

Open Budget Survey 2019

Questionnaire

Albania

April 2020

Country Questionnaire: Albania

PBS-1. What is the fiscal year of the PBS evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2019

Source:
MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: It also relates to Fiscal Year 2018 for mid-year and end-year reports.

Researcher Response
FY 2019 as per the OBS methodology.

IBP Comment
As the researcher notes, OBS guidelines call for the most recently published Pre-Budget Statement prior to the research cut-off date (31 December 2018) to be evaluated. The existing response of "FY 2019" is maintained.

PBS-2. When is the PBS made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for a PBS to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public one month before the Executive's Budget Proposal is submitted to the legislature for consideration. If the PBS is not released to the public at least one month before the Executive's Budget Proposal is submitted to the legislature for consideration, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the PBS.

Answer:
a. At least four months in advance of the budget year, and at least one month before the Executive's Budget Proposal is introduced in the legislature

Source:
MoFE

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: c. Less than two months in advance of the budget year, but at least one month before the Executive's Budget Proposal is introduced in the legislature
Comments: <https://www.crca.al/sq/acce-news/shoqeria-civile-i-ben-thirrje-qeverise-ministrive-dhe-bashkive-te-konsultojne-dhe>
<http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20181221143707Komisioni%20i%20Medies,%20date%2019.11.2018.pdf>

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

The peer reviewer's comment is well-noted. As they note in question PBS-3a, the 2019 Pre-Budget Statement was released in January 2018. The existing response of "a" is maintained.

PBS-3a. If the PBS is published, what is the date of publication of the PBS?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:
23/01/2018

Source:
MoFE website observation

Comment:
n/a

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: 17/01/2018

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: PBS was approved on 17 January 2018 and published in the Official Gazette no. 4 of 23 January 2018 (link: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/4/31647c2c-d1f4-408c-99fd-9428a4cf86d2>)

Researcher Response
The official gazette website has been problematic during the research so the MoFE was taken as a reference. Agree with the date 23 January 2018.

IBP Comment
IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The response is updated from "8/6/2018" to "23/01/2018."

PBS-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the PBS.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:
The 2019 PBS was published in the Official Gazette no. 4 of 23 January 2018 (link: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/4/31647c2c-d1f4-408c-99fd-9428a4cf86d2>)

Source:
MoFE website

Comment:
The date on the document is January 17, 2018 and there are news reports on its approval in January 2018 (<http://probiznes.al/miratohet-kuadri-iri-makroekonomik-dhe-fiskal/>), but based on researcher observation the document was not available publicly until June 8, 2018.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: PBS was approved on 17 January 2018 and published in the Official Gazette no. 4 of 23 January 2018 (link: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/4/31647c2c-d1f4-408c-99fd-9428a4cf86d2>). The response should be reviewed accordingly, because it was published on 23 January 2018.

IBP Comment
The government reviewer's comment is well-received. Per the researcher and IBP comments on PBS-3a, the response is revised from "Researcher observation" to "The 2019 PBS was published in the Official Gazette no. 4 of 23 January 2018 (link: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/4/31647c2c-d1f4-408c-99fd-9428a4cf86d2>)."

PBS-4. If the PBS is published, what is the URL or weblink of the PBS?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:
http://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e_Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Source:
the document published on the MoFE website

Comment:
You can find the PBS and previous Pre-Budget Statements at this link: <https://financa.gov.al/kuadri-makroekonomik-dhe-fiskal-2/>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: that is not the only link you can find the document through the other link: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/4/31647c2c-d1f4-408c-99fd-9428a4cf86d2>

IBP Comment
The government reviewer's suggested link is well received; it is also valid for this indicator.

PBS-5. If the PBS is published, are the numerical data contained in the PBS available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>

Option "d" applies if the PBS is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:
c. No

Source:
the document published on the MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

PBS-6a. If the PBS is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the PBS is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question PBS-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question PBS-2)

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

the document published on the MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

PBS-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question PBS-6a, please specify how you determined whether the PBS was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question PBS-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion:

Government Reviewer
Opinion:

PBS-7. If the PBS is produced, please write the full title of the PBS.

For example, a title for the Pre-Budget Statement could be "Proposed 2019 State Budget" or "Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Plan and Budget for 2018/19."

If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Kuadri Makroekonomik e Fiskal per periudhen 2019-2021

Source:

the document published on the MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: http://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e_Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

PBS-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the PBS?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>.

Answer:

b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: a. Yes

Comments: http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

The link posted by the peer reviewer is the citizens budget of the Enacted Budget, not the PBS. The answer "b" remains unchanged.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review."

EBP-1a. What is the fiscal year of the EBP evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2019

Source:
MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

EBP-1b. When is the EBP submitted to the legislature for consideration?

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:
29/10/2018

Source:
<http://www.newsbomb.al/projekt-buxheti-2019-ahmetaj-rritje-me-5-9-140339>
<http://abcnews.al/ahmetaj-prezanton-projekt-buxhetin-2019-rritje-me-5-9/>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The answer should be revised as the EBP for the FY2019 was submitted to the legislature on 29 October 2018 as confirmed by the following link of the Parliament's official website: <https://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156>

Researcher Response
I agree with the new date suggested by the Gov reviewer.

IBP Comment
The government reviewer's suggest date is well received, and IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The response is updated from "5/11/2018" to "29/10/2018."

EBP-2. When is the EBP made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for an EBP to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public while the legislature is still considering it and before the legislature approves (enacts) it. If the EBP is not released to the public before the legislature approves it, option "d" applies.

Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the EBP.

The OBS definition of an Executive's Budget Proposal is a document(s) that (i) the executive submits to the legislature as a formal part of the budget approval process and (ii) the legislature either approves or on which it approves proposed amendments.

The OBS will treat the Executive's Budget Proposal as "Not Produced," in the following cases:

- The executive does not submit the draft budget to the legislature; or
- The legislature receives the draft budget but does not approve it or does not approve recommendations on the draft budget;
- The legislature rejects the draft budget submitted by the executive, but the executive implements it without legislative approval; or
- There is no legislature, or the legislature has been dissolved.

Answer:

b. At least two months, but less than three months, in advance of the budget year, and in advance of the budget being approved by the legislature

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: c. Less than two months in advance of the budget year, but at least in advance of the budget being approved by the legislature

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: The EBP for FY2019 is publicly available through the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Researcher Response

The document was made publicly available on October 29. Therefore answer "a" remains unchanged.

IBP Comment

Per the researcher's response in EBP-3a, answer choice "b" applies for EBP-2. The response here remains unchanged.

EBP-3a. If the EBP is published, what is the date of publication of the EBP?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

In the comment boxes below, researchers should also list any supporting documents to the EBP and their date of publication.

Answer:

29/10/2018

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EBP-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the EBP.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Development followed by the researcher because of the debate at the Committee of economy and finance.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

In addition to the developments monitored by the researcher, the below news link also validates the publication of the EBP at that time: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZOQAz9YXEM> – the budget was approved in late October 2018 by the government

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: besides the publication of the EBP for FY2019 on MoFE website on 29/10/2018, the publication date is confirmed by the Parliament's website on the same date: <https://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156>

Researcher Response

The response confirms the date chosen by the researcher.

IBP Comment

The government reviewer's added details are well received.

EBP-4. If the EBP is published, what is the URL or weblink of the EBP?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

In the comment boxes below, researchers should also list any supporting documents to the EBP and their URL or weblink.

Answer:

<http://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019>

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EBP-5. If the EBP is published, are the numerical data contained in the EBP or its supporting documents available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data

found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>.

Option "d" applies if the EBP is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:

a. Yes, all of the numerical data are available in a machine readable format

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EBP-6a. If the EBP is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the EBP is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question EBP-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question EBP-2).

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EBP-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question EBP-6a, please specify how you determined whether the EBP was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question EBP-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Government Reviewer

Opinion:

EBP-7. If the EBP is produced, please write the full title of the EBP.

For example, a title for the Executive's Budget Proposal could be "Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for BY 2018-19, produced by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development."

If there are any supporting documents to the EBP, please enter their full titles in the comment box below.

If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Projektbuxheti 2019

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EBP-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the EBP?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets>.

Answer:

b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: a. Yes

Comments: The Citizens Budget 2019 has been published through the following link: http://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Researcher Response

The link posted by the gov reviewer is the citizens budget of the Enacted Budget, not the EBP. Answer "b" remains unchanged.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review."

EB-1a. What is the fiscal year of the EB evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2019

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

EB-1b. When was the EB approved (enacted) by the legislature?

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:
3/12/2018

Source:
The parliament approved the budget on December 3 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4M8JMzlvDg>).

<http://www.monitor.al/buxheti-2019-ahmetajriten-pagat-per-mjeket-mesuesit-diplomatet-hyn-ne-fuqi-bonusi-i-lindjes/>

Comment:

Later in the month, in response to student protests, the president decreed that the budget be revised and parliament overturned the decree, meaning that the original budget approved by parliament stands.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: there is another official link to confirm this:

<https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20181212134606ligi%20nr%20%2099%20dt%20%203%2012%202018.pdf>

EB-2. When is the EB made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for an EB to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public three months after the budget is approved by the legislature. If the EB is not released to the public at least three months after the budget is approved by the legislature, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the EB.

Answer:

a. Two weeks or less after the budget has been enacted

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: b. Between two weeks and six weeks after the budget has been enacted

Comments: After the approval of the annual budget law from the Parliament, the President has 20 days to issue the respective decree that effectively enters this law in to force.

IBP Comment

Based on the researcher's response to EB-3a, the existing answer choice of "a" is retained.

EB-3a. If the EB is published, what is the date of publication of the EB?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:

4/12/2018

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The EB for FY 2019 was published on the Official Gazette on 21 December 2018 which can be found on the following source:
<https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/183/49ef4f8f-e9f6-432c-837f-3acfd94b2b5f;q=buxheti%202019>

Researcher Response

The team conducting the research has discussed this issue even during the previous rounds where MoFE officials acknowledged the need to publish the EB immediately after its approval. This is what has happened this year. Certainly the MoFE doesn't have to wait for the official gazette since they are the issuing authority of the document they are aware that this would help with the transparency and the OBS score.

EB-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the EB.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Researcher noted the date of the publication.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The EB was published on the Ministry of Finance website on December 4, 2018 after parliament approved the budget on December 3 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4M8JMzlvDg>). Later in the month, in response to student protests, the president decreed that the budget be revised and parliament overturned the decree, meaning that the original budget approved by parliament stands.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The official publication of the EB for FY2019 has been done by the Official Gazette through the following link:
<https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/183/49ef4f8f-e9f6-432c-837f-3acfd94b2b5f;q=buxheti%202019> Ministry of Finance has published the same document shortly after this on its website

Researcher Response

The team conducting the research has discussed this issue even during the previous rounds where MoFE officials acknowledged the need to publish the EB immediately after its approval. This is what has happened this year. Certainly the MoFE doesn't have to wait for the official gazette since they are the issuing authority of the document they are aware that this would help with the transparency and the OBS score.

EB-4. If the EB is published, what is the URL or weblink of the EB?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:

<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/>

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: Besides the above link used by the researcher there is the Official Gazette publication link as follows:
<https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/183/49ef4f8f-e9f6-432c-837f-3acfd94b2b5f;q=buxheti%202019>

Researcher Response

The link provided by the gov reviewer is also valid. However, the research has taken in consideration primarily the website of the institution which produces the document, as the main source.

EB-5. If the EB is published, are the numerical data contained in the EB available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>

Option "d" applies if the EB is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:

a. Yes, all of the numerical data are available in a machine readable format

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EB-6a. If the EB is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the EB is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question EB-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question EB-2)

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion:

EB-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question EB-6a, please specify how you determined whether the EB was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question EB-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion:

Government Reviewer
Opinion:

EB-7. If the EB is produced, please write the full title of the EB.

For example, a title for the Enacted Budget could be "Appropriation Act n. 10 of 2018."

If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

LIGJ Nr. 99/2018 PËR BUXHETIN E VITIT 2019

Source:

MoFE

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <https://www.syri.net/politike/218690/protesta-e-studenteve-qe-ktheu-buxhetin-2019-argumentat-e-presidentit-meta/>
<https://www.parlament.al/Files/LigjeRishqyrtim/Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20ekonomi%20dhe%20FinancatBuxhet.pdf>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

EB-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the EB?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see:

<http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>

Answer:

a. Yes

Source:

Comment:

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

CB-1. What is the fiscal year of the CB evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

If more than one Citizens Budget is produced, for each CB please indicate the document the CB simplifies/refers to, and the fiscal year.

Answer:

FY 2019

Source:

n/a

Comment:

this document is the simplified version of the enacted budget

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

CB-2a. For the fiscal year indicated in CB-1, what is the public availability status of the CB?

If more than one Citizens Budget is produced, please complete this question for one of them, specifying in the comment box below which document (Executive's Budget Proposal or Enacted Budget) you are referring to, and – in the same comment box – which other Citizens Budget is produced and its public availability status.

Remember that publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

*Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology
Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.*

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion:

CB-2b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question CB-2a, please specify how you determined whether the CB was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question CB-2a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Government Reviewer

Opinion:

CB-3a. If the CB is published, what is the date of publication of the CB?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

If more than one Citizens Budget is published, please complete this question for one of them, specifying in the comment box below which document you are referring to, and – in the same comment box – which other Citizens Budget is produced and its dates of publication.

Answer:

11/12/2018 11/12/2018

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

CB-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the CB.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:
I have been checking the MoEF website after the budget was enacted while at the same time I have been in contact with MoFE officials too.

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

CB-4. If the CB is published, what is the URL or weblink of the CB?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

If more than one Citizens Budget is published, please complete this question for one of them, specifying in the comment box below which document you are referring to, and – in the same comment box – which other Citizens Budget is produced and its URL or weblink.

Answer:
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Source:
MoFE website
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Comment:
The previous CBs can be found on the link below
<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-i-qytetarit-2/>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

CB-5. If the CB is produced, please write the full title of the CB.

For example, a title for the Citizens Budget could be "Budget 2018 People's Guide" or "2019 Proposed Budget in Brief: A People's Budget Publication."

If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

If more than one Citizens Budget is produced, for the other CB, indicate the document the CB refers to and, next to it, its full title.

Answer:
Buxheti i Qytetarit 2019 Buxheti i qytetarit 2019

Source:
MoFE website

Comment:
The CBs for different years can be found at:
<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-i-qytetarit-2/>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

CB-6. If the CB is produced, please indicate which budget document it corresponds to.

If more than one Citizens Budget is produced, please complete this question for one of them, specifying in the comment box below which document you are referring to, and – in the same comment box – which other Citizens Budget is produced and which budget document it simplifies.

Answer:
The CB corresponds to the Enacted Budget The CB corresponds to the Enacted Budget for the fiscal year 2019

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

IYRs-1. What is the fiscal year of the IYRs evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2018 FY 2018

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment
The response has been corrected from "FY 2019" to "FY 2018."

IYRs-2. When are the IYRs made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for IYRs to be considered publicly available, IYRs must be made available to the public no later than three months after the reporting period ends. If at least seven of the last 12 monthly IYRs, or at least three of the last four quarterly IYRs are not released to the public at least three months after the reporting period ends, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the IYRs.

Answer:

a. At least every month, and within one month of the period covered

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: a. At least every month, and within one month of the period covered

Comments: Please refer to the following link where the Treasury Department publishes the Fiscal Indicators (i.e. actual revenues, expenditures and deficit in economic classification manner) on monthly basis within one month of the period covered: <https://financa.gov.al/3014-2/>

Researcher Response

The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and the documents cited by him, appear to contain the same information (Table format) as other IYR, used to answer the questionnaire. However, although they are published less frequently than the documents mentioned by the government reviewer, they contain more useful and comprehensive information.

IBP Comment

IBP acknowledges both the researcher's and the government reviewer's comments. Since the monthly reports referenced by the government reviewer are indeed published within a month of the period covered, answer "a" is chosen here. Also, since the quarterly reports (though published within three months of the period covered and not within one month of the period covered) are publicly available, and they contain more useful and comprehensive information than the monthly reports, we examine these quarterly reports in Section 3 (Questions 68 - 75).

IYRs-3a. If the IYRs are published, what are the dates of publication of the IYRs?

Specifically: if quarterly In-Year Reports are published, indicate the dates of publication of at least three of the last four IYRs that were publicly available. If monthly IYRs are published, indicate the dates of publication of at least seven of the last 12 IYRs that were publicly available.

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD Month YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05 September 2018. If the document is not published or not produced, please mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Dates of publication of the IYRs

"Buletini fiskal" quarterly report (fiscal bulletin, first quarter BY2018) 29 July 2018

"Ekonomia dhe Buxheti"-monthly report

September edition, published on 27 November 2018

August edition, published on 27 November 2018

July edition, published on 08 October 2018

June edition, published on 27 August 2018

May edition, published on 16 August 2018

April edition, published on 01 August 2018

"Statistika fiskale"-monthly report

August edition, published on 28 September 2018

July edition, published on 28 August 2018

June edition, published on 17 August 2018

May edition, published on 30 July 2018

April edition, published on 25 May 2018

March edition, published on 20 April 2018

February edition, published on 20 March 2018

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Latest monthly report is the September edition of "Ekonomia dhe Buxheti", published on 27 November 2018

Short description of the IYRs:

The document "statistika fiskale" shows only fiscal data in the format EBP and EB presents them. It then compares through time, the factual data against the planned ones. The difference is then shown in another column.

The document "Ekonomia dhe Buxheti" is a more comprehensive, narrative report which goes to report on the performance of the economy based on multiple indicators such as: Consumer Price Index, average exchange rate, Interest rates of the debt deposits and so on.

The main object of "Buletini Fiskal" is to give periodic information about fiscal statistics of government. Because of this, the bulletin is published periodically and methodology used is Cash Base.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Ekonomia-dhe-Buxheti-Mars-2019.pdf> <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ekonomia-dhe-Buxheti-Shkurt-2019.pdf> <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Ekonomia-dhe-Buxheti-Janar-2019.pdf>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: following the revised answer for the previous question, the reports are published on the following link:
<https://financa.gov.al/3014-2/>

Researcher Response

The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and the documents cited by him, appear to contain the same information (Table format) as other IYR, used to answer the questionnaire. However, although they are published less frequently than the documents mentioned by the government reviewer, they contain more useful and comprehensive information.

IBP Comment

IBP acknowledges the government reviewer's comments. Based on the properties of the PDF monthly reports, the January 2018 report was published on February 28, 2018; the February 2018 report was published on April 3, 2018; the March 2018 report was published on April 16, 2018; the April 2018 report was published on May 29, 2018; the May 2018 report was published on June 25, 2018; the June 2018 report was published on July 16, 2018; the July 2018 report was published on August 15, 2018; the August 2018 report was published on October 1, 2018; the September 2018 report was published on October 29, 2018; the October 2018 report was published on November 27, 2018; and the November 2018 report was published on December 24, 2018.

IYRs-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the IYRs.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

In order to determine the dates of publication, I had to talk to MoFE officials for confirmation since sometime the official website wouldn't work because of maintenance. Some dates were observed during the publication.

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The publication of IYRs as described in the corrected answers of the previous 2 questions, is done with no doubt within 1 month from the end of the period covered (in this case the end of the month). This can be easily confirmed by the Treasury Department of the MoFE as it is mandatory by a specific official order from the Minister of Finance and Economy

Researcher Response

The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and the documents cited by him, appear to contain the same information (Table format) as other IYR, used to answer the questionnaire. However, although they are published less frequently than the documents mentioned by the government reviewer, they contain more useful and comprehensive information.

IBP Comment

The dates of the publication of the monthly In-Year Reports (<https://financa.gov.al/3014-2/>) were determined by looking at the properties of each PDF document.

IYRs-4. If the IYRs are published, what is the URL or weblink of the IYRs?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Researchers should provide the weblink to the most recent In-Year Report in the space below, and – in the comment box underneath – the weblinks to older IYRs.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:

<http://www.financa.gov.al/ekonomia-dhe-buxheti/>

Source:

MoFE website

Comment:

Ekonomia dhe buxheti

<http://www.financa.gov.al/ekonomia-dhe-buxheti/>

Statistika Fiskale Mujore

<http://www.financa.gov.al/statistika-fiskale-mujore/>

Buletini Fiskal

<http://www.financa.gov.al/buletini-fiskal/>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: it should be the following link as previously explained: <https://financa.gov.al/3014-2/>

Researcher Response
The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and the documents cited by him, appear to contain the same information (Table format) as other IYR, used to answer the questionnaire. However, although they are published less frequently than the documents mentioned by the government reviewer, they contain more useful and comprehensive information.

IYRs-5. If the IYRs are published, are the numerical data contained in the IYRs available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>

Option "d" applies if the IYRs are not published or not produced, therefore their machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:
b. Yes, some of the numerical data are available in a machine readable format

Source:
MoFe website

Comment:
Some documents are published in pdf and word format too

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: c. No
Comments: All the tables of documents are published in pdf

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer: a. Yes, all of the numerical data are available in a machine readable format
Comments: All the data are either in pdf or excel format, which is machine readable format that can be found in the following link as mentioned previously: <https://financa.gov.al/3014-2/>

Researcher Response
The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and the documents cited by him, appear to contain the same information (Table format) as other IYR, used to answer the questionnaire. However, although they are published less frequently than the documents mentioned by the government reviewer, they contain more useful and comprehensive information.

IBP Comment
Since some of the data is in Excel format but some is not, answer "b" is maintained.

IYRs-6a. If the IYRs are not publicly available, are they still produced?

If the IYRs are not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question IYRs-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question IYRs-2).

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: Ekonomia dhe buxheti <http://www.financa.gov.al/ekonomia-dhe-buxheti/> Statistika Fiskale Mujore <http://www.financa.gov.al/statistika-fiskale-mujore/> Buletini Fiskal <http://www.financa.gov.al/buletini-fiskal/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IYRs-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question IYRs-6a, please specify how you determined whether the IYRs were produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question IYRs-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Government Reviewer

Opinion:

IYRs-7. If the IYRs are produced, please write the full title of the IYRs.

For example, a title for the In-Year Report could be "Budget Monitoring Report, Quarter 1" or "Budget Execution Report January-March 2018."

If In-Year Reports are not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Researchers should provide the full title of the most recent In-Year Report in the space below, and - in the comment box underneath - the full titles of older IYRs.

Answer:

Ekonomia dhe Buxheti, Raport mujor, shtator 2018

Source:

Comment:

TREGUESIT ANALITIK FISKAL, GUSHT 2018

Fiscal statistics of government, quarterly report January - March 2018

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The title of the IYRs is as follows: Treguesit Fiskal sipas Buxhetit të Konsoliduar

IYRs-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the IYRs?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>.

Answer:
b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

MYR-1. What is the fiscal year of the MYR evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2018

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

MYR-2. When is the MYR made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for an MYR to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public no later than three months after the reporting period ends (i.e., three months after the midpoint of the fiscal year). If the MYR is not released to the public at least three months after the reporting period ends, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the MYR.

Answer:

a. Six weeks or less after the midpoint

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

MYR-3a. If the MYR is published, what is the date of publication of the MYR?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document.

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:

16/7/2018

Source:

MoFE

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

MYR-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the MYR.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Through observation and confirmation from MoFE officials.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Please also see the following link, which confirms that the MYR was posted online as of 7 August 2018:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180807124536/http://www.financa.gov.al/en/raporti-i-mes-vitit-mbi-zbatimin-e-buxhetit-2018/>

MYR-4. If the MYR is published, what is the URL or weblink of the MYR?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:

<https://financa.gov.al/raporti-i-mes-vitit-mbi-zbatimin-e-buxhetit-2018/>

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

MYR-5. If the MYR is published, are the numerical data contained in the MYR available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>.

Option "d" applies if the MYR is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:

c. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

MYR-6a. If the MYR is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the MYR is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question MYR-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question MYR-2).

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

MYR-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question MYR-6a, please specify how you determined whether the MYR was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question MYR-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Government Reviewer

Opinion:

MYR-7. If the MYR is produced, please write the full title of the MYR.

For example, a title for the Mid-Year Review could be "Semi-annual Budget Performance Report, FY 2017/18" or "Mid-Year Report on the 2018 National Budget."

If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:
RAPORTI I MES-VITIT MBI ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT 2018

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

MYR-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the MYR?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>.

Answer:
b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

YER-1. What is the fiscal year of the YER evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2017

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

YER-2. When is the YER made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for an YER to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public no later than one year after the fiscal year to which it corresponds. If the YER is not released to the public within one year after the end of the fiscal year to which it corresponds, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the YER.

Answer:

b. Nine months or less, but more than six months, after the end of the budget year

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

YER-3a. If the YER is published, what is the date of publication of the YER?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document. Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:

05/07/2018

Source:

n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: MoFE is preparing the "Package of the Draft Act of the Factual Budget 2018" <http://financa.gov.al/buxheti-faktik-2018/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The YER for FY 2017 has been published by the Parliament on 5 July 2018 as it can be confirmed by the following link: <https://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51113>

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the government reviewer's response and due to new evidence the publishing date is changed from 30 July to the suggested one (5 July)

YER-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the YER.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Through observation.

Source:

Comment:

There is a timestamp for 30 July 2018 on the "Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik" page on the Ministry of Finance website.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Comments: Ligji i buxhetit Faktik 2017 Nr.70 date 18.10.2018 – Publikuar ne Fletoren Zyrtare nr.161_2018

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: As mentioned on the previous answer the YER for the FY2017 has been published by the Parliament on 5 July 2018, link: <https://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51113>

YER-4. If the YER is published, what is the URL or weblink of the YER?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:

<https://financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Ligji-i-buxhetit-Faktik-2017-Nr.70-date-18.10.2018-Publikuar-ne-Fletoren-Zyrtare-nr.161_2018.pdf

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: it is also published on the following link of the Parliament: <https://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51113>

YER-5. If the YER is published, are the numerical data contained in the YER available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>

Option "d" applies if the YER is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:

c. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

YER-6a. If the YER is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the YER is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question YER-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question YER-2)

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

YER-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question YER-6a, please specify how you determined whether the YER was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question YER-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion:

Government Reviewer
Opinion:

YER-7. If the YER is produced, please write the full title of the YER.

For example, a title for the Year-End Report could be "Consolidated Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2018" or "Annual Report 2017 Published by the Ministry of Finance and Planning." If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:
Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree
Comments: <http://financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

YER-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the YER?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>.

Answer:
b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

AR-1. What is the fiscal year of the AR evaluated in this Open Budget Survey questionnaire?

Please enter the fiscal year in the following format: "FY YYYY" or "FY YYYY-YY."

Answer:
FY 2017

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

AR-2. When is the AR made available to the public?

Publicly available budget documents are defined as those documents that are published on the website of the public authority issuing the document within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology and that all citizens are able to obtain free of charge. (See the Open Budget Survey Guidelines on Public Availability of Budget Documents.) This is a change from previous rounds of the Open Budget Survey: now at minimum documents must be made available on the Internet and free of charge to be considered publicly available.

The OBS methodology requires that for an AR to be considered publicly available, it must be made available to the public no later than 18 months after the end of the fiscal year to which it corresponds. If the AR is not released to the public at least 18 months after the end of the fiscal year to which it corresponds, option "d" applies. Option "d" should also be chosen for documents that are produced for internal purposes only (that is, produced but never released to the public) or are not produced at all. Some governments may publish budget documents further in advance than the latest possible dates outlined above. In these instances, researchers should choose options "a" or "b," depending on the date of publication identified for the AR.

Answer:
b. 12 months or less, but more than six months, after the end of the budget year

Source:
n/a

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

AR-3a. If the AR is published, what is the date of publication of the AR?

Note that the date of publication is not necessarily the same date that is printed on the document. Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late.

Please enter the date in the following format: "DD/MM/YYYY." For example, 5 September 2018 should be entered as 05/09/2018. If the document is not published or not produced, leave this question blank.

Answer:
11/10/2018

Source:
<http://www.panorama.com.al/klish-zbardh-shifrat-e-buxhetit-2017-borxhi-publik-ishte-72/>

Comment:

The news paper cites the report 3 days after publication though.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The AR was published with the order of the Head of Supreme Audit on 3 October 2018 and can be accessed through the following links: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/RAPORT_P_R_ZBATIMINEBUXHETIT_T_SHTETIT_T_VITIT_2017_3543_1.php

[https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20(1).pdf)

Researcher Response

The date of publication is confirmed with SAI, but regardless, the difference is small and does not affect the outcome of the questionnaire either way.

IBP Comment

The "last modified" date of the file on the klsh.org.al page provided by the government reviewer is 11 October 2018, while that of the file on the parliament page is 17 October 2018. The existing response of "11/10/2018" is maintained.

AR-3b. In the box below, please explain how you determined the date of publication of the AR.

If the document is not published at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

As soon as the media started to report on it, I asked for a confirmation of the publication date. It was only 3 days before the media coverage.

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: I choose not to review this question

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The AR was published with the order of the Head of Supreme Audit on 3 October 2018 and can be accessed through the following links: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/RAPORT_P_R_ZBATIMINEBUXHETIT_T_SHTETIT_T_VITIT_2017_3543_1.php

[https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20(1).pdf)

IBP Comment

The "last modified" date of the file on the klsh.org.al page provided by the government reviewer is 11 October 2018, while that of the file on the parliament page is 17 October 2018. The existing response is maintained.

AR-4. If the AR is published, what is the URL or weblink of the AR?

Researchers should respond to this question if the document is published either within the time frame accepted by the OBS methodology or too late. If the document is not published at all, researchers should leave this question blank.

Answer:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf

Source:

SAI website

Comment:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Raporti_mbi_Buxhetin_e_Shtetit_82_1.php

Please click on the first link on this page.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: The AR for FY2017 can also be found on the following link:

[https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/RAPORTI%20I%20KLSH%20P%C3%8BR%20ZBATIMIN%20E%20BUXHETIT%20T%C3%8B%20SHTETIT%20P%C3%8BR%202017%20(1).pdf)

AR-5. If the AR is published, are the numerical data contained in the AR available in a machine readable format?

Material (data or content) is machine readable if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer, such as .csv, .xls/.xlsx, and .json. Numerical data found in PDFs and Word (.doc/.docx) files do not qualify as machine readable. See more at: <http://opendatahandbook.org/glossary/en/terms/machine-readable/>

Option "d" applies if the AR is not published or not produced, therefore its machine readability cannot be assessed.

Answer:

c. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

AR-6a. If the AR is not publicly available, is it still produced?

If the AR is not considered publicly available under the OBS methodology (and thus the answer to Question AR-2 was "d"), a government may nonetheless produce the document.

Option "a" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public online but not within the time frame specified in the OBS methodology (see Question AR-2).

Option "b" applies if the document is produced and made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology but only in hard copy (and is not available online). Option "b" also applies if the document is made available to the public within the time frame specified by the OBS methodology in soft electronic copy but is not available online.

Option "c" applies if the document is produced for internal purposes only and so is not made available to the public.

Option "d" applies if the document is not produced at all.

Option "e" applies if the document is publicly available.

If a document is not released to the public, researchers may need to write to or visit the relevant government office in order to determine whether answer "c" or "d" applies.

