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Budgetary fund management in resource- constrained environments: Financing strategies



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Abstract In the process of European integration, it is necessary to implement economic reforms to ensure effective management of state finances. Changes in budgetary relations and the allocation of budget monetary resources are observed in connection with the process of decentralisation and transformation processes in the budgetary system. The aim of this article is to establish the significance of financing budget managers, even under resource constraints. The study focuses on the process of financing budget managers. The research methods employed include analysis, systemic-structural, comparative-legal, and dialectical methods. The results indicate that the current state and societal development necessitate the establishment of a strong and effective state economy. The financing of budget managers under resource constraints is a pertinent issue. Recent events in the country highlight that local budgets encounter various problems and inconsistencies, mainly due to limited financial resources, unclear expenditure powers between different levels of the budgetary system, inefficient spending models, and low investment capacity. Planning and executing local budgets' expenditure is a crucial aspect of budget policy that determines the effectiveness of local self-government bodies in fulfilling their functions and powers. Financial constraints of the state are especially significant in relation to the competence level of participants in the budget process, the ability to allocate budget funds rationally and in line with the priorities of budget policy, and the need to achieve maximum effect with minimal costs for socio-economic development. Proper use of local budgets requires evaluating financial procedures, monitoring the fulfilment of budgetary powers, assessing expected results, and accurately defining needs, among other factors. To address financial constraints, it is necessary to review and adjust budget expenditures and regulate the powers of local authorities regarding expenditure. Increasing spending by local budgets to complete their own responsibilities will enhance the investment aspect of local self-government budgets.

Keywords: budget managers, financing, budget, resource constraints, budgetary resources, budget system of Ukraine

1. Introduction

The management of socio-economic development in the state requires a strict policy for regional finances. Local self-government, as a part of civil society, plays a crucial role in modernizing and defining the purpose of budgets. This optimization of functioning and implementation of programs aims to improve territorial communities and enhance the welfare of the population.

Local budgets are a means of macroeconomic stabilization that contribute to economic stability and development. However, the limitation of budgetary resources for local self-government has led to a significant problem in their current development. This is because these resources are necessary for providing public services to the population and for the effective implementation of expenditures (Zharikov, et al., 2023).

To ensure the effective and full utilization of the powers defined by local self-government bodies, it is important to integrate progressive planning methods into the budgetary process for local budgets, particularly in conditions of resource constraints.

Currently, the study of financing managers of budget funds is of increased interest due to the relevance of the problem of effective management of state finances. Nowadays, when financial resources are limited, it is important to ensure their rational use and optimization of the budget process. Research in this direction will be useful for the development of effective financial management mechanisms, as well as for the modernization of the public administration system as a whole. Taking this into account, this study will contribute not only to increasing the efficiency of the use of budgetary resources and sustainable development of the economy not only at the regional, but also at the state level (Kachula et al., 2021).

2. Literature review

Scientific works by Kovalenko and Venher (2013) address questions regarding the definition of finance, money, and credit. Kachula, Pavlova, Lysiak, Dobrovolska, and Katan (2021) discuss issues related to the budgetary system, while Onyshchenko, Berezhna, and Filonych (2021) cover the budget mechanism, including methodological approaches and the practice of budget decentralization. Researchers investigate the development of the budget mechanism as a component of managing the activities of budget managers (Larikova, 2022), the functions of chief budget managers (Stepaniuk, 2017), and the accounting support of estimates by budget managers (Ksonzhyk, Petrov, 2020).

Scientific literature addresses the issues of directions in budgetary policy in conditions of limited financial resources. For example, Zharikov (2023) discusses this topic. Additionally, the legal status of military administrations as budget managers is also a topic of interest, as discussed by Shliakhov and Yakymchuk (2022).

The funding of budget managers is regulated by existing legislation. However, despite the numerous studies on the funding of budget managers, the question of their role and significance in resource-constrained conditions remains unanswered.

This article aims to determine the essence and significance of funding for budget managers, including in resource-constrained conditions.

3. Methods

In order to study the peculiarities of financing managers of budget funds, research methods such as analysis and comparative legal analysis were used in the study. The functions and powers of managers of budget funds, the specifics of using such funds for various local needs were investigated in detail using the system-structural method and the method of synthesis. At the same time, the dialectical method was used to investigate the conditions of resource limitation of financing managers of budget funds. The financing of managers of budget funds was studied by applying doctrinal analysis, economic forecasting and modeling to determine ways of its improvement. In addition, the method of expert evaluation can be used in this study. This method, based on statistical and analytical data, will help establish the specifics of experts' expert assessment of budget planning and analysis of the use of budget funds.

