

Georgia

Open Budget Index 2006



Open Budget Index Highlights

Georgia scores 33 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. Georgia's performance indicates that the government provides citizens with **minimal information** on the central government's budget and financial activities and that there is much 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. Georgia's proposal provides minimal information to the public, scoring 28 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 substantial room for improvement.

Governments should report to citizens regularly during the budget year on their spending, revenue collection and borrowing with **in-year reports**. Georgia provides fair information in its in-year reports and in its **mid-year review**. This document provides the public with updates on what can be expected for the second half of the budget year. By presenting more comprehensive information for these two documents, Georgia could greatly strengthen public accountability. **Year-end reports** by the executive are released in a timely manner, but lack the details needed to facilitate comparisons between enacted levels and actual outcomes. Georgia makes its **audit report** public but it provides minimal information on whether the audit report's recommendations are successfully implemented.

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. Georgia's score on the *Open Budget Index* suggests that the public's access to information has to be improved. The researcher also found

that opportunities for citizen participation could be increased. For example, the legislature does hold public hearings on the budget – but there are a limited number of hearings in which the public can participate.

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