

OECD Anti-Corruption and Integrity Outlook: Country Fact Sheet 2024

Australia

Contextual factors

State structure	Executive power	Legislative system	Legal system
Federal	Parliamentary	Bicameral	Common law

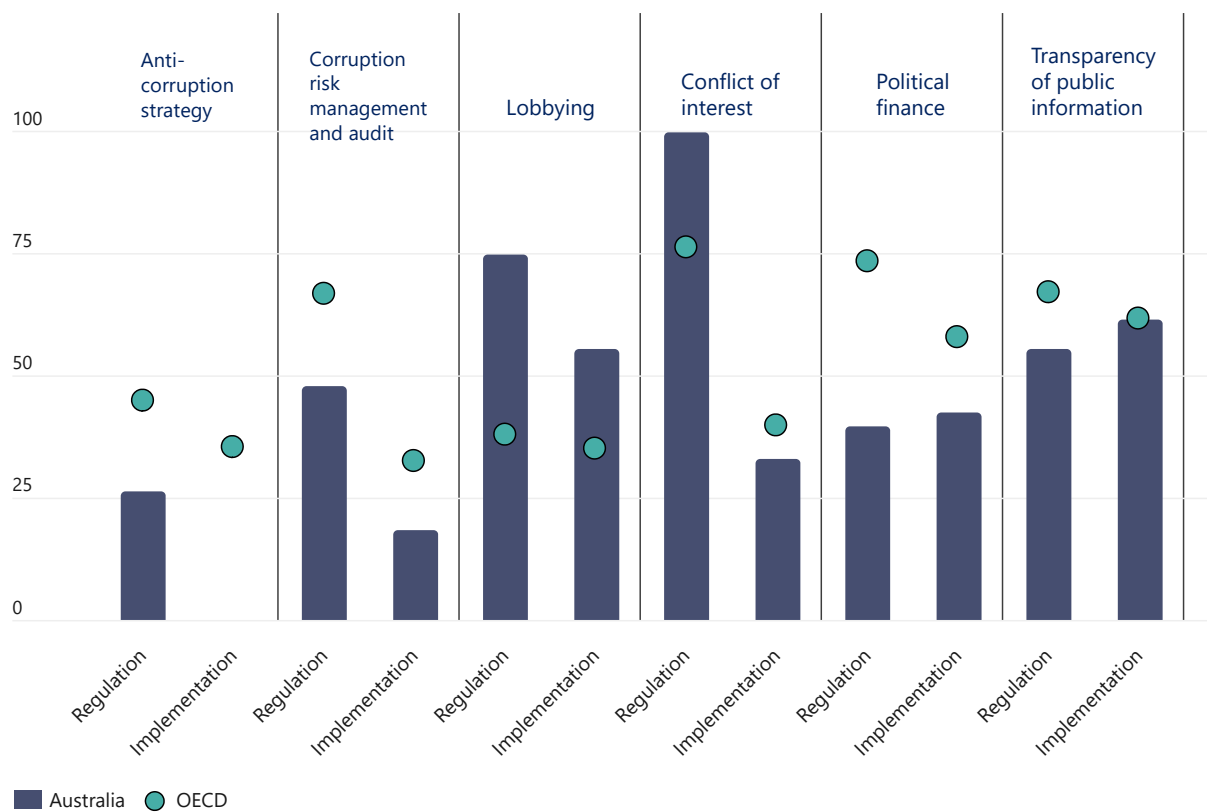
Strategy and institutions on anti-corruption and public integrity

Australia has a strategic framework to mitigate corruption risks and strengthen public integrity. The [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013](#) promotes integrity and accountability in the Australian public sector by providing rules, standards and principles. Additionally, the [Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework 2017](#) contains provisions to mitigate public integrity risks in public financial management and reduce fraud and other types of corruption across the public sector. The [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#) aims to mitigate public integrity risks in internal control and risk management.

In terms of institutions, Australia has an independent anti-corruption body ([National Anti-Corruption Commission \(NACC\)](#)), which operates under the [National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022](#), and an independent body responsible for open data ([Office of the National Data Commissioner](#)). The [Attorney-General's Department](#) oversees lobbying at the federal level, and lobbying frameworks are also applicable and overseen by local bodies at sub-national level. There is no central harmonisation unit for internal control and internal audit.

