

ProcurComp^{EU}

Study on professionalisation of public procurement in the EU and selected third countries



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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Directorate DDG2.G — Public Procurement

Unit G.1— Public Procurement Strategy

European Commission

B-1049 Brussels

Contact: Katharina Knapton-Vierlich, Justyne Balasinska

Email: GROW-G1@ec.europa.eu

Website: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/public-procurement/support-tools-public-buyers en

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Study on professionalisation of public procurement in the EU and selected third countries

Manuscript completed in June 2020

The primary authors of this study are Tsvetelina Blagoeva, Melissa Campagno, Karim Karaki, and Brian Kessler from PwC.

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020



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Print: ISBN 978-92-76-18642-7 Doi: 10.2873/1198 ET-02-20-324-EN-C

Web: ISBN 978-92-76-18624-3 Doi: 10.2873/005620 ET-02-20-324-EN-N

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INTRODUCTION

Context, rationale and objective of the study

Each year, public authorities in the EU procure supplies, services and works worth around 14% of the EU GDP or about EUR 2 trillion. Given the large share of public spending on procurement, it is essential that public procurement professionals have the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve value for money, ensure efficient procedures, and maximise the impact of their procurement budgets. This includes using procurement to pursue wider policy objectives, such as growth, innovation, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. At the European level, sound national public procurement practices are necessary for the functioning of the Single Market, and to ensure the effective use of European funds.

To achieve these goals, procurement practitioners and contracting authorities need to undertake sustained professionalisation efforts. In support of this, the European Commission (EC) has launched several initiatives to support Member States in the professionalisation of public procurement practitioners. The 2014 Directives on public procurement provide a toolbox for Member States looking to make a more efficient and strategic use of public procurement. In 2017, the EC adopted a 'Recommendation on the professionalisation of public procurement' to encourage Member States to increase the professionalisation of contracting authorities. The Recommendation is made up of three parts:

- Defining a policy for the professionalisation of public procurement: Member States are
 encouraged to develop long-term professionalisation strategies based on high-level political
 support and through an inclusive process at national, regional and local level. This includes
 the support of contracting authorities in the implementation.
- Improving training and career management of public procurement professionals: Member States should ensure that procurement practitioners have the right qualifications, training, skills and experience needed for their responsibility. Further, they should identify baseline skills and competencies that procurement professionals should possess and be trained in.
- Encouraging the **development and application of IT tools** to improve procurement systems: Member States should apply tools and processes to spur efficiency of procurements, such as e-procurement tools, digitalisation and single online portals to enable access to information.

To complement the 2017 Recommendation, the EC committed to develop **ProcurComp**^{EU} – the European Competency Framework for public procurement professionals. ProcurComp^{EU} contributes to the second pillar of the Recommendation and acknowledges the crucial importance of sound human resources management and capacity building in public procurement. The main goal of ProcurComp^{EU} is to help contracting authorities and individuals define the knowledge and skills they need to do their job well, identify their competency gaps, and take action to address them. To do this, ProcurComp^{EU} consists of three elements:

- A **Competency Matrix**, which defines 30 procurement-related and soft competences along four proficiency levels;
- A Self-Assessment Tool that allows users to set targets for the different competences and assess their proficiency levels against them and identify any gaps;
- A Generic training curriculum which lists all learning outcomes public procurement professionals should know and be able to demonstrate after having attended a training for a certain proficiency level.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/public-procurement_en

 $^{^2 \, \}underline{\text{https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/public-procurement/rules-implementation_en}} \\$

³ Source: Commission Recommendation (EU) 2017/1805, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/25614

The objective of this **study** is to provide the background for the ProcurComp^{EU} competency framework. It gives an overview of the state of play in public procurement professionalisation in the EU and internationally, highlighting established gaps and identified good practices. The study is based on the findings of research about public procurement professionalisation in the EU and selected third countries. These findings were a key input to the design of ProcurComp^{EU} and helped ensure that all its elements are tailored to the current practices, challenges and priorities in public procurement across the EU Member States and can be adapted in other countries.

Structure of the report

The **first part** of the study report is structured as follows:

Section 1 presents the research methodology of the study as a basis for developing the ProcurComp^{EU} competency framework, in particular the structure and rationale for the Country Factsheets about public procurement professionalisation for each of the EU Member States, as well as the structure and approach to the Case Studies of countries and institutions that have established public procurement competency frameworks, self-assessment tools, or professionalisation initiatives in both EU and non-EU countries.

Section 2 presents the key findings that emerged from the country assessments that are relevant to the design and use of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools. These cover different aspects of public procurement, such as human resources management, training and development and the set-up of the procurement system.

Section 3 highlights the potential benefits of adopting the ProcurComp^{EU} tools as well as the concrete ways in which individuals and organisations can do so, including in an international context.

Section 4 presents recommendations for how the European Commission can promote the take-up of the ProcurComp^{EU} package.

The **second part** of the study contains the country factsheets and case studies.

PART I. METHODOLOGY AND MAIN FINDINGS

1. Methodological approach

1.1. Research Methodology

The methodological approach of the stock-taking study is based on a combination of desk research and interviews focusing on public procurement professionalisation at national and international level. This research is summarised in 28 Country Factsheets and 7 Case Studies of experiences from inside the EU and selected third countries, provided in the second part of the study (for more details on their scope and structure see Sections 1.2 and 1.3).

Information for the study was gathered through several different data collection activities:

- Desk research was carried out to gather publicly available information on national and international procurement systems and practices, as well as on relevant European Commission competency frameworks and tools like the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), or the 2016 New Skills Agenda for Europe⁴. The research also included a review of available training programmes on procurement,⁵ which fed into the development of the ProcurComp^{EU} training curriculum.
- Interviews with public procurement stakeholders in all Member States and the selected third countries were conducted, involving public procurement authorities, supervisory bodies, contracting authorities and procurement associations. These semi-structured interviews allowed for a detailed, balanced and comprehensive understanding of the key issues on the professionalisation of public procurement professionals in the respective country. The interviews provided evidence of practitioners' perceptions on their country's public procurement capacity and information regarding the latest developments and initiatives in professionalisation. As such, they constituted a valuable input to the Country Factsheets and Case Studies provide an added value to this exercise as the most recent information cannot always be found in publicly available documentation.
- The **Advisory Committee** set up to guide the development of ProcurComp^{EU} provided invaluable insight and advice on relevant initiatives to study and relevant stakeholders to consult with at Member State level. Its members played a key role in facilitating meetings, validating the findings from the Country Factsheets and Case Studies, supporting the implementation of the pilot exercise of the self-assessment tool and raising awareness of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools. The Committee was composed of procurement experts from national administration, central purchasing bodies, professional and international bodies.
- Round-table discussions with regional and local stakeholders were organised to gather
 insights on the user perspective of the ProcurComp^{EU} and also served as an additional
 opportunity to collect information about professionalisation initiatives at the regional and local
 level.
- Stakeholder workshops with representatives of public and private organisations interested in
 the subject of public procurement professionalisation were organised at EU level in order to
 discuss existing experiences and obtain input on the ProcurComp^{EU} tools being developed.

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⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0381

⁵ Training programmes provided by the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM), the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), the European Academy for Taxes, Economics, and Law, the OECD Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA)

1.2. Country Factsheets

The information collected during the research and consultations is summarised in 28 Country Factsheets providing an overview on the current state of play regarding administrative capacity and professionalisation initiatives in public procurement for each EU Member State.

In order to allow for comparison across Member States, the Factsheets are structured around the assessment of six central determinants of public procurement capacity and professionalisation described below:

- General overview of the procurement system: The Factsheets begin with a short description of the general state of the procurement in each country, reflecting relevant information about the number of contracting authorities and characteristics of public procurement system.
- 2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce: Administrative capacity constitutes a key determinant for the overall performance of the public procurement system in a Member State. Therefore, this section provides a short description of the public procurement system in place, its governance and the characteristics of the public procurement workforce. It presents relevant facts and figures on public procurement professionalisation in the Member State and gives an indication of the competency level and the organisational state of play of public procurement.
- 3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce: Human resource (HR) management, recruitment procedures, remuneration schemes and career planning affect the ability of contracting authorities to attract and retain qualified procurement staff. Therefore, this section focuses on the definition and ownership of HR processes and bodies, the provisions regulating civil service as well as the roles and functions of public procurers observable across different contracting authorities in the EU. Further, this section gives an overview of recruitment procedures, performance assessment, compensation as well as career progression opportunities.
- 4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies: This section presents the experience that Member States have in applying competency frameworks in public procurement, and related professionalisation initiatives. Further, it identifies the use of competency frameworks more generally in the public administration, as well as the use of quality management tools aimed at monitoring and increasing the efficiency of public service provision.
- 5. Training: The creation and maintenance of administrative capacities in public procurement requires dedicated structures and institutions to provide trainings. This section addresses the available training offer and priorities in the Member States. It also identifies higher education in public procurement provided by universities, certifications offered by both private and the public providers as well as their experience in developing trainings for public procurement professionals.
- 6. Challenges and priorities, as identified by stakeholders: The last section of the Country Factsheet summarises the key challenges, initiatives and priorities for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce in the Member State. This section is based on feedback gathered through interviews with the stakeholders and does not constitute an assessment by the European Commission. This section seeks to identify who is impacted by the observed challenges and how they affect procurement practices in the Member State overall.

In addition, where applicable, the Country Factsheets include a **box on professionalisation initiatives**, presenting a current or prospective procurement professionalisation initiative in the Member State. The description of the initiative includes the context and status of implementation of the initiative, its objectives, the key stakeholders involved and how it contributes to the professionalisation of public procurement professionals.

1.3. Case Studies

The stock-taking exercise included several Case Studies. The Case Studies illustrate particularly well-developed examples of existing competency frameworks, or of national level professionalisation initiatives that represent a valuable input and inspiration to the methodology, design, and content of ProcurComp^{EU}. The subjects of the case studies were identified on the basis of feedback from stakeholder interviews and discussions.

The structure of the case studies focuses on the key implementation elements of the specific initiative that were found to be relevant to the development of ProcurComp^{EU}:

- 1. **Context** a short background on the subject of the case studies including information about the broader framework it is part of or related initiatives;
- 2. **Description of the initiatives and key features** an overview of the key features of the initiative, reflecting where relevant the involvement of different stakeholders in its implementation;
- 3. **Outcome and lessons learnt** synthesis of the available information about the results of the initiative as well as the identified lessons learnt from its implementation.

The Case Study subjects are presented in the following table:

Initiative	Country	Short description
Public procurement certification programmes	United States	Competency models and certification programmes developed by the Federal Acquisition Institute with the aim to establish consistent competencies and standards for staff of civilian agencies performing procurement-related work.
Procurement Competency Framework and self-assessment tool	Scotland	Procurement Competency Framework and Procurement Development Framework launched by the Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate to improve practices and support the recruitment, development, career progression and mobility of procurement staff in the public sector.
Post-graduate programme in public procurement	Poland	Cooperation between the Public Procurement Office and several universities in Poland to develop a post-graduate programme in public procurement that can prepare specialised procurement practitioners.
Professionalisation of the public procurement workforce	Norway	Range of tools (procurement academy, certification system, strategy tool, self-assessment tool, created by the Agency Public Management and eGovernment (Difi) to meet the professionalisation needs of contracting authorities in Norway.
Procurement Capability Index	New Zealand	A Procurement Capability Index and self-assessment tool created by the New Zealand Government Procurement to reduce the difference in procurement capability across all types of contracting authorities.

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Initiative	Country	Short description
Career path for procurement professionals	France	Career path for procurement professionals created by the established the State Procurement Directorate to support the recognition of public procurement as a standalone profession and provide relevant training and certification for state public procurement practitioners.
Accreditation of public procurement professionals	Chile	A mandatory proficiency-based accreditation process developed and administered by <i>ChileCompra</i> with the goal to certify competencies of public procurement officers and provide them with the required knowledge to assure efficient and effective public procurement.

2. Key takeaways of the stock-taking study

While procurement systems and practices vary significantly across the 28 Member States, a number of common observations regarding the professionalisation of public procurement practitioners emerged during the course of the study.

2.1. Different characteristics and dynamics of public administration systems

Many of the issues encountered on this topic are linked to some of the general characteristics and dynamics of public administration systems and organisations:⁶

- Public bodies, and the public sector generally, with its administrative provisions and set-up is subject to specific regulations for the recruitment, employment and career development of civil servants.
- There are different public administration systems across the EU Member States with varying degrees of use of the two main categories of public sector employment:
 - a more traditional type of civil service, based on a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment and
 - public employment based on civil law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment.

There are also differences in the degree of centralisation of the public administration, as well as differences in the characteristics of the administrative culture – ranging from more management-oriented public administrations to more legalistic ones.

 Public administrations also face new challenges, new constraints, demands, technologies, and indeed an evolution towards a more contract-based approach, which they approach within the constraints mentioned above.

2.2. Lack of homogeneity in recruitment practices

Due to the specific characteristics of the public administration, practices for the recruitment of public procurement professionals vary significantly across Member States. They are highly dependent on the degree of centralisation of human resource management as well as on the type of employment of public procurement professionals.

Public procurement in the EU is mainly carried out by civil servants or public employees under private law contract (contractual staff),⁷ with some cases of outsourcing of procurement activities to external experts. The **regulations for the recruitment of staff whose employment is regulated by civil law are more flexible** than those of civil servant which gives contracting authorities flexibility in defining the job description and selection procedure.

Either way, many contracting authorities struggle to attract experienced procurement experts because private sector salaries usually exceed public sector ones. Strict hiring requirements, e.g. civil servant status, pose an additional challenge for contracting authorities in terms of recruiting suitable personnel. When contracting authorities have flexibility in terms of their **hiring criteria**, even though candidates with prior public procurement experience are usually preferred, candidates without prior experience are often hired given the tight labour market conditions.

⁶ See European Commission (2018) A Comparative Overview of Public Administration Characteristics and Performance in EU28 - https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8072

⁷ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

Strict hiring regulations also represent an obstacle to **career mobility** for public procurement professionals, limiting their options for career developments and motivation to upskills themselves.

For CPBs, when they are operating as separate non-profit companies (e.g. The Federal Procurement Agency in Austria, the UGAP- Union des Groupements d'Achats Publics in France, SKI in Denmark), **salary competitiveness** is less of a concern as they are more flexible in terms of wage-setting. As a result, they are usually more successful in recruiting procurement experts and display a lower level of staff turnover. The recruitment practices of larger CPBs which process large procurement volumes indicate that there is a preference for hiring candidates with dual legal and commercial expertise, as well as to candidates with specialised sectoral knowledge.

2.3. Broad range of job profiles

Public procurement is **not considered a standalone occupation** in the majority of Member States. Only few Member States (e.g. France, Scotland, Poland, Romania, Sweden) have formally recognised the occupation by defining minimum standards, specific roles reflecting the tasks and duties of public procurement staff, or establishing competency frameworks at country level.

A wide range of different job profiles and titles are used for public procurement professionals across Member States and contracting authorities. This does not only hold across Member States, but also for different contracting authorities within a country. The underlying reasons can be found in the variety of procurement systems and contracting authorities, administrative practices and traditions, as well as the diverse employment conditions of procurement professionals. In some Member States, there are highly specialised procurement functions or different seniority levels in place, while others have longstanding procurement-related careers on the administrative level.

Similarly, in the majority of Member States there is no specific career path for public procurement professionals in place. In most Member States the public procurement workforce is to a large extent comprised of civil servants and contract employees that are usually assigned to general public administration job profiles.

In several countries there are examples of establishing procurement-related job profiles and career paths at the organisational level. This is the case for Central Purchasing Bodies (CPBs) in e.g. Italy, Austria and Denmark.

2.4. CPBs as driver of professionalisation initiatives

The study finds that a number of Member States engage in activities to foster the **centralisation of public procurement** to achieve economies of scale and improve coordination and professionalisation. This is observable for both CPBs operating at the central government level as well as on a regional or sectoral level.

Especially in smaller countries, there are currently strong efforts to **pool procurement activities on a central government level**. For example, an increasing number of central government ministries in Estonia outsource their procurement activities to the State Shared Services Centre. Further, there is an increasing use of the services of central government CPBs by regional and municipal authorities (e.g. PT, MT, RO).

There is also an increase in the use of joint purchasing and the pooling of municipal capacities. This is the case, for example, in Belgium and Denmark, where a wide range of regional networks exist to foster joint efforts, information exchange as well as the dissemination of good practices regarding advanced procurement procedures.

Across most Member States, the **highest level of procurement proficiency tends to be displayed at CPBs**. The study identifies the following factors to be accountable for this observation.

First, given the absence of a specific career path for public procurement professionals in most Member States, it is a common **career move for experienced personnel** to change from smaller, municipal contracting authorities to central government institutions and CPBs. Further, experienced procurement professionals recruited from the private sector are more inclined to join CPBs rather than smaller contracting authorities. Thus, CPBs do usually not only attract higher skilled procurement workforce, but also allow for a greater specialisation and professionalisation of their staff.

Second, CPBs are more likely to conduct **advanced procurement procedures** based on the higher proficiency level of their staff. In this respect, specialised subject experts and legal experts in CPBs are better trained to apply advanced procurement criteria, while less experienced procurers tend to be rather reluctant due to lack of knowledge and legal concerns.

Third, CPBs are leading the way in the **development and application of competency-based human resource management**. In most cases, there is at least some functional division of labour within CPBs between legal and subject experts, and there are several examples of CPBs developing their own public procurement competency frameworks. This holds specifically for CBPs that are established as separate legal entities that are not bound by public sector employment regulation and human resources management.

Fourth, in a number of EU Member States, CPBs assume a key role in establishing specialised networks of contracting authorities to foster the **dissemination of good practices** as well as to provide exchange on specific procurement-related topics. Further, it is a common observation that CPBs reach out to universities and industry associations to join efforts in capacity building and information exchange. Examples include the Finnish CPB Hansel that has established a joint initiative of public and private associations to foster professionalisation of public procurement professionals. Further, the Austrian CPB BBG has established a procurement academy in cooperation with Vienna University. The Polish State Procurement Office cooperates with universities for the provision of a post-graduate programme on public procurement (see case study).

Finally, the study finds that despite the progress made by some CPBs in developing their own public procurement competency frameworks, there is significant potential for the adaptation and adoption of ready-made instruments as a way of addressing the gaps across the EU Member States.

2.5. Focus of trainings in legal and procedural topics

Procurement training priorities in many Member States tend to focus on legal and procedural aspects to ensure compliance in implementation. The predominance of legal trainings is also driven by high staff turnover and the fact that most new hires are not experienced procurement specialists. Further, in some Member States, procurement positions also entail a legal liability for civil servants, creating an even greater incentive for practitioners to ensure legal compliance.

The study finds that the **available training in many Member States does not meet the full range of needs** of procurement professionals. This holds especially for trainings in more advanced procurement topics, such as the consideration of green, social and innovative aspects. In those Member States where such training is offered, it may not be accessible to many practitioners. In many cases, courses on specific techniques such as sourcing, market and needs assessment, and managerial skills are offered by private providers. For contracting authorities facing budget limitations the cost of external trainings can be prohibitive.

As a result of this, in some Member States, the lack of appropriate training courses leads to a rather slow uptake of the application of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) criterion and advanced procurement procedures.

2.6. Adoption of national training plans, certification and accreditation frameworks

Another trend in the professionalisation of public procurement is the increasing use of certification and accreditation frameworks. Several countries are currently implementing comprehensive public sector reforms that are usually initiated by the central government and aim at enhancing the efficiency of public sector overall, including public procurement, and the working conditions of civil servants. Other Member States have introduced initiatives specifically targeted at the public procurement workforce, such as the Slovenian Action Plan on Professionalisation for Public Procurement or the Italian National Training Plan on Public Procurement.

One approach applied across a number of Member States (e.g. Hungary, Croatia) is the introduction of certification and accreditation frameworks. While there is a broad range of optional certifications issued by both public and private training providers in many Member States, the study identifies a trend towards specific national accreditation schemes combined with a legal obligation to involve certified procurement experts in certain procedures. For example, Croatia has introduced a system for certification of public procurement experts. The national procurement law requires that a certified expert is involved in every procedure exceeding a certain threshold. In order to obtain a certification, candidates have to attend a comprehensive training programme. Thus, the certification aims at ensuring that tender procedures are conducted and reviewed by specialised practitioners with up-to-date knowledge and skills. This, in turn, fosters the dissemination of good practices across contracting authorities in the country. Consequently, a critical mass of accredited public procurers may elevate the procurement proficiency level overall.

Furthermore, new executive education and certification programmes for public procurement professionals have recently been launched at university level, for example in Germany⁸ and Austria. These programmes aim specifically at international procurement professionals, with a curriculum beyond the national procurement context.

Another approach can be found in France, where the State Procurement Directorate (DAE -Direction des achats de l'État) is in charge of reviewing and approving public procurement training plans and course content prepared by government ministries in order to ensure their harmonisation.

2.7. Professional associations as key actors for the professionalisation of public procurement

The research and consultations carried out in preparation of the study confirmed that professional associations in the area of public procurement play a key role for professionalisation efforts. For example, at the international level, the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) established the Global Standard for Procurement and Supply 10 which is a comprehensive procurement competency framework used by public and private practitioners and organisations. The International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM) developed the Global Standard in Purchasing and Supply Management¹¹ which defines the mix of knowledge, learning and skills appropriate to the profession and against which education programmes (typically with a duration of three to four years such as Bachelor's degree programmes) can be assessed or accredited.

⁸ Weiterbildungsinstitut der Universität der Bundeswehr München - Öffentliche Beschaffung Modulstudium mit Zertifikatsabschluss

⁹ Vienna University of Economics / Business Executive Academy - Public Procurement Excellence (PPE) programme

¹⁰ CIPS Global Standard for Procurement and Supply: https://www.cips.org/en/knowledge/global-standard-for-procurementand-supply/

11 International Federation of Procurement and Supply Management's Global Standard: https://www.ifpsm.org/global-standard

There also example of initiatives driven by professional associations at **national level**. The Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics (LOGY) launched the Best in Class Procurement tool ¹² in 2015 which works as an organisational self-assessment tool that provides organisations with a description of their procurement function, allows them to benchmark themselves against other member organisations, and points out areas where the organisation could improve the performance of its procurement activities. The Swedish Association for Public Purchasers (SOI) has developed a competency profile that covers key public procurement areas: market analysis; strategy development, negotiation; legal skills or digitalisation and IT-based working methods. ¹³ SOI has also developed a web self-assessment tool tailored to the role of public buyer. Through the tool, a person or organisation can map their strengths and development areas.

2.8. Success factors for the implementation of professionalisation initiatives

The review of national and international professionalisation initiatives carried out in the context of the study identified several **cross-cutting lessons learnt** about the factors influencing positively their successful implementation:

- **Cooperation** with relevant stakeholders in the development of professionalisation tools helps ensure their relevance to practitioners' needs.
- **Communication** is a key element of effective change management for the take-up of procurement professionalisation measures. Efficient, transparent, and timely communication and messaging were success factors for a number of organisations to ensure acceptance of the developed professionalisation tools practitioners.
- Using a phased approach to implementation, including dedicated pilot testing is an effective
 way of ensuring that the tools are fit to the needs of their target audience and are sustainable
 in the long term.
- Continuous improvement of the developed tools is necessary to ensure they remain up-todate and take account of feedback for improvement provided by their users.

These lessons learnt were applied in the development of ProcurComp^{EU} are also relevant for its subsequent adaption and adoption at national or organisational level.

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¹² Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics' Best in Class Procurement tool: https://www.logy.fi/tietoa/best-in-class-tyokalut html

tyokalut.html

13 See more information at http://www.soi.se/media/3245/kompetensprofil.pdf

3. Recommendations for the use of ProcurComp^{EU}

The results of the stock-taking study show that the majority of EU Member States do not have in place a comprehensive competency-based framework for public procurement professionalisation. The consultations carried out indicated a broad **interest in the development of an EU or international-level reference** that governments, industry organisations or individual contracting authorities can adapt and use to realise their professionalisation goals.

The gaps in the current level of professionalisation activities among Member States identified by the stock-taking study can be addressed through the use of ProcurComp^{EU} tools at individual and organisation level. The following section summarises the potential benefits and makes concrete recommendations for the take-up of ProcurComp^{EU} by individuals and organisations within the EU and internationally.

3.1. Potential benefits of adopting ProcurComp^{EU} at individual and organisational level

The review of existing initiatives at national and international level as well as the feedback from stakeholders consulted over the course of preparing this study led to the identification of several expected benefits of the adoption of ProcurComp^{EU} by individuals and organisations within the EU and beyond, as summarised in the following paragraphs.

Allowing for a strategic Human Resources approach

The ProcurComp^{EU} can help contracting authorities and governments approach human resource in public procurement more strategically. ProcurComp^{EU} enables contracting authorities to define their needs and to develop competency-based job descriptions based on the ProcurComp^{EU} competency matrix. In the long term, this could help reduce recruitment costs and allow to better match needs and actual competencies and profiles available on the market. ProcurComp^{EU} offers a way for organisations to assess development and performance. ProcurComp^{EU} may finally serve as a foundation for the development of specific career paths for procurement professionals (for an example see case study on France).

Determining individual training and development needs

The ProcurComp^{EU} has the power to enable public procurement professionals to clearly identify both skills and knowledge required for their respective role in their organisation. Based on the self-assessment tool, individual training and development needs can be identified and respectively tailored trainings be offered. Thus, the currently observed gap between training needs and offered courses can be closed. Further, there is full transparency for procurement professionals in terms of competencies required to progress to the next career level. Based on the assessment, ProcurComp^{EU} allows individuals and organisations to identify what type of trainings should be attended in order to move from one level to the next for a specific competency.

Swift dissemination of ProcurComp^{EU} through multipliers

The adoption and implementation of the ProcurComp^{EU} package draws upon the cooperation of CPBs that have significantly contributed to the development of the framework as members of the Advisory Committee as well as participants of the pilot testing phase. As such, they could assume a leading role in fostering the dissemination of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools, as well as inspire other contracting authorities to implement the tools. In doing so, they could build upon the current momentum observed across Member States as regards the promotion of public procurement professionalisation schemes. The feedback received throughout this study revealed that Member States broadly support the initiative and tools developed by the EC as it is aligned with current national efforts and allows for integration into existing frameworks.

Broad applicability of the framework

ProcurComp^{EU} can help further enhance efficiency at national, regional and local level contracting authorities as capacity building measures can be tailored according to the respective competency level and degree of specialisation. For example, for procurement professionals at a higher proficiency level, the application of innovative, green and social considerations is a priority. At the same time, ProcurComp^{EU} also suits the needs of smaller, less professionalised contracting authorities to improve their procurement proficiency.

Increasing transparency and comparability

Contracting authorities and governments are encouraged to define their own public procurement roles based on the ProcurComp^{EU} according to their specific contexts and needs. The ProcurComp^{EU} is likely to increase transparency and comparability of public procurement positions within the Member States if the competencies laid down in the framework are broadly accepted to define procurement roles. In addition, the ProcurComp^{EU} provides a precise definition of competencies needed for six generic public procurement roles, and, thus, allows both individuals and contracting authorities at the organisational level to map their desired level of proficiency in key competencies.

Supporting current national professionalisation initiatives

Given the current momentum for procurement certification and accreditation schemes, the ProcurComp^{EU} could provide significant added value by providing the different national initiatives with a common ground. The competences listed in the ProcurComp^{EU} competency matrix could be embedded into recent national initiatives like certification levels and standards. Further, current accreditation schemes are usually based on a general training programme on public procurement topics to be attended. ProcurComp^{EU} can also effectively support the recognition of skills acquired on the job as well as vocational training schemes. The competency-based approach of ProcurComp^{EU} could enhance these efforts by taking the specific skills and competency level of the public procurement professionals into account. For each competency level, the ProcurComp^{EU} provides a reference training content that can be used when searching for existing training offers on the market to specifically address the identified knowledge and competency gaps. This can entail significant savings of both time and financial resources for Member States that are considering the launch of such schemes as they will not have to establish their own training curricula.

3.2. Recommendations for the adoption of ProcurComp^{EU} at individual and organisational level

The research carried out in the context of the study on the application of existing professionalisation tools at national level has been used to identify the main use cases for such tools which will also be relevant for individual or organisations making use of ProcurComp^{EU}. These use cases are further detailed in the ProcurCompEU main document.

1. Individual competency analysis and development

In the examples studied during the research, competency frameworks are used by individuals to explore their current public procurement capacity, knowledge and skills, their future professional goals and the priority gaps between them. Individuals can use the results of their competency analysis to identify areas in which they can upskill themselves to reach their desired level of proficiency, or to identify the competencies they would need to develop in order to specialise within a certain job profile (e.g. category manager).

As an example, the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) established the Global Standard for Procurement and Supply 14 which is a comprehensive procurement competency

¹⁴ CIPS Global Standard for Procurement and Supply: https://www.cips.org/en/knowledge/global-standard-for-procurement-and-supply/

framework used by public and private practitioners and organisations. It is structured around four pillars (infrastructure, process, performance and people development) and 11 themes such as spend management, metrics and measurements, ethics, and technology, further divided into individual segments such as logistics control, contract administration, delivering value for money, team in procurement. Each segment is described in terms of knowledge and capability required at five proficiency levels namely: tactical, operational, managerial, professional, and advanced professional. At the individual level, the Global Standard can help to identify current competency levels and the knowledge and capabilities needed to move onto the next career stage. It can also help individuals to develop a personal development plan to address the knowledge and skills gaps identified though training courses developed by CIPS for each of the segments covered in the Global Standard and monitor their progress by referring to other proficiency levels.

Inspired by the CIPS standard, the Scottish Government established a national procurement development framework¹⁵ composed of a competency matrix that sets out the skills and competency levels required by public sector staff involved in the procurement process, and a selfassessment tool to self-assess their skills, identify training and development needs and help with career planning and personal development.

2. Organisational competency gap analysis

Procurement organisations use competency frameworks to assess whether their staff members possess the right level of knowledge and skills to achieve their current policy, business and organisational goals.

The Scottish national procurement development framework is also used by organisations of different types and in sizes including ministries, municipalities, schools, universities, or the police force. Such organisations use it to carry out regular organisational competency gap analysis exercises which allow them to ensure that they have the right people with the right skills and experience in the right place at the right time to deliver to the best procurement outcome.

Another example is the Best in Class Procurement tool¹⁶ developed by the Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics (LOGY) launched in 2015 with the goal to support member organisations from the private and public sector in developing their procurement function. The tool works as an organisational self-assessment tool that provides organisations with a description of their procurement function, allows them to benchmark themselves against other member organisations. and points out areas where the organisation could improve the performance of its procurement activities. The tool requires the organisation to provide background information on its activities (e.g. branch of business, procurement spending, etc.) and answer a set of 14 questions related to its procurement performance and use of good practices in different categories (e.g. about whether the procurement function has and uses a documented model to evaluate its competencies). The assessment results indicate the organisation's average score (on a scale of 1-5) in the different categories assessed, the average score of other organisations of similar size and sector, the gap (if any) between these two scores, and an indication of the top quarter average scores.

3. Performing a maturity assessment for future goals

Competency based HR management can help define the new competencies necessary for an organisation to achieve new procurement policy objectives, and the ways to achieve them.

For example, the administration of the Dutch city of Haarlem was looking to expand their use of environmentally sustainable public procurement and innovation procurement and shift to circular

¹⁵ Scottish Government's national procurement development framework: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-

procurement-competency-framework/

16 Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics' Best in Class Procurement tool: https://www.logy.fi/tietoa/best-in-class- tyokalut.html

procurement. As part of this process, they mapped out the relevant competencies and the target levels for each of their key procurement job profiles, and then used these targets to define the organisation's learning and development strategy.

Similarly, the Norwegian Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi) developed a procurement strategy tool¹⁷ which provides support to contracting authorities looking to define and adjust their procurement strategy in the long term. The strategy tool is complementary to the organisational self-assessment tool provided by Difi and helps the contracting authorities to analyse the current state of their procurement strategy, plan activities for the upcoming year and measure developments by comparing to earlier results. In addition, Difi regularly conducts a maturity survey of contracting authorities. The results provide a knowledge base on the state of maturity of procurement functions in the public sector and are used to develop and improve work in the field.

4. Joint competency assessment by multiple procurement organisations

The research conducted identified instances where multiple procurement organisations operate sometimes with overlapping mandates, responsibilities and functions. To address this issue, some of them have developed collaboration initiatives to build synergies and maximise complementarities including in terms of competencies. This is particularly relevant for small contracting authorities that may not have the capacity and resources to employ full-time procurement specialists. Procurement organisations thus use common competency framework tools in order to compare their situation and identify the most relevant measure for addressing identified gaps.

Such cooperation can be illustrated by the Global Standard in Purchasing and Supply Management¹⁸ developed by the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM) for its 48 members across the world. With a view to serve purchasing and supply management professionals and the organisations for which they work worldwide, IFPSM created the Global Standard that reflects a mix of knowledge, learning and skills appropriate to the profession and against which education programmes (typically with a duration of three to four years such as Bachelor's degree programmes) can be assessed or accredited. The Global Standard provides generic statements/ descriptors of attributes that a professional in the field should demonstrate, such as having comprehensive knowledge, understanding and acumen across the fields of strategic supply chain management or knowledge and understanding of the different tools, techniques, models and methodologies of purchasing and supply management. The Global Standard aims to assure employers that prospective employees who have graduated from an accredited programme have the required minimum level of knowledge and skills in the field. At the same time, it assures students that the educational programme they are enrolling in will provide them with knowledge relevant to employers' needs and with a qualification recognised around the world.

5. Designing official job profiles

As part of the overall human resources management of the public administration, some Member States maintain a database or register of civil service job profiles, including public procurement job profiles. Individual entries include job descriptions of the kinds of competencies public procurement professionals should have and the kinds of tasks they should be able to perform.

Job profiles are also used to prepare job descriptions for recruitment (see use case 6). In turn, job profiles make it easier for staff members to better understand their roles, tasks and responsibilities and assess which competencies are required to do their job.

¹⁷ Norwegian Agency for Public Management and eGovernment's procurement strategy tool: https://www.anskaffelser.no/verktoy/analyseverktoy/selvevalueringsverktoy&usg=ALkJrhiA628FDoDAnxnjBiJXndX-ydwSXA International Federation of Procurement and Supply Management's Global Standard: https://www.ifpsm.org/global-standard

An example of the use of job profiles can be found in the official registry of State civil service job profiles (RIME¹⁹) established by the French State Procurement Directorate. The registry defines a purchasing job family which contains five job profiles that the French State administration uses for recruitment and performance assessment purposes. Each job profile includes a specific 'knowwhat' and 'know-how' elements similar in content to the proficiency levels in the Competency Matrix.

Another example is the database of procurement job roles developed by the Scottish contracting authorities using the national procurement competency development framework. ²⁰ The roles included range from buyer, contract manager, team leader, administrator, category manager, corporate procurement officer, head of procurement, lead procurement officer, assistant procurement officer, to eProcurement manager, senior procurement specialist, procurement coordinator, and procurement business partner.

6. Recruitment of procurement staff

Recruitment may be the preferred approach when competency gaps identified in the organisational competency gap assessment (see use case 2) are more substantial and cannot be met by upskilling the profiles already present in the organisation.

The research and collected stakeholder feedback show that using competency framework tools like a Competency Matrix and job profiles can lead to a faster, targeted, and more efficient hiring process. Having a common reference point brings about consistency and comprehensiveness across the job descriptions. It also helps ensure that the individuals recruited using the same reference have the right competency and the right level of knowledge and skills, thereby ensuring a better fit with the job position filled. It also allows for a better alignment between recruitment and organisational goals.

For example, the Federal Procurement Agency (BBG), which is the main central purchasing body in Austria, developed an internal procurement competency framework and a comprehensive training curriculum for the professionalisation of its staff and for the recruitment and onboarding of new employees. First, the job description is elaborated using the competencies listed in their framework. During the recruitment process, the competency framework is used to assess whether the applicant actually possesses the knowledge and skills in the competencies BBG needs to obtain or reinforce. Once the position is filled, the new employee takes part in the BBG onboarding programme and follows a series of training courses that BBG considers provides the minimum knowledge and skills a new joiner should have to be able to start working.

7. Outsourcing of procurement activities

Many contracting authorities address short-term needs for support in their procurement activities by outsourcing certain roles or tasks to staff from other departments in their organisation or external experts.

Procurement organisations use the results of organisational competency gap analyses to identify the areas where additional expertise is needed based on the procurement plan of the organisation. Other competency framework tools like job profiles and a competency matrix can be used to define the levels of knowledge and skills that are sought by the organisation and to assess the suitability of candidates (similar to use case 6).

8. Developing procurement training curriculum and content

When the competency gaps identified based on the use of the Self-Assessment Tool for an organisational competency gap analysis are limited, training may be the preferred approach for upskilling the procurement team members to their targeted level of proficiency. The study came

https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/biep/repertoire-interministeriel-des-metiers-de-letat

²⁰ Scottish Government's national procurement development framework: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-procurement-competency-framework/

across several examples of governments and procurement organisations establishing a comprehensive education curriculum for the development of procurement, providing targeted training courses or developing a Procurement Academy.

An example of the development of a procurement training curriculum can be found in Norway, where in 2017 the Norwegian Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi) founded the Public Procurement Academy²¹. The Academy was set up with the goal to increase the overall professionalisation of procurement staff in Norway and strengthen the recruitment of procurement professionals to meet the future needs of contracting authorities. The Academy offers Research and Education programmes. The education curriculum covers various domains related to procurement, including economy and law, project management, market dialogue, market analysis, negotiation skills, organisational psychology, innovation and corporate social responsibility.

The Federal Procurement Corporation of Austria (BBG) has also recently developed a comprehensive training curriculum for its staff. The curriculum is also offered to other central purchasing bodies (CPBs). The design of the curriculum started by identifying the key competencies and learning outcomes needed by the organisation's procurement professionals. On this basis, BBG developed coursework that would get staff with different levels of knowledge and skills to their target proficiency level.

9. Developing certification schemes

The conducted research showed that a growing trend in procurement professionalisation is the introduction of official certifications for procurement experts. Certification schemes delineate a list of subjects that a candidate has to master in order to obtain the certificate. In order to ensure that they do, the certification schemes are often accompanied by a recommended training curriculum and require passing a written exam.

Certifications schemes promote professionalisation by valorising the broader set of skills a procurement practitioner needs to have to do the job well, and by requiring that qualified professionals are involved in procurement procedures, especially those above a given minimum value.

Such a certification scheme was established in Croatia as part of their accession to the EU. It requires candidates to attend 50 hours of training and to pass a written examination in order to become certified public procurement experts. The certification is valid for 3 years and can be renewed after completing a 32-hour refresher course. The certification curriculum covers a number of topics, including legislation, implementation strategies, evaluation, and prevention of fraud and corruption. The scheme does not, however, impose the certification on all public buyers to ensure that their staff is certified. Rather, it requires that each procurement procedure is verified by a certified buyer, whereby the certified buyer can be staff of the organisation, staff of another organisation, or a private service provider such as a consultant or a lawyer.

3.3. Potential for the adoption of ProcurComp^{EU} internationally

The tools that comprise the ProcurComp^{EU} package reflect both EU and international good practices (see case studies) and can thus be considered as a common reference for competency-based human resource management that is relevant for both EU and non-EU organisations.

There is also high potential for the adoption of ProcurComp^{EU} among countries currently engaged in the EU accession and pre-accession process. Implementation of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools can facilitate the upskilling of their procurement practitioners which would be necessary to ensure that they apply public procurement in line with the EU acquis and standards.

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²¹ Norway's Public Procurement Academy: https://anskaffelsesakademiet.no/om-anskaffelsesakademiet/

4. Recommendations for the European Commission

The stock-tacking study identified a number of areas in which the European Commission will be well placed to provide support for the professionalisation of public procurement through the uptake of the ProcurComp^{EU} package of tools.

Provision of direct implementation support to Member States

Over the course of the consultations and communication activities carried out in the process of developing the ProcurComp^{EU} package, the majority of EU Member States indicated that they would need support by the European Commission in order to be able to implement the tools in their public procurement authorities. This need is linked to the lack of own capacities and experience with similar initiatives, as well as the recognition that support by the Commission would be helpful for promoting buy-in as it would highlight the importance of the initiative among stakeholders more effectively than if it were considered to be a purely local initiative. Such support could be provided directly by the Commission or together with cooperation partners and could comprise e.g.:

- Operational support with the implementation of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools (e.g. organisational competency assessment using EUSurvey), or
- Support with the adaption of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools to the local needs (e.g. expert advice on revising the ProcurComp^{EU} competency matrix to better fit the national/organisational context, preparing tailored training curricula or job profiles)

Provision of financial support for implementation to Member States

A number of organisations will be constrained in their ability to implement the ProcurComp^{EU} tools in line with their needs due to lack of sufficient financial and/or human resources. The Commission, together with Member States, should promote the use of the available financing instruments which can be used by Contracting Authorities to secure additional resources to support their implementation of the ProcurComp^{EU} package. The main financing instruments that can be used to this end are the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the financing provided by the Commission under the Structural Reform Support Programme.²²

Further alignment of ProcurComp^{EU} with other initiatives of the European Commission

The European Commission should ensure that ProcurComp^{EU} is aligned with other relevant initiatives and that synergies are explored and achieved on an ongoing basis. At the stage of preparing this report, two such initiatives have been identified:

- The EUSurvey tool can be used as the technological solution to develop a self-assessment tool for ProcurComp^{EU} as well as other competency frameworks developed by the European Commission.
- The job profiles defined as part of ProcurComp^{EU} can be integrated in the ESCO database (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) tool, which provides a multilingual description and classification of close to 3,000 occupations and 13,500 skills relevant for the EU labour market, education and training.

