

Public Finance Monitor

April 2017

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General Overview

Government finances saw a strong year-on-year improvement in the first four months of 2017, as a correction in primary expenditures from 2016, along with higher revenue collections put the primary balance at a surplus of LL 942 billion compared to a deficit of LL 228 billion in Jan-Apr 2016. The **total fiscal deficit** narrowed by around 48% to LL 1,273 billion. Expenditures dropped by around 9 percent compared to their 2016 level when transfers amounting to LL 592 billion had been made on a one-off basis to municipalities¹. Revenues on the other hand increased with higher tax and non-tax receipts, supported by an uptick in economic activity, discrepancies in the timing of collection, and administrative efforts by the Ministry of Finance to improve collections.

Table 1: Summary of Fiscal Performance

(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	2017 Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
Total Budget and Treasury Receipts	5,012	5,555	10.8%
Total Budget and Treasury Payments, of which	7,474	6,828	-8.6%
•Interest Payments	2,174	2,154	-0.9%
 Concessional loans principal payment¹ 	60	62	3.8%
•Primary Expenditures ²	5,240	4,613	-12.0%
Total (Deficit)/Surplus	-2,462	-1,273	-48.3%
Primary (Deficit)/Surplus	-228	942	-

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)

Revenues

Total revenues rose by 11 percent to reach LL 5,555 billion in Jan-Apr 2017, up from LL 5,012 billion in the same period of 2016.

Tax revenues increased by LL 361 billion to LL 3,990 billion accounting for two-thirds of the rise in total revenues. **Taxes on income**, profits and capital gains rose by LL 104 billion. Income tax on capital gains and dividends and tax on interest income added LL 25 billion each, while income tax on profits rose by LL 26 billion.

Taxes on property rose by LL 86 billion mainly with real estate registration fees and built property tax rising by around 22 percent each.

Domestic taxes on goods and services rose by LL 146 billion with value added tax rising by LL 99 billion, private car registration fees by LL 8 billion, and passenger departure tax by LL 19 billion.

Taxes on International Trade increased by LL 17 billion driven by a slight increase in excises (LL 13 billion), in addition to a minor increase in customs by LL 4 billion.

Non-tax revenues increased by LL 214 billion (20.5 percent) rising from LL 1,043 billion in Jan-Apr 2016 to LL 1,257 billion in Jan-Apr 2017. Revenues from Port of Beirut reached LL 143 billion, constituting two-thirds of the increase in non-tax revenues. Administrative fees and charges increased by LL 61 billion in Jan-Apr 2017. Vehicle

¹ Includes only Principal repayments of concessional loans earmarked for project financing

² Primary expenditures exclude debt related payments (Interest payments and Concessional loans principal repayment)

¹ In 2014, the Treasury collected an estimated LL 739 billion of telecom revenues on behalf of municipalities (of which LL 636 billion in arrears for the period 2010-2013). In Jan-Apr 2016, around LL 592 billion of those were transferred back to municipalities.



control fees more than doubled to LL 160 billion, as fees pending from 2016 were collected in early 2017.

Expenditure

Total expenditures recorded a considerable decrease of LL 645 billion (8.6 percent), a decline from LL 7,474 billion in Jan-Apr 2016 to LL 6,828 billion in Jan-Apr 2017.

Current primary expenditures² rose by LL 63 billion, reaching LL 3,795 billion in Jan-Apr 2017, as a result of increases (a) in transfers to EDL by LL 229 billion, (b) in Salaries, Wages and Social benefits by LL 94 billion, (b) in Retirement compensation by LL 30 billion (c) in transfers to Higher Council of Relief by LL 20 billion, and (d) in transfers to Directorate General of Cereals and Beetroot by LL 15 billion.

These increases were partly counterbalanced by (i) a significant drop of LL115 billion in transfers to hospitals, (ii) a LL 47 billion decrease in contributions to non-public sector, (iii) a LL 15 billion decrease in transfers to Public Institutions to cover salaries, and (iv) a decline in transfers of NSSF by LL 20 billion.

Capital expenditures increased by LL5 billion in Jan-Apr 2017, primarily due to (i) a LL 23 billion increase in construction in progress mainly driven by a LL 35 billion rise in transfers to CDR. In contrast, maintenance costs decreased by LL 11 billion reaching LL 72 billion in Jan-Apr 2017 and other expenditures related to fixed capital assets recorded a LL 6 billion decrease.

