



PRESS RELEASE

DR. MARIO MARAZZI-SANTIAGO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics publishes financial transparency website to promote greater accountability regarding its income and expenses

Over time the effort seeks to include the transactions of all Puerto Rico government entities in this open data platform designed to be easy to navigate by all users

San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 4, 2016 – Signaling its clear commitment to transparency, the Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics (Institute) presented today www.transparenciainanciera.pr, a website through which citizens can obtain a total breakdown of the transactions of the Institute since it began operations.

This open data platform allows users to search by type of expenditure or by vendor name and it produces from relatively general data, such as the total expenditures of the Institute, to more specific data points, such as the number of transactions, including the salary of the Executive Director and other employees, as well as payments to suppliers, among others. The website also gives you the option of viewing the data in dollars and cents, as well as in percentage terms.

For example, in the past fiscal year 2014-2015 the Institute invested a total of \$1,160,000 of which \$391,724 or 33.7% was allocated to the payroll of regular employees, \$163,795 or 14% to specialized professional services and consulting, \$79,704 or 6.9% in payments related to the rental of facilities and \$48,000 or 4.1% to legal services. The highest paying position was that of the Executive Director, Dr. Mario Marazzi-Santiago, whose remuneration was \$128,000.

The consolidated budget of the Institute for the fiscal year 2014-2015 was \$1,376,000. On the other hand, in the present fiscal year 2015-2016 the consolidated budget is \$2,712,000 of which, until mid-April, \$1,290,000 had been spent. The consolidated budget of the central government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is currently \$28,807,832,000. Therefore, the Institute's budget represents 0.004% of the central government's total budget. According to the Institute's charter law, the initial budget of the Institute should have been \$5,000,000.

"The Institute is mandated by Law to promote the accessibility of data. One way in which we do this is through the coordination of interagency projects. We are pleased to release this new platform through which any Puerto Rico government entity can publish on the Internet in a detailed and continuous manner updates to its financial transactions, requiring neither additional resources, nor technical knowledge and without compromising existing technological resources. The commitment to financial transparency has to be one of the guiding principles of the Puerto Rico to which we aspire", said Dr. Marazzi-Santiago.

At this early stage the website only provides detailed information of the transactions of the Institute since it began operations in August 2007. But, over time, the Institute expects that, when citizens get to know this new tool and support it, more Puerto Rico government entities will become a part of this important initiative that promotes transparency in Puerto Rico's public finances.

Dr. Marazzi-Santiago took the opportunity to invite and encourage the agencies, public corporations and other government entities of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to take a step forward and participate by providing information about their expenses through www.transparenciainanciera.pr. "Our crisis is not just financial. It is also a crisis in the confidence and trust of our citizenry with regards to their government. In this crisis, I have no doubt that transparency in our public finances is the first step needed to regain the confidence of our citizens", said Dr. Marazzi-Santiago.

The initiative of the Institute has the support of non-profit organizations, such as *Espacios Abiertos* (Open Spaces) dedicated to promoting transparency in public affairs. "In Puerto Rico we have to change the culture of secrecy in government in favor of a culture of accountability. The Financial Transparency Initiative of the Institute of Statistics is a great first step. Government officials manage the resources of the people and they have a duty to be accountable to us. It is ironic that we have to say it, but all public administrators need to be challenged to fulfill this important responsibility", said Nuria Ortiz Y. Vargas, Executive Director of *Espacios Abiertos*.

"We congratulate the Institute of Statistics and its executive director, Dr. Mario Marazzi-Santiago, who has had the courage to lead this project and show the rest of the government that transparent is a matter of will. Transparency is something that is demonstrated by facts. It is up to us, the people, to demand transparency of government. *Espacios Abiertos* today begins a campaign to demand that the rest of the government fulfill its duty and be transparent and accountable. We invite all who want to take action to join our campaign", said the Executive Director of *Espacios Abiertos*.

The new website was developed with the internal resources of the Institute based on the Socrata open data platform, a tool for the management and dissemination of data, offering complete solutions for the dissemination of datasets in various formats, and in compliance with the principles of the Open Data movement. Socrata is the same software used for the Puerto Rico Open Data Interconnection Portal (www.data.pr.gov), a government initiative for the release and dissemination of data, which the Institute has taken charge of and continues to develop after the closing of the Office of the Puerto Rico Chief of Information Officer last year.

"There is a great need and demand to improve the accessibility and quality of financial reporting of expenditures of the Puerto Rico government. The Financial Transparency site is a tool that is readily available to our government to achieve the transparent government we all want and deserve", said the Executive Director of the Institute.

The Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics is an autonomous government entity with the responsibility of coordinating the statistical production service of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico with the goal of ensuring that the data collection systems of Puerto Rico, on which public policies are based, are complete, reliable, fast and of universal access. The Institute has in its inventory, accessible through www.estadisticas.pr, about 280 statistical products. In addition, it is custodian and provides access to approximately 268 data sets at www.data.pr.gov and about 40 tables and 6,600 time series indicators available at: www.indicators.pr.

For more information visit our website: www.estadisticas.pr or www.statistics.pr. In addition, you can follow us on our social networks through Facebook (estadisticas.pr), Twitter (@EstadisticasPR) and LinkedIn (Institute of Statistics of Puerto Rico).

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