Promotion of ProcurComp^{EU} at national and international level

One important factor in the successful uptake of ProcurComp^{EU} will be the extent to which there is awareness of it among contracting authorities and stakeholders at national level, both within the EU and internationally. The implementation of communication activities that effectively raise

²² Regulation (EU) 2017/825 on the establishment of the Structural Reform Support Programme ("SRSP Regulation")

awareness and promote the implementation of ProcurComp^{EU} tools will therefore be a key activity that the European Commission should undertake. Over the near term, this may include:

- cooperation with the international organisations such as the OECD in the area of communication promoting ProcurComp^{EU} at international and EU-level events related to the implementation of EU Single Market policies.
- supporting the implementation of promotional events at national level in cooperation with national procurement authorities, professional organisations and international organisations such as the OECD.

Creating a community of practice and platform for virtual exchange

There is also interest in creating a community of practice on public procurement professionalisation leveraging on the momentum built in the process of developing the ProcurComp^{EU}. Participants in the consultation activities on the development of the tools (e.g. as part of the Advisory Committee or by attending workshops) noted how useful this has been for giving them insight into the experience in other countries and inspiring them to learn from it and launch their own professionalisation activities at national level. This points towards the opportunity to create a community of practice for Member State-level procurement leaders that can serve as a forum for the continued exchange on experiences, good practices, emerging trends and innovative approaches to applying ProcurComp^{EU} for professionalisation in public procurement in the broader sense. For example, it would be very relevant for the Commission to support the exchange between Member States on different experiences and approaches towards developing certification schemes for procurement professionals and to offer further guidance on how they can be developed on the basis of the ProcurComp^{EU} framework.

Another way to provide ongoing support to potential ProcurComp^{EU} adopters would be to create an online, moderated platform to facilitate exchange between users. This would allow for sharing of good practices, such as the definition of job profiles, as well as allowing more experienced users to answer questions from less experienced or potential users. In turn, this would generate a wealth of data that could help shape the future iterations of ProcurComp^{EU} tools such as the user guide, or other Commission support.

Development of a training plan tool to bridge the gap between the self-assessment tools and the curriculum.

Experience from the implementation of organisational assessments on a pilot basis shows that organisations need further guidance on developing a training plan which would connect the identified gaps to a training offer based on the curriculum. This points to the need for complementing the ProcurComp^{EU} package with a training plan tool, which would make the link between the competency gaps and the capacity building activities. The tool should address the following questions:

- What competency gaps should the organisation target in the short, mid and long-term?
- At which level should the training activities take place individual, job profile or organisational level?
- What types of training (formal/informal) and training formats would be most suitable?
- How should the training be organised (internally, with established external providers, etc.)?

Provision of EU-level training to public procurement practitioners

The provision of EU-level trainings on public procurement competencies would be relevant in cases where there is evidence of expected economies of scale compared to provision at national level or where the objectives of the training could not be achieved at national level. Based on this, there are three potential areas where training provided by the European Commission could be considered:

 Training on the application of EU public procurement law targeted at more advanced practitioners in this competency;

- Trainings on risk management, internal control, certification and payment in the context of procurement carried in connection to EU funds subject to audit and control by EU institutions;
- Training on public procurement policy priorities like green, social and innovative procurement;
- Train-the-trainer courses aimed at developing the capacity of national stakeholders to implement and promote the implementation of ProcurComp^{EU} tools at national and organisational level. The training can also promote the exchange of good practices and experience among the participants.

Continuous improvement of the ProcurCompEU tools

The findings of the stock-taking study indicate that continuous improvement of the tools developed to support public procurement professionalisation is necessary to ensure that they remain relevant to the evolving needs of their users and stakeholders. The planned creation of a Self-Assessment Tool on the EUSurvey platform will be a significant improvement of the tool from a user experience perspective. Further updates of the tools taking account of improved technological solutions facilitating their application will also be important for keeping them user-friendly and improving their functionalities. It will be important to also look for way of expanding the range of tools and support materials available. For example, a database of job profiles could be set up following the example of the one provided by the Scottish Government. It is therefore recommended that the European Commission make provisions for the continuous updating of the ProcurComp^{EU} tools as well as dedicated means for obtaining feedback from its users and stakeholders about how it can be improved.

PART II COUNTRY FACTSHEETS AND CASE STUDIES

1. Country factsheets



AUSTRIA

Austria

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

There are about 7,700 contracting authorities among the federal states, provinces and municipalities. ²³ The Federal Procurement Agency (BBG) acts as a central purchasing body (CPB) in Austria for all levels of government providing more than 2.7 million products and services to contracting authorities. ²⁴ Other large contracting authorities in Austria include the procurement departments of the federal states, large municipalities' hospital networks, as well as state-owned enterprises such as the Autobahn and high way financing stock corporation (ASFINAG), Austrian Federal Railway (OeBB) etc. The Federal Ministry of Justice is the primary body responsible for public procurement policy and legislation.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Currently, public procurement is not considered a standalone occupation in Austria. Public procurement professionals in central government authorities and regional and local authorities are decreasingly hired as civil servants and increasingly as contractual staff in Austria. As a limited company fully owned by the Republic of Austria and represented by the Ministry of Finance, BBG can also hire procurement staff from the private sector and on a contractual basis.²⁵

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Recruitment

Recruitment of civil servants is organised in a decentralised way by respective contracting authorities. The recruitment process for public officials at federal level is demanding as it entails a comprehensive series of tests to assess potential candidates' competencies. Regional contracting authorities' recruitment process is rather less demanding and based on requirements set independently by each contracting authority.

BBG focuses its recruitment strategy on the actual needs around the competencies of public buyer's role. As it is a multidisciplinary function, BBG is looking for candidates with product and market expertise as well as candidates with sound legal and economic backgrounds. At the level of provincial and local contracting authorities, recruitment from the private sector remains challenging due to the challenges of a public buyer role's reputation, differences in culture, as well as income gaps, between operating in the private and the public sectors. The recruitment process is a multi-stage process, and based on the require job profile, assesses a series of procurement and professional competencies, such as market and product know-how, problem-solving, consulting, negotiation, communication and presentation skills.

conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

²³ https://www.kommunalnet.at/fileadmin/user_upload/ANKOE_Studie_Zusammenfassung.pdf

²⁴ https://www.bbg.gv.at/en/service/costs-and-services-of-the-bbg/

²⁵ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment

Performance and compensation

Compensation of civil servants is based on a detailed salary scheme that varies across different government levels.

Within BBG, performance-based pay is possible – targets are defined at the company level and can also be defined at the individual level for certain roles. BBG then annually assesses whether and how those targets were met. The assessment and the overall company results feed into the determination of employees' performance-based salary component (depending on the relevant role).

Career progression

For civil servants, there are guaranteed career advances based on seniority defined by law. BBG is currently reviewing its job functions and incorporating the latest competency frameworks. Based on identified gaps and consolidation opportunities, corresponding job descriptions will be adapted and thereby will define a clear career and development path for all BBG employees.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

There is no common competency framework for public procurement professionals applicable throughout the Austrian public administration.

BBG was one of the first European CPBs to develop a procurement competency framework tailored to the specific needs of the organisation. The first version of the competency framework that was introduced included about 30 competencies ranging from commercial and purchasing competencies, legal and procedural knowledge, to analysis, creativity, project management, planning, and IT proficiency, among others. After piloting this first version, the list of competencies was deemed too numerous and complex. Henceforth, BBG simplified and streamlined the list of competencies and reduced them to 12 core competencies organised into two groups: discipline-specific and discipline-independent. The discipline specific competencies include strategic purchasing ²⁶, category management, e-procurement, economics, contract and quality management and law. Discipline independent competencies include cooperation skills, consulting experience, strategic thinking ability, negotiation techniques, and methodological expertise and project management skills.

The competency framework will be reviewed and revised based on the final ECF and will apply at both the individual and institutional level. It will allow BBG procurement professionals to assess and manage their performance and identify learning and development needs. At the organisational level, the competency framework is used to create job profiles and to support the recruitment process in order to match a candidate's skillset with the desired profile of the vacant position. Furthermore, it is used for performance assessment as well as to define the career paths of procurement professionals.

5. Training

BBG provides training, e-learning courses and information sessions on public procurement for in-house staff and external public sector employees as well as relevant business operators.

BBG's in-house education and training programme "Public Procurement Academy" is based on BBG's competency model and is structured around 4 building blocks: an on-boarding programme, a public buyer certification programme, individual training programmes and a leadership programme.

European professionalisation initiative: BBG-Vienna University joint training²⁷

In 2018, BBG and the Vienna University of Economics and Business Executive Academy launched the Public Procurement Excellence (PPE) programme aimed at providing state-of-the-art training for staff of

²⁶ Strategic purchasing refers to applying public procurement to reach wider policy goals, such as fostering sustainability and innovation but the capacity to make economic savings.

²⁷ More information is available at: https://ppe.bbg.gv.at/

existing and newly established CPBs. In addition, the programme promotes the sharing of professional experience and provides a platform for an international network of public procurement professionals.

It was the first comprehensive European training programme of its kind, initiated and funded by the European Commission. The programme enabled 33 public procurement professionals from 19 different European countries to participate.

The programme provided a unique combination of academic and practical approaches to public procurement and built upon a competency model and detailed training needs analysis. It covered aspects ranging from legal framework and centralised public procurement to strategic topics, such as SME inclusion as well as innovative and sustainable practices. The PPE courses were structured into two 3-weeks class-room blocks and consisted of academic lectures with teachers and practitioners, interactive group sessions and a final business project paper. Participants receive training in business economics, negotiation and communication. The teaching team was comprised of both public procurement experts from CPBs as well as lecturers from Universities. Graduates of the programme are accredited as "Certified Public Procurement Expert" worth 30 ECTS.

BBG's external training covers topics such as the basics of procurement law, introduction to procurement processes and e-tendering, electronic purchasing and thematic subjects such as procurement for healthcare services or "How do I become the best bidder?". Furthermore, two in-house national service points for Public Procurement Promoting Innovation (PPPI/IOeB) and Sustainable Public Procurement (naBe) are integrated into BBG organisation and strategy. Both are initiatives of the Austrian state to foster innovation, sustainability and green procurement in the public sector and offer a wide range of training and knowledge exchange as well as direct procurement support to public contracting authorities as well as to economic operators.

Furthermore, Austrian administration provides specific training for civil servants²⁸. Its curriculum includes procurement law as well as procurement of innovation.

There are also a number of private providers active in the market. For instance, the Federal Association of Materials Management, Purchasing and Logistics (BMOe) offers a range of certified programmes in strategic purchasing and supply chain management.²⁹ Contracting authorities can also book tailored inhouse training with BMOe.

At the university level, the Vienna University for Economics and Business recently created the PPE programme in cooperation with BBG, as detailed in the box above.³⁰

Type of training	Availability (training provider)		
Legal and procedural	Yes (Academy of Public Administration)		
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes		
Advanced topics	Yes (BBG, BMOe, Academy of Public		
Green public procurement	Administration, PPPI Service Centre of		
Public procurement for innovation	BBG)		
 Socially responsible public procurement 			
E-procurement			
Managerial	Yes (Academy of Public Administration)		

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²⁸ See more information at: https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/vab/seminarprogramm/index.html

²⁹ http://www.bmoe.at/Akademie/

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Austria consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

- Talent Management: It is still very challenging to attract candidates with high potential for the jobs
 within public procurement as the public sector still has the unfortunate reputation of being "old
 fashioned", formal and bureaucratic, coupled with salaries that are less competitive than in the
 private sector.
- A lack of advanced and strategic procurement skills: There has been a prevalence of training
 courses on legal aspects of procurement. For public procurement professionals, there is a lack of
 training aimed at building competencies for more advanced strategic procurement skills, such as
 market, business and technology skills as well as capabilities around SME-friendly tender strategies
 and sustainable and innovation procurement. By the same token, public procurement professionals
 report a need for specific training and an exchange of best practices on the development and
 application of advanced evaluation criteria such as TCO / LCC and best price / quality ratio (MEAT
 concept).

Priorities for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

- A new integrated procurement competency framework for BBG employees: BBG seeks to
 further improve its existing competency framework and create clear career paths for its employees.
 It engages in close cooperation with other CPBs and leading educational institutions to further foster
 professionalisation of its staff.
- Fostering strategic procurement: There are strong efforts by BBG to further advance the application of SME inclusion, innovation and sustainable procurement practices in Austria. For this purpose, an SME competence centre, the PPPI service point as well as the Sustainable Public Procurement service point were integrated into BBG's core procurement processes and to provide capacity building support to contracting authorities and economic operators across Austria.





Belgium

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Belgian public procurement system involves about 3,500 contracting authorities across the three regions: Wallonia, Flanders and the Brussels Capital regions. At the federal level, several bodies are in charge of the coordination of public procurement: The Federal Public Service Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Central Procurement Body for the Federal Services, and the Advice and Procurement Policy Unit (APP). The last two public services are part of the Federal Public Service Policy and Support (FPS BOSA) administrative capacity of the procurement workforce.

2. Administrative capacity of the procurement workforce

The administrative capacity of contracting authorities varies depending on their size and experience. The larger the contracting authority, the more likely it is to have public procurement specialists and be split into different specialisations (technicians, economists, administrative support, lawyers, etc.). In smaller contracting authorities, public procurement is one of several tasks that civil servants perform. To further develop their capacities, regional contracting authorities are making an effort to centralise procurement procedures through framework contracts and central purchasing bodies (CPBs).

Within the Belgian public procurement workforce, there are two types of staff: civil servants and contractual staff³¹. In cases of specific needs and requirements, contractual agents, i.e. consultants or experts, and inter-municipal companies may be hired on a short-term basis.

3. Human resource management of the procurement workforce

There are no specific human resource processes for public procurement professionals. Human resource practices are decentralised, with federal, regional and local public authorities making their own policies regarding remuneration, hiring, promotion, holidays, and pensions³².

At the federal level, human resource processes are managed by the DG Recruitment and Development of FPS BOSA. FPS BOSA provides civil servants with a human resource management framework, from recruitment to selection, career development and evaluation steps. The implementation of the framework is then ensured by the specific federal services. The Selection et Orientation (SELOR)³³, a

³¹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

32 EC (2018). Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Belgium. Available at https://client.selor.be/nl/

service part of the DG Recruitment and Development of FPS BOSA, acts as a recruitment agency, facilitating the selection and screening of applicants for mostly public sector positions at the federal level. In cases where an official of a specific service from a regional or local administration is accredited by *SELOR* ³⁴, this official is authorised to conduct the selection procedure independently. Obtaining this certification requires passing two tests: the first pertains to a profile analysis, while the second uses STA methodology to select and screen candidates.

Regions and Communities also use SELOR for recruiting civil servants, except for Flemish authorities, who have their own agency. All Regions and Communities have their own recruitment processes. Despite an effort towards standardisation, each municipality remains autonomous to set its own framework, recruitment rules, requirements, etc.

Recruitment

At the federal level, all vacant positions are communicated in advance via SELOR or contracting authorities' websites, unless they are filled by internal transfer. While most candidates for federal level public procurement positions come from the public sector, applications from candidates from the private sector are equally considered. For higher-level positions, relevant experience may be required. This is rarely the case for lower grade positions, where the focus is rather placed on training and professional development once staff is recruited.

Economists, lawyers, technicians (including engineers and secretarial profiles) are amongst the most sought after in regard to public procurement. These profiles sometimes require knowledge of, and experience in, procedural and legal aspects of public procurement. However, there are no specific requirements that apply to the public procurement function.

Typically, requirements for public procurement positions vary depending on the grade of the position (i.e. the level of seniority) and the specific role of the public procurement professional (i.e. legal, technical or administrative). There are four levels among public servants following their level of qualifications: A-level civil servants are the most qualified and have a Master's degree in a relevant field, sometimes in addition to relevant experience. They are followed by B-,C- and D-levels. A-level is often required for public procurement professionals who work at the central level or in CPBs (for certain tasks). At the local level, B- and C-level civil servants are more common. It should however be clarified that promotion selections are organised regularly to allow access to higher levels of functions. This is only possible after a series of tests.³⁵

This means that A- and B-level civil servants have a university diploma not exceeding a Master's level in any field (not necessarily relevant to public procurement), and C-level civil servants have a secondary school certificate.

Performance and compensation

There is no specific performance and compensation framework for public procurement professionals, but rather generic frameworks that apply to civil servants and contractual staff. At the federal level, performance is reviewed on an annual basis, and performance ratings affect the progression of salary rates. An "exceptional" rating speeds up the progression, while a "to be improved" or "insufficient" rating slows down the progression. This progression comes in addition to annual salary increases. Staff can also be promoted based on their annual evaluation. Currently, there are no national performance targets for public procurement professionals related to, for instance, the share of innovative or responsible procurement or the optimal and efficient use of a budget.

Regional contracting authorities have different approaches. In the Brussels-Capital Region, each civil servant has individual objectives to achieve and is subject to an evaluation every two years. In addition, each department is assigned operational objectives that are assessed annually by their Executive Board. Therefore, specific public procurement objectives can be set at both the individual and collective

³⁴ https://client.selor.be/nl/

³⁵ See example of tests for the federal level at: https://www.selor.be/fr/proc%C3%A9dures/accession-au-niveau-a/

levels. In the Walloon Region, there are no quantified objectives for agents that are linked to strategy (i.e. broader department's objectives). Although this may be true, the collective objectives of the service in relation to the policy guidelines (e.g. social dumping, social clauses) must be respected at the individual level. In the Flemish Region, authorities use certain indicators to assess their agents annually. These indicators are based on the number and nature of procurement projects that agents are assigned to. In addition, organisation-wide objectives (such as sustainability) may also be included in the objectives of the agents.

At the local level, very little use is made of indicators concerning the use of public procurement to achieve certain objectives.

Career progression

There is no specific public procurement career progression defined at the federal level. Generally, two main tracks are proposed when it comes to career progression at the federal level and in Flanders: either becoming an expert or opting for a team management function. There is no specific career progression path set in the Walloon and Brussels-Capital Regions.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Federal and regional governments in Belgium have implemented a number of competency frameworks in an effort to modernise human resource management in public administration.³⁶ For instance, Flanders has adopted the European e-competence framework³⁷, although its use is not mandatory.

The federal government has also defined recommended job profiles for public procurement professionals, focusing on legal advice and purchasing. These include mapping key competencies according to specific job profiles. Regional governments have not established specific job roles or profiles but instead rely on specific job descriptions drawn up for each recruitment, describing the skills required, including for public procurement professionals. Flanders is the only region that has created and maintains a "skills dictionary", a database tool serving as a basis for establishing job descriptions (including the competencies required) for public procurement professionals and other administrative functions. The Ministry of Defence is in the process of creating a similar tool.

Public procurement job profiles are often divided into three categories. The first focuses on legal aspects, the second on technical aspects and the third on administrative aspects. At the federal level and in major cities, these three roles are recognised independently. At the local level, small and medium sized administrations distinguish two roles: technical roles, and the administrative and legal role.

Professionalising public procurement at the federal and regional levels

Based on the Royal Decree of 22 December 2017, efforts at the federal level via the new approach "centralised public procurement at the federal level" have been carried out to expand training-related services in the field of public procurement, thus contributing to the professionalisation of public procurement professionals³⁸. This includes the creation of the Central Purchasing Service, which allows for the building up of capacities of public procurement professionals, who face a greater level of complexity in their daily jobs with increasingly advanced public procurement procedures.

At the regional level, some have taken the lead in further developing their public procurement capacities. Flanders developed a 2016-2020 plan that explicitly refers to the professionalisation of

³⁶ See more information at https://www.oecd.org/gov/pem/39375676.pdf; and https://soc.kule.uven.be/io/onderzoek/project/files/hrm27-country-report-belgium.pdf

https://soc.kule.uven.be/io/onderzoek/project/files/hrm27-country-report-belgium.pdf

37 See more information at https://www.cepis.org/media/EU ICT Professionalism Project %20FINAL REPORT.pdf

³⁸ See more information at https://www.publicprocurement.be/fr/services-federaux/la-concertation-des-achats-federaux

public procurement professionals³⁹. The plan presents some high-level strategic commitments of the region. These include, inter alia, deepening market knowledge about the goods and services being supplied; approaching procurement from a strategic, tactical and operational perspective; accounting for life-cycle costs where possible. The Flemish CPB plays a key role in providing training on procurement, and in establishing standardised requirements, criteria, processes and methodologies as much as possible. In 2009 the Flanders region and its Competence Centre for innovation procurement⁴⁰ developed an approach that encourages procurers to go through the complete procurement procedure, starting from political ambitions and procurement needs for innovative solutions all the way to the final procurement.⁴¹

In the Brussels-Capital Region, public procurement-related training courses have been made mandatory, while the Walloon Region does not have a specific official professionalisation strategy.

5. Training

At the federal level, the unit in charge of public procurement training is APP. This service is part of the public procurement unit of FPS BOSA and provides training courses, manuals and standards on public procurement legislation. In addition, the Procurement Service Centre (*SPC*) and the Royal Military Academy offer a number of training courses on the subject of central procurement.

Several training institutions, including the regional schools of Public Administration and the regional procurement offices, also provide procurement-related training. Some universities also provide academic training integrating public procurement. Other training programmes may be provided by the private sector and associations.

At the federal level, public procurement professionals are required to attend a training on the common procurement policy as part of multi-year plan. At the regional level, there is no such general training requirements in place, with the exception of the Brussels-Capital Region, which provides its agents with a two-hour training covering public procurement basics.

The following types of trainings are available in Belgium:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (APP, Ecole Régionale d'Administration Publique - ERAP, Ecole d'Administration publique Wallonie Bruxelles – EAP, Aankoopcentrales Lokaal Bestuur Vlaanderen, SPC, schools of Public Administration, Université Libre de Bruxelles or Université Catholique Louvain, Royal Military Academy)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (APP, schools of Public Administration), Aankoopcentrales Lokaal Bestuur Vlaanderen, Royal Military Academy
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (APP), Aankoopcentrales Lokaal Bestuur Vlaanderen
Managerial	Yes (schools of Public Administration, Royal Military Academy)

³⁹ The plan is called *Vlaams plan overheidsopdrachten - voor een strategisch en gecoördineerd beleid overheidsopdrachten voor vlaanderen*

⁴⁰ See more information at http://innovatieveoverheidsopdrachten.be/

⁴¹ See more information at https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/innovation-procurement-initiatives-around-europe

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Belgium consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Contracting authorities struggle to attract and retain qualified and knowledgeable public procurement profiles. This is explained by the fact that public procurement is seen as a legal and procedural matter, often linked to complex, heavy and redundant legislative framework and processes. In addition, remuneration in the public sector is not as competitive as in the private sector.
- Access to training is limited in local contracting authorities, including in major cities. This
 presents challenges for public procurement professionals who wish to maintain or upgrade their
 capacities.

Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

Policy makers continue their efforts to centralise procurement systems at the federal, regional and local levels. At the federal level, a new approach was designed and is being implemented regarding the centralisation of public procurement. This approach entails a new model of cooperation between various departments and services for the management of joint procurement, as established by the Royal Decree of 22 December 2017. 42 Regions have put in place regional procurement centres for their departments and services, which are sometimes used by local contracting authorities (such as the Agentschap voor Facilitair Management in the Flanders region).

⁴² Royal Decree 22 December 2017 is available at: http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2018/01/16_1.pdf#Page9



BULGARIA

Bulgaria

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The number of contracting authorities in Bulgaria has increased from 4,662 in 2012 to 6,441 in 2018⁴³, due to a push to increase local control by decentralising budgets. On the other hand, at the central level, some effort has been made to centralise public procurement. For instance, the central purchasing body within the Ministry of Finance has significantly expanded its scope in recent years. The central purchasing body for the health sector was established in 2015, as part of the administrative structure of the Ministry of Health. It is responsible for organising and conducting public procurement procedures and concluding framework agreements for supplies of medicinal products intended for medical establishments. In 2016, another central purchasing body - the central purchasing body for the needs of municipalities, was established within the National Association of the Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria.

2. Administrative capacity of the procurement workforce

Public procurement is not formally recognised as a specific occupation. In general, staff working for contracting authorities are both civil servants and contractual staff.⁴⁶ In some cases, contracting authorities may also use external consultants.

While there are often specialised procurement units⁴⁷ or at least public procurement professionals in central government authorities and large municipalities, smaller contracting authorities may not have employees working full-time on public procurement. Further professionalisation of public procurement professionals remains challenging in particular at the municipal level, due to their limited financial capacities.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

There are no specific human resource processes and systems in place for public procurement professionals. Civil servants working in a public procurement function are subject to rules governing

⁴³ See more information at: http://rop3-app1.aop.bg:77778/portal/page?_pageid=93,1590259&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

⁴⁴ OECD (2016). Public Procurement Training for Bulgaria: Needs and Priorities.

⁴⁵ European Commission (2019). Bulgaria Country Report.

⁴⁶ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

⁴⁷ The Public Procurement Law (section IV, Article 245 (1)) requires that certain contracting authorities (with budget over BGN 20 million (EUR 10.2 million) and 20 procurement procedures per year on average in the last three years) set up a specialised procurement unit.

civil service, as described in the Civil Service Act (1999), while contract employees are covered by the general Labour Code⁴⁸. Contractual staff may have a temporary or indefinite contract and work only as technical experts. On the other hand, civil servants are systematically appointed to a permanent position for technical, expert as well as managerial roles, based on an open competition 49. As stated in the Public Administration Act, recruitment and overall human resource management is within the competence of the individual contracting authority, and their own human resource unit.

Recruitment

In the central government as in local authorities, the recruitment process is often divided into four stages. First, the authority checks the information in the candidates' applications to make sure they comply with the requirement set for the job. Then, selected candidates are invited to take a multiplechoice test where questions on procurement legislation are included for public procurement positions. Successful candidates further take a practical exam. For instance, the exam can take the form of a written opinion on a problem related to a specific situation during the procurement procedure. Lastly, successful candidates are invited to an interview where an appointed commission further evaluates their knowledge on public procurement as well as their soft skills.

There are minimum legal requirements applicable to all civil servants, but none specific to public procurement professionals. The specific minimum requirements (including necessary competences) for a given position are set in the job description by the respective authority. Public procurement professionals are expected to have knowledge and experience in public procurement in line with the position's seniority⁵⁰ and profile. Their profiles often include specialists in finance, law or engineering.

Performance and compensation

The assessment of the performance of public procurement professionals with the status of civil servants is governed by the Civil Service Act and the Ordinance on the terms and conditions for assessment of the performance of staff in state administration for civil servants. It is carried out annually by the immediate superior and it is based on the achievement of the objectives set in advance, the fulfilment of immediate tasks and demonstrated competencies. The assessment is similar for contractual staff. Their performance is evaluated annually, as defined in the Labour Code and Ordinance on the terms and conditions for assessment of the performance of staff in state administration.

Compensation for civil servants and contractual staff working as public procurement professionals is defined in the aforementioned regulations. Remuneration is made up of a basic salary, plus additional remunerations (for night work, for overtime, for work on public holidays, for time spent on standby duty, for achieved results, etc.), as regulated by the law51,52. The salary gap between the public and private sector remains significant and often results in high turnover and a lack of expertise across the public sector.

Career progression

Positions occupied by civil servants and contractual staff under labour law are determined in the Classifier of Positions in the Administration. It sets out the minimum requirements related to an educational degree acquired and rank or professional experience needed to take up each position, thus determining career progression. There are three career paths - management, 53 expert, and technical,

⁴⁸ The appointment of civil servants follows a legally established selection procedure, the stages of which may also include passing a test and/or a practical exam. Employees under a labour contract within the administration shall be appointed in accordance with the Labour Code.

49 However, there are specific appointments that do not require an exam or an open competition, such as reappointment in the

same administrative unit, appointment in a newly created administrative unit until an open competition is organised, but for no more than 6 months, a permanent or temporary transfer to another administrative unit, part-time employment, etc.

⁵⁰ While junior experts are not required to have previous professional experience, senior experts are required to have a professional experience matching the seniority of the position.

51 See more information at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Archive:Public_employment_-_Bulgaria

⁵² European Commission (2018). Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Bulgaria

⁵³ A person occupying a managerial position within the administration cannot implement it under a labour contract. (Law on Administration, Art. 13)

all applicable to public procurement professionals. Similar to the recruitment process, career progression is handled at the individual contracting authority level, and follows the same structure. There are five levels of seniority for the management path, i.e. Head of Unit, Head of Department, Director, Director-General, and Secretary-General, and four for the expert track, i.e. junior expert, senior expert, chief expert, and state expert. Promotions from one level or position to another is based on performance assessment or open competition. This may in turn incentivise public procurement professionals to perform well and acquire new sets of skills.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

The Bulgarian public administration has increasing experience with the design and implementation of competency frameworks, including the European e-competence Framework (e-CF),⁵⁴ and the Customs Competency Framework,⁵⁵ but none in the field of public procurement. There are no standardised public procurement professional job profiles. Instead, contracting authorities individually set up job profiles and requirements.

In line with its 2014-2020 National Public Procurement Strategy, Bulgaria has made considerable progress in building capacity in public administration, including the professionalisation of public procurement professionals. This was done by i) enhancing the capacity of the Public Procurement Agency (PPA); ii) organising regular training events for different target groups (such as contracting authorities, managing authorities of operational programs, control bodies, judges, etc.); and iii) introducing public procurement as a discipline in higher education⁵⁶. In addition, the OECD jointly with the key national stakeholders, developed a training plan for 2017-2019 based on a thorough analysis of public procurement needs.⁵⁷ This plan is based on four key pillars: i) face to face workshops and seminars; ii) e-learning; iii) on-the-job training and job swapping; and iv) communication and awareness-raising.

Developing competence in green procurement

Through the GreenS project, Bulgaria is building the administrative capacities of local contracting authorities regarding the implementation of Green Public Procurement (GPP). As part of GPP, the National Association of the Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB) partnered with the National Trust EcoFund (NTEF), helping it adopt green procurement principles for its Investment Climate Program. In particular, the NAMRB provided methodological support, specifications, as well as technical templates, implemented in tender documents to be used by public procurement professionals. The project is designed to increase the capacities of public authorities to save energy, cut carbon emissions and reduce costs throughout the lifecycle of acquired supplies⁵⁸.

As part of this initiative, three pilot-procurement projects have been selected to test the implementation and innovations in GPP, namely "Electric cars for 20 Bulgarian municipalities and 7 governmental institutions". Thanks to NTEF's financial support to municipalities this project was successful. 39 electric vehicles were procured in 2017, and the reduction of CO2 emissions reached 117,758kg⁵⁹. Overall, this pilot project helped the NTEF and municipalities build their capacities with regard to GPPs – showing that such success is most likely to take place when linking theory (GPP training and guidelines) to practice (pilot projects).

⁵⁴ See more information at: http://pictet-tempus.sstu.ru/doc/Marinoni%2031032014_EU_eCF.pdf

⁵⁵ See more information at: http://oldwww.customs.bg/en/pubs/7783

 $^{^{56} \} See \ more \ information \ at \ \underline{http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/296421525762408268/EN-Bulgaria-Veselina-Atanasova.pdf}$

⁵⁷ OECD (2016). Public Procurement Training for Bulgaria: Needs and Priorities.

⁵⁸ See more information at https://www.namrb.org/namb-supports-the-development-of-green-public-procurements-gpps-in-bulgaria

⁵⁹ See more information at: http://greensproject.eu/en/20-bulgarian-municipalities-and-7-governmental-institutions-refurbished-their-car-fleet-with-electric-cars/

Under the Bulgarian –Swiss Cooperation Program, the Public Procurement Agency has implemented a GPP project. Its purpose was to raise awareness about the benefits of green procurement and to encourage contracting authorities/contracting entities to apply environmentally friendly criteria in award procedures. To do so, a practical handbook with 12 product groups identified as suitable for the Bulgarian market was elaborated and published. Targeted training for procurement specialists with Swiss experts in green procurement were also organised. An e-training course was developed and is available for civil servants on the Institute of Public Administration's platform.

5. Training

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) offers training programs for civil servants in two core streams: compulsory training for career development, and optional specialised training for professional development. The IPA has eight major training programs with courses spanning several topics, including public procurement. The courses on public procurement may be given in collaboration with the Public Procurement Agency.

The National Institute of Justice, a specialised institution established to provide professional training and to enhance the qualification of judicial professionals, also provides training in public procurement. Additionally, there are some non-government organisations that offer training on public procurement for practitioners, both from the administrative and private sectors.

Some contracting authorities provide internal training on public procurement for their staff members (e.g. the Ministry of Finance). The same is true in some private organisations. However, due to a lack of certification systems, both for the programmes and for the trainers, the quality of the training offer is unknown. ⁶⁰

Within the implementation of different projects, the PPA has also provided training on topics such as e-procurement and green public procurement for different target groups.

There is no official certification scheme for public procurement professionals.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (IPA, National Institute of Justice,
	Ministry of Finance)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (IPA, Ministry of Finance)
Advanced topics	Yes (IPA and PPA)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (IPA)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Bulgaria consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of procurement professionals

• Attracting, training and retaining public procurement professionals. The public administration cannot provide competitive compensation in comparison to the private sector. This is a key issue,

⁶⁰ Public procurement – a study on administrative capacity in the EU, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country_profile/bg.pdf

- especially given the complexity of public procurement and the need for extensive knowledge and various competencies.
- Frequent regulatory changes, such as successive amendments to the Public Procurement Act, make the public procurement profession more complex and uncertain, and thus less attractive for potential applicants.

Priorities to the professionalisation of procurement professionals

- The government will further enhance the administrative capacity and professionalisation in the public procurement field, in line with the 2014-2020 National Public Procurement Strategy and the OECD Training Plan. Training programmes will target 125 municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants.
- The Bulgarian government is making concrete steps to make e-procurement operational. In this regard, PPA has planned training events in 2019 to use the upcoming e-Procurement platform.





Croatia

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Croatia is organised as a unitary state with three levels of governance: national, county and municipal. There are 5,168 contracting authorities across all territorial levels, of which, 1,486 were active in 2018. In the same year, public procurement accounted for 14.88% of the GDP. The Directorate for Public Procurement Policy (DPPP), within the Ministry of the Economy, is responsible for the development, improvement and coordination of the entire public procurement system. As such, four specific Directorates oversee the analysis of public procurement procedures, the development of the public procurement system and training, and the e-procurement system. The State Commission for the Supervision of Public Procurement Procedures is the body responsible for resolving legal disputes regarding public procurement.

2. Administrative capacity of the procurement workforce

The overall capacity of public procurement professionals in Croatia has improved since the introduction of a certification scheme in 2009, which was put in place as part of the professionalisation strategy Croatia developed in the context of its European Union's accession process. The Croatian Public Procurement Law requires that for any public procurement procedure worth more than EUR 26,000 for services and goods or EUR 66,000 for works, a public procurement committee must be appointed, and it must include as least one certified procurement practitioner⁶¹. While contracting authorities are allowed to acquire such capacity externally, over the years many of them have been certifying their own staff. Indeed, a decade after the introduction of the original reform, 6,581 professionals that deal with public procurement have received training and a certification. Among those, around 35 are highly recognised experts. The Croatian certification scheme is considered by the DPPP to have contributed to an increased recognition of public procurement as a standalone occupation.

Similar to other MS, procurement professionals in larger contracting authorities tend to be more trained and skilled because they are in a full-time procurement positions, whereas small contracting authorities usually contract procurement experts on the basis of their needs.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Typically, public procurement professionals and certified professionals are civil servants⁶². As such, they are governed by the rules and obligations set in the Civil Servants Act of 2005. However, there is no particular regulation or policy governing the fact that certified procurement professionals can work

61 https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/good_practices/GP_fiche_08.pdf

⁶² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

in several contracting authorities. The Ministry of Public Administration is the responsible body for the Human Resource Management policy of public administration.

Recruitment

Recruitment is decentralised allowing each contracting authority to select their own staff depending on their needs (specific skills and levels of expertise). Recruitment relies on a competitive and open procedure. The selection of civil servants is based on the candidate's knowledge, skills and competences, which are typically assessed via tests and/or interviews. In terms of qualifications, contracting authorities typically look for economists and lawyers that have experience and have obtained the public procurement certificate. There is a high demand for such experienced procurement staff that is difficult to find on the market, therefore, contracting authorities increasingly tend to train their own staff for certification.

Performance and compensation

An annual appraisal is used to assess the performance of civil servants. The appraisal is conducted by the direct supervisor who assesses the results achieved compared to the tasks assigned at the beginning of the period. There is no particular reward system for procurement practitioners, such as a bonus system for a particular performance. Nevertheless, as a general principle, complex tasks such as working on EU-funds related project are rewarded with a bonus. However, this depends on the internal job classification of each contracting authority. By and large, compensation in the public sector is less competitive than the private sector.

Career progression

The Croatian career progression for civil servants is structured around a classification system that distinguishes amongst three categories of positions, namely lower, higher and managerial (e.g. junior advisor, advisor, senior advisor and manager). Promotions are merit-based and usually require an internal call procedure and a positive performance assessment. The career structure for public buyers follows the same progression as that of civil servants.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

While Croatia has longstanding experience with certifying public procurement professionals, it does not have a comprehensive competency framework that applies to all procurement professionals, nor a tool that helps assess public procurement professionals' competencies.

In regard to procurement competencies, there is a 50-hour basic training course that includes a module on general procurement management, where professionals are taught that the procurement is a multidisciplinary job, and procurement teams should therefore reflect multiple subject-matter expertise. The procurement team can consist of legal, economic and sectoral/ technical experts.

5. Training

The Ministry of the Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts is the main provider of training in public procurement. It is also the body responsible for issuing and renewing certification. In addition, about 50 training providers have been trained and certified to deliver the certification training courses.

Three training courses are organised free of charge by the Ministry. In terms of advanced topics, the training offer by the DPPP covers green public procurement (GPP), public procurement for innovation (PPI), and socially responsible public procurement (SRPP). The Ministry used to provide a course to train contracting authorities to use the e-procurement national system, however since the full adoption of e-submission in 2016, these courses are almost no longer delivered as the majority of contracting authorities have been trained.

Professionalisation initiative: From a paper based to a digital certification of public procurement professionals

In 2009, Croatia made it obligatory for certified procurement professionals to be involved in all the steps of the procedure and ensure that the procedure is conducted in compliance with the law. A decade later, a pool of 6,581 public procurement professionals have been certified. Often, contracting authorities tend to contract external certified professionals for the sole purpose of conducting a procedure rather than training its own staff. However, this practice is changing, and contracting authorities are increasingly training their full-time staff.

To further support this change and make the certification more easily accessible, the DPPP introduced e-education in the public procurement platform⁶³ that supports and enables the interaction among users i.e. procurement professionals, training providers and the DPPP.

More specifically, the platform provides a channel of direct communication between the training schools and the Ministry and among procurement professionals. In addition, the platform is used to remind participants to renew their certification every three year. At the Ministry level, it is a tool to gather statistics in real time.

The platform also provides several registers including, a trainer's and expert's register, a register of authorised training schools, certificate holders and a list of approved training programs. These may range from public procurement procedures to criteria for the qualitative selection of the economic operator, sustainable and green public procurement or techniques and instruments for electronic and bulk procurement.

Individuals taking part in the certification process and registered on the platform can enrol online for training courses, have access to upcoming training dates, learn about the exam duration and format, and register for exams.

At the university level, some coursework is offered in public procurement, but no full degrees.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Ministry of the Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Ministry of the Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, private providers)
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (Ministry of the Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Ministry of Environment and Energy, HAMAG-BICRO and private providers)
Managerial	No

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Croatia consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

A need for hands-on experience beyond training: Procurement expertise is based on practical
experience acquired through working on the job. Only practice teaches procurement professionals
key skills in risk management and problem-solving experience that cannot be replaced with
theoretical examples in a training course.

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⁶³ https://egradani-izobrazba.mingo.hr/&usg=ALkJrhj-kmvXXbtQYbc0XvIXLz1VTVR1Rw

Priorities for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

• Advanced training in cooperation with universities: To reach a more advanced level of professionalisation, it is key to set up higher level education, such as MBA degrees. Such high degrees of professionalisation would concern a select pool of highly expert buyers.





Cyprus

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Cyprus's public procurement system is decentralised with approximately 600 contracting authorities across the country. Municipalities and local authorities make up about 75% of all contracting authorities. However, approximately 20 contracting authorities including the Ministry of health, the police department, the public works department, the department of IT systems, carry out the majority of the procurement volume. Public sector procurement spending amounts to over EUR 500 million annually.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not recognised as a standalone occupation in Cyprus. Currently, at the central level, the public procurement workforce is composed of civil servants⁶⁴ who are not required to get any procurement-specific education. Most public procurement professionals are infrequent procurers, running just one or two procedures per year. Procurement expertise is concentrated at the Central Government level, specifically within six ministerial and departmental procurement units. However, public buyers operating in such units are not necessarily procurement experts, but rather subject-matter experts relying on their experience as professionals in their specific industry.

The competent authority for public procurement in Cyprus, the Public Procurement Directorate of the Treasury of the Republic of Cyprus, has several roles, including the professionalisation and capacity building of the public procurement workforce. The Treasury is the only training centre for procurement for all contracting authorities in Cyprus and is generally seen as a procurement Competency Centre. It develops and shares good practices in procurement, instilling a culture of collaboration and conformity with the law and public procurement principles among procurement professionals across the country.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

At the central level, the Public Service Commission is responsible for the appointment, promotion, transfer, secondment, retirement and the disciplinary control of public officers. The Public Service Law regulates the function of the Public Service Commission and establishes the system for recruitment and promotion. Contractual staff in semi-governmental organisations and local authorities are governed by different legislation.

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⁶⁴ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

Recruitment

There is no specific recruitment process for public buyers in Cyprus. Buyers are hired as civil servants to whom procurement tasks and responsibilities are assigned later on. However, some bodies governed by public law such as the Electricity Authority have a procurement department and may have their own specific recruitment practices for procurement hires.

Performance and compensation

Civil servants, including all public buyers, are subject to an annual performance appraisal. The goal of the performance appraisal is to guide and align civil servants' conduct to meet organisational goals through the definition of personal objectives set on the basis of their competencies and skills, job roles, and job-related activities. The performance appraisal is not linked to promotion, instead it was put in place to encourage continuous feedback and foster organisational efficiency among the general public administration including contracting authorities.

The Law on State Budgets defines the salary scales for civil servants. Every position is assigned a scale or a combination of scales ranging from A1 (entry level scale, for positions with minimum requirements) to A16 (highest scale, for Directors of relatively small Departments). Directors of large Departments, Directors and employees at other senior level positions receive a fixed salary.

