



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

REPORT ON INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

**ACTIVITY B22: REALIZATION AND PUBLICATION OF AT LEAST 5 INTERVIEWS
WITH STAKEHOLDERS RELATED TO ACTION PLANS IMPLEMENTATION**

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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 the level of involvement of stakeholders in the action plan, their source of inspiration and the milestones that they need to overcome when addressing their policy instruments. Furthermore, all respondents share recommendations and suggestions, give a feedback on the lessons learnt and activities to be implemented in the forthcoming action plans. Every participant is being asked to fulfill a summary and a conclusion at the end of the questionnaire.



Photo: GPP-STREAM conference in Lyon, France, 4th December 2019

GPP-STREAM project is approaching the end of phase 1 – the culmination of 2 years of growth, development and efforts mirrored in the design and content of the action plans of the partners. The great importance imposed on that particular stage of the project illustrates the essence of the questionnaire and explains why the focus of questions is on the activities of action plans, their source of inspiration and the obstacles that they try to overcome. The questions go deeper into better understanding the role of the respondents into the definition and realization of the activities. They dig into expected outcomes and stress on the recommendations on the part of the stakeholders – recommendations for improvement of activities, for upgrade and better understanding performance of the action plans. The current survey reflects the experiences of stakeholders, the ideas and good



practices and brings them together in recommendations and proposals for improvement of addressed policy instruments. On the basis of respondents' replies, we can draw conclusions about the targets that partners try to achieve, the activities that are considered feasible and useful, their expected impact and the extent of the respondent's participation in the elaboration of the action plans.

The questionnaire starts with responses revealing the background of the stakeholder. Afterwards, it examines respondents' basic understandings and knowledge on the above mentioned GPP-STREAM 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 the elaboration of the action plans connected to 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

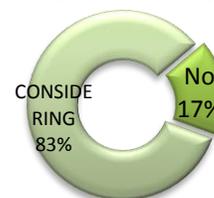
Overall, green public procurement is being embedded in a number of policies and strategies, in relation to its recognized potential to promote more sustainable use of natural resources, achieve the behavioral changes needed for sustainable consumption and production, and as a driving force for innovation. GPP policies represent an important tool for achieving environmental goals related to climate change, resource use and sustainable consumption and production - especially given the importance of spending on goods and services in the public sector. Despite all strong sides of GPP uptake, the implementation of a green procurement policy has proved to be a major milestone for most of the administrations and our

respondents' replies give evidence of exactly the same picture. When asked about the existence of such a policy in their institution, the majority of the respondents documented that they are still considering it, and no one says that such policy exists in their institution. Contrary to our conclusions, made in the previous report, where some 40% of the respondents clearly stated that their organization does have a GPP policy in place.

According to the survey, when asked about their attitude and **level of involvement** in the forthcoming Action plans, more than 80% of the respondents indicated that they are well aware of the activities, that are going to be presented into the local action plans, but still the larger part have not planned to commit to their realization.

It can be seen from the data that 60% of those interviewed say that they have actively participated in the process of action

Does your institution have a green procurement policy ?



Are you directly involved into the implementation of a GPP-STREAM action plan?





definition but less than 40% plan to directly participate in action implementation.

A positive conclusion, stemming from the questionnaire is that the majority of the respondents are not only aware of the activities to be implemented but have also participated in the process of their definition. What is interesting here is that the greater part of the respondents have visited at least one transnational learning event and the opinion of the Italian stakeholder is that the events where they have been mostly involved in the activities definition is during the local stakeholder meetings.



Those of the stakeholders who responded that they are actively involved and committed to participate in the implementation of the action plans point out the following interesting ideas:

Q: What is your role in the action plan implementation?

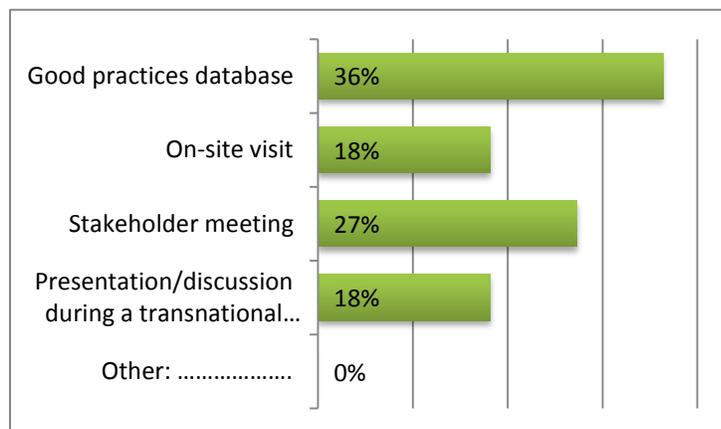
A:

- *“Collaboration in order to identify the real difficulties in the activity that impedes the application of the GPP;*
- *Dissemination of information received within the working groups coordinated by the North-East RDA;*
- *Dissemination of informative materials elaborated within the project”*

Romanian Stakeholder

“As a main stakeholder I believe that we can directly participate and benefit from the planned seminars and trainings targeting municipality administration. Moreover, we would embrace the opportunity for receiving technical help in the elaboration design of local environmental by-laws and programs elaboration.”

Bulgarian Stakeholder



On the basis of the survey replies, it would be fair to conclude that the majority of the respondents has participated in transnational learning events /more than 80%/ and have found it to be a positive and fruitful experience. They consider it an inspiration for

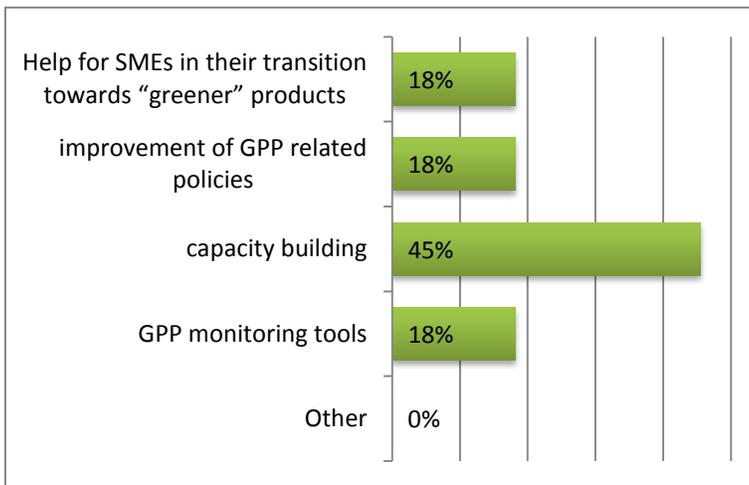


activities and together with local stakeholder meetings they are assumed as beneficial and valuable tool. The top winner, as it comes to inspiration, however, turns out to be best practices sharing. Collection of a set of best practices in the field of GPP is also a major output of the project. All best practices identified by project partners have been gathered under a special tab on the webpage of the project and have helped local stakeholders to borrow and successfully adopt and apply ideas. Finally comes the study visits that are also quite popular among respondents. They are regarded as a source of inspiration and helpful real examples of GPP that have already been implemented and proved their positive impact.

Here are the words of a Romanian Stakeholder in relation to good practices and multiplication:

*During the meetings of the working group I discovered projects that can be multiplied
We have been properly informed about the European good practices.*

Romanian Stakeholder



Capacity building, providing support to public procurers or improving administration skills is still being considered a major enhancement of GPP uptake and simultaneously a drawback for proper and smooth GPP implementation and improvement of addressed policy instruments. When being asked what action should be included in action plan, most of the respondents say capacity building. This comes to show that administration still feels unsure when procuring green and it is something that

must be overcome by introduction of trainings, forums, working tables, webinars or any form of module education on the subject of GPP. Establishing a wide capacity building program on GPP aims at increasing the level and uptake of GPP in the region concerned, raising the knowledge and expertise among procurers.

What is interesting here is the opinion of the Italian and Bulgarian stakeholders that reveal the following:



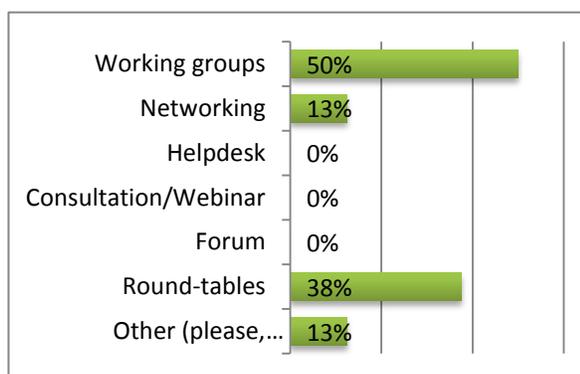
*The GPP has a key role in building a more sustainable society. The EU is investing through projects and in developing common criteria. The GPP-STREAM project use interregional cooperation to be part of this process. We truly hope to use the project results to understand the best way to implement GPP in our procurement process. Thanks to **capacity building, monitoring tools and a good practices database** it is possible to overcome the main barriers of GPP.*

Lazio Stakeholder

*“Seminars and training will improve **administration capacity** and knowledge on GPP criteria, best practices, implementation and current legislation. As a main stakeholder I believe that we can directly participate and benefit from the planned seminars and trainings targeting municipality administration. Moreover, we would embrace the opportunity for receiving help for local environmental by-laws and programs elaboration”*

Bulgarian Stakeholder

Reasonably, comes the conclusion of the next question that most of the respondents think that they can realize their actions through working groups and roundtables. They rely on the face to face contact, on meetings, world cafes and similar forms of communication to instill proper attitude towards GPP and its deployment. What is worth mentioning here is the opinion of the Italian stakeholder, who says that they



