

New Fiscal Rules in the Member State in 2016

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

The database uses the Kopits-Symansky (1998) definition of a fiscal rule: "a permanent constraint on fiscal policy, typically expressed in terms of a summary indicator of fiscal performance". A "permanent" constraint is, in the interpretation of the database, a parameter which shall be taken into account at the preparation of the annual budget and whose value is fixed for at least two years. The typical example consists of numerical limits on budgetary aggregates that are defined in the establishing act of the rule and cannot be changed too often, such as "a general government deficit of 3% in nominal terms". Other example consists of ceilings which are fixed for at least two years, for example expenditure ceilings set in the multi-annual programming law of 2015 and binding the annual budget for 2016 and 2017, at least.

Please note that some question numbers may not appear in ascending order.

SECTION 1: Description of the rule

* 1.1 Please choose from: (Please note that this questionnaire is only aimed at **New Rules** or at **Already Existing Rules** that were **not reported previously**)

- The present rule was introduced in 2016
- The present rule was already in force in 2016 but it has never been reported

* 1.2 Please define the nature of the rule:

- Expenditure rule
- Budget balance rule
- Revenue rule
- Debt rule

* 1.3 Please provide a general description of the rule:

* 1.4 Please indicate the main reasons for the introduction of the rule. Please mention any related particular event (such as institutional reform, changes in legislation to adapt to the requirements of EU law, inter-governmental treaties, financial assistance programmes, etc.). Please indicate the date of important decisions taken.

* 1.5 Indicate the approval date of the rule (MM/YY):

* 1.6 Indicate the date the rule entered/should enter into force (DD/MM/YY):

Explanation/additional information.

SECTION 2: Coverage and target definition

* 2.1 Does the rule cover the whole of the general government sector? (Please note that here the general government includes central government, local government, social security and regional/state government if applicable)

- Yes
 No

* 2.2 Please indicate the sector(s) of general government covered by the rule (multiple replies possible):

- local government
 regional government (autonomous regions or federated states)
 central government
 social security
 other

* Please specify:

* 2.15a Are there any exclusions in the coverage of the above rule in the form of items that fall outside authorities' control at least in the short-term (e.g. interest payments, unemployment benefits)?

Note: Items that fall outside authorities' control at least in the short-term (e.g. interest payments, unemployment benefits)

- Yes, only items that fall outside the control of the government are excluded
 Yes, exclusions include also items that are under the control of the government
 No

* Please specify:

* 2.15a.1 Please indicate the budgetary elements that are excluded from the coverage of the rule (multiple replies possible):

- Interest payments
 Unemployment benefits
 Public investment
 Other

* Please specify the relevant definition of public investment applied (e.g. gross or net investment, including only specific items, etc.):

* Please specify:

Additional information:

* 2.18 Please indicate the estimated share of items covered by the rule as a percentage of local government expenditure (taking into account any exclusions mentioned in Q 2.15a (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the estimated value as % of local government revenue)

Note: For example, in case of a rule targeting the whole of the local government sector without any exclusion the response should be 100%.

* 2.19 Please indicate the estimated share of items covered by the rule as a percentage of regional/state government expenditure (taking into account any exclusions, mentioned in Q 2.15a): (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the estimated value as % of regional/state government revenue)

Note: For example, in case of a rule targeting the whole of the regional/state government sector without any exclusion the response should be 100%.

* 2.20 Please indicate the estimated share of items covered by the rule as a percentage of central government expenditure (taking into account any exclusions, mentioned in Q 2.15a): (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the estimated value as % of central government revenue)

Note: For example, in case of a rule targeting the whole of the central government sector without any exclusion the response should be 100%

* 2.21 Please indicate the estimated share of items covered by the rule as a percentage of social security expenditure (taking into account any exclusions, mentioned in Q 2.15a): (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the estimated value as % of social security revenue)

Note: For example, in case of a rule targeting the whole of the social security sector without any exclusion the response should be 100%.

* 2.22 Please indicate the estimated share of items covered by the rule as a percentage of general government expenditure (taking into account any exclusions, mentioned in Q 2.15a): (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the estimated value as % of general government revenue)

Note: For example, in case of a rule targeting the whole of the general government sector without any exclusion the response should be 100%.

