

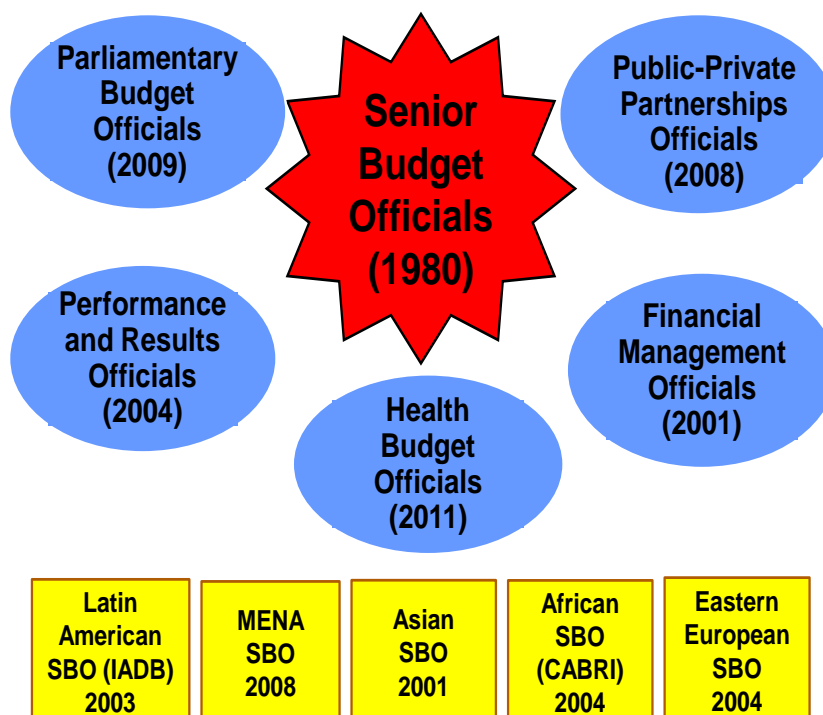
OECD Network of Parliamentary Budget Officials (PBO)

The main channel for the OECD work on budgeting is the Working Party of Senior Budget Officials (SBO) and its associated networks. Established in 1980, and composed of budget directors and other senior officials from member countries, the SBO is recognised as the world's leading forum on international budgeting issues.

The SBO has launched four associated networks and is in the process of launching a fifth associated network on health expenditures (November 2011). Five regional networks are also associated with the SBO (see below).¹ Recognising the importance of an effective role for the legislature in the budget process, **the OECD Network of Parliamentary Budget Officials (PBO) was launched at a meeting at the Italian Chamber of Deputies in February 2009.** This new network was informed by earlier work with chairpersons of parliamentary budget or finance committees (in 2001-2003), and a special meeting on the relationship between the legislature and the budget office (2006).

The SBO and its associated networks, like the PBO, convene annually to address key budgeting concerns and relevant policy options. These forums are marketplaces of ideas where many of the most important innovations in budgeting have gained wider currency. The key to the success of the SBO and its associated networks has been a culture of informal professionalism and mutual support, within which delegates have the confidence for frankness, disclosure, and peer review.

The OECD Senior Budget Officials and associated networks



¹ The African SBO is run by the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), which now has the status of an international organisation in its own right. The Latin American SBO is run in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

Who participates in PBO network meetings?

The PBO network is a diverse group, bringing together specialised professional staff from: independent fiscal institutions (parliamentary budget offices and fiscal councils); specialised in-house parliamentary budget research units; and parliamentary budget or finance committees.

Where are PBO network meetings held?

The PBO network meetings are hosted by OECD member country parliaments. Past PBO network meetings were held in the Italian Chamber of Deputies in Rome (2009), the Swiss Parliament in Bern (2010) and the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm (2011).

What types of issues are discussed at PBO meetings?

At the core of PBO discussions are the institutional arrangements for, practices of, and challenges faced by parliamentary budget institutions. A particularly strong interest in independent fiscal institutions - a growing but extremely diverse group of bodies in OECD countries - resulted in delegates tasking the OECD Secretariat to work with them to develop a set of principles for independent fiscal institutions based on lessons of experience and commonly agreed good practices. These principles will be supplemented by a short note on each relevant institution which highlights the specific country context (both economic and political) that led to their establishment. An informal Reference Group of heads and deputy heads of independent fiscal institutions was formed to help guide this work.

Certain topics have come to the fore as the result of current events, such as the “Role of Parliament in the Approval and Oversight of Fiscal Stimulus Packages and Strategies to Reduce Fiscal Deficits” or “Fiscal Rules in Light of the Global Financial Crisis.” Discussions have also recognized the growing complexity that parliaments face in their oversight role when scrutinising economic assumptions, fiscal risks, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Through a survey of PBO network members, substantive work has been done to compare country experiences on, for example, [Committee structures for budget approval and Interim reporting practices and legislative oversight in OECD countries](#).

