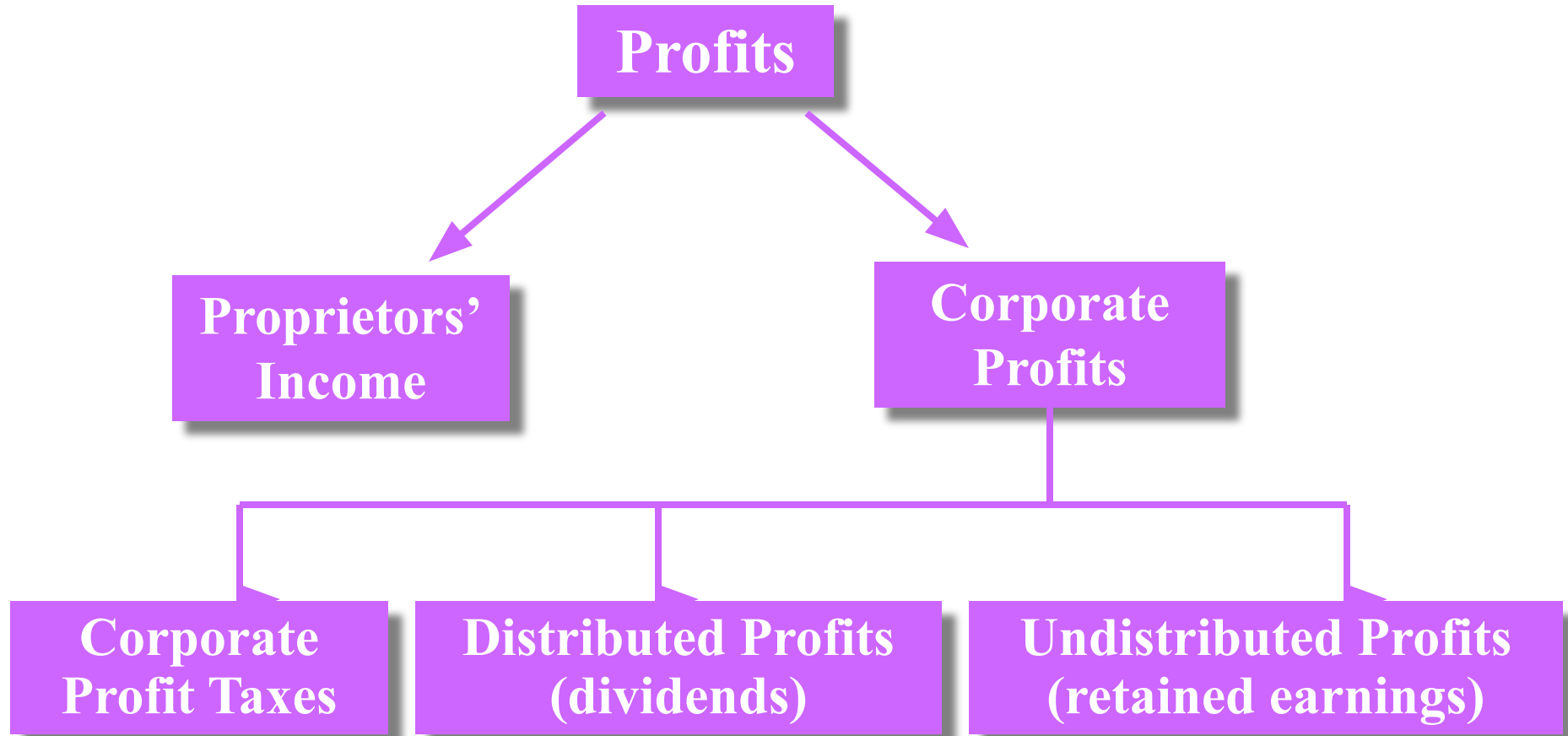
In accordance with the existing forms of business organization, national accounts distinguish two types of profits:

- ***proprietors' income***, i.e. profits of firms, possessed by one owner (single proprietorship) or several joint owners (partnership), who themselves manage the firm make all the decisions and are personally responsible for all of the firm's actions and debts;
- ***corporate profits***, i.e. profits of firms in which ownership and financial responsibility are divided, limited, and shared among any number of shareholders. Such type of firms is called *corporations*.