Overview

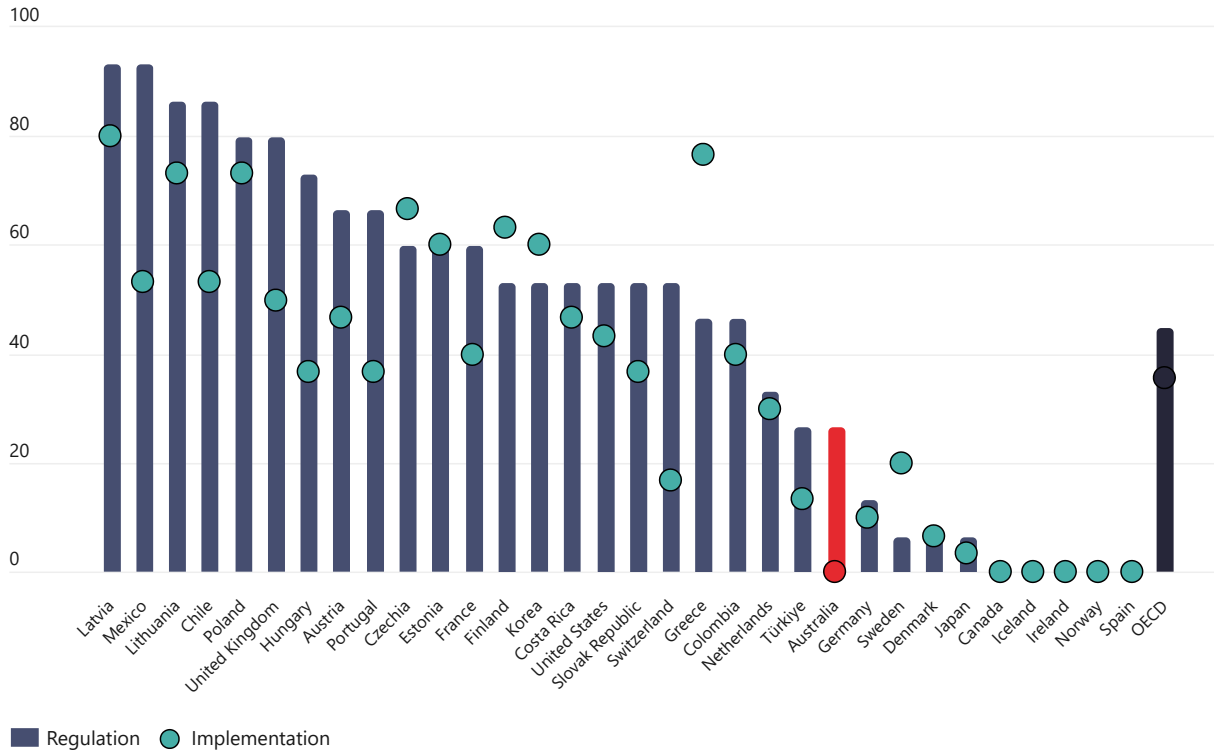
Figure 1. Overview



Greatest strengths	Areas to improve
Conflict of interest - regulation	Anti-corruption strategy - implementation
Lobbying - regulation	Corruption risk management and audit
Transparency of public information - practice	Conflict of interest – practice

