

OPEN BUDGET INDEX SCORE  
— OUT OF 100 —

- 81-100 Extensive
- 61-80 Substantial
- 41-60 Some
- 21-40 Minimal
- 0-20 Scant or None

### How does Sweden compare to its neighbors in Western Europe & the U.S.?



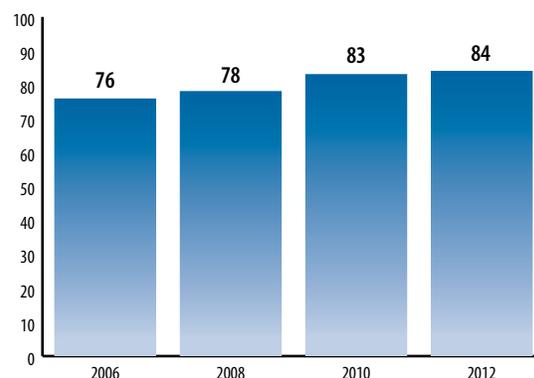
### What are each of the eight key budget documents, and does the public have access to them?

Document	Description of Document	Publication Status
<b>PBS</b>	<b>Pre-Budget Statement:</b> Provides information that links government policies and budgets and typically sets forth the broad parameters that will define the budget proposal that is presented to the legislature.	Published
<b>EBP</b>	<b>Executive's Budget Proposal:</b> Presents the government plans to raise revenues through taxes and other sources and spend these monies to support its priorities, thus transforming policy goals into action.	Published
<b>EB</b>	<b>Enacted Budget:</b> The legal instrument authorizing the executive to raise revenues, make expenditures, and incur debt.	Published
<b>CB</b>	<b>Citizens Budget:</b> A nontechnical presentation to enable broad public understanding of a government's plans for raising revenues and spending public funds in order to achieve policy goals.	Published
<b>IYR</b>	<b>In-Year Reports:</b> Periodic (monthly or quarterly) measures of the trends in actual revenues, expenditures, and debt, which allow for comparisons with the budget figures and adjustments.	Published
<b>MYR</b>	<b>Mid-Year Review:</b> An overview of the budget's effects at the midpoint of a budget year and discusses any changes in economic assumptions that affect approved budget policies.	Not Produced
<b>YER</b>	<b>Year-End Report:</b> Information comparing the actual budget execution relative to the Enacted Budget.	Published
<b>AR</b>	<b>Audit Report:</b> Independent evaluation of the government's accounts by the country's supreme audit institution. It typically assesses whether the executive has raised revenues and spent monies in line with the authorized budget, and whether the government's accounts of its revenues and expenses are accurate and provide a reliable picture of the fiscal situation.	Published

### From Zero to 100: Has Sweden increased the amount of information it makes available in the eight key budget reports?



### OBI scores over four Surveys



## Open Budget Index

The **Open Budget Survey** assesses whether the central government in each country surveyed makes eight key budget documents available to the public, as well as whether the data contained in these documents is comprehensive, timely, and useful. The Survey uses internationally accepted criteria to assess each country's budget transparency developed by multilateral organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic

Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

The scores on 95 of the 125 Open Budget Survey questions are used to calculate objective scores and rankings of each surveyed country's relative transparency. These composite scores constitute the Open Budget Index (OBI), the world's only independent and comparative measure of budget transparency.

Sweden ranks fourth on the OBI 2012 with a score of 84 out of 100, which is significantly higher than the average score of 43 for all the 100 countries surveyed and is among the highest relative to its neighbors. Sweden's score indicates that the government provides the public with extensive information on the national government's budget and financial activities during the course of the budget year. This makes it possible for citizens to hold the government accountable for its management of the public's money.

**Sweden's OBI 2012 score of 84 has increased slightly from its score of 83 on the OBI 2010.**

The Open Budget Index is composed of subscores for each of the eight key budget documents assessed in the Survey. These subscores represent the average of the scores received on a set of questions in the Survey that measure the public availability of and amount of information in the documents. The subscores are comparable across all of the countries included in the Survey.

