

Single Market Scoreboard

Access to public procurement

Reporting period:

01/2022 – 12/2022

Public procurement

Public procurement is the process by which public authorities, such as government departments or local authorities, purchase works, goods or services from companies. Public procurement accounts for about 14% of the EU's gross domestic product (GDP). It is regulated by law to maximise value for money for the public sector and ensure compliance with three key principles:

- equal treatment
- non-discrimination
- transparency

Public procurement and the single market – why does it matter?

To create a level playing field for businesses across Europe, EU law sets out minimum harmonised public procurement rules. These govern the way public authorities and certain public utility operators purchase goods, works and services. The European Commission's public procurement strategy is designed to improve EU public procurement practices in a collaborative manner by working with public authorities and other stakeholders.

The number of tenders published continues to increase. In 2022, 272 000 were published, almost double compared to 10 years ago.

Performance indicators

‘**Performance**’ measures whether purchasers get good value for money. The indicators below measure key issues on public procurement performance in a way that is transparent and easy to understand and compare.

Like all indicators, however, they simplify reality. They are affected by country-specific factors such as what is actually being bought, the structure of the economies concerned, and the relationships between different tendering options, none of which are taken into account. In some cases, a large number of tenders below EU thresholds are published in Tenders Electronic Daily (TED). This publication is voluntary and considered a good practice, as it increases transparency for a significant part of the procurement not covered by the EU rules (for tenders below the EU thresholds, national rules apply, which nevertheless must respect the general principles of EU law).

Moreover, some aspects of public procurement have been omitted entirely or covered only indirectly, e.g. corruption, the administrative burden and professionalism. Although the scoreboard provides useful information, it gives only a partial view of EU countries’ public procurement performance. As a result, the indicators should be interpreted carefully, ideally in the light of additional quantitative and qualitative information.

Overview

Perf. Ind.	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IS	IT	LI	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
Indicator 1	29	24	34	16	42	25	23	32	48	28	14	22	23	33	21	14	37	18	34	23	37	15	19	16	52	24	42	13	51	30
Indicator 2	7	2	23	39	10	6	5	11	1	10	3	2	5	5	1	3	5	7	6	6	8	9	9	1	9	5	23	1	11	5
Indicator 3	4.8	3.7	5.8	3.8	5.7	2.1	6.5	9.2	3.3	4.3	7.0	8.4	7.9	9.4	3.3	n/a	6.0	n/a	6.2	4.5	10.9	4.4	3.8	n/a	7.9	2.4	8.7	6.8	4.7	6.1
Indicator 4	6	16	1	9	5	13	17	17	3	1	21	6	3	11	16	1	11	0	2	1	17	0	3	11	3	4	1	1	5	7
Indicator 5	30	37	87	94	81	66	50	80	85	22	58	8	1	49	15	90	40	73	93	70	72	92	21	25	58	65	86	83	68	96
Indicator 6	87	110	100	128	90	51	70	52	242	157	88	92	90	112	108	53	197	43	68	110	72	177	84	49	60	99	105	44	82	175
Indicator 7	57	33	74	88	68	61	52	82	51	48	56	41	50	75	67	92	48	94	91	63	92	92	67	46	55	45	53	58	85	82
Indicator 8	78	59	72	85	95	71	62	90	85	58	60	66	39	74	74	99	60	100	94	96	91	91	56	48	58	58	63	12	80	84
Indicator 9	11	31	35	22	19	18	25	30	37	30	28	42	38	38	14	6	27	9	42	8	36	16	16	10	46	35	47	6	40	33
Indicator 10	4	2	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	3	0	2	7	0
Indicator 11	51	90	0	0	6	99	43	5	88	29	6	88	0	12	33	25	94	80	5	98	4	3	43	47	66	58	0	4	2	1
Indicator 12	87	14	0	1	2	97	13	0	76	10	0	54	0	0	69	7	85	96	0	92	0	18	6	0	48	27	1	1	1	0

The colour thresholds are based on two factors:

- qualitative policy judgement on what constitutes good practice
- recent data for individual countries

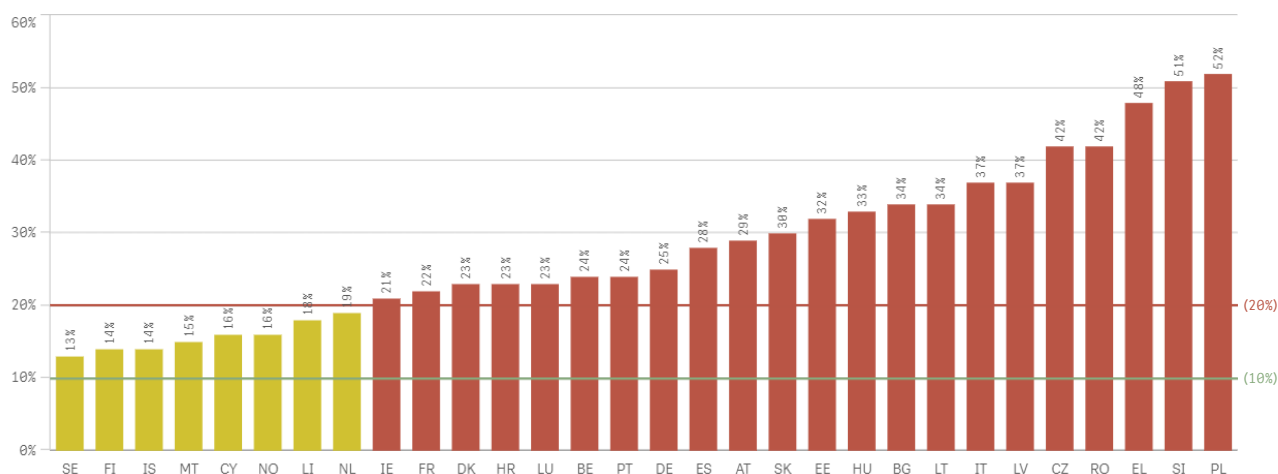
Performance colour codes:

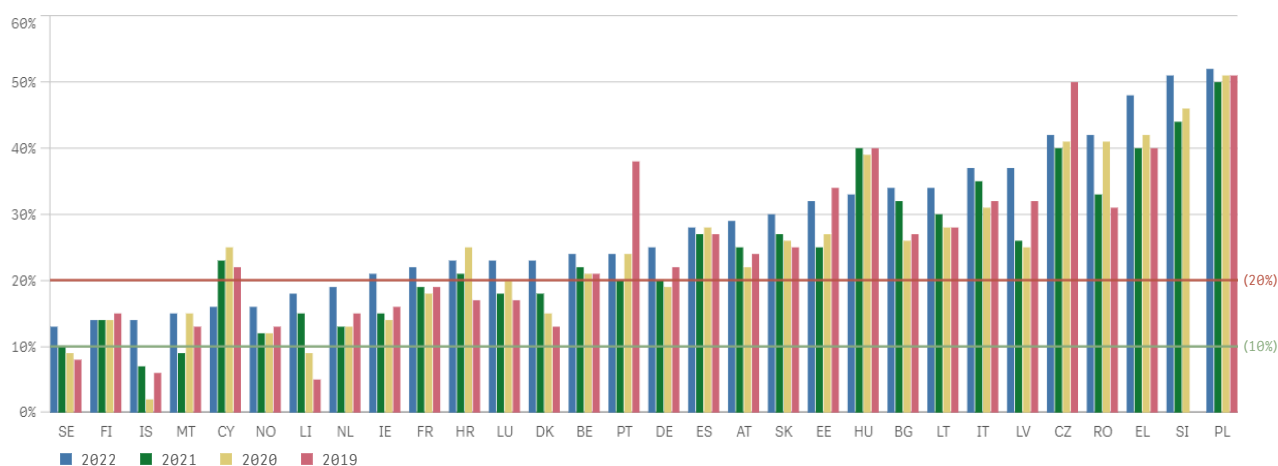
- green – satisfactory performance
- yellow – average performance
- red – unsatisfactory performance

Indicator	Green	Red
[1] Single bidder	≤ 10%	> 20%
[2] Direct awards	≤ 5%	≥ 10%
[3] Publication value by GDP	> 5%	< 2.5%
[4] Joint procurement	≥ 10%	< 10%
[5] Award criteria based on price alone	≤ 80%	> 80%
[6] Decision speed	≤ 120 days	> 120 days
[7] Contracts with SME participation	> 60%	< 45%
[8] SME bids	> 80%	< 60%
[9] Procedures divided into lots	> 40%	< 25%
[10] Missing previous publication number	≤ 3%	> 3%
[11] Missing supplier registration number	≤ 3%	> 3%
[12] Missing buyer registration number	≤ 3%	> 3%

Indicator [1]: Single bidder

This chart shows the proportion of contracts awarded where there was just a single bidder. Framework agreements are excluded, as they have different reporting patterns. Direct awards – i.e. negotiated without a call for competition/award without prior publication of a contract notice – are also excluded, since the rules on such procedures do not make any provision for competition. In 2022, the proportion of public procurement tenders with a single bidder rose to the highest level in the last 10 years. There are still 13 countries with a high percentage, which shows there is room for improvement in the coming years.