Anti-corruption strategy

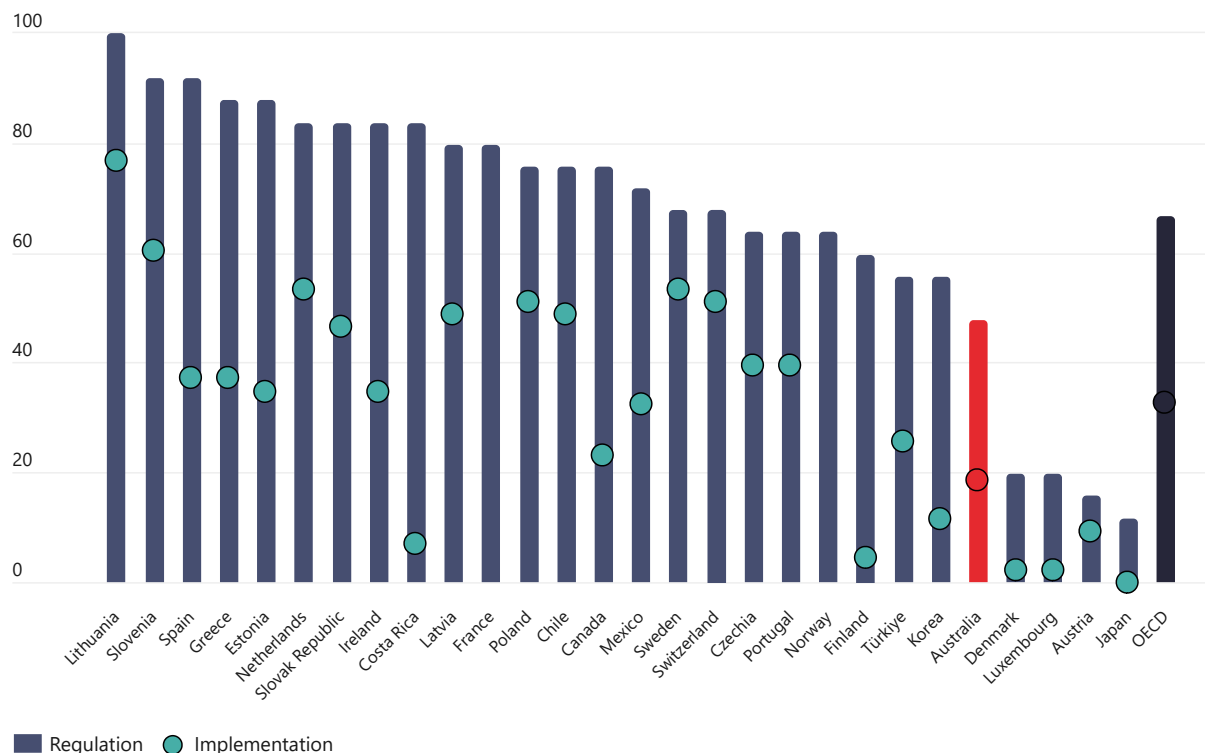
Figure 2. Anti-corruption strategy



Australia's strategic framework establishes objectives for mitigating public integrity risks in public financial management, internal control and risk management, and reducing fraud and other types of corruption across the public sector. However, there is no central coordination function responsible for coordinating the implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of the action plan. Criteria on the adequacy of implementation structures and reporting, financial sustainability and transparency of evaluation practices are not fulfilled, as there is no action plan in force.

Corruption risk management and audit

Figure 3. Corruption risk management and audit



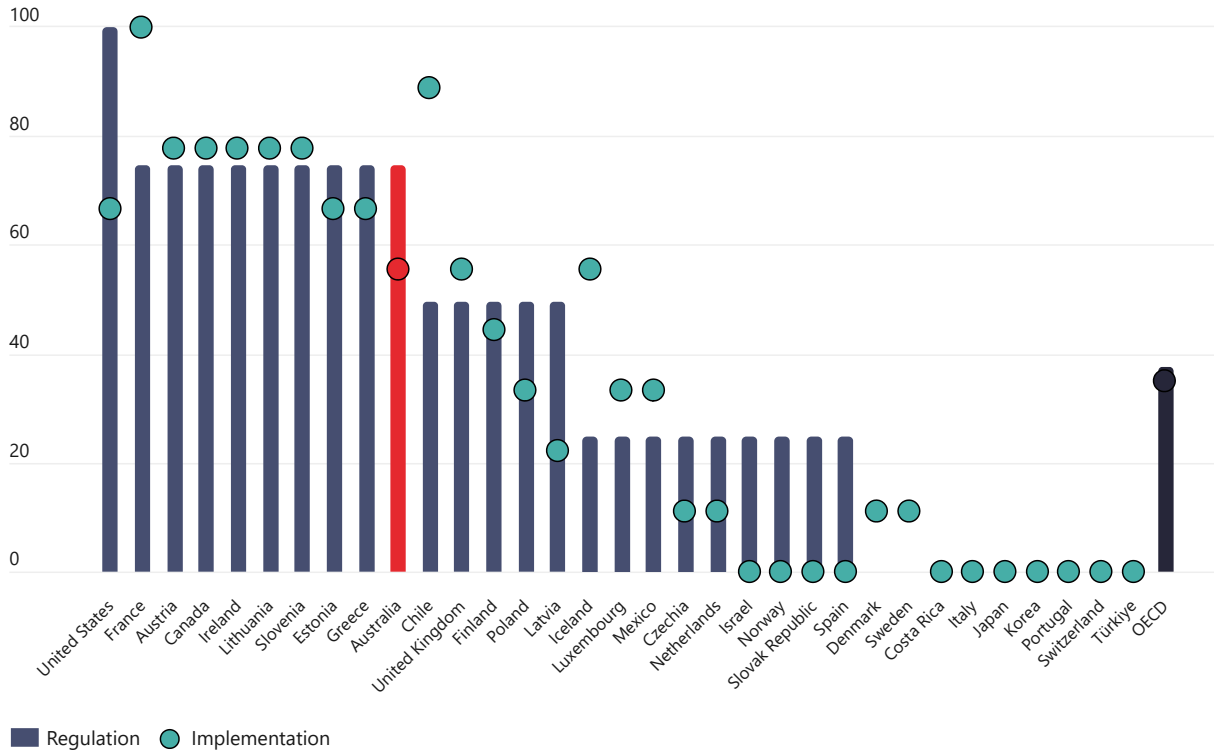
As measured against OECD standards on risk management, which includes internal control and internal audit, Australia fulfils 48% of criteria for regulations and 19% for practice, compared to the OECD average of 67% and 33%, respectively.

