

Can We Avoid Another Financial Crisis

Financial crisis

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A financial crisis is any of a broad variety of situations in which some financial assets suddenly lose a large part of their nominal value. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, many financial crises were associated with banking panics, and many recessions coincided with these panics. Other situations that are often called financial crises include stock market crashes and the bursting of other financial bubbles, currency crises, and sovereign defaults. Financial crises directly result in a loss of paper wealth but do not necessarily result in significant changes in the real economy (for example, the crisis resulting from the famous tulip mania bubble in the 17th century).

Many economists have offered theories about how financial crises develop and how they could be prevented. There is little consensus and financial crises continue to occur from time to time. It is apparent however that a consistent feature of both economic (and other applied finance disciplines) is the obvious inability to predict and avert financial crises. This realization raises the question as to what is known and also capable of being known (i.e. the epistemology) within economics and applied finance. It has been argued that the assumptions of unique, well-defined causal chains being present in economic thinking, models and data, could, in part, explain why financial crises are often inherent and unavoidable.

1997 Asian financial crisis

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The 1997 Asian financial crisis gripped much of East and Southeast Asia during the late 1990s. The crisis began in Thailand in July 1997 before spreading to several other countries with a ripple effect, raising fears of a worldwide economic meltdown due to financial contagion. However, the recovery in 1998–1999 was rapid, and worries of a meltdown quickly subsided.

Originating in Thailand, where it was known as the Tom Yum Kung crisis (Thai: ??????????????) on 2 July, it followed the financial collapse of the Thai baht after the Thai government was forced to float the baht due to lack of foreign currency to support its currency peg to the U.S. dollar. Capital flight ensued almost immediately, beginning an international chain reaction. At the time, Thailand had acquired a burden of foreign debt. As the crisis spread, other Southeast Asian countries and later Japan and South Korea saw slumping currencies, devalued stock markets and other asset prices, and a precipitous rise in private debt. Foreign debt-to-GDP ratios rose from 100% to 167% in the four large Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economies in 1993–96, then shot up beyond 180% during the worst of the crisis. In South Korea, the ratios rose from 13% to 21% and then as high as 40%, while the other northern newly industrialized countries fared much better. Only in Thailand and South Korea did debt service-to-exports ratios rise.

South Korea, Indonesia and Thailand were the countries most affected by the crisis. Hong Kong, Laos, Malaysia and the Philippines were also hurt by the slump. Brunei, mainland China, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam were less affected, although all suffered from a general loss of demand and confidence throughout the region. Although most of the governments of Asia had seemingly sound fiscal policies, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stepped in to initiate a \$40 billion program to stabilize the currencies of South Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia, economies particularly hard hit by the crisis.

However, the efforts to stem a global economic crisis did little to stabilize the domestic situation in Indonesia. After 30 years in power, Indonesian dictator Suharto was forced to step down on 21 May 1998 in the wake of widespread rioting that followed sharp price increases caused by a drastic devaluation of the rupiah. The effects of the crisis lingered through 1998, where many important stocks fell in Wall Street as a result of a dip in the values of the currencies of Russia and Latin American countries that weakened those countries' "demand for U.S. exports." In 1998, growth in the Philippines dropped to virtually zero. Only Singapore proved relatively insulated from the shock, but nevertheless suffered serious hits in passing, mainly due to its status as a major financial hub and its geographical proximity to Malaysia and Indonesia. By 1999, however, analysts saw signs that the economies of Asia were beginning to recover. After the crisis, economies in East and Southeast Asia worked together toward financial stability and better financial supervision.

Steve Keen

Steve (2017). Can We Avoid Another Financial Crisis? Polity. ISBN 9781509513734. Keen, Steve (2015). Developing an economics for the post-crisis world. World

Steve Keen (born 28 March 1953) is an Australian economist and author. He considers himself a post-Keynesian, criticising neoclassical economics as inconsistent, unscientific, and empirically unsupported.

Keen was formerly an associate professor of economics at University of Western Sydney, until he applied for voluntary redundancy in 2013, due to the closure of the economics program at the university. In 2014, he became a professor and Head of the School of Economics, History and Politics at Kingston University in London. He has since taken retirement and is crowd source funded to undertake independent research; he is an Honorary Professor UCL, and Distinguished Research Fellow at the Institute for Strategy Resilience & Security, University College London.