One part of corporate profits is paid to government in the form of corporate taxes, and the rest sum is divided into two parts:

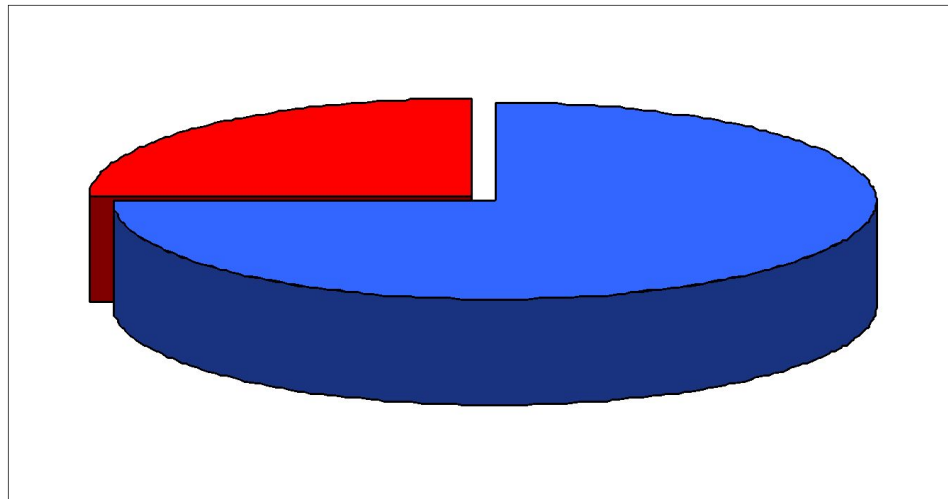
- ✓ ***distributed profits*** – the part which is distributed to shareholders as dividends;
- ✓ ***undistributed profits*** – the part not distributed to shareholders and retained by the firm (also called ***retained earnings***).

The Structure of Profits



The Structure of Factor Payments

The dominant factor of production is labor. The share of **labor** income in National Income in industrialized countries occupies more than **2/3** of all factor payments (70% in the U.S.). Most of the remainder goes to pay **capital**. Only a small amount goes for other factors of production or true profits.



■ Payments to labor

■ Payments to capital and other factors

From National Income to GDP

National Income must be modified slightly to arrive at GDP.

We must add components that are necessary for calculating aggregate output, but not included in National Income as they do not become income for suppliers of productive resources:

- ***depreciation***, because these expenses capture the value of output needed to replace or repair worn out buildings and machinery;
- ***indirect taxes*** (sales taxes, value-added taxes, customs duties, license fees, and so on), because they are part of the expenditure on goods and services and are included in prices;
- ***factor income of foreigners*** received for the use of their economic resources in the country, whose GDP is calculated.

From National Income to GDP

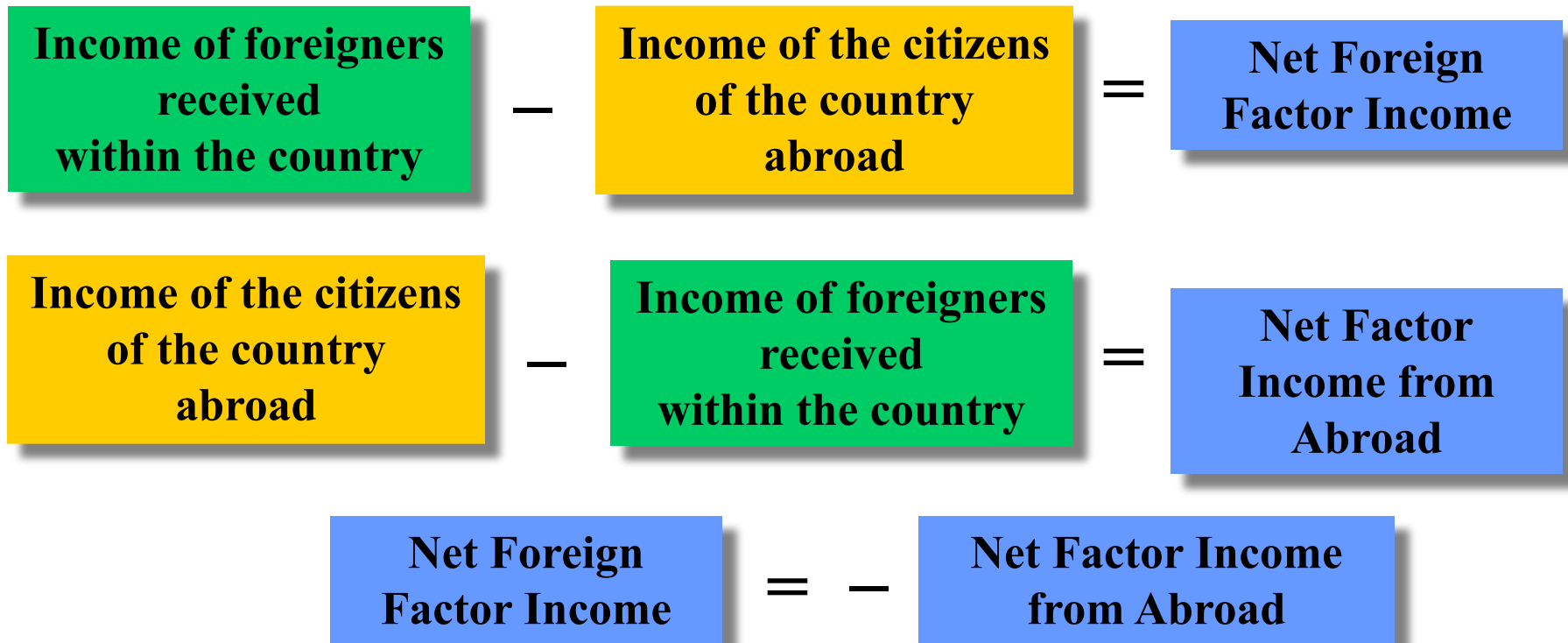
At the same time we must subtract from NI elements that are not part of GDP:

