



# URUGUAY'S CAPACITIES FOR SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION



## **About AUCI**

The Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI, in Spanish) was created by law in December 2010, and operates within the Presidency of the Republic. It is responsible for coordinating all non-refundable international cooperation that Uruguay receives and provides for sustainable development.

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Montevideo, February 2019

## **Credits**

*Coordination:* Andrea Vignolo  
*Edition:* María Dutto Piaggio, Karen Van Rompaey and Felipe Ortiz de Taranco  
*Translation:* María Angélica Aldecoa

AUCI specially thanks all institutions that contributed inputs to this publication.

*Design:* Taller de Comunicación

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# INTRODUCTION

After a period of uninterrupted growth and public policies for equality, Uruguay advanced in its human development. Today, it has a dual role in international cooperation, as it continues to receive cooperation to strengthen its capacities on priority issues for its sustainable development, and offers technical cooperation by sharing its innovative experiences and successful public policies. These exchanges are based on the understanding that we live in an increasingly complex and interdependent world, where it is necessary to learn from each other in order to overcome obstacles towards sustainable development.

For all these reasons, the Uruguayan program for South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) is a pillar of its international cooperation policy by 2030. Currently, Uruguay also has a dual role in SSTC, which has become a unique feature in Latin America. As a country of the South, it subscribes to the guiding principles of South-South cooperation, which is based on horizontal and reciprocal associations, is driven by the needs of the beneficiaries, and aims at the development of skills and knowledge, seeking the best solutions adapted to the context in which they are implemented.

The SSTC that Uruguay provides mostly involves training activities, technical assistance from Uruguayan experts, or the offer of short-term internships. Most of these initiatives are designed and executed by national public institutions with their counterparts in the partner country, through the sharing of costs. AUCI coordinates with the National System of International Cooperation for the program's implementation and manages the South-South Cooperation Fund.

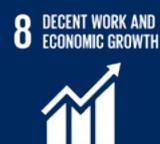
In this publication you will find some of the most relevant State capacities in which Uruguay has experience and knowledge that can be shared through SSTC initiatives. They are organized into four thematic areas. However, the country is open to receive requests in other areas. In this way, Uruguay aims at contributing to the development of other countries and to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

February 2019





Photo: Pablo La Rosa



## I. SOCIAL AREA

Uruguay's model of social policies has generated interest in other countries of the region. It entails regulations, policies, initiatives and institutional arrangements with a human rights, gender, and generations perspective, which promote the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

One of its pillars is to guarantee equal opportunities, identifying populations that are in a situation of vulnerability, be it for reasons of gender and sexual diversity, ethnic-racial background, age, disability, territory, among others.

## Social policies: equality and social cohesion

### National Integrated Care System

It is an innovative social policy of Uruguay designed to install a system that guarantees the right to care for people in situations of dependency who do not have the necessary autonomy to carry out activities of daily living. From a model of co-responsibility between families, the State, the community and the market, this policy aims to correct the overload of care tasks that are faced –almost exclusively– by women. The system is aimed at caring for people with severe dependence on three specific populations: people with disabilities, the elderly, and early childhood.

### Human rights' new agenda

Uruguay began a process of transformation aimed at incorporating the perspective of human rights, inclusion and social integration in all public policies. It has designed and implemented regulations, policies and programs to reverse historical situations of inequality for reasons of gender and sexual diversity, age, ethnic-racial background, disabilities, among others. Through this process, the Uruguayan State has carried out actions for the recognition and redressing of populations that were in a situation of historical disadvantage.

### Interinstitutional policy implementation

To guarantee the full realization of people's rights, the Uruguayan State created articulation mechanisms in which public organisms and civil society engage in policy dialogue and action, such as: a policy to prevent, address, protect and repair gender based violence in its various manifestations; an intersectoral strategy to prevent unintentional pregnancy in teenagers, as well as the National Integrated Care System.

