Drawing on internationally accepted criteria developed by multilateral organizations, the Open Budget Survey uses 109 equally weighted indicators to measure budget transparency. These indicators assess whether the central government makes eight key budget documents available to the public online in a timely manner and whether these documents present budget information in a comprehensive and useful way.

Each country receives a composite score (out of 100) that determines its ranking on the Open Budget Index – the world’s only independent and comparative measure of budget transparency.

**How has the OBI score for Venezuela changed over time?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pre-Budget Statement</th>
<th>Executive’s Budget Proposal</th>
<th>Enacted Budget</th>
<th>Citizens Budget</th>
<th>In-Year Reports</th>
<th>Mid-Year Review</th>
<th>Year-End Report</th>
<th>Audit Report</th>
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**How comprehensive and useful is the information provided in the key budget documents that Venezuela publishes?**

Venezuela’s score of 0 out of 100 is substantially lower than the global average score of 42.
Transparency alone is insufficient for improving governance. Public participation in budgeting is vital to realize the positive outcomes associated with greater budget transparency.

To measure public participation, the Open Budget Survey assesses the degree to which the government provides opportunities for the public to engage in budget processes. Such opportunities should be provided throughout the budget cycle by the executive, the legislature, and the supreme audit institution.

The questions assessing participation in the Open Budget Survey 2017 were revised to align them with the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency’s new principles on public participation, which now serve as the basis for widely accepted norms on public participation in national budget processes. Therefore, data on the extent of public participation in budgeting in the Open Budget Survey 2017 cannot be compared directly to data from earlier editions.

Venezuela’s score of 0 on the 2017 Open Budget Index is lower than its score in 2015.

Moreover, Venezuela has been inconsistent in which documents are made publicly available in a given year.

Since 2015, Venezuela has decreased the availability of budget information by:
- Producing the In-Year Reports for internal use only.
- Failing to publish the Enacted Budget online in a timely manner. Moreover, after the research period assessed in the survey, the Enacted Budget for 2017 was produced for internal use only and approved by presidential decree, bypassing the Parliament.

Venezuela has also failed to make progress in the following ways:
- Not making the Executive’s Budget Proposal available to the public.
- Not making the Pre-Budget Statement or the Year-End Report available to the public.
- Not producing a Citizens Budget, a Mid-Year Review, or an Audit Report.

How does public participation in Venezuela compare to other countries in the region?

Venezuela’s score of 7 out of 100 indicates that it provides few opportunities for the public to engage in the budget process. This is lower than the global average score of 12.

To what extent do different institutions in Venezuela provide opportunities for public participation?
The Open Budget Survey examines the role that legislatures, supreme audit institutions, and independent fiscal institutions play in the budget process and the extent to which they are able to provide effective oversight of the budget. These institutions play a critical role — often enshrined in national constitutions or laws — in planning budgets and overseeing their implementation.

These indicators were revised to better assess the role of formal oversight institutions in ensuring integrity and accountability in the use of public resources. Therefore, data on the role and effectiveness of oversight institutions in the Open Budget Survey 2017 should not be compared directly to data from earlier editions.

To what extent does the legislature in Venezuela provide budget oversight?

The legislature provides weak oversight during the budget cycle. This score reflects that the legislature provides weak oversight during the planning stage of the budget cycle and weak oversight during the implementation stage of the budget cycle.

The main barriers to effective legislative oversight are:
- A debate on budget policy by the legislature does not take place prior to the tabling of the Executive’s Budget Proposal.
- The Executive’s Budget Proposal is not provided to legislators at least two months before the start of the budget year.
- Legislative committees do not examine and publish reports on their analyses of the Executive’s Budget Proposal online.

To what extent does the supreme audit institution in Venezuela provide budget oversight?

The supreme audit institution provides adequate budget oversight.
- Under the law, it has full discretion to undertake audits as it sees fit.
- Moreover, the head of the institution is appointed by the legislature or judiciary and cannot be removed without legislative or judicial approval, which bolsters its independence.
- However, the supreme audit institution is provided with insufficient resources to fulfill its mandate, and its audit processes are not reviewed by an independent agency.

Oversight by an Independent Fiscal Institution

Venezuela does not have an independent fiscal institution (IFI). While IFIs are not yet widespread globally, they are increasingly recognized as an important source of independent, nonpartisan information. IFIs take a variety of different institutional forms. Common examples include parliamentary budget offices and fiscal councils.


RECOMMENDATIONS

For more detailed information on the survey findings for Venezuela, please see the Open Budget Survey Data Explorer at survey.internationalbudget.org.

How can Venezuela improve transparency?

Venezuela should prioritize the following actions to improve budget transparency:
- Publish an Executive’s Budget Proposal online.
- Publish a Pre-Budget Statement, In-Year Reports, and a Year-End Report online.
- Publish an Enacted Budget online in a timely manner.
The Open Budget Survey uses internationally accepted criteria developed by multilateral organizations from sources such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) and the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT).

It is a fact-based research instrument that assesses what occurs in practice through readily observable phenomena. The entire research process took approximately 18 months between August 2016 and January 2018 and involved about 300 experts in 115 countries. The Open Budget Survey 2017 assesses only events, activities, or developments that occurred up to 31 December 2016. The survey was revised somewhat from the 2015 version to reflect evolving methods for disseminating budget information and to strengthen individual questions on public participation and budget oversight. A discussion of these changes can be found in the Open Budget Survey Global Report (see link below).

Survey responses are typically supported by citations and comments. This may include a reference to a public document, an official statement by the government, or comments from a face-to-face interview with a government official or other knowledgeable parties.

How can Venezuela improve participation?
Venezuela should prioritize the following actions to improve public participation in its budget process:

- Pilot mechanisms for members of the public and the executive branch officials to exchange views on national budget matters during both the formulation of the national budget and the monitoring of its implementation. These mechanisms could build on innovations, such as participatory budgeting and social audits. For examples of such mechanisms, see www.fiscaltransparency.net/mechanisms/.
- Hold legislative hearings on the formulation of the annual budget, during which members of the public or civil society organizations can testify.
- Establish formal mechanisms for the public to assist the supreme audit institution by participating in relevant audit investigations.

How can Venezuela improve oversight?
Venezuela should prioritize the following actions to make budget oversight more effective:

- Ensure the legislature holds a debate on budget policy prior to the tabling of the Executive’s Budget Proposal and approves recommendations for the upcoming budget.
- Ensure that the legislature receives the Executive’s Budget Proposal for its discussion and approval.
- Ensure a legislative committee examines and publishes reports on in-year budget implementation online.
- Ensure the supreme audit institution has adequate funding to perform its duties, as determined by an independent body (e.g., the legislature or judiciary).
- Consider setting up an independent fiscal institution.

Further Information
Visit openbudgetsurvey.org for more information, including:

- The Open Budget Survey 2017: Global report
- Data explorer
- Methodology report
- Full questionnaire