



Local Government in Argentina

Responses to Urban-Rural Challenges

edited by

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The H2020-MSCA-RISE-2018 project aims to provide solutions for local governments that address the fundamental challenges resulting from urbanisation. To address these complex issues, 18 partners from 17 countries and six continents share their expertise and knowledge in the realms of public law, political science, and public administration. LoGov identifies, evaluates, compares, and shares innovative practices that cope with the impact of changing urban-rural relations in major local government areas (WP 1-5).

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Structure of Local Government



4.1. The Structure of Local Government in Argentina: An Introduction

Elisabeth Mohle, *Universidad Nacional General San Martín*

Historically, Argentine municipalities performed three types of functions: regulation and control of urban infrastructure and economic activities carried out in their territory, some basic social services (such as primary health), and local government administration. Most of these functions were fulfilled without any form of horizontal inter-institutional articulation because the implementation of the policies was basically local.⁷²

However, the decentralization processes implemented in the nineties, where the central government transferred some functions – especially local development – without funding attached,⁷³ prompted the need to generate mechanisms of inter-municipal cooperation. The most important example of inter-municipal cooperation are interjurisdictional agencies and/or municipal associativism for local development. Specifically the local development agencies work with the mission of designing and implementing a specific territorial strategy, constructing a regional territorial problematic agenda and seeking solutions within a framework of complementarity and public-private commitment.⁷⁴

The limited institutional and fiscal capacity of local governments to deliver the new functions demanded innovative responses which, incidentally, exceeded territorial limits. Examples of these innovative responses can be found in environmental issues as waste management, climate change adaptation and mitigation and the promotion of agroecology.

This emergence of inter-municipal cooperation in Argentina could be attributed to the transformation of the roles, functions, and spheres of action of local governments in the context of neoliberal economic reforms during the 1990s.⁷⁵

⁷² Daniel Cravacuore, 'La cooperación intermunicipal en la provincia de Buenos Aires. Fortalezas y debilidades' in María Elena Lurnaga and Antonio Cardarelo (eds), *La geografía de un cambio. Política, gobierno y gestión municipal en el Uruguay* (Ediciones de la Banda Oriental 2001).

⁷³ Tullia G Falleti, 'Una Teoría Secuencial De La Descentralización: Argentina Y Colombia En Perspectiva Comparada' (2006) 46 *Desarrollo Económico* 317.

⁷⁴ Pablo Costamagna and Noemi Saltarelli, 'Las agencias de desarrollo local como promotoras de la competitividad de las pymes. Experiencia del caso argentino' in José L RhiSausi, *El desarrollo local en América Latina. Logros y desafíos para la cooperación europea* (Nueva Sociedad 2004).

⁷⁵ José Luis Coraggio, 'Descentralización, el día después—' (Secretaría de Posgrado, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales and Oficina de Publicaciones, Ciclo Básico Común, University of Buenos Aires 1997).



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