

## Overview



Transparency:

**47** /100

(Open Budget Index score)



Public  
Participation:

**17** /100



Budget Oversight:

**50** /100

## About the survey

Government budget decisions – what taxes to levy, what services to provide, and how much debt to take on – affect how equal a society is and the well-being of its people, including whether the most disadvantaged will have real opportunities for a better life. It is critical that governments inform and engage the public on these vital decisions that impact their lives.

**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 the legislature and auditor 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 7th edition of the OBS covers 117 countries.

Visit [www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey](http://www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey) for more information, including the full OBS methodology, the 2019 Global Report, findings for all surveyed countries, and the Data Explorer.

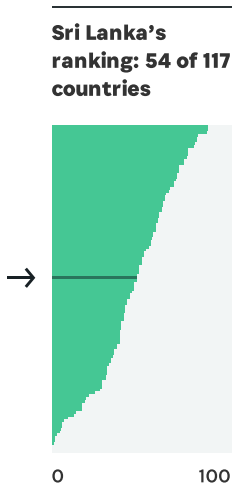


# Transparency

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.

Sri Lanka has a transparency score of **47** (out of 100).

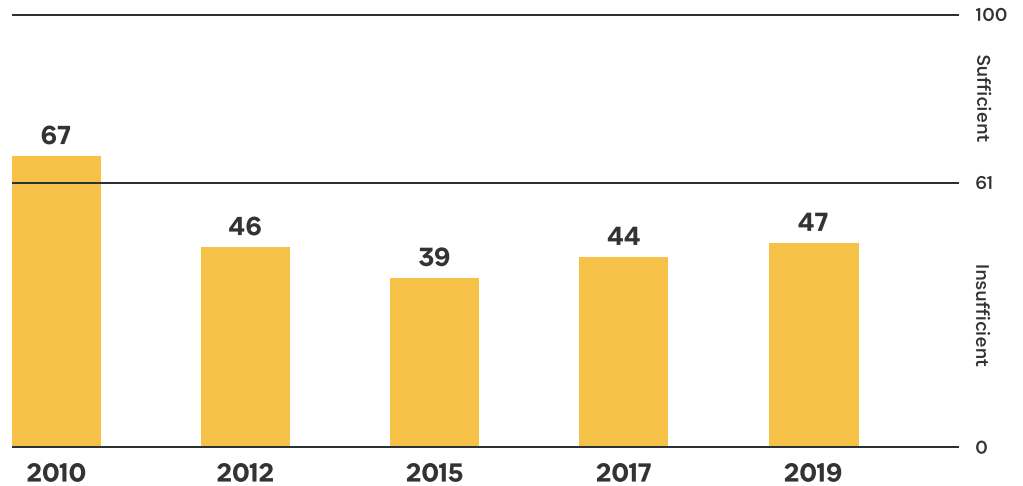
## Transparency in Sri Lanka compared to others



Global Average	45
Afghanistan	50
India	49
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>47</b>
Nepal	41
Bangladesh	36
Pakistan	28

0    Insufficient    61    Sufficient    100

## How has the transparency score for Sri Lanka changed over time?



## Public availability of budget documents in Sri Lanka

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

Document	2010	2012	2015	2017	2019
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 Sri Lanka makes available to the public?

- 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.	2019	Internal Use
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.	2018	60
Enacted Budget	The budget that has been approved by the legislature.	2018	84
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.	2018	25
In-Year Reports	Include information on actual revenues collected, actual expenditures made, and debt incurred at different intervals; issued quarterly or monthly.	2018	33
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.	2018	Not Produced
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.	2017	57
Audit Report	Issued by the supreme audit institution, this document examines the soundness and completeness of the government's year-end accounts.	2017	33

Sri Lanka's transparency score of **47** in the OBS 2019 is near its score in 2017.

### What changed in OBS 2019?

Sri Lanka has increased the availability of budget information by:

- Publishing the Citizens Budget online.

## **Recommendations**

Sri Lanka should prioritize the following actions to improve budget transparency:

- Publish the Pre-Budget Statement online in a timely manner.
- Produce and publish a Mid-Year Review online in a timely manner.
- Include in the Executive's Budget Proposal the functional classification of expenditures, and details of the composition of government debt in the budget year and prior years.
- Include in the Year-End Report performance and macroeconomic information.
- Improve the comprehensiveness of the In-Year Reports by reporting actual revenues by individual source, and including a comparison of revenues and expenditures to the original estimates or the same period in the previous year.
- Improve the Citizens Budget by seeking public input on the contents.



