



## SUBNATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ACTION THROUGH INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS TO THE BUDGET: ELEMENTS THAT HELP UNDERSTAND THE ELECTORAL CONNECTION

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**Abstract:** This article seeks to examine whether the performance of state deputies in Espírito Santo, based on individual amendments inserted in the budget during the 17th and 18th Legislatures (2011 - 2018 which, in turn, correspond to LOAs of 2012 -2019) were preferentially destined to the electoral bases of the ES deputies. For this purpose, it was preferentially targeted to the electoral bases of the deputies from Espírito Santo. To this end, electoral data and information on individual amendments to the budget were used, notably those referring to the total value (in currency) of the amendments submitted by the deputy to a Microregion of the State of Espírito Santo. Additionally, interviews were conducted to complement the purposes of the investigation. The data show a significant relationship between the total votes obtained by deputies from Espírito Santo in the State's Microregions and the allocation of resources through the individual amendments inserted in the annual budget for the respective Planning Microregions.

**Keywords:** Individual amendments to the budget; Electoral connection; Public budget.

### 1 Introduction

Budget preparation is based on three fundamental technical instruments: the multiannual plan (PPA in Portuguese), the law of budgetary guidelines (LDO in Portuguese), and the annual budget law (LOA in Portuguese). These are government planning instruments and, therefore, developed to trace government planning with the respective direction and organization of the revenues and expenses that will make up the fiscal year. This budget process occurs within the Executive Branch but its approval is the responsibility of the Legislative Branch. This in any sphere of government. The budget is debated by the Legislative, which in turn can amend it and participate more actively in the management of public policies.

The budget piece of any federated entity, in particular, the parliamentary amendments, is an essential tool for understanding the political system, the relationship between Executive and Legislative, and parliamentary behavior<sup>3</sup>. Bezerra (1999, p. 19, our translation) perceives

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<sup>3</sup> The legislative studies, with the ideal beginning and locus in the analyses of the North American Congress, have developed especially based on three distinct theoretical models of a parliamentary organization according to the new institutionalism of rational choice: the partisan (McCUBBINS & COX, 1993), distributive (SHEPSLE & WEINGAST, 1995), and informational models (KHREIBEL, 1991). These explanatory aspects of the legislative

the "[...] preparation and execution of the budget as a privileged sociological place to study the performance and relations established by deputies and senators according to the conception they share regarding their functional obligations". Furthermore, Ames, Pereira, and Rennó (2011, p. 260/261, our translation) complement that "[...] the absolute majority of parliamentarians agree that visits to the electoral district and budget amendments are central to their electoral strategies."

The analysis of the budget process and parliamentary behavior has been the subject of important studies. Some authors understand that budget amendments can move federal deputies in the direction of raising funds for their electoral base in exchange for support to the Executive at the time of implementation of the amendments (PEREIRA, 2000; PEREIRA and MUELLER, 2003). In contrast, Figueiredo and Limongi (2005) identify a problem in the thesis of amendments as "bargaining chips" since these studies are generally an assumption that legislators have a common interest, namely, that of promoting distributive policies since these would guarantee (or positively affect) their chances of obtaining re-election. For Figueiredo and Limongi (2005), the budget amendments would be an opportunity for deputies to indicate their preferences in public policies, complementing the agenda defined by the government.

Some issues still lack greater empirical density to contribute to the effort to unravel the daily life of the subnational Legislative regarding the allocation of resources by using amendments to the budget. If on the one hand, part of the literature (SANTOS, 2001; TOMIO; RICCI, 2008; TOMIO, 2011) shows that the Executive tends to dominate the subnational decision-making process (with distinct costs depending on the analyzed state), restricting the parliamentary performance via legislative production, on the other hand, the daily life of these deputies, regarding the use of budget amendments, can indicate a more effective action, also focused on their electoral bases.

## **2 Methodological Aspects**

A question arises from the support and assumptions of the studies concerning the budget process and electoral connection at the federal level (AMES, 2001; CARVALHO, 2003;

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organization have distinct consequences in understanding the parliamentary dynamics and, consequently, the interpretation of the outcome of the political game (CARVALHO, 2003). In a very synthetic way, it can be said that the distributive model identifies the practice of clientelist policies, with the consequent allocation of government funds to the bases as a guarantee of good electoral dividends aimed at the re-election of parliamentarians. For the partisan perspective, the parties can control the decision agenda (determine how much and what will be the object of decision) through their leaders within the legislative house. Their strength comes from this characteristic. Party leadership ensures stability around an agenda, explaining, to some extent, the discipline that parties demonstrate in their intraparlimentary performance. For the informational model, "[...] the asymmetry of information implies the existence of room for the strategic use of this information. Rational individuals, with their particular preferences, may choose not to make public the information they have" (LIMONGI, 1994, p. 21, our translation). Thus, the asymmetry of information would generate interest in the expertise of parliamentarian and, the commissions would be, par excellence, the place for developing this prerogative. It should be noted that the informational, partisan, and distributive models are not exclusive. The central idea is to perceive the preponderant instance in parliamentary activity in a given institutional locus.

PEREIRA, 2000; Pereira; MULLER, 2003): is the state representative's performance in the management of individual amendments to the budget directed preferentially to their electoral bases? The objective is to analyze the individual performance of state parliamentarians through the individual amendments inserted in the budget and, thus, verify if their performance tends to be directed to their electoral bases. Thus, it can be assumed that deputies from Espírito Santo (ES) allocate resources to their electoral bases via individual budget amendments, which presumes a positive relationship between budget amendments and electoral connection.

In operational terms, the Legislative Assembly of Espírito Santo is a productive legislative house regarding individual amendments (during the 17th and 18th legislatures, 6,810 amendments were incorporated into the LOA - Annual Budgetary Law), but relatively small (30 members)<sup>4</sup>. This combination seems appropriate when one aims to analyze the strategy of the individual deputy. The choice for the investigation of an assembly allowed us to weave considerations in greater depth with the combination of distinct data collection strategies (both quantitative and qualitative).