2008 financial crisis

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The 2008 financial crisis, also known as the global financial crisis (GFC) or the Panic of 2008, was a major worldwide financial crisis centered in the United States. The causes included excessive speculation on property values by both homeowners and financial institutions, leading to the 2000s United States housing bubble. This was exacerbated by predatory lending for subprime mortgages and by deficiencies in regulation. Cash out refinancings had fueled an increase in consumption that could no longer be sustained when home prices declined. The first phase of the crisis was the subprime mortgage crisis, which began in early 2007, as mortgage-backed securities (MBS) tied to U.S. real estate, and a vast web of derivatives linked to those MBS, collapsed in value. A liquidity crisis spread to global institutions by mid-2007 and climaxed with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in September 2008, which triggered a stock market crash and bank runs in several countries. The crisis exacerbated the Great Recession, a global recession that began in mid-2007, as well as the United States bear market of 2007–2009. It was also a contributor to the 2008–2011 Icelandic financial crisis and the euro area crisis.

During the 1990s, the U.S. Congress had passed legislation that intended to expand affordable housing through looser financing rules, and in 1999, parts of the 1933 Banking Act (Glass–Steagall Act) were repealed, enabling institutions to mix low-risk operations, such as commercial banking and insurance, with higher-risk operations such as investment banking and proprietary trading. As the Federal Reserve ("Fed") lowered the federal funds rate from 2000 to 2003, institutions increasingly targeted low-income homebuyers, largely belonging to racial minorities, with high-risk loans; this development went unattended by regulators. As interest rates rose from 2004 to 2006, the cost of mortgages rose and the demand for housing fell; in early 2007, as more U.S. subprime mortgage holders began defaulting on their repayments, lenders went bankrupt,

culminating in the bankruptcy of New Century Financial in April. As demand and prices continued to fall, the financial contagion spread to global credit markets by August 2007, and central banks began injecting liquidity. In March 2008, Bear Stearns, the fifth largest U.S. investment bank, was sold to JPMorgan Chase in a "fire sale" backed by Fed financing.

In response to the growing crisis, governments around the world deployed massive bailouts of financial institutions and used monetary policy and fiscal policies to prevent an economic collapse of the global financial system. By July 2008, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, companies which together owned or guaranteed half of the U.S. housing market, verged on collapse; the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 enabled the federal government to seize them on September 7. Lehman Brothers (the fourth largest U.S. investment bank) filed for the largest bankruptcy in U.S. history on September 15, which was followed by a Fed bail-out of American International Group (the country's largest insurer) the next day, and the seizure of Washington Mutual in the largest bank failure in U.S. history on September 25. On October 3, Congress passed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, authorizing the Treasury Department to purchase toxic assets and bank stocks through the \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). The Fed began a program of quantitative easing by buying treasury bonds and other assets, such as MBS, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed in February 2009 by newly elected President Barack Obama, included a range of measures intended to preserve existing jobs and create new ones. These initiatives combined, coupled with actions taken in other countries, ended the worst of the Great Recession by mid-2009.

Assessments of the crisis's impact in the U.S. vary, but suggest that some 8.7 million jobs were lost, causing unemployment to rise from 5% in 2007 to a high of 10% in October 2009. The percentage of citizens living in poverty rose from 12.5% in 2007 to 15.1% in 2010. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell by 53% between October 2007 and March 2009, and some estimates suggest that one in four households lost 75% or more of their net worth. In 2010, the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act was passed, overhauling financial regulations. It was opposed by many Republicans, and it was weakened by the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act in 2018. The Basel III capital and liquidity standards were also adopted by countries around the world.

