

OECD Public Governance Reviews

# Promoting Strategic and Green Public Procurement in France

Professionalising the State Procurement Function



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# **Promoting Strategic and Green Public Procurement in France**

PROFESSIONALISING THE STATE PROCUREMENT  
FUNCTION

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# Foreword

In the wake of growing environmental challenges, the need for governments to adopt sustainable practices has never been more urgent. Public pressure, with citizens ranking climate change among their top concerns according to the OECD's latest Determinants of Trust survey (OCDE, 2024<sup>[1]</sup>), is forcing governments and public institutions to implement proactive, comprehensive policies.

In this context, the French government has set a number of sustainable development objectives, such as achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, reducing pressure on biodiversity by 2030, and a 33% share of renewable energies in gross final energy consumption by 2030.

In France, as in most OECD countries, public procurement is seen as a strategic lever for achieving these objectives. Green public procurement (GPP), i.e., the public purchase of products and services that are more respectful of the environment, is being increasingly used by countries to achieve their sustainable development objectives. The results of a survey conducted in 34 OECD countries in 2022 show that 94% of the countries surveyed had a national policy or framework for GPP. GPP encourages businesses to develop more environmentally friendly products, services and works, particularly in sectors where public authorities account for a large share of spending, such as infrastructure, health services and public transport.

In France, the law to tackle climate change and strengthen resilience (the Climate and Resilience Law) of August 22, 2021, incorporates proposals from the Citizens' Climate Convention, and requires the inclusion of environmental considerations in all public procurement processes by 2026. However, to comply with these obligations, the capacity of procurement officers is essential in order for them to be able to introduce more complex dimensions into the assessment of value for money in public contracts.

This report takes stock of the capacity of the French State's procurement workforce to implement environmental considerations in public procurement, and aims to identify existing opportunities to enhance the knowledge and wider skills of State procurement officers. It is part of the "Promoting the use of strategic and green public procurement in France" project, financed by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the OECD in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate General for Structural Reform Support.

This project complements the OECD's work on the professionalization of the procurement workforce, an essential step towards the strategic use of public procurement to boost citizens' trust in governments' ability to solve complex problems.

This report was approved by the Public Governance Committee on 2 June 2025 and prepared for publication by the Secretariat.

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# Executive summary

In France, public procurement is a major economic lever, representing around 8% of GDP and more than a quarter of total public spending in 2021. Beyond this significant economic weight, public procurement is also subject to broader public policies, most notably environmental.

This report presents an assessment of the institutional and regulatory frameworks for green public procurement in France, as well as the capacities of State procurement officers to implement the regulatory objectives.

## Key findings

France has an ambitious regulatory framework for green public procurement, centred on the National Plan for Sustainable Procurement (PNAD) and the Climate and Resilience Law, both of which require the inclusion of environmental considerations in all public procurement contracts by 2026. These texts are complemented by a number of sector-specific provisions with an environmental dimension which also impact on public procurement. Nevertheless, the practical implementation of these obligations is often complex due to the multiplicity of requirements imposed on procurement officers, in particular the simultaneous integration of these environmental considerations into different phases of the procurement cycle (needs assessment, award and contract performance). In practice, recent efforts by the French administration have led to significant progress in the practices of State procurement officers. In 2023, 54.7% of State procurement contracts included an environmental consideration. Nevertheless, achieving the national objectives set by the PNAD and the Climate and Resilience Law would be difficult without additional efforts. For this reason, the DAE has identified strengthening the capacity of State procurement officers on GPP as one of its priorities.

This strengthening must, however, take into account the institutional structure of state procurement, and in particular the division of responsibilities among several institutions and levels of governance. Furthermore, the green public procurement ecosystem includes not only procurement officers, but also decision-makers and technical experts, who, despite the importance of their role, are not always an obvious target for awareness-raising campaigns on green procurement.

One of the main challenges identified is the need to build up specific skills in green procurement, which must be harnessed at various stages of the public procurement lifecycle, such as defining needs, analysing market capacities, developing relevant and measurable award criteria, and monitoring green contract clauses. Although extensive training programmes on public procurement were developed, these programmes do not systematically address the challenges faced by procurement officers in their day-to-day activities. In addition, the cost and location of such training programmes are an obstacle for procurement professionals, particularly those in the regions. Of the 550 buyers surveyed, only 168 (30%) said they had attended a training course on green procurement in the last two years.

## Key recommendations

Following the example of Canada, Poland, Japan and Ireland, France could adopt a strategy focused on building capacities to implement green public procurement. Given the multiple opportunities identified in this report, this strategy could approach capacity building from different angles and engage all stakeholders. There are several concrete actions that French public authorities could undertake or pursue:

- Ensuring that the information platform developed by the CGDD becomes a genuine one-stop shop for access to existing information and resources on green public procurement.
- Conducting an awareness-raising campaign presenting the approach of green public procurement, and in particular the use of the concept of lifecycle costing. Such a campaign would help address the budgetary silos that currently hinder greater use of GPP.
- Finalizing the development of KPIs to ensure quantitative monitoring of the regulatory targets and qualitative monitoring of purchasing strategies, which would enable the creation of a barometer of green procurement in France on a government-wide scale.
- The DAE and the DGAFP could initiate a discussion on the contribution of the procurement function to the greening of administrations, and rethink job descriptions as they appear on tools promoting public employment, such as the *Choisir le Service Public* platform.
- Developing DAE's advisory role on green public procurement by piloting the development of a help desk led by the Sustainable Procurement Office would both meet buyers' need for support and assess the relevance in France of this model, which exists in many OECD countries.
- Relying more on sustainable procurement advisors within state entities, so that they become true agents of change.

In addition, enhancing the skills of both procurement officers and specifiers would enable the mobilization of various procurement strategies with a real impact on the State's environmental performance. France could therefore:

- Setting up a certified green public procurement training course would help tackle some of the current challenges, such as the attractiveness of the procurement function and the allocation of training budgets within government bodies. An alternative would be to centralise training budgets for procurement, drawing inspiration from other cross-cutting fields such as IT.
- Developing procurement officers' skills in techniques specific to green public procurement, throughout the entire procurement cycle.
- Favouring a more practical approach, with small group exercises on different environmental issues, could encourage the exchange of experiences and reflection on the challenges encountered.
- Building on the tool-sheets currently being developed by the DAE, offering short training modules by procurement category, with a focus on the procurement officer/technical expert duo, would enable participants to apply the content of these training courses in their day-to-day activities.
- Building capacity through the development of life cycle costing and carbon footprint tools.

The OECD will continue to support the DAE in implementing these recommendations, in particular through the development of training and practical tools.

# 1 Introduction

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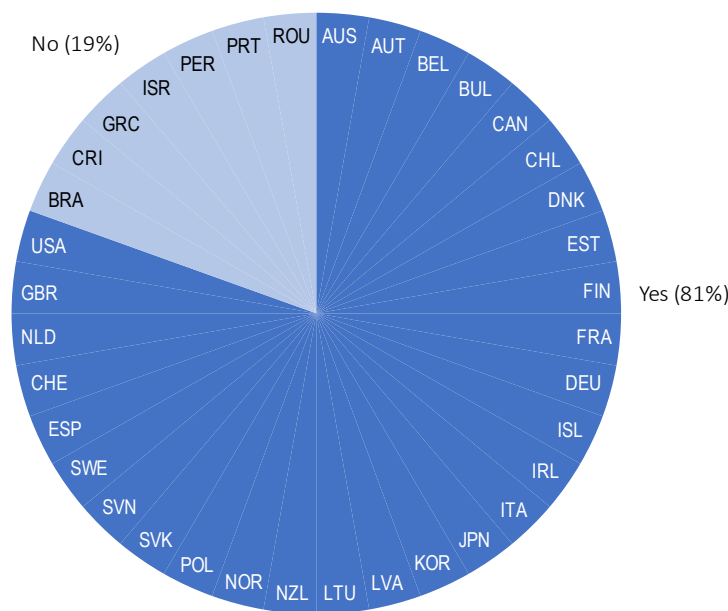
Public procurement plays a key role in national commitments to tackle climate change. The potential of public procurement to contribute to sustainable development was first highlighted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (also known as the ‘Earth Summit’) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Governments recognised their role as powerful consumers in the marketplace and their responsibility to steer consumption and production systems towards more sustainable trends. This shift in perception has elevated public procurement to a strategic government function in the pursuit of environmental objectives. Just like private companies, governments can contribute to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by adopting sustainable procurement practices and giving priority to eco-designed products and services, renewable energies, and by integrating strict environmental criteria into their calls for tenders.

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The implementation of public policies to achieve environmental objectives, while crucial, is not always obvious and often suffers from a lack of visibility. Governments need to demonstrate that public institutions can be a driving force behind the green transition and that citizens can have trust in their public institutions to actively support these transitions. Public procurement offers an opportunity to give concrete expression to the public administration's commitments to its citizens. In this way, government operations and contractual practices can incorporate a principle of energy efficiency or carbon neutrality in order to set an example for the private sector and society as a whole, and to encourage behaviours and innovations that are necessary to support the climate transition.

Strategies and measures based on the concept of Green Public Procurement (GPP) emerged more than a decade ago, and their uptake has increased significantly since the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were defined. 32 of the 34 OECD countries that responded to a recent survey (94%) have a national GPP policy or framework, showing that GPPs are widely seen as an effective lever for achieving nationally-defined climate goals. 81% of these countries also identified public procurement as a vehicle for meeting climate commitments in their environmental policies (see Figure 1.1). (OECD, 2023<sup>[1]</sup>).

**Figure 1.1. The identification of public procurement as a vehicle for meeting climate commitments in different countries, 2022**



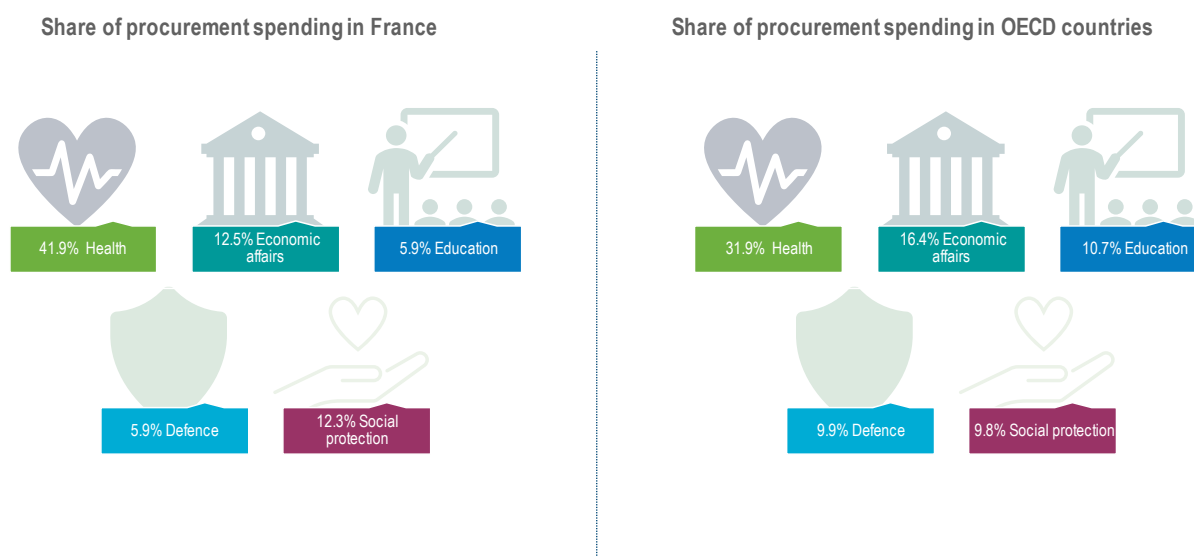
Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[2]</sup>)

France is one such country. Through various legislative and political initiatives, the French government has committed to integrating environmental considerations into its public procurement procedures, with the aim of contributing to the achievement of its sustainable development objectives. Public procurement is a major lever of economic policy in France, representing around 8% of GDP in 2021, and over 61% of public procurement contracts in terms of volume are awarded to SMEs. Although the share of public procurement, expressed as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is significantly lower in France than the average for OECD countries (12.9% of GDP), the funds committed to public procurement remain

a significant source of public spending, representing more than a quarter of total public spending in France in 2021. (OECD, 2023<sup>[1]</sup>)

Furthermore, public procurement has an impact not only on economies, but also on societies and the provision of public services. According to OECD data, certain sectors in France, such as health and education, account for a higher proportion of public procurement spending than other OECD countries (see Figure 1.2).

**Figure 1.2. Share of procurement spending in different sectors in France and in OECD countries**

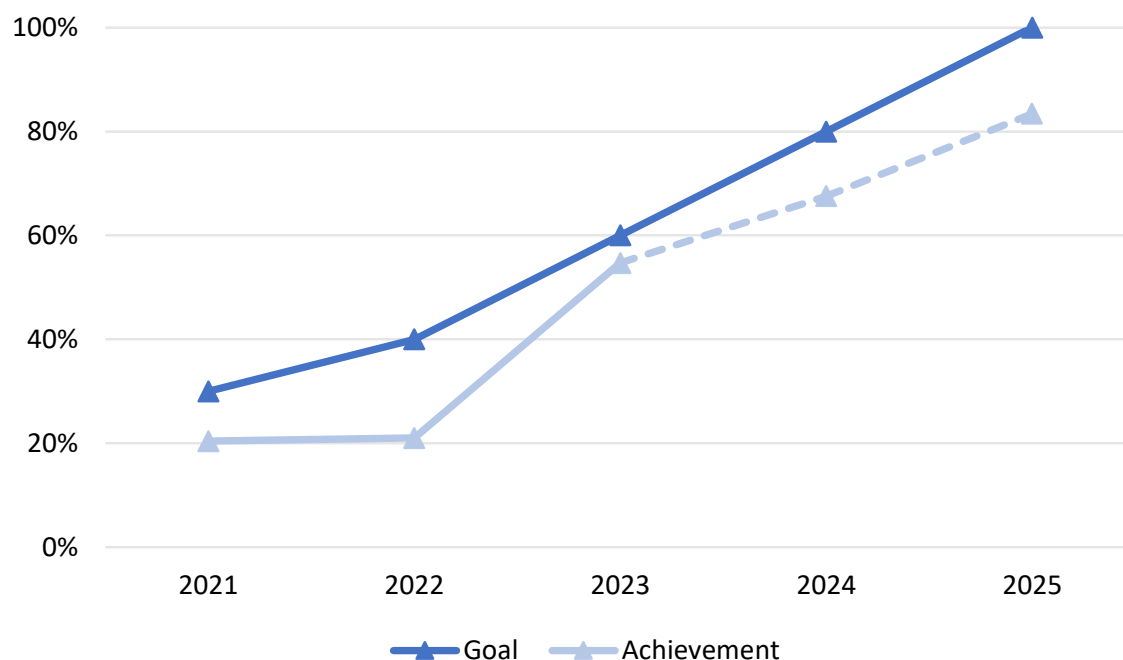


Source: (OECD, 2023<sup>[1]</sup>)

The regulatory framework in France sets out specific targets for the inclusion of environmental considerations both in public procurement and for certain private sector purchasers. The National Plan for Sustainable Procurement (PNAD) 2022-2025 is a national roadmap for the 3 civil services (State, Local Authorities, Hospitals), and for private sector players. Its aim is to ensure that by 2025, 100% of contracts awarded during the year include at least one environmental consideration. The Climate and Resilience Law of 22 August 2021 also sets a target of environmental considerations in 100% of public procurement by 2026. The PNAD also states that by 2025, at least 30% of public procurement contracts should include at least one social consideration.

In order to implement these objectives, the DAE (State Procurement Directorate) has created a series of progressive objectives for procurements by the State and its public bodies, from 2021 to 2025 for contracts awarded in excess of €40,000. Although achievement of these objectives initially fell short of the targets set, with 20.4% of contracts including an environmental consideration in 2021 against a target of 30%, and 21% in 2022 against a target of 40%, there was a sharp increase in 2023, with a rate of 54.7% against a target of 60%. Additional measures have also been taken in 2024 to ensure that these targets are met, particularly with regard to inter-ministerial contracts, as well as in-depth communication at decentralised level and the mobilisation of ministerial procurement managers to ensure compliance with these obligations. Based on historical data, a prediction model estimates that the integration of environmental considerations will reach 68% in 2024 and 83% in 2025 (see Figure 1.3).

**Figure 1.3. Achievement of PNAD targets for environmental considerations in procurement, 2020-2025**



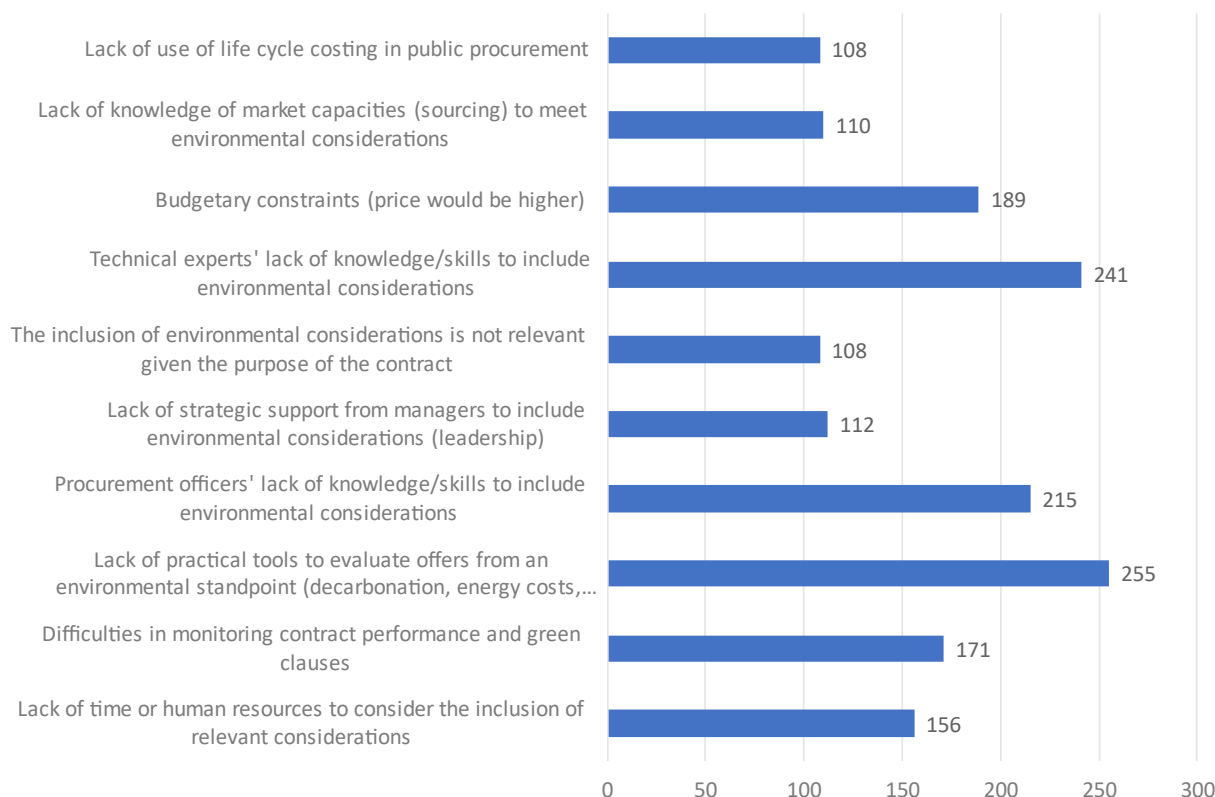
Note: The forecast predicts future values using the AAA version of the exponential smoothing algorithm (ETS). The predicted values are weighted averages of past observations, with recent observations given more weight.

Source: Author

Several factors may explain this phenomenon. One possible explanation lies in the ability of procurement professionals to make these objectives their own. Integrating environmental considerations into public procurement requires procurement officers to master complex concepts such as life cycle costing and the carbon footprint of a good or service. A survey carried out by the OECD among 555 state procurement officials (from ministries and public bodies) reveals that a lack of skills or knowledge in this area, and a lack of practical tools to implement them, are the main barriers to the inclusion of environmental considerations in procurement (see Figure 1.4).



**Figure 1.4. Main reasons why environmental considerations are not included in State public procurement**



Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[3]</sup>)

The implementation of PNAD's objectives relating to social considerations seems to be more successful with purchasers. In fact, the social aspect seems less complex to implement, and support tools have been put in place to assist procurement officers. Some 480 facilitators currently provide support to procurement officers, mainly from local authorities and State departments, in the drafting of tenders, analysis of target groups and monitoring of the implementation of social integration clauses. Conversely, developing responsible purchasing policies and using environmental criteria in public tenders requires a multi-faceted set of skills. Green public procurement requires expertise from a wide range of disciplines, including environmental science, cost-benefit assessments, public procurement regulations and the legal provisions governing public contracts. Public purchasers have to navigate a complex decision-making process where environmental considerations, financial assessments and compliance with legislation can be contradictory. As such, effective professionalisation of procurement staff and capacity building in environmental matters is necessary to achieve the public policy objectives. The DAE itself has recognised this need in its sustainable procurement policy for the State and its public bodies by including a recommendation on the professionalisation of State procurement officers.

The aim of this report is to take stock of the capacity of the French State's procurement function to implement environmental considerations in procurement. Through an analysis of available data, a wide-ranging survey of state procurement officers, interviews with a number of stakeholders and a review of international best practice, the report aims to identify opportunities for enhancing the knowledge and skills of state procurement officers. It also examines the structure and content of the training offered and the use of tools developed to support procurers in adopting sustainable procurement practices. It focuses solely

on procurement by the State and its public bodies, and does not analyse the capacity of those involved in the procurement function in local authorities and hospitals.

This report begins with an overview of the legislative framework and national policy initiatives to promote green public procurement, highlighting the objectives set and the means deployed to achieve them. It then explores the reality of implementing these policies at the level of procurement officers, focusing on the challenges faced in integrating environmental considerations into procurement decisions. Finally, it analyses the current training and tools available to procurers. The report puts forward a series of recommendations designed to strengthen the capacities of state procurement officers in France. These recommendations aim to facilitate a smoother transition towards the wider integration of environmental criteria into all aspects of public procurement, in line with national and international ambitions for sustainable development.

This report is therefore intended as a tool for reflection and guidance for political decision-makers, public procurers and other stakeholders involved in State procurement, at both central and decentralised levels. Its aim is to contribute to a better understanding of the issues, progress and challenges associated with the various environmental policies (such as decarbonation) impacting public procurement, and to provide a solid basis for the development of capacity-building strategies aimed at improving the contribution of public procurement to the country's environmental objectives.

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<https://doi.org/10.1787/3d5c5d31-en>.

## **2 An ambitious regulatory framework for achieving environmental objectives**

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Developing an overarching strategy or framework for advancing environmental objectives through public procurement is crucial to ensure policy coherence and align procurement practices across different levels of government. Over the past decade, many countries, including France, have actively formulated green public procurement strategies and policies, a momentum that has gained further attention with the launch of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. This chapter explores the comprehensive French legal framework regulating the inclusion of environmental considerations in procurement and the ambitious targets it sets. It also analyses the need for coordination among the various players to implement this framework.

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## 2.1. From regulatory ambitions to operational reality: translating environmental policies into public procurement contracts

An analysis of the interrelationships and complementarities between different environmental laws and initiatives in France reveals the complexity and wealth of the legal and regulatory framework governing green public procurement. Although these legislative texts and programmes come from different sources and target different objectives, they all converge towards a common commitment to sustainability and the environment. It is therefore important to distinguish between the regulatory framework that sets precise objectives for public purchasing, and ancillary laws and regulations that target certain purchasing categories or influence purchasing without directly affecting it.

### ***2.1.1. Ambitious targets for systematising environmental considerations in all procurement processes***

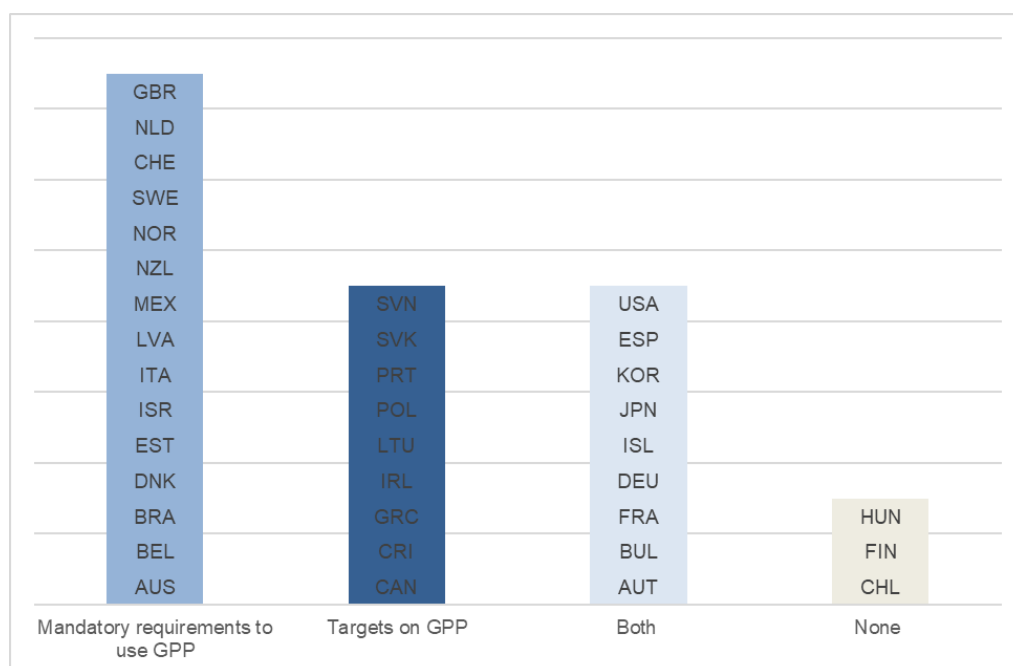
The OECD Recommendation, in its principle of Balance, suggests that adherents assess the value of using public procurement as a method of contributing to wider public policy objectives in line with clear national priorities, balancing the potential benefits against the need for value for money. This should take into account the ability of procurement staff to work towards secondary objectives and the burden of monitoring progress towards these objectives. (OECD, 2015<sup>[1]</sup>)

France has chosen a more ambitious route to use public procurement as a lever to achieve its environmental objectives. Two texts aim to make the inclusion of environmental considerations systematic in all public procurement contracts. First, the Climate and Resilience Law, adopted in 2021, aims to step up the fight against climate change and to help society adapt to increase its resilience in the face of climate impacts. It affects many sectors of activity and, in particular, extends the obligations of public procurers in terms of integrating climate and environmental considerations into public procurement procedures. Article 35 of the Law amends the Public Procurement Code, requiring contracting authorities to include environmental considerations in the form of administrative or technical requirements (performance clauses, purpose, technical specifications, implementation arrangements) and mandatory environmental award criteria in public procurement and concession contracts. The law also reiterates the obligation to take sustainable development objectives into account when defining requirements, particularly through technical specifications. This is an obligation of means, which means that all purchasers must consider, when carrying out a procurement procedure, how to reconcile environmental, social and economic issues, and set proportionate requirements as a result. This inclusion is mandatory for all public procurement contracts, with a deadline of 21 August 2026. (Gouvernement français, 2022<sup>[2]</sup>) The National Plan for Sustainable Procurement (PNAD) 2022-2025 takes up the objectives imposed by the Law, setting a target of 100% of public procurement contracts including at least one environmental consideration and 30% including a social consideration by 2025. (Gouvernement français, 2022<sup>[3]</sup>)

Achieving these objectives is proving difficult in France, particularly in State procurement, where 21% of contracts included an environmental consideration in 2022. Training and awareness-raising efforts have been implemented to help purchasers achieve these objectives, resulting in a significant increase to over 54.7% of contracts including an environmental consideration in 2023, for central and decentralised government departments (excluding other public bodies). Despite this increase, difficulties persist in achieving these objectives for certain procurers and certain procurement categories.

These persistent difficulties can be explained by the maximalist approach adopted by the public authorities, echoing a proposal made by the Citizens' Climate Convention. Unlike France, in most OECD countries, the general objectives contained in environmental public procurement strategies and policies are translated either through specific obligations for certain product categories or through targeted objectives for the widespread inclusion of environmental considerations (see Figure 2.1)

Figure 2.1. GPP mandatory requirements and targets in OECD countries



Note: Figures shows respondents responses to two different questions: (1) "Does the national policy or strategic framework include a mandatory requirement to use GPP in specific instances?", (2) "Does the national policy or strategic GPP framework include targets in terms of share of procurement subject to GPP?" Peru and Romania did not answer to the question. Hungary adopted a GPP policy framework in December 2022 after the closing of the Survey.

As such, 39% of countries have chosen to introduce specific obligations for certain categories of procurement, using a gradual approach. Initially, mandatory environmental considerations were limited to a few categories of public procurement with a strong risk/reward logic, but their scope was gradually extended. 29% of countries preferred to generalise the inclusion of environmental considerations to all procurement segments with targeted objectives, defining a percentage of tenders (in value or number) including environmental considerations. The ultimate aim is to encourage and guide implementation, as well as to facilitate monitoring and reporting on the inclusion of these environmental considerations. Therefore, countries can establish an obligation to introduce environmental requirements in public tenders or set more progressive targets such as the percentage of goods or services subject to environmental requirements. (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

In addition to the objective of integrating environmental considerations into all public procurement contracts, the French regulatory framework goes further. The Climate and Resilience Law imposes the dual obligation not only to integrate environmental considerations into 100% of public procurement contracts, but also to include these environmental considerations in two areas (technical or administrative clauses, and award criteria).

The difficulties in achieving the objectives could be explained by the overly rigorous requirements placed on procurement officers. The 100% target applies to all procurement processes, even though certain purchasing categories, such as intellectual services, are not necessarily relevant for the inclusion of environmental considerations. This ambitious objective may present a risk of greenwashing by procurers, i.e. the inclusion of an environmental consideration out of obligation, but which will not produce any effect during the performance of the contract. It also poses the risk of an increased rate of legal challenges against public procurement procedures by ousted economic operators, who may question the legality of a contract concerning the obligations contained in the Climate and Resilience Law (for example, if a procurer

has only included one environmental consideration out of the two mandatory ones). An alternative choice could be to select the most polluting purchasing categories (in terms of carbon footprint, CO2 emissions, biodiversity, energy consumption, etc.) and introduce specific obligations to include environmental considerations. In France, certain texts affect specific purchasing categories (see Section 2.1.2 below). However, most of these texts do not set out any concrete obligations for purchasers. The National Low Carbon Strategy, for example, promotes objectives for clean vehicles without translating them into purchasing targets. In New Zealand and Belgium, for example, the legislative or strategic frameworks for public procurement require contracting authorities to purchase a percentage of clean vehicles. In Slovenia, 22 purchasing segments are covered by environmental obligations, including construction, road building, textile products, etc.

