

Inter-ministerial coordination is one of the key CoG functions. It is critical to ensure whole-of-government responses to cross-cutting issues, and to minimise unintended duplications or contradictions in government policy. The CoG can be an “honest broker” between line ministries that have their own sectoral agendas and bureaucratic cultures, aligning them behind a coherent government direction. Moreover, the rise of complex and multidimensional issues, which cannot be addressed solely by “vertical” ministerial responses, has highlighted the importance of central steering and co-ordination.

In consequence, coordination has become increasingly relevant. In recent years, 60% of LAC countries reported that the number of cross-ministerial initiatives increased, compared to 51% in OECD countries. Of the remaining LAC countries 33.3% reported that the number of cross-ministerial initiatives remained stable (44% in OECD) while 6.7% signalled that it decreased (4% in OECD member countries). In almost every LAC country the CoG’s role in this regard is to facilitate or support the ministries that work on these initiatives, although in almost half of the countries, the CoG may take a leadership role as well.

In general, coordination is achieved through inter-ministerial committees. In 80% of LAC countries, the CoG is responsible for organising cross-governmental policy coordination groups or committees. These committees exist at a ministerial level in 80% of LAC countries (compared with 85.2% in the OECD), at a deputy ministerial level in 40% of LAC countries (70.3% in OECD) and at a director’s level in 46.7% of LAC countries (74.1% in OECD). Therefore, compared to the practice in OECD countries, inter-ministerial committees in LAC tend to be composed of politically appointed officials rather than senior civil servants. This can lead to insufficient continuity or lack of institutional memory in inter-ministerial coordination, as political appointees have higher turnover rates than civil servants.

The CoG’s influence to promote inter-ministerial collaboration varies across LAC countries. In 33.3% of the cases, the CoG is regarded as having a high level of influence over line ministries to encourage coordination (compared to 30% in OECD countries), meaning that it can potentially impose consequences or sanctions on them. In 20% it has low influence (11% in OECD countries), meaning that it can only express its views. The remaining 46.7% reported moderate influence (59% in OECD countries).

This influence can be expressed through different incentives for line ministries. Some 60% of CoGs in LAC countries use individual or collective performance targets (60% in OECD countries), while 13% use financial incentives to promote coordination (21% in OECD). Further, 20% of LAC countries indicated a lack of incentives for coordination.

Methodology and definitions

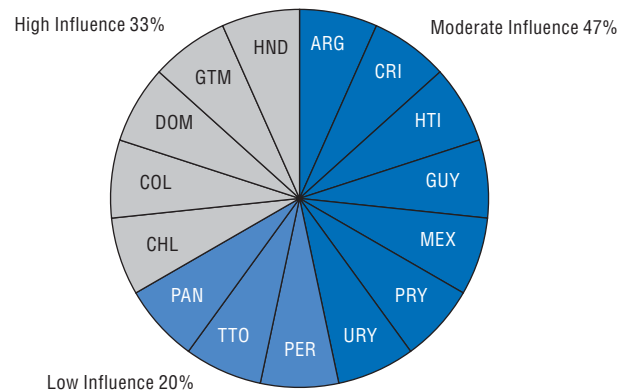
Data were collected through the 2015 IDB-OECD Survey on the Organisation and Functions of the Centre of Government in Latin America and the Caribbean. Fifteen countries participated in the survey. Respondents were senior officials who provide direct support and advice to heads of government and provided information for the year 2015. The OECD totals are as reflected in the Government at a Glance dataset and are based on answers from 27 countries.

Centre of government (CoG) was defined as the organisation and units responsible for certain critical cross-cutting functions (strategic management, coordination, monitoring and improving performance, political management, communications and accountability) related to the management of the government’s top priorities. Typical units include the ministry or general secretariat of the presidency, the office of the prime minister and the cabinet office, but sometimes those functions may be performed by units based in other parts of the government (finance, planning, budget office, etc.). Some responses were re-coded to ensure that those units were considered part of the CoG.

Further reading

- Alessandro, M., M. Lafuente and C. Santiso (2014), *Governing to Deliver: Reinventing the Center of Government in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC., <https://publications.iadb.org/handle/11319/6674>.
- OECD (2015), “Centre Stage: Driving Better Policies from the Centre of Government”, GOV/PGC/MPM(2014)3, OECD, Paris, [http://www2.oecd.org/oecdinfo/info.aspx?app=OLIScoteEN&Ref=GOV/PGC/MPm\(2014\)3](http://www2.oecd.org/oecdinfo/info.aspx?app=OLIScoteEN&Ref=GOV/PGC/MPm(2014)3).

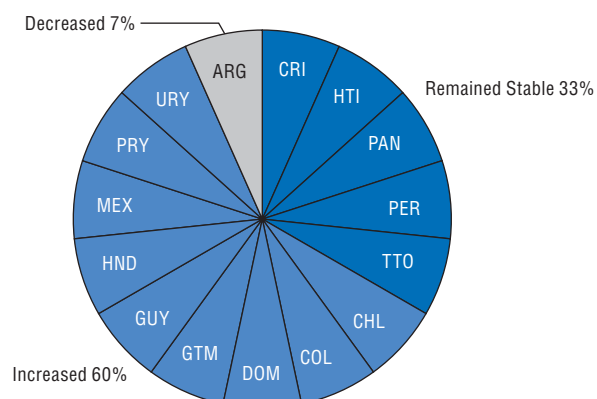
4.3. Level of influence of the CoG over line ministries to encourage coordination, 2015



Source: OECD-IDB (2015), Survey on the Organisation and Functions of the Centre of Government.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933431148>

4.4. Variation in the number of cross-ministerial initiatives in recent years, 2015



Source: OECD-IDB (2015), Survey on the Organisation and Functions of the Centre of Government.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933431154>

4.5. Responsibility of the CoG for organising cross-government policy coordination committees, 2015

	Minister level	Deputy minister level	Director level
Argentina	●	●	○
Chile	●	○	●
Colombia	●	○	●
Costa Rica	●	○	
Dominican Republic	●	○	●
Guatemala	●	●	●
Guyana	●	●	○
Haiti	●	○	●
Honduras	●	●	●
Mexico	○	●	○
Panama	○	○	○
Paraguay	○	○	○
Peru	●	○	○
Trinidad and Tobago	●	○	○
Uruguay	●	●	●
Total LAC			
Yes ●	12	6	7
No ○	3	9	7
Total OECD			
Yes ●	23	19	20
No ○	4	8	7

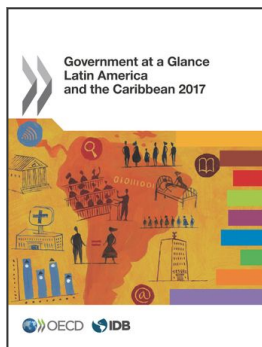
Key:

● Yes

○ No

Source: OECD-IDB (2015), Survey on the Organisation and Functions of the Centre of Government, OECD, Paris.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933431642>



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