Subprime mortgage crisis

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The American subprime mortgage crisis was a multinational financial crisis that occurred between 2007 and 2010, contributing to the 2008 financial crisis. It led to a severe economic recession, with millions becoming unemployed and many businesses going bankrupt. The U.S. government intervened with a series of measures to stabilize the financial system, including the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The collapse of the United States housing bubble and high interest rates led to unprecedented numbers of borrowers missing mortgage repayments and becoming delinquent. This ultimately led to mass foreclosures and the devaluation of housing-related securities. The housing bubble preceding the crisis was financed with mortgage-backed securities (MBSes) and collateralized debt obligations (CDOs), which initially offered higher interest rates (i.e. better returns) than government securities, along with attractive risk ratings from rating agencies. Despite being highly rated, most of these financial instruments were made up of high-risk subprime mortgages.

While elements of the crisis first became more visible during 2007, several major financial institutions collapsed in late 2008, with significant disruption in the flow of credit to businesses and consumers and the onset of a severe global recession. Most notably, Lehman Brothers, a major mortgage lender, declared bankruptcy in September 2008. There were many causes of the crisis, with commentators assigning different

levels of blame to financial institutions, regulators, credit agencies, government housing policies, and consumers, among others. Two proximate causes were the rise in subprime lending and the increase in housing speculation. Investors, even those with "prime", or low-risk, credit ratings, were much more likely to default than non-investors when prices fell. These changes were part of a broader trend of lowered lending standards and higher-risk mortgage products, which contributed to U.S. households becoming increasingly indebted.

The crisis had severe, long-lasting consequences for the U.S. and European economies. The U.S. entered a deep recession, with nearly 9 million jobs lost during 2008 and 2009, roughly 6% of the workforce. The number of jobs did not return to the December 2007 pre-crisis peak until May 2014. U.S. household net worth declined by nearly \$13 trillion (20%) from its Q2 2007 pre-crisis peak, recovering by Q4 2012. U.S. housing prices fell nearly 30% on average and the U.S. stock market fell approximately 50% by early 2009, with stocks regaining their December 2007 level during September 2012. One estimate of lost output and income from the crisis comes to "at least 40% of 2007 gross domestic product". Europe also continued to struggle with its own economic crisis, with elevated unemployment and severe banking impairments estimated at €940 billion between 2008 and 2012. As of January 2018, U.S. bailout funds had been fully recovered by the government, when interest on loans is taken into consideration. A total of \$626B was invested, loaned, or granted due to various bailout measures, while \$390B had been returned to the Treasury. The Treasury had earned another \$323B in interest on bailout loans, resulting in an \$109B profit as of January 2021.

Euro area crisis

(IMF). The crisis included the Greek government-debt crisis, the 2008–2014 Spanish financial crisis, the 2010–2014 Portuguese financial crisis, the post-2008

The euro area crisis, often also referred to as the eurozone crisis, European debt crisis, or European sovereign debt crisis, was a multi-year debt crisis and financial crisis in the European Union (EU) from 2009 until, in Greece, 2018. The eurozone member states of Greece, Portugal, Ireland, and Cyprus were unable to repay or refinance their government debt or to bail out fragile banks under their national supervision and needed assistance from other eurozone countries, the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The crisis included the Greek government-debt crisis, the 2008–2014 Spanish financial crisis, the 2010–2014 Portuguese financial crisis, the post-2008 Irish banking crisis and the post-2008 Irish economic downturn, as well as the 2012–2013 Cypriot financial crisis. The crisis contributed to changes in leadership in Greece, Ireland, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia, Belgium, and the Netherlands as well as in the United Kingdom. It also led to austerity, increases in unemployment rates to as high as 27% in Greece and Spain, and increases in poverty levels and income inequality in the affected countries.

Causes of the euro area crisis included a weak economy of the European Union after the 2008 financial crisis and the Great Recession, the sudden stop of the flow of foreign capital into countries that had substantial current account deficits and were dependent on foreign lending. The crisis was worsened by the inability of states to resort to devaluation (reductions in the value of the national currency) due to having the euro as a shared currency. Debt accumulation in some eurozone members was in part due to differences in macroeconomics among eurozone member states prior to the adoption of the euro. It also involved a process of cross-border financial contagion. The European Central Bank (ECB) adopted an interest rate that incentivized investors in Northern eurozone members to lend to the South, whereas the South was incentivized to borrow because interest rates were very low. Over time, this led to the accumulation of deficits in the South, primarily by private economic actors. A lack of fiscal policy coordination among eurozone member states contributed to imbalanced capital flows in the eurozone, while a lack of financial regulatory centralization or harmonization among eurozone member states, coupled with a lack of credible commitments to provide bailouts to banks, incentivized risky financial transactions by banks. The detailed causes of the crisis varied from country to country. In several EU countries, private debts arising from real-

estate bubbles were transferred to sovereign debt as a result of banking system bailouts and government responses to slowing economies post-bubble. European banks own a significant amount of sovereign debt, such that concerns regarding the solvency of banking systems or sovereigns are negatively reinforcing.