### Information, evaluation and monitoring systems of social programs

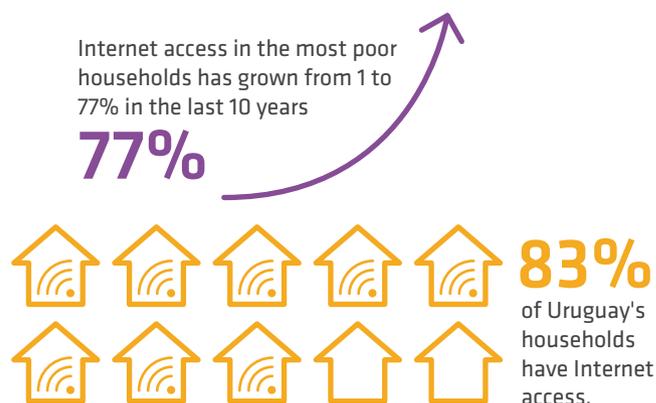
Uruguay has the Social Area Integrated Information System, an initiative that allows the exchange of information between different State agencies, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of public policies. Likewise, capacities have been generated for the multidimensional analysis of poverty.

### Social tourism

The program seeks to enlarge the opportunities for Uruguayans to enjoy free time and recreation, making it possible to travel to tourist sites in affordable and accessible conditions in terms of comfort and safety. For this purpose, the program targets different population groups (senior citizens, people with disabilities, students, among others), articulating between State agencies and private operators.

### Digital inclusion

Uruguay has advanced in its digital transformation in an inclusive and sustainable way, reducing the digital gaps between people, so that all can make the most of the benefits of the information and knowledge society with equal opportunities. In this sense, we can highlight the following initiatives: *Plan Ceibal*, which works with children and teenagers; *Plan Ibirapitá*, which promotes the digital inclusion of retirees, and programs that make universal access to the Internet possible, among others.



Source: EUTIC, AGESIC, 2016



Photo: Pablo La Rosa

## Health: quality and care

### **Breastfeeding promotion**

Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended by the World Health Organization for the first six months of age. For this reason, the National Regulation for Breastfeeding has been approved in Uruguay, which includes not only this right but also the existence in the country of milk banks and centers for the collection of human breast milk.

**97%** of new borns are  
breast fed

Source: ENDIS, MIDES/INE/UEDELAR, 2015



### Organ and tissue donation and transplant

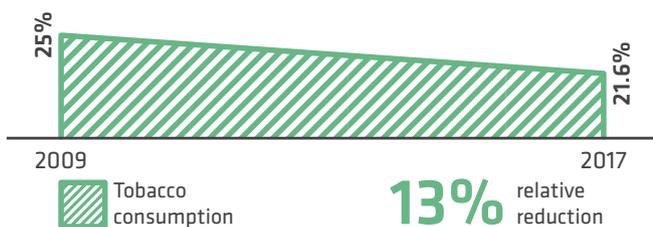
The Uruguayan National Bank of Organs and Tissues has a long history. It provides an active and comprehensive assistance in the matter, in accordance with current legal and ethical principles and scientific knowledge. Uruguay is one of the countries in the region with the highest percentage of donors in relation to its population, and has also one of the most advanced legal frameworks in this field.

### National Integrated Health System

Since 2008, Uruguay has a National Integrated Health System that protects the right to health of all inhabitants of the country, and a National Health Insurance. The system, in addition to improving access, efficiency and equality, stimulates coordination and complementation between public and private services. There are also spaces for the participation of users, workers and health providers. The model is based on the strategy of primary health care with emphasis on the first level.

### Smoking control

Uruguay ratified the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control early on and is a pioneer in having a comprehensive law for the fight against smoking. Examples of progress in the implementation of this framework agreement, are as follows: the increase in taxes on tobacco companies; the declaration of spaces for public use as 100% smoke-free; the application of health warnings on cigarette packs; the prohibition of advertising tobacco products; and the incorporation of the diagnosis and treatment of tobacco dependence free of charge.