The time frame chosen was from 2011 to 2018, which corresponds to the 17th and 18th legislatures, respectively. The choice of this time lapse is justified, in operational and very objective terms, by the fact that they are the last two legislatures of the State Legislative Assemblies (ALES). They also refer to legislatures that have different configurations among the body of deputies (most of the deputies were not re-elected, as we will see below, and gave way to new representatives) and, as a consequence, may have strategies for allocating resources via separate individual amendments.

A databank was created capable of combining electoral data<sup>5</sup> of the deputies (votes in the microregions<sup>6</sup> of ES) and the values (in R\$) of amendments sent to the same microregions. It should be noted that the universe of data concerning the amendments corresponds to the individual amendments of the parliamentarians (approved and included) to the LOAs for 2012 to 2019<sup>7</sup>. The data are available on the ALES website and were collected/organized for the end of the research. The choice of the examination of the budget amendments is appropriate because it aims to identify the strategy (movement/intention) of the deputy in resource management regardless of whether they were subsequently executed or not by the Executive Branch.

Allied with the quantitative research, we seek to add the information obtained in in-depth interviews with those involved in the ES budget process. The placements achieved with

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<sup>4</sup> The smallest Assemblies of the Federation have 24 state deputies. However, despite the State Legislative Assemblies (ALES) not composing this table of 11 Assemblies with the minimum number of deputies, for this study we consider it as a small legislative house.

<sup>5</sup> Data provided by the TSE (<https://www.tse.jus.br/>).

<sup>6</sup> The division of the ten ES microregions was established by Law Law n° 9,768/11. They are: Caparaó, Central Serrana, Central South, Central West, South Coast, Metropolitan, Northeast, Northwest, Rio Doce, Southwest Serrana. The state has a total of 78 municipalities.

<sup>7</sup> The rapporteur's amendments were excluded. They appear in the data as authored by the rapporteur, without distinction, but the text/justification of the amendment presents the information.

the qualitative research helped us to understand the complexity of the relationships arranged around the individual amendments to the LOA, and provided us with data capable of "trimming some edges" for the better perception of the parliamentary strategy via amendments to the budget and the electoral connection.

Seven interviews were conducted between April and May 2019 inside the ALES (in the offices of deputies or in the dependencies of two House Commissions). The interviews lasted, on average, 40 minutes<sup>8</sup> and were granted from three pre-established roadmaps (one addressed to deputies, another to members of the Finance Commission – which are repeated since the members of the Commission also answered the questions identified in the roadmaps intended for deputies in general - and another to technicians of the Legislative House). Of the interviewees, five were ES deputies (present at ALES during the period studied) and two were House technicians.

The following criteria were observed for parliamentarians selection: deputies with electoral base both in the Metropolitan Region and in the countryside and from parties of center, right-wing, and left-wing. In some cases, in addition to the criteria already mentioned, we consider the previous experience in the Finance Commission. The technicians selected were those who, indicated among others, presented higher *expertise* in the budget process, notably, in the process of drawing up individual amendments to the budget. The interviewees were classified in the course of the text by cardinal numbers so as not to be identified.

### **3 Electoral Connection and Parliamentary Behavior**

The process of Brazilian redemocratization revealed a diagnosis of democratic unfeasibility by most theorists due to a kind of explosive combination of presidentialism, party system little institutionalized, and characteristics of the domestic electoral legislation (which, among other institutes, provided for the proportional system of open lists). Thus, the Brazilian institutional system would tend to be an inoperative system. One of the key points of these studies began to revolve around analyzing the impacts of the electoral system on party dynamics and the behavior of parliamentarians in the legislative arena (AMES, 2001; MAINWARING, 2001).

The thesis of the “personal vote” (MAYHEW, 1974), which found fertile ground in the analyzes of the US Congress, assumes that the greatest goal of the political actor is re-election. Therefore, parliamentarians would act to maximize their chances in the electoral arena aiming for re-election. This direction should be understood as an immediate result of policy-making and negotiation between actors in the parliamentary arena.

A species of joint action aimed at re-election (from the respective electoral incentives)

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<sup>8</sup> The interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewees.

with the personalized vote resulting in distributive policies as a primary behavior of the legislator. Mainwaring (2001) and Ames (2001) developed their work on the Brazilian political system based on this analytical starting point. The logic of the parliament's functioning and, consequently, of legislator behavior can be understood through the perspective of the electoral connection. In other words, of the centrality of the geographical dimension of the vote and the impact of this dimension on the performance of the congressman in the parliamentary arena (which would tend to operate to allocate benefits to their electoral bases).

Mainwaring (2001) investigated the degree of institutionalization of the Brazilian party system and some problems subsequent to the democratization of the country. The author concludes that these rules would function as an incentive to an individualized performance of parliamentarians in the legislative arena based on the identification of some electoral rules capable of conditioning the behavior of political actors, such as the decentralization of the selection process of candidates for election and the proportional system of open lists. This same author (2001, p. 33, our translation) notes that, in Brazil, political parties have " [...] tenuous roots in society and scant legitimacy, exerting little influence on Congress representatives", which would result in low institutionality. In turn, this low institutionality has an intimate connection with the fact that "[...] political elites deliberately forge institutional norms that favor decentralized, undisciplined, and individualistic *cath-all parties*" (MAINWARING, 2001, p. 34, our translation). According to him, Brazilian political elites create parties to implement their preferences. In the same reasoning, political leaders extinguish them when they consider them a threat. Political parties are often viewed not as a democratic inducer but as an obstacle to governability.

For Ames (2001), the distributive model of legislative organization has the geographical dimension of the electoral system as a predominant factor, which conditions the performance of political actors in a particularistic form (diffuse costs and aggregate benefits). The budget amendments have a fundamental role in this logic, pointed out as an optimal strategy (with the consequent allocation of resources to the electoral bases) aimed at re-election.

Figueiredo and Limongi (1999) counter the idea of the ungovernability of the Brazilian political system (due to the combination of presidentialism, pulverized parties, and electoral dispersion rules) with the argument that the Executive has institutional resources, such as the prerogative of urgency, the private legislative power, and the power to edit provisional measures, which can be used as instruments of agenda control by the Executive, enabling governability. The budget process indicated the limitations for the incorporation of the premise of the North American Studies outlined by Mayhew (1974) for the studies of the Brazilian legislature in which parliamentarians pursue the objective of re-election and, to this end, establish personal ties with their voters (LIMONGI; FIGUEIREDO, 2002).