Career progression

The career progression of procurers is the same as the civil service progression and promotion, based on principles of merit, qualifications and seniority.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Although Cyprus did not have a lot of experience with competency frameworks in the past, the Treasury made a proposal to the council of ministers for the creation of procurement professional roles. This proposal is part of a large procurement reform launched in 2015. It is now in the process of implementation, following decision no. 86.929 of 28 February 2019 (see more information in the box below). To follow a career in procurement, candidates will be required to obtain a 'procurement professional' certificate. This is to ensure that individuals responsible for public procurement are qualified professionals in the area and have been trained to carry out various procurement duties. Such a certificate will not be mandatory, but rather recommended to all future full-time procurement officers who deal with procurement procedures and contracts.

Three-pronged approach to professionalisation in Cyprus

The Treasury of the Republic of Cyprus has implemented three complementary professionalisation strategies in recent years to address weaknesses in its public procurement system.

The first strategy aims to centralise some purchases by establishing a **State Shared Service Centre** within the Treasury of the Republic of Cyprus, which launches and follows procurement procedures on behalf of contracting authorities that do not have the capacity or expertise to do so.

The second initiative aims to promote the professionalisation of procurement practitioners by introducing a **certification for public procurement professionals**, as well as the development of academic and practical training. The third proposed initiative aims to improve communication among professional buyers, and by doing so build a community of practice by creating **a network of procurers**. Each contracting authority in the network would act as a contact point for the Treasury. Network members commit to acquiring a certain level of

knowledge in procurement and engaging with other contact points to share good practices and lessons learnt.

5. Training

The primary provider of public procurement training in Cyprus is the Treasury, which offers courses to contracting authorities at all levels on general procurement principles and best practices, legal matters, and the use of e-procurement systems. In 2018, the Treasury delivered 30 training sessions to around 400 individuals who, on average, attended two to three different sessions each.

In addition to the core curriculum, there are some specialised courses. The European Office of Cyprus offers a training programme for central purchasing body officers, leveraging best practices to improve public procurement. The training focuses on managing markets and the inclusion of SMEs. ⁶⁵ Additionally, the Cyprus Energy Agency and the Environment Department have designed a free training seminar on Green Public Procurement. The training seminar is organised in cooperation with the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration.

With regards to academic education in public procurement, a private Cypriot university provides a course on public procurement law as part of its Bachelor of Law degree. The course covers the relevant legislative framework, and principal case law around Public Procurement Law, from both the Supreme Court of the Republic of Cyprus and the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The main training provider for civil servants, the Academy of Public Administration (KADD), however, does not provide specific training in public procurement. Moreover, training or certificates in public procurement are not required of procurement practitioners in Cyprus.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Treasury of the Republic of Cyprus, private university)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (European Office of Cyprus (managing markets, inclusion of SMEs)
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes, for green public procurement (Cyprus Energy Agency and the Environment Department)
Managerial	Yes (Cyprus Academy of Public Administration)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Cyprus consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- A lack of structure and incentives to advance professionalisation of the procurement workforce
 in the whole spectrum of public procurement, despite the certificate that was introduced;
- Most practitioners are not full-time buyers at both management and operational levels;

⁶⁵ https://www.publicspendforum.net/blogs/nancy-clinton/2017/08/31/cyprus-training-central-purchasing-body-officers-enhance-sme-inclusion/

• **High turnover of contracting authority staff** undermines the impact of investment in training. New employees need to be constantly trained while experienced employees leave the organisation seeking better remuneration and awards.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- To identify top procurement professional performers and support them in developing commercial skills to better achieve value for money in every stage of the procurement cycle;
- To encourage the use of the State Shared Service Centre within the Treasury as a means to increase the professionalisation of contracting authorities. The State Shared Service Centre launches and follows procurement procedures on behalf of contracting authorities that do not have the capacity or expertise to do so. They also broaden coverage of framework agreements to include the maximum possible common needs of purchasers.



CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Republic

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Czech Republic is highly decentralised with about 1,989 contracting authorities active in 2016 at the central, regional and local contracting authorities responsible for their own public procurement, without central coordination. ⁶⁶ While there is no Central Purchasing Body, efforts to increase aggregation of procurement demand through joint purchasing can be observed at central level. ⁶⁷ This is also stimulated by the National Electronic Procurement system, which use is mandatory for all central government bodies.

The Ministry of Regional Development (MoRD) is the primary body responsible for issuing legislation and implementing public procurement regulations. It provides support and guidance to contracting authorities and manages the public procurement and concessions portal⁶⁸.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

While public procurement capacities vary depending on the size of contracting authorities, the country struggles with adequate skills and administrative capacity.⁶⁹ Large contracting authorities often have a specialised purchasing department, while regional and local authorities often do not have full time public procurement professionals.

In Czech Republic, public procurement professionals can either be civil servants⁷⁰ or contractual employees mostly in the case of regional and local authorities. Private sector experts can also be hired on an ad hoc basis, when specific (often legal) expertise is required.

There are no specific professional requirements or job profiles for civil servants working on public procurement, and no system of certification or accreditation of their procurement knowledge and skills. Public procurement is hence not considered as a standalone occupation in Czech Republic.

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⁶⁶ European Commission (2018). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU Czech Republic Country Profile, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country_profile/cz_pdf

procure ment/study/country_profile/cz.pdf

67 Resolutions No. 563/2011, No. 924/2014, No. 289/2015 promote the aggregation of procurement at central government level, and e.g. require the establishment of lists of commodities that must be purchased jointly.

68 https://www.mmr.cz/en/uvod

⁶⁹ European Commission (2018). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU Czech Republic Country Profile, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country_profile/cz.pdf

procurement/study/country_profile/cz.pdf

70 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Human resources processes are governed by the Civil Servants Act for the civil servants working at central level; and the Law (312/2002 Coll.) for civil servants working in territorial self-governing units. Last, the status of contractual employees is regulated by the Labour Code (Nr. 262/2006 Coll.). The recruitment, development, trainings, progression and promotion are managed each individual contracting authority.

Recruitment

Each contracting authority manages independently their own recruitment process. To become civil servants working on public procurement at central level, candidates need to pass an official exam including exercises on public procurement, and that is then assessed by the Ministry of Regional development. At regional and local levels, public procurement job offers are posted on the contracting authority's website and follow a traditional process (application; assessment; interviews).

Individual contracting authorities have flexibility in defining the competences required when recruiting public procurement professionals. Candidates with legal and administration backgrounds are often favoured, together with those having direct public procurement experience and knowledge. As recruiting experienced profiles is challenging, candidates without or with limited experience are often hired by contracting authorities and trained later on.

Performance and compensation

As per the Labour code and Civil Servant Act, the remuneration is based on the seniority and the complexity of the tasks related to the position. Yet, each individual contracting authority is in charge of the performance and compensation processes for it staff.

Civil servants and contractual employees' performance are assessed annually, but no specific objectives regarding public procurement are included in this process.

The remuneration is not competitive in comparison to the private sector's, making it challenging for contracting authorities to hire experienced public procurement profiles.

Career progression

There is no fixed career progression defined at national level in public procurement. At organisational level, it is possible to define specific procurement-related roles and career steps, e.g. the role of public buyer or procurement manager.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

The Czech Republic currently does not have any competency framework in place for public procurement professionals. Over the past years, the MoRD has been active in professionalising public procurement professionals through the development of training in public procurement. This training programme targets both public procurement professionals, but also training providers of public procurement courses through a train-the-trainer programme.

The Ministry also started cooperating with professional organisations and other relevant institutions to develop public procurement related methodological guidance. Last, the government adopted a resolution endorsing more (socially and environmentally) responsible and transparent public procurement procedures. If implemented, this could steer the demand for trainings on more innovative type of public procurement among large contracting authorities.

In terms of procurement roles and occupation, Czech Republic does not an official classification of job position that cover public procurement. Contracting authorities usually distinguish between three main roles in the public procurement processes. The first role regards the specification and definition of the

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⁷¹ European Commission (2019). Country Report Czech Republic 2019

⁷² Ibidem

needs; the second role concerns the management of the call for tender, i.e. starting from the publication of the call for tender to the evaluation of the tenders; and the third role focuses on the signature and implementation of the tender.

5. Training

The MoRD is responsible for public procurement related training that are delivered by MoRD and five private sector providers. The MoRD has developed an Educational program⁷³ for public procurement and concessions law which aims to support users of the Public Procurement Act, in particular representatives of contracting authorities (central authorities and their subordinate organisations, regions, municipalities, etc). The programme is delivered through half-day seminars taking place in the Academy of Public Investment.⁷⁴ As part of the educational program, over 36 trainings were organized in 2019, with over 2,100 people were trained. Outside the educational program itself the employees of the Ministry of Regional Development trained another almost 2,000 people as part of vocational training meetings throughout the Czech Republic (e.g. professional seminars for hospitals focused on the procurement of medicines and medical supplies). 75 Specific trainings are also organised on the subject of the e-procurement portal in the Czech Republic.

The Office for the Protection of Competition also offers seminars and training on public procurement. In 2019, the Office established cooperation with the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic and prepared an educational program for small communities focused primarily on multi-criteria evaluation.76

The Institute for Public Administration gives methodological guidance on professional gualifications, including eight-hour procurement seminars for beginners, advanced practitioners, and other courses open to all levels.⁷⁷ Such training is not mandatory, and no qualification or certification is earned at the end of the cycle.

In some regional and local contracting authorities such as the municipality of Prague, all the staff is required to attend 18 days of educational training in the first three years following their recruitment. These trainings need to be related to their professions and interests. Hence, public procurement professionals may receive such trainings, which fees are paid by the contracting authorities.

There are no mandatory trainings or certificates for procurement practitioners. The following types of trainings are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Ministry of Regional Development, Office for the Protection of Competition, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Ministry of Regional Development, private providers)
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (private providers)
Managerial	Yes (private providers)

⁷³ http://www.portal-vz.cz/cs/Informacni-systemy-a-elektronicke-vzdelavani/Vzdelavani/Archiv/Skoleni-ZZVZ

⁷⁴ https://www.mmr.cz/cs/ministerstvo/urad/projektova-kancelar/akademie-verejneho-investovani

⁷⁵ Ministry of Regional Development, Výroční zpráva o stavu veřejných zakázek v České republice za rok 2019

⁷⁷ European Commission (2018). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU Czech Republic Country

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The research carried out on public procurement professionalisation did not identify concrete challenges and priorities in this area in the Czech Republic.



DENMARK

Denmark

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Danish public procurement system is rather decentralised as local level procurement accounts for a larger share of total procurement than central government and regional public procurement. In Denmark, public purchases of goods and services amount to about EUR 40 billion (300 billion DKK) annually.

At the central government level, the Danish Agency for Modernisation within the Ministry of Finance is responsible for public procurement policy. The Modernisation Agency is also the mandatory central procurement body (CPB) for central government institutions. The Danish Competition and Consumer Authority is responsible for public procurement legislation, the implementation of European law and the operation of the e-procurement portal. The Danish Complaints Board for Public Procurement handles public procurement related complaints. The largest Danish central purchasing body (CPB) is SKI, a non-profit company jointly owned by the Danish state and a member organisation representing all Danish municipalities known as KL - Local Government Denmark. SKI arranges framework agreements open to all levels of government. In addition, there are several inter-regional and inter-municipal joint purchasing bodies. Oversight of the public procurement system is carried out by the Court of Auditors.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not a standalone profession in Denmark. The workforce of procurement professionals consists largely of civil servants and contractual staff.⁷⁸ The level of proficiency observable across different contracting authorities varies. Smaller municipalities tend to have fewer staff members procuring on a less frequent basis, and thus less internal capacity. This is partly compensated for by the strong cooperation across municipal contracting authorities in Denmark. CPBs and large contracting authorities are usually more professionalised in terms of both organisation and workforce.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

There is no central human resources management for public procurement professionals in Denmark. The vast majority of public procurement professionals operate under a public employee contract governed by the General Employment Framework. Overall, Danish public authorities are transitioning away from a civil servant workforce in favour of contractual staff, and civil servants now make up less

⁷⁸ European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28: Denmark" p. 228.
⁷⁹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

than 20% of the total public workforce.⁸⁰ At the central, regional and local government level, HR policy and functions rest with the respective authorities.

Recruitment

Individual contracting authorities have flexibility in defining the competencies and selection procedures of public procurement professionals. Vacancies are publicly announced and filled via a competitive selection process. Public procurement professionals are recruited from a variety of professional backgrounds. State and municipal contracting authorities lean towards legal profiles, while central purchasing bodies recruit staff with procurement experience from municipalities, private sector institutions, industry or consulting firms. For central government bodies, the recruitment of experienced procurement professionals remains a challenge due to restrictive and less competitive remuneration schemes. Thus, it is more common to fill vacancies through internal rotation or, less frequently, using headhunting agencies.

Based on its legal status as a separate non-profit company, SKI is more flexible in terms of wage setting, and thus offers salaries comparable to private sector institutions. Therefore, SKI is more successful in recruiting experienced procurement professionals and the turnover of staff is rather low. SKI generally looks for prior experience in project management and expertise in specific procurement areas, such as managing framework contracts. They also recruit young professionals, who then require more extensive training.

Performance and compensation

The pay structure of public employees consists of a base salary with the possibility of an annual salary negotiation. Bonuses can be granted based on a set of criteria including qualifications, function, oneoff payments, and/or performance. Even though private sector employees earn more than public sector employees, the public sector employees are paid relatively well.

In the central purchasing body SKI, it is common practice to set individual performance targets for public procurement staff that are evaluated annually and linked to compensation increases. These goals are usually set in terms of personal and professional growth rather than specific procurement targets.

Career progression

There is no fixed career progression defined at the national level in public procurement. Public procurement professionals in smaller contracting authorities tend to move to larger institutions or central purchasing bodies, such as SKI. Further, it is also common for public procurers to assume positions in the private sector as a means for career progression.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Denmark does not have a competency framework for public procurement professionals in place and there are no centrally defined procurement roles. Notwithstanding, Denmark has experience in applying competency frameworks for public administrators. The Centre for Development of Human Resources and Quality Management is the main organisation for competency management and dissemination of best practices. There is a competency model in place that builds upon the Common Assessment Framework⁸¹ and the European Foundations for Quality Development.⁸² In 2005, a Code for Chief Executive Excellence was developed and introduced for top civil servants. The Code lays out nine behavioural recommendations for senior public officials to deal with, both, strategic tasks as well as daily management tasks.83

82 Available at: https://www.efqm.org/

⁸⁰ European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28: Denmark" p. 229.

⁸¹ More information at: https://www.eipa.eu/portfolio/european-caf-resource-centre/

⁸³ More information at: http://www.publicgovernance.dk/?siteid=672&menu_start=672

5. Training

There are no mandatory training courses or certifications for public procurement professionals in Denmark. However, there is a broad range of training providers covering various aspects of procurement. A number of joint procurement training courses aimed at different proficiency levels are offered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS). The courses range from introductory training to advanced topics, such as communication and negotiation, strategic contract management or sustainable and innovative public procurement.⁸⁴

The Danish Competition and Consumer Authority provides market analysis and issues guidance notes on both legal and practical matters of public procurement. In addition, jointly with the Danish Agency for Modernisation, it established a new Advisory Unit that offers courses in procurement, including market dialogue, procurement strategy and contract modification.⁸⁵

SKI offers training for contracting authorities in various procurement areas. For Danish municipalities, KL runs the Centre for Public Competence Development (COK) that offers courses on topics such as procurement law and e-procurement. Furthermore, the Association of Public Procurement Officers in Denmark (IKA) offers a variety of training courses, webinars and conferences on public procurement.⁸⁶

There are many private companies (including law firms) offering courses and organising conferences on public procurement topics. In the area of green procurement, there are several networks and organisations that provide capacity building, under the coordination of the Ministry of the Environment. These include the Forum on Sustainable Procurement, the Partnership for Green Public Procurement as well as a dedicated webpage for public procurement professionals on green procurement.⁸⁷

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (UNDP/CIPS, IKA, COK, Advisory
	Unit, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (UNDP/CIPS, Advisory Unit)
Advanced topics	Yes (UNDP/CIPS, Ministry of the
Green public procurement	Environment, COK, IKA, SKI, Advisory
Public procurement for innovation	Unit, private providers)
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (UNDP/CIPS)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Denmark consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Recruitment and retention of staff: For central government institutions, it is hard to recruit and retain qualified staff due to lower salaries offered compared to the private sector. This is less of a challenge for SKI, which has more flexibility in recruitment and remuneration policies.
- Complexity of legal rules: The Danish legal framework and procurement rules are very complex and require specialised skills and training. Contracting authorities in Denmark often rely on costly external legal advice due to a lack of specialised personnel in-house.

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⁸⁴ Available at: https://www.training.undp.dk/

⁸⁵ Available at: https://statensindkob.dk/

⁸⁶ http://www.ika.dk/

 $^{^{87}\} ht\dot{tps}: /\!/eng.mst.dk/sustainability/sustainable-consumption-and-production/sustainable-procurement/$

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• Creation of a new Advisory Unit in public procurement: There is an effort to facilitate common capacity building measures in order to establish a level playing field in public procurement practice. For this purpose, the Danish Agency for Modernisation and the Competition and Consumer Authority have launched a dedicated Advisory Unit to disseminate knowledge and tools, as well as to provide consultancy services, templates and training for CAs. Furthermore, the Advisory Unit hosts dedicated networks, such as specialised networks for experienced procurement lawyers as well as for contract managers. In addition, as part of the Advisory Unit, a new mentoring scheme as well as a Corporate Social Responsibility network for public procurement professionals in underway.



ESTONA

Estonia

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Estonia is a centralised unitary State divided into counties, rural municipalities and cities. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for defining procurement policy, drafting legislation, supervising procurement activities, managing the national e-procurement platform, and providing procurement training and advice. There are approximately 2,000 contracting authorities registered in the central electronic public procurement register conducting about 10,375 procurement procedures in 2017, accounting for 13% of GDP. ⁸⁸

The Centre of Registers and Information Systems (RIK), which covers the IT sector, is the only mandatory central purchasing body (CPB). There are four additional voluntary public CPBs for other specialised areas, of which the State Shared Service Centre is the largest as it covers all other non-IT purchases (see box below).

Outsourcing procurement to the State Shared Service Centre

Estonia has an established practice of outsourcing certain services for the public administration (e.g. HR reporting and accounting) to the State Shared Service Centre. This practice is increasingly applied in the procurement field, as the State Shared Service Centre now offers to take over all public procurement activities of a ministry or other contracting authority (including beyond central-level authorities).

The State Shared Services Centre is available for contracting authorities in the central government, especially smaller ones, to purchase goods and services other than IT. Four ministries and the Government Office have already fully outsourced their procurement function to the Centre. The goal of the increased centralisation of public procurement activities is to increase efficiency and professionalisation of the public procurement professionals in the CPB.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not a standalone occupation in Estonia. The vast majority of procurement professionals are civil servants⁸⁹, but occasionally there are short term, project-based contractual staff.

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⁸⁸ Source: Estonian Ministry of Finance (based on stakeholder consultation). GDP figure based on OECD Government at a

⁸⁹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

Larger contracting authorities have typically dedicated procurement departments with specialised staff. In smaller contracting authorities, civil servants carry out procurement along with other duties and display a lower competency level. Estonia's application of European funds has increased the competence level of procurement professionals as the implementation of these funds entailed specific training for the procurement workforce.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

In Estonia, there is no central body governing the recruitment of public procurement professionals. The recruitment of civil servants is governed by the Civil Service Act, with HR-related administrative services often carried out centrally by the State Shared Service Centre. These include HR statistics and reporting, holidays and sick leave. However, in terms of recruitment decisions, contracting authorities are independent.

Recruitment

Regarding the recruitment of procurement professionals, there are no minimum qualification requirements and each contracting authority is able to set its own requirements according to its needs. Specific procurement-related questions can be part of the selection procedure. Currently, public procurement professionals tend to have a legal background and prior work experience in the public service. However, due to the small number of procurement specialists in Estonia and higher salaries in the private sector, it is hard to attract them for public positions. In addition, contracting authorities value previous public sector experience in the recruitment process, as they consider it essential to understanding the specificities of public procurement as compared to private purchasing.

Performance and compensation

The Civil Service Act mandates a yearly performance appraisal of civil servants. The appraisal discussion includes, not only the performance evaluation, but also the determination of professional development and training needs. For public procurement professionals, specific performance targets can be set by the respective contracting authority.

Career progression

There is currently no procurement-specific career ladder for public procurement professionals in Estonia. In larger contracting authorities, professionals are often able to specialise in a market segment, become a legal specialist, or take a management role as the head of a procurement office or department.

Smaller contracting authorities often lack these career options, so it is common for more experienced professionals to move from a smaller contracting authority to a larger one or to a CPB.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Estonia has some experience in the application of competency frameworks in the civil service. For example, it introduced a competency framework for senior public officials in 2005. The revised 2017 competency framework of Estonian Top Civil Service (TCS) consists of assessing six competencies. Namely, it maps the public official in the following categories: designer of the future, achiever, driver of innovation, value builder and effective self-leader. The competency framework is used by the Estonian Top Civil Service Excellence Centre.⁹⁰

There is no dedicated competency framework of official job profiles in the area of public procurement to be applied by all contracting authorities, although larger contracting authorities and CPBs usually have separate roles for procurement specialists and procurement lawyers.

⁹⁰ https://www.riigikantselei.ee/en/supporting-government/top-executives-civil-service/competency-framework

5. Training

There is no dedicated authority specifically in charge of procurement training in Estonia. Similarly, there is no mandatory training nor certification programmes required for public procurement professionals.

The Ministry of Finance provides public procurement training to contracting authorities, including upon request. Courses focus on the Public Procurement Act and the electronic Public Procurement Register. The State Shared Service Centre contributes to training sessions organised by the Ministry of Finance and also organises its own training programmes. In 2017, it offered general public procurement training to about 1,000 persons over nine sessions. In addition, it offered seven focused training sessions with about 500 total participants. The State Shared Service Centre also provides training to contracting authorities to whom it provides its services.

The Ministry of Environment offers specialised courses in green public procurement. Private companies also offer procurement training courses, but mainly focus on legal aspects of procurement. Enterprise Estonia is the national competence centre for innovation procurement and seeks to increase awareness in the field by providing support measures and the dissemination of best practices.

There are also several private providers with specialised courses available.

There are no university degrees in public procurement, but the Tartu University offers an optional course in public procurement at the post-graduate level.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Ministry of Finance, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Ministry of Finance, private providers)
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Environment, Enterprise Estonia)
Managerial	No

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Estonia consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

- Recruitment of procurement specialists: For larger contracting authorities or CPBs, it is challenging to recruit experienced procurement professionals given the scarcity of these experts in Estonia and higher remuneration in the private sector.
- Retention of trained practitioners: It is common that staff leave the public sector after having acquired a certain proficiency in procurement. Trained practitioners have a strong financial incentive to move to the private sector either as lawyers or as consultants in the field of procurement.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

• **Centralisation of public procurement**: The government seeks to have greater centralisation as a means to professionalise and improve the overall procurement function, as exemplified by the mandate of the State Shared Service Centre.





Finland

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In 2017, there were about 2,891 contracting authorities in Finland. 91 The total value of the Finnish public sector's procurement amounts to approximately EU 35 billion annually (16% of GDP).92

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for procurement legislation in Finland, while the central government's procurement strategy is defined by the Ministry of Finance. The first procurement strategy regarding the central government was established in 2009. The Ministry of Finance has set up "Hankinta-Suomi" Programme together with the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities in 2019. The purpose of the "Hankinta-Suomi" is to develop a common strategy in public procurement for the whole public sector. The strategy will include, inter alia, a goal for competence development. The Programme also aims to foster the collaboration between contracting authorities themselves and between contracting authorities and suppliers.

There is one main newly-created central purchasing body (CPB) in Finland called Hansel, that started its operations on 1 September 2019. It is a joint effort between KL-Kuntahankinnata, a national municipal sector's CPB owned by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, and the government's CPB. The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities is now a shareholder in Hansel Ltd with a 35% stake, the state's ownership remaining at 65%. This is part of a major structural reform in Finland aiming at enhancing efficiency of public services 93. In addition, there are several other CPBs (between 5 and 10) in different regions.

Procurement is not recognised as a standalone occupation in Finland. Public procurement professionals in various public institutions are either civil servants or contractual staff.94 Civil servants account for the majority of the staff at the central government level (90%). In contrast, at the municipal level, 73% work as contractual staff. 95 Furthermore, employees of CPBs are usually not civil servants as these operate as separate, non-profit entities.

⁹¹ Based on stakeholder consultation

⁹² Eurostat (2015)

⁹³ OECD (2019): "Productivity in Public Procurement: A case study of Finland" available at: https://www.oecd.org/gov/publicprocurement/publications/productivity-public-procurement.pdf. Further efforts are currently in the digitalisation of procurement and enhanced transparency

⁹⁴ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22. ⁹⁵ COM (2018) "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU 28: Finland", p. 300

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Recruitment

Contracting authorities at different levels of the civil service recruit staff based on their needs and in accordance with their respective procedures. Procurement-related vacancies are generally advertised on authorities' websites, the central recruitment portal⁹⁶, and also on social media (i.e. LinkedIn, Twitter). Experienced buyers are difficult to attract for public positions given the higher remuneration in the private sector. Therefore, there is a tendency to hire rather junior technical experts and provide them with additional procurement training. In larger contracting authorities and specifically CPBs, public procurement professionals often have an academic background in disciplines such as law, economics and business administration.

Performance and compensation

Compensation schemes of public procurement practitioners vary across different institutions. The salary scheme of government staff has three components: the requirements of the job, personal performance and additional performance rewards (not in all agencies). However, given the absence of general pay scales for different positions, government agencies have their own application of the general public sector pay system.⁹⁷ to a large extent, Finland applies performance-related pay schemes for civil servants. Assessments take place annually and results are of vital importance for the determination of the performance-based salary component as well as for permanent pay raises. In regard to CPBs, permanent employees of Hansel are included in an incentive system that includes a performance-related pay of up to 15% of the annual salary. The additional pay is based on customer satisfaction and individual performance.

Career progression

The career progression of public buyers is the same as that of civil servants. Performance appraisals and qualifications are the key determinants of promotion decisions for all public sector grades.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Finland has experience in applying competency frameworks in public institutions. It has notably been involved in the development of the EU Customs Competency Framework. The EU framework served as a benchmark for Finnish authorities to align different national initiatives towards a uniform framework for Finnish Customs.

The KEINO programme⁹⁸

In March 2018, the Finnish Competence Centre for Sustainable and Innovative Procurement (KEINO) was established as a joint initiative of eight founding members from both the public and private sector, including the CPBs *Hansel* and *Kuntahankinnat*. Additional members of the consortium are Motiva Ltd, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (FLRA), VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd, the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation Business Finland and the Finnish Environment Institute SYKE. The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra was part of the network until the end of 2019. KEINO serves as a network-based competence centre to support innovation procurement in Finland. It is funded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

KEINO's three main objectives are:

- Increasing the number of innovative public procurement procedures in Finland
- Promoting public procurement as a strategic tool to reach wider societal objectives
- Fostering the dissemination of information and peer learning across contracting authorities

⁹⁶ www.valtiolle.fi

⁹⁷ Source: COM (2018) "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU 28: Finland", p. 303

⁹⁸ https://www.hankintakeino.fi/en

In order to reach these goals, the centre supports the development of procurement competence in Finland through advisory services, events and networking meetings. It promotes peer learning among procurement professionals and it fosters closer collaboration and international networks on sustainable and innovative procurement topics. In addition, KEINO offers specific capacity building measures to public procurement professionals in the area of innovative procurement, such as issuing guidelines, disseminating best practises and case studies, and providing templates and tools.

In the area of public procurement, Hansel introduced a competency framework in 2013, defining four different procurement roles: key account manager, procurement specialist, legal counsel (lawyer) and sourcing consultant. A complementary self-assessment tool was developed for Hansel's own personnel to map the competencies relevant to each role. The questionnaire is structured under different categories of strategic knowledge and skills required for the role, as well as general shared skills to be assessed against a pre-defined target level. Following an individual self-assessment, Hansel is able to identify training needs at the organisational level and to launch targeted in-house development programmes. One of the biggest gaps in training identified is the lack of knowledge of the public administration's procedures and processes.

In addition, contracting authorities use assessment tools at the organisational level, such as the Best in Class tool developed by the Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics (LOGY). The tool is based on a questionnaire for managers to assess, benchmark and improve an organisation's purchasing performance. Organisations first evaluate 14 statements to set a target level for their organisation. In the second step, they assess their organisation's performance (scale 1-5) with respect to 180 purchasing best practices in 13 sub-areas. The results allow for internal and external analysis, benchmarking and specific recommendations on how purchasing practises can be improved. Also, the CPB Hansel has a tool for their customers named Hankintatutka. The tool is developed to analyse the maturity of public procurement skills of the organisation.

5. Training

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and FLRA jointly operate the Public Procurement Advisory Unit (PPAU). It offers a free-of-charge help desk service, seminars and informational material on topical issues for all contracting authorities.

The Finnish Institute of Public Management (HAUS) is the primary body for the training and development of civil servants of the central government. HAUS offers a wide range of courses, including an initial training session in public procurement procedures for procurement practitioners. HAUS is one of the leading training organisations in the public administration sphere, providing an average of 30 training programmes to approximately 400 participants per year. In addition, many contracting authorities organise procurement training programmes with private service providers and consultancies, as only central government employees are eligible for HAUS training.

Recently, various initiatives and training programmes were launched in the area of advanced procurement, including the establishment of KEINO (see box above) and the Handi Programme. The Handi programme was an initiative of the Ministry of Finance to provide training on digitalisation of government procurement practices. The Handi programme ended at the beginning of 2020. Inter alia, the programme published online training courses for public procurement professionals (Hankinta 2020) by the State Treasury. It is the first e-learning course in Finland to cover the procurement process entirely –from beginning to end.

There are no mandatory training programmes or national certification programme for public procurement practitioners in Finland. However, some contracting authorities are exploring opportunities to collaborate with local universities in this regard.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Public: HAUS, PPAU)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Public: HAUS, PPAU)
Advanced topics	Yes (Public: Competence Centre for
Green public procurement	Sustainable and Innovative Public
Public procurement for innovation	Procurement KEINO, PPAU, Handi
Socially responsible public procurement	Programme (Hankinta 2020))
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (Public: KEINO)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Finland consulted in the preparation of this factsheet

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Shortage of qualified and experienced personnel: Usually, persons in public procurement specialist positions have a master's degree in, for example, Law, Science of Economics or Administrative Sciences, which might have included some courses in public procurement. Finland's first master's degree program in public procurement will start in autumn 2020 by Metropolia Business School. LUT University has the Master of Procurement, but it focusses on general procurement. It is often difficult to attract and retain qualified individuals to public procurement jobs as private sector entities offer better remuneration. For the same reason, it is difficult to attract experienced procurement staff from the private sector.
- Procurement knowledge management: Technical procurement know-how remains concentrated
 within the CPBs and the biggest contracting authorities, whereas the relevant Ministry of Finance
 focuses on steering the procurement strategy. A higher degree of centralisation of knowledge or
 increased information exchange across the different entities is required in order to formulate a
 common, single procurement strategy for Finland and to ensure its coherent application. This is one
 of the goals of the "Hankinta-Suomi" programme established by the Ministry of Finance.
- Content of training courses: The current training courses for public procurement professionals
 cover the basics of public procurement and focus primarily on legal aspects. There is a strong need
 to expand training opportunities for capacity building in other areas, such as strategic management,
 economic analysis, project management and negotiation practices. KEINO has arranged a training
 program in strategic public procurement management named Keino-akatemia that was launched
 for the first time in 2019.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Efficiency concerns in public spending: Enhancing public procurement practices though capacity building is high on the Finnish government's agenda, given the current political priority to increase public spending efficiency overall. 99 In addition, the government's main goal is to enhance environmental and social sustainability in public procurement.
- Innovative procurement: Fostering the procurement of innovative supplies and services as a way to promote competitiveness, sustainable development and societal goals is a major priority of the national government. To this end, the government has set a target of 10 % of total procurement, and is offering training on sustainable and innovative procurement to professionals under the KEINO programme (see above).

⁹⁹ As part of these efforts, the Finnish Treasury currently develops a self-assessment instrument for government procurement to support public procurement development. The first results will be published in 2019. Source: https://www.valtiokonttori.fi/en/service/development-of-procurement/#material-bank

• Enhanced collaboration between public buyers: The Finnish government has identified a lack of collaboration and information exchange among procurement authorities as a source of inefficiencies. The government has established the "Hankinta-Suomi" program to tackle the challenge and to offer a concrete solution for a national strategy for public procurement in Finland. Additionally, the KEINO programme seeks to increase cooperation, transparency and efficiency by better connecting Finnish procurement professionals nationally and internationally in the area of sustainable and innovative procurement (see above).





France

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In France, public procurement is organised across the three civil service branches i.e. the State public function, the local public function and the health public function. In 2017, public procurement accounted for about EUR89 billion, of which EUR46 billion were from the state civil service through public procurement conducted by Ministries and public institutions (e.g. universities), EUR23 billion were from the health public function, and EUR20 billion from the local public function.

The State Procurement Directorate (DAE – Direction des Achats de l'Etat) is the responsible body for public procurement conducted by state agents. At regional and local level, authority and responsibility for public procurement has been devolved to local authorities. The fifth subdirectorate (BCL office), which is part of the Budget Directorate, is charged of providing advice to local authorities on procurement related matters.

In 2016, the DAE has introduced a career path for its State buyers through the creation of a training certification scheme for state agents working in central government / local state administration and the addition of a "Purchasing" family containing five procurement job profiles into the Interministerial state job classification (RIME – Référentiel Interministériel des Métiers de l'État) (see case study on France).

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The public procurement workforce is primarily composed of civil servants and to a lesser extent of contract agents generally recruited for a specific expertise. Local contracting authorities often appoint non-specialist civil servants to be responsible for public procurement, while larger contracting authorities typically have dedicated procurement departments with specialised profiles.

Public procurement has only recently been recognised as a standalone occupation ("métier") within the State public function thanks to the introduction of a 'Purchasing' job family within the State jobs classification¹⁰¹ and the development of a professionalisation framework and a dedicated career path for procurement professionals by the DAE. At the regional level, large contracting authorities have been deploying efforts in recent years and introduced initiatives and practices to achieve wider policy goals (sustainable, socially responsible and innovation procurement) as exemplified in the box below.

¹⁰⁰ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractuals taff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

¹⁰¹ https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/biep/repertoire-interministeriel-des-metiers-de-letat

Professional development, pooling and mobility of State's public procurement staff and competencies in the Bourgogne Franche-Comté Region, France

Transnum is an interdepartmental portal ¹⁰² bringing together collaborative tools for production (the COLLAB application), for the development, management and enhancement of skills and competencies (the ePORTFOLIO application) and for the pooling of material resources and knowhow (the CAMBIOMUT application).

Transnum is an initiative developed and supported by the Regional Platform for interdepartmental support for the management of human resources (PFRH) of the General Secretariat for Regional Affairs) of the Bourgogne Franche-Comté region, with the objective to open the platform to 5000 state agents in the region by the end of 2019.

Although the primary focus of the project is to pool resources and expertise for the mobility of IT resources and the development of IT projects in the region, the portal and its applications were designed from the outset to be applicable to other field of work in the public administration, including public procurement. In this regards, the main job classifications including the RIME and ROME have been linked to the e-PORTFOLIO and CAMBIOMUT applications, in order to reference all the professions and their related competencies, including the new Purchasing job family introduced in the RIME, in these applications.

This allows state agents to create a 'job fiche' for themselves and reference their official job position, skills and competencies in the ePORTFOLIO application. This fiche is further visible to all users of the CAMBIOMUT application who are looking for competencies and skills in a specific area and would wish to temporarily contract one agent for its competencies in a specific area.

In addition, state agents can use the ePORTFOLIO application to manage their professional development by self-assessing their competencies and skills through various tests and looking and registering for training classes to enhance their competencies.

The example of Transnum is interesting because it combines three key components useful when building multidisciplinary project teams: a workspace accessible by the agents concerned, a database referencing the pool of skills that can be called upon, and an exchange platform, to match supply and demand.

Given the strong focus traditionally put on trainings on legal aspects of public procurement, civil servants generally have a good knowledge of procurement laws and procedures. Conversely, knowledge of purchasing and commercial techniques has been concentrated in Central Purchasing Bodies (CPB) such as the State CPB UGAP (*Union des Groupements d'Achats Publics*), State Procurement Directorate, large contracting authorities and central government central / local state administration making the offer of purchasing training less widespread.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The HR management of procurement professionals is decentralised in France, to the exception of the State public function where the DAE is in charge of HR policy and strategy in public procurement applicable to all services of the State, from central to regional services and public agencies. Large regional contracting authorities usually have a dedicated Human Resource department responsible for hiring and promotion decisions. The same applies to contracting authorities operating in the healthcare. However, small contracting authorities do not have a dedicated procurement department.

¹⁰² https://transnum-eportfolio.ac-dijon.fr/bfc/login.php

Recruitment

Since the introduction of the professionalisation framework by the DAE, the job profiles of all professionals recruited for all State services from central administration to regional service and public institutions have to be in line with the job profiles defined in RIME. Within the local and healthcare public function, contracting authorities hire civil servants based on the general civil servants classification without referring to any procurement roles. Job descriptions may include procurement related tasks but not necessarily or systematically. Contract employees are generally hired in case of need for specific or technical expertise on a procurement procedure, usually by smaller contracting authorities.

Performance and compensation

The performance of procurement staff is assessed annually in line with civil servants yearly assessment. Personal performance is not linked to the remuneration package and no specific financial incentive exist. However, the DAE would like to see the creation of new financial incentives for state agents in the near future.

Career progression

The professionalisation framework introduced by the DAE offers a clear career path for state agents. This includes a certifying training for newcomers to each specific purchasing position e.g. procurement manager, order manager, buyers, procurement expert advisor and public procurement documentation assistant. In addition, a range of purchasing courses aimed at advancing the skills and competences of experienced buyers are also available.

For non-state buyers operating in large contracting authorities, career progression means specialisation. This is the case in CPBs, and large contracting authorities which procure various types of goods, works and services and therefore need subject-matter and technical expertise to carry out their procurement.

In smaller contracting authorities, there is generally no specific career path for procurement professionals.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

In addition to the professionalisation framework and career path developed by the DAE, the National Employment Agency has developed an operational classification of jobs and professions (ROME¹⁰³) which include several procurement functions, and the Ministry of Solidarity and Health has developed a classification of jobs for the public health function (RFPH¹⁰⁴) which also includes procurement functions.

5. Training

As part of their education, future civil servants who attend public schools such as the National Administration School (ENA), the National Institute for Territorial Studies (INET), the National School for Public Health (EHESP) and the Regional Institutes of Administration (IRAs), learn about the general rules / procedures in public procurement and purchasing techniques. Once they become civil servants, they improve their skills and knowledge by attending various courses including some in public procurement, delivered by the National Centre of the Territorial Public Function (CNFPT), which is the main training provider for civil servants.

¹⁰³ http://www.pole-emploi.org/opendata/repertoire-operationnel-des-meti.html?type=article

http://www.metiers-fonctionpubliquehospitaliere.sante.gouv.fr/spip.php?page=fiche-sousfamille&idsubfam=39

Together with the Institute of Public Management and Economic Development (IGPDE), the DAE is the main provider of training on purchasing techniques for State buyers, while the Directorate for Legal Affairs (DAJ) is the primary training provider of legal and procedural training.

In addition to these public training providers, some private providers also propose training in public procurement.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (DAJ, CNFPT, IGPDE, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (DAE, IGPDE, private providers)
Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement	Yes, (DAE, IGPDE, private providers)
Managerial	Yes (DAE, IGPDE, private providers)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The following challenges and priorities have been identified by stakeholders consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

High turnover of trained and experienced buyers: Across the three branches of the public function, it is seen that the most experienced and full-time public procurement staff tend to leave to the private sector for more attractive compensation package. This particularly concerns procurement experts located within CPBs, central government procurement units and large contracting authorities with high procurement volume.

Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

Moving from a legal to an economic and efficient vision of purchasing: There has been traditionally a strong focus placed on legal, judicial and procedural procurement training on the market, while training courses on strategic procurement and purchasing techniques have been scarce and existing ones are mainly offered to state agents. However, more and more initiatives are emerging from the regional or local level (see box above) and contracting authorities are demanding access to new and technical training, which will teach them the tools to achieve better value for money in their procurements.



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Greece

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Greek public procurement landscape is characterised by contracting authorities at the national, regional and local levels governed by public law. The Contracting Authority Registry, as maintained by the Hellenic Single Public Procurement Authority (HSPPA)¹⁰⁵, recorded almost 3,400 contracting authorities in 2018, 71 of which are Central Government Authorities, and almost 1,000 are independent operational units supervised by other General Government Entities.

The majority of public procurement professionals are civil servants 106 and their level of professionalisation varies according to their educational background, the size of the contracting authority in which they operate, and the frequency of public procurement procedures they carry out. Posts of specialised scientific, technical, or auxiliary personnel provided by law, may also be filled, in limited cases. bv personnel hired private law contracts. i.e. contractual staff¹⁰⁷. A small number of full-time buyers are employed in central government authorities such as the three national central purchasing bodies (CPBs) located within the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Development and Investments and within the Ministry of Health. However, the vast majority of public procurement professionals who work in small contracting authorities carry out procurement functions infrequently and lack comprehensive knowledge of EU and national procurement legislation.

