

The Fiscal Policy Council

Stockholm

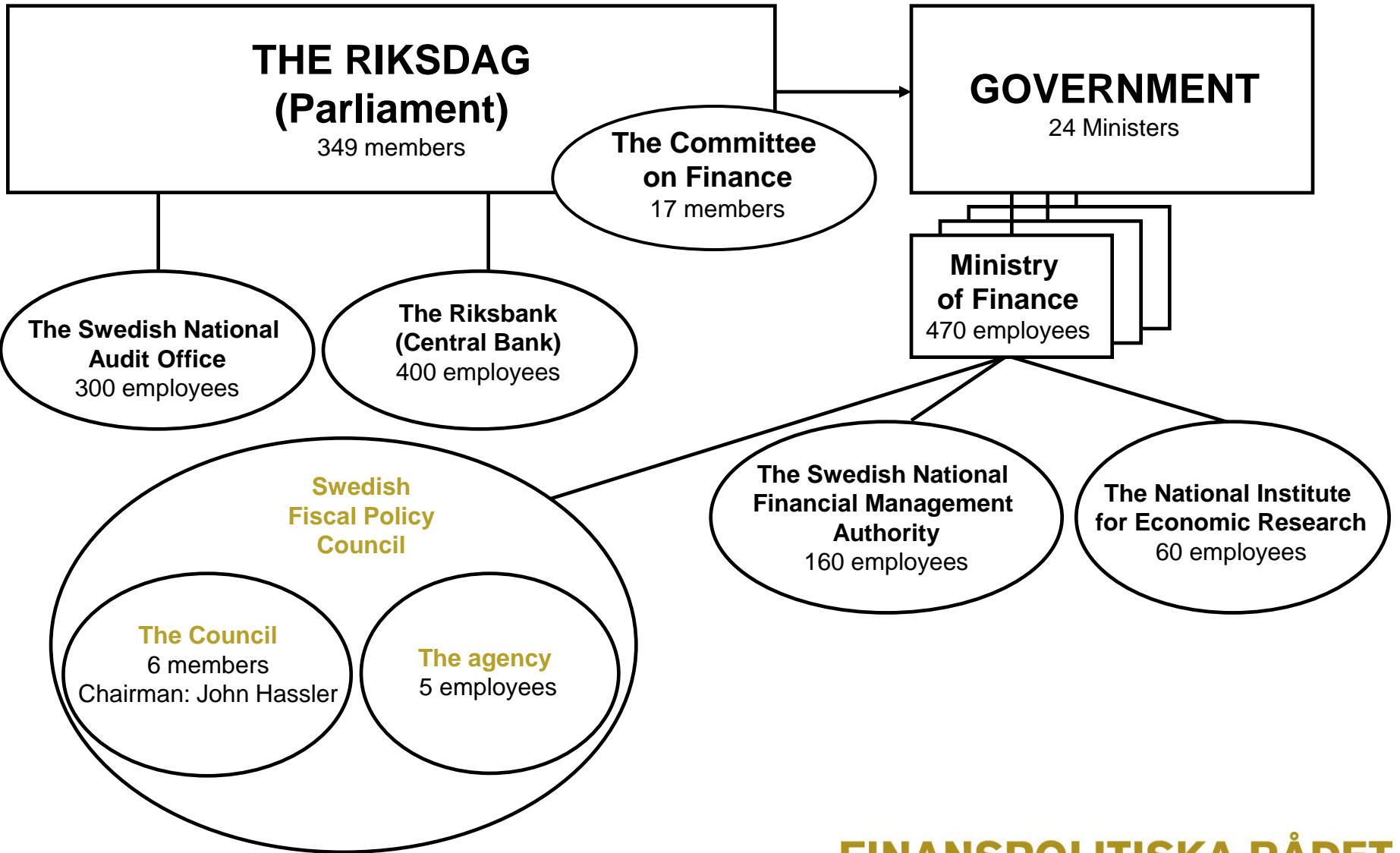
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The Swedish Fiscal Framework

- Top-down budget process (preparation in Government as well as decision in Parliament);
- A fiscal *surplus target* for general government net lending of 1% of GDP, on average, over the business-cycle;
- Central government *expenditure ceiling* set 3 years in advance; decision by Parliament;
- Balanced budget requirement for local governments;
- Since 2007, a Fiscal Policy Council with a broad remit (to facilitate transparency and accountability).
- *Note: The strength of this framework depends on the political will to respect it...*

The set-up of the council

- Established in 2007;
- An agency under the Government;
- Six members:
 - Academics;
 - Policy-making experience;
- Supplementary activities to ordinary jobs (mainly academic positions);
- Small secretariat: five persons;
- Annual budget 900 000 €;
- Provisions to safeguard the Council's independence, such as a stipulation that the Council itself proposes its members to the Government.



The tasks of the Fiscal Policy Council

1. Focus on *ex post* evaluation, with some *ex ante* evaluation;
2. Evaluate whether the fiscal policy meets its objectives:
 - Long-run sustainability;
 - Surplus target;
 - The expenditure ceiling;
 - Stabilization issues.
3. Evaluate whether the developments are in line with healthy sustainable growth and a sustainable high employment;
4. Monitor the transparency of the government budget proposals and the motivations for various policy measures;
5. Analyse the effects of fiscal policy on the distribution of welfare;
6. Contribute to a better economic policy discussion in general:
 - Annual report in May (this year May, 15);
 - More information on www.finanspolitiskaradet.se.