



**Regional Action Plan
for practical measures in support the use/promotion of GPP within EU funds beneficiaries**

North-East Regional Development Agency

Part I – General information

Project: **GPP-STREAM – Green Public Procurement and Sustainability Tools for Resource Efficiency Mainstreaming**
 Partner organisation(s) concerned: **North-East Regional Development Agency**
 Country: **Romania**
 NUTS2 region: **North-East**
 Contact person: **Georgiana Gabriela Nedelea**
 Email address: **georgiana.nedelea@adrnordest.ro**
 Phone number: **+40 758 973 449**

Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact: Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
 European Territorial Cooperation programme
 Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed: **Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020 Romania**

The GPP-STREAM project aims at improving the management, implementation and monitoring of policy instruments that integrate green public procurement (GPP) approaches so as to ensure that resource efficiency gains can be maximised and that resource efficiency objectives are institutionalised through GPP. Therefore, the overall objective of the GPP-STREAM project is to support the partners to transfer the lessons learnt to all implementation phases of the policy instruments addressed and to create a community of stakeholders that can mainstream GPP practices.

The policy instrument addressed under the GPP-STREAM project is the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020, more specifically the Priority Axis 4 - Supporting sustainable urban development, Investment Priority 4.2 - Carrying out actions aimed at improving the urban environment, revitalising cities, regenerating and decontamination of disused industrial land (including conversion areas), reducing air pollution and promoting noise-reduction measures. The most important activities supported under this investment priority, eligible for funding are:

- creation of pedestrian alleys, bicycle lanes, sidewalks;
- arrangement of green spaces (clearing withered vegetation and planting new trees, shaping the land, planting perennial plants or sowing lawn);
- creation of recreational facilities (children playgrounds, sports facilities);
- purchase of constructive elements for building up gazebos, pergolas, grids;
- purchase of urban furniture (benches, trash cans, ecological toilets, bicycle parking racks, fencing).



Currently, under the Investment Priority 4.2, there are already 9 projects in implementation within the North-East Region as following:

Project beneficiary	Number of projects	Non-reimbursable financial assistance (Euro)	Total budget (Euro)
Piatra Neamt Municipality	3	4,548,347.29	4,641,170.72
Iasi Municipality	2	2,855,500.55	3,377,924.14
Suceava Municipality	1	1,590,683.38	1,623,146.34
Botosani Municipality	2	5,206,830.35	5,321,503.58
Vaslui Municipality	1	2,817,402.89	2,912,560.47
TOTAL	9	17,018,764.46	17,876,305.25

The deadline for the implementation of this projects spans between January 2021 and November 2022.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1: Improved green public procurement monitoring system for ERDF projects

1. Relevance to the project

Even though the market for green products becomes an increasingly dynamic sector, the global demand remains rather low versus the supply offer. Therefore, promoting green public procurement and introducing environmental protection criteria into the public procurement process carried out in the framework of the European ERDF projects, can improve the quality of products and services offered to citizens, promote sustainable production and consumption patterns and encourage the development and application of environmentally friendly clean technologies.

Taking into consideration these issues, GPP-STREAM project partners, North-East RDA, Romania and Gabrovo Municipality, Bulgaria, have elaborated a toolkit for checking GPP compliance of procurements initiated under ERDF projects.

The toolkit is intended to provide guidelines and specific information to all public and private procurement officers in charge with carrying out checking on the public procurement procedures launched by the beneficiaries. It offers support for preparing and assessing specific green public procurements by referring to:

- inclusion of common social goals in the procurement process, based on existing EU legislative framework;
- the request for eco-labels;
- study cases (useful for the user to define how GPP criteria are integrated in ERDF-funded projects and examples from GPP-STREAM project partners that showcase real difficulties encountered during a GPP procedure);
- examples of evaluation grids (to be used for checking if the offers received from the suppliers comply with the GPP criteria specified within the tender books).

2. Nature of the action

The public procurements procedures carried out under the projects funded and implemented by the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020 (the policy instrument) are checked by the ROP Intermediate Body's procurement department. In this process it makes use of the "checklist of the procedure for awarding public procurement contracts" elaborated according with the national public procurement law which includes somehow, but is not very specific in highlighting the GPP criteria. In order to have a project evaluation tool more comprehensive and compliant with green public procurement (GPP) criteria, there is a need for adjusting the content of the above-mentioned checklist in order to be able to monitor the following, but without limiting, to the issues below:



- if the qualification and selection criteria include standards for environmental management systems;
- if the evaluation factors contain evaluation indicators that include environmental aspects in relation to the subject of the public procurement;
- if there is a potential environmental impact as a result of inserting the green criteria in project procurement awarding procedures.

In order to get in place an improved green public procurement monitoring system for the ERDF-funded projects there should be made an adjustment of the impact criteria into the existing checklist. The steps for achieving this goal are the following:

1. creation of a small, yet representative and skilled consultative group of experts of the agency (project team members and ROP Intermediate Body's public procurement experts) with the mission to analyze the present "checklist of the procedure for awarding public procurement contracts" in order to find the gaps and missing elements in terms of green criteria. The feedback is going to be collected and all new relevant criteria and related requirements will be inserted into a revised checklist compliant to GPP. The working procedure afferent to this checklist will be also revised accordingly.