The agendas and background documents for past PBO meetings are available at: www.oecd.org/gov/budget/pbo

Where can I find OECD analysis related to parliaments and budgeting?

The OECD Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division examines the role of parliaments in the budget process through [country budget reviews](#), the [International Budget Practices and Procedures Database](#), and a variety of analytical work, some of which is prepared specifically for [PBO network meetings](#) (as with the survey described briefly above). The majority of this work is disseminated in the [OECD Journal on Budgeting](#) which is published three times per year. Articles from past *Journal* issues can be downloaded electronically at: www.oecd.org/gov/budget/journal

Peer-reviewed country budget reviews provide a comprehensive overview of the budget process in the country under examination, evaluate national experiences in light of international best practice, and offer specific policy recommendations. All country budget reviews include a section on the role of the country’s parliament in the budget process.



OECD country budget reviews to date

Australia , 2008 (Volume 2008/2)	Moldova , 2010 (Volume 2010/3)
Austria , 2007 (Volume 7:3)	Netherlands , 2001 (Volume 1:3)
Brazil , 2003 (Volume 3:1)	Norway , 2006 (Volume 6: 1)
Bulgaria , 2009 (Volume 2009/3)	Philippines , 2010 (Volume 2010/2)
Canada , 2001 (Volume 1:2)	Portugal , 2008 (Volume 2008/3); Avaliação do Processo Orçamental em Portugal
Chile , 2004 (Volume 4:2)	Romania , 2005 (Volume 4:4)
Croatia , 2006 (Volume 5:4)	Russia , 2008 (Volume 2008/2)
Denmark , 2004 (Volume 4:1)	Singapore , 2006 (Volume 6:1)
Estonia , 2008 (Volume 2008/2)	Slovenia , 2005 (Volume 4:4)
Finland , 2002 (Volume 2:2)	Sweden , 2001 (Volume 1:1)
Georgia , 2006 (Volume 5:4)	Switzerland , 2005 (Volume 5:1)
Greece , 2008 (Volume 2008/3)	Thailand , 2006 (Volume 5:3)
Hungary , 2006 (Volume 6:3)	Turkey , 2007 (Volume 7:2)
Indonesia , 2009 (Volume 2009/2)	United States , 2003 (Volume 3:2)
Latvia , 2009 (Volume 2009/3)	
Lithuania , 2010 (Volume 2010/3)	
Mexico , 2009 (Supplement 1); Estudio de la OCDE sobre el proceso presupuestario en México	<i>*Reviews are forthcoming for Cambodia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, and Ukraine.</i>

Examples of analytical work that has appeared in the *Journal*

Volume 2011/3 (forthcoming)

- “Independent Fiscal Institutions: Developing Good Practices” (George Kopits)

Volume 2009/1

- “[Reforming the Budget Formulation Process in the Brazilian Congress](#)” (Helio Tollini)
- “[The Changing Role of Parliament in the Budget Process](#)” (Barry Anderson)

Volume 7:3 (2007)

- “[Role of the Legislature in the Budget Process: Recent Trends and Innovations](#)” (Paul Posner and Chung-Keun Park)

Volume 4:3 – Special Issue (2004)

- “[The Legal Framework for Budget Systems: An International Comparison](#)” (Ian Lienert and Moo-Kyung Jung)

Volume 4:2 (2004)

- “[Legislatures and Budget Oversight in Latin America: Strengthening Public Finance Accountability in Emerging Economies](#)” (Carlos Santiso)

Volume 1:3 (2002)

- “[The OECD Budgeting Database](#)” (information on parliamentary budget procedures)
- “[Can National Legislatures Regain an Effective Voice in Budget Policy?](#)” (Allen Schick)

What other resources exist at the OECD for parliamentarians and parliamentary officials?

There are several avenues for OECD interaction with parliamentarians and parliamentary officials. Increasingly, staff throughout the OECD consult with parliamentarians and parliamentary officials as part of research processes. Institutionally, the OECD has longstanding relationships with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), which debates the work of the OECD on an annual basis, and

the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's Economics and Security Committee. The OECD also maintains its own network of parliamentary contacts and cooperates more informally with other parliamentary organisations and networks. As part of this cooperation, the OECD organises two High-Level Parliamentary Seminars per year and arranges for briefings to inform parliamentarians and parliamentary officials about OECD work. More information on these and other initiatives is available at: www.oecd.org/parliamentarians

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