Australia's internal control regulations define and establish internal control and internal audit according to international standards. The risk management framework explicitly addresses public integrity risks and delegates the responsibility for risk assessments to management. Despite these strong regulations, there is no central function for developing internal control systems and a low usage of integrity risk management in budget organisations in practice.

While Australia has implemented some internal audit and risk-based measures in practice, it has no regulatory safeguards in place for internal audit. For example, there are no specifications of operational arrangements for internal audit, no standards focusing specifically on internal auditors and their work and no required external assessments of internal audit activity. Additionally, Australia has no available data on how many public organisations were internally audited or the implementation rate for internal audit recommendations.

Lobbying

Figure 4. Lobbying

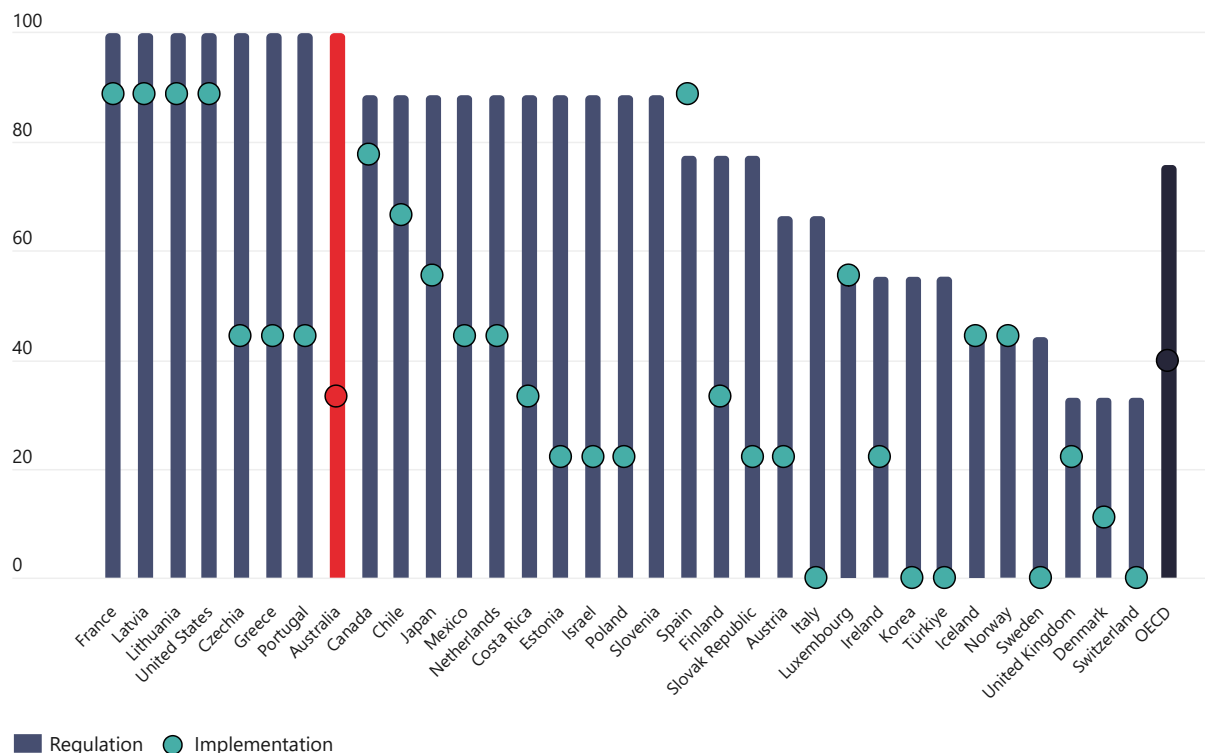


As measured against OECD standards on lobbying, Australia fulfils 75% of criteria for regulations and 56% for practice, compared to the OECD average of 38% and 35%, respectively.