The legal and regulatory framework in the fields of public financial management and auditing in Greece sets clear rules when it comes to ensuring the integrity of public procurement procedures, in particular with regards to monitoring the spending of allocations deriving from national or European sources. Procurement staff who write the technical specifications are not to be involved in the payment process. Similarly, evaluation committee members may not be involved in other duties in the context of the same procedure. However, small contracting authorities often find it challenging to comply with these requirements due to limited staff.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

For public works, specific provisions regarding procurement competencies apply, namely the technical adequacy of the Technical Service (i.e. Technical Directorate or Department) of the contracting authority

¹⁰⁵ HSPPA is constantly updating this registry through data extraction from the Central Electronic Public Procurement Registry (KIMDIS) -an online repository that aims at keeping track of all procurements concluded by the state and making this information available online - and on the information it receives from the contracting authorities,. The Registry can be found at the following link: https://ppp.eaadhsy.gr/index.php/el/Registry

¹⁰⁶ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22. $^{\rm 107}$ Greek Constitution, article 103

involved. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport is currently defining the specific implementation rules for technical adequacy such as the number of persons to be involved, and their profiles and qualifications. This type of service can be developed in-house or acquired externally. The latter option is particularly relevant for small contracting authorities that may lack such capacity internally. In addition, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport recently established 108 a national register of qualified members of award committees for public works and related services.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

There are no centralised provisions on how to organise human resources in the public procurement field. The public procurement function is carried out by generalist civil servants and is thus subject to the rules governing civil service. While the structure and organisation of HR depends on the size and function of each institution, a number of centralised provisions apply to recruitment, compensation and career progression of civil servants.

In the utilities sector, contracting entities are often set up as companies under private law. As such, they have more flexible rules on how to recruit, remunerate and train their staff as opposed to the public administration.

Recruitment

Open positions in public procurement are available exclusively for personnel that have passed the competition to become a civil servant. The entry-level competition for civil servants is run centrally by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP), an independent authority responsible for personnel selection in public administration and in the wider public sector. Depending on the level of education required, five categories of civil servant positions exist:

- Elementary Education posts/roles
- Secondary Education posts/roles
- Technological Educational Institutes graduates posts/roles
- University graduates posts/roles
- Scientific/research posts for higher education graduates with additional qualifications

Regarding the seasonal, temporary or fixed-term employees, the selection procedure, based on objective criteria defined by the recruitment law currently in force, is carried out by various public agencies or authorities, generally under the supervision and control of ASEP.

For any vacant job position, an open announcement must be published, to which any interested and qualified candidate may apply. To attract more applicants for a procurement position, different types of job roles (beyond the procurement function) are often included in the job description, and only rarely job descriptions focus solely on public procurement.

Few bodies are exempted from the central recruitment procedure to grant greater flexibility to parts of the government competing more directly with the private sector or with a need for specialised skills (e.g. some state-owned enterprises, constitutional independent authorities, the Legal Counsel of the State, the Hellenic Parliament)¹⁰⁹.

An alternative way to enter public administration is through successful attendance at the National School of Public Administration and Local Government (ESDDA) which is one of the National Centre of Public Administration and Local Government's (EKDDA) training units. The School accepts University graduates by a competitive entry examination and operates on the basis of a curriculum aimed at the

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¹⁰⁸ Decision of the Ministry of Infrastructure DNS/61034/FN466, published on 21 December 2017

¹⁰⁹ Law 2190/1994, article 14

production of rapid development staff through a comprehensive professional training, including in the area of public procurement.

New legislation¹¹⁰ includes specific provisions to introduce a more strategic recruitment plan on behalf of the general government (incl. strengthening the capacity of ASEP) and establishing new structures which link mobility to recruitment processes.

Performance and compensation

An annual performance assessment in the form of a written evaluation is mandatory for all employees. The performance appraisal is based on the duties of the employee and takes into account personal development objectives and professional duties. A recent administrative reform intends to create a stronger link between the organisational goals and the individual targets and may therefore translate into more specific targets related to public procurement. The remuneration for public sector employees is based on a standardised grid, which leaves little opportunity to reward individual performance with bonuses or similar premia.

Career progression

No specific career path is defined for public procurement professionals. However, there is a predefined career progression for civil servants based on years of service. Promotion to more senior positions is based on additional criteria, including formal qualifications, type of work experience, and testing candidates on behavioural and scenario-based questions. ESDDA graduates (see above) generally have a faster professional development. It should also be noted that promotions in the public sector take into consideration the training points which are linked to certified programmes.

Professionalisation initiative: Mobility in the Greek public administration

The Ministry of Interior (former Ministry for Administrative Reconstruction) is introducing a reform to foster mobility and effective allocation of human resources within the Greek public administration. To this purpose, public bodies are currently in the process of describing the organisational statusquo by defining their organisational structure and the job roles of their staff. Once this first mapping exercise is completed, this information will be available digitally in a centralised location allowing easier allocation of resources within the public administration.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Tasks performed by procurement practitioners in Greece usually include qualifications of one or more disciplines at different educational levels (e.g. Building and Civil Engineering Professionals, Health Professionals, Economics and Administration Professionals, Information and Communications Technology Professionals, Legal Professionals).

Since spring 2016, the Greek qualifications register ¹¹¹ —which comprises of 674 qualifications classified in the Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF), referenced from the EQF—is being connected to the register of the European classification of skills, competences, qualifications and occupations (ESCO) ¹¹². In addition, national legislation ¹¹³ provides for the establishment of a Registry of Certified Public Procurement Officers which has not yet been implemented.

Greek authorities have no previous experience with competency frameworks in public procurement nor with strategic human resource management tools. In addition, mobility within the civil service and effective allocation of resources pose a challenge in human resource management within the public administration, and is currently being addressed by the Ministry of Interior (former Ministry for

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¹¹⁰ Law. 4674/2020,4635/2019, 4622/2019, , 4604/2019, 4590/2019 και N. 4590/2019,

¹¹¹ https://proson.eoppep.gr

¹¹² https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/greece-new-qualifications-register

¹¹³ Law 4412/2016, article 344

Administrative Reconstruction) through a reform to foster mobility and effective allocation of human resources within the Greek public administration (see box above).

Furthermore, the newly established central purchasing body (EKAPY) within the Ministry of Health, is currently in the process of defining the procurement profiles of its staff.

5. Training

There is a legal framework introducing a Training Certification System for employees in the wider public sector which aims at certifying the knowledge acquired by public servants through seminars/training delivered by EKDDA, other public sector schools, public universities and Institutes. EKDDA is the national body for development of the human resources of the public administration and local government. As such, it has the responsibility for public procurement training sessions, which it develops in cooperation with HSPPA and other relevant procurement stakeholders, such as the General Secretariat for Commerce of the Ministry of Development and Investments and the General Secretariat for Infrastructure of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport. Training is conducted through certified programmes designed and implemented by the Institute of Training (INEP). By way of illustration, in 2018, INEP carried out nine training programmes focusing mainly on public procurement that were successfully attended by 2,508 officials.

Trainers in public procurement have to meet certain criteria regarding educational attainment or proven professional experience. EOPPEP is the certification authority, responsible for the quality assurance of the certification of qualifications in Greece. In addition to being involved in the design of training sessions, staff from HSPPA may also act as trainers. They even offer tailor-made training to contracting authorities upon request, although HSPPA has limited resources to meet such requests.

In relation to co-financed contracts and structural actions, the Management Organisation Unit of Development Programmes (MOU), in cooperation with the competent authorities of the Ministry of Development and Investments, assist public authorities in the effective management of EU-funded programmes by providing on-going training for MOU staff and technical assistance to NSRF Managing Authorities and Beneficiaries.

A variety of private training programmes are also available that cover various themes, including from universities, lifelong training schools, and learning centres¹¹⁴.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (EKDDA/ INEP, HSPPA)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (EKDDA-INEP, MOU)
Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement	Yes (the General Secretariat for Commerce-Universities-Local Government, General Secretariat for Commerce-INEP, Local Governement, Center for European Constitutional Law (CECL), HSPPA, EKDDA/INEP, General Secretariat for Commerce, General Secretariat for Infrastructure, Ministry of Digital Governance).
Managerial	Yes (EKDDA/ INEP)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Greece consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

114 https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/european_inventory_validation_2018_Greece.pdf

Challenges related to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- **Small contracting authorities are understaffed** due to budgetary constraints, and thus struggle to comply with rules on the separation of procurement tasks in public administration.
- Not enough emphasis on pre-award and implementation phases. The public procurement system in Greece places great emphasis on the contract award process by providing detailed legal provisions on the set-up of evaluation committees, the staff to be involved, etc. Consequently, there is less emphasis on the pre-notification and post-award phases, although significant value is generated or lost in these phases.
- There is a lack of managerial capacity to approach public procurement as a strategic function. Contracting authorities have little awareness of the importance of managerial roles for ensuring that procurement is conducted based on needs, and there appears to be little investment in developing such capacities. Formal qualifications are often prioritised at the expense of practical experience and competencies.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Policy makers identify the need to support contracting authorities in addressing their day-today challenges in procurement, in particular regarding adequate staffing, upgrading technical competences, simplification of procedures, as well as regulatory and compliance matters.
- Policy makers acknowledge that unlocking budgetary resources would enable public administrations to invest in various aspects of the professionalisation of public procurement, e.g. training, recruitment, remuneration.



GERMANY

Germany

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The German public procurement system is highly decentralised due to the country's federal structure allowing for a large degree of autonomy to federal, regional and local authorities. 115 As a result, there are approximately 30,000 contracting authorities across the country performing about 2.4 million procurement procedures per year amounting to a total purchasing volume of about EUR 350 billion (13% of German GDP). 116 The Ministry of Economics is responsible for public procurement policy, drafting legislation and regulatory coordination with European and international bodies. There are four central purchasing bodies (CPBs) at the central government level with different duties. The CPB of the Ministry of Interior (BeschA) plays the most important role as it not only procures for federal agencies, but also manages the e-procurement portal, and provides procurement support and capacity building measures for local contracting authorities.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not a standalone profession in Germany. Across different federal levels, both civil servants and contractual staff¹¹⁷ conduct procurement activities. At the central government level 71% of staff are civil servants, while they make up only 13% of the local governments. 118 Many civil servants in the public procurement workforce in CPBs are generalists with a Bachelor's degree level qualification. More senior positions often require an academic background in subject-related disciplines, such as law, economics or engineering.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for general civil service regulation, but each public institution is responsible for its own human resource management, including recruitment and training. It is common for large contracting authorities to have their own dedicated HR departments. Contractual staff work under the same labour law rules as employees in the private sector, while the status of civil servants is defined by public law.

Recruitment

¹¹⁵ Procurement activities are distributed at 12% at federal level, 30% at regional level and 58% at municipal level.

¹¹⁶ There are no overarching public procurement statistics available in Germany, but the government is currently creating a common public procurement registry to be developed by the Federal Statistical Office and be operational by the beginning of

https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/DE/Artikel/Wirtschaft/vergabestatistik.html

117 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

¹¹⁸ European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Germany" p. 367.

Recruitment is organised by individual contracting authorities. Procurement positions may be filled as a result of internal mobility of the staff, or via a competition open to the wider public. Published job descriptions may include specific skill requirements that vary according to the needs of the respective contracting authority. There is generally a low awareness of public procurement positions due to the high discrepancy of salaries paid in the private and public sector. Furthermore, it is challenging to attract subject matter experts, such as engineers, due to the less appealing nature of public administrative work compared to private sector positions. Despite the availability of certain instruments to attract candidates, e.g. salary add-ons, these are seldom used. Currently, some CPBs are stepping up their communication efforts to enhance their visibility in the job market and to attract experienced personnel.

Performance and compensation

The compensation of civil servant public procurers is regulated by law, and depends on the categorisation of the civil servant into one of four standard career classes, each of which consists of at least five grades. There is a mandatory annual assessment of civil servants with their superior, where goals and envisaged training are discussed. Performance-related pay is not foreseen as a regular salary component of civil servants in Germany. Bonus payments can only be granted in cases of extraordinary achievements of a civil servant. However, this involves a rather bureaucrat procedure and is not common practice. There are no specific procurement-related targets and financial incentives for public procurement professionals.

Career progression

There is no specific career path for public procurement professionals in public administration. It follows the regular progression of civil servants in Germany, which is in principle a merit-based assessment system, but in practice it still has a strong emphasis on seniority.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

There is no mandatory application of competency frameworks or any strategic human resource management tools in the German public administration. However, several central and local public institutions voluntarily apply the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as a quality management tool. In the area of customs, the European Union's Customs Competency Framework is not applied within the relevant public authorities for strategic human resource purposes, but its use for training is encouraged.

There is no competency framework with specifically defined public procurement roles in place.

5. Training

The Federal Academy of Public Administration is the primary provider of courses for public officials on the federal level and offers training on public procurement law. 119 Moreover, the Federal University of Applied Sciences offers an optional module in public procurement. Courses on public procurement are also offered by the regional applied science universities for public administration.

Professionalisation initiative: Launching a public procurement university course¹²⁰

In German higher education, the *Bundeswehr University* in Munich is a leading institution in research focusing on public procurement. It hosts the Research Centre for Law and Management of Public Procurement, carrying out research in both private and public supply management, covering the areas of industrial procurement, public procurement and defence procurement.

In 2019, the chair launched a unique part-time certification programme for public procurement professionals. It aims to prepare public procurement professionals for management tasks in public authorities and institutions and to help them refresh, broaden or deepen their existing knowledge. The extra-occupational training programme extends over a period of seven months comprising 4 modules on public procurement management, public procurement law, profitability analysis in the public sector and public management.

In addition to courses on public procurement law, it also includes business courses relating to the public procurement process and strategic procurement management. Graduates earn a certificate and 24 ECTS credit points.

Larger contracting authorities, such as the CPB BeschA, rely on both in-house training as well as external training. New joiners undergo mandatory internal procurement training that is offered on-site. In addition, the BeschA hosts a Competence Centre for Sustainable Procurement, a separate unit dedicated to capacity building of federal and local contracting authorities.

There are various initiatives to foster advanced procurement practices. The Ministry of Economics, jointly with the private Association for Supply Chain Management and Logistics (BME), established the Competence Centre for Innovative Procurement (KOINNO) that issues guidelines, hosts workshops and conferences and provides both individual and online-based training.

In addition, there is a multitude of private providers and procurement associations that offer training, and organise conferences on procurement topics, such as the Procurement Forum, BME, the European Academy of Economics & Law and the German Procurement Network.

Since 2015, lawyers have been able to obtain a specific certification as specialists in procurement law. 121

There is no mandatory training or certificates for procurement practitioners. The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Federal Academy of Public
	Administration, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (KOINNO, private providers)

¹¹⁹ As a rule, only federal employees have the right to take part in courses offered by the Federal Academy of Public Administration (BAköV). Employees of the Federal Ministry of Defence and Federal Police officers are an exception, because there are other special facilities offering advanced training for them. However, contractual staff of the indirect federal administration and of regional or local public administration, and in some cases employees of other organizations may attend as quests

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https://www.unibw.de/casc/programme/modulstudium/beschaffung

[&]quot;Fachanwalt für Vergaberecht".

Advanced topics	Yes (Ministry of Interior / BeschA,
Green public procurement	Competence Center for Sustainable
Public procurement for innovation	Public Procurement, KOINNO,
Socially responsible public procurement	universities, private providers)
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (KOINNO)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Germany consulted in the preparation of this factsheet

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- A lack of training of civil servants involved in procurement: There is no mandatory training on public procurement included in the educational curriculum of civil servants in Germany.
- Persistence of disparity of procurement practices: Due to the decentralised structure in Germany, public procurement below EU thresholds is often governed by specific state level legislation or municipal laws. This leads to a discrepancy in skills and practices of procurement professionals.
- A lack of training from an economic perspective: Training of public procurement professionals
 focuses on legal aspects because of the increased complexity of the procurement law.
 Professionals have been expressing the need for specific training on the economic aspects of
 procurement and innovative procedures.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• Advancing sustainable and innovation procurement goals: The Ministry of Interior's CPB BeschA has established a dedicated unit to promote and disseminate best practices in sustainable public procurement in Germany. It provides guidelines, training and consulting services to all contracting authorities. ¹²² In addition, the Ministry of Economics hosts the Competence Centre for Innovative Procurement ¹²³, jointly with a procurement association, to foster the application of sustainable procurement across contracting authorities on all government levels.

https://www.koinno-bmwi.de/

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¹²² http://www.nachhaltige-beschaffung.info/DE/Home/home_node.html



HUNGARY

Hungary

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In Hungary, there are over 6,100 contracting authorities registered in the obligatory Electronic Procurement System (EKR), conducting more than 10,361 procurement procedures in 2018 124 and approximately 13,000 contracting authorities at all territorial levels. 125

In 2014, there has been a concentration of previously dispersed procurement governance functions at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), including legislation, implementation, training, guidance, monitoring and control functions. The Public Procurement Authority (KH) is in charge of collecting and publishing procurement statistics, conducting remedy procedures, controlling contract performance, issuing guidelines and providing training for practitioners. The Directorate General for Public Procurement and Supply (KEF) is the mandatory central purchasing body (CPB) for ministries and other central government institutions in the area of building and vehicle operations, office and technical supplies. In some sectors there are specialised CPBs for other goods and services (e.g. healthcare, IT, government communication). Local contracting authorities conduct procurement procedures independently.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not considered a standalone occupation in Hungary. Public procurement is usually carried out by civil servants ¹²⁶. In many contracting authorities, it is common to hire external consultants to advise in the preparation of the tendering phase and in conducting the procedure. In this respect, Hungary has established an accreditation framework for all public procurement consultants involved in procedures above the EU threshold and when European funding is involved (see box below).

Professionalisation initiative: Accreditation of public procurement consultants¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Hungarian Public Procurement Authority: Annual Report 2018

¹²⁵ European Commission, DG REGIO (2016) Stock taking study of administrative capacities, practices and systems across the EU to ensure the compliance and quality of public procurement involving European Structural and Investment Funds, Hungary Country Profile, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country-profile/hu.pdf

procurement/study/country_profile/hu.pdf

126 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

¹²⁷ http://eugo.gov.hu/a-z-index/official-public-procurement-consultation-activities

The Public Procurement Act of 2015 requires that accredited public procurement consultants are involved in procurement procedures above the EU threshold (in cases where public construction contracts are above approx. €2.1 million) and when European funding is involved. The official public procurement consultant shall ensure that public procurement procedures are conducted professionally, transparently and according to the law. The consultant is involved throughout the whole procedure from the preparation to the conduct of the procedure. The procurement consultant will be held personally liable in case of legal damage caused throughout his/her involvement in the procedure.

KH is responsible for the accreditation of public procurement consultants and for publishing their information in the central registry of the procurement portal. Public procurement consultants attend a compulsory training programme consisting of different modules jointly run by the PMO, KH and several universities. In order to obtain their accreditation, public procurement consultants need to collect credit points obtained by attending the training.

There are strict requirements in order to qualify as an accredited public procurement consultant. These include a university-level degree (not necessarily in law), prior public procurement experience (either in the private or public sector) including a minimum amount of conducted procurement procedures within a certain time period preceding the accreditation.

In addition, Hungary has established a mid-level certification for public procurement rapporteurs, which is commonly held by assistant staff in public procurement. Delivering this certification and providing training of rapporteurs (like many more vocational training programmes outside the school system) can be carried out by state-recognised training institutions or universities in accordance with an accredited training plan (see Act LXXVII of 2013 on adult education).

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The employment conditions of public procurement professionals fall under the Civil Service Act. However, human resource management is highly decentralised in the Hungarian public administration.

Recruitment

Recruitment decisions are taken by the contracting authority including the design of the recruitment procedure. Hungarian law does not require vacant positions to be publicly advertised nor is there a requirement for a competitive selection procedure. Procurement functions are usually part of the legal or financial department of contracting authorities. Every department or unit is in charge of writing the job description, which usually entails detailed information on the envisaged procurement duties.

Performance and compensation

The salary of civil servants in Hungary consists of various components. The base salary is set according to the level of education and seniority of the civil servant calculated using salary grids defined in the Civil Service Act. There is also a granted pay supplement based on the institution the civil servant is affiliated to. In addition, there are various forms of discretionary bonuses and pay based on individual performance, which is assessed annually. These include a temporary base salary raise or decrease. Overall, the remuneration of public procurement professionals is lower than in a comparable position in the private sector in Hungary.

Career progression

The career progression highly depends on the structure of the contracting authority. Civil servants in the central government are required to pass a civil service exam within the first two years of service. The advanced exam qualifies them for a promotion to an advisory or managerial position. Public

¹²⁸ OECD (2017): Hungary: Public Administration and Public Service Development Strategy, 2014-2020 p. 39

procurement professionals commonly join larger contracting authorities or CPBs or leave the public sector and join consultancies or law firms.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Hungary has experience in the application of the common assessment framework (CAF) for public administration since 2005¹²⁹. In addition, within the EU Customs 2020 Programme, Hungary adopted the Competency Framework for Customs, including receiving implementation workshops, and change management training.

In the field of public procurement, the Hungarian Public Procurement Act of 2015 requires contracting authorities to display four competencies to conduct public procurements: (1) technical and professional knowledge, (2) public procurement expertise, (3) financial expertise and (4) legal expertise. It is up to the contracting authorities to organise these four competencies in their institution in order to be legally compliant. To do so, different departments work together or they involve individuals competent in several of these areas.

In addition, under the Public Procurement Act, accredited public procurement consultants must be involved in certain procurement procedures (see box above). There are currently more than 1,000 accredited public procurement consultants registered in the EKR.

5. Training

The PMO extends procurement training to procurement professionals of both public and private institutions and covers a broad range of topics, such as the legal framework, procurement procedures and management, as well as framework agreements. Due to its control function, the PMO's training mainly focuses on legal aspects of public procurement. The PMO offers specific training for ministries managing ESIF funds about public procurement rules, audit aspects, technical information on how to implement EU directives and the dissemination of best practices. Further training priorities of the PMO in 2018 evolved around the obligatory use of the EKR with more than 100 training courses provided.

KH organises thematic training sessions and conferences on various aspects of procurement. More than 1,500 professionals participated in 15 conferences organised in 2018 on topics, such as control of public procurement contracts, sustainability-related public procurement issues, as well as public procurement practices in specific sectors. In addition, KH maintains a free-of-charge helpdesk to provide advice on legal questions to both contracting authorities and economic operators.

Accredited public procurement consultants must attend special training to obtain credit points for their accreditation. In 2018, there were 14 different training modules, of which 8 were provided by the PMO, 5 by KH and 1 by the National University of Public Service (NUPS). NUPS was established in 2012 and offers a variety of courses on public administrative topics at both the bachelor's and master's level, including courses on public procurement. ¹³⁰ In addition to accredited public procurement consultants, state-recognised training institutions and universities offer a mid-level certification for public procurement rapporteurs. Furthermore, at the university level there is a public procurement law programme (3 semesters) and a special training course for public procurement managers.

In addition, there are a range of private operators offering different procurement training. NGOs provide training for public procurement consultants. There are no mandatory training programs ¹³¹ or certificates for public procurement professionals in Hungary. The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Prime Minister's Office, NUPS, NGOs,
	universities, private operators)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	

¹²⁹ EIPASCOPE 2005/3, Patrick Staes and Nick Thijs, "Report on the State of Affairs of the Common Assessment Framework after Five Years", available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/5957/1/Scope2005_3_6(2).pdf
130 https://en.uni-nke.hu/

¹³¹ Except in the case of accredited consultants, who must attend specific trainings for collecting the required credit points. See more details in the box.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Advanced topics	Yes (KH, PMO)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Hungary consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Recruitment and retention of procurement professionals: Contracting authorities usually face a challenge to recruit qualified procurement professionals. This is especially true among smaller contracting authorities, while the large CPBs and highly specialised contracting authorities, e.g. in the area of public infrastructure, are more attractive for experienced public procurement professionals. In addition, junior procurement professionals tend to leave the public service once they have acquired procurement expertise for better paid positions in the private sector, i.e. in consultancies or law firms.
- A lack of experience with the application of MEAT criteria: There is a lack of experience in applying the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) criteria. This is due to the strong role of lawyers in the procurement procedures, who are less experienced in the application of MEAT criteria. The cooperation between the lawyers and technical experts to design appropriate criteria should be optimised beyond the strong focus on legal compliance.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

 Enhancing the skills of public procurement consultants: In order to foster the application of MEAT criteria and more innovative procurement practices, the PMO is intensifying its effort to coordinate the compulsory training programmes for public procurement consultants. Through additional information sharing and dissemination of best practices, a more sophisticated approach to public procurement shall be promoted.





Ireland

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Irish state spends approximately EUR 15 billion every year on goods, services and construction work. The total number of contracting authorities in Ireland amounts to approximately 8000. In recent years, there have been strong efforts towards the centralisation of public procurement functions. The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) of the part of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (MPER) was established in 2014 as the primary procurement body in Ireland. As such, it is responsible for the formulation of public procurement policy and procedures, sourcing systems and data collection. In addition, the OGP acts as a central purchasing body (CPB) on behalf of the government and manages the e-procurement portal. Other organisations act as CPBs at a central government level and cover a variety of goods and service areas. 132 In addition, tendering responsibilities are also managed by individual contracting authorities at state and local levels.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not a standalone occupation in Ireland, as only staff of central government departments and some state agencies are classified as civil servants. The larger proportion of public procurement professionals consists of contractual staff. 133 Both civil servants and contractual staff usually have permanent employment contracts. 134 Their level of procurement proficiency varies across contracting authorities. Staff in smaller municipalities usually procure on a less frequent basis and consequently may display a lower level of expertise, whereas CPBs and large Contracting Authorities (CA) have dedicated procurement teams with a high degree of specialisation.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

There is no central human resource management targeted specifically at public procurement professionals across Ireland. However, at the central government level, there is a degree of centralisation of human resource management across government departments. As such, the human resource management (HRM) unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is responsible for defining base salary, employment conditions and codes of conduct. 135 Local government, and health and education sectors also have central human resource functions.

Recruitment

¹³² Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Health Executive, Local Government Operational Procurement Centre, Defence Forces Ireland, Local Government, Education Procurement Service

¹³³ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

134 European Commission (2018): Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Ireland

¹³⁵ https://hr.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/People-Strategy-for-the-Civil-Service-2017-2020.pdf

Individual contracting authorities are responsible for the recruitment process of public procurement professionals and have flexibility in defining the competencies required. For central government institutions, the recruitment process of civil servants is usually facilitated by the Public Appointments Service (PAS) through a centralised recruitment system. However, the respective contracting authority takes the final hiring decision. Local authorities can also utilise PAS' recruitment services. For procurement positions, candidates with prior experience in procurement or with specific subject-matter expertise are preferred. At the same time, it is challenging to attract and retain experienced procurement professionals because the private sector tends to offer more competitive remuneration packages.

Performance and compensation

An annual assessment is mandatory for civil servants in Ireland. However, the process and evaluation criteria vary across institutions. Central government contractual staff are evaluated based on a standardised performance management development system (PMDS). The performance is based on a two-point rating system indicating whether the job-holder has performed to a satisfactory level. This assessment is linked to salary increases or promotions, in addition to illustrating and determining development needs. 136

Career progression

Most civil servant positions are grade-based in Ireland. Promotions are awarded through competitions, in accordance with the guidelines set out by relevant central or local government authorities. In larger contracting authorities, it is common to advertise these competitions both internally and externally. For internal competitions, the selection is usually based on an interview, whereas in open competitions additional tests are applied. As there is no fixed career path for public procurement professionals, there are various options in terms of career progression. Civil servants in procurement-related positions may seek to move upwards within their field or move internally to other areas leveraging on their procurement experience. Despite the absence of financial incentives for public procurement, more procurement experience increases the chances for promotion.

Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Ireland has experience in applying competency frameworks in the Civil Service. For example, the independent central recruitment agency, PAS, developed a competency model outlining required competencies for six different civil service positions: clerical officer, executive officer, administrative officer, higher executive officer, assistant principal officer, principal officer. For each position, performance indicators are provided for six categories: (1) team leadership, (2) judgement, analysis and decision making, (3) management and delivery of results, (4) interpersonal and communication skills, (5) specialist knowledge, expertise and self-deployment and (6) drive and commitment to public service values. 137

There is no specific competency framework in place for public procurement professionals. However, in larger contracting authorities it is common to have certain differentiation of functional roles in procurement, such as a junior role, a specialist role, a category role as well as functional and team managers.

5. Training

There is no mandatory training or certificates for procurement practitioners in Ireland. However, the training market in the areas of both public and private procurement is very comprehensive. There is a broad range of both private and public training providers, including university-level education in the field. For civil servants, the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is the primary training provider. IPA offers a range of vocational training programmes, including a Certificate in Public Procurement as well as a more advanced Professional Diploma in Public Procurement. 138

¹³⁶ https://hr.per.gov.ie/pmds-2016/

https://www.publicjobs.ie/documents/PAS_CS_Competency_Models_2017.pdf https://www.ipa.ie/public-management/certificate-in-public-procurement.1759.html

The OGP is currently piloting a focussed training programme called the Commercial Skills Academy, aiming to enhance the commercial delivery capability of key spending departments and public sector bodies. The training suite is organised on a tiered system: Tier 0 – Foundation, Tier 1 – Commercial skills training, Tier 2 – In-depth Specialist Modules, Tier 3 – Conferences & Networking.

The Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) is one of the leading procurement training providers in Ireland. In addition, the Irish Institute of Purchasing and Materials Management (IIPMM), the national chapter of the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM), offers various training courses and a certification in public procurement. Many private service providers also offer specialised procurement training and certifications. Training covers various aspects of public procurement, such as tender specifications, contract management, operating framework contracts, etenders as well as advanced procurement topics.

At the university level, several specialised courses in e.g. public procurement law and procurement management at the Bachelor and Master programme level are offered.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (IPA, private providers, universities)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (CIPS, private providers, universities)
Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement	Yes (IPA, OGP, private providers)
Managerial	Yes (IPA, private providers)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Ireland consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Focus on legal aspects of public procurement: Procurement professionals report that most training focuses on procurement law and procedures, while there is a lack of emphasis on capacity building regarding commercial aspects, such as market and risk analysis.
- Attracting and retaining qualified staff: Public procurement is perceived as rather administrative
 and bureaucratic work and does not attract young professionals compared to similar posts in private
 sector institutions. There are also difficulties in retaining staff who have undergone training and
 have developed their skills because they are in demand in the private sector.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Fostering exchange of public procurement professionals: There are efforts to enhance knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices and common learning in order to improve the procurement expertise and to harmonise practices. The OGP are currently developing a network for procurement officers to meet and exchange ideas and experience.
- Considerations for developing a competency framework: The OGP is considering developing
 a competency framework comprising various grades and related training measures. It would
 provide a more structured approach to developing staff, fostering professionalisation and providing
 a career path for procurement professionals in order to reduce fluctuation and attract young
 professionals.





Italy

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In Italy, the public procurement system includes 36,000 contracting authorities across the national, regional, and local levels and 32 Central Purchasing Bodies (CPBs). At the national level, centralised procurement is organised through CONSIP, a CPB which procures predefined goods and services for the central level contracting authorities 40. At the regional level, similar centralised mechanisms are in place with regions that have their own CPBs 41. In 2016, public procurement represented about 10% of the GDP 42.

The Department of European Union Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers is in charge of the design, coordination and implementation of public procurement policies at all territorial levels ¹⁴³, while the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport is responsible for preparing draft legislation and providing advice to contracting authorities regarding the correct implementation of EU procurement rules. In addition, the Department of Development and Economic Cohesions has policy-related responsibilities as it is in charge of translating and implementing EU cohesion policy objectives and EU Directives into the national policy framework. Importantly, the National Anti-Corruption Authorities (ANAC) oversee corruption-prevention activities and collect data on public procurement through the Public Procurement Observatory. The Institute for Innovation And Transparency Of Public Contracts And Environmental Compatibility (ITACA) is responsible for implementing actions and initiatives shared by the regional system in order to promote and ensure technical coordination between regions, and between local and regional authorities and state institutions.

Public procurement professionals are primarily civil servants¹⁴⁴ in central governments (ministries, departments and agencies) and in national public bodies, schools, universities, regional and local administrations and local health administrations.

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¹³⁹ CONSIP (2018). Angela Russo, International Cooperation Projects. "Central Purchasing in Italy: the Experience of Consip, the National CPB"

¹⁴⁰ For goods and services outside of the scope of CONSIP, central authorities manage procurement independently.

¹⁴¹ This is partly driven by the fact that most of state expenditure takes place at sub-national level.

¹⁴² European Commission, (2016) DG REGIO study on Public Procurement administrative capacity in the EU, Italy Country Profile, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country_profile/it.pdf

procurement/study/country_profile/it.pdf

143 Legislative Decree 50/16, part II, title VI, regulates the governance of the Italian public procurement code. In particular, in article 212, it establishes the "Steering Committee" (acting as a control board) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department for legal and legislative affairs (DAGL)..

¹⁴⁴ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not considered as a standalone occupation in Italy, and there is no official classification of pre-defined procurement roles. In addition, while the management of tender procedures cannot be outsourced, private sector providers may be called to support other functions. These include: i) technical infrastructure enabling contracting authorities to award public contracts or conclude framework agreements for works, supplies or services; ii) advice on the conduct or design of procurement procedures and; iii) preparation of tender procedures on behalf of the contracting authorities.

In 2016, the government introduced Article 38 of the Public Contracts Code (Legislative Decree no. 50 of 18 April 2016), which promotes professionalisation of public procurement professionals by setting minimum qualification standards for contracting authorities and CPBs ^{145.} This article further limits the number of contracting authorities by establishing that contracting authorities that do not possess the necessary qualification pursuant to Article 38 shall procure through a CPB or through aggregation with one or more other contracting authorities that do have the necessary qualifications. However, the administrative measures necessary to complete the implementation of Article 38 have not yet been adopted, preventing the proposed professionalisation system to be implemented.

The Public Contracts Code provides for a training obligation but does not detail what this obligation consists of. In 2018, the Agency for Territorial Cohesion, the National School for Administration (SNA), the Conference of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces as well as ITACA, designed a national training plan on Public Procurement and Concessions (see box below).

Italy's National Training Plan of contracting authorities

The National Training Plan on Public Procurement and Concessions ("the plan"), was elaborated with a view of building the public procurement capacities of contracting authorities and CPBs in Italy.

The plan relies on four key initiatives:

- 1. First level e-learning about generic aspects of public procurement, which provides general information material on the Public Procurement Contracts Code. The material was made available through 11 regional portals, plus the ITACA portal. A total of 25,000 public administration staff completed the online training course, including a final technical test. Participation in the course led to certification. The general training course provided by SNA involved about 2,000 procurement professionals from central contracting authorities.
- A train-the-trainer programme, in which specific phases of the public procurement lifecycle are examined (planning phase of needs assessment, phase of preparation of tender documentation, etc.), apart from the contract management phase, which is the responsibility of contracting authorities. About 100 participants identified by ANAC and CONSIP were trained.
- 3. In-depth procurement courses, covering important key aspects at different stages of the public procurement lifecycle (subdivision into lots, reasons for exclusion, award criteria, etc). About 5,000 staff were selected and trained from a pool of 25,000 participants who have completed the first level training. The selection was made, inter alia, based on the score obtained in the final test of the first level.
- 4. **Training on project management** for the Responsible for the Entire Procurement Procedure (RUP), for complex contracts. A total of 180 RUPs were trained.

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¹⁴⁵ Available at:

https://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/MenuServizio/English%20section/ITALIAN_PUBLIC_CONTRACT_CODE%2015%20giugno%202018_sito%20(2).pdf

This plan was successful for a couple of reasons. First, it managed to involve all the key institutions in public procurement, ensuring a high degree of ownership and engagement. Second, by combining the training skills of each institution with a technological platform, the consortium managed to provide a wide range of training, with very limited investments.

Following the success of the plan, ITACA aims to organise broad delivery of such training throughout the entire territory with the involvement of the Regions and SNA to deliver the training courses.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The status of civil servants is mainly regulated by the Code of Conduct for Government employees amended in 2013, as well as collective agreements. 146

Recruitment

As the Italian system is decentralised, all contracting authorities are responsible for their own recruitment, performance evaluation, and learning and development of staff by following their own internal and autonomous systems and tools of professionalisation.

Generally, civil servants enter the service through competitions mostly for jurists, economists, statisticians who can then be entrusted with the responsibility of managing public contracts. Procedural and legal knowledge in public procurement is usually required, and the traditionally sought-after profiles for public procurement professionals are often related to administration and law, as well as more technical profiles (such as engineers). Some contracting authorities may also request or favour candidates with relevant professional experience. When in need of public procurement specialists, CONSIP often recruits from the private sector. It is also possible for a contracting authority to hire experts from other public administrations for specific assignments (e.g. in IT or health).

Performance and compensation

The government introduced a new evaluation system 147, with the creation of Independent Evaluation Performance Units to monitor and annually assess the performance, efficiency, and transparency of the civil service. 148 This evaluation is based on a set of objectives, which are usually defined on the basis of management planning documents and the executive management plan of the individual administration. There are no objectives specifically dedicated to public procurement professionals. A salary increase and/or a promotion may follow a successful evaluation. However, the remuneration offered by the public sector is not competitive comparative to the private sector. 149

Career progression

There is no specific framework for the career progression of public procurement professionals. Their career path and progression depend on the individual administration in which they are employed. It is important to note that individual civil servants cannot assess their own training gaps, but rather the contracting authority does so and then selects the staff that will take part in training.

Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

While the public administration uses competency frameworks in specific areas such as the European e-competence framework, 150 there is no comprehensive competency framework for public procurement

¹⁴⁶ See more information at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Public_employment_ <u>Italy&oldid=368912</u>

147 Through the legislative decree. n° 150 of 2009.

¹⁴⁸ OECD (2013). OECD Public Governance Reviews OECD Integrity Review of Italy.

¹⁴⁹ Incentives for technical functions for public employees are described in Article 113 of the Code.

¹⁵⁰ https://www.digitalsme.eu/ecompetence-framework-italy-sets-example/

which applies to all contracting authorities. In the private sector, the Italian Association for Procurement and Supply Management (ADACI) has developed the certification Q2P ADACI that recognises three levels of procurement competence: buyer, senior buyer and expert in purchase and supply management.¹⁵¹ The certification has been recognised by the Ministry of Economic Development and could technically apply to any procurement professional in the public or private sector. Some CBPs such as CONSIP make use of these certified roles.

Several organisations, including SNA, provide certificates in public procurement based on the successful completion of training. While these certificates are not officially recognised by law, they are often considered by contracting authorities in recruitment, and useful for the professional development of procurement professionals.

There is no single classification of public procurement roles. Instead, several roles can be found in larger contracting authorities such as the RUP, Contract Execution Manager, the Assistant to the RUP, the Controller, the Director of Works, and the Final Test Commission Member.

5. Training

Main training providers

SNA is the main training provider for civil servants, offering them a wide range of training programs including on public procurement. SNA is active at the national level—ministries and national public bodies (e.g. INPS, INAIL, etc.)—and can also provide training to local and regional authorities through a system of agreements.

Other training providers

While ANAC does not provide training directly, it contributes to the development of courses provided by other institutions. In this regard, ANAC often collaborates with ITACA, the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), and SNA to prepare training courses on the Public Contracts Code. ANAC has also actively collaborated in the launch of university master's degrees intended exclusively for civil servants and mainly dedicated to public procurement. For example, courses on contracts and CBPs and anti-corruption issues were launched in Turin and Rome.

The Tor Vergata University in Rome offers the International Master's in Public Procurement Management (IMPPM) degree. It features English speaking in-class lectures in addition to distance learning, and professional internships in a company or institution in Italy or abroad. The programme is renowned for its interdisciplinary content and for its acceptance of both experienced public purchasers and young students preparing for a career in public procurement.

In addition, the Department of Economics and Finance of the ToR Vergata University hosts the "Proxenter", a centre for interdisciplinary research on Public and Private procurement and on the supply chain. It encourages the cultural and scientific debate on these issues in cooperation with governments, institutions and companies, and regularly organises seminars, conferences and workshops at the national and international level.

The following type of training are available:

Type of training **Availability (training provider)** Legal and procedural Yes (SNA, ITACA, ANCI, ADACI and Tor Vergata) Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation) Yes (SNA, ADACI) Advanced topics Yes (SNA, ADACI, ITACA, CONSIP, Min. Green public procurement Environment) Public procurement for innovation Yes (ITACA, AGID) Socially responsible public procurement Yes (SNA, CONSIP) E-procurement Yes, (CONSIP) Managerial Yes (SNA, Tor Vergata)

¹⁵¹ https://www.adaci.it/attestazione-di-qualita-e-qualificazione-professionale-dei-servizi-adaci/

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Italy consulted in the preparation of this factsheet

Challenges to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

- Attracting, training and retaining staff is perceived as being difficult in the field of
 procurement. A lack of opportunity and harmonisation of training in procurement at all territorial
 levels, together with less competitive remunerations and incentives compared to private sector
 positions, makes it difficult to attract and retain experienced professionals.
- The complexity and uncertainty of the public procurement regulatory framework: The continuous changes in the legal and regulatory system of public procurement is highly fragmented (Public Contracts Code, guidelines issued by ANAC, implementing decrees, etc.) which tends to discourage potential future procurement professionals. In addition, The Public Contracts Code's implementation is delayed, creating uncertainties over public procurement processes. Notably, the question around the qualifications of contracting authorities seems to be particularly sensitive.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

An organisation dedicated to public procurement training will be setup by ITACA, with the collaboration and support of the Regions and SNA. This organisation will carry on the work undertaken under the National Training Plan on Public Procurement (described in the box above) and ensure the continuous professionalisation of public procurement professionals.



LITHUANA

Lithuania

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Following the abolition of its county administrations in 2010, Lithuania has become a unitary state with two levels of government, the central and local governments (similar to its neighbour states). Lithuania's public spending as a share of GDP is of one the lowest in the EU.

According to the National Audit Office of Lithuania (NAO), there are approximately 4000 contracting authorities in the country. Public procurement professionals are primarily civil servants ¹⁵² governed by the Law on Civil Service, and contractual staff governed by the Labour Code.

