

Guatemala

Overview



Transparency:

64 /100

(Open Budget Index score)



Public Participation:

19 /100



Budget Oversight:

46 /100

About the survey

Government budget decisions – what taxes to levy, what services to provide, and how much debt to take on – have important consequences for all people in society. When governments provide information and meaningful channels for the public to engage in these decisions, we can better ensure public money is spent on public interests.

The Open Budget Survey (OBS) is the world’s only independent, comparative and fact-based research instrument that uses internationally accepted criteria to assess public access to central government budget information; formal opportunities for the public to participate in the national budget process; and the role of budget oversight institutions, such as legislatures and national audit offices, in the budget process.

The survey helps local civil society assess and confer with their government on the reporting and use of public funds. This 8th edition of the OBS covers 120 countries.

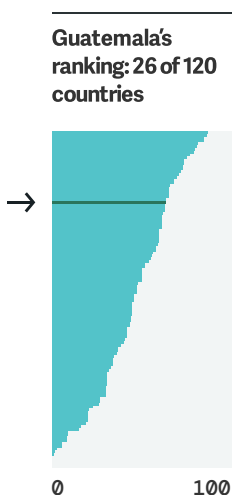
Visit www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey for more information, including the full OBS methodology, the 2021 Global and Regional Reports, findings for all surveyed countries, and the Data Explorer.

Transparency

This part of the OBS measures public access to information on how the central government raises and spends public resources. It assesses the **online availability, timeliness, and comprehensiveness** of eight key budget documents using 109 equally weighted indicators and scores each country on a scale of 0 to 100. **A transparency score of 61 or above indicates a country is likely publishing enough material to support informed public debate on the budget.**

Guatemala has a transparency score of **64** (out of 100).

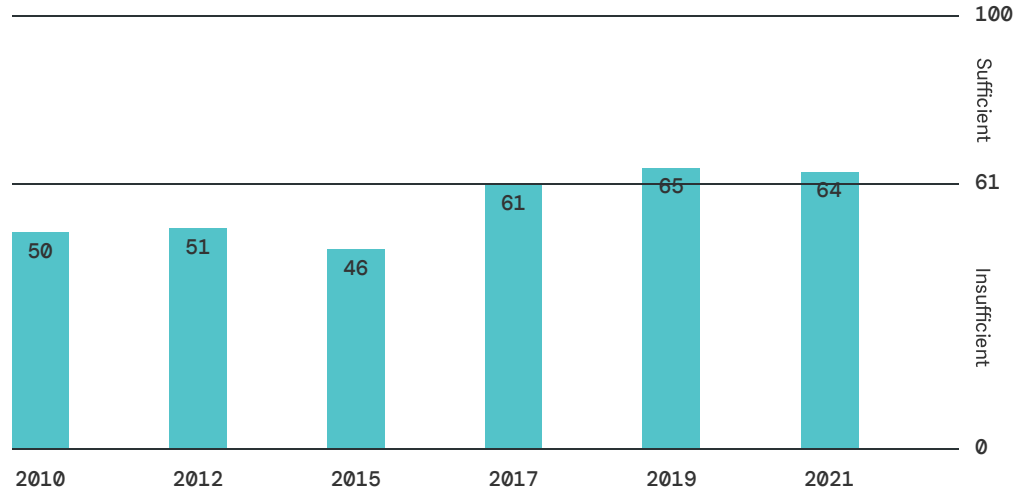
Transparency in Guatemala compared to others



Global Average	45
Mexico	82
Dominican Republic	77
Guatemala	64
Costa Rica	63
Honduras	61
Jamaica	50
Nicaragua	42
El Salvador	41
Trinidad and Tobago	34

0 Insufficient 61 Sufficient 100

How has the transparency score for Guatemala changed over time?



Public availability of budget documents in Guatemala

KEY	
●	Available to the Public
●	Published Late, or Not Published Online, or Produced for Internal Use Only
⊘	Not Produced

Document	2010	2012	2015	2017	2019	2021
Pre-Budget Statement	⊘	●	⊘	●	●	●
Executive's Budget Proposal	●	●	●	●	●	●
Enacted Budget	●	●	●	●	●	●
Citizens Budget	⊘	●	●	●	●	●
In-Year Reports	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mid-Year Review	⊘	⊘	●	⊘	●	●
Year-End Report	●	●	●	●	●	●
Audit Report	●	●	●	●	●	●

How comprehensive is the content of the key budget documents that Guatemala makes available to the public?

KEY	
● 61-100 / 100	
● 41-60 / 100	
● 1-40 / 100	

Key budget document	Document purpose and contents	Fiscal year assessed	Document content score
Pre-Budget Statement	Discloses the broad parameters of fiscal policies in advance of the Executive's Budget Proposal; outlines the government's economic forecast, anticipated revenue, expenditures, and debt.	2021	44
Executive's Budget Proposal	Submitted by the executive to the legislature for approval; details the sources of revenue, the allocations to ministries, proposed policy changes, and other information important for understanding the country's fiscal situation.	2021	59
Enacted Budget	The budget that has been approved by the legislature.	2020	95
Citizens Budget	A simpler and less technical version of the government's Executive's Budget Proposal or the Enacted Budget, designed to convey key information to the public.	2021	50
In-Year Reports	Include information on actual revenues collected, actual expenditures made, and debt incurred at different intervals; issued quarterly or monthly.	2020	93
Mid-Year Review	A comprehensive update on the implementation of the budget as of the middle of the fiscal year; includes a review of economic assumptions and an updated forecast of budget outcomes.	2020	67
Year-End Report	Describes the situation of the government's accounts at the end of the fiscal year and, ideally, an evaluation of the progress made toward achieving the budget's policy goals.	2019	64
Audit Report	Issued by the supreme audit institution, this document examines the soundness and completeness of the government's year-end accounts.	2019	67

Guatemala's transparency score of **64** in the OBS 2021 is near its score in 2019.

What changed in OBS 2021?

Guatemala has decreased the availability of budget information by:

- Reducing the information provided in Pre-Budget Statement.

Recommendations

Guatemala should prioritize the following actions to improve budget transparency:

- Include in the Executive's Budget Proposal data on the financial position of the government and information on performance and policy.
- Improve the comprehensiveness of the Pre-Budget Statement by including a discussion of revenue and expenditure policies and priorities, and by providing updated estimates of government borrowing and debt.
- Expand on the participatory nature of the Citizens Budget, for example by identifying the public's requirements for budget information prior to the release of the document, disseminating it via additional methods, and publishing simplified budget documents covering the execution and audit phases of the budget cycle.

Public Participation

The OBS assesses the formal opportunities offered to the public for meaningful participation in the different stages of the budget process. It examines the practices of the central government's executive, the legislature, and the supreme audit institution (SAI) using 18 equally weighted indicators, aligned with the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency's Principles of Public Participation in Fiscal Policies, and scores each country on a scale from 0 to 100.

Guatemala has a public participation score of **19** (out of 100).

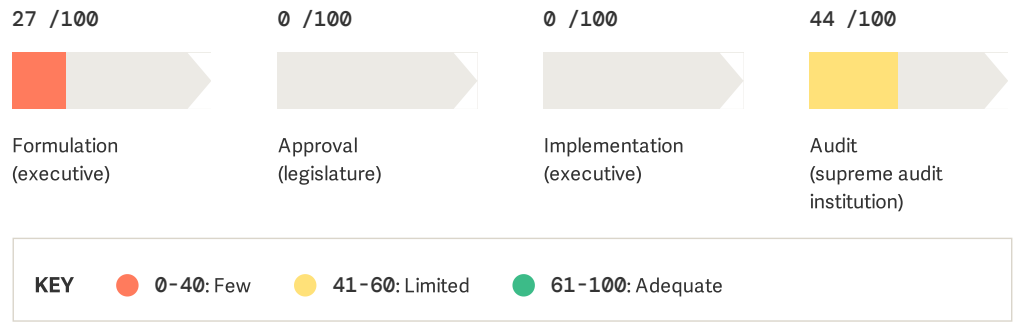
Public participation in Guatemala compared to others

Global Average	14
Mexico	22
Dominican Republic	22
El Salvador	20
Guatemala	19
Jamaica	18
Honduras	17
Costa Rica	9
Nicaragua	7
Trinidad and Tobago	7

0 Insufficient 61 Sufficient 100

For more information, see [here](#) for innovative public participation practices around the world.