The onset of crisis was in late 2009 when the Greek government disclosed that its budget deficits were far higher than previously thought. Greece called for external help in early 2010, receiving an EU–IMF bailout package in May 2010. European nations implemented a series of financial support measures such as the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) in early 2010 and the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) in late 2010. The ECB also contributed to solve the crisis by lowering interest rates and providing cheap loans of more than one trillion euros in order to maintain money flows between European banks. On 6 September 2012, the ECB calmed financial markets by announcing free unlimited support for all eurozone countries involved in a sovereign state bailout/precautionary programme from EFSF/ESM, through some yield lowering Outright Monetary Transactions (OMT). Ireland and Portugal received EU-IMF bailouts In November 2010 and May 2011, respectively. In March 2012, Greece received its second bailout. Cyprus also received rescue packages in June 2012.

Return to economic growth and improved structural deficits enabled Ireland and Portugal to exit their bailout programmes in July 2014. Greece and Cyprus both managed to partly regain market access in 2014. Spain never officially received a bailout programme. Its rescue package from the ESM was earmarked for a bank recapitalisation fund and did not include financial support for the government itself.

Greek government-debt crisis

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Greece faced a sovereign debt crisis in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Widely known in the country as The Crisis (Greek: η κρίση, romanized: I Krísi), it reached the populace as a series of sudden reforms and austerity measures that led to impoverishment and loss of income and property, as well as a humanitarian crisis. In all, the Greek economy suffered the longest recession of any advanced mixed economy to date and became the first developed country whose stock market was downgraded to that of an emerging market in 2013. As a result, the Greek political system was upended, social exclusion increased, and hundreds of thousands of well-educated Greeks left the country, though the majority of those emigrants had returned as of 2024.

The crisis started in late 2009, triggered by the turmoil of the world-wide Great Recession, structural weaknesses in the Greek economy, and lack of monetary policy flexibility as a member of the eurozone. The crisis included revelations that previous data on government debt levels and deficits had been underreported by the Greek government; the official forecast for the 2009 budget deficit was less than half the final value, and after revisions according to Eurostat methodology, the 2009 government debt was raised from \$269.3bn to \$299.7bn, about 11% higher than previously reported.

The crisis led to a loss of confidence in the Greek economy, indicated by a widening of bond yield spreads and rising cost of risk insurance on credit default swaps compared to the other Eurozone countries, particularly Germany. The government enacted 12 rounds of tax increases, spending cuts, and reforms from 2010 to 2016, which at times triggered local riots and nationwide protests. Despite these efforts, the country required bailout loans in 2010, 2012, and 2015 from the International Monetary Fund, Eurogroup, and the European Central Bank, and negotiated a 50% "haircut" on debt owed to private banks in 2011, which amounted to a €100bn debt relief (a value effectively reduced due to bank recapitalization and other resulting needs).

After a popular referendum which rejected further austerity measures required for the third bailout, and after closure of banks across the country (which lasted for several weeks), on 30 June 2015, Greece became the

first developed country to fail to make an IMF loan repayment on time (the payment was made with a 20-day delay). At that time, debt levels stood at €323bn or some €30,000 per capita, little changed since the beginning of the crisis and at a per capita value below the OECD average, but high as a percentage of the respective GDP.

Between 2009 and 2017, the Greek government debt rose from €300bn to €318bn. However, during the same period the Greek debt-to-GDP ratio rose up from 127% to 179% due to the severe GDP drop during the handling of the crisis.