On the basis of the specified methods, it is possible to obtain comprehensive information about the financial activities of managers of budget funds, as well as to establish the specifics of their financing.

4. Results

In the context of socio-economic transformation, modernizing the domestic public finance management system is necessary to improve the efficiency of budget allocation. Effective mechanisms for the interaction of various components in resource utilization are required to achieve the targeted objectives of the economic system's functioning.

The state can regulate socio-economic processes in the country through budget expenditures. These expenses should be justified to achieve the goals and priorities of social development. The distribution of limited budgetary resources among the sectors of social development should be rational and aligned with the expenditure part of the budget, which should be driven by socio-economic processes that are in line with strategic development goals (Chuhunov, 2021).

The state sector of the economy can be more effectively managed through budget policy. The budget plays a crucial role in economic transformations, such as stabilising the economy, adapting to changes in the economic environment, and stimulating investment activities. Key factors to consider include the level of budget deficit, budget execution, debtor and creditor indebtedness, budget arrears, inflation, and fluctuations in currency exchange rates. Identifying and managing the strategic goals and directions of branch activities, budget managers, and necessary budget resources are crucial (Kostiukevych et al., 2020).

Budget planning is a fundamental aspect of state regulation of economic and social development. It can improve financial management processes and enhance the overall quality of budget policy development and implementation (Chuhunov, 2021). In situations where state financial resources are limited, fiscal policy can be a potent instrument for influencing socio-economic development (Zharikov, 2023).

The order of accounting and settlement of budget funds is determined by the specifics of Ukraine's budgetary system, considering its principles and legislative framework (Myskiv, 2020).

The Budget Code of Ukraine regulates the relations that arise during the process of budget drafting, estimation, approval of estimates, and consideration of reports. It also defines the methods, forms, and levers of their implementation. The content of these relations determines the movement of budget funds, intended to ensure that the authorities fulfil their duties and responsibilities throughout the budgetary period.

The main budget managers' effective execution of the budget is crucial for ensuring the functions and results of central authorities. Managing their activities largely depends on intelligent organization and appropriate methods of income and expenditure accounting.

The budgetary process in Ukraine follows a system where budget managers pre-distribute funds among respective main budget managers as budget allocations, which are then communicated to them as open appropriations (Soloviova, 2017).

Budgetary institutions receive funds from budgets at various levels, provided free of charge on non-repayable terms, to ensure socio-economic development and public administration.

Budget financing is a process based on justified spending, clear goals for fund utilization, budget execution planning, and effective control over expenditures (Kovalenko, 2013; levdokymov et al., 2018).

To regulate the economy, the state exercises various forms of influence. These include providing subsidies to organizations and the population, investing in them, and funding sectors that affect scientific and technological progress through budgetary funds.

Budgeting involves several processes, including the creation, implementation, monitoring and review of budgetary funds, which requires research to determine strategies for improving the efficiency of financial resources by key budget managers (Skorobohatova, 2023).

When analysing the features of funding budget managers, it is relevant to focus on the managers themselves.

Budget managers are responsible for implementing programs and activities funded by budgetary funds, which they are allocated.

During interactions with participants, it is recommended to concentrate on risk sources related to budget financing.

According to the Budget Code of Ukraine (2024) (see Figure 1), a budget manager is the head of a budget organization who is authorized to receive budget appropriations, budget commitments, long-term commitments in the field of energy supply, and medium-term commitments in healthcare, as well as to expend budgetary funds.

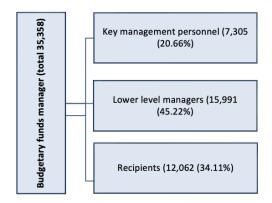


Figure 1 Managers of budget funds. Sourc: Budget for Citizens Portal, 2024.

An important issue arises regarding the investigation of budgetary mechanisms used by budget managers who receive funding from local budgets. It is important for them to be aware of reports from international institutions.

Due to the specific nature of budget management, the budgetary mechanism includes both tax and non-tax forms, interbudgetary transfers, state policies, methods of revenue mobilisation, and budgetary forms (Onyshchenko, Berezhna, Filonych, 2021).

Inter-budgetary relations are established among budget managers at different levels of administration through the budgetary mechanism, which is associated with inter-budgetary transfers and their effective utilisation (see Figure 2).