Some countries have also opted for a more progressive sequencing, taking into account the capacity of procurers, in order to allow them to acquire the necessary capacity to implement environmental considerations. Indeed, target objectives are most effective when developed in consultation with contracting authorities, as they are responsible for achieving the objectives and can directly influence performance. It is important to set realistic targets to ensure effectiveness, particularly taking into account implementation difficulties and market constraints. For example, in the Slovak Republic, in line with the strategy for environmental policy, the targets for environmental public procurement are 70% of the total value and number of contracts by 2030, for all levels of government. Other countries, such as Norway, have chosen to generalise environmental considerations in all purchases, but also to set up an exemption process if the purpose of the contract justifies it (see Box 2.1).

### Box 2.1. The generalisation of environmental considerations in public procurement in Norway

In 2021, Norway launched a new action plan to increase the proportion of green public procurement and green innovations for the period 2021 - 2030, and the Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management (DFØ) is responsible for following up and updating the action plan. The action plan aims to leverage the role of public procurement in achieving three key objectives: minimising the adverse environmental impacts of the public sector, promoting climate-friendly solutions and supporting the transition to a circular economy, and shifting the national and global supply chain towards greener production systems.

Even before the plan was adopted, back in 2016, the Public Procurement Act obliged public authorities at all levels of government to take into account the reduction of adverse environmental impacts and the promotion of climate-friendly solutions when awarding contracts. A specific provision also encouraged the weighting of the 'environment' award criterion at 30%, when used.

Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, this 30% weighting provision has gone from optional to mandatory for all public contracts. The law does, however, provide for two mechanisms for waiving this obligation in order to offer procurers greater flexibility, but these waivers must be duly justified:

- The award criteria may be replaced by climate and environmental requirements in the technical specifications, if it is established that this will produce better effects on the climate and the environment and if this is justified in the procurement documents;
- The obligation to set requirements or criteria in accordance with the law does not apply if the public contract has, by its nature, an insignificant climate footprint and environmental impact and this is justified in the procurement documents.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>), (DFØ, 2023<sup>[5]</sup>)

In addition, in the Netherlands, contracting entities are responsible for developing their own targets according to their level of ambition and capacity, which has resulted in an increase in the use of environmental award criteria from 39% to 49% in 5 years (see Box 2.2).

### Box 2.2. The objectives of contracting entities for green public procurement in the Netherlands

Due to past failures of top-down targets for sustainable public procurement, the Netherlands has decided to make contracting authorities responsible for setting their own SPP targets. In 2016, the Dutch procurement agency launched a “Socially Responsible Procurement Manifesto” and public agencies were invited to sign up. Within six months upon signature, public agencies have to develop a SPP action plan, which includes setting up their level of ambition for SPP; identifying areas of intervention according to the level of expected impact; defining measurable goals; and explaining how they plan to achieve targets and mainstream SPP practices.

Although each participating party can decide its own level of ambition, the Manifesto is a binding instrument: all participating parties commit themselves to creating and publishing an SPP plan based on the above six themes. Moreover, they need to monitor implementation and report on progress on an annual basis.

Since the launch of the SPP Manifesto 170 agencies are now signatories and the use of award criteria that promote SPP has increased (from 39% in 2015 to 49% in 2020 of the procurement processes). SPP is more often included in market consultations (from 18% to 46%) and a higher number of organisations are now equipped to apply SPP (from 28% to 54%). With the SPP Manifesto, government agencies are motivated to pursue ambitious goals and to implement them. Signing the SPP Manifesto has had a positive effect for the majority of the signatories in the form of awareness-raising, commitment and as a basis for their own SPP policy. Nevertheless, a proper translation from ambition to concrete implementation is still lacking. SPP can increase (perceived) costs and complexity and is therefore often not included in purchase orders, or only marginally. Moreover, commitment to SPP often depends on enthusiastic individuals such as a director or buyer, with structural anchoring still lacking.

The six SPP themes of the Manifesto are linked to the UN SDGs: Social Return, Diversity & Inclusion, International Supply Chain Responsibility, Environment and Biodiversity, Circular Economy and Climate.

The Dutch Public Procurement Expertise Centre (PianoO) provides support on how to develop GPP action plans and promotes peer-learning by sharing best practice examples and lessons learned.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

The strategy followed in the Netherlands illustrates a different approach to the adoption and widespread introduction of environmental considerations into public procurement. This proactive approach is based on the willingness of contracting authorities to take ownership of climate issues and to use public procurement to meet these challenges.

### ***2.1.2. A comprehensive regulatory framework that multiplies the number of requirements in public procurement***

The profusion of laws and regulations governing public procurement is likely to create increasing complexity in their implementation. While the main text governing public procurement has already been amended to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account across the board, many other texts also have an impact on public procurement. Indeed, France's environmental strategy, as reflected in



its various policies and regulations, illustrates an integrated and systemic approach to the environmental transition, where each legislative measure and initiative contributes to a common objective: sustainability and the reduction of environmental impact. Focusing on public procurement, this section looks at how this overall strategy shapes and guides government purchasing to encourage a greener, more resilient economy. Table 2.1 summarises the different texts, the environmental dimension targeted, and the procurement categories concerned, where applicable.

**Table 2.1. List of texts and documents with an impact on public procurement in terms of environmental considerations**

Year	Text	Environmental Theme	Details	Procurement category targeted
2015	LOI n° 2015-992 du 17 août 2015 relative à la transition énergétique pour la croissance verte (1)	GHG emissions	Encouraging non-polluting means of transport	Freight transport
		Circular economy	Functional economy Reuse of products Reuse of waste Production of goods and services incorporating recycled materials	Goods and services, waste
		Biodiversity	Environmental performance of products Biobased products	
2015	La stratégie nationale bas-carbone – SNBC (2015-2018)	GHG emissions	Promoting low-carbon industries and materials	Supplies (e.g. paper), vehicle fleets, building materials
2016	Guide de l'Achat Public - L'achat public : une réponse aux enjeux climatiques	GHG emissions	Mitigating and offsetting GHG emissions	
		Circular economy	Pooling of resources / public procurement (taking into account interests beyond the procurement itself))	
		Circular economy	Cost of living	
		Circular economy	Cost of living (including indirect costs such as energy consumption))	
		Climate change	Anticipating and managing risks	Infrastructure, buildings, agricultural products
		GHG emissions	Promoting alternatives to fossil fuels	
		GHG emissions	Mapping GHG emissions in production Product prioritisation	
2016	Décret n° 2016-412 du 7 avril 2016 relatif à la prise en compte de la performance énergétique dans certains contrats et marchés publics	Energy efficiency	Taking account of energy performance in public procurement	Buildings and leases
2018	Plan biodiversité	General	Integrating environmental criteria into public procurement	
		Biodiversity	Zero deforestation	
2018	La feuille de route économie circulaire (FREC)	Circular economy		
2018	Stratégie nationale de lutte contre la déforestation importée 2018-2030	Biodiversity	Zero deforestation	
2018	Loi pour l'équilibre des relations commerciales dans le secteur agricole et alimentaire et une alimentation saine, durable et accessible à tous (EGALIM)	Circular economy	Reduce the use of plastic in the food industry, Enhance the health, environmental and nutritional quality of food products;	Catering services
		Biodiversity	Strengthen commitments on animal welfare, Encourage products from organic farming	
2020	LOI n° 2020-105 du 10 février 2020	Circular economy	Reducing consumption of single-use	17 purchasing categories

	relative à la lutte contre le gaspillage et à l'économie circulaire		plastics Reduce waste production Favour goods that are re-used or contain recycled materials	
		Energy efficiency	Limiting energy consumption linked to the use of software	Software
2020	Guide de l'Achat Public	Circular economy	Favour sustainable/quality products Use of recycled and reconditioned products Reuse waste Eliminate plastic packaging	
		Biodiversity	Favour products from organic farming	
		GHG emissions	Carbon impact of delivery	
		Energy efficiency	Reducing energy consumption	
		Water consumption	Reducing water consumption	Catering, green spaces
2021	LOI n° 2021-1104 du 22 août 2021 portant lutte contre le dérèglement climatique et renforcement de la résilience face à ses effets (1)	General	Public procurement helps achieve sustainable development objectives	Works, goods, and services
		GHG emissions	Air pollution, GHG emissions	
		Biodiversity	Loss of biodiversity and deforestation	
		Circular economy	Life-cycle costs (use, maintenance and end-of-life))	
		Biodiversity	Biobased materials	Major renovation and construction
		GHG emissions	Low-carbon materials	Major renovation and construction
2021	Ordonnance n° 2021-1490 du 17 novembre 2021 portant transposition de la directive (UE) 2019/1161 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 juin 2019 modifiant la directive 2009/33/CE relative à la promotion de véhicules de transport routier propres et économes en énergie	GHG emissions	Imposes a minimum proportion of low and very low emission vehicles to be purchased by the State and its public bodies, local authorities and other contracting entities.	Vehicles
		Energy efficiency		
2021	Décret n° 2021-254 du 9 mars 2021 relatif à l'obligation d'acquisition par la commande publique de biens issus du réemploi ou de la réutilisation ou intégrant des matières recyclées	Circular economy	Goods produced by reuse or incorporating recycled materials	Goods (17 purchasing categories)
2023	LOI n° 2023-973 du 23 octobre 2023 relative à l'industrie verte (1)	GHG emissions	Non-compliance with the obligation to draw up a GHG emissions balance as grounds for exclusion	
		Circular economy	Non-compliance with the sustainability commitment publication as grounds for exclusion	
		General	Value for money assessment takes environmental aspects into account	
ND	Code de l'énergie	Energy efficiency	High energy performance	Buildings
	Code de l'environnement	Circular economy	Public procurement contributes to the transition towards a circular economy	
		GHG emissions	Acquisition of low/very low emission vehicles	Vehicles
		Biodiversity	Biobased products/materials Materials derived from renewable resources.	Construction
		Circular economy	Use of recycled materials	Construction
		GHG emissions	Low-carbon materials Combating greenhouse gas emissions Carbon storage	Construction / Renovation
		GHG emissions	Carbon footprint of the production of	Renewable energy

			renewable energy systems	systems
		General	Environmental footprint (manufacturing, use)	Renewable energy systems
		Circular economy	Recovery after end of life	Renewable energy systems
		Biodiversity	Preservation or restoration of ecological continuity	Works
		Circular economy	Functional economy Product re-use Preparing waste for re-use Production of goods and services incorporating recycled materials	Waste, goods and services
	SPASER	General	Training for procurement staff Raising awareness about environmental issues	
		Circular economy	Taking into account the sustainability of products Taking into account the requirements of the AGECL law (anti-waste))	Office supplies, printing solutions, videoconferencing equipment, computers and computer peripherals, or others as opportunities arise
		Energy efficiency	Performance review, energy savings	

Note: This list is not exhaustive and contains the main texts at the national level.

Source: Author

At the heart of France's environmental strategy, the Law on Energy Transition for Green Growth (LTECV) lays the foundations by setting ambitious targets for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy consumption, while increasing the share of renewable energies. It provides the basis for a public procurement policy that gives priority to eco-designed goods and services, thereby driving the market towards innovative and sustainable solutions. This strategic direction is reinforced by the EGALIM Law which, by focusing on the agricultural and food sectors, requires the inclusion of sustainable and local products in collective catering, creating demand for organic farming and supporting short distribution channels. A proactive policy to promote organic farming through public procurement has proven successful in Sweden (see Box 2.3).

### Box 2.3. The use of public procurement contracts for agricultural processing in Sweden

Sweden's experience with Green Public Procurement (GPP) provides useful insights into how public sector procurement can support the growth of organic farming. By integrating environmental public procurement policies into existing agricultural support programmes, Sweden sought to increase the consumption of organic food by the public sector, thereby encouraging farmers to convert to organic farming. This approach was aimed not only at meeting national environmental protection targets, but also at reducing the financial burden on farmers through targeted subsidies. The synergy between GPP and direct agricultural policies highlights the importance of a comprehensive policy design that takes advantage of several instruments to achieve environmental objectives.

Sweden's market-based green public procurement strategy was designed to stimulate public and private demand for organic products. By using the purchasing power of the public sector, the Swedish government aimed to create a stable and growing market for organic products. This strategy encouraged farmers to adopt organic practices by guaranteeing a reliable demand for their products. Although the initial targets for both organic farmland and organic purchases were ambitious (25% organic food consumption and 20% organic farmland by 2010), the policy has made significant progress

over time. By 2016, the share of organic food in public consumption had reached 33%, above the original target, demonstrating the effectiveness of sustained public procurement efforts in increasing organic production. In 2017, a new, more ambitious version of the policy set the share of organic products in public sector food consumption at 60% and the share of organic farmland at 30% by 2030.

Empirical research on Sweden's green public procurement policy shows a strong positive correlation between increased public purchases of organic food and the expansion of organic farmland. These data highlight the essential role of integrating public procurement into direct subsidy policies in order to improve the overall impact on organic farming. The results suggest that public procurement can be a powerful tool for promoting environmental sustainability when combined with financial incentives that reduce barriers for farmers. Such integration allows the market to bear a greater share of the costs of converting to organic farming, thereby encouraging the adoption of sustainable farming practices on a larger scale.

Source: (Lindström, Lundberg and Marklund, 2020<sup>[6]</sup>)

This approach has been taken a step further by the French anti-waste law for a circular economy (AGEC) which, by promoting the principles of the circular economy, has created an obligation for public purchasers to acquire goods made from reused or recycled materials, in proportions set by type of product (between 20% and 80%). This law encourages procurement professionals to consider the entire life cycle of the products and services purchased, thus integrating a long-term sustainability dimension into public procurement decisions.

The initiatives reinforce each other by creating an overall regulatory framework for public purchasing. For example, the AGECE law and the LTECV share common circular economy objectives, while the EGALIM law and the climate and resilience law both promote purchasing practices that support the ecological transition.

In this context, the sobriety plan and the circular on the State's commitment to ecological transformation translate these legislative principles into concrete actions within the administration. They implement low-energy practices, sustainable management of resources and waste, and sustainable mobility, while emphasising the importance of green public procurement as a lever for change. These initiatives illustrate the State's commitment to be exemplary in its own management and to use its influence to encourage the market to adopt more responsible practices.

Finally, the Green Budget, which integrates environmental considerations into budget planning, ensures that resources are allocated in a way that supports these ecological transition objectives. It reflects the State's financial commitment to these priorities, by aligning public spending with climate and environmental ambitions.

All of these measures, by being interconnected and complementary, create a regulatory and operational ecosystem conducive to the ecological transition. However, the regulatory environment is characterised by a profusion of legislation and standards which, although aimed at promoting sustainable public procurement, can create complexity and risks of inconsistency for public procurers.

This multiplicity of texts can lead to difficulties of interpretation and application, making it more difficult for public purchasers to integrate environmental criteria into their procurement procedures in a relevant way. One of the challenges revealed by an analysis of this legislative framework is the many dimensions of sustainable development. Environmental considerations may touch on various areas such as biodiversity, circular economy, greenhouse gas emissions and so on. Faced with the multiplicity of these objectives, procurers may not know which dimension to prioritise in their procurement processes.

Clarifying and simplifying the regulatory framework is therefore a first step. Public procurers would benefit from the consolidation of the numerous regulations and directives into a coherent and easily accessible framework. This need for regulatory simplification could also be part of the government's current approach to drafting a 'simplification' action plan for businesses, one of the many measures of which is to limit the piling up of new standards, if not to be able to replace an old rule as soon as a new one appears (Ministère de l'Économie, 2024<sup>[7]</sup>). In addition to increasing the complexity for public procurers, this extremely rich regulatory landscape is likely to affect companies wishing to submit tenders because of the multitude of requirements arising from the various texts. Companies, for lack of capacity or knowledge, could then decide not to take part in invitations to tender.

Finally, the creation of unified guides or simplified benchmarks would play a major role in this approach, making information not only more accessible but also more comprehensible. This would enable purchasers to gain a better understanding of their legal obligations as well as best practice in green procurement, thereby contributing to smoother and more effective implementation of environmental policies through public procurement.

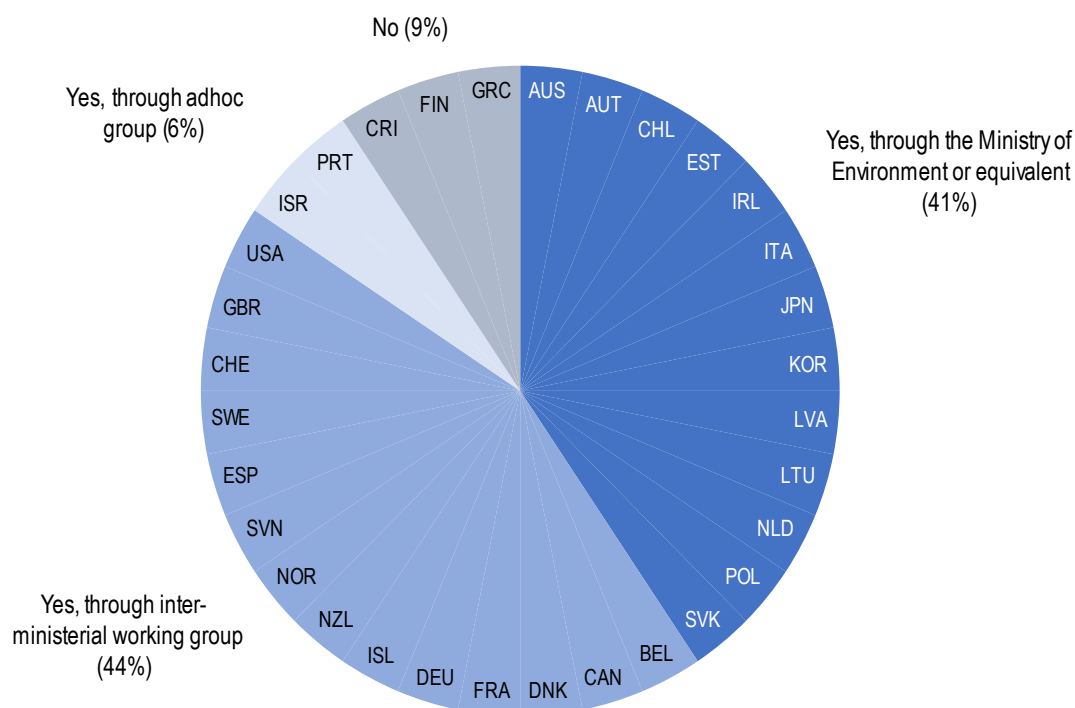
## **2.2. The need to strengthen coordination among the various players in the State's institutional procurement ecosystem**

The implementation of various environmental legislation and initiatives in France has revealed a need for greater coordination among the various players in the State's procurement function and those responsible for environmental public policies. Although the common objective is to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly procurement practices, the multiplicity of regulatory frameworks and objectives can hamper effective and consistent application. Specific tools and actions to strengthen this coordination are therefore suggested.

### **2.2.1. A comprehensive institutional framework for State procurement**

Green public procurement must combine two areas of public policy: public procurement policies and environmental policies. Given the expertise needed to define ambitious but meaningful objectives in green public procurement policies, 32 of the 35 OECD countries include a co-ordination mechanism for the design, implementation and review of green public procurement policies. In 13 of these countries, Ministries of Environment or similar bodies formally co-ordinate GPP with broader environmental policies, thereby strengthening the role of GPP in achieving environmental objectives. A further 16 countries (50%) rely instead on inter-ministerial or ad hoc working groups bringing together different stakeholders (see Figure 2.2). (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

**Figure 2.2. Institutional coordination between public procurement policies and environmental policies, 2022**



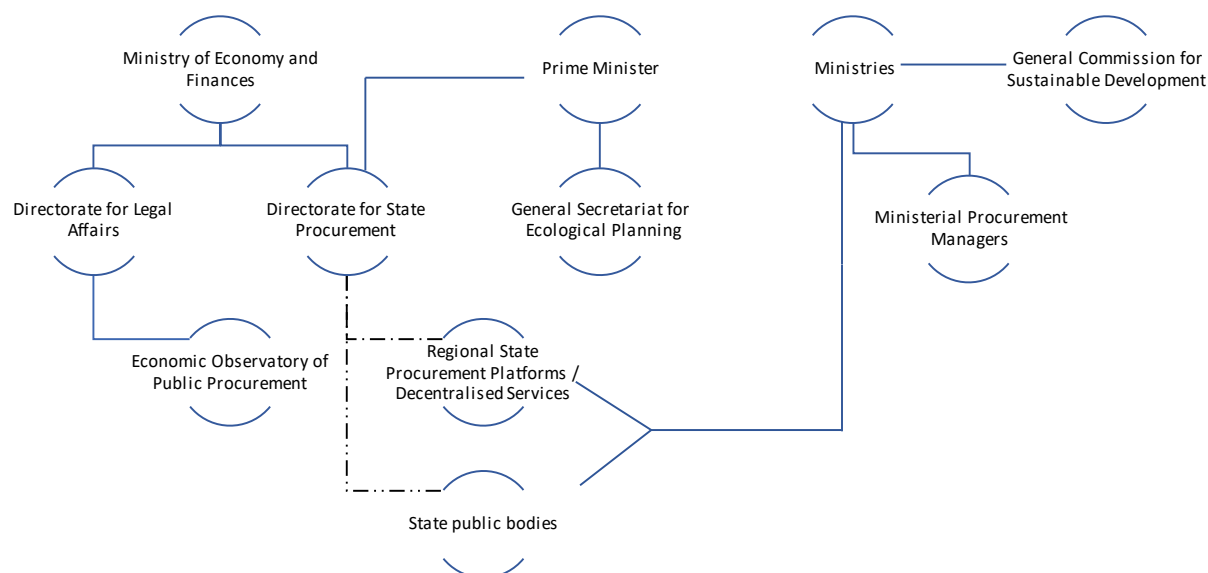
Note: Table shows respondents responses to two different questions: (1) "Is there a coordination mechanism to ensure alignment between environmental policies and the GPP policy or strategic framework?" and (2) "If so, which institution is responsible for such coordination?" Mexico and Hungary are excluded as they indicated they did not have an active GPP framework at the time of the survey (end 2022). Hungary adopted a GPP strategy (2022-2027) in December 2022, after the closure of the data cycle for this questionnaire.

Source: (OECD, 2023<sup>[8]</sup>)

France falls into the latter category, as the Commissariat Général au Développement Durable, as a cross-cutting department of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Interministerial Delegation for Sustainable Development, is responsible for steering the PNAD. As such, it is responsible for steering and coordinating sustainable procurement initiatives at national level, for all types of procurers.

In addition to high-level public policies, there is a growing multitude of players involved in the implementation of green public procurement. Therefore, it is important to strengthen the collaboration among all actors in order to improve the management of GPP policies. Figure 2.3 summarises the institutional landscape for environmental public procurement.

Figure 2.3. The institutional framework for green public procurement policies in France



Note: The Commissariat Général au Développement Durable (General Commission for Sustainable Development or CGDD) is attached to the Ministry of Ecological Transition, and the regional state procurement platforms are attached to the Ministry of the Interior.

Source: Author

Public policies on environmental markets are decided at interministerial level, with the CGDD. However, the General Secretariat for Ecological Planning (or SGPE, under the authority of the Prime Minister) also plays a coordinating role in ecological planning. The SGPE's mission is to ensure the coherence and monitoring of environmental policies, to initiate and frame the mobilisation of ministries and stakeholders, to coordinate all negotiations and finally to measure the performance of the actions taken.

These public policies, decided at ministerial level, trickle down to a large number of players in the State's procurement function. For example, the Regional State Procurement Platforms (or PFRA) are the DAE's relay at regional level for all its missions, in particular the implementation of the State's procurement policy and the management of inter-ministerial procurement projects at regional or departmental level. Hierarchically, they are placed under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, as they report to the regional prefect within the general secretariats for regional affairs. Similarly, the procurement function within the decentralised departments is the responsibility of the Ministerial Procurement Managers (RMA) within each ministry. Their role includes ensuring the definition and implementation of ministerial purchasing strategies within the framework of the State's purchasing policy and in compliance with inter-ministerial strategies.. (Gouvernement français, 2024<sup>[9]</sup>)

The fact-finding missions carried out by the OECD have highlighted the challenges involved in understanding public policies on green public procurement. This is particularly the case for the PFRAs, which are functionally and hierarchically dependent on two different ministries, while they are responsible for implementing the important task of pooling purchases for different ministries.



Beyond an understanding of general policies, public procurement covers a wide range of sectors, from the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure to the supply of goods and services to public authorities. Each sector is governed by specific standards and objectives which may vary. This fragmentation requires a cross-sectoral approach to harmonise efforts and ensure that environmental criteria are integrated consistently across all areas.

France's environmental objectives are ambitious and diverse, covering aspects such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting circular economy, and increasing the share of renewable energies. Achieving these objectives requires not only rigorous application of existing policies and technical knowledge of climate issues, but also effective coordination to ensure that action in one area supports and does not thwart progress in another.

To overcome these challenges, the CGDD and the various institutions involved could promote further the existing tools available to those involved in the State's procurement function, such as the RAPIDD network (see Section 2.2.3 below), the green clause tool, or the tool for referencing all existing legal obligations in the area of sustainable purchasing. In this respect, a digital platform on sustainable procurement, accessible to public and private players, to raise awareness among decision-makers and strengthen the link with businesses was developed by the CGDD and launched online in November 2024. This platform could serve as an entry point to various resources, including training, guides, tools, events, communities and the SPASER repository and mapping. It could also facilitate operational support through social facilitators, green desks, and DAE advisors. This platform is therefore an interesting opportunity for purchasers who need assistance with their environmental purchases. The CGDD could also regularly measure the participation rate on this platform, particularly for procurers, and ensure that they are mobilised.

### ***2.2.2. Overcoming structural budgetary obstacles to take greater account of environmental considerations in public procurement***

A difficulty highlighted during discussions with various stakeholders is the situation where the willingness to implement GPP clashes with other public policies, in particular budgetary austerity. Policies to reduce public spending in France, as well as the compartmentalisation of budgets, may not encourage buyers to include environmental considerations, as green products are often perceived as being more expensive than conventional products. This is particularly the case at the regional level, where the smaller budgets imply that there is generally less room for manoeuvre than at central or ministerial level.

French procurers are not alone in facing this perception. An OECD survey reveals that in 22 out of 35 member countries, the perception that environmentally-friendly products are more expensive than their conventional equivalents is the main barrier to the implementation of GPP. This finding is also underlined by the ProcurCompEU survey conducted by the OECD among 555 State procurement officials, 189 of whom reported budgetary constraints in implementing green procurement.

OECD countries have adopted several approaches to address this challenge. Some countries have chosen to financially reward entities that perform well in terms of green procurement. For example, the Republic of Korea is one of the few countries that use financial incentives extensively: while high-performing local governments are rewarded with a larger budget, public institutions receive a performance bonus (see Box 2.4).

#### Box 2.4. Performance bonus for GPP in the Republic of Korea

In Korea, financial incentives are provided in the form of annual bonuses to high-performing public organisations. The performance of public organisations is evaluated according to different indicators, including the use of GPP, which is measured as the percentage of green purchases over the total amount of purchases, over a year. The higher the use of GPP in public tendering, the better the score for the related indicator, and the higher the bonus for the organisation.

Moreover, according to the Act on the Promotion of Purchase of Green Products, the Korean Minister of Environment can grant environment-related subsidies to local governments that have a good record in terms of green purchases (see Article 16). In addition to that, as prescribed by Article 15, para 2 of the Presidential Decree, the government can offer financial rewards to public institutions, business operators, and other relevant organizations, that perform well in terms of green procurement, either by actually purchasing green solutions or by promoting the purchase of green products.

These incentives encourage agencies to purchase green by using the e-procurement platform, improving data completeness at the same time.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

Other countries have chosen to raise public procurers' awareness of the need to take into account the entire life cycle of a product in order to calculate its overall cost. Life cycle costing is a methodology often associated with GPP, which assesses the total costs associated with a specific purchase throughout its life cycle, beyond the initial purchase price. It covers all expenditure typically incurred by public bodies, such as acquisition costs (e.g. installation), operational costs (e.g. energy and water consumption), maintenance costs (e.g. periodic replacement of components) and end-of-life costs (e.g. disposal and recycling of assets). This approach demonstrates to French procurers that a green product may cost more at the time of purchase, but will cost less in the long run. Life cycle costing, for example, has enabled Norway not only to save money in the long term, but also to significantly reduce its carbon footprint when constructing a new building (see Box 2.5).

