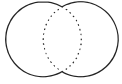
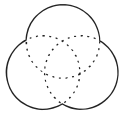
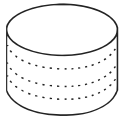


Overview

**Transparency:****23** /100

(Open Budget Index score)

**Public Participation:****0** /100**Budget Oversight:****11** /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.**

Saudi Arabia has a transparency score of **23** (out of 100).

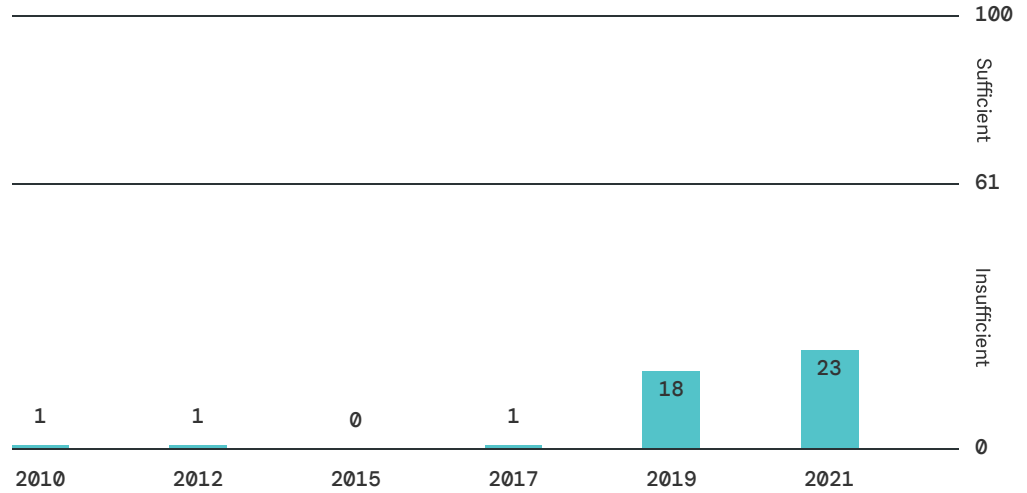
Transparency in Saudi Arabia compared to others



Global Average	45
Jordan	61
Morocco	48
Egypt	43
Tunisia	42
Saudi Arabia	23
Lebanon	9
Iraq	6
Algeria	3
Qatar	2
Sudan	1
Yemen	0

0 Insufficient 61 Sufficient 100

How has the transparency score for Saudi Arabia changed over time?



Public availability of budget documents in Saudi Arabia

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 Saudi Arabia 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	78
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	Not Produced
Enacted Budget	The budget that has been approved by the legislature.	2021	61
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	58
In-Year Reports	Include information on actual revenues collected, actual expenditures made, and debt incurred at different intervals; issued quarterly or monthly.	2020	63
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	33
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	38
Audit Report	Issued by the supreme audit institution, this document examines the soundness and completeness of the government's year-end accounts.	2019	Internal Use

Saudi Arabia's transparency score of **23** in the OBS 2021 is near its score in 2019.

What changed in OBS 2021?

Saudi Arabia has increased the availability of budget information by:

- Publishing the Mid-Year Review online.

Recommendations

Saudi Arabia should prioritize the following actions to improve budget transparency:

- Publish the Audit Report online in a timely manner.
- Submit the Executive's Budget Proposal to the Shura Council and publish it online in a timely manner.
- Improve the comprehensiveness of the Mid-Year Review and publish it as a standalone document.
- Improve the comprehensiveness of the Year-End Report.

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.