Australia's regulatory framework provides a definition of lobbying activities, including which actors are considered lobbyists, and sanctions for breaches of lobbying transparency standards. Additionally, Australia has cooling off periods for public officials in place but not for lobbyists. In practice, Australia's lobbying register does not contain the type of lobbying activities, budget/expenses for lobbying activities, and pieces of legislation and regulation targeted.

Conflict of interest

Figure 5. Conflict of interest

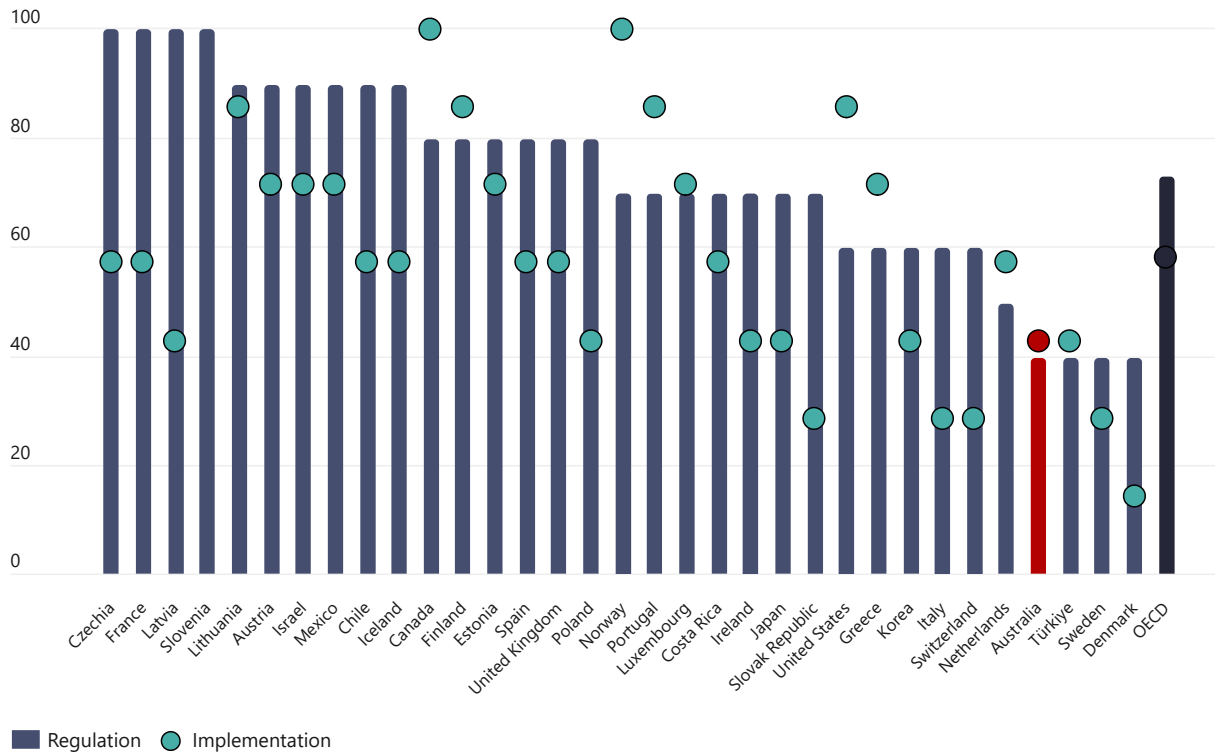


As measured against OECD standards on conflict of interest, Australia fulfils 100% of criteria for regulations and 33% for practice, compared to the OECD average of 76% and 40%, respectively.