### Recommendations

Sweden's score on the Open Budget Index has increased over the four rounds of the Open Budget Survey, a commitment to improvement for which the government is congratulated. With a score of 84 out of 100, Sweden maintains a high degree of budget transparency. Though a leader in open budgeting, the International Budget Partnership recommends that Sweden undertake the following steps to expand budget transparency even further:

- Produce and publish a Mid-Year Review. Detailed guidance on the contents of this document can be found in this guidebook: <http://bit.ly/QGzHv8>. As per the Open Budget Survey 2012, 29 countries publish a Mid-Year Review, including Sweden's neighbors France, Germany, Italy, Norway, and the United Kingdom, and as well as the United States. Links to the budget documents published by these countries can be accessed from the IBP's website: <http://bit.ly/P8NPOV>.
- Increase the comprehensiveness of the Executive's Budget

Proposal, specifically by focusing on providing information on the following areas:

- expenditures for both the budget year and the year preceding the budget year by administrative unit, functional classification, and economic classification in a format that is compatible with international standards (see questions 1-3 and 18-20 of the Open Budget Questionnaire);
  - more details in a narrative discussion and quantitative estimates that show the impact of different macroeconomic assumptions on the budget (see question 15 of the Open Budget Questionnaire);
  - actual outcomes for all revenues from two years prior to the budget year and nonfinancial data presented so as to be useful for assessing the performance of expenditure programs (see questions 32 and 51 of the Open Budget Questionnaire);
  - performance targets and indicators for all expenditure programs designed to assess progress toward meeting established policy goals (see questions 52-54 of the Open Budget Questionnaire);
  - a detailed timetable for formulating the Executive's Budget Proposal (see question 57 of the Open Budget Questionnaire); and
  - extensive information with both a narrative discussion and quantitative estimates on contingent and future liabilities and financial and nonfinancial assets (see questions 39-40 and 42-43 of the Open Budget Questionnaire).
- Improve the quality of the Citizens Budget by having the executive consult widely the public to identify their informational needs prior to publishing a Citizens Budget (see question 111 of the Open Budget Questionnaire).
  - Increase the comprehensiveness of In-Year Reports by focusing on covering all sources of actual revenue collection and presenting all expenditures by administrative unit, economic classification, and/or function (see questions 64 and 68 of the Open Budget Questionnaire).
  - Increase the comprehensiveness of the Year-End Report by presenting an extensive explanation, including a narrative discussion and quantitative estimates, of the differences between original estimates of nonfinancial as well as performance indicators and actual outcomes (see questions 83-84 of the Open Budget Questionnaire).

## Strength of Legislatures and Supreme Audit Institutions in Budget Oversight

The Open Budget Survey examines the extent of effective oversight provided by legislatures and supreme audit institutions (SAIs). These institutions play a critical role — often enshrined in national constitutions — in planning and overseeing the implementation of national budgets.

The Open Budget Survey assesses whether legislatures provide effective budget oversight by measuring performance on 11 indicators, including: consultations with the executive prior to the tabling in the legislature of the draft budget, research capacity, formal debate on overall budget policy, time available to discuss and approve the budget, legal authority to amend the budget proposal, approval of shifts in expenditure budget and excess revenues collected, supplemental budget powers, authority to approve use of contingency funds, and scrutiny of audit reports.

The Open Budget Survey assesses whether supreme audit institutions are empowered to provide effective budget oversight by using the following four indicators: authority to remove the head of the supreme audit institution, legal power to audit public finances, financial resources available, and availability of skilled audit personnel.

## Recommendations

Although the overall legislative oversight in Sweden is strong, the Open Budget Survey 2012 finds that this can be further strengthened by the following actions:

- The executive should consult extensively with a wide range of legislators as part of the process of determining budget priorities, seek legislative approval for every shift of funds between budget lines; the legislature scrutinize all audit reports (see question 59, 103, and 107 of the Open Budget Questionnaire).