Additional information:

* 2.6 Please indicate the share of social security in general government expenditure (in percent): (in case of revenue rules, please indicate the share in terms of general government revenue)

* 2.7 Is the government sector targeted by the rule reported in this questionnaire also covered by other rule(s)?

- Yes
- No

* Please indicate which is/are the other rule(s):

* 2.7.1 Within this government sector, are the items targeted by this rule completely different from those targeted by all the other rule(s)?

NOTE: The aim is to identify rules targeting the same sector but with non-overlapping coverage (e.g. two rules covering central government that target pharmaceutical expenditures and housing subsidies)

- Yes
- No

* Please explain:

2.8 Please indicate the accounting system in which the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule is specified:

- ESA 10' accounting
- cash/budgetary accounting
- other

* Other, please specify:

Additional information:

* 2.10 Please indicate the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule:

- Nominal Balance
- Structural balance
- Primary balance
- Primary balance except capital investment
- Other

* 2.11 Please indicate the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule:

- Nominal expenditure
- Real expenditure
- Allocation of expenditure to a specific purpose
- Other

* 2.12 Please indicate the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule:

- Nominal debt
- Real debt
- Debt service ratio
- Other

* 2.13 Please indicate the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule:

- Allocation of unexpected revenue
- Limits on direct tax rates
- Limits on indirect taxes
- Earmarking specific revenue
- Other

* Please specify:

Additional information:

2.14 Please indicate the unit of measurement of the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule:

- absolute terms (EUR, etc)
- ratio
- percentage change
- % of GDP
- % of revenues
- percentage points related to GDP growth
- percentage points related to a specific concept of economic growth (e.g. potential output)
- other

* percentage points related to a specific concept of economic growth (e.g. potential output), specify:

* Please specify:

Additional information:

* 2.15 Please indicate the numerical target of the rule, i.e. the numerical value(s) of the limit imposed on the targeted budgetary aggregate (e.g., % of GDP for budget balance rules, the amount of a nominal ceiling, allowed growth rate of expenditures, etc.). t refers to the ongoing budget year

For year t+1

* ... year t+2

* ... year t+3

* ... year t+4

* ... year t+5

* 2.23 Is the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule defined in cyclically-adjusted terms or does it account for the cycle in any way (e.g. a budget balance calculated over a 10-year period)?

- Yes
- No

* 2.23.1 Please explain how the target takes account of the cycle:

* 2.16 According to its establishing act, which of the following options describes the provided margin of adjustment to the government in specifying the numerical target of the rule?

Note: By numerical target it is meant the numerical limit imposed on the budgetary aggregate targeted by the rule which was defined earlier in the section (e.g. 3% deficit, 60% debt-to-DGP ratio)

- The target of the rule, as defined in its establishing act, cannot be changed or temporarily suspended by the Government except in well-defined situations (i.e. escape clauses)
- Subject to parliamentary approval, the Government can either temporarily change the target or it is mandated to decide on the target (in case the target is not defined in its establishing act)
- The government can change the target of the rule at any time without parliamentary approval (e.g. the statutory base of the rule merely contains broad principles of the obligation for the government or the relevant authority to set targets)

* Please include the provision from the establishing act:

* Please explain and, where relevant include the provision from the establishing act:

* 2.24 Is there a budgetary margin defined in relation to the rule (i.e. the spending targets at the planning stage are set at a lower level than the expenditure ceilings) or a safety margin linked to the MTO which is enshrined in national legislation?

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

Additional information:

2.17 In case of revenue allocation rules, please indicate to what area is unexpected or specific revenue to be allocated to (multiple replies possible):

- deficit reduction
- debt reduction
- specific funds (e.g. pension funds)
- other

* Please specify:

* 2.27 Does the establishing act of the rule define escape clauses (i.e. events/circumstances triggering derogation from the rule)?

- Yes
- No

2.27.1 To what extent are escape clauses specified in the establishing act/legal base of the rule?

- The establishing act lists all events or circumstances that allow for a derogation which are consistent with the SGP
- The establishing act lists all events or circumstances that allow for a derogation of which only some are consistent with the SGP
- The circumstances triggering the derogation are not fully specified, there is some margin for discretion
- Other

* Please specify below (or upload) the complete list of events/ circumstances that allow for a derogation as indicated in the establishing act:

If instead of specifying the circumstances you have uploaded the list, please write "list uploaded" in the text box below.