A paper entitled "electoral incentives, parties and Budget Policy", by Limongi and

Figueiredo (2002), presents an argument against the transposition of the personal vote thesis to Brazil since the ability of parliamentarians to approve policies depends on the organization of the decision-making process, notably, on the distribution of rights and resources to parliamentarians. The national political system does not generate motivational and institutional conditions for this. Furthermore, parliamentarians do not have homogeneous preferences and rather pursue diverse objectives, acting strategically in a diverse manner.

As such, the authors argue their case from a few findings that: a) the incentives of the electoral laws (open lists and proportional representation) would incur in acting on behalf of his/her personal vote, but the results have been in the direction that the election returns from this strategy were not significant; and b) the rules of the budget process are not intended to serve solely in the immediate and individual interest of the parliamentarians; c) the strong presence of the political parties grouped into two major groups: the situation and the opposition; and d) concerning the budgetary policy, the concentration of power by the Executive (which has the private constitutional authority to propose budgetary laws), and the centralization of the decision-making process within the Legislative Branch (LIMONGI, FIGUEIREDO, 2002).

Carvalho (2003), in turn, explored the hypotheses derived from the distributive model of legislative analysis for a select set of actions and perceptions of Brazilian parliamentarians over two legislatures (1994-1998) to verify the possible impact of the geographical origin of deputies within the Legislative Branch. In other words, whether the incentives of the electoral arena would enter the halls of Congress. Thus, the electoral connection would become one of the keys to understand the *modus operandi* of the Legislative. Thus, the stylized view of what occurs outside the walls of Congress and the mechanical transposition of the properties of the US electoral arena to the Brazilian one with the combination of two great incentives to deputies, re-election and personalized vote, could prioritize policies with diffuse costs and concentrated benefits.

However, this combination is not so feasible in Brazil as far as our representatives "[...] although elected on the basis of personalized votes, the proportional system adopted, as is well remembered by the literature, provides multiple strategies for deputy candidates to obtain a legislative seat" (CARVALHO, 2003, p. 212, our translation). Differentiated strategies for obtaining the vote (set of various incentives) assume different forms of action of parliamentarians.

Authors such as Ivan Carlos Lago and Edegar Rotta (2014) measured the impact of budget amendments on the chances of re-election of federal deputies of southern Brazil (between 1998 and 2010), from a certain data: "[...] the increase or decrease of the deputy's vote, between two consecutive elections, in the municipalities that benefited from the proposal of budget amendments authored by the same deputy, and respective release or not" (LAGO; ROTT, 2014, p.144, our translation). Thus, they concluded that sending budget amendments

to the electoral bases is not the determining factor of the deputy's strategy aimed at re-election. To this data they add that it is impossible to identify the true effect of the budget amendments on the capture of votes necessary for re-election. The simple argument that the deputies who are most capable to release resources are those who are most re-elected does not justify that the release of amendments is the causal factor of re-election.

In the same vein, Ames, Pereira, and Rennó developed a study from the identification of the possible interests of voters who would be able to affect the supply of distributive policies (of the *pork barrel* type<sup>9</sup>). This research aimed to verify "[...] whether the parliamentarian's perceptions on the electoral base and the strategy of providing *pork* for a specific municipality is consistent with the preferences of the voters and views of the congressmen regarding what the voters want" (AMES; PEREIRA; RENNÓ, 2011, p. 243, our translation).

The authors' expectation is that the demands of voters for *pork* affect the allocation of resources and the conduct of distributive policies by parliamentarians (who would be acting responsively in delivering what voters want).

It is noteworthy that, "[...] the appreciation for distributive policies, as we argued at the beginning of the text, is apparently not ideological but based on the fact that the party of preference is or not of the government" (AMES; PEREIRA; RENNÓ, 2011, p. 255, our translation).

In addition, Bezerra (1999, p. 40, our translation) suggests that: "[...] in general, the emphasis on the link with the states and municipalities, the assistance and intervention in favor of requests, and the action outside the Congress are elements that conform a specific conception regarding parliamentary representation". For the author, sending resources to the parliamentarian's base may not be his/her main assignment, but it is the population's expectation. Despite the relevance of these studies to unveil important aspects of Brazilian democracy at the federal level, there are still few researches on state assemblies, as opposed to the large production on the Chamber of Deputies. This reflects the need for the analysis of regional parliaments, with a view to building a knowledge capable of inducing the understanding of legislative activities in the Brazilian subnational political scenario.

## **4 Results and analysis**

### **4.1 Individual amendments to the Budget as an indicative element of the Electoral Connection in ALES**

We initially seek to understand the individual performance of the state parliamentarian through the budget amendments, which makes essential the construction in approaches

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<sup>9</sup> The hitherto existing studies on policies of the *pork barrel* type, as a rule, emphasize negative aspects of local policies, such as inefficiency, clientelism, and patronage. However, there is another "side to the coin" of this type of policy since it is one of the forms to obtain resources for localities that would probably not be contemplated.

regarding the electoral connection, and, as a consequence, the deputy's behavior in the legislative arena, using the the allocation of budgetary resources as a parameter. The assumption is that "[...] distinct electoral incentives arising from the diverse spatial configurations of elected deputies cannot generate a single behavior if we consider that the electoral connection makes a difference in the explanation of legislative action" (CARVALHO, 2003, p. 60, our translation).

The study is based on the following question: is the performance of the state representative in the management of amendments to the budget directed preferably to their electoral bases? We suggest the hypothesis that deputies in ES, during the 17th and 18th legislatures, allocate resources to their electoral bases through budget amendments, which presumes a positive relationship between budget amendments and electoral connection.

Thus, we established a linear correlation/regression<sup>10</sup> between an independent variable (total votes in the state microregion) and a dependent variable (total value of amendments intended for the microregion) to analyze the individual performance of the state parliamentarian through individual amendments to the budget and, thus, verify if his performance tends to be directed to his electoral bases. The option to cut through the microregions of Espírito Santo stems from the fact that the analyzes stipulated by microregions contemplate the issue of contiguity of municipalities. Moreover, the interviews revealed that the vast majority of deputies understand their electoral stronghold from a specific region, not a municipality. The choice for the value (in R\$) of the amendments is because it is a more reliable variable than the amount of amendments (many amendments can be made, but in lower values). Therefore, we assume that the greatest impact of the deputy's performance would come from the value of the amendments, not their amount. In other words, we could understand if the electoral issue (having/quantity of votes in a given microregion of the state) impacts on the parliamentarian's strategy for allocating budgetary resources. We did not consider the examination of the reverse movement, that is, whether sending amendments returns in electoral dividends to deputies.

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<sup>10</sup> We built a linear model, with fixed effect per year and microregion. The  $R^2$  varies between 0 and 1, indicating how much the model can explain the values presented. The higher the  $R^2$ , the more explanatory the model. The panel model was inserted in the analyses to validate/reinforce the finding since it was more robust in generating coefficients. Even if the adjusted  $R^2$  falls to 0.25 as a linear model, there is significance and the indication that the data is in the right direction. It is worth noting that the linear regression model represents another evidence of the performance of the ES deputy in favor of his bases, which, in turn, is corroborated with interviews conducted in this study.



**Table 1** – Total votes per Microregion *Versus* Total Amendments per Microregion

	<i>Dependent Variable</i>			
	<i>Total Log Amendments Microregion</i>			<i>linear panel</i>
	(1)	OLS (2)	(3)	(4)
Log Total Votes				
microregion	1.695*** (0.101)	1.677*** (0.112)	1.655*** (0.111)	1.655*** (0.111)
CAPARAÓ		-0.688 (0.891)	-1.288 (0.893)	
SERRANA CENTRAL		-1.522* (0.863)	-2.149** (0.866)	
SOUTH CENTRAL		-0.724 (0.917)	-1.306 (0.918)	
MIDWEST		-0.625 (0.937)	-1.213 (0.937)	
SOUTH COAST		-2.288** (0.897)	-2.874** (0.898)	
METROPOLITAN		-0.924 (1.143)	-1.450 (1.137)	
NORTHEAST		-0.561 (0.909)	-1.156 (0.910)	
NORTHWEST		-1.615* (0.897)	-2.202** (0.898)	
RIO DOCE		-1.582* (0.903)	-2.167** (0.904)	
SERRANA SOUTHWEST		-0.022 (0.887)	-0.611 (0.889)	
Constant	-1.169* (0.638)			
Observations	687	687	687	687
R <sup>2</sup>	0.291	0.774	0.780	0.226
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.290	0.771	0.776	0.254
Residual Std. Error	5,236 (df= 685)	5,231 (df= 676)	5,170 (df= 675)	
F Statistic	281,319** * (df=1; 685)	210,937** * (df=11; 676)	199,297** * (df= 12; 675)	112,531** * (df= 2; 675)

Source: PESSINE (2019, p. 102).

Note: \*p < 0.1; \*\*p < 0.05; \*\*\* p < 0.01; Models 2, 3, and 4 have fixed effect per year and microregion

The coefficient of the independent variable of votes per microregion is consistent, with and without a fixed effect. It is still consistent by applying the panel model (model 4), which is the most suitable. Even the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> falls to 0.25 as a linear model (model 3) with the fixed effects per year and microregion.

Therefore, the data showed a significant relationship between the total votes obtained by

ES deputies (in the 2010 and 2014 elections) in the microregions of the state and the allocation of resources through the individual amendments inserted in the annual budget (between 2012 and 2019) destined to the planning microregions of Espírito Santo.

The collected elements indicate that the strategy of the ES parliamentarians (during the 17th and 18th legislatures) from the assumption of analysis regarding the individual amendments to the budget, is directed to their electoral bases. It is worth noting that the information obtained in the interviews also shows a positive relationship between the electoral connection and the individual amendments to the budget. All respondents reported that most of the ES deputies (during the period studied) acted for their electoral territory.

The results of this research effort show that [Interviewee 6] indicated the perception that about 70% of the amendments of the deputies are directed to their electoral bases. When asked about the strategies of their peers, all respondents reported understanding that most of their colleagues in parliament act toward their bases via individual amendments.

The strategy of directing efforts in the allocation of resources to electoral territories is often understood pejoratively. The term "clientelism" is commonly associated with physiologism/delayed practices, when in fact, it can simply configure a successful strategy, beginning from a more pragmatic action, that is, more adequate survival.

The allocation of budget amendments are easily traced and assigned to a specific politician. Additionally, local issues would tend to increase the attention of voters. [...] Thus, it's easier to claim paternity from policies like *pork*. Therefore, *pork* facilitates the assignment of credit in an institutional environment that potentially clouds the accountability of the representative for his/her performance in the exercise of the mandate (AMES; PEREIRA; RENNÓ, 2011, p. 251).

Although the performance for the electoral bases is a reality in ALES, there is room for distinct behaviors, including as a result of the argument established by the literature (CARVALHO, 2003) that diverse voting patterns would also result in distinct behaviors. Moreover, the ES parliamentarians have different perceptions on the clientelist action from the individual amendments to the budget.

In this perspective, [Interviewees 1 and 4] do not attach great strategic value to individual amendments to the budget, nor do they understand that allocating resources to a given region is part of their doing within a House of Laws. In the words of [Interviewee 1] "amendments, strictly speaking, should not exist". For him, the amendments were created, at the federal level, to make sure that the parliamentarian does not change the budget established by the Executive. However, this is the time, in excellence, for the Legislative to interfere in public investments. [Interviewee 1] reports that he does not base his political actions around the individual amendments to the budget. Therefore, allocating resources is not an interesting/relevant political strategy for him. He adds:

There is another issue at the federal level: the amendments turn the electoral dispute into something unequal. At the federal level, a deputy has 15 million in amendments per year. I believe that this weight is mitigated at the state level, as the value is very small, but also weighs. Not least because people have an immense difficulty in understanding the role of parliamentarians. Filing an amendment is something physical. You see it! It is visible! Politics would gain if the amendments ceased to exist, in conjunction with tax reform and the federative pact. Politicians would have to occupy much more spaces with their functions which would improve national politics as a whole.