## Education: innovate to learn

### Protection of educational trajectories

Uruguayan public education has an Educational Trajectories' Protection System for monitoring students' educational events and for early intervention in cases of imminent risk of disengagement. For these purposes, there are information systems and professional teams in the territory that favor local and inter-institutional work.

### Musical training for coexistence

The country has a Youth and Children's Orchestras System, with training centers throughout the territory. This initiative promotes that children and young people incorporate skills and values through music, such as perseverance, responsibility, respect for others, teamwork, and concentration. Participants also have the opportunity to pursue an academic plan, integrating local choirs and children's symphony orchestras, to develop a career in music.

### Approach to scientific knowledge

The country promotes the Science Clubs program throughout the national territory, which links public and private educational institutions and other organizations. The clubs are contexts of non-formal education, in which children, young people, and adults strengthen their ideas and their creativity, favoring the taste for knowledge search through research in instances such as scientific camps, science fairs, among others.

Source: GATS, INE/MSP



Photo: Pablo La Rosa

### **Technology at the service of education**

Since 2007, *Plan Ceibal* has been deployed with the aim at supporting Uruguayan educational policies with technology. So, every child who enters the public education system is given a laptop with free Internet connection within the school (“one laptop per child” model). In addition, the plan provides programs, educational resources and teacher training. The plan has placed Uruguay at the forefront in programs to reduce the digital gap and to generate greater inclusion and equal opportunities.





Photo: Pablo La Rosa

2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



## II. PRODUCTIVE AREA

Uruguay has developed a series of initiatives, policies and regulations that aim to improve sustainable productive development. To this end, it promoted institutional strengthening, the development of public-private collaboration models with emphasis on certain production chains, investment in science, technology and innovation, active policy instruments to increase productivity in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as several transversal policies to promote sustainable productive diversification, foreign direct investment, and exports. In particular, since 2016, Uruguay has a National Productive Transformation and Competitiveness System (“Transforma Uruguay”) that articulates the different relevant institutions to promote productive and innovative economic development, with sustainability, social equality, and environmental and territorial balance.

On the other hand, in Uruguay, the agricultural sector has been and continues to be of great importance for its national economy (in 2017, almost 80% of goods exports were agro-industrial). High technological-innovation tools, applied to the particularities of our region’s soil and climate, have been introduced in a massive way. In order to offer the best quality and comply with international standards for export, Uruguay has invested human and financial resources in the development of animal information, identification and registration systems. Thanks to this, it currently has a privileged sanitary status.

## Agricultural sector

### **National Livestock Information System (SNIG)**

The quality and sanitary safety of Uruguayan meat products are widely recognized in international markets. The SNIG provides the necessary functionalities to manage the registries of the agro-industrial chain's main actors. It keeps the stock of cattle, sheep, pigs and horses, and the land use of each rural establishment updated. It also provides all the necessary functionalities for managing cattle's individual traceability.

### **Animal and plant health**

In accordance with the country's long history of livestock and agricultural production, there is significant experience and levels of professional excellence in animal and plant health that position Uruguay as a world reference in surveillance, monitoring and control practices for diseases that could affect human health and/or negatively influence the possibilities of entering international markets.

### **Food safety**

Uruguayan agrarian public institutions have promoted the improvement of industrial practices to achieve regional and global standards of safety and quality of the food produced in the country, strengthening strategic research and technological development in cooperation with other public and private institutions.

### **Sustainable intensification of agriculture**

Uruguay promotes an agricultural production that is sustainable from an economic, environmental and social standpoint. This is carried out, among other things, through the development of an advanced Integrated National Agricultural Information System and the creation of technical standards for the conservation of soil and water for agricultural purposes and the recovery of eroded soils.

## Industry

### **Technology at the service of the industry**

Uruguay has an Industrial Automation and Mechatronics Center, a training place to disseminate automation technology, which helps increase productivity and comply with international standards.