Please upload your file

* Please explain:

* Other, please specify:

Additional information:

* 2.29 What institution is legally mandated to decide whether escape clauses should be triggered/extended /exited?

- The government
- The ministry of finance
- The parliament
- An independent fiscal institution
- Other

* Please specify:

If the rule cannot be immediately described in the above terms, please provide a verbal description of the target(s), unit(s) of measurement, and numerical values of the constraint established by the rule:

SECTION 3: Statutory base of the rule

* 3.1 Please indicate which of the following best describes the statutory/legal base of the rule in its capacity to constrain budget making and execution:

Note: The statutory/legal base of the rule refers to the highest legal base which establishes the rule.

- political commitment made by an authority (e.g., Ministry of Finance, president of a regional government etc.)
- political agreement between governing partners
- Government programme voted in Parliament
- agreement between sectors of general government which does not take the form of a law
- established only through the annual budget law (i.e. and not in any other legal document /establishing act)
- ordinary (i.e. other than constitutional/organic) law other than annual budget law
- organic law
- constitutional law
- other

* Please specify:

Additional information:

* 3.2.1 What is the time frame covered by the agreement that introduces the rule?

- one-year budgetary cycle
- multi-annual
- legislative period
- other

Additional information:

* 3.2.2 What is the time frame covered by the law that introduces the rule?

- one-year budgetary cycle
- multi-annual
- other

Additional information:

3.3 Please give a precise reference to the official document(s) that form the statutory base of the rule:

3.4 Please upload a pdf version of the above legal text(s) or official document(s) in original language and in English if available.

SECTION 4: Monitoring of compliance with the target of the rule

* 4.1 What national body is in charge of monitoring the **ex-ante** compliance with the rule (i.e. at budget planning stage) (multiple replies possible)?

Note: The mandate of the monitoring institution could either derive from a legal obligation or be assumed in practice

- There is no regular public monitoring of ex-ante compliance with the rule
- Ministry of Finance
- Government body other than the Ministry of Finance
- Parliament
- Court of Auditors (if not acting as IFI)
- Independent fiscal institution (e.g. fiscal council, court of auditors acting as IFI)
- Other

* Government body other than the Ministry of Finance, please specify:

* Independent fiscal institution, please specify:

* Other, please specify:

Additional information:

* 4.1.1 Is there a monitoring report produced and made public?

- Yes
 No

* 4.1.2 Please indicate the name of the report and provide a link:

* 4.1.3 Is there any other output of the monitoring?

* 4.1.4 Please indicate which of the following applies to the monitoring report (multiple replies possible):

- The government does not usually comment on the monitoring report
 The government is not obliged to comment on the monitoring report, but typically does so (e.g. by a public statement)
 The government is obliged to comment on the monitoring report (e.g. by a public statement)
 The monitoring report is presented in Parliament
 The monitoring report is available to the public

Additional information:

* 4.2 What national body is in charge of monitoring the **ex-post** compliance with the rule (i.e. after budget execution) (multiple replies possible)?

Note: The mandate of the monitoring institution could either derive from a legal obligation or be assumed in practice

- There is no regular public monitoring of ex-post compliance with the rule
- Ministry of Finance
- Government body other than the Ministry of Finance
- Parliament
- Court of Auditors (if not acting as IFI)
- Independent fiscal institution (e.g. fiscal council, court of auditors acting as IFI)
- Other

* Government body other than the Ministry of Finance, please specify:

* Independent fiscal institution, please specify:

* Other, please specify:

Additional information:

* 4.2.1 Is there a monitoring report produced and made public?

- Yes
- No

* 4.2.2 Please indicate the name of the report and provide a link:

* 4.2.3 Is there any other output of the monitoring?

* 4.2.4 Please indicate which of the following applies to the monitoring report (multiple replies possible):

- The government does not usually comment on the monitoring report
- The government is not obliged to comment on the monitoring report, but typically does so (e.g. by a public statement)
- The government is obliged to comment on the monitoring report (e.g. by a public statement)
- The monitoring report is presented in Parliament
- The monitoring report is available to the public

Additional information:

* 4.3 Is there a real-time monitoring of the rule, namely an alert mechanism that would detect the risk of non-respect of the rule during budget execution? ("real-time" is defined as quarterly or more frequent)

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

* 4.3.1 How often this is done:

* 4.3.2 Is there a monitoring report issued?:

* 4.3.3 Does the statutory base of the rule specify corrective actions to be taken during budget execution in case a risk of non-compliance with the rule is detected through the real-time alert mechanism?