Extent of opportunities for public participation in the budget process



Recommendations

Guatemala's Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas has established public consultations during budget formulation but, to further strengthen public participation in the budget process, should also prioritize the following actions:

- Pilot mechanisms to monitor budget implementation.
- Expand mechanisms during budget formulation to: engage any civil society organization or member of the public who wishes to participate, and enable citizens to actively participate in dialogues that have an impact on the budget formulation process.
- Actively engage with vulnerable and underrepresented communities, directly or through civil society organizations representing them.

Guatemala's Congreso de la República should prioritize the following actions:

- Allow members of the public or civil society organizations to testify during its hearings on the budget proposal prior to its approval.
- Allow members of the public or civil society organizations to testify during its hearings on the Audit Report.

Guatemala's Contraloría General de Cuentas has established mechanisms for the public to assist in developing its audit program. It should prioritize the following actions to improve public participation in the budget process:

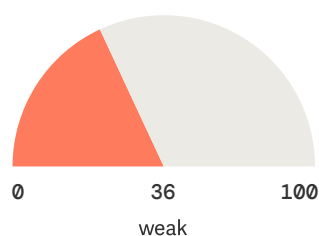
- Establish formal mechanisms for the public to contribute to relevant audit investigations.

Budget Oversight

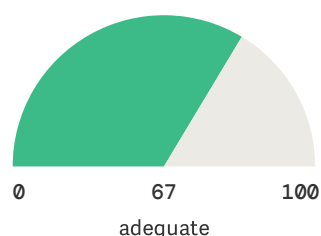
The OBS examines the role that legislatures and supreme audit institutions (SAIs) play in the budget process and the extent to which they provide oversight; each country is scored on a scale from 0 to 100 based on 18 equally weighted indicators. In addition, the survey collects supplementary information on independent fiscal institutions (see Box).

The legislature and supreme audit institution in Guatemala, together, provide limited oversight during the budget process, with a composite oversight score of **46** (out of 100). Taken individually, the extent of each institution's oversight is shown below:

Legislative oversight



Audit oversight



KEY ● 0-40: Few ● 41-60: Limited ● 61-100: Adequate

Recommendations

Guatemala's Congreso de la República provides limited oversight during the planning stage of the budget cycle and weak oversight during the implementation stage. To improve oversight, the following actions should be prioritized:

- The Congreso de la República should debate budget policy before the Executive's Budget Proposal is tabled and approve recommendations for the upcoming budget.
- Legislative committees should examine the Executive's Budget Proposal and publish reports with their analysis online.

- The Congreso de la República should approve the Executive's Budget Proposal before the start of the budget year.
- A legislative committee should examine the in-year budget implementation report, as well as the Audit Report, and publish their findings online.
- In practice, ensure the legislature is consulted before the executive shifts funds specified in the Enacted Budget between administrative units or reduces spending due to revenue shortfalls during the budget year.

To strengthen independence and improve audit oversight by Guatemala's Contraloría General de Cuentas, the following actions are recommended:

- Ensure audit processes are reviewed by an independent agency.

The emerging practice of establishing independent fiscal institutions

Guatemala does not have an independent fiscal institution (IFI). IFIs are increasingly recognized as valuable independent and nonpartisan information providers to the Executive and/or Parliament during the budget process.

**These indicators are *not* scored in the Open Budget Survey.*

Methodology

- Only documents published and events, activities, or developments that took place through 31 December 2020 were assessed in the OBS 2021.
- The survey is based on a questionnaire completed in each country by an independent budget expert:
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- To further strengthen the research, each country's draft questionnaire is also reviewed by an anonymous independent expert, and in Guatemala by a representative of the Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas.