

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six

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What are important decision-making opportunities in Italy's annual budget process?

Overall ODA levels are set in spring; allocations to countries are made following budget approval

- Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) develops the three-year budgetary guidelines:** From February to April each year, the government develops the Economic and Financial Document (DEF), which sets a three-year framework for economic and budgetary planning; over the past years, the document has also outlined estimates of the share of GNI dedicated to ODA for the next three years. Key decision-makers in this process are the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The DEF is presented to the Parliament by April 10 each year for the approval of both houses.
- Government develops the budget draft:** From July to September, the Cabinet develops the budget draft, in which suggested ODA increases need to be protected. Key stakeholders include the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, and the Prime Minister. As budget negotiations between the government and parliament start prior to the presentation of the draft budget in

mid-October, engaging MPs over this period of time may prove effective for advocacy purposes.

- Parliament examines, amends, and votes on budget draft:** Parliamentary budget discussions run from October to December. The Budget committees of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate set the final budget bill, and the Foreign Affairs committees of both houses give recommendations on amendments to the bill. Members of these committees are thus key stakeholders to engage when it comes to budget allocations. The full parliament votes on the budget by the end of December.

The budget cycle in 2018 will diverge from the above timeline, given the general elections in March 2018.

In addition to the regular budget process, the government usually issues a decree known as the 'one thousand extension decree' ('milleproroghe') at the end of December. It uses this decree to finance additional measures in the next budget year, relating to any budgetary issue. Parliament examines and may amend the decree from January to February. This may provide additional opportunities to influence the ODA budget.