Economic bubble

“popped” and prices have crashed. The term “bubble”, in reference to financial crisis, originated in the 1711–1720 British South Sea Bubble, and originally

An economic bubble (also called a speculative bubble or a financial bubble) is a period when current asset prices greatly exceed their intrinsic valuation, being the valuation that the underlying long-term fundamentals justify. Bubbles can be caused by overly optimistic projections about the scale and sustainability of growth (e.g. dot-com bubble), and/or by the belief that intrinsic valuation is no longer relevant when making an investment (e.g. Tulip mania). They have appeared in most asset classes, including equities (e.g. Roaring Twenties), commodities (e.g. Uranium bubble), real estate (e.g. 2000s US housing bubble), and even esoteric assets (e.g. Cryptocurrency bubble). Bubbles usually form as a result of either excess liquidity in markets, and/or changed investor psychology. Large multi-asset bubbles (e.g. 1980s Japanese asset bubble and the 2020–21 Everything bubble), are attributed to central banking liquidity (e.g. overuse of the Fed put).

In the early stages of a bubble, many investors do not recognise the bubble for what it is. People notice the prices are going up and often think it is justified. Therefore bubbles are often conclusively identified only in retrospect, after the bubble has already "popped" and prices have crashed.

Great Recession

(2019): 89–114. Read, Colin (2009). Global Financial Meltdown: How We Can Avoid the Next Economic Crisis. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-0-230-22218-2

The Great Recession was a period of market decline in economies around the world that occurred from late 2007 to mid-2009, overlapping with the closely related 2008 financial crisis. The scale and timing of the recession varied from country to country (see map). At the time, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded that it was the most severe economic and financial meltdown since the Great Depression.

The causes of the Great Recession include a combination of vulnerabilities that developed in the financial system, along with a series of triggering events that began with the bursting of the United States housing bubble in 2005–2012. When housing prices fell and homeowners began to abandon their mortgages, the value of mortgage-backed securities held by investment banks declined in 2007–2008, causing several to collapse or be bailed out in September 2008. This 2007–2008 phase was called the subprime mortgage crisis.

The combination of banks being unable to provide funds to businesses and homeowners paying down debt rather than borrowing and spending resulted in the Great Recession. The recession officially began in the U.S. in December 2007 and lasted until June 2009, thus extending over 19 months. As with most other recessions, it appears that no known formal theoretical or empirical model was able to accurately predict the advance of this recession, except for minor signals in the sudden rise of forecast probabilities, which were still well under 50%.

The recession was not felt equally around the world; whereas most of the world's developed economies, particularly in North America, South America and Europe, fell into a severe, sustained recession, many more recently developing economies suffered far less impact, particularly China, India and Indonesia, whose

economies grew substantially during this period. Similarly, Oceania suffered minimal impact, in part due to its proximity to Asian markets.

Economic recovery

short by another distinct contraction that began in May 1937 and lasted until June 1938. The United States responded to the 2008 financial crisis by cutting

An economic recovery is the phase of the business cycle following a recession. The overall business outlook for an industry looks optimistic during the economic recovery phase.

During the recovery period, the economy goes through a process of economic adaptation and change to new circumstances, including the reasons that caused the recession in the first place, as well as the new policies and regulations enacted by governments and central banks in reaction to the recession.

When displaced workers find new employment and failing enterprises are bought up or broken up by others, the labor, capital goods, and other economic resources that were tied up in businesses that failed and went under after the recession are re-employed in new industries. Recovery is the process by which the economy heals itself from the harm it has sustained, paving the way for future growth.

"Terms such as 'recovery', 'reconstruction', and 'rebuilding' might suggest a return to the status quo before the conflict. Typically, however, developmental pathologies such as extreme inequality, poverty, corruption, exclusion, institutional decay, poor policy design and economic mismanagement will have contributed to armed conflicts in the first instance and will have been further exacerbated during conflict. Accordingly, post-conflict recovery is often not about restoring pre-war economic or institutional arrangements; rather, it is about creating a new political economy dispensation. It is not about simply building back, but about building back differently and better. As such, economic recovery . . . is essentially transformative, requiring a mix of far-reaching economic, institutional, legal and policy reforms that allow war-torn countries to re-establish the foundations for self-sustaining development."

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