Treasury expenditures witnessed a significant drop of LL 651 billion to reach LL 304 billion in Jan-Apr 2017, mainly due to lower payments to Municipalities – from LL 757 billion in Jan-Apr 2016 to LL 86 billion in Jan-Apr 2017.

Public Debt

Gross public debt reached LL 115,979 billion end of April 2017, increasing by LL 3,069 billion (2.7 percent) from end-2016. Net debt increased by a lower 1.4 percent as public sector deposits rose by LL 1,686 billion (11.8 percent).

Local currency debt amounted to LL 70,923 billion from LL 70,528 billion (0.6 percent). Local Currency Debt holdings by the Commercial banks increased by LL 2,602 billion, whereas Central Banks' holdings decreased by LL 2,166 billion. Local currency debt holdings by Public Entities decreased by LL92 billion (1.1 percent) to reach LL 8,626 billion in Apr 2017.

The stock of **foreign currency debt** grew by the equivalent of LL 2,674 billion to LL 45,056 billion (6.3 percent), mostly owing to an increase in Market-Issue Bonds by LL 2,283 billion, a LL 272 billion increase in Bilateral, Multilateral and Foreign Private Sector Loans and a LL 258 billion in accrued interest on Eurobonds. Paris II and Paris III related bonds and loans decreased by LL 68 billion and LL 46 billion respectively.

² Current primary expenditures represent current expenditures excluding interest payments and debt service.



Table 2: Total Revenues

(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	•	
Budget Revenues, of which	4,671	5,246	12.3%
Tax Revenues	3,628	3,990	10.0%
Non-Tax Revenues	1,043	1,257	20.5%
Treasury Receipts	341	309	-9.4%
Total Revenues	5,012	5,555	10.8%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)

Table 3: Tax Revenues

(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	2017 Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
Tax Revenues:	3,628	3,990	10.0%
Taxes on Income, Profits, & Capital Gains, of which	943	1,047	11.0%
Income Tax on Profits	219	245	11.9%
Income Tax on Wages and Salaries	362	379	4.7%
Income Tax on Capital Gains & Dividends	59	84	43.2%
Tax on Interest Income (5%)	282	307	8.9%
Penalties on Income Tax	21	32	47.8%
Taxes on Property, of which:	472	558	18.3%
Built Property Tax	152	185	21.9%
Real Estate Registration Fees	255	312	22.3%
Domestic Taxes on Goods & Services, of which:	1,378	1,524	10.6%
Value Added Tax	1,239	1,338	7.9%
Other Taxes on Goods and Services, of which:	115	141	22.9%
Private Car Registration Fees	71	78	10.6%
Passenger Departure Tax	43	62	43.6%
Taxes on International Trade, of which:	659	675	2.5%
Customs	226	230	1.8%
Excises, of which:	433	445	2.9%
Gasoline Excise	215	213	-1.0%
Tobacco Excise	73	77	5.4%
Cars Excise	143	154	7.5%
Other Tax Revenues (namely fiscal stamp fees)	176	185	5.1%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)



Table 4: Non-Tax Revenue

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(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	2017 Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
Non-Tax Revenues	1,043	1,257	20.5%
Income from Public Institutions and Government Properties, of which	675	853	26.4%
Income from Non-Financial Public Enterprises, of which:	560	734	31.0%
Revenues from Casino Du Liban	36	40	12.2%
Revenues from Port of Beirut	0	143	-
Budget Surplus of National Lottery	0	1	-
Transfer from the Telecom Surplus	524	549	4.8%
Transfer from Public Financial Institution (BDL)	61	61	-0.6%
Property Income (namely rent of Rafic Hariri International Airport)	51	56	10.3%
Other Income from Public Institutions (interests)	3	2	-14.8%
Administrative Fees & Charges, of which:	277	338	21.9%
Administrative Fees, of which:	216	290	34.5%
Notary Fees	12	12	2.8%
Passport Fees/ Public Security	86	88	1.6%
Vehicle Control Fees	77	160	108.3%
Judicial Fees	11	10	-3.7%
Driving License Fees	7	7	6.5%
Administrative Charges	20	15	-28.0%
Sales (Official Gazette and License Number)	1	1	11.9%
Permit Fees (mostly work permit fees)	33	27	-19.2%
Other Administrative Fees & Charges	7	5	-22.8%
Penalties & Confiscations	16	12	-27.7%
Other Non-Tax Revenues (mostly retirement deductibles)	75	54	-27.4%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)