### **Sectoral articulation spaces**

For some years, the country has been promoting private-public articulation spaces for the development of prioritized economic sectors, such as biotechnology, design, forestry/wood, pharmaceutical, and audiovisual. Through them, information is shared, and normative changes and other tools are promoted to improve medium and long-term results.

### **Industrial Extension Center (CEI)**

The CEI is an alliance between the State, the industry and the academy that seeks to intensify the use of knowledge in industrial companies to strengthen their capacities for innovation and competitiveness. It works mainly with the food, metallurgical, plastic, chemical and wood sectors. It acts as an articulation mechanism between the needs of industrial companies and the existing offer of knowledge, support and services.

## Tourism

Uruguay has a long experience in carrying out tourism policies. For instance, work with local communities through tourism projects in order to enhance their capabilities by providing them with development opportunities, as well as strong statistical records developed through the establishment of a Tourism Satellite Account for more than 15 years.



Photo: Pablo La Rosa





Photo: Pablo La Rosa

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



### III. ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

The protection of the environment as a general interest, and access to drinking water and sanitation as a fundamental human right are enshrined in Uruguay's national constitution. The country has taken on the great challenges that adaptation and mitigation to climate change represent, accumulating capacities in this direction that may be of interest for countries of similar development.

In recent years, the Uruguayan State has made significant investments for the provision of public goods and services linked to the environment in order to secure quality of life for all citizens, and to promote sustainable development through the network of existing State institutions and public companies.

## Environment for sustainable development

Based on the knowledge of the current situation of the environment and the economic and social processes that affect its dynamics, Uruguay has aimed for the conservation of water, soil, air and biodiversity quality as well as the vitality of ecosystems in order to ensure the quality of life of the population.

### National System of Protected Areas (SNAP)

The SNAP has become a fundamental tool to reconcile environment care –in particular, the diversity of landscapes, ecosystems, species, and cultural elements– with the country's economic and social development, supporting the generation of opportunities for local communities and society as a whole through recreation, tourism, education, research and the development of productive activities compatible with conservation.

### Integrated management of water resources

Uruguay implements its national water policy towards the integrated management of water resources, which are planned, managed and controlled considering water basins as a management unit. The country has a National Water Plan designed in a participatory manner, and has accumulated rich experience in interinstitutional planning and articulation. It also has capacities for the elaboration of Urban Water Plans, the incorporation of the sustainability approach in the design of urban storm drainage systems, and preparation of flood-risk maps. Also, since 2015, the Regional Center for Groundwater Management for Latin America and the Caribbean (CeReGAS) has been operating in Montevideo as a Category II Center backed by UNESCO.

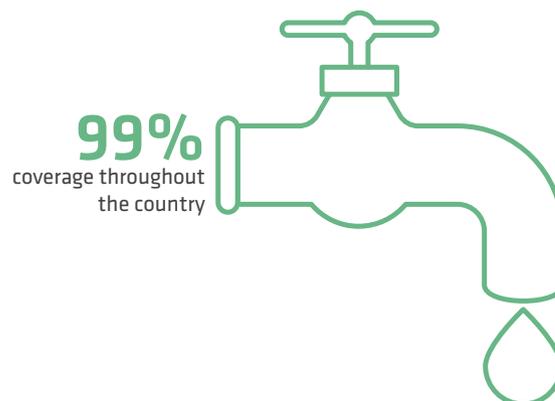
## Drinking water and sanitation

Uruguay has reached a 99% coverage of the drinking-water network and a great development in the sanitation of urban areas, which places the country among the most advanced in the world in this matter.

This data illustrates the institutional capacities for the management, generation and distribution of drinking water, as well as the development and operation of sanitation systems.

### Autonomous units for water purification and sanitation (UPA)

Uruguay has extensive experience in the operation and installation of UPA's, a type of compact and transportable water-purification plant. It is an effective and reliable water-treatment plant that works with a wide variety of raw-water qualities, allowing it to produce and supply water in regions where there are geographical and sanitary difficulties for water supply.