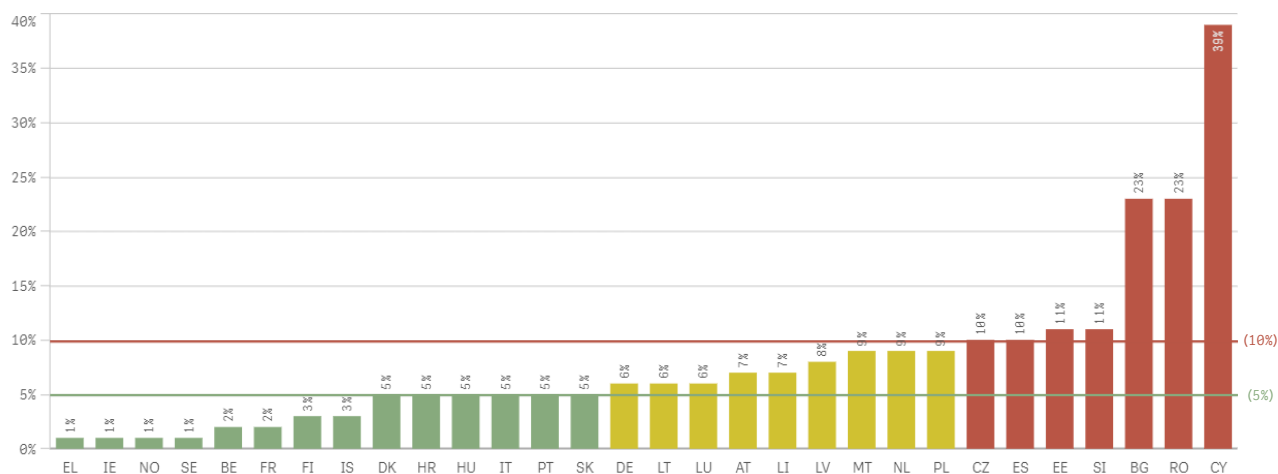


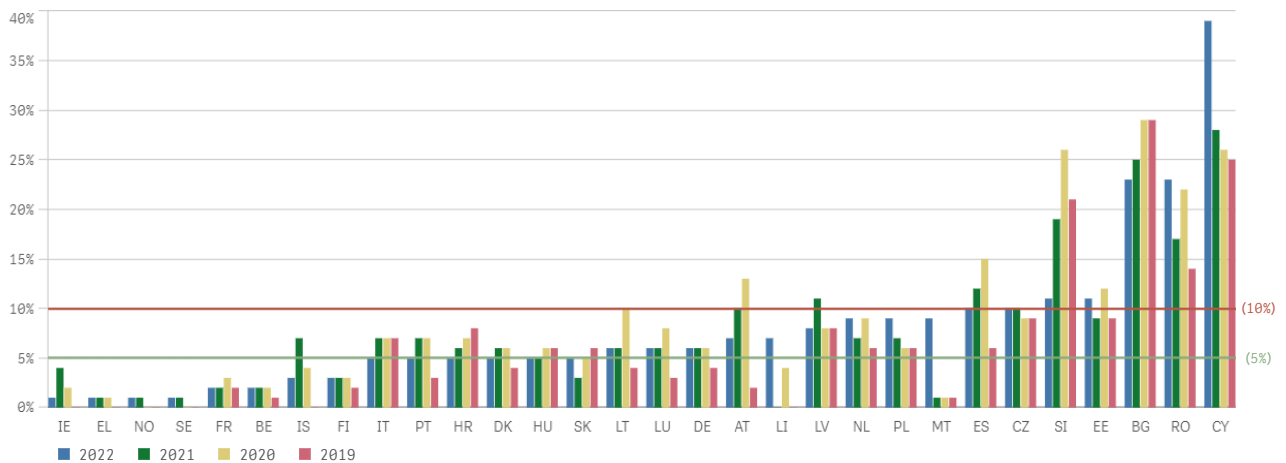
For technical reasons, Slovenian data for 2018 and 2019 are not reliably available.

More bidders are better, as this means public buyers have more options, and can get better value for money. The indicator reflects several aspects of procurement, including competition and bureaucracy.

Indicator [2]: Direct awards

This chart shows the proportion of procurement procedures negotiated with a company without any call for bids. Despite a slight increase compared to 2021, the level of direct awards follows the overall results of recent years.

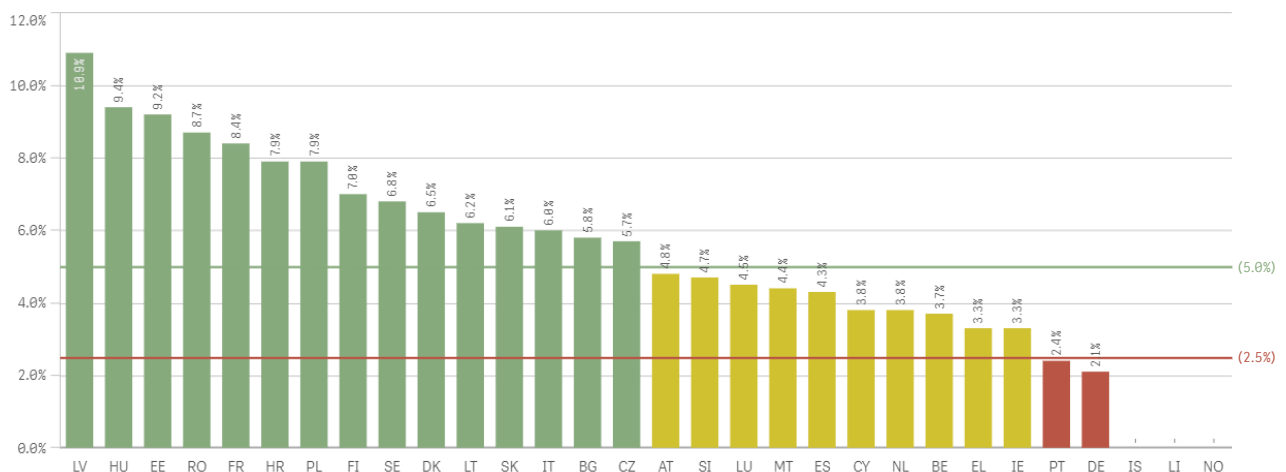


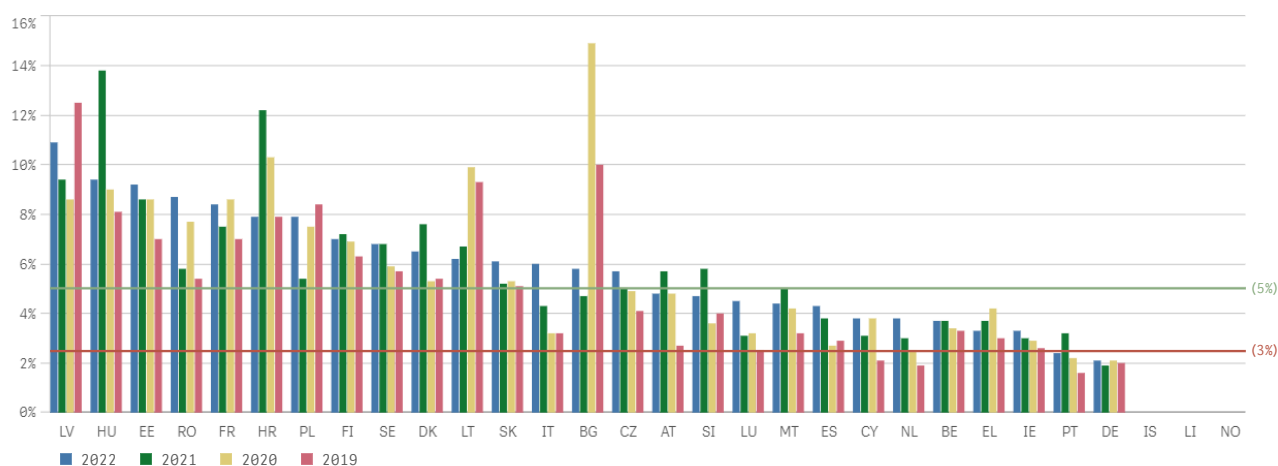


Calling for bids (or ‘calling for tenders’) before starting procurement negotiations is a better approach as it makes the bidder selection process more transparent and increases competition. This leads to better value for money. The indicator reflects several aspects of procurement, including transparency and competition.