SECTION **2: E**XPENDITURE **O**UTCOME

Table 5: Expenditure by Economic Classification

Table 5: Expenditure by Economic Classification	2016	2017	% Change
(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
1. Current Expenditures	5,966	6,011	0.8%
1.a Personnel Cost, of which	2,479	2,585	4.3%
Salaries, Wages and Related Items	1,667	1,761	5.6%
Retirement and End of Service Compensations, of which:	686	712	3.8%
Retirement	591	620	5 . 1%
End of Service	95	92	-3.8%
Transfers to Public Institutions to Cover Salaries	126	112	-11.6%
1.b Interest Payments 1/, of which:	2,174	2,154	-0.9%
Domestic Interest Payments	1,544	1,541	-0.2%
Foreign Interest Payments	630	613	-2.7%
1.c Accounting Adjustments 2/	43	0	-100.0%
1.d Foreign Debt Principal Repayment	60	62	3.8%
1.e Materials and Supplies, of which:	138	147	6.7%
Nutrition	23	24	5.9%
Fuel Oil	14	14	-4.8%
Medicaments	72	83	15.8%
1.f External Services	59	49	-15.8%
1.g Various Transfers, of which:	646	768	19.0%
EDL 3/	317	546	72.2%
NSSF	20	0	-100.0%
Higher Council of Relief	1	21	-
Contributions to non-public sectors	101	55	-46.1%
Transfers to Directorate General of Cereals and Beetroot 4/	0	15	-
1.h Other Current, of which: Hospitals Others(judgments & reconciliations, mission costs, other)1.i Interest Subsidy	325 275 48 43	207 160 44 39	-36.4% -41.9% -9.4% -9.0%
2. Capital Expenditures	381	386	1.3%
2.a Acquisitions of Land, Buildings, for the Construction of	0	0	-
Roads, Ports, Airports, and Water Networks	U	U	-
2.b Equipment	29	28	-5.3%
2.c Construction in Progress, of which:	223	246	10.3%
Displaced Fund	0	0	-
Council of the South	11	13	22.6%
CDR	81	116	43.4%
Ministry of Public Work and Transport	47	51	7.9%
Other of which:	81	61	-24.3%
Higher Council of Relief	2	6	175.0%
2.d Maintenance	84	72	-13.6%
2.e Other Expenditures Related to Fixed Capital Assets	45	40	-12.2%
3. Budget Advances 5/	120	97	-18.8%
4. Customs Administration (exc. Salaries and Wages) 6/	48	29	-39.2%
5. Treasury Expenditures 7/	955	304	-68.1%
Municipalities	757	86	-88.6%
Guarantees	23	41	79.3%
Deposits 8/	53	91 86	69.6%
Other, of which:	122	86 60	-29 . 3%
VAT Refund 6. Unclassified Expenditures	89 2	69 0	-22.1% -100.0%
7. Total Expenditures (Excluding CDR Foreign Financed)			-100 . 0%
/ Total Experiultures (Excluding CDK Foreign Financed)	7,474	6,828	-8.6%



Source: Statement of Account 36, Cashier Spending, Public Debt Department Figures, Fiscal Performance Gross Adjustment Figures

1/ For a detailed breakdown of interest payments, kindly refer to table 6.

2/ It is worth noting that amounts of LL41.4 billion in coupons and 1.9 billion in discounted interest payments due on 31/12/2015 were recorded in the accounting system on 2/1/2016.

3/ For a detailed breakdown of transfers to EDL, kindly refer to table 7. EDL has been reclassified to various transfers from "other treasury expenditures", following the reclassification of the 2009 Budget Proposal and in line with the Fiscal Performance.

4/ Transfers to Directorate General of Cereals and Beetroot include both administrative expenses and payments for wheat subsidy.

5/ Budget Advances were previously classified under "other". Given their growth, and in line with the Ministry of Finance's efforts to ensure transparency, they will be published in a separate line. They will be regularized at a later stage, and it is only after their regularization that they can be classified according to their economic nature in the budget system.

6/ Customs administrations include payments - excluding salaries and wages - made to customs and paid from customs cashiers. They can only be classified after Customs submit the supporting documents to the Directorate General of Finance. 7/Starting December 2011, the Treasury expenditures section in the monthly , quarterly and yearly reports and its corresponding figures differ from the eponym section appearing in the Fiscal performance reports published by the Ministry of Finance because of the reclassification affecting certain payments from guarantees and treasury advances accounts which are manually reclassified in their budgetary economic classification articles.

8/ Deposit payments are payments made by the treasury to public administrations, institutions, municipalities, funds, from revenues it has collected on their behalf.

