



GREENER

| BULGARIAN NATIONAL REPORT

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BULGARIAN NATIONAL REPORT



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BULGARIA

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1. Situation of GPP in Bulgaria

Bulgaria's public procurement system has traditionally been comparatively centralised.

In legal and regulatory terms, public procurement in Bulgaria is highly complex and continuously changing. Frequent reforms have been initiated to address persistent irregularities and corruption-related issues, which impact all spheres of the procurement cycle, including oversight and law enforcement.

National Action Plan for Stimulating Green Public Procurement (GPP) for the period 2014-2020 is primarily focused on fostering awareness, but does also introduce compulsory requirements for a set of product categories.

The next National Strategy for the Development of the Public Procurement sector in Bulgaria sets the strategic framework for the state policy in the area over 2014 – 2020. A practical handbook for the award of such contracts is developed within a project under the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Programme.

In accordance with the requirements of the Public Procurement Act, public and sectoral contracting authorities are obliged to publish information on all public procurement procedures they have announced in a register of public procurement at a Public Procurement Agency. At present, only field IV. 4 of the model opening decision provides information related to the environmental criteria set by the contracting authorities. Completion of the field is at the discretion of the procurement experts who develop all the contract documentation.

According to the Report On Monitoring Public Procurement And Concessions in the period 2018-2020 the procedures for green procurement procedures represent 7. 5% of the total number of procurement procedures (for comparison, in 2017 their share was 4. 55%).

The Public Procurement Register and the Portal are a major source for receiving systematized information about the condition of the procurement market in the country. Unfortunately, the portal does not provide an option for statistical data regarding inclusion of green criteria in public procurement. So we cannot provide significant numerical data regarding the situation of GPP in Bulgaria.

2. Methodology

The aim of the National report is to highlight the key takeaway messages gathered through the Advisory Group consultation. The first Workshop took place on 22nd of June 2022 and was focused on the process of skills identification, barriers and drivers and similar practices. The second workshop took place on 21st of September 2022 in Sofia has for objective to present the pilot test results and gather external feedback on the pilot methodology and how to replicate GREENER training.

The participants in the two expert meetings were representatives of public authorities, business associations, companies, universities, and national government.

3. First Advisory group meeting

The first Workshop took place on 22nd of June 2022 in Sofia and 13 experts participated in the meeting.

Agenda

- Presentation of the GREENER project
- Process of identification of skills
- Website presentation: training materials section
- Open discussion on the four questions

Participants list

Name	Organisation
Lyubka Deneva	Bulgarian Construction Chamber
Elitsa Pesheva	Confederation of Employers and Industrialists of Bulgaria
Galya Petrova	Confederation of Employers and Industrialists of Bulgaria
Emre Mehmed	Veyl Construction EOOD
Kremena Nedkova	Ministry of Economics and Industry
Jeliaz Enev	Ministry of Economics and Industry
Shteriana Dardanova	Stroyinvest Consult Sofia Ltd
Antonia Shalamova	Sofia Municipality
Boyan Chipriyanov	Veyl Construction EOOD
Violina Vodenicharova	Veyl Construction EOOD
Boryana Ilieva	Technical University of Sofia
Nusha Ognyanova	Botanic Lab OOD

Photos



3.1 Feedback on the methodology to identify skills and the organization of the training materials

The answers of the Advisory Group (AG) related to the training materials could be divided in 3 thematic areas based on the different profile of the participant's expertise and experience.

The **Business Representatives** expressed their real need for training materials, as in Bulgaria the topic of green public procurement is poorly presented and known. It was also well appreciated that **the training course addressed the issue from many different perspectives**. Most of the Bulgarian SMEs are not familiar with the EU legislation and regulations they must comply with, which makes participation in the GPP unwanted and extremely difficult. Another positive part of the course that was highlighted is that it **helps SMEs feel more confident and supports them on how to introduce and make aware their employees with GPP**.

From the point of view of **Public Authorities**, the course was also considered very useful, given that there is lack of applicable training materials on the GPP topic in Bulgaria. **The training modules were identified as easy to use and understand and will be very useful in the process of introducing GPP at all levels**.

From **Educational** perspective, the only **concern expressed was in relation to the evaluation procedure**, as in the current organization of the training materials each participant has many attempts to choose the correct answer. They expressed positive feedback for **the further introduction of the teaching material in their educational programmes**.

Very important issue that according to the Advisory group should be taken into consideration is the size of the company, municipality etc., smaller organisations are less likely to have capacity, knowledge and resources to participate in GPP, thus making them the main target group of similar training.

