

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Green Public Procurement Guidance and Resources



1. Overview of Organization

Name of Organization: European Commission

Website: http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm

Contact Information: http://ec.europa.eu/contact/guide_activity_en.htm

Funding Sources: Contributions from member countries, import duties on products from outside the EU and a percentage of the value-added tax leveled by each country.

Organization Type: International

Partners: http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm (member countries)

Location: Europe

Mission: "The Commission represents and upholds the interests of the EU as a whole. It oversees and implements EU policies by:

- Proposing new laws to Parliament and the Council,
- Managing the EU's budget and allocating funding,
- Enforcing EU law (together with the Court of Justice), and
- Representing the EU internationally, for example, by negotiating agreements between the EU and other countries." ⁱ

2. Sustainable Purchasing Activities and Resources

1. GPP at a glance

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/brochure.pdf>

2. GPP Frequently Asked Questions

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/faq_en.htm

3. GPP Studies in the EU

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/studies_en.htm

4. "About GPP" section: Definition, benefits, barriers, green and sustainable public procurement, dialogue with the market, life-cycle costing (LCC), eco-labels, & glossary.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/what_en.htm

5. "Legal Framework" section: Case law, EU PP Directives, The Treaty and other EU Law, & Commission Guidance

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/case_law_en.htm

6. "Policy Framework" section: GPP policy, EU strategic policy, related EU legislation, international policy framework

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/gpp_policy_en.htm

7. GPP National Action Plans

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/action_plan_en.htm

8. "Useful Links" section: National websites, and Networks and Initiatives

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/material_en.htm

3. Sustainable Purchasing Guidance Materials

1. Buying Green! Handbook (Second Edition) & Summary

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/buying_handbook_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/handbook_summary.pdf

"This handbook is designed to help public authorities successfully plan and implement Green Public Purchasing (GPP). It explains the possibilities offered by European Union law in a practical way, and looks at simple and effective approaches to greening contracts. For practical reasons the handbook follows the logic and structure of a procurement procedure. It also gives many real examples of green purchasing by public authorities across the EU." ⁱⁱ

Year Guidance was Published: 2011

Access: Full public access

Types of Purchasers: "This handbook has been produced for public authorities, but many of the ideas and approaches are equally relevant for corporate purchasers. It should also help suppliers and service providers - particularly smaller companies (SMEs) - to better understand the environmental requirements increasingly encountered in public tenders." ⁱⁱⁱ

Regional Focus: Europe

Languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Spanish, Danish, German, Estonian, Greek, English, French, Italian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian, Maltese, Dutch; Flemish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian; Moldavian; Moldovan, Slovak, Slovenian, Finnish, & Swedish.

Topics covered:

✓✓✓ environmental sustainability ✓✓ social sustainability ✓✓ economic sustainability

Activities/steps:

(unless otherwise indicated)

✓✓✓ Familiarize yourself with the scope and potential benefits of GPP; ✓✓✓ Establish a working group; ✓✓✓ Adopt a GPP policy with clear definitions and targets; ✓✓✓ Set priorities for the product and service groups you will address via: ✓✓✓ Spend analysis, ✓ level of environmental impact, ✓ potential influence to the market; ✓✓✓ Consult existing criteria, eco-labels and other sources; ✓✓✓ Put in place information, training, networking and monitoring activities; ✓✓✓ Consider how green requirements will affect the procurement process for the goods and services you have chosen; ✓✓✓ Consider how you will implement the green requirements in line with legal obligations; Supplier engagement; ✓✓✓ Make a business case for GPP based on life-cycle costing; ✓✓✓ Consider framework agreements; ✓✓✓ Define the subject matter and technical specifications for contracts in a way which takes into account environmental impacts; ✓✓✓ Apply selection criteria based on environmental technical capacity or environmental management measures and exclude tenderers who have committed serious breaches of environmental requirements; ✓✓✓ Specify materials and production methods and consider the use of variants; ✓✓✓ Set award criteria; ✓✓✓ Assess life-cycle costs when comparing tenders; ✓✓✓ Make a business case for GPP based Joint procurement; ✓✓ Make a business case for GPP based Energy performance contracting (EPC); ✓✓✓ Set contract performance clauses; ✓✓✓ Provide appropriate remedies where suppliers/service providers fall short; ✓✓✓ Verify compliance; ✓✓✓ Review the rules governing contract clauses