In this same reasoning, [Interviewee 4] classifies individual amendments to the budget as an “illegitimate act” since, in practice, they are used as a “bargaining chip”. For him, the parliamentarian has the autonomy to modify the budget and, provided he does not cause budgetary difficulties to the Executive, should use this prerogative. He also notes that the amendments are used so that the Legislative does not change the budget piece and complements its argument stating not having visualized the impact of this type of policy (allocate resources to electoral territories). The argument is corroborated when the parliamentarian indicates that, most of his/her votes come from members of a specific church. This reinforces our understanding that other variables (in addition to individual amendments) can (and will) impact the behavior of the parliamentarian assuming the logic of the electoral connection.

We ask the following question to better understand the relationship of ALES deputies with their electoral bases: "Do you consider it a duty of the parliamentarian to allocate resources via amendments to their electoral bases?" We highlight the positioning of [Interviewee 2] in the affirmative answer to the question. For him, it is a duty to send resources via amendments to his electoral stronghold since it was where he built a “certain political heritage” in his electoral base. He reports belonging to a certain region of the State, so he has a preference for it. In his words: "[...] this obligation is not only because I obtain more votes [from a specific region] of the State, but because my life was built there. I am more sought after by the base and I work more for the base”. He also observes:

I work day and night. It's an operation, ICU vacancy, etc. The Prosecutor's Office believes this is a promotion. That it is not a political action, but personal. But I do not think so. I believe the population should look for the politician and he has to act on behalf of the population. Play for the team! Attention to the needy is the most important!

[Interviewee 3] considered it a duty of the parliamentarian to send resources to his/her electoral base through the individual amendments and says he/she to act in favor of his electoral stronghold in other ways. Among them is based on the joint interlocution (from the demands of mayors and other local authorities) with the state government to claim benefits for their region, mainly, regarding the demands related to infrastructure, notably, roads. in addition to acting by articulating consensus with the state bureaucracy (secretariats).

For Bezerra (1999), acting with the bureaucracy in the fulfillment of demands/favors,

considering that the privileged access of the parliamentarian to the Public Power, is not a distinctive feature only between private individuals (citizens/voters) and parliamentarians. It is also an element of distinction between parliamentarians since access to public bodies is not identical to them. For the author, "[...] the incorporation of practices of meeting particularist demands and release of federal resources to states and municipalities as a conception of political representation is not only shared by parliamentarians but also by mayors/governors". Thus, the latter understand that the allocation of resources is the fundamental attribution of the parliamentarian (BEZERRA, 1999, p. 40).

#### **4.2 Election Maps/Individual Amendments to the LOA**

This section was designed to bring elements that can illustrate the arguments worked so far based on "a few cases". The intent is not to draw generalizations based on this greater detail regarding the strategies and positions of ALES parliamentarians. Thus, in the impossibility of individualizing the data of all the deputies analyzed, four cases were selected to weave greater considerations.

In the selection, we sought to observe the inclusion of deputies present both in the 17th and 18th legislatures, who did not change the alliance in the indicated period and presented different voting profiles (distinct NER ranges<sup>11</sup>). Based on the classification adopted, we identified one deputy with a high concentration of votes, another with moderate concentration, one with moderate dispersion, and, finally, one deputy with high vote dispersion. Therefore, we have: Deputy Hércules da Silveira (MDB), Deputy José Eustáquio de Freitas (PSB), Deputy Dary Alves Paung (PRP), and Deputy Luzia Alves Toledo (MDB). The expectation is that distinct bands of concentration and deputy vote dispersion are equivalent to different types of resource allocation strategies (CARVALHO, 2003).

The figures that follow and illustrate this section correspond to the maps that contain the data of both the votes (by ES microregion) and values (in R\$) of the amendments destined to the respective microregions per deputy.

The upper quadrants present data on the amount of votes (N) obtained, both in the 2010 elections (left) and in the 2014 elections (right). The lower quadrants show the value in R\$ of amendments per Microregion in the 17th (2011-2018) and 18th (2015-2018) legislatures. The varying colors of the maps, from light tones (white) to dark (green), tell us the concentration (or not) of voting and amendments. The darker the hue on the map, the more votes/amendments in the respective microregion.

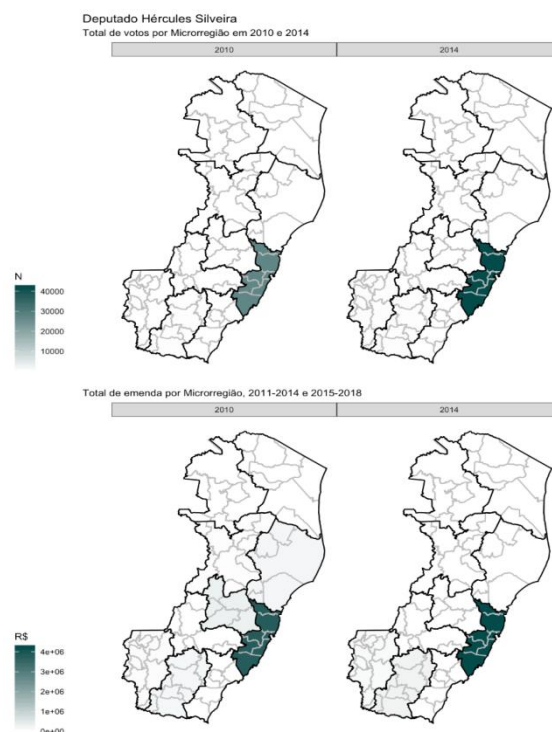
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<sup>11</sup> Simply put, the NER is the indication of an index created to classify the geographical profile of the vote of parliamentarians from the concentration/dispersion of the votes received in the microregions of Espírito Santo. The higher the NER, the greater the voting dispersion. In contrast, the lower the NER, the more concentration of votes in a given region. For further information, see Appendix I at the end of the article.

#### 4.2.1 First Case: Deputy Hércules Silveira (MDB)

Deputy Hércules Silveira (MDB) has a high concentration of votes, with a NER of 1.07 in the 2010 election and 1.8 in the 2014 election. The deputies elected to ALES in 2010 and 2014 present the lowest NER, therefore, the highest concentration of votes.

