

How to convert the PEFA alphabetic scores into numerical values?

An increasing number of PEFA users are interested in converting the alphabetic PEFA scores into numerical values. The purpose of conversion is typically to make quantitative analyses possible and to visualize and summarize the scores.

The evaluation of the PEFA performance indicators is the most important part of all PEFA assessments. For each indicator, the score reflects a number of dimensions, which are aggregated according to the PEFA methodology. Each dimension is scored separately on a four-point ordinal scale: A, B, C or D, according to criteria established for each dimension.

The PEFA Secretariat recommends following the approach for conversion outlined in a paper by Paolo de Renzio: “Taking Stock: What do PEFA Assessments tell us about PFM systems across countries”: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PEFA/Resources/TakingStockRenzi2007.pdf> According to this approach, all four-point ordinal scale PEFA scores should be converted into numerical values in accordance with the table below.

PEFA Scores	A	B+	B	C+	C	D+	D	D*, NR	NA, NU
Numerical value	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	1	Excluded

Notes: 1) According to PEFA 2011 Methodology:

NR: Not Scored, due to insufficient information

NA: Not Applicable

NU: Not Used i.e. not assessed

2) According to PEFA 2016 Methodology:

NA: Not Applicable

NU: Not Used i.e. not assessed

D*: Not sufficient information at dimension level, scored as D

Additional guidance can be found on the PEFA website (pefa.org). The guidance document on “[Issues in Comparison and Aggregation of PEFA Assessment Results over Time and Across Countries](#)” highlights the different methods used for aggregating and comparing scores and provides some useful examples. The guidance document “[Tracking Change in Performance Based on Previous Versions of PEFA](#)” would also be relevant for user converting the data.