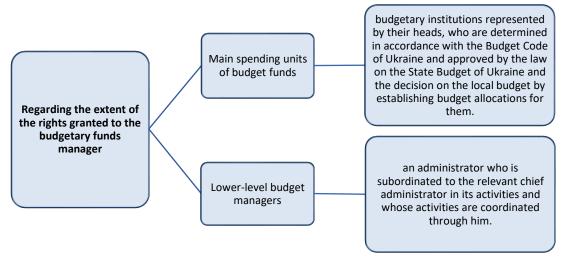


Figure 2 Managers of budget funds. Sourc: (Budget Code of Ukraine, 2024).

Research into the practical activities of the main managers of budget funds has allowed the identification and isolation of risks associated with budget financing:

- delay in approving budgets for subordinate budget managers;
- untimely preparation of budget program passports, leading to low quality and delayed approval;
- inability to ensure effective and targeted use of budget allocations;
- lack of management and coordination of work between main and subordinate budget managers and lower-level budgets;
- inability of budget managers and recipients to effectively control their responsibility for budget commitments;
- accounting for expenditures and errors in budget execution may impact the quality of reporting (Cabinet of Ministers Resolution "On Approval of the Procedure for Preparation, Review, Approval, and Basic Requirements for the Execution of Budget Estimates of Budgetary Institutions," Ministry of Finance of Ukraine Order "On Approval of the Procedure for Treasury Servicing of the State Budget for Expenses").

In accordance with current legal provisions governing budget expenditure, priority is given to minimizing financing risks for the main managers of available budget funds (Stepaniuk, 2017).

It is important to note that financial and legal regulation now covers a wider range of budgetary relations. The rise in state funding and the involvement of organizations in the replenishment, distribution, or utilization of these funds contribute to this phenomenon. To establish a unified registry of budget managers and recipients of budget funds, the main managers of these funds create corresponding networks of managers at a lower level (Romanenko, 2013).

When investigating budget resources, it is important to consider two different positions: one as part of state budget policy and the other separately from individual budget managers.

Our country is facing budgetary problems in the process of efficiently redistributing limited budget funds, especially in modern times. The Reserve Fund, which manages the state budget, is currently the main control tool. Recently, the Verkhovna Rada introduced changes to the State Budget of Ukraine to increase its size. In compliance with government directives, monetary resources from the reserve fund are regularly allocated, with particular attention given to supporting the Ministry of National Defence and other ministries (Larikova, 2022; Kryvokhyzha et al., 2023).

Therefore, budget managers are required to reduce or cancel budgetary and financial commitments that exceed allocations for the general fund, special fund (providing loans), and budget funds. This is achieved through various methods, such as decreasing the funding allocated to each category (Procedure for Registering and Accounting for Budgetary Commitments by Budget Managers and Recipients of Budget Funds in the State Treasury Service of Ukraine, 2023).

5. Discussions

In line with current circumstances, especially during times of war, it is essential to guarantee the swift, thorough, and uninterrupted implementation of local budgets.

To safeguard the budgetary capacity and address the essential requirements of the population of a territorial community during a state of war, the Presidency of the President of Ukraine, the Government, the Verkhovna Rada, the National Security and Defence Council (NSDC), and other bodies will also collaborate (Onyshchuk, 2022).

A budget is a plan for the allocation and use of financial resources to ensure the implementation of tasks and functions of state authorities (Kovalevych, 2013).

The relationship between revenues and expenditures is closely intertwined. The adequacy of the budget is influenced by economic indicators of regional development and is only partially covered by revenues. In contrast, budget expenditures affect the economic needs of production, improve efficiency, accelerate scientific and technological progress, and increase budget revenues. Therefore, budget expenditures play an active role in influencing economic processes and contributing to GDP and national income growth. The budget expenditures play a crucial role in regulating the funding of priority economies, non-procurement sectors, optimizing the structure of material production, and addressing regional financial disparities. Furthermore, the infrastructure of the general market is reliant on budgetary allocations (Explanations for communities: features of executing local budgets in case of their delayed approval, 2023).

In the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the primary objective of budget policy regarding state and local budgets, as well as interbudgetary relations, is to fund essential areas such as internal affairs, defence, and social welfare (Financing security and defence from local budgets: ways and grounds for this, 2023).

The legal framework of a state of war introduces a new dimension to existing legal relationships and content. The creation of new institutions is currently in progress, with a primary focus on fulfilling national security and defence objectives.

It is important to pay attention to specialised organisations, such as military administrations, on this path. Military administrations are established in accordance with the provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law" through relevant decrees issued by the President of Ukraine.