Figure I – Distribution of votes X Amendments - Deputy Hércules Silveira (MDB)



Source: PESSINE (2019, p. 102).

The votes of Deputy Hércules Silveira are concentrated in the Metropolitan <sup>12</sup>Region, in particular, in the municipality of Vila Velha. In 2010, of the 28,536 votes received, 27,525 were in the Metropolitan Region. That is, almost the entirety of the votes. The South Central Region also received a few votes.

Regarding the amendments inserted in the LOA by the respective parliamentarian (those corresponding to the 17th legislature), R\$ 3.8 million were allocated to the Metropolitan Region<sup>13</sup> (equivalent to 82.83% of the total value of the amendments). The Central Serrana region obtained R\$ 312 thousand (6.81% of the total), Rio Doce received R\$ 190 thousand (4.15% of the total), and Central South R\$ 178 thousand (3.89% of the total). Note that the logic of the electoral connection is noticeable for the case. Almost all of their votes are received from

<sup>12</sup> During the course of the topic, we will use the terminology region because it is of a more usual and easy expression, when in fact they correspond to the ES microregions.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that the values presented were not deflated.

the Metropolitan Region, and in turn, 82.83% of the amendment values go to the Metropolitan Region.

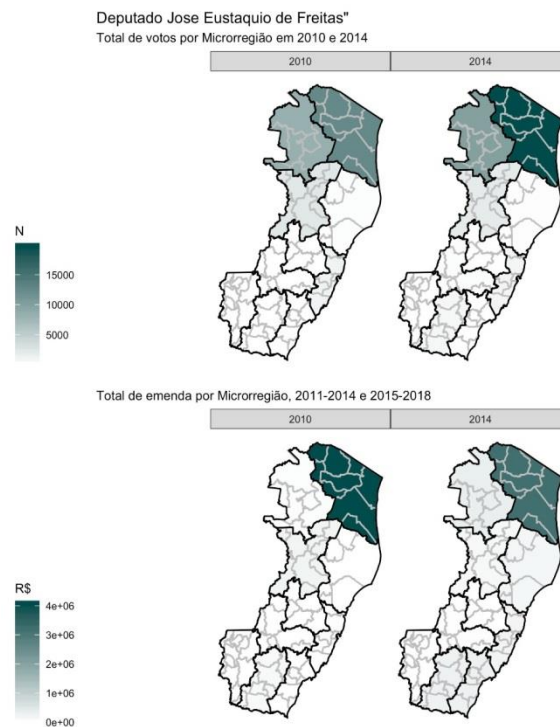
In the 2014 elections, 41,964 of the 43,765 votes received by Hércules da Silveira were also from the Metropolitan Region. We can highlight that the deputy obtained relative electoral success with significant increase in total votes that still remain concentrated in the Metropolitan Region. However, it cannot be said that there is a relationship between electoral success and the allocation of resources.

During the 18th legislature, the individual amendments to the budget still remain concentrated in the Metropolitan Region, R\$ 4.2 million (that is, 91.74% of the total amount of the deputy's amendments). The Central-South Region corresponds to the second region with the highest values allocated, R\$ 240 thousand (5.21% of the total). Deputy Hércules Silveira did not destine any amendments to the Midwest, South Coast, Northeast, Northwest, and Rio Doce regions during the entire 18th legislature. The data in Figure I shows that, for this case, there is an indication that the concentration of votes in a region reflects in an amendment concentrator behavior. Additionally, the priority of sending resources to his electoral base is clear.

#### 4.2.2 Second Case: Deputy José Eustáquio de Freitas (PSB)

Deputy José Eustáquio de Freitas (PSB) has a moderate concentration profile of votes, with an NER of 2.63 in the 2010 election and 2.32 in the 2014 election.

**Figure II** – Distribution of votes X Amendments - Deputy José Eustáquio de Freitas (PSB)



Source: PESSINE (2019, p. 109).

The votes of deputy José Eustáquio de Freitas (PSB) are divided between the Northeast, Northwest, and Midwest regions of Espírito Santo. In 2010, 12,483 of the 24,711 votes received were in the Northeast Region, 8,314 in the Northwest Region, and 2,392 in the Midwest Region.

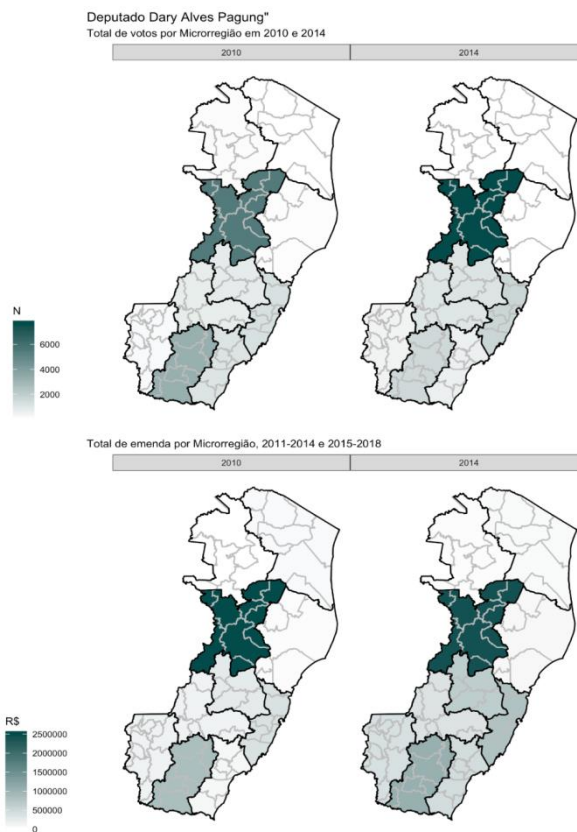
During the 17th legislature, the priority regions of amendment destinations were, respectively, the Northeast region, with R\$ 4.1 million (the equivalent of 90.53% of the total amendments made), followed by the Midwest Region, with R\$ 220 thousand (4.89% of the total). The highlights are for sending R\$ 105 thousand (2.39% of the total) in amendments to the Central-South Region, which is not an electoral stronghold of parliament. The Northwest Region, the second in total votes received, was not a priority destination, on the contrary, received only R\$ 50 thousand in resources. We can assume the movement of the parliamentarian as follows: he consolidates his greatest electoral stronghold with a great concentration of amendment values and tries to project himself in the Midwest regions (the third region with the most votes for the candidate at the time) and in a region where he does not have a significant vote (the Central-South). It should be noted that the amounts allocated to these last regions, although higher than for the Northwest, are not significant amounts, especially compared to the R\$ 4.1 million allocated to the Northeast Region.

