

Budget Literacy of the Population in the Republic of Belarus.

Perapadzia Zhanna

IPU - Public Administration Research Centre, School of Young Managers in Public Administration (SYMPA), Minsk, Belarus

Abstract: Study “Budget Literacy of the Population in the Republic of Belarus”
https://sympa-by.eu/sites/default/files/library/byudzhetnaya_gramotnost_2021.pdf

A review of the relevant literature:

- International Practices to Promote Budget Literacy <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org>
- Open Budget Survey 2015 https://www.internationalbudget.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/2015_Report_RU.pdf
- Budget transparency and participation in Belarus: A pilot of the 2017 Open Budget Survey https://sympa-by.eu/sites/default/files/library/obs_report_final_eng_1.pdf
- On the joint action plan to improve the financial literacy of the population for 2019-2024 https://www.nbrb.by/today/finliteracy/docs/pdf/p241_6.pdf
- Report on the implementation of research work on the topic: "Assessment and analysis of financial literacy of the population of the Republic of Belarus" <https://www.nbrb.by/today/finliteracy/research/razvitiye-deyatelnosti-fg.pdf>
- BEROС study “Attitude of the population towards the pension system in Belarus” <https://beroc.org/upload/iblock/535/535afac78eee1d8ce11396362baab750.pdf>

A clear research question:

What is the level of budget literacy of the population of the Republic of Belarus?

A description of the methodology

Taking into account the definition of budget literacy proposed by the World Bank, the researchers assessed the level of budget literacy of the population of Belarus in four different areas:

- Knowledge about the main rates of taxes and contributions, understanding of the volume of their own contributions to the budget of the public administration sector;
- Knowledge about the structure of expenditures of the public administration sector, the main directions of budget expenditures;
- Ability to read and understand budgets;
- Understanding the essence of the budget process and knowledge about the main stakeholders.

In order to assess the current level of budget literacy of the population, an online survey of urban residents was conducted. The sample is representative of the sex and age structure of the population of Belarus. The survey involved 1,000 male and female respondents over the age of 18.

The assessment of the level of budget literacy of the population of Belarus was carried out on a 5-point scale using certain formulas.

Short discussions of the expected results:

The level of budget literacy of the population of Belarus as a whole is rather low, its average score was 2.02 points out of 5.

At the same time, Belarusians tend to overestimate their own budget literacy: about 80% of respondents believe that they have an idea about the amount of funds paid to the budget, but less than 15% are able to correctly assess the amount of these funds.

The team of studies made recommendations to public administration organizations, civil society organizations, as well as researchers and thinktanks on what set of measures should be taken to improve the level of budget literacy of the population of the Republic of Belarus.