

Amsterdam hosts the first international congress on Circular Procurement



With the European Commission's (EC) [Circular Economy package](#) released in December 2015, the attention of public procurers from across Europe has been drawn towards how to procure in a way that contributes to closing the loop. The [first international congress on Circular Procurement](#) held in Amsterdam on 20-22 April looked to provide some answers to this question, by showcasing some of the first pilots of circular procurement that have taken place in Europe and discussing how this could become a standard

practice of doing business in Europe.

Circular Procurement requires purchasers to consider the whole life cycle of products and their impacts, from raw material extraction, through to product transformation and disposal. Introducing these aspects, as well as non-conventional business models in procurement procedures, and involving markets in the creation of more sustainable products for a circular economy, has proven to greatly increase resource efficiency and reduce waste. The Congress, convened by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment and the European Commission, concluded with a number of recommendations on the use of circular procurement for public and private sector organisations. For more information, please visit: www.circularprocurementevent.com. A [summary video](#) is also available.



Zoom in on... Award criteria in procurement

Getting award criteria right in public procurement is the topic of the conference taking place on 19 May in Tallinn (Estonia). The aim is to discuss how to get 'best value for money' through procurement, particularly under the current EU rules. The programme will address how to choose the best award criteria for selecting offers, depending on needs and the type of purchase. The event is organised by the European Commission and forms part of the [Single Market Forum](#). Registration is still open. [More information...](#)

Strengthening action on GPP – the Danish approach



Iben Kinch Sohn is the Head of Section in the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, working on projects and strategies within the area of sustainable consumption and production, including green public procurement (GPP). She is the Project Manager of the Danish Partnership on GPP.

What are the Ministry's main actions on fostering sustainable procurement in Denmark? The Ministry has three main initiatives to promote green purchasing in Denmark. We have a national network called [Forum for Sustainable Procurement](#), which is a knowledge sharing forum where procurers from both public and private organisations can keep updated on best practice, methods and tools for

green procurement, through a website, newsletters and various events. [The Partnership on GPP](#) is a collaboration between frontrunner municipalities, regions and other public organisations who are committed to making extra efforts in partnership with other organisations to reduce their environmental impact from their procurement actions. Joining the partnership is purely voluntary, however signing up commits the organisation to put certain green procurement criteria into action for 10 different product groups. The main stimulus behind the partnership is the potential impact it can have on the market: the more partners involved, the greater the procurement volume and the greater the impact on the market.

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



Zoom in on... Food and catering services

Ghent (Belgium) will host the Sustainable Catering Forum on 9 June - a chance for public procurers, policy-makers and suppliers from across Europe to exchange experiences, form partnerships, and discuss the challenges facing food systems in Europe. The Forum will provide some of the latest information on new approaches to the sustainable procurement of food and catering services, the latest EU policy developments, and training on eco-innovative procurement. Participation is free of charge. [More information...](#)



GPP examples

Sustainable city logistics in London

Local authorities possess a large number of properties that are geographically widespread and receive numerous deliveries of everyday goods every day.

A feasibility study carried out a few years ago on behalf of the London boroughs of Camden and of Enfield focused on obtaining supply chain savings and environmental benefits through procurement. The study recommended the use of a London Boroughs Consolidation Centre - a facility that channels suppliers' deliveries into one central point. The goods are then sorted onto fewer vehicles for the final 'leg' (or last mile) of the journey to Council sites, on a just in time basis.

Following the study, a successful trial period took place which then followed the contracting of a long-term logistics partner. Since its start, the Consolidation Centre has achieved a 57% reduction in vehicle trips, 69% reduction in kilometres travelled, and the following reductions in emissions: NO_x (71%), PM (87%) and CO₂ (67%). In terms of vehicles, the idea is that all vehicles used will be low or zero emission. The main focus of the scheme, however, is to remove freight vehicles from the road altogether - a superior solution to changing all vehicles to zero-emission.

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

Image: Camden Council



Zoom in on... Global survey on sustainable procurement

In an effort to identify and map the policies, activities, drivers and challenges for sustainable public procurement (SPP) worldwide, a global survey has been launched through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [10-Year Framework Programme for SPP](#). This is the second survey of its kind being conducted to establish the global trends on SPP. The online survey is available in Spanish and English. The opinions of SPP practitioners and other stakeholders are sought.

[More information...](#)

City of Barcelona's + Sustainable City Council Programme

Barcelona's City Council manages around 2,000 buildings and has about 12,000 employees, organised into a number of departments and divisions, which manage decentralised budgets for contracting services.

One of the Council's priority areas is promoting social action and respect for the environment through its public purchasing actions, thereby making its own operations more sustainable. The initiatives for improvement are detailed in the +Sustainable City Council (+SCC) Programme, which is part of Barcelona's Agenda 21 and another example of the city council's commitment to local and global sustainability. Since the Programme's actions began in 2001, it has won two national awards on sustainable procurement and was among the finalists selected for the [European Public Sector Award](#) (in 2011).

The efforts made to involve key players (such as by providing technical instructions for applying sustainability criteria), providing regular information and carrying out awareness raising actions among council staff (via the Council's regular e-bulletin, the +SCC Programme [website](#), training and targeted information campaigns) have been decisive in ensuring the viability of its actions on sustainable procurement.

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

Image: Barcelona City Council



Zoom in on... Engaging NGOs on GPP in Europe

In order to further support promotion of GPP policies and practice, the EC aims to establish a network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on GPP in Europe. Its aim is to provide NGOs with the capacities to act as local "change agents" in encouraging the more widespread uptake of GPP. The EC is also considering other mechanisms for how to support NGOs in their GPP-related activities.

If you are interested in finding out more, or in taking part in the network, please contact estela.grana@iclei.org

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