- *subsidy payments* made by the government to firms (farmers, for example) that are part of the farmers' income but are not made in exchange for goods or services;
- *factor income of the citizens of the country abroad*, because NI includes the income of all citizens everywhere whereas GDP includes the value of goods produced domestically by anyone.

The Factor Income from Abroad

Factor income includes:

- ***labor income*** (= compensation of employees);
- ***property and entrepreneurial income*** (= investment income from the ownership of financial assets, i.e. interest on short- and long-term capital, dividends, rent, etc).



The Income Approach: A Summary

In summary,

$$\mathbf{GDP = NI + Depreciation + Indirect taxes - Subsidies -}$$
$$\mathbf{- Net factor income from abroad}$$

or

$$\mathbf{GDP = NI + Depreciation + Indirect taxes - Subsidies +}$$
$$\mathbf{+ Net factor income of foreigners}$$

All the approaches for calculating GDP
(expenditure, income and value added)
must give the same result.

Gross National Product

Gross National Product (GNP)

is the total market value of all final goods and services produced within a year by factors of production owned by the citizens of that country.

It doesn't matter where the output is actually produced:
in the domestic economy or abroad.

GDP versus GNP



Italian worker

works in Germany

He adds to:

- Gross Domestic Product of Germany
- Gross National Product of Italy

Thus,

$$GNP = GDP + \textit{net factor income from abroad}$$

or

$$GNP = GDP - \textit{net factor income of foreigners}$$

Hence, GNP can be greater or less than GDP, depending on whether the citizens of the country earn more or less abroad than foreigners earn in this country.

Net Domestic and Net National Product

Net Domestic Product (NDP) = GDP – Depreciation

Net National Product (NNP) = GNP – Depreciation

or *Net National Product = National Income + Net Indirect Taxes*

that is why *NNP* is often called national income *at market prices*.

NNP characterizes *productive potential* of the economy for the next year because it is free from depreciation and *includes only net investment*.



National Income

$$\begin{aligned} \text{National Income} &= \text{NNP} - \text{Net Indirect Taxes} = \\ &= \text{NNP} - \text{Indirect taxes} + \text{Subsidies} \end{aligned}$$

National Income (NI) (or national income *at factor costs*) is the money income **earned** by households for the factor services. It is the sum of factor payments, made to households by private firms.

$$\text{NI} = \text{Wages} + \text{Rents} + \text{Interest} + \text{Profits}$$

Personal Income

Personal income (PI) is the money income **received** by households before personal income taxes are subtracted.

$$\begin{aligned} PI = NI &- \text{Contributions for social insurance} - \\ &- \text{Corporate profits} + \text{Personal dividend income} + \\ &+ \text{Government and business transfers} - \text{Net interest} + \\ &+ \text{Personal interest income} \end{aligned}$$

(Not all national income is distributed to persons. Some of the corporate profits are retained by firms. Similarly, not all interest payments paid by firms go to persons: some go to banks, some go abroad.)