When studying and analysing the legal status of military administrations as managers of budgetary funds, it is important to note that local administrations, such as regional, district, and Kyiv city administrations, have temporarily taken on a new form as military administrations. These military administrations have been granted additional powers regarding tasks or duties (Shliakhov, 2022). The chief of the military administration is designated as the manager of budgetary funds in accordance with

the fourth paragraph of the sixth part of Article 15 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law" (Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law").

The legal status of military administrations in relation to their role as budget managers and their legal or financial stability is unclear. Normative legal acts that establish the rights and obligations of budget entities are typically referred to as budgetary powers. It should be noted that 'budgetary allocations' refer to the authority granted to the budget manager by the budgetary authority, with adherence to quantitative, temporal, and target restrictions on making budgetary payments and commitments (Shliakhov, 2022; Makarenko et al., 2023).

In 2023, over 1 trillion hryvnias were allocated for defence, and over 417 billion hryvnias for social protection and social security (Budget for Citizens Portal). Ukraine makes significant efforts to secure international financial assistance and recover allocated budgetary funds. The World Bank has supported an agreement to finance humanitarian and civil aid.

Budget expenditures include a significant portion of funds for social insurance payments to Ukrainians. The projected state budget for providing social assistance to the population in 2023 is 163.1 billion hryvnias. This is an increase of 12.4 billion hryvnias from 2022 and 51.8 billion hryvnias from 2021 (Ministry of Finance Budget Policy).

The allocation of budgetary funds is closely linked to the fulfilment of assigned tasks, such as regulating social reproduction, meeting the needs of the population, governing the state, maintaining law and order, strengthening national defence, promoting international cooperation, and protecting the environment. State initiatives often result in various models of fund allocation, which are concentrated in the centralised fund of state monetary resource.

Budgetary funds are limited not only by their nominal value, but also by two other factors: the level of decisions made regarding expenditure needs and the efficiency of using budgetary resources.

The budget plays a crucial role in both market relations and the implementation of state policy. Specifically, as a financial category, it is aimed at providing financial resources for the functions of the state. The budget is a social document as it supplies additional funding for societal needs and intents to balance these needs with financial resources within their constraints (Zharikov, 2023).

The efficient execution of budgets for public sector entities is a crucial task for budget managers. Rational organization and appropriate accounting methods for revenues and expenditures are used to manage their activities (Soloviova, 2017).

The fund of the budget manager is the primary planning document that authorizes the budgetary institution to receive income and incur expenses. The aim is to achieve the defined annual objectives in accordance with budgetary allocations by establishing the volumes and directions of financing (Ksonzhyk, Petrov, 2020).

The functioning of administratively separated regions is based on the income of the budget, which ensures the fulfilment of the state's functions and the responsibilities of local authorities. However, it also serves as a mechanism for redistributing financial resources between the state and its administrative-territorial units. Financial regulation of simple and expanded reproduction is a significant aspect of state regulation. It focuses on the income generated within the reproductive system.

The participation of administrative-territorial units in creating the value of the national product, the distribution of financial resources between levels of governance based on their legal principles, and the circulation of local resources are factors that limit inflows to the budget.

The budget enables the state to redistribute funds for social security, ensure employment, and support other activities. Fixating financial resources in budgets has become a significant obstacle to creating favourable economic conditions for business operations.

6. Conclusions

As managers of state and local budget funds, investors are responsible for determining the direction of international financial resources and their allocation. Their choices ascertain potential opportunities for economic development, as assistance can contribute to growth and create the necessary infrastructure to encourage international aid.

The quality of relationships between budget managers at different levels, their cooperation with foreign partners and other stakeholders, and their impact on state and local budgets through increased international aid are crucial factors in achieving a better budget mechanism.

Regulating interbudgetary relations stimulates the redistribution of funds to meet the needs of territorial communities in the region, considering any weak or moderate economic potential. Achieving an equilibrium between budget revenues and expenditures is crucial at all levels of budget management. This is particularly important in laying the foundations for market management.

The primary objective of modern budget policy is to balance the budget in conditions of limited financial resources, both at the state and local levels. Budget regulation not only specifies the ratio of revenues and expenditures of local budgets but also addresses issues of financial equalization. Due to differences in financial capabilities and revenue bases, there are always disparities in meeting local needs among individual territories in each country.

The number of population in administrative-territorial units can significantly affect the expenditures of local budgets. Based on the above, improving budget execution necessitates new methods for optimizing its functional and organizational structure to ensure effective management of local budget resources.

Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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