



**THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP  
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ALBANIA  
2020 – 2022**

**PRE-CONSULTATION REPORT FOR  
COMPONENT 4: ‘FISCAL TRANSPARENCY’**



## **I. Introduction and Background**

***Briefly outline the overall objective of the component and the sub-components:***

Component 'Fiscal Transparency' will be one of fourth components of Open Government Partnership Action Plan 2020-2022. This component will be led by Ministry of Finance and Economy and will include priority measures on two Specific Objectives: Transparency on Budget and Transparency on Revenues.

***Briefly outline the past and current challenges that have impeded stakeholder engagement in the past on the component's topic:***

Considering the international evaluation, Albania should work more on increasing fiscal transparency. According to OBI (Open Budget Index) score 2019: Transparency: 55/100; Public Participation: 7/100; Budget Oversight: 65/100. Several recommendation are left on these three topics, as: To include policy information and additional fiscal risk details in the Year-End Report; To further strengthen public participation in the budget process; Albania's Parliament provides adequate oversight during the planning stage of the budget cycle and limited oversight during the implementation stage. To further improve oversight; to strengthen independence and improve audit oversight by the Albania State Supreme Audit.

As well, considering shortcomings identified by the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) 2018-2020 in the report Albania's Progress on the Eligibility Criteria for OGP, one of the main issues that need efforts for improvement is Citizen Engagement.

***What steps were taken to address these challenges?***

Fiscal Transparency has been on focus of Government of Albania and part of the Ministry of Finance and Economy's efforts, mostly in the recent years, considering our collaboration and follow up of IMF recommendation, OBI results and recommendation, EU findings etc. Most of our efforts are summarized in the Public Finance Management Strategy 2014-2020, as part of the pillar 4 'Transparent government reporting' and currently in the revised PFM Strategy 2019-2022 as part of the Specific Objective 5 'Transparency of Public Finance'. As well, the transparency has been part of the OGP action plan 2018-2020 and currently, we are working to address the existing challenges in the new OGP work plan 2020-2022.

## **II. Methodology**

### **II.1. Survey Design:**

***The questions included***

Survey for Fiscal Transparency prepared by MoFE, includes 7 questions, presented as below:

1. Rate the fiscal transparency in our country

2. Has the fiscal transparency changed for Albania over time?
3. Public availability of budget documents in Albania
4. How comprehensive is the content of the key budget documents that Albania makes available to the public?
5. Public participation in Albania in the budget process
6. How much should work Ministry of Finance and Economy to increase the extent of opportunities for public participation in the budget process
7. Propose 1 to 5 priority measures that Albania need to undertake immediately in order to increase our fiscal transparency (budget transparency and/or revenue transparency).  
Please rank them from 1=the most important (High priority) to 5=the less important (low priority).

***Why these questions were chosen:***

With the aim to receive feedback from citizens (through CSOs, academic representatives), MoFE has prepared several questions that reflect fiscal transparency background in Albania. Most of the questions included in the survey are based on the result of the Open Budget Survey and the following areas for further improvement.

***What is the hoped outcome of the survey:***

We hope that that survey will be filled by all invited CSOs and mostly we expect to receive CSOs contribution for proposed measures that GoA should undertake to further improve fiscal transparency.

## **II.2. Stakeholder Selection:**

***How were stakeholders selected?***

CSOs selected are based on the interaction in the framework of PFM reform and considering all CSOs listed by the Agency for Support of Civil Society, focusing on the CSOs that might cover the state economic and finance issues.

***What stakeholders were contacted and why?***

Once we finalized the list with the selected CSOs, as mentioned above, we have contacted and invited all CSOs that we considered relevant for this component and might interact on the consultation.

## **III. Initial Findings**

***Summary of feedback from stakeholders:***

From the pre-consultation conducted for Fiscal Transparency component, notified via electronic communication (email and notification in OGP website), from the surveys completed up to now, it has resulted no high participation of CSOs in the process. This is one of the main challenges in regard of transparency in our country, and such results were expected (5 surveys completed).

***Main issues identified by stakeholders:***

From the survey has resulted that citizens that responded think that overall fiscal transparency is low and GoA should work more to increase the transparency.

For instance for the first question most of the responses show low ratio of the fiscal transparency in our country, as well in relation to the progress of the fiscal transparency changed over time, it is shown low progress.

Regarding public availability of budget documents the responses show that in Albania there is a moderate level and there is needed much more work to improve their content and quality and the overall fiscal transparency in country. As well, there are left some suggestion for proposed measures that GoA should focus on this three-year plan. The detailed answer are presented in the table 1, annex2.

***Main recommendations from stakeholders:***

The recommendation provided from CSO's responses, are:

1. Increase Citizens engagement in the budget process
2. To publish concessionaire contracts.
3. Public participation in Albania in the budget process
4. Simplify the content of the key budget documents

***Areas recommended to focus on in next stages:***

The recommendation provided above, are given as suggestion for further improvements in next stages.