In 2014, 19,775 of the 33,945 votes received by the deputy were in the Northeast region (which is fixed as its largest electoral base - with more than 5,000 votes added). It grows in electoral terms also in the Northwest Region (in smaller numbers), even allocating only R\$ 50 thousand in resources to this region. However, the number of voters in the Midwest region decreased (1,930) and still has an inexpressive vote in the Central-South Region. Regarding the allocation of resources in the course of the 18th legislature, the northeast region still remains the destination preference with R\$ 3.2 million (69.25% of the total ) in individual amendments to the budget. The Northwest region (which was practically not privileged in the last Legislature) began to receive R\$ 336.1 thousand (which corresponds to 7.30% of the total of the deputy's amendments). The Central-South and South Coast regions appear in second place with R\$ 271 thousand (5.89% of the total) and R\$ 271 thousand (5.89% of the total), respectively

#### **4.2.3 Third Case: Deputy Dary Alves Paung (PRP)**

Deputy Dary Alves Paung (PRP) has a moderate dispersion profile of votes with a NER of 4.02 in the 2010 election and 3.05 in the 2014 election.

**Figure III** – Distribution of votes X Amendments - Deputy Dary Alves Paung (PRP)



Source: PESSINE (2019, p. 111).

The votes of Deputy Dary Alves Paug (PRP) are divided between the Central-West, Central-South, South Coast, and Metropolitan regions in 2010, of the 13,022 votes received, 5,234 (40.19%) were in the Central-West Region, 3,251 (24.96%) in the Central-South, 1,251 (9.60%) in the Metropolitan, and 1,134 (8.70%) in the South Coast region.

Throughout the 17th legislature, the priority regions of amendment destinations were the Midwest Region (its largest electoral stronghold) with R\$ 2.5 million (representing 55.35% of the total value of amendments), followed by the Central-South Region with R\$ 854.6 thousand (18.82% of the total), and the Central-Serrana region with a total of R\$ 265 thousand (5.83% of the total).

In the 2014 elections, the Midwest Region was established as the electoral territory of the deputy, with 7,687 votes (including an increase in voters), followed by the Metropolitan Region, with 1,652 votes, and Central-South, with 1,548 (which had a decrease in total numbers of the previous vote of the deputy). The parliamentarian obtained 616 votes in the South Coast region. Therefore, we can infer that there was a higher concentration of votes in the 2014 election than in the 2010 election (the decrease in the NER index identified above would already make us presume this statement).

The individual amendments to the budget proposed in the 18th legislature are similar to

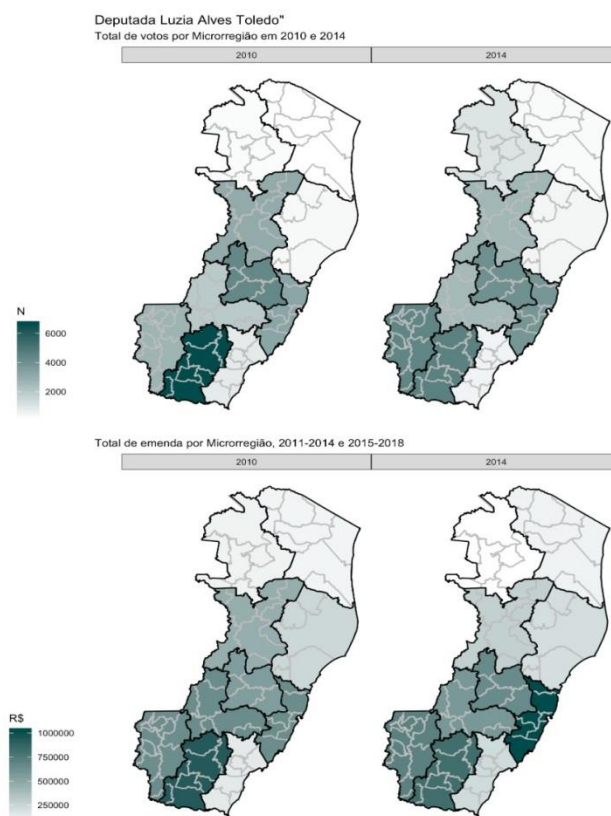


that of the 17th legislature. The Midwest Region received R\$ 2,421,000.00 (37.81% of the total) in amendments, R\$ 1.1 million (16.40% of the total) went to the Central-South, R\$ 658 thousand (10.27%) to the Central-Serrana, and R\$ 805 thousand (12.57%) to the Metropolitan Region. Thus, the deputy consolidates the Midwest Region as an electoral base but advances towards the Metropolitan Region (which in 2014 became the second largest in number of votes) and the Central-Serrana, but without disregarding the Central-South Region (where it also has a significant amount of votes, but lower than 2010).

#### 4.2.4 Fourth Case: Deputy Luzia Alves Toledo (MDB)

Deputy Luzia Alves Toledo (MDB) has a high dispersion of votes profile, with a NER of 5.87 in the 2010 election and 6.91 in the 2014 election. Of the deputies elected to ALES in 2010 and 2014, she presented the highest NER indices, therefore, greater vote dispersion.

**Figure IV** – Distribution of votes X Amendments - Deputy Luzia Alves Toledo (MDB)



Source: PESSINE (2019, p. 113).

The data show us that the votes of Deputy Luzia Alves Toledo (MDB) are scattered more evenly across several regions of the State: Central-South, Central-Serrana, Central-West, Caparaó, and Metropolitan. In 2010, 6,663 (28.20%) of the 23,626 votes received were in the Central-South Region, 4,313 (18.25%) in the Central-Serrana Region, 3,243 (13.72%) in the

Metropolitan Region, 3,037 (12.85%) in the Midwest, and 2,713 (11.48%) in the Caparaó Region.