Answer:

e. Not applicable (the document is publicly available)

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

AR-6b. If you selected option "c" or "d" in question AR-6a, please specify how you determined whether the AR was produced for internal use only, versus not produced at all.

If option "a," "b," or "e" was selected in question AR-6a, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion:

Government Reviewer
Opinion:

AR-7. If the AR is produced, please write the full title of the AR.

For example, a title for the Audit Report could be "Annual General Reports of the Controller and Auditor General." If the document is not produced at all, researchers should mark this question "n/a."

Answer:

Raport "Mbi Zbatimin e Buxhetit të Shtetit për Vitin 2017"

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree
Comments: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

AR-8. Is there a "citizens version" of the AR?

While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now

evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle. While it is recognized that it may be unreasonable to expect that a citizens version is produced for each and every one of those key documents, it seems acceptable to expect that according to good practice, the executive releases a citizens version of key budget documents for each of the four stages of the budget process to allow citizens to be aware of what is happening, in terms of public financial management, throughout the entire budget cycle. For more information on Citizens Budget see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/opening-budgets/citizens-budgets/>.

Answer:

b. No

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

GQ-1a. Are there one or more websites or web portals for disseminating government fiscal information? If yes, please provide the necessary links in the comment/citation.

GQ-1a asks the researcher to list any government websites or portals where fiscal information can be found. For example, in New Zealand the Treasury website (<http://www.treasury.govt.nz/>) hosts important budget-related information, including the Pre-Budget Statement, the Executive's Budget Proposal, the Citizens Budget, In-Year Reports, the Mid-Year Review, and the Year-End Report. In addition, New Zealand's Parliamentary Counsel Office (<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>) posts the Enacted Budget while the Controller and Auditor-General website (<http://www.oag.govt.nz/>) publishes the annual Audit Report. The New Zealand researcher would provide the links to each of these sites. Other countries have developed portals that include fiscal information, though not in the "documents" format. For example, these portals have been created by Mexico (<https://www.transparenciapresupuestaria.gob.mx/>) and Brazil (<http://www.portaltransparencia.gov.br/>). Some countries have both a website and a portal. The Brazilian government, for example, apart from the Transparency Portal, has a dedicated website for the federal budget, where all key documents and other information can be found (www.orcamentofederal.gov.br). Researchers should include details about all of the relevant websites and/or portals that they can be used to access budget information.

Answer:

a. Yes

Source:

<http://www.financa.gov.al> - This is website of the Ministry of Finance where all the information regarding the budget (produced and publicly available), is published.

<http://www.klsh.org.al> - This is the SAI website where the Audit Report is published. There are other websites as well where it is possible to find information regarding the budget but are limited to those documents which are in the form of laws or Council of Ministers decrees.

<http://www.kryeministria.al> - this is the website of the Prime Minister's office/institution www.parlament.al - this is the website of the parliament

<http://www.ligjet.org> - this is a government website where it is possible to search for different documents/acts/laws.

<http://www.qbz.gov.al> - this is a similar website to the one above, it differs mostly on the configuration and the search function.

<https://www.tatime.gov.al> - this is website of the directorate general for duty/taxes

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: https://fint.gov.al/DREJTORIA_E_PËRERGJITHSHME_E_PARANDALIMIT_TË_PASTRIMIT_TË_PARAVE

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: There are other links that contain government fiscal information as follows: www.parlament.al contains draft laws and approved laws submitted by the Government <http://open.data.al/> contains data on public spending and public procurement

GQ-1b. On these websites/portals, can revenue and/or expenditure data for the current fiscal year be downloaded as a consolidated file (or set of files)? If yes, please provide the necessary links in the comment/citation.

GQ-1b, GQ-1c, and GQ-1d ask about whether governments publish specific types of content on their websites/portals: (a) consolidated files that contain revenue and/or expenditure information for the current fiscal year; (b) consolidated files that contain revenue and/or expenditure information for multiple years in consistent formats; and (c) infographics/visualizations or other similar tools used to simplify data access and analysis. Researchers should provide the links to relevant webpages and some explanations of what they contain.

Answer:

a. Yes, both revenue and expenditure data can be downloaded as a consolidated file

Source:

<https://www.financa.gov.al/buxheti-ne-vite/> - This link directs the research to all the previous enacted budgets.

Furthermore, if we take for example FY2018, one of the links https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Tabela_4_-_Treguesit_fiskale_t-2_derit2.xls

refers to a document part of the EB where the information includes BY-2 and BY+2 years. This is one document, part of the EB for the respective year.

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

This is the link for the CB and the information included is also graphically visualized (info graphic) to make it easier for the reader.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: Also the following link: <http://www.financa.gov.al/3014-2/> that contains information on monthly basis for actual revenues and expenditures

GQ-1c. On these websites/portals, can consolidated revenue and/or expenditure data be downloaded for multiple years in consistent formats? If yes, please provide the necessary links and details in the comment/citation.

Answer:

a. Yes, both revenue and expenditure data can be downloaded for multiple years in consistent formats

Source:

<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-ne-vite/>

Comment:

Similar to the previous question, the link above takes you to the Budget through years available in the same/consistent format

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

GQ-1d. On these websites/portals, are infographics/visualizations or other similar tools used to simplify data access and analysis? If yes, please provide the necessary links and details in the comment/citation.

Answer:

b. No

Source:

n/a

Comment:

No such tool exist

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

GQ-2. Are there laws in place guiding public financial management and/or auditing? If yes, please provide the necessary details and links in the comment/citation, and specify whether and where the law(s) contains specific provisions for budget transparency and/or participation.

GQ-2 asks about the existence of any national laws governing public financial management and auditing. These may include a public finance act, a section of the constitution, or an organic budget law. In some countries, fiscal responsibility legislation may also be relevant. For example, the Kenya researcher may include the link to its Public Finance Management Act, 2012 (<http://www.kenyalaw.org/lex/actview.xhtml?actid=No.%2018%20of%202012>), and the Macedonian researcher may include a link to its State Audit Law (<https://www.finance.gov.mk/files/u11/Audit%20law.pdf>). Researchers should provide links to websites where such laws are published, if possible, or an electronic copy of the law itself. They should also indicate if and where (e.g. which article) these laws include specific provisions for budget transparency and citizen participation in budget processes.

Answer:

a. Yes

Source:

Organic Budget Law: <https://financa.gov.al/ligjet/> This is the link for organic budget law together with the latest amendments.
See also section 13 of the Constitution <http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/kushtetuta.pdf> (public finances)

Organic Auditing Law: www.klsh.org.al/previewdoc.php?file_id=29 See also section 14 of the Constitution To clarify: Section 14 of the Constitution refers to how the SAI is defined in the Constitution. There are no references neither to transparency nor to participation within the Constitution. Transparency (only) is defined only on the Organic Budget Law.

Comment:

Article 4 of the Organic Budget Law, there are references to transparency. These are principles of the functioning of the budget system. There are no references to public participation.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: a. Yes

Comments: The Organic Budget Law, in its 2016 revision, has made it mandatory for central budget institutions to consult with Civil Society Organizations on the budget preparation phase. Please refer to Article 25 and 26 (point 5) of the OBL on the following link:
http://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/LOB_i_ri_nr.57_dt.02.06.2016_-_MIRATUAR_ne_KUVEND_version_integral.docx

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the government reviewer's reference to hearings with civil society organizations in Articles 25 and 26 of the Organic Budget Law. These are indeed references to public participation.

IBP Comment

The government reviewer's comment is well-received. The response of "a" is unchanged.

GQ-3. Are there additional laws regulating: (1) access to information; (2) government transparency; or (3) citizens participation? If yes, please provide the necessary details and links in the comment/citation, and specify whether and where these laws contain specific provisions for budget transparency and/or participation.

The third and last question asks researchers to list any additional laws regulating access to information, transparency, or citizens' participation that are relevant for the promotion of budget transparency and citizen participation in budget processes. These might include legislation related to access to information, to planning processes, or to public administration more generally. India's Right to Information Act of 2005 (<https://www.ncess.gov.in/facilities/central-public-information-officer/rti-act-details.html>) is an example of this type of law. More information on access to information legislation (constitutional provisions, laws, and regulations), including examples of model laws, can be found here: <http://www.right2info.org/laws/constitutional-provisions-laws-and-regulations#section-1>.

Answer:

a. Yes

Source:

Sources: Law on the right to information: http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore_zyrtare/2014/PDF-2014/160-2014.pdf

Constitution, Article 23: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/kushtetuta.pdf>

Comment:

Please note: in the "Law on the right to information" refer to Article 7, letter e) for a definition/obligation of budget transparency. It must also be noted that the notion of transparency itself, is defined in Article 2, point 5) ; as a transparency programme.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

1. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for the budget year that are classified by administrative unit (that is, by ministry, department, or agency)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 1 addresses the presentation of expenditure by administrative unit. This information indicates which government entity (ministry, department, or agency, or MDAs) will be responsible for spending the funds and, ultimately, held accountable for their use.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for all administrative units, accounting for all expenditures, in the budget year. To answer "b," the administrative units shown individually, in the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation, must account for at least two-thirds of all expenditures in the budget year. In other words, the sum of the expenditures assigned to the individual MDAs (education, health, infrastructure, interior, defense, etc.) must account for at least two-thirds of the total expenditure budgeted for that particular year. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents administrative units that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by administrative unit.

Answer:

a. Yes, administrative units accounting for all expenditures are presented.

Source:

<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

This is the link for the EBP with the supporting documents.

The supporting documents to answer this question are:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-institucioneve-1.xlsx>

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-e-tjera-2019-1.xls>

Comment:

The above documents, excel sheets, show all expenditures classified by administrative units.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

2. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for the budget year by functional classification?

GUIDELINES:

Question 2 addresses the presentation of expenditure by functional classification. This classification indicates the programmatic purpose, sector, or objective for which the funds will be used, such as health, education, or defense. Administrative units are not necessarily aligned with functional classifications. For instance, in one country all functions connected with water supply (which fall into the "Housing" function) may be undertaken by a single government agency, while in another country they may be distributed across the Ministries of Environment, Housing, and Industrial Development. In the latter case, three ministries have programs addressing water supply, so three ministries contribute to one function. Similarly, some administrative units may conduct activities that cut across more than one function. For instance, in the example above, some programs of the Ministry of Environment would also be classified in the "environmental protection" function.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for the budget year organized by functional classification.

Answer:

a. Yes, expenditures are presented by functional classification.

Source:

The document "Tabela 6 shoqeruese – Shpenzimet sipas funksioneve te Qeverise" presents expenditures for the budget year by functional classification.

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-6-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-funksioneve-te-Qeverise-2.xls>

Comment:

The functional classification is compatible with international standards

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

3. If the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation presents expenditures for the budget year by functional classification, is the functional classification compatible with international standards?

GUIDELINES:

Question 3 asks whether a country's functional classification meets international standards. To answer "a," a country's functional classification must be aligned with the OECD and the UN's Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG), or provide a cross-walk between the national functional presentation and COFOG.

The OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency can be viewed at <http://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/Best%20Practices%20Budget%20Transparency%20-%20complete%20with%20cover%20page.pdf>

COFOG can be viewed at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesM/SeriesM_84E.pdf or at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/ch6ann.pdf>.

Answer:

a. Yes, the functional classification is compatible with international standards.

Source:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-6-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-funksioneve-te-Qeverise-2.xls>

Comment:

The functional classification is compatible with international standards since the expenditures are presented in the same format (identical headings) as the international Classification of the Functions of Government (General public services; Defense; Public order and safety; Economic affairs; Environmental protection; Housing and community amenities; Healthcare; Recreation, culture and religious affairs; Education; Social protection).

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

4. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for the budget year by economic classification?

GUIDELINES:

Question 4 asks whether the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents expenditures for the budget year organized by economic classification. Economic classification provides information on the nature of the expenditure, such as whether funds are being used to pay for wages and salaries, capital projects, or social assistance benefits.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for the budget year organized by economic classification.

Answer:

a. Yes, expenditures are presented by economic classification.

Source:

"Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The document cited, shows expenditures by economic classification.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

5. If the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation presents expenditures for the budget year by economic classification, is the economic classification compatible with international standards?

GUIDELINES:

Question 5 asks whether a country's economic classification meets international standards. To answer "a," a country's economic classification must be consistent with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) 2001 Government Finance Statistics (GFS). The GFS economic classification is presented here: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/app4.pdf>. To learn more about Government Finance Statistics also refer to the entire IMF 2001 GFS manual (<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/all.pdf>).

Answer:

b. No, the economic classification is not compatible with international standards, or expenditures are not presented by economic classification.

Source:

"Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The economic classification is not compatible with international standards. The numbering (coding) used is not as per international standards.

Revenues and expenditures are numbered the same while the coding should have been different.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, the economic classification is compatible with international standards.

Comments: The economic classification is indeed compatible with international standards, even though the coding is different. The labeling of revenues and expenditures from an economic classification point of view do not differ. So the question should not be referring only on same codes used but also the same or similar labeling/description of revenue or expenditure items.

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the government reviewer's comment. The economic classification in Table 4 includes elements that are compatible with international standards (compensation of employees, social benefits, interest, subsidies) but misses other key elements (consumption of fixed capital, grants). See link below: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/app4.pdf>

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The existing response of "b" is maintained.

6. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for individual programs for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 6 asks whether expenditures are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should treat the term "program" as meaning any level of detail below an administrative unit – that is, any programmatic grouping that is below the ministry, department, or agency level. For example, the Ministry of Health's budget could be broken down into several subgroups, such as "primary health care," "hospitals," or "administration." These subgroups should be considered programs even if they could be, but are not, broken down into smaller, more detailed units.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaillé. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures, in the budget year. To answer "b," the programs shown individually in the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must account for at least two-thirds of all expenditures in the budget year. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents programs that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by program.

Budget decisions for the upcoming year can also affect the parameters of future budgets. It is therefore useful to estimate revenues and expenditures for multi-year periods, understanding that these estimates might be revised as circumstances change. Sometimes referred to as a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), a three-year period – that is, the budget year plus two more years – is generally considered an appropriate horizon for budgeting and planning.

Answer:

a. Yes, programs accounting for all expenditures are presented.

Source:

EBP and its supporting documents:

<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Comment:

the supporting documents :

"Tabela 5 – shoqeruese – Shpenzimet sipas institucioneve"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-institucioneve-1.xlsx>

and

"Tabela 5 shoqeruese – Shpenzimet e tjera 2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-e-tjera-2019-1.xls>

present expenditures for individual programs for the budget year. The first excel sheet shows all programs under each administrative unit and the second excel sheet shows the (rest) expenses which do not fall under any administrative unit.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

7. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditure estimates for a multi-year period (at least two-years beyond the budget year) by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 7 asks if multi-year expenditure estimates are presented by any one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications – which were addressed in Questions 1-5 above. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditure estimates by all three of the expenditure classifications for at least two years beyond the budget year. To answer "b," multi-year expenditure estimates must be presented by two of these three classifications. A "c" answer applies if multi-year expenditure estimates are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" applies if multi-year expenditure estimates are not presented by any of the three classifications.

Answer:

b. Yes, multi-year expenditure estimates are presented by two of the three expenditure classifications.

Source:

"Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Multi-year expenditure estimates are presented only by economic classification for the period BY + 2.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, multi-year expenditure estimates are presented by two of the three expenditure classifications.

Comments: The budget contains expenditure estimates on administrative and economic classification for the next three years. Please refer to the following link: <http://www.financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/> and specifically to Tabela 1, Tabela 1.1, and Tabela 1.2 in which expenditures from an administrative classification are presented for the 2019-2021 period.

Researcher Response

We agree with the answer provided by the government reviewer and the score is upgraded accordingly.

7b. Based on the response to Question 7, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications have estimates for a multi-year period in the Executive's Budget Proposal?

Answer:

Economic classification
Administrative classification

Source:

"Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Only expenditures classified by economic classification.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: The budget contains expenditure estimates on administrative and economic classification for the next three years. Please refer to the following link: <http://www.financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/> and specifically to Tabela 1, Tabela 1.1, and Tabela 1.2 in which expenditures from an administrative classification are presented for the 2019-2021 period.

Researcher Response

We agree with the answer provided by the government reviewer and the score is upgraded accordingly.

8. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditure estimates for a multi-year period (at least two-years beyond the budget year) by program?

GUIDELINES:

Question 8 asks if multi-year expenditure estimates are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department. For example, the Ministry of Health's budget could be broken down into several subgroups, such as "primary health care," "hospitals," or "administration." These subgroups should be considered programs even if they could be, but are not, broken down into smaller, more detailed units.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaillé. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures, for at least two years beyond the budget year. To answer "b," the programs shown individually in the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must account for at least two-thirds of all expenditures over the multi-year period. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents multi-year estimates for programs that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if multi-year estimates are not presented by program.

Revenues generally are separated into two major categories: "tax" and "non-tax" revenues. Taxes are compulsory transfers that result from government exercising its sovereign power. The largest sources of tax revenue in some countries are taxes on personal and business income and taxes on goods and services, such as sales or value-added taxes. The category of non-tax revenues is more diverse, ranging from grants from international institutions and foreign governments to funds raised through the sale of government-provided goods and services. Note that some forms of revenue, such as contributions to social security funds, can be considered either a tax or non-tax revenue depending on the nature of the approach to these contributions. Particularly because different revenues have different characteristics, including who bears the burden of paying the tax and how collections are affected by economic conditions, it is helpful when estimates for revenues are disaggregated and displayed based on their sources.

For more information, please refer to the 2001 GFS manual, in particular Appendix 4 (<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/app4.pdf>).

Answer:

b. Yes, multi-year estimates for programs accounting for at least two-thirds of, but not all, expenditures are presented.

Source:

Comment:

No expenditure estimates for a multi-year period are presented by program.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

Comments: The budget contains expenditure estimates on program level for the next three years. Please refer to the following link: <http://www.financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/> and specifically to Tabela 1, Tabela 1.1, and Tabela 1.2 in which expenditures divided by programs are foreseen for 2019-2021

Researcher Response

We agree with the answer provided by the government reviewer and the score is upgraded accordingly."b"

9. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present the individual sources of tax revenue (such as income tax or VAT) for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 9 assesses the degree to which the individual sources of "tax" revenue are disaggregated in the budget. The largest sources of tax revenue in some countries are taxes on personal and business income and taxes on goods and services, such as sales or value-added taxes.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present all individual sources of tax revenue for the budget year, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all tax revenue. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present individual sources of tax revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all tax revenue, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents individual sources of tax revenue that account for less than two-thirds of tax revenues. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of tax revenue are not presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, individual sources of tax revenue accounting for all tax revenue are presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The document above presents all individual sources of tax revenue. It is also translated in English at the last column.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

10. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present the individual sources of non-tax revenue (such as grants, property income, and sales of government-produced goods and services) for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 10 assesses the degree to which the individual sources of "non-tax" revenue are disaggregated in the budget. The category of non-tax revenues is diverse, and can include revenue ranging from grants from international institutions and foreign governments to funds raised through the sale of government-provided goods and services.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present all individual sources of non-tax revenue for the budget year, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all non-tax revenue. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present individual sources of non-tax revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all non-tax revenue, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents individual sources of non-tax revenue that account for less than two-thirds of non-tax revenues. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of non-tax revenue are not presented.

Answer:

b. Yes, individual sources of non-tax revenue accounting for at least two-thirds of, but not all, non-tax revenues are presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

At the heading III "non-tax revenue", one of the sub headings is called "others" which obviously not specified. This is roughly 19% of the non tax revenue so answer b is chosen.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

11. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present revenue estimates by category (such as tax and non-tax) for a multi-year period (at least two-years beyond the budget year)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 11 evaluates whether revenue estimates are presented for a multi-year period (at least two years beyond the budget year) by "category," that is, whether tax and non-tax sources of revenue are shown separately.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present multi-year estimates of revenues classified by category for at least two years following the budget year in question.

Answer:

a. Yes, multi-year estimates of revenue are presented by category.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The document shows revenue estimates by category for the period BY+2

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

12. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates for individual sources of revenue presented for a multi-year period (at least two-years beyond the budget year)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 12 evaluates whether revenue estimates for individual sources of revenue are presented for a multi-year period (at least two years beyond the budget year). The question applies to both tax and non-tax revenue.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present multi-year estimates of all sources of revenue individually, accounting for all revenue, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all revenue. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present multi-year estimates of individual sources of revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all revenue, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents multi-year estimates of individual revenue sources that account for less than two-thirds of revenue. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of revenue are not presented for a multi-year period.

Answer:

b. Yes, multi-year estimates for individual sources of revenue accounting for at least two-thirds of, but not all, revenue are presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Sources of revenue are presented for a multi-year period (BY+2) but not all sources are identified. That is why option b is selected.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

13. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present three estimates related to government borrowing and debt: the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year; the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year; and interest payments on the debt for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 13 asks about three key estimates related to borrowing and debt that the budget should include:

- the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year;
- the central government's total debt burden at the end of the budget year; and
- the interest payments on the outstanding debt for the budget year.

Debt is the accumulated amount of money that the government borrows. The government can borrow from its citizens and banks and businesses within the country (domestic debt) or from creditors outside the country (external debt). External debt is typically owed to private commercial banks, other governments, or international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF.

Net new borrowing is the additional amount of new borrowing that is required for the budget year to finance expenditures in the budget that exceed available revenues. Net new borrowing adds to the accumulated debt. It is distinct from gross borrowing, which also includes borrowing needed to repay existing debt that matured during the budget year; debt that is replaced (or rolled over) does not add to the total of accumulated debt.

Interest payments on the debt (or debt service costs) are typically made at regular intervals, and these payments must be made on a timely basis in order to avoid defaulting on the debt obligation. Interest payments are separate from the repayment of principal, which occurs only when the loan has matured and must be paid back in full.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present all three estimates of borrowing and debt. For a "b" answer, the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present two of those three estimates. For a "c" answer, the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present one of the three estimates. Answer "d" applies no information on borrowing and debt is presented for the budget year.

Answer:

a. Yes, all three estimates related to government borrowing and debt are presented.

Source:

EBP and its supporting documents
<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

More specific:

The draft law "Projektligji i Buxhetit 2019"
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Projektligji_i_Buxhetit_2019.doc

"Tabela 5 shoqeruese – Shpenzimet e tjera 2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-e-tjera-2019-1.xls>

Comment:

The draft budget law shows the amount of net new borrowing (Article 9) and total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year (Article 20)

The supporting document "Tabela 5 shoqeruese – Shpenzimet e tjera 2019" gives information on interest payments in the section titled "Interesat."

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

13b. Based on the response to Question 13, check the box(es) below to identify which estimates of government borrowing and debt are presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal:

Answer:

The amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year
The central government's total debt burden at the end of the budget year
The interest payments on outstanding debt for the budget year

Source:

EBP and its supporting documents
<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

14. "Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information related to the composition of the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year?"

(The core information must include interest rates on the debt instruments; maturity profile of the debt; and whether it is domestic or external debt.)"

GUIDELINES:

Question 14 focuses on the composition of government debt at the end of the budget year, asking whether "core" information related to its composition is presented. These core components include:

- *interest rates on the debt;*
- *maturity profile of the debt; and*
- *whether the debt is domestic or external.*

The interest rates affect the amount of interest that must be paid to creditors. The maturity profile indicates the final payment date of the loan, at which point the principal (and all remaining interest) is due to be paid; government borrowing typically includes a mix of short-term and long-term debt. As discussed in Question 13, domestic debt is held by a country's citizens, banks, and businesses, while external debt is held by foreigners. These factors related to the composition of the debt give an indication of the potential vulnerability of the country's debt position, and ultimately whether the cost of servicing the accumulated debt is affordable.

Beyond these core elements, a government may also provide additional information related to the composition of its debt, including for instance: whether interest rates are fixed or variable; whether debt is callable; the currency of the debt; a profile of the creditors (bilateral institutions, multilateral institutions, commercial banks, Central Bank, etc.); an analysis of the risk associated with the debt; and where appropriate, what the debt is being used to finance.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to the composition of government debt at the end of the budget year as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the composition of government debt is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on the composition of the debt outstanding at the end of the budget year.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements.

Source:

EBP supporting documents

"Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t-2.xls>

"Relacioni PB 2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

The document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)" shows information on domestic and external debt.

The document "Relacioni PB 2019" pages 87-94 shows information regarding maturity profile of (domestic only) debt and very little information regarding interest rates.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the core information is presented for the composition of the total debt outstanding.

Comments: The explanatory notes accompanying the draft budget 2019 indeed contain information on interest rates for both domestic and foreign debt from, both historical and forecast. So the most appropriate answer would be: b.

Researcher Response

There is some backward-looking information on interest rates in the Explanatory Notes (for example, in Table 29), but no breakdown of interest rates for FY2019. The government's comment is acknowledged, and the answer is maintained at "c".

14b. Based on the response to Question 14, check the box(es) to identify which elements of the composition of the total debt outstanding are presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal:

Answer:

Whether the debt is domestic or external

Source:

Comment:

While there are checked three boxes on this question, it is necessary to explain that information on "Interest rates on the debt" and "Maturity profile of the debt" is limited/incomplete.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

For the purposes of cross-country consistency, the options "Interest rates on the debt" and "Maturity profile of the debt" are de-selected.

15. "Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on the macroeconomic forecast upon which the budget projections are based?"

(The core information must include a discussion of the economic outlook with estimates of nominal GDP level, inflation rate, real GDP growth, and interest rates.)"

GUIDELINES:

Question 15 focuses on the macroeconomic forecast that underlies the budget's revenue and expenditure estimates, asking whether "core" information related to the economic assumptions is presented. These core components include a discussion of the economic outlook as well as estimates of the following:

- *nominal GDP level;*
- *inflation rate;*
- *real GDP growth; and*
- *interest rates.*

While the core macroeconomic information should be a standard feature of the Executive's Budget Proposal, the importance of some types of macroeconomic assumptions may vary from country to country. For example, the budget estimates of some countries are particularly affected by changes in the price of oil and other commodities.

Beyond these core elements, some governments also provide additional information related to the economic outlook, including for instance: short and long-term interest rates; rate of employment and unemployment; GDP deflator; price of oil and other commodities; current account; exchange rate; and composition

of GDP growth.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to the macroeconomic forecast as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the macroeconomic forecast is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information on the macroeconomic forecast is presented.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements.

Source:

EBP supporting document: "Relacioni PB 2019"

<http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

Information on Nominal GDP level (PBB nominale in Albanian) can be found on page 15 (table).

No other information is presented.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the core information is presented for the macroeconomic forecast.

Comments: The explanatory note "Relacioni PB 2019" contains the needed information for core elements of macroeconomic forecast for the next three years. Please refer to page 7 and 8 of the abovementioned explanatory note: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the comment from the government reviewer regarding the macroeconomic forecast which includes real GDP growth, and information beyond the core such as external demand and unemployment rates. However, answer remains unchanged for lack of information on other core elements.

15b. Based on the response to Question 15, check the box(es) to identify which elements of the macroeconomic forecast are included in the Executive's Budget Proposal:

Answer:

Nominal GDP level

Real GDP growth

Information beyond the core elements (please specify)

Source:

EBP supporting document: "Relacioni PB 2019"

<http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer: Nominal GDP level Real GDP growth Interest Rates please refer to the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the comment from the government reviewer regarding the macroeconomic forecast which includes real GDP growth, and information beyond the core such as external demand and unemployment rates.

IBP Comment

In alignment with the government reviewer's comment and researcher's "Response to Review" on Q15, the options "Real GDP growth" and "Information beyond the core elements (please specify)" have been selected alongside "Nominal GDP level."

16. "Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation show the impact of different macroeconomic assumptions (i.e., sensitivity analysis) on the budget?"

(The core information must include estimates of the impact on expenditures, revenue, and debt of different assumptions for the inflation rate, real GDP growth, and interest rates.)"

GUIDELINES:

Question 16 focuses on the issue of whether the Executive's Budget Proposal shows how different macroeconomic assumptions affect the budget estimates (known as a "sensitivity analysis"). It asks whether "core" information related to a sensitivity analysis is presented, estimating the impact on expenditures, revenue, and debt of different assumptions for:

- *inflation rate;*
- *real GDP growth; and*
- *interest rates.*

A sensitivity analysis shows the effect on the budget of possible changes in some macroeconomic assumptions, and is important for understanding the impact of the economy on the budget; for instance, what would happen to revenue collections if GDP growth were slower than what is assumed in the budget proposal? Or what would happen to expenditure if inflation were higher than estimated? Or how will revenue be affected by a decrease in the price of oil?

As noted for Question 15, changes in certain macroeconomic assumptions, such as the price of oil and other commodities, can have a significant impact on the budget estimates. As a result, some sensitivity analyses may also examine the impact on the budget estimates of changes in assumptions such as the price of oil that are beyond the core elements of the inflation rate, real GDP growth, and interest rates.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to a "sensitivity analysis" as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to a "sensitivity analysis" is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information on "sensitivity analysis" is presented.

Answer:

d. No, information related to different macroeconomic assumptions is not presented.

Source:

This analysis does not exist.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements.

Comments: The most appropriate answer would be c. as the explanatory notes on page 7 and 8 contain information on macroeconomic assumptions regarding economic growth and its components, as well as inflation and unemployment estimates. link: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Researcher Response

The comment by the government reviewer is valid regarding the macroeconomic information in the pages cited of the Explanatory Notes, but these do not include an analysis of DIFFERENT macroeconomic assumptions on the budget. Therefore, original answer is maintained.

17. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information for at least the budget year that shows how new policy proposals, as distinct from existing policies, affect expenditures?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 17 and 18 ask about new policy proposals in the budget. In any given year, most of the expenditures and revenues in the budget reflect the continuation of existing policies. However, much of the attention during the budget debate is focused on new proposals – whether they call for eliminating an existing program, introducing a new one, or changing an existing program at the margins. Typically, these new proposals are accompanied by an increase, a decrease, or a shift in expenditures or revenues. Because these changes may have different impacts on people's lives, the budget proposal should present sufficient detail about new policies and their budgetary impact.

Question 17 asks about new expenditure policies, and Question 18 asks about new revenue policies. To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present both estimates of how all new policy proposals affect expenditures (for Question 17) or revenues (for Question 18) and a narrative discussion of the impact of these new policies. To answer "b" for either question, the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present estimates that show the impact of all new policy proposals, but no narrative discussion is included. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes only a narrative discussion, or if it includes estimates that show the impact of only some, but not all, policy proposals (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on the impact of new policy proposals.

Answer:

b. Yes, estimates that show how all new policy proposals affect expenditures are presented, but a narrative discussion is not included.

Source:

EBP supporting document: "Relacioni PB 2019"

<http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

Information can be found on pages 2-3 together with a narrative discussion.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

The researcher's comment is well-noted. Because not each new measure on pp. 2-3 has a detailed narrative discussion associated with it, the response is revised from "a" to "b" to ensure consistency across survey countries.

18. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information for at least the budget year that shows how new policy proposals, as distinct from existing policies, affect revenues?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 17 and 18 ask about new policy proposals in the budget. In any given year, most of the expenditures and revenues in the budget reflect the continuation of existing policies. However, much of the attention during the budget debate is focused on new proposals – whether they call for eliminating an existing program, introducing a new one, or changing an existing program at the margins. Typically, these new proposals are accompanied by an increase, a decrease, or a shift in expenditures or revenues. Because these changes may have different impacts on people's lives, the budget proposal should present sufficient detail about new policies and their budgetary impact.

Question 17 asks about new expenditure policies, and Question 18 asks about new revenue policies. To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present both estimates of how all new policy proposals affect expenditures (for Question 17) or revenues (for Question 18) and a narrative discussion of the impact of these new policies. To answer "b" for either question, the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present estimates that show the impact of all new policy proposals, but no narrative discussion is included. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes only a narrative discussion, or if it includes estimates that show the impact of only some, but not all, policy proposals (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on the impact of new policy proposals.

Prior-year information constitutes an important benchmark for assessing the proposals for the upcoming budget year. Estimates of prior years should be presented in the same formats (in terms of classification) as the budget year to ensure that year-to-year comparisons are meaningful. For example, if the budget proposes shifting responsibility for a particular program from one administrative unit to another – such as shifting responsibility for the training of nurses from the health department to the education department – the prior-year figures must be adjusted before year-to-year comparisons of administrative budgets can be made.

Typically, when the budget proposal is submitted, the year prior to the budget year (BY-1), also known as the current year, has not ended, so the executive will provide estimates of the anticipated outcome for BY-1. The soundness of these estimates is directly related to the degree to which they have been updated to reflect actual expenditures to date, legislative changes that have occurred, and anticipated changes in macroeconomic, caseload, and other relevant factors for the remainder of the year.

The first year that can reflect actual outcomes, therefore, is generally two years before the budget year (BY-2). Thus the OECD recommends that data covering at least two years before the budget year (along with two years of projections beyond the budget year) are provided in order to assess fully the trends in the budget.

Answer:
d. No, information that shows how new policy proposals affect revenues is not presented.

Source:
No such information is present.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

19. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1) by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 19 asks if expenditure estimates for the year prior to the budget year (BY-1) are presented by one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on. (See Questions 1-5 above.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditure estimates for BY-1 by all three of the expenditure classifications. To answer "b," expenditure estimates for BY-1 must be presented by two of these three classifications. A "c" answer applies if expenditure estimates for BY-1 are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" applies if expenditure estimates for BY-1 are not presented by any of the three classifications.

Answer:
c. Yes, expenditure estimates for BY-1 are presented by only one of the three expenditure classifications.

Source:
EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:
Expenditure estimates for BY-1 are presented only by economic classification.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

20. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for individual programs for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 20 asks if expenditure estimates for the year before the budget year (BY-1) are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department. For example, the Ministry of Health's budget could be broken down into several subgroups, such as "primary health care," "hospitals," or "administration." These subgroups should be considered programs even if they could be, but are not, broken down into smaller, more detailed units.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaillé. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures, for BY-1. To answer "b," the programs shown individually in the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must account for at least two-thirds of all expenditures for BY-1. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents programs that account for only less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by program.

Answer:

d. No, expenditures are not presented by program for BY-1.

Source:

No expenditures presented for individual programs for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1)

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

21. In the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation, have expenditure estimates of the year prior to the budget year (BY-1) been updated from the original enacted levels to reflect actual expenditures?

GUIDELINES:

Question 21 asks whether the expenditure estimates for the year before the budget year (BY-1) have been updated from the original enacted levels. Updates can reflect actual experience to date; revised estimates due to shifting of funds by the executive, as permitted under the law; enactment of supplemental budgets; and revised assumptions regarding macroeconomic conditions, caseload, and other relevant factors for the remainder of the year.

Answer "a" applies if the estimates have been updated; answer "b" applies if the original estimates are still being used.

Answer:

a. Yes, expenditure estimates for BY-1 have been updated from the original enacted levels.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Projektligji i Buxhetit 2019"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Projektligji_i_Buxhetit_2019.doc

The narrative discussion "Relacioni-PB-2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

See chapter "9.4 ANALIZA E SHPENZIMEVE BUXHETORE PËR PERIUdhËN JANAR-SHTATOR 2018" pages 72-80 which is also a narrative discussion.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

22. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of expenditure for more than one year prior to the budget year (that is, BY-2 and prior years) by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 22 asks if expenditure estimates for more than one year prior to the budget year (BY-2 and prior years) are presented by any of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money

is spent on. (See Questions 1-5 above.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditure estimates for BY-2 and prior years by all three of the expenditure classifications. To answer "b," expenditure estimates for BY-2 and prior years must be presented by two of these three classifications. A "c" answer applies if expenditure estimates for BY-2 and prior years are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" applies if expenditure estimates for BY-2 and prior years are not presented by any of the three classifications

Answer:

c. Yes, expenditure estimates for BY-2 and prior years are presented by only one of the three expenditure classifications.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Expenditure estimates for BY-2 are presented only by economic classification.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

22b. Based on the response to Question 22, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications have estimates for more than one year prior to the budget year in the Executive Budget Proposal:

Answer:

Economic classification

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

23. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present expenditures for individual programs for more than one year preceding the budget year (that is, BY-2 and prior years)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 23 asks if expenditure estimates for more than one year before the budget year (BY-2 and prior years) are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department. For example, the Ministry of Health's budget could be broken down into several subgroups, such as "primary health care," "hospitals," or "administration." These subgroups should be considered programs even if they could be, but are not, broken down into smaller, more detailed units.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as *le plan comptable* or *le plan comptable detaille*. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must present expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures, for BY-2 and prior years. To answer "b," the programs shown individually in the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation must account for at least two-thirds of all expenditures for BY-2 and prior years. A "c" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or its supporting documentation presents programs that account for only less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by program.

Answer:

d. No, expenditures are not presented by program for BY-2 and prior years.

Source:

No expenditures presented for individual programs for the years preceding the budget year (BY-2)

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

24. In the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation, what is the most recent year presented for which all expenditures reflect actual outcomes?

GUIDELINES:

Question 24 asks for which year the actual outcomes for expenditures are shown. In most cases, the most recent year for which budget data on actual outcomes are available will be BY-2, as BY-1 is generally not yet finished when the budget proposal is drafted. So a government that has updated all its expenditure data for BY-2 to reflect what actually occurred, as opposed to estimating the outcome for that year, shows good public financial management practice.

For an "a" answer, a country must meet the good practice of having the figures for BY-2 reflect actual outcomes.

Answer:

a. Two years prior to the budget year (BY-2).

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The EBP supporting document cited above includes information which reflect actual outcomes for year BY-2.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

25. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present revenue by category (such as tax and non-tax) for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Yes, revenue estimates for BY-1 are presented by category.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

revenues by category are presented for BY-1 too

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

26. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present individual sources of revenue for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Yes, individual sources of revenue accounting for all revenue are presented for BY-1.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Individual sources of revenue for the budget year BY-1 are presented but there is one category named "others" which has not defined the sources. This source is roughly 1 % of the total revenue so I think is very small to consider a different alternative (other than "a") for this question.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

27. In the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation, have the original estimates of revenue for the year prior to the budget year (BY-1) been updated to reflect actual revenue collections?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Yes, revenue estimates for BY-1 have been updated from the original enacted levels.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

See chapter "9.2 ZHVILLIMET FISKALE GJATË 9-MUJORIT 2018" pages 65-68

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

28. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present revenue estimates by category (such as tax and non-tax) for more than one year prior to the budget year (that is, BY-2 and prior years)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Yes, revenue estimates for BY-2 and prior years are presented by category.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Revenue estimates are presented for BY-2 and BY-3 years by category

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

29. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present individual sources of revenue for more than one year prior to the budget year (that is, BY-2 and prior years)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Yes, individual sources of revenue accounting for all revenue are presented for BY-2 and prior years.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Individual sources of revenue for the budget year BY-1 are presented but there is one category named "others" which has not defined the sources. This source is roughly 0.8 % of the total revenue so I think is very small to consider a different alternative (other than "a") for this question.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

30. In the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation, what is the most recent year presented for which all revenues reflect actual outcomes?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 25 through 30 cover the same topics about prior-year information as the previous six questions, only they ask about information provided for revenues rather than expenditures.

Answer:

a. Two years prior to the budget year (BY-2).

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

See column "Faktik 2017"

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

31. "Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on government borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1)?"

(The core information must include the total debt outstanding at the end of BY-1; the amount of net new borrowing required during BY-1; interest payments on the debt; interest rates on the debt instruments; maturity profile of the debt; and whether it is domestic or external debt.)"

GUIDELINES:

Question 31 focuses on prior-year debt information, rather than on prior-year expenditures or revenues, asking whether "core" information is provided on government borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the year preceding the budget year (BY-1).

The "core" information includes:

- total debt outstanding at the end of BY-1;
- amount of net new borrowing required during BY-1;
- interest payments on the debt;
- interest rates on the debt instruments;
- maturity profile of the debt; and
- whether it is domestic or external debt.

This core information for BY-1 is consistent with the budget year information for borrowing and debt, which is examined in Questions 13 and 14.

In addition, some governments provide information beyond the core elements, such as gross new borrowing required during BY-1; currency of the debt; whether the debt carries a fixed or variable interest rate; whether it is callable; a profile of the creditors (bilateral institutions, multilateral institutions, commercial banks, Central Bank, etc.); where appropriate, what the debt is being used to finance.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to government borrowing and debt, including its composition, for BY-1 as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to government borrowing and debt, including its composition, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on government borrowing and debt for BY-1.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>
Chapter "9.5 ECURIA E BORXHIT PUBLIK PËR PERIUdhËN JANAR-SHTATOR 2018" pages 87-93
see also:
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The supporting documents show information only on some core elements which are:
total debt outstanding at the end of BY-1; page 88 of relacioni
amount of net new borrowing required during BY-1; excel doc
average government yields; table on page 93 of relacioni
whether it is domestic or external debt. page 90 of relacioni

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the core information is presented for government debt.

Comments: According to the explanatory note of Budget 2019: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc> the core elements are presented so please review the answer to: b.

Researcher Response

On a second review of the documents, it appears that there is some information on interest rates on the debt in BY-1 presented in Table 29 of Relacioni, but it is incomplete (only up until September 2018). There also appears to be information on interest payments on the debt (page 12 of relacioni). However, even with the additional information, it doesn't satisfy the criteria for a higher score. Answer "c" remains unchanged.

32. In the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation, what is the most recent year presented for which the debt figures reflect actual outcomes?

GUIDELINES:

Question 32 asks for which year the actual outcome for debt is shown. In most cases, the most recent year for which budget data on actual outcomes are available will be BY-2, as BY-1 is generally not yet finished when the budget proposal is drafted. So a government that has updated its debt data for BY-2 to reflect what actually occurred, as opposed to estimating the outcome for that year, shows good public financial management practice.

For an "a" answer, a country must meet the good practice of having the figures for BY-2 reflect actual outcomes.

It is essential that all government activities that may have an impact on the budget – in the current budget year or in future budget years – be fully disclosed to the legislature and the public in budget documents. In some countries, for instance, entities outside central government (such as public corporations) undertake fiscal activities that could affect current and future budgets. Similarly, activities that can have a significant impact on the budget, such as payment arrears and contingent liabilities, sometimes are not properly captured by the regular presentations of expenditure, revenue, and debt.

Answer:

d. No actual data for government debt are presented in the budget or supporting budget documentation.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

Only figures on the deficit are presented, rather than total debt.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Before BY-3.

Comments: Please refer to page 88 of the Explanatory Note of the Budget 2019: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Researcher Response

The information on page 88 of the Explanatory Note appears to have information only for the period up to September (9M) for each year on the graph,

rather than final figures. Even information on local government expenditure are of the same format (9M) till September. Answer remains unchanged.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The existing response of "d" is maintained.

33. "Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on extra-budgetary funds for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a statement of purpose or policy rationale for the extra-budgetary fund; and complete income, expenditure, and financing data on a gross basis.)"

GUIDELINES:

Question 33 focuses on extra-budgetary funds, asking whether "core" information related to these funds, which exist outside the budget, are presented. These core components include:

- *a statement of purpose or policy rationale for the extra-budgetary fund (i.e., why was a particular fund set up? what is it used for?); and*
- *estimates of its income, expenditure, and financing. (These estimates should be presented on a gross basis so that it is possible to tell how much money flows through each extra-budgetary fund.)*

In most countries, governments engage in certain budgetary activities that are not included in the central government's budget. Known as extra-budgetary funds, they can range in size and scope. For example, countries frequently set up pension and social security programs as extra-budgetary funds, where the revenues collected and the benefits paid are recorded in a separate fund outside the budget. Another example of an extra-budgetary fund can be found in countries dependent on hydrocarbon/mineral resources, where revenues from producing and selling those resources are channeled through systems outside the annual budget.

In some cases, the separation engendered by an extra-budgetary fund serves a legitimate political purpose, and the finances and activities of these funds are well documented. In other cases, however, this structure is used for obfuscation, and little or nothing is known about a fund's finances and activities.

The availability of information related to extra-budgetary funds is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the government's true fiscal position. In addition to the core information, other information about extra-budgetary funds is also desirable. Such information includes a discussion of the risks associated with the extra-budgetary fund; expenditures classified by economic, functional, or administrative unit; and the rules and procedures that govern the operations and management of the extra-budgetary fund.

For more information about extra-budgetary funds, see the Guide to Transparency in Public Finances: Looking Beyond the Core Budget (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Looking-Beyond-the-Budget.pdf>) and Principle 2.1.1 of the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to extra-budgetary funds as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. A "b" answer applies if the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation presents all of the core information. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to extra-budgetary funds is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on extra-budgetary funds.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements or some extra-budgetary funds.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

See "Shpenzime per Fondet Speciale" - reflecting the expenditure and

"Te ardhurat nga Fondet Speciale" reflecting its income.

However there is no "statement of purpose or policy rationale"

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

34. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present central government finances (both budgetary and extra-budgetary) on a consolidated basis for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 34 asks whether the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documents present the finances of the central government on a consolidated basis, showing both its budgetary and extra-budgetary activities. Virtually all of the questions in the OBS questionnaire focus on budgetary central government – the activities of the ministries, departments, or agencies of central government. In addition, Question 33 asks about extra-budgetary funds, such as social security funds that are not included in the budget.

Coverage is an important aspect of fiscal reporting. Budget documents should cover the full scope of government's financial activity. In many countries, extra-budgetary activities are substantial, and can represent a sizable share of the central government's activities. To get a full picture of the central government's finances, therefore, it is necessary to examine both activities that are included in the budget and those that are extra-budgetary. This question asks whether such a consolidated presentation of central government finances is provided.

The central government is only one component of the overall public sector. The public sector also includes other levels of government, such as state and local government, and public corporations. (See Box 2.1 under Principle 1.1.1 of the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018): <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>. For the purpose of answering this question, please consider only the central government level.

In order to answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present central government finances (both budgetary and extra-budgetary) on a consolidated basis for at least the budget year.

Answer:

a. Yes, central government finances are presented on a consolidated basis.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The document shows government finances on a consolidated basis with the extra-budgetary funds included "Shpenzime per Fondet Speciale" (Social insurance outlays in English).

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: "Fiscal indicators regarding consolidated budget of 2015-2020" explain: TOTAL REVENUE From Which: Grants/ Budget Support/Tax Revenue

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Per follow-up communication with the peer reviewer, they are in agreement with the researcher's response.

35. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of intergovernmental transfers for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 35 asks about intergovernmental transfers. In many cases, the central government supports the provision of a good or service by a lower level of government through an intergovernmental transfer of funds. This is necessary because, independent from the level of administrative decentralization that exists in a given country, the capacity for revenue collection of a local government is unlikely to be sufficient to pay for all its expenses. However, because the activity is not being undertaken by an administrative unit of the central government, it is unlikely to receive the same level of review in the budget. Thus it is important to include in the budget proposal a statement that explicitly indicates the amount and purposes of these transfers.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year both estimates covering all intergovernmental transfers and a narrative discussing these transfers. If a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all intergovernmental transfers are presented, then a "b" answer is appropriate. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, intergovernmental transfers (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no estimates of intergovernmental transfers are presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, estimates of all intergovernmental transfers are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Source:

EBP supporting document - bill on the budget 2019
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Projektligji_i_Buxhetit_2019.doc
Articles 3 and 16.

Comment:

The actual criteria and formula for calculating intergovernmental transfers can be found on the EBP supporting documents

Aneksi 1 – Formula e transferes se pakushtezuar 2019 19.10.18 ES

Aneksi 2 – Kriteret fondit rezerve te PV 2019

Tabela 3 TP Qarqet 2019

Tabela 3 – TP Bashkite 2019 Finale

The above documents can be found at the MoEF website:

<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: Aneksi 3 – Fondi për Zhvillimin e Rajoneve dhe Programi për Infrastrukturën Vendore dhe Rajonale as part of

<https://financa.gov.al/projektbuxheti-2019/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Per follow-up communication with the peer reviewer, they are in agreement with the researcher's response.

36. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present alternative displays of expenditures (such as by gender, by age, by income, or by region) to illustrate the financial impact of policies on different groups of citizens, for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 36 asks about "alternative displays" of expenditures that highlight the financial impact of policies on different groups of citizens. As discussed above, expenditures are typically presented by at least one of three classifications – administrative, functional, and economic classifications (see Questions 1-5) – and by individual program (Question 6). In addition, governments can provide alternative displays to emphasize different aspects of expenditure policies and to show who benefits from these expenditures.

For the purpose of answering this question, the alternative presentation must differ from the presentations (such as administrative, functional, or economic classifications or presentation by program) used to answer other questions. The alternative display can cover all expenditures or only a portion of expenditures. For instance, it can show how all expenditures are distributed according to geographic region or it can show how selected expenditures (such as the health budget or the agriculture budget) are distributed to different regions. But such a geographic display must be something different than the presentation of intergovernmental transfers used to answer question 35. One exception is when a country includes a special presentation of all policies intended to benefit the most impoverished populations (and is used to answer Question 52) then that can be considered an alternative display for purposes of answering this question as well. Finally, brief fact sheets showing how proposals in the budget benefit particular groups would be insufficient; only more detailed presentations would be considered.

The IBP Budget Brief, "How Transparent are Governments When it Comes to Their Budget's Impact on Poverty and Inequality?"

(<https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/government-transparency-of-budgets-impact-on-poverty-inequality-ibp-2019.pdf>) includes a discussion of the importance of alternative displays of budget information and provides a number of examples. For instance,

- *Bangladesh in its 2017-18 Budget included a detailed supplementary Gender Budgeting Report, which presents the spending dedicated to advancing women across various departments. (<https://mof.portal.gov.bd/site/page/3bb14732-b5b1-44df-9921-efedf1496295>).*
- *The UK's 2017 budget included a supplementary analysis that provided a distributional analysis of the budget by households in different income groups (see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661465/distributional_analysis_autumn_budget_2017.pdf)*
- *South Africa's 2017 Budget Review goes beyond the standard presentation of intergovernmental transfers, discussing the redistribution that results from national revenue flowing to the provinces and municipalities and presenting the allocations on a per capita basis (see chapter 6, <http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2017/review/FullBR.pdf>).*

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must include at least three different presentations that illustrate the financial impact of policies on different groups of citizens for at least the budget year. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must include at least two different alternative displays of expenditures. A "c" applies if only one type of alternative display of expenditure is presented. Answer "d" applies if no alternative display of expenditure is presented.

Answer:

d. No, alternative displays of expenditures are not presented to illustrate the financial impact of policies on different groups of citizens.

Source:
No such alternative displays exist.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, one alternative display of expenditures is presented to illustrate the financial impact of policies on different groups of citizens.
Comments: Please refer to the Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which accompanies the Draft Budget of 2019 on which there is a specific annex on Gender Responsive Budgeting as follows: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/13.-Aneksi-2-BPGJ-PBA-2019-2021-1.docx>

Researcher Response
MTBP is not part of the Executive's Budget Proposal (or its supporting documents) therefore cannot be taken into consideration.

IBP Comment
In light of the researcher's "Response to Review," the existing response of "d" is maintained.

36b. Based on the response to Question 36, select the box(es) below to identify which types of alternative displays are included in the Executive's Budget Proposal:

Answer:
None of the above

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

37. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of transfers to public corporations for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 37 asks about transfers to public corporations. It is often the case that governments have a stake in enterprises that manage resources that are particularly relevant for the public good (such as electricity, water, and oil). While these public corporations can operate independently, in some cases the government will provide direct support by making transfers to these corporations, including to subsidize capital investment and operating expenses.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year both estimates covering all transfers to public corporations and a narrative discussing the purposes of these transfers. If a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all transfers to public corporations are presented, then a "b" answer is appropriate. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, transfers to public corporations (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "c" also applies if estimates of transfers to public corporations are presented as a single line item. Answer "d" applies if no estimates of transfers to public corporations are presented.

Answer:
c. Yes, estimates of some but not all transfers to public corporations are presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>
see page 13, paragraph "Shpenzimet për subvencione "

Comment:

The total amount of transfers to public corporations (water and railway) is mentioned but there are no specifics on the particular amounts transferred individually for each corporation.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019" Pages 57-58 2014 2015 2016 2017 Shtat. 18 Mbështetje neto për Sektorin e Energjisë nga e cila: 8.166 8.529 6.309 11.419 4.905 -Për garancitë e paguara nga MFE 2.269 2,278 2061 2.652 1.875 -Për fondet me financim të huaj të nënhuazuara 4.292 6.143 3.002 6.170 2.881 -Për mbështetjen buxhetore me fonde nga buxheti i shtetit 1.500 1.000 2.241 98 -Për interesat e fondeve të nënhuazuara 106 108 246 356 247

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

38. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on quasi-fiscal activities for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a statement of purpose or policy rationale for the quasi-fiscal activity and the intended beneficiaries.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 38 focuses on quasi-fiscal activities, asking whether "core" information related to such activities is presented. These core components include:

- *A statement of purpose or policy rationale for the quasi-fiscal activity (i.e., what is the reason for engaging in this activity?);*
- *The identification of intended beneficiaries of the quasi-fiscal activity.*

The term "quasi-fiscal activities" refers to a broad range of activities that are fiscal in character and could be carried out through the regular budget process but are not. For example, a quasi-fiscal activity could take place if, instead of providing a direct subsidy through the budget for a particular activity, a public financial institution provides an indirect subsidy by offering loans at below-market rates for that activity. Similarly, it is a quasi-fiscal activity when an enterprise provides goods or services at prices below commercial rates to certain individuals or groups to support the government's policy goals.

The above examples are policy choices that may be approved by the government and legislature. However, quasi-fiscal activities can also involve activities that violate or circumvent a country's budget process laws or are not subject to the regular legislative approval process for expenditures. For example, the executive may issue an informal order to a government entity, such as a public commercial enterprise, to provide the executive with goods and services that normally would have to be purchased with funding authorized by the legislature. All quasi-fiscal activities should be disclosed to the public and subject to public scrutiny.

Beyond the core information, some governments may also provide other information about quasi-fiscal activities, including for example: the anticipated duration of the quasi-fiscal activity; a quantification of the activity and the assumptions that support these estimates; and a discussion of the fiscal significance and potential risks associated with the activity, including the impact on the entity carrying out the activity. Principle 3.3.2 of the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>) provides examples of quasi-fiscal activities that can be consulted as needed. And more details on quasi-fiscal activities can be found in the Guide to Transparency in Public Finances: Looking Beyond the Core Budget (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Looking-Beyond-the-Budget.pdf>).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to all quasi-fiscal activities for at least the budget year as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to quasi-fiscal activities is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on quasi-fiscal activities.

If quasi-fiscal activities do not represent a significant problem in your country, please mark "e." However, please exercise caution in answering this question.

Answer:

d. No, information related to quasi-fiscal activities is not presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019" pages 61-63
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

No information is present on quasi-fiscal activities. The document cited above has a chapter (8.1) which attempts to describe quasi-fiscal activities but the information is referring to loan guarantees would in fact, qualify more as contingent liabilities than quasi-fiscal activities.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements or some quasi-fiscal activities.

Comments: the explanatory note on page 61-63 explains the quasi fiscal activities of the Government with its SOEs in the energy and water supply sectors. this is well within the definition of quasi fiscal activities: Quasi-fiscal activities are any activities undertaken by state-owned banks and enterprises, and sometimes by private sector companies at the direction of the government, where the prices charged are less than usual or less than the "market rate." Examples include subsidized bank loans provided by the central bank or other government-owned banks, and noncommercial public services provided by state-owned enterprises. A typical example would be state-owned enterprises providing fuel, electricity, or water at below market prices, thus providing an implicit price subsidy. If not clearly included in the government's financial reports, quasi-fiscal activities are a particular type of extra-budgetary transaction.

IBP Comment

The government reviewer's comment is well received. The pages (61-63) cited by the researcher and reviewer pertain to loan guarantees, which are more applicable to the contingent liabilities discussed in question 42. The existing response of "d" is maintained.

39. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on financial assets held by the government for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a listing of the assets, and an estimate of their value.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 39 focuses on financial assets held by the government, asking whether "core" information related to these assets is presented. These core components include:

- *A listing of the financial assets; and*
- *An estimate of their value.*

Governments own financial assets such as cash, bonds, or equities. Unlike private sector businesses, however, few governments maintain balance sheets that show the value of their assets and liabilities.

Beyond the core information, some governments may also provide other information about financial assets, including for example: a discussion of their purpose; historical information on defaults; differences between reported values and market values; and a summary of financial assets as part of the government's balance sheet.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year all of the core information related to all financial assets held by the government as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to financial assets is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on financial assets held by the government.

Answer:

d. No, information related to financial assets is not presented.

Source:

Comment:

No such information is presented.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

40. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on nonfinancial assets held by the government for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a listing of the assets by category.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 40 focuses on nonfinancial assets held by the government, asking whether "core" information related to these assets is presented. The core information is a listing of nonfinancial assets, grouped by the type (or category) of asset.

Nonfinancial assets are things of value that the government owns or controls (excluding financial assets) such as land, buildings, and machinery. The valuation of public nonfinancial assets can be problematic, particularly in cases where the asset is not typically available on the open market (such as a government monument). In these cases, it is considered acceptable to provide summary information in budget documents from a country's register of assets. But, in some cases, governments are able to value their nonfinancial assets; some present a summary of nonfinancial assets as part of their balance sheets. For an example of how nonfinancial assets are presented in one of the many supporting documents to the New Zealand Executive's Budget Proposal, see the Forecast Financial Statement 2011, Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued), Note 14, accessible here: <https://treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2011-05/befu11-pt6of8.pdf>.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year a listing by category of all nonfinancial assets held by the government as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to nonfinancial assets is presented, but some nonfinancial assets are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on nonfinancial assets held by the government.

Answer:

d. No, information related to nonfinancial assets is not presented.

Source:

Comment:

No such information is presented.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

41. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of expenditure arrears for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 41 asks about estimates of expenditure arrears, which arise when government has entered into a commitment to spend funds but has not made the payment when it is due. (For more information see sections 3.49-3.50 of the IMF's GFS Manual 2001, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/pdf/all.pdf> (page 29)). Though equivalent to borrowing, this liability is often not recorded in the budget, making it difficult to assess fully a government's financial position. Moreover, the obligation to repay this debt affects the government's ability to pay for other activities.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year both estimates covering all expenditure arrears and a narrative discussing the arrears. If a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all expenditure arrears are presented, then a "b" answer is appropriate. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, expenditure arrears (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no estimates of expenditure arrears are presented.

If expenditure arrears do not represent a significant problem in your country, please mark "e." However, please exercise caution in answering this question. Public expenditure management laws and regulations often will allow for reasonable delays, perhaps 30 or 60 days, in the routine payment of invoices due. Expenditure arrears impacting a small percentage of expenditure that are due to contractual disputes should not be considered a significant problem for the purpose of answering this question.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of expenditure arrears are not presented.

Source:

Comment:

No such information is included in the EBP or its supporting documents.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, estimates of all expenditure arrears are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Comments: The Explanatory Note of Budget 2019 indeed includes estimates for past years and narrative for central and local government arrears, specifically on page 40, 60 and 61.

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the comment of the government reviewer but the information to revise the answer is not sufficient since the information is not for the current fiscal year.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The existing response of "d" is maintained.

42. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on contingent liabilities, such as government loan guarantees or insurance programs, for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a statement of purpose or policy rationale for each contingent liability; the new guarantees or insurance commitments proposed for the budget year; and the total amount of outstanding guarantees or insurance commitments (the gross exposure) at the end of the budget year.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 42 focuses on contingent liabilities, asking whether "core" information related to these liabilities is presented. These core components include:

- *a statement of purpose or policy rationale for each contingent liability;*
- *the new contingent liabilities for the budget year, such as new guarantees or insurance commitments proposed for the budget year; and*
- *the total amount of outstanding guarantees or insurance commitments at the end of the budget year. This reflects the gross exposure of the government in the case that all guarantees or commitments come due (even though that may be unlikely to occur).*

Contingent liabilities are recognized under a cash accounting method only when the contingent event occurs and the payment is made. An example of such liabilities is the case of loans guaranteed by the central government, which can include loans to state-owned banks and other state-owned commercial enterprises, subnational governments, or private enterprises. Under such guarantees, government will only make a payment if the borrower defaults. Thus a key issue for making quantitative estimates of these liabilities is assessing the likelihood of the contingency occurring.

In the budget, according to the OECD, "[w]here feasible, the total amount of contingent liabilities should be disclosed and classified by major category reflecting their nature; historical information on defaults for each category should be disclosed where available. In cases where contingent liabilities cannot be quantified, they should be listed and described."

Beyond the core information, some governments may also provide other information about contingent liabilities, including for example: historical default rates for each program, and likely default rates in the future; the maximum guarantee that is authorized by law; any special financing associated with the guarantee (e.g., whether fees are charged, whether a reserve fund exists for the purpose of paying off guarantees, etc.); the duration of each guarantee; and an estimate of the fiscal significance and potential risks associated with the guarantees.

For more details on contingent liabilities, see Guide to Transparency in Public Finances: Looking Beyond the Core Budget (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Looking-Beyond-the-Budget.pdf>) and page 59 (Box 11) and Principle 3.2.3 of the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year all of the core information related to contingent liabilities as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to contingent liabilities is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on contingent liabilities.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements or some contingent liabilities.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019" pages 61-63

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:
see chapter "Detyrimet Kontigjente:" pages 59-60 but some core elements are missing.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree
Comments: EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:
b. Yes, the core information is presented for all contingent liabilities.
Comments: The core elements are displayed in the Explanatory Notes for Contingent Liabilities so please revise the answer to b.

Researcher Response

In response to the comment of the government reviewer, when assessing pages 59-60 of the document "Relacioni PB 2019" it is noted only one of the core element to be present; "a statement of purpose or policy rationale for each contingent liability". There is no information regarding: -the new contingent liabilities for the budget year, such as new guarantees or insurance commitments proposed for the budget year; -the total amount of outstanding guarantees or insurance commitments at the end of the budget year. Therefore answer "c" is not changed.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." In addition, the guaranteed debt portfolio discussed beginning on page 61 is only listed for September 2018, rather than the 2019 budget year. The existing response of "c" is maintained.

43. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present projections that assess the government's future liabilities and the sustainability of its finances over the longer term?

(The core information must cover a period of at least 10 years and include the macroeconomic and demographic assumptions used and a discussion of the fiscal implications and risks highlighted by the projections.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 43 focuses on government's future liabilities and the sustainability of its finances over the longer-term, asking whether "core" information related to these issues is presented. These core components must include:

- *Projections that cover a period of at least 10 years.*
- *The macroeconomic and demographic assumptions used in making the projections.*
- *A discussion of the fiscal implications and risks highlighted by the projections. Good public financial management calls for budgets to include fiscal sustainability analyses.*

The IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>) recommends that governments regularly publish the projected evolution of the public finances over the longer term (see Principle 3.1.3.). Future liabilities are a particularly important element when assessing the sustainability of public finances over the long term. Future liabilities are the result of government commitments that, unlike contingent liabilities, are virtually certain to occur at some future point and result in an expenditure. A typical example consists of government obligations to pay pension benefits or cover health care costs of future retirees. Under a cash accounting system, only current payments associated with such obligations are recognized in the budget. To capture the future impact on the budget of these liabilities, a separate statement is required.

Beyond the core information, some governments may also provide other information about the sustainability of their finances, including for example: projections that cover 20 or 30 years; multiple scenarios with different sets of assumptions; assumptions about other factors (such as the depletion of natural resources) that go beyond just the core macroeconomic and demographic data; and a detailed presentation of particular programs that have long time horizons, such as civil service pensions.

For more details on future liabilities, see Guide to Transparency in Public Finances: Looking Beyond the Core Budget (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Looking-Beyond-the-Budget.pdf>).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core information related to future liabilities and the sustainability of government finances over the longer term as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to future liabilities is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on future liabilities and the sustainability of government's finances

Answer:

d. No, information related to future liabilities and the sustainability of finances over the longer term is not presented.

Source:

There is no information regarding future liabilities.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

44. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of the sources of donor assistance, both financial and in-kind, for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 44 asks about estimates of donor assistance, both financial and in-kind assistance. Such assistance is considered non-tax revenue, and the sources of this assistance should be explicitly identified. In terms of in-kind assistance, the concern is primarily with the provision of goods (particularly those for which there is a market that would allow goods received as in-kind aid to be sold, thereby converting them into cash) rather than with in-kind aid like advisors from a donor country providing technical assistance.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year both estimates covering all donor assistance and a narrative discussing the assistance. If a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all donor assistance are presented, then a "b" answer is appropriate. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, donor assistance (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "c" also applies if the sources of donor assistance are not presented, but the total amount of donor assistance is presented as a single line item. Answer "d" applies if no estimates of donor assistance are presented. Select answer "e" if your country does not receive donor assistance.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of the sources of donor assistance are not presented.

Source:

Some information can be found at the EBP supporting document "Tabela 4 – Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2-2.xls>

Comment:

The document only mentions the total amount of donor assistance "Te ardhura nga ndihmat" but it does not cite the source. Also, it is not possible to determine what part is financial and what in-kind.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: "Fiscal indicators regarding consolidated budget of 2015-2020" explain: TOTAL REVENUE From Which: Grants/ Budget Support/Tax Revenue

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, estimates of all sources of donor assistance are presented, but a narrative discussion is not included.

Comments: Please refer to the document on the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Lista-e-Investimeve-Publike-v.2019-2021-per-KM.xls> on the F.H. sheet you will find information on the donors financing of public investment projects for the past and future 3 years (2019-2021)

Researcher Response

The document cited by the government review appears to be comprehensive but this document is not part of the EBP. This is important because of two specific instances: 1. Often, the MoFE does present information but under different categories or complicated sub-folders that is hard to find. Ultimately, when one searches for budget information within a set of budget documents, it expects to find it there. For this reason alone, since it is not part of the EBP, it wouldn't be considered part of EBP. 2. It is also difficult to assess (this document) whether it is legally binding and who oversees the implementation. Certainly there are contracts and agreements overseen by donors but strictly speaking in terms of annual budget, when it comes to reporting and oversight, this format is not included. That is why it should be incorporated with the budget documents.

45. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on tax expenditures for at least the budget year?

(The core information must include a statement of purpose or policy rationale for each tax expenditure, the intended beneficiaries, and an estimate of the revenue foregone.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 45 focuses on tax expenditures, asking whether "core" information related to these tax preferences is presented. These core components must include for both new and existing tax expenditures:

- a statement of purpose or policy rationale;
- a listing of the intended beneficiaries; and
- an estimate of the revenue foregone.

Tax expenditures arise as a result of exceptions or other preferences in the tax code provided for specified entities, individuals, or activities. Tax expenditures often have the same impact on public policy and budgets as providing direct subsidies, benefits, or goods and services. For example, encouraging a company to engage in more research through a special tax break can have the same effect as subsidizing it directly through the expenditure side of the budget, as it still constitutes a cost in terms of foregone revenues. However, expenditure items that require annual authorization are likely to receive more scrutiny than tax breaks that are a permanent feature of the tax code.

*Beyond the core information, some governments may also provide other information about tax expenditures, including for example: the intended beneficiaries by sector and income class (distributional impact); a statement of the estimating assumptions, including the definition of the benchmark against which the foregone revenue is measured; and a discussion of tax expenditures as part of a general discussion of expenditures for those program areas that receive both types of government support (in order to better inform policy choices). For more details on tax expenditures, see *Guide to Transparency in Public Finances: Looking Beyond the Core Budget* (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Looking-Beyond-the-Budget.pdf>) and Principle 1.1.4 of the IMF's *Fiscal Transparency Handbook* (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>).*

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present, for at least the budget year, all of the core information related to tax expenditures as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to tax expenditures is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on tax expenditures.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements or some tax expenditures.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

See pages 46-47. Some information is included such as the revenue forgone. However the purpose is not clear as well as the beneficiaries which only show some categories.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the core information is presented for all tax expenditures.

Comments: should be revised as there is enough information for the tax expenditures for each type of tax in the explanatory note of Budget 2019

Researcher Response

The comment of government's reviewer is acknowledged and looking at the document referenced for this question, there is a total number of 78 exclusions (from VAT) but not a list of the beneficiaries. The purpose or policy rationale is not stated clearly either. Answer remains unchanged, "c".

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the researcher's "Response to Review." The existing response of "c" is maintained.

46. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of earmarked revenues for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 46 asks about estimates of earmarked revenues, which are revenues that may only be used for a specific purpose (for example, revenues from a tax on fuel that can only be used for building roads). This information is important in determining which revenues are available to fund the government's general

expenses, and which revenues are reserved for particular purposes.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present for at least the budget year both estimates covering all earmarked revenues and a narrative discussing the earmarks. If a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all earmarked revenues are presented, then a "b" answer is appropriate. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, earmarked revenues (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no estimates of earmarked revenues are presented. An "e" response applies if revenue is not earmarked or the practice is disallowed by law or regulation.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of earmarked revenues are not presented.

Source:

No such information

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

47. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on how the proposed budget (both new proposals and existing policies) is linked to government's policy goals for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 47 and 48 ask about information that shows how the budget (both new proposals and existing policies) is linked to the government's policy goals. The budget is the executive's main policy document, the culmination of the executive's planning and budgeting processes. Therefore, it should include a clear description of the link between policy goals and the budget – that is, an explicit explanation of how the government's policy goals are reflected in its budget choices. For an example of a discussion of a government's policy goals in the budget, see pages 13-18 of New Zealand's 2011 Statement of Intent (<http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/abouttreasury/soi/2011-16>), one of the many documents supporting its budget.

In some countries the government prepares strategic/development plans. These plans include all the policies the government is planning to implement for the budget year and very often cover a multi-year perspective. In some cases, these plans do not match the budget documentation, and it is possible that they are completely disconnected from the Executive's Budget Proposal. So the question is examining whether government policy plans are "translated" into revenue and expenditure figures in the actual budget documents.

Question 47 asks about the information covering the budget year, and Question 48 asks about the period at least two years beyond the budget year. To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present both estimates of how the budget is linked to government's policy goals for the budget year (for Question 47) or for a multi-year period beyond the budget year (for Question 48) and a narrative discussion of how these policy goals are reflected in the budget. To answer "b" for either question, the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present estimates that show how the budget is linked to government's policy goals, but no narrative discussion is included. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes only a narrative discussion, or if it includes estimates that show how the budget is linked to some, but not all, of the government's policy goals (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on how the budget is linked to government's policy goals.

Answer:

c. Yes, information that shows how the proposed budget is linked to some but not all of the government's policy goals for the budget year is presented.

Source:

EBP supporting document "Relacioni PB 2019"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Comment:

Pages 2-4 show what new and existing policies are financed. The document continues with another chapter "POLITIKAT SEKTORIALE DHE PËRFITIMET PËR QYTETARIN" (pages 17-34) showing different sector policy goals but is not clear how they are linked.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: 4. POLITIKAT SEKTORIALE DHE PËRFITIMET PËR QYTETARIN (pages 17-34) showing different sector policy as 1. Agriculture 2. Economic Development 3. Infrastructure

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, estimates that show how the proposed budget is linked to all the government's policy goals for the budget year are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on linkage between government policies and budget for the next three years. Please refer to the following link:

<http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The document referenced by the Government reviewer can not be taken into consideration since it is not part of the EBP. Please see link at the parliament website: <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> where this document is absent. In other words, it is not part of the budget 2019.

IBP Comment

IBP agrees with the researcher's conclusion that the Medium Term Budget Program is not part of the 2019 EBP package. The existing response of "c" is maintained.

48. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present information on how the proposed budget (both new proposals and existing policies) is linked to government's policy goals for a multi-year period (for at least two years beyond the budget year)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 47 and 48 ask about information that shows how the budget (both new proposals and existing policies) is linked to the government's policy goals. The budget is the executive's main policy document, the culmination of the executive's planning and budgeting processes. Therefore, it should include a clear description of the link between policy goals and the budget – that is, an explicit explanation of how the government's policy goals are reflected in its budget choices. For an example of a discussion of a government's policy goals in the budget, see pages 13-18 of New Zealand's 2011 Statement of Intent (<http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/abouttreasury/soi/2011-16>), one of the many documents supporting its budget.

In some countries the government prepares strategic/development plans. These plans include all the policies the government is planning to implement for the budget year and very often cover a multi-year perspective. In some cases, these plans do not match the budget documentation, and it is possible that they are completely disconnected from the Executive's Budget Proposal. So the question is examining whether government policy plans are "translated" into revenue and expenditure figures in the actual budget documents.

Question 47 asks about the information covering the budget year, and Question 48 asks about the period at least two years beyond the budget year. To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present both estimates of how the budget is linked to government's policy goals for the budget year (for Question 47) or for a multi-year period beyond the budget year (for Question 48) and a narrative discussion of how these policy goals are reflected in the budget. To answer "b" for either question, the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present estimates that show how the budget is linked to government's policy goals, but no narrative discussion is included. A "c" response applies if the presentation includes only a narrative discussion, or if it includes estimates that show how the budget is linked to some, but not all, of the government's policy goals (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" applies if no information is presented on how the budget is linked to government's policy goals.

Answer:

c. Yes, information that shows how the proposed budget is linked to some but not all of the government's policy goals for a multi-year period is presented.

Source:

No such information is included in the EBP and its supporting documents.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, information that shows how the proposed budget is linked to some but not all of the government's policy goals for a multi-year period is presented.

Comments: [?] Rezultatet që synohet të arrihen për periudhën afatmesme 2019-2021 (Pages 20) <https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc> Pages 20-24 show what new and existing policies are financed. Rezultatet që synohet të arrihen për periudhën afatmesme 2019-2021, showing different sector policy goals but is not clear how they are linked.

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, estimates that show how the proposed budget is linked to all the government's policy goals for a multi-year period are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on linkage between government policies and budget for the next three years. Please refer to the following link:

<http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The peer reviewer's response is acknowledged and the document "Relacioni-PB-2019" pages 20-21 contains some information how the proposed budget is linked to the government's policy goals regarding the water sector. This is associated with the expenditure figures but it is the only sector that satisfies this criteria therefore the answer is upgraded to "c"

IBP Comment

See the researcher's response, as well as IBP's comment, in Question 47 for a more detailed explanation as to why we do not consider the Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021, which was cited by the government reviewer, to be a part of the Executive's Budget Proposal.

49. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present nonfinancial data on inputs to be acquired for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 49 asks about the availability of nonfinancial data on inputs for the budget year. (Nonfinancial data on outputs and outcomes are addressed in Question 50.)

The budget should disclose not only the amount of money that is being allocated on a program but also any information needed to analyze that expenditure. Nonfinancial data and performance targets associated with budget proposals are used to assess the success of a given policy. For example, even when allocated funds are spent according to plan, there remains the question of whether the policy delivered the results that it aimed to achieve.

Nonfinancial data can include information on:

Inputs - These are the resources assigned to achieve results. For example, in regards to education, nonfinancial data on inputs could include the number of books to be provided to each school or the materials to be used to build or refurbish a school.

Outputs - These are products and services delivered as a result of inputs. For example, the number of pupils taught every year; the number of children that received vaccines; or the number of beneficiaries of a social security program.

Outcomes - These are the intended impact or policy goals achieved. For example, an increase in literacy rates among children under 10, or a reduction in rates of maternal mortality.

In addition, governments that set performance targets must use nonfinancial data for outputs and outcomes to determine if these targets have been met.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present, for at least the budget year, nonfinancial data on inputs for each individual program within all administrative units (ministries, departments, and agencies). It is also acceptable if nonfinancial data on inputs for each individual program is organized by functions. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present nonfinancial data on inputs for all administrative units or all functions, but not for each individual program (or even for any programs) within those administrative units or functions. A "c" response applies if nonfinancial data on inputs are presented only for some programs and/or some administrative units or some functions. Answer "d" applies if no nonfinancial data on inputs is presented.

Answer:

d. No, nonfinancial data on inputs are not presented.

Source:

No such information is included in the EBP and its supporting documents.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, nonfinancial data on inputs are presented for all administrative units (or functions) but not for all (or any) programs.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on non-financial data on inputs for the three future years. Please refer to the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The document referenced by the Government reviewer can not be taken into consideration since it is not part of the EBP. Please see link at the parliament website: <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> where this document is absent. In other words, it is not part of the budget 2019.

IBP Comment

IBP agrees with the researcher's conclusion that the Medium Term Budget Program is not part of the 2019 EBP package. The existing response of

"d" is maintained.

50. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present nonfinancial data on results (in terms of outputs or outcomes) for at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 50 asks about the availability of nonfinancial data on results for the budget year. Nonfinancial data on results can include data on both outputs and outcomes, but not on inputs (which are addressed in Question 49).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present, for at least the budget year, nonfinancial data on results for each individual program within all administrative units (ministries, departments, and agencies). It is also acceptable if nonfinancial data on results for each individual program is organized by functional classification. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must present nonfinancial data on results for all administrative units or all functional classifications, but not for each individual program (or even for any programs) within those administrative units or functions. A "c" response applies if nonfinancial data on results are presented only for some programs and/or some administrative units or some functions. Answer "d" applies if no nonfinancial data on results is presented.

Answer:

d. No, nonfinancial data on results are not presented.

Source:

No such information is included in the EBP and its supporting documents.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, nonfinancial data on results are presented for all administrative units (or functions) but not for all (or any) programs.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on non-financial data on inputs for the three future years. Please refer to the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The document referenced by the Government reviewer can not be taken into consideration since it is not part of the EBP. Please see link at the parliament website: <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> where this document is absent. In other words, it is not part of the budget 2019.

IBP Comment

IBP agrees with the researcher's conclusion that the Medium Term Budget Program is not part of the 2019 EBP package. The existing response of "d" is maintained.

51. Are performance targets assigned to nonfinancial data on results in the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation?

GUIDELINES:

Question 51 asks about performance targets assigned to nonfinancial data on results for the budget year. The question applies to those nonfinancial results shown in the budget, and that were identified for purposes of Question 50.

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must assign performance targets to all nonfinancial data on results shown in the budget for at least the budget year. To answer "b," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must assign performance targets to a majority (but not all) of the nonfinancial data on results shown in the budget. A "c" response applies if performance targets are assigned only to less than half of the nonfinancial data on results. Answer "d" applies if no performance targets are assigned to nonfinancial data on results shown in the budget, or the budget does not present nonfinancial results.

Answer:

d. No, performance targets are not assigned to nonfinancial data on results, or the budget does not present nonfinancial data on results.

Source:

No such information is included in the EBP and its supporting documents.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, performance targets are assigned to most nonfinancial data on results.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on performance targets for most of the KPIs for each program. Please refer to the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The document referenced by the Government reviewer can not be taken into consideration since it is not part of the EBP. Please see link at the parliament website: <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> where this document is absent. In other words, it is not part of the budget 2019.

IBP Comment

IBP agrees with the researcher's conclusion that the Medium Term Budget Program is not part of the 2019 EBP package. The existing response of "d" is maintained.

52. Does the Executive's Budget Proposal or any supporting budget documentation present estimates of policies (both new proposals and existing policies) that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations in at least the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 52 asks whether the budget highlight policies, both new and existing, that benefit the poorest segments of society. This question is intended to assess only those programs that directly address the immediate needs of the poor, such as through cash assistance programs or the provision of housing, rather than indirectly, such as through a stronger national defense. This information is of particular interest to those seeking to bolster government's commitment to anti-poverty efforts. For purposes of answering this question, a departmental budget (such for the Department of Social Welfare) would not be considered acceptable. In general, this question is asking whether the EBP includes a special presentation that pulls together estimates of all the relevant policies in one place. However, if the country uses "program budgeting," where programs are presented as expenditure categories with specific and identified objectives, and it identifies anti-poverty programs within each administrative unit, then that is also acceptable for this question.

The IBP Budget Brief, "How Transparent are Governments When it Comes to Their Budget's Impact on Poverty and Inequality?"

(<https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/government-transparency-of-budgets-impact-on-poverty-inequality-ibp-2019.pdf>) includes a discussion of countries that have provided information on how its policies affect the poor.

For instance, Pakistan provides a detailed breakdown of pro-poor expenditure as part of its 2017-18 budget proposal. In one document, the government sets out policy priorities, expected outputs, and estimates of past and future spending for several programs aimed at poverty alleviation. Another supporting document provides a comprehensive overview of ongoing policies, including a chapter on social safety nets, covering both financial and performance information of poverty alleviation schemes over a period of eight years. (http://www.finance.gov.pk/budget/mtbf_2018_21.pdf and http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey_1718.html).

To answer "a," the Executive's Budget Proposal or supporting documentation must for at least the budget year both present estimates covering all policies that are intended to benefit the most impoverished populations and include a narrative discussion that specifically addresses these policies. (For countries using program budgeting that breaks out individual anti-poverty programs, there should be a separate narrative associated with each such program.) Answer "b" if a narrative discussion is not included, but estimates for all policies that are intended to benefit the most impoverished populations are presented. Answer "c" if the presentation includes estimates covering only some, but not all, policies that are intended to benefit the most impoverished populations (regardless of whether it also includes a narrative discussion). Answer "d" if no estimates of policies that are intended to benefit the most impoverished populations are presented.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of policies that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations are not presented.

Source:

No such information is included in the EBP and its supporting documents.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, estimates of some but not all policies that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations are presented.

Comments: The Medium Term Budget Program 2019-2021 document which is also submitted to the Parliament as part of the Budget 2019 contains information on KPIs and outputs related to most impoverished populations (economic assistance beneficiaries, unemployed people, employment schemes beneficiaries etc.) for related programs. Please refer to the following link: <http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021-faza-ii/>

Researcher Response

The document referenced by the Government reviewer can not be taken into consideration since it is not part of the EBP. Please see link at the parliament website: <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> where this document is absent. In other words, it is not part of the budget 2019.

IBP Comment

IBP agrees with the researcher's conclusion that the Medium Term Budget Program is not part of the 2019 EBP package. The existing response of "d" is maintained.

53. Does the executive release to the public its timetable for formulating the Executive's Budget Proposal (that is, a document setting deadlines for submissions from other government entities, such as line ministries or subnational government, to the Ministry of Finance or whatever central government agency is in charge of coordinating the budget's formulation)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 53 asks about the budget timetable. An internal timetable is particularly important for the executive's management of the budget preparation process, in order to ensure that the executive accounts for the views of the different departments and agencies in the proposed budget. The timetable would, for instance, set deadlines for submissions from other government entities, such as line ministries or subnational government, to the Ministry of Finance or whatever central government agency is in charge of coordinating the budget's formulation. So that civil society is aware of the various steps in the budget formulation process, and when opportunities may exist to engage the executive, it is essential that this timetable be made available to the public.

To answer "a," the executive must prepare a detailed budget timetable and release it to the public. A "b" answer applies if the timetable is made public, but some details are not included. A "c" response applies if the timetable is made public, but many important details are excluded, reducing its value for those outside government. Answer "d" applies if no timetable is made available to the public. As long as a timetable for formulating the Executive's Budget Proposal is released, answer "a," "b," or "c" may be selected, even if the Executive's Budget Proposal is not made publicly available.

Answer:

a. Yes, a detailed timetable is released to the public.

Source:

Council of Ministers Decision "on the approval of the calendar for public expenditures for 2018"
<http://80.78.70.231/pls/kuv/f?p=201:Vendim%20i%20KM:13:12.01.2018>

Comment:

The above document is the calendar published every year and approved by the CoM.

Additional information on budget discussion (EBP) and approval (EB) can also be found in the organic budget law. Likewise, there can be seen the rationale behind such calendar. (Articles 29, 30)

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

54. Does the Pre-Budget Statement present information on the macroeconomic forecast upon which the budget projections are based?

(The core information must include a discussion of the economic outlook with estimates of nominal GDP level, inflation rate, real GDP growth, and interest rates.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 54 focuses on the macroeconomic forecast that underlies the Pre-Budget Statement, asking whether "core" information related to the economic assumptions is presented. These core components include a discussion of the economic outlook as well as estimates of the following:

- nominal GDP level;
- inflation rate;
- real GDP growth; and
- interest rates.

Beyond these core elements, some governments also provide additional information related to the economic outlook, including for instance: short- and long-term interest rates; the rate of employment and unemployment; GDP deflator; price of oil and other commodities; current account; exchange rate; and composition of GDP growth.

To answer "a," the Pre-Budget Statement must present all of the core information related to the macroeconomic forecast as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Pre-Budget Statement must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the macroeconomic forecast is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information on the macroeconomic forecast is presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, information beyond the core elements is presented for the macroeconomic forecast.

Source:

PBS document: https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e_Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Comment:

The core elements can be found on the document linked above and more specifically:

The nominal GDP level (PBB nominale) can be found on page 8.

Inflation rate can be found on the Table on page 15.

Real GDP growth can be found on the Table on page 15.

Information on interests, can be found on tables on pages 16 and 17 of the documents under the heading "1.2 Interesat"

Some beyond core elements would be GDP deflator, exchange rate, rate of unemployment

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

55. Does the Pre-Budget Statement present information on the government's expenditure policies and priorities that will guide the development of detailed estimates for the upcoming budget?

(The core information must include a discussion of expenditure policies and priorities and an estimate of total expenditures.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 55 focuses on the government's expenditure policies and priorities in the Pre-Budget Statement, asking whether "core" information related to these policies is presented. These core components include:

- a discussion of expenditure policies and priorities; and
- an estimate of total expenditures.

Although a Pre-Budget Statement is unlikely to include detailed programmatic proposals (such detailed information is typically only presented in the budget itself), it should include a discussion of broad policy priorities and a projection of at least total expenditures associated with these policies for the budget year. The Pre-Budget Statement can include some detail, for instance, estimates provided by any of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications.

To answer "a," the Pre-Budget Statement must present for the upcoming budget year all of the core information related to the government's expenditure policies and priorities as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Pre-Budget Statement must present all of the core components noted above for the upcoming budget year. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the government's expenditure policies and priorities is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information on the government's expenditure policies and priorities is presented.

Answer:

b. Yes, the core information is presented for the government's expenditure policies and priorities.

Source:

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e_Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Comment:

The document includes a discussion of broad policy priorities (pages 7-8) and a projection of total expenditures for the period BY to BY+2 (table on page 16).

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

56. Does the Pre-Budget Statement present information on the government's revenue policies and priorities that will guide the development of detailed estimates for the upcoming budget?

(The core information must include a discussion of revenue policies and priorities and an estimate of total revenues.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 56 focuses on the government's revenue policies and priorities in the Pre-Budget Statement, asking whether "core" information related to these policies is presented. These core components include:

- *a discussion of revenue policies and priorities; and*
- *an estimate of total revenue.*

Although a Pre-Budget Statement is unlikely to include detailed revenue proposals, it should include a discussion of broad policy priorities and a projection of at least the total revenue associated with these policies for the budget year. The Pre-Budget Statement can also include more detail, for instance, with estimates provided by revenue category – tax and non-tax – or some of the major individual sources of revenue, such as the Value Added Tax or the income tax.

To answer "a," the Pre-Budget Statement must present for the upcoming budget year all of the core information related to the government's revenue policies and priorities as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Pre-Budget Statement must present all of the core components noted above for the upcoming budget year. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the government's revenue policies and priorities is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information on the government's revenue policies and priorities is presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, information beyond the core elements is presented for the government's revenue policies and priorities.

Source:

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e_Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Comment:

The document includes an estimate of total revenue (graphics on page 13) and it also contains a brief discussion of revenue policies and priorities (page 11 second half; and page 13).

Beyond core information includes: tax and non-tax revenues (table on page 16 heading II Të ardhura tatimore and heading III Të ardhura jo-tatimore, respectively)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

57. Does Pre-Budget Statement present three estimates related to government borrowing and debt: the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year; the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year; and interest payments on the debt for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 57 asks whether the Pre-Budget Statement includes three key estimates related to borrowing and debt:

- the amount of net new borrowing needed in the upcoming budget year;
- the central government's total debt burden at the end of the upcoming budget year; and
- the interest payments on the outstanding debt for the upcoming budget year.

Debt is the accumulated amount of money that the government borrows. The government can borrow from its citizens, banks, and businesses within the country (domestic debt) or from creditors outside the country (external debt). External debt is typically owed to private commercial banks, other governments, or international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Net new borrowing is the additional amount of new borrowing that is required for the budget year to finance expenditures in the budget that exceed available revenues. Net new borrowing adds to the accumulated debt. It is distinct from gross borrowing, which also includes borrowing needed to repay existing debt that matured during the budget year; debt that is replaced (or rolled over) does not add to the total of accumulated debt.

Interest payments on the debt (or debt service costs) are typically made at regular intervals, and these payments must be made on a timely basis in order to avoid defaulting on the debt obligation. Interest payments are separate from the repayment of principal, which occurs only when the loan has matured and must be paid back in full.

To answer "a," the Pre-Budget Statement must present all three estimates of borrowing and debt for at least the upcoming budget year. For a "b" answer, the Pre-Budget Statement must present two of those three estimates. For a "c" answer, the PBS must present one of the three estimates. Answer "d" applies if no information on borrowing and debt is presented in the PBS.

Answer:

a. Yes, all three estimates related to government borrowing and debt are presented.

Source:

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e-Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Comment:

The table on page 16 has all three estimates .
- total net borrowing (domestic and external)
- total debt (Borxhi Publik Total (Stok))
- interest payments (heading 1.2)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

58. Does the Pre-Budget Statement present estimates of total expenditures for a multi-year period (at least two-years beyond the budget year)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 58 asks about multi-year expenditure estimates in the Pre-Budget Statement.

To answer "a," expenditure estimates for at least two years beyond the upcoming budget year must be presented. The estimates must be for at least total expenditures, but could include more detail than just the aggregate total.

Answer:

a. Yes, multi-year expenditure estimates are presented.

Source:

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Kuadri_Makroekonomik_e-Fiskal_per_periudhen_2019-2021_VKM_nr.25_date_17.01.2018-1.pdf

Comment:

See table on page 16

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

59. Does the Enacted Budget present expenditure estimates by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 59 asks if expenditure estimates in the Enacted Budget are presented by any one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications – which were addressed in Questions 1-5 above. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on. Unlike classification by administrative unit, which tends to be unique to each country, functional and economic classifications for government budgeting have been developed and standardized by international institutions. Cross-country comparisons are facilitated by adherence to these international classification standards.

To answer “a,” the Enacted Budget must present expenditure estimates by all three of the expenditure classifications. To answer “b,” expenditure estimates must be presented by two of the three classifications. A “c” answer applies if expenditure estimates are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer “d” applies if expenditure estimates are not presented by any of the three classifications.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Enacted Budget presents expenditure estimates by all three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, and functional classification).

Source:

the enacted budget can be found here:
<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/>

Comment:

expenditure estimates are presented by all three expenditure classifications

administrative classification is presented at:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-institucioneve.xlsx>

functional classification is presented at:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-6-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-funksioneve-te-Qeverise.xls>

economic classification is presented at:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2.xls>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

59b. Based on the response to Question 59, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications are included in the Enacted Budget:

Answer:

Administrative classification
Economic classification
Functional classification

Source:
<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

60. Does the Enacted Budget present expenditure estimates for individual programs?

GUIDELINES:

Question 60 asks if expenditure estimates in the Enacted Budget are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaille. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Enacted Budget must present all programs, which account for all expenditures, in the budget year. To answer "b," the Enacted Budget must present expenditures for individual programs that when combined account for at least two-thirds of expenditures, but not all expenditures. A "c" answer applies if the Enacted Budget presents programs that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by program in the Enacted Budget.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Enacted Budget presents estimates for programs accounting for all expenditures.

Source:

The information can be found at the document "Tabela 5-shoqeruese Shpenzimet sipas institucioneve"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-sipas-institucioneve.xlsx>

Comment:

The rest of the expenditure which does not fall under any administrative unit, is shown at:
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-5-shoqeruese-Shpenzimet-e-tjera-2019.xls>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

61. Does the Enacted Budget present revenue estimates by category (such as tax and non-tax)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 61 asks whether revenue estimates in the Enacted Budget are presented by "category"— that is, whether tax and non-tax sources of revenue are shown separately.

To answer "a," the Enacted Budget must present revenue estimates classified by category.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Enacted Budget presents revenue estimates by category.

Source:

The information can be found at the document "Tabela 4 Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2.xls>
Last column of the excel file is in English

The EB link for all its documents including the above:
<https://financa.gov.al/buxheti-2019-fillestar/>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

62. Does the Enacted Budget present individual sources of revenue?

GUIDELINES:

Question 62 asks whether revenue estimates for individual sources of revenue are presented in the Enacted Budget. The question applies to both tax and non-tax revenue.

To answer "a," the Enacted Budget must present all individual sources of revenue, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all revenue. To answer "b," the Enacted Budget must present individual sources of revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all revenue, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if the Enacted Budget presents individual sources of revenue that account for less than two-thirds of revenues. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of revenue are not presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Enacted Budget presents individual sources of revenue accounting for all revenue.