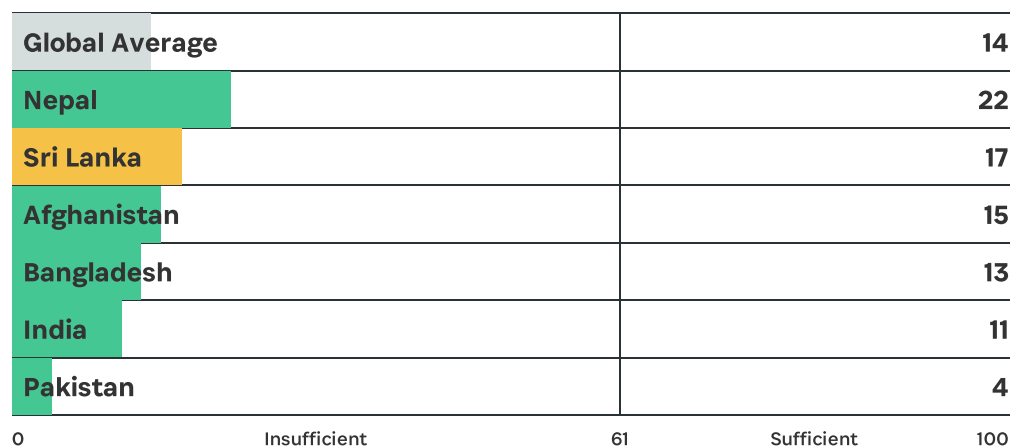
# Public Participation

Transparency alone is insufficient for improving governance. Inclusive public participation is crucial for realizing the positive outcomes associated with greater budget transparency.

The OBS also 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.

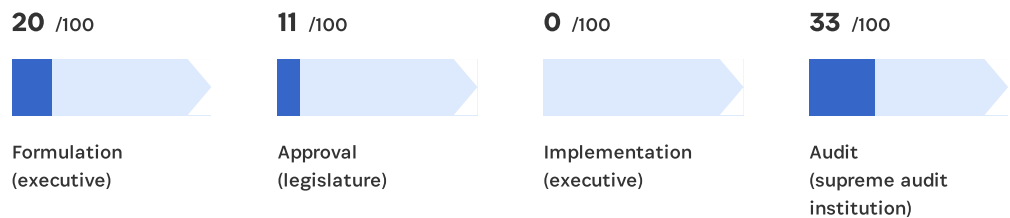
Sri Lanka has a public participation score of **17** (out of 100).

## Public participation in Sri Lanka compared to others



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

## Extent of opportunities for public participation in the budget process



few: 0 - 40; limited: 41 - 60; adequate: 61 - 100

## Recommendations

Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance 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 engage the public when monitoring budget implementation.
- Expand mechanisms during budget formulation that engage any civil society organization or member of the public who wishes to participate.
- Proactively invite and include vulnerable and underrepresented communities, directly or through civil society organizations representing them.

Sri Lanka's Parliament has established public hearings related to the approval of the annual budget, but should also prioritize the following actions:

- Allow any member of the public or any civil society organization 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.

Sri Lanka's National Audit Office has established mechanisms to assist the supreme audit institution 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.

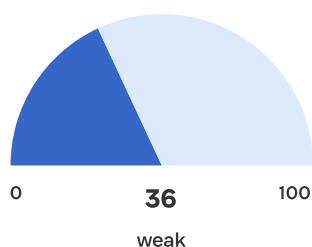


# Budget Oversight

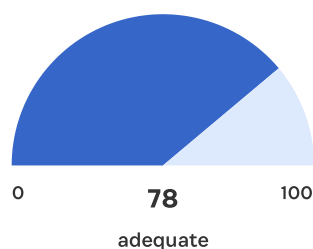
The OBS also examines the role that legislatures and supreme audit institutions (SAIs) play in the budget process and the extent to which they provide oversight; each country is scored on a scale from 0 to 100 based on 18 equally weighted indicators. In addition, the survey collects supplementary information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

The legislature and supreme audit institution in Sri Lanka, together, provide limited oversight during the budget process, with a composite oversight score of **50** (out of 100). Taken individually, the extent of each institution's oversight is shown below:

## Legislative oversight



## Audit oversight



weak: 0 - 40; limited: 41 - 60; adequate: 61 - 100

## Recommendations

Sri Lanka's Parliament 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 legislature should debate budget policy before the Executive's Budget Proposal is tabled and approve recommendations for the upcoming budget.
- The Executive's Budget Proposal should be submitted to legislators at least two months before the start of the budget year.
- Legislative committees should publish reports on their analysis of the Executive's Budget Proposal online in a timely manner.



- A legislative committee should examine in-year budget implementation and publish reports with their findings online.
- In practice, ensure the legislature is consulted before the executive shifts funds specified in the Enacted Budget between administrative units; spends any unanticipated revenue; or reduces spending due to revenue shortfalls during the budget year.
- A legislative committee should publish reports on their analysis of the Audit Report of the government's financial statements online.

To strengthen independence and improve audit oversight by the Sri Lanka National Audit Office, the following actions are recommended:

- Require legislative or judicial approval to appoint the head of the supreme audit institution.

### **The emerging practice of establishing independent fiscal institutions**

Sri Lanka 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

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- Only documents published and events, activities, or developments that took place through 31 December 2018 were assessed in the OBS 2019.
- 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.