Indicator [3]: Publication value by GDP

This chart shows the value of procurement advertised on TED as a proportion of national GDP. At EU level, there is an upward trend, and no country has a publication value below 2%.





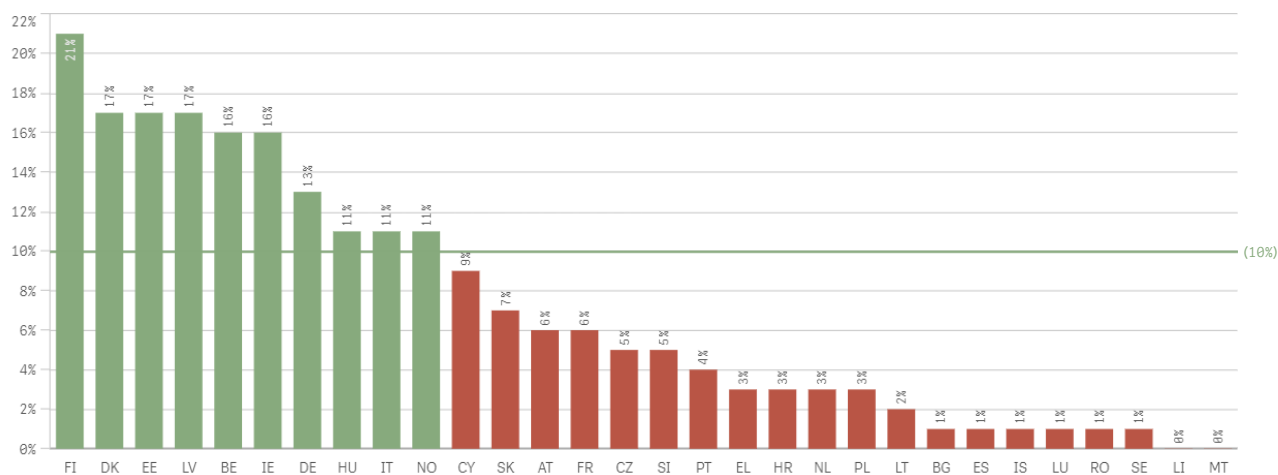
Data for Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are not available.

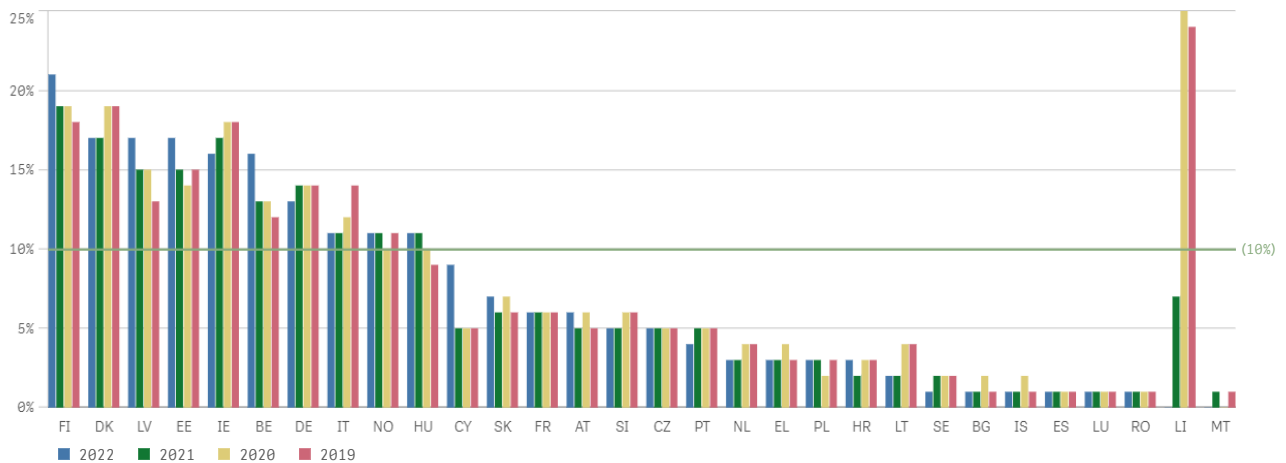
A higher score is better, as it means more companies can bid, bringing better value for money. It also means greater transparency, as more information is available to the public.

This indicator reflects the value of national public procurement advertised to businesses, i.e. the accessibility and openness of public procurement markets.

Indicator [4]: Joint procurement

This chart shows the proportion of procurement procedures involving more than one public buyer. There has been no significant change in this indicator and is similar to previous years.



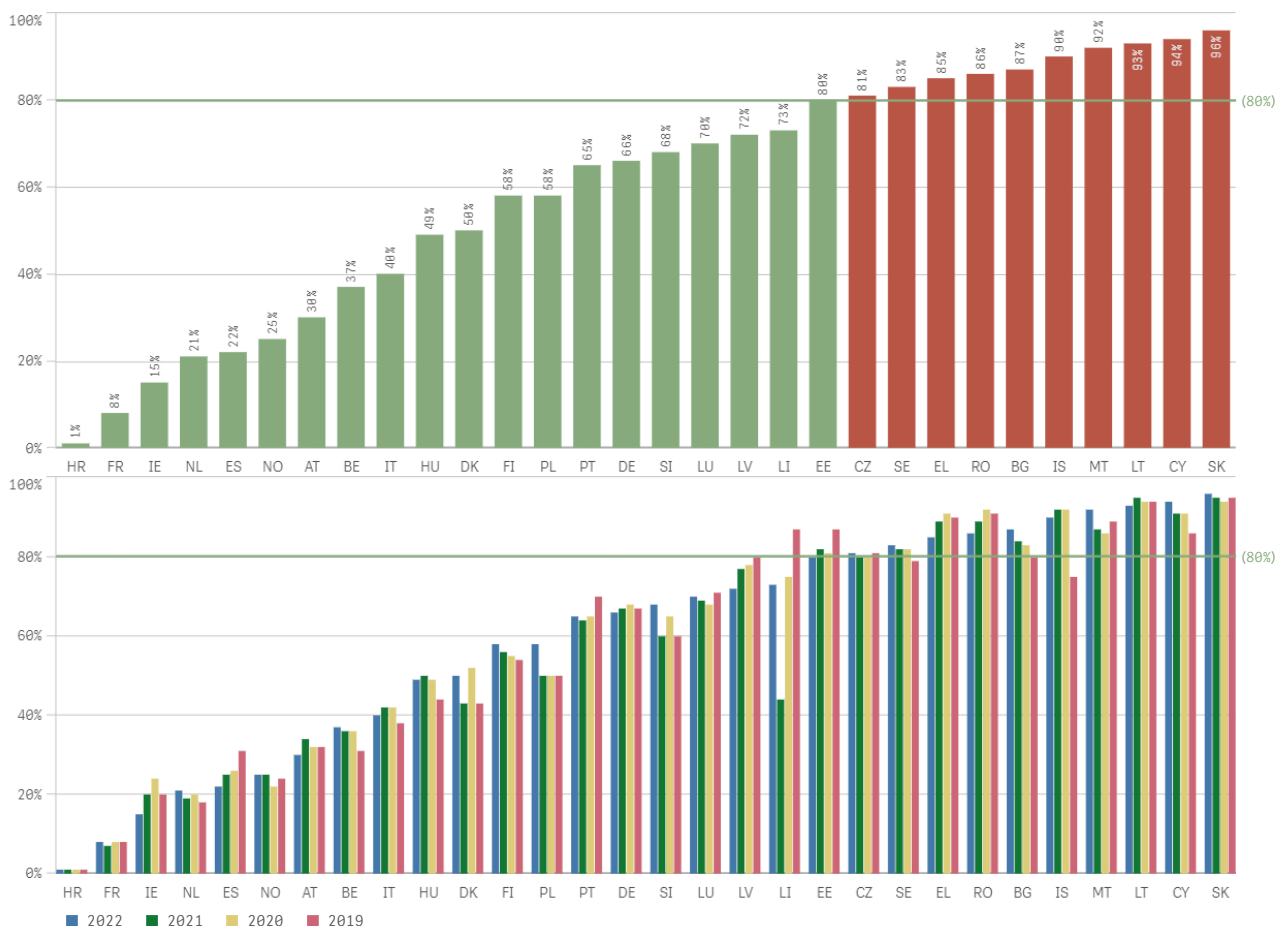


Although not all types of purchases are suitable for joint procurement, excessively low rates suggest missed opportunities.

This indicator reflects how often public buyers buy together. Buying in bulk often leads to better prices and gives the opportunity to share knowledge.

Indicator [5]: Award criteria based on price alone

This chart shows the proportion of procedures awarded solely because the offer was the cheapest one available. There has been no change compared with the previous year, and the indicator follows the trend observed in recent years.

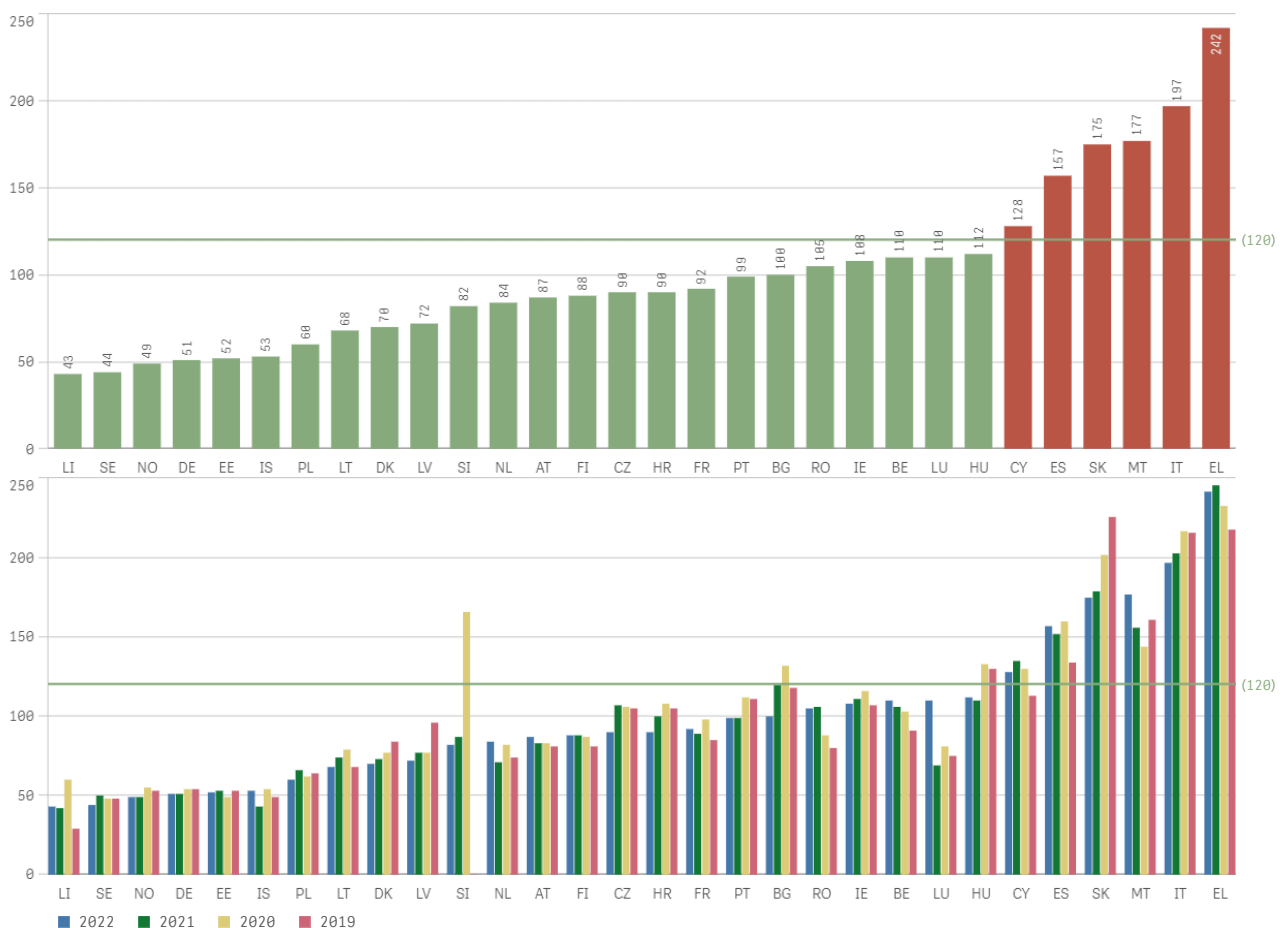


Although the choice of criteria depends on what is being purchased, an over-reliance on price suggests that better criteria could have been applied, resulting in a better purchase.

The indicator reflects how public buyers choose the companies they award contracts to. Specifically, it shows if their decisions are based on price alone or if they also consider quality.

Indicator [6]: Decision speed

This chart shows the mean decision-making period, i.e. the time between the deadline for receiving offers and the date the contract is awarded. To ensure comparability, only notices published under the open procedure, which do not include framework agreements, are considered. This indicator slightly improved compared with 2021 but follows the overall trend in recent years.

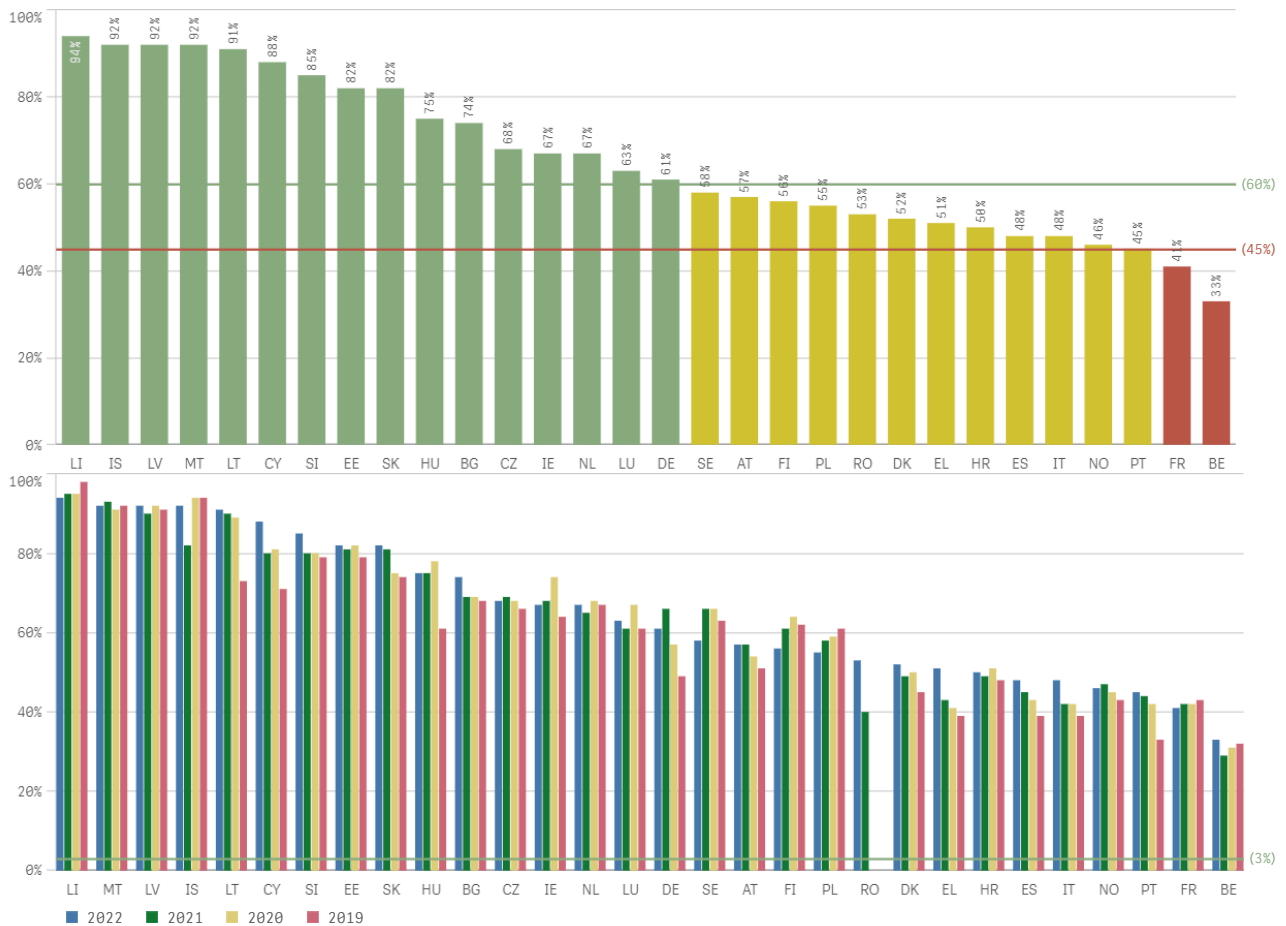


For technical reasons, Slovenian data for 2018 and 2019 are not reliably available.

