Belgium has one of the highest shares of government spending relative to GDP among OECD countries

While government expenditures in 2015 represented 40.9% of GDP on average across OECD countries, the share of expenditures reached 53.9% of GDP in Belgium. The fiscal balance continues to consolidate, as the deficit decreases from 5.4% of GDP in 2009 to 2.5% of GDP in 2015. Furthermore, in 2015 the primary balance, which excludes net interest payments on government debt from the overall balance, was slightly positive, reaching 0.2% of GDP. However, investment spending remained low with a share as 4.4% of total government expenditures.

Citizen satisfaction with health care and education systems is among the highest across OECD countries in Belgium

Citizen satisfaction is among the highest for both the health care – at 90% of citizens satisfied – and the education system – at 80%. These levels of satisfaction are significantly higher than the OECD averages, which amount to 70% in the case of health care and 66% for the education system.

Belgium has radically reorganized its back office functions

In early 2017, the country created a new Federal Public Service to group IT, human resources, integrity, management, budget, accounting and public procurement functions into a single body serving all federal organisations.
Public Finance and Economics

Fiscal balance* (2015, 2016) % of GDP
-2.5% 2016 Belgium
-2.8% 2015 Belgium
-10% 2015
-5% 2015
0% 2015
+5% 2015
+10% 2015
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government expenditures (2015, 2016) % of GDP
Belgium 2015
53.9% 2015
2016
53.3% 2016
2015
40.9%
2016
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government investment (2015, 2016) % of GDP
Belgium 2015
3.2% 2015
2016
2.3% 2016
2.4% 2015
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government gross debt* (2015, 2016) % of GDP
Belgium 2016
127.5% 2016
126.7% 2015
0% 2015
50% 2015
100% 2015
150% 2015
200% 2015
250% 2015
Source: OECD National Accounts

Public Employment

General government employment as % of total employment (2015)
Belgium 2015
18.1%
Source: OECD National Accounts

Women in the civil service ...
Belgium 2015
52.3%
53.0%
Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

Percentage of central government employees aged 55 years or older (2015)
Belgium 2015
27.6%
24.9%
Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

Public Sector Compensation

Annual compensation across central government positions (2015)
Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the compensation of employees in central / federal governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Belgium 2015</th>
<th>Belgium 2016</th>
<th>OECD Average 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial Positions</td>
<td>73,800</td>
<td>52,700</td>
<td>452,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Professionals</td>
<td>161,300</td>
<td>88,700</td>
<td>143,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Managers (D3 positions)</td>
<td>184,300</td>
<td>134,500</td>
<td>84,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Managers (D1 positions)</td>
<td>342,500</td>
<td>231,500</td>
<td>92,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to read the figures:
- Country value in blue (not represented if not available)
- Average of OECD countries in red
- Range of OECD country values in grey
- Values have been rounded.
- n.a. refers to data not available
- * See Notes
- National Accounts

* SNA definition, see Notes

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Compensation of employees in Central/federal Governments

... and in senior positions (2015)
Belgium 2015
21.1%
32.4%
Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

**Human Resource Management**

**Composite indicators on HRM practices in central government (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extent of delegation of HRM practices in line ministries</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of the use of performance assessments in HR decisions</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of the use of performance related pay</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of separate HRM practices for senior civil servants</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection of administrative data</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composite index from 0 lowest to 1 highest

Source: OECD (2016) Strategic Human Resources Management Survey

**Budgeting**

**Performance budgeting practices at the central level of government (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Impact Assessment for developing regulations</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex post evaluation of regulations</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composite index from 0 lowest to 4 highest

Source: OECD (2016) Survey of Performance Budgeting

**Regulatory governance**

**Composite indices on regulatory governance for primary laws* (2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Impact Assessment for developing regulations</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex post evaluation of regulations</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composite index from 0 lowest to 4 highest

* See Notes

Source: OECD Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance (iREG)

**Public Procurement**

**General government procurement expenditures (2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Strategic public procurement - Objectives (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>50%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for green public procurement</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for SMEs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for innovative goods and services</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Some procuring entities have developed an internal strategy/policy
- A strategy/policy has been developed at a central level
- A strategy/policy has been rescinded
- There has never been a strategy/policy in place

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on Public Procurement
**Fiscal balance** as reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.

**Regulatory governance indicators:** The results for stakeholder engagement and Regulatory Impact Assessment apply exclusively to processes for developing primary laws initiated by the executive. Data is not applicable to the United States, where all primary laws are initiated by Congress. In the majority of countries, most primary laws are initiated by the executive, except for Mexico and Korea, where a higher share of primary laws are initiated by parliament/congress (respectively 90.6% and 84%).

**Government gross debt** is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.

**Open Data**

**OURdata Index: Open, Useful, Reusable Government Data (2017)**

Composite index: from 0 lowest to 1 highest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Data availability</th>
<th>Data accessibility</th>
<th>Government support to re-use</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>0.46</th>
<th>0.55</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: OECD (2017) Survey on Open Government Data

**Digital Government**

**Individuals using the Internet for sending filled forms via public authorities websites in the past 12 months (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>35.0%</th>
<th>35.6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: OECD, ICT database; and Eurostat, Information Society database

**Core Government Results**

**Satisfaction and confidence across public services (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Service</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>National government</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Health care</th>
<th>Judicial system</th>
<th>Education system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gallup World Poll

**Differences in income inequality pre and post-tax and government transfers (2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Taxes and Transfers</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Taxes and Transfers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

**Limited government powers (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>0.83</th>
<th>0.75</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: The World Justice Project

**Notes**

- Fiscal balance is reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.
- Regulatory governance indicators: The results for stakeholder engagement and Regulatory Impact Assessment apply exclusively to processes for developing primary laws initiated by the executive. Data is not applicable to the United States, where all primary laws are initiated by Congress. In the majority of countries, most primary laws are initiated by the executive, except for Mexico and Korea, where a higher share of primary laws are initiated by parliament/congress (respectively 90.6% and 84%).
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**Government at a Glance 2017**

Government at a Glance provides readers with a dashboard of key indicators assembled with the goal of contributing to the analysis and international comparison of public sector productivity and performance. Indicators on government revenues, expenditures, and employment are presented, alongside key output and outcome data for education, health and justice. Information on key enablers to increase productivity including on digital government, budget procedures, strategic human resource management, open government data and innovative practices are also included. In a context of tight budget constraints in many member countries, good indicators are needed more than ever, in order to help governments make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and to help restore confidence in government institutions.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance 2017 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication:

http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: [www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm)