

New green purchasing criteria for office buildings available



Buildings are major consumers of resources, with around half of all the energy and raw materials consumed in the European community coming from the buildings sector. A third of water used and waste generated in the EU also stems from this sector. Public buildings therefore have a significant role to play in reducing the environmental impact of cities and countries. The new voluntary EU GPP criteria for Office Building Design, Construction and Management released on 2 June by the Commission, aim to

help public authorities willing to procure greener construction and renovation works by addressing the most significant environmental impacts generated by them in a cost-effective way. In addition to requirements ensuring high energy and water efficiency and good indoor air quality, the new guidance promotes a number of circular economy aspects, such as the inclusion of recycled content in building materials like concrete and masonry and the reduction of demolition waste. The criteria are accompanied by a Procurement Practice Guidance Document, which provides specific advice on how to integrate GPP criteria at the right stage of the procurement process - from the selection of the design team and contractors, to the demolition and construction phases and management of the building facilities. [The criteria are now available in English](#), with translations into the other official EU languages to follow soon.



Zoom in on... Webinar on Food & Catering

The first EU GPP Helpdesk webinar of the year will take place next Thursday 23 June at (14.30-16.00 CET) and will focus on Sustainable Procurement in the Food and Catering sector. The status of the revised European GPP criteria on food and catering will be in the spotlight. If you would like to take part, sign up today at the following link: <http://bit.ly/1srBhHr>

GPP example

Croatian Post purchases e-bikes for mail deliveries

Croatian Post, the national postal service in Croatia, launched a public tender in April 2015 to purchase 180 electric bicycles to replace an equal number of conventionally fuelled (combustion engine) scooters.

The tender came as part of its involvement in the EU-funded [PRO-E-BIKE project](#) during which the Croatian Post took part in a pilot scheme to see whether electric bicycles could replace scooters for mail deliveries. Following a successful 12 month testing period, the Croatian Post concluded that e-bikes provided a better alternative to conventional scooters due on financial grounds (approx. 926 euro per scooter would be saved), reduced noise pollution, and, operationally, the e-bikes would cover the same range in terms of kilometres. However, when battery power is low, you can still ride the e-bike, as opposed to the scooter.

Cycling is an efficient way of using expensive and scarce space in urban areas, and is healthy, clean and inexpensive. It has enormous potential when we acknowledge that almost half of all car trips in cities are of less than five kilometres.

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



Zoom in on... Online survey to assess suitability to join the European NGO network on GPP

In order to support the promotion of GPP policies and practice, the European Commission is aiming to establish a European NGO network on GPP that will encourage a more widespread uptake of GPP amongst public authorities. NGOs with an interest in GPP and experience working with public authorities are encouraged to take part in an [online survey](#) that will assess suitability to join the network.



Leading by example - GPP through EMAS in the European Commission

In 2011, the European Commission (EC) decided to reduce its environmental impact through the implementation of a [European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme \(EMAS\)](#) system. Since then, the use of EMAS has extended progressively to cover all major EC-sites, reaching up to 1,513,075 m² and concerning over 30,000 employees. Celso Sanchez Martínez chairs the Inter-institutional Environmental Management System Group (GIME) and has been in charge of EMAS at the Commission for the past six years.



How are you using GPP to meet the defined environmental requirements?

We include the [green purchasing criteria developed by the Commission](#) into the vast majority of our higher value tenders.

For example, as a result of a campaign on paper use, a proposal from a department was to use paper with 75g/m² and include further criteria such as using paper made from 100% recovered paper fibres or asking for the origin of the wood used. For the procurement of furniture, we also ask for the origin of the wood, the raw materials used in the products, etc.

Regarding vehicles, the EC's fleet now includes a large number of electric cars (more than 40) and we are now introducing electric service bikes for staff mobility.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is another area where green procurement has contributed to achieving significant energy savings, with 100% of our hardware contracts including environmental criteria in the technical and financial selection phase. But we don't only include green criteria into our public procurement procedures; at the European Commission we have committed to lead by example and help foster a

circular economy by way of our own procurement and through our daily work. For example, IT devices which are no longer in use (by the EC) are given to charity for reuse. These devices are refurbished and about 90% of them enjoy a second life. Proper recycling of the remaining, non-usable equipment is ensured.

Furthermore, we are involving our subcontractors a lot more in all processes, so that they can deliver on the expected environmental requirements. For instance, in a recent facilities management tender, suppliers were expected to count on EMAS officers to check the legal compliance of installations with the requirements of the contract. They were also asked to put forward proposals for technical improvements in buildings, where possible, which would further improve our environmental performance.

Another good example are our (numerous) canteens. Here we include several provisions requiring organically certified food and requirements for our contractors to meet our environmental policy, in terms of waste, water consumption and energy use. Regarding waste management, actions to reduce waste include a close control of the food portions offered and to improve recycling of organic waste.

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



Zoom in on... Rewarding sustainable and innovative procurement

With the aim of giving visibility to dynamic, forward-looking and innovative public authorities and their initiatives, the [Procura+ Awards](#) seek to showcase excellence in sustainable and innovative public procurement. The purchased solutions need to have a strong potential for replication and scaling up. The Procura+ Awards are organised as part of [the Procura+ European Sustainable Procurement Network](#). Entries for this year's awards need to be received by 6 September 2016.



Zoom in on... Climate impacts of the healthcare sector

A guide outlining the 'simple steps to reducing the climate impact from healthcare' has been published through the EU-funded [Climate Friendly Health and Care project](#). The guidance provided starts with advice on how to map the climate impacts of a healthcare organisation, through to concrete steps on how to reduce the impacts from specific areas, such as transport or food. It uses two examples from clinics in Malmö (Sweden) as further inspiration and food for thought.

[More information...](#)

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