Source:

The information can be found at the document "Tabela 4 Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2.xls>
Last column of the excel file is in English

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

63. Does the Enacted Budget present three estimates related to government borrowing and debt: the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year; the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year; and interest payments on the debt for the budget year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 63 asks about three key estimates related to borrowing and debt:

- *the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year;*
- *the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year;*
- *the interest payments on the outstanding debt for the budget year.*

Debt is the accumulated amount of money that the government borrows. The government can borrow from its citizens, banks, and businesses within the country (domestic debt) or from creditors outside the country (external debt). External debt is typically owed to private commercial banks, other governments,

or international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Net new borrowing is the additional amount of new borrowing that is required for the budget year to finance expenditures in the budget that exceed available revenues. Net new borrowing adds to the accumulated debt. It is distinct from gross borrowing, which also includes borrowing needed to repay existing debt that matured during the budget year; debt that is replaced (or rolled over) does not add to the total of accumulated debt.

Interest payments on the debt (or debt service costs) are typically made at regular intervals, and these payments must be made on a timely basis in order to avoid defaulting on the debt obligation. Interest payments are separate from the repayment of principal, which occurs only when the loan has matured and must be paid back in full.

To answer "a," the Enacted Budget must present all three estimates of borrowing and debt. For a "b" answer, the Enacted Budget must present two of those three estimates. For a "c" answer, the Enacted Budget must present one of the three estimates. Answer "d" applies if no information on borrowing and debt is presented in the Enacted Budget.

Answer:

a. Yes, all three estimates related to government borrowing and debt are presented.

Source:

"Tabela 4 Treguesit fiskale (t-2 deri t+2)"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2.xls>

Budget law

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ligj-nr.-99-dt.-3.12.2018.docx>

Article 9 shows the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year

Article 20 shows the total debt outstanding at the end of the budget year

Comment:

The excel file shows:

-the amount of net new borrowing under the heading "DEFIÇITI" (same as article 9 of the budget law)

-the interest payments on the outstanding debt under the heading "Interesat"

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

64. What information is provided in the Citizens Budget?

(The core information must include expenditure and revenue totals, the main policy initiatives in the budget, the macroeconomic forecast upon which the budget is based, and contact information for follow-up by citizens.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 64 focuses on the content of the Citizens Budget, asking whether "core" information is presented. These core components include:

- *expenditure and revenue totals;*
- *the main policy initiatives in the budget;*
- *the macroeconomic forecast upon which the budget is based; and*
- *contact information for follow-up by citizens.*

To answer "a," the Citizens Budget or supporting documentation must present all of the above core information as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," the Citizens Budget must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if the Citizens Budget includes some of the core components above, but other core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if a Citizens Budget is not published.

Answer:

b. The Citizens Budget provides the core information.

Source:

Buxheti i qytetarit 2019

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Comment:

Contact information is included on the second page.
Expenditure and revenue totals can be found on page 7
The macroeconomic forecast can be found on pages 7-8
The main policy initiatives are found throughout the document

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

65. How is the Citizens Budget disseminated to the public?

GUIDELINES:

Question 65 asks how the Citizens Budget is disseminated to the public. Citizens Budgets should be made available to a variety of audiences. Therefore paper versions and an Internet posting of a document might not be sufficient.

To answer "a," the executive must use three or more different types of creative media tools to reach the largest possible share of the population, including those who otherwise would not normally have access to budget documents or information. Dissemination would also be pursued at the very local level, so that the coverage is targeted both by geographic area and population group (e.g., women, elderly, low income, urban, rural, etc.). Option "b" applies if significant dissemination efforts are made through a combination of two means of communications, for instance, both posting the Citizens Budget on the executive's official website and distributing printed copies of it. Option "c" applies if the Citizens Budget is disseminated through only posting on the executive's official website. Option "d" applies when the executive does not publish a Citizens Budget.

Answer:

c. A Citizens Budget is disseminated only by using one means of dissemination.

Source:

The citizens budget is only published online on the executive's official website.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: Buxheti i qytetarit 2019 https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Web_buxheti_19.pdf

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Per follow-up communication with the peer reviewer, they are in agreement with the researcher's response.

66. Has the executive established mechanisms to identify the public's requirements for budget information prior to publishing the Citizens Budget?

GUIDELINES:

Question 66 asks whether the executive has established mechanisms to identify the public's requirements for budget information before publishing a Citizens Budget. What the public wants to know about the budget might differ from the information the executive includes in technical documents that comprise the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget; similarly, different perspectives might exist on how the budget should be presented, and this may vary depending on the context. For this reason the executive should consult with the public on the content and presentation of the Citizens Budget.

To answer "a," the executive must have established mechanisms to consult with the public, and these mechanisms for consultation are both accessible and widely used by the public. Such mechanisms can include focus groups, social networks, surveys, hotlines, and meetings/events in universities or other locations where people gather to discuss public issues. In countries where Citizens Budgets are consistently produced and released, it may be sufficient for the government to provide the public with contact information and feedback opportunities, and subsequently use the feedback to improve its management of public resources.

Option "b" applies if the executive has established mechanisms for consultation that are accessible to the public, but that the public nonetheless does not use frequently. That is, the public does not typically engage with the executive on the content of the Citizens Budget, even though the executive has created opportunities for such consultation. Option "c" applies if the executive has established mechanism for consultation with the public, but they are poorly designed and thus not accessible to the public. Option "d" applies if the executive has not created any mechanisms to seek feedback from the public on the content of the Citizens Budget.

Answer:

d. No, the executive has not established any mechanisms to identify the public's requirements for budget information in the Citizen's Budget.

Source:

According to the law, the executive should engage with the public during the budget formulation. However, no evidence is found that this year such actions have taken place.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the executive has established mechanisms to identify the public's requirements for budget information in the Citizen's Budget; while these mechanisms are accessible they are not widely used by the public.

Comments: As explained previously the Organic Budget Law has made it mandatory to all central government institutions to consult with civil society organizations.

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the comment of the Government reviewer but the Organic budget law mentions the mechanism regarding only the participation during the MTBP formulation. (Articles 25,26) In other words, the law is not specifically talking about a mechanism for public requirements for budget information in the Citizen's Budget. Answer "d" remains unchanged.

67. Are "citizens" versions of budget documents published throughout the budget process?

GUIDELINES:

Question 67 asks if "citizens" versions of budget documents are published throughout the budget process. While the Citizens Budget was initially conceived as a simplified version of the Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, good practice is now evolving and suggests that a "citizens" version of key budget documents should be produced during each of the four phases of the budget cycle. This would serve to inform citizens of the state of public financial management throughout the entire budget cycle.

To answer "a," a citizens version of at least one budget document is published for each of the four stages of the budget process (budget formulation, enactment, execution, and audit) – for a total of at least four citizens budget documents throughout the process. Option "b" applies if a citizens version of a budget document is published for at least two of the four stages of the budget process. Option "c" applies if a citizens version of a budget document is published for at least one of the four stages of the budget process. Select option "d" if no "citizens" version of budget documents is published.

Answer:

c. A citizens version of budget documents is published for at least one stage of the budget process.

Source:

The citizens budget is published only for the Enacted Budget.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

68. Do the In-Year Reports present actual expenditures by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 68 asks if expenditure estimates in In-Year Reports are presented by any one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications – which were addressed in Questions 1-5 above.

Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on. Unlike classification by administrative unit, which tends to be unique to each country, functional and economic classifications for government budgeting have been developed and standardized by international institutions. Cross-country comparisons are facilitated by adherence to these international classification standards.

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present actual expenditures by all three of the expenditure classifications. To answer "b," actual expenditures must be presented by two of these three classifications. A "c" answer applies if actual expenditures are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" applies if actual expenditures are not presented by any of the three classifications in In-Year Reports.

Answer:

a. Yes, the In-Year Reports present actual expenditures by all three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, and functional classification).

Source:

See the quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal,"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

Expenditures are presented for each classification on the following pages;

- (page 10) Economic classification
- (page 12) Functional classification
- (page 13) Administrative unit classification

Comment:

Another source for expenditures presented by economic classification is the IYR "Statistika Fiskale Mujore":
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treguesit-Analitik-Fiskal-NENTOR-2018.xls>

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

68b. Based on the response to Question 68, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications are included in the In-Year Reports:

Answer:

Administrative classification
Economic classification
Functional classification

Source:

See the quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal,"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

Expenditures are presented for each classification on the following pages;

- (page 10) Economic classification
- (page 12) Functional classification
- (page 13) Administrative unit classification

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

69. Do the In-Year Reports present actual expenditures for individual programs?

GUIDELINES:

Question 69 asks if expenditure estimates in In-Year Reports are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaillé. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present actual expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures. To answer "b," In-Year Reports must present actual expenditures for individual programs that when combined account for at least two-thirds of expenditures, but not all expenditures. A "c" answer applies if In-Year Reports present actual expenditures for programs that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if actual expenditures are not presented by program in In-Year Reports.

Answer:

d. No, the In-Year Reports do not present actual expenditures by program.

Source:

none of the IYRs represent expenditures for individual programs.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

70. Do the In-Year Reports compare actual year-to-date expenditures with either the original estimate for that period (based on the enacted budget) or the same period in the previous year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 70 asks whether In-Year Reports compare actual expenditures to-date with either the enacted levels or actual expenditures for the same period in the previous year.

The OECD recommends that the reports contain the total year-to-date expenditures in a format that allows for a comparison with the budget's forecast expenditures (based on enacted levels) for the same period.

To answer "a," comparisons must be made for expenditures presented in the In-Year Reports

Answer:

a. Yes, comparisons are made for expenditures presented in the In-Year Reports.

Source:

See the quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal,"
<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

Comment:

Pages 9,10 show monthly (progressive) data then it compares them with the enacted levels (blue columns)
Pages 11,13 show expenditure estimates compared to the same period in the previous year.

See also Monthly fiscal statistics (tabs 2, 3, 4).

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treguesit-Analitik-Fiskal-NENTOR-2018.xls>

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

71. Do In-Year Reports present actual revenue by category (such as tax and non-tax)?

GUIDELINES:

Questions 71 asks whether In-Year Reports present actual revenues by "category"— that is, whether tax and non-tax sources of revenue are shown separately.

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present revenue estimates classified by category.

Answer:

a. Yes, In-Year Reports present actual revenue by category.

Source:

See the quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal," (table on page 10)

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

See also Monthly fiscal statistics (tab 2)

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treguesit-Analitik-Fiskal-NENTOR-2018.xls>

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

72. Do In-Year Reports present the individual sources of revenue for actual revenues collected?

GUIDELINES:

Question 72 asks whether In-Year Reports present actual collections of individual sources of revenue (such as income taxes, VAT, etc.). The question applies to both tax and non-tax revenue.

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present actual collections for all individual sources of revenue, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all revenue. To answer "b," In-Year Reports must present actual collections for individual sources of revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all revenue collected, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if In-Year Reports present individual sources of actual revenue that account for less than two-thirds of all revenue collected. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of actual revenue are not presented.

Answer:

a. Yes, In-Year Reports present individual sources of actual revenue accounting for all revenue.

Source:

Quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal,"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

See pages 9-10

Monthly fiscal statistics:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treguesit-Analitik-Fiskal-NENTOR-2018.xls>

See Tab2

Monthly report "Ekonomia dhe Buxheti"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Ekonomia-dhe-Buxheti-Nentor-2018-1.pdf>

See page 17

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

73. Do the In-Year Reports compare actual year-to-date revenues with either the original estimate for that period (based on the enacted budget) or the same period in the previous year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 73 asks whether In-Year Reports compare actual revenues to-date with either the enacted levels or actual revenues for the same period in the previous year.

The OECD recommends that the reports contain the total year-to-date revenues in a format that allows for a comparison with the budget's forecast revenues (based on enacted levels) for the same period.

To answer "a," comparisons must be made for revenues presented in the In-Year Reports.

Answer:

a. Yes, comparisons are made for revenues presented in the In-Year Reports.

Source:

Quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal,"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

See pages 9-11

Monthly fiscal statistics:

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treguesit-Analitik-Fiskal-NENTOR-2018.xls>

See Tab2. It compares actual year-to-date revenues the original estimate as well as with the same period over the previous year.

Comment:

Both IYRs show comparisons of actual year-to-date revenues with the original estimate for that period (based on the enacted budget) and the same period in the previous year.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

74. Do In-Year Reports present three estimates related to actual government borrowing and debt: the amount of net new borrowing; the total debt outstanding; and interest payments?

GUIDELINES:

Question 74 asks about three key estimates related to borrowing and debt:

- *the amount of net new borrowing so far during the year;*
- *the central government's total debt burden at that point in the year; and*
- *the interest payments to-date on the outstanding debt.*

Debt is the accumulated amount of money that the government borrows. The government can borrow from its citizens and banks and businesses within the country (domestic debt) or from creditors outside the country (external debt). External debt is typically owed to private commercial banks, other governments,

or international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Net new borrowing is the additional amount of new borrowing that is required for the budget year to finance expenditures in the budget that exceed available revenues. Net new borrowing adds to the accumulated debt. It is distinct from gross borrowing, which also includes borrowing needed to repay existing debt that matured during the budget year; debt that is replaced (or rolled over) does not add to the total of accumulated debt.

Interest payments on the debt (or debt service costs) are typically made at regular intervals, and these payments must be made on a timely basis in order to avoid defaulting on the debt obligation. Interest payments are separate from the repayment of principal, which occurs only when the loan has matured and must be paid back in full.

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present all three estimates of borrowing and debt. For a "b" answer, In-Year Reports must present two of those three estimates. For a "c" answer, IYRs must present one of the three estimates. Answer "d" applies if no information on borrowing and debt is presented in In-Year Reports.

Answer:

a. Yes, all three estimates related to government borrowing and debt are presented.

Source:

Quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

Monthly report "Ekonomia dhe Buxheti"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Ekonomia-dhe-Buxheti-Nentor-2018-1.pdf>

Comment:

from the documents cited above, please see:

the amount of net new borrowing so far during the year. "Buletini Fiskal" page 20

the central government's total debt burden at that point in the year. "Buletini Fiskal" page 21

the interest payments to-date on the outstanding debt. "Buletini Fiskal" page 22 (interest payments of external debt). Meanwhile the total interest payments can be found on the table on page 9.

Additionally, the interest payments to-date on the outstanding debt can also be found on the IYR "Ekonomia dhe Buxheti", table on page 17: and the amount of net new borrowing so far during the year is found on page 20.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

75. Do In-Year Reports present information related to the composition of the total actual debt outstanding?

(The core information must include interest rates on the debt instruments; maturity profile of the debt; and whether it is domestic or external debt.)

GUIDELINES:

Question 75 focuses on the composition of government debt, asking whether "core" information related to its composition is presented. These core components include:

- interest rates on the debt;
- maturity profile of the debt; and
- whether the debt is domestic or external.

The interest rates affect the amount of interest that must be paid to creditors. The maturity profile indicates the final payment date of the loan, at which point the principal (and all remaining interest) is due to be paid; government borrowing typically includes a mix of short-term and long-term debt. As discussed in Question 74, domestic debt is held by a country's citizens and banks and businesses, while external debt is held by foreigners. These factors related to the composition of the debt give an indication of the potential vulnerability of the country's debt position, and ultimately whether the cost of servicing the accumulated debt is affordable.

Beyond these core elements, a government may also provide additional information related to the composition of its debt, including for instance: whether interest rates are fixed or variable; whether debt is callable; the currency of the debt; a profile of the creditors (bilateral institutions, multilateral institutions, commercial banks, Central Bank, etc.); an analysis of the risk associated with the debt; and where appropriate, what the debt is being used to finance.

To answer "a," In-Year Reports must present all of the core information related to the composition of government debt to-date as well as some additional information beyond the core elements. To answer "b," In-Year Reports must present all of the core components noted above. Answer "b" is also accepted if one of the core elements is not presented but additional information beyond the core elements is presented. A "c" answer applies if some information related to the composition of government debt is presented, but some of the core pieces of information are not included. Answer "d" applies if no information is

presented on the composition of the debt outstanding in In-Year Reports.

Answer:

c. Yes, information is presented, but it excludes some core elements.

Source:

Quarterly IYR Fiscal bulletin "Buletini Fiskal"

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Buletini-09-2018.doc>

Comment:

Information on the maturity profile and whether the debt is domestic or external can be found at the linked document on pages 21-22, but there is no information on interest rates.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

76. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget include an updated macroeconomic forecast for the budget year underway?

GUIDELINES:

Question 76 asks whether the Mid-Year Review includes an updated macroeconomic forecast for the budget year, and provides an explanation of the update.

Refer to Question 15 for the components of the macroeconomic forecast presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must include an updated macroeconomic forecast and explain all of the differences between the initial forecast presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal and the updated forecast. The explanation must include at least estimates of all differences; a narrative discussion is desirable but not required if estimates of all the differences are provided. To answer "b," the macroeconomic forecast must be updated, but only some of the differences between the initial and updated forecasts are explained. The explanation would be more limited, such as only a narrative discussion of the differences or estimates covering only some of the differences. A "c" response applies if the Mid-Year Review includes an updated macroeconomic forecast, but does not provide an explanation for the revisions. A "d" response applies if the macroeconomic forecast has not been updated.

Answer:

c. Yes, the estimates for macroeconomic forecast have been updated, but an explanation of the differences between the original and updated forecast is not presented.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

[https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx)

[_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx)

Comment:

Question 15 identifies only one component of the macroeconomic forecast (nominal GDP level) which is not discussed in the MYR.

There is some discussion however, regarding real GDP growth and inflation but the comparison is made with the same period of the previous FY.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

On a second review, first paragraph under section I.2 reaffirms the real GDP growth rate for the entirety of FY 2018, and explains why that level of expansion will be seen. Response is upgraded from "d" to "c."

77. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget include updated expenditure estimates for the budget year underway?

GUIDELINES:

Question 77 asks whether the Mid-Year Review includes updated estimates of expenditure for the budget year, and provides an explanation of the update.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must include updated expenditure estimates and explain all of the differences between the initial levels presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal (or the Enacted Budget) and the updated estimates. The explanation must include at least estimates of all differences; a narrative discussion is desirable but not required if estimates of all the differences are provided. The expenditure estimates must be updated, but only some of the differences between the initial and updated estimates are explained. The explanation would be more limited, such as only a narrative discussion of the differences or estimates covering only some of the differences. A "c" response applies if the Mid-Year Review includes updated expenditure estimates, but does not provide an explanation for the revisions. A "d" response applies if the expenditure estimates have not been updated.

Answer:

d. No, expenditure estimates have not been updated.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:

See heading III.2

There is very little information on expenditure estimates and that is in general terms. There is a discussion on expenditure levels compared to the plan (up to the reporting date) but that is presented in a reporting format.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

78. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget present expenditure estimates for the budget year underway by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 78 asks if expenditure estimates in the Mid-Year Review are presented by any one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications – which were addressed in Questions 1-5 above. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on. Unlike classification by administrative unit, which tends to be unique to each country, functional and economic classifications for government budgeting have been developed and standardized by international institutions. Cross-country comparisons are facilitated by adherence to these international classification standards.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must present expenditure estimates by all three of the expenditure classifications. To answer "b," expenditure estimates must be presented by two of these three classifications. A "c" answer applies if expenditure estimates are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" applies if expenditure estimates are not presented by any of the three classifications in the Mid-Year Review.

Answer:

d. No, the Mid-Year Review does not present expenditure estimates by any expenditure classification.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:

No such information

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

78b. Based on the response to Question 78, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications are included in the Mid-Year Review:

Answer:
None of the above

Source:

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018" https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

79. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget present expenditure estimates for the budget year underway for individual programs?

GUIDELINES:

Question 79 asks if expenditure estimates in the Mid-Year Review are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaille. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must present expenditures for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures. To answer "b," the Mid-Year Review must present expenditures for individual programs that when combined account for at least two-thirds of expenditures, but not all expenditures. A "c" answer applies if the Mid-Year Review presents programs that account for less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" applies if expenditures are not presented by program in the Mid-Year Review.

Answer:
d. No, the Mid-Year Review does not present expenditure estimates by program.

Source:
"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:
No such information

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

80. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget include updated revenue estimates for the budget year underway?

GUIDELINES:

Question 80 asks whether the Mid-Year Review includes updated estimates of revenue for the budget year, and provides an explanation of the update.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must include updated revenue estimates and explain all of the differences between the initial levels presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal (or the Enacted Budget) and the updated estimates. The explanation must include at least estimates of all differences; a narrative discussion is desirable but not required if estimates of all the differences are provided. To answer "b," the revenue estimates must be updated, but only some of the differences between the initial and updated estimates are explained. The explanation would be more limited, such as only a narrative discussion of the differences or estimates covering only some of the differences. A "c" response applies if the Mid-Year Review includes updated revenue estimates, but no explanation for the revisions is provided. A "d" response applies if the revenue estimates have not been updated.

Answer:

c. Yes, revenue estimates have been updated, but an explanation of the differences between the original and updated revenue estimates is not presented.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:

See heading II.2

There is some information on tax revenues and its respective estimates but not on the other sources of revenue and how it affects total revenue.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

81. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget present revenue estimates for the budget year underway by category (such as tax and non-tax)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 81 asks whether revenue estimates in the Mid-Year Review are presented by "category"— that is, whether tax and non-tax sources of revenue are shown separately.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must present revenue estimates classified by category.

Answer:

b. No, the Mid-Year Review does not present revenue estimates by category.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:

As a matter of fact, only information on tax revenue is presented.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: Information on tax revenue is presented on "Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018" https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

82. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget present individual sources of revenue for the budget year underway?

GUIDELINES:

Question 82 asks whether revenue estimates for individual sources of revenue are presented in the Mid-Year Review. The question applies to both tax and non-tax revenue.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must present all sources of revenue individually, accounting for all revenues, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all revenue. To answer "b," the Mid-Year Review must present individual sources of revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all revenue, but not all revenue. A "c" answer applies if the Mid-Year Review presents estimates of individual revenue sources that account for less than two-thirds of revenue. Answer "d" applies if individual sources of revenue are not presented in the Mid-Year Review.

Answer:

d. No, the Mid-Year Review does not present individual sources of revenue.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx

Comment:

There is information on individual sources of revenue but for tax only and that counts for over two-thirds of the total. See chapter II "POLITIKA FISKALE" (Fiscal Policy) pages 6-14.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

The document cited for this question does not have updated revenue figures for the entirety of FY 2018 (the "budget year underway"). Under this second review, the answer changes from "b" to "d".

83. Does the Mid-Year Review of the budget include updated estimates of government borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the budget year underway?

GUIDELINES:

Question 83 asks whether the Mid-Year Review includes updated estimates of borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the budget year, and provides an explanation of the update.

Refer to Question 13 for details on estimates in the Executive's Budget Proposal of borrowing and debt. Key estimates related to borrowing and debt include:

- The amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year;
- The central government's total debt burden at the end of the budget year; and
- The interest payments on the outstanding debt for the budget year.

Refer to Question 14 for details on estimates in the Executive's Budget Proposal related to the composition of the debt. Core information related to the composition of government debt include:

- interest rates on the debt;
- maturity profile of the debt; and
- whether the debt is domestic or external.

To answer "a," the Mid-Year Review must include an updated estimates of borrowing and debt, including its composition, and explain all of the differences between the initial estimates presented in the Executive's Budget Proposal (or Enacted Budget) and the updated estimates. The explanation must include at least estimates of all differences; a narrative discussion is desirable but not required if estimates of all the differences are provided. To answer "b," the estimates of borrowing and debt must be updated, but only some of the differences between the initial and updated estimates are explained. The explanation would be more limited, such as only a narrative discussion of the differences or estimates covering only some of the differences. A "c" response applies if the Mid-Year Review includes updated estimates, but no explanation for the revisions is provided. A "d" response applies if the estimates of borrowing and debt

have not been updated.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of government borrowing and debt have not been updated.

Source:

"Raporti i Mes-Vitit 2018 – Vleresimi i situates Makroekonomike, Fiskale dhe Buxhetore per 5M 2018"

[https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx)

[_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raporti_i_Mes-Vitit_2018_-_Vleresimi_i_situates_Makroekonomike_Fiskale_dhe_Buxhetore_per_5M_2018_dhe_pritshmeria_per_12M_2018_Publikimi.docx)

Comment:

Strictly speaking, there are some estimates of government borrowing and debt but not in the format required by this question and therefore doesn't satisfy a higher ranked answer.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

84. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the enacted levels (including in-year changes approved by the legislature) and the actual outcome for expenditures?

GUIDELINES:

Question 84 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and actual expenditures for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and the actual outcome for all expenditures, along with a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if estimates of the differences for all expenditures are presented, but a narrative discussion is not included. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences are presented for some, but not all expenditures, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. Answer "d" if no estimates of the differences are presented in the Year-End Report

Answer:

a. Yes, estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and the actual outcome for all expenditures are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

Please see the table "TABELA 4 – Treguesit fiskal te konsoliduar FAKTIK per vitin 2017" for a comparison between the enacted levels and the actual outcome for all expenditures.

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_4_-_Treguesit_fiskal_te_konsoliduar_FAKTIK_per_vitin_2017.xlsx

The narrative discussion can be found at the document "Raporti për zbatimin e buxhetit vjetor situaten makroekonomike dhe fiskale gjate vitit 2017" - Chapter IV.2 Shpenzimet e Përgjithshme (pp. 31-40)

[https://financa.gov.al/wp-](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b-Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx)

[content/uploads/2018/07/b-Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b-Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

85. Does the Year-End Report present expenditure estimates by any of the three expenditure classifications (by administrative, economic, or functional classification)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 85 asks if expenditure estimates in the Year-End Report are presented by any one of the three expenditure classifications – by administrative, economic, and functional classifications – which were addressed in Questions 1-5 above. Each of the classifications answers a different question: administrative unit indicates who spends the money; functional classification shows for what purpose is the money spent; and economic classification displays what the money is spent on. Unlike classification by administrative unit, which tends to be unique to each country, functional and economic classifications for government budgeting have been developed and standardized by international institutions. Cross-country comparisons are facilitated by adherence to these international classification standards.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present expenditure estimates by all three of the expenditure classifications. Answer "b" if expenditure estimates are presented by two of these three classifications. Answer "c" if expenditure estimates are presented by one of the three classifications. Answer "d" if expenditure estimates are not presented by any of the three classifications in the Year-End Report.

Answer:

b. Yes, the Year-End Report presents expenditure estimates by two of the three expenditure classifications.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

expenditure estimates by administrative classification

"TABELA 1 – Shpenzimet buxhetore FAKTIKE me programe sipas ML_IB 2017"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_1_-_Shpenzimet_buxhetore_FAKTIKE_me_programe_sipas_ML_IB_2017.xlsx

expenditure estimates by economic classification

"TABELA 4 – Treguesit fiskal te konsoliduar FAKTIK per vitin 2017"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_4_-_Treguesit_fiskal_te_konsoliduar_FAKTIK_per_vitin_2017.xlsx

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

85b. Based on the response to Question 85, check the box(es) to identify which expenditure classifications are included in the Year-End Report:

Answer:

Administrative classification

Economic classification

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_1_-_Shpenzimet_buxhetore_FAKTIKE_me_programe_sipas_ML_IB_2017.xlsx

http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_2_-_Numri_FAKTIK_i_punonjesve_buxhetore_sipas_ML_IB_2017.xlsx

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

86. Does the Year-End Report present expenditure estimates for individual programs?

GUIDELINES:

Question 86 asks if expenditure estimates in the Year-End Report are presented by program. There is no standard definition for the term "program," and the meaning can vary from country to country. However, for the purposes of answering the questionnaire, researchers should understand the term "program" to mean any level of detail below an administrative unit, such as a ministry or department.

A note for francophone countries: "Program" level detail is sometimes referred to as le plan comptable or le plan comptable detaillé. (These data are typically coded in the financial management database, following the chart of budgetary accounts, so that they can be organized by administrative and functional classification.)

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present expenditure estimates for all individual programs, accounting for all expenditures. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents expenditures for individual programs that when combined account for at least two-thirds of expenditures, but not all expenditures. Answer "c" if the Year-End Report presents programs that account for only less than two-thirds of expenditures. Answer "d" if expenditures are not presented by program in the Year-End Report.

Answer:

c. Yes, the Year-End Report presents estimates for programs accounting for less than two-thirds of expenditures.

Source:

"TABELA 1 – Shpenzimet buxhetore FAKTIKE me programe sipas ML_IB 2017"

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_1_-_Shpenzimet_buxhetore_FAKTIKE_me_programe_sipas_ML_IB_2017.xlsx

Comment:

The table above presents expenditure estimates for individual programs while the primary source of information was intended to be the respective administrative unit.

Therefore not all expenditure is presented since even at the initial budget formulation (EBP) there is a separate table which presents the expenditure that doesn't fall under a specific administrative unit. Such a table is not present here.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

87. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the enacted levels (including in-year changes approved by the legislature) and the actual outcome for revenues?

GUIDELINES:

Question 87 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and actual revenues for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and the actual outcome for all revenues, along with a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if estimates of the differences for all revenues are presented, but a narrative discussion is not included. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences are presented for some, but not all revenues, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. Answer "d" if no estimates of the differences are presented in the Year-End Report.

Answer:

a. Yes, estimates of the differences between the enacted levels and the actual outcome for all revenues are presented, along with a narrative discussion.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

Please see the table "TABELA 4 – Treguesit fiskal te konsoliduar FAKTIK per vitin 2017" for a comparison between the enacted levels and the actual

outcome for all revenues.

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_4_-_Treguesit_fiskal_te_konsoliduar_FAKTIK_per_vitin_2017.xlsx

The narrative discussion can be found at the document "Raporti për zbatimin e buxhetit vjetor situaten makroekonomike dhe fiskale gjate vitit 2017" - Chapter IV.1 Te Ardhurat e Përgjithshme (pp. 21-30)

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b_Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

88. Does the Year-End Report present revenue estimates by category (such as tax and non-tax)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 88 asks whether revenue estimates in the Year-End Report are presented by "category"— that is, whether tax and non-tax sources of revenue are shown separately.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present revenue estimates classified by category.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Year-End Report presents revenue estimates by category.

Source:

Please see "TABELA 4 – Treguesit fiskal te konsoliduar FAKTIK per vitin 2017" for revenue estimates by category.

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_4_-_Treguesit_fiskal_te_konsoliduar_FAKTIK_per_vitin_2017.xlsx

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

89. Does the Year-End Report present individual sources of revenue?

GUIDELINES:

Question 89 asks whether revenue estimates for individual sources of revenue are presented in the Year-End Report. The question applies to both tax and non-tax revenue.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present all sources of revenue individually, accounting for all revenue, and "other" or "miscellaneous" revenue must account for three percent or less of all revenue. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents individual sources of revenue that when combined account for at least two-thirds of all revenue, but not all revenue. Answer "c" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of individual revenue sources that account for less than two-thirds of revenue. Answer "d" if individual sources of revenue are not presented in the Year-End Report.

Answer:

a. Yes, the Year-End Report presents individual sources of revenue accounting for all revenue.