The Ministry of the Economy and Innovation has legislative and regulatory authority over public procurement and is responsible for designing policies and drafting laws and regulations related to public procurement. The Public Procurement Office (VPT - Viešųjų pirkimų tarnyba) is in charge of the overall implementation of public procurement policies. Among its responsibilities, VPT monitors public procurement procedures, manages the e-procurement system, collects statistics on public procurement and provides methodological assistance, training and advice to contracting authorities.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

As in most Member States, public procurement is not a regulated profession in Lithuania. In most cases, public procurement staff is primarily recruited for administrative tasks, and only in rare cases, is recruited for a public procurement function in an expert role. Only about 10% of procurement professionals work exclusively on public procurement, while 70% of those in charge of the implementation of public procurement within contracting authorities carry out procurement activities in addition to their other tasks.¹⁵³

An audit of the public procurement system carried out by the NAO ¹⁵⁴ in 2018 revealed that public procurement professionals lack the skills and competencies required for conducting public procurement in a satisfactory manner, in particular when it comes to the planning and performance of public procurement.

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¹⁵² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

¹⁵³ OECD, 'Improving Lithuania's Public Procurement System, Component 1 – Implementation of professionalisation and certification frameworks', 2019, available at: http://www.oecd.org/governance/public-procurement/publications/ 154 National Audit Office of Lithuania (2018), Audit of the function of the public procurement system, available at: https://www.vkontrole.lit/failas.aspx?id=3810

Recognising this, in 2018 the Lithuanian government and VPT, supported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), created a professionalisation strategy and a certification framework (see box below).

Professionalisation initiative: Lithuania's procurement professionalisation strategy and action plan

In 2018, the European Commission in cooperation with the OECD agreed to provide technical support to Lithuania via the project 'Improving Lithuania's public procurement system through professionalisation and certification frameworks'.

The project started with a gap analysis that consists of an **overall assessment of the public procurement workforce** in Lithuania and its **specific challenges and needs**, as well as an **extensive review of the training courses and materials** and capacity building tools (manuals, templates, consultations, etc.) available to procurement professionals. The results of this gap analysis indicated that the development of a professionalisation strategy and certification framework could be suitable solutions to overcome Lithuania's challenges and needs.

The proposed **certification framework** outlines skills and competences required, the specific training programmes to be completed and a career path for public procurement professionals. The project accounts for different expertise levels among procurement professionals, therefore two certificate levels were proposed: **a basic level and an advanced level**. The basic level focuses on a practitioner's ability to implement basic and standard tasks of procurement procedures, while the advanced level is about implementing complex procedures, providing colleagues with advice on every aspect of public procurement, and proposing solutions to improve the practitioners' daily work.

In terms of **course requirements**, both the basic and advanced levels mandate the completion of a 42-hour course while only the advanced level requires an additional 18-hour course. The procurement topics covered in the certification courses vary in length and scope, with a wider variety of subjects covered in the basic level courses. Topics range from Public Procurement Law, Market Analysis, Calculation of Estimated Procurement Value, Negotiation Methods and Tactics and Contract Management, e-Procurement, Green public procurement, Socially Responsible Public Procurement, Innovation procurement and facilitating SMEs access to procurement.

Examination tests for both levels consist of multiple-choice questions, while the advanced test includes additional open-ended questions. Both certificates are valid for a period of three years. A **train-the-trainer programme** was created to ensure the delivery of the certification programme training courses. While most training courses that cover generic public procurement aspects will be administered by the VPT and consultants, specific training such as Negotiation Methods and Tactics, will be delivered by private entities only.

The implementation of the suggested **professionalisation strategy** entails the development of several tools including face-to-face workshops, e-learning modules, an educational degree programme, manuals and guidelines, standardised templates, ad hoc support through a helpdesk and consultations, as well as practical training in the form of job-swapping, a community of practice, and internships. All this content and information is available on a one-stop-shop procurement portal. Finally, motivating public procurement practitioners was also addressed in the professionalisation strategy through the creation of financial incentives (payment and other direct financial benefits) and non-financial incentives (e.g. recognition and awards, flexible working hours, etc.).

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

In January 2019, a reform of the civil service was launched impacting, among others, the classification of civil servants, learning and development initiatives and annual evaluations. As part of the reform, there is a focus on learning. For instance, the reform includes the creation of a mentor's role (suggested

for civil servants who have reached retirement age (65 years old)). Mentors support the learning development of counterparts, by sharing their technical and institutional knowledge.

Recruitment

At the central and local level, public procurement practitioners who are civil servants are recruited by the Civil Service Department under the Ministry of the Interior. Civil servant positions may be filled either as a result of internal mobility or via a competition open to the public. On the other hand, the recruitment of contractual staff is carried out independently by contracting authorities. In general, recruitment opportunities are offered to candidates from both the public and the private sector.

Candidates should have procedural and legal knowledge in public procurement as a minimum qualification. Previous experience in public procurement is considered an advantage. However, due to the lack of professionals that work exclusively on public procurement, public procurement professionals often gain their skills through on-the-job training.

Performance and compensation

The compensation of civil servants is regulated by law and depends on the category of the civil servant. There are 10 position groups, starting with level 10 (specialist – lowest level) and ending at level 1 (senior civil servant – highest level). Civil servants are subject to an annual performance review. In cases of excellent performance, civil servants can be promoted, receive a higher remuneration or be incentivised through other means (additional days for annual holiday, extraordinary bonus, etc.). Currently, there are no national performance targets set for public procurement professionals such as achievement of savings. Instead, each contracting authority sets its own performance targets for its staff. There are ongoing plans to introduce national-level key performance indicators for performance evaluation purposes in the near future.

Career progression

There is no specific fixed career progression for public procurement professionals defined at the national level, other than the general progression of civil servants. At the organisational level, it is possible to define specific procurement-related roles and career steps, e.g. the role of buyer or procurement manager in accordance with requirements set for progression of civil servants.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Before the development of the certification framework for procurement practitioners in 2018, Lithuania did not have experience with competency frameworks or competency-based policies in the public procurement field.

While it is not a widespread practice, some contracting authorities have dedicated staff to plan public procurement, draft technical specifications, implement and contract management, etc. Usually such practices are more common in larger contracting authorities that are able to have staff exclusively performing procurement tasks. However, there is no uniform approach to defining public procurement roles. Hence, public procurement functions are often covered under a broad umbrella of profiles, such as a public procurement specialist who would cover one or several roles defined in the internal regulations.

5. Training

The Civil Service Department of the Ministry of Economy is responsible for the coordination of the training system for civil servants in Lithuania. VPT organises training sessions and seminars in public procurement. Furthermore, Lithuania's Central Purchasing Body (CPO) is providing training to contracting authorities and suppliers on topics related to centralised procurement. In addition to these institutions involved in procurement training, approximately 51 private training providers deliver programmes on public procurements topics. Lastly, the training framework introduced by the OECD on Training of Trainers was successfully implemented.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (VPT)
Technical (e.g. market analysis)	Yes (VPT)
Advanced topics	Yes (VPT, CPO)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (private providers)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Lithuania consulted in the preparation of this factsheet

Challenges related to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- A lack of knowledge and a lack of motivation to include secondary policy objectives: Public
 procurement professionals regard green, socially responsible and innovation procurement as too
 complex to implement, and therefore tend to stick to the use of traditional procurement to achieve
 primary goals. In addition, they struggle to divide contracts into lots, thus not facilitating the
 participation of SMEs in public procurement.
- Planning and preparation of procurement and contract management phases are the most challenging: As indicated in the 2018 OECD report, and also evidenced by statistics on irregularities, procurement planning and preparation, as well as contract management, are the procurement stages most prone to errors and irregularities.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- The Lithuanian government is implementing a professionalisation strategy and certification framework: As described in the box above, a certification framework was created to map, develop and certify skills and competencies of procurement practitioners. While the legislative initiatives that would support the proposed model for certification have stalled, the professionalisation plan foresees the preparation of various help tools for public buyers (standardised documents, life cycle cost calculators, commentaries on Law on Public Procurement, etc.), as well as officially establishing a list of competencies that the procurement professional should have. They are equally foreseeing i) the preparation of e-learning tools to fill in those gaps, ii) establishing the motivational measures for public procurement professionals, iii) a dialogue with universities to enhance training on public procurement matters, iv) the training of suppliers, auditors and judges.
- Centralisation of public procurement: Although no formal decision has yet been taken by the Lithuanian government, the National Audit Office suggests that the centralisation of procurements could allow for better effectiveness of administration, the specialisation and professionalisation of procurement staff, and the concentration of procurement expertise. In January 2020 initiatives regarding creation of more central purchasing bodies have been presented by the President of the Republic of Lithuania (the proposed changes to the law are still under discussion).



LATVIA

Latvia

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Latvia is a unitary and fairly centralised state and its public sector is relatively small compared to the EU-27 Member States, as the share of total expenditure of GDP is 37%. The central government expenditure accounts for about 60%. Latvia does not have a regional level governance and the local government share is around 26% of total expenditure. ¹⁵⁵ There are about 1,900 contracting authorities and contracting entities that cover the central and local government. ¹⁵⁶

The Ministry of Finance defines procurement policy and drafts relevant legislation. The Procurement Monitoring Bureau (IUB) ¹⁵⁷, responsible for monitoring procurement compliance, i) examines complaints of the economic operators regarding infringements of procurement procedures; ii) examines administration violation cases in the field of public procurements and impose administrative penalties; iii) prepares guidelines and instructions; iv) provides training, and v) publishes quarterly and annual reports summarising data on public procurement in Latvia. The State Regional Development Agency (VRAA) acts as a central purchasing body of the central government for IT, household and stationary goods, as well as for health insurance ¹⁵⁸. As such, VRAA provides framework agreements to Latvian contracting authorities and is responsible for operating and managing the e-procurement portal. Even though both central and local contracting authorities can conduct their own procedures in Latvia, there are ongoing intensified centralisation efforts. Many local contracting authorities have already centralised their procurements through VRAA, while the government is currently considering introducing centralised procurement for scientific institutions and universities.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Procurement is not a standalone occupation in Latvia. Public procurement professionals are divided into two broad categories of public sector employment: civil servants 159 and contractual staff with

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⁰¹aa75ed71a1/language-en

156 European Commission, (2016) DG REGIO stock-taking study of administrative capacity, systems and practices across the EU to ensure the compliance and quality of public procurement involving European Structural and Investment Funds, Latvia country profiles, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/

¹⁵⁷ https://www.iub.gov.lv/

¹⁵⁹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

contracts based on labour law. ¹⁶⁰ At the central government level, procurement-related tasks are mostly carried out by civil servants, while in other central and local contracting authorities staff is primarily comprised of contractual staff. In addition, external consultants and lawyers are often employed to implement specific procurement projects. Larger contracting authorities usually have separate procurement departments and can afford to consult with experts for large and complex public procurements.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Employment conditions for public procurement professionals with civil servant status are based on the Civil Service Law. 161 The State Chancellery is the body in charge of developing the Human Resource Policy at the central level. In contrast, ministries, agencies and local municipalities are autonomous in implementing their human resources policies.

Recruitment

Minimum requirements to become a civil servant are defined in the Civil Service Law. However, there are no centralised procurement-specific requirements in the recruitment processes. Each contracting authority can autonomously impose the necessary requirements regarding prior work experience, education, competencies and language skills.

Job positions in the central and local government are classified in the Occupation Classification established by the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 1075 ¹⁶². Although public procurement is not considered a standalone occupation, public procurement positions sometimes match certain levels of classified occupations. Such levels differ depending on duties. For instance, level 1 includes tasks such as identifying the needs of the contracting authority and preparing suggestions for necessary supplies, while level 5 includes tasks related to procurement in a large institution such as conducting centralised procurement, developing tender documentation, etc. Job openings must be publicly announced and published on the vacancy portal of the State Employment Agency.

In order to become a public procurement professional, prior experience in the field is usually required. When recruiting from the private sector, candidates with specific expertise in a procurement-related field as well as skills in project management are preferred. However, experienced procurement professionals are usually hired from the public sector as they already have acquired expertise in the application of public procurement law. Currently, procurement professionals in Latvia predominantly have an educational background in law, while technical specifications are often developed by specialists in the respective field.

Performance and compensation

The remuneration in the public administration is significantly lower than in comparable private sector jobs, ¹⁶³ therefore, it is difficult to recruit and retain qualified procurement professionals. There is a unified remuneration system for civil servants at the central and local levels. According to this law, remuneration consists of a base salary, social guarantees and bonuses. Bonuses can be set for additional job responsibilities, the performance of important strategic tasks or special quality of work, but performance-

¹⁶³ European Commission (2018): "European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU: Latvia", p. 548.

¹⁶⁰ In 2017, there were only 6% of the central government workforce civil servants, while civil service does not exist on a local municipal level in Latvia. Source: European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU: Latvia" pp. 546-547.

¹⁶¹ Civil servants and contractual staff have the same duties and social rights, ethical codes, performance evaluation and remuneration system.

¹⁶² See Annex 1, Section II, point 2 of Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No 1075 Catalogue of positions of state and municipal institutions (adopted in November 30, 2010, available at https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=222271

based salary is not applied. The performance of civil servants is assessed annually, and results of the evaluation can affect opportunities for promotion.

Career progression

The career progression for public procurement professionals is dependent on the contracting authority. In larger contracting authorities with dedicated procurement functions, it is possible to become the head of unit or a director of a department. However, it is also common that highly qualified public procurement experts pursue options in the private sector as part of their career progression, given the significant income discrepancy.¹⁶⁴

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Latvia has some experience implementing the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)¹⁶⁵ on a voluntary basis, with some public institutions that have implemented it.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the government's Public Administration Reform Plan for 2020 foresees the introduction of key performance indicators for senior civil servants to enhance effectiveness and allow for a systematic evaluation of development needs. It is called the Programme for the Development of Senior-Level Managers and it foresees five essential indicators to be defined related to the functions and tasks of these officials, such as timely performance of tasks, efficient use of resources, employee engagement, satisfaction of customers as well as an additional indicators considering the contribution to the overall development of the State. The State Chancellery plans to run a pilot of this programme with senior staff of different central government ministries and subordinate institutions.¹⁶⁷

In the area of public procurement, there is no centrally defined competency framework applied by contracting authorities. However, larger contracting authorities have specialised staff for different parts of the procurement process, such as procurement planning, organisation of procedures, development of procurement documents, drafting technical specifications or implementing EU projects.

5. Training

The Latvian School of Public Administration is the primary training provider for civil servants. It offers regular courses on public procurement topics, including a three-day initial training and specific training in case law, development of procurement documents and the implementation of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria. It also offers e-training in the field.

IUB offers methodological assistance and organises training for contracting authorities across the country on the application of the legal framework. These typically cover case law, the preparation of procurement documents, evaluation criteria, implementation of exclusion grounds, as well as sharing of common mistakes. In addition, it provides training seminars as well as publications and workshops on the latest legal issues in procurement. IUB also cooperates with the State Chancellery and the School of Public Administration in the area of procurement capacity building. Furthermore, it develops and publishes different guidelines for public procurement practitioners jointly with industry associations. IUB and the Central Finance and Contracting Agency also offers lectures and training for procurements involving EU funds.

At regional level, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments organises seminars on procurement topics for municipalities. There are also private providers including a procurement magazine publisher that runs training seminars and an annual public procurement conference.

As both corruption and the lack of competition remain challenges in Latvia, dedicated training sessions have been organised by the Latvian Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau and the Competition

¹⁶⁴ Middle and top-level managers in the Latvian public administration receive on average more than 50% less salary than their private counterparts. Source: European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU: Latvia", p. 548.

https://www.eipa.eu/portfolio/european-caf-resource-centre/

¹⁶⁶ Murat Kalfa & A. Azmi Yetim (2018): "Organizational self-assessment based on common assessment framework to improve the organizational quality in public administration", p. 5.

https://www.mk.gov.lv/sites/default/files/editor/public-administration-reform-plan-2020_.pdf

Council. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development provides seminars on green public procurement and publishes guidelines to foster green procurement practices. VRAA offers guidelines on e-procurement on its website.

There is no specific academic degree in public procurement, but rather single courses offered by universities. For instance, the private *RISEBA University* offers a specialised procurement course aimed at project managers and The University of Latvia offers a course called *Public Procurement Law*. However, there is no mandatory training or certificates for public procurement professionals.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Latvian School of Public Administration, IUB, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, Corruption Combating and Prevention Bureau, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Competition Council)
Advanced topics Green public procurement E-procurement	Yes (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, VRAA)
Managerial	Yes (Universities)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Latvia consulted in the preparation of this factsheet

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- **Difficulties attracting staff for public procurement positions:** Due to the high income discrepancy between public and private sector employers and the lack of formal education in public procurement, it is a challenge for contracting authorities to attract and retain qualified staff.
- Limited application of advanced procurement procedures: Despite a growing interest among larger contracting authorities to apply new procedures, such as competitive dialogue, competitive procedure with negotiation and innovation partnership, the lack of guidelines and best practices hampers a more widespread use of these procedures.
- A lack of knowledge in strategic procurement: Strategic procurement training and guidance is
 not comprehensively provided in Latvia. As a result, public procurement professionals are not
 equipped to implement green, social and innovation procurement.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Enhancing efficiency in public procurement: It is a government priority to increase efficiency in
 public administration and spending. This includes further centralisation of procurement and its
 support functions, increasing competition and reducing the risks of illegal expenditures and
 corruption. Due to the resulting reduction of personnel, this also entails a more specialised and
 qualified public procurement workforce.
- Fostering innovative procurement: The government has established a special working group on green public procurement comprising experts from different ministries. In addition, there is a dedicated working group within the Ministry of Economics responsible for developing measures to foster innovative procurement in Latvia.



LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Luxembourg has a comparatively centralised public procurement structure, with a single public procurement portal where all contracting authorities are obliged to publish their procurement notices. Currently, there are approximately 450 contracting authorities registered on the e-procurement portal, of which 150 are assumed to be local authorities. Public procurement expenditures account for about 11.8% of GDP and 29.2% of total general government expenditures in Luxembourg in 2017. 168

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The Ministry of Mobility and Public works (MMTP) hosts the Public Procurement Directorate, which is the only policy body for public procurement in Luxembourg. It is responsible for the regulatory framework, drafting of legislation and monitoring its implementation. Further, the MMTP hosts the administrative services of the Tender Commission that performs supervisory and consultative tasks for contracting authorities and economic operators. The MMTP is also in charge of implementing the e-procurement portal, the helpdesk thereof and e-procurement training. The main bodies in terms of supervision of public procurement are the Judiciary (in charge of providing remedies when relevant), the Court of Auditors and the Competition Council.

Public procurement is not a standalone occupation in Luxembourg and is carried out by civil servants and public employees ¹⁶⁹. The proficiency level varies across institutions, with highly skilled and trained professionals in large contracting authorities, while procurement professionals of smaller contracting authorities usually conduct procurement-related activities as a side-task and therefore have less experience and capacity.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

For civil servants and public employees in the central government, the human resources management (HRM) system is rather centralised in Luxembourg. The Ministry of the Civil Service is responsible for defining the general principles for recruitment, promotion, appraisal, career management and remuneration. Further, the Ministry of the Civil Service assumes a key role in the central recruitment of both civil servants and public employees. ¹⁷⁰¹⁷¹

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¹⁶⁸ OECD (2019): "Government at a glance: Country Fact Sheet Luxembourg" (figures as of 2017).

¹⁶⁹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

¹⁷⁰ In 2015, the share of civil servants in public administration amounted to 64.9%, while public employees made up to 25.3%. The remaining 9.8% were state manual workers. Source: European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Luxembourg" p.702.

¹⁷¹ The differences between civil servants and state employees are diminishing.

Recruitment

Procurement professionals with civil servant status are recruited through competitive exams organized by the Ministry of the Civil Service. Since the entry into force of the reform of the "examen-concours" in 2015, the recruitment process is more efficient and less lengthy. There is also an increasing trend of hiring staff under public employee contracts. This allows contracting authorities at the central government and municipal levels to draft job descriptions based on the specific needs and to recruit suitable candidates in a less complex selection procedure and with less rigid criteria. Given the competitive salaries paid in the public sector in Luxembourg, retention of staff and recruitment of procurers is not a concern.

Performance and compensation

Civil servant salaries in Luxembourg are mostly higher than in the private sector, especially for entry level positions and lower grades. The salary levels of the different grades are laid down in a grid, which has been adopted by law. There are no performance-based salary components for public servants.

Career progression

There is no specific career progression defined for public procurement professionals in Luxembourg. Rather, their career and pay progression follows the rules of the civil service. In the public administration in Luxembourg, career progression remains to a large extent determined by seniority.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency based policies

In Luxembourg, the use of competency frameworks and strategic management tools in the public administration used to be uncommon. In 2015, the central government started introducing the use of strategic management tools for setting objectives at organisational and individual level and evaluating these. Since then, the central government has been working towards continuous improvement of these tools and their application. The development of a competency framework for public administrators comprising both functions and related competencies is planned in the near future. There is a strong focus on fostering professionalisation in a comprehensive manner, beyond merely technical skills. The framework will consist of five types of competencies.

For public procurement professionals, there is no specific competency framework in place and it is currently not planned.

5. Training

The primary training institution for public servants at both state and communal level is the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP). INAP offers several basic training courses on public procurement, including budget and procurement law. Recent training focused on the new public procurement law that entered into force in April 2018. In addition, there are tailored training offers designed for the specific needs of contracting authorities. INAP may provide financial support for training purposes to contracting authorities, provided there is a lack of budget.

There is also a range of private training providers, including the *Professional chambers*. On a university level, there are no procurement-related courses, but there is also little demand by practitioners for such an academic training. There are no mandatory training or certificates for procurement practitioners. The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (INAP, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (INAP)
Advanced topics	Yes (INAP, MMTP – Portail des marchés
Green public procurement	publics, private providers)
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (INAP)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Luxembourg consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• **Gaps in specialised training offers:** Available training courses for public procurement professionals in Luxembourg usually cover basic public procurement issues.





Malta

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Malta is the smallest Member State of the EU in both population and size. The Department of Contracts within the Ministry of Finance and Financial Services is the Central Government Authority responsible for procurement across the whole Maltese Civil Service. The majority of contracts are still handled by individual government contracting authorities and by the Ministerial Procurement Units (MPUs) where available.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

An MPU is an entity that is established under each Ministry which processes, administers, and recommends the award of a call for tenders published under the open procedures, where the estimated value of the call exceeds EUR10,000 but is less than EUR 250,000. The first MPU was established at the Ministry for Education and Employment, and training was delivered to the personnel that were recruited accordingly. There are currently seven MPUs established in seven Ministries and eventually, it is envisaged that all Ministries will have an MPU.

Due to its small population and size, Malta faces a general lack of human capacity in public administration, which extends to the public procurement system. To cope with this lack of resources accentuated by a lack of expertise, over the past few years Malta has been proactively building opportunities for learning and development by making various training workshops available for its procurement staff. Public procurement is not yet recognised as a standalone profession in Malta, however the Department of Contracts considers making it so as one of its primary objectives.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The People and Standards Division within the Prime Minister's Office governs the human resource management of civil servants¹⁷² and subsequently of public procurement professionals.

Recruitment

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The hiring process for public procurement practitioners includes both internal and external calls for application. Calls for application within and outside of the central government are published and administered by individual ministries, while the human resources management of other government entities is managed by the People's and Standards Division within the Prime Minister's Office. When recruiting new procurement staff, procurement education, both in terms of qualification as well as ongoing training and hands-on experience, is encouraged. A level of qualification in selected ancillary

¹⁷² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

areas is mandatory. To a certain extent, ongoing training is also mandatory for all staff that have procurement duties, which thus enables Malta to have officers up-to-date with Public Procurement processes. This is also acknowledged in the selection criteria for procurement calls. Recruited staff may have some level of experience in purchasing but usually, knowledge in procurement is limited.

Performance and compensation

Ministries and individual contracting authorities are responsible for carrying out individual performance appraisals of their procurement staff. In terms of compensation, salary conditions proposed by the public sector are considered less attractive than in the private sector.

Career progression

The career progression of public procurement professionals is based on the job classification set by the People's and Standards Division within the Office of the Prime Minister and is currently being revised (see box below). The Public Procurement career stream has been defined as follows:

- i. Assistant Manager (Procurement);
- ii. Manager I (Procurement);
- iii. Manager II (Procurement);
- iv. Senior Manager (Procurement);
- v. Assistant Director.

Malta's classification of public procurement job profiles

The Department of Contracts has defined **five procurement job profiles** which are also used in the newly set up MPUs, namely: Procurement Director, Assistant Director Procurement, Procurement Manager II, Procurement Manager I, and Assistant Manager (Procurement). Each job profile encompasses a number of specific tasks related to the procurement cycle amongst which are policy and guideline development, planning, vetting, publication, evaluation, award, modifications, mediation, appeals and court litigation, quality assurance, compliance and monitoring as well as programme implementation.

Minimum qualifications have also been established for the recruitment of staff under these job profiles. For instance, a position of experienced Procurement Manager II requires either a master's degree in Procurement, Accounts, or Finance or a comparable professional qualification. For the less experienced Procurement Manager I position, a bachelor's degree in the same field/s is required.

These job profiles represent Malta's early steps towards the establishment of a national procurement competency framework by its national public procurement authority. Moreover, the Department of Contracts strives to raise awareness among Public Procurers about the importance of recognising the public procurement profession as a standalone one and to develop a viable procurement career path through the development of more educational and development opportunities in public procurement.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

There is no official procurement competency framework in Malta, but all the necessary elements to create one are available. Work is underway by the Department of Contracts in liaison with MFIN, OPM and the MEDE in order to develop a Recognition for Prior Learning [RPL] setup in Public Procurement. The RPL setup is in its advanced stages and is based on the European Competency Framework. Procurement roles have been defined with specific tasks assigned to each. A wide range of training modules providing all the necessary skills to complete such tasks are available. Since 2015, the

Department of Contracts has also been using the EU Common Assessment Framework¹⁷³ to improve its organisational performance and to foster the use of quality management techniques.¹⁷⁴ From 1994 to 2016, thanks to the Performance Management Programme (PMP), the Maltese Public Service assessed the individual performance of public service employees against approved output and quality standards. As of 2016, a new fully automated web-based performance appraisal system was established, replacing the PMP. The main objective of this new system is the holistic assessment of individuals as part of the public service and the enhancement of individual accountability and job satisfaction, whilst providing visibility on training and development needs. Performance targets may include procurement-related targets, but this is not a systematic practice.

Malta has launched several initiatives aiming to professionalise public procurement, including the design and provision of several training courses, like the national procurement legislation, e-procurement systems and tools and green procurement. In addition, to support the improvement of public procurement processes, the OECD conducted a study 175 highlighting the key areas where further effort is needed. These include public procurement capability and capacity building, strategic planning, increasing and enhancing digital public procurement processes and benchmarking improvements. Regarding procurement capability and capacity building, the OECD recommends the implementation of a skill-based assessment mechanism considering qualifications, competences and core experience, to be implemented in a two-year period.

5. Training

The reformed Institute for Public Service (IPS) was set up in 2016 as the main provider of public procurement training and learning development opportunities for civil servants. Its strategic partners are the University of Malta and the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology. The IPS also provides academic and vocational learning for public administration.

Through its collaboration with universities and the Department of Contracts, the IPS has designed two mandatory training courses for procurement staff delivered by trainers from the IPS and experienced staff from the Department of Contracts. The first training is a two half-day course on 'Departmental tendering' (i.e. tenders issued by contracting authorities below the departmental (EU services/supplies) threshold). The second one consists of a comprehensive five half-day course on 'National Public Procurement Regulations' aiming at providing public procurement professionals with the adequate procurement knowledge, skills and competencies required to execute their role. The use of real-world examples analysed in case studies provides a practical dimension to the training courses. A specific focus is also put on the contract management phase.

The Department of Contracts in collaboration with IPS provides a Follow-up Procurement course for any professional who has previously taken the two mandatory procurement training workshops. This course focuses on the same topics but delves into them deeper and takes a more hands-on approach.

Training in green procurement and e-procurement are also available both to public procurement professionals and economic operators.

On the private side, CIPS is a large provider of e-learning modules in procurement in Malta. In terms of procurement education, the Department of Contracts, the IPS and the Malta's College for Art, Science, and Technology have designed two bachelor's degrees, one in Public Projects and one in Procurement and Finance.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes, IPS (with Department of Contracts, University of Malta and Malta's College for Arts, Science and Technology)
Technical (e.g. market analysinegotiation)	is, Yes (with Department of Contracts, University of Malta and Malta's College for Arts, Science and Technology)

¹⁷³ https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/Pages/News/2015/20150518_CAFSpreading.aspx

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https://contracts.gov.mt/en/NewsAndInfo/Pages/CAF.aspx

¹⁷⁵ Available at https://www.oecd.org/governance/public-procurement/publications/public-procurement-in-malta.pdf

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Advanced topics	Yes (with Department of Contracts, University of Malta
Green public procurement	and Malta's College for Arts, Science and Technology)
Public procurement for innovation	
 Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement Fighting fraud and corruption in public procurement 	
Managerial	Yes (IPS)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Malta consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

1. Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Attracting public procurement professionals: As part of the setup of MPUs within Ministries, new public procurement job profiles have been created and should be filled. However, the recruitment of sufficient suitable candidates with the right profile is difficult.
- Expanding and upgrading the procurement training offer: The lack of human capacity and expertise in procurement in Malta represents a threat to the development of more advanced procurement training which would ensure the upskilling of procurers who have already attended available procurement training.
- Retaining public procurement professionals: Due to more attractive salary conditions offered by the private sector, employees who have a solid education and experience in public procurement tend to leave the public sector.

2. Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Enhancing the role of the Department of Contracts: The Department of Contracts, in particular
 its regulatory role, will be extended in order to act pro-actively to ensure adherence to all
 procurement directives during the implementation stage of procurement contracts.
- Procurement efficiency and professionalisation: The Department of Contracts is responsible for supporting the setup and staffing of MPUs. Its role in these activities aims at achieving greater efficiency in public procurement and at raising interest in a career path in public procurement among procurement professionals.



NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In the Netherlands, the public procurement system is driven by 7,500 contracting authorities at the central state, the provinces and the municipalities' levels. The Netherlands is at the forefront of development in public procurement with a longstanding tradition of professionalising public buyers and, thus, the overall competence level of public procurement professionals is generally high. Nevertheless, disparities exist among large contracting authorities small ones, which rarely employ full-time buyers. Large organisations typically have full-time public buyers, who are well position to organise the procurement process efficiently, deliver results to their internal clients and deliver value for money procurements. In comparison, small authorities often lack the capacity to employ staff who can fully specialise in procurement. Instead, they often rely on cooperation with regional purchasing bodies and joint purchasing to be able to access the needed expertise.

In fact, more cooperation between public buyers is one of the key elements of the 'Better Public Procurement' (Beter Aanbesteden) agenda published by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate in 2018. In 2016, only 4% of procedures involved more than one buyer, one of the lowest levels in the EU. The Ministry thus called for increased cooperation as a means of improve the expertise of public buyers. By 2019, there were 50 municipal procurement partnerships varying from actual cooperative procurement to knowledge sharing. 177

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

It is estimated that 14,000 to 20,000 public sector jobs are linked to the purchasing job family ¹⁷⁸. Approximately 2,000 full-time public buyers are members of the Dutch Association for Purchasing Management (NEVI)¹⁷⁹. Procurement is carried out by civil servants, ¹⁸⁰ but also by independent consultants that are hired for their particular industry expertise on a project basis.

There is a general understanding that public procurement is a standalone occupation in The Netherlands, although no formal certification is required to be a public buyer. Public procurement

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¹⁷⁶ European Commission (2018). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU The Netherlands Country

 ¹⁷⁷ European Commission, Semester Report for the Netherlands 2019, available on https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-netherlands_en_0.pdf, p. 56.
 178 NEVI (2011). NEVI Procurement Profiles Study.

¹⁷⁹ NEVI website, https://nevi.nl/.

¹⁸⁰ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

professionals are mostly civil servants with a public-law status. 181 Their employment conditions are very similar to those of the private sector.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Officials working for the central government, provinces and municipalities are typically employed under the Civil Service Law. The Ministry of the Interior sets the overall policy framework for human resource management (HRM) of civil servants in coordination with departments and cabinets. It also manages centralised HRM services, such as the salary payment system. However, ministries, departments and province/municipal contracting authorities have flexibility in defining their recruitment, promotion, appraisal, development and training objectives and processes.

Recruitment

Recruitment is based on specific vacancies to be filled. As a general trend, the public sector hires staff with higher formal qualifications compared to the private sector. For instance, most public buyers are required to hold a Master's degree, while this is not necessarily the case for private sector recruitment. In addition, contracting authorities increasingly consider and/or include the NEVI public procurement certification in their selection criteria.

Performance and compensation

Remuneration is mainly based on the position and grade occupied, as well as the performance evaluation. It also increases every year automatically after a year in the position. Compensation in the public sector is generally not as attractive as in the private sector, in particular for specialised functions such as public procurement.

Performance of civil servants is assessed on a six-month basis, and focuses on the activities undertaken, outputs and improvement of competencies of staff.¹⁸² A merit-based allowance and/or promotion may be granted for exceptional work.

Career progression

The career progression processes are managed by individual contracting authorities. There is no specific track for public procurement professionals. A Senior Public Service (ABD) has been established in the 1990s to enhance management skills and interdepartmental coordination. A special category of ABD comprises the top management within the civil service, such as directors-general, inspectorsgeneral and secretaries-general.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency based policies

There is no formal competency framework for public procurement in the Netherlands. However, the Dutch public administration in general is beginning to introduce competency frameworks. For instance, the Ministry of the Interior recently implemented a framework for Civil Service Job Description and Evaluation System to support human resource management within the central government 183. With this system 30,000 job descriptions were summarised into eight job families, i.e. line management, project and programme management, policy, advice, operational management, knowledge and research, oversight and implementation. The job families are further subdivided into job groups and job profiles. This new classification allows greater transparency and easier comparison between various government functions. This framework is meant to support the performance review and development targets. A digital tool has also been developed to facilitate the use of the framework.

Public procurement roles in the Netherlands are evolving and include emerging specialisation. A study commissioned by the Dutch Association for Procurement Professionals (NEVI) identifies seven public procurement roles:

¹⁸³ Ministry of the Interior, Civil Service Job Description and Evaluation Service https://www.functiegebouwrijksoverheid.nl/over.

¹⁸¹ See more information at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Public_employment_-Netherlands&oldid=369071#Public employment structure.

182 OECD(2012). Human Resource Management Country Profile : The Netherlands

- 1. Procurement officer or Buyer, who is responsible for the primary procurement process;
- 2. Analyst, who is an expert in gathering all relevant information and translating them into concrete actions:
- 3. Relationship manager, who takes care of supplier and customer relationship management;
- 4. Advisor, who gives advice to internal and external stakeholders to make their procurements efficiently;
- 5. Performance manager, who maps performance and manages activities accordingly;
- 6. Coordinator, who organises and monitors the entire procurement process, and;
- 7. Manager, who manages her or his team and identifies staff's development opportunities.

NEVI also offers several certifications regarding public procurement (see Training section), including on sustainable procurement, tendering of ICT, socially responsible procurement, etc. and is also exploring possibilities to offer industry-specialised training (e.g. for procurement in IT or healthcare). The certifications are voluntary and are not a prerequisite for performing public procurement functions in the public sector, but are considered an asset for candidates.

5. Training

In the Netherlands, there is no public body with the responsibility for procurement training, as it is considered that training can best be delivered by the market. The Public Procurement Expertise Centre PIANOo, under the Ministry of Economic Affairs, offers expertise and guidance to procurement practitioners on a variety of procurement themes, including legal and procedural aspects, strategic procurement, etc.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, it provides a dedicated training on the legal aspects of public procurement. It also fosters the creation of a community of practice through the set-up of a dedicated procurement platform and the organisation of events.

The Dutch Association for Procurement Professionals NEVI offers a variety of training courses on procurement. It also offers a training programme that leads to a certification on sustainable procurement, contract management, socially responsible procurement, tendering of ICT, etc. (see box below).

Professionalisation initiative: NEVI certification for public buyers

NEVI's mission is to advance the professionalisation of the procurement profession, both for private and public sector buyers. It consults with practitioners to understand what training needs are and develops its training programmes accordingly. The complexity stemming from the legal and organisational framework that applies for public procurement spurred NEVI to develop a dedicated training programme for public sector buyers, which leads to the 'Best value procurement' B Certification.

This 2-day certification programme focuses on methodologies to obtain best value for money within the context of European and national procurement law. The training is suitable for professionals working either operationally or leading a team of buyers from the public or private sector¹⁸⁵. It covers efficient purchasing strategies, minimising risks and efficient ways to find the best suppliers. The training is given in partnership with the Best Value Group experts of the Netherlands.

NEVI also offers additional training courses regarding Best Value procurement, including Best Value Procurement and the Legal Framework; Best Value Procurement Preparation A Course; Best Value Procurement Refresher Course; Best Value Sales and Best Value Contract Management.

Other providers cover the broad spectrum of procurement training.

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¹⁸⁴ PIANOo website: https://www.pianoo.nl/nl.

¹⁸⁵ Specific tracks exist for public and private sector actors.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (PIANOo, NEVI, private providers, universities)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (NEVI, private providers)
Advanced topics	Yes (NEVI, private providers)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
 Socially responsible public procurement 	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (NEVI, private providers)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member State

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in the Netherlands consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- There is a shortage of skilled procurement practitioners in the public sector: There is high demand for skilled practitioners in the public sector, which is not fully met. This is partly explained by the perception of the public sector as an employer that provides less attractive conditions than in the private sector. In fact, it may be more lucrative to be employed as a consultant on a project basis. Furthermore, procurement in the public sector is associated with additional complexity linked to the legal framework, which is also a deterrent for candidates.
- The transformation of the public procurement function is set to change and increase in complexity: Indeed, simple tasks are likely to be subject to automation, while more complex tasks will become the core job for procurement practitioners, as the focus shifts from simple purchasing to orchestrating a procurement process. These will involve an evolution of the skillset required to deliver as a public buyer, which involves influencing stakeholders, aligning overall goals, etc.
- More efforts should be placed on ensuring stronger coordination between public
 procurement professionals and other services: Large procurement departments have
 effectively professionalised their staff, but may need to cooperate more closely with the rest of their
 organisation by better understanding the final beneficiaries' needs and supporting the overall
 organisational goals.

Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Small contracting authorities increasingly prioritise or cooperate. With the lack of capacity to
 engage in large-scale professionalisation initiatives of their procurement workforce, small
 contracting authorities choose fewer priorities whereby they specialise or engage in joint purchasing
 to maximise the effectiveness of the procurements.
- Aligning the training offer to the market needs is a key element of the professionalisation of public procurement professionals. Training providers are constantly looking for ways to tailor their offer to specific needs and providing sufficient specialisation for public procurement professionals.



POLAND

Poland

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Polish public procurement system is highly decentralised, with contracting authorities present at the local, regional and central governmental levels. Based on the information provided by the Public Procurement Office¹⁸⁶, there are about 33,000 contracting authorities in Poland, each of them have their own Human Resources procurement practices in place, with some coordination in this respect at the central and regional level.

Public procurement is considered as a standalone occupation with a recommended set of minimum requirements and rules regarding specific roles in procurement procedures (as indicated in Articles 18-21 of the Public Procurement Law¹⁸⁷ and defined by the National standard of professional competence¹⁸⁸).

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Within the State administration (at the central and regional level), public procurement professionals are mostly public employees or civil servants¹⁸⁹, whose status is governed by the Civil Service Act of 21 November 2008. Contractual staff are employed on the basis of an employment contract, while civil servants are employed on the basis of nomination. Contrary to contractual staff, civil servants need to take a state exam or graduate from the Lech Kaczyński National School of Public Administration, and they have a lifelong tenure once nominated. Within local and regional administration, HR processes are subject to rules specified in the Act on the staff of local and regional administration.

At the central governmental level, it is often the case that public procurement professionals work full time in public procurement units. In contrast, in smaller local administrations, procurement is an extra task performed in addition to regular work that is not procurement-related. It is more nuanced in regional administration, where only the procurement staff of voivodship 190 offices may work full-time in public procurement.

https://www.uzp.gov.pl/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/40177/Public_Procurement_Law_2018_consolidated.pdf

¹⁸⁶ https://www.uzp.gov.pl/en

¹⁸⁸ https://docplayer.pl/15653762-Specjalista-do-spraw-zamowien-publicznych-242225.html

¹⁸⁹ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

190 A voivodship ("region" or "province") correspond to regional public administration, hence located between the central and local power levels.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

All contracting authorities are responsible for their own recruitment, performance evaluation, learning and development of staff, following their own internal and autonomous systems and tools of professionalisation.

At the government and voivodship levels, where employees are governed by the Civil Service Act, HR processes are accompanied by a series of Regulations and Ordinances about required professional qualifications and remuneration. Public employees and civil servants undergo periodical evaluations on organisation and conduct of training, job evaluation, or the standards of human resources management in the civil service. At the local and regional levels, Human Resources processes (including recruitment, evaluation, promotion) are regulated by the Act on the staff of local and regional administration of 7 June 2018.

Recruitment

The recruitment processes for public procurement professionals are decentralised, i.e. contracting authorities organise the process themselves, defining their own sets of requirements for public procurement-related competencies, experience and knowledge. The Chancellery of the Prime Minister maintains a central portal for announcing recruitment to the governmental civil service¹⁹¹ where job posting is mandatory.

Criteria for the selection process often demand a university degree in administration, law, economic or technical studies (such as construction, roads and bridges, medical science, IT, military), as well as experience and knowledge in procedural and legal rules around public procurement (e.g. Public Procurement Law; the Act on Public Finance or the European directives on public procurement). Requirements reflect those described in the "National standard of professional competence" for "Specialists for public procurement (242225)". While candidates with work experience are often preferred, inexperienced candidates are also considered, especially for support-type positions. Generally, anybody can apply for a public procurement professional position, including procurement professionals from the private sector.

Performance and compensation

The performance of staff is assessed by individual contracting authorities and entities, following the applicable regulations at the central, regional and local levels. Regulations for civil servants working at the central level specify the conditions and manner for conducting periodic assessments including procedures, scale and assessment criteria. They also provide model templates for the assessment. Such assessments can be adapted to the nature of the tasks performed at a given position, including positions related to the award of public contracts and the achievement of performance-related targets.

Remuneration in the public sector is generally less competitive than in the private sector, though it varies depending on the size of the contracting authorities (the larger they are, the higher the remuneration is).