Indicator: 1 set of new relevant green criteria collected and included into the checklist

2. submission of the revised checklist joined by the revised working procedure to the attention of the Managing Authority for ROP 2014-2020, specifically the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration. MAROP will analyze the newly proposed check list and will decide if the recommendations are going to be adopted and included into the current working standard as a whole or they will be used as part of the procurement monitoring system of the projects currently under implementation in Investment Priority 4.2.

Indicator: 1 new improved checklist submitted to MAROP

3. Stakeholders involved

- 5 municipalities in the North-East Region having project under implementation from Investment Priority 4.2, specifically: Piatra Neamt Municipality (3 projects); Iasi Municipality (2 projects), Botosani Municipality (2 projects), Vaslui Municipality (1 project) and Suceava Municipality (1 project);
- North-East RDA as Intermediary Body for ROP 2014-2020 that implements the monitoring procedure for public procurements;
- Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration as Managing Authority for the Regional Operation Program 2014-2020, the envisaged policy instrument.

4. Timeframe

The timeframe for implementation of this action is spanning during 2020-2023 because this period includes also the N+3 monitoring rule of the policy instrument. The action will be implemented considering the following steps:

- elaboration by RDA North-East of the first draft version of a revised checklist by late September 2020;
- submission of the draft checklist to the analysis the stakeholders' consultative group; preparation of a new version of the revised checklist by the first half of September 2020;
- submission of the revised checklist to the ROP's Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will be requested to express its opinion on the inclusion of green impact criteria into the checklist and eventually approve the implementation of this monitoring tool into the actual working procedure of the Intermediate Bodies. The final decision is expected to be formally expressed by the end of October 2020.

5. Costs

Estimated costs: 200 Euro (representing the equivalent of RDA staff costs implied by the involvement of project team and public procurement experts into consultative activity)

6. Funding sources



Own resources – North-East RDA budget.

ACTION 2: GPP and circular economy awareness online campaigns

1. Relevance to the project

As partner in the GPP-STREAM project, the North-East RDA actively participated at the 13th edition of Compraverde - Buygreen Forum, that has been promoted by Fondazione Ecosistemi (PP2) and took place during 17-18 October 2019, in Rome, Italy. The forum is the most important Italian and European event for public and private policies, projects and initiatives on green and sustainable procurement. During the forum, the main public and private organizations, from both national and international levels, discussed upon the newest legal issues, national and international best practices and opportunities in the field of green procurement and ecological transition. All the conferences, workshops and seminars focussed on the dissemination of green and sustainable procurement at municipal, regional, national and European level, and on specific related themes, such as sustainable buildings, low environmental impact infrastructures, green areas management, sustainable food, sustainable cultural events and circular procurement, all implemented under the umbrella of green public procurement.

2. Nature of the action

The participation to the forum, in particular to the GPP-STREAM conference called “Institutions for the ecological transition” (17 October 2019), was intended to explore the general approach adopted by some public authorities at national and regional levels to develop GPP policies and generate competences for the ecological transition in our economies. The conclusions of the conference were that in order to stimulate GPP market and transition to circular economy, it is very important to implement as early as possible online awareness campaigns. The campaign should use marketing tools (ex. posters, infographics, etc) to promote useful information related to the implementation of GPP and circular economy, together with indications on their benefits for both economy and society. Considering this, RDA North-East decided to promote starting with the second half of 2020 until the end of 2023 of such awareness campaign that will be publicised intensively and extensively on quarterly basis, using the existing online news carriers of the North-East Regional Development Agency such as:

- its main website: www.adrnordest.ro (over 55,000 unique visitors per year)
- ROP 2014-2020 website: www.inforegionordest.ro (over 15,000 unique visitors per year)
- North-East RDA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/adrnordest/> and
- RDA electronic newsletter (distributed quarterly to over 2,000 regional stakeholders).

In order to complement the activity carried out under the Action 1 of the present Action Plan, an interview data sheet related to GPP needs will be drafted and submitted to beneficiaries having projects under implementation and funded by Investment Priority 4.2. Those project beneficiaries showing that they have already included green criteria in their public procurement procedures, will be considered regional good practices and promoted accordingly.

The deliverables of this activity consist in 12 online awareness campaigns, the **indicators will be represented by the number of visitors on the website pages launched, more precisely, 50 clicks per campaign.**

3. Stakeholders involved

- local public authorities part of the working group of the GPP-STREAM project, which will assume the dissemination of information materials among their subordinate institutions (Municipalities: Roman, Botosani, Pascani, Slanic Moldova, Onesti, Iasi, Comanesti, Vicovu de Sus, Moinesti, Gura Humorului; Mobiera SRL-D as furniture manufacturer; NGOs: Roade si merinde, Mai bine; Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration);



- project beneficiaries under investment Priority 4.2 of ROP 2014-2020 - Piatra Neamt, Botosani, Vaslui, Iasi and Suceava Municipalities — providing feedback to the interviewing data sheets;
- County School Inspectorates (6) and public universities in the North-East Region (7) to disseminate the materials provided by the North-East RDA in such a way as to have awareness campaigns concerning circular economy promoted into the regional education system;
- RDA North-East that will design, plan, implement and monitor the quarterly awareness campaigns.

4. Timeframe

There will be carried out 12 online awareness campaigns in 3 years (4 a year) starting with the first campaign to be launched on October 2020; and the last one on October 2023;

5. Costs

The estimated cost related to the implementation of Action 2 is 2,400 € per year, representing staff costs of the employees of the North-East Regional Development Agency, which will develop, design and launch the online campaigns.

6. Funding sources:

Own resources – North-East RD budget.

ACTION 3: Adopting green criteria in North-East RDA's public procurement tenders for 4 product categories

1. Relevance to the project

During the transnational learning event organized by Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Energy Environment (project partner 9) in Lyon, France during 3-6 December 2019, the best practice that attracted our particular attention was presented by the representative of the Lyon City Hall, stakeholder of this French partner.

The sustainable criteria inserted in the specifications of their cleaning products tenders were:

- banning from the offers the toxic substances;
- request employment of disabled persons (social criteria) on specific job positions;
- request only eco-labelled products (such as toilet paper, vinegar for cleaning and black soaps).
- In order to educate and increase awareness of the cleaning staff, the City Hall elaborated a guidance toolbox and organized workshops to teach them how to use these products as well as to inform them about the impact of using environment friendly and sustainable items. As an example, for printing and writing, the City Hall of Lyon is using in its premises only recycled paper. To be noted that all these products are used only by the employees who desire to use them.

2. Nature of the action

North-East RDA will conduct green public procurement covering 4 European categories of products. In this regard, the agency intends to initially, purchase the following categories of products:

- cleaning products (only Eco-label);
- computer and monitors (IT products) that have low energy consumption in compliance with Energy Star requirements from the national legislation in force;
- electric appliances (only LED light bulbs will be purchased for all the offices of the agency).

Considering that the North-East RDA has its own Urban Mobility Plan in implementation and one of the objectives is to identify the carbon footprint generated by the organization (by its own staff and



the vehicle park) and to reduce it as much as possible, a public procurement tender will be launched for the optimization of vehicle fleet that will include green criteria for purchasing:

- a low carbon emission hybrid or electric vehicle;
- a charging station.

Indicators:

- monitor and record the amount of cleaning products used (indicating whether they are eco-labelled and their dilution rate), cleaning accessories used (type and whether they are reusable or not), amount of water used for cleaning tasks and location of water discharge, power equipment used (indicating energy class) and duration of used. We will seek to increase the use of eco-labelled cleaning products, reduce the use of disposable cleaning accessories, reduce water use, and improve the energy class of the power equipment used.
- the procurement of IT products will be made only based on the need. There is not an estimate of the number of procurements for this products. The computer and monitors (IT products) that have low energy consumption will impact the KW consumed per year.
- a comparison analysis will be made between consumers from previous years when using conventional bulbs and using LED bulbs. Throughout the headquarter of North-East RDA there are already LED bulbs. So far, within one year, it has saved about 10,500 KW.
- The impact will be a ratio between the number of kilometers traveled and the energy consumed. The electric car will replace a Ford Mondeo 3 that has an estimated annual emissions of 6.4 tonnes CO2.

3. Stakeholders involved

North-East RDA:

- the public procurement department elaborates and updates, based on the needs transmitted by the other departments, the contracting strategy;
- the administrative department elaborate tenders for cleaning products and electrical appliances as well as for the purchase of the electric car and the charging station;
- the IT department is responsible for developing the tender for computers and monitors;
- the Economic Department is responsible for the coordination of the procurement procedures and monitoring the supply contracts compliance.

4. Timeframe

The frequency of the following types of purchases are:

- the cleaning products are purchased monthly;
- the computer and monitors (IT products) are purchased every 2 years;
- the electric appliances (LED bulbs for all the offices of the agency) are purchased every semester;
- the electric car and the charging station are planned to be purchased between September 2020 and June 2021.

5. Costs

The estimated costs related to the implementation of action 3 are:

- the cleaning products – 7,000 €/year
- the computer and monitors (IT products) – 44,000 €/year;
- the electric appliances – 1,900 €/year;
- the electric car – 30,000 €;
- the charging station – 5,000 €.

Total costs: **87,900 €**

6. Funding sources:

Own resources – North-East RDA budget.



The total costs arising from the 3 actions of this Regional Action Plan:

Action	Costs	Funding sources
ACTION 1: Improved green public procurement monitoring system for ERDF projects	200 €	Own resources – North-East RDA budget.
ACTION 2: GPP and circular economy awareness online campaigns	2,400 €/year	Own resources – North-East RDA budget.
ACTION 3: Adopting green criteria in North-East RDA's public procurement tenders for 4 product categories	87,900 €	Own resources – North-East RDA budget.
TOTAL	90,500 €	

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Name of the organisation(s) : North-East Regional Development Agency

Signatures of the relevant organisation(s):

Vasile ASANDEI
Director General



Nicolaie BURGHELEA
Director of the Economic Department