Source:

Please see "TABELA 4 – Treguesit fiskal te konsoliduar FAKTIK per vitin 2017" for individual sources of revenue.

https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TABELA_4_-_Treguesit_fiskal_te_konsoliduar_FAKTIK_per_vitin_2017.xlsx

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

90. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the original estimates of government borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 90 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the original estimates and the actual outcome for the fiscal year for borrowing and debt, including its composition, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

Refer to Question 13 for details on estimates in the Executive's Budget Proposal of borrowing and debt. Key estimates related to borrowing and debt include:

- *the amount of net new borrowing required during the budget year;*
- *the central government's total debt burden at the end of the budget year; and*
- *the interest payments on the outstanding debt for the budget year.*

Refer to Question 14 for details on estimates in the Executive's Budget Proposal related to the composition of the debt. Core information related to the composition of government debt include:

- *interest rates on the debt;*
- *maturity profile of the debt; and*
- *whether the debt is domestic or external.*

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must include estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of borrowing and debt, including its composition, for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of borrowing and debt for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original estimates of borrowing and debt for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of the differences between the original estimates of government borrowing and debt for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year is not presented.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"
<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>
The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

"Raporti për Borxhin Publik dhe përbërjen e tij, për vitin 2017"
https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/c-Raporti_per_Borxhin_Publik_dhe_perberjen_e_tij_per_vitin_2017-1.docx

This link is a report on Debt, but strictly speaking as per the question, does not give information on differences between original estimates for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year. It mostly analyzes it by comparing it to previous fiscal years or just giving a "snapshot" of where it stands.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

90b. Based on the response to Question 90, check the box(es) to identify which estimates of government borrowing and debt, including its composition, have the differences between the original forecast and the actual outcome for the year presented in the Year-End Report:

Answer:

Information beyond the core elements:

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

91. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the original macroeconomic forecast for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year?

GUIDELINES:

Question 91 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the original macroeconomic forecast for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

Refer to Question 15 for the components of the macroeconomic forecast in the Executive's Budget Proposal. Core components include estimates of the nominal GDP level, inflation rate, real GDP growth, and interest rates, although the importance of other macroeconomic assumptions, such as the price of oil, can vary from country to country.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must include estimates of the differences between all of the original macroeconomic assumptions for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between all of the original macroeconomic assumptions for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original macroeconomic assumptions for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of the differences between the original macroeconomic forecast for the fiscal year and the actual outcome for that year is not presented.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

No information available.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

91b. Based on the response to Question 91, check the box(es) to identify which elements of the macroeconomic forecast have the differences between the original forecast and the outcome for the year presented in the Year-End Report:

Answer:
None of the above

Source:
"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"
<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>
The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

92. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome?

GUIDELINES:

Question 92 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

Refer to Question 49 for the nonfinancial data on inputs included in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must include estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented.

Answer:
d. No, estimates of the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on inputs and the actual outcome are not presented.

Source:
"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"
<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>
The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:
No such information is available even in the EBP.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

93. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome?

GUIDELINES:

Question 93 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion. Nonfinancial data on results can include data on both outputs and outcomes, but not on inputs (which are addressed in Question 92).

Refer to Question 50 for the nonfinancial data on results included in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must include estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of the differences between the original estimates of nonfinancial data on results and the actual outcome are not presented.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

No such information is available even in the EBP.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: More information you can find at: http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b_Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

94. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the enacted level of funds for policies (both new proposals and existing policies) that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome?

GUIDELINES:

Question 94 asks whether the Year-End Report includes estimates of the differences between the enacted level of funds for policies that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

Refer to Question 52 for assistance to the most impoverished populations in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must present estimates of the differences between the enacted level for all policies that are intended to benefit the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between the enacted level for all policies that are intended to benefit the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between the enacted level for some but not all of the policies that are intended to benefit the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented.

Answer:

d. No, estimates of the differences between the enacted level for policies that are intended to benefit directly the country's most impoverished populations and the actual outcome are not presented.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

No such information is available even in the EBP.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

95. Does the Year-End Report present the differences between the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome?

GUIDELINES:

Question 95 asks whether the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome for the year, and whether these estimates are accompanied by a narrative discussion.

Refer to Question 33 for estimates of extra-budgetary funds in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

To answer "a," the Year-End Report must include estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome, including a narrative discussion. Answer "b" if the Year-End Report presents estimates of the differences between all of the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome, but does not include a narrative discussion. Answer "c" if estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome are presented, regardless of whether a narrative discussion is included. A "d" response applies if estimates of the differences are not presented

Answer:

c. Yes, estimates of the differences between some but not all of the original estimates of extra-budgetary funds and the actual outcome are presented.

Source:

"Paketa e Projektbuxhetit Faktik të vitit 2017"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/paketa-e-projektbuxhetit-faktik-te-vitit-2017/>

The YER is published "as a package" at the link above.

Comment:

See "Raporti për zbatimin e buxhetit vjetor situaten makroekonomike dhe fiskale gjate vitit 2017" page 23 "te ardhura nga fondet speciale"

[https://financa.gov.al/wp-](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b_Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx)

[content/uploads/2018/07/b_Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx](https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/b_Raporti_per_zbatimin_e_buxhetit_vjetor_situaten_makroekonomike_dhe_fiskale_gjate_vitit_2017.docx)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

96. Is a financial statement included as part of the Year-End Report or released as a separate report?

GUIDELINES:

Question 96 asks whether a financial statement is included as part of the Year-End Report, or whether it is released as a separate report. The financial statement can include some or all of the following elements: a cash flow statement, an operating statement, a balance sheet, and notes on accounting. For purposes of responding to this question, the financial statement in question does not need to be audited. For an example of a financial statement, see the document "Financial Statements of the Government of New Zealand 2013" (<https://treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2013-10/fsgnz-year-jun13.pdf>)

To answer "a," a financial statement must either be included in the Year-End Report or must be released as a separate report. Answer "a" applies if a financial statement is released as a separate report, even if the Year-End Report is not publicly available. Answer "b" applies if no financial statement is released either as part of the Year-End Report or as a separate report.

Answer:

b. No, a financial statement is neither part of the Year-End Report nor released as a separate report.

Source:

No such document is produced

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

- a. Yes, a financial statement is part of the Year-End Report or is released as a separate report.

Researcher Response

We acknowledging the government reviewer's comment, but in absence of additional evidence on the financial statement, answer "b" is maintained.

97. What type of audits (compliance, financial, or performance) has the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) conducted and made available to the public?

GUIDELINES:

Question 97 asks about the types of audits conducted by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI). There are three basic types of audits:

- *Financial audits are intended to determine if an entity's financial information is accurate (free from errors or fraud) and presented in accordance with the applicable financial reporting and regulatory framework. See ISSAI 200 (<http://www.issai.org/issai-framework/3-fundamental-auditing-principles.htm>) for more detail.*
- *Compliance audits look at the extent to which the relevant regulations and procedures have been followed. See ISSAI 400 (<http://www.issai.org/issai-framework/3-fundamental-auditing-principles.htm>) for more details.*
- *Performance audits assess whether activities are adhering to the principles of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. See ISSAI 300 (<http://www.issai.org/issai-framework/3-fundamental-auditing-principles.htm>) for more details. ≈*

Financial and compliance audits are more common than performance audits, which usually occur only once a performance framework has been agreed upon. In some countries, the SAI's mandate limits the type of audit it can conduct.

To answer "a," the SAI must have conducted all three types of audit – financial, compliance, and performance – and made all of them available to the public. A "b" response applies if the SAI has conducted two of the three audit types, and a "c" applies if it has conducted only one type of audit. Answers "b" and "c" may be selected even if the Audit Report is not publicly available, as long as the SAI has conducted compliance or performance audits and made them available to the public. A "d" response applies if the SAI has not conducted any of the three types of audits, or has not made them available to the public.

Answer:

- a. The SAI has conducted all three types of audits (compliance, financial, or performance) and made them available to the public.

Source:

Audit report "RAPORT PËR ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT TË SHITETIT TË VITIT 2017"
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf

Comment:

compliance audit, pages 53-68
financial audit, pages 212-216
performance audit, pages 251-260

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

98. What percentage of expenditures within the mandate of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) has been audited?

GUIDELINES:

Question 98 focuses on the coverage of audits by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI), asking what percentage of expenditures within the SAI's mandate has been audited.

The SAI's mandate is typically defined in statute. Only expenditures related to budgetary central government (ministries, departments, and agencies) that are within the SAI's mandate should be considered for this question. (Question 99 addresses audits of extra-budgetary funds.) Further, the question does not apply to "secret programs" (for example, security-related expenditures that are confidential). Further, if the mandate gives the SAI the authority to outsource some audits, then those audits count for purposes of this question.

Only the Audit Report identified in Section 1 should be used to answer this question. Financial audits and compliance audits, or a hybrid of the two, can be taken

into account to answer this question. Performance audits should not be considered for this question.

To answer "a," all expenditures within the SAI's mandate must be audited. A "b" response applies if at least two-thirds, but not all, expenditures within the SAI's mandate have been audited. A "c" response is appropriate when less than two-thirds of expenditures within the SAI's mandate have been audited. A "d" response applies when no expenditures have been audited.

Answer:

a. All expenditures within the SAI's mandate have been audited.

Source:

Audit report "RAPORT PËR ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT TË SHETIT TË VITIT 2017"
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf

Excel file from EB "Tabela 4 shoqeruese – Treguesit fiskale"

<http://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Tabela-4-Treguesit-fiskale-t-2-deri-t2.xls>

Comment:

please see chapter "3.2 SHPENZIMET BUXHETORE"
pages 81-94

In order to answer the question it is necessary to compare the expenditure levels from the 2017 Enacted Budget with the expenditures audited by SAI (table at the top of page 81 of the Audit Report).

The expenditure estimates on both documents match.

All main headings are reflected on the AR (although numbered a little different when compared to the Excel file from EB "Tabela 4 shoqeruese – Treguesit fiskale") except for heading "Detyrimet e prapambetura" which is nil, therefore has nothing to audit.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

99. What percentage of extra-budgetary funds within the mandate of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) has been audited?

GUIDELINES:

Question 99 focuses on audits of extra-budgetary funds, asking what percentage of extra-budgetary funds within the mandate of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) has been audited. These funds, although technically outside the budget, are governmental in nature and thus should be subject to the same audit requirement as other government programs.

The SAI's mandate is typically defined in statute. Only expenditures related to extra-budgetary funds within the SAI's mandate should be considered for this question. (Question 98 addresses audits of budgetary central government.) Further, if the mandate gives the SAI the authority to outsource some audits, then those audits count for purposes of this question.

To answer "a," all extra-budgetary funds within the SAI's mandate must be audited. A "b" response applies if extra-budgetary funds accounting for at least two-thirds of, but not all, expenditures associated with extra-budgetary funds within the SAI's mandate have been audited. A "c" response applies if extra-budgetary funds accounting for less than two-thirds of expenditures associated with extra-budgetary funds within the SAI's mandate have been audited. A "d" response applies if extra-budgetary funds have not been audited.

Answer:

a. All extra-budgetary funds within the SAI's mandate have been audited.

Source:

Audit report "RAPORT PËR ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT TË SHETIT TË VITIT 2017"
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf
please see chapter "3.2 SHPENZIMET BUXHETORE"

Comment:

See table on page 81 (heading 5)
also see pages 83-84 (heading 5.Shpenzimet për fondet speciale)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Raporti_Vjetor_i_Performances_2018_3868_1.php
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Raporti_mbi_Buxhetin_e_Shtetit_82_1.php

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

100. Does the annual Audit Report(s) prepared by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) include an executive summary?

GUIDELINES:

Question 100 asks whether the annual Audit Report includes an executive summary. Only the Audit Report identified in Section 1 should be used to answer this question. The Audit Report can be a fairly technical document, and an executive summary of the report's findings can help make it more accessible to the media and the public.

To answer "a," the Audit Report must include at least one executive summary summarizing the report's content. Answer "b" applies if the Audit Report does not include an executive summary, or the Audit Report is not made publicly available.

Answer:

a. Yes, the annual Audit Report(s) includes one or more executive summaries summarizing the report's content.

Source:

Audit report "RAPORT PËR ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT TË SHITIT TË VITIT 2017"
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf

Comment:

see chapter "PËRMBLEDHJE EKZEKUTIVE " which translate to Executive Summary

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

101. Does the executive make available to the public a report on what steps it has taken to address audit recommendations or findings that indicate a need for remedial action?

GUIDELINES:

Question 101 asks whether the executive reports to the public on the steps it has taken to address audit recommendations made by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI). The ultimate purpose of audits is to verify that the budget was executed in a manner consistent with existing law, and to hold the government accountable for this execution and its future improvement. The extent to which audits achieve the latter depends on whether there is adequate and timely follow-up on the recommendations provided in the SAI's audit reports.

To answer "a," the executive must report publicly on the steps it has taken to address all audit findings. A "b" response applies if the executive reports publicly on the steps it has taken to address most, but not all, audit findings. A "c" response applies if the executive reports publicly on the steps it has taken to address only some audit findings. As long as the executive reports publicly on the steps it has taken to address audit finding, answer "a," "b," or "c" may be selected, even if the Audit Report is not made publicly available. A "d" response applies if the executive does not report at all on its steps to address audit findings.

Answer:

d. No, the executive does not report on steps it has taken to address audit findings.

Source:

No such report produced.

Comment:

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

102. Does either the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) or legislature release to the public a report that tracks actions taken by the executive to address audit recommendations?

GUIDELINES:

Question 102 asks whether the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) or the legislature track actions by the executive to address audit recommendations. After audit results and recommendations are discussed and validated by the legislature, the executive is normally asked to take certain actions to address the audit findings. For accountability purposes, the public needs to be informed about the status of those actions, and steps the executive has taken to address audit recommendations. In addition to the executive reporting on its actions (see Question 101), the SAI and legislature – as the key oversight institutions – have a responsibility to keep the public informed by tracking the executive's progress in addressing audit recommendations.

To answer "a," the SAI or legislature must report publicly on what steps the executive has taken to address all audit findings. A "b" response applies if the SAI or legislature reports publicly on what steps the executive has taken to address most, but not all, audit findings. A "c" response applies if the SAI or legislature reports publicly on what steps the executive has taken to address only some audit findings. As long as the SAI or legislature reports publicly on the steps the executive has taken, answer "a," "b," or "c" may be selected, even if the Audit Report is not made publicly available. A "d" response applies if neither the SAI nor the legislature reports on the executive's steps to address audit findings.

Answer:

c. Yes, the SAI or legislature reports publicly on some audit recommendations.

Source:

Audit report "RAPORT PËR ZBATIMIN E BUXHETIT TË SHITETIT TË VITIT 2017"
http://www.klsh.org.al/web/raporti_i_zbatimit_te_buxhetit_2017_4367.pdf
see heading "4. MBI ZBATIMIN E REKOMANDIMEVE TË KLSH"
pages 247-248

Comment:

Only SAI reports on some audit recommendations.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: For more information on see Years Performance Report (2017/2018) as:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Raporti_Vjetor_i_Performances_2017_3367_1.php

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Raporti_Vjetor_i_Performances_2018_3868_1.php

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

103. Is there an Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) that conducts budget analyses for the budget formulation and/or approval process?

GUIDELINES:

Question 103 examines whether an Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) exists that contributes budget analyses to the budget formulation and/or approval process. According to the Principles for Independent Fiscal Institutions, adopted by the OECD Council in 2014, "independent fiscal institutions are publicly funded, independent bodies under the statutory authority of the executive or the legislature which provide non-partisan oversight and analysis of, and in some cases advice on, fiscal policy and performance", and with "a forward-looking ex ante diagnostic task". In practice, they come in two main forms:

- *Parliamentary budget offices (also known as PBOs) such as the Congressional Budget Office in the United States (<https://www.cbo.gov/>), the Parliamentary Budget Office in South Africa (<https://www.parliament.gov.za/parliamentary-budget-office>), and the Center for Public Finance Studies in Mexico (Centro de Estudios de las Finanzas Públicas, <http://www.cefp.gob.mx/>); or*
- *Fiscal councils such as the Office for Budget Responsibility in the United Kingdom (<https://obr.uk/>), the Fiscal Policy Council in Sweden (Finanspolitiska Rådet, <http://www.finanspolitiskaradet.com/>), and the High Council for Public Finances in France (Haut Conseil des finances publiques, <https://www.hcftp.fr/>).*

For more information, see von Trapp et al. 'Principles for Independent Fiscal Institutions and Case Studies', OECD Journal on Budgeting 15:2 (special issue,

2016), <https://doi.org/10.1787/budget-15-5jm2795tv625>

To answer "a," there must be an IFI, and its independence must be set in law. In addition, it must have sufficient staffing and resources, including funding, to carry out its tasks. Answer "b" applies if an IFI exists, but either its independence is not set in law or its staffing and resources are insufficient to carry out its tasks. Answer "c" applies if an IFI exists, but its independence is not set in law and it lacks sufficient staffing and resources. Answer "d" applies if no IFI exists.

If the answer is "a," "b," or "c," please specify in the comments the name and type of IFI that exists (e.g., parliamentary budget office or fiscal council). If the answer is "a" or "b," identify the law that guarantees its independence, and provide evidence in support of the assessment of the adequacy of its staffing and resources. This can include the IFI's total budget allocation over recent years, any press reports that discuss perceived funding shortfalls, assessments by international organizations, and/or information from interviews with staff of the IFI.

Answer:

d. No, there is no IFI.

Source:

Comment:

this institution does not exist

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

104. Does the Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) publish macroeconomic and/or fiscal forecasts?

GUIDELINES:

Question 104 assesses whether an Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) has a role in producing the macroeconomic forecast (e.g., GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, etc.) and/or the fiscal forecast (revenues, expenditure, deficits, and debt), and if so, what kind of role it has. Macroeconomic and/or fiscal forecasting is a typical core function across IFIs, but their role in forecasting takes several forms (von Trapp et al. 2016, p. 17 and Table 2). Some IFIs produce just a macroeconomic forecast, while others produce a complete fiscal forecast (which also typically requires an underlying macroeconomic forecast). In some cases, the fiscal forecast reflects continuation of current budget policies; such forecasts can be used by the legislature, the media, or the public to assess the projections in the executive's budget reflecting the government's policy proposals.

Some IFIs produce the official macroeconomic and fiscal forecasts used in the executive's budget. In other cases, IFIs do not prepare their own independent forecasts, but rather produce an assessment of the official estimates, or provide an opinion on, or endorsement of, the government's forecasts. Some others have no role at all in forecasting.

To answer "a," there must be an IFI that publishes both its own macroeconomic AND fiscal forecasts. Answer "b" applies if an IFI publishes its own macroeconomic OR fiscal forecast (but not both). Answer "c" applies if the IFI does not publish a macroeconomic or fiscal forecast, but rather publishes an assessment of the official forecasts produced by the executive and used in the budget. Choose option "d" if there is no IFI; or if there is an IFI that neither publishes its own macroeconomic and/or fiscal forecasts, nor a commentary on the official forecasts for the budget.

Macroeconomic forecasts may include indicators relating to economic output and economic growth, inflation, and the labor market, amongst others. Fiscal forecasts may include estimates of revenues, expenditures, the budget balance, and debt. If the answer is "a" or "b," please specify which indicators and estimates are included in the forecasts and whether the forecast is used by government as the official forecast. If the answer is "c," please describe the nature and depth of the assessment (e.g., the length of the commentary, or whether it covers both economic and fiscal issues).

Answer:

d. No, there is no IFI; or the IFI neither publishes its own macroeconomic and/or fiscal forecasts, nor a commentary on the official forecasts produced by the executive.

Source:

Comment:

It doesn't exist

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

105. Does the Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) publish its own costings of new policy proposals, to assess their impact on the budget?

GUIDELINES:

Question 105 assesses whether an Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) has a costing function that involves assessing the budgetary implications of new policy proposals for both revenues and expenditures, and if so, what kind of role it has. Many IFIs have a costing role, but with substantial diversity in the nature and extent of this work (von Trapp et al 2016, pp. 17-18 and Table 2). Some assess virtually all new policy proposals, while others cost only a selection of new policy proposals. Others only publish opinions on, or scrutinize the costings of, budget measures produced by the executive.

To answer "a," the IFI must publish its own costings of all (or virtually all) new policy proposals. Answer "b" applies if the IFI publishes its own costings, but only for major new policy proposals – for instance, only those proposals that cost or save above a certain amount. Answer "c" applies if the IFI publishes its own costings, but only on a limited number of proposals. This could occur, for instance, if the IFI lacked the capacity to assess proposals dealing with certain sectors. Instead of producing a cost estimate, it can also publish an assessment of the estimates produced by the executive. Answer "d" applies if there is no IFI; or if the IFI does not publish its own costings of new policy proposals or provide an assessment of the official costings of new policy proposals.

Answer:

d. No, there is no IFI; or the IFI does not publish its own costings of new policy proposals.

Source:

Comment:

It doesn't exist

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

106. In the past 12 months, how frequently did the head or a senior staff member of the Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) take part and testify in hearings of a committee of the legislature?

GUIDELINES:

Question 106 concerns the interaction between two important oversight actors and assesses how frequently the Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) made high-level inputs to the work of legislative committees. Almost all IFIs interact with the legislature in some form (von Trapp et al 2016, p. 18), but the intensity of the interaction varies. This question assesses this aspect by asking, with reference to the past 12 months, how frequently the head or a senior staff member of the IFI took part and testified in hearings of a committee of the legislature. The intent is to assess the extent to which the IFI staff member in question was not only present at a meeting of a legislative committee, but was an active participant (as opposed to a passive observer, serving only as a resource when called upon). As evidence to support your answer, you can refer to official records of legislative committees, websites and annual reports of the IFI, press releases and media coverage, for example. Choose answer "a" if this occurred five times or more; "b" for three times or more, but less than five times; and "c" for once or twice. Answer "d" should be selected if the head or a senior staff member of the IFI never took part and testified in hearings of a committee of the legislature, or if there is no IFI.

Answer:

d. Never, or there is no IFI.

Source:

Comment:

n/a

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

107. Does the full legislature and/or a legislative committee debate budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 107 asks whether the legislature debates budget policies prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal. In general, prior to discussing the Executive's Budget Proposal for the coming year, the legislature should have an opportunity to review the government's broad budget priorities and fiscal parameters. Often times this information is laid out in a Pre-Budget Statement, which the executive presents to the legislature for debate. (See Questions 54-58.)

A number of countries conduct a pre-budget debate in the legislature around six months before the start of the budget year. In some cases, they adopt laws that guide the upcoming budget, for example the Budget Guidelines Law in Brazil and the Spring Fiscal Policy Bill in Sweden. A pre-budget debate can serve two main purposes: 1) to allow the executive to inform the legislature of its fiscal policy intentions by presenting updated reports on its annual and medium-term budget strategy and policy priorities; and 2) to establish "hard" multi-year fiscal targets or spending ceilings, which the government must adhere to when preparing its detailed spending estimates for the upcoming budget year.

To answer "a," the full legislature must debate budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal and approve recommendations for the upcoming budget.

Answer "b" applies if a legislative committee (but not the full legislature) debates budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal, and approves recommendations for the budget. Option "b" also applies if, in addition to the action by the committee, the full legislature also debates budget policy in advance of the budget, but does not approve recommendations.

Answer "c" applies if the full legislature and/or a legislative committee debates budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal, but does not approve recommendations for the budget. Answer "d" applies if neither the full legislature nor any legislative committee debate budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal.

In your comment, please indicate the dates of the budget debate, and if both the full legislature and a legislative committee held a debate. Note that a debate does not need to be open to the public, but a public record of the meeting or a public notice that the meeting occurred is required. In addition, please indicate whether the budget debate was focused on a Pre-Budget Statement published by the Executive. If the Executive did not publish a Pre-Budget Statement, then please indicate what served as the focus of the legislature's debate (for instance, a report released by an IFI or some other institution).

Answer:

c. Yes, the full legislature and/or a legislative committee debates budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive's Budget Proposal, but it does not approve recommendations for the upcoming budget.

Source:

The organic budget law

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf

Comment:

See article 23. The macroeconomic framework which is the first step in the budget preparation (PBS) is introduced by the minister of finances, to the Council of Ministers. The latter forwards it to the parliament where the committee for the economy and finances may call the minister for explanations. However the committee or the parliament do not approve recommendations for the upcoming budget. The same steps are followed for the MTBP which is explained in article 25.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

108. How far in advance of the start of the budget year does the legislature receive the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 108 examines how far in advance of the start of the budget year the legislature receives the Executive's Budget Proposal. International good practice recommends that the Executive's Budget Proposal should be submitted to the legislature far enough in advance to allow the legislature time to review it properly, or at least three months prior to the start of the fiscal year. (See, for instance, Principle 2.2.2 of the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Handbook (2018) (<https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF069/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859/24788-9781484331859.xml>)).

For the purposes of responding to this question, if – and only if – the most recent budget submission occurred later than usual as a result of a particular event, such as an election, please use a more normal year as the basis for the response. If, however, delays have been observed for more than one budget year, and the legislature has not received the Executive's Budget Proposal in a timely manner on more than one occasion in the last three years, then "d" will be the appropriate answer.

To answer "a," the legislature must receive the Executive's Budget Proposal at least three months in advance of the start of the budget year. Answer "b" applies if the legislature receives the Executive's Budget Proposal at least two months, but less than three months, before the start of the budget year. Answer "c" applies if the legislature receives the Executive's Budget Proposal at least one month, but less than two months, before the start of the budget year. Answer "d" applies if the legislature does not receive the Executive's Budget Proposal at least one month prior to the start of the budget year, or does not receive it at all.

Answer:

c. The legislature receives the Executive's Budget Proposal at least one month, but less than two months, before the start of the budget year.

Source:

<http://www.scan-tv.com/prezantohet-projektbuxheti-2019-ahmetaj-rritje-e-te-ardhurave-pavaresisht-goditjes-se-kursit/>

<http://abcnews.al/ahmetaj-prezanton-projekt-buxhetin-2019-rritje-me-5-9/>

<http://www.newsbomb.al/projekt-buxheti-2019-ahmetaj-rritje-me-5-9-140339>

Comment:

The links show the date the budget was introduced at the parliamentary committee for the economy on 5 November 2018.

However, according to the budget law, article 29, it is stated that the EBP is sent within October 20, at the parliament.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://www.mod.gov.al/index.php/newsroom-2/fjalime-te-ministrit/3443-fjala-e-ministres-se-mbrojtjes-ne-prezantimin-e-projektbuxhetit-te-ministrise-se-mbrojtjes-per-vitin-2019-ne-komisionin-parlamentar-te-sigurise-dhe-mbrojtjes> <https://balkanweb.com/buxheti-i-2019-ahmetaj-liston-sektoret-rritje-pagash-me-7/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. The legislature receives the Executive's Budget Proposal at least two months, but less than three months, before the start of the budget year.

IBP Comment

The government reviewer's feedback is well-received. In light of the sources cited by the researcher and peer reviewer, the current "c" response is maintained.

109. When does the legislature approve the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 109 examines when the legislature approves the Executive's Budget Proposal. International good practice recommends that the Executive's Budget Proposal should be approved by the legislature before the start of the fiscal year the budget proposal refers to. This gives the executive time to implement the budget in its entirety, particularly new programs and policies.

In some countries, the expenditure and revenue estimates of the Executive's Budget Proposal are approved separately; for purposes of this question, at least the expenditure estimates must be approved. Further, approval of the budget implies approval of the full-year budget, not just a short-term continuation of spending and revenue authority.

To answer "a," the legislature must approve the Executive's Budget Proposal at least one month before the start of the budget year. Answer "b" applies if the legislature approves the Executive's Budget Proposal less than one month in advance of the start of the budget year, but at least by the start of the budget year. Answer "c" applies if the legislature approves the Executive's Budget Proposal less than one month after the start of the budget year. Answer "d" applies if the legislature approves the Executive's Budget Proposal more than one month after the start of the budget year, or does not approve the budget.

Answer:

b. The legislature approves the budget less than one month in advance of the start of the budget year, but at least by the start of the budget year.

Source:

<http://www.kohajone.com/2018/12/03/miratohet-buxheti-2019-parlamenti-voton-me-76-vota-pro/>

<http://www.gazetadita.al/miratohet-buxheti-2019-parlamenti-voton-me-76-vota-pro/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4M8JMzlvDg>

Comment:

The budget was approved on 3 December 2018. However, due to students protests that took place, the President decreed for the budget to be reviewed but it was overrun but the parliament so the initial budget remained unchanged.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <https://www.monitor.al/buxheti-2019-programohet-468-7-miliarde-leke-rritje-4-7-me-programin-e-ketij-viti/> http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Projektligji_i_Buxhetit_2019.doc

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

110. Does the legislature have the authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 110 examines the legislature's power to amend—as opposed to simply accept or reject—the budget proposal presented by the executive. This question is about legal authority rather than actions the legislature takes in practice. The legislature's powers to amend the budget can vary substantially across countries.

The "a" response is appropriate only if there are no restrictions on the right of the legislature to modify the Executive's Budget Proposal, including its right to change the size of the proposed deficit or surplus. The "b" response would be appropriate if, for instance, the legislature is restricted from changing the deficit or surplus, but it still has the power to increase or decrease funding and revenue levels. The more limited "c" response would apply if, for instance, the legislature can only re-allocate spending within the totals set in the Executive's Budget Proposal or can only decrease funding levels or increase revenues. Finally, response "d" would apply if the legislature may not make any changes (or only small technical changes), or if amendments must first be approved by the executive. In these cases, the legislature is essentially only able to approve or reject the budget as a whole. If the answer is "b" or "c", please indicate the nature of the amendment powers available to the Parliament and how they are limited.

Answer:

a. Yes, the legislature has unlimited authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal.

Source:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/rregullorja.pdf>

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf

Comment:

The first link is the Parliament Regulation and articles 80-84 show the process of budget approval when the EBP is sent to the parliament.

The second link is the organic budget law and article 30 shows the process of budget approval (the level of detail)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

111. During the most recent budget approval process, did the legislature use its authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 111 assesses whether any formal authority of the legislature to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal is used in practice. The responses to this question should be determined based on action by the legislature related to the Enacted Budget used in the OBS. Choose answer "a" if the legislature used its authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal during the most recent budget approval process, and amendments were adopted (all, or at least some of them). Answer "a" also applies if the legislature used its authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal, but the amendments were

rejected by executive veto. Answer "b" applies if the legislature used its authority in law to propose amendments to the Executive's Budget Proposal, but none of these amendments were adopted. Answer "c" applies if the legislature has the authority in law to amend the budget, but no amendments were proposed during its consideration. Answer "d" applies when the legislature does not have any authority to amend the budget (that is, Question 110 is answered "d").

If the answer is "a" or "b", please specify in the comments the number of amendments introduced by the legislature (and in the case of an "a" response, the number adopted, or if applicable, information about an executive veto) and describe their nature. For example, did the amendments result in an increase or decrease of the deficit? What were the most significant amendments to revenues and to expenditures in terms of the sums involved? How did amendments affect the composition of expenditures? If the answer is "a," please specify which amendments were adopted, and provide evidence for it.

Answer:

a. Yes, the legislature used its authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal, and (at least some of) its amendments were adopted.