Source: OSE, 2018



Photo: Pablo La Rosa



## Response to climate change

For years, Uruguay has been working on the implementation of measures to increase resilience and adaptation to climate change. Within this framework, a National Climate Change Policy towards 2050 has been developed through a broad participatory process, and the Paris Agreement is being implemented. Specifically, three adaptation planning processes are being carried out: coastal zone, cities and infrastructure, and agriculture.

Likewise, mitigation actions have been deployed in various sectors of the economy such as energy, agriculture, and waste. Additionally, the country has several initiatives for the incorporation of electric transport. In the energy sector, the consolidation of the decarbonization of the electrical matrix reached in recent years is to be highlighted.

## Territorial planning and sustainable development

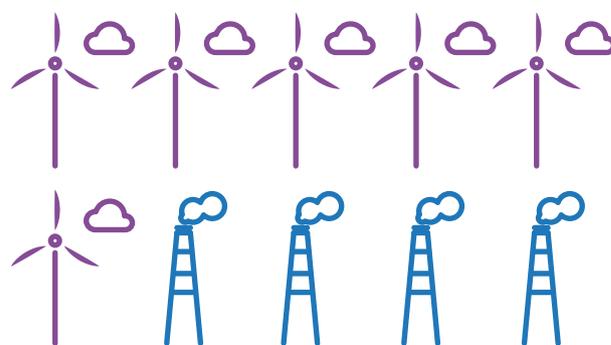
Uruguay has accumulated significant experience in the processes of elaboration of national, regional, departmental and local territorial planning instruments, which deepened after the approval in 2008 of the Law of Territorial Planning and Sustainable Development. In addition, the country has a National Strategy for Access to Urban Land, the result of a participatory process with the different actors involved in the matter (public, private, and civil society).

## Sustainable energy matrix

Uruguay has a 2005-2030 Energy Policy that incorporates a multidimensional view, including economic and technological elements, but also environmental, cultural, ethical and social ones, and whose fundamental components were endorsed by all political parties with parliamentary representation. The policy is committed to the diversification of the energy matrix by encouraging the participation of autochthonous sources, with special emphasis on renewable energies, the promotion of energy efficiency, and the consideration of universal and safe access to energy as a human right for all social sectors.

### Improvement of energy efficiency

In 2015, the National Energy Efficiency Plan (2015-2024) was approved, to promote actions aimed at improving the use of energy through public awareness raising of the benefits of its efficient use. Furthermore, instruments to encourage the implementation of energy efficiency measures for end users of all economic sectors are also promoted within this framework.



**63%** of the energy is obtained from renewable sources

**95%** of the electric sector is composed of renewable sources

Source: BEN, MIEM, 2017



Photo: Pablo La Rosa

### **Renewable energies promotion**

The approval of the 2005-2030 energy policy was key to the development of renewable energy in Uruguay. This policy involves initiatives for the generation of different types of renewable energy: wind (public and private parks), from biomass (resorting to the use of wastes from the forest and rice industries, and from sugarcane), solar (photovoltaic and thermal), among others.



