

Norway

Open Budget Index 2006



Open Budget Index Highlights

Norway scores 72 percent out of a possible 100 percent on the *Open Budget Index 2006*. The *Index* evaluates the quantity of information provided to citizens in the seven key budget documents that all governments should make public during the course of the budget year. Norway's performance indicates that the government provides citizens with **substantial information** on the central government's budget and financial activities, but that there is some room for improvement.

Public Availability of Key Budget Documents	
Budget Document	Availability
Pre-Budget Statement	
Executive's Budget Proposal	
Citizens' Budget	
In-Year Reports	
Mid-Year Review	
Year-End Report	
Auditor's Report	
Available to the Public	Produced but for internal Use Only
	
	Not Produced
	

The **executive's budget proposal** is one of the most important documents released during the budget year. Norway's proposal provides substantial information to the public, scoring 74 percent out of a possible 100 percent of the information needed to present the public with a comprehensive picture of the government's financial activity. This suggests that there is some room for improvement.

Governments should report to citizens regularly during the budget year on their spending, revenue collection and borrowing with **in-year reports**. Norway provides substantial information in its in-year reports and its **mid-year review**. This document should provide the public with updates on what can be expected for the second half of the budget year. The executive releases a **year-end report** in a timely manner, which facilitates comparisons between enacted levels and actual outcomes; however, the year-end report needs some improvement to be on par with the level of information provided in the rest of the budget documents. Norway makes its **audit report** public and provides information on whether the audit report's recommendations are successfully implemented, though some details are excluded.

Citizens require both access to information, and opportunities during the budget's consideration to use that information, to ensure their informed participation in budget debates. Norway's score on the *Open Budget Index* suggests that the public's access to information could be improved. The researcher also found that opportunities for citizen participation are fair. For example, the legislature does hold public hearings on the budget in which the public can participate, though they are not extensive.

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