Career progression

In Poland, career progression in public procurement follows the same path as for all civil servants. It includes six main steps, starting at junior specialist to specialist (after about five years of experience), senior specialist, chief specialist, coordinator and head of procurement unit or head of procurement department. Requirements for promotion are set by individual contracting authorities and entities.

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¹⁹¹ https://nabory.kprm.gov.pl/

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

In 2013, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implemented the programme "Developing a set of national standards of professional competences required by employers" ¹⁹². The objective was to i) prepare updated information resources about professions; ii) better adapt the educational offer to the needs of the labour market; and iii) provide employers with a tool to facilitate human resource processes. ¹⁹³ Thanks to this endeavour, the public procurement profession is now described in the "National standard of professional competence" as "Specialist for public procurement (242225)". While this document is not legally binding nor a competency framework per se, it includes profession identification data, a description of the profession (i.e. education requirements, opportunities for professional development, tasks and competences), and a description of professional competences and key competence profiles.

The Specialist for public procurement (242225) document distinguishes the professional competencies between two activities: the "preparation of the proceedings for granting public contracts" and "conducting the procurement procedures" — suggesting a diversity of roles throughout the public procurement cycle. While the Public Procurement Law mentions the role of the head of the contracting authority (who oversees the full procurement cycle) and roles of members of the tender committee, individual contracting authorities are responsible for classifying any additional procurement roles in the procurement cycle.

5. Training

Training in the field of procurement is principally delivered by the Public Procurement Office (PPO), the National School of Public Administration (KSAP), the Civil Service Department at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the Academia. The PPO went so far as to develop a wide cooperation with 10 universities. They signed a Charter that commit the universities to teaching procurement curriculums approved by the PPO¹⁹⁴. Contractual staff may also participate in training organised by private sector companies such as law offices. Larger public institutions have internal professionalisation systems based on groups of internal trainers, a system of internal training and their own databases with educational materials.

To support the professionalisation of the public procurement profession, the Polish government works at several levels – central, regional and local, with programmes designed and implemented at both, the central level (top-down approach) and at the local/regional levels (bottom-up approach). The two following boxes illustrate this approach.

A top-down approach to public procurement professionalisation

To support the professionalisation of the public procurement profession, several programmes have been designed and implemented at the central level (top-down approach) and the local and regional level (bottom-up approach). This helps ensure that training programmes, knowledge and guidance on public procurement are tailored to the context and needs of public procurement professionals and effectively contribute to building administrative capacities. The two following examples illustrate this approach.

With a view to develop capacities and skills of the national, regional and local administrations, the Public Procurement Office (PPO) of Poland¹⁹⁵ put in place the "Effective public procurement - strengthening administrative capacity – PO WER" programme in 2017.¹⁹⁶ As a result, by the end of

¹⁹² Referred in Polish by "Rozwijanie zbioru krajowych standardów kompetencji za wodo wych wymaganych przez pracodawców".

¹⁹³ See more information here: http://psz.praca.gov.pl/-/176380-rozwijanie-zbioru-krajowych-standardow-kompetencji-zawodowych-wymaganych-przez-pracodawcow-projekt-b2-2-

¹⁹⁴ Studia Podyplomowe pod patronatem Prezesa UZP: https://www.uzp.gov.pl/baza-wiedzy/przedsiewziecia-edukacyjne/studia-podyplomowe-pod-patronatem-prezesa-uzp

Przedsięwzięcia edukacyjne: https://www.uzp.gov.pl/baza-wiedzy/przedsiewziecia-edukacyjne

¹⁹⁵ The Public Procurement Office (PPO) also plays a leading role in the procurement professionalisation. Every year the PPO adopts a plan of educational and publishing activities and implement educational projects.

¹⁹⁶ Co-financed by the European Social Fund, PO WER project is to be continued (PO WER 2 educational project 2019-2021).

2018, 1700 persons were trained on general and specific issues essential to public procurement during either two-day or one-day training sessions. Seminars and conferences gathering a total of 750 and 2450 participants, respectively, were organised in the framework of the programme. In addition, templates, information materials and publications were elaborated and shared with all interested stakeholders via the PPO website.

The programme was able to reach a wide number of participants, providing them with sound training and knowledge on various aspects of public procurement, including SME-friendly public procurement, criteria for bid evaluation, negotiation techniques, innovation and e-procurement, and social aspects in public procurement.¹⁹⁷

The key role of regional and local authorities in bottom-up approaches to public procurement training

Another public sector initiative led by the Marshall's Office¹⁹⁸ – the "Samorząd dla Obywateli – Łódzkie Service Jam" programme, follows a bottom-up approach that is shaped by local contracting authorities (i.e. the municipalities) of the Lodz Voivodship.

Based on a needs assessment conducted at the local government level, two objectives were set. The first was to raise the competences of the administrative staff of local government units from the Lodz region. The second was to foster a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience between employees of units at various levels of the local government in order to improve cooperation and implementation of public tasks, including public procurement. A set of 33 training sessions in 17 cities was thus designed and implemented, leading to a total of over 354 staff trained on various aspects of public procurement including public procurement law, team management, negotiation, conflict resolution, etc.

The scale which the PO WER programme hoped to reach was not achieved, nonetheless the effort resulted in training that is specifically tailored to the local contractual authorities' needs. In addition, the local scale of the Łódzkie Service Jam programme provided a space for exchange of knowledge and practices between contractual authorities, which typically work independently.

There is no mandatory training or certificates for procurement practitioners at the national level. The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (PPO, KSAP, Civil Service Department, universities, individual contracting authorities, private sector (law offices, constancy companies))
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (KSAP, universities, private sector (law offices, constancy companies))
Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement	Yes (PPO, KSAP, universities, individual contracting authorities, private sector (law offices, consultancy companies))

¹⁹⁷ See more information at https://www.funduszeeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/67555/Program_Wiedza_Edukacja_Rozwoj_2014-2020_2018.pdf

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^{2020 2018.}pdf

198 A marshal's Office is a voivodship organisational unit in charge of the budget of the voivodship self-government.

Managerial	Yes (KSAP, universities, private sector
	(law offices, consultancy companies))

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Poland consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Professionalisation of public procurement professionals focuses on procedural and legal aspects, and thus less on economic performance and value for money.
- Fragmentation of the public procurement system related to human resource systems and tools between the different levels of public administration and in different types of public institutions poses another challenge.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Policy makers should aim to build synergies between existing public procurement initiatives, with the goal of capitalising knowledge.
- Contracting authorities should achieve a better balance between their focus on the legal and procedural public procurement aspects and their consideration of the economic/performance-related aspects (best value for money).
- Human Resource Departments recognise the need to put in place a tailored career path and
 incentives for public procurement professionals, which will support the professionalisation of the
 procurement workforce.





Portugal

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Portugal has about 3,200 contracting authorities among national, regional and local bodies that conducted 557,589 procurement procedures in 2017. 199 Public procurement accounts for about 20% of total general government expenditures.²⁰⁰

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The Ministry of Planning and Infrastructure is responsible for public procurement policy in coordination with the Ministry of Finance. The public Institute of Public Markets, Real Estate and Construction (IMPIC) carries out several tasks under the Ministry of Planning and Infrastructure, such as the regulation and supervision of construction, the real estate sector as well as public procurement, including e-procurement platforms. Further, the Ministry of Finance hosts the Technical Unit for Project Monitoring (UTAP) that was created to provide technical support in large-scale public procurement projects. The Entity of Shared Services for Public Administration (ESPAP) acts as the central purchasing body (CPB) on behalf of the government. 201 It also provides services to regional and municipal contracting authorities (CA) provided they are members of the National System of Public Procurement (SNCP)—which is true of most of the CAs. 202

Public procurement is not a standalone profession in Portugal. At the central government level, most public procurement professionals are civil servants, 203 in sub-central bodies, temporary agents with the status of contractual staff also perform some procurement duties. The competence level of public procurers in the central administration, ESPAP, and procurement units of larger contracting authorities is advanced. In primarily large public companies, e.g. in the area of water supply and sanitation services, there are specialised procurement experts and teams operating on a highly professionalised level with advanced tools. In addition, the Portuguese government is currently implementing specialised tribunals on public procurement, through the Decree Law 174/2019. Judges of those specialised tribunals will be required to have some prior experience relating to public procurement and competition law. In local contracting authorities, the competency level of procurement professionals and entry requirements are typically lower.

¹⁹⁹ Questionnaire with IMPIC

²⁰⁰ OECD (2017), Government at a Glance: CFS Portugal

²⁰¹ https://www.espap.gov.pt/en/Pages/Home.aspx The SNCP is a procurement network of about 2,500 contracting authorities based at ESPAP. It negotiates framework contracts on behalf of its members, runs a procurement portal with more than 29,000 registered users and fosters e-

procurement.

203 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

Recruitment

In the central administration, procurement professionals are recruited as civil servants. To enter the civil service, candidates are required to display a general procurement knowledge. Experience in conducting procurement procedures is considered, but the primary focus is on financial and administrational skills. Current public procurement professionals have a variety of educational backgrounds, such as law, engineering, economics and business administration. For public servants at the central government level, a university degree is required, while regional contracting authorities are more flexible.

It remains difficult for central government institutions to recruit procurement experts due to the comparatively higher remuneration in the private sector. Furthermore, public procurement units in the central government usually have a high turnover of personnel and retaining staff is a challenge for them.

Non-central government contracting authorities are more flexible regarding the salaries they can offer, and thus have an easier time recruiting more experienced personnel. By the same token, they are not subject to the more complex rules of public sector recruitment, for example only publishing vacancy calls when there is no suitable person available internally to fill the position.

Performance and compensation

Civil servants in Portugal are subject to an annual assessment. The set of objectives is related to the specific position held, i.e. public procurers may have specific performance targets, such as the number of conducted procedures. Procurers in the Portuguese central government are personally liable for errors in procurement procedures. Although penalties are not often applied, some public servants have been fined for failing to comply with the established rules. At the same time, there is no specific financial compensation for this additional risk borne by public procurers, or any other financial incentive linked to positive performance.

Career progression

There is no specific career path for procurement professionals in Portugal. Their career progression is the same as for any other civil servant and is usually determined by the number of years of experience.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Portugal has some experience with competency frameworks in the public administration. It applies a competency framework in the civil service, defining a list of 19 competencies for middle managers, 17 competencies for professional staff, 15 for administrative staff and 14 for support employees. ²⁰⁴ Individual public bodies may also have organisational competency frameworks, that cover all staff or focus on specific functions.

In Portugal, there is no competency framework specific to public procurement.

5. Training

The Directorate-General for the Qualification of Public Servants (INA) is the primary training provider for public officials in Portugal. The courses offered cover various aspects of public administration, including procurement. However, the training focuses on the legal framework and compliance issues. INA training sessions are primarily designed for public servants, but occasionally open to private participants. INA has established regional satellite entities that are jointly run by both public and private associations.

ESPAP provides training programmes to contracting authorities that are members of SNCP, as well as to its suppliers. Courses include strategic sourcing, cost management and contract management.

²⁰⁴ OECD (2018), "Using skills and competency frameworks to attract, recruit, develop and promote Kazakh civil servants", in Benchmarking Civil Service Reform in Kazakhstan, OECD Publishing, Paris. p. 67

ESPAP also works with the Institute of Management and Public Administration (IGAP) and INA to offer training on aggregated procedures and framework agreements.

IMPIC²⁰⁵ runs an electronic helpdesk for public procurement professionals that provides services to both public buyers and economic operators.

In addition, there are some training courses available at the university level in association with ESPAP. Porto Business School and Nova School of Economics offer post-graduate courses on Strategic Sourcing and Procurement that include Public Procurement from an economic perspective. The School of Law of *Universidade Católica Portuguesa* in Lisbon offers a post-graduate course on Public Procurement Law.

There is no mandatory training or certificates for public procurement professionals.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (INA, IMPIC, Universities)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Public: ESPAP, INA, IGAP)
Advanced topics	Yes (Public: INA, ESPAP, Universities)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (INA)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Portugal consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- High complexity of procurement legislation: The Portuguese public procurement law is highly
 complex and has had frequent adjustments in recent years. As a result, procurement professionals
 tend to focus on compliance to the exclusion of value for money and strategic considerations.
- A lack of incentives and attractiveness of public procurement positions: Public procurement
 professionals report that their role is not valued as crucial for public administration. In addition, they
 do not feel appropriately compensated for neither the complexity of tasks performed nor the
 personal legal risks implied. This leads to a high turnover of public procurers.
- A lack of a national public procurement strategy: According to Portuguese authorities, a national strategy on public procurement would help set up a clear career path for public procurers. Such a strategy would support procurement professionals in developing the right skills and would provide them with distinct steps in order to advance their careers.
- A lack of procedural management skills: Practitioners report a lack of specific skills in procedure management, especially in the area of e-procurement, i.e. electronic catalogues and electronic auctions.²⁰⁶

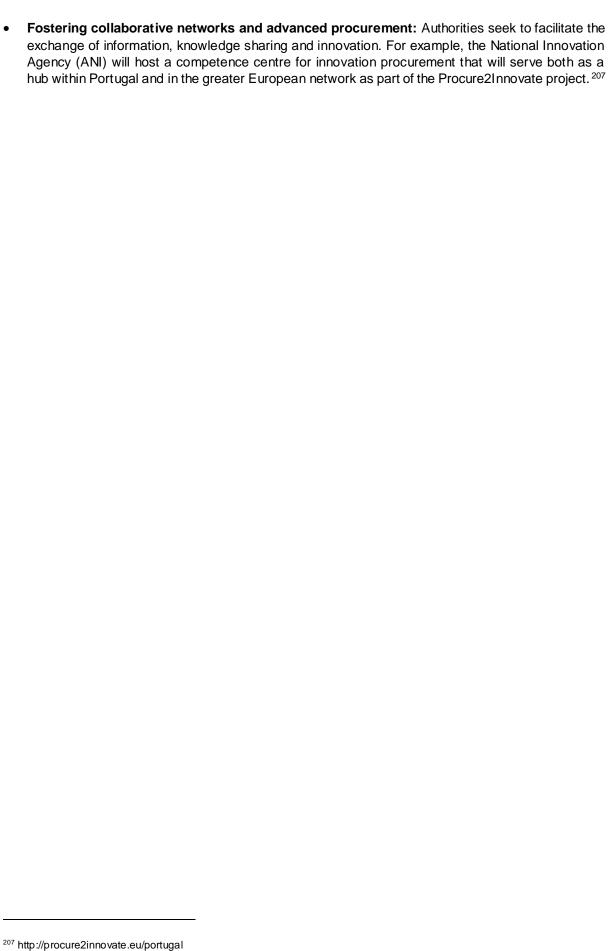
Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• Foster e-procurement skills: It remains a strong priority to enhance the skills of public procurement professionals through the use of information systems and e-platforms as well as innovative procurement.

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 $^{^{205}}$ IMPIC is the licensing entity and operator of the Portuguese e-procurement portal BASE.

²⁰⁶ IMPIC questionnaire





ROMANIA

Romania

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Romanian public procurement system is composed of 13,524 contracting authorities, active at the local, regional and national levels, and administrative capacities are reportedly limited. ²⁰⁸ However, following the approval of the 2015 National Public Procurement Strategy, a reform of the public procurement system has been initiated. This is exemplified by the recent creation of a state central purchasing body, the National Office for Central Procurement (ONAC). There are also plans to develop an aggregated contracting system for local contracting authorities within a geographical area to be defined. ²¹⁰

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement professionals are mostly civil servants and contractual staff. While at the central level and in large municipalities they often work full-time in public procurement, it is not the case in small and local authorities. These often conduct public procurement activities in addition to other tasks and sometimes hire additional staff to meet capacity in cases of major public procurement procedures.

Public procurement has been considered a standalone occupation since the creation of an occupational standard for Public Procurement Experts in 2007. 211

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

As most public procurement professionals are civil servants, ²¹² their status is governed by the National Agency for Public Servants, which defines and manages human resource processes. ²¹³ At the regional and local level, human resource processes are defined by individual contracting authorities. In the largest contracting authorities, human resource processes are directly managed by a dedicated Human Resource unit within the contracting authority. Human resources are therefore managed differently in

²⁰⁸ European Commission (2016). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU Romania Country Profile.

²⁰⁹ European Commission (2019). 2019 European Semester - Country Report Romania 2019.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ See more information at: https://www.traininguri.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Expert-achizitii.pdf

²¹² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

²¹³ As per the Emergency Government Ordinance no.57/2019 on the Administrative Code of Romania is regulating the status of public servants

large organisations as compared to smaller ones, because there is often an official human resources unit in large entities while this is not the case for smaller organisations.

Recruitment

Each contracting authority is responsible for hiring procurement professionals based on job profiles that they define. The recruitment is based on competition, including a written test and an interview. Some contracting authorities, including the National Public Procurement Agency (ANAP), favour candidates who have obtained the Public Procurement Expert occupational standard, and have a university degree. The degree required (economics, law or engineering) depends on the role envisaged for the public buyer and whether her/his tasks will be administrative, legal, or technical.

Performance and compensation

There is no specific compensation scheme for public procurement professionals, only one that applies to all civil servants. Promotions are regulated through the EGO no. 57/2019 as approved by the Administrative Code of Romania. According to the Administrative Code of Romania, the promotion to a higher professional grade can only be earned through competition or examination, organised by public authorities and institutions. To be eligible for promotions, four criteria must be met: i) occupying the current position for a minimum of three years; ii) obtaining a minimum number of credits according to the law, by participating in training, seminars, conferences, exchanges of experience or study visits, or alternatively, following a form of professional development with a minimum of 30 hours in the last three years of activity; iii) obtaining at least the qualification "good" in individual performance evaluations in the last two years of activity; and iv) avoiding any disciplinary sanction.

Career progression

The career progression for public procurement professionals follows the same structure as that of other civil servant profiles and is based on three levels: assistant, principal counsellor and superior counsellor. Requirements for promotion are set by individual contracting authorities.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

ANAP has set up a working group which in turn elaborated a public policy document regarding professionalisation in the field of public procurement. To support the activity of the working group, meetings were organised, both at the decision and technical levels, with representatives from institutions who were then involved in the elaboration and implementation of the plan (Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection, The National Institute of Administration, the National Agency of Civil Servants and the Sectoral Committee of Administration and Public Services). The resulting document takes the form of a medium term plan (2019-2023) and targets three specific goals: i) Strengthening the legal and institutional framework for the development of career, competencies and knowledge of personnel involved in the field of public procurement; ii) Supporting contracting authorities in order to streamline the public procurement process and to uniformly apply rules and procedures in the field of public procurement; iii) Improve the communication process in order to efficiently manage the training process in the field of public procurement. This document will be subject to public consultation and inter-ministerial endorsements.

The National Agency for Public Procurement and the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration concluded the financing contract no. 385/10.07.2019, within the Operational Program Administrative Capacity, related to project SIPOCA 625 - "Support in the implementation of SNAP by strengthening the administrative capacity of ANAP and of the contracting authorities". Activity no. 5 of the project aims to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for the development of career, competences and knowledge of personnel involved in the field of public procurement. One of the objectives of the project is to revise the Occupational Standard for "Public Procurement Expert" and to align it to the new rules and provisions of the 2014 Public Procurement Directives. ANAP is also planning to elaborate the competencies framework for the Public Procurement Counsellor (general function included in EGO no. 57/2019 of the Administrative Code of Romania) and the Public

Procurement System Counsellor (specific public function for ANAP personnel included in EGO no. 57/2019 of the Administrative Code of Romania).

There is a certification programme supporting the occupational standard for Public Procurement Experts recognised by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation. The certification can be acquired after taking the Public Procurement Expert Course provided by an external professional training provider²¹⁴ and accredited by the National Qualifications Authority (ANC). It is not mandatory, but it is often requested and preferred by contracting authorities as part of their recruitment process. The course covers the necessary competencies for public procurement staff in order to perform their work efficiently and in compliance with the law²¹⁵. At the end of the training, participants take a final exam. If they meet the passing grade, they receive a diploma which attests all the professional competences of the occupation. Between January 2007 and September 2019, a total of 71.904 certificates were issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice (an annual average of almost 6,000 certificates delivered). The certification does not need to be renewed periodically or otherwise.

5. Training

Training programmes in the field of procurement are delivered by the National Institute of Public Administration, Public Universities²¹⁶ and private sector training providers. In cases where training is not free, public procurement professionals may need to finance the training themselves. This may in turn prevent professionals from building further capacities and expertise in their fields. There is no mandatory training for procurement practitioners at national, county or local levels.

Following the revision of the occupational standard, ANAP is planning to train, in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Administration, 4,100 civil servants over a period of two years. A web-based public procurement guide was developed to support the capacities of public procurement staff. The guide provides a step by step explanation about how to conduct a procurement procedure; from the definition of the procurement strategy to the review of the performance of the procedure against set objectives. It includes three modules: (i) an information wizard with guidance for different procurement stakeholders, (ii) an interactive tool with instructions on the use of the Web-based Guide, and (iii) an online collaborative forum as a platform for online meetings, discussions, and consultations.²¹⁷

In addition to the Public Procurement Expert course accredited by the National Qualifications Authority for obtaining the certification programme supporting the occupational standard for Public Procurement Experts (see section Experience with competency framework), the following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (National Institute of Public Administration, Universities)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (private sector training providers)
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (private sector training providers)
Managerial	Yes (National Institute of Public Administration)

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²¹⁴ See more information at : https://promanagement.ro/en/public-procurement-expert/

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Universities providing public procurement training include inter alia The National School for Politics and Administrative Science, The Academy for Economic Studies, the University Petru Maior - Targu Mures, The University Danubius, Galati, Faculty of Law- Bucharest, Faculty for Administrative Science – Cluj.

²¹⁷ World Bank (2017). Romania Ádvisory Services Agreement on Support to the Implementation of the Public Procurement Strategy

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Romania consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Training often focuses almost exclusively on legal and procedural aspects and are in some instances outdated. This prevents public procurement professionals from adopting more complex or innovative approaches to procurement.
- Contracting authorities struggle to attract, retain and develop the capacities of public procurement professionals. There is a general lack of recognition of the profession and limited rewards attached to it.
- Public procurement professionals are personally liable in cases where procurement procedures are not compliant with the law. In case of errors in the public procurement procedure, civil servants are liable and may be charged with disciplinary sanctions. This may disincentivise civil servants who may want to pursue a carrier in public procurement.

Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

 The professionalisation of public procurement professionals should be high on the policy makers' agenda. They should provide political and financial support to public procurement professionalisation activities. These should cover training programmes, new public procurement provisions and legislation. The activities should also consider economic performance and value for money.





Slovakia

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

In 2017, there were 1,788 contracting authorities in Slovakia conducting more than 2,455 public procurement procedures. The Ministry of the Interior (MoI) acts as the central purchasing body for the government. While procurement procedures are handled independently on the central, state or municipal level, some contracting authorities are required to purchase commonly available goods and services from the MoI. The Public Procurement Office (PPO)²¹⁹ acts as the central authority for public procurement and is responsible for policy setting and implementation, capacity building, data collection and publication as well as for oversight ensuring that procurement procedures are performed in compliance with the law.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not a standalone occupation in Slovakia. The procurement workforce is largely composed of civil servants. In addition, external consultants support procurement operations, primarily in drafting tender documentation. The competence level of public procurements professionals varies across contracting authorities. The level of public procurement professionals dealing with European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) tends to be higher than of those dealing with the national budget, as a benefit from the support of a dedicated Department of ESI Funds Administrative Capacity, established within the Government Office in 2016. 220

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

As public procurement professionals are civil servants in Slovakia, the law on the civil service establishes their employment conditions. It also lays down the general regulations related to public service careers, responsibilities and remuneration.

Recruitment

The recruitment process for public procurement professionals follows the law on the civil service. Vacancies are only open to candidates outside the civil service if there is no suitable internal candidate for the position. However, each administration is flexible to develop tailored position descriptions specifying the educational qualifications, skills, and professional experience required for the candidates. In addition, for public procurement positions, knowledge questions in the field can be included as a part of the selection process.

²²⁰ Slovakia draws significantly on European resources in public procurement with more than 90% of public investment financed by ESIF.

²¹⁸ These figures include the activities of both contracting authorities and contracting entities. The total number of active entities in public procurement (incl. other subjects financed by contracting agencies) amounts to 3,182. Source: PPO of the Slovak Republic (2019)

²¹⁹ Úrad pre verejné obstarávanie (UVO): https://www.uvo.gov.sk/

At the MoI, applicants for procurement functions are expected to have a master's degree, relevant work experience (between 1-7 years depending on the position), communications and team skills, organisational skills, and basic legal knowledge. However, it remains difficult to attract experienced staff for the public administration as remuneration in the private sector is higher. Therefore, it has become common to hire inexperienced candidates for the junior roles. Public procurement officials at the MoI include people from a variety of different backgrounds, including lawyers, economists, teachers, police and military academy managers.

Performance and compensation

Civil servants in Slovakia have a mandatory performance assessment once per year. The assessment does not only take past performance of the public official into account but also the feedback received and individual efforts for further professionalisation, such as the attendance of additional trainings. There are no financial incentives set in direct relation with procurement outcomes for procurement officials. However, special rewards for public servants are generally possible, but depend on the availability of budget of each organisation. For instance, under special circumstances there is the possibility to pay out a special bonus or offer benefits, such as additional holidays.

Career progression

Currently, there is no strict career progression structure for public servants. Instead, each administration can define its own career ladder. The PPO, for example, has a career ladder in place. In addition, the central government currently plans to create a predefined career progression for civil servants, which will be applicable for all state institutions.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency based policies

There is no procurement competency framework in Slovakia. However, even though there are no predefined roles in public procurement to be applied, some contracting authorities have a repartition of procurement roles. For example, the Mol has defined different grades for its procurement staff, such as junior procurer, senior procurer, team leader and director of department.

In addition, the OECD is currently implementing a so-called "Public Procurement Action Plan" in Slovakia. This capacity building programme is targeted at a wider range of Slovak contracting authorities and includes a training programme by the OECD to raise awareness for the introduction of competency frameworks in public procurement.

Professionalisation initiative: Public Procurement Chamber

Given the absence of a procurement certification scheme, the chairman of the PPO has launched activities for higher professionalisation in the field of public procurement. As part of this initiative, the government plans to introduce a law in 2019 to create a Public Procurement Chamber. The goal of the Chamber is to raise the quality of procurement practices in Slovakia, in part by establishing a certification of procurement expertise for its members. The certification will serve as a common quality standard in public procurement.

As part of this legislative proposal, procurement procedures will require the signature of a certified member of the Public Procurement Chamber. This requirement ensures that a qualified professional reviews the procurement documents before publication. The Chamber member is then liable for any irregularities. As such, these designated public procurement experts will act as guarantors of both quality and legality of public procurement procedures.

The introduction of the Public Procurement Chamber is expected to shorten the preparation time, reduce errors, and ultimately increase the quality of public procurement procedures.

5. Training

The PPO is the main provider of public procurement training in Slovakia. It cooperates with the MoI to prepare and organise training sessions available to all Slovak contracting authorities. In 2018, the PPO primarily focused its training activities on the changes brought by the Public Procurement Directives, and including e-procurement and strategic procurement topics such as innovation, green and socially responsible public procurement. Training on the use of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) is also considered a priority.

Other specialised institutions deliver procurement-related trainings. For instance, the Slovak Environment Agency delivers educational activities on green public procurement, while the anti-corruption agency by the Presidium of the Police Force provides training on avoiding abuses and irregularities in procurement processes.

In addition, there is a growing number of private training providers, but the level of quality offered varies according to procurement professionals.

There are no mandatory training courses for procurement officers as such. However, officials involved in the management and control of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) are required to follow mandatory training, which covers the administrative control of public procurement.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (PPO, ESIF AC Department)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	No
 Advanced topics Green public procurement Public procurement for innovation Socially responsible public procurement E-procurement 	Yes (PPO, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Environment Agency, Anti-corruption Bureau, OECD)
Managerial	No

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Slovakia consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Shortage of qualified and experienced personnel: Qualified professionals are less interested in
 working for the state, as they are offered better remuneration in the private sector. In addition,
 Slovakia has the highest turnover rate of procurement officials in the EU, with 37% of staff staying
 less than one year in their institution.²²¹
- Lack of formal education in public procurement: There is no professional qualification or university-level educational offer in public procurement. A prior procurement certification scheme was suspended (see box below).
- Poor perception and recognition of procurement professionals: From the point of view of political decision-makers, procurement is often seen as a purely administrative task, and thus little consideration is given to it. Furthermore, it is negatively associated with corruption in public perception.
- Complexity of the public procurement framework: Procurement officers have to pay attention to new developments in procurement such as the application of MEAT criteria and secondary

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²²¹ OECD "Developing administrative capacity for public procurement in the Slovak Republic" (2017), p.17

policies as green, social or innovative procurement without having sufficient information and training on these topics. At the same time, they are concerned with ensuring legal soundness.²²²

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Enhanced training in innovation procurement: Further training offer is needed to increase capacity in a range of advanced topics such as planning phase of public procurement, data and market analysis, as well as strategies to implement secondary policy objectives through public procurement.
- Improved cooperation among Slovak municipalities: To increase the efficiency and skill level
 of procurement, small municipalities intend to increase their level of joint procurement. This would
 also facilitate better information exchange, learning from best practise and reduce error probability
 in procurement processes in case of smaller CAs. The PPO also plans to launch regional
 representations to support public procurement professionals in smaller contracting authorities.²²³

Promoting the public procurement career: The PPO fosters cooperation with universities and offers scholarships to attract recent graduates.

²²² The previous public procurement law (before 2016) was amended 27 times in three years.

²²³ European Commission (2019): European Semester - Country Report Slovakia. p. 45





Slovenia

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Slovenia is organised as a unitary state with only one level of local self-government, the municipalities. It is considered rather centralised as local authorities account for only about 20% of total public expenditure. There are approximately 3,120 contracting authorities in Slovenia. In accordance with the Public Procurement Act, contracting authorities in Slovenia fall under five categories: i) authorities of the Republic of Slovenia, ii) authorities of self-governing local communities (212 municipalities), iii) other bodies governed by public law, iv) public undertakings which pursue one or more activities in the field of infrastructure, v) entities that are not referred to above but pursue one or more activities in the field of infrastructure, operating on the basis of special or exclusive rights granted by a competent authority of the Republic of Slovenia. In terms of public procurement policy, functions are highly centralised at the Public Procurement Directorate (PPD) of the Ministry of Public Administration as the primary institution for procurement policy formulation, as well as for regulatory and advisory duties. The PPD also acts as the central purchasing body. In addition, there is a National Review Commission for Reviewing Public Procurement Award Procedures (DKOM) in charge of both monitoring and reviewing public procurement procedures. In cases of procurement-related disputes, it is empowered to annul pre-award and award decisions.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement is not recognised as a standalone occupation in Slovenia. Public procurement professionals within the central authorities (i.e. ministries and bodies within the ministry) and self-governing local community authorities as well as those in other bodies governed by public law are mostly civil servants²²⁵. At the central level and in large municipalities, they usually work in full-time positions exclusively dedicated to procurement activities. However, within smaller municipalities and within some other bodies governed by public procurement (i.e. agencies, institutes etc.) a very low number of procurement processes is conducted every year. In these smaller contracting authorities, civil servants carry out procurement activities in addition to their other tasks. There are usually no specific procurement departments and the employees tend to display a lower level of specialised subject knowledge. In these contracting authorities, it is common to hire external consultants or lawyers for certain parts of procurement procedures. Given the absence of a specific job profile, there are no accurate figures on the number of officials working in public procurement jobs as full-time equivalent.

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²²⁴ European Commission (2018): Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Slovenia.

²²⁵ Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

In public administration, procurement practitioners are recruited as civil servants with either limited or unlimited contracts. Therefore, the provisions from the *Law on Public Servants* apply to procurement staff, including elements such as classification of positions, recruitment, selection and appointment, particular rights, duties and restrictions, promotion, transfer to other positions, disciplinary procedures, as well as training and dismissal. The Directorate for the Public Sector within the Ministry of Public Administration defines strategic Human Resource Management within the government, i.e. it is responsible for primary and secondary legislation and the coordination of human resources units of the different ministries.

On the other hand, individual municipal authorities, and other bodies governed by public law, have autonomy regarding the structure of their respective human resources management. Furthermore, public companies have different HR procedures compared to the overall public administration.

Recruitment

The recruitment of procurement staff follows the same process as for all civil servants. Namely, if no internal candidate fulfils the desired profile, a public posting is used to advertise the position. Contracting authorities typically prefer candidates with prior work experience. A call for applications may also include criteria beyond that, such as specific knowledge in public procurement.

Currently, the most common educational background of public procurement professionals in Slovenia is law, but other profiles (such as economists) are recruited. The most experienced procurement professionals are often difficult to attract due to better pay offered for positions in the private sector.

Performance and compensation

Slovenia introduced a unified salary system for its civil servants. The assessment of performance is based on a yearly interview with a superior. The interview can involve defining goals that a particular employee must reach over the course of the next year. However, there are no specific procurement targets defined for public officials against which they are assessed.

Career progression

The general career progression of civil servants also applies to the procurement function. Civil servants are ranked according to a system of grades and move up on the career ladder based on their yearly evaluation. As part of the evaluation, the individual career progression is discussed and defined with the employee, also taking into account the financial means of the contracting authority. Employees can request to attend additional training and seminars to strengthen their skills and qualifications to facilitate the career progression.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Slovenia does not have any specific experience with competency frameworks in public procurement. However, within public administration, Slovenia has implemented the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)²²⁶ to increase administrative capacity and efficiency.²²⁷ The use of CAF was also included in the public administration development strategy 2015-2020. The Ministry of Public Administration provides methodological support, such as CAF publications, advisory meetings, self-assessment forms and evaluations assistance.²²⁸ Slovenia has also prepared a Guide to assessing and developing competences²²⁹ with the aim to ensure a successful and stable public administration.

²²⁶ Available at: https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MJU/Kakovost-in-inovativnost-v-javni-upravi/Publikacije-model-CAF/Prirocnik-modela-CAF 2013.pdf)

²²⁷ Common Assessment Frameworks are used as quality management tools in public institutions to assess and improve their performance. They are usually based on a self-assessment of the institution taking both internal management practices and external impact into account.

²²⁸ Zurga (2016): "Quality Management in Slovene Public Administration: Opportunities for Learning from Experience".

²²⁹ Available at: https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MJU/SUKV/VKM/Prirocnik-za-uporabo-kompetencnega-modela-ter-presojanje-in-razvoj-kompetenc-za-kadrovike.pdf

There are ongoing efforts to introduce a competency framework for public procurement professionals in Slovenia. This is part of the Action Plan on Professionalisation that was launched in 2018 (see box below). It foresees the definition of skills and competencies of public procurement professionals. While there is currently no specific division on the roles in public procurement, there is a distinction between staff conducting separate parts of the procedure between the subject matter specialist and the procurement specialist (e.g. preparing tender material, preparing technical specifications, publishing tender specifications).

Slovenia's Action Plan on Professionalisation of Public Procurement

In 2018, Slovenia launched the Action Plan on the Professionalisation of Public Procurement to improve practices and the system as a whole, between 2018 and 2020.

The Action Plan identifies the following five priorities:

- Raising the competency level and encouraging public officials to improve the quality of public procurement:
- Assisting contracting authorities and economic operators in ensuring greater legal certainty, quality and cost-effectiveness of public procurement;
- Promoting strategic public procurement;
- Enhancing joint public procurement;
- Developing smart tools to support procurement processes.

In Regards to the professionalisation of procurement professionals, the Action Plan foresees the definition of both skills and competencies needed, and the provision of higher quality training specifically adapted to the previously defined competencies. In addition, public procurement professionals will receive various training courses in the above-mentioned areas by the Ministry of Public Administration, Public Procurement Directorate and Civil Servants Centre in the form of seminars, workshops, e-training and online conferences. To attract highly skilled personnel, there are also plans to increase rewards for public procurement professionals.

5. Training

The main body responsible for procurement training is the Ministry of Public Administration's Public Procurement Directorate (PPD). It sets up the courses in various areas of public procurement in cooperation with other ministries and stakeholders. Recent training priorities have focused on the Public Procurement Act that came into force in April 2016 and its amendments that came into force in 2018. Specific training sessions have also been organised e-procurement (that became mandatory in 2018) and in the field of sustainable public procurement, with several training sessions being organised for the purpose of introducing the new Decree on green public procurement. In addition, the PPD has offered courses in the field of innovative public procurement. As part of the professionalisation action plan, the PPD is also reflecting on establishing a procurement academy.

The Civil Servant Centre of the Ministry of Public Administration offers courses aiming at both procedural and managerial aspects of public procurement, including practices on overall procurement procedures and advanced procurement topics. Further, there are training sessions on assessing the competence of economic operators and the appropriate design of award criteria.

In addition, private sector providers offer procurement training and certifications. However, a certification is not required for performing public procurement duties in Slovenia. At the university level, no training or courses are currently available, but a more prominent role of universities in public procurement training is currently under consideration.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training

Availability (training provider)

Legal and procedural	Yes (PPD, Civil Servants Centre)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Civil Servants Centre)
Advanced topics	Yes (PPD: GPP, e-procurement,
Green public procurement	Guidelines on socially responsible public
Public procurement for innovation	procurement especially in the areas of
Socially responsible public procurement	cleaning and security services)
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (Civil Servants Centre)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Slovenia consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- A lack of technical knowledge: Even public procurement professionals that are experienced in running procedures often report a lack of technical expertise, including market analysis skills, needs assessment and drafting tender specifications. There is also the problem of fragmentation between different tasks and functions, e.g. between project managers and public procurement officers.
- Low competency in advanced procurement topics: Contracting authorities are often cautious in
 the application of advanced procurement, in particular innovative public procurement, in order to
 minimise the exposure to potential legal risks, as well as reputational risks given the strong public
 scrutiny.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Enhancing the skills of local public procurers: In order to enhance efficiency of their procurements, the PPD provides best practices to smaller contracting authorities' staff to encourage them to conduct joint public procurement. Further, the PPD issues various guidance notes in specific areas, such as IT procurement, public works and cleaning services to increase procurement competencies in contracting authorities, especially small (local) contracting authorities.
- Improving the quality and availability of training: Contracting authorities continuously demand training in public procurement to close their knowledge gaps. It is the ambition of the Ministry of Public Administration to provide high quality training to meet this demand, partly by expanding the offering of online training.
- Slovenia has engaged in a systemic analysis of the reforms required to ensure change of the procurement system.





Spain

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Spanish public procurement system is highly decentralised due to the country's political structure that grants autonomous regions a large degree of independence. As a result, there is a variety of different institutions and oversight bodies at both national and regional level governing public procurement. The total number of contracting authorities in Spain amounts to more than 8,000 at the national, regional and local level. Public procurement expenditures account for about 10% of the GDP.²³⁰

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

At the national level, the Ministry of Finance (*Ministerio de Hacienda*) is responsible for national public procurement policy. It hosts the Directorate General for State Assets (*Dirección General del Patrimonio del Estado*) that deals with the general regulatory framework on public procurement and e-procurement and the management of the e-procurement platform; as well as the Directorate General for Rationalisation and Centralisation of Procurement (*Dirección General de Racionalización y Centralización de la Contratación*) that serves as a central purchasing body (CPB), running the State Centralised Purchasing System (*Sistema Estatal de Contratación Centralizada*) for state administration and other related activities, through the use of a centralised procurement catalogue (the *Conecta-Centralización*). The State Consultative Board on Administrative Procurement is another body within the Ministry of Finance that provides legal advice and guidance to contracting authorities on administrative, technical and financial aspects.

Public procurement is not a standalone occupation in Spain. The public procurement workforce in Spain is primarily comprised of civil servants (*funcionarios públicos*) and to a lesser extent by contractual staff (*empleados públicos*) ²³¹. The level of expertise varies significantly across institutions. Usually, smaller contracting authorities do not have specialised procurement staff and conduct few procedures per year. CPBs, and in most cases larger contracting authorities, have dedicated procurement departments and employ personnel that is skilled and experienced in the procurement profession.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

There is no central human resource management of public procurement professionals. In most cases, public procurement professionals in Spain are civil servants and as such their status is governed by the

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²³⁰ European Commission (2018). Public procurement – Study on administrative capacity in the EU Spain Country Profile. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/study/country_profile/es.pdf

procurement/study/country_profile/es.pdf

231 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

Law 7/2007, of 12th April on the Civil Service Basic Statute (*Estatuto Básico de los Empleados Públicos*), updated by the Royal Legislative Decree 5/2015, of October 30th on the Civil Service Basic Statute (*Texto Refundido de la Ley del Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público*). For civil servants in the central government, the Directorate General for the Civil Service has largely centralised the HR management, leaving only few functions to the ministries. To a lesser extent, public procurement professionals have the status of contractual staff operating on a contract, based on the Employment Law contract. However, the distinctive features of the different regimes are minor as certain regulations are also applied to labour contracts, including ethical codes, collective bargaining decisions, individual duties and rights as well as disciplinary regimes.²³²

Recruitment

For public procurement staff in the civil servant category, recruitment procedures are carried out in a centralised way. At the central government level, the Directorate of the Civil Service (*Dirección General de la Funcion Publica*), currently under the Ministry of Territorial Policy and Civil Service (*Ministerio de Hacienda y Función Pública*) is in charge of the recruitment of public procurement professionals. It is rather strict as candidates must already have a civil servant status to qualify for the position. Recruitment is conducted following competitive procedures: competitive examination (passing tests - *oposiciones*), competition (exceptional system in which merits are verified and assessed) and competition-examination (passing tests and merit assessment)²³³. Therefore, vacancies are published internally and filled based on internal rotation only. Hiring from the private sector or through public competition is not possible. Seeing that candidates can only be recruited from the internal civil servant pool, the quality of applicants does not always meet the specific requirements of the position. Civil servants in Spain only receive a basic training on public procurement as part of their general curriculum, limiting their competencies. Additional procurement-specific training is not mandatory and can only be provided upon request in cases where a procurement position is obtained.