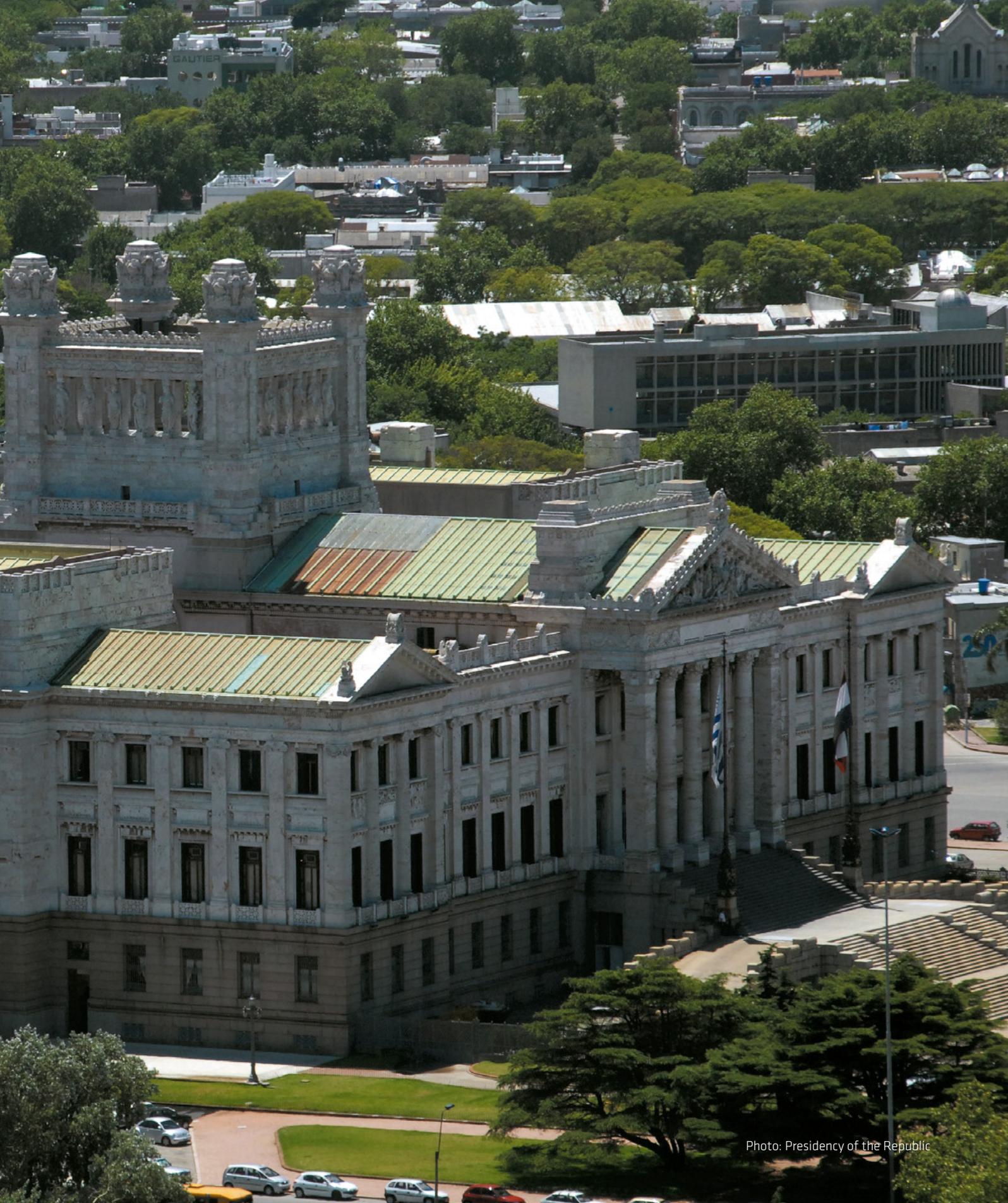


Photo: Presidency of the Republic

10 REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



## IV. GOVERNANCE AREA

Although the Uruguayan institutional framework is internationally renowned, the State has focused its efforts on improving the quality of public institutions so that they respond better to the needs of their citizens.

This process is developed on the basis of a long-term accumulation characterized by a stable and strong democratic institutionality. Among its most outstanding features are: an independent judicial system, a solid and stable party system, a transparent electoral system, a low level of corruption, high degrees of freedom of expression and recognized levels of transparency in access to public information, and mechanisms of social articulation of demands with significant participation of citizens.

## Quality of democracy and political culture

The quality of the Uruguayan democratic institutions, the confidence population has in them in an extended and homogeneous manner, as well as the level of civic engagement constitute distinctive features and values of Uruguay, that have been recognized internationally. The different components of the institutional framework of democracy –organisms, Parliament, instruments and mechanisms for consulting citizens or direct democracy– have good practices that can be transferred through international cooperation initiatives.