THE TRAINING
course addressed the
issue from many
different perspectives

HELPS SMES
feel more confident
and supports them on
how to introduce and
make aware their
employees with GPP

TRAINING
MODULES
are easy to use and
understand and will be
very useful in the
process of introducing
GPP at all levels

EVALUATION
PROCEDURE
is considered very light
and doesn't give
quantitative expression

INTRODUCTION
of the teaching
material in the
educational
programmes

3.2 Feedback on the barriers and drivers for SMEs to apply for GPP

Barriers

- lack of legislation and procedures;
- shortage of awareness-raising campaigns;
- lack of example set by Public Authorities;
- no incentive to implement the GPP;
- in Bulgaria it is considered as discrimination to add green criteria.

Drivers

- Training materials for improving the administrative capacity of SMEs, when it comes to participating at GPP;
- Clearer regulation and criteria frame for green products and services;
- Framing the green criteria in a non-discriminative way and setting an estimated proportion of green criteria to each public procurement procedure.

**LACK OF LEGISLATION
AND PROCEDURES**

**NO INCENTIVE
to implement GPP**

**it is considered as
DISCRIMINATION TO
ADD GREEN CRITERIA**

**LACK OF EXAMPLE
set by PAs**

**FRAMING THE GREEN
CRITERIA IN A NON-
DISCRIMINATIVE WAY**

**setting an ESTIMATED
PROPORTION OF
GREEN CRITERIA to
each PP procedure**

3.3 How to best engage SMEs (that are not participating in GPP yet) to apply for GPP?

Unfortunately, Bulgarian stakeholders do not have significant experience in the implementation of GPP, which leads to a very short list of good examples. Most of cases, presented and discussed during the meeting, were in the field of construction sector - use of sustainable materials, reduction of pollution, waste management, etc. Including green criteria to procedures for providing street lighting in municipalities was also recognized as best practice and a good example of implementing green requirements to the PP process.

**TAX RELIEF
for companies
participating in GPP**

**CONDUCTION OF
MORE AWARENESS
RISING CAMPAIGNS
among relevant
stakeholders**

**TRAINING MATERIALS
developed in
accordance with the
real business needs
and requirements**

In order to attract more SMEs to participate to GPP, the stakeholders identified the following actions, which can be implemented:

- Tax relief for companies participating in GPP;
- Conduction of more awareness rising campaigns among relevant stakeholders;
- Introduction of the benefits from implementing GPP;
- Development and dissemination of new training materials, developed in accordance with the real business needs and requirements.

3.4 Recommendations for the training course and existing best practices and/or similar training addressed to SMEs on GPP

One of the recommendations that the Advisory group gave during the workshop in order to be more applicable in educational programs, was to think about **evaluation that provides quantitative expression of the knowledge acquired**. And the possibility to receive **Certificates** that will give the employees opportunity for career development and hierarchical advancement.

Another good idea that arises during the workshop was to create new educational program based on the GREENER training materials (theoretical part) that could be supplemented with practical workshops. Talking about training in real working environment **more practical activities were recommended in order to be more useful for the daily work**.

The members of the Advisory group stated that **the existing training materials on a national level are not updated to a new version, covering the newest GPP trends and requirements, which makes them not applicable to the current GPP situation in Bulgaria**.

Nevertheless, there are few guides and documents developed under different European programs.

- Buy green! Guide to Green Public Procurement 3rd edition.
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/handbook_2016_bg.pdf
- GPP-STREAM PROJECT that presents a collection of 49 “Good Practice” in the Partner countries Bulgaria, Romania, Spain, Italy, and France

[https://projects2014-](https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1562327044.pdf)

[2020.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1562327044.pdf](https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1562327044.pdf)

- A practical guide for Green public procurement developed as part (Stage 2) from the public procurement for "Study and forecasting of the potential of the national green public procurement market and the preparation of a practical guide for their implementation", commissioned by the Public Procurement Agency. It was part of the project "Methodological support for the development of the Green Public Procurement in Bulgaria", funded under priority Axis 3 "Private Sector" of the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Programme.

https://www2.aop.bg/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/PwC_Handbook_A5_Print_Single-page_new.pdf

- GPP4Growth project presents examples of best practices for GPP, as well as specific recommendations for implementation of such best practices throughout the European Union. The aim is to provide policy makers and stakeholders with a tool to identifying possible ways to support GPP in their regions.

[GPP4Growth | Interreg Europe](#)

**EVALUATION
that provides
quantitative expression
of the knowledge
acquired**

CERTIFICATES

**MORE PRACTICAL
ACTIVITIES**

**USE THE GREENER
TRAINING CORSE
as theoretical part of a
new educational
programme**

- GPP-FURNITURE An innovative and open learning resource for professionals of the furniture industry to expand their knowledge and provide added value for the Green Public Procurement <http://gpp-furniture.eu/>

- SPP Regions promoted the creation and expansion of European regional networks of municipalities working together on sustainable public procurement (SPP) and public procurement of innovation (PPI). The project included 7 networks from across Europe which together published a total of 40 eco-innovative tenders focused on energy savings in public buildings; vehicles and transport; and food and catering.