### Sweden is one of the leaders in Western Europe and the U.S. on budget oversight and engagement

Country	Legislative Strength	SAI Strength	Public Engagement
France	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Germany	Strong	Strong	Weak
Italy	Strong	Strong	Weak
Norway	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Portugal	Moderate	Strong	Weak
Spain	Moderate	Strong	Weak
Sweden	Strong	Strong	Moderate
United Kingdom	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
United States	Strong	Strong	Moderate

**Strong:** average score above 66 of 100; **Moderate:** average score between 34 and 66; **Weak:** average score below 34

## Opportunities for Public Participation

Research and advocacy experience of civil society over the past 15 years has demonstrated that transparency by itself is insufficient for improving governance. Transparency along with opportunities for public participation in budgeting can maximize the positive outcomes associated with open budgeting. Therefore, the Open Budget Survey assesses opportunities available to the public to participate in national budget decision-making processes. Such opportunities can be provided throughout the budget cycle by the executive, legislature, and supreme audit institution.

Based on these indicators, the Open Budget Survey 2012 finds that there are moderate opportunities for public participation in the budget process in Sweden.

### Sweden has much room to improve public participation

Requirement	Finding
<b>Process Followed Before Consultation</b>	
Formal requirement for public participation (Q114)	Exists but is weak
Articulation of purposes for public participation (Q115)	Does not exist
Communication by the SAI of audit findings beyond publication of audit reports (Q124)	Exists and is strong
<b>Process of Consultation</b>	
Mechanisms developed by the executive for participation during budget planning (Q116)	Exists and is strong
Public hearings in the legislature on macroeconomic budget framework (Q119)	Exists but is weak
Public hearings in the legislature on individual agency budgets (Q120)	Exists but is weak
Opportunities in the legislature for testimonials by the public during budget hearings (Q121)	Does not exist
Mechanisms developed by the executive for participation during budget execution (Q117)	Exists and is strong
Mechanisms developed by the SAI for participation in audit agenda (Q123)	Exists and is strong
<b>Process Followed After Consultation</b>	
Feedback by the executive on use of inputs provided by the public (Q118)	Does not exist
Release by the legislature of reports on budget hearings (Q122)	Exists and is strong
Feedback by the SAI on use of inputs provided by the public (Q125)	Does not exist

## Recommendations

The International Budget Partnership recommends that Sweden expand public engagement in budgeting after considering the Open Budget Survey indicators on which the country performs poorly (see table below and questions 114-115, 118-121, and 125 in the Open Budget Questionnaire).

## Description of Survey, Methodology, Reliability, and Researcher Contact Information

The Open Budget Survey is a fact-based research instrument that uses easily observable phenomena to assess what occurs in practice. The research conclusions are typically supported by citations and comments, including reference to a budget document, a law, or other public document; a public statement by a government official; or comments from a face-to-face interview with a government official or other knowledgeable party. The Survey is compiled from a questionnaire completed for each country by independent budget experts who are not associated with the national government. Each country's questionnaire is then independently reviewed by two anonymous experts who also have no association with government. In addition, the IBP invites national governments to comment on the draft results from the Survey and considers these comments before finalizing the Survey results. The entire research process for 2012 took over 18 months between July 2011 and December 2012 and involved approximately 400 experts.

The Open Budget Survey provides a reliable source of data on national budget transparency practices for governments, development practitioners, the media, and citizens. Current users of the Survey results include the Open Government Partnership, Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative, INTOSAI, the World Bank in its Worldwide Governance Indicators, and a number of bilateral aid agencies and international and regional multilateral bodies. The publication of the Open Budget Survey 2012 has reinforced the Survey's preeminent position as a global data repository on budget transparency, participation, and accountability.

Research to complete this country's Open Budget Survey was undertaken by Anna Schnell, Melander Schnell Consultants, Liljegatan 12, 753 24 Uppsala, Sweden, [anna@melander-schnell-consultants.se](mailto:anna@melander-schnell-consultants.se).

The Swedish government has provided its comments on the draft Open Budget Questionnaire results for the country.