Disposable Income

Disposable income (*DI*) is the money income which is **at the disposal** of households and which they can use as they like. It is an after-tax personal income.

$$DI = PI - \text{Personal income taxes}$$

Disposable income is used by households for consumption spending (*C*) and saving (*S*):

$$DI = C + S$$

Part of disposable income that is not spent for consumption is called **personal (or household) saving**:

$$S = DI - C$$



National Income Accounting: A Summary

GNP at market prices	Net Factor Income from Abroad	Net Factor Income from Abroad	Depreciation		
	NX	GDP at market prices			Indirect Taxes
	G			National Income = NNP at factor costs	Profits
	I				Interest Income
	C		NNP at market prices		Wages And Salaries

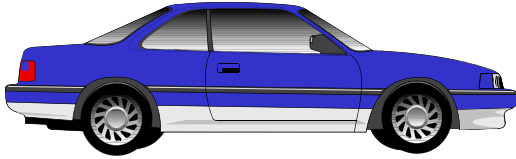
GDP as an Indicator of the True Level of National Output

Being the major measure of aggregate output, GDP can't serve the exact indicator of the actual level of production in the economy.

Official GDP statistics do not provide a complete accounting of economic activity, because do not include the value of:

- *underground or illegal economic activities,*
- *household work and production,*
- *bartered goods.*





GDP as the Indicator of the Welfare and the Well-being

GDP and GNP can't serve the exact indicators of societal well-being.

An increase in these measures might reflect an increase in the standard of living, **but** GDP and GNP:

- ✓ also increase with expenditures on natural disasters, deadly epidemics, war, crime, and other detriments to society;
- ✓ do not include non-market activity and self-made production;
- ✓ do not reflect the impact of externalities, either positive (“goods”) or negative (“bads”), such as deterioration of environment, changes in leisure time, the level of medical care and education, the length of life, the crime situation, noise, etc;
- ✓ do not capture the change in product quality.





Net Economic Welfare



This indicator to estimate economic well-being was proposed in **1972** by two prominent U.S. economists

James Tobin (Nobel prize, 1981) and **William Nordhaus**.

$$\begin{aligned} \textit{Net Economic Welfare} &= \\ &= \textit{GDP} + \textit{Value of "goods"} - \textit{Value of "bads"} \end{aligned}$$

Nominal GDP versus Real GDP

Nominal GDP is GDP measured at **current prices**. The size of nominal GDP is influenced by two factors:

- changes in the size of physical volume of production;
- changes in prices (level of inflation).

In order to measure the true change in output economists use real GDP.

Real GDP is GDP measured with **constant prices**.

Real GDP is nominal GDP corrected for inflation.

$$\text{Real GDP} = \frac{\text{Nominal GDP}}{\text{Price level}}$$

Example

Imagine, that the economy produces only bananas.



	Quantity (in tons) Q	Price (in dollars) P	Nominal GDP (in current prices)	Real GDP (in prices of 2008)
Year 2008	100	150	$150 \times 100 = \underline{15000}$	$150 \times 100 = \underline{15000}$
Year 2009	80	200	$200 \times 80 = \underline{16000}$	$150 \times 80 = \underline{12000}$

In 2009 the *real* GDP *decreased*
while the *nominal* GDP *increased* due to the increase in prices.



Nominal GDP versus Real GDP

If an economy produces a great number of goods
(n goods, for example), then the value of

Nominal GDP = current year prices \times current year quantities

$$= \sum_{i=1}^n P_i^t Q_i^t$$

the value of

Real GDP = base year prices \times current year quantities =

$$= \sum_{i=1}^n P_i^0 Q_i^t$$

where P_i^t and P_i^0 are the prices for good i correspondingly in the current (t) year and in the base (0) year;

Q_i^t and Q_i^0 are the quantities of good i produced correspondingly in the current (t) year and in the base (0) year.

Price Indexes

The measures of general price level are:

- **Consumer Price Index – CPI;**
- **Producer Price Index – PPI;**
- **GDP Deflator.**

Price indices are used to measure inflation and adjust nominal values for inflation to find real values

The Consumer Price Index

- is based on the prices of items in a fixed representative "market basket" of hundreds of final goods and services used by typical urban consumers in a base year;
- is the government's gauge of inflation in the US;
- is considered to be the best measure of the cost of living;
- is used, for example, to adjust tax brackets and social security payments and wages for inflation (i.e. indexation);
- is calculated as **Laspeyres index**, i.e. fixed basket (base year) quantities index:



$$I = \frac{\textit{Current year prices} \times \textit{Base year quantities}}{\textit{Base year prices} \times \textit{Base year quantities}} \times 100 =$$

$$= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n P_i^t Q_i^0}{\sum_{i=1}^n P_i^0 Q_i^0} \times 100$$

The Producer Price Index

- is based on the prices of items in a fixed "market basket" of hundreds of intermediate (or wholesale) goods (such as lumber and steel) used by producers during a production process in a base year;
- is calculated as **Laspeyres index**, i.e. fixed basket (base year) quantities index, so the PPI is similar in calculation to the CPI;
- differs from CPI, because:
 - includes raw materials and semifinished goods;
 - is designed to measure prices at an early stage of a distribution system;
 - is constructed from prices at the level of the first (not final) significant commercial transaction;
- the PPI is sometimes a good predictor of future inflation (since producers often pass their cost increases on to consumers).