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

SECTION 5: Consequences in case of deviation from the target of the rule

* 5.1 Please indicate which body is legally mandated to establish the existence of a deviation from the target of the rule (multiple-choice question):

- There is no body in charge
- Ministry of Finance
- Government body other than the Ministry of Finance
- Parliament
- Court of Auditors (if not acting as an IFI)
- Independent fiscal institution
- Body or review panel (other than the independent fiscal institution) specifically created for this purpose
- EU-level decision
- Other

* Government body other than the Ministry of Finance, please specify:

* Independent Fiscal Institution, please specify:

* Body or review panel (other than the Fiscal institution), please specify:

* EU-level decision, please specify:

* Other, please specify:

Additional information:

* 5.2 Does the annual budget document contain a reference to the numerical fiscal rule (multiple answers possible)?

- Yes, there is a chapter/paragraph devoted to compliance with the target of the rule for the forthcoming budget year (i.e. ex-ante compliance)
- Yes, there is a chapter/paragraph devoted to assess compliance with the target of the rule for the previous budget year(s) (i.e. ex-post compliance)
- Yes, there is cursory reference to the numerical fiscal rule and/or the implied target
- No

Additional information:

* 5.3. Are there pre-defined consequences in case of deviation (risk of deviation) from the target of the rule?

- Yes, the statutory base of the rule defines a correction mechanism in case of deviation from the target
- No, no correction mechanism is pre-defined
- Other (e.g. sanctions, reputational costs)

* Please specify

* 5.3.1. In case of a deviation (or risk of deviation) (multiple-replies possible):

- There are well-defined criteria, defined in the establishing act, to assess whether a correction mechanism should be triggered (e.g. in case of a deviation of x% from the target)
- There is a pre-defined timeline within which corrective measures need to be taken (e.g. corrective measures need to be adopted within 6 months of the occurrence of a deviation)
- None of the above

* Please specify

* 5.3.2 What best describes the nature of the corrective measures in case of deviation from the target of the rule?

- The government is obliged to present corrective measures before the parliament, whose nature and /or size and/or timeline is predetermined (e.g. cut in next year's resources by an amount proportional to the deviation)
- The government is obliged to present corrective measures before the parliament, but it can decide the nature, size and timeline of these measures

* Please specify the predetermined nature and/or size and/or timeline

* Please specify

Additional information:

SECTION 6: Independent production/ endorsement of the macroeconomic and budgetary forecasts

* 6.1 Is there an independent body which provides or is legally mandated to endorse the official macroeconomic and/or budgetary forecasts on which the annual budget is prepared?

Note: By endorsement it is understood an opinion issued by the independent body which validates/certifies the plausibility of the forecasts at budget planning phase, i.e. clearly stating whether the forecasts are realistic or not.

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

- an independent body providing or endorsing the official macroeconomic AND budgetary forecasts
- an independent body providing or endorsing the official macroeconomic OR budgetary forecasts

* Please give further details in relation to your answer above (i.e. the name of the body, exact responsibilities):

SECTION 7: Compliance with the target of the rule in 2016

NOTE: In this section the aim is to assess the extent to which the target of the rule (as defined in Q 2.15) was complied with in 2016 both ex-ante, i.e. at the adoption of the budget law for the budgetary year 2016, (the subject of questions 7.1) as well as ex-post, i.e. after the budget execution for budgetary year 2016 (the subject of questions 7.2).

* 7.0 Did the new rule introduced in 2016 have an impact on 2016 budget execution?

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

Additional information:

* 7.1 Was the budget law adopted for the budgetary year 2016 compliant with the rule?

- Yes
- No

* 7.1a Were any of the escape clauses defined in Section 2 triggered at the adoption of the budget law for budgetary year 2016?

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

* 7.1b Were there any flexibility provisions in the sense of COM Flexibility Communication taken into account in order to ensure compliance with the rule of the budget law adopted for budgetary year 2016?

