



Project GPP-STREAM “Green Public Procurement and Sustainability Tools for Resource Efficiency Mainstreaming”

ACTIVITY B15: REALIZATION AND PUBLICATION OF AT LEAST 5 INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS – REPORT ON INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

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1. Introduction

This report is issued on the basis of a questionnaire completed by stakeholders coming from all 5 countries that form the GPP-STREAM project consortium. As it had quite a good response rate, the collected data provides us with reliable and credible information about GPP implementation level, green criteria being used and last but not least barriers and recommendations highlighted by our stakeholders.



The current GPP-STREAM questionnaire reveals findings and responses connected to the GPP toolkit and offer a benchmark for policy makers, stakeholders and decision makers. It tackles questions mostly connected to the introduction of GPP criteria, the level of GPP uptake and the awareness of the public administration of GPP promotion. It has been designed in order to collect data on GPP implementation and practices and the result is a comparative analysis that can be found below. Responses were given mostly by public figures from regional and national administrations that demonstrate their readiness to use GPP and promote green public spending.

The questionnaire starts with responses revealing the background of the stakeholder. Afterwards, it examines respondents' basic understandings and knowledge on the above mentioned GPP issues. Most of the questions are closed-ended, as they suggest a quick and easy way of information fill-in. The final part of the questionnaire is mostly descriptive and respondents are invited to promote their ideas, know-how, knowledge and understanding

on green public procurement policies. What follows is a summary of the main findings and conclusions that can be drawn from respondents' replies.

2. Findings and conclusions

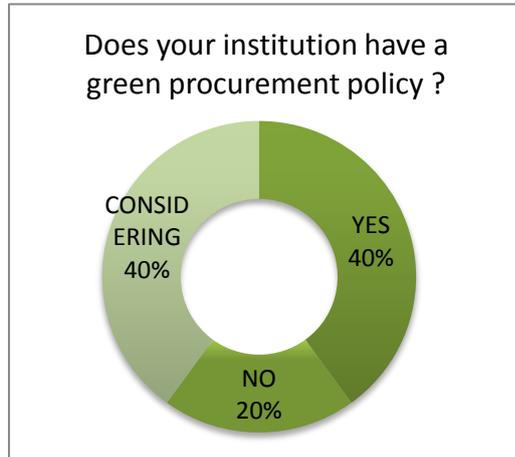


Chart № 1

A characteristic that has often been highlighted as a major barrier to GPP uptake is the lack of GPP policy on a local or regional level. Not this time however! When asked about the implementation of a GPP policy in their institution, 40% of all respondents indicated that they had such a policy implemented within the structure of their organization. Other 40% documented that they are considering it. Altogether, it would be fair to conclude that there is quite a positive tendency in this respect. GPP policy encouragement is being

embraced as a prime facilitator of green public spending and as a means of broadening GPP implementation. The commitment of public institutions to GPP integration should be reflected in their plans, strategies, actions and instructions. They shall be supported by a unified legal framework, by a monitoring process and rules that ensure transparent and smooth tender process. To sum up, with reference to chart No.1, stakeholders' replies are completely in line with the focus of the GPP-STREAM project that aims to address and improve eight policy instruments on a local and regional level. Furthermore, from the collected data it becomes obvious that most of the respondents have tried to build on the lessons learnt during GPP-STREAM transnational meetings and try to include a green criterion in their public tenders. Here is what the Regional Landfill for Non-hazardous Waste Enterprise/Gabrovo municipality/ says in this regard:

"Since the field we work in, is tightly related to sustainable development and environmental protection, our public procurement usually includes green criteria, because of the effect we want to achieve with the good or the service we've procured. Usually our public procurement is related to services, equipment and goods that lead to lowering the landfilled waste and for many of them there are ecological criteria that can be used in tendering".

Gabrovo municipality stakeholder

Despite the fact that 70% of the respondents indicate that most of them either **often** or **always** use green criteria, it turns out that for most of them this is not such an easy task. With reference to the chart below, the majority of those interviewed report that it is actually difficult to include a green criterion in procurement tender. According to chart No.2, only 10% of those surveyed, are of the opinion that it is actually easy to use such criteria.

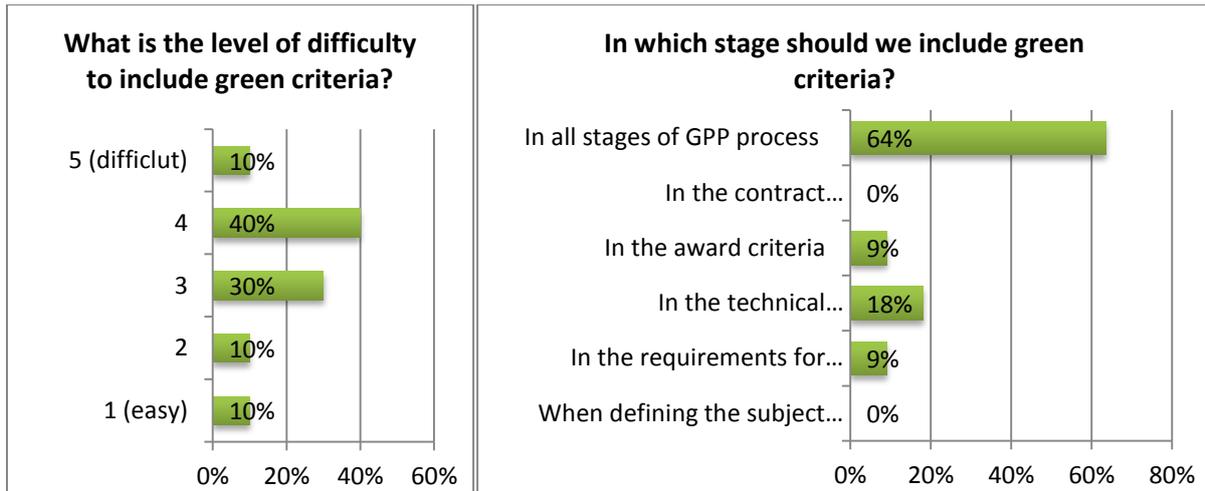


Chart № 2

Chart № 3

Besides, respondents are unsure in which stage of the procurement process they should include the GPP criteria. In the end, they unite around the option that GPP criteria is better to be included in all stages of the GPP tender process. 64% of all respondents agree that green criteria should be added in all stages of the tender process.

A positive conclusion, stemming from the questionnaire is that the majority of the respondents are aware of certain product groups that are being referred to as priority groups in their organization. Despite the narrow margin, 56% of the stakeholders reply that they have such a priority products. In addition, the French stakeholder says that

environmental health (cleaning products) and collective catering as well as road markets (waste plan) are considered to be a priority group for GPP.

French stakeholder

Other stakeholders point out the following:

"...in Italy the Ministry of Environment has set the Minimal Environmental Criteria (CAM): environmental requirements defined for the various phases of the purchasing process, aimed at identifying the best solution for the project, from an environmental point of view along the life cycle, taking into account the market availability. The Minimal Environmental Criteria must be applied."

Italian stakeholder

"In our entity the priority are the acquisition of products made with materials that do not generate waste or generate less waste or in smaller quantities, reused products or reusable materials, recycled materials, use of compost of domestic waste in the services that requires fertilizers for the land."

Spanish stakeholder



Besides, applying ISO 50001 is a good option for a stakeholder in Italy when it comes to identifying green criteria or priority groups:

*“Following Italian national law, GPP criteria must be applied. Insiel has decided to apply the ISO 50001 certification to its datacenter.
ISO 50001 specifies the requirements to create, start, maintain and improve a system of energy management. The objective of this system is to allow an organization to pursue, with a systematic approach, continuous improvement of its energy performance, including energy efficiency and energy consumption and use.”*

Italian stakeholder



Chart № 4

Unfortunately, the facts suggest that LCC is still not widely promoted and used in most of the stakeholders' institutions. More than half of the respondents say that LCC is not being successfully used in their organization. Stakeholders point out that it happens mostly when they calculate future prices of vehicles, machinery or equipment. Things such as consumables and technical services are being taken into consideration and included in LCC calculations.

According to the words of the Spanish stakeholder, they should always take into account the LLC, as they are a public entity working under the environmental law. In contrast, another stakeholder shares that LCC is not as popular as it should be and recommends a wider use.