The GDP Deflator

The **Gross Domestic Product Deflator** is an alternative general price index that reflects the importance of products in current market baskets (current year quantities), rather than in base year market baskets (base year quantities), which become less relevant over time.

$$\text{GDP Deflator} = \frac{\text{Current year prices} \times \text{current year quantities}}{\text{Base year prices} \times \text{current year quantities}} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n P_i^t Q_i^t}{\sum_{i=1}^n P_i^0 Q_i^t} \times 100$$

GDP deflator is calculated as **Paasche index**.

From Nominal GDP to Real GDP

In order to convert any year's nominal GDP
(or any other nominal figure)
into real GDP
(or any other corresponding real figure),
one must use the formula

$$\text{Real GDP} = \frac{\text{Nominal GDP}}{\text{CPI (or GDP deflator) for the same year}}$$



CPI versus GDP deflator

	The Consumer Price Index	The GDP deflator
Type of Goods	Only Consumer Goods	All the Final Goods Included in GDP
Imported Goods	Includes	Excludes
Market Basket (Quantities)	Fixed (of the base year)	Changing (of the current year)
Price Index	Laspeyres	Paasche
Changes in Price Level	Overestimates	Underestimates
Substitution Effect	Doesn't reflect	Reflects
Quality Improvements	Excludes	Includes
Price Changes in New Products	Excludes	Includes

How to Measure Inflation

Inflation is a sustained increase in the overall price level. An increase in the price of one good or several goods is not necessarily inflation. There must be an increase in the general price level (P) between two years – current (t) and previous ($t-1$). The key measure is the rate of inflation (π):

$$\text{The rate of inflation } (\pi) = \frac{P_t - P_{t-1}}{P_{t-1}} \times 100\% = \left(\frac{P_t}{P_{t-1}} - 1 \right) \times 100\%$$

The most frequently used measures of price level are CPI and GDP deflator.

$$\pi = \frac{CPI_t - CPI_{t-1}}{CPI_{t-1}} \times 100\%$$

$$\pi = \frac{GDP \text{ deflator}_t - GDP \text{ deflator}_{t-1}}{GDP \text{ deflator}_{t-1}} \times 100\%$$

Nominal GDP, Real GDP and Inflation

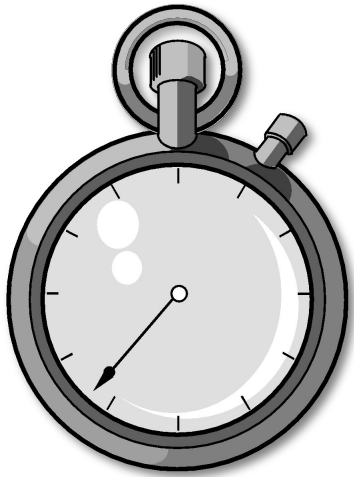
If inflation is low ($< 10\%$), the relationship between nominal GDP, real GDP and inflation rate is:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Changes in nominal GDP (in \%)} = \\ & = \text{Changes in real GDP (in \%)} + \text{Changes in the overall} \\ & \quad \text{price level (in \%)} \end{aligned}$$

Example. Suppose, during a year nominal GDP increased by 7% , while the rate of inflation by the end of the year appeared to be 4% . It means that the real GDP growth was only 3% ($7\% - 4\% = 3\%$).



Actual and Potential Real GDP



To measure changes in quantities, i.e. physical amount of output, only real GDP can be used.

But annual (**short-run**) output can deviate from output that can be produced if all the economic resources are fully employed (**long-run** output).

The first one is called *actual real GDP* and is used to measure the changes in real from year-to-year output (i.e. business cycle fluctuations), the second one is called *potential (or natural) real GDP* and is used to estimate the changes in productive possibilities of the economy (i.e. the trend of economic growth).