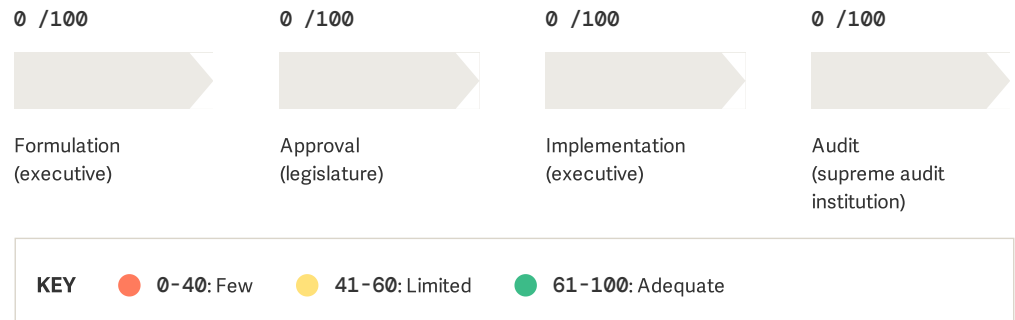
Saudi Arabia has a public participation score of **0** (out of 100).

Public participation in Saudi Arabia compared to others

Global Average	14			
Egypt	19			
Tunisia	15			
Morocco	7			
Jordan	4			
Sudan	4			
Saudi Arabia	0			
Algeria	0			
Iraq	0			
Lebanon	0			
Qatar	0			
Yemen	0			
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

To further strengthen public participation in the budget process, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Finance should prioritize the following actions:

- While Saudi Arabia hosts a Budget Forum and discusses budget trends with the public, it lacks formal mechanisms that solicit citizen input into key budget decisions. Pilot mechanisms should be developed during budget formulation and implementation with an emphasis on formally recording comments and input from the public – and demonstration that these are taken on board.

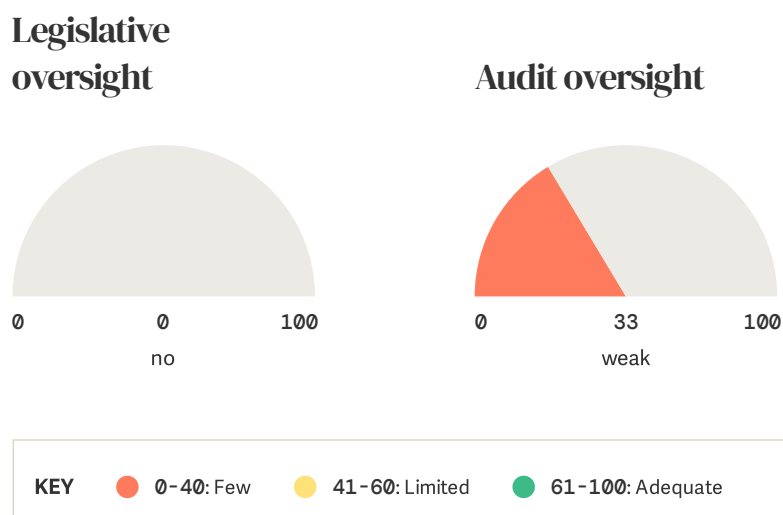
Saudi Arabia's General Auditing Bureau (GAB) should prioritize the following actions to improve public participation in the budget process:

- Establish formal mechanisms for the public to assist in developing its audit program and 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 Saudi Arabia, together, provide weak oversight during the budget process, with a composite oversight score of **11** (out of 100). Taken individually, the extent of each institution's oversight is shown below:



Recommendations

Saudi Arabia's Shura Council provides no oversight during the planning stage of the budget cycle and no oversight during the implementation stage. To improve oversight, the following actions should be prioritized:

- The legislature should be given the opportunity to debate budget policy before the finalisation of Executive's Budget Proposal and provide 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 examine the Executive's Budget Proposal and publish reports with their analysis online.

- A legislative committee should examine in-year budget implementation and publish reports with their findings online.
- In practice, ensure the legislature is informed 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.

To strengthen independence and improve audit oversight by the Saudi Arabia General Auditing Bureau (GAB), the following actions are recommended:

- Ensure audit processes are reviewed by an independent agency located outside of the GAB.

The emerging practice of establishing independent fiscal institutions

Saudi Arabia 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:

For inquiries please contact the International Budget Partnership

info@internationalbudget.org

- To further strengthen the research, each country's draft questionnaire is also reviewed by an anonymous independent expert, and in Saudi Arabia by a representative of the Ministry of Finance.