[SPP Regions :: Home](#)

4. Second advisory group meeting

The second workshop took place on 21st of September 2022 in Sofia and 13 experts participated.

Agenda

- GREENER project recap
- The pilot test activity and project work
- Open discussion on the three questions

List of participants

Name	Organisation
Elitsa Pesheva	Confederation of Employers and Industrialists of Bulgaria
Galya Petrova	Confederation of Employers and Industrialists of Bulgaria
Kremena Nedkova	Ministry of Economics and Industry
Jeliaz Enev	Ministry of Economics and Industry
Shteriana Dardanova	Stroyinvest Consult Sofia Ltd
Antonia Shalamova	Sofia Municipality
Boyan Chipriyanov	Veyl Construction EOOD
Violina Vodenicharova	Veyl Construction EOOD
Vesela Petrova	Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency
Gabriela Georgieva	Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency
Teodor Tsvetkov	Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency
Boryana Ilieva	Technical University of Sofia
Nusha Ognyanova	Botanic Lab OOD

Photos



4.1 Feedback on the way the pilot training was organized

The way the pilot training was organized in Bulgaria was positively evaluated from the Advisory group. As a major advantage was highlighted out that it was organized in person, especially after the restrictions and changes imposed on the training process as a result of the COVID. At the same time GREENER training course allows its online delivery, which makes it **flexible to the specific needs and characteristics of each participant**.

The development of **project work** as part of the pilot testing received highly positive feedback because it **helps to structure what is learned thus permitting to transfer the theory into practice**. Furthermore, the development of project work **facilitates the process of transferring and sharing knowledge with others. Finally increases participants' confidence to work with green criteria**.

Bringing together SMEs and PAs is a prerequisite for a fruitful collaboration addressing the challenges of Green Public Procurement in Bulgaria. The interaction of the two parties in the process is crucial towards the implementation of European priorities in the field of public procurement.

FLEXIBILITY
of **GREENER** training
course

THE PROJECT WORK

- **helps transfer the theory into practice**
 - **increases participants' confidence to work with green criteria**

4.2 Feedback on the replicability of the training modules

The implementation of green criteria to each PP is a must and respectively the need for training is essential. As previously mentioned in Bulgaria there are existing trainings mostly in PP, but only few including GPP, developed under EU projects.

Having in mind the lack of awareness within SMEs the Advisory board unanimously assumes that for Bulgarian reality (to increase the chances for replicability) would be very useful to include more video materials and examples of good practices.

The Modular way of organizing the materials makes them flexible for the needs of the companies and specific participants which rises the replicability of the training course.

The Educational authorities consider it easy to be included in existing educational programs. Public Authorities can use the training to rise employees' skills and knowledge, and SMEs awareness. But in both cases the development of train the trainers' guide will facilitate the further use of the GREENER training materials.

4.3 Would initiatives like GREENER increase the participation on GPP?

The implementation of green criteria in Public Procurement is extremely rare. Big companies and big Municipalities are the main stakeholders which makes a very small percent of GPP. In small municipalities there is a problem to find bidders, and when green criteria are introduced, this becomes almost impossible. Small SMEs very often don't have human and financial resources, adding the lack of knowledge, their participation in green procurement becomes an back-breaking task.

In this complex situation, the Advisory Group expressed the opinion that the emergence of training is a crucial factor that can increase motivation and confidence to participate in green public procurement.

By presenting concrete practical examples GREENER training course helps SMEs and small municipalities to raise their awareness on GPP and to draw ideas and inspiration for implementing green criteria in line with EU requirements.

Unfortunately, internally – Bulgarian legislation and government incentives do not support SMEs, which is why external initiatives such as GREENER are essential to increase SME participation.

INCLUDE MORE VIDEO MATERIALS AND EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES

MODULAR WAY OF ORGANIZING THE MATERIALS MAKES THE TRAINING COURSE FLEXIBLE for the needs of the companies and specific participants

DEVELOPMENT OF TRAIN THE TRAINERS' GUIDE will facilitate the further use

BY PRESENTING CONCRETE PRACTICAL EXAMPLES GREENER TRAINING COURSE HELPS SMEs and small municipalities to draw ideas and inspiration for implementing green criteria

EXTERNAL INITIATIVES SUCH AS GREENER are essential to increase SME participation