

QUESTIONNAIRE ON SUBNATIONAL BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

September 2010

RESEARCH ON SUB NATIONAL BUDGET TRANSPARENCY IN ARGENTINA

QUESTIONNAIRE AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Section one: The availability and contents of budget documents

- Key budget documents used
- Publication and availability of documents
- Enacted provincial budget contents: degree of disaggregation
- Update status of the information
- Relevant Legislation

Section two: Evaluation of the actual budget process

- Executive's formulation of the budget
- Legislative approval of the budget
- Executive's implementation of the budget. Deviations.
- Executive's Year-end Report and the Supreme Audit Institution

Section three: The intergovernmental fiscal transfers

- Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations
- Types of transfers and rationality in the management of funds from National Government to the Provinces.
- Criteria to allocate transfers into municipalities.
- Additional relevant information about fiscal transfers.

□ **General information about provincial budget process**

1. How is the provincial budget elaborated? What are the typical steps and actors involved in the elaboration of the Budget proposal?
2. Who are the key players in the budget formulation? In what stages of the budget formulation process can amendments be introduced? What are the typical amendments introduced to the budget? Who can citizens, businesspeople, trade unions and NGOs contact in order to lobby for amendments to the budget?
3. In what stage of the budget process can legislators introduce amendments and modifications to provincial budget?
4. Does the Budget and Finance Commission at the Legislature often request for reports on budgetary issues to the Executive?

□ **Section two: Evaluation of the actual budget**

5. Does the Executive adhere to a public timetable for the formulation and submission of the budget?
 - a. The Executive adheres to the dates in its timetable.
 - b. The Executive adheres to most of the key dates in its timetable.
 - c. The Executive has difficulty adhering to most of the dates in its timetable.
 - d. The Executive does not adhere to the dates in its timetable, or it does not release to the public its timetable.
 - e. Not applicable/other (please comment).

□ **Legislative approval of the budget**

6. How long in advance of the start of the budget year does the legislature receive the budget proposal?
 - a. The legislature receives the budget proposal at least one month before the start of the budget year.
 - b. The legislature receives the budget proposal less than one month before the start of the budget year.
 - c. The legislature receives the budget proposal after the start of the budget year.
 - d. The legislature does not receive the budget proposal.
 - e. Not applicable/other (please comment).
7. Does the legislature have authority *in law* to amend the budget submitted by the Executive?
 - a. Yes, the legislature has unlimited authority *in law* to amend the budget.
 - b. Yes, the legislature has authority *in law* to amend the budget, with some limitations.
 - c. Yes, the legislature has authority *in law* to amend the budget, but in reality its authority is very limited.
 - d. No, the legislature does not have any authority *in law* to amend the budget.
 - e. Not applicable/other (please comment).
8. Does the legislature usually make modifications to the Executive's budget proposal?
 - a. Yes, the legislature usually introduces changes to amend the budget.
 - b. Yes, the legislature introduces minor changes and its authority is very limited.
 - c. No, the legislature does not introduce changes to amend the budget
 - d. Not applicable/other (please comment).

9. What kind of changes are the most usual?
- The legislature amendments can involve all provincial government levels and programs.
 - The legislature amendments can involve some provincial government levels and some programs.
 - The legislature amendments only involve its own administrative unit level.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
- Executive's implementation of the budget. Deviations**
10. The last in-year expenditure report has a delay of
- One quarter or less.
 - More than one quarter and less than one year.
 - More than one year.
 - In-year reports are not released.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
11. Are there any regulations introducing limits on what the Executive can change on the enacted budget?
- Yes, the Executive cannot modify the enacted budget.
 - Yes, the Executive can modify the enacted budget in its composition but cannot change the total amount of the enacted budget. It is restricted by the following laws (please mention and summarize).
 - Yes, the Executive can change the enacted budget both in its composition as well as in its total amount (cite laws and other regulations).
12. Does the province publish a list of beneficiaries of subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending?
- Yes, a complete list of beneficiaries is published for all targeted spending.
 - The government publishes the list of beneficiaries for only some portions of targeted spending.
 - Information on beneficiaries is extremely poor.
 - There is no information on beneficiaries of targeted spending.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
- The Performance of the Supreme Audit Institution**
13. How long after the end of the fiscal year are the final annual expenditures of national departments released to the public?
- Final audited accounts are released to the public six months or less after the end of the fiscal year.
 - Final audited accounts are released 12 months or less (but more than six months) after the end of the fiscal year.
 - Final audit accounts are released after 12 months of the end of the fiscal year.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
14. Referring to the last audited budget:
- Please analyze the role of the Audit Institution, the Legislature, the delay, formal details, etc.