In contrast, recruitment of public procurement staff employed under the labour law is organised in a decentralised way and is more common at the local level.²³⁴ Individual contracting authorities have flexibility in defining the competencies required when recruiting public buyers. Procedural and legal knowledge in public procurement is generally considered a minimum qualification requirement, but some contracting authorities also require previous experience or they indicate that experience is considered as an advantage.

Performance and compensation

As for any civil servants, the compensation of public procurers with civil servant status is regulated by law and can consist of up to five components: a basic salary, a seniority allowance, a rank allowance, a specific post-related allowance and a performance-related bonus. At the central government level, the latter two are defined by the respective ministry. They are usually bigger for a higher rank. It is worth noting that salaries of senior public administrators in Spain are significantly lower than in the private sector, while compensation on lower levels in the public sector can be higher than in the private sector.²³⁵

Career progression

There is no fixed career progression defined for public procurement professionals nor for civil servants. In the central government administration, promotion is formally based on a competitive procedure, and can be either horizontal (progression of grade or category, without the need to change a job) or vertical

²³² European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Spain" p. 985

²³³ Spanish Government (2010). Public Employment in European Union Member States. Available at: https://www.dgaep.gov.pt/upload/RL estudos%20Presid%C3%AAncias/Public Employment FUMS po

https://www.dgaep.gov.pt/upload/R1_estudos%20Presid%C3%AAncias/Public_Employment_EUMS.pdf
234 In 2016, the proportion of civil servants amounted to 81.6% on a central government level, 64.8% on a regional level and
37.9% on a local level.

²³⁵ European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Spain" p. 989

(promotion in the job structure).²³⁶ However, in practice, this internal competition rarely takes place and horizontal promotions (between levels) are more common, awarded on the basis of merit and capacity.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

There are no competency frameworks used in the public administration in general, except for some experience at the regional level. However, civil servants are required to pass a number of highly compulsory competitive exams that cover State organisation, public administration, European Union legislation, budget and policies, constitutional and administrative law (including public procurement legislation, types of contracts, award procedures), human resource management (including ethics and civil servants accountability), finance management (including budget, expenditure, public auditing), and the purchase of goods and services. However, the Ministry of Finance through its Public Procurement Consultative Board is currently working on the design of training curricula called the High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course. These training curricula will serve to train and certify high-level procurement professionals and define a clear career track.

5. Training

There are no mandatory training courses or certification to be obtained by procurement professionals. However, each civil servant has, as part of the general civil servant introductory training, a module on public procurement. Additional training in public procurement may be attended when assuming procurement tasks. However, these courses are on a voluntary basis and procurement expertise is largely obtained through practice. Given the predominance of public servants in public procurement, training is primarily provided by central and regional public training bodies. Additional training for civil servants but also public employees can be provided by academia, private providers and other public training bodies. These training sessions cover Basic and Intermediate proficiency levels, as described in the European Competency Framework (ECF) Matrix.

The National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), in charge of training in general, offers civil servants various training seminars and e-learning courses on public procurement specifically. There are other specialised public training centres for civil servants to build capacities in specific areas. For example, public procurement is covered by the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IEF), which is the Spanish public finance and training centre. The IEF also has a dedicated public procurement training (Ley 9/2017, de Contratos del Sector Público) that is composed of 21 lessons, split in 28 hours of classes, focusing on the legal procedures of public procurement. Successful candidates obtain a certification at the end of the course, which public authorities consider confirmation of an advanced proficiency level.

In addition, the Public Procurement Consultative Board is an active training provider. Training priorities focus on legal aspects of public procurement based on the new public procurement act passed in November 2017. Respective courses are also provided through an e-learning portal.

Lastly, there are also private providers that offer tailored procurement training to contractual staff in local and regional contracting authorities, and academia, which provides courses and even master's degrees to those wishing to acquire knowledge around public procurement (see table below).

Professionalisation initiative: High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course

As explained by a representative of the Ministry of Finance ²³⁷, responsible for Public Procurement policy and legislation in Spain, the Ministry of Finance is committed to achieving the goals established by the Recommendation (EU) 2017/1805 of 3 October 2017 on the professionalisation of public procurement and, specifically, enhancing the level of proficiency of public procurement professionals.

²³⁶ More information available at: https://administrativando.es/carrera-profesional-funcionario-administracion-publica/

²³⁷ Stakeholder Workshop on the European Competency Framework, 20th November 2019.

The Public Procurement Consultative Board of the Ministry has launched the design and development of the High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course, a certification-training framework and a career path aimed at high-level public procurement professionals. The certification framework is in many aspects inspired by the current work on the ECF for Public Procurement Professionals.

The proficiency level targeted by the High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course matches the proficiency level Expert (level 4) of the ECF Matrix. The Basic and Intermediate levels are already fulfilled by the highly demanding Spanish system for accessing the civil service, while the Advanced proficiency level (level 3) may be acquired by taking an online training of 21 lessons provided by the IEF.

In developing the content of the training modules to be delivered as part of the High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course, the Spanish Ministry of Finance worked closely with the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation. Topics in the training curricula encompass all the competencies listed in the ProcurComp^{EU} Competency Matrix and cover, inter alia, national and international procurement law, strategic procurement (green, social and innovation procurement), e-procurement, trade and commercial aspects, public auditing, monitoring systems, pre-publication documents drafting, pre-award management. The format of the examination will encompass ongoing evaluation, an end of course project and practice activities.

Public Procurement individuals willing to take the High Specialisation in Public Procurement Course must have previously received public procurement training courses equivalent to the Advanced proficiency level of the ProcurComp Competency Matrix.

The design of the career path will be the last step and will involve human resource units in order to best integrate the certification framework into the definition of job roles and recruitment processes.

The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Public Procurement Consultative Board, INAP, Institute of Fiscal Studies, private providers, Academia – e.g. Law School of Madrid University, or University of Castilla-La Mancha)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (Institute of Fiscal Studies)
Advanced topics	Yes (Institute of Fiscal Studies, Public
Green public procurement	Procurement Consultative Board)
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (INAP)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Spain consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

 Decentralised structure and a lack of common procurement strategy: The proficiency of public procurement professionals varies not only between smaller and larger contracting authorities, but also across Spanish regions that have some leeway in shaping procurement legislation. Thus, there is a lack of an overarching public procurement strategy²³⁸.

Difficulties to attract and retain professionals in public procurement: There is a high turnover
rate among civil servants within public administration. It is common that experienced procurement
professionals change positions to a different area in order to progress in their career. Furthermore,
public procurement entails a legal responsibility for civil servants in Spain. The new legislation -.Act
9/2017 on public procurement contains sanctions to be imposed in case of criminal or administrative
mistakes, corruption, and misuse of legal aspects.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

Defining a certification and training programme to professionalise public procurement: The Ministry of Finance, through its Public Procurement Consultative Board of experts, is currently designing and planning the development of a certification and training programme for high-level public procurement professionals. The training curriculum was set to be ready for September 2019 and the launch of the certification programme in September 2020²³⁹.

²³⁸ Please note that there is a National Procurement Strategy yet to be adopted. According to article 329 of Act 9/2017, it will be made by the Public Procurement Cooperation Committee, a body with representation of the Central Government, the Autonomous Regions and the Local Entities. Approval of the Strategy is competence of the Independent Office of Regulation and Supervision of Public Procurement.

²³⁹ These dates will be subject to changes due to the COVID-19 crisis.



SWEDEN

Sweden

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

The Swedish procurement system is composed of approximatively 3,700 contracting authorities organised around two main levels: the local self-governments, municipalities and county councils, and the national government. There are additionally several central purchasing bodies (CPBs), operating at the central, ²⁴⁰ regional and local levels. ²⁴¹ There are also sector specific CPBs such as Sinfra (formerly Värmek), a member-owned association that procures technology, products and services for its members in the supply sector.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The competence level of public procurement professionals in Sweden is generally considered as one of the most advanced in the EU, especially when it comes to green public procurement²⁴². Indeed, since Sweden joined the European Union, policymakers, academia, the private sector and non-profit organisations have been actively developing knowledge and capacity in the public procurement field. Public procurement professionals are highly competent when it comes to applying the Swedish Public Procurement Act (from a legal and procedural perspective), and many show interest and knowledge in strategic approaches (innovative and sustainable procurement). This partly stems from the principle of public access to information²⁴³, which gives exposure to public procurement professionals. At the local level, capacities are generally more limited than at the central level. 244 To address this issue, cooperation over municipal boundaries increasingly take place where the internal competence or capacity does not cover the demands.

Even though it is not systematically mandatory²⁴⁵, the sustainability dimension of public procurement, i.e. environmental and social, is becoming more and more prominent²⁴⁶. In this context, the National Agency for Public Procurement developed the free life-cycle costing (LCC) tool and provided public

²⁴⁰ Povolokina (2017). Report on centralized purchasing organizations in Ukraine: expectations, risks, state of affairs and

prospects 241 This may include for instance such as the Administration for Purchasing and Procurement - City of Gothenburg, Purchasing Gävleborg

²⁴² OECD (2014). OECD Environmental Performance Reviews: Sweden 2014. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/environment/country-reviews/oecd-environmental-performance-reviews-sweden-2014-9789264213715-

²⁴³ See more information at: https://www.regeringen.se/49bb7e/contentassets/2c767a1e4e8469fbfd0fc044998ab78/publicaccess-to-information-and-secrecy-act

²⁴⁴ European Commission (2019). European Semester. Sweden Country Report.

²⁴⁵ The application of sustainability criteria is in general not mandatory, but may apply to a specific set of contracts. For instance, the Swedish procurement legislation was recently supplemented by provisions stating that certain above thresholds contracts should contain specific labour conditions.

²⁴⁶ See more information in the National Public Procurement Strategy

procurement professionals with 600 sustainability criteria for eight products areas^{247,248}, as well as information and support on environmental and social labels and environmental and labour conditions and standards.²⁴⁹

Larger contracting authorities and entities tend to organise the procurement function between strategic, tactical and operational procurement as they consider it to be more efficient²⁵⁰. Consequently, many of the roles that previously existed only in the private sector are now also used in the public sector. These include: strategic buyer, category manager, purchasing analyst, purchasing controller, procurement coordinator, purchasing coordinator, etc. The title of strategic procurer or purchaser is sometimes used to describe a more experienced public procurer.

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The main regulation governing public employees is the Public Employee Act (1994:260) and the Civil Service Act (1994). As a rule, each contracting authority owns and manages the human resource processes, from recruitment to career development, of their employees, including those working in public procurement.

Since 2014, Statistics Sweden includes public procurement officers and purchasers in its annual survey of occupations in Sweden, thus considering public procurement professionals as a standalone profession. About 3,000 people hold a position as a public procurement officer (or equivalent).²⁵¹

The public procurement workforce in Sweden typically consists of civil servants and contractual staff. ²⁵² There is no life-long employment in central government positions—If redundancies become necessary, permanent employees may be laid off. Contracting authorities and entities sometimes use consultancy services in connection with procurement²⁵³, e.g., based on the need for expertise in specific areas. These services are also used to deal with temporary work peaks, specific industry knowledge, or specific types of procurement; e.g. public works.

Recruitment

Each contracting authority is responsible for its own recruitment process. At the central level, contracting authorities follow the meritocratic principles (Chapter 12 Article 5 The Instrument of Government) for recruitment. For contractual staff at the local and regional level, these principles are not applicable. Instead, they follow the Public Employment Act (1994:260).²⁵⁴ Staff is recruited for a specific position.

The skills and knowledge requirements for the recruitment of public procurement professionals vary depending on existing competencies held by the organisation, and the identified gaps. Often, knowledge of the Swedish Public Procurement Acts is favoured, together with a public procurement academic background and/or professional experience. Depending on the role, specific industry knowledge may be requested too. Analytical abilities are also part of the skill set that contracting authorities and entities may look for.

²⁴⁷ These include IT and telecom, building and property, cleaning and chemicals, vehicles and transport, office and textiles, food, nursing and care, and supplies for a toxic-free preschool.

²⁴⁸ See more information at https://www.upphandlingsmyndigheten.se/en

²⁴⁹ Swedish Competition Authority (2018). The Swedish procurement monitoring report 2018.

²⁵⁰ While smaller authorities rather tend to combine some of these fields.

The Swedish Occupational Register with statistics, https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/arbetsmarknad/sysselsattning-forvarvsarbete-och-arbetstider/yrkesregistret-med-yrkesstatistik/
 Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees

²⁹² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

²⁵³ European Commission (2018). Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Sweden.

²⁵⁴ European Commission (2018). Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Sweden.

Public procurement professionals may have different backgrounds, most commonly legal, technical, ITC or economic. There is also an increasing interest in recruiting personnel that come from the industry or from suppliers.

Performance and compensation

The salaries for public procurement professionals are based on the overall framework governing civil servants and contractual staff. Collective agreements set the working conditions and salaries. They are negotiated at the central level, then within each agency and finally individually. At the local level, individual salaries based on the pay-for-performance principle gives a scope for negotiation at the individual level. While overall compensation tends to be higher in the private sector, the compensation policy in the public sector aims to be competitive enough to ensure the necessary competence. Regarding performance assessment, there is no general assessment tool implemented for public procurement professionals. Instead, assessments are performed annually within the HR-process where individual development dialogues between employer and employees are conducted. Performance assessment are usually based on activities undertaken, timeliness and quality of outputs, cost effectiveness of work and improvement of competencies 256.

Career progression

Each contracting authority or entity is responsible for the design and management of the career path of their staff, including public procurement professionals. There is no specific career progression path tailored to public procurement professionals.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

Although competency frameworks are used by some Swedish public institutions²⁵⁷, there is no formal competency framework for public procurement professionals.

Instead, a number of developments have strengthened the professionalisation of the profession over the past two decades, which is in fact one of the priorities established in the National Public Procurement Strategy, developed by the Swedish Government in 2016 (more details in the box below). For starters, legislation has become more extensive, requiring a greater level of public procurement competence. As a result, contracting authorities and entities have invested in strengthening their knowledge and skills to apply legal, industry-specific and business-related perspectives to procurement.

Professionalisation initiative: Swedish National Public Procurement Strategy

In Sweden, there is a growing realisation that public procurement can be used effectively to support government and societal priorities, if used effectively. To this end, the government developed the Swedish National Public Procurement Strategy in 2016 addressing seven policy objectives, namely:

- Public procurement as a strategic tool;
- · Effective public purchasing;
- A multiplicity of suppliers and well-functioning competition;
- Legally certain public procurement;
- Public procurement that drives innovation and promotes alternative solutions;
- Public procurement that is environmentally responsible;
- Public procurement that contributes to a socially sustainable society²⁵⁸.

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²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ OECD(2012). Human resource Management Country Profile: Sweden.

²⁵⁷ This may include the core values and required groups of competencies are applied for civil servants; the DigComp (digital competence framework;

²⁵⁸ Government Offices of Sweden, Ministry of Finance, National Public Procurement Strategy, 2016

The main target group for implementing these objectives are authorities from the central government. Municipalities and county councils are also targeted as they carry out large shares of procurement expenditure. The National Agency for Public Procurement (NAPP), created in 2015 as a one-stop-shop to support public procurement policy implementation, is instrumental in achieving the goals laid out by the strategy. Namely, it is tasked with supporting contracting authorities and entities in raising their knowledge in specific policy objectives of the strategy.

NAPP has developed a self-assessment tool based on the national procurement strategy. In the tool, contracting authorities and entities can assess their goal fulfilment in relation to the strategy and, based on their results, identify development areas²⁵⁹. The tool also provides practical tips and advice on how to work to achieve policy objectives.

The Swedish Association for Public Purchasers (SOI) has developed a competency profile that covers key public procurement areas: market analysis; strategy development, negotiation; legal skills or digitalisation and IT-based working methods. 260 SOI has also developed a web self-assessment tool tailored to the role of public buyer. Through the tool, a person or organisation can map their strengths and development areas.²⁶¹

In Sweden there is a range of different private providers which focus on education in public procurement, purchasing and logistics.

5. Training

Multiple organisations provide public procurement training in Sweden. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is responsible for higher vocational education (HVE) and ensures that HVE programmes meet labour market's needs. HVE programmes in public procurement are also carried out by the private sector after being granted permission to conduct the course.

The civil society and private sector are also active in providing public procurement training. This is the case with SOI, which has long-standing experience promoting competence development within the public procurement profession. Among other activities, it organises seminars and conferences for public procurement professionals. Several private companies provide courses and programmes related to public procurement.

Several universities provide higher-level education on public procurement, such as Stockholm University and Mid Sweden University. Both offer dedicated courses in public procurement law.

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (Stockholm University, Mid Sweden
	University, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (private providers)
Advanced topics	Yes (private providers)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (private providers)

²⁵⁹ See more information at: https://www.upphandlingsmyndigheten.se/aktuellt/strategikollen--ny-tjanst-for-att-utvecklastrategiskt-inkopsarbete/

²⁶⁰ See more information at http://www.soi.se/media/3245/kompetensprofil.pdf

²⁶¹ soi-competenskollen.se

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in Sweden consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• There is a shortage of experienced public procurement professionals. As the public sector is currently experiencing a shortage of experienced public procurers, there is a need to recruit from a broader resource base, including from the private sector. This may be challenging as remunerations in the public sector are not always as competitive as those in the private sector. Contracting authorities and entities need to work cross-functionally and take advantage of all the skills needed to achieve value for money and contribute to the development of society.

Priorities to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• The NAPP will endeavour to raise awareness, give support and guidance as well as develop and strengthen the measuring and monitoring of environmental and social indicators in public procurement. This should lead to i) building sustainable procurement capacities; ii) assessing whether these dimensions are well integrated among contracting authorities processes and; iii) reaching the objectives set in the Public Procurement Strategy.





The United Kingdom

Professionalisation of public procurement Fact Sheet

1. General overview of the procurement system

Public procurement in the United Kingdom (UK) accounts for about 14% of GDP. The UK's public procurement system is highly complex and unique as it comprises a variety of legal regimes and oversight bodies due to the fact that public procurement rests within the responsibility of the devolved governments of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Public procurement is mostly considered a standalone occupation in the UK. It is worth noting that in Scotland, the Scotlish Government has adopted a competency framework and official job profiles specific to each of its contracting authorities. Similarly, the Crown Commercial Service (CCS), which is governed by the UK, has developed a specific career path for its public procurement professionals.

Public procurement professionals are usually contractual staff²⁶² as only a minority of public sector employees in the UK have civil servant status.²⁶³ The latter are usually found at central government institutions and subordinated agencies, while the larger amount of the workforce in contracting authorities is comprised of contractual staff. As in many countries, there are strong discrepancies in procurement expertise between highly professionalised central purchasing bodies (CPBs) and smaller contracting authorities.

2. Administrative capacity of the public procurement workforce

The central public procurement policy functions are the responsibility of the Cabinet Office. It hosts the Government Chief Commercial Officer who coordinates the Government Commercial Function (GCF)—a network of about 3,700 public procurement professionals. The CCS is an executive agency of the Cabinet Office and is the largest CPB in the UK. It not only acts on behalf of the government, but also offers its services to local contracting authorities. The CCS is also responsible for defining the procurement policy and its implementation, providing advice and support to other government departments. In addition, there are several ministries (like the Ministry of Defence) who act as CPBs as well as individual local contracting authorities across the country. The National Audit Office (NAO) oversees public procurement activities and issues annual reports, while HM Treasury collects and publishes data on public spending. The devolved governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland take the lead on public procurement policy for their respective countries, working closely with sector Centres of Procurement Expertise on coordinated programmes across the wider public sector.

²⁶² Broadly defined, public employment refers to the staff employed by a public institution or corporation. Public employees include civil servants but also employees whose status is regulated by private law and temporary staff. Civil servants are government employees with a specific and more protected public law status with unilateral appointment. Contractual staff (here called Public employees) are government employees whose employment contracts are based on private law with employment conditions more similar or identical to private sector employment. See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.

characteristics and performance in the EU28, p.7 and 22.
²⁶³ See European Commission (2018): "Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: United Kingdom" (p.1062)

3. Human resource management of the public procurement workforce

The employment conditions of public procurement professionals with civil servant status are governed by the provisions of the Civil Service Code. The status of contractual staff and their conditions of service are highly diverse and vary across different public institutions in the UK, including contracting authorities. As such, there is no common human resources management system and each service has its own employment policies.

Recruitment

Given the absence of a central human resources management system for public procurement professionals, individual contracting authorities have flexibility in recruiting their staff and drafting job specifications based on their respective needs.

On behalf of the central government, the GCF has introduced a central recruitment model for procurement professionals that consists of a common pay structure, as well as learning and development schemes. As of recently, recruited staff members are no longer assigned to an individual department, but are rather centrally employed thereby ensuring an internal pool of available talent. Before vacancies are published externally, the internal talent pool is consulted for suitable internal candidates that match the pre-defined criteria and competencies.

Recruitment of staff from the private sector with a variety of backgrounds is very common in the UK. It is reflected in the above described competency framework, which is applied to define specific needs, draft job descriptions and assess potential candidates. With few exceptions, both internal and external candidates for procurement positions have to pass through the assessment centre, where attributes, skills and procurement knowledge are tested. These tests are adjusted to specific roles and required competencies. Prior professional experience in procurement-related functions is considered and preferred.

The Scottish government's national Procurement People of Tomorrow programme, which supports making procurement a career of choice in Scotland, is another example of encouraging recruitment, development and retention of public procurement professionals and offering a range of routes in to the profession.

Performance and compensation

Despite having the Senior Civil Service, public sector pay structures are not centralised in the UK. Each department is responsible for implementing a remuneration policy that is consistent with the civil service pay guidance and reflects both the needs of business and labour market positions. There is an annual performance assessment of civil servants, procurement professionals in CPBs and in smaller contracting authorities. Performance assessments are of high importance in the UK for career advancements and remuneration. Bonus payments are possible but have been sharply reduced in recent years.

Career progression

There is no specific career path for public procurement professionals. It usually follows the career progression of the respective institution. The CCS established a specific career path for public procurement professionals (see box below).

Establishing a specific career path for public procurement professionals²⁶⁴

Unlike many other Member States, the UK has established an explicit career path for public procurement professionals in the central government contracting authority. The Commercial Career Framework (CCF) was developed to enhance transparency for public procurement professionals

²⁶⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/697452/Commercial_Care er_Framework_V2.0__2_.pdf

on the requirements for each grade and to provide a base for individual career planning and evaluation of development needs.

The CCF combines the competency framework for both junior and senior procurement professionals. It describes the different roles that exist in public procurement and the individual capabilities required for each role. Such descriptions are useful in order to outline the different career paths in the profession and to understand the required capabilities for certain roles. In addition, the CCF provides a Commercial Career Map that tracks and displays the most common entry and exit points for public procurement professionals, possible moves within the institution and across the Civil Service as well as to the private sector.

Transparency of possible career opportunities and a structured career path constitute an important factor to help attract external experts for procurement positions as well as to enhance individual career development.

4. Experience with competency frameworks and competency-based policies

The UK has comprehensive experience developing and applying competency frameworks in public administration. Since 2012, there has been a Civil Service Competency Framework in place applied across the entire Civil Service. It outlines 10 competencies that are grouped into three clusters: setting direction, engaging people and delivering results. ²⁶⁵ These competences are specifically defined for each grade of the civil servant, ranging from level 1 (assistant) to level 6 (director/director general) and comprise the descriptions of effective behaviour and ineffective behaviour for each grade and competency.

For public procurement professionals, there are additional procurement-specific competency frameworks in place that are used at central government contracting authorities. ²⁶⁶ For senior procurement professionals, the framework "Attributes for Government Commercial Professionals" lays out model behaviours and skills for four different roles: commercial lead, associate commercial specialist, commercial specialist and senior commercial specialist. The framework consists of two sections: i) judgement and leadership skills ii) subject-specific expertise.

The Commercial Skills and Competency Framework "Developing and Practitioner Levels" ²⁶⁷ is used for more junior staff in public procurement. This framework consists of three sections to assess procurement-related skills: i) pre-market skills, ii) sourcing skills and iii) contract and supplier management skills (post-contract award). For each section, there are defined competencies for two levels: developing (junior) and practitioner (more experienced). The framework is used for drafting job descriptions, career development planning of procurement staff, team building and restructuring, and as a reference for learning and development.

The Scottish government also has extensive experience in the professionalisation of its procurement workforce and competency-based policies. The government has created a procurement competency development framework and tool to enhance procurement function skills and capabilities, and to help advance the careers of procurement practitioners (see case study on the Scottish government). Scotland uses an individual self-assessment tool and a comprehensive competency framework applicable to all contracting authorities. Comparatively, in the rest of the UK, there is a general lack of diagnostic and analytic tools to assess the needs for training in procurement at the local and regional level.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-commercial-function-people-standards-for-the-profession

²⁶⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-competency-framework

²⁶⁷https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/501136/Commercial_Skills_Framework_v_October_2015__1_.pdf

5. Training

The Cabinet Office runs a Civil Service Learning (CSL) programme that provides e-learning, online resources and classroom courses for all civil servants, with some related to public procurement. The Government Commercial College offers a range of training designed to improve the commercial capability of the central government and the wider public sector.

The CCS has a broad range of internal training offers. These include master classes, peer reviews, podcasts and online-based training offers. It further designs training to be specifically tailored to its needs but cooperates with specialised private service providers in running these sessions, such as the International Association for Contract & Commercial Management (IACCM) and the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS). CIPS also offers a professional qualification in procurement. In addition, there are a range of national training programmes in the devolved administrations and there is an abundant supply of public courses and certifications by other private providers.

However, there is no mandatory training or certification programme required for public procurement professionals in the UK. The following types of training are available:

Type of training	Availability (training provider)
Legal and procedural	Yes (CSL, CCS, private providers)
Technical (e.g. market analysis, negotiation)	Yes (CSL, CIPS, private providers)
Advanced topics	Yes (CSL, CIPS, private providers)
Green public procurement	
Public procurement for innovation	
Socially responsible public procurement	
E-procurement	
Managerial	Yes (CSL, CIPS, private providers)

6. Challenges and priorities as perceived in the Member States

The challenges and priorities presented here have been identified by procurement stakeholders in the UK consulted in the preparation of this factsheet.

Challenges to the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

- Lack of professionalisation of local contracting authorities' staff: The UK government applies very advanced competency frameworks and tools for public procurement professionals. However, their use is currently limited to the central government level and does not consider local contracting authorities. This amplifies uneven professionalisation levels of procurement staff in central and local contracting authorities. The Scottish Government's national frameworks and tools have been developed with local contracting authorities with commitment to roll them out locally, though gaps remain regarding their adoption.
- Reluctance of procurement staff to flag knowledge gaps: Despite the application of advanced competency-based tools in large contracting authorities, public procurement professionals are rather reluctant to proactively address knowledge gaps. There is a lack of diagnostic and analytic tools to assess specific needs of staff and recommend the appropriate training. The Scottish Government's competency framework encourages self-assessment with national skills gaps discussed and targeted at a central and sectoral level. This is underpinned by the Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme which assesses competence at an organisational level, generating targeted continuous improvement plans.

Priorities for the professionalisation of the procurement workforce

• Enhance the skills of local procurement staff: The CCS plans to spread the use of the competency frameworks in public procurement also to regional CAs in order to enhance the

professionalisation of staff. In Scotland, a range of national capability programmes continue to support local capability.

2. Case Studies

Case Study: Accreditation of public procurement professionals in Chile

Key characteristics

Type of initiative: Accreditation framework **Target group**: All public procurement officers

Goals: Certify competencies of public procurement officers and provide them with the required knowledge to assure efficient and effective purchases that promote savings in price and reduce delays.

Contact: ChileCompra

Website: https://www.chilecompra.cl/

Context

In Chile, the decentralised procurement system allows contracting authorities to launch calls for tenders and procure through framework agreements managed by ChileCompra, which is the Public Procurement Authority and main central purchasing body in Chile²⁶⁸. It also requires that public procurement officers have received an **official accreditation** which gives the assurance that they have the **relevant procurement legal and procedural knowledge**.

This **accreditation is mandatory**²⁶⁹ and ChileCompra is allowed to block access to the e-procurement platform²⁷⁰ to public officers who are not accredited. With more than 850 public institutions and approximately 15,000 purchasing units in Chile, this represents a population of 27,000 full-time and part-time public officers who have successfully passed and received this accreditation from ChileCompra and are currently allowed to procure through the e-procurement system.

Description of the initiative

Origins of the project

The first iteration of the accreditation system was officially launched in 2006 and was in use until 2018. The system was based on in-class training and examination in person. After attending a set of **in-class training** sessions covering the legal framework and environment of the public procurement system delivered by ChileCompra, procurement officers had to pass a **paper-based on-site exam** to get their knowledge checked. Topics covered during the training classes included the following:

- Introduction to the Public Procurement System,
- Regulations on Public Procurement and Purchasing for the official practice;
- The supply area and its strategic role in the State; and Introduction to the execution of purchases.

The training participants were required to answer at least 60% of the questions correctly to pass the exam.

Once a procurement officer had passed the exam, they were given different access rights to the e-procurement platform, depending on their **job profiles**, namely, lawyer, operator, supervisor or auditor. Each profile had a set of functions and tasks they were responsible for on the e-procurement platform. The operator prepares the tender documentation, the lawyer reviews all the tender documentation and checks its compliance with the procurement law, the supervisor reviews and approves the tender documentation and publishes it, and the auditor reviews the tendering process after the tender evaluation and award of the contract.

²⁶⁸ As established by the Public Procurement Law No.19.886

²⁶⁹ Ibidem

²⁷⁰ www.mercadopublico.cl

Current accreditation system

Further on, as part of the government's commitment to implementing digital transformation as a policy priority, in 2018 ChileCompra was mandated to revise, improve and digitalise the existing accreditation system, and to not only check whether public officers know the law, but whether they are actually able to correctly implement it in practice.

ChileCompra based this new framework on the accreditation framework of the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) of the United States.²⁷¹

The current version of the accreditation system has been in place since **January 2019** and represents a shift of perspective from a profile-based to proficiency-based accreditation process. 272 Indeed, public officers are no longer tested on their knowledge of the procurement law, but rather on their skills and ability to apply Procurement Law in an efficient way that brings value for money.

Structure of the certification exam

The new exam has been revised and restructured by ChileCompra along with a working group of procurement officers, in order to ensure its practical dimension. While the previous certification exam had 50 multiple-choice questions, the new one has 20 questions including 12 multiple-choice questions and 8 scenario-based open-ended questions. Public officers are evaluated on their ability to apply public procurement rules and procedures in a specific situation. For instance, public officers could be asked to describe what procurement procedures should be applied if 100 computers need to be procured.

The proficiency-based approach of the new accreditation process no longer segments procurement officers by profiles, but instead by four proficiency levels:

- 1. Basic level: Someone new in the public procurement system;
- 2. **Intermediate level**: Someone that carried out low value procurements:
- 3. Advanced level: Someone that has experience in public procurement and carried out more complex procurement;
- 4. Expert level: Someone that has both experience and education and/ or received training in procurement and carries out highly strategic procurements.

Four accreditation tests have been developed to evaluate the competencies and skills of procurement officers that belong to each of the four levels.

Training courses

The training to complete prior to taking the accreditation test has been tailored to the four proficiency levels.

- Basic level training courses are similar to the ones that were delivered as part of the previous accreditation process;
- Intermediate level courses include "Planning as a tool for control and decision making in public procurement", "Execution of purchases for good management" and "Knowledge management and learning related to public procurement";
- Advanced level courses cover "Market analysis to make good decisions in public procurement", "Budget planning and timely payment" and "Strategic purchases"; and
- Expert level courses cover "Leadership in supply management", "Strategies to obtain greater value for money" and "tools for the generation and analysis of data".

These training courses have been developed by two staff members of ChileCompra's team (who are teachers in public procurement) with the help of an external partner.

272 https://www.chilecompra.cl/acreditacion-digital-de-competencias/

²⁷¹ See the case study on the US framework for more details.

Training courses are **compulsory** and **available online** through e-learning and online training.²⁷³ The accreditation tests are also carried out online, making it easy for procurement officers to take the test from their geographical location. **Three test sessions per year** are offered.

Similarly to the previous accreditation system, the current system requires a minimum grade of 60% to successfully pass the exam.

Validity of the accreditation & reaccreditation

The accreditation is **valid for a period of three years**, after which the accredited procurement officer should take the test again in order to stay accredited. A procurement officer accredited for the first time must first complete the Basic level.

For **reaccreditation**, procurement officers can complete a form where they indicate their years of experience, whether they received education in public procurement, whether they attended training, the decision-making level they have in their position, the highest amount of procurement they carried out, etc. Such information is analysed by ChileCompra in order to establish the proficiency level of the procurement officer and the test that is suitable for them.

Outcome and lessons learnt

The revised accreditation process was piloted in the last quarter of 2018 and officially launched in 2019. Results of the sessions carried out in 2019 led to few adjustments and a **revised version of the accreditation process was implemented for 2020**.

In particular, the passing rate of 60% of correct answers to the exam was reinstated, and procurement officers are now evaluated based on the grade they received during the e-learning and online training that they took, as well as on the final test score. The **training courses grade** accounts for 40% of the final grade, while the **test grade** accounts for 60%.

In addition, all public officers taking part in the accreditation process must now follow a **workshop to help them navigate the training platform** where the virtual training courses are available. The number of questions on the test has also been **increased to 30.**

In the early days of the accreditation, **some criticism was received**, mainly linked to the virtual aspect of the accreditation process and the shift from a profile-based to a proficiency-based approach. ChileCompra invested a lot of effort in **communication and promotional activities** in order to ease procurement officers' acceptance of the new framework.

Today, ChileCompra is just starting to **see the benefits** as procurement officers recognise that the new proficiency-based approach of the accreditation offers much **more opportunities for them to grow and advance their careers**.

In the future, ChileCompra intends to **certify other institutes** to be able to deliver the training courses and tests.

²⁷³ https://capacitacion.chilecompra.cl/course/view.php?id=3858

Case Study: France's career path for state procurement professionals

Key characteristics

Type of initiative: Official civil service procurement job profiles, training and certification

Target group: All state public procurement practitioners

Goals: Recognise public procurement as a standalone profession and provide relevant training and

certification for state public procurement practitioners

Contact: State Purchasing Directorate (DAE) Website: https://www.economie.gouv.fr/dae

Context

The French public procurement workforce is characterised by civil servants from the three civil service branches, namely the state, local and health branches. The decree of 3 March 2016 established the **State Procurement Directorate (DAE – Direction des achats de l'État)** of the Ministry of Economy. DAE has jurisdiction over all procurement professionals of the state civil service branch including ministries and public institutions. In 2017, the volume of public procurement carried out by the state civil service branch amounted to EUR 46 billion (including defence and security procurements), which represents about 52% of public procurement in France.

Among other responsibilities, the DAE defines the state's procurement policies and develops interministerial procurement strategies, conducts inter-ministerial public tenders and contracts or entrusts their conduct to another entity (e.g. a government department, the state central purchasing body, other central purchasing bodies or contracting authorities).

In addition, the DAE is responsible for the **professionalisation of state procurement professionals**. The professionalisation of such actors in the procurement process is fundamental to enable them to achieve expected savings objectives, and implement the public policies related to procurement, namely sustainable purchases, social integration, access of SMEs to public procurement markets, innovation purchases, etc.

Description of the initiative

Origins of the project

In line with its mission, in 2013 DAE undertook a **step-by-step professionalisation process** with the overarching goal to have a high-performing purchasing function over the medium and long term that will enable the achievement of its policy objectives. The professionalisation of state procurement professionals, as elaborated by the DAE, is based on the following five pillars: **1. Training programme, 2. Dedicated career path**, 3. Professional social network, 4. Public procurement manual, 5. Procurement information system.

In order to support the **first two pillars**, the DAE has adopted a comprehensive approach based on three initiatives:

- The definition of **new reference job positions** for the creation of a **new professional** "**Purchasing**" family in the state jobs classification system (RIME Répertoire Interministériel des Métiers de l'État);
- The design of a single reference framework for a training programme tailored to the five profiles referenced in RIME, thereby establishing a clear career path for state procurement professionals; and
- The development of a **certification scheme** for state buyers based on the certification of all newcomers to any of the new reference job positions, and in turn, the development of specialisation

courses. This certification scheme aims to support the harmonisation of training practices, content, and therefore knowledge and skills of state procurement professionals.

Key steps and timeline of the professionalisation process

The step-by-step professionalisation process was initiated by the DAE in 2013.

The first step consisted of **performing an inventory of procurement roles, practices and related training programmes**. Over the course of the first year, the DAE consulted approximately 12,000 actors in the procurement process about their respective roles, tasks and activities, as well as on the key skills required in specific procurement processes. This consultation process took place via a survey. It also allowed the DAE to take stock of the existing training offer available in various procurement functions, both at the central and regional level.

The second step undertaken by the DAE was to develop a **single common professionalisation framework** for all state procurement professionals. Practically, this consisted in the creation of an **Interdepartmental Reference Framework for Procurement Training** and the **mapping of procurement skills** in such a framework.

Finally, the DAE developed **a training strategy** that meets the objectives of the Interdepartmental Reference Framework for Procurement Training and the needs of procurement stakeholders. In total, the development of the single common professional framework lasted a year and took place from 2015 to 2016.

The third and final step was to develop a viable career path for state procurement professionals through the **certification of training** for newcomers to the position and the creation of new procurement courses.

The five official Procurement job profiles

Five reference jobs were defined in order to officially recognise **a new professional "Procurement" family** in RIME and link these job profiles to the single reference framework for procurement training. These five job profiles include:

- 1. **The Procurement Manager**, who manages and implements the procurement policy according to performance objectives;
- 2. **The Public buyer**, who makes sure that the procurements carried out meet both qualitative and quantitative needs and ensures performance is achieved;
- 3. **The procurement expert advisor**, who advises and provides expertise to buyers on specific aspects such as sourcing, negotiation, social and environmental responsibility, etc.
- 4. **Public procurement assistants** who are in charge of the administrative aspects of procurement procedures and advise buyers on the legal risks and/ or benefits of the public contract;
- 5. **The order manager**, who manages the orders of goods and services.

Each of these five job profiles has a **fiche in RIME**. Each fiche provides a short definition of the job position, describes its main activities, knowledge, skills and capabilities. In cases where the job profile requires managerial skills, these skills are indicated in the fiche. In addition, the fiche provides a section indicating action points that professionals of this profile will need to focus on in the future. For instance, a procurement manager will be responsible for promoting sustainable procurement and e-procurement procedures.

The single reference framework for procurement training

The **single reference framework** for procurement training recognises and integrates these five job profiles and is organised around 5 curricula of training courses, each providing a set of procurement training courses to train staff to **one of the five job profiles**.

A procurement expert advisor training curriculum offers four specialisation courses covering IT
equipment and procurement of services, procurement of works, procurement of supplies and
services, and procurement of intellectual services.

- A procurement manager curriculum provides four courses focusing on managerial aspects including an introduction to the procurement manager role, procurement strategy for managers, managing of procurement staff, and procurement performance for managers.
- Two public buyers curricula have been developed, one for junior buyers and one for senior buyers.
 - The junior buyer curriculum covers courses such as introduction to public procurement, sourcing (level 1), bids analysis, suppliers relationship management (level 1), evaluation and definition of needs (level 1), procurement strategy, negotiation (level 1), and procurement performance.
 - The **senior buyer curriculum** requires the completion of all courses from the junior buyer curriculum and covers the same topics but in more detail.
- A cross-functional skills curriculum offers training on topics which are important and should be
 mastered regardless of the job profile. Courses cover procurement marketing, legal basics for public
 procurement, corporate organisation, sustainable procurement, managing projects, SME access to
 public procurement, innovative procurement and procurement information systems.

The training strategy

The training strategy developed by the DAE requires each ministry to develop a training plan consistent with the single reference framework. The DAE is in charge of reviewing and approving each training plan. The strategy further relies on the following set of priorities:

- Professionals working in procurement over 50% of their time should be trained as a priority;
- Professionals should be trained to develop the skills that they need most improvement in;
- Training courses can only be certified by the DAE;
- E-learning options should be offered for training courses where possible;
- Dedicated manuals should be prepared to support training.

Outcome and lessons learnt

The professionalisation process took five years to develop, test, fine-tune and roll out and some challenges were encountered along the way. In particular, the shift from a longstanding focus on legal compliance training to an economic vision of procurement was difficult to accept. Similarly, the project management training faced some resistance from state buyers as project management was previously not considered to be a competency requirement for civil service positions.

However, other aspects have helped to overcome these challenges. Notably, the strong political support the professionalisation process received, as well as the recognition of procurement as an official profession highly contributed to a more rapid acceptance of the initiative. Moreover, the broad consultation process undertaken to identify existing training and to map procurement roles and skills helped raise awareness and engage key stakeholders from the very beginning of the process and facilitated acceptance of change. Finally, the fact that all training plans and training course content produced by French Ministries would be reviewed and certified by the DAE before being implemented, allowed for a strong harmonisation of content and thus practices.

In 2018, the DAE trained and certified 80 public buyers.

Case Study: Procurement Capability Index in New Zealand

Key characteristics

Type of initiative: Procurement self-assessment tool and training and professional development systems

Target group: All contracting authorities

Goals: Reduce the difference in procurement capability across all types of contracting authorities **Contact**: New Zealand Government Procurement, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment,

New Zealand

Website: https://www.procurement.govt.nz/

Context

In 2009, the New Zealand Government initiated the **Government Procurement Reform** with the goal to achieve efficient public procurement through cost savings, enhanced commercial capability and business participation, improved practices and reduced red tape.

As part of the Government Procurement Reform, the New Zealand Government Procurement and Property (NZGPP) identified **capability development and capacity building** as key priorities that can be supported through a set of initiatives including significant investment in procurement capability, leadership support and training, a graduate programme, and an agency capability review ²⁷⁴.

Later in 2017, the newly elected Government of New Zealand placed a stronger focus on procurement and decided to use it as a lever for social change, which led to a shift **from a light touch procurement regime to a more directive regime** dictating the way procurement must be conducted.

A set of Procurement Government rules, which apply to all mandated agencies, was therefore issued. This represents 135 mandated public organisations out of the 3600 public organisations conducting public procurement in New Zealand. Mandated public organisations range from government departments, non-public service departments such as the New Zealand polices and Defence Force, and Crown entities.