Very lengthy procedures are bad because they are expensive and cause uncertainty for both the public buyers and companies. This indicator reflects the speed of the public buyers' decision-making.

Indicator [7]: Contracts with SME participation

This chart shows the proportion of contracts that include smaller firms (small and medium-sized enterprises or SMEs). There was a small increase compared to 2021, but overall it follows the trend observed in recent years.



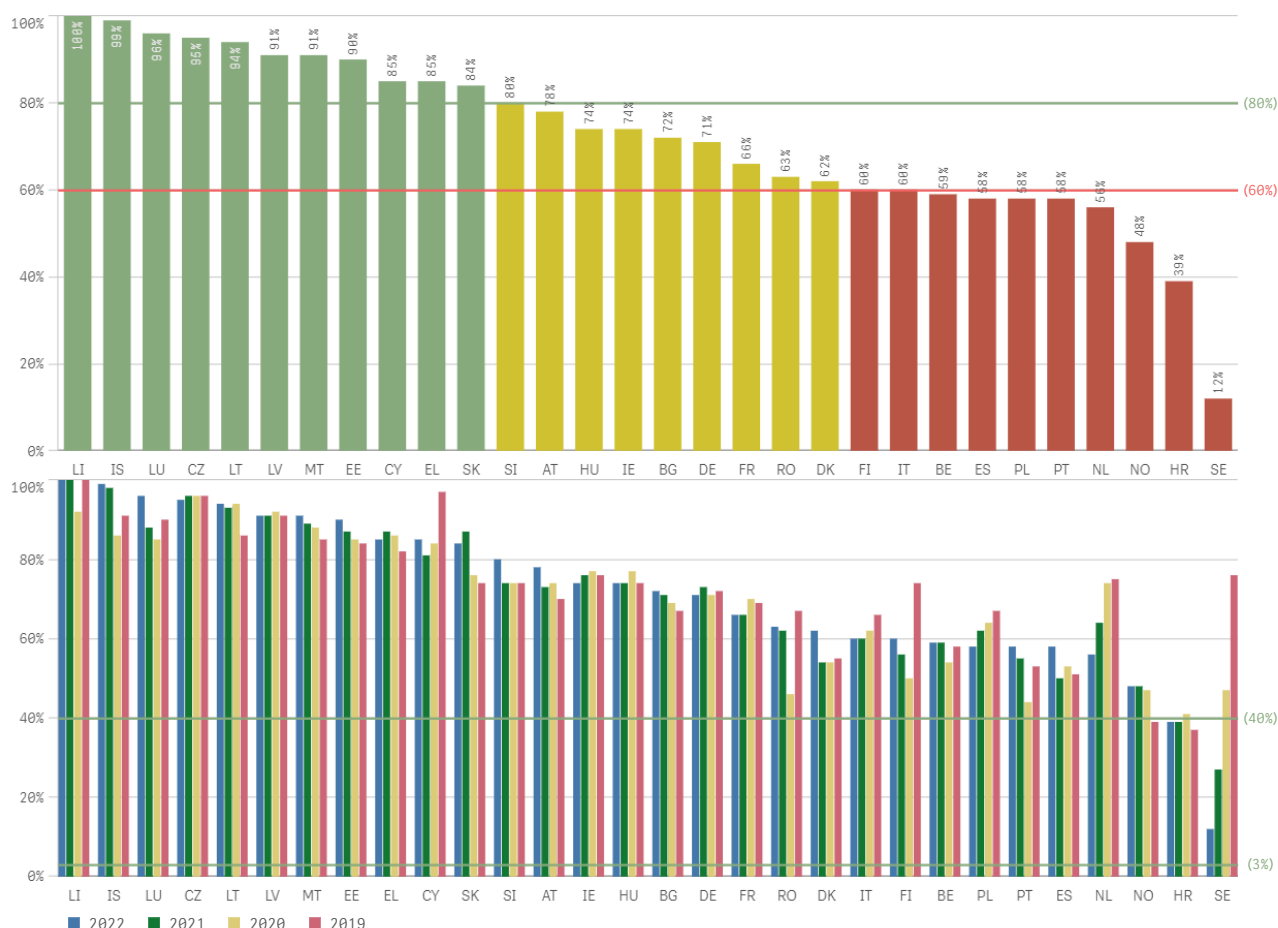
For technical reasons, Romanian data for 2018, 2019 and 2020 are not reliably available.

High percentages are better, as most companies in the EU are SMEs.

Low percentages could indicate barriers preventing smaller firms from participating in procurement procedures (e.g. red tape, calls for tender biased against smaller firms or low capacity among smaller firms to compete).

Indicator [8]: SME bids

This chart shows the proportion of bids from SMEs. There is no change compared to 2021, reflecting the stable results for the indicator on contracts with SME participation.



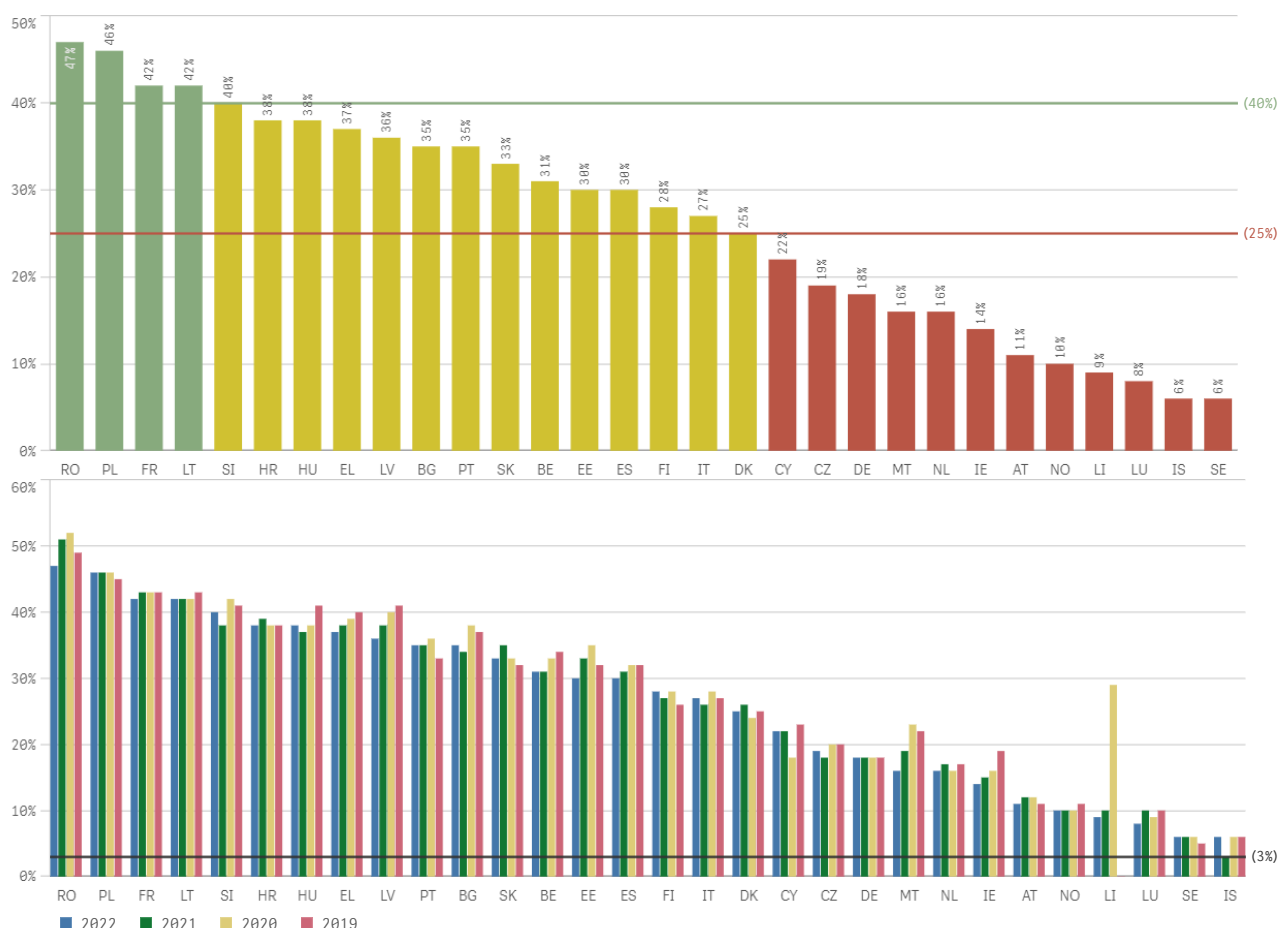
For technical reasons, Romanian data for 2018 is not reliably available.

High percentages should be the rule, as most companies in the EU are SMEs.