What is interesting here is the opinion of the French stakeholder that reveals the following:



Since 2019 and even since 2015, the public procurement code has encouraged us to think not in terms of price but **in terms of cost**. The Egalim law also invites us to take into account the analysis of the life cycle of products, for the moment there is **no tool proposed at national level**. For supplies, we can refer to the requirements of **eco-labels**. There are also **eco-comparators**:

- On vehicles (5 criteria associated with the price, but not yet the end of life)
- The EU offers some eco-comparison tools, particularly for electrical and electronic equipment
- Eco-comparator Seve on the road is also an interesting element, particularly to monetarize certain aspects and allow the opening to variants

French stakeholder

The results of the survey show that all stakeholders prefer trainings and newsletters as a useful information tool. EC website comes afterwards and on the third place stakeholders mark local options as a credible source of regular update and an information pool. These may be:

- work with regional networks, toolbox sharing, ministry platforms, workshop meetings or
- the website of the Italian Ministry of Environment that has a section devoted to GPP

At this point, the Romanian stakeholders share that conferences and meetings can be an opportunity for opening new horizons. They can be a place for business opportunities, learning and socializing. What they consider important is that during all meetings they have obtained new information on good practices in Bulgaria, Spain and France. This is what they consider valuable and fruitful experience.

According to the next chart, respondents have rated sources of green criteria information quite evenly. Obviously, the easiest and most popular place for finding such information is either the EU GPP criteria or nationally developed ones.

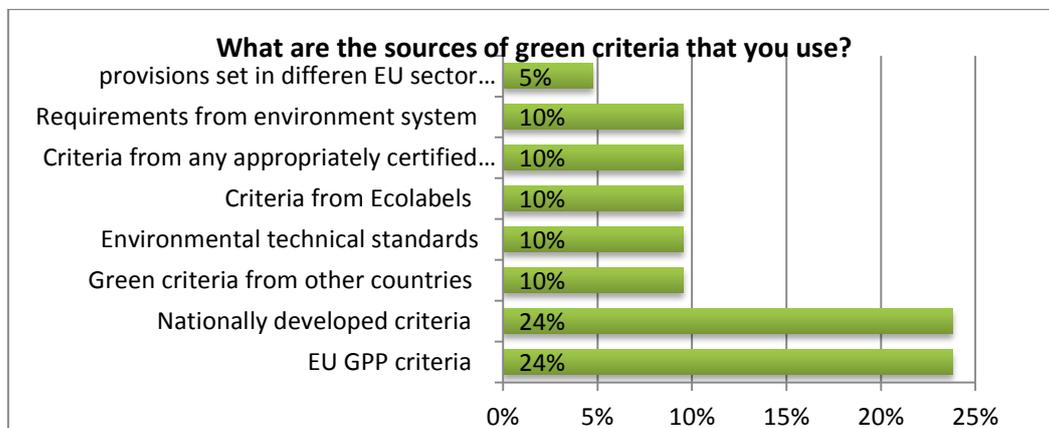


Chart № 5



What comes next in the questionnaire is a topic that usually fires a discussion and is the focus of most of GPP projects, namely: Challenges in front of adopting GPP criteria. In this respect, one of the main barriers and a major obstacle, that has always been pointed out as a milestone to GPP implementation and that has been highlighted in our questionnaire as well, is the necessity of further improvement of public-authority knowledge and administration capacity on that matter. During transnational learning meetings, it has often been pointed out that constant training for public procurement officers seems to be a driver to GPP uptake in every country. Lack of knowledge about environmental issues and green criteria has to be overcome and instead there shall be instilled an interest and a focus on organization and implementation of GPP on a local level. Public authorities shall seek advice and information on the straightforward implementation of GPP.

Other main barriers that shall be overcome and that are pointed out as main obstacles facing GPP uptake are the following:

- Higher price on the purchasing phase
- Lack of experience, knowledge and confidence
- Lack of administrative capacity + will for implementation
- Immature business and market
- Need of better understanding of GPP themselves
- Lack of organizational issues + targeting mass production

The question that comes afterwards, concerns the additional benefits from the EU policy. What else can be done to improve GPP implementation on a local level? Generally it is felt that EU directives are good enough but they need to be better implemented at local level.

“No improvement to propose, everything is already there to do well”

Peshtera municipality stakeholder

There is an interesting opinion of the Lazio stakeholder, who suggests the following:

- *Legislative measures for environmental tax exemption;*
- *Tax incentives could have the effect of facilitating the activation of training processes directly in the companies in order to increase the environmental culture (focused on the opportunities and threats for the companies depending on Mandatory provision on GPP.*

The majority of the respondents feel that regular trainings, sharing best practices and building on others' experience are good recommendations.

“A really good practice that can be used by administrations that have a lot of subdivisions is the dynamic purchasing system that was presented to us on one of the transnational learning events.”