#### Box 2.5. Comparing alternative LCC in public buildings in the planning stage, Norway

During a procurement process for a school for 840 students in the city of Oslo, the municipality had to decide whether to buy the main plot or also the extra plot next to it. Since the municipality is in charge of carrying out the design process, it developed two different options for the project and calculated the corresponding LCC costs. The alternative using only the main plot entailed building a school with six floors and play area on the roof, thus significantly increasing both the investment and operation costs of the building. The option using two main land plots presented significantly lower life cycle costs amounting to NOK 564 million (EUR 48 million). Choosing the option of buying the extra land plot also significantly decreased the carbon footprint of the building since the city of Oslo could build a more efficient building. Thanks to the LCC calculation, the political decision about buying an extra land plot was easy to make.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

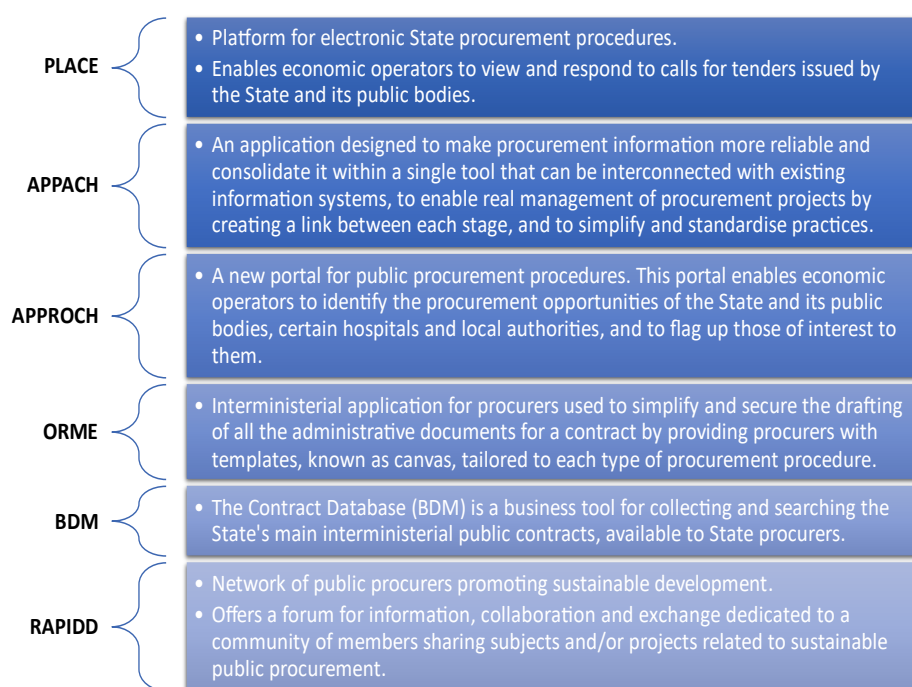
To overcome these challenges, the DAE would benefit from implementing an awareness-raising campaign on the cost of green procurement compared to conventional procurement in order to provide confidence to procurers. This awareness-raising campaign could initially be implemented by purchasing category. Professional training on life cycle costing is also recommended.

### 2.2.3. Implementing digital tools to promote coordination between stakeholders

Implementing ambitious environmental policies through public procurement in France comes up against a series of operational and regulatory challenges. These challenges highlight the need for effective digital support tools and regulatory simplification to facilitate the integration of environmental criteria into public procurement.

The DAE is responsible for designing and managing the State's procurement IT system, and to this end has developed a number of applications for use by procurers and economic operators. In addition to DAE's applications, the Ministry for Ecological Transition has also launched RAPIDD, a professional platform for exchanging and sharing experiences between public procurement stakeholders in the field of sustainable procurement, with the CGDD in charge of running this network (see Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4. The different applications available to State procurers in France**



Source: (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[10]</sup>)

Although these numerous systems were designed to help procurers in their day-to-day tasks, the fact-finding missions revealed that procurers sometimes find them unintuitive or that they sometimes find it difficult to get to grips with them. The PLACE system, for example, enables procurers to state whether their contract contains one (or more) environmental or social consideration(s), and to indicate the type (specifications, criteria or clauses). However, some procurers indicated that they did not tick this box due to a lack of knowledge, even though they had in fact included an environmental consideration in their contract. The RAPIDD network is part of international best practice in the creation of sustainable procurement networks that enable buyers to exchange experiences, best practices and lessons learned.

However, despite a good membership rate (over 6,000 members at the time of writing), some buyers have pointed out that the network is little used and that many of the questions asked by members remain unanswered. (OCDE, 2024<sup>[11]</sup>) In 2016, the DAE also launched a social network for ministerial procurers, the RESPAE network. The purpose of this network is to offer a database and a platform for exchanging good sustainable procurement practices. Despite a growing number of users, some stakeholders have mentioned a need to promote this network further among procurers in order to encourage the exchange and pooling of resources.

The DAE and the Ministry for Ecological Transition would therefore benefit from promoting these networks, but also from capitalising on existing applications to promote the inclusion of environmental considerations in contracts. Some countries have opted to create a single portal for green procurement, as the value of a one-stop shop lies in the fact that practitioners no longer need to navigate multiple websites and formats to find the help or information they need. Having all the information in one place also makes it easier for users to find the right source of officially verified information, rather than relying on external sources. (European Commission, 2017<sup>[12]</sup>) The digital platform on sustainable procurement recently developed by the CGDD (see Section 2.2.3) could therefore be a starting point for the development of such a one-stop shop and could draw on the various portals developed in other OECD countries. In Malta, for example, a central website on GPP offers quick access to a brief definition of GPP and its importance in Malta; mandatory and voluntary sets of environmental criteria; the latest GPP policies and action plan guiding implementation activities; a database and procurement guidance; and a registration form for an 'Introduction to GPP' course. The Basque Country in Spain manages an online database of good practices in green public procurement implemented by institutions in the region. (World Bank, 2021<sup>[13]</sup>)

#### ***2.2.4. Harmonising monitoring practices to provide a true picture of the extent to which environmental considerations in procurement have been met***

In addition to setting targets and public policies to promote environmental considerations in procurement, monitoring the implementation of GPP against national targets is essential to ensure that public procurement contributes to the country's sustainable development objectives and the fight against climate change. In addition, regular monitoring and reporting can help identify bottlenecks that hinder the potential of GPP and limit its implementation by contracting authorities. Based on monitoring results and an in-depth analysis with procurement stakeholders, governments can improve their GPP action plans, develop targeted solutions, and provide operational support and advice where needed.

In France, there is little harmonisation of practices for monitoring the inclusion of environmental considerations in procurement. The aim of action 21 of the PNAD is to develop and promote the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators to monitor the development and impact of environmental considerations by procurers, which "will enable procurers to ensure the quality and relevance of the requirements set, while at the same time ensuring that appropriate and simplified systems are put in place". This work should also provide an overall view of the integration of environmental considerations into public procurement. This action foresees the creation of a working group to identify these indicators, and the bodies responsible for implementing this action are the CGDD and the OECP in collaboration with various bodies such as the DAE, the ESS networks etc. This working group was formed in 2023 and the indicators are currently being developed. At the same time, other monitoring initiatives have also been set up. Within the Ministry of Ecological Transition itself, for example, there is specific reporting on the implementation of the EGALIM law, on eco-responsible public services, and carbon offsetting for mobility, but there is no specific reporting on procurement itself.

Practices for monitoring the State's green procurement vary. Monitoring is mainly carried out by the DAE, which relies on the PLACE system, where procurers can tick an 'environmental consideration' box when they publish their tenders. However, this system does not allow for optimal monitoring and may not give a reliable picture of the implementation of environmental considerations in procurement. For example, the

fact-finding missions revealed that some procurers do not tick this box even though an environmental consideration has been included. Others, on the other hand, are likely to tick this box even though an environmental consideration has not been included. One of the potential risks of this monitoring system is therefore to underestimate the actual use of GPP. Thus, the main challenges to efficient monitoring of GPP relate to procurers' lack of knowledge about GPP, and a lack of capacity and under-staffing in some institutions, particularly in the regions.

In order to overcome these challenges, the development of tools or standard templates to help procurers monitor the implementation of GPP would be beneficial. In Ireland, for example, the Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a model report on green public procurement. In addition, to ensure effective monitoring of GPP, substantial investment is required, both in terms of digital infrastructure for automated data collection and in terms of human resources. Data collection and analysis require technical capacity and expertise. (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>) Regular communication from the DAE to procurers on the use of the PLACE system and the 'environmental consideration' feature would ensure that the data correctly reflects the implementation of these considerations by State procurers..

In addition to the statistical monitoring carried out through the PLACE system, the DAE could also set up periodic surveys and evaluations. Carrying out regular, in-depth surveys with contracting authorities/entities that perform poorly in GPP or with companies that do not participate in tenders that include environmental considerations can provide access to information on GPP practices, perceptions and motivations, as well as barriers to implementation. In addition, it can help governments to focus on specific entities or product categories in order to assess the impact of GPP. In Canada, for example, a national survey on GPP in the public and private sectors has been carried out over several years. The annual GPP surveys have also been used to feed into the four-yearly Sustainable Procurement Barometer, which allows public and private organisations to self-evaluate and compare their performance with their peers over time (see Box 2.6). (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>)

### Box 2.6. Canada: The Sustainable Procurement Barometer

The Sustainable Procurement Barometer was first launched in 2012 by the Network of Sustainable Procurement Organizations. It is partially funded by the Canadian government, and enables Canadian contracting authorities to self-assess their sustainable procurement performance. The barometer was also implemented in 2016 and 2020.

The 2020 edition assesses the contribution of sustainable procurement to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations Environment Programme, and also includes the participation of businesses. The Barometer reports on organisational practices according to five levels of maturity (low concern, commitment, progress, maturity and exemplarity) for each of the five aspects of sustainable procurement (vision, policy and governance, stakeholder engagement, operationalisation and evaluation).

A total of 142 organisations took part in the study:

- 26% companies ;
- 26% agencies and government departments (Quebec and Canada);
- 26% municipalities and 11% educational institutions;
- 20% of the organisations are members of ECPAR.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[4]</sup>), (Réseau d'organisations pour l'approvisionnement responsable, 2020<sup>[14]</sup>)

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# **3**

## **Mobilising all key stakeholders to enable the State's procurement function to achieve its objectives**

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The substantial change in roles and responsibilities and the growing multitude of actors involved in defining green public procurement policies and their implementation reflect a change in the way public procurement is viewed. From being seen as an administrative function, it is now being used as a strategic tool to achieve wider policy objectives. It is therefore important to strengthen collaboration among key stakeholders to improve the management of environmental procurement policies. In France, it is essential to strengthen the procurement function in the broadest sense as a strategic function to enable it to respond to these environmental challenges. This will also require greater access to environmental expertise to enable procurers to take environmental considerations into account throughout the procurement life cycle.

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### 3.1. Strengthening the procurement function to better meet environmental requirements

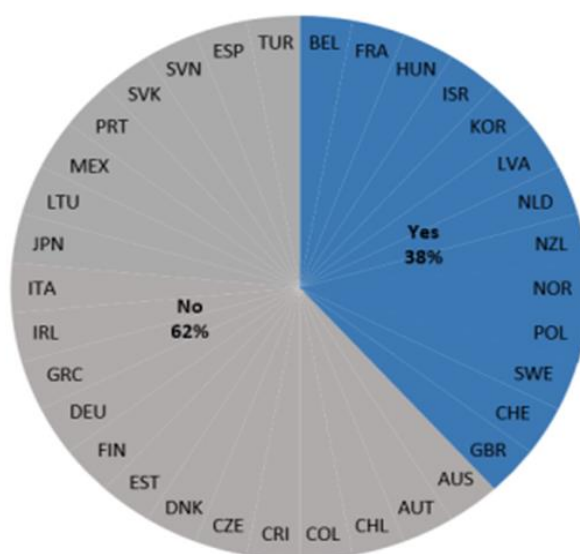
The International Labour Organisation states that sustainable development is only possible with the active participation of the world of work. Governments, employers and workers are agents of change, capable of devising new ways of working that preserve the environment, eradicate poverty and promote social justice, by encouraging sustainable enterprises and creating decent jobs for all. (OIT, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>) In order to achieve the objectives of France's environmental policies, the procurement function needs to be strengthened by streamlining it and making it more attractive.

#### 3.1.1. A recognised procurement function, but wide disparities in status and a lack of clarity about its role in achieving environmental objectives

All OECD countries are increasingly using public procurement as a strategic tool to help achieve public policy objectives (PPOs) such as sustainable development, and in particular environmental protection and the fight against climate change. The pursuit of these objectives must, however, be assessed against the overarching principles of public procurement, which are the acquisition of goods and services necessary to fulfil the public authorities' mission in a timely manner, at least cost and with efficiency.

As a result, the task entrusted to public procurers is becoming increasingly complex, requiring trade-offs and a growing diversity of skills and knowledge. This is why the procurement function is receiving more and more attention in OECD member countries. In 2020, 38% of OECD countries recognised the procurement function as a standalone profession (see Figure 3.1). France has been one of these countries since 2017, when the State civil service (permanent and contract staff) included procurement job profiles in the interministerial directory of State jobs. (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, n.d.<sup>[2]</sup>).

Figure 3.1. Public procurement recognised as a standalone profession in OECD countries (2020)



Note: Data for Canada, Iceland, Luxembourg, and the United States are not available. As of 2024, Australia recognises public procurement as a standalone profession with the launch of the new Procurement and Contract Management Profession. Costa Rica is included as an OECD member as of May 2021. Among non-OECD members, Indonesia recognises public procurement as a professional task, while this is not the case in Peru and Morocco

Source: 2020 OECD Survey on the Professionalisation on Public Procurement

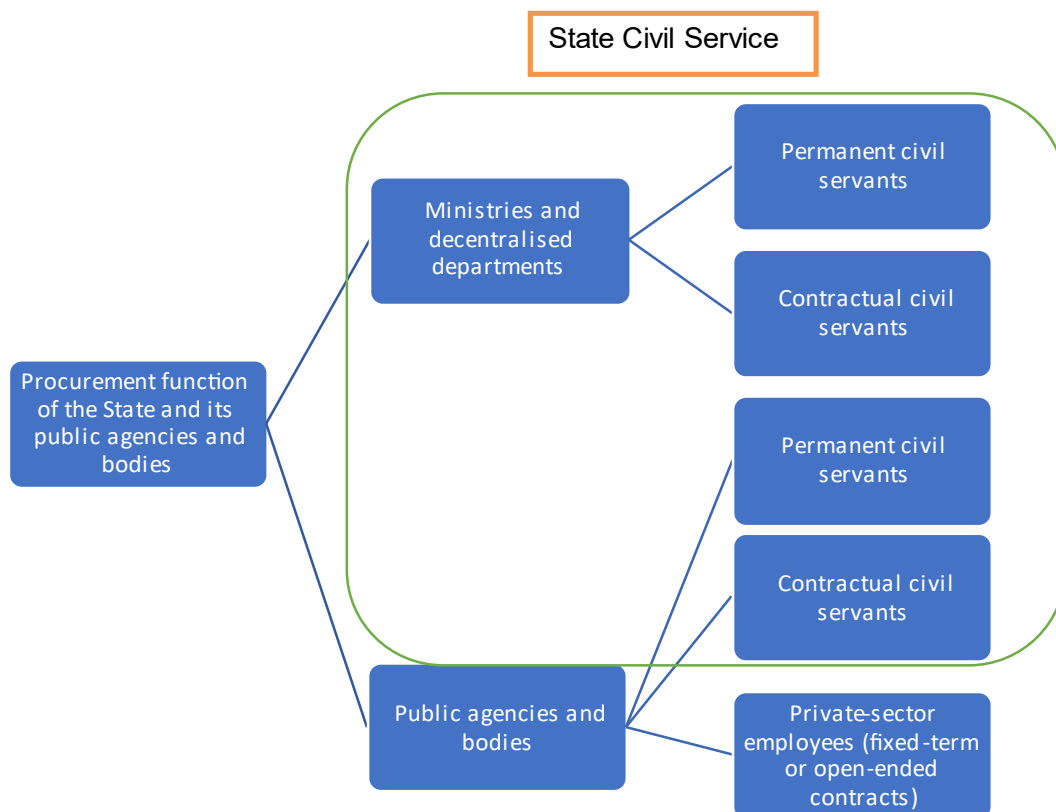
By purchasing responsibly and sustainably, public bodies can not only contribute to economic growth and job creation, but also improve social well-being and protect the environment while optimising available resources. (OECD, 2023<sup>[3]</sup>). It is therefore important to ensure that an appropriate procurement organisation is in place, with the resources and skills to meet these objectives.

*A lack of harmonisation of job profiles within the procurement functions among State procurers*

In France, the organisation of the State's procurement function varies according to the actors involved. State procurement is carried out by the Ministries and their decentralised departments, as well as by their public agencies and bodies (excluding defence and security procurement). These staff are subject to different statuses depending on whether they are employed in a Ministry or in a public agency or body. Within Ministries, procurement staff are either permanent or contractual civil servants, whereas for public agencies and bodies, procurement staff may also be employed under private law (see Figure 3.2).

In addition to the civil service, certain public service missions are carried out by public bodies that are not part of the civil service, by private bodies financed by public authorities, and by public companies (La Poste, SNCF, RATP, EDF, GDF, Aéroports de Paris, etc.). These organisations are all subject to the French Public Procurement Code. (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>).

**Figure 3.2. The State procurement function in France**



Source: Author

In 2017, the interministerial directory of State jobs included five reference jobs (procurement manager, procurement officer, procurement engineering adviser, procurement drafter, supply officer). (Ministère de la fonction publique, 2017<sup>[5]</sup>).

This directory has evolved with the introduction of the directory of job profiles common to the three levels of the civil service (for State, local, and hospital levels), which includes a description of each procurement job. This directory now contains 13 procurement-related job profiles (see Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1. Job profiles within the public procurement function**

	Job profile
1	Purchasing manager
2	Purchasing manager – public procurement
3	Public procurement manager
4	Multi-skilled procurer
5	IT procurer (IT, telecoms)
6	Procurer for works, real estate, energy
7	Specialised procurer
8	Project procurer
9	Procurement engineering advisor
10	Procurement management controller
11	Procurement assistant
12	Supply expert - contracts and procurement administrator
13	Procurement legal expert

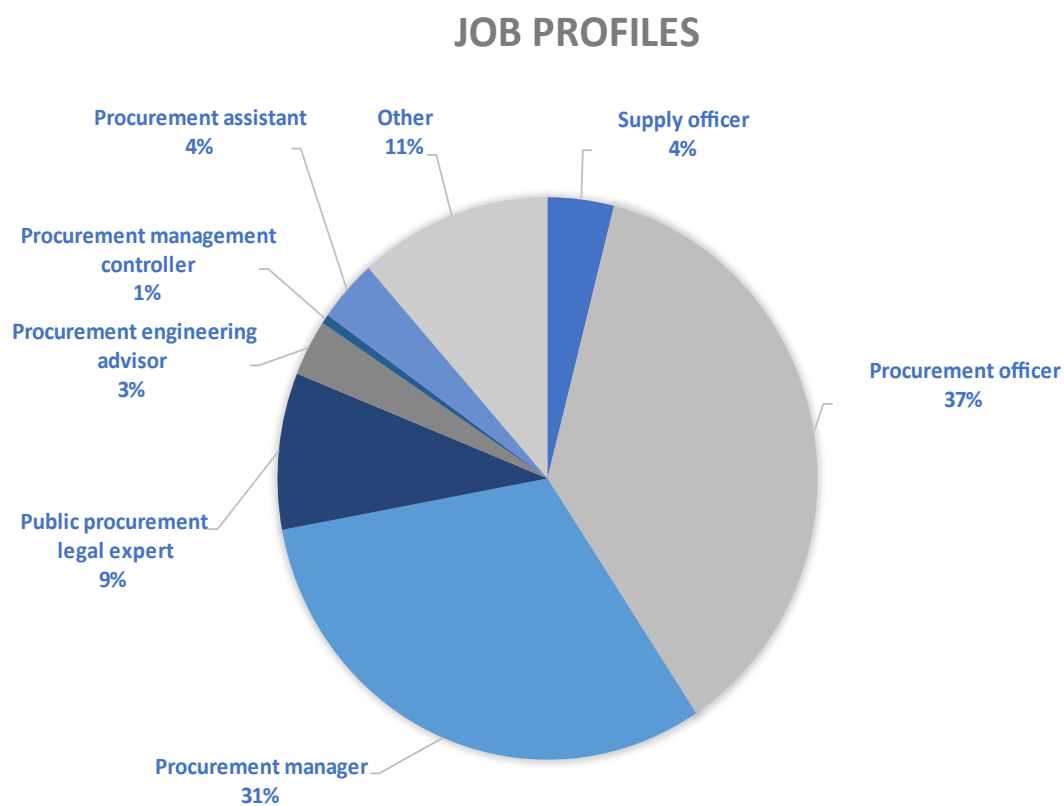
Source: (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, n.d.<sup>[2]</sup>)

Although the directory has been revised to include a greater number of job profiles, there is still no clear link between them. For example, the purchasing manager, purchasing manager - public procurement and public procurement manager have similar skills and activities. The job of purchasing manager - public procurement is distinguished by a broader scope of skills, as it implements the procurement policy of its public sphere of reference, whereas the purchasing manager implements the procurement policy of his or her own organisation. The public procurement manager, on the other hand, focuses more on the legal aspects of public procurement, and is responsible for ensuring compliance with regulations.

The same ambiguity emerges from the comparison between the specialised procurer, project procurer, multi-skilled procurer and IT or works procurer, where the four job profiles have a common set of skills. An IT or works procurer has the same skills as a specialised procurer, as both will focus more on a particular purchasing category. In addition, the difference between a project procurer and a multi-skilled procurer is difficult to distinguish. (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, n.d.<sup>[2]</sup>) Consideration could therefore be given to the use of the various job profiles in the directory by employers, with a view to proposing a clearer structuring of the career opportunities.

The survey carried out by the OECD also provides some interesting information on the distribution of State procurers across the various job profiles in the procurement function. It shows that there is a high concentration in certain procurement job profiles (68% of respondents are either procurers or procurement managers). It also reveals difficulties in identifying the job profile to which the personnel belong (11% of respondents) and the complete absence of certain jobs despite the representativeness of the sample surveyed (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3. Breakdown of State procurement staff by job profile



Note: Responses from 555 respondents.

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>)

In addition, it seems that the public authorities themselves do not necessarily take account of the typology of the procurement function, as the job postings for certain positions to be filled within Ministries do not refer to the civil service directory. In addition, many procurers hold a different position or belong to a different civil service category before joining the procurement function (finance, law, IT, etc.). This raises the question of the clarity of potential career progression, in the procurement function as in the civil service in general. The DGAFP, in collaboration with the DAE, could therefore undertake an analysis of the careers and skills of procurement officers, which could lead to the identification of transferable skills between different branches of the State civil service and help to clarify the relationship between the various job profiles in the directory.

*Conduct a census of the State's procurers to better manage the professionalisation of the function*

To carry out effective and targeted professionalisation actions (including in the field of green procurement), it is necessary to have a certain amount of data regarding the procurement function. The Council's Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability recommends that its adherents develop a long-term, strategic and systematic approach to human resources management, based on evidence and inclusive planning that relies on an evidence-based assessment of the skills needed and the skills available to meet the organisation's current and future needs, using data on human resources and the workforce for strategic and predictive analysis, while taking all necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of the data. (OECD, 2019<sup>[7]</sup>) This data can be used, for example, to develop guidance documents, a structured training

programme and practical tools tailored to the procurement function. This data can also be used to consider the implementation of effective management and career development strategies.

In France, there is no exhaustive data on the procurement function. The DAE and the Directorate General for Administration and the Civil Service - DGAFC (for the procurement function within the civil service) do not currently collect such data. The DGAFC does, however, publish annual key figures for the civil service, listing the number of employees by type of civil service (State, local authorities, hospital), by working hours, by place of employment, as well as salary figures, but the data does not include an analysis by job category.

Some countries have decided to create databases to list all civil servants, beyond the procurement function. This type of database includes, at the very least, the number of procurement agents by profession or family of professions. Other, more advanced systems may include information related to the level of training, years of experience, etc. (OECD, 2023<sup>[3]</sup>) In Australia, for example, the Australian Public Service (APS) provides a statistical overview of the APS workforce employed under the Public Service Act of 1999. It provides key indicators on the workforce as of 31 December 2023 and trends since 2004. Similarly, in the United States, the FedScope platform lists government employees at the Federal level on the basis of a number of indicators, including the professions of the various employees (see Box 3.1).

### Box 3.1. Civil service personnel databases in Australia and the United States

#### Australia

The APS Job Family Framework (the Framework) was established in 2010 for the purposes of collecting, analysing and comparing information on the type of work performed across the APS. The Framework is a workforce segmentation tool used for workforce planning purposes. It outlines an occupational grouping for the APS. Occupations talk about the type of work performed. They are a way of defining and grouping roles that require the performance of similar or identical sets of tasks. The Framework can be used to assist in undertaking benchmarking, environmental scanning and labour market analysis. As such, it enables agencies to gain a deeper understanding of their workforce, and to anticipate any future workforce supply challenges.

Under this framework, an APS employment database has been developed to compile information on public service employees. Each year a 'snapshot' of data concerning all APS employees as at 30 June and 31 December is released by the Australian Public Service Commission. The data is provided by agencies and is drawn from the Australian Public Service Employment Database.

APS employment data includes:

- demographic variables including age, gender, and work location
- data on the number of staff per job family, according to the job family framework
- classification level of APS employees, from trainee to Senior Executive Service
- diversity data including voluntary items self-reported by APS staff such as disability status, Indigenous status, and cultural diversity
- staff movements including engagements, separations, promotions and transfers between agencies.

#### United States

The U.S. Federal Government's Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is the focal point for the provision of statistical information on the federal civilian workforce. In this capacity, OPM launched FedScope in the fall of 2000 to meet the workforce data needs of several stakeholders (federal

government agencies, researchers, the media and the general public). This online tool enables stakeholders to access and analyse data on the federal public service on the basis of several indicators, including a job indicator which includes, as a sub-category, public procurement jobs.

Fedscope is based on the Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI) information system. The data is transmitted to EHRI directly by the federal agencies via their own personal information systems. The agencies are required to produce this data on a quarterly basis, and its accuracy is checked directly by the system, which can then ask the agencies to make corrections.

This database has enabled HR processes to be streamlined, data to be analysed for policy formulation and impact studies, access to salary and benefits data, and overall economies of scale for the government as a whole.

Source: (Australian Public Service Commission, 2023<sup>[9]</sup>), (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2024<sup>[9]</sup>)

One of DAE's missions, as defined in Decree 2016-247 of 3 March 2016 creating the State Procurement Directorate and related to the governance of State procurement, is to “consolidate data on procurement by State departments and its public agencies and bodies, as well as on the performance of the procurement organisations they have set up. (...) To this end, it has access to all information, particularly contractual, budgetary, financial, accounting and organisational information relating to purchasing, held by departments of the State and its public bodies with the exception of information covered by national defence secrecy.” (Gouvernement français, 2016<sup>[10]</sup>)

Given the DAE's role in the professionalisation of State procurement and its mandate to consolidate data, including organisational data, a census of procurement personnel could provide a better overall view of the State's procurement function in order to improve professionalisation efforts. This census could be carried out in collaboration with the DGAFP, given its role in drawing up annual reports and key figures on the civil service, as well as with the human resources departments of the various ministries.

The creation of a database of procurement professionals could thus help the DAE and other stakeholders define the most efficient strategy for developing a training curriculum that best meets the needs of each job in the procurement function, identify the categories to be prioritised and, in general, obtain a more accurate picture of the personnel and their needs. This database will also enable the identification of jobs that are particularly under pressure within the State's procurement function.

*Recognising more widely the role of procurement officers in achieving environmental objectives by formalising this connection in their job descriptions*

National ambitions, including in terms of sustainable development and green procurement, which are translated into concrete actions by State employees, should be reflected in some way in their job descriptions (where they exist), especially in the job descriptions of the State procurement function (Ministries and public bodies).

With regard to civil service job descriptions, Table 3.2 presents a mapping of the inclusion of environmental considerations within job descriptions of the State procurement function. Most of the job descriptions (8 out of 11) include environmental considerations in the definition of the job and in the description of the main activities (directly or indirectly). All of the job descriptions include knowledge of sustainable procurement in the skills requirements. Finally, almost all of the job descriptions include environmental considerations in the ‘specificity section’, which describes the particular conditions under which the job is carried out, the career development perspectives and the impact on the job profile. The next revision of the job directory could therefore include elements related to sustainability and environmental considerations in all sections of the job descriptions for the procurement function. In addition, sustainable

procurement skills should be required not only in terms of knowledge but also in terms of know-how for certain professions.

**Table 3.2. Inclusion of environmental considerations in civil service job descriptions (procurement function)**

	Job profile	Definition of the job	Main activities	Skills	Specificities
1	Purchasing manager	Yes, directly	Yes, indirectly <i>He/she must ensure that procurement performance targets are met (the environmental aspect of performance is mentioned in the 'definition' section)</i>	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
2	Purchasing manager – public procurement	Yes, directly	Yes, indirectly <i>He/she must ensure that procurement performance targets are met (the environmental aspect of performance is mentioned in the 'definition' section)</i>	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
3	Public procurement manager	No	No	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
4	Multi-skilled procurer	Yes, directly	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
5	IT procurer (IT, telecoms)	Yes, directly	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
6	Procurer for works, real estate, energy	Yes, directly	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
7	Specialised procurer	Yes, directly	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
8	Project procurer	Yes, directly	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
9	Procurement engineering advisor	No	Yes, directly	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
10	Procurement management controller	No	No	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	N/A
11	Procurement assistant	No	No	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly
12	Supply expert - contracts and procurement administrator	No	No	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes indirectly (mention of the Responsible Procurement and Supplier Management label)
13	Procurement legal expert	Yes, directly	No	Yes, directly (knowledge only)	Yes, directly

Source: (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, n.d.[2])

The OECD has analysed job descriptions for the procurement function published in 2023 and 2024, a number of which do not mention any activity related to green procurement or, more specifically, the integration of environmental considerations. Given the State's ambitions in terms of environmental protection, the human resources departments of the State's ministries and public bodies should ensure that the job descriptions for the procurement function include elements relating to the integration of environmental considerations. Including these environmental considerations in job descriptions could thus contribute to France's efforts to create jobs in the green economy. According to the Observatoire national des emplois et métiers de l'économie verte (National Observatory of Jobs and Professions in the Green Economy), in addition to green jobs with a direct environmental focus, 3.8 million people work in jobs that

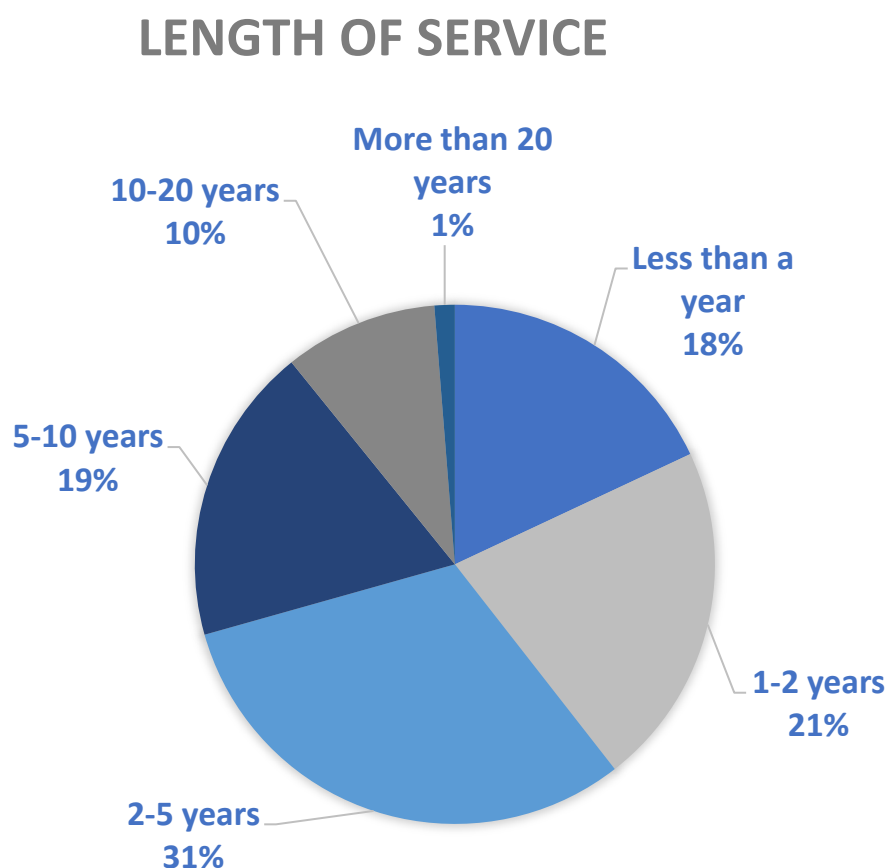


could potentially be involved in integrating environmental issues, even if the functions performed do not have a direct environmental focus. These ‘greening’ professions cover a wide range of fields: procurement, construction, transport, industry, research and development, tourism and entertainment, purchasing, agriculture and forestry, and maintenance of green spaces. (Ministère de la Transition Écologique, 2023<sup>[11]</sup>) Procurement officers are therefore key players in contributing to the success of the ecological transition, and systematically incorporating this dimension into their job descriptions would be an important recognition of this.

