



C2 National approaches in the new EU Member States

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Executive Summary of your Abstract

Green procurement is perceived as a novelty in Romania: a concept that is just emerging. It is the time of "pioneers", public and private organisations who dare to buy recycled paper hoping that it will not damage their printers.

However, they are not alone in their quest: Ministry of Environment, coordinator of the green public procurement policy is creating a framework that will push the Romanian public administration to buy green goods, services and works on a regular basis.

Efforts are concentrated on the adoption and implementation of the National Action Plan on Green Public Procurement, a document that is central to the success of the green public procurement policy in Romania. The hope is that the implementation of this public policy will generate a snowball effect, inducing the private sector to apply green criteria as well, when purchasing goods and service.

Abstract

Romania experienced major changes in the last years, both from the political and economical point of view. Economical progress brought important changes in lifestyle, increasing consumption in a major way.

Concerns about environmental protection and energy efficiency lead to questions as: what are the limits of consumption? and what kind of consumption does the state encourage in Romania?

Until recently, procurement of ecological products, services and works did not constitute an area of interest in Romania. However, things are changing. In a study performed last year among public and private organisations, 39% of the respondents declared that they have an internal policy regarding sustainable development/green public procurement.

Promotion of ecological products and services among public procurers constitutes even more of a novelty.

For a long period of time, the legislation on public procurement was not mentioning anything on this matter. The transposition in 2006 of the Directives no. 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of

public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts and no. 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors into national law encouraged the public purchase of environmentally-friendly goods and services by introducing environmental criteria in public tenders: in the subject matter of the contract, in the qualifying and selection criteria, in the technical specifications of tender documents, in the award criteria as well as in the performance clauses.

Giving possibility to public procurers to buy green did not mean that they automatically started to buy green. A policy aiming to promote green public procurement needed to be developed. For this reason, in 2007, the Romanian Government took the initiative to set up an action plan on GPP.

The promotion of GPP was concentrated initially on two main pillars:

1. Working together with stakeholders to design and adopt the National Action Plan on Green Public Procurement, a document of strategic importance that aims to define concrete instruments to promote the green public procurement policy in Romania.
2. Informing the public about what green procurement means. A series of seminars was organised in the last years throughout the country, their scope being to inform and explain the basics of green public procurement.

The National Action Plan targets an array of activities that should lead to the fulfilment of its goal:

1. The development of a public database that gathers information about available ecological products and services for 9 products/services categories based on the self-declaration of the producer/distributor. This database was created last year for informative purposes. It is available on the website dedicated to green public procurement: www.achizitiiecologice.ro
2. Training for producers and consumers: the accomplishment of this activity is critical