On the basis of the survey results, it might be concluded that GPP are not harder than standard procurement, they need better planning and knowledge. The main issue to be solved is to change the mentality of the consumers, public procurement officers, and decision makers, to improve the authority organization process for procurement from the planning level to the contract implementation and monitoring.

3. Questionnaire summaries

In a nutshell here is the general feel of the report findings:

“It has never been easy to implement the EU Criteria for GPP and to implement GPP in the local legal framework. Nevertheless, EU countries are more and more embracing the idea and we should follow suit. We have to follow and use the best practices that we have and learn from them. We have to know more about LCC and how to calculate it, we need to have more trainings and a greater variety of “green” economic operators. Handbooks and brochures are all welcomed, but we need practical decisions in the planning phase, more time and better analyses of the situation and



Peshtera Municipality stakeholder

possible purchasing alternatives before implementation. Planning is crucial, but so is the tendering and implementation stage. We need a clear legal framework on a national level and then we can turn to regional by-laws. What is more important to change the mindset that “the lowest” price is always for the best to all consumers. Better understanding of LCC will help us be prepared of what to expect and will facilitate analyses and evaluation”.



During the interview, Mr Pier Luigi Carotenuto, member of the Purchasing & Tenders central staff of Insiel SpA, said that Insiel is particularly interested and committed in applying GPP criteria in their institution. Their references are the website of the Italian Ministry of



Environment and the CAM, Minimal Environmental Criteria that must be applied by Italian institutions. Mr. Carotenuto said that GPP Stream project is really important in order to make stakeholders aware of other partners' best practices, but he suggested to communicate also with citizens to make possible for them to apply green actions in their everyday life.

FVG stakeholder

4. Annex: Questionnaire for stakeholders, third semester GPP-STREAM project

1. In which country is your institution situated?

- Italy
- France
- Romania
- Bulgaria
- Spain
- Other:

2. Type of organization and authority /more than one option is possible/:

- Public organization
- Non-profit, NGO
- Profit organization
- Other, please specify:
- National authority
- Regional authority
- Local authority

3. Name of organization /optional/

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4. Does your institution have a green procurement policy?

- Yes
- No
- Not yet, we are considering



5. How often do you include environmental/green criteria in your procurement policy?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Often
 - Always
6. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 very easy; 5 very difficult), what is the level of difficulty to include “green” criteria in procurement contracts?
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
7. In which stages of the procurement process should we include the green/energy efficient criteria? (you can select as many statements as you wish)
- When defining the subject matter of the contract
 - In the requirements for technical/professional ability of the tenderer
 - In the technical specifications
 - In the award criteria
 - In the contract performance clauses
 - In all stages of GPP process
8. In your country/organization are there any priority GPP products, services and works defined? If so what are they?
- No
 - Yes

Further explanation

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9. What is your national policy framework? (you can select as many statements as you wish)
- Mandatory provision on GPP
 - Adopted national action plan on GPP
 - Clear national targets and timeframes for the GPP uptake
 - GPP products, services and works prioritized
 - Other (than NAP) policy document about GPP
 - Political agreement about GPP implementation
 - Assigned responsibilities on national level
 - Promotion of potential benefits of GPP
 - Monitoring and reporting systems in place
 - Promotion and use of LCC (life cycle costing)



10. Is Life cycle costing (LCC) promoted and used in your institution/organisation?

- Yes
- No

Further explanation

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11. Which external sources are being used to find information about green procurement (for example on green criteria)?

- European Commission GPP website
- Ecolabel
- Buying GREEN! - a handbook on green public procurement” available in all EU languages
- Newsletters, subscriptions, webinars etc.
- Public Procurement for a Circular Economy
- Trainings
- Good practices database/case studies
- Else.....

12. What are the sources of green criteria that you use/should be used?

- EU GPP criteria
- Nationally developed criteria
- Green criteria from other countries
- Environmental technical standards
- Criteria from Ecolabels
- Criteria from any appropriately certified or labelled products
- Requirements from environmental management system
- Provisions set in different EU sector legislation

13. Could you please list briefly the main challenges in adopting green public procurement criteria into your inner policy?

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14. How can the EU directives and other national and local regulations be improved so they help to better implement GPP?

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15. Any further recommendations/suggestions will be warmly appreciated:

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Summary of the interview:

Please, summarize the main findings and lessons learnt (please, note that these summaries will be officially published on all communication channels of GPP-STREAM project):

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