### **3.1.2. Developing an attractive procurement function to meet the challenges of recruitment and turnover**

A number of discussions during the fact-finding missions highlighted two major challenges facing the State procurement function: recruitment and turnover. The main source of these challenges lies in the lack of incentive mechanisms, and in particular unattractive remuneration, especially in certain ministries. The OECD survey confirms the problem of turnover. Nearly 70% of respondents have less than 5 years’ experience in their organization (see Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4. Length of service of various employees in the State procurement function**



Note: Responses from 555 respondents.

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>)

The Council's Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability recommends “defining and offering transparent terms and conditions of employment (e.g. in terms of remuneration, tenure, job security and rights and obligations) commensurate with the duties of the post, taking into account external and internal labour markets” (OCDE, 2019<sup>[12]</sup>). The issue of the attractiveness of the public procurement profession is also central to the OECD Council Recommendation on Public Procurement (OCDE, 2015<sup>[13]</sup>).

The introduction of incentive mechanisms aimed at increasing the motivation of procurement professionals is an important factor in the professionalisation of procurement staff (OECD, 2023<sup>[3]</sup>). This motivation helps not only to maintain the performance and productivity of the public sector, but also to attract qualified workers. The types of incentive mechanisms can be classified into three groups:

- i) Direct financial incentives (wages/salaries, bonuses etc.)
- ii) Indirect financial incentives (pensions, insurances, childcare allowances etc.)
- iii) Non-financial incentives (professional development, training and certifications, recognition/awards, work environment, holidays, flexible working hours etc.) (OECD, 2023<sup>[3]</sup>).

Direct financial mechanisms are governed by the structure of the civil service and its grading system. Civil servants are paid a salary plus bonuses and allowances (Ministère de la transformation et de la fonction publiques, n.d.<sup>[14]</sup>). While salaries are more or less harmonised across ministries, bonus systems are different and can represent a significant difference in remuneration. In addition, although there is more flexibility in public bodies, they are subject to strict rules to ensure that the wage bill is kept under control.

In contrast, the private sector, because of its profit-oriented nature, recognises the buyer's strategic role in controlling expenditure and improving the entity's operational efficiency, including in environmental matters, which allows greater value to be placed on purchasing profiles. This observation was confirmed in a cross-functional diagnosis carried out by the DAE in 2020. More specifically, this study confirmed the low attractiveness of the procurement function due to salary scales compared with the private sector and the absence of grades within the function. It also highlighted major disparities across various ministries (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[15]</sup>).

According to a study carried out in 2024, salaries for procurement managers in the private sector are on average 30 to 40% higher than in the public sector, regardless of the level of experience (from less than 3 years to more than 10 years). A similar observation applies to procurement officers, who are better paid in the private sector, particularly if they specialise in certain purchasing categories. This gap widens even further when salaries in the Paris Region are compared with those in the rest of France (HAYS France, 2024<sup>[16]</sup>).

In addition to the attractiveness of the profession, the level of remuneration offered to civil servants in the government procurement function has a direct impact on the level of experience of those recruited. According to various stakeholders, State procurement officers tend to leave the civil service quickly and move into the private sector after acquiring a certain amount of experience (generally between 1 and 3 years) and after receiving training in this field. This rate of turnover represents a significant loss of investment for entities, particularly considering the costs associated with training.

In order to overcome these challenges, raising the salaries of the whole of the State's procurement function seems difficult, given the budgetary constraints on public spending and the existing pay scales. Nevertheless, a number of international examples illustrate that targeted action on incentive mechanisms, both financial and non-financial, can have an impact on the attractiveness of the public procurement profession (see Box 3.2).

### Box 3.2. Promoting careers in public procurement in Canada

The Government of Canada is looking to recruit around 1,000 motivated professionals interested in a career in public procurement between 2022 and 2024. To this end, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat has set up an information platform on ‘careers in public procurement’ to facilitate the recruitment process. The website contains information such as the skills and aptitudes required to start a professional career in public procurement, training and development programmes, possible career paths, information on salaries and benefits, as well as a video interview in which staff talk about the dynamics of working in the public procurement sector.

In terms of salary, procurement officers are classified in the Purchasing and Supply (PG) group of the federal civil service. The starting annual salary for a PG is CAD 65,000 (around EUR 44,500), although staff can earn a salary of more than CAD 75,000 (around EUR 51,300) if they successfully complete a certification training programme. The Directive on Terms and Conditions of Employment also allows new employees to negotiate their rate of pay:

- when there is a shortage of skilled labour or difficulties filling a position
- where the minimum rate of pay is not competitive with rates offered by local or regional employers for similar duties

In addition, procurement officers are entitled to other benefits, such as a specific pension scheme, health and dental care, a minimum of three weeks (15 working days) paid holiday and other paid leave, and the possibility of flexible working arrangements such as teleworking and the 4-day week.

Source: (Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada, 2022<sup>[17]</sup>)

The example of Canada illustrates different strategies for motivating civil servants to pursue careers in public procurement. In 2022, France launched the “*Choisir le Service Public*” (“*Choose the civil service*”) platform to raise awareness of public service professions and attract new talent to the civil service, including procurement.

However, unlike in Canada, the description of the different roles within the procurement function remains largely procedural and does not put into perspective the contribution of this function to the achievement of public service missions. There is also no specific information on employment conditions, possible career progression or feedback on the skills that can be acquired in this role within the public service. Furthermore, while the importance of public procurement in achieving environmental objectives is affirmed by a multitude of legislative and regulatory texts, references to these objectives are virtually non-existent in the descriptions of the various jobs in the procurement function.

In the past, public administrations had to make only a limited effort to attract candidates, particularly for entrance examinations, but the context has changed considerably. Enhancing the attractiveness of the civil service is becoming even more necessary at a time when the civil service is ageing and it is becoming crucial to replace retiring staff. In this context, the question of the meaning of jobs is becoming a prominent argument for attractiveness (OCDE, 2023<sup>[18]</sup>).

The main stakeholders, the DAE and the DGAFP, could initiate an in-depth analysis of the meaning of the procurement function, its contribution to the greening of administrations and develop a website (or a section of an existing website such as *Choisir le Service Public*) dedicated to careers in public procurement. This website could provide information on the different professions in the procurement function, their missions and their contributions to public services, and on opportunities for professional development, particularly in the context of continuous training.

Beyond the attractiveness of the function and in order to retain talent, by linking an increase in salary to the completion of the certification training programme, Canada is ensuring that a sample of procurement staff will have their skills upgraded at a relatively modest cost. (OECD, 2023<sup>[3]</sup>) Following the example of this initiative, the completion of a specific programme in France, such as the various certification courses offered by the Institut de la Gestion Publique et du Développement Économique (Institute of Public Management and Economic Development or IGPDE), which is the main training body of the Ministry of Economy, or a certification course in green procurement, could pave the way for career progression (see Chapter 4).

### **3.1.3. Technical experts and decision-makers, key players in taking environmental considerations into account in public procurement**

In addition to the State's procurement function strictly speaking, many other players play an important role in taking environmental considerations into account, in particular specifiers and decision-makers. The technical experts play a key role in public procurement because they define the needs, and therefore what should be procured. In particular, they specify how long the deliverables are likely to be useful to their organisation, in what geographical territory, in what contexts, on what media, etc. (Ministère de l'économie des finances et de la souveraineté industrielle et numérique, 2017<sup>[19]</sup>) In public procurement, the role of the technical expert generally involves defining the need, drawing up technical specifications, participating in market engagement and monitoring contract performance - two areas targeted by the Climate and Resilience Law and the PNAD for the inclusion of environmental considerations.

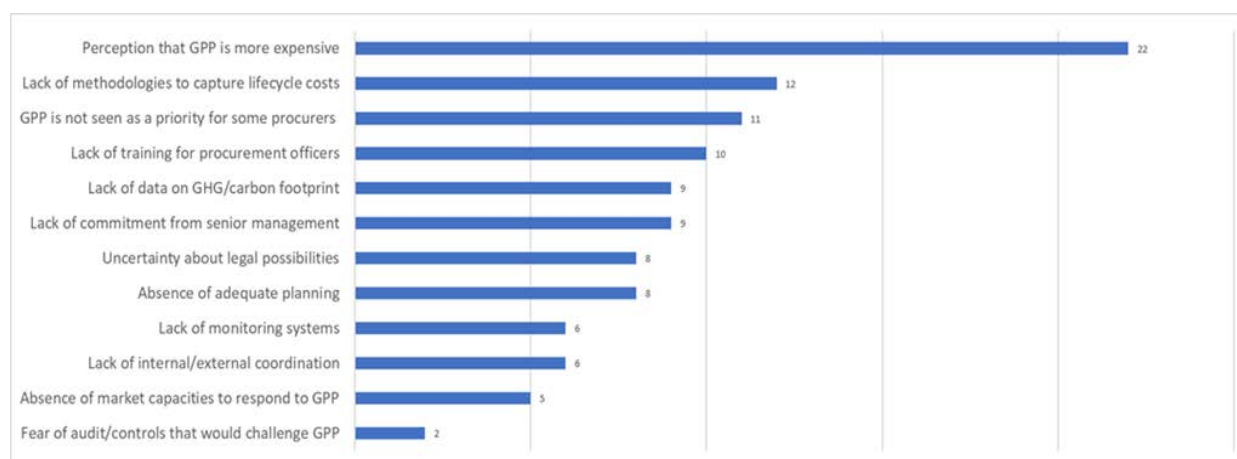
However, the extent to which technical experts have taken on board the GPP objectives appears to be limited. And yet these technical experts operate in a variety of procurement categories that are particularly conducive to the integration of environmental considerations, such as vehicles, construction, port activities, information systems and IT, etc. An OECD survey of 22 technical experts revealed that only three of them had a strategy dealing with environmental issues within their division, while 6 others indicated that such a strategy was in the process of being developed.

Beyond the strategic objectives, the operational reality demonstrates the potential for greater synergy between technical experts and procurement officers. The responses to the survey indicate a diverse role for technical experts in the public procurement cycle, with joint intervention with buyers at various stages such as gathering needs, drafting technical specifications, undertaking market research, establishing award criteria, evaluating tenders, monitoring contracts and making payments. Only 40% of the technical experts surveyed said that they contribute to taking environmental considerations into account in procurement, some by inserting performance clauses or environmental criteria, others by drafting environmentally-friendly specifications.

A broader engagement of technical experts is needed to ensure that the entire procurement ecosystem has the objectives of the various public policies mentioned in Chapter 2 in mind. While some technical experts are already aware of environmental issues, practical training could prove useful in strengthening their capacity to integrate environmental considerations into public procurement (see Chapter 4). This observation is confirmed by the results of the survey, which highlight a need for stronger communication with procurement officers in order to improve technical experts' understanding of the environmental dimension of procurement. (OCDE, 2024<sup>[20]</sup>)

Another key player in the procurement system is the decision-maker, the legal representative of the contracting authority. His role includes awarding and signing contracts on the basis of the analysis of tenders carried out by his departments, and thus legally committing the contracting authority on the basis of a power of attorney. It thus supports the procurement function. (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2020<sup>[21]</sup>) An OECD report reveals that many countries have identified a lack of commitment on the part of decision-makers as a barrier to the implementation of environmental public procurement (see Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5. Main obstacles to GPP implementation



Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

In this respect, the survey carried out by the OECD reveals that little account is taken of environmental issues at the level of strategic orientations within the various organisations. This lack of consideration on the part of decision-makers, coupled with the need to build the capacity of technical experts on GPP in order to analyse tenders, and the lack of interest in environmental criteria compared with other criteria, does not facilitate the inclusion of environmental considerations in public procurement (OCDE, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>).

A number of factors may explain why environmental considerations are not sufficiently taken into account by decision-makers. They may perceive them as costly in terms of budgets, preferring economic efficiency and technical conformity. They may also find them more complex, with higher transaction costs and risks than existing practices (World Bank, 2021<sup>[23]</sup>). These concerns are often due to a lack of awareness of environmental issues and the use of public procurement as a strategic tool for meeting these challenges.

A training campaign on the ecological transition has already been launched by the government and implemented by the Institut national du service public (National Institute of Civil Service - INSP). The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness among all civil servants by 2027, starting in 2022 with 220 central government directors. (Ministre de la Transformation et de la Fonction publiques, 2022<sup>[24]</sup>) By the end of 2024, the aim is to train all 25,000 senior civil servants. This campaign provides an opportunity to introduce the role of public procurement in the ecological transition. However, in the current version of training, the question of the role of public procurement as a lever for ecological transition is only mentioned briefly. In Canada, for example, specific online training on GPP is aimed at managers and supervisors (see Box 3.3).

### Box 3.3. GPP training for decision-makers in Canada

In response to Canada's commitment to climate change, the Canada School of Public Service has highlighted the importance of environmental performance in public procurement decision-making and has developed an online course for managers and supervisors of public entities.

This course presents the federal government's environmental procurement policy and provides detailed strategies for applying its principles throughout the procurement process. Participants can examine the different reasons for environmentally friendly procurement and learn to identify what defines a sustainable good or service.

Topics include:

- Understanding green public procurement policies
- Identifying the main eco-labels
- Applying life cycle analysis
- Defining value for money
- Evaluating suppliers' environmental declarations

Source: (Canada School of Public Service, 2022<sup>[25]</sup>)

In addition to the current campaign to raise awareness of the ecological transition, an online training module aimed at decision-makers would also be beneficial in order to increase the awareness of environmental issues involved in procurement. In 2023, the CGDD launched an 8.5-hour MOOC devoted to the challenges of sustainable procurement, currently available on OpenClassroom. It is recommended that this course be made available on the MENTOR online platform to widen its access. It would also be advisable to actively promote this training to decision-makers and, possibly, to link certain elements of remuneration to its completion.

## 3.2. Improving access to environmental expertise to ensure more effective integration of environmental considerations in public procurement

There are a number of players who can help the State's procurement officers take environmental considerations into account and integrate them into public procurement contracts, including the DAE, the sustainable procurement advisors and the various green desks at regional level.

### 3.2.1. More use could be made of the DAE's expertise to meet the operational challenges of State procurers

The DAE defines and implements the State's procurement policy (with the exception of defence and security procurement). Among its missions as defined in the 2016 decree, the DAE “advises the State's departments and State public bodies on their procurement strategies and the organisation of the procurement function”. (Gouvernement français, 2016<sup>[10]</sup>)

In addition, the decision of 18 March 2024 on the organisation of the DAE states that “the Procurement Modernisation Sub-Directorate prepares and drives the policy of modernising the procurement function of the State and the public bodies of the State [...], and supports its implementation by taking action on procurement governance, organisation and processes. It prepares, implements and steers the State's strategic procurement policies in terms of environmentally and socially responsible procurement; it

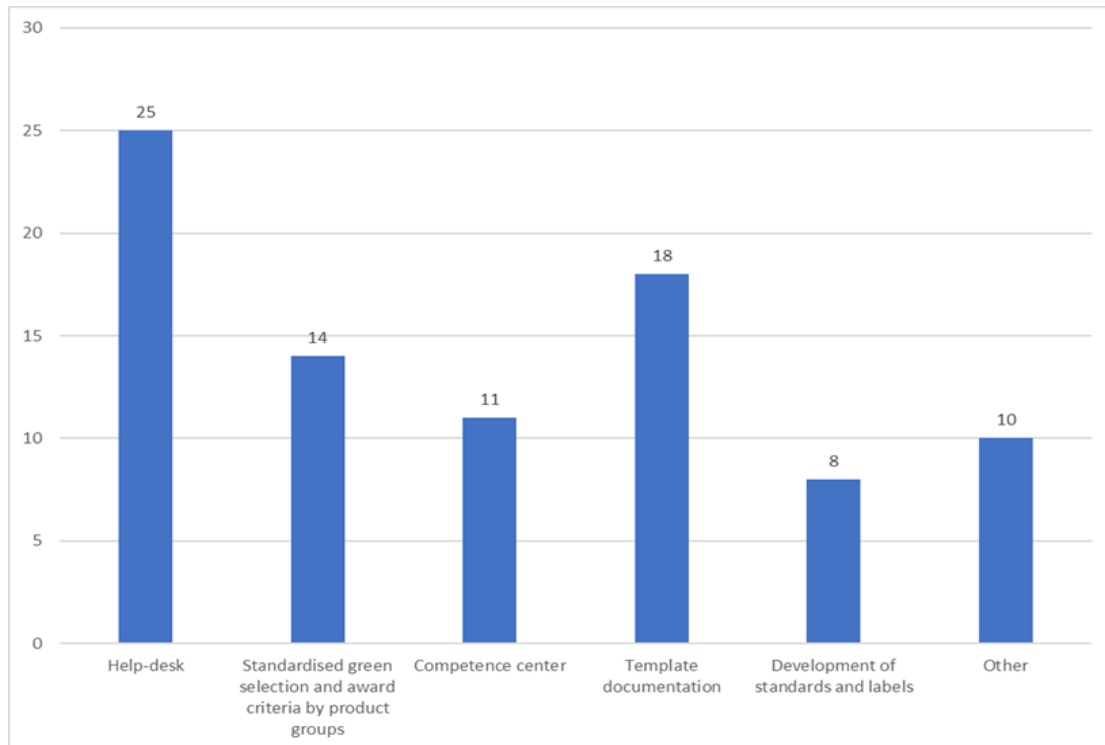
supports the operational implementation of these policies for the entities mentioned above. It prepares the State's scheme for promoting socially and environmentally responsible procurement (SPASER).” (Gouvernement français, 2024<sup>[26]</sup>)

As a result, the DAE is playing a leading role in the widespread introduction of environmental considerations into the State's public procurement contracts. In order to implement this mission, the Procurement Modernisation Sub-Directorate has set up an Office for Sustainable Procurement. This office has also recently strengthened its structure and technical expertise. Three additional staff were recruited in 2024 to play an active role in advising procurers in the ministries, regional procurement platforms and public bodies.

The Office for Sustainable Procurement is designed to respond to specific issues, in particular those relating to the circular economy, construction materials and pollution control. The limited number of resources and the variety of issues raised by the inclusion of environmental considerations may not allow the DAE to meet all of the demand, but this reinforcement of the DAE's capacities should enable its advisory role to be given greater prominence. Indeed, some players have pointed to a lack of clarity regarding the DAE's potential role in supporting procurers, particularly in the regions.

Given the new nature of this role, the DAE could monitor the volume and nature of requests for support made by procurers over one or two years, and thus re-evaluate the size of the office. The DAE would therefore be following the example of many OECD countries, which have chosen to set up a help desk to assist procurers in implementing green public procurement (see Figure 3.6).

**Figure 3.6. Types of support provided to contracting authorities on GPP in OECD countries**



Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

In addition, the Office for Sustainable Procurement can count on the support of other DAE departments in order to build the capacity of the State's procurers. In fact, the same sub-directorate is responsible for the professionalisation of those involved in the procurement function through training, via the office for the

professionalisation of the procurement function. It also proposes and leads initiatives to enhance the attractiveness of the State's professional procurement function. The DAE has set up a number of forums for exchanges among those involved in the procurement function, but these remain at a high level and do not include the procurers themselves:

- **The organisation of the biannual seminar on sustainable procurement** for the State and its public bodies. The seminar is chaired by the Director of State Purchasing and brings together the procurement managers of the ministries, the directors of the regional procurement platforms, and the procurement managers of the main public bodies (EP). The Commissariat général au développement durable (CGDD), UGAP (the main centralized purchasing body) and the ministerial sustainable procurement advisors are also members of this forum;
- **The organisation of meetings**, every two months, under the guidance of the DAE, for ministerial sustainable procurement advisors.

These meetings could be supplemented by a systematic exchange between the DAE, via the office for professionalisation of the procurement function, and the IGPDE, in order to gain a better understanding of the expectations and difficulties faced by procurers in implementing sustainable procurement.

### ***3.2.2. Promoting the role of sustainable procurement advisors within State entities***

The ministerial sustainable procurement advisors were created in 2016. The aim was to set up sustainable procurement experts within each ministry to facilitate the implementation of environmental policies in State procurement. The DAE has also drafted a sustainable procurement advisor mission statement in cooperation with the ministerial sustainable procurement advisors in order to harmonise their role. The sustainable procurement advisors are responsible for coordinating the actions of their ministry's departments at central level, as well as those of decentralised departments and public bodies under their ministry's supervision.

They have 7 main missions, including participating in the interministerial implementation of the State's sustainable procurement policy, defining the procedures for implementing their ministry's sustainable procurement policy, and monitoring sustainable procurement policy performance indicators. They are also responsible for providing support to the procurers and technical departments of their ministry, by helping to draft social and/or environmental clauses, monitoring implementation and assessing results, as well as providing support to those involved in procurement at all stages of the procurement project with regard to the functional aspects of the sustainable development clauses. (Direction des Achats de l'Etat, 2023<sup>[27]</sup>)

The tasks assigned to the ministerial sustainable procurement advisors should help to build the capacity of those involved in the State's procurement function to implement environmental considerations in their procurement processes, particularly in decentralised departments and public bodies. However, many stakeholders, particularly in decentralised departments, have pointed to a lack of awareness of the very existence of this advisor or of his or her duties. This lack of visibility certainly has an impact on the use of the services that the advisor can provide to purchasers.

In order to maximise the benefits of the existence of this expertise, the role of sustainable procurement advisors should be elevated to that of genuine change agents to raise procurers' awareness of sustainable procurement. A 2015 study showed that in many public procurement departments, change agents played a crucial role in building capacity, increasing motivation, and creating additional opportunities for sustainable procurement. (Andhov et al., 2020<sup>[28]</sup>)

For example, the Public Procurement Unit in Jičín, Czech Republic, acted as an agent of change within the city council. The unit conducted pilot tenders to test sustainable considerations in practice. The unit secured top-level management support for the implementation of sustainable procurement and organised a training seminar to inspire the city council and its subordinate organisations (such as schools and sports



facilities) in this area. The unit's actions as a change agent for green procurement even led to the inclusion of environmental issues in the city's long-term strategic plan. (Andhov et al., 2020<sup>[28]</sup>) Practices in Australia provide another example of promoting the circular economy through the creation of sustainable procurement champions (see Box 3.4).

#### Box 3.4. The Buy Recycled Champions programme in Victoria, Australia

As part of Sustainability Victoria's (SV) Buy Recycled service, 23 champions from 21 Victorian regional and metropolitan councils have been appointed as Buy Recycled Champions from March 2023 to June 2024.

The initiative enables Buy Recycled Champions to embed sustainable procurement practices as a mainstream activity within their councils and provides opportunities for participants to build capacity, influence, network and share successes within their own councils and beyond.

Champions have been selected based on their enthusiasm for improving sustainable procurement outcomes within their council, their ability to influence internal sustainable procurement decisions and their interest in supporting other councils on their sustainable procurement journey.

The 'Buy Recycled Champions' initiative is part of SV's 'Buy Recycled' service, which enables councils to use more recycled materials and products in infrastructure, landscaping, parks and gardens.

In 2025 the 'Buy Recycled' Champions program evolved into the 'Buy Circular' Champions program and includes 40 Champions from 28 Victorian Councils. This program supports councils to consider circular aspects of products including recycled and reused materials, materials efficiency, design for disassembly, product as a service and product repair, while encouraging the adoption of circular economy principles in procurement decisions for infrastructure, landscaping, parks and gardens projects.

Source: (Sustainability Victoria, 2024<sup>[29]</sup>) and (Sustainability Victoria, 2024<sup>[30]</sup>)

There are various ways of promoting sustainable procurement advisors within ministries: ensuring that they are systematically present at the biannual seminars on sustainable procurement organised by the DAE, or publishing a newsletter, either issued by the DAE or by each ministry, detailing the role and activities of these advisors. Given the geographical remoteness of decentralised departments and many public bodies, it will be necessary to ensure that these newsletters are distributed to all ministerial networks. Certified sustainable procurement advisors could also participate in training efforts by becoming occasional in-house trainers (see Section 4.1.1).

Furthermore, the sustainable procurement policy of the State and its public bodies recommends creating and leading an internal sustainable procurement community in each ministry, steered by ministerial sustainable procurement advisors, with the aim of setting up a ministerial network that meets at least once a year. To date, this practice remains exceptional. The effective implementation of this recommendation could be beneficial. In addition, the policy stipulates that, in order to implement the objectives of the sustainable procurement policy, the main public bodies (with an annual volume of more than €10m excluding VAT) must also appoint a sustainable procurement advisor and, to this end, may draw inspiration from the mission statement for the sustainable procurement advisors mentioned above. If the ministerial advisor already covers the public bodies under the authority of his or her ministry, setting up these advisors within the public bodies themselves could help increase the scope of these objectives.

### 3.2.3. The availability of sustainable procurement expertise in the regions

The need for support in implementing green procurement is not limited to central government. Decentralised services and public bodies, which are major players in public procurement, also need expertise in this area. State purchasers in the regions have approached this issue in two different ways.

Some regional procurement platforms have opted to set up an internal sustainable procurement advisor, whose role varies from region to region. Most have a sustainable procurement advisor, but only for contracts managed by the platform. On the other hand, procurement officers in both the Centre Val de Loire and Nouvelle-Aquitaine procurement platforms who have endorsed the role of sustainable procurement advisors, provide their services for the entire region. These regional advisors could take part in the biannual seminars on sustainable procurement as well as the ministerial network of sustainable procurement advisors in order to ensure the consistency of the various practices.

In addition to these regional advisors, the main support networks for the procurement function are the “*guichets verts*” or green desks, which are environmental advisory services offered to public procurers as part of the PNAD 2022-2025 programme, which was rolled out on an experimental basis from September 2022. The programme is run by the regional networks for sustainable public procurement, with the support of the Commissariat Général au Développement Durable. The green desks are being deployed in all regions having a regional public procurement network, with the aim of covering the whole of national territory. (Ministère de la Transition Écologique et de la Cohésion des Territoires, 2022<sup>[31]</sup>) Figure 3.7 describes the regional networks active in 2024.

Figure 3.7. Regional public procurement networks active in 2024



Source: (Ministère de la transition écologique et de la cohésion des territoires, 2024<sup>[32]</sup>)

The networks offer free first-level support to help public procurers incorporate environmental considerations into their procurement procedures. This support may relate to a specific procurement procedure or a general approach to green procurement issues. For more advanced support<sup>1</sup>, a membership fee must be paid to the various networks, ranging from €250 to €5,000. The cost of membership depends, for example, on the number of inhabitants in the case of local authorities (e.g. €250 for local authorities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants to €3,000 for those with more than 500,000 at Res'Occ), or the number of beds in the case of healthcare facilities. The cost of membership is generally higher for State entities, with a fixed price of between €3,000 and €5,000 for decentralised departments, and €500 to €1,000 for State bodies.

The green desks are open to all public procurers located in areas where there is a regional network for sustainable public procurement. The green desk charter mentions that the internal advisors provided to State purchasers are to be contacted first, before consulting the green desk.

In practice, these networks are frequently approached by procurers, including State procurers, to support them in incorporating environmental considerations while taking into account local or regional aspects. However, several State procurement officers have highlighted a number of challenges, including the lack of political will on the part of the State to encourage its staff to use these green desks and the lack of budget to benefit from more advanced support.

