

## BEST PRACTICES IN DECENTRALISATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

### → Best practices sheet

<p>Please send the duly completed form to the Secretariat of the DAL Committee, which remains at your disposal for any questions or comments. E-mail: <a href="mailto:dal.cglu@diba.cat">dal.cglu@diba.cat</a></p>			
<p><b>Best practices in Decentralisation and Local Governance sheet</b></p>			
<p><b>Title: Workshop-Seminars on the Process of Decentralisation in Uruguay</b></p>			
<p><b>Promoting organisation: UNDP Local Development Programme ART Uruguay</b></p>			
<p><b>Territorial sphere: Canelones, Uruguay</b></p>			
<p><b>Subject area:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Politics/ Law</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Economics/ Taxation</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Basic services</b> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Environment and sustainability</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capacity building / administrative structure</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Multilevel dialogues</b> </td> </tr> </table>		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Politics/ Law</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Economics/ Taxation</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Basic services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Environment and sustainability</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capacity building / administrative structure</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Multilevel dialogues</b>
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<p><b>Start date: 25 September 2008</b></p>	<p><b>End date: 10 December 2008</b></p>		
<p><b>Summary of the initiative:</b>  A process of dialogue and debate developed as a series of workshop-seminars on the dynamics of decentralisation in the country was organised as part of the UNDP's Local Development Programme ART Uruguay. Three of these workshop-seminars were held in Canelones: the first on 25 September 2008 entitled "Dialogue for Decentralisation. New Local Authorities. The New Institutionalism and Its Impact on Local Development"; the second on 26 November 2008, entitled "Dialogue for Decentralisation" and took the opportunity to present the publication "<i>Cuadernos para el desarrollo Local</i>"; and the third on 10 December 2008, entitled "For Decentralisation and Municipal Strengthening in Uruguay".</p>			
<p><b>Relevance of the initiative with regard to the local and national context</b> (economic, political, social, administrative, organisational context):  The approval of the proposed Law on Decentralisation in Uruguay was founded on broad political consensus and hence paved the way for territorial restructuring of political power in which every reflection or debate could potentially contribute to the shaping of this power.</p>			
<p><b>Objectives:</b>  The aim of these workshop-seminars was to bring together politicians, experts and representatives of institutions at every level of government in the country to debate the proposed Law on Decentralisation in Uruguay in general and, in particular, issues such as local authorities' need for resources, instruments and tools to provide local public services in the context of the proposed law, decentralisation and citizens' participation, all of which are key to territorial development, intergovernmental links at local authority level within the framework of the decentralisation process, and the role of the Presidential Office of Planning and the Budget (OPP) in this process.</p>			
<p><b>Parties involved, distribution of responsibilities and coordination mechanisms:</b>  The ART Uruguay Local Development Programme, the Uruguayan Presidential Office of Planning and the Budget, the Uruguayan Congress of Governors, Barcelona Provincial Council, the Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation and the International and Ibero-American Foundation of Public Administration and Policies.</p>			
<p><b>Impacts</b> (on public policy, on political culture or on social cohesion):  The observations and proposals that came out of these workshop-seminars influenced the forthcoming legislative process, as well as political figures that do not appear in the Uruguayan Chamber of Representatives, and the citizens of Uruguay, thereby increasing transparency and legitimacy. All of this</p>			

helped to remove the obstacles that confront the effective institutionalisation of the municipal tier of government in Uruguay.

**Transferability:** Yes, this practice can be replicated in a different context

**Assessment (comments and lessons learned):**

The workshop brought up the following conclusions:

- there are incongruences between the provisions contained in the proposed Law on Decentralisation and other Uruguayan laws, including the wording of the Constitution;
- there are significant shortcomings in the territorial structure of political power in the country;
- there is room for improved clarification and preciseness in relation to the powers of new local authorities, their sources of financing and the mechanisms whereby they interact with other levels of government,
- that there is a need for new local authorities to have sufficient resources to be able to respond effectively to citizens' demands;
- to ensure the medium-term sustainability of the initiative of decentralisation, public employees need to have the proper skills to enable them to set effective public policies in motion.
- finally, the experience proved that that it is necessary for every tier of government to come closer to the population, thereby ensuring the gradual devolution of political power to citizens.

**Additional documentation:** <http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/committees/dal/library.asp?L=EN>

**Basic information on the promoting organisation (local or regional government, association of municipalities or the ministry that has led the process)**

**Name of sponsoring institution:** UNDP Local Development Programme ART Uruguay

**Municipality/ Province:** Canelones

**Country:** Uruguay

**More information:** [dal.cglu@diba.cat](mailto:dal.cglu@diba.cat)