Source:

Comment:

Slight differences are noted in the figures between the EBP and the EB.(total expenditures in the EBP are set at 519,377 milione leke and total expenditures in the EB are set at 519,577 milione leke).

According to MoFE, a change was proposed by the parliamentary commission for the economy and finances. This commission had looked into all proposals made by the other parliamentary commissions as well as going through the articles of the proposed law. Ultimately, a decision was taken to increase the expenditure for many administrative units while reducing it for some others (reallocation) and a slight increase of the total expenditures.

However there isn't any document publicly available to support the above.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, the legislature used its authority in law to amend the Executive's Budget Proposal, and (at least some of) its amendments were adopted.

Comments: Please check parlaments website for the budget 2019 and its amendments made by the Parliament

Researcher Response

Looking at the government's reviewer response there is indeed a change on the EBP by the legislature. The new surfaced evidence is found at <http://www.parlament.al/ProjektLigje/ProjektLigjeDetails/51156> Answer is upgraded to "a".

112. During the last budget approval process, did a specialized budget or finance committee in the legislature examine the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

Question 112 assesses the role of a specialized budget or finance committee during the budget approval stage. Effective committee involvement is an essential condition for legislative influence in the budget process. Specialized committees provide opportunities for individual legislators to gain relevant expertise, and to examine budgets and policy in depth. Yet, the involvement of committees differs across legislatures. Some legislatures have separate committees to examine spending and tax proposals, while others have a single finance committee. Not all legislatures have a specialized budget or finance committee to examine the budget. In addition, there can be differences in the time available for the committee's analysis of the budget.

A report with the committee's findings and recommendations is intended to inform the debate in the full legislature, therefore it must be published before the legislature has adopted the budget.

Response "a" requires that, in the last budget approval process, a specialized budget or finance committee had one month or more to examine the Executive's Budget Proposal, and it published a report with findings and recommendations prior to the budget being adopted. Response "b" applies where such a committee examined the draft budget and published a report, but within a shorter timeframe of less than one month. Response "c" applies if a committee examined the budget (without regard to the time period), but did not publish a report prior to the adoption of the budget. Response "d" applies where a specialized budget or finance committee did not examine the Executive's Budget Proposal.

Please specify in your comment the name of the committee and the number of days it had available to examine the budget and to publish a report. For bicameral legislatures where one house or chamber has greater constitutional authority in budgetary matters, the question applies to the house or chamber (usually the upper or second one) that is decisive. For bicameral legislatures with co-equal houses or chambers, the question should be answered with reference to the one that achieves the higher score for this question. In the case of bicameral legislatures, please note the relevant arrangements in each house or chamber. If applicable, provide a copy of the report. Please note also if a report is published, but only after the budget has been adopted.

Answer:

b. Yes, a specialized budget or finance committee had less than one month to examine the Executive's Budget Proposal, and it published a report with findings and recommendations prior to the budget being adopted.

Source:

A report filed by the the committee of Economy and Finance

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20181203133802Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20p%C3%ABr%20Ekonomi%C3%AB%20dhe%20Financat.pdf>

Comment:

We have to look at the organic budget law in order to answer this question. Article 30 says that the budget must be approved no later than 15 December (not always respected on some previous years) while article 29 says that within 20 October the prime minister presents to the parliament the EBP (not respected this time). Furthermore the law also states that the budget must be discussed at the permanent parliamentary commissions. Therefore, the commissions should finish their job sometime (but not too long) before the 15 December deadline (in order to respect the law). The evidence is there that the commission for economy and finance has discussed (held hearings) the EBP several times with different ministers as well as the minister of finances and in practice it has always done so. If the EBP was sent to the legislature less than a month from the 15 December deadline, than that would have meant at least according to the law, that the commission was given less than a month time (even though this deadline can potentially not be respected). The conclusion for this time, is that the commission finished its examination early.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Relacioni-PB-2019.doc>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

The fact is that by law, all dates are in favor of an "a" response but in order to better answer the question, we have to look at the calendar for the parliament works for budget approval : <https://www.parlament.al/Files/KalendariPunimeve/kalendari%20buxhetit%20web.pdf> It appears that the committee had less than one month to examine the Executive's Budget Proposal. Answer "b" is selected.

113. During the last approval process, did legislative committees, responsible for particular sectors (e.g., health, education, defense, etc.), examine spending in the Executive's Budget Proposal related to the sector for which they are responsible?

GUIDELINES:

Question 113 assesses the role of committees of the legislature that are responsible for particular sectors (e.g., health, education, defense, etc.) during the budget approval stage. The role of sectoral committees differs across legislatures. Some legislatures do not involve them in the budget approval process, while others do. In addition, the time available for committee analysis differs.

A report with the committee's findings and recommendations is intended to inform the debate in the full legislature, so therefore must be published before the legislature has adopted the budget. Response "a" requires that sector committees had one month or more to examine the Executive's Budget Proposal, and published a report with findings and recommendations prior the budget being adopted. Response "b" applies where such committees examined the draft budget and published a report, but within a shorter timeframe of less than one month. Response "c" applies if sectoral committees examined the budget (without regard to the time period), but did not publish a report prior to the adoption of the budget. Response "d" applies where sectoral committees did not examine the Executive's Budget Proposal.

Please provide in the comments a brief overview of the committee structure and specify the number of days that sectoral committees had available to examine the budget and to publish their reports. For bicameral legislatures where one house or chamber has greater constitutional authority in budgetary matters, the question applies to the house or chamber (usually the upper or second one) that is decisive. For bicameral legislatures with co-equal houses or chambers, the question should be answered with reference to the one that achieves the higher score for this question. In the case of bicameral legislatures, please note the relevant arrangements in each house or chamber. If applicable, provide a sample copy of at least one of the reports. Please note if a report is published, but only after the budget has been adopted.

For purposes of responding to this question, use those sectoral committees that are best performing – that is, the ones that examine the budget the longest and that publish reports.

Answer:

c. Yes, sector committees examined the Executive's Budget Proposal, but they did not publish reports with findings and recommendations prior to the budget being adopted.

Source:

<http://top-channel.tv/2018/11/07/buxheti-i-vitit-2019-diskutim-ne-kuvend-per-parate-e-institucioneve/>

<http://parlament.al/News/Index/7034>

Comment:

Also according to parliament regulation (<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/rregullorja.pdf>) article 80, it is stated that the permanent committees examine the EBP then draft a report which is sent to the committee for the Economy and Finance. There is no evidence of these reports though.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <https://propacientit.com/buxheti-i-shendetesise-per-vitin-2019/>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

114. In the past 12 months, did a committee of the legislature examine in-year implementation of the Enacted Budget during the relevant budget execution period?

GUIDELINES:

Question 114 is about legislative oversight of budget execution. It assesses whether and how often a committee examined the implementation of the budget during the budget execution period (i.e., financial year) for which it was approved, and whether this resulted in an official report with findings and recommendations. This question does not apply to the ex post review of implementation following the end of the budget year as part of the audit stage, which is assessed separately. Nor does it apply to the legislature's review of the budget that it may undertake as part of the process of considering a supplemental budget during the year. In-year monitoring by the legislature will be affected by the frequency that the executive publishes In-Year Reports.

To answer "a," a committee must have examined in-year implementation of the Enacted Budget at least three times during the course of the relevant budget year and published reports with findings and recommendations. Answer "b" applies where this occurred only once or twice during the year.

Exception: If a legislature is in session only twice during the year, and it examines the implementation of the budget during both sessions, then it would be eligible for an "a" response.

Choose "c" if a committee examined in-year implementation (without regard to frequency), but did not publish any report with findings and recommendations. Answer "d" applies where no committee examined in-year implementation.

If the answer is "a" or "b," please specify the name of the committee and when it reviewed budget implementation, and provide a copy of its report(s). If the answer is "c," please specify the name of the committee and when it reviewed budget implementation.

For purposes of responding to this question, if more than one committee holds in-year reviews of the budget, use the committee that is best performing – that is, the one that examines in-year implementation the most times and that publishes a report.

Answer:

d. No, a committee did not examine in-year implementation.

Source:

<https://financa.gov.al/3-3-miliarde-per-paketen-e-solidariteit-ne-fundvit-miratohet-akti-normativ-i-buxhetit-2018/>

Report:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20180904155301Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20p%C3%ABr%20Ekonomi%C3%AB%20dhe%20Financat.pdf>

Comment:

The relevant proposed changes by the minister of finances regarding the 2018 budget, were examined at the committee which also released the relevant report. See links above.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

After a review, the document cited is in fact to approve the "Normative Act" which in essence is a proposal by the Council of Ministers to change the budget law for the year 2018. As per the question guidelines, this is not "a committee examining in-year implementation" but rather approving a proposed change.

IBP Comment

Per the researcher's "Response to Review," the response was revised from "b" to "d."

115. Does the executive seek approval from the legislature prior to shifting funds between administrative units that receive explicit funding in the Enacted Budget, and is it legally required to do so?

GUIDELINES:

Question 115 examines whether the executive seeks approval from the legislature prior to shifting funds between administrative units, and whether it is legally required to do so.

In some countries, the executive has the power in law to adjust funding levels for specific appropriations during the execution of the budget. This question examines rules around shifting funds between administrative units (ministries, departments, or agencies) or whatever funding unit (or "vote") is specified in the Enacted Budget.

The conditions under which the executive may exercise its discretion to shift funds should be clearly defined in publicly available regulations or law. In addition, the amount of funds that the executive is allowed to transfer between administrative units should not be so excessive as to undermine the accountability of the executive to the legislature.

To answer "a," the executive is required by law or regulation to obtain prior legislative approval before shifting funds between administrative units, and it does so in practice. Answer "b" applies if the executive obtains legislative approval before shifting funds between administrative units, but is not legally required to do so. Answer "c" applies if the executive is legally required to receive legislative approval before shifting funds, but does not do so in practice. Answer "d" applies if legislative approval is not legally required for the executive to shift funds between administrative units and the executive does not obtain legislative approval in practice. Answer "d" also applies if the executive is authorized to shift an amount considered so excessive as to undermine accountability (roughly equal to 3 percent of total budgeted expenditures). A "d" response applies if the legislature only approves the shifting of funds after it has already occurred.

In the comments, please indicate any law or regulation that provides the executive with standing authority to shift funds between administrative units and, if so, describe that authority. Similarly, legislative approval for shifting funds between administrative units typically occurs with the adoption of legislation such as a supplemental budget. But if other formal procedures for gaining approval from the legislature exist, then please provide information about that approval process.

Answer:

d. There is no law or regulation requiring the executive to obtain approval from the legislature prior to shifting funds between administrative units, and in practice the executive shifts funds between administrative units before obtaining approval from the legislature.

Source:

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf
Article 44 of the Organism Budget Law

Comment:

The article cited above, states that funds shifted between administrative units that receive explicit funding are approved by the Council of Ministers when they do not exceed 10% of the total amount of the approved programme. Also, if other funds are needed by an administrative unit/program, but do not fulfill the requirement above, the government may use the reserve fund of the state budget and it only requires the approval of the Council of Ministers. Organic Budget Law, Article 45.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

116. Does the executive seek approval from the legislature prior to spending excess revenue (that is, amounts higher than originally anticipated) that may become available during the budget execution period, and is it legally required to do so?

GUIDELINES:

Question 116 examines whether the executive receives approval from the legislature prior to spending excess revenue, and whether it is legally required to do so. Good practice requires the legislature to approve changes in revenue or expenditure relative to the Enacted Budget. For example, if additional revenue is collected unexpectedly during the year, which often happens in oil/mineral-dependent countries, and it was not accounted for in the Enacted Budget, there should be a procedure in place to ensure that the legislature approves any proposed use of these "new" funds. If such requirements are not in place, the executive might deliberately underestimate revenue in the budget proposal it submits to the legislature, in order to have additional resources to spend at the executive's discretion, with no legislative control.

To answer "a," the executive is required by law or regulation to obtain prior legislative approval before spending any funds resulting from higher-than-expected revenues, and it does so in practice. Answer "b" applies if the executive obtains legislative approval before spending excess revenue, but is not legally required to do so. Answer "c" applies if the executive is legally required to receive legislative approval before spending excess revenue, but does not do so in practice. Answer "d" applies if prior legislative approval is not legally required for the executive to spend excess revenue and the executive does not obtain legislative approval in practice. A "d" response applies if the legislature only approves the additional spending after it has already occurred.

Typically, legislative approval of additional spending beyond what was reflected in the Enacted Budget would occur with the adoption of a supplemental budget. But other formal procedures for getting approval from the legislature in advance of it adopting the supplemental budget may exist. If that is the case,

then please provide information about that approval process.

Answer:

a The executive is required by law or regulation to obtain approval from the legislature prior to spending excess revenues, and it does so in practice.

Source:

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf
Article 46 of the Organic Budget Law

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/rregullorja.pdf>
Article 85 of Parliament Regulation

Comment:

Any excess revenue, is considered in fact to be a change of the annual budget law. Consequently the procedure for changes in the budget law applies and requires approval from the legislature.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

117. Does the executive seek approval from the legislature prior to reducing spending below the levels in the Enacted Budget in response to revenue shortfalls (that is, revenues lower than originally anticipated) or other reasons during the budget execution period, and is it legally required to do so?

GUIDELINES:

Question 117 examines whether the executive receives approval from the legislature prior to cutting spending below the levels in the Enacted Budget in response to revenue shortfalls or for any other reason, and whether it is legally required to do so. Good practice requires the legislature to approve changes in revenue or expenditure relative to the Enacted Budget. For example, if less revenue is collected unexpectedly during the year, the legislature should approve or reject any proposed reductions in expenditures that are implemented as a result. If such requirements are not in place, the executive might substantially change the composition of the budget at the executive's discretion, with no legislative control.

Typically, legislative approval of proposals to reduce spending below the levels reflected in the Enacted Budget would occur as part of the supplemental budget. But other formal procedures for getting approval from the legislature in advance of it adopting the supplemental budget may exist. If that is the case, then please provide information about that approval process.

To answer "a," the executive is required by law or regulation to obtain prior legislative approval before implementing spending cuts in response to revenue shortfalls or for other reasons, and it does so in practice. Answer "b" applies if the executive received legislative approval before implementing such cuts, but is not legally required to do so. Answer "c" applies if the executive is legally required to obtain legislative approval before implementing such cuts, but does not do so in practice. Answer "d" applies if legislative approval is not legally required for the executive to implement such cuts and the executive does not obtain such approval in practice. A "d" response applies if the legislature only approves the spending cuts after they have already occurred.

Answer:

a. The executive is required by law or regulation to obtain approval from the legislature prior to reducing spending below the enacted levels in response to revenue shortfalls or other reasons, and it does so in practice.

Source:

constitution, article 160
<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/kushtetuta.pdf>

organic budget law article 46

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf

Comment:

The above articles, consider this scenario as a change in the budget law therefore it has to be approved by the legislature (which is the same procedure followed for the EBP)

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

118. Did a committee of the legislature examine the Audit Report on the annual budget produced by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 118 is about ex post oversight following the implementation of the budget. It probes whether a committee examined the Audit Report on the annual budget produced by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI), and whether this resulted in an official report with findings and recommendations. A key issue is how soon after the SAI releases the report does it legislature review it. This question does not apply to the legislative scrutiny of in-year implementation of the Enacted Budget during the relevant budget execution period, which is assessed separately. Also, the question is asking specifically about the SAI's annual report on the execution of the budget, not about other audit reports that the SAI may produce. (This is the Audit Report used for responding to Question 98.)

To answer "a," a legislative committee must have examined the annual Audit Report within three months of it being released by the SAI, and then published a report (or reports) with findings and recommendations. (Note that the three-month period should only take into account time when the legislature is in session.)

Answer "b" applies when the committee examines it within six months of it being released (but more than three months), and then published a report with its findings and recommendations. Choose "c" if a committee examined the annual Audit Report more than six months after it became available or it did not publish any report with findings and recommendations. Answer "d" applies where no committee examined the annual Audit Report.

If the answer is "a" or "b," please specify the name of the committee and when it reviewed the Audit Report, and provide a copy of its report(s). If the answer is "c," please specify the name of the committee and when it reviewed budget implementation. Answers "a," "b," or "c" may be selected if the Audit Report is produced by the SAI but not made publicly available.

Answer:

a. Yes, a committee examined the Audit Report on the annual budget within three months of its availability, and it published a report with findings and recommendations.

Source:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/rregullorja.pdf>

Parliament regulation. Articles 18, 19 and 102 describe the parliamentary commissions and their rights.

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/sKuvendi/kushtetuta.pdf>

Constitution of Albania, Article 164 specifies the obligation of SAI to report at theparliament.

Comment:

<https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20181017144703Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20p%C3%ABr%20Ekonomi%C3%AB%20dhe%20Financat.pdf>

This is the report form the parliamentary commission on the "approval of the factual budget of 2017" and SAI's report on the budget execution.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/Kushtetuta_e_Republikes_se_Shqiperise_879_1.php http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

119. Was the process of appointing (or re-appointing) the current head of the SAI carried out in a way that ensures his or her independence?

GUIDELINES:

Question 119 concerns the appointment process of the current head of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI). Appointment procedures vary greatly across countries, as well as across different types of SAIs. Moreover, conventions and informal practices can greatly affect the de facto independence of the head of the SAI. While these factors make it difficult to devise a single metric against which all SAIs can be assessed with regard to this particular aspect, this question focuses on whether the legislature or judiciary must appoint or approve the appointment of the head of the SAI as a way to ensure the SAI's independence from the executive. However, if the appointment is carried out in another way that nonetheless ensures the independence of the SAI head, then that approach could be also considered.

To answer "a," the legislature or judiciary must appoint (or re-appoint) the head of the SAI, or approve the recommendation of the executive, as a way that ensure his or her independence from the executive. (As noted above, alternative approaches may also be acceptable.) Choose "b" if the appointment process does not ensure the independence of the head of the SAI, e.g. the executive may appoint the head of the SAI without the final consent of the legislature or judiciary.

Irrespective of which answer you selected, provide a description of how the head of the SAI is appointed.

Answer:

a. Yes, the head of the SAI may only be appointed by the legislature or judiciary, or the legislature or judiciary must give final consent before the appointment takes effect.

Source:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf
Law on the Organization and Functioning of SAI

Comment:

Article 19, The head of SAI is appointed and dismissed by the PARLIAMENT upon the proposal of the President of Republic. His mandate lasts for 7 years, with the right of reelection.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

120. Must a branch of government other than the executive (such as the legislature or the judiciary) give final consent before the head of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) can be removed from office?

GUIDELINES:

Question 120 covers the manner in which the head or senior members of the SAI may be removed from office. This question draws on best practices identified in the Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/LimaDeclaration.pdf>), including measures intended to guarantee the office's independence from the executive.

To answer "a," the head of the SAI may only be removed by the legislature or judiciary, or the legislature or judiciary must give final consent before the head of the SAI is removed. For example, the legislature or judiciary may give final consent following a certain external process, such as a criminal proceeding. So while the executive may initiate a criminal proceeding, the final consent of a member of the judiciary – or a judge – is necessary to render a verdict of wrongdoing that may lead to the removal from office of the head of the SAI. Answer "b" applies if the executive may remove the head of the SAI without the final consent of the judiciary or legislature.

Answer:

a. Yes, the head of the SAI may only be removed by the legislature or judiciary, or the legislature or judiciary must give final consent before he or she is removed.

Source:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf
Law on the Organization and Functioning of SAI

Comment:

Article 23 sets the conditions when the head of SAI can be removed but the final decision is made either by legislature or the judiciary.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

121. Who determines the budget of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI)?

GUIDELINES:

Question 121 asks who determines the budget of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI). To ensure objective audits of government budgets, another important component of the SAI's independence from the executive is the extent to which the SAI's budget is determined by a body other than the executive, and whether the SAI has adequate resources to fulfill its mandate.

Answer "a" applies if the funding level is broadly consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate, AND either the SAI determines its own budget and then submits it to the executive (which accepts it with little or no change) or directly to the legislature, or the budget of the SAI is determined directly by the legislature or judiciary (or some independent body). Answer "b" applies if the SAI's budget is determined by the executive (absent a recommendation from the SAI), and the funding level is broadly consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate. Answer "c" applies if the legislature or judiciary (or some independent body) determines the SAI's budget, but the funding level is not consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate. Answer "d" applies if the executive determines the SAI's budget, and the funding level is not consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate. Please provide evidence in support of the assessment that the funding level is or is not broadly consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate.

Answer:

a. The SAI determines its own budget (i.e., submits it to the executive, which accepts it with little or no change, or directly to the legislature), or the budget of the SAI is determined by the legislature or judiciary (or some independent body), and the funding level is broadly consistent with the resources the SAI needs to fulfill its mandate.

Source:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf
Law on the Organization and Functioning of SAI

Comment:

Article 7 states that the draft budget is proposed by the SAI to the Economic and Financial Committee which in turn presents it for approval (after examining it) to the PARLIAMENT in accordance with the budget law.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

122. Does the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) have the discretion in law to undertake those audits it may wish to?

GUIDELINES:

Question 122 explores the scope of the investigative powers of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) as prescribed in law.

Question 97 asks which of the three types of audits – financial, compliance, and performance – the SAI conducts. This question asks if the SAI is constrained by law (rather than by a lack of capacity or an inadequate budget) from undertaking any form of audit or investigating irregularities in any program or activity.

There are numerous examples of limitations. For instance, some SAIs are not permitted by their legal mandate to audit joint ventures or other public-private arrangements. Others are only allowed to undertake financial audits, precluded from conducting performance or value-for-money audits. The SAIs in some countries do not have the legal mandate to review arrangements involving oil or stabilization funds, or other types of special or extra- budgetary funds. The SAI may also not have the ability to audit commercial projects involving the public and private sector.

To answer "a," the SAI must have full discretion in law to decide which audits to undertake. Answer "b" applies if some limitations exist, but the SAI enjoys significant discretion to undertake those audits it wishes to. Answer "c" applies if the SAI has some discretion, but significant legal limitations exist. Answer "d" applies if the SAI has no power at all to choose which audits to undertake

Consulting the Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts (<http://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/LimaDeclaration.pdf>) may be useful in answering this question as its provisions serve to define the appropriate scope of a SAI's legal mandate and jurisdiction.

Answer:

a. The SAI has full discretion to decide which audits it wishes to undertake.

Source:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf
Law on the Organization and Functioning of SAI

Comment:

Chapter II of the law describes it very well and more specifically Article 9. Further information can also be seen on articles 10, 11, 12, 13.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion:

Comments: http://www.klsh.org.al/web/rregullore_e_brendshme_e_organizimit_dhe_funksionimit_administrativ_te_klsh_1894.pdf

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Per follow-up communication with the peer reviewer, they are in agreement with the researcher's response.

123. Are the audit processes of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) reviewed by an independent agency?

GUIDELINES:

Question 123 assesses whether and to what extent the audit processes of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) are subject to review by an independent agency. The latter could be a peer SAI, an international organization, an academic institution with relevant expertise, or an independent domestic agency with quality assurance functions in the area of financial reporting.

To answer "a," an independent agency must conduct and publish a review of the audit processes of the SAI on an annual basis. Answer "b" applies if a review was carried out within the past five years, and published, but it is not conducted annually, but. Choose answer "c" if the SAI has an internal unit that reviews the audit processes of the SAI on a regular basis, but an independent agency does not conduct such a review. Answer "d" applies if the audit processes of the SAI are reviewed neither by an independent agency nor by a unit within the SAI.

If the answer is either "a" or "b," please specify the name of the independent agency and when last it conducted such a review, and provide a copy of the published report. If the answer is "c," please specify the name of the unit within the SAI that is tasked with conducting such reviews.

Answer:

d. No, the audit processes of the SAI are reviewed neither by an independent agency nor by a unit within the SAI.

Source:

http://www.klsh.org.al/web/ligji_klsh_al_1622.pdf
Law on the Organization and Functioning of SAI

Comment:

The SAI report is not subject to such reviews. It is only discussed at the parliament and parliamentary commission and then approved by the legislature.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

124. In the past 12 months, how frequently did the head or a senior staff member of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) take part and testify in hearings of a committee of the legislature?

GUIDELINES:

Question 124 concerns the interaction between two important oversight actors and assesses how frequently the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) made high-level inputs to the work of legislative committees. Many SAIs interact with the legislature in some form, but the nature and intensity of the interaction varies. This question probes this aspect by asking, with reference to the past 12 months, how frequently the head or a senior staff member of the SAI took part and testified in hearings of a committee of the legislature. The intent is to assess the extent to which the SAI representative in question was not only present at a meeting of a legislative committee, but was an active participant (as opposed to a passive observer, serving only as a resource when called upon). You can refer to official records of legislative committees, websites and annual reports of the SAI, press releases and media coverage, for example. Choose answer "a" if this occurred five times or more; "b" for three times or more, but less than five times; "c" for once or twice, and "d" for never.

Answer:

c. Rarely (i.e., once or twice).

Source:

From the practice, the head of SAI takes part and testify in hearings mainly about the Audit Report on the state budget.

For 2018, this is a link which shows he was present at such event:

<https://www.parliament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20180719111517Procesverbal,%20dat%C3%AB%2006.06.2018.pdf> (see the list of invitees)

Comment:

There are other instances where he may be invited and in 2018 there was another occasion when discussing the consolidated budget such as: <https://sot.com.al/politike/perplasje-mes-klsh-dhe-qeverise-ne-kuvend-vartesja-e-leskajt-akuza-fshehje-te-borxhit> but he was not present by delegating his authority to one of his subordinate officers.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

125. Does the executive use participation mechanisms through which the public can provide input during the formulation of the annual budget (prior to the budget being tabled in parliament)?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles on "Inclusiveness" and "Timeliness" and assesses the extent to which the participation mechanism(s) used by the executive are truly interactive and involve a two-way conversation between citizens and the executive.

The drafting of this question and its answers are partially drawn from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, in particular with regards to the concepts of "involvement" (option "a" in the responses) and "consultation" (option "b"). See: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf.

Please consider only participation mechanisms that the Ministry of Finance, lead budget agency, or central coordinating agency designated by the government to implement participation mechanisms ("the executive") is currently using to allow the public to participate in the formulation of the annual budget, including annual pre-budget discussions. Participation mechanisms used only by line ministries should not be used to answer this question. If there is more than one mechanism used by the executive, please select the deepest or most interactive mechanism that reflects the government's efforts to incorporate citizens' input into the formulation of the annual budget. The participation mechanisms can involve a range of different issues, such as spending and tax policy, funding and revenue levels, and macro-fiscal planning.

To answer "a," the executive must use open participation mechanisms that involve the public in the formulation of the annual budget. This means that a public process is in place whereby CSOs and/or individual members of the public and government officials interact, and have the opportunity to express their opinions to each other in what can be considered a public dialogue between them (i.e., in-person and online discussion forums). Additionally, the mechanism should be open to any CSO and/or individual members of the public who wish to participate. By selecting this answer, the researcher must present evidence to support the presence of a public dialogue among citizens and government officials. Examples include public meetings and online deliberative exchanges.

Answer "b" applies if an open consultation mechanism is in place whereby members of the public (i.e., individuals and/or CSOs as well as academics, independent experts, policy think tanks, and business organizations) can provide their input in the formulation of the annual budget. This answer applies if the government is using a mechanism that is structured and well established, and not ad-hoc. The researcher must present evidence to support the presence of consultative processes through which the executive seeks out inputs from citizens. Examples include surveys, focus groups, report cards, published policy consultation exercises, and online platforms that government officials actively manage to solicit inputs.

Answer "c" applies if the executive has established a mechanism or mechanisms to allow citizens to participate in the budget formulation phase, but:

1) The mechanisms are not structured and happen only on ad-hoc basis, or not regularly.

and/or

2) The executive consults with and/or interacts with, citizens, but there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, and the executive determines fully or partially such selection process by inviting specific groups (for example by making an open call but just to experts from a particular sector, or naming specific organizations). While it is not possible for all citizens and/or CSOs to participate in this or other phases of the budget process, options "a" and "b" apply if the government does not exercise any discretion in determining who is allowed to participate. While there is likely going to be self-selection, it is important that the selection is not made by the executive.

In cases where there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, to select answer choice "c", there should be some sort of public record (held in public, minutes of meetings released to public) so that the all CSOs and individual members of the public can have knowledge of the meeting, who participated, and what was discussed.

Examples of mechanisms that might qualify as a "c" response include hotlines, Facebook announcements, and one-off meetings with NGOs in which there is a public record.

The researcher must present evidence to support selection of a "c" response.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimit_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf
Organic Budget Law, Article 25 states that the MoFE should consult the civil society regarding the MTBP which also affects the formulation of the Budget.

Comment:

In practice there is no evidence that this happened. In fact there is a call made by the civil society (interested stakeholders) for the consultations to take place.

<http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/04/16/shoqeria-civile-thirrje-institucioneve-konsultoni-buxhetin-me-qytetaret-duhet-tu-pergjigjeni-nevojave-te-tyre/>
<https://www.crca.al/sq/acce-news/shoqeria-civile-i-ben-thirrje-qeverise-ministrive-dhe-bashkive-te-konsultojne-dhe>

There is one article which refers to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy about the public consultation of the MTBP 2019-2021 but this is not acceptable as per the public participation methodology.

<http://www.scan-tv.com/buxheti-afatmesem-2019-2021-mie-nis-konsultimet-me-shoqerine-civile/>

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <https://www.cna.al/2018/04/13/buxheti-2019-shoqeria-civile-del-me-nje-thirrje-publike/> <http://www.osfa.al/njoftime/perfundon-projekti-rritja-e-presionit-civil-mbi-hartimin-e-programit-buxhetor-afatmesem-dhe-buxhetit-vjetor-2019>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. Yes, the executive uses open participation mechanisms through which members of the public provide their inputs on the budget.

Comments: as explained previously

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used through which the public can provide input during the formulation of the annual budget, we maintain the answer "d".

IBP Comment

Per follow-up communication with the government reviewer, Articles 25 (cited by the researcher above) and 26 of the Organic Budget Law provide for civil society involvement in the budget process, while the "Co-Governance Platform" (<https://www.shqiperiaqedum.al/>) allows for citizens to submit feedback and complaints to government agencies. The latter, however, is not directly linked to the budget process, and in light of the comments from the researcher and peer reviewer, the existing response of "d" is maintained.

126. With regard to the mechanism identified in question 125, does the executive take concrete steps to include vulnerable and under-represented parts of the population in the formulation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principle of "Inclusiveness", and examines the executive's effort to actively reach out to citizens who are from socially vulnerable groups and/or underrepresented in national processes. The emphasis here is on the executive's efforts to seek out the views of members of the public from socially vulnerable groups and/or who are underrepresented in the process.

To answer "a," the executive must actively seek out individuals from vulnerable and underrepresented communities and/or civil society organizations representing vulnerable and underrepresented individuals and communities. The researcher must provide evidence to show the government's efforts and actions. The researcher must speak with the relevant government official(s), and subsequently double check with an alternative source, such as representatives of vulnerable/underrepresented groups.

Answer "b" applies if the executive does not take concrete steps to incorporate vulnerable/underrepresented individuals, or organizations representing them, into participation mechanisms or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage.