### 3.3. The challenge of effectively taking environmental considerations into account throughout the procurement life cycle

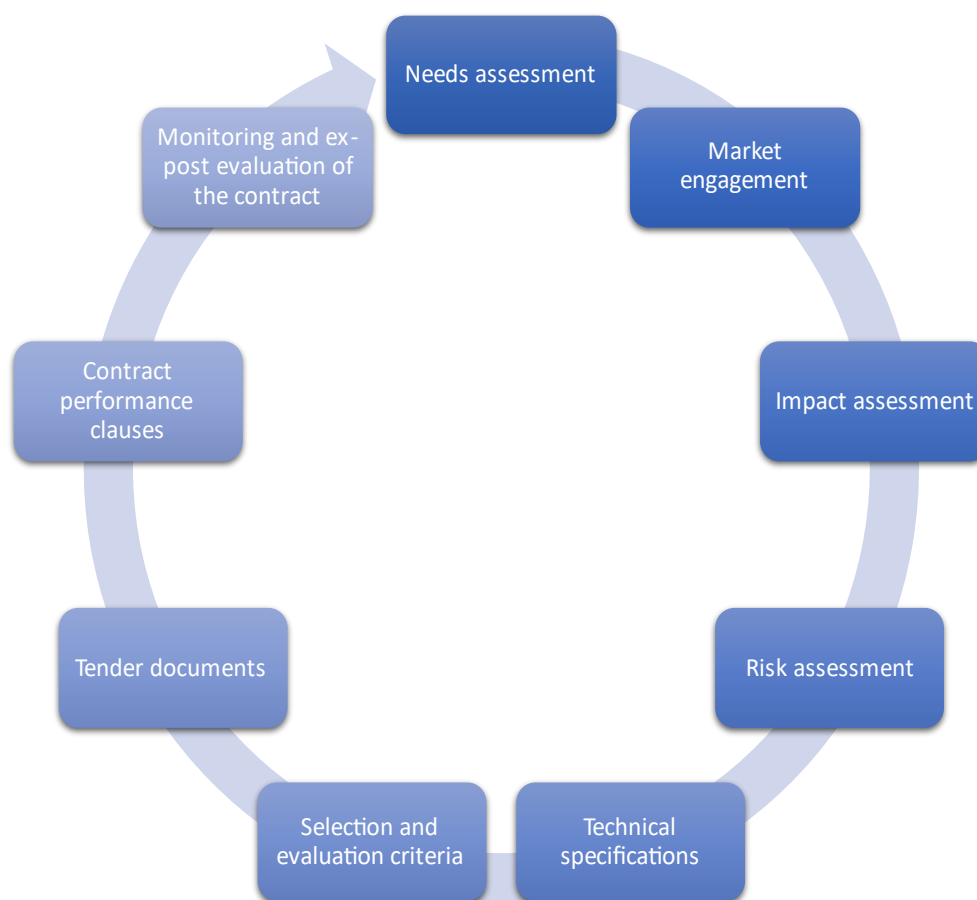
The regulatory and strategic framework requires environmental considerations to be taken into account for all procurement categories. 20% of respondents to the OECD survey consider it difficult to take environmental considerations into account for certain categories, particularly intellectual/consulting services, and certain project management contracts. Faced with these challenges, while some procurers do not integrate environmental considerations at all, others, in order to comply with the targets, either:

- i) Consider the mere reference to regulations as an environmental consideration. Indeed, for certain procurement categories, the legislator has specified minimum mandatory considerations to be taken into account (see Table 2.1); or
- ii) Include clauses that have little or no real impact on the subject matter of the contract. For example, in the case of consulting services contracts, some invitations to tender simply require deliverables to be delivered electronically.

In addition to the issues linked to certain procurement categories, the discussions held during the fact-finding missions and the results of the survey show that there are recurring difficulties in relation to certain stages of the public procurement life cycle, in particular with regard to market research, drafting of tender documents, and monitoring of contracts (OCDE, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>). These challenges are partly linked to issues of capacity and professionalisation.

As illustrated in Figure 3.8, taking environmental considerations into account in public procurement can be relevant throughout the public purchasing cycle (from defining the need, to payment and contract completion).

**Figure 3.8. Taking environmental considerations into account throughout the life cycle of public procurement contracts**



Source: Adapted from (OECD, 2021<sup>[33]</sup>)

### **3.3.1. Leveraging the benefits of market research to define effective environmental considerations in public procurement contracts**

Market research is used to identify market capacities in terms of volumes, quality, and technical parameters, in order to design and draw up specifications and tender documents that are tailored to the reality of the market. These studies also enable examining the appropriateness of using public procurement as a strategic lever to achieve public policy objectives, such as sustainable development, access to public procurement for small and medium-sized enterprises or support for innovation. Market research helps to reduce the asymmetry of information between public buyers and economic operators, thereby improving overall market efficiency and obtaining better value for money (OCDE, 2019<sup>[34]</sup>). Ultimately, it can lead to the development of innovative ways of providing services or building facilities. (OECD, 2021<sup>[33]</sup>)

Market research provides a unique opportunity to gather information on how environmental considerations are taken into account. More specifically, it can help:

- Identify potential suppliers and solutions that have a positive impact on the environment;
- Encourage the market to respond to new requirements in terms of environmental considerations through dialogue;

- Inform the design of the procurement strategy, tender documentation, and contract so that the integration of environmental considerations is relevant, linked to the contract objective and measurable. (OECD, 2021<sup>[33]</sup>)

Initiating these discussions well in advance of the launch of a call for tenders will ensure that economic operators have sufficient time and information to prepare and adapt their commercial practices and supply chains in order to participate in the competitive tendering procedure, thereby promoting effective competition (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>).

Taking environmental considerations into account in public procurement is also highlighted in several sections of the guide on “operational sourcing” spearheaded by the DAE, which was published in 2019 (Direction des Achats de l’État, 2019<sup>[35]</sup>). This guide was developed by a multi-disciplinary team made up of representatives from the civil service of the State and its public bodies, and is intended to serve as a common reference framework for public buyers in the area of market research. It contains a number of annexes aimed at operationalising the implementation of market research, such as a call for expertise template, a model supplier invitation, a general supplier questionnaire model, etc. A number of discussions during the fact-finding missions highlighted the usefulness of this guide.

However, in France, those involved in the State's procurement function face a number of problems when it comes to analysing the supplier market. Discussions during the fact-finding missions identified two major problems linked to market analysis:

- i) A lack of capacity (in terms of numbers) to implement systematic market research. This analysis is therefore not carried out for all procurement processes within a given entity.
- ii) The use of an inappropriate methodology. Some public buyers only consult the holders of contracts that are currently being implemented, or the contractors of other lots in the case of allotted procurement contracts. Furthermore, when market research is used, the market's capacity to integrate environmental considerations is rarely addressed in the discussions or in the analysis.

As such, it is essential to build the capacity of those involved in the State's procurement function in order to implement systematic market research practices that allow a certain number of economic operators to be consulted in addition to current contract holders and that, in general, actively address environmental considerations.

The DAE guide could be supplemented by practical tools for implementing market research that is more focused on environmental issues, such as checklists or standard market analysis reports for more environmentally friendly products.

Beyond the development of tools and methodologies, some countries have also taken the initiative of setting up multi-stakeholder forums, specialised working groups and dedicated teams to facilitate the participation of the private sector in the development of policies and instruments related to green public procurement, by giving them a formal role in the design process itself.

For example, the Japan's Green Purchasing Network brings together stakeholders from the private sector, central and local governments, and civil society organisations (see Box 3.5).

### Box 3.5. The Green Purchasing Network in Japan

The Green Purchasing Network (GPN) is a network organisation where different entities, such as private companies, governmental bodies and consumer groups, work together to promote green procurement. In 1996, the GPN has defined the Green Purchasing Principles. These principles encompass the following four major points:

1. Consider whether a product is needed before purchasing it;
2. Consider environmental impacts across the whole life cycle of a product, including those incurred through any services provided from extraction of raw materials to disposal;
3. Select products and services offered by suppliers who take a conscious effort reduce the impact on the environment;
4. Gather information on products, services, and suppliers to inform decision-making and management of contractual relationships.

Building upon these principles, the Green Purchasing Guidelines were developed to provide guiding principles for purchasing by category of products and services. Different GPN members, including manufacturers of eco-friendly products, companies willing to purchase green products, consumer groups, non-governmental environmental associations and local governments, co-designed the Guidelines based on a consensus-building approach. The Guidelines cover a wide range of products and services – i.e. from office supplies and home appliances to vehicles.

Moreover, based on the Principles of Green Purchasing, the GPN created a Supplier Evaluation Check List to assess the efforts undertaken by suppliers to improve the environmental performance of products and services. In the Eco-products Database, suppliers then disclose information about the environmental measures adopted for each product and service registered, in accordance with the Check List. The Eco-products Database gives environmental information in list form on products provided by each manufacturer so that users can compare products from an environmental standpoint in accordance with the Green Purchasing Guidelines. As of May 23, 2016, the database listed approximately 15,000 products from 63 fields, including environmentally friendly products in product fields for which the Green Purchasing Guidelines have yet to be formulated.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

The DAE or the regional procurement platforms could draw on these practices to promote an inclusive approach to identifying the green products and services on offer from the private sector. In addition, these elements could provide a reference base for other buyers to identify products and services with better environmental performance. The use of the APPACH information system and its database of 80,000 suppliers would also benefit from being promoted among buyers in order to facilitate the identification of green products.

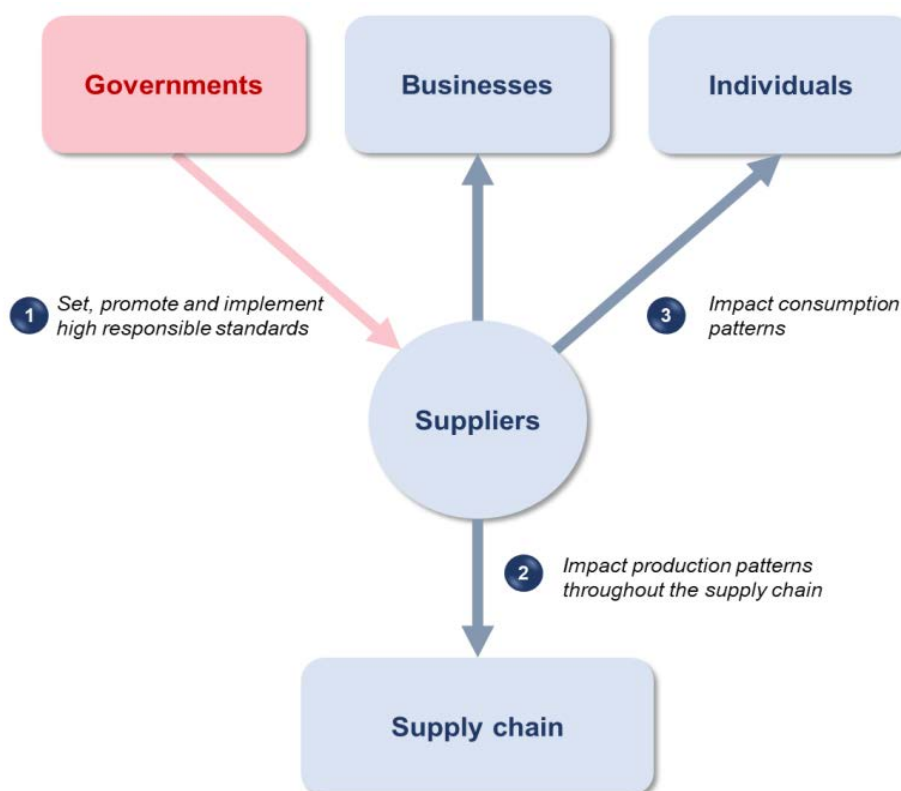
### **3.3.2. Standardising the inclusion of environmental considerations in tender documentation would enhance the impact of public procurement on the ecological transition**

The public sector is a major consumer of goods, services and works supplied by the private sector, and sometimes the main consumer in certain procurement categories. Because of the volume it represents (12.9% of GDP in OECD countries), public procurement has the potential to influence markets both in

terms of production standards throughout the supply chain and also in terms of consumption in favour of environmentally friendly and socially responsible products and services on a large scale.

They therefore represent a lever for achieving certain public policies. Economic operators and their supply chains must comply with the sustainability requirements set by the public sector. High sustainability standards in public procurement activities could influence production and, consequently, consumption patterns (see Figure 3.9). (OECD, 2022<sup>[36]</sup>)

**Figure 3.9. Public procurement influences production and consumption patterns**



Source: (OECD, 2022<sup>[36]</sup>)

If public procurement is to have this capacity to influence the sustainability of production chains and therefore consumption, it is important that those involved in the procurement function adopt a uniform approach for the same category of purchase.

Faced with the ambitious objectives of the Climate and Resilience Law, the discussions held during the fact-finding missions with State buyers and also with the private sector highlighted the heterogeneous approaches to integrating environmental considerations into public procurement. For example, for the same category of purchase, one public buyer will include environmental considerations in the award or selection criteria, while another will do so through contract performance clauses. Even if certain local specificities may explain different practices, harmonising the strategies used to integrate environmental considerations into tender documentation would both facilitate the work of public buyers and demonstrate a consistent position with regard to the market.

Indeed, these different approaches do not enable a clear message to be sent to the private sector as to the requirements and expectations of State procurers in terms of environmental considerations, and may therefore limit their efforts to adapt their production and sourcing to uniform environmental requirements.



The importance of greater harmonisation of practices is also reinforced by the specific features of the French legislative framework, which requires the integration of environmental considerations in two different areas: contract performance clauses, whether technical (technical specifications) or administrative, and contract award criteria. However, these aspects cover very different concepts: the contractual clauses define the need and the obligations of the contractor, and the award criteria define the way in which bidders are invited to compete.

Integrating environmental considerations into technical specifications presents an additional constraint, as the specifications are most often drafted not by the purchaser but by technical departments. As a result, the integration of environmental considerations presents more difficulties due to a potential lack of awareness on the part of the technical experts drafting them. In cases where buyers and technical experts are two separate functions, a joint approach to procurement between these two functions would be a good way of ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account throughout the procurement lifecycle (see Chapter 4).

The inclusion of environmental considerations as evaluation and award criteria depends very much on the subject of the contract. Public buyers are used to implementing specific criteria in their contracts, such as evaluation on the basis of reports on greenhouse gas emissions provided by bidders, the development of specific objectives to reduce energy consumption, the use of low-temperature asphalt mixes, the proportion of recycled materials or the requirement to draw up an environmental impact statement.

However, public buyers have also pointed out that while some procurement categories are more conducive to including these criteria (particularly works and goods contracts), they are finding it difficult to include them in other categories, such as consulting services, where procurers are either not including them at all, or include criteria that they deem to be of little relevance or to have little impact on the environment, or that they deem to be difficult to monitor, such as the paperless nature of deliverables, or the requirement for experts to travel by clean means of transport such as car pooling or the train.

Furthermore, when a public buyer includes environmental considerations as award criteria, the question of their weighting also arises. During the discussions held during fact-finding missions, buyers reported that they generally only gave a weighting of 5% to 10% to environmental criteria for a number of reasons, including the fear of budget overruns or the fear of legal proceedings against the procedure.

Harmonising practices on the definition and weighting of award criteria helps alleviate these fears, and therefore generalise the use of green criteria, by providing purchasers with points of comparison based on historical data (results of past invitations to tender, levels of competition, etc.). Some organisations, such as the Direction Interdépartementale des Routes du Nord-Ouest (North-Western Interdepartmental Roads Directorate or DIRNO), a decentralised department of the French Ministry for Ecological Transition, have introduced tools such as the SEVE TP eco-comparator, in collaboration with the national public works federation, to assess greenhouse gas emissions and optimise choices in terms of materials and construction methods.

DIRNO has also developed a public procurement directive for all its public procurers. This directive deals with environmental criteria, advising its procurers to consider, in addition to waste management and the paperless nature of deliverables, environmental criteria that will contribute to decarbonisation objectives, particularly in the following areas:

- The bidder's material resources, measures envisaged to reduce the number of kilometres travelled, etc.
- Thresholds for energy consumption, water consumption, emissions of polluting substances into water or the air, recycled content, etc.
- The quality of the environmental measures taken to carry out the contracts (site management, waste management, packaging management, delivery management, etc.).



There is a clear need expressed by many public buyers for support in strengthening the integration of environmental criteria into invitations to tender in various procurement categories. This need is echoed in other OECD countries where the integration of environmental considerations is mandatory for certain categories of procurement. For example, the Italian government has introduced minimum environmental criteria for 20 purchasing categories (see Box 3.6).

### Box 3.6. Italy's Minimum Environmental Criteria

The Minimum Environmental Criteria (Criteri Ambientali Minimi or CAM) are environmental requirements defined for the various phases of the purchasing process (e.g. selection, technical specification, contractual clauses, awarding) with the aim of supporting contracting authorities in identifying the best solution from an environmental point of view, also considering the entire lifecycle of products and services and the capacity of the market. CAM are mandatory for all public contracts, across all levels of government and regardless of the contract's value.

CAM were designed based on a comprehensive market analysis of the sector and on the analysis of a wide range of available requirements, including those proposed by at the EU level (e.g. EU GPP Criteria, the EU Eco-label, etc.). Moreover, CAM took into account national and European regulations that impose certain environmental standards as well as the inputs provided by the relevant stakeholders, such as enterprises and trade associations, consumers and users.

The definition of CAM falls under the competences of the Circular Economy Directorate of the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security. The Directorate is supported by technical working groups made by representatives and experts of the Public Administration and central purchasing bodies, research institutes and universities, as well as representatives of the trade associations. Once developed, CAM are submitted for approval to the GPP Management Committee. The final document is adopted by means of a Decree of the Ministry, which is published in the Official Gazette.

To date, CAM have been adopted for 20 procurement categories:

Interior furniture	Street furniture
Incontinence aids	Work shoes and leather accessories
Paper	Cartridges
Building	Cultural events
Public lighting (supply and design)	Public lighting (service)
Lighting, heating/cooling for buildings	Industrial washing and rental of textiles and mattresses
Municipal waste and street sweeping	Refreshment and vending machines
Catering	Cleaning and sanitizing services
Printers	Textile
Vehicles	Public green spaces

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

Given the disparity in approaches to the two key areas for implementing environmental considerations, the DAE has taken the initiative of developing practical tool-sheets in order to standardise approaches by procurement category. These tool-sheets cover both aspects of environmental considerations. This effort would therefore benefit from being pursued, in particular in order to prioritise categories where the integration of environmental considerations presents particular difficulties.

### **3.3.3. Monitoring the implementation of environmental considerations during the performance of the contract**

The inclusion of environmental considerations in the contract is generally not sufficient to ensure that it has a positive impact on the environment. The monitoring of performance clauses is therefore essential to ensure that the economic operator fulfils its commitments. Many countries have set up systems for monitoring environmental considerations in contracts. In this way, contracting authorities can check suppliers' performance against pre-defined environmental objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) tailored to the different products or services supplied, with suppliers being required to provide all the information needed for this verification. Contracting authorities can also verify compliance with environmental criteria and ecolabels by asking suppliers to provide detailed documentation on the environmental performance of products and services. (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

In France, discussions held during fact-finding missions revealed a number of difficulties encountered by public buyers in monitoring environmental clauses. First, the segregation of duties in some structures means that contract execution is mainly the responsibility of technical experts or departments, with the procurement department intervening only in the event of problems, blockages or the need for amendments.

Another pitfall concerns the technical skills and knowledge needed to monitor environmental clauses. For example, one buyer indicated that it included a clause requiring the supplier to recycle waste, but that this clause was not monitored during implementation due to a lack of know-how (e.g. through waste tracking slips). Contract monitoring essentially focuses on the actual service rendered and payment, without checking the implementation of the environmental aspect.

Finally, many entities reported a lack of human resources and tools for effective monitoring of the clauses. The monitoring of environmental considerations also raises challenges because the current information system, PLACE, does not allow for adequate monitoring and management control. Some organisations have raised the need to identify specialised staff to monitor contractual clauses, to develop monitoring and traceability tools for environmental clauses, and to promote these practices to technical departments. The “*Clause Verte*” or Green Clause tool ([www.laclauseverte.fr](http://www.laclauseverte.fr)), launched in November 2020 by the CD2E - the centre for the deployment of eco-transition in businesses and territories - to meet the needs of public buyers regarding the inclusion of environmental clauses, was deemed too general by the various stakeholders interviewed, and remains mostly silent on the modalities for monitoring the proposed clauses during contract performance.

While the clauses in the Green Clause tool are a good starting point for public buyers, they would benefit from being expanded and deepened, and classified by product category to make them easier to understand. A specific section for monitoring these clauses would also be useful. Box 3.7 describes the example of Ireland, which has developed comprehensive clauses for 10 procurement categories, including verification standards for the implementation of the various clauses (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>). The practical tool-sheets for each procurement category currently being developed by the DAE are intended to propose a methodology for monitoring environmental clauses, similar to the practice in Ireland.

### Box 3.7. Contractual clauses to monitor suppliers' performance on GPP in Ireland

The 2021 Guidance on Green Public Procurement provides several examples of contract performance clauses that contracting authorities can use and that are tailored to the different procurement categories.

These contractual performance clauses represent a good example of how contracting authorities can engage with suppliers to gather data on the environmental performance of the products or services purchased.

#### **Food and catering services: food and beverages**

##### ***CPC1. Evidence of compliance with environmental requirements***

Throughout the contract period, the contractor must keep electronic copies of orders, invoices and other documents that prove compliance with the environmental requirements and commitments under the technical specifications and award criteria. These documents must be made available to the contracting authority for verification purposes. The contracting authority may set rules and penalties for non-compliance.

#### **ICT products and services: ICT products**

##### ***CPC1. Service level agreement reporting***

The tenderer must provide periodic [monthly / annual] reports on its compliance with all the metrics, Key Performance Indicators and other indicators defined in the Service Level Agreement.

##### ***CPC2. Environmental performance***

The contractor is responsible for ensuring that the levels of environmental performance, including energy efficiency, indicated in its tender are met both at the point of installation / commissioning and during the [entire operating lifetime of the appliance] / [warranty period]. Where this is dependent upon specific usage instructions and maintenance activities, these must have been clearly highlighted in the tender. Regular inspections and testing of the equipment to ensure compliance will be carried out. It is important to specify the schedule for regular inspections and testing, as well as whether the contractor is responsible for the costs.

This clause should be adapted to the specific nature of the contract and the scope of any maintenance/repair/Warranty commitments. It is important to include a specific requirement to test environmental performance at regular intervals and assigns responsibility for this activity.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[22]</sup>)

Systematic monitoring of environmental clauses would provide better opportunities for public buyers to measure their impact on the environment, through a number of actions:

- If an organisation's technical department is responsible for monitoring the contract, there could be a joint approach between the buyer and the technical expert, similar to the way technical specifications are drawn up, to ensure that environmental commitments are respected.
- Incorporating discussions on the implementation of environmental considerations into all meetings during the performance of the contract (monthly contract reviews, for example) would help systematise monitoring on a regular basis. In view of the capacity/human resources issues identified, random monitoring or monitoring of the most strategic/important contracts could be introduced initially.

- A review of the functionalities of the PLACE information system, tasked in particular with the electronic management of the execution of public procurement contracts, and of the APPACH information system, could also be carried out to enable buyers and technical experts to receive the documentation they need to check compliance with environmental clauses.
- In terms of methodological and practical support, a guide to monitoring environmental clauses in certain procurement categories could be developed to improve buyers' technical knowledge. This guide could capitalise on existing clauses in the contracts of the DAE or the ministries, or those developed by the DAJ, taking into account more complex procurement families (consulting services) or those with higher greenhouse gas emissions (IT, textiles, food, buildings). Practices in Ireland could serve as a source of inspiration for the development of such a guide. The development of similar tools is also planned as part of the State's scheme to promote socially and economically responsible public procurement.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> e.g. expert advice, a single point of contact to answer questions, regional technical workshops and webinars to exchange views with network members and experts on current, high-stakes issues, thematic working groups tailored to the regional context, etc.

# **4**

## **Strengthening the capacity of the procurement function to take greater account of environmental considerations in public procurement**

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The procurement function has become more complex than ever, requiring staff not only to have high-level skills in implementing public procurement procedures, but also to be able to deal with issues related to the entire public procurement cycle. In particular, they are expected to possess technical knowledge and skills, such as knowledge of the regulatory framework and drafting tender documents, as well as non-technical skills, such as project management and communicating with a non-expert audience, in order to perform their duties to the best of their ability. This requirement is further reinforced by the increasing use, worldwide, of public procurement as a strategic tool to pursue wider policy objectives, and in particular in France objectives arising from the rich regulatory framework concerning sustainable development (see Chapter 2). (OECD, 2023<sup>[1]</sup>)

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Furthermore, the notion of public procurement implies the expertise of stakeholders that go beyond the strict definition of public buyer. Adequate capacity of public procurement staff is a key element in guaranteeing a sound procurement system and ensuring efficiency and value for money in the use of public funds. The OECD Recommendation devotes a principle to the capacity of public procurement staff. It invites countries to develop a procurement workforce that is capable of continuously optimising the use of public funds in an efficient and effective manner. (OECD, 2015<sup>[2]</sup>) In addition, the PNAD itself recommends harnessing the power of training to achieve the objective of 100% of procurement procedures including an environmental consideration. (Gouvernement français, 2022<sup>[3]</sup>)

This chapter discusses the initiatives implemented in France to build the capacity of those involved in the state procurement function. It identifies the main challenges and provides key recommendations on building staff capacity in two main areas: 1) training; and 2) practical tools.

## 4.1. Increasing the accessibility and environmental dimension of the existing training offer

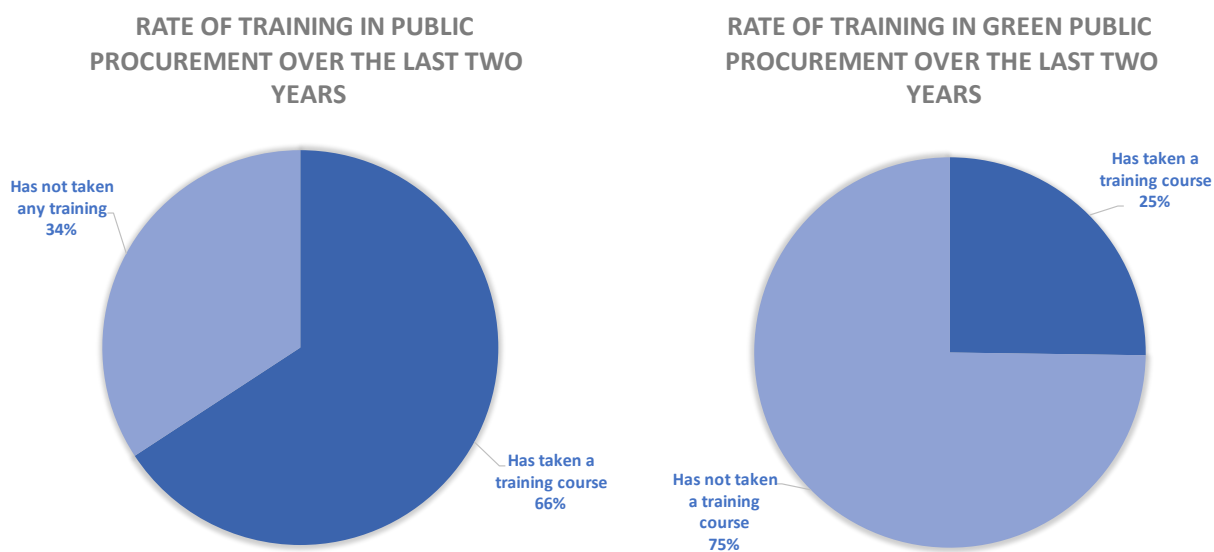
Building the capacity of public procurement staff requires an appropriate training system. Some countries have introduced mandatory training courses to enhance the skills of their public procurement officers. In 2020, 35% of OECD countries required public procurement officers to take certain training courses. In Chile, for example, the ChileCompra portal provides mandatory training aligned with the certification framework. This training is a prerequisite for buyers to be able to access the e-procurement system. Most countries offer optional training. However, an OECD report notes that although many countries offer training in public procurement, public procurement officials need more opportunities for training in advanced topics, particularly environmental issues. (OECD, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>)

### 4.1.1. Strengthening the green public procurement ecosystem requires optimising the role of training

#### *Rationalising and promoting the current training offer*

Although training courses on the subject of green procurement exist in France, few buyers decide to take them, seemingly due to a lack of visibility or accessibility. In fact, according to an OECD survey of more than 550 buyers, two-thirds of them have taken a training course related to public purchasing in the last two years. However, of these two-thirds, only 25% had taken training directly related to green procurement, which means that in total only 17% of those surveyed had taken part in training on green procurement (see Figure 4.1).

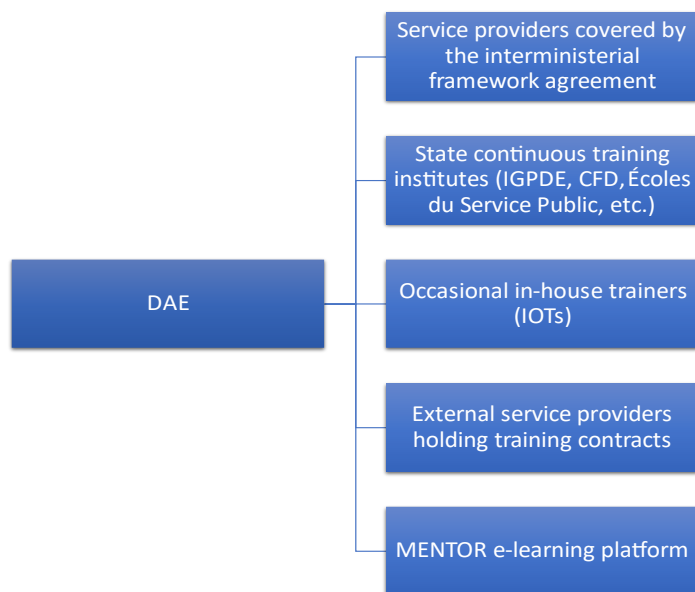
Figure 4.1. Rate of training in public procurement over the last two years in France



Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

The training offer, however, is very broad, with many options available to civil servants working in the State procurement function in France. These courses are provided by several entities (see Figure 4.2), however, there is currently no centralised source of information on the various training options, with each entity promoting its own courses. A centralisation of information on training courses was considered for a time, but abandoned because of the complexity of harmonising the practices and the different cultures of eleven ministries. Consideration could be given to the possibility of centralising information, taking into account the lessons learned from this previous attempt.

Figure 4.2. Training bodies for the State procurement function



Source: (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>)

The DAE is the leading figure when it comes to training the State's procurement function. Decree 2016-247 of 3 March 2016 creating the DAE states that the DAE shall define the training strategy for those involved in the State's procurement function and shall steer the training on offer in this area, proposing any measures likely to enhance the professionalisation of procurement officers and to structure their career paths within the framework of a procurement branch common to the State's departments and its public bodies. (Gouvernement français, 2016<sup>[7]</sup>)

To this end, and in close collaboration with the IGPDE, which implements some of these courses, the DAE offers two types of training:

- **A certifying training programme:** this interministerial accredited programme covers ministries as well as 124 State bodies. This training offer is designed for three levels: 1) Level 1 for Procurement Officers and Supply experts; 2) Level 2 for Procurement Officers; 3) Level 3 for Procurement Managers and specialised procurement officers. According to statistics provided by the DAE, more than 1,550 employees have been certified from 2018 to 2023.
- **On demand training modules:** these are modular courses designed to enhance specific skills in procurement techniques. It offers basic and advanced modules, as well as modules focusing on cross-cutting procurement skills such as corporate knowledge and green procurement. The content is also accredited as compliant with interministerial procurement strategies.