See COM (2015) "Making the best use of the flexibility within the existing rules of the stability and growth pact". Note that flexibility is different from escape clauses (defined in question 2.27)

- Yes
 No

* Please specify the underlying document defining how flexibility should be taken into account.

* 7.1c Please give a quantitative assessment of compliance with the rule of the budget law adopted for the budgetary year 2016, consistent with the entries in section 2 on the target definition, unit of measurement, and numerical value of the target: (e.g., in case of a rule prescribing that the cyclically-adjusted general government deficit is not higher than 1.5% of GDP, please specify the cyclically-adjusted general government balance defined in the adopted budget law for the budgetary year 2016; in case of a rule prescribing that the growth rate of nominal expenditure does not exceed 1%, please specify the growth rate of nominal expenditure defined in the adopted budget law for the budgetary year 2016 etc.)

Additional information:

* 7.1d If the budget law for year 2016 was not compliant with the rule, please specify the main reason(s):

* 7.1e Was non-compliance of the budget law with the rule covered by the media?

Additional information:

* 7.2 Was the execution of the budget law for 2016 compliant with the rule?

- Yes
 No

*7.2a Were any of the escape clauses defined in Section 2 triggered during the execution of the budget for budgetary year 2016?

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

*7.2b Were there any flexibility provisions in the sense of COM Flexibility Communication taken into account in order to ensure compliance with the rule at the budget execution for budgetary year 2016?

See COM (2015) "Making the best use of the flexibility within the existing rules of the stability and growth pact". Note that flexibility is different from escape clauses (defined in question 2.27)

- Yes
- No

* Please specify the underlying document defining how flexibility should be taken into account.

Additional information:

*7.2c Please give a quantitative assessment of compliance with the rule in 2016 by budgetary outcomes, consistent with the entries in section 2 on the target definition, unit of measurement, and numerical value of the target: (e.g., in case of a rule prescribing that the cyclically-adjusted general government deficit is not higher than 1.5% of GDP, please specify the cyclically-adjusted general government balance achieved, in case of a rule prescribing that the growth rate of nominal expenditure does not exceed 1%, please specify the growth rate of nominal expenditure achieved etc.):

*7.2d If the execution of the budget was not compliant with the rule in 2016, please specify the main reason (s) (multiple replies possible):

- deviation between forecasted GDP and its realisation
- unexpected revenue shortfalls due to adverse macro-economic developments
- unexpected revenue shortfalls due to legislative changes
- unexpected mandatory spending obligations (e.g., new or amended legislation)
- unexpected urgent need for discretionary spending (e.g., disaster relief or war)
- unexpected interest increase on existing debt
- other

* deviation between forecasted GDP and its realisation, please specify:

* unexpected revenue shortfalls due to adverse macro-economic developments, please specify:

* unexpected revenue shortfalls due to legislative changes, please specify:

* unexpected mandatory spending obligations (e.g., new or amended legislation), please specify:

* unexpected urgent need for discretionary spending (e.g., disaster relief or war), please specify:

* unexpected interest increase on existing debt, please specify:

* other, please specify:

* 7.3 Please indicate the perceived nature of the constraint defined by the rule in 2016:

e.g. a debt target significantly higher than current debt level

- Compliance with the rule could be achieved easily.
- Compliance with the rule could be achieved with difficulty.

Additional information:

* 7.4 Was non-compliance of the budget execution with the rule well covered by the media?

- Non-compliance with the rule was closely covered by the media; there was a public debate
- Non-compliance with the rule was covered by the media but there was no public debate
- No or modest coverage by the media

Additional information:

* 7.5 Did non-compliance in 2016 have any impact on the 2017 budget preparation? (Please describe potential correction mechanisms, sanctions or corrective measures affecting 2017 budget preparation and any other relevant issues)

- Yes
- No

* Please specify:

7.6 Was compliance of budget execution with the rule well covered by the media?

- Compliance with the rule was closely covered by the media; there was a public debate
- Compliance with the rule was covered by the media but there was no public debate
- No or modest coverage by the media

Additional information:

SECTION 8: End of the questionnaire

* 8.1 Contact details of the respondent: Name, first name, position, department, institution, address, email, phone number.

8.2 Remarks/feedback concerning the questionnaire:

SECTION: Meta Information

Creation date:

Last update date

* Identifier of the questionnaire (please do not change this field):

