

# URBAN AGENDA PARTNERSHIP POSITION PAPER

## Introduction

The Urban Agenda Partnership on Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement and Eurocities aim to encourage the use of innovative and responsible public procurement as a strategic tool for public authorities to address economic, social, and environmental challenges. The Partnership and Eurocities believe that using procurement as a strategic tool allows public authorities to obtain pioneering solutions that are tailor-made to their specific needs, for the benefit of the communities they serve.

## Urban Agenda Partnership on Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement

The Urban Agenda for the EU is an initiative of the European Commission that addresses problems cities are facing, by setting up Partnerships between the Commission, EU organisations, national governments, region and city authorities, and other stakeholders such as expert organisations. The Urban Agenda Partnership on Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement aims to push forward the development and implementation of public procurement as a strategic tool. It creates the opportunity for cities to work closely with European institutions to support innovation and sustainability, and solve social, economic and environmental challenges faced by public authorities.

## Purpose

The Urban Agenda Partnership for EU and Eurocities have worked together to produce a position paper with the most impactful recommendations identified by their partners. Their adoption will enable the effective use of public procurement as a strategic tool to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. Procurers are key stakeholders in implementing EU priorities at local level, notably the twin transitions of the Green deal and the digital transformation of European society. To help achieve an effective and just transition, we ask you to consider our recommendations to improve the EU framework on public procurement.

In the context of the EU elections and the new European Commission, the **Urban Agenda Partnership on Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement** and **Eurocities** share with you key recommendations that underline the importance of innovative and responsible public procurement as a strategic tool. Your actions could enable transformative progress fuelling sustainable economic growth, circular economy, energy transition, sustainability, gender equality, social responsibility, and innovation.



## Key Recommendations

- 1 To avoid contradictions between goals and methods, public procurement rules and strategies should better align with EU-wide policies on the twin transitions as well as economic and social challenges, emphasising sector-specific priorities where necessary.
- 2 Develop systematic binding dialogue and engagement of local governments at the European level, with an EU-wide recognition of the strategic role of public procurement in advancing innovation, and social and environmental outcomes.
- 3 EU policies should encourage and support the creation of a pre-tender ecosystem, that enables information exchange between buyers and suppliers.
- 4 The EU should encourage the use of a holistic approach and provide practical tools on how to achieve that, rather than constrain buyers to the contract subject; for example in finding ways to relate a supplier's Corporate Social Responsibility policy to the contract subject if it does not concern social matters.
- 5 Public bodies should play a leading role in generating a re-use and repair service economy in accordance with circularity principles.
- 6 Offer resources to acknowledge the specific needs of stakeholders of different sizes.
- 7 Provide additional assistance to address key barriers to implementing social public procurement, including support for pre-tender market engagement and the use of qualitative award criteria.
- 8 The European Commission website should feature a detailed list of EU legislation related to public procurement, along with brief descriptions of their application.
- 9 Establish a resource center in official EU languages to assist buyers in understanding and implementing regulations.
- 10 Facilitate direct feedback and enhance monitoring of the effects of EU regulations on innovative and sustainable public procurement through the resource center in official EU languages.



## Contributing Partners

**Eurocities** - is one of the largest networks of European cities. Eurocities is where local governments meet, exchange ideas and work together to bring positive change to public services and public procurement. Eurocities' member cities address various global issues at the local level, from climate change to integration to the digital transition, among many others. Eurocities' actions cut across a broad range of themes and foster change through advocacy and projects, while Eurocities membership offers European cities extensive networking opportunities, activities, events, training and campaigns.

**City of Haarlem** - the coordinating municipality of the Urban Agenda Partnership on Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement, winner of the Procura+ Award on 'Procurement Initiative of the Year 2020' and winner of iCapital Award 'European Rising Innovative City 2022'.

**City of Munich**- forerunner of sustainable procurement policies in Germany.

**City of Gabrovo**- one of the leading municipalities in Bulgaria in sustainable procurement and winner of the European Green Leaf Award 2021.

**City of Vantaa**- exemplary city in the field of sustainable procurement in Finland and winner of the European Rising Innovative City Award 2021 (iCapital).

**Metropolis Nantes**- forerunner on responsible procurement in France and winner of the European Innovative City Award 2019 (iCapital).

**Barcelona Provincial Council**- one of the leaders in green public procurement in Spain and winner of the Procura+ Innovation in ICT Procurement of the Year 2021 award.

**ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability**- provides professional information, advice, networking opportunities, training and tools to public authorities wanting to implement better, more cost effective sustainable and innovation procurement practices.

**University Twente**- leading Dutch technical university, home to EL-IPS, the European Lab for Innovative Purchasing and Supply.

**URBACT**- enables the exchange of knowledge and learning amongst cities around Sustainable Urban Development, and with a key focus on Public Procurement.

**Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)**- promotes innovative procurement legislation in EU networks.

**EUROTOWNS**- promotes innovative public procurement in the networks of small- and medium-sized cities in Europe

**Cyprus Energy Agency**- agency that supports Green and Innovative Public Procurement.

**BME/KOINNO**- strengthens the innovation orientation of public procurement in Germany.

**Czech Republic- Ministry of Agriculture**- supports the use of sustainable and innovative requirements in public procurement.