

Project title	Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning (PEMPAL)
General information	Region: Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Duration: 2008 to 2012 Budget (total for program): USD 4.8 million (SECO: USD 975'000; other donors include GIZ, OECD and Russia) Website: www.pempal.org
Project partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional partner: ministries of finance • Implementing partner: World Bank, Center of Excellence in Finance (CEF)
Project objectives	PEM PAL is a network of practitioners in public finance in countries of the ECA region. The objective of the network is to share experience and promote peer-learning on reform implementation in key areas of public financial management through communities of practice (CoPs) in budgeting, treasury and internal audit, thus contributing to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of public expenditures.
Background	<p>The ECA region comprises a diverse group of countries that all have undergone dramatic changes since the early 1990s, as they have moved from socialism toward market economies. Since then, governments had undertaken significant economic and fiscal reforms. As a result of the global financial and economic crisis, macroeconomic and fiscal stability risks have increased and growth prospects have worsened. Thus, prudent public finance management that ensures the strategic allocation of public resources and efficient and effective delivery of public services remains critical for medium-term fiscal sustainability.</p> <p>The program responds to the concerns that many governments are not spending their resources as effectively and transparently as they should and that institutional controls on public expenditures are still weak. The motivation for peer-assisted learning was based on the observation that knowledge that has been learned from peers is much more easily retained than knowledge gained in traditional classroom settings.</p> <p>The program is open to all countries of the ECA region. All countries in the South Caucasus are participating members of the three CoPs.</p>
Project activities	<p>The following activities are carried out under the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing, on-demand learning and knowledge sharing activities centered around the three CoPs • Study visits aimed at improving the public finance management systems through interaction and discussion both in the beneficiary and host institutions • Plenary PEM PAL meetings that bring together all the participating countries and the donors of the program to discuss specific topics of general interest
Project results	<p>Since its inception, PEM PAL has introduced several innovative features and is often cited as a show case for peer-learning. The last evaluation in 2008 showed that results were positive and confirmed that PEMPAL was a valuable network for peer-learning in the area of public expenditure, PFM accountability and the mainstreaming of the PEFA approach in the region.</p> <p>PEM PAL continued to grow strongly since its inception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2011 418 participants from 21 countries, plus 49 resource persons and 59 speakers participated to seven meetings held in six countries and at two study visits. This is up from 178 PEM PAL participants in 2010 and 160 in 2009. • PEM PAL's website registered 10,459 visits with 1'027 pages viewed 38,344 times. For comparison, there were 6,318 visits in 210 and 3,062 visits in 2009. The website was further developed as a tool for collaborative learning, with a virtual library a glossary of terms and a PEM PAL wiki.