Table 6: Details of Debt Service Transactions¹

(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	2017 Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
Interest Payments	2,174	2,154	-0.9%
Local Currency Debt	1,544	1,541	-0.2%
Foreign Currency Debt, of which:	630	613	-2.7%
Eurobond Coupon Interest*	604	588	-2.6%
Special bond Coupon Interest*	1	1	-13.3%
Concessional Loans Interest Payments	24	24	-3.2%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)

Table 7: Transfers to EDL¹

(LL billion)	2016 Jan-Apr	2017 Jan-Apr	% Change 2017/2016
EDL, of which:	317	546	72.2%
Debt Service	8	7	-15.2%
Reimbursement for purchase of Natural Gas, Fuel & Gas Oil	309	539	74.5%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)

⁽¹⁾ Please note that the classification of debt service expenditures is now broken into two separate categories as follows: Interest Payments (as per GFS classification) and repayment of principal on concessional loans earmarked for project financing.

^{*} Includes general expenses related to the transaction

⁽¹⁾ Prior to 2005, transfers to EDL were recorded under the line item "treasury expenditures", because they were paid through treasury advances based on decrees issued by the Council of Ministers. Starting 2005, transfers to EDL were included in the yearly budget as an allocation classified as a loan. In 2009, the said budget item was reclassified to become a subsidy to the electricity company rather than a treasury. In the fiscal performance, transfers to cover EDL's gas and fuel oil remained classified under "treasury expenditures" until August 2010 when it was reclassified under "budget expenditures". This reclassification, however, was not reflected in the 2010 PFM issues to avoid a disruption in the series and in order to keep the figures published in the PFM throughout 2010 consistent and comparable. Since January 2011, EDL transfers are reclassified under "budget expenditures".



SECTION 3: PUBLIC DEBT

Table 8: Public Debt Outstanding by Holder as of End-April 2017

(LL billion)	Dec-15	Dec-16	Apr-17	% Change Apr 17- Dec 16
Gross Public Debt	106,031	112,910	115,979	2.7%
Local Currency Debt	65,195	70,528	70,923	0.6%
* Accrued Interest Included in Debt	997	1,098	1,237	12.7%
a. Central Bank (Including REPOs)	24,308	30,150	27,984	-7.2%
b. Commercial Banks	29,878	29,581	32,183	8.8%
c. Other Local Currency Debt (T-bills), of which:	11,009	10,797	10,756	-0.4%
Public Entities	8,461	8,718	8,626	-1.1%
Contractor bonds 1/	180	139	139	0.0%
Foreign Currency Debt 2/	40,836	42,382	45,056	6.3%
a. Bilateral, Multilateral and Foreign Private Sector Loans	2,479	2,506	2,778	10.8%
b. Paris II Related Debt (Eurobonds and Loans) 3/	1,182	631	564	-10.7%
c. Paris III Related Debt (Eurobonds and Loans) 4/	810	660	614	-7.0%
d. Market-Issued Eurobonds	35,846	38,063	40,346	6.0%
e. Accrued Interest on Eurobonds	435	458	716	56.3%
f. Special T-bills in Foreign Currency 5/	68	63	38	-39.7%
Public Sector Deposits	13,227	14,268	15,954	11.8%
Net Debt 6/	92,788	98,642	100,025	1.4%
Gross Market Debt 7/	68,799	70,303	75,473	7.4%
% of Total Debt	65%	62%	65%	4.5%

Source: Ministry of Finance (MOF), Directorate General of Finance (DGF)

(1) Contractor bonds issued in LBP. Contractor bonds issued in USD are listed under "Special T-bills in foreign currency".

⁽²⁾ Figures for Dec 15- Dec 16 may differ from previously published data due to updated information regarding bilateral and multilateral loans in the DMFAS system.

⁽³⁾ Paris II related debt (Eurobonds and Loans) including a Eurobond originally issued at USD 1,870 billion to BDL in the context of the Paris II conference.

⁽⁴⁾ Eurobonds Issued to Malaysia as part of its Paris III contribution, IBRD loan, UAE loan, first and second tranches of the French loan received in February 2008.

⁽⁵⁾ Special Tbs in foreign currency (expropriation and contractor bonds).

⁽⁶⁾ Net Debt is obtained by subtracting Public Sector Deposits from Gross Public Debt.

⁽⁷⁾ Gross market debt equals gross debt less the portfolios of the BDL, NSSF, bilateral and multilateral loans, Paris II and Paris III related debt.





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