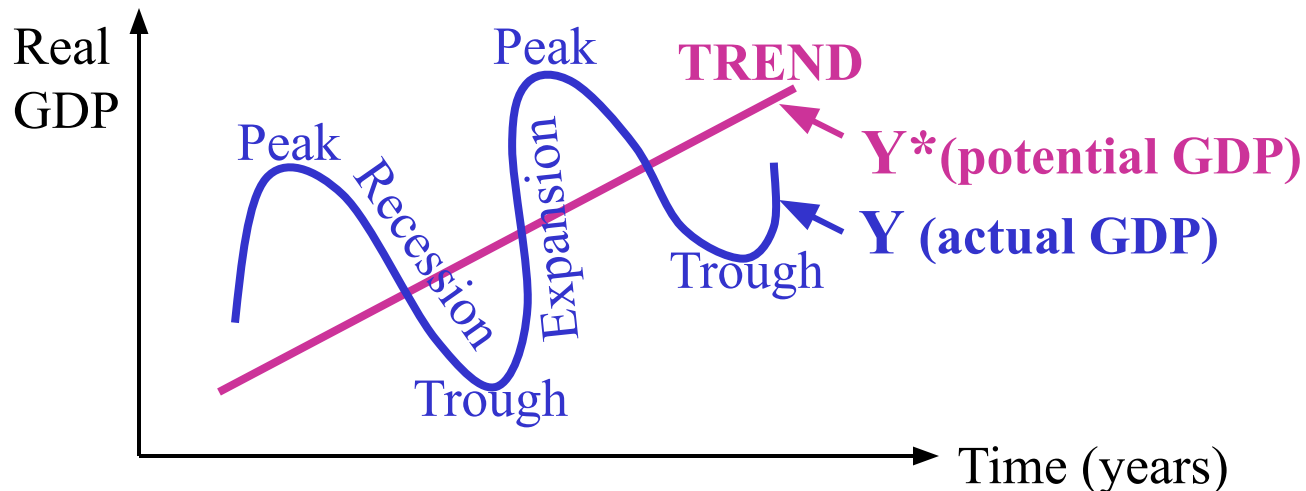
Actual versus Potential Real GDP

Actual real GDP (Y)

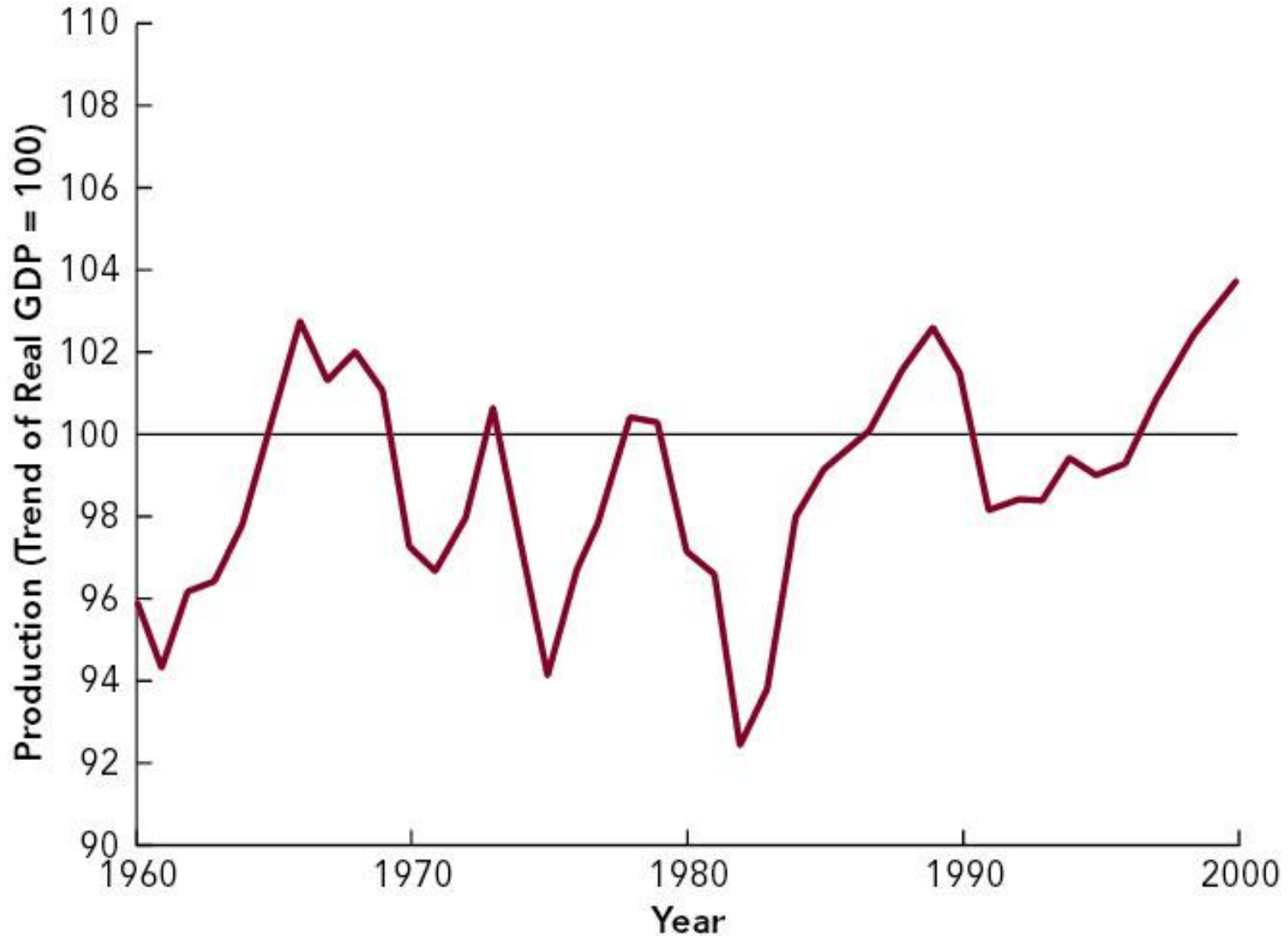
- Short run period.
- Measures changes in the annual (year-to-year) output.
- Is a characteristic of business cycle.
- The level is determined by the desire of economic agents to buy produced goods and services, i.e. by aggregate demand.

