



What is GPP?

Green Public Procurement (GPP) is the process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life-cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.

What is GPP4Growth?

GPP4Growth brings together the experience and practices of nine public bodies from across the EU in a bid to improve those public bodies' capacity to implement policies that promote eco-innovation and green growth through 'Green Public Procurement' (GPP). 14% of the EU's total GDP is consumed by Europe's public authorities. This public expenditure on goods, services and works has a total estimated value of €1.8 trillion annually. This substantial public authority 'purchasing power' can be utilised to stimulate eco-innovation, resource efficiency and green growth by promoting environmentally friendly, resource-efficient goods and services.

**Best policies, plans and
criteria for the application of
GPP in the European Union**



Executive Summary

This document presents policy recommendations on how to use green public procurement to strengthen resource efficient growth in EU territories, based on data from a comparative policy analysis in various EU territories, conducted by the University of Patras, Greece, using data collected from various EU territories by the Interreg EU GPP4Growth consortium. Recommendations include guidelines on improving existing green procurement policies in EU regions, such as suggestions for minimising administrative burden for businesses involved in international tenders.

The Research

The report outlines the results of desk based research which examined the current GPP policies across the nine GPP4Growth partner countries to address three main research questions:

Research question 1: What is the state and prospects of the development of GPP in your region and country and what are the most important enabling and constraining factors?

Research question 2: Which are the most important strategies and policies consisting of policy framework analysed to further the utilisation of GPP in your country or region?

Research question 3: How will your country or region capitalise on GPP as an enabler of sustainable growth?



What were the main findings?

EU countries have so far mostly opted to assist public institutions in the voluntary integration of sustainable procurement where possible. As such the level of engagement of these public bodies with GPP varies significantly. However, this voluntary approach to implementation of GPP has not always been effective and the research suggests that implementation of GPP requires greater standardisation across the public sector.

Also, most EU regions do not have specialised regional plans for the implementation of GPP which may impact on awareness levels and political buy in.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that partners acknowledge the need to improve their GPP monitoring processes mainly through developing centralised and specialised instruments responsible for the monitoring of GPP processes. A key component of all the approaches was to organise a number of events designed to change the mentality of people with regards to GPP, so that they stop consider it as something expensive, overcomplicated or unnecessary.

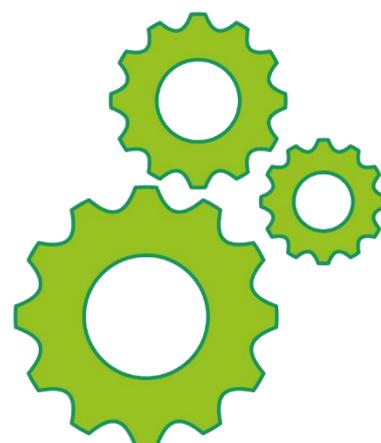
The research also highlighted that partnership territories and countries should further integrate the EU directives and in general instructions on GPP. Finally, a number of supporting mechanisms that could aid the expansion and transfer of GPP were identified, such as:

- Training materials and seminars for public sector employees involved in GPP.
- Networking mechanisms to come into contact with producers of green products and services and to procure the latest green innovations produced by the market.
- Provision of a number of incentives for participation in GPP processes (e.g. tax reliefs).
- Formation of a coordinating apparatus for the implementation of GPP.

The research demonstrated that there are a number of key constraining factors which hinder implementation of GPP which are similar across some of the partner regions. Additionally it identified key enabling factors which can increase the uptake in and engagement with GPP.

The absence of mandatory specialized legislation with regards to GPP in most partnership territories has increased the importance of initiatives taken by national authorities that aim to promote and advance GPP.

The conclusion is that the non-mandatory or partially mandatory character of GPP implantation in partnership regions means that the dynamics of GPP implementation can be heavily influenced by the commitment and engagement of public authorities.



Enabling Factors	Constraining Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU regulation that promotes and advances the implementation of GPP. - EU-funded projects that serve as platforms for the exchange of best GPP practices (e.g. PRIMES). - Greater inclusion of life-cycle costs in public tenders - Increasing the awareness of environmental benefits derived from GPP. - Greater use of tools such as web platforms to exchange information. - More efficient flow of information and knowledge about GPP. - Forming more effective administrative procedures for the implementation of GPP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of awareness about the benefits of applying GPP. - Lack of mandatory rules for GPP and the poor coordination of public administrations during this process. - The limited political support to the implementation of GPP. - Lack of practical knowledge in GPP implementation procedures. - Absence of a specialized legal and/or regulatory framework with regards to GPP. - High prices of specific green products. - Perceived negative impact of GPP in the competitiveness of the local economy. - Lack of dissemination mechanisms to raise awareness about the importance of GPP.



Policy Recommendations

- Development of a more complete list of green criteria to be applied in GPP processes.
- Application of life-cycle costing methods in these criteria.
- Compulsory application of green criteria in tenders.
- Formation of the appropriate monitoring mechanisms, capable of ensuring the adherence to green criteria in public procurement processes.
- Utilisation of ICT technology in their GPP.
- Development of specialised regional GPP action plans that take into account the needs and characteristics of public administrations in specific territories.

Policy Recommendations Contd...

- Establishment of a regional GPP community of practice
- Regional support for public purchasers to acquire competences and skills to define and manage green procurement.
- Agreement for the definition of a support and information strategy for the regional market.

Conclusions

The research demonstrated that progress in the implementation of GPP policy across the nine partnership regions varies and multiple approaches are engaged to increase the level of green criteria in the tenders prepared by public bodies.

However throughout the examples there are common practices which can be identified as key to increasing GPP. This brief has outlined a number of policy recommendations that have the potential to further optimise GPP implementation and facilitate its transfer across partnership regions.

In addition a number of additional interventions were suggested based on partner experience. These include the creation of supporting mechanisms to GPP and improvements to the administrative process such as:

- Apply monitoring methods for public tenders that allow for data collection, dissemination of information and continuous assessment and revision of the procurement process.
- Expand the application of green criteria.
- Professionalisation and capacity building for public sector employees
- Expansion of products and services addressed by green criteria and further integration of EU directives, according to the latest scientific/commercial developments.
- Development of incentives for applying green criteria.
- Development of tools to facilitate the application of green criteria, such as a green products database.
- Development of additional support systems for public buyers and suppliers to facilitate the networking and production of goods and services.

There are still several improvements to be made for the efficient implementation of GPP however, the sharing of experiences across member states allows for the efficient development of policy in this area.

More Information

This policy brief is provided by Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment of the Republic of Ireland / Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe ar son na hAeráide agus Comhshaoil, and is based on a research report prepared by The University of Patras, Greece, a GPP4Growth partner and the GPP4Growth consortium. The full report is called 'Analysing existing policies, plans and criteria for GPP in the key GPP4Growth sectors' and is available on request.

Visit www.interregeurope.eu/gpp4growth for more about GPP4Growth.



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