Australia's comprehensive regulatory framework defines and describes how to manage conflict-of-interest situations at various levels of government and includes proportional sanctions for breaches of conflict-of-interest provisions. Additionally, ministers, members of parliament, high-ranking judges and public employees in high-risk positions are all required to declare their interests. In practice, Australia does not fully track data on the verification of interest declarations, nor on the extent of recommendations or sanctions issued to resolve cases of conflicts of interest. Additionally, not all declarations are submitted electronically.

Political finance

Figure 6. Political finance

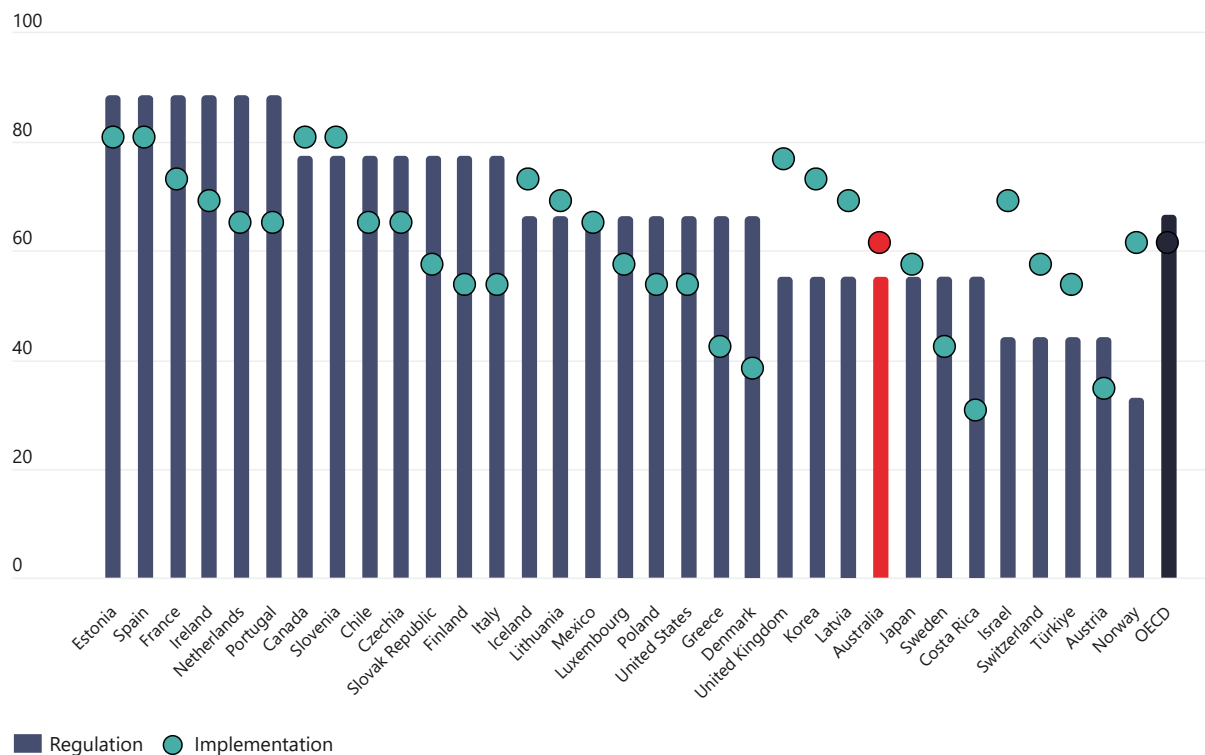


As measured against OECD standards on political finance, Australia fulfils 40% of criteria for regulations and 43% for practice, compared to the OECD average of 73% and 58%, respectively.

The regulatory framework requires political parties to report on their annual and campaign finances and defines proportional sanctions, but it does not set a threshold for personal contributions to candidates' personal campaigns. In practice, not all political parties have submitted their annual or campaign financial reports within the timelines defined by national legislation and there is no independent body with a mandate to oversee the financing of political parties and election campaigns.

Transparency of public information

Figure 7. Transparency of public information



As measured against OECD standards on public information, which include access to public information and open data, Australia fulfils 56% of criteria for regulations and 62% for practice, compared to the OECD average of 67% and 62%, respectively.

The Office of the National Data Commissioner is responsible for public information issues. Consolidated versions of all primary laws, legislative proposals of the government as sent to parliament and the state budget for the current year as well as public tenders and results of those awarded by central government are publicly available. However, agendas of formal government meetings are not systematically published prior to the session, and not all ministers' agendas are publicly available.