The content of these training courses, particularly with regard to the environmental dimension, will be discussed in greater detail in the section 4.1.2 below.

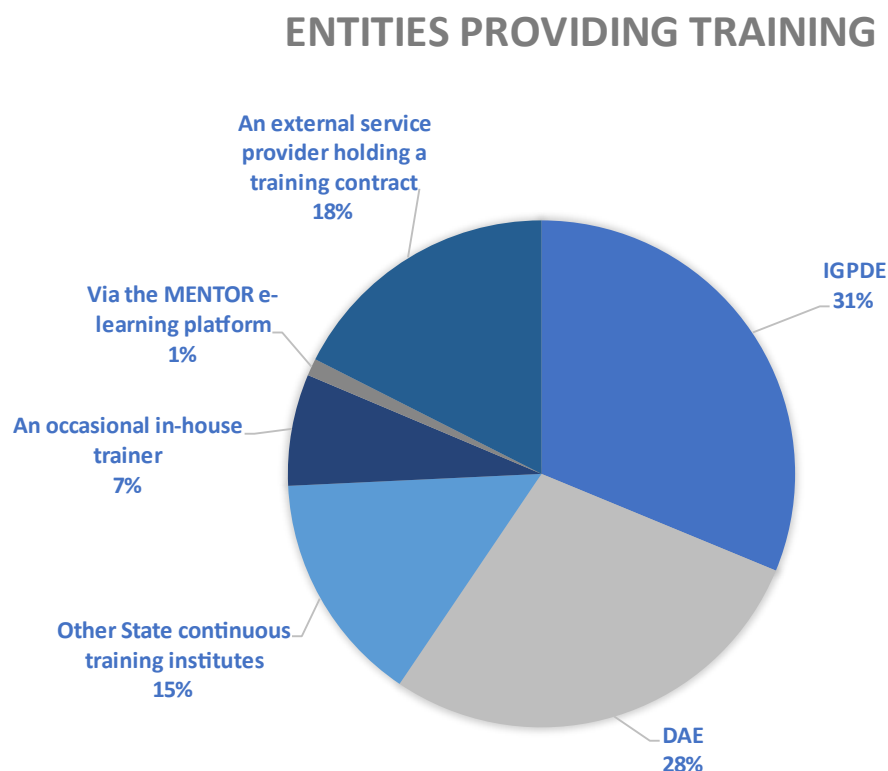
These two training programmes are delivered by framework agreement holders working for various training organisations and by occasional in-house trainers. The procurement certification training programmes have been awarded to service providers under an interministerial framework agreement awarded in 2020 (Lot 1) and 2021 (Lots 2 to 8). As a result, 4 contractors are delivering these courses, mainly at the IGPDE (which offers around a third of the courses). The on demand courses can be provided by all the State's internal training bodies, such as the IGPDE, the ministerial training centres (Centre de Formation de la Défense, Sous-Direction du Recrutement et de la Formation, écoles académiques de la formation continue, etc.), the network of civil service training schools, and occasional in-house trainers (civil servants who, regardless of their status, grade or assignment, possess specific knowledge and know-how that they make available to their assigned structure or to another inter-directorate structure). External service providers holding training contracts other than those holding framework agreements may also provide these training courses.

Regardless of the organisation providing the training, the content of the courses must be reviewed and approved by the DAE in an accreditation process. The training strategy for procurement professionals dated 22 July 2016 describes this accreditation process at two levels: 1) the first level focuses on content analysis and is based on the module sheet and training materials of the course: the accreditation can only be granted if the course contents comply with the interministerial objectives; 2) if the course contents do not comply with the interministerial objectives in the first analysis, the assessment of a training session can be planned with the agreement of the training provider, the aim being to check that the course contents really do meet the expected educational objectives and that they are aligned with the interministerial procurement strategies.

In addition to these two courses, the DAE is also managing the "Public Procurement" series on MENTOR, the e-learning platform for civil servants run by the DGAFP. (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>) This platform hosts 10 procurement training modules. However, as the results of the survey show, this platform remains underused, with only 1% of respondents having used it in the last two years. This lack of use can potentially be explained by the fact that not all ministries are members of the platform. Having a dedicated administrator to lead and promote the 'Public Procurement' series would be a good way to ensure that more people take part in the various modules.

Finally, the choice of training organisation depends largely on the training plan of the ministries. Public buyers who wish to receive the trainings that were selected as part of their organisation's annual appraisal of employees can submit their requests to the human resources departments of their organisation, which may or may not accept them depending on their budget availability and/or ministerial priorities. The survey conducted by the OECD reveals a wide variety in the choice of training organisation, with a preference for the IGPDE (see Figure 4.3).

**Figure 4.3. Training attended by public buyers by entity providing training over the last two years in France, 2024**



Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

However, the survey and the fact-finding missions carried out by the OECD revealed that many procurement officers - particularly in the regions - deplore a lack of visibility and communication about the range of training courses on offer, particularly in the environmental field. In fact, only 168 buyers have benefited from one or more training courses focusing on the environmental aspects of procurement over the last two years. Most of the personnel trained come from the Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty.

This lack of visibility leads some buyers to opt for training provided by green networks/desks, private training, or to organise their own in-house training, as is the case for some regional procurement platforms, which developed their own training modules. Disseminating and communicating about existing training courses, particularly those on green procurement, to the various stakeholders in the State's procurement function could help to promote these courses and ensure greater participation by buyers. The promotion of these training courses at local level could also be strengthened in order to respond to the challenges identified by buyers in the regions.

In addition, the fragmentation of training providers can lead to disparities in access to training, depending on the ministry or even the entity. While some decentralised departments, such as those of the Ministry of National Education or the Ministry of the Armed Forces, have free access to certain training courses, particularly those leading to certification, through their respective Ministerial Procurement Managers, other ministries do not necessarily offer such training for their employees. This means that staff have to attend training courses run by other ministries and, as they are not under their supervision, have to set aside a budget to attend these courses. Certain public bodies, such as the *Établissements Publics Industriels et Commerciaux* (“public industrial and commercial establishments” or EPICs), are also excluded from free training within their own supervisory Ministry, as the supervision of an EPIC does not include its employees. In addition to this disparity in the availability of training by Ministry, there is also the risk of differences in the content and quality of training among the various training bodies, despite the DAE's accreditation. In Latvia, for example, the Procurement Monitoring Bureau (PMB) is responsible for providing training in public procurement. As such, in cooperation with the School of Public Administration, PMB launched in 2003, a training programme for procurement specialists, one of the modules being “Strategic procurement planning and Management”, which includes also planning of green public procurement. PMB also developed a free-of-charge online module on strategic public procurement. (Procurement Monitoring Bureau of Latvia, 2024<sup>[8]</sup>) In Poland, the Office for Public Procurement has launched a “Professionalisation of public procurement staff” project to provide common training for some 1,963 staff (see Box 4.1).

#### Box 4.1. The project “Professionalisation of staff in public procurement” in Poland

This project implemented by the PPO of Poland aims at professionalising public procurement by supporting public officials involved in the process of preparation, awarding, supervision and control of public procurement at the public administration (central and local governments) as well as at control and audit institutions in Poland.

As part of this project activities, the following training modules were offered:

- Open electronic training on the PPO website
- Two-day training courses on the public procurement process
- Two-day training courses on sustainable public procurement (green public procurement and socially responsible procurement)

The project was implemented by the PPO over the period 2020-2023 and included various forms of training activities. In total, 86 training courses, 14 conferences and 5 seminars were organised, attended by 5,914 people.

Source: (OECD, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>), (Public Procurement Office of Poland, 2023<sup>[9]</sup>)

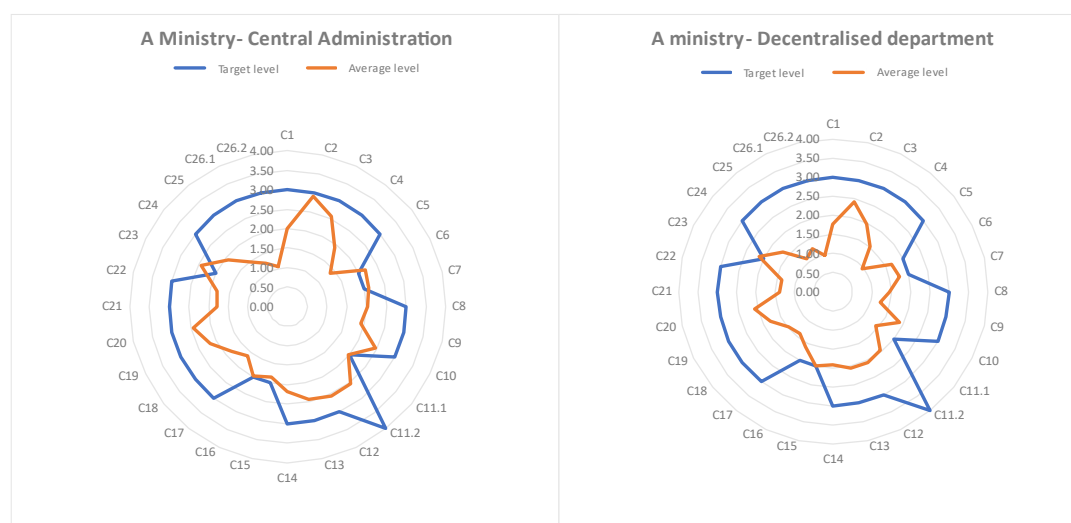
Consideration could therefore be given to designating a single training body for green procurement, accessible to all those involved in the State's procurement function, regardless of the organisation to which they belong, thus ensuring an equal level of training for all buyers. This body could be responsible for providing a common core of training, both face-to-face and online via the State's MENTOR platform.

#### *Taking account of geographical location and cost in the development of training opportunities*

The decentralised State services in France's regions account for a significant proportion of the State's purchasing. In 2022, out of a total State expenditure of approximately 22.5 billion euros (central administration and decentralised services, excluding public bodies), the regions represented an

expenditure of more than 8 billion euros. (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>) However, those involved in the State's procurement function in the regions have little access to existing training. The PNAD itself stresses that despite the existence of a variety of tools available to purchasers, their level of knowledge varies widely. (Gouvernement français, 2022<sup>[3]</sup>) Analysis of the self-assessment carried out by 555 buyers on 26 distinct skills (see Annex A) also illustrates the different levels of skills depending on whether the buyers are at the central level of a ministry or in a decentralised department (see Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4. Assessment of procurement competencies at a centralised and decentralised levels**



Note: This figure summarises the responses for both knowledge and skills for each competency.  
Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

There are two main reasons why regional personnel do not participate as much in the various training courses, and therefore do not develop their skills as much.

First, the issue of territoriality was raised by many of the stakeholders interviewed. Indeed, most of the training courses take place in Paris, particularly for the certification programmes offered by the IGPDE. The various stakeholders met with in the regions raised travel as an issue for attending courses, in terms of travel time and costs in addition to the cost of the course itself. These obstacles have given rise to initiatives within different decentralised services to ensure a minimum level of awareness of green procurement among buyers, such as an online game to raise buyers' awareness environmental issues developed by the Centre Val de Loire regional procurement platform, or regular legislative monitoring within the University of Tours.

For smaller organisations, these problems are compounded by the need to mobilise staff over several days for the purpose of attending training, as some organisations may have only one buyer per organisation, and their absence would lead to an interruption in the procurement function.

A European Commission report stresses that training in public procurement must be offered in a variety of geographical locations to make it easily accessible and reduce the cost of participation. (European Commission, 2016<sup>[10]</sup>) In order to solve this problem, the DAE could start thinking about the possibility, for certain training modules, of providing regional training, using for example, in coordination with the DGAFP, the regional interministerial support platforms for human resources management (PFRH) and the regional procurement platforms (PFRA) or the training bodies operating in the regions. A prior assessment of training needs in the regions could be carried out first in order to ensure optimum participation of those involved in the procurement function.

In Spain, for example, specialised training programmes in the field of public procurement, training seminars and e-learning courses are organised by the Institute of Public Administration and regional training schools for public procurement officers on subjects such as transparency, competition, green procurement and innovation procurement. In Italy, the Institute for Innovation and Transparency in Public Procurement and Environmental Compatibility (ITACA) plays a leading role in training and professionalisation in the Italian regions to promote and ensure coordination among the regions and between the local/regional level and central institutions (see Box 4.2).

#### Box 4.2. Training regional officials on green procurement in Italy

Created in 1996 on the initiative of the Italian regions, the Institute for Innovation and Transparency in Public Procurement and Environmental Compatibility (ITACA) is a non-profit association whose founding members are the regions and autonomous provinces of Italy. Its aim is to implement actions to promote and guarantee effective coordination between the regions.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Infrastructure and Mobility, ITACA is committed to providing a legal support service for contracting authorities, with the aim of promoting uniformity in the interpretation of public procurement regulations, as well as providing operational solutions to contracting authorities.

ITACA is also committed to building the capacity of the staff of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces and of public administrations more generally - from a legal, technical and economic point of view - through training. To this end, ITACA works in collaboration with the relevant regional training offices and the regional public procurement observatories, in order to offer and guarantee consistent, high-quality training both on a territorial basis, through regional structures and resources, and on a national basis. The training offered is also based on the use of interactive and distance learning tools and methodologies.

Source: (OECD, 2023<sup>[11]</sup>)

An alternative to regional training courses would be to offer e-learning or distance learning courses to regional stakeholders. Although the DAE already offers e-learning courses on the MENTOR training platform, the range is limited to 10 modules, none of which focuses on environmental considerations. The DAE could also expand its future range of face-to-face, distance learning and e-learning courses to ensure that a greater number of regional staff are able to participate. An alternative would be to record the face-to-face/distance training courses and publish them online so that buyers can view them on demand.

In addition, the cost of training seems to be a significant barrier to participation. While employees can attend training courses offered by their own ministry free of charge, they cannot attend training courses offered by other ministries free of charge. For example, employees of the Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty (MEFSIN) can attend training courses offered by the IGPDE free of charge, as the IGPDE is the dedicated training institute for the MEFSIN. Even if the IGPDE accepts to receive agents from other ministries, in particular agents from decentralised services such as those under the responsibility of the regional procurement platforms, the agents must provide for financing by their administrative department in order to be able to attend.

In addition, employees of State administrative bodies (other than ministries and their services) can access the IGPDE training programmes, but they will be billed for them, even if they fall under the authority of the MEFSIN, as the supervision of an administrative body excludes their employees from being affiliated to it. The cost of the training will then depend on the training provider; for example, for an occasional in-house trainer, the cost is estimated at between €50 and €100 per day and per employee, for an external service



provider, the cost is estimated at between €100 and €150 per day and per employee, and the cost of attending training given by a contractor under the interministerial framework agreement is estimated at between €200 and €300 per day and per employee (including certification). (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>)

Faced with these training costs, many buyers have indicated that their organisation's budgetary constraints do not allow them to attend these courses. Training courses focusing on public procurement are not seen as a priority in some organisations, and the budget is therefore allocated to other training topics. This problem also arises for public bodies when staff are not affiliated to the ministry that supervises the body.

Two strategic levers could be used to overcome these challenges. The DAE could fund certain training courses, especially those relating to green procurement, so that all buyers can be made aware of the environmental issues involved in procurement. Another alternative would be to centralise the training budget at DAE level for all those involved in the State's procurement function, as is the case for other sectors such as IT. In countries such as Lithuania and Peru, the authorities responsible for public procurement policy have decided to offer all or part of their training courses free of charge (see Box 4.3).

### **Box 4.3. Free public procurement training in Lithuania and Peru**

#### **Free training courses offered by the Public Procurement Office in Lithuania**

The Public Procurement Office (PPO) is an independent government agency responsible for the overall implementation of the public procurement policy defined by the Lithuanian Ministry of Economy and Innovation. The PPO is the main body providing training, advice and methodological assistance in the field of public procurement in Lithuania. At present, 18 full-time PPO employees act as trainers. Some of them act as trainers as part of their day-to-day work, while others organise training sessions on a particular subject on an ad hoc basis. Contracting authorities are the main target of these training sessions. In 2017, the PPO offered 42 training courses to train 2,607 employees of contracting authorities in 2017 (against an annual target of 1,500 people). All training provided by the PPO is free of charge. The content of the training courses is decided according to the needs of the agents.

#### **Online training modules in Peru**

The Government Procurement Supervising Agency (OSCE) is in charge of the capacity development of the public procurement workforce in Peru. Its sub-directorate on capacity development develops training offers. OSCE also manages the certification process of the public procurement workforce for total four levels (Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Executive). OSCE has made considerable efforts to develop different training modalities (face-to face as well as online) in order to increase access to public procurement information and training.

OSCE has established a “virtual classroom” website (Aula Virtual de OSCE, AVO), which provides access to online courses for public procurement officials as well as suppliers. For example, the course for public procurement officers covers whole the public procurement process (tender planning, pre-tendering stage, tender stage, contract management). Access to AVO is free and without any restriction, ensuring optimal accessibility to training opportunities. In addition to the AVO website, OSCE administers its YouTube Channel (AULA OSCE) which is linked to the AVO. The uploaded videos cover wide ranges of public procurement topics such as procurement methods, tender documents, contract management, ethics in procurement.

Source: (OECD, 2019<sup>[12]</sup>)



In addition, awareness-raising activities could be carried out among senior managers to make them aware of the importance of giving greater consideration to the procurement function in skills development programmes at ministerial level, so that the various bodies have a sufficient budget to enable them to attend the various training courses.

### *Extending capacity building opportunities to other key players in public procurement*

While procurement officers and other direct players in the government's procurement function are the cornerstone of the system, other players who are not part of the procurement function as such should also be taken into account when building capacity on green procurement. At the forefront of this ecosystem are the technical experts.

Their influence on the effectiveness of public procurement and its environmental objectives is often predominant. In some organisations, the technical expert also plays the role of buyer. However, for many other organisations, these two functions are separate. It is therefore essential that technical experts are also included in the training strategy for State procurement when they do not have the dual role of technical expert and purchaser, and that they have access to different training modules depending on their needs.

This need for training of technical experts has been raised by many buyers, who point out that the integration of environmental considerations must come from the initiative of the technical experts, who are at the origin of the definition of the need. Buyers can therefore propose and encourage green procurement, but they are not responsible for expressing needs or monitoring suppliers. Furthermore, 45% of the technical experts surveyed by the OECD highlighted the need for training in green public procurement.

Opening up certain training modules to technical experts would represent an interesting opportunity to build their capacities and thus strengthen the green public procurement ecosystem. The creation of a module dedicated to the buyer/technical expert duo would also provide a better understanding of their role in the inclusion of environmental considerations in procurement.

In addition to dedicated training, other alternatives can be used to strengthen the knowledge and skills of prescribers. Initiatives such as on-the-job training, mentoring and job swapping (see Table 4.1) can help achieve these objectives. (OECD, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>)

**Table 4.1. Summary of practical training sessions**

	<b>On-the-job training</b>	<b>Mentoring</b>	<b>Job swapping</b>
<b>Description</b>	One-on-one training where an experienced staff transfers his skills and knowledge to a less experienced worker by working for the same project.	Mentors provide mentees with advice in their professional development and daily work.	Inter-exchange programme of the staff who work for different units inside the same entity and/or for different agencies for a certain period of time.
<b>Purpose</b>	An experienced staff transfers his skills and knowledge to a less experienced worker.	An experienced person (mentor) provides support and guidance to a less experienced person (mentee) in an effort to help him develop and reach his potential.	Provide procurement experts with the opportunity to share their experiences and learn at different working areas.
<b>Remarks</b>	Trainer and trainees work together for the same task at the same workplace on a daily basis.	Mentor and mentee do not necessarily work for the same organisation nor at the same workplace. This will be an alternative or supplemental option to on-the-job training, because the trainer of on-the-job training can act as a mentor.	The inter-exchange of the staff among various entities such as the public procurement authority, control entities, contracting authorities (small and large) is an option as long as it is beneficial to the exchanged staff.

Source: (OECD, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>)

One buyer who responded to the OECD survey raised this possibility. As a specialist in digital procurement, this buyer mentioned that he was familiar with software eco-design, unbeknownst to the technical departments. He expressed the wish to be able to acquire technical skills in environmental issues so that he could then advise and support the technical departments. (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

A communication campaign aimed at all stakeholders at central level, as well as at decentralised departments and public bodies, could also be implemented to raise awareness with the widest possible audience. This communication campaign can take several forms. In the Philippines, for example, conscious of the potential reluctance of certain stakeholders to consider environmental issues in public procurement, the government has developed an environmental public procurement roadmap with a list of distribution channels that can be used to raise awareness among stakeholders (see Box 4.4).

#### **Box 4.4. Dissemination channels for awareness-raising on green public procurement in the Philippines**

The Philippines GPP Roadmap recognizes that *“the first-time introduction of GPP is usually confronted with skepticism and various concerns. A well-designed approach that is sensitive to these sentiments and is carefully aware that issues have to be solved, is necessary.”* The Roadmap outlines arguments that respond to stakeholders’ concerns: GPP is a measure of prudence; VfM is the guiding principle; suppliers’ readiness is a largely fulfilled condition; more capacity and better awareness has to be created; and verification of green supplies is no different than verification of conventional supplies.

The Roadmap sets out a list of outreach channels that can be leveraged to raise the wider public’s awareness and buy-in of GPP, including:

- Print media through press articles and media kits that convey stories and testimonials on the advantages and benefits of green purchasing for the wider public, and broadcast media through occasional broadcast plugs or press releases;
- Meetings with particular audiences or media briefings on specific themes;
- Internet promotion on relevant websites as an interactive medium to disseminate information and gather data and feedback;
- Informational materials (e.g. posters, newsletters, brochures), audio-visuals, and e-mails to reach as many stakeholders as possible.

Source: (World Bank, 2021<sup>[13]</sup>)

#### **4.1.2. Ensuring the relevance of training content**

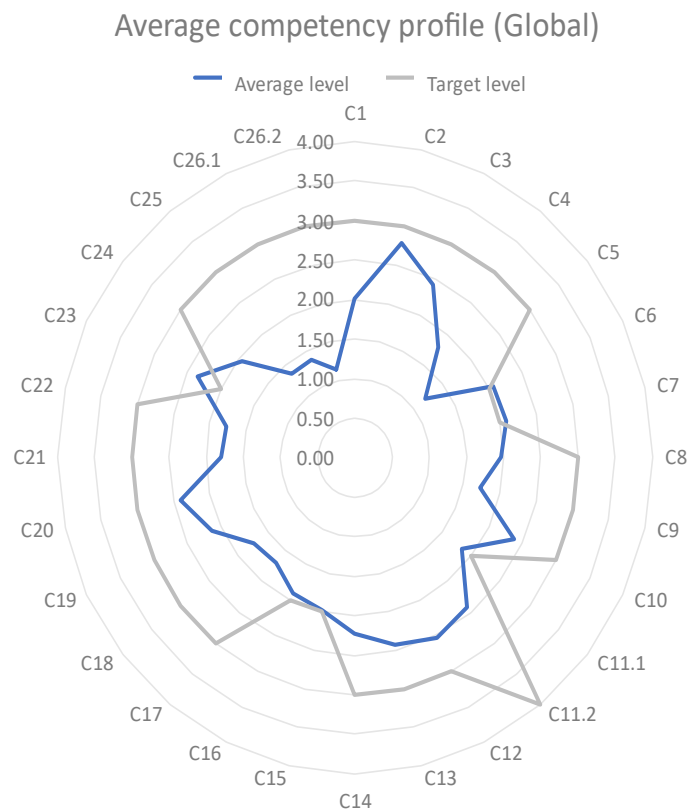
The DAE is currently in the process of renewing its training offer through the launch of procurement procedures for two framework agreements, one for certifying courses and the other for on-demand courses. This renewal includes a strengthening of the training offer for green procurement, but in order for this offer to benefit as many people as possible, it is essential to take into account the issues discussed above, such as geographical location, cost and target audience.

##### *Targeting both training opportunities and priority buyer groups*

The results of the survey highlight certain major trends: 1) an assessment of specific skills that sometimes falls far short of what is expected; and 2) the importance of the number of years of experience in building skills. As discussed below, these two factors can have a major impact on the professionalisation strategy adopted by the DAE.

An analysis of the self-assessment carried out by 555 buyers on 26 different competencies (see Figure 4.5) reveals a level of competency below the level expected for implementing green procurement.

**Figure 4.5. Average assessment of competencies by State procurement professionals in France**

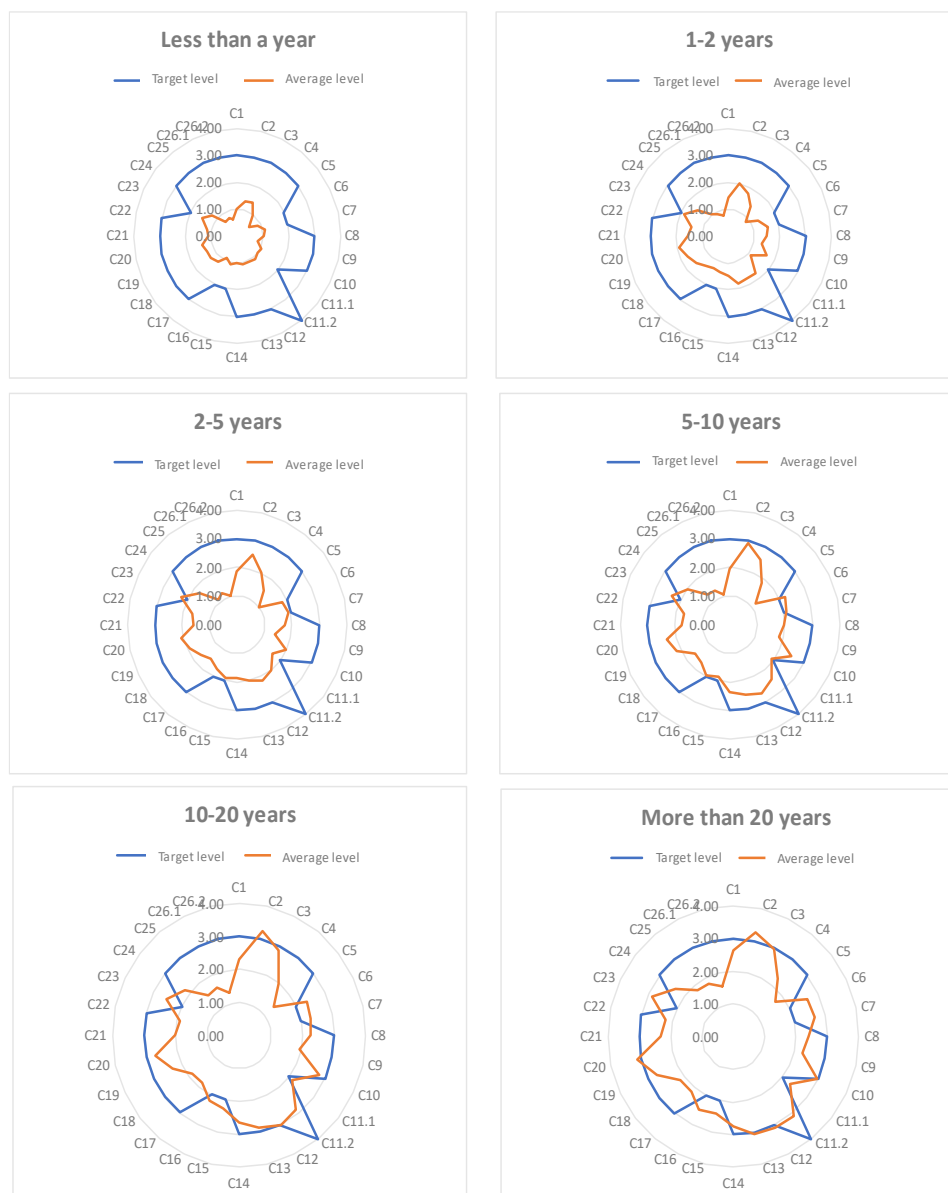


Note: Responses from 555 respondents. This graph summarises the responses on both knowledge and skills for each competency.  
Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

For example, on the specific competency on environmental procurement, buyers have an average level close to 0 (corresponding to 'I have no knowledge/skills') whereas the expected level is 3 (corresponding to an 'advanced' level). Similarly, for the competency relating to the ability to draft evaluation criteria, the average level is between basic and intermediate, while an expert level is required to include the environmental aspect. A more detailed description of the various competencies is given in Annex A. The results of the survey thus present an opportunity for the DAE to target the competencies where buyers have identified the greatest gaps in order to put in place an effective training offer.

Furthermore, as Figure 4.6 below shows, a linear rise in competency assessment can be observed as the number of years of experience increases.

**Figure 4.6. Assessment of competencies by State procurement professionals in France, by number of years' experience**



Note: Responses from 555 respondents

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

This finding could lead to a reflection on the priority given to certain training participants. Encouraging access to training for people with the fewest years of experience in public procurement could help to improve the skills of those buyers who feel they need it most, particularly with regard to existing tools. This strategy can be implemented by various means, from a campaign to raise awareness of the existence of a training offer for new entrants to the function to the decision to make it compulsory to take a training course within a year of taking up the position. These efforts should be made in cooperation with the various ministries.