*can give its support in actions involving the participation of facilitators to **connect the public and private sectors***

According to the opinion of our respondents main barriers that shall be overcome and that are pointed out as main obstacles facing GPP uptake are the following:

- Lack of political will
- Increased costs of green goods, services and works
- Difficulty in drafting green tenders
- Difficulty in involving external stakeholders



3. Questionnaire summaries

Italian Stakeholder:

“My expectations are to improve the connection between public and private to make the system and connections smoother. To ensure that companies are incentivised to adapt their products to GPP criteria because they themselves recognise their usefulness. To date, many companies in Friuli-Venezia Giulia do not see the public administration as the main channel for their products but see the foreign market as a more attractive one. The more we bring the national GPP rules in line with European rules, aligning the rules of individual states, the more companies will be encouraged to comply with green purchasing. The more aligned these criteria are, the easier and more useful it will be for companies to align. In order to make Italian companies interested in environmental criteria, we need to harmonise Italian rules with those of the reference markets. If the criteria in the regulations of individual countries were brought together in a single set of rules and criteria, it would be even more convenient for companies to align. To date, the main problem is that the existing regulations are too stringent for the market to meet. The rules are detached from what the market can provide and what the market is interested in. For companies, adapting their production chain to the GPP rules of a single country requires a major economic investment; if a company has to adapt to different regulations applied in different states, this involves an investment multiplied by each market in which you want to position your products. If the GPP criteria were the same for each country, the investment would only have to be made once. As already highlighted during the stakeholder meetings, there are 2 or 3 important strands to work on. The criteria have been made but there is no question of whether and how much they can be implemented by the market and interpreted by those who write and judge the calls. There is a misalignment between those who write and those who participate in the calls. It is important to act both on the criteria but also on the diffusion of a GPP culture. In my opinion, it is necessary to invest in training on both sides, both companies and public administrations, which need to know how to judge and interpret environmental criteria. We also need a simplification of GPP legislation, which can facilitate the rules and make them clearer and more practicable, so that GPP can be promoted and disseminated. Practical implementation could take place, for example, through the creation of comparison tables, useful and practical information desks made by experts, providing an expert in writing and reading calls for proposals, but also an expert for companies to help them understand what criteria they must include, what they must work on in order to participate in calls for proposals that include GPP criteria. Promotion, communication, and simplification of environmental criteria would also bring benefits in the spread of GPP. The implementation of these actions would bring benefits on sides, public and private, through increased collaboration and aligned communication.”

Bulgarian stakeholder

“During all meetings, learning events and collaborations it became clear that our administrators lack capacity and experience connected to GPP application and using environmental criteria, let alone LCC calculation and legislation. We need help in the development of local environmental laws and programs, so that we can implement GPP in those documents and use them as a tool for reaching set targets and



objectives. Our municipality is a small one, so we welcome the opportunity for trainings, forums, meetings etc. Sharing best practices has proved to be a valuable step towards the local GPP uptake. We support the activities in the Action plan and we believe they will contribute to the creation of better understanding of GPP principles and “greener” public spending.”

4. Annex – Questionnaire for stakeholders

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

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. Are you directly involved into the implementation of a GPP-STREAM action plan?



Yes

No

6. Are you aware of the actions to be included in the Action plan?

Yes

No

7. Did you participate in the process of action definition?

Yes

No

8. Have you ever visited a transnational learning event or any other event within the GPP-STREAM project?

Yes

No

9. In your experience, what are the main obstacles and problems in implementing GPP into a local policy instrument?

- Lack of familiarity with GPP
- Lack of political will
- Inertia for change by the Public Administration
- Lack of dialogue between Public Administration departments
- Difficulty in involving responsible people of Purchasing system in environmental issues
- Lack of knowledge about environmental impacts of goods/services/public works
- Risk of delays of the tendering procedures, also due to recourses
- Poor market availability of green goods and services
- Difficulties in finding the ecological criteria and brands to be included in green tenders
- Missing or unclear information provided by suppliers
- Lack of confidence in the quality of green products
- Increased costs of green goods, services and works
- Difficulty in drafting green tenders
- Difficulty in involving external stakeholders
- Other (please specify):

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10. What is the nature of the actions that you support and that should be implemented in the project Action plan?



- Help for SMEs in their transition towards “greener” products
- improvement of GPP related policies
- capacity building
- GPP monitoring tools
- other.....
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11. Where does the inspiration for your actions come from?

- Good practices database
- On-site visit
- Stakeholder meeting
- Presentation/discussion during a transnational learning event
- Other:

12. What is your role in the action implementation? Describe briefly!

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13. How do you plan to realise your actions?

- Working groups
- Networking
- Helpdesk
- Consultation/Webinar
- Forum
- Round-tables
- Other (please, specify):

14. What are your main expectations/impact resulting from the implementation of the Action Plan?

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15. Other comments/recommendations in regards to your Regional Action Plan?



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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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