There was a dispersion of amendments during the 17th legislature (mainly compared to the cases previously presented). The Central-South Region (with the highest number of votes) is also a priority concerning the transfer of amendments, with R\$ 931.9 thousand (20.57%) sent, followed by Caparaó, with R\$ 635 thousand (14.02%), Metropolitan, with R\$ 642,3 thousand (14.18%), Central Serrana, with R\$ 551.6 thousand (12.17%), and Midwest, with R\$ 460 thousand (10.15%). The Caparaó Region is the second option of sending resources, even being the one with the least amount of votes of those presented.

In the 2014 elections, 4,581 of the 24,375 votes went to the Central-South Region, 4,399 to Caparaó, 4,010 to the Central-Serrana, 3,794 to the Metropolitan, and 2,621 to the Midwest Region. We can see that the priority strategy of sending amendments may have impacted the vote of deputy Luzia Toledo in the Caparaó region, which in the 2014 elections becomes the second region in terms of electorate.

Concerning sending amendments, the Metropolitan Region gains prominence with R\$ million (which corresponds to 22.09% of the deputy's total amendments), followed closely by the Central-South, with R\$ 818 thousand (17.63% of the total), Caparaó, with R\$ 707 thousand (15.23% of the total), and Central-Serrana, with R\$ 652 (14.05% of the total), and Midwest R\$ 280 thousand (6.03% of the total).

The illustrated cases present us with more evidence to be incorporated into the argument that "the bases matter". In other words, the logic of the electoral connection can be seen as an explanatory key to the behavior of ES deputies via individual amendments to the budgets corresponding to the 17th and 18th legislatures. Furthermore, the information contained in the figures in this section indicate that the voting profile impacts the strategy of the deputies in the allocation of benefits. That is, the higher the concentration of votes, the higher the concentration of resources. The greater the dispersion of votes, the greater the dispersion of resources. It should be noted that it is impossible to assume generalities from the selected cases.

Finally, it should be noted that in the course of the interviews conducted, the reports of the vast majority of deputies indicated that the strategies of legislators for the amendments can be considered beyond their bases (in the sense we addressed, relative to the geographical space), but also in relation to the areas of destination of preferential amendments of the ES deputies (health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, among others), which would result in the insertion of another variable explaining the behavior of the parliamentarian. There is evidence that the occupation of deputies (whether doctor, farmer, teacher, politician, policeman) affects the propensity to allocate resources to the corresponding target areas. However, this analysis perspective was not the subject of this study. Future research will find fertile ground in the analysis of the possible impacts of the target areas on the strategies of amendment proposals of

parliamentarians.

## 5 Conclusion

Studies that analyze the budget process and parliamentary behavior normally focus on the federal level. Despite the relevance of these studies to unveil important aspects of parliamentary behavior at the federal level, it is necessary to question to what extent the previous provisions can be replicated at the subnational level. This article helped us to fill this gap, to a certain extent that, analyzing the strategy of the state representative of Espírito Santo in the management of individual amendments to the budget, including verifying whether this strategy is preferably directed to their electoral bases.

Based on the identified research issue, we built the hypothesis that deputies in ES, during the 17th and 18th legislatures, allocate resources to their electoral bases through budget amendments, which presumes a positive relationship between budget amendments and electoral connection.

To this end, we established a linear correlation/regression between an independent variable (total votes in the state microregion) and a dependent variable (total value of amendments intended for the microregion). The data showed a significant relationship between the total votes obtained by ES deputies (in the 2010 and 2014 elections) in the microregions of the state and the allocation of resources through the individual amendments inserted in the annual budget (between 2012 and 2019) destined to the planning microregions of Espírito Santo.

Thus, the collected elements indicate that the strategy of the ES parliamentarians (during the 17th and 18th legislatures) is directed to their electoral bases, considering the individual amendments to the budget as a presupposition of analysis. The information obtained in the interviews also shows a positive relationship between the electoral connection and the individual amendments to the budget. It is worth noting that there is room for different strategies, including those related to the areas of preference for resource allocation.

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## APPENDIX I

The geographical voting profile of ALES parliamentarians was identified based on the degree of concentration/dispersion of votes, using the index established by Carvalho (2003) and Lagos (2010). This is an index commonly adopted in studies on the geography of voting, given by the equation:

$$N = \frac{1}{\sum V_i^2}$$

Where,  $V_i$  = number of votes of deputy X in municipality  $i$ /total number of votes of Deputy X in the state.

Following the same precepts of the choice made by Simões (2018), we chose to change the calculation of the index considering the votes the microregions of the state of Espírito Santo instead of the municipalities of the state as a unit. Aggregating votes by development microregions is a justifiable argument, planned for a few reasons: first, the analysis by microregions contemplates the issue of contiguity of municipalities and, second, the interviews revealed that the vast majority of deputies understand their electoral stronghold from a specific region, not a municipality. In the interviews, only one deputy referred to his electoral base as concentrated in a single municipality.

Thus, in our research,  $V_i$  is the number of votes of deputy X in the region and  $i$ /total number of votes of deputy X in the state.

The theory has adopted this index to determine the effective number of parties. “In our case, the index, which we call NER (Effective Number of Regions), will suggest the number of regions in which elected state deputies were voted effectively” (SIMÕES, 2018, p. 49, our translation). Adopting the typology of Simões (2018), which in turn is an adaptation of the typology of Carvalho (2003), we have:

1. Voting deputies with high concentration:  $1.0 \leq \text{NER} < 1.55$ . This range includes those deputies who can concentrate at least 80% of their votes in the same region.
2. Voting deputies with moderate concentration:  $1.55 \leq \text{NER} < 2.50$ . This range includes deputies who obtain from 60% to 80% of his votes from a region.
3. Deputies of moderate dispersed voting:  $2.50 \leq \text{NER} < 3.70$ . In the first dispersion range, the deputy concentrates between 40% and 60% of his votes in a single region.
4. Deputies of high dispersed voting:  $3.7 \leq \text{NER} < 6$ . In the highest dispersion range, the deputy obtains up to 40% in the region where he concentrates more votes (SIMÕES, 2018, p. 51).