*The environmental dimension in training courses is still too limited at present*

An analysis of part of DAE's current training offer reveals a wide choice of modules for the various job profiles. There are 62 training packages offered in collaboration with the IGPDE, covering a wide range of topics such as pricing, public-private partnerships, information systems, supplier relationship management, as well as all the certifying courses (buyer, purchasing manager, supply expert). However, there are still very few courses dealing with green procurement. Of these 62 courses, only 15 include the environmental dimension in their content or in the skills targeted (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2. List of DAE-IGPDE training courses addressing green procurement considerations**

Course title	Face-to-face / Distance learning	Course duration	Level of training	Target reference job	How are environmental considerations addressed?
Introduction to taking account of greenhouse gas reduction in sustainable procurement	On-site	1 day	Beginner	Procurement officer Procurement drafter Procurement manager Legal drafting officer	In content : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrating climate issues into the principles of public procurement at every stage of the contract</li> </ul>
The global cost approach in sustainable public procurement	On-site	1 day	Advanced	Procurement officer Procurement drafter Procurement manager Legal drafting officer	The course enables trainees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand the various concepts of the global cost approach (TCO, LCC, etc.) from the point of view of environmental issues;</li> <li>take an overall cost approach to a contract and apply it systematically in order to harness green benefits.</li> </ul>
The fundamentals of public procurement - virtual class	Remote	2 days	Beginner	Procurement officer Procurement drafter Supply expert	In the basic principles governing public procurement : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integration of the sustainable procurement dimension</li> </ul>
Procurement officer certification course - Level 2 Virtual class	Remote	5 days	Advanced	Procurement officer	Skills targeted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>being able to carry out green procurement actions with impact (in particular by involving suppliers in an active approach to improving the social and/or environmental conditions of their activities.</li> </ul> <p>Module 1: context and challenges of the State procurement function, advanced procurement levers and procurement techniques for carrying out innovative and/or sustainable projects</p>
Procurement officer certification course - Level 1 Virtual class	Remote	5 days	Expertise	Procurement officer	Skills targeted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrating innovation and eco- and socio-conscious approaches into procurement projects</li> </ul>
Implementing public procurement processes	On-site	5 days	Beginner	Procurement officer Procurement drafter	In content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategic importance of State procurement: purchasing to support public policies (social and environmental</li> </ul>

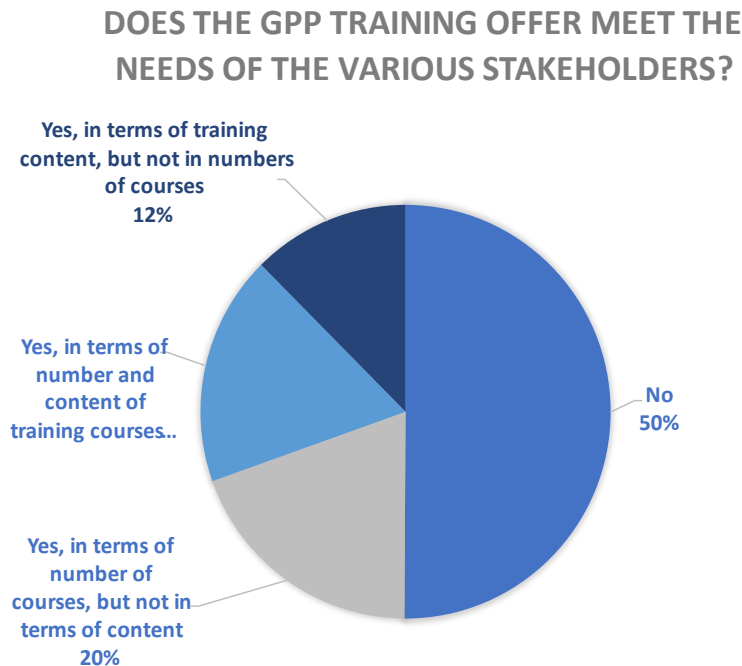
					considerations, support for SMEs, innovation)
Implementing green public procurement	On-site	3 days	Advanced	Procurement officer Procurement drafter Procurement manager Legal drafting officer	In content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a relevant sustainable procurement strategy</li> <li>Market analysis (alternative solutions) - sourcing and benchmarking in relation to sustainable procurement issues</li> <li>Analysis of RBC risks and issues using a life-cycle approach</li> <li>Transposing sustainable procurement issues into the tendering process: use of technical reference systems, including standards and ecolabels, incorporating climate change considerations into procurement, circular procurement</li> </ul>
Developing expertise in real estate and works procurement – certifying course - Level 3	On-site	6 days	Expertise	Procurement officer	Module 6: lifecycle of works and buildings and associated procurement Target objective: to understand the procurement procedures involved in each phase of a building's lifecycle. Programme : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anticipating environmental risks when planning real estate/works procurement</li> <li>Identifying the lifecycle and associated procurement when upgrading a public building</li> </ul>
Analysis of bids: from choice of criteria to selection of candidates	On-site	2 days	Beginner	Procurement officer Procurement drafter	Choice of criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The special case of environmental and social criteria</li> </ul>
The fundamentals of green public procurement	On-site	2 days	Beginner	Procurement officer Procurement drafter Supply expert Legal drafting officer	In content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions, scope, and challenges of green public procurement (GPP)</li> <li>The policy of the State and its public bodies on GPP</li> <li>The legal framework for GPP and regulatory developments</li> <li>The normative framework for GPP standards (ecolabels)</li> <li>Operational deployment of GPP in the procurement process</li> </ul>
Procurement officer certification course - Level 1	On-site	5 days	Expertise	Procurement officer	Skills targeted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating innovation and eco- and socially-responsible approaches into procurement projects</li> </ul>
Organising a works procurement project	On-site	2 days	Advanced	Procurement officer Procurement drafter	Skills targeted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify the technical, architectural, environmental, and economic skills that need</li> </ul>

					<p>to be mobilised to successfully complete the procurement project.</p> <p>The process of carrying out a works project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The case of global contracts, design and build, global energy performance contracts.</li> </ul>
Procurement strategies	On-site	2 days	Advanced	Procurement officer	<p>Analysis of the supplier market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The challenges of supplier diversity: identifying opportunities for innovation, increasing SME participation and GPP.</li> </ul> <p>Levers linked to sustainable development and SMEs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental and social criteria and clauses</li> </ul>
Developing expertise in procurement of new means of transport – certifying course - Level 3	On-site	3 days	Expertise	Procurement officer	<p>Skills targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the environmental and economic challenges of sustainable transportation,</li> <li>Integrate sustainable transportation into transportation procurement,</li> <li>Identify the players in the field of sustainable transportation and understand their roles,</li> <li>Integrate the innovation, eco- and socio-responsibility dimension.</li> </ul>
Procurement officer certification course - Level 2	On-site	5 days	Advanced	Procurement officer	<p>Skills targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to carry out GPP actions with impact (in particular by involving suppliers in an active approach to improving the social and/or environmental conditions of their activities).</li> </ul> <p>Content Module 1: context and challenges of the State procurement function, advanced procurement levers and procurement techniques for conducting innovative and/or sustainable procurement projects</p>

Source: (Direction des Achats de l'État, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>)

In addition to the number of training courses available, the OECD survey highlights the fact that the content of training courses is often not sufficiently tailored to buyers' needs (see Figure 4.7), particularly in terms of green public procurement.

Figure 4.7. OECD Survey - Does the green procurement training offer meets buyer's needs?



Note: Responses from 555 respondents

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

When asked why such training programmes are not adapted to the needs of buyers, the respondents highlighted the fact that training on green procurement is still too theoretical and does not tackle the practical difficulties involved in integrating it effectively into a contract. In particular, the respondents pointed out that green procurement training courses are often fairly basic, dealing with the concepts of sustainable development or the regulations without going into more detail on certain more concrete aspects of the entire public procurement cycle. (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

A study carried out in 2021 by the World Bank on the practices adopted to promote green public procurement shows that the capacity-building programmes that can be considered effective involve: (World Bank, 2021<sup>[13]</sup>)

- Defining a clear target group and respond to its technical needs, concerns, and constraints.
- Addressing both skills and the development of green mindsets.
- Drawing on local examples and show practical applications.
- Integrating opportunities for experiential learning, including through pilot tenders.
- Offering specialised training on TCO and LCC tools and product and service categories.
- Providing for peer learning.

More and more countries are introducing practical training courses on green public procurement, including modules on life-cycle costing, how to use the various ecolabels and certifications to evaluate bids, and the purchase of second-hand goods.

In Belgium, for example, training on social and environmental procurement is provided as part of a larger programme of public procurement training for public procurement practitioners at the federal level. In 2022, two general training sessions on the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social, environmental) in public procurement were delivered in the two national languages. The session



dedicated to GPP focused on specific product categories and covered the use of green criteria, eco-labels and ISO-standards in public tenders, as well as the use of environmental management systems, LCC methodologies and circular economy principles. (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

In 2024, the OECD also supported Croatia in the organisation of a training of trainers programme on innovation public procurement, involving three distinct practical cases that take place throughout the procurement life cycle (see Box 4.5).

#### Box 4.5. Practical training of trainers on innovation procurement in Croatia

The use of public procurement for innovation is still limited in Croatia. In 2020, two innovation procurement procedures were carried out in the country, according to the 2020 Annual Statistical Report on Public Procurement in Croatia. These two individual procedures represented only 0.01% (approximately EUR 700,000) of the total volume of public procurement. The innovation partnership procedure has not been used at all.

As part of a technical support project funded by the European Commission, the OECD developed a 3.5-day training programme for some fifteen trainers. The programme consisted of half a day devoted to the theory of innovation procurement, and the rest of the training devoted to three practical cases for three groups of trainers who were asked to solve them as the modules progressed. The case studies were based on real examples of negotiated competitive procedure, competitive dialogue and innovation partnership that took place in Norway. Each module was dedicated to a stage in the procurement life cycle (from needs analysis to contract monitoring) with practical exercises to solve.

The training programme was praised by the trainers, who then reproduced it for other public bodies.

Source: Author

This type of training could therefore be transposed to France for green procurement and presents an opportunity for the DAE to incorporate concrete case studies into its new training programme, which would cover various themes (biodiversity, decarbonisation, circular economy, global cost, reduction of greenhouse gases, etc.) and incorporate these themes throughout the life cycle of public procurement, up to the monitoring of these environmental implications during the performance of the contract.

Another way of incorporating practical exercises on environmental aspects would be to offer modules by purchasing category, with concrete examples for the two areas of environmental considerations targeted by the Climate and Resilience Law and the PNAD (administrative or technical clauses and award criteria). This approach to structuring training courses was also widely supported by the respondents, 85% of whom said they preferred training by purchasing category. Structuring training by procurement category would also enable the mobilisation of technical experts, who are by definition more interested in specific products or services than in general training on public procurement.

This need for training by procurement category can also be explained by the fact that buyers are generally highly specialised in certain procurement categories. The DAE's range of training courses leading to certification also offers specialisations for certain procurement categories, such as real estate, IT, etc. These courses are level 3, and are only accessible to buyers who already have level 2 certification, thus limiting access to certain agents in the State procurement function. This category-based approach is all the more necessary given the diverse legal framework in France, where several laws aim to include environmental considerations in various product categories. For example, the European Commission has created a training toolbox for green procurement, in which several modules by procurement category are offered (see Box 4.6).

#### Box 4.6. The training modules by procurement category of the European Commission's Green Public Procurement Toolkit

The European Commission is making available a training toolkit on green public procurement, designed for use in training courses and workshops. Each module is accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, notes for the trainer and a reference guide. There are six core modules and ten sector-specific modules focusing on specific product and service categories including:

- Indoor cleaning services
- Computers, Monitors, Tablets and Smartphones
- Food, Catering services and Vending machines
- Furniture
- Imaging equipment, Consumables and Print services
- Office building Design, Construction and Management
- Paints, Varnishes and Road Markings
- Road Design, Construction and Maintenance
- Road lighting and Traffic signals
- Road transport
- Textiles products and services

Training materials have also been developed as part of several EU-funded projects on green public procurement. The PRIMES GPP training kit (<https://primes-eu.net/use-our-findings/training-material/>) includes slides, interactive exercises and evaluation sheets on topics such as life cycle costing, innovative public procurement, ecolabels and joint procurement.

Source: (European Commission, n.d.<sup>[15]</sup>)

A range of training courses on specific procurement categories offered to the largest possible number of players in the State procurement function, other than those leading to certification, would help to maximise efforts to build the capacity of the entire public procurement ecosystem on specific issues. These training courses could be based on the tool-sheets for each procurement category currently being developed by the DAE.

Another key theme to be addressed in these training courses is the security of supply. In the context of green public procurement, securing supplies represents a challenge, raising questions about the resilience of supply chains in the face of environmental and economic constraints. The transition to green public procurement introduces increased complexity into the security of supply, particularly due to dependency on limited sources, vulnerability to climatic conditions, and price fluctuations. These factors can compromise the continuous availability of green products and services, underlining the need to actively analyse and manage the risks associated with sustainable supply chains.

An analysis of DAE's training courses shows that, with the exception of the supply expert certification course, there is little or no coverage of the issue of security of supply, despite the fact that it is crucial to green procurement. To meet these challenges, future training courses could include this dimension in the various training modules, particularly those relating to green procurement. These modules could explain the various strategies for securing supply chains, such as diversifying sources of supply to reduce dependency on a limited number of suppliers and limit the risk of shortages; establishing long-term contracts and developing strategic partnerships with suppliers to stabilise supplies and costs, while

encouraging innovation and the continuous improvement of green products and services; and certifying and regularly auditing suppliers to ensure that they comply with environmental and social criteria, thereby ensuring the sustainability of the supply chain.

## 4.2. Developing practical tools to help State procurement officers include environmental considerations in their procurement practices

In addition to professionalisation and training efforts, many countries have developed a wide range of practical tools to facilitate the integration of environmental considerations for buyers. These tools can take various forms, such as standardised environmental criteria (e.g. selection or award criteria) and advice on how to incorporate them into public tenders, eco-labels or eco-certifications, life cycle costing (LCC) tools, environmental footprint calculators and databases. France has already developed some of these tools, but could draw on international best practice to develop others and provide better support for buyers.

### ***4.2.1. Several practical tools on green procurement exist, but there are still very few of them***

It is important for public buyers to have practical tools available in addition to theoretical training when integrating environmental considerations into their procurement processes. Theoretical training provides an essential basis of knowledge about environmental issues and regulations, but is not sufficient on its own to ensure effective implementation. Practical tools, such as guides, checklists, model criteria, clauses and technical specifications, Excel spreadsheets for calculating carbon footprint or life cycle costs, help to translate the theoretical principles learned in training into concrete, measurable actions. These practical tools also play an essential role in standardising and simplifying procurement processes, enabling environmental considerations to be integrated more seamlessly.

To this end, the European Commission has developed a range of tools to simplify the integration of GPP for public buyers (see Box 4.7).

#### **Box 4.7. The EU Ecolabel and the Practical Guides developed by the European Commission**

The European Commission has developed several tools to help public buyers integrate GPP into their procurement processes. First, the EU Ecolabel is the official EU voluntary label for environmental excellence of goods and services. It is the only pan-European ISO 14024 Type 1 ecolabel and has been operating for over 33 years. It is implemented by the European Commission in cooperation with the Member States (EU Ecolabel Competent Bodies). The EU Ecolabel criteria were also established for 25 categories of products, such as paper, detergents, furniture or cleaning services. These criteria were established through a science-based process, involving open and transparent consultation of stakeholders. Criteria are addressing environmental impacts during the whole life cycle of the products.

To promote the use of the EU Ecolabel in public procurement, the European Commission has developed “Practical Guides for the use of the EU Ecolabel in green public procurement”. The Practical Guides help procurers in formulating technical specifications and award criteria by identifying the relevant EU Ecolabel criteria to be inserted in the procurement call.

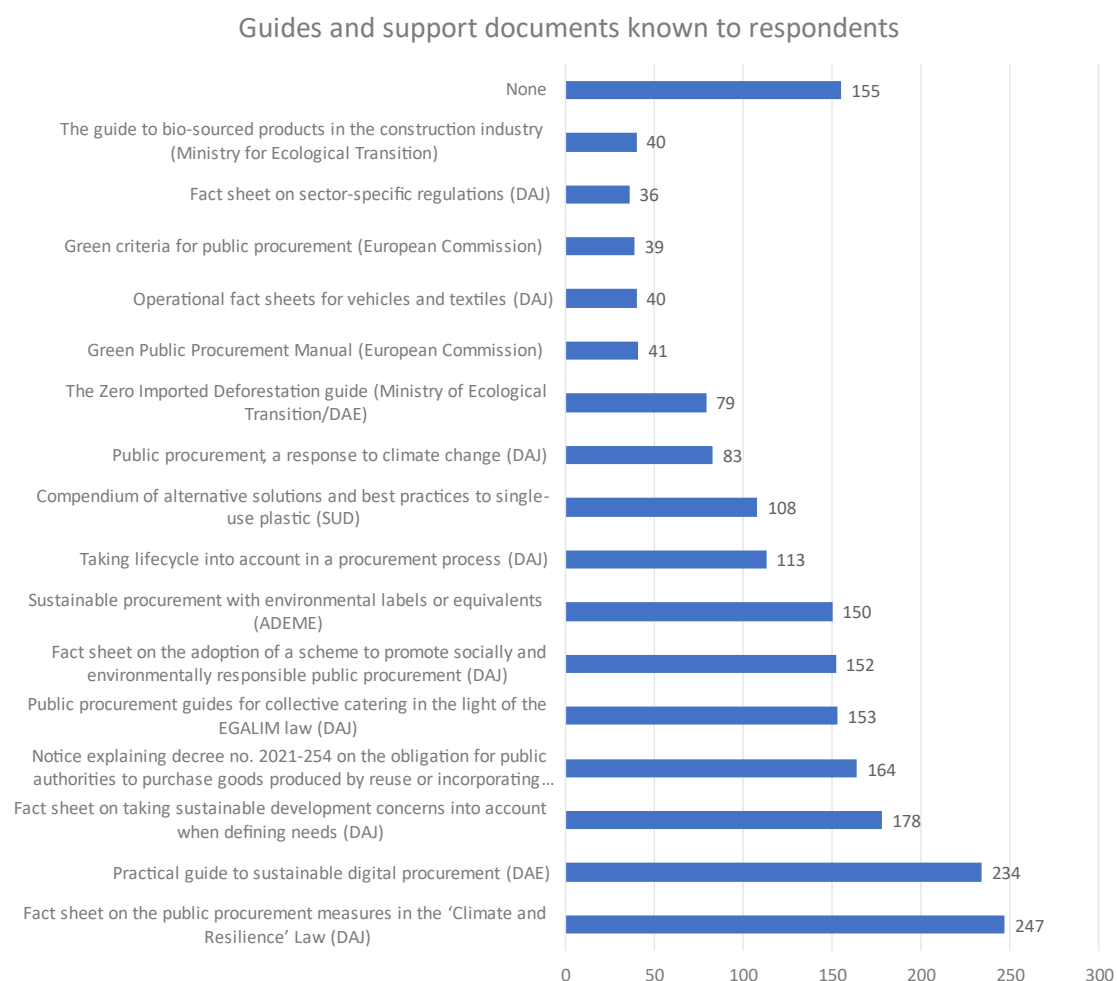
Such guides have been developed for the following product categories:

- Hard covering products (2024)
- Absorbent hygiene products (2024)
- Graphic paper (2025)
- Tissue paper and tissue products (2025)

Source: (European Commission, n.d.<sup>[16]</sup>), (European Commission, 2025<sup>[17]</sup>), (European Commission, n.d.<sup>[18]</sup>)

In France, a number of practical tools - mainly guides - were initially developed to help buyers better understand and integrate environmental issues. These guides also complement the various guides developed by the European Union. However, two problems have been identified with these guides. First, some buyers are unaware of their existence. In fact, the OECD survey revealed that out of 555 buyers surveyed, 155 buyers, i.e. almost a third, were not aware of any guide or practical document (see Figure 4.8).

**Figure 4.8. OECD survey - Knowledge of the various guides or support documents available to procurement officers**



Note: Responses from 555 respondents.

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[5]</sup>)

The DAE and DAJ could improve promotion of the various guides that have been developed, and jointly ensure uniform distribution of these tools, particularly in the regions. In this respect, the platform developed by the CGDD offers a unique opportunity to promote them and encourage access to these resources.

In addition to a lack of familiarity with these guides, most respondents also pointed to the lack of practicality of these tools. In fact, only around one hundred out of 555 respondents rated three of the guides as useful in the OECD survey, and fewer than 50 rated the rest as useful. The stakeholders interviewed during the fact-finding missions also pointed out that some guides are useful, but too long and impractical for everyday use.

The tools targeting sustainable procurement, such as the green clause tool, are considered too general and do not meet buyers' needs. The development of tools that would help buyers translate environmental considerations into practice in their procurement processes would therefore be beneficial. The DAE has already taken the initiative of developing tool-sheets simplifying the possibilities for integrating environmental considerations into each procurement category. These sheets could be supplemented by other tools such as Excel spreadsheets that automatically calculate carbon footprint, energy savings, life cycle costs or greenhouse gas emissions.

A database of suppliers and sustainable products bringing together suppliers committed to sustainable practices could also prove to be a valuable tool for public buyers, to facilitate the search for products and services that meet environmental criteria. This database could also be based on the existing APPACH information system and its database of 80,000 suppliers. Some countries and institutions have already taken the initiative to develop such tools. The European Commission, for example, has developed life cycle costing tools for five procurement categories. In Latvia, the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development has also developed user-friendly LCC calculation tools for twelve procurement categories, and a more complex calculation tool for construction works. (Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of Latvia, 2020<sup>[19]</sup>) In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment has developed the DuboCalc calculation tool to assess the environmental impact of civil engineering works (see Box 4.8).

#### **Box 4.8. Examples of practical calculation tools available to buyers**

##### **Life cycle costing tools developed by the European Commission**

The European Commission has developed five sector-specific life-cycle costing tools to facilitate the use of consistent life-cycle costing across Member States. The tools cover five procurement categories including: vending machines, imaging equipment, computers and monitors, and indoor and outdoor lighting. For each procurement category, the European Commission has developed an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the cost, as well as a user guide explaining how to use the tool.

The Excel spreadsheet allows for easy calculation of:

- Initial acquisition costs (purchase and installation);
- Operating and maintenance costs (particularly energy, given that computers are energy-consuming products with considerable operating costs);
- Other costs (such as residual value); and
- Environmental externality costs, i.e. those associated with climate change/CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to energy consumption during operation.

##### **Netherlands' DuboCalc calculation tool**

In the Netherlands, sustainable public procurement has been a longstanding policy goal, with the decision of the Dutch House of Commons to reach 100% sustainable public procurement by 2015. In

response, the Department of Public Works of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (Rijkswaterstaat) introduced several approaches to make its procurements more sustainable, such as the calculation tool DuboCalc and the CO<sub>2</sub> Performance Ladder.

To operationalise sustainable procurement, the software DuboCalc calculates the environmental impact of material use of infrastructure projects. The calculation is based on LCA of construction materials. It takes into account the embedded environmental impacts of materials during their lifecycle (e.g. material extraction, production, demolition and recycling). The energy consumed by the infrastructure is calculated, too.

DuboCalc calculates environmental impacts based on a system of shadow prices, which includes 17 different types of environmental impacts (e.g. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, land use, water use). The final result of the calculation is the Environmental Cost Indicator (ECI value). The tool is applied in works tenders that are typically based on the scheme 'Design-Build-Finance and Maintain'. Furthermore, tenders are based on functional requirements, thus giving suppliers the possibility to innovate and determine the most sustainable design. Namely, suppliers use the tool during the tender preparation and are able to test multiple designs to identify the most sustainable version, i.e. with the lowest ECI value.

DuboCalc tool is used in all major projects at Rijkswaterstaat and has been progressively applied by large public entities in the Netherlands, too. Given the complexity of the tool, it is more difficult to apply by smaller entities such as municipalities. However, recently the so-called DuboCalc Light has been in used by smaller municipalities. It consists mainly of a list of materials that have high negative environmental impacts and are therefore excluded from the project. This simplified version of DuboCalc can be used for projects of EUR 10 000 or upwards.

An important foundation for the calculations is the underlying database, i.e. the National Environmental Database. This database includes the reference data for the environmental impacts of construction materials. It has a dedicated governance structure (National Environmental Database Foundation - NMD) that is tasked with maintaining and regularly updating the database.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

Finally, discussions with the various stakeholders have highlighted systematic difficulties in monitoring green clauses. Practical tools can also be developed to help monitor these clauses, such as a desktop tool/information system for monitoring the implementation of these clauses. This system could be based on easily verifiable key performance indicators linked to the contractor's right to claim payment. These indicators could be developed for certain procurement categories. Key performance indicators or other forms of compliance monitoring must, however, take into account the time and resources that will be required to apply them in practice. It may be preferable to include a smaller number of such indicators that can be meaningfully applied if monitoring a long list of environmental commitments is not realistic. (World Bank, 2021<sup>[13]</sup>)

#### **4.2.2. Setting up a help desk to support buyers in their day-to-day green procurement operations**

A help desk is a contact point centre to assist contracting authorities and/or economic operators in clarifying their inquiries related to their daily tasks of public procurement. It is an efficient tool to provide quick and tailor-made information. This function is essential because public procurement regulations are complex and can be modified frequently. A help desk can contribute to ensuring legal compliance and solving recurrent issues of daily procurement tasks, such as the choice of procedure and award criteria. (OECD, 2023<sup>[4]</sup>)

In France, there is no free help desk dedicated as such to assisting buyers with the inclusion of green considerations. Although the green desks offer free expertise and support, membership of these networks for more in-depth support is usually subject to a fee (See section 3.2.3). Many stakeholders in the State procurement function who responded to the OECD survey, as well as those met during the fact-finding missions, expressed the desire for such a help desk to be set up.

Some have suggested the creation of an interministerial department specialising in green clauses, with technical and administrative experts who could discuss the various issues and produce standard clauses or analyses based on the different procurement categories. Other stakeholders also insisted on regional specificities being taken into account with the creation of regional help desks. However, this option raises evident questions of both financial and human resources.

At central level, the DAE has already acquired additional human resources, in particular three environmental experts, to support buyers in including environmental considerations in their procurement processes. The capacity of these additional human resources to meet the needs of buyers will largely depend on the volume of requests submitted and also on the nature of the support offered. After an initial phase of implementation and stabilisation of demand, it will certainly be necessary to analyse the rate of use of this service by buyers in order to assess the adequacy of the resources allocated to this centralised help desk. Furthermore, experience in other countries shows that it is not always necessary to internalise the required resources. Other countries, such as Belgium and Norway, have opened helpdesks dedicated to sustainable public procurement (see Box 4.9). (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

#### **Box 4.9. Helpdesks dedicated to green public procurement in Belgium, Norway and Lithuania**

##### **Belgium**

Bruxelles Environnement is a public institution with a wide range of competences in environmental, animal welfare and energy policy. Since 2009, Bruxelles Environnement has been offering training, a helpdesk, newsletters, and other practical tools to Brussels public buyers. The helpdesk is free of charge, and is run by an external service provider under a public contract. These service providers are also assigned other tasks related to sustainable public procurement, with the title of “sustainable public procurement facilitators”. They provide training and direct support to public authorities to help them implement sustainable public procurement processes.

The helpdesk generally responds to questions from public authorities within 3 working days. The advice offered by the helpdesk is not limited to the award criteria, but also covers the period prior to the launch of the contract (needs analysis and market research), through to the award and execution of the contract. The helpdesk can also provide assistance with the review of specifications and covers all procurement categories.

##### **Norway**

The Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management (DFØ) supports and advises on the implementation of public procurement rules. In 2021, DFØ launched a helpdesk to meet buyers' needs for assistance with environmental and innovative public procurement. The helpdesk is one of DFØ's most popular services. The service is free and open 5 days a week. In view of this success, the assistance offered by the helpdesk has been extended to include all types of questions about public procurement.



### Lithuania

In Lithuania, a web page on “frequently asked questions” regarding green public procurement has been created. In addition, e-mail and telephone consultations are provided by the Ministry of the Environment on policy issues and by the Public Procurement Office, which provides specific advice and consultation on the use of GPP criteria.

Source: (Bruxelles Environnement, 2023<sup>[20]</sup>), (DFØ, 2023<sup>[21]</sup>), (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

As discussed in section 3.2.1, if the DAE were to take on a similar role, it would be necessary to assess the volume and complexity of requests received to ensure that the resources allocated to this helpdesk are adequate. The DAE could use the legal information unit for public purchasers (CIJAP), set up by the MEFSIN, as a reference base to meet the needs of State buyers, even though the issues involved are different. In 2014, 86% of questions asked to the CIJAP were answered the same day. Most questions that are not answered the same day are dealt with in writing within 48 hours. For questions requiring a more detailed legal interpretation, the request is forwarded to a specialised ‘Advice to Buyers’ unit in MEFSIN’s Legal Affairs Directorate (the DAJ). The DAJ generally responds in writing within 45 days. Overall, the CIJAP has been very busy, handling 35,000 requests a year.

Beyond help desks, another solution provided by countries to support GPP professionalisation and promote implementation is through a dedicated competence centre. A competence centre is an organisation/organisational structure that has been assigned the task by its government and has a mandate according to national law to encourage wider use of strategic procurement (green public procurement, socially responsible public procurement and/or innovation procurement). Its function includes, among others, providing practical and/or financial assistance to contracting authorities in the preparation and/or implementation of procurement procedures, providing training course, administering the digital platform to connect the public sector and private sector, organizing networking events to connect the public sector and the private sector on specific themes etc. (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

Two concrete examples of the role and functions of these centres of expertise can be found in Germany and Finland (see Box 4.10).

### Box 4.10. Competence centres for GPP

#### KNB in Germany

Since 5 December 2011, the Competence Centre for Sustainable Procurement (KNB) at the Procurement Office of the Federal Ministry of the Interior has been the central point of contact for all the federal ministries, states, local governments and other government offices responsible for procurement. The KNB carries out different tasks and activities:

- Provides information, training and advice on sustainable public procurement to federal, state and local government procurement offices and other public agencies via phone or e-mail as well as on-site training.
- Works with other organizations to prepare procurement guidelines and information brochures, as well as newsletters on sustainable procurement;
- Develops and proposes new ideas for sustainable public procurement in collaboration with representatives from public administration, industry, NGOs and association.

KNB also operates a web-based information platform that serves as an information, communication and network hub, helps building up a national expert network, and supports communication with companies



and NGOs. The platform provides key information, documents, important dates for sustainable procurement, which are available online to staff of public procurement offices and to other interested persons. Moreover, through this platform, KNB can address questions on the use of LCC for different product groups (e.g. from motor vehicles and consumer electronics to household appliance).

### **KEINO in Finland**

KEINO is a network-based competence center for sustainable and innovative public procurement in Finland and it started operating in March 2018. KEINO is part of the Government Program's implementation, and it is funded and steered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. Moreover, the strategic management of KEINO is supported by a Secretariat, which is appointed separately from the representatives of the ministries and a broad-based cooperation group.