Potential real GDP (Y*)

- Long run period.
- Measures changes in the productive possibilities.
- Is a characteristic of economic growth.
- The level is determined by the amount and productivity of resources (labor and capital) and the existing technology, i.e. by production function.



US Business Cycle: Fluctuations in Total Production Relative to the Long-run Growth Trend



The GDP gap

The deviation of actual real GDP (Y) from its potential level (Y^*) is known as the *GDP (or output) gap*.

$$\text{GDP gap} = \text{Potential GDP} - \text{Actual GDP} = Y^* - Y$$

The GDP gap may be:

- **positive**, when actual real GDP is below its potential level; it is the period of recession; this type of gap is called the **recessionary GDP gap**;
- **negative**, when actual real GDP exceeds its potential level; it is the period of expansion (or boom); this type of gap is called the **inflationary GDP gap**; the economy in this case is called an *overheated economy*.



Recessionary versus Inflationary GDP Gap

	Recessionary GDP gap	Inflationary GDP gap
Level of output	$Y < Y^*$	$Y > Y^*$
Level of employment	Underemployment (less than full)	Overemployment (higher than full)
Major problem	Unemployment	Inflation
Situation	Recession	Expansion (boom)

The Rate of Growth

The rate of growth (g) is an important macroeconomic variable that is used to measure the *annual percentage changes* in the level of economy's output, i.e. *in actual real GDP* (Y) in a given year (year 2 or more generally year t) relative to the previous year (year 1 or more generally $t - 1$), that allows to estimate if economic activity is declining or expanding.

$$g = \frac{\text{Real GDP of year}_2 - \text{Real GDP of year}_1}{\text{Real GDP of year}_1} \times 100\%$$

