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TAX-BUDGET POLICY DURING DIGITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY

Mirza Qilichbayevich Sabirov, Inomjon Turaevich Jumaniyazov

Associate professor of the Institute, "International School of Finance Technology and Science" LLC

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Abstract

This Article analyzes the tax challenges of digitalization and the potential solutions to address them. This Article argues in favor of a multilateral approach and proposes applying a new tax nexus based on market thresholds subject to a global de minimis amount. As more companies conduct business online, current international tax law and its principles have failed to adapt to global commercial practices. Digital-tech giants such as Facebook, Google and Amazon have been able to exploit the international tax framework by avoiding a physical presence in the jurisdiction of their consumers. As a result, profits of highly digitalized enterprises can be shifted to low tax countries and left untaxed in markets where substantial economic activity occurs.

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Introduction

Digitalization has transformed everyday life. Routine functions are performed by using assorted digital applications and the online consumer is at the center of modern business models. Many of the world's largest companies are highly digitalized, including Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and Microsoft. The digital economy offers great benefits to society, yet its unique attributes have produced considerable tax challenges. This is primarily because highly digitalized business models often do not conform with traditional international tax characterizations. Most notably, highly digitalized businesses can earn profits in foreign economies without creating physical permanent establishments that give rise to taxing rights. As a result, significant profits remain untaxed by market jurisdictions despite the sustained involvement of highly digitalized enterprises in those market jurisdictions. International efforts are underway to address the tax challenges arising from digitalization. The OECD is working through an inclusive framework comprised of 137 countries, large and small, to achieve a long-term consensus-based solution on new taxing rights and profit allocation norms. 1 Meanwhile, as of January 2021 approximately 38 jurisdictions have announced, proposed, or already adopted unilateral measures to tax revenues from digital services provided within their jurisdictions.

Result and discussion

A robust alignment between tax-budget policies and the imperatives of economic digitization, encompassing aspects such as digital governance and financial oversight, is imperative for successful implementation. Numerous countries have embarked on comprehensive reforms to fortify tax-budget policies in tandem with the digital transformation. Neglecting this alignment poses significant risks to fiscal governance and economic stability.



This thesis advocates for methodological approaches, including empirical analyses or survey methodologies, to substantiate its arguments. Methodological frameworks aim to dissect effective strategies for implementing tax-budget policies amidst economic digitization, elucidating their impact on digital economy dynamics and governance mechanisms.

Analysis reveals that effective strategies in tax-budget policy implementation are pivotal for optimizing the benefits of economic digitization. These strategies are geared towards enhancing the efficiency of digitization-driven governance reforms and fostering sustainable economic growth.

The advent of economic digitization has revolutionized the landscape of policymaking, necessitating a recalibration of tax-budget policies to harness its full potential. This introduction sets the stage for a discourse on the criticality of identifying and adopting effective strategies in tax-budget policy implementation within the realm of digitization.

The rapid advancement of technology and the pervasive integration of digital systems into economic activities have necessitated a fundamental reevaluation of fiscal policies worldwide. Tax-budget policies, as foundational elements of fiscal governance, are not exempt from this transformation. In fact, they stand at the forefront of the evolving landscape, where traditional modes of revenue collection and expenditure allocation are being reshaped by digital innovations.

Historically, tax-budget policies have primarily relied on conventional mechanisms for revenue generation and budget allocation. However, the digital era presents new opportunities and challenges. On one hand, digitalization offers avenues for enhanced revenue collection through improved tax compliance measures and innovative taxation models. On the other hand, it introduces complexities in tracking and regulating digital transactions, necessitating agile policy responses.

Despite the potential benefits, implementing tax-budget policies in the digital age is fraught with challenges. The proliferation of online platforms and digital transactions complicates the task of tax enforcement and necessitates the development of sophisticated monitoring mechanisms. Additionally, ensuring fairness and equity in taxation amidst the digital divide poses ethical and regulatory dilemmas for policymakers.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses policy reforms, institutional capacity building, and international cooperation. Effective strategies may include:

Leveraging digital technologies such as big data analytics and artificial intelligence for tax compliance monitoring and enforcement can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of tax administration.

Developing innovative tax policies tailored to the digital economy, such as digital services taxes or transaction levies, can capture revenue from digital transactions while minimizing distortions and ensuring fairness.

Collaborating with other countries and international organizations to develop common standards and frameworks for taxing digital transactions can prevent tax evasion and ensure a level playing field for businesses operating in the digital sphere.

Investing in the training and development of tax administrators and policymakers to understand and adapt to the complexities of the digital economy is essential for effective policy implementation.