KEINO offers support to public procurement practitioners in Finland through Change Agents (KEINO-muutosagentti in Finnish) operating at the regional level, which serve as local contact point. Change Agents are paid by KEINO, but they are part of each Agent's employees.

The priorities of Keino's activities in 2022–2023 included, among others, the implementation of ecosystem agreements with cities, and refining lessons learned into practical tools and operating models for procurement units.

Source: (OECD, 2024<sup>[14]</sup>)

As the German, Finnish, Belgian and Norwegian examples show, the DAE has a range of options for strengthening support for State buyers in terms of integrating environmental considerations into public procurement.

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## **5 A roadmap: options for promoting green procurement by professionalising the State procurement function**

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The DAE has made significant efforts in recent years to build the capacity of State procurement officers in the area of green procurement. While these efforts have resulted in a significant increase in the rate of integration of environmental considerations into public procurement (50% of procurement processes in 2023 excluding those of other State public bodies), other initiatives could complement these efforts to ensure that the objectives of the PNAD and the Climate and Resilience Law are achieved, in particular by means of two main pillars: 1) training; and 2) the development of methodological assistance and tools.

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## 5.1. Accelerating capacity building through training

### 5.1.1. *Creating a professionally recognised GPP training programme*

The DAE's training offer is generally well developed and comprehensive. However, the range of courses on green procurement is still underdeveloped and seldom taken up by buyers. Although the DAE already offers several levels of procurement certification, the environmental aspect is hardly addressed and often remains very general.

As the results of the OECD survey have shown, the issue of integrating environmental considerations into public procurement raises different challenges throughout the procurement cycle. The challenges encountered in defining the need, drawing up a cost/benefit analysis, analysing market capacities, incorporating these considerations into tender documentation and evaluation criteria, and monitoring performance all require practical, tailored responses.

The development of a training programme focused entirely on green procurement, covering the entire procurement cycle, would have the advantage of responding to the practical challenges faced by buyers. The course would also cover a range of environmental issues such as decarbonisation, circular economy, the fight against climate change and security of supply. The content, which would be more practical than theoretical, would be based on real-life case studies in small groups, encouraging the sharing of experiences, reflection on the challenges encountered and comparison with the reality of a public procurement procedure. Using real-life cases, this training would address the specific challenges associated with the different stages of the procurement cycle.

In addition to strengthening the skills of buyers, a recognised and accredited (if not certifying) training programme could raise the profile of the role of a State procurement officer (with possible effects on the attractiveness of the job and on the turnover rate) and address the problem of geographical distance (since it would only be taken once, buyers and their managers could make the corresponding financial effort). Finally, it could serve as a catalyst for the career advancement of buyers. As with some OECD countries, green procurement certification, or at least its formal recognition, could be linked to a pay rise or the opening up of new roles within the procurement function.

This training could be provided by a single institution, which would harmonise the content for all those involved. Finally, it will be necessary to answer the question of its cost, beyond the development of the training package. As cost is a major factor in participation, this training could either be offered free of charge to buyers and borne by the DAE, or it could be made compulsory for certain categories of buyers so that the budgetary allocation within each ministry for their training plan could systematically include this training. A third possibility would be to centralise the training budgets of each ministry within the DAE for all State buyers.

### 5.1.2. *Creating thematic training modules in pairs*

Considering the importance of the other players in the public procurement ecosystem, in particular technical experts, practical training with buyers in a joint training module, or by working in pairs, would enable buyers and technical experts to compare their perspectives, exchange their knowledge and experience and thus increase their skills together.

Given that the various players have limited time available, the complex issues involved in the ecological transition in certain sectors and the specialisation of the technical departments, short training modules, dealing with specific procurement categories, would enable participants to translate the content of these training courses into concrete environmental considerations in their day-to-day procurement activities..

As a general rule, practical training in pairs is used to develop i) the staff and/or ii) the organisation through comparative learning. The specific objectives of each job-shadowing or job-exchange programme should always be well-defined, with clear targets. (OECD, 2017<sup>[1]</sup>)

The expected benefits of these programmes are:

- Personal: job enhancement, development (career, leadership skills, etc.),
- Organisational: better alignment of skills with organisational needs and improved performance.

## 5.2. Providing buyers with the necessary methodological assistance and tools

### 5.2.1. Improving access to environmental expertise in public procurement

Beyond capacity building through training, ad hoc support for buyers would give them access to environmental and procurement expertise on a day-to-day basis. As such, helpdesks provide ad hoc and immediate assistance to contracting authorities in the form of call centres, telephone consultations or by e-mail. They provide quick, personalised answers to buyers and are particularly useful for helping inexperienced buyers. As the regulatory frameworks for green public procurement can be quite complex and diverse, the helpdesks are useful for clarifying legal issues and resolving recurring questions in terms of choice of procedures, evaluation criteria or tender documents.

Access to dedicated expertise has proved beneficial in the social field, where a number of facilitators have been set up to help buyers implement certain social considerations in their procurement procedures. However, this system may not be fully transposable to the environmental field. In fact, the social dimension is easier to integrate, as it is more subject to standard clauses (in particular targeting the staff of the bidder) and with limited themes. The environmental dimension, on the other hand, covers a wide range of issues (biodiversity, circular economy, greenhouse gas emissions, recycling, etc.), and affects several aspects of procurement in different procurement categories.

Consequently, consideration needs to be given as to how this support can be put in place, so that it is as effective as possible for all buyers. The DAE has already recruited four new experts, three for the environmental aspect and one for the social aspect, and also has a number of tools available to buyers (guides, tool-sheets, the RESPAE professional social network, etc.). The three environmental experts are specialised in circular economy, decarbonisation and biodiversity respectively. In this way, the DAE could become a true helpdesk for buyers if the demand for assistance from the experts proves significant over the coming months. Strong demand could also present an opportunity to expand the support team to cover other themes or specific procurement categories. The DAE team could also draw on the support of the ministerial sustainable procurement advisors, the regional procurement platforms, and the networks of public bodies in order to create a support network for buyers, provided that the skills of these players are strengthened beforehand.

Given the need for local assistance in the regions, local initiatives can also supplement the assistance offered by the DAE. In particular, some regional procurement platforms have set up a sustainable procurement advisor within their unit. This initiative could be extended to all regions of France, so that the methodological assistance offered can take account of specific local procurement requirements. However, this possibility comes up against the question of the availability of sufficient human and budgetary resources.

### 5.2.2. Developing tools to help buyers on a day-to-day basis

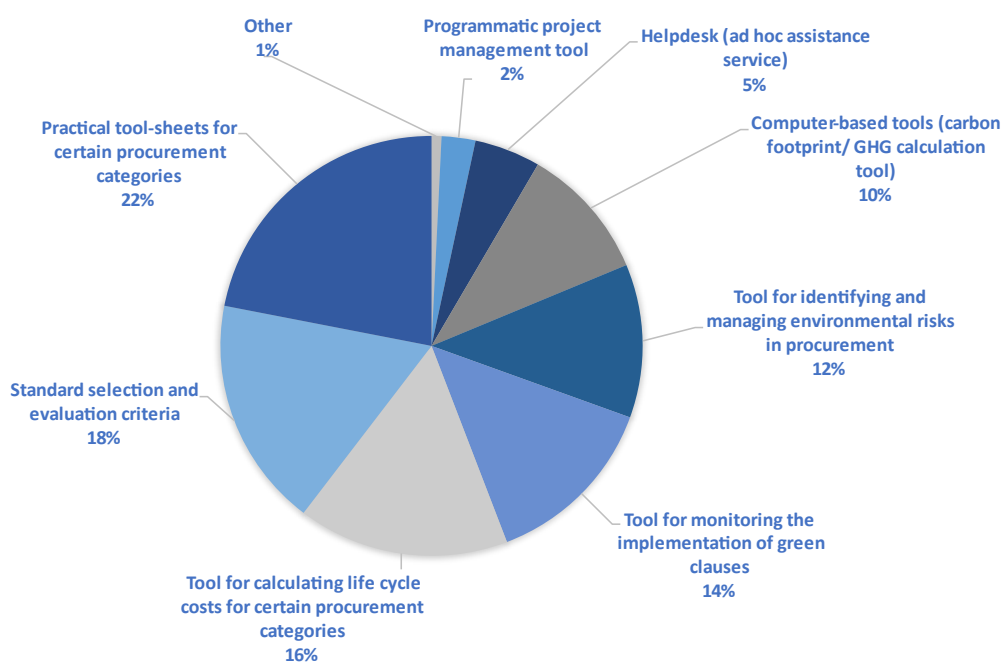
Green public procurement involves more complex, technical, and strategic decision-making than procurement based solely on identifying the most economically advantageous offer. In this respect, the

development of practical tools such as tool-sheets or IT resources for green procurement would simplify the integration of environmental considerations and reduce the administrative and technical burden on buyers. According to 255 respondents, the lack of practical tools is the main reason why environmental considerations are not fully implemented in procurement. Furthermore, few of the guides and support documents developed by the DAE, the DAJ or the European Commission are known to respondents, and while those that are known are considered to be useful and informative, they were also deemed too long and impractical.

The OECD survey also asked buyers which three practical tools they thought would be the most useful in strengthening their green procurement skills. The responses to this question were by definition diverse, but the development of practical tool-sheets and standard criteria for each procurement category were the most frequently cited (see Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1. Practical tools that buyers would like to see developed to enhance their skills, 2024**

### THE MOST USEFUL TOOLS FOR STRENGTHENING GPP SKILLS



Note: Responses from 555 respondents.

Source: (OCDE, 2024<sup>[2]</sup>)

A number of tools are already being developed to help buyers with environmental issues. In addition to the tool 'La clause verte', the tool 'La ref' enables buyers to find out the regulatory requirements in terms of sustainable public procurement applicable to their structure, by procurement category. (Réseau 3AR, n.d.<sup>[3]</sup>) The DAE is also developing tool-sheets for green procurement by procurement category. These tool-sheets include references to the legal framework for the procurement category, examples of technical specifications and conditions for implementing and monitoring the contractor's commitments. They also contain standard award criteria. Cross-cutting tool-sheets on greenhouse gas emissions, transport and delivery, and waste management are also being developed. The first tool-sheets were published in summer 2024 on priority procurement categories (IT, textiles, catering, works and consulting services), with a focus on decarbonisation to be added in a second stage.

The DAJ, in conjunction with the OECP, has also recently developed a sustainable procurement toolkit, including a mapping of procurement by sector, a tool for calculating the climate impact by sector, and an electronic tool for defining needs that takes sustainable development objectives into account. Other tools could be added to these initiatives, such as office tools for calculating life-cycle costs or environmental impact by type of product, a catalogue of products with high environmental-added value, a practical tool-sheet explaining the various ecolabels, etc.

Existing tools or those currently being developed could be supplemented by other tools based on those developed in certain OECD countries, such as Excel spreadsheets that can automatically calculate carbon footprint, energy savings, lifecycle costs or greenhouse gas emissions, particularly for certain procurement categories. (OECD, 2022<sup>[4]</sup>)

- In **Italy**, the central purchasing body Consip has developed a simplified methodology for taking into account life-cycle costs in some of its framework agreements and for certain product categories, such as ICT, vehicles, printing services and public lighting. The methodology consists of taking into account the energy consumption of the product category combined with green criteria. The methodology is adapted on a case-by-case basis depending on the product group. For example, for the purchase of computers, the award was based on the lowest cost, taking into account minimum environmental and social requirements, as well as energy consumption over the duration of the contract (3 years).
- In **Austria**, ÖBB, the Austrian federal railway company, has recently developed a tool for calculating life cycle costs (LCC): the TCO CO2 calculator. ÖBB has teamed up with the Technical University of Graz to integrate the externalities generated by CO2 emissions into its LCC calculation tool. The TCO CO2 calculator is the first calculation model in Europe to select the winning bidder on the basis of an ecological and sustainable assessment of the total cost of ownership. For a given product, it calculates the environmental impacts caused by the production, construction and use phases in the context of public procurement. These environmental impacts are monetised and integrated into the total cost of ownership. The result of this calculation is included directly in the tendering process.

In addition, a database of suppliers and sustainable products listing suppliers committed to sustainable practices could also prove to be a valuable tool for public buyers, in order to facilitate the search for products and services meeting environmental criteria. Practical tools can also be developed to help monitor environmental clauses, such as a computer-based tool/information system for monitoring the implementation of these clauses. This system could be based on easily verifiable key performance indicators linked to the contractor's right to claim payment. These indicators could be developed for certain procurement categories.



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## Annex A. ProcurCompEU competency framework used as part of the OECD survey

Competency	Description	Average level of respondents <sup>1</sup>
<b>Competency 1: Planning</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the procurement planning and policy priorities of the organisation, including budget plans and options for implementation, as well as relevant policies at national level.</p> <p>The formulation, development and implementation of procurement planning translate the policy choices of the organisation into where and how public procurement should be used to cost-effectively purchase the required supplies, services or works in line with the desired policy impact. The planning should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political and policy priorities of the organisation;</li> <li>• The relevant policies at the State level;</li> <li>• The adopted budget plans and available resources;</li> <li>• Whether procurement is the right option to meet the identified need;</li> <li>• The need to prioritise and manage timelines;</li> <li>• The identification of critical procurement for which it is necessary to secure supply chains;</li> <li>• Potential opportunities and risks in the implementation process.</li> </ul>	2.12
<b>Competency 2: Lifecycle</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the procurement lifecycle from prepublication to post-award, and how the different phases interact with each other. The procurement lifecycle includes the various phases from planning and pre-publication to post-award and contract management. Each step affects the nature of subsequent steps. Understanding the overall lifecycle and the interactions between the steps, over a number of procedures, is necessary for the design and implementation of robust procurement procedures. It allows to anticipate risks and opportunities, thus improving efficiency and value for money.</p>	2.78
<b>Competency 3: Legislation</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the procurement legislation at national and EU level, as well as adjacent areas of law and their implications for public procurement.</p> <p>Public procurement professionals need to understand and be able to apply the relevant national (particularly the public procurement code) and EU level legal frameworks and the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, proportionality and sound financial management. This includes adjacent areas of law and policy, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition, administrative, contract, environmental, social and labour laws, accessibility obligations and Intellectual Property Rights;</li> <li>• The legislative framework for environmental considerations and their impact on public procurement (The REEN, EGALIM, AGECE, Climate and Resilience Laws, Green Industry, ETEE Circular (15 Commitments for the Ecological Transformation of the State) etc.)</li> <li>• EU funding, budgetary and accounting rules;</li> </ul>	2.48

- Remedies;
- Anti-corruption and anti-fraud measures;
- Any relevant international obligations, in particular the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals - measure 12 of the Paris Agreement).

Knowledge of the legislation is also essential to understand and ensure the desired impact on the procurement system and supply chains.

In addition, public procurers need to be familiar with the major government plans, national roadmaps and interministerial policies on sustainable procurement (Ecological Planning, the circular on the State's Commitment to Ecological Transformation, the National Plan for Sustainable Procurement, the State's Decarbonisation Strategy, the Sobriety Circular, the State's Sustainable Procurement Policy, etc.).

**Competency 4:  
Green procurement**

Knowledge of: the green objectives of the organisation and related national policies, as well as of the available tools, standards, and techniques for incorporating these into the procurement process. Green public procurement incorporates strategic public policy goals into procurement procedures, such as the reduction of greenhouse gases, decarbonisation, the use of ecolabels or equivalent, energy sobriety, the fight against deforestation, the securing of supply chains, the preservation of biodiversity, etc. It contributes to reducing the environmental impact of procurement, and to improving value for money for the organisation and for society at large.

Sustainable objectives can be implemented in many ways:

- Exclusion criteria that require a minimum level of compliance with environmental and social law by contractors and sub-contractors;
- Selection criteria that verify the bidder's qualifications to achieve environmental goals; Technical specifications that include environmental considerations such as label requirements or sustainable production processes;
- Evaluation techniques such as life-cycle costing and use of environmental award criteria;
- Contract performance clauses in order to monitor and enforce high sustainability standards;
- Progress plans to achieve higher sustainability standards and help suppliers to mature throughout the contract;
- Sector specific legislation requiring, for example, minimum energy efficiency standards, as well as horizontal rules such as accessibility obligations;
- Green action plans outlining support measures or setting targets.

1.80

**Competency 5:  
Innovation  
procurement**

Knowledge of: the innovation objectives of the organisation and related national policies, as well as the available tools and techniques for incorporating these into the procurement process. Innovation procurement refers to a public procurement that involves either:

- Buying the process of innovation (e.g. buying research and development services), or
- Buying the outcomes of innovation created by others (i.e. buying innovative solutions).

Innovation procurement helps modernise public services while creating opportunities for companies to develop new markets. By developing a forward-looking innovation procurement strategy and considering alternative competing solutions, contracting authorities can drive innovation from the demand side to meet short term as well as medium to long term needs. A well-designed innovation procurement strategy will reduce the risk of low- or non-performance of the purchased innovations by providing a step-by-

1.23

	step approach from solution design, prototyping, and development to development and product testing.	
<b>Competency 6: Category specific</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the features and specificities relevant to one or more categories of supplies, services or works, including suppliers, technical parameters, and market conditions.</p> <p>Category specific expertise is at the core of the procurement procedure. The characteristics of the category of supplies, services, or works to be acquired, as well as the structure of the corresponding markets and value chains, must be well understood, including by involving experts and stakeholders (professionals and end-users). The procurement strategy and documents have to be tailored to fulfil the identified need and maximise value for money.</p>	2.15
<b>Competency 7: Supplier management</b>	<p>Knowledge of: strategies and processes to develop and manage relationships with suppliers in accordance with public procurement principles.</p> <p>Supplier management involves building and maintaining effective relationships with current and potential future suppliers. It is essential to ensuring the successful delivery of current contracts and of future calls for tender. In addition, increased understanding of suppliers can help procurement professionals drive more robust, ethical, responsible, and economically advantageous supply chains through open channels of communication with suppliers, especially SMEs. Providing information, guidance and potentially support and training to suppliers (e.g. on the use of e-procurement) are efficient ways to achieve these objectives, while ensuring that communication with economic operators during the tendering phase is in accordance with public procurement principles (i.e. non-discrimination, transparency, and equal treatment) and ethical standards.</p>	1.90
<b>Competency 8: Needs assessment</b>	<p>Knowledge of: needs assessment techniques and tools for determining the underlying needs of the organisation and of the end-users regarding the subject matter of the procurement.</p> <p>The needs assessment is the process of determining the needs, including possible impacts in terms of value for money or environmental impacts, regarding the subject matter of the procurement by various means, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaising with internal and external stakeholders, within the organisation itself or third parties to identify their needs;</li> <li>• Translating identified needs into procurement planning of supplies, services, or in line with the organisation's budget plan;</li> <li>• Considering aggregation of needs related to the same subject matter;</li> <li>• Use the technique of functional expression of needs to develop innovative and sustainable procurement solutions.</li> </ul>	2.04
<b>Competency 9: Market analysis &amp; engagement</b>	<p>Knowledge of: market analysis and market engagement techniques and tools that can be used to understand the characteristics of the supplier market as well as the market conditions and trends, in order to define the procurement strategy.</p> <p>Market analysis provides an in-depth view of which supplies and services can or cannot be provided by the market, and under what conditions. It involves collecting information on key market drivers (e.g. political, environmental, technological, and social – PESTEL matrix) and on the potential bidders.</p> <p>This involves using RFI (Request For Information) techniques, which can be published on PLACE, or physical sourcing of economic operators (EOs). This information can be used to define the public purchasing strategy (e.g. division into lots), the reference price, etc.</p>	1.79
<b>Competency 10: Procurement strategy</b>	Knowledge of: the range of available procurement strategies and their components (e.g. in terms of choice and features of the	2.49

procedures, instruments for submission, types of contracts) in order to reach the organisation's objectives.

The design of the procurement strategy is the deliberate use of different elements in the procurement lifecycle to reflect and exploit the conditions of the subject matter of the procurement and define the most appropriate and impactful process in order to reach the organisation's objectives and ensure genuine competition. It includes the identification of the most appropriate option between:

- Types of procurement procedures;
- Standalone or joint procurement;
- Features of the procedure, such as scope, duration, and division into lots;
- Techniques and instruments for electronic submission (electronic auctions and catalogues, and dynamic purchasing systems);
- Types of contract (e.g. direct or framework agreement) and contract performance clauses.

<b>Competency 11.1: Technical specifications (CCTP)</b>	Knowledge of: drafting technical specifications that enable potential bidders to submit realistic offers that directly address the underlying need of the organisation.  Drafting technical specifications involves transforming the findings of the needs assessment and market analysis into concrete specifications and evaluation criteria that can be used in assessing bids and awarding the contract. This includes setting objective and not over-prescriptive minimum requirements for the subject matter to avoid unnecessarily limiting competition. Ensuring that technical specifications are outcome-focused and future-proofed is key to enable innovation and continuous improvement. Technical specifications can also contain references to standards in order to ensure common understanding, transparency, and equal treatment.	1.93
<b>Competency 11.2: Evaluation criteria</b>	Knowledge of: drafting criteria that enable the evaluation committee to select the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT).  Exclusion, selection and award criteria are used to evaluate the offers in order to identify the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT). Exclusion criteria ensure that the contract is not awarded to bidders that have been found guilty of certain offenses or that are in breach of certain tax, environmental, or social security obligations. Selection criteria ensures that the bidder fulfil the minimum requirements prescribed by the bidding documents, in terms of economic, technical, and financial capacity. Finally, evaluation contract award ensures that the selected offer is the most economically advantageous one, based on price only, based on cost (such as life-cycle cost) or based on a combination of price and qualitative factors related to the quality of the technical offer or its environmental quality.	2.45
<b>Competency 12: Tender documentation</b>	Knowledge of: the content of the tender documentation, including the exclusion, selection and award criteria that are the basis for the contract award decision, in order to run a successful procurement procedure.  To launch a procurement procedure, tender documentation has to be prepared and the exclusion, selection and award criteria that are the basis for the contract award decision must be defined. The tender documentation (in addition to the technical specifications) explains the administrative requirements of the procedure, justifies the estimated value of the contract, and specifies the terms and conditions under which tenders are to be submitted, evaluated, and awarded. They may include other elements such as draft contract provisions, cancellation conditions for the tender, as well as modifications, performance, and termination provisions, etc..	2.58
<b>Competency 13: Tender evaluation</b>	Knowledge of: the appropriate evaluation process depending on the type of procurement procedures, including the role and responsibilities of the evaluation committee, in order to ensure that all tenders are assessed in an objective and transparent way against pre-defined criteria.	2.42

The tender evaluation process must ensure that tenders are assessed in an objective and legally compliant way and against exclusion, selection and award criteria defined in the call for tender, in order to identify the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT).

The evaluation committee should be led by experienced agents (representatives of the contracting authority, buyers, legal experts etc.) who are well-versed in their roles, responsibilities, and procedural obligations, supported by relevant technical experts in the field of the subject matter, including assessing standards and labels. The process should be documented to provide the evidence and the rationale for the award.

<b>Competency 14: Contract management</b>	<p>Knowledge of: contract management principles to ensure proper delivery, in compliance with all legal requirements and technical specifications, as well as logistics, environmental and inventory management considerations.</p> <p>Contract management involves ensuring that the subject of the procurement is delivered according to the terms, conditions in the technical specifications and the contract, and in compliance with all legal and environmental requirements and technical specifications. This includes aspects related to governance, risk, performance (and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)), rules on modifications of contracts and financial management of contracts.</p> <p>In the case of supply contracts, contract management also covers logistics and inventory management. This means ensuring that goods are delivered on time and meet quality standards, and that the availability of stocks is consistently and cost-effectively maintained, and that security of supply is guaranteed.</p>	2.36
<b>Competency 15: Certification &amp; payment</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the verification principles and the financial control framework which ensure that the relevant supplies, services or works are delivered in compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract and all applicable financial and accounting rules in order to proceed to the payment.</p> <p>Before proceeding with a payment to a contractor for the provision of supplies, works or services, the procuring organisation needs to perform a verification check to ensure alignment with the specifications of the terms and conditions of the contract and all applicable financial and accounting rules.</p>	2.07
<b>Competency 16: Reporting &amp; evaluation</b>	<p>Knowledge of: monitoring tools and techniques for the implementation and performance of the contracts.</p> <p>Reporting and evaluation is the ex-post assessment of the deliverables and outcomes of a procurement process to assess the strengths and weaknesses and draw lessons for future calls for tender. It is done by collecting relevant data in line with organisational and national reporting obligations.</p>	2.00
<b>Competency 17: Adaptability &amp; modernisation</b>	<p>Knowledge of: change management techniques and tools.</p> <p>Public procurement professionals need to respond and adapt to changing tasks and circumstances. Such changes can occur in terms of working methods (e.g. digitalisation), citizens' expectations (e.g. food safety), technological solutions and challenges (e.g. big data and cybersecurity), emergency scenarios (e.g. pandemics, natural disasters) and policy challenges (e.g. climate change).</p> <p>Public procurement professionals must keep abreast of relevant changes in the regulatory, political, and technological environment of public procurement. They must keep an open mind to changing conditions, new ideas and viewpoints and working methods. They must adapt, be resilient to change, and even embrace change by looking for modern and innovative solutions to overcome new procurement challenges. They should be capable of reassessing their approach in emergency situations to ensure compliance while making full use of available flexibilities. They should identify learning and development opportunities that support agile adaptation to change and new tools.</p>	1.52

<b>Competency 18: Analytical &amp; critical thinking</b>	Knowledge of: analytical and critical thinking approaches and tools. Procurement professionals need analytical and critical thinking to evaluate information with accuracy and objectivity. In doing so, they use good judgment, anticipate opportunities and threats and solve problems in an efficient and creative way.	1.58
<b>Competency 19: Communication</b>	Knowledge of: communication tools and techniques and how the public procurement principles apply to various communication situations. Communication aims to ensure that the goals and processes of procurement policy in general, and individual procurement procedures, are well understood by stakeholders. It relies on the use of appropriate communication channels (oral, written, electronic) in order to deliver relevant and accurate information in line with the public procurement principles of non-discrimination, transparency, and equal treatment. In doing so, public procurement professionals need to adapt the communication medium and message to each target audience, whether internal (management, technical departments, representatives of the contracting authority, financial services, etc.) or external (suppliers).	2.08
<b>Competency 20: Ethics &amp; compliance</b>	Knowledge of: the applicable procedural rules and principles as well as tools, codes and guidance documents which help ensure adherence thereto. Public procurement stakeholders must ensure compliance with all applicable rules, codes of conducts and guidelines and adherence to the principles of public procurement: equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, and proportionality. All stakeholders involved in public procurement must ensure verification throughout the full range of concrete tasks, making use of available tools to assess the risks of conflict of interest, corruption on the one hand, and anti-competitive practices by suppliers such as collusion and bid-rigging, or potential problems with compliance in their work on the other hand. The procurement professionals are subject to a code of ethics that sets out the rights, duties and limits to be respected in the procurement profession.	2.41
<b>Competency 21: Collaboration</b>	Knowledge of: collaborative tools and techniques. No public procurement professional works in isolation. To be successful, procurement professionals need to collaborate with each other and their environment. This means working in teams and encouraging the sharing of ideas and strategies and the gathering input and expertise. This is equally applicable for a small organisation where the public buyer will have to rely on both internal and external stakeholders, as well as for larger organisations and central purchasing bodies, where there is a conscious strategy for building multidisciplinary procurement teams for specific procurement procedures (e.g. lawyer, economist, specialist or subject-matter expert).	1.85
<b>Competency 22: Stakeholder relationship management</b>	Knowledge of: key concepts and methods of stakeholder relationship management. Stakeholder relationship management means creating and maintaining solid internal and external relations based on mutual trust and credibility. Public procurement professionals often need to engage with stakeholders to achieve organisational goals and contribute to the sustainable development of stakeholder relationships.	1.53
<b>Competency 23: Organisational awareness</b>	Knowledge of: the organisation's administrative structure, procedures and processes, internal culture, and legal and policy framework. Organisational awareness is the understanding of the administrative structure, organisational culture, as well as the legal and policy framework, that impacts the organisation. It allows one to understand the drivers and motivations of different stakeholders, and to take appropriate actions leading to securing value for money and the best outcome for the organisation.	2.36

<b>Competency 24: Project management</b>	<p>Knowledge of: the key concepts and tools of project management relevant for the public administration.</p> <p>The effective delivery of a procurement project requires the understanding and application of key concepts, practices and tools to manage procurement procedures. These project management concepts can be used to ensure that procurement projects are delivered in line with the expected timeline, budget, quality, stakeholder involvement and risk mitigation.</p>	1.92
<b>Competency 25: Performance orientation</b>	<p>Knowledge of: Performance management strategies and methods that help identify inefficiencies and monitor the performance of procurement and the way it delivers value for money.</p> <p>Public procurement professionals need to focus efforts and prioritise work to deliver value for money, in line with public service guidelines and policies. Their role is to achieve cost savings and strategic and sustainable goals, proactively identify inefficiencies, overcome obstacles and adapt their approach to consistently deliver sustainable and high-performance procurement outcomes.</p>	1.30
<b>Competency 26: Risk management &amp; internal control</b>	<p>Knowledge of: The different types of risk in public procurement processes and mitigation measures, functions of internal control and audit from the procurement point of view.</p> <p>Public procurement takes place at an intersection of public and private interests. It is subject to several layers of internal and external oversight, even including media attention, and is widely identified as a key risk area for fraud and corruption. As such, a big part of a procurement professional's job is managing a number of overlapping risks. This requires rigorous and thoughtful application of mitigation measures and controls, as well as a proactive approach to protecting the interests of the organisation and the public good.</p>	1.26

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> A level 0 corresponds to a less than basic level, level 1 corresponds to a basic level of skills and knowledge, level 2 corresponds to an intermediate level, level 3 corresponds to an advanced level, and level 4 corresponds to an expert level.



# Promoting Strategic and Green Public Procurement in France

## Professionalising the State Procurement Function

In light of growing environmental challenges, public procurement is increasingly seen as a strategic lever for achieving the sustainable development objectives set by governments. France has set ambitious targets for the inclusion of environmental considerations in all public procurement contracts, including state procurement contracts, by 2026. Achieving these targets largely depends on the ability of state buyers to implement these environmental considerations in public procurement. This report takes stock of the capacity of stakeholders in the French state procurement function to implement environmental considerations in public procurement and identifies opportunities to strengthen the knowledge and the skills of state buyers.



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