

Circular procurement in the Nordic Countries

Performance-based procurement, using life cycle costing and criteria concerning the reuse and recycling of materials, procuring services instead of products, and undertaking market dialogue are all important means for promoting circular procurement, according to the latest report published by the Nordic Council of Ministers: [‘Circular Procurement in the Nordic Countries’](#), published in May.

Circular procurement can be defined as a way of acquiring goods and services that seeks to achieve closed energy and material loops during the lifetime of the purchased items, whilst minimising negative environmental impacts and waste creation. Examples of circular procurement in the study were identified in Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. Sectors offering a high potential for circularity – that is, high purchasing volume and opportunities for creating a circular economy-based business – were also identified. In construction and renovation of buildings, material



and demolition waste could be recycled according to criteria and conditions fixed in the contract. In the construction of road infrastructure, significant savings in material and money could be achieved by utilising secondary materials from the site or nearby. Regarding energy and transport, local circular systems could be created by developing bioenergy production. In waste water treatment, the circular economy could be promoted in terms of more efficient recycling of nutrients and the development of related technology and business concepts. Potential can also be found in product groups such as appliances, furniture and textiles.

Energy Agencies as promoters of green purchasing



Pablo Quero is an Environmental Officer for the Energy Agency of the Province of Cádiz (APEC) – a coastal city and province in the southern region of Andalucía, Spain. Since 2015 he is responsible

for the institutionalisation of green public procurement (GPP) within the EU-funded GreenS Project.

Where do you see the connection between the work of a local/provincial energy agency and GPP?

In general, GPP is very closely connected to the activities of energy agencies. Purchases of energy consuming products and services are significant in terms of the annual budgets of local public administrations: electricity supply, public lighting, transport, office ICT equipment, etc. These products

and service have a major impact on our natural environment and in the production of greenhouse gas emissions. As a provincial energy agency, we work to continuously provide legal and technical advice to municipalities and to other stakeholders, by offering them assistance about the availability of more sustainable technologies, good practice experiences and the best approaches to financing projects on energy efficiency or renewable energy. These agencies are therefore ideally placed to help introduce GPP into local and regional administrations’ purchasing practices and support them throughout their journey implementing GPP by improving public authorities’ policy-making and concrete actions ‘on the ground’.

To view the interview in full, click [here](#).



Zoom in on... Webinar on GPP of Textiles

The first webinar for 2017 organised via the [EU GPP Helpdesk](#) will take place on Wednesday 28 June (14:30-16:00, CEST) and will focus on the newly updated [EU GPP Criteria](#) for Textile Products and Services. Details about the new GPP guidance (scope, environmental ‘hot spots’, proposed solutions, etc.) for this product area will be up for discussion, and will be complemented by a selection of good practice experiences. Participation is free of charge.

[More information...](#)



Zoom in on... Strategic Procurement conference, 2 June

The European Commission is organising a one-day event on ‘Strategic Procurement’ in Paris (France) on 2 June, to help promote the use of public procurement as a strategic tool to support more sustainable economies and societies. A number of policy and implementation challenges will be presented by public sector experts to address possible solutions to embark on. Participation is free of charge and simultaneous translation will be provided.

[More information...](#)



GPP examples

Towards zero emission public transport in the Province of North-Brabant (the Netherlands)

The provincial government of North-Brabant has set itself the ambitious goal of achieving 100% 'clean' bus transport by 2025, and thus finds itself now on the path transitioning towards zero emission public transport. It recently re-tendered its bus concessions contract and now has the largest fully electric transit district in the Netherlands. The buses have been in operation since December 2016 with several of them covering more than 340 kilometers per day.

As the market for zero emission vehicles has been gradually evolving, the Province has increased the share of points given to the zero emissions award criteria (in its call for tenders) from 4% (in 2013/2014) to 11.5% in the most recent tender. The provision of zero emissions buses was not an obligatory requirement of this contract however, the competitive nature of the market meant that this was enough of an incentive to get the required result.

Download the full case study [here](#).

Joint procurement of 100% recycled copying paper (Erlangen, Germany)

Since 2013 all municipal departments in the City of Erlangen (situated in the state of Bavaria) are obliged to only use paper consisting of 100% recycled fibres for their office needs. Following this commitment, Erlangen annually takes part in nationwide joint procurement actions organised by the [German Municipal Purchasers Group](#) (EKV) for its copying paper needs.

In terms of environmental savings made from purchasing paper made from 100% recycled fibres, as opposed to virgin fibres, annual savings for the City of Erlangen have been estimated to reach 12.03 tonnes of CO₂, 2,191,093 litres of water and 451,234 kWh in energy. Calculations were made using the [Pro Recycling Paper \(IPR\) Sustainability Calculation tool](#) and based on the annual consumption (from 2013) of 13.85 million sheets of Blue Angel certified 100% A4-sized recycled paper.

Download the full case study [here](#).

Building a 'green' exposition centre in Burgas (Bulgaria)

In 2013, the [City of Burgas](#) decided to replace an existing textile exposition pavilion with a modern building, which could be used year-round for a wider variety of events. The overall concept for the new building was based on three pillars - functionality, aesthetics and economy - as well as being guided by the Municipality's [Strategy for Sustainable Energy Development](#), which focuses on reducing energy consumption and sourcing energy from renewable sources. The contract for the construction of the new exhibition centre was awarded to the 'most economically advantageous tender', which also fulfilled extensive 'green' technical specifications covering the design and environmental performance requirements of the new building.

The design of the resulting building incorporates photovoltaic panels, a green roof (or living roof) and wall features, rain-fed irrigation, utilisation of natural and light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, and energy efficient building systems and materials.

Download the full case study [here](#).



Image: Pixabay

Zoom in on... First international standard on sustainable procurement

The International Standards Organisation has launched the first global standard for sustainable procurement: [ISO 20400](#). The standard provides guidance to organisations, independent of their activity or size, on integrating sustainability within procurement, as described in [ISO 26000](#) on Social Responsibility. It is intended for stakeholders involved in, or impacted by, procurement decisions and processes. [More information...](#)



Image: Pixabay

Zoom in on... Smart Procurement for Better Transport (SPICE)

The European-funded SPICE project, which began in September 2016, is designed to support purchasing actions for innovative transport and mobility solutions in urban centres. The project aims to facilitate dialogues between public procurers and industry (suppliers) and develop recommendations for use in public procurement procedures to further enable adoption of innovative and more sustainable technologies, including joint-cross-border procurement actions. [More information...](#)

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