#### **IV. Shortcomings Identified**

***Limitations in responses/underrepresentation of stakeholders:***

Responses provided via survey are comprehensive, even though they could contain optimist/pessimist biases, still they are very useful for our process since they present CSOs contribution on behalf of Albanian citizens.

***Discussion on non-responses:***

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***Any biases of responses:***

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#### **V. Preparations for Next Phase**

***What will be done to improve engagement in the next stages?***

**Regardless pre-consultation-as first step**, which was announced in OGP website, after this phase, it was held a **consultation meeting with CSOs in September 15**, (attached the CSO's notification), were the participation was also in low level.



**Njoftim per konsultim te Planit t**



**2. Njoftim per konsultim te Planit t**

During the first consultation meeting, CSOs representatives were asked for suggestions, comments, recommendation and one of the representatives- Mrs. Esmeralda Hoxha from GADC congratulated

MoFE for this initiative and wished a successful process. Other representatives sent also written messages with warm words and wishes for a successful process.

**Next consultation is planned within September** (probably in September, 30). Once we will have consolidated draft action plan we will notify CSOs for next consultation.

**Final meeting will be PFM committee, hopefully within October** (because it depends on the PFM agenda) to approve priority measures included in OGP action plan 2020-2022 for the component of fiscal transparency.

***How will collaboration be ensured with the meetings?***

Through follow up of the consultation process and several meetings, MoFE will be committed to involve CSOs to contribute for the increase of fiscal transparency in Albania. Participation of the CSOs is one of the core issues in focus during this process.

***What steps will be taken to promote engagement by stakeholders?***

One of the important measure that we proposed to include in Fiscal Transparency component is ‘To increase citizen’s engagement’ therefore the specific steps will be elaborated in outputs/activities in the action plan.

## VI. Annex 1: Evidence of Stakeholder Engagement

*Attached is the detailed list in excel with CSOs contacted*



CSOs list\_Fiscal  
Transparency\_compr

Civil Society Organization Contacted	Contact Person at CSO	Contact Person's Title	Stakeholder Type (NGO, Union, University, Private Sector Cooperation, etc.)	Date Contacted	Did they respond?	Date responded	Additional notes
GADC	Esmeralda Hoxha	Project Coordinator Gender Alliance for Development Center	CSO	September 10, 2020	Yes	September 11, 2020	Participated in the 1st meeting.
GADC	Marinela Seitaj	Coordinator Gender Alliance for Development Center	CSO	September 10, 2020	Yes	September 11, 2020	Completed the survey and confirmed the same proposal in the consultation meeting
-	-	-	CSO	September 10, 2020	Yes	September 13, 2020	Completed the survey-anonymously
-	-	-	CSO	September 10, 2020	Yes	September 15, 2020	Completed the survey-anonymously
-	-	-	CSO	September 10, 2020	Yes	September 23, 2020	Completed the survey-anonymously
-	Dritan Shutina	-	Co-plan	-	-	-	Merita Toska Participated in the 1st meeting.

Anisa Feshti

CSO

Participated in  
the 1st  
meeting.

## VII. Annex 2: Results Data

Table 1: Survey on Fiscal Transparency

Responses	1	2	3	4	5
Timestamp	9-11-2020 9:17:41	9-11-2020 9:48:51	9-13-2020 22:30:58	9-15-2020 9:53:56	9/23/2020 11:50:05
1. Rate the fiscal transparency in our country	1	1	1	3	3
2. Has the fiscal transparency changed for Albania over time?	1	1	2	3	3
3. Public availability of budget documents in Albania	3	3	5	7	3
4. How comprehensive is the content of the key budget documents that Albania makes available to the public?	1	1	4	6	4
5. Public participation in Albania in the budget process	0	0	1	3	2
6. How much should work Ministry of Finance and Economy to increase the extent of opportunities for public participation in the budget process	5	5	5	4	4
7. Propose 1 to 5 priority measures that Albania need to undertake immediately in order to increase our fiscal transparency (budget transparency and/or revenue transparency). Please rank them from 1=the most important (High priority) to 5=the less important (low priority).	Increase Citizens engagement in the budget process	Publikim i kontratave koncesionare;	Increase Citizens engagement in the budget process	Public participation in Albania in the budget process	Simplify the content of the key budget documents

Optional: You might complete your email contact and/or the name of the CSO that you represent

marinela.seitaj@live.com - Gender Alliance Development Center (GADC)

*Source of Verification: Ministry of finance and Economy (2020)<sup>1</sup>*

### Attached as an excel



Ministry of Finance and Economy Form

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<sup>1</sup>Survey is published in OGP website: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pHIHZE3sZgrs89GzrW6MKG1nQoqoC6IddIcuxjJEGFA/edit#responses>