or more generally

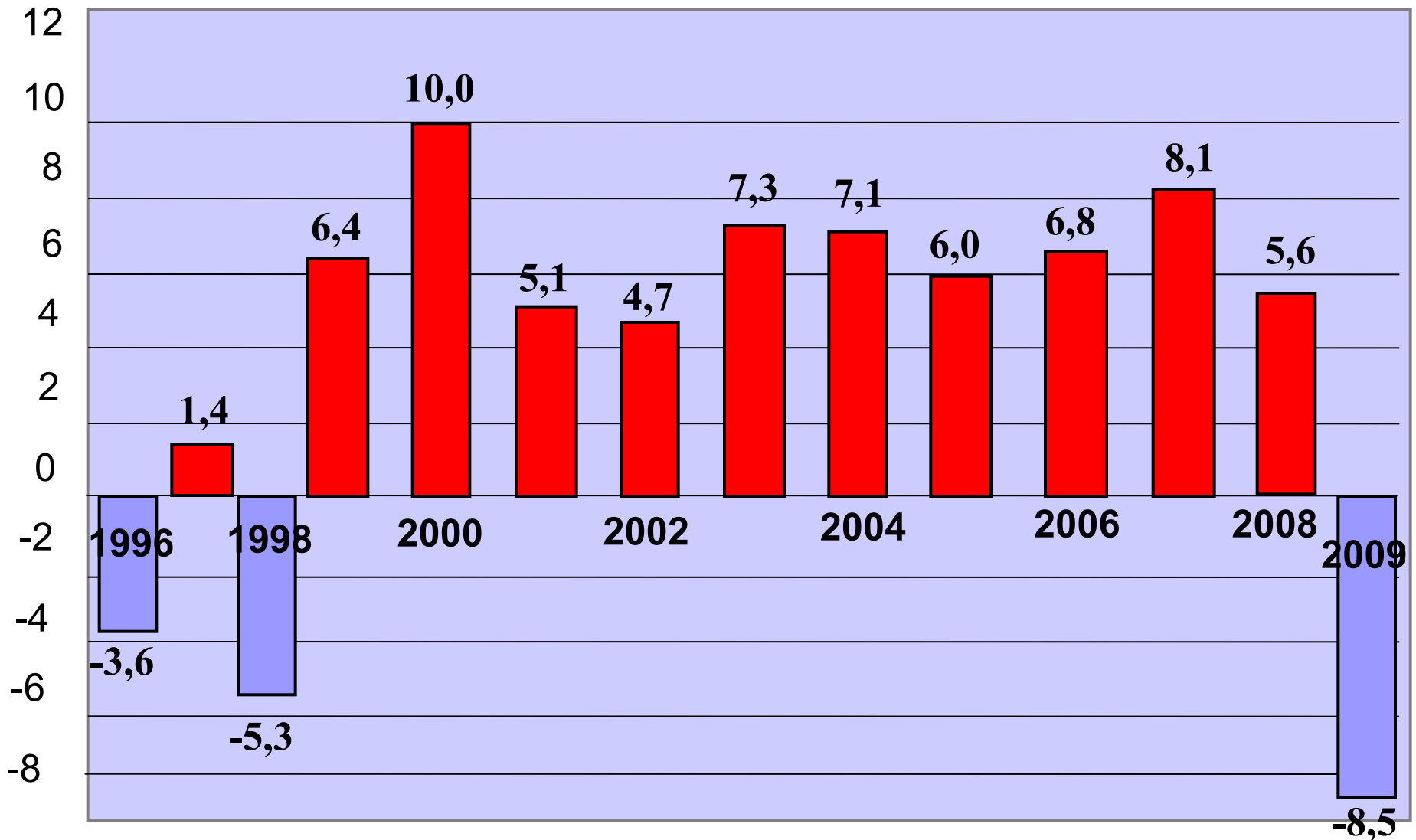
$$g = \frac{Y_t - Y_{t-1}}{Y_{t-1}} \times 100\%$$

Growth Rates of Real GDP Across the Countries

Country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Russia	7,3	7,2	6,4	6,7	8,1	5,6
Germany	-0,2	1,6	0,9	2,7	2,5	1,3
Italy	0,0	1,1	-0,1	1,8	1,8	-1,0
Canada	1,7	3,1	2,7	2,7	2,5	0,4
Great Britain	2,7	3,3	1,9	2,8	3,0	0,7
United States	2,7	4,2	3,5	3,4	1,9	1,1
France	1,1	2,3	1,2	2,1	1,3	0,4
Japan	2,1	2,7	3,1	2,3	1,7	0,4

Source: Goscomstat

Growth Rates of Real GDP in Russia, 1996 – 2009



How to Measure the Standard of Living

The best measure for the **productive potential** of the economy is **real GDP**.

But it is not the exact variable to estimate the living standard and the well-being of each citizen, because the population growth rate may be higher than that of real GDP.

So the best measure for the **standard of living** is thought to be **real GDP per capita**.

$$\text{Real GDP per capita} = \frac{\text{Real GDP}}{\text{Size of Population}}$$

But real GDP per capita is not the ideal measure of personal economic well-being, because it doesn't include the changes:

- in the distribution of income;
- in leisure time enjoyed by the typical person;
- in the impact of externalities;
- in product quality, etc.



Standards of Living Worldwide, 2008

Country	GDP per Capita (\$) by PPP	Rank	Country	GDP per Capita (\$) by PPP	Rank
Luxembourg	78985	1	Germany	33154	19
Norway	53334	2	Italy	29934	23
Singapore	50299	3	Cyprus	27173	24
United States	45790	4	Czechia	23194	29
Ireland	43035	5	Estonia	21252	33
Switzerland	39963	6	Antigua & Barbados	17118	38
Netherlands	37960	8	Croatia	15516	40
Sweden	36365	10	Russia	14743	42
Canada	35729	12	Chili	13885	45
Great Britain	36590	16	Argentina	13244	49
Japan	35310	17	Ukraine	6916	81
France	33414	18	Georgia	4667	96

Source: World Bank