Section Three: The Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers

□ **Types of Transfers and Rationales for Their Use**

Automatic transfers: Tax sharing system (*Coparticipación*) and other automatic transfers

15. What percentage of total provincial budget do the automatic transfers from central government represent?
16. Are the automatic transfers from central government (tax revenue sharing system plus other special transfers by law) well defined and clearly identified in the provincial budget?
- Yes, each kind of automatic transfer is specifically distinguished and stated in provincial budgets.
 - Yes, automatic transfers are specified but in aggregate terms. .
 - No, automatic transfers are not clearly distinguished.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
17. Are the automatic transfers from central government considered as general income (*rentas generales*) in the provincial budget and can be used discretionally?
- Yes, automatic transfers are considered as general income in provincial budgets.
 - No, automatic transfers have specific use or are destined to specific purpose expenditures.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
18. Does the accreditation of funds occur on a regular and predictable basis?
- Yes, the funds are accredited on a regular basis.
 - No, often delays and shifts on the level of transfers occur.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
19. Can the national government make transfers in advance and charge interests to the province (*anticipos a cuenta de las respectivas participaciones en el producido de los impuestos nacionales*)? How often does this happen?
- No, there are no such transfers in advance.
 - Exceptionally, but the amount of transfers in advance is not significant.
 - Yes, the province, due to financial problems, usually requests for *coparticipation* funds in advance and has to pay significant amounts of interests.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
20. When the actual transferred funds are superior to the enacted original level, how are the extra funds managed?
- The provincial budget is revised and sent to the legislature.
 - The extra transferred funds are automatically incorporated to the budget without a discussion in the legislature.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).

21. Does the Federal Commission of Taxes have a control on the liquidation of funds that belong to each province?
- Yes, the Federal Commission of Taxes has a periodic control on the liquidation of these funds.
 - No, the Federal Commission of Taxes makes no control over these funds.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
22. Are the rules and regulations from the Federal Commission of Taxes observed and respected by National Government?
- Yes, the resolutions from Federal Commission are strictly observed by National Government.
 - Only some resolutions from Federal Commission are observed by National Government.
 - No, National Government does not respect the resolutions from Federal Commission of Taxes.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
23. What percentage of total provincial budget do the non automatic transfers from central government represent?

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24. Are non automatic transfers from central government well defined and clearly identified in the provincial budget?
- Yes, each kind of non automatic transfer is specifically distinguished and stated in provincial budgets.
 - Yes, non automatic transfers are specified but in aggregate terms. .
 - No, non automatic transfers are not clearly discriminated.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
25. Are non automatic transfers from central government considered as general income (*rentas generales*) in the provincial budget and can be used discretionally?
- Yes, all non automatic transfers are considered as general income in provincial budgets.
 - Only some non automatic transfers are considered as general income in provincial budgets (please specify)
 - No, the whole non automatic transfers have specific use or are destined to specific purpose expenditures.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
26. Is it possible that the actual transferred funds may be superior to the enacted original level? How are these extra funds managed?
- Yes, the transferred funds may be superior to the enacted level (please comment how they are managed).
 - No, actual transferred funds are never superior to the enacted original level.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).

27. Is it possible that the actual transferred funds may be inferior to the enacted original level? How are the financial gaps overcome?
- Yes, the transferred funds may be inferior to the enacted level (please comment how these situations are managed).
 - No, actual transferred funds are never inferior to the enacted original level.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).

Other mechanisms of financial aid from central government (*Programas de financiamiento ordenado*)

28. Are the mechanisms to access financial aid from central government transparent and equitable for every province?
- Yes, clear rules exist, are transparent and equal to all who request it.
 - Partially: some conditions are equal and well known while others are negotiated according the situation of each province.
 - No, it is always a bilateral negotiation.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).

Transferences to Municipalities

29. Does the provincial budget provide clear and reliable information about all transfers to the municipalities?
- Yes, each kind of transfer is specifically distinguished and stated in provincial budgets.
 - Yes, transfers are specified but in aggregate terms.
 - No, transfers are not clearly discriminated.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).
30. Does the Executive publish information for the geographical distribution of expenditures to municipalities?
- Yes, the Executive publishes all the relevant information regarding transfers to municipalities.
 - Yes, the Executive publishes an important part of the information regarding transfers to municipalities.
 - Yes, the Executive publishes at least some of the information regarding transfers to municipalities.
 - No, the Executive publishes no information regarding transfers to municipalities.
 - Not applicable/other (please comment).