

At a Glance: The Relationship between Democracy And Government Spending in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to give an overview of government spending in relation to the level of democracy in Thailand from 1980 through 2018. The statistics provided in this study were derived from the National Statistics Bureau of Thailand and the Polity Index. The results drawn from this study suggest that the government budget between 2008-2018 was on average higher than the previous decades. To be more particular, between 1980-2005 the government budget was around 17 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), unaffected by the level of its democracy. From 2008 onwards, however, Thailand's government budget has increased to 21 percent of GDP. Over the same previous period, the government budget on Public Defense and Health were relatively higher in administrations with lower level of democracy; whereas the budget on education went in opposite direction. Since 2008 government spending on education and public defense has increased in administrations with higher level of democracy, while the government spending on health was higher in governments with lower level of democracy. The government's total budget was higher in governments with higher level of democracy from 2008 onwards.

Keywords: Government Spending; Democracy; Public Defense; Health; Education