Answer:

b. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, the executive takes concrete steps to include individuals and/or CSOs representing vulnerable and underrepresented parts of the population in the formulation of the annual budget.

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the answer of "b".

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "b" is maintained.

127. During the budget formulation stage, which of the following key topics does the executive's engagement with citizens cover?

For the purpose of this question, key topics are considered to be:

1. Macroeconomic issues
2. Revenue forecasts, policies, and administration
3. Social spending policies
4. Deficit and debt levels
5. Public investment projects
6. Public services

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Timeliness". Please consider all of the mechanisms currently used by the executive to promote public participation during the formulation of the annual budget.

Please note that while the public engagement can/may cover other topics -- and for this reason the other questions assessing the executive's engagement with the public during budget formulation can be answered on the basis of engagement on topics other than the six listed above -- for the purpose of answering this question, "key topics" are considered to be only the ones listed above. If the executive's engagement with the public covers topics other than the six listed above, please specify these topics in the comments.

Note also that this question assesses only the coverage of public engagement (i.e., "what issues is the public invited to engage on?") and issues related to the depth of engagement or selectivity of engaged are not dealt with by this question.

Answer "d" applies if requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://www.osfa.al/njoftime/perfundon-projekti-rritja-e-presionit-civil-mbi-hartimin-e-programit-buxhetor-afatmesem-dhe-buxhetit-vjetor-2019>

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

b. The executive's engagement with citizens covers at least three (but less than six) of the above-mentioned topics.

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the

answer of "d"

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

128. Does the executive use participation mechanisms through which the public can provide input in monitoring the implementation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles on "Inclusiveness" and "Timeliness" and assesses the extent to which the participation mechanism(s) used by the executive are truly interactive and involve a two-way conversation between citizens and the executive.

The drafting of this question and its answers are partially drawn from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, in particular with regards to the concepts of "involvement" (option "a" in the responses) and "consultation" (option "b"). See:

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf.

Please consider only participation mechanisms that the Ministry of Finance, lead budget agency, or central coordinating agency designated by the government to implement participation mechanisms ("the executive") is currently using to allow the public to participate in monitoring the implementation of the annual budget. If the executive has designated a central coordinating agency to implement participation mechanisms throughout the national budget process, researchers may consider these mechanisms. Participation mechanisms used only by line ministries should not be used to answer this question. If there is more than one mechanism used by the executive, please select the deepest or most interactive mechanism that reflects the government's efforts to incorporate citizens' input into the implementation of the annual budget. The participation mechanisms can involve a range of different issues, such as revenue administration, public service delivery, public investment project implementation, including procurement, and the administration of social transfer schemes.

To answer "a," the executive must use open participation mechanisms that involve the public in the implementation of the annual budget. This means that a public process is in place whereby CSOs and/or individual members of the public and government officials interact, and have the opportunity to express their opinions to each other in what can be considered a public dialogue between them (i.e., in-person and online discussion forums). Additionally, the mechanism should be open to any CSO and/or individual members of the public who wish to participate. By selecting this answer, the researcher must present evidence to support the presence of a public dialogue among citizens and government official. Examples include public meetings, online, deliberative exchanges, procurement complaint mechanisms, and social monitoring and dialogue.

Answer "b" applies if an open consultation mechanism is in place whereby members of the public (i.e., individuals and/or CSOs as well as academics, independent experts, policy think tanks, and business organizations) can provide their input on the implementation of the annual budget. This answer applies if the government is using a mechanism that is structured and well established, and not ad-hoc. The researcher must present evidence to support the presence of consultative processes through which the executive seeks out inputs from citizens. Examples include public hearings, surveys, focus groups, report cards, and online platforms that government officials actively manage to solicit inputs.

Answer "c" applies if the executive has established a mechanism or mechanisms to allow citizens to provide input on budget implementation, but:

1) *The mechanisms are not structured, happen only on ad-hoc basis, or not regularly.*

and/or

2) *The executive consults with and/or interacts with, citizens, but there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, and the executive determines fully or partially such selection process by inviting specific groups (for example by making an open call but just to experts from a particular sector, or naming specific organizations). While it is not possible for all citizens and/or CSOs to participate in this or other phases of the budget process, options "a" and "b" apply if the government does not exercise any discretion in determining who is allowed to participate. While there is likely going to be self-selection, it is important that the selection is not made by the executive.*

In cases where there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, to select answer choice "c", the researcher must have evidence that the government is holding participation mechanisms that have some sort of public record (held in public, minutes of meetings released to public) so that all CSOs and members of the public can have knowledge of the meeting, who participated, and what was discussed.

Examples include hotlines, Facebook announcements, one-off meetings with NGOs in which there is a public record.

The researcher must present evidence to support selection of a "c" response.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:
b. Yes, the executive uses open participation mechanisms through which members of the public provide their inputs on budget implementation.

Researcher Response
The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the answer of "d"

IBP Comment
Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

129. With regard to the mechanism identified in question 128, does the executive take concrete steps to receive input from vulnerable and underrepresented parts of the population on the implementation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principle of "Inclusiveness", and examines the executive's effort to actively reach out to citizens who are from socially vulnerable groups and/or underrepresented in national processes. The emphasis here is on national government's efforts to obtain input from members of the public who are from socially vulnerable groups and/or underrepresented in national processes during the implementation of the annual budget.

To answer "a," the executive must actively seek out individuals from vulnerable and underrepresented community and/or civil society organizations representing vulnerable and underrepresented individuals and communities. The researcher must provide evidence to show the government's efforts and actions. The researcher must speak with the relevant government official(s), and subsequently double check with an alternative source, such as representatives from vulnerable/underrepresented groups.

Answer "b" applies if the national executive does not take concrete steps to incorporate vulnerable/underrepresented individuals, or organizations representing them, into participation mechanisms or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage.

Answer:

b. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:
a. Yes, the executive takes concrete steps to receive input from individuals from and/or organizations representing vulnerable and underrepresented parts of the population on the implementation of the annual budget.

Researcher Response
The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the answer of "b"

IBP Comment
Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "b" is maintained.

130. During the implementation of the annual budget, which of the following topics does the executive's engagement with citizens cover?

For the purpose of this question, key topics are considered to be:

1. Changes in macroeconomic circumstances
2. Delivery of public services
3. Collection of revenue
4. Implementation of social spending
5. Changes in deficit and debt levels
6. Implementation of public investment projects

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Timeliness". Please consider all of the mechanisms currently used by the executive to promote public participation during the implementation of the annual budget.

Please note that while the public engagement can/may cover other topics -- and for this reason the other questions assessing the executive's engagement with the public during budget implementation can be answered on the basis of engagement on topics other than the six listed above -- for the purpose of answering this question, "key topics" are considered to be ONLY the ones listed above. If the executive's engagement with the public covers topics other than the six listed above, please specify these topics in the comments.

Note also that this question assesses only the coverage of public engagement (i.e., "what issues is the public invited to engage on?") and issues related to the depth of engagement or selectivity of engaged are not dealt with by this question.

Answer "d" applies if requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

b. The executive's engagement with citizens covers at least three (but less than six) of the above-mentioned topics.

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the answer of "d"

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

131. When the executive engages with the public, does it provide comprehensive prior information on the process of the engagement, so that the public can participate in an informed manner?

Comprehensive information must include at least three of the following elements:

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Constraints
4. Intended outcomes
5. Process and timeline

GUIDELINES:

This question relates to the GIFT principle of "Openness," and addresses whether the executive provides relevant information on the process of the engagement before public participation takes place, in order to help citizens engage effectively. The question addresses whether the "rules of the public engagement" are clearly spelled out, in advance and in detail, so that those members of the public who want to engage know how to do so, in terms of when they can do so, what they are expected to provide input on, by when, to whom, etc. This question does not cover the substance of the engagement, which is covered by questions 127 and 130.

Non-comprehensive information means that the government provides information that includes at least one but less than three of the elements listed above.

Purpose refers to a brief explanation of why the public engagement is being undertaken, including the executive's objectives for its engagement with the public.

Scope refers to what is within the subject matter of the engagement as well as what is outside the subject matter of the engagement. For example, the scope may include how a current policy is administered but exclude the specifics of the policies themselves.

Constraints refers to whether there are there any explicit limitations on the engagement. An example of a constraint could be that any policy changes must not cost (or forgo revenue) more than a specific amount or have no net fiscal cost.

Intended outcomes refers to what the executive hopes to achieve as a result of the engagement. Examples of intended outcomes could be revising a policy to better reflect citizen or service-user views or to improve the way in which a particular program is administered.

Process refers to the methods by which the public engagement will take place and the discrete steps in the process. For example, the process may simply be a one-off Internet-based consultation, with a summary published of public inputs and the official response. The process may involve simultaneous or overlapping steps, and may be conducted in one round or in two or more rounds of engagement.

Timeline refers to the specific dates on which the discrete steps in the process will take place, or during which they will be completed, and clear start and end dates for the overall engagement.

Answer "d" applies if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation or formulation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Comprehensive information is provided in a timely manner prior to citizens engagement in both budget formulation and implementation phases.

Comments: Please refer to Medium Term Budget Program documents

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that the executive provides relevant information on the process of the engagement, we maintain the answer of "d."

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

132. With regard to the mechanism identified in question 125, does the executive provide the public with feedback on how citizens' inputs have been used in the formulation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Sustainability", and examines the extent to which the executive provides information to citizens on which public inputs were received, which ones are used in the formulation of the annual budget, and how/why.

By "written record", we mean a document that is produced and released by the lead budget agency (Ministry of Finance, Treasury) that has set up and holds the participation activity.

Answer "a" applies when the executive provides a written document with:

- *The inputs (e.g., a written transcript) received from the public and*
- *A detailed report on how the inputs were used or not used (such report should include information on which inputs were used or not used, why, and how)*

Answer "b" applies when the executive provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs (e.g., a written transcript) received from the public and
- A not-so-detailed report, such as a document with a few paragraphs, on how public inputs were used or not used. This document only gives a general idea on how those inputs were used or not used.

Answer "c" applies when the executive provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs (e.g., a written transcript) received from the public or
- A report (being it detailed or not-so-detailed) on how public inputs have been used or not used.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation stage

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, the executive provides a written record which includes either the list of the inputs received or a report or summary on how they were used.

Comments: Please refer to MTBP document 2019-2021 phase 1: <http://financa.gov.al/programi-buxhetor-afatmesem-2019-2021/>

Researcher Response

The government's reviewer comment is acknowledged and it should be noted that the Albanian Government has taken significant steps towards PFM and transparency which is mostly embedded on the MTBP practices. However, since the document cited here concerns the MTBP rather than the annual budget, it is not possible for a score higher than "d".

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

133. With regard to the mechanism identified in question 128, does the executive provide the public with information on how citizens' inputs have been used to assist in monitoring the implementation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Sustainability", and examines the extent to which the executive provides information to citizens on which public inputs were received during the implementation of the annual budget, which ones are taken into account to improve budget monitoring, and how/why.

By "written record", we mean a document that is produced and released by the lead budget agency (Ministry of Finance, Treasury) that has set up and holds the participation activity.

Answer "a" applies when the executive provides a written document with:

- The inputs (e.g., a written transcript) received from the public and
- A detailed report on how the inputs were used or not used (such report should include information on which inputs were used or not used, why, and how)

Answer "b" applies when the executive provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs received (e.g., a written transcript) from the public and
- A not-so-detailed report, such as a document with a few paragraphs, on how public inputs were used or not used. This document only gives a general idea on how those inputs were or were not taken into account by the executive during budget monitoring.

Answer "c" applies when the executive provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs (e.g., a written transcript) received from the public or
- A report (being it detailed or not-so-detailed) on how public inputs have been used or not used.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The executive lacks in public participation mechanisms during the budget implementation stage

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

c. Yes, the executive provides a written record which includes either the list of the inputs received or a report or summary on how they were used.

Researcher Response

The government reviewer's comment is acknowledged, but in the absence of evidence that a participation mechanism was used, we maintain the answer of "d"

IBP Comment

Please see the IBP comment for Q125; the existing response of "d" is maintained.

134. Are participation mechanisms incorporated into the timetable for formulating the Executive's Budget Proposal?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles on "Sustainability," "Timeliness" and "Complementarity" and addresses whether the executive is able to link participation mechanisms to the administrative processes that are used to create the annual budget.

Please note that "timetable" refers to a document setting deadlines for submissions from other government entities, such as line ministries or subnational government, to the Ministry of Finance or whatever central government agency is in charge of coordinating the budget's formulation. This document is sometimes referred to as the budget calendar and is the same document referenced in Question 53.

Answer "a" applies if the national executive establishes a clear set of guidelines that enable citizens and civil servants to understand when participation mechanisms should be used to enable citizen inputs to be incorporated into the annual budget. For answer choice "a", the timetable must be available to the public prior to the budget preparation process beginning.

Answer "b" applies if the executive does not establish a clear set of guidelines that enable citizens and civil servants to understand when participation mechanisms should be used to enable citizen inputs to be incorporated into the annual budget or if the executive does not use public participation mechanisms during the budget formulation or implementation stage.

Answer:

b. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

Source:

<http://qbz.gov.al/Botime/Akteindividuale/Janar%202018/Fletore%203/VKM%20nr.%2013,%20date%2012.1.2018.pdf>
"The calendar for managing the public expenditure for 2018"

https://www.arsimi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/B.1_Ligji_per_Menaxhimin_e_Sistemit_buxhetor_ALB.pdf
Organic budget Law, Article 25

Comment:

The documents above mention public participation (consultation) but only for the formulation of the MTBP.

Technically, it doesnt satisfy the criteria to answer this question a.

Peer Reviewer
Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer
Opinion: Disagree
Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, the executive incorporates participation into its timetable for formulating the Executive's Budget Proposal and the timetable is available to the public.

Comments: Please refer to the Standard Budget Preparation Instruction: http://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Udhezimi_nr.7_date_28.2.2018_Per_procedurat_standarde_te_pergatitjes_se_PBA.pdf

Researcher Response

We acknowledge the government reviewer's comment and after consideration of the document there appears to be a timetable on page 13 which deals both the PBS and EBP. However this timetable does not establish a clear set of guidelines that enable citizens and civil servants to understand when participation mechanisms should be used. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

IBP Comment

IBP is in agreement with the reviewer that the Standard Budget Preparation Instruction does not provide sufficient details on participation mechanisms and when they are used in the formulation of the EBP. The existing response of "b" is maintained.

135. Do one or more line ministries use participation mechanisms through which the public can provide input during the formulation or implementation of the annual budget?

GUIDELINES

While questions 125 – 135 focus only on participation mechanisms that the Ministry of Finance, lead budget agency, or central coordinating agency currently use to allow the public to participate in the national budget process, this question asks about participation mechanisms used by line ministries to allow the public to participate in national budget processes. Thus, participation mechanisms used by the Ministry of Finance, lead budget agency, or central coordinating agency should not be used to answer this question. If there is more than one mechanism used by a line ministry or if multiple line ministries use participation mechanisms, please select the deepest or most interactive mechanism that reflects the government's efforts to incorporate citizens' input into the formulation and/or implementation of the annual budget.

This question reflects the GIFT principles on "Inclusiveness" and "Timeliness" and assesses the extent to which the participation mechanism(s) used by the executive are truly interactive and involve a two-way conversation between citizens and the executive.

The drafting of this question and its answers are partially drawn from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, in particular with regards to the concepts of "involvement" (option "a" in the responses) and "consultation" (option "b"). See: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf

To answer "a," a line ministry must use open participation mechanisms that involve the public in the formulation or implementation of the annual budget. This means that a public process is in place whereby CSOs and/or individual members of the public and government officials interact, and have the opportunity to express their opinions to each other in what can be considered a public dialogue between them (i.e., in-person and online discussion forums). Additionally, the mechanism should be open to any CSO and/or individual members of the public who wish to participate. By selecting this answer, the researcher must present evidence to support the presence of a public dialogue among citizens and government official. Examples include public meetings and online deliberative exchanges.

Answer "b" applies if an open consultation mechanism is in place whereby members of the public (i.e., individuals and/or CSOs as well as academics, independent experts, policy think tanks, and business organizations) can provide their input in the formulation or implementation of the annual budget. This answer applies if the government is using a mechanism that is structured and well established, and not ad-hoc. The researcher must present evidence to support the presence of consultative processes through which a line ministry seeks out inputs from citizens. Examples include surveys, focus groups, report cards, published policy consultation exercises, and online platforms that government officials actively manage to solicit inputs.

Answer "c" applies if a line ministry has established a mechanism or mechanisms to allow citizens to participate in the budget formulation phase, but:

1) The mechanisms are not structured and happen only on ad-hoc basis, or not regularly.

and/or

2) A line ministry consults with and/or interacts with, citizens, but there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, and the line ministry determines fully or partially such selection process by inviting specific groups (for example by making an open call but just to experts from a particular sector, or naming specific organizations). While it is not possible for all citizens and/or CSOs to participate in this or other phases of the budget process, options "a" and "b" apply if the government does not exercise any discretion in determining who is allowed to participate. While there is likely going to be self-selection, it is important that the selection is not made by the executive.

In cases where there is discretion in who is allowed to participate, to select answer choice "c", there should be some sort of public record (held in public, minutes of meetings released to public) so that the all CSOs and individual members of the public can have knowledge of the meeting, who participated, and what was discussed.

The researcher must present evidence to support selection of a "c" response.

Examples of mechanisms that might qualify as a "c" response include hotlines, Facebook announcements, and one-off meetings with NGOs in which there is a public record.

Answer:

c. Yes, at least one line ministry uses participation mechanisms during the budget formulation or implementation phase, but either these mechanisms capture only some ad-hoc views, or the executive invites specific individuals or groups for budget discussions (participation is not, in practice, open to everyone).

Source:

<http://www.scan-tv.com/buxheti-afatmesem-2019-2021-mie-nis-konsultimet-me-shoqerine-civile/>

<https://www.infrastruktura.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/NJOFTIM-PER-SHOQERINE-CIVILE.pdf>

Call for participation from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

Comment:

The above links are for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy which is calling for the participation of civil society to take part in 10 talks regarding the MTBP 2019-2021

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

The researcher's comment is well-noted. As the available sources do not describe the public's extent of participation in the Ministry's meetings, the response is revised from "b" to "c" to ensure consistency across survey countries.

136. Does the legislature or the relevant legislative committee(s) hold public hearings and/or use other participation mechanisms through which the public can provide input during its public deliberations on the formulation of the annual budget (pre-budget and/or approval stages)?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principle on "Sustainability," "Transparency," and "Complementarity" and assesses the extent to which the participation mechanism(s) used by the legislature are interactive and involve a two-way conversation between citizens and the legislature, rather than being limited to allowing the public to attend or hear public budget deliberations.

Please consider participation mechanisms that the legislature (both in its whole institution or its relevant budget/public accounts/finance committees) has put in place and is using to allow the public to participate in their deliberations on the annual budget. This includes deliberations during the pre-budget phase (i.e., when the executive is still in the process of formulating the draft budget) and the budget discussions after the budget has been tabled to parliament and before it is approved. In the comment box, please specify during which stage of the budget cycle the legislature has put in place a public participation mechanism.

Mechanisms through which members of the public reach out to individual Members of Parliament as opposed to the legislature (both in its whole institution or its relevant budget/public accounts/finance committees) or unofficial hearings organized by a subset of committee members should not be considered in answering this question.

If there is more than one mechanism, please select a mechanism that best shows/reflects the legislature's efforts to incorporate citizens into the formulation of the annual budget. The participation mechanisms can involve a range of different issues, such as revenues, policy selection, and macro-fiscal planning (please note that the issue of coverage is covered in a subsequent question).

To answer "a," the legislature must hold public hearings where citizens are allowed to testify. This answer applies only if the legislature does not exercise discretion in determining which citizens and/or CSOs can testify (for example, participation takes place on a first-come-first-served basis).

Answer "b" should be selected if the following applies:

- The legislature holds public hearings on the budget;
- Testimony is not allowed from members of the public or CSOs; but
- There are other means used by the legislature to receive and collect views from citizens and CSOs on the budget, and the legislature does not exercise discretion in determining which citizens and/or CSOs can provide input. The researcher must provide evidence to support the presence of those alternative processes through which the legislature seeks inputs from citizens. For example, there should be a public record indicating that views from citizens and the public were sought.

Answer "c" should be selected if the following applies:

- *The legislature holds public hearings on the budget;*
- *Testimony is not allowed from members of the public or CSOs;*
- *No other means are used by the legislature to receive and collect views/input from citizens and CSOs on the budget, but*
- *The legislature invites a few individuals/groups to provide input (through public hearings or elsewhere)*

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the legislature does not use public participation mechanisms during its deliberations on the annual budget

Answer:

c. Yes, public hearings are held. No testimony from the public is provided during the public hearings, and there are no other mechanisms through which public contributions are received, but the legislature invites specific individuals or groups to testify or provide input (participation is not, in practice, open to everyone).

Source:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20190129112836Procesverbal,%20dat%C3%AB%2014.11.2018.pdf>
This is a transcript of the discussions held with CSO representatives (among other invitees)

<http://parlament.al/News/Index/7034>

This link shows the voting process after the hearing

Comment:

The above is an example taken from the Parliamentary Commission for Work, Social Affairs and Health on the pre-approval stage.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Disagree

Suggested Answer:

a. Yes, public hearings are held, and members of the public/CSOs testify.

Comments: please consult reports of commissions of the parliament on the budget 2019 esp. health and education commissions

Researcher Response

It appears like members from Associations attend hearings and participate in discussions at the Finance Commission.

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20181203094051Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20p%C3%ABr%20Ekonomi%C3%AB%20dhe%20Financat.pdf>
However, there are no other mechanisms through which public contributions are received, but the legislature invites specific individuals or groups to testify or provide input.

IBP Comment

The comments from the researcher and government reviewer are well-received. IBP has the following additions: It looks like members from the public do attend hearings and do participate in discussions (views from experts are welcome): All hearings by Finance committee are noted on pages 10-11: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/Informacione/Raportishoqerisecivile2018.pdf> Examples from two hearings on Administration of Local Tax System (held on 20 Nov 2018 and 27 Nov 2018). At the hearings, officials from Ministry of Finance as well as other experts like the Governor of Bank of Albania and representatives from Associations were present to respond to questions from the members of the Committee on Economy and Finance.

Link:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20181203094051Raport%20i%20Komisionit%20p%C3%ABr%20Ekonomi%C3%AB%20dhe%20Financat.pdf>
Based on this evidence, a "c" response is maintained.

137. During the legislative deliberations on the annual budget (pre-budget or approval stages), which of the following key topics does the legislature's (or relevant legislative budget committee) engagement with citizens cover?

For the purpose of this question, key topics are considered to be:

1. Macroeconomic issues
2. Revenue forecasts, policies, and administration
3. Social spending policies
4. Deficit and debt levels
5. Public investment projects
6. Public services

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Timeliness". Please consider the range of mechanisms currently used by the legislature to promote public participation during legislative deliberations on the annual budget.

Please note that while the public engagement can/may cover other topics, for the purpose of answering this question, "key topics" are considered to be only the ones listed above. If the legislature's engagement with the public covers topics other than the six listed above, please specify these topics in the comments.

Note also that this question assesses only the coverage of public engagement (i.e., "what issues is the public invited to engage on?") and issues related to the depth of engagement or selectivity of engaged are not dealt with by this question.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the legislature does not use public participation mechanisms during its deliberations on the annual budget.

Answer:

c. The legislature seeks input on at least one (but less than three) of the above-mentioned topics.

Source:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20190129112836Procesverbal,%20dat%C3%AB%2014.11.2018.pdf>

Transcript for the hearing held at the Parliamentary Commission for Work, Social Affairs and Health.

Comment:

No other transcripts are found from other commissions. Based on the above, there are discussed at least Macroeconomic issues and Social spending policies.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20181116133406Komisioni%20i%20%20Medias,%20date%2001.11.2018.pdf> Transcript for the hearing held at the Parliamentary Commission for Education

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

IBP Comment

Noting the example provided in Question 136, page 10-11 of the following document show the hearings that Committee on Finance held:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/Informacione/Raportishoqerisecivile2018.pdf>.

138. Does the legislature provide feedback to the public on how citizens' inputs have been used during legislative deliberations on the annual budget?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Sustainability", and examines the extent to which the legislature provides information to citizens on which public inputs were received and how inputs were used during legislative deliberations (please note that these deliberations can refer to the pre-budget and approval phases). By "written record" in this question, we mean a document that is produced and released by the legislature.

Answer "a" applies when the legislature provides a written document with:

- The inputs received from the public (e.g., a written transcript) and
- A detailed report on how the inputs were used or not used (such report should include information on which inputs were used or not used, why, and how).

Answer "b" applies when the legislature provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs received from the public (e.g., a written transcript) and
- A not-so-detailed report on how public inputs were used or not used. This document only gives a general idea on how those inputs were used or not used in legislative deliberations on the annual budget (please note that these deliberations refer to the pre-budget and approval phases).

Answer "c" applies when the legislature provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs received from the public (e.g., a written transcript) or
- A report (being it detailed or not-so-detailed) on how public inputs have been used or not used.

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the legislature does not use public participation mechanisms during its deliberations on the annual budget.

Answer:

c. Yes, the legislature provides a written record which includes either the list of the inputs received or a report or summary on how they were used.

Source:

<http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20190129112836Procesverbal,%20dat%C3%AB%2014.11.2018.pdf>

Comment:

The above link is a transcript of the hearing held at the Parliamentary Commission for Work, Social Affairs and Health. It is a narrative (transcript) description as the hearing happened (underacted) but obviously shows the inputs received for the public. However, there is no evidence/report or summary on how the inputs were used.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Comments: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/Procesverbale/20181116133406Komisioni%20i%20Medias,%20date%2001.11.2018.pdf>

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Researcher Response

Additionally, information can also be found at: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/Informacione/Raportishoqerisecivile2018.pdf> chapter V (page 10-11) has few links for the finance commission.

139. Does the legislature hold public hearings and/or use other participation mechanisms through which the public can provide input during its public deliberations on the Audit Report?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principle on "Sustainability," "Transparency," and "Complementarity" and assesses the extent to which the participation mechanism(s) used by the legislature are interactive and involve a two-way conversation between citizens and the legislature, rather than being limited to allowing the public to attend or hear public budget deliberations.

A key constitutional role of the legislature in almost all countries is to oversee the government's management of public resources. While the Supreme Audit Institution is responsible for checking the government's accounts and publishing the outcome of their audits, for accountability purposes it is essential that the legislature reviews and scrutinizes those reports, and checks on whether the executive is taking the appropriate corrective actions based on the Supreme Audit Institution's recommendations.

Holding public hearings to review audit findings allows the public to learn more about how the government has managed its resources for the budget years that have ended, and demand accountability in case of mismanagement and irregularities. Reviewing and discussing those reports in public is therefore a key responsibility of a legislature.

Please note that by "Audit Report" we refer to the same audit report assessed in the transparency section of this Survey, i.e., one of the eight key budget documents that all governments (in this case, the Supreme Audit Institution) must produce, according to best practice.

Please consider participation mechanisms that the legislature (both in its whole institution or its relevant budget/public accounts/finance committees) have put in place and using to allow the public to participate in their deliberations on the Audit Report.

Mechanisms through which members of the public reach out to individual members of parliament as opposed to the legislature (both in its whole institution or its relevant budget/public accounts/finance committees) or unofficial hearings organized by a subset of committee members should not be considered in answering this question.

To answer "a," the national legislature must hold public hearings where citizens are allowed to testify. This answer applies only if the legislature does not exercise discretion in determining which citizens and/or CSOs can testify (for example, participation takes place on a first-come-first-served basis).

Answer "b" should be selected if the following applies:

- *The legislature holds public hearings on the budget;*
- *No testimony is allowed from the public; BUT*
- *There are other means used by the legislature to receive and collect views from citizens and CSOs on the budget, and the legislature does not exercise discretion in determining which citizens and/or CSOs can provide input. The researcher must provide evidence to support the presence of those alternative processes through which the legislature seeks inputs from citizens. For example, there should be a public record indicating that views from citizens and the public were sought.*

Answer "c" should be selected if the following applies:

- *The legislature holds public hearings on the budget;*
- *No testimony is allowed from the public;*
- *No other means are used by the legislature to receive and collect views/input from citizens and CSOs on the budget, BUT*
- *The legislature invites a few individuals/groups to provide input (through public hearings or elsewhere)*

Answer "d" applies if the requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if the legislature does not use public participation mechanisms during its deliberations on the Audit Report.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

no such mechanisms or practices are used.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

140. Does the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) maintain formal mechanisms through which the public can suggest issues/topics to include in the SAI's audit program (for example, by bringing ideas on agencies, programs, or projects that could be audited)?

GUIDELINES:

This question assesses whether the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) has established mechanisms through which the public can provide suggestions on issues/topics to be included in its audit program. When deciding its audit agenda, the SAI may undertake audits for a sample of agencies, projects, and programs in the country; and such a selection could be based on complaints and suggestions made by members of the public. To receive such suggestions, the SAI may create formal mechanisms, like setting up a website, hotline, or office (or assigning staff to liaise with the public).

Answer:

b. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The SAI has not established mechanisms through which the public can provide suggestions.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

141. Does the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) provide the public with feedback on how citizens' inputs have been used to determine its audit program?

GUIDELINES:

This question reflects the GIFT principles of "Transparency" and "Sustainability", and examines the extent to which the Supreme Audit Institution provides information to citizens on which public inputs were received, which ones are used to determine the Supreme Audit Institution's audit program. By "written record" in this question, we mean a document that is produced and released by the Supreme Audit Institution.

Answer "a" applies when the Supreme Audit Institution provides a written document with:

- *The inputs received from the public and*
- *A detailed report on how the inputs were used or not used (such report should include information on which inputs were used or not used, why, and how).*

Answer "b" applies when the SAI provides a written document that includes:

- The inputs received from the public and
- A not-so-detailed report on how public inputs were used or not used. This document only gives a general idea on how those inputs were used or not used to determine the SAI's annual audit program.

Answer "c" applies when the SAI provides a written document that includes:

- The received from the public or
- A report (being it detailed or not-so-detailed) on how public inputs have been used or not used.

Answer "d" applies if requirements for a "c" response or above are not met or if maintain formal mechanisms through which the public can suggests issues/topics to include in the SAI's audit program.

Answer:

d. The requirements for a "c" response or above are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The SAI has not established mechanisms through which the public can provide suggestions.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

142. Does the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) maintain formal mechanisms through which the public can contribute to audit investigations (as respondents, witnesses, etc.)?

GUIDELINES:

This question mirrors question 140, but instead of covering public assistance in formulating the SAI's audit program, it focuses on whether the Supreme Audit Institution has established mechanisms through which the public can participate in audit investigations. In addition to seeking public input to determine its audit agenda, the SAI may wish to provide formal opportunities for the public and civil society organizations to participate in the actual audit investigations, as witnesses or respondents.

Answer:

b. The requirements for an "a" response are not met.

Source:

n/a

Comment:

The SAI has not established mechanisms through which the public can provide suggestions.

Peer Reviewer

Opinion: Agree

Government Reviewer

Opinion: Agree