## Mechanisms of collective action

### Facilitation of collective bargaining

The country has a valuable experience in collective bargaining, and in convening wage councils (tripartite bodies made up by the State, workers, and employers), which, through the mechanism of social dialogue, set minimum wages, raises criteria, job categories, and other benefits. These articulation mechanisms have regulated labor relations between workers and employers, and give predictability and stability to the productive system.

### Cooperativism and solidarity-based economy

Uruguay has a long tradition in cooperativism in different areas of national life such as housing, labor, social, agriculture, among others, proving how cooperation, mutual aid and solidarity can contribute to meeting people's needs. Since 2008, the country has a General Law of Cooperatives and a specific institutionality to execute the national cooperativism policy.

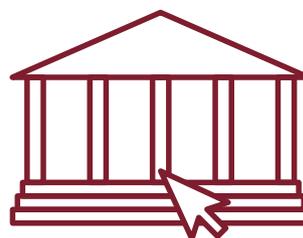
**3653** cooperatives in the country

Source: INACOOP, 2018

## Institutional strengthening of public capacities

### Digital government

Uruguay is a world leader in digital government. Initiatives such as the digitalization of all the Central Administration procedures, the national electronic medical record, the unified gub.uy government portal, the digital files in the State, the interoperability platform, reusable solutions and the government's cloud, digital identity, and the guarantee of rights such as access to public information, the protection of personal data, and digital security are to be highlighted.



**D9**

Uruguay is part of the group of the most digitally advanced countries in the world

### Strengthening of institutional capacities linked to the economic area

Over a decade ago, Uruguay carried out a major reform of its tax system, both in its design and in its administration. Likewise, it has incorporated international standards in matters of transparency and tax cooperation. It also developed methodologies and information systems for budgetary and financial management and planning in the Central Administration and for managing public debt with a comprehensive approach consistent with the economic policy as a whole.



### **Cadastral design and management**

A *multipurpose cadaster* has been developed, adding tools for territorial planning to its traditional tax use. Likewise, instruments to improve access to the cadastral registry, under the principles of openness, transparency and gratuity in a context of development of electronic and open government, have been developed.

### **Financial inclusion**

Uruguay has implemented a set of regulations and instruments to universalize access to the financial system by historically excluded social sectors, as well as by micro and small enterprises, and also to modernize and transform the payment system, fostering competition and efficiency as well as promoting the use of electronic means.

### **National Science, Technology and Innovation System**

Uruguay has been strengthening its capacities for the promotion and enhancement of scientific-technological development and innovation. Among others, the National Researchers System, the National Scholarship System, technology parks as well as research centers and institutes in specific sectors are to be highlighted.



### **Decentralization**

In recent years, the Uruguayan State has promoted a variety of actions aimed at promoting citizen participation and decentralization through the institutional strengthening of subnational governments, improving the quality of services, infrastructure, and the creation of spaces for social participation. Among the various programs developed, +Local stands out, which seeks to strengthen the municipalities' capacities to design and implement territorial-based initiatives with interagency articulation and coordination, and public participation.

### **Evaluation and monitoring**

Uruguay promotes results-based management (RBM) in the State, including the Sustainable Development Goals into the public management cycle. RBM seeks to go beyond budget monitoring to identify the value provided to citizens by public interventions. In this sense, the country has a five-year budget organized in programmatic areas and programs that are transversally executed by different organisms.

It also has an information system that includes the strategic planning of government and the evaluation of the level of achievement of the goals based on the management indicators previously defined. Likewise, evaluations of public policies are carried out, among which the design, implementation and performance evaluations stand out as they are an economic instrument that delivers results in the short term.





Torre Ejecutiva - Plaza Independencia 710 -7th floor  
Tel.: (+ 598 2) 150 ext. 3421 and 3461  
[cooperacion@auci.gub.uy](mailto:cooperacion@auci.gub.uy)  
Montevideo, Uruguay.  
[www.gub.uy/auci](http://www.gub.uy/auci)