Product categories covered:

✓✓✓ Buildings; ✓✓✓ timber; ✓ office IT equipment; ✓ road transport vehicles

Service categories covered:

✓✓✓ Food and catering services; ✓✓✓ electricity

*The **Buying Green Handbook Summary** elaborates on Office IT Equipment, Construction works, & Paper and Wood Products (Timber).*

2. Buying Social: A Guide to Taking Account of Social Considerations in Public Procurement

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6457&langId=en>

"The purpose of this Guide is (a) to raise contracting authorities' awareness of the potential benefits of socially responsible public procurement (SRPP) and (b) to explain in a practical way the opportunities offered by the existing EU legal framework for public authorities to take into account social considerations in their public procurement, thus paying attention not only to price but also to the best value for money. When drafting this Guide, the Commission widely consulted public authorities in the Member States and many other interested parties and stakeholders." ^{iv}

Year Guidance was Published: 2010

Access: Full public access

Types of Purchasers: "This Guide has been produced chiefly for public authorities, but also in the hope that it will also inspire private-sector purchasers." ^v

Regional Focus: Europe

Languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Spanish, Danish, German, Estonian, Greek, English, French, Italian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian, Maltese, Dutch; Flemish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian; Moldavian; Moldovan, Slovak, Slovenian, Finnish, & Swedish.

Topics covered:

environmental sustainability ✓✓✓ social sustainability economic sustainability

Steps (very high level):

✓✓✓ Strategic development and prioritization of SRPP initiatives; ✓✓✓ Identifying the needs and planning procurement in individual procurement procedures; ✓✓✓ Defining the requirements of the contract in the technical specifications; ✓✓✓ Selecting suppliers, contractors and service-providers; ✓✓✓ Awarding the contract: tender evaluation; ✓✓✓ Contract conditions, contract management and contract monitoring

3. GPP Green Public Procurement, a collection of good practices

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/GPP_Good_Practices_Brochure.pdf

"The new "GPP brochure of good practice examples" presents some of the most interesting case studies collected over the years. The brochure is intended to inspire public (and private) procurers to opt for green products and services when making their purchasing decisions." ^{vi}

Year Guidance was Published: 2012

Access: Full public access

Types of Purchasers: Public authorities/public procurement professionals

Regional Focus: Europe

Languages: English

Topics covered:

✓✓✓ environmental sustainability social sustainability ✓ economic sustainability

*The case studies are organized by 1) procurement objectives 2) criteria used
3) environmental impacts 4) results 5) lessons learned*

Product categories covered:

✓✓✓ Paper; ✓✓✓ IT products; ✓✓✓ cleaning and waste; ✓ toner cartridges; ✓✓✓ laboratory equipment;
✓✓✓ textiles; ✓ construction materials

Service categories covered:

✓✓✓ Food and catering; ✓✓✓ building maintenance; ✓✓✓ lighting; ✓✓✓ service vehicles; ✓✓✓ electricity

4. GPP Examples by Product Group

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/case_group_en.htm

Besides the collection of good practices guidance above, "the European Commission has collected other examples of GPP in practice to illustrate how European public authorities have successfully launched 'green' tenders, and provide guidance for others who wish to do the same." ^{vii}

Year Guidance was Published: EC has been collecting examples since January 2010

Access: Full public access

Types of Purchasers: Public authorities/public procurement professionals

Regional Focus: Europe

Languages: English

Topics covered:

✓✓✓ environmental sustainability social sustainability economic sustainability

Product categories covered:

√√√ Cleaning products; √√√ construction materials; √√√ copying and graphic paper; √√√ gardening products; √√√ furniture; √√√ indoor lighting; √√√ office IT equipment; √√√ office supplies; √√√ printing products; √√√ street lighting and traffic signals; √√√ textiles; √√√ transport; √√√ water based heaters; √√√ laboratory supplies; √√√ wood

Service categories covered:

√√√ Cleaning services; √√√ combined heat and power; √√√ construction; √√√ electricity; √√√ food and catering services; √√√ gardening services; √√√ printing services; √√√ transport; √√√ waste management and collection; √√√ waste water infrastructures; √√√ event management

5. GPP Training Toolkit

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm

"The toolkit is designed for use by public purchasers and by GPP trainers or for integration in general public procurement training courses and workshops. In addition to an introductory presentation, it consists of 3 independent modules:

1. A strategic module which seeks to raise the political support for GPP.
2. A legal module which seeks to clarify legal issues.
3. An operational module aimed at purchasing officers." ^{viii}

Year Guidance was Published: 2008

Access: Full public access

Types of Purchasers: Public purchasers and GPP trainers

Regional Focus: Europe

Languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Spanish, Danish, German, Estonian, Greek, English, French, Italian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian, Maltese, Dutch; Flemish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian; Moldavian; Moldovan, Slovak, Slovenian, Finnish, & Swedish.

Module 1: An Action Plan for GPP

"The first module provides strategic and economic information on Green Public Procurement. The guidance sets out, robustly, a case as to why decision makers should set up a GPP strategy. It provides them with a simple yet effective methodology to develop an action plan for gradually introducing GPP within the organization." ^{ix}

Steps:

√√ Define the scope of the activity; √√ Prepare via expenditure analysis, life cycle costing, and prioritization among others; √√ Set targets; √√ Develop the Action Plan; √√ Monitor progress and report results

Module 2: Legal Module

"The second module includes legal guidance, providing clear examples of how and where to integrate environmental criteria into the public procurement process while fully respecting European public procurement law (including Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC)." ^x

Steps:

√√ Define the subject matter; √√ Describe the minimum technical specifications which all bids need to comply with; √√ Determine the selection criteria related to the capacity of bidders to perform the contract; √√ Determine the award criteria on the basis of which the contracting authority will compare the offers; √√ Determine the contract performance clauses to be included in the contract

Module 3: Practical module

"The third module is specifically designed for purchasing officers. It includes concrete examples of environmental criteria which can be readily introduced in tender documents. Examples of criteria have been established for the priority product and service groups identified (due to their environmental impact and/or scope for environmental improvement and/or financial impact and/or political or example-setting function) as most suitable for "greening" under Green Public Procurement." ^{xi}

The EU GPP criteria cover the same products and services as those in the GPP examples by product group resources.

4. Observations

The European Commission's GPP program has a wide number of resources and guidance documents for environmentally preferable (or green) public purchasing. These are available online, in several languages, and designed for a wide variety of European local provincial and national government audiences. Guidance includes comprehensive product category guidance, as well as program-level guidance. Some guidance to social issues in purchasing are also provided in the Buying Social Handbook. Information and guidance is provided to government contracting authorities at all levels who may voluntarily adopt or use it. The Commission supports a number of studies have been undertaken to determine the extent of GPP implementation by EU contracting authorities; however, they are not required by law to report and so results are not comprehensive.

ⁱ European Union. *European Commission*. Accessed from: http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-commission/index_en.htm

ⁱⁱ European Commission. (2011). *Buying Green! Handbook (Second Edition)*. Accessed from: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/buying_handbook_en.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} European Commission. (2010). *Buying Social: A Guide to Taking Account of Social Considerations in Public Procurement*. Accessed from: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6457&langId=en>

^v Ibid.

^{vi} European Commission. *GPP Examples by Product Group*. Accessed from: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/case_group_en.htm

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} European Commission. (2008). *GPP Training Toolkit*. Accessed from: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm

^{ix} Ibid.

^x Ibid.

^{xi} Ibid.