In 2018, the NZGP launched the **Procurement Capability Index**²⁷⁵ self-assessment tool (the PCI). As of 2019, all mandated agencies must perform the PCI (Government Procurement Rule No. 70).

Description of the initiative

The Procurement Capability Index tool

Origins of the PCI

As in most countries, New Zealand suffers from a huge disparity in procurement capacity and capability between central government agencies and local/regional government agencies. In order to reduce this gap, the NZGPP developed the PCI as a self-assessment tool that provides an agency-wide view of procurement capability across the government.

It is intended both for the New Zealand Government Procurement to see procurement capability trends at a macro level and use them to inform future capability development initiatives, and for agencies to set improvement plans and benchmark their own improvement.

Methodology steps and timeline to design the PCI

²⁷⁴ John Ivil, General Manager Government Procurement, "A Case Study: New Zealand Government Procurement" presentation, Second South Asia Regional Public Procurement Conference, Islamabad, Pakistan 25-27 March 2014, available at: https://pdfslide.net/documents/a-case-study-new-zealand-government-procurement.html

at: https://pdfslide.net/documents/a-case-study-new-zealand-government-procurement.html

275 https://www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/improving-your-procurement/frameworks-reporting-and-advice/procurement-capability-index/

The initial design of the tool **started in 2012** and was made in-house by the NZGP. It was then comprehensively tested with agencies and the Procurement Functional Leadership (PFL), an advisory group made up of Chief Procurement Officers (or equivalent) from across the State and Public service. The group is chaired by senior members of NZGP and is in charge of providing advice to NZGP on policy initiatives. The PFL was consulted a number of times before NZGP settled on a final model. During its bi-monthly meetings, the PFL provided input, suggestions and advice to NZGP on the elaboration of the PCI.

An early draft in mid-2015 served as a pilot test with a few agencies. Based on the received feedback, it was reworked and further **tested with a wider group of agencies in 2016**.

Due to the change of government in 2017, a restructuring within NZGP took place which meant the work on the PCI was on hold for a lot of 2017. There were a few more iterations drafted and tested in late 2017, before NZGP settled on the current version of the PCI which was officially **launched in mid-2018**.

Process and structure of the PCI

The PCI is a **self-assessment tool**²⁷⁶ that helps agencies assess their **current procurement capability** against 27 capability elements across eight capability categories, in order to determine how the agency is performing against its **expected capability levels**.

The **eight categories** cover 1. Strategy and outcomes, 2. Commercial and social outcomes, 3. Governance and assurance, 4. Risks and benefits, 5. Planning and sourcing, 6. Managing for results, 7. People strategy, and 8. Building capability.

The **expected capability levels** are set considering whether the agency is an investment intensive agency, or whether it is part of the central government and reflect the agency's reliance on procurement to deliver its outcomes. The expected capability levels are reviewed after the first reporting period, taking into account the overall results from agencies.

In terms of format, the PCI self-assessment should be performed using a **calculation spreadsheet** composed of four main worksheets:

- A self-assessment worksheet containing the 27 statements that should be answered based on the current capability of the agency;
- A worksheet showing the self-assessment score and the expected level of the agency on a radar chart:
- A 12-month target worksheet requiring the agency to answer the same 27 statements based on the capability targets of the agency; and
- A full summary result worksheet, which shows the agency's current capability, expected capability level set and the agency's 12-month targets for each capability category in the form of a radar chart.

The scale for assessing the 27 capability statements ranges from **limited** and **moderate** capability to **well- placed** and **strong** capability. The proposed answers are statements that reflect these capability levels.

Each **mandated agency is required to perform** the PCI self-assessment annually and to submit it before September of every year to a team within the NZGP in charge of reviewing the PCI self-assessment results.

²⁷⁶ https://www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/improving-your-procurement/frameworks-reporting-and-advice/procurement-capability-index/

Other procurement capacity building initiatives

Hikina training platform

The NZGP has continued developing its capability and capacity initiatives and in 2019 created the Hikina platform²⁷⁷, a training and skills development system providing e-learning modules and workshop opportunities for government procurement practitioners. Currently, three types of training courses are offered through the platform:

- Social service contract management, which is a set of e-learning modules for practitioners who procure or manage social service contracts. It focuses on developing cultural competencies and procurement practices to support more effective social service partnering practices;
- Demystifying procurement, which is intended for an audience of procurement practitioners who are beginners, and aims to teach various stages and processes of the public procurement lifecycle;
- Broader outcomes, which teaches procurement practitioners how to conduct green, social and innovative procurement and to increase access to public procurement markets for businesses.

The NZGP is committed to continuing enriching the platform with new procurement e-learning workshops in the near future.

Graduate programme

In addition, a new graduate programme²⁷⁸ in procurement has been launched by NZGP. The goal of the programme is to prepare and develop future procurement leaders. Over a two-year period, procurement graduates are conducting public procurement activities in agencies across the government, while receiving training and advice from experienced procurement practitioners.

Outcome and lessons learnt

The development of the PCI was an iterative process which took about seven years. During its development and testing some difficulties were encountered. Notably, the level of completion of the PCI among all mandated agencies was considered too slow despite the introduction of the Government Procurement Rules No 70 that requires all mandated agencies to submit a self-assessment annually.

However, some aspects have facilitated the acceptance and take-up of the tool. In particular, the involvement of the PFL during the development and roll-out of the PCI is considered to have been a key success factor. The PFL, composed of about 30 Senior leaders and Commercial Procurement Officials who were selected for their extensive networks covering local and regional agencies, largely contributed to promoting the tool within these agencies and facilitated its uptake.

In addition, the NZGP appointed representatives throughout the country and tasked them to make the link between all agencies and the NZGP. Their mission is to promote the PCI and encourage agencies which are not subject to the Government Procurement Rules to use the PCI.

Currently, one of the main priorities of the NZGP is the promotion of strategic procurement. As part of the new Government Procurement Rules, mandated agencies are required to pursue secondary environmental and social goals throughout their procurement. This is considered an important objective for agencies. The NZGP now counts on its newly developed training platform and graduate programme to effectively support this change.

Moving forward, the PCI will also be used to understand agencies' capabilities regarding broader procurement outcomes and strategic procurement areas, as well as to uncover what other capacitybuilding initiatives could be developed.

²⁷⁷ https://learning.procurement.govt.nz/

https://www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/improving-your-procurement/training-and-professional-development/graduateprogramme/

Case study: Strengthening the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce in Norway

Key characteristics

Type of initiatives: Public Procurement Academy, certification system, and strategy and selfassessment tools

Target group: All types of contracting authorities

Goals: To provide formal education in public procurement, to formally recognise public procurement professionals' knowledge and skills through certification and to equip contracting authorities with appropriate tools that help define, plan, adjust and measure the performance of their procurement strategy.

Contact: The former Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi), currently part of the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency, Norway²⁷⁹

Website: https://www.digdir.no/ and https://www.anskaffelser.no/ (former website: https://www.difi.no/)

Context

Norway's public procurement system is highly decentralised which grants contracting authorities a high degree of independence in their procurement activities and the human resource management of their procurement staff. The working culture of contracting authorities is, similar to all public sector institutions in Norway, characterised by a collaborative approach focusing on organisational performance rather than individual performance.

Although the public procurement system is considered to function very well and deliver great value for money, some challenges linked to the capacity of procurement staff exist, both in terms of numbers and skills. In particular, the 2018 assessment of Norway's public procurement systems²⁸⁰ revealed that small contracting authorities generally suffer from a lack of human resources and capacity. Moreover, the public sector struggles with recruitment and retention of staff, while the procurement function specifically is impacted by the lack of attractiveness and competence leading to inefficient procurement and high transaction costs.

These challenges are not new, and when it comes to the professionalisation of public procurement, Norway has been among the early movers and adopters of competency-based tools. The mission of the Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi)²⁸¹ is to be the central professional body for modernisation and restructuring of the public sector, including in the field of public procurement. To do so, Difi's approach is to provide a variety of tools that can meet the needs of all contracting authorities in Norway. Some of these tools are explored in further detail below.

²⁷⁹ The research for this case study was done in 2019, and refers to the Difi. However, following a restructuring, as of 1 January 2020, Difi and Altinn, the data management section of the Brønnøysund Register Centre, were merged to create the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency (Digdir), under the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. As of 1st September 2020, Difi's existing Department for Public Procurement will be transferred from the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency, to the Government Agency for Financial Management (DFØ), which will from the same date change its name to the Norwegian Government Agency for Public and Financial management (DFØ).

²⁸⁰ OECD, 2018, Assessment of Norway's Public Procurement System, Testing The New Methodology, available at:

Description of the initiatives

The self-assessment tool

Origins of the project

In 2008, Difi launched a **procurement strategy tool** aimed at supporting contracting authorities with the definition and implementation of their public procurement strategies.²⁸² However, while the procurement strategy tool was being implemented, it became apparent that contracting authorities needed a suitable measure to be able to assess their current situation and base their procurement strategy and priorities on concrete findings.

As a result, Difi developed in 2010 a **self-assessment tool** as a complement to the procurement strategy tool.²⁸³ The self-assessment tool allows contracting authorities to assess the current state of their procurement work and activities and benchmark them against good practices before defining their procurement strategy targets.

Structure of the tool

The tool looks at **nine areas**: 1) Leadership, 2) Organisation, 3) Management, 4) Staff's competence and capacity, 5) Systems and tools, 6) Supplier markets, 7) Cooperation, 8) Procurement processes, 9) Spend analysis. Each respondent must score the proficiency level of the contracting authority in each of the nine areas between 0 and 4 (level 0 – No or poor action is in place to address this area, 1 – Minimum action is in place to address the dimension, 2 – Defined and controlled actions are planned or completed in this area, 3- Proactive, defined and controlled actions in place, 4 – actions are planned, implemented, assessed and adjusted systematically in this area).

Use of the tool

The assessment should be performed by the broadest base of respondents from the top management level of the contracting authority to the staff level. The use of the tool is not mandatory, and results are not shared with other authorities.

As a rule, all contracting authorities should aim to reach level 2 of all competencies as a minimum, while larger and more specialised contracting authorities such as central purchasing bodies (CPBs), are expected to strive for higher proficiency levels. For each dimension, respondents are also asked to provide a description of the current situation and suggestions for areas of improvement. These elements serve as a basis for further discussion among the top management level of the contracting authority.

The Public Procurement Academy

Origins of the project

In 2013, Difi launched **the Public Procurement Academy**, a project aimed at creating opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between the procurement community and academic institutions in Norway, in order to develop solutions that meet the need for research-based education in public procurement.²⁸⁴

To address the need for a higher level of professionalisation among all types of contracting authorities, Difi teamed up with **five universities** (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norwegian School of Economics, University of Bergen, Norwegian Business School, and Nord University), **about 15 contracting authorities** from the municipal and state level, and **four trade organisations** (Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises and Enterprise Federation of Norway).

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²⁸² https://www.anskaffelser.no/verktoy/eksempler/styringsparametere-anskaffelser

²⁸³ https://www.anskaffelser.no/verktoy/analyseverktoy/selvevalueringsverktoy

anskaffelsesakademiet.no

As a result of this collaboration, the **Public Procurement Academy** was founded in November 2017 with the goal of offering a comprehensive training and education programme in public procurement, establishing research-based education in public procurement and developing and disseminating knowledge in public procurement through research, collaboration, and knowledge sharing between management, business and academia.

Public Procurement Academy services

The Public Procurement Academy offers undergraduate programmes, Bachelors and Masters' degrees, and PhD positions. The education curriculums are comprehensive and targeted at preparing future procurement professionals to undertake various aspects of public procurement. In particular, they cover economy and law, project management, market dialogue, market analysis, negotiation skills, organisational psychology, innovation and corporate and social responsibility.

In the area of Research and Development, the Academy proposes various research projects and has already published several articles and research reports, including one on innovation partnerships and green public procurement practices. Additionally, research opportunities are offered for the development of research-based textbooks on public procurement.

The Academy is also developing its networking opportunities, notably through the organisation of an annual Forum in which all their partners gather, and an annual conference on R&D.

The certification system

Origins of the project

More recently, Difi launched a **certification scheme for basic level in public procurement (SOA BASIS)**²⁸⁵ in order to cope with the lack of minimum standards for the content of various training courses offered and the lack of overall strategy for building and developing competencies across the public sector. The scheme allows procurement professionals that have acquired procurement knowledge and skills through their previous practice and experience, or through formal education, to have their competencies formally recognised and documented.

The certification scheme is steered by Difi with the support of an academic committee composed of similar partners who make up the Public Procurement Academy (Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise, Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, and Enterprise Federation of Norway) as well as different contracting authorities including the Oslo townhall. This committee develops and maintains syllabuses that form the basis for elaborating on questions in the certification test.

Structure of the certification system

The SOA BASIS' curriculum describes relevant topics and competency goals for procurement at a basic level and is available to anyone. It is structured around five topics: laws and regulations, procurement planning, contract monitoring, competition, and procurement principles. The certification test is based on these topics and consist of 40 questions that are randomly drawn from an extensive database. There are various types of question formats, but most of them are multiple choice. Candidates have 60 minutes to complete the test. Results are available after a period of 14 days.

Prior to taking the actual certification exam, candidates can test their readiness by taking a mapping test, ²⁸⁶ which allows them to map and check their current knowledge. Candidates can then assess whether their knowledge is sufficient enough to successfully pass the certification exam.

https://www.norsktest.no/innkjop/&usg=ALkJrhhEvbuMIZpaI-MmB_B2KCgZvn5V8Q

²⁸⁵ https://www.anskaffelser.no/innkjopsledelse/kompetanseheving-soa

Added value of the certification scheme

The certification system is considered to add value for several parties. At the level of contracting authorities, it allows them to map their competencies, adopt a systematic approach to building up the capacity of their staff, and carry out competency-based recruitment. Individuals see their knowledge and skills formally recognised and have the assurance that they can meet the recruitment needs of potential employers. Providers of courses and training are encouraged to develop new courses tailored to specific target groups, themes and levels while also promoting the certification scheme as part of their traditional activities. Finally, the certification scheme is overseen by Difi which is best positioned to monitor the overall level of competence in public procurement in Norway and provides updates to the curriculum when necessary.

While the Public Procurement Academy provides theoretical and practical education, as well as formal competence in public procurement, the certification scheme provides procurement professionals who have not necessarily received formal education in public procurement with an opportunity to have their skills and experience recognised and valued.

Outcome and lessons learnt

Tackling the professionalisation of public procurement is a **comprehensive and step-by-step process**. The approach adopted by Difi to provide a variety of tools as opposed to a one-size-fits-all solution proves to be efficient in Norway. Contracting authorities face different challenges and therefore need tools and solutions which are tailored to their specific circumstances. Notwithstanding, tools alone are not enough. Instead, they should be placed in a wider professionalisation framework which also provides formal knowledge and education, and recognition of skills and expertise acquired through experience.

The development of such tools and initiatives takes time and requires testing and finetuning to make sure they fit the needs of their target audience and are sustainable in the long term. In addition, communication and promotion should not be overlooked as an effective means of ensuring buy-in by end-users. Finally, knowledge networks and exchange of practice should be an underpinning requirement to provide practitioners with peer-to-peer communication and benchmarking opportunities.

Case study: Scotland's national Procurement Competency Framework and self-assessment tool

Key characteristics

Type of initiative: Competency framework and self-development tool

Target group: All contracting authorities in Scotland

Goals: Increase the professionalisation of procurement officials across the public sector

Contact: Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate, Scotland

Website:https://www.gov.scot/about/how-government-is-run/directorates/scottish-procurement-and-

property-directorate/ Email: ceu@gov.scot

Context

In the United-Kingdom, public procurement is devolved to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in order to provide greater freedom to regional government to set their own procurement policy objectives.

In Scotland, the Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate is responsible for developing public procurement policy and legislation, as well as setting contracts and framework agreements to support Scottish contracting authorities, namely, 32 local authorities, 22 health boards, 16 universities and colleges and over 100 central government authorities.

In 2008, as part of the **Procurement Reform programme**, a **national procurement competency framework**²⁸⁷ was established to increase the professionalisation of procurement officials across the public sector. A clear need to improve practices and provide a clear setting of standards and expectations was needed to support the recruitment, development, career progression and mobility of procurement staff in the public sector.

Scotland has extensive experience with the professionalisation of public procurement. In particular, Scotland has introduced a holistic approach to public procurement, which is exemplified by **the Procurement Journey**. The Procurement Journey is "intended to support all levels of procurement activities and to help manage the expectation of stakeholders, customers and suppliers alike" ²⁸⁸. It facilitates best practices and consistency across the Scottish public sector, by providing a single source of guidance and documentation for the Scottish public sector, which is updated on a continuous basis with any changes in legislation and policy.

In addition, the Scottish government has launched in 2014 the **Procurement People of Tomorrow**²⁸⁹ programme, involving both the public and private sector, to support education and careers in procurement Recently the programme launched information packages intended to inform secondary school students as well as recent higher education graduates of the public procurement professions and the career opportunities they bring.

²⁸⁷ https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-procurement-competency-framework/

https://www.procurementjourney.scot/procurement-journey

https://www.gov.scot/publications/procurement-people-of-tomorrow-programme/

Description of the initiatives

The competency framework

Origins of the project

The competency framework was developed to meet the needs of all contracting authorities. The **first framework launched in 2006** was the starting point of the existing one. However, as it was based on procurement staff's existing corporate competencies, it became rapidly outdated and the need for new skill development moved far beyond what the framework allowed.

Development and updating process

The competency framework was refreshed in 2016 with the aim to ensure that it describes the skills and experience of procurement professionals in the Scottish context. A **national working group** was set up to carry out this update and it agreed on several specifications for the framework including to:

- Reflect the Scottish model of procurement and overall Scottish context;
- Map the competency of the framework to the CIPS Global Standard ²⁹⁰;
- Include technical and softer skills to allow adoption of either/both;
- Include considerations for the new EU Procurement Directives and the Scottish Procurement Reform Act²⁹¹, supply chain, logistics and distributions roles, creating a common career pathway and being flexible and agile in its use;
- Conduct further consultation on the structure, themes, depth and proficiency levels of the competency framework.

A **global benchmarking exercise** was carried out to consider and test the new structure and format and, in consultation, a hybrid model was honed. The working group consulted on the themes to be covered in the framework and on the depth to which each competency within those themes would go in a series of collaborative workshops.

As a result of these collaborative workshops, it was agreed that the competencies would be laid out for the following five proficiency levels: 1. Foundation/ Awareness, 2. Developing/ Working knowledge, 3. Practitioner, 4. Expert (Portfolio/ Functional leadership) and 5. Master/ Leader.

The content was developed centrally, tested in consultation, and further refined before the resulting version was piloted across different sectors. However, this **iterative process** took longer than expected as feedback received indicated that the content needed to be even clearer for those new to the profession. A working group of people in their first four years in the profession was therefore tasked with refining the content further.

Structure of the competency framework

The new Scottish national procurement competency framework developed through this process featured:

- 37 competencies at five proficiency levels covering all aspects of procurement;
- References to the CIPS Global Standard and standards of other chartered professional bodies such as the Association of Project Management (APM) and Chartered Management Institute (CMI).
- Signposts to professional qualifications and cross-sectoral learning and development opportunities;
- Generic and organisation-specific job roles, with a bank of over 50 job roles, facilitating the use of the competency framework depending of the role, tasks and responsibilities present in an organisation.

The competency framework is divided in four procurement-related vertical dimensions (infrastructure foundations, process, performance and people) with three additional transversal dimensions (commercial and financial awareness, planning and risk management, sustainability and innovation). The framework is therefore composed of 7 dimensions and 37 competencies, including soft skill competencies.

https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20170701235508/http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Procurement/policy/ProcurementReform/ProcReformAct

²⁹⁰ https://www.cips.org/en-gb/knowledge/global-standard-for-procurement-and-supply/

²⁹¹ The procurement reform Scotland Act, available at:

The self-assessment tool

In parallel, the Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate developed the **Procurement Development Framework**²⁹², an easy-to-use online tool which is linked to the competency framework. The tool allows any procurement official from any contracting authority in Scotland to self-assess their skills, identify relevant training and development needs, and to plan for their career and personal development.

The bank of job roles²⁹³ was embedded in the tool, allowing users to select their relevant job profile before taking the self-assessment. The Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate keeps track of the profiles chosen and uses the information to determine sectoral learning and development efforts.

The use of the self-assessment tool is structured around four main steps. First, the user should select one of the seven sectors for procurement activity (central government, universities and colleges, Scottish local authorities, etc.). Next, they should decide whether to use a pre-defined job role or not, meaning that individuals can either select a specific job role with predefined competencies associated with it, or directly select all appropriate competencies (no job role selected).

In the third step, the user scores each of the selected competencies at one of the five proficiency levels. The final output is a scorecard of all the results, which can also be presented in the form of radar charts, where the scores of the individual are assessed against a benchmark score defined by the job role selected. Finally, for competencies where gaps in skills and knowledge are identified, appropriate training courses are proposed.

The relevance and accessibility of the tool were tested with procurement professionals across the public sector as well as members of the Procurement People of Tomorrow community consisting of apprentices and graduates working in procurement.

Application of the competency framework and self-assessment tool

The Scottish procurement competency framework is applied on a voluntary basis, as there is no legal obligation to apply it. However, the Procurement Reform Scotland Act requires public sector bodies to publish an annual procurement strategy and provide evidence on its implementation. The procurement competency framework therefore facilitates compliance with this requirement regarding the professionalisation elements of procurement strategies.

The competency framework and the self-assessment tool are applied at the individual level. When completing the framework, individuals can decide to anonymise their results in order to limit the evaluation dimension of the tool. However, indications of organisation type and sector are not anonymised, as this information is necessary for the Procurement and Property Directorate to be able to analyse results nationally, by sector and by type of organisation.

Outcome and lessons learnt

Three main aspects have enabled the implementation and efficacy of the tools. First, the integration of job roles, which proved to facilitate users' understanding and navigation of the competency framework. To ensure consistency in the job roles, public authorities worked together on the definition of buyers' standard profiles. Second, the creation of a mobile app for the self-assessment tool was considered to be an important success factor. Finally, the support of the major professional bodies such as CIPS, the APM and CMI brought credibility to the framework, which is now seen as a professional tool nationally and internationally.

In order to raise awareness and encourage the implementation of the competency framework, the framework is promoted at regular meetings of Professional Practice and Development Forum²⁹⁴. This forum gathers practitioners from a broad range of procurement organisations. On an annual basis, the

https://scottishprocurementdevelopmentframework.azurewebsites.net/index.php

 $[\]frac{293}{\text{https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-procurement-competency-framework/?refresh=0.42579720224413053}$

²⁹⁴ Professional Practice and Development Forum, https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-procurement-governance/

Procurement and Property Directorate collects feedback on the framework and adapts it according to the feedback received.

Looking back at the development journey of the procurement competency framework, some important lessons learnt can be drawn. Communication is imperative for ensuring that the objectives of the framework are not misunderstood and should be carefully framed as early as at the stage of the pilot project. The use of the framework should also be enforced at an organisational level (as well as at the individual level) in order to maximise the number of respondents and therefore ensure consistency of the results. Finally, to implement a procurement competency framework on an international basis, the differences between countries in terms of job profiles should be intently considered as they may considerably vary.

Scotland was already well advanced in the professionalisation of public procurement when the country decided to implement the framework (and previous knowledge certainly helped to refine the framework), but the key factor to the success of the tools rests on the collaborative dimension brought to the development process. The main priorities of the Scottish government are now to continue promoting the tools and their implementation in order to collect more data on public procurement practices.

Case Study: Cooperation between the Public Procurement Office and Universities in Poland

Key characteristics

Type of initiative: Education in public procurement

Target group: General public

Goals: Generalise public procurement education in Poland to prepare future procurement practitioners

Contact: Polish Public Procurement Office

Website: https://www.uzp.gov.pl/

Context

The Polish public procurement system is highly decentralised with approximately 33,000 contracting authorities in 2017. Contracting authorities at all levels of public administration (central, regional, local) independently employ their own public procurement staff and organise the development of staff's competencies.

To this end, they may use different solutions and tools developed and made available by public institutions involved in the professionalisation of public procurement, including the Public Procurement Office (UZP – Urząd Zamówień Publicznych)²⁹⁵, the National School of Public Administration (KSAP)²⁹⁶, the Civil Service Department at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister²⁹⁷ and other public institutions. Public procurement staff may also independently apply for thematic trainings, courses, post-degree or other studies to be financed by their employer. However, UZP plays a leading role in professionalisation of public procurement. Notably, every year UZP adopts a plan for education, publishes activities and implements educational projects in the field of public procurement.

While it is not legally binding, the national standard of professional competence – public procurement specialist (profession code 242225)²⁹⁸, elaborated in 2013 under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Centre for the Development of Human Resources, establishes the minimum professional competencies in public procurement in compliance with the national law on public procurement (see Country Fact Sheet for Poland). The national standard acts as a general good practice that employers of contracting authorities should follow and use as a basis that can be elaborated further to reflect their needs.

In addition, to ensure that future public procurement professionals are well-prepared and educated in accordance with the public procurement law, UZP in cooperation with universities in Poland have teamed up to develop a post-graduate programme in public procurement. This initiative is described in the following sections.

²⁹⁵ https://www.uzp.gov.pl/

http://ksap.gov.pl/ksap/en

https://dsc.kprm.gov.pl/en

https://www.uzp.gov.pl/ data/assets/pdf_file/0024/41928/Profesjonalizacja-kadr.pdf

Description of the initiative

UZP's cooperation agreement with Universities

Origins of the project

In 2011, UZP signed a cooperation agreement on preparing and implementing a post-graduate programme²⁹⁹ in the field of public procurement with 6 universities in Poland. The primary objective was staff professionalisation for the sound preparation and conduct of public procurement procedures in Poland, as well as the importance of public procurement for the economic development of Poland and Europe. The goal was also to ensure that the public procurement principles of non-discrimination, equality and transparency are strictly applied by public procurement professionals.

The initial signatory universities included the Warsaw Business School, the Cracow University of Economics, the University of Gdansk, the University of Lodz, the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, and the University of Wroclaw.

Since the cooperation agreement was signed, 6 new signatory universities have taken part in the agreement. They include the Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznan, the College of Law and Administration in Przemysl and Rzeszow, the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, the University of Bialystok, and the Poznan University of Technology.

Purpose and features of the cooperation agreement

The purpose of the cooperation agreement is threefold:

- 1. The development of a standard study programme that harmonises standards for conducting post-graduate studies in public procurement;
- 2. Post-graduate programmes developed by signatory universities which respect the minimum requirements set by the standard study programme defined in the cooperation agreement, and therefore be interdisciplinary;
- 3. UZP, and specifically its President, takes patronage over post-graduate programmes in the field of public procurement provided by the signatory universities.

The cooperation agreement remains open to other universities willing to take part. Accession to the cooperation agreement is effective when the President of UZP and the university sign the cooperation agreement and that signatory universities are notified.

All signatory universities provide mutual support in the organisation and implementation of the post-graduate programmes.

Standard study programme for post-graduate studies³⁰⁰

The Standard study programme for post-graduate studies presents the following structure:

1. Scope

- 1.1. The conduct of public procurement procedures
 - Non-discrimination
 - Equal treatment
 - Transparency
- 1.2 The scope of application of the Public Procurement Law
- 1.3 Discharging the obligation to apply the procedure of the Public Procurement Law
- 2. Public Procurement system in EU law
- 3. Preparation of the procedure
- 3.1 Description of the subject of the procurement
- 3.2 Estimating the value of the contract
- 3.3 Content of the Terms of Reference (ToR)

²⁹⁹ https://www.uzp.gov.pl/baza-wiedzy/przedsiewziecia-edukacyjne

³⁰⁰ https://www.uzp.gov.pl/baza-wiedzy/przedsiewziecia-edukacyjne/studia-podyplomowe-pod-patronatem-prezesa-uzp/wzorcowy-program-studiow-podyplomowych

- Conditions, descriptions of how to assess compliance with the conditions for participating in the procurement procedure and documents confirming their fulfilment
- Method of communication between the contracting authority and the suppliers
- Rules for receiving and issuing a payment
- Bid evaluation criteria
- Subcontracting

4. Conducting a public procurement procedure

- 4.1 Publication of the contract notice and rule for making changes to the notice
- 4.2 Modes of awarding public contracts
- 4.3 Special procedures for awarding public contracts open procedure, framework agreement, dynamic purchasing system
- 4.4 Clarification and modification of the Terms of Reference
- 4.5 Selection of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender
 - Supplementing the offer
 - Explanation of the offer
 - Improving the offer
 - Rejecting the offer
 - Information on the selection of the best offer
- 5. Sector procurement
- 6. Legal protection measures
- 7. Public procurement contract invalidity, cancellation, amendment
- 8. Administration of contract management/ documentation
- 9. Public procurement control system
- 10. New approaches to public procurement
- 10.1 E-procurement
- 10.2 SME-friendly public procurement
- 10.3 Innovation-friendly public procurement
- 10.4 Socially Responsible public procurement
- 10.5 Green public procurement

Universities willing to design a post-graduate programme in public procurement are required to respect specific requirements. First, the programme curriculum shall, at the least, cover all the aspects outlined in the standard study programme set out in the cooperation agreement. Second, the curriculum of the post-graduate programme should foresee a minimum of 100 hours of training and take place over a period of two semesters. Finally, the post-graduate programme should not be limited to theorical study but foresee on-the-job training in a contracting authority.

Learning outcomes

Universities taking part in the design of a post-graduate programme in public procurement should ensure that the learning outcomes are clearly defined and expressed in the form of knowledge and skills.

In addition, at the end of the post-graduate programme, students should be able to know and demonstrate their ability to:

- Indicate the legal basis for applying specific public procurement provisions;
- Select appropriate procurement procedures;
- Assess the soundness and compliance of the procedure used and the specific requirements to be met by bidders;
- Prepare the documentation of the contract award procedure;
- Assess the soundness and compliance of the documents prepared by the contracting authority;
- Prepare the necessary documents for the supplier;
- · Assess the offers received;
- Evaluate offers and the conditions required from suppliers;
- Assess the whole procurement procedure from the point of view of the control conducted by the President of UZP; and

Respect the scope of application of EU Law in domestic procurement.

Other requirements and features of the cooperation agreement

Signatory universities are required to specify but are free to choose the **method for evaluating the knowledge and skills** of students in their post-graduate programme. They are also responsible for issuing the certification of completion of the post-graduate programme in public procurement. Students will also receive a certificate signed by the Dean of the Faculty and the President of UZP which states that the post-graduate programme corresponds to the minimum standard study programme defined by UZP.

Universities can request financial support from UZP to develop their post-graduate programmes and can take advantage of trainings delivered by UZP in the field of public procurement.

The post-graduate study programmes are subject to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Post-graduate programmes that only meet the minimum requirements set out in the standard study programme are worth 40 ECTS credits, while those that go beyond those minimum requirements can be worth a maximum of 60 ECTS credits.

Outcome and lessons learnt

While there is no requirement to have formal education in public procurement in order to access a position in a Polish contracting authority, procurement professionals are highly encouraged to use the good practices and support tools made available by UZP and other institutions involved in the professionalisation of public procurement. In addition, following a formal education in public procurement and/or complying with the national standard for public procurement specialists, contributes to the harmonization of knowledge and skills of the procurement workforce, which, in turn, helps to recognise and valorise the profession as a standalone one.

In addition, such initiatives support recruitment practices and increase the chances of applicants of procurement positions. Job applicants who either have education in public procurement or meet the standard of public procurement specialists are preferred by employers and therefore have a greater chance to obtain a position as a public procurement practitioner.

Case Study: Public procurement certification of the Federal Government of the USA

Key characteristics

Types of initiatives: Procurement competency models and certification programmes

Target group: All public procurement professionals

Goal: Establish consistent competencies and standards for professionals performing procurement-

related work and provide them with a clear career path **Contact**: Federal Acquisition Institute, United States

Website: https://www.fai.gov/

Context

The Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) within the Office of Management and Budget of the Federal government is responsible for providing the overall direction for government-wide procurement policies, regulations and procedures and to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the procurement processes of federal agencies. Established in 1976 under the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) has been charged with fostering and promoting the development of a federal acquisition workforce. FAI facilitates and promotes career development and strategic human capital management for the acquisition workforce.³⁰¹

The public procurement workforce is composed of civil servants working in federal agencies including the military, such as the Department of Defence (DoD) and non-military, also referred to as civilian agencies. In 1999, the DoD was the first to **develop its own competency model** and certification programme for the defence acquisition workforce³⁰². Enjoying a considerable budget, the DoD has also developed its own Defence Acquisition University³⁰³ where training courses are provided.

In **2005**, **non-military federal agencies** adopted the same approach and the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) developed **competency models and certification programmes** aimed at establishing consistent competencies and standards for professionals performing procurement-related work in non-military federal agencies.

The approach taken by the Federal government, described below, is competency-based. It serves to plan the necessary training and certification and acts as a basis for **career planning**. A career roadmap³⁰⁴ provides a framework for the career planning, including gaining a basic understanding of the acquisition process, the competencies and mandatory training required, guidelines for selecting and working with a mentor, guidelines for goal setting, and best practices for documenting experiences on the job.

Description of the initiatives

Origins of the FAI Competency Model The FAI competency model started with a gap analysis of all federal agency staff's competencies and continued with the identification of mission critical occupations. This led to the establishment of three main occupations for federal agency staff:

- 1. **Contracting professionals** in charge of pre-tendering and tendering activities (e.g. planning, needs assessment, market analysis, etc.)
- 2. **Contracting officers' representatives,** who manage procurement contracts and ensure that suppliers meet the commitment of their contract; **and**
- 3. Programme and project managers.

For each of these three occupations, a competency model and a certification programme were further

³⁰¹ https://www.fai.gov/

³⁰² https://www.dau.edu/faq/Pages/Certifications-Programs.aspx

https://www.dau.edu/

https://www.fai.gov/tools/contracting-professionals-career-roadmap

developed. Each certification contains **three levels**. In order to apply to a certification programme, candidates must meet a set of **experience**, **education and training requirements** that are defined by FAI and regularly updated.

Structure of the FAI competency model

The three competency models have a **similar structure** built around **units of competencies**, types of competencies i.e. **technical and professional competencies**, and **performance outcomes** defined by technical and professional elements. Within each certification programme there are **three levels**: entry level, mid-level and senior level.

1. The Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) Programme 305

The FAC-C is offered to professionals performing contracting and procurement activities and functions related to the pre-award phases of a contract i.e. from the development of annual procurement plans for the federal agency to award of contracts, while contracting officers' representatives are responsible for the contract management phase.

Competency model³⁰⁶

The Competency model of the FAC-C programme is structured around **28 technical and 10 professional competencies**, and **52 technical and 10 professional elements**. Technical competences range from pre-award and award processes, contract administration, contract termination and procurement policy to small business socio-economic programmes and advanced costs/ price analysis, while professional competencies include among others written and oral communication, problem solving, accounting, flexibility and resilience.

Performance outcomes are elaborated in a way that makes them measurable. For instance, a performance outcome related to the pre-award and award competencies could be to perform acquisition planning by considering all available sources and methods of procurement to satisfy mission needs, while appropriately allocating risk.

FAC-C requirements

The **experience** required varies across the three levels of the FAC-C programme and range from 1 year of contract work for level 1, two years for level 2 and four years for level 3. In terms of **education**, a baccalaureate degree from an accredited organisation is required for all three levels. **Training courses** are specific to each level and courses should be taken in sequential order, starting at level 1 to reach level 3.

Topics covered in the training courses of the three levels include, but are not limited to, contract basics, contract management, shaping smart business arrangements, legal considerations in contracting, negotiating, source selection and administration of service contracts, contracting for decision makers, and more specialised courses such as acquisition law or construction contracting.

2. The Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR) Programme³⁰⁷

FAC-COR is intended for acquisition professionals performing **contract management activities and functions**. Such professionals play a critical role in ensuring that contractors meet the commitment of their contract but have no decision power (e.g. they cannot make contract modifications. Only programme or project managers can do so). In particular, they facilitate proper development of requirements and assist contracting officers in developing and managing their contracts.

Competency model³⁰⁸

The FAC-COR competency model is structured around **49 technical competencies and 5 professional** ones ranging from contract type, strategic planning, determining needs, conducting, collecting and applying market-based research to proposal evaluation, contract quality assurance and

³⁰⁵ https://www.fai.gov/certification/contracting-fac-c

https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/2014-5-7-Contracting-Competency-Model.pdf

https://www.fai.gov/certification/fac-cor

https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/NEW_COR-Competency-Model_2.pdf

evaluation, business acumen and communications skill sets.

Performance outcomes are described systematically for the three levels in each of the technical and professional competences. Due to the curriculum, some competencies only have performance outcomes described for level 2 and 3. For instance, the strategic planning competency does not have a level 1 performance outcome as it is considered to start at level 2 by default.

FAC-COR requirements

No formal post-secondary qualifications are required for the three levels of the FAC-COR programme. **Prior work experience** is not required for level 1, while level 2 and 3 require 1 and 2 years of previous experience respectively. Level 1 is generally appropriate for simple and low-value contracts. Level 2 is for complex and risky supply and service procurement contracts. Level 3 concerns the most complex, risky and mission-critical contracts. Previous work experience can include time spent on the job in a contracting officer's representative related job assignment, either in the private or public sector.

FAC-COR only has one type of training course, but the number of hours to complete it vary across the levels. Level 1 requires 8 hours, level 2 –40 hours, and level 3 –60 hours.

3. The Federal Acquisition Certification for Programme and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) Programme ³⁰⁹

FAC-P/PM is intended for acquisition professionals performing **programme and project management activities** and functions. Programme and project managers are responsible for developing accurate government requirements, defining measurable performance standards, and managing life-cycle activities to ensure that the intended procurement outcomes are achieved. Although possible, it is quite difficult for programme and project managers to become contracting professionals, while the opposite is easier to do.

Competency model³¹⁰

FAC-P/PM competency model is structured around **6 technical competencies** including requirements development and management process, system engineering, test and evaluation, life cycle logistics, contracting, and financial management, and **one professional competency** - Leadership.

Performance outcomes are strictly defined in terms of technical elements and are described for three different levels. For instance, for the competency "Requirements developments and management process":

- entry level performance outcomes include describing the requirements development process and the criticality of meeting user/ mission requirements;
- mid-level performance outcomes include illustrating the criticality of user/ mission requirements in performance project management functions, and
- senior level performance outcomes include managing the analyses of user requirements to optimise system performance relative to cost and schedule.

FAC-P/PM requirements

Similar to the FAC-COR programme, the FAC-P/PM does not require any formal education qualifications. It also requires the same number of years of previous work experience as FAC-COR, but in project or programme management and preferably working on federal programmes.

Training courses in the three levels focus on the fundamentals of project and programme management, leading projects and programmes, applications in contracting, applied leadership in projects and programmes, and progressive concept, and contracting strategies in programme management.

Within the FAC-P/PM programme, project and programme managers also have the opportunity to specialise in the procurement of IT, through the **IT Core-Plus Specialisation**. The purpose is to establish the additional training, experience and continuous learning requirements for FAC-P/PM certified personnel who manage specific investments requiring specialised IT-related knowledge, skills, and abilities.

https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/NEW_PPM-Competency-Model_2.pdf

³⁰⁹ https://www.fai.gov/certification/program-and-project-managers-fac-ppm

The IT Core-Plus Specialisation offers three additional required training courses, including management competencies: Managing IT projects, IT management, security and performance assurance, IT infrastructure and architectural design.

4. FAI training application system (FAITAS)

In order to support the delivery of training to procurement professionals of civilian agencies, the FAI has created the FAI training applications system (FAITAS). FAITAS is used by civilian agencies to search and register for **on-site and virtual training courses** and keep track of participants' training paths. As soon as they have completed their certification, a notification is available in the system and sent to the civilian agency. Training courses are provided both by **commercial and federal government training providers**.

Outcome and lessons learnt

The Department of Defence and the FAI can be considered **pioneers in the development of certification programmes for public procurement**. Although the certification programmes were made mandatory as they were introduced, the institutions recognised that staff's reluctance to change would be a barrier for the success of the programmes. To overcome this obstacle, efficient, transparent, and timely **communication and messaging** were used and are considered key success factors for ensuring acceptance of the programme by staff.

Even though the three certification programmes and training courses have the same format, over the years the FAI noticed that sometimes, candidates do not have the same learning curve and process. Some may rush over specific topics and not actually learn the material well. Therefore, they may be certified for their job, but not fully qualified. To address this concern, the Defence Acquisition University introduced the **adaptive learning technique**³¹¹ to allow training participants to learn at their own pace and calibrate the time they can spend on one topic over another.

The federal government continued its journey to professionalising its procurement workforce by exploring alternative solutions, like the Procurement Innovation Lab (PIL) or the Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training described below.

In the area of innovation procurement for example, the federal government established that the best way to train and assist its staff was not to add specific courses in each of the three certification programmes, but rather to introduce a **Procurement Innovation Lab (PIL)**. The PIL was created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the goal of experimenting with **innovation procurement techniques**. The DHS selected five of its best contracting agents to take part in an Advisory Lab, through which they can assist and provide advice to other contracting agents. The PIL is presented as a unique test environment for exploring and refining innovations in acquisition and a "safe space", where any agent can bypass their leadership and consult with the experts of the PIL. One of their primary tasks consists in helping other contracting agents craft their technical specifications. Whether they receive positive or negative outcomes for their procurements, they study the process undertaken and broadly share lessons learnt and practices within the DHS.

Recently, with the **digitalisation of public services**, the OFPP realised that IT skills are difficult for procurement professionals to master as these skills are vastly different from procurement skills. Hence, together with the United States Digital Service, the FAI the **Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training**³¹³, a training and certification programme. It started with a six-month pilot programme and is now offered to professionals in all procurement positions. This development program will be offered in multiple agencies, by various training providers, or by the Federal Acquisition Institute.

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³¹¹ https://aaf.dau.edu/

³¹³ https://techfarhub.cio.gov/initiatives/ditap/

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Doi: 10.2873/005620 ISBN 978-92-76-18624-3