Low percentages indicate barriers preventing smaller firms from participating in public procurement procedures (e.g. red tape, calls for tender biased against smaller firms or low capacity among smaller firms to compete).

Indicator [9]: Procedures divided into lots

This chart shows the proportion of tenders divided into lots. This is another indicator related to SMEs' participation in public procurement, and it reveals the same stable trend observed in indicators 7 and 8.

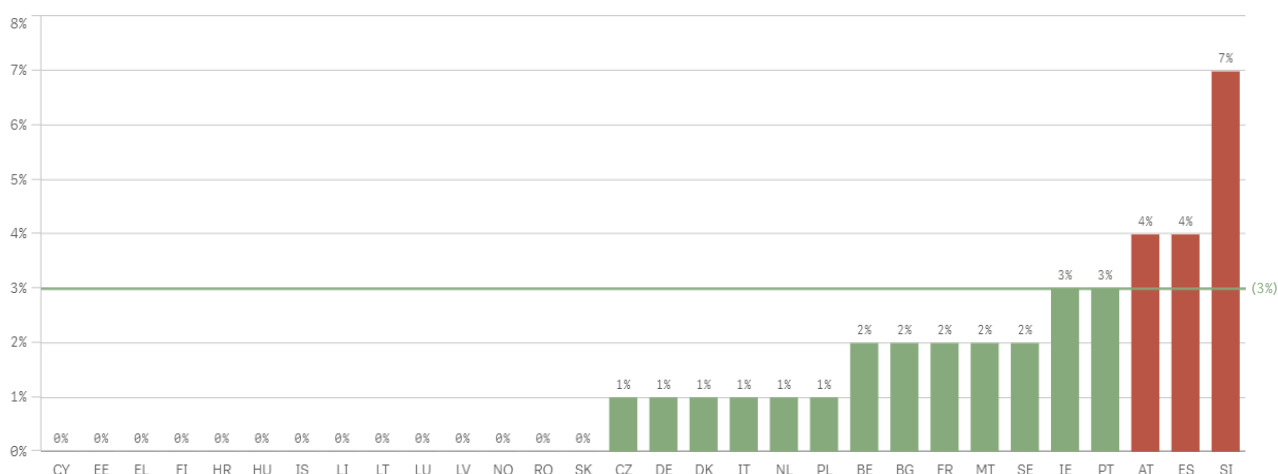


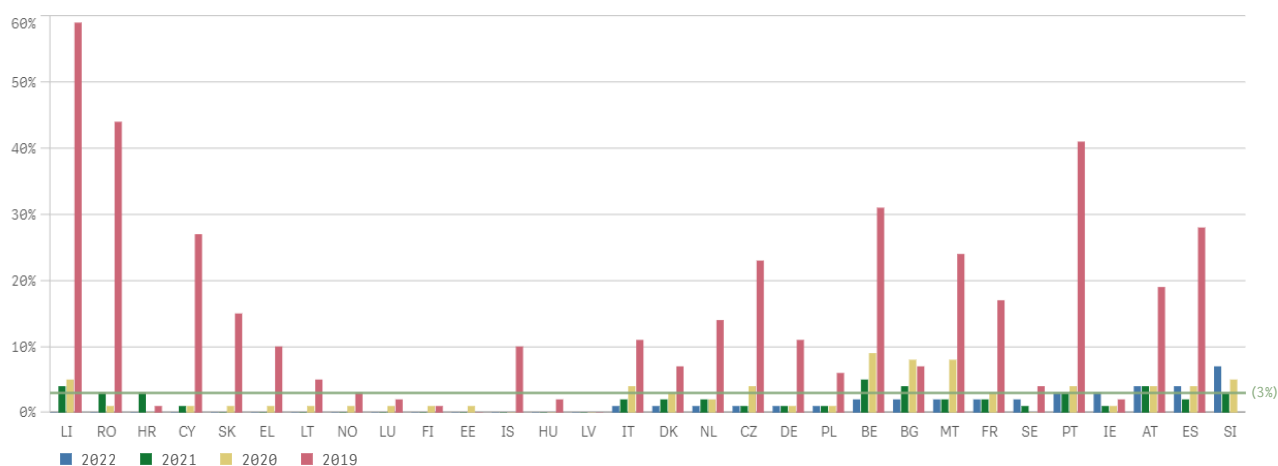
Lots are beneficial, particularly for SMEs, making it easier for them to make an offer.

Low percentages show that large companies can more easily bid for public contracts. This means that public buyers are missing the opportunities smaller firms can offer.

Indicator [10]: Missing previous publication number

This chart shows the proportion of contracts awarded that did not include the publication number of the related call for competition. This data quality indicator shows a significant improvement in recent years. The situation in 2022 is comparable with 2021, and only three countries are still above the benchmark level of 3%.





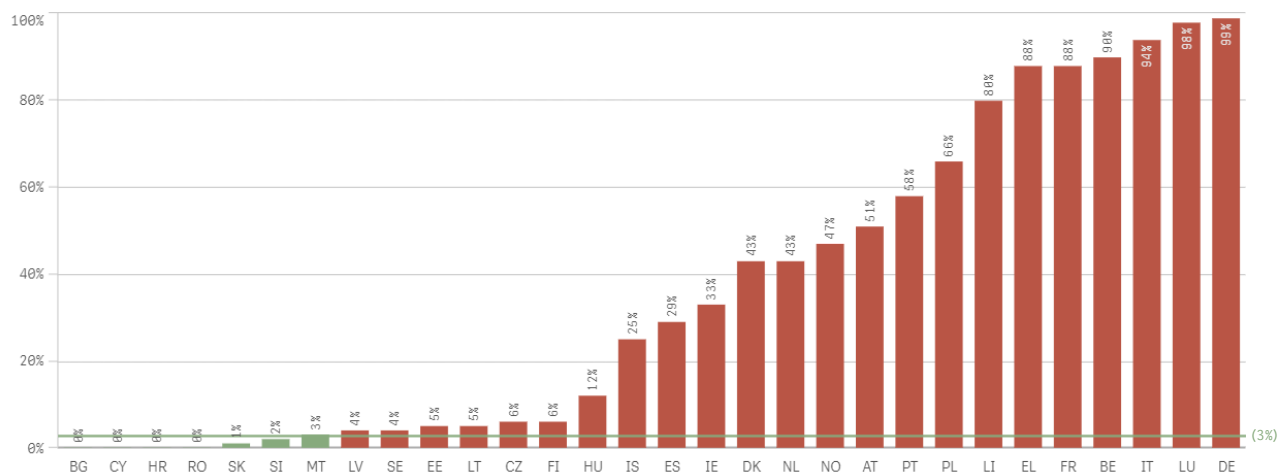
For technical reasons, Slovenian data for 2018 and 2019 are not reliably available.

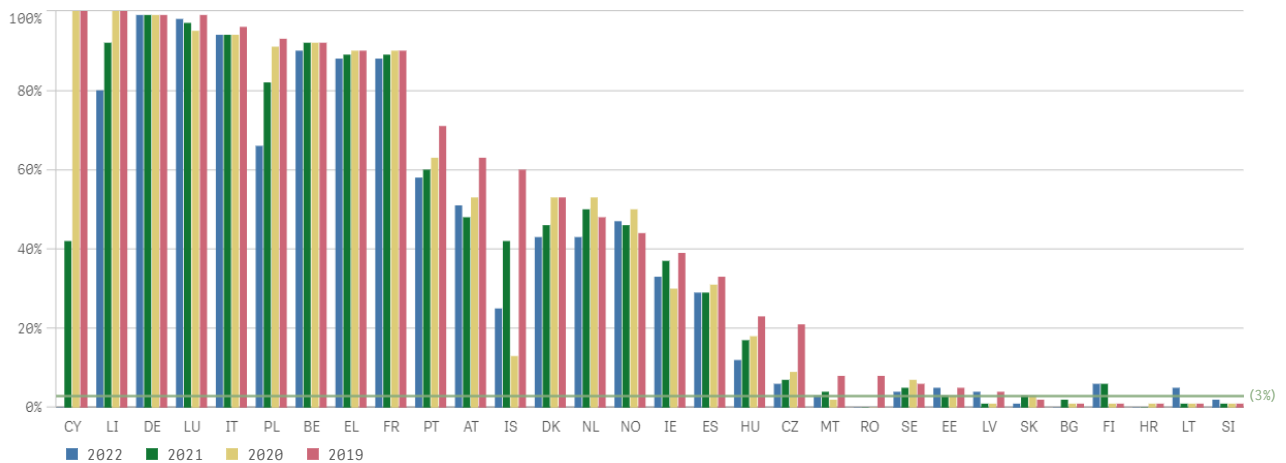
A lower score is preferable because it means businesses and the public can understand how contractors have been selected.

However, a higher score suggests that public buyers are failing to provide enough information about their procurement activities and are therefore in breach of EU law.

Indicator [11]: Missing supplier registration number

This chart shows the proportion of contracts that did not include the supplier's registration number. This is another data quality indicator that has followed the downward trend in recent years. It is at its lowest level since being included in the scoreboard. Nevertheless, there is a large discrepancy in countries' results, which indicates big room for improvement.



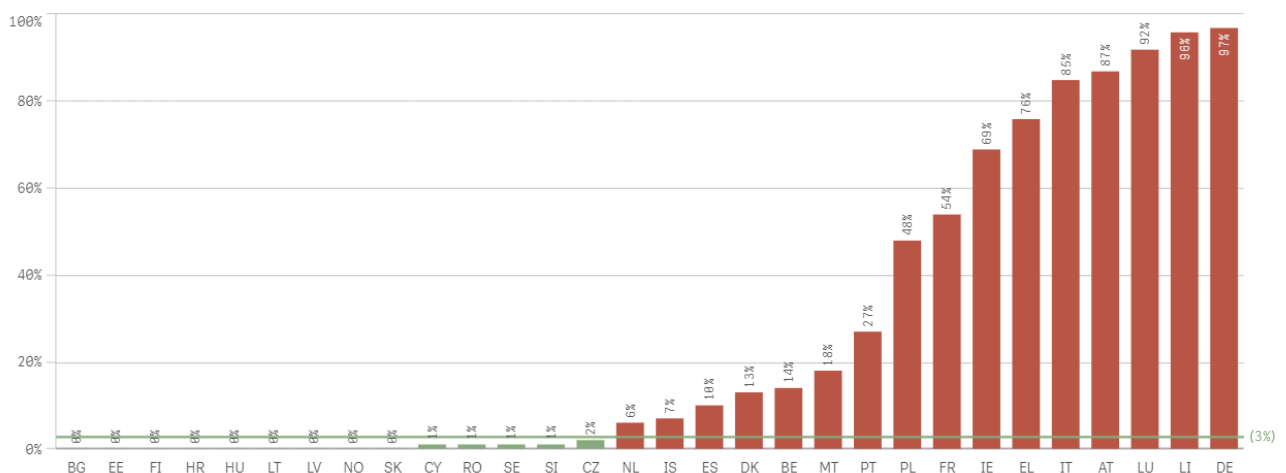


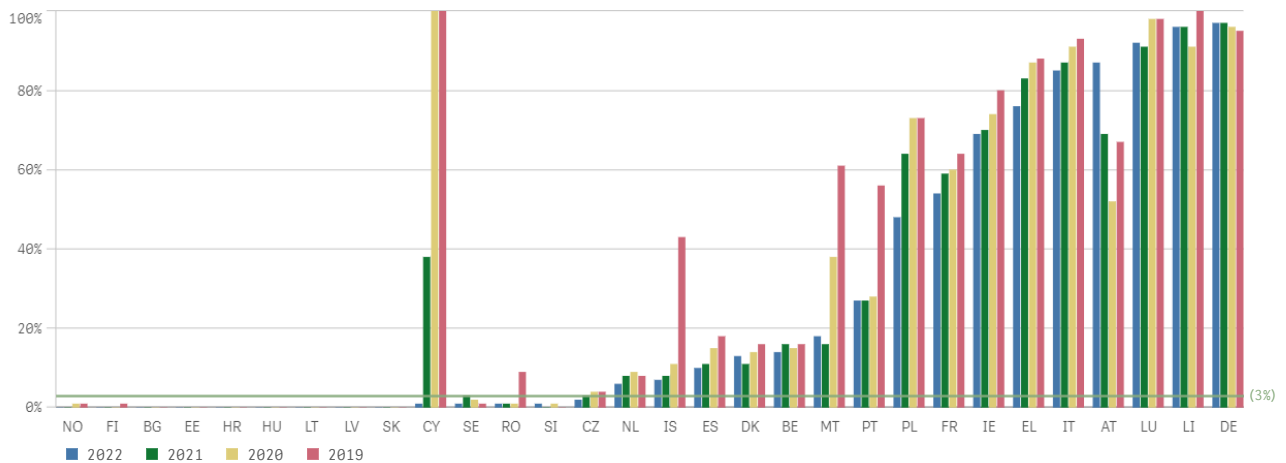
A lower score is preferable. Buyer and supplier registration numbers (provided by business registries) are crucial for understanding who is buying from whom across different procurement procedures.

A higher score suggests that public buyers are failing to provide enough information about the party selected, following a procurement procedure, to sell goods, works or services.

Indicator [12]: Missing buyer registration number

This chart shows the proportion of procedures that did not include the buyer's registration number. This third data quality indicator follows the downward trend in recent years, reaching its lowest level since it was included in the scoreboard. Nevertheless, there is a large discrepancy in countries' results, which indicates big room for improvement.





A lower score is preferable. Buyer and supplier registration numbers (provided by business registries) are crucial for understanding who is buying from whom across different procurement procedures.

A higher score indicates that public buyers are failing to provide enough information about their procurement activities.

More information on public procurement

The indicators show how different EU countries are performing on key aspects of public procurement.

Although the picture they give is rather simplified, they nonetheless highlight basic aspects of countries' procurement markets.

All indicators are based on notices published in the Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) database, under four EU Procurement Directives (general, sectoral, concessions and defence).

These data are available at the EU Open Data Portal. More data and indicators are also available at opentender.eu, an EU-funded research project.

For more detailed information on public procurement, see [EU public procurement](#).

For general information on public procurement, see [Your Europe](#).

eCertis

eCertis is an online database that lists eligibility criteria and documentary evidence. These are needed by companies in every European Economic Area (EEA) country to take part in public procurement. eCertis is a useful tool for EEA-based companies wishing to participate in public procurement and for public buyers evaluating bids received from various EEA countries.

eCertis in figures

- eCertis contains a total of **2 133** records (criteria, items of evidence, and issuing bodies). This is a 1.1% decrease from last year, where the number stood at 2 156. A total of **1 196** criteria (down 1.1% from the previous year) and **659** items of evidence (up 0.3% from the previous year) were listed in eCertis on 26 September 2023.
- The system contains information on **278** bodies that issue certificates, meaning that eight fewer issuers were registered in 2023 compared to the previous year.

Disclaimer: eCertis is managed by the Commission. Participating countries are obligated to make sure the information in it is accurate and up to date. **It is for reference purposes only and is not legally binding.** It shows what evidence is required to fulfil a criterion. For example, how can a supplier show a country A that it has paid taxes in country B.

eCertis and the single market - why does it matter?

eCertis helps:

- **suppliers** (tenderers) identify what proof they need to submit when they are awarded a contract in an EEA country
- **contracting authorities** (buyers) in EEA countries understand which documents they can accept or they need to ask tenderers to provide.

The Commission aims to support both suppliers and buyers in the field of public procurement by making all needed information on grounds for exclusion and selection criteria available through a single service. Accessible information is needed to help make the single market a reality.

According to eCertis indicators, the availability of data provided by EU countries remained stable between 2022 and 2023. Overall, most countries have a complete set of evidences on exclusion ground.

The data below is a snapshot from eCertis taken on 26 September 2023.

Performance indicators

Overview

This table shows the availability of data recorded in eCertis for each country for two indicators:

- **Indicator 1:** Criteria completeness
- **Indicator 2:** Evidence recorded

Each of these indicators is split into two sub indicators:

- **Sub indicator 1:** Exclusion grounds (EG)
 - **criminal convictions (CC):** contracting authorities may exclude a supplier (economic operator) from participation in a procurement procedure if it has participated in a criminal organisation
 - **non-payment of taxes and social security contributions (PT):** contracting authorities may exclude an economic operator from participation in a procurement procedure if it is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions
 - **insolvency, conflict of interests or professional misconduct (INS):** contracting authorities may exclude an economic operator from participation in a procurement procedure if it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up proceedings, guilty of grave professional misconduct or a conflict of interest.

- **Sub indicator 2: Selection criteria (SC)**
 - **economic and financial standing (EF):** contracting authorities may impose requirements ensuring that economic operators possess the necessary economic and financial capacity to perform the contract
 - **quality assurance schemes and environmental management standards (QA):** contracting authorities may require economic operators to demonstrate that they have such schemes and standards in place
 - **suitability to pursue the professional activity concerned (ST):** contracting authorities may require economic operators to be enrolled in one of the professional or trade registers kept in their country of establishment or to comply with any other request set out in that Annex XI of Directive 2014/24/EU
 - **technical and professional ability (TP):** contracting authorities may impose requirements ensuring that economic operators possess the necessary human and technical resources and experience to perform the contract to an appropriate quality standard.

Provision of data for sub indicator 1 is mandatory, while it is optional for sub indicator 2.

	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	IS	LI	NO
Criteria completeness [1]																														
Evidence recorded [2]																														

Legend

The overview table takes into account the “total” score for each sub indicator (last row of each table) and is calculated as follows:

Red	Both sub indicators are red
Yellow	If both sub indicators are yellow or if there is a mix of yellow and red
Green	If both sub indicators are green or if there is a mix of green and yellow

Indicator [1]: Criteria completeness

The graph shows the percentage of criteria set at EU level that have been recorded in eCertis for each country. Higher scores show countries have entered more data in the eCertis database.

Indicator 1	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	IS	LI	NO
EG-INS	13	87	93	87	87	93	93	73	100	80	67	47	100	87	100	100	80	20	60	87	100	100	33	73	100	100	60	7	73	93
EG-PT	100	100	100	100	100	50	100	100	100	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
EG-CC	100	100	100	100	83	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	83	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	17	100	100
Ratio	71	96	98	96	90	81	98	91	100	77	89	82	100	96	100	100	93	73	81	96	100	100	78	91	100	100	87	41	91	98

Indicator 1	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	IS	LI	NO
SC-EF	0	62	62	25	38	12	100	88	38	100	38	50	100	100	100	100	88	0	62	100	100	100	12	100	0	100	38	12	62	38
SC-QA	0	100	100	50	100	50	100	100	100	100	50	50	100	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	50	50	0
SC-ST	25	0	100	50	25	25	100	75	50	50	50	100	100	100	100	100	50	25	75	100	100	100	25	100	100	100	50	25	25	50
SC-TP	0	83	100	28	78	6	100	89	83	50	33	78	100	94	100	100	78	6	94	100	100	100	39	100	0	100	61	0	22	0
Ratio	6	61	91	38	60	23	100	88	68	75	43	70	100	99	100	100	79	8	83	100	100	100	44	100	25	100	62	22	40	22

Legend

Red	0%
Yellow	0%, ≤ 50 %
Green	> 50 %, ≤ 100 %

Indicator [2]: Evidence recorded

This indicator groups the countries that use eCertis by type of criterion based on the number of items of evidence recorded in the system.

Indicator 2	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	IS	LI	NO
EG-INS	1	3	6	2	7	3	11	4	10	3	8	9	3	10	3	9	7	1	7	5	2	5	7	4	5	2	7	2	2	2
EG-PT	2	3	3	2	4	3	9	3	2	4	3	6	2	2	3	3	5	3	6	4	1	2	8	2	0	1	5	2	1	1
EG-CC	2	2	3	1	3	2	5	3	1	3	3	4	2	1	2	4	3	1	5	1	1	1	6	2	1	2	3	1	1	1
Total	5	8	12	5	14	8	25	10	13	10	14	19	7	13	8	16	15	5	18	10	4	8	21	8	6	5	15	5	4	4

Indicator 2	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	IS	LI	NO
SC-EF	0	7	5	2	2	4	12	2	3	2	4	8	1	6	3	9	5	0	4	1	1	4	1	8	0	2	2	0	1	2
SC-QA	0	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	0	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	0	3	1	2	2	2	3	0	1	3	0	1	0
SC-ST	3	0	3	2	6	3	12	3	3	0	3	6	3	5	1	4	2	1	2	1	0	3	1	13	4	1	6	1	2	2
SC-TP	3	0	3	2	6	3	12	3	3	0	2	10	0	5	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	1	10	4	1	6	1	2	1
Total	6	9	13	8	16	12	39	11	10	2	12	27	5	18	6	16	10	2	11	4	3	10	5	34	8	5	17	2	6	5

Legend

Each criterion of the sub indicator is coloured as follows:

Red	A country has not entered any evidence data
Green	A country has entered at least one item of evidence

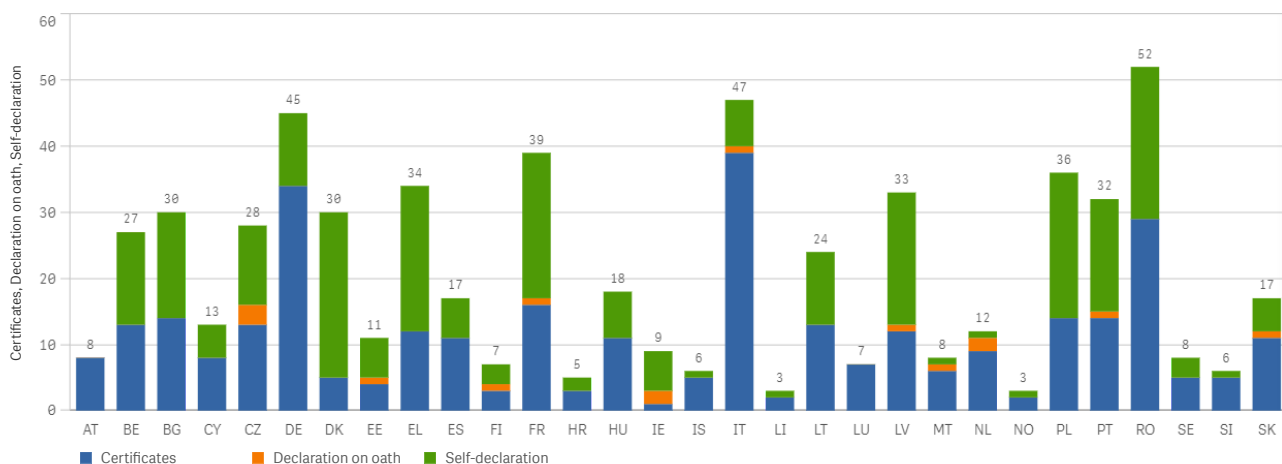
The “total” score of each sub indicator for each country is coloured in the last row of each table as follows:

Red	All criteria are red
Yellow	A mix of red and green values
Green	All criteria are green

Facts and figures

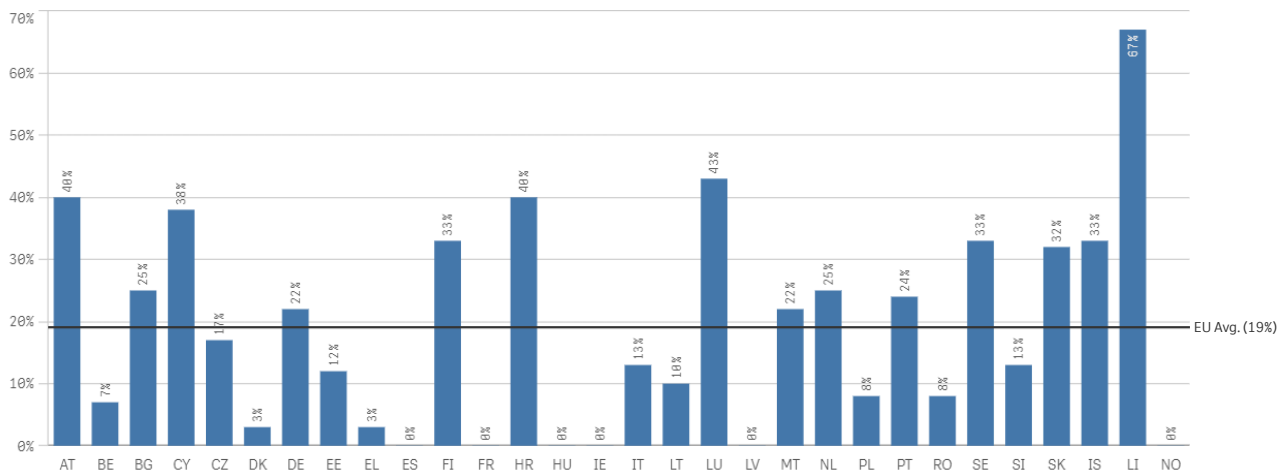
Evidence types

The following graph depicts the number of items of evidence in participating countries that may be required and may be used in a public procurement contract. These items of evidence are broken down into three types: certificates, declaration on oath, and self-declaration. The graph does not cover online evidence. It shows the differences in regulatory systems used in each country.



Priced evidence

This graph shows the percentage of items of priced evidence recorded in the system for each country. These items are accessible by payment of a fee. Free access to evidence increases participation in public procurement procedures.



Percentage of items of evidence available online, by country, & items of evidence with samples

This graph shows

- online evidence by country as a percentage of all items of evidence recorded in the database. The link to the online evidence allows eCertis users to access the database and look at the evidence.
- the percentage of items of evidence entered in eCertis for which a PDF sample is available, by country. There may be no samples available for certain types of evidence.