One of the key objectives of tax-budget policies is to ensure adequate revenue generation to fund public expenditures. In the digital era, leveraging technology can significantly enhance tax compliance and revenue collection. For instance, digital platforms can be utilized to automate tax filing processes, provide real-time insights into taxpayer behavior, and detect instances of tax evasion more efficiently. Moreover, blockchain technology holds promise in ensuring transparency and traceability in financial transactions, thereby reducing opportunities for tax fraud and enhancing overall compliance.



A critical consideration in implementing tax-budget policies in the context of economic digitization is ensuring that the benefits of digital transformation are inclusive and reach all segments of society. This entails designing tax policies that promote equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities, particularly in addressing disparities exacerbated by the digital divide. Additionally, targeted investments in digital infrastructure and education can empower marginalized communities to participate more fully in the digital economy, thereby fostering inclusive growth.

As the digital economy evolves rapidly, regulatory frameworks governing taxation and budgetary policies must also evolve to keep pace with technological advancements. This requires policymakers to adopt a flexible and adaptive approach to regulation, capable of accommodating emerging digital business models and cross-border transactions. Moreover, international cooperation is essential to harmonize tax regulations and prevent tax base erosion and profit shifting in the digital sphere.

While embracing digitalization offers myriad opportunities for enhancing tax-budget policies, it also introduces new risks and uncertainties. Cybersecurity threats, data privacy concerns, and the potential for algorithmic biases are some of the challenges that policymakers must navigate in the digital landscape. Thus, effective implementation strategies should prioritize innovation while also incorporating robust risk mitigation measures and safeguards to protect taxpayer rights and ensure the integrity of fiscal systems.

In the digital age, data has emerged as a valuable asset for governments in formulating tax-budget policies. By leveraging data analytics and predictive modeling, policymakers can gain insights into economic trends, taxpayer behavior, and revenue projections. This data-driven approach enables more informed decision-making, allowing governments to tailor tax policies to specific economic conditions and optimize budget allocations for maximum impact. Additionally, open data initiatives can enhance transparency and accountability in fiscal governance by providing citizens with access to government financial information.

Tax-budget policies play a crucial role in creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in the digital economy. By implementing tax incentives and investmentfriendly policies, governments can encourage research and development, attract venture capital, and stimulate the growth of startups and small businesses. Furthermore, tax policies that support digital infrastructure development, such as broadband expansion and digital skills training, can catalyze innovation ecosystems and drive economic diversification.

The digitalization of the economy has brought to the fore complex international tax challenges, such as profit shifting and tax avoidance by multinational corporations. To address these challenges, policymakers must collaborate at the international level to develop coordinated tax frameworks and mechanisms for ensuring fair taxation of digital transactions. Initiatives such as the OECD/G20 Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project are instrumental in fostering international cooperation and establishing common standards for taxing digital activities.

While implementing tax-budget policies to harness the benefits of economic digitization is essential, policymakers must also consider the long-term sustainability of fiscal measures. This entails striking a balance between short-term revenue generation and long-term fiscal stability, as well as accounting for potential disruptions and uncertainties in the digital economy. Moreover, fiscal policies should be designed with a focus on promoting environmental sustainability and social equity, aligning with broader development goals such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In conclusion, the effective implementation of tax-budget policies in the era of economic digitization requires proactive strategies that embrace innovation, collaboration, and capacity building. By addressing the challenges posed by digitalization and harnessing its potential, policymakers can ensure sustainable fiscal governance and support economic growth in the digital age.

Governments should prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, including broadband connectivity and digital skills training programs, to ensure widespread access to digital technologies. This will facilitate broader participation in the digital economy and enable more effective implementation of taxbudget policies.

Policymakers should foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among governments, international organizations, academia, and the private sector to address global tax challenges and develop best practices for implementing tax-budget policies in the digital age.

Conclusions

Governments should invest in taxpayer education and engagement initiatives to improve understanding of tax obligations, foster voluntary compliance, and build trust in the tax system. This may include outreach programs, online resources, and interactive platforms for taxpayers to access information and seek assistance.

Policymakers must prioritize data privacy and security considerations in the implementation of taxbudget policies, particularly in the collection and use of taxpayer data. Robust safeguards and protocols should be put in place to protect sensitive information and mitigate the risk of data breaches or misuse.

Collaboration between government agencies, industry stakeholders, civil society organizations, and academic institutions is essential for developing holistic solutions to complex tax and budgetary challenges. Governments should foster an environment conducive to cross-sectoral collaboration, encouraging dialogue, partnerships, and joint initiatives to address shared objectives.

By implementing these recommendations and suggestions, policymakers can navigate the complexities of economic digitization and effectively implement tax-budget policies that promote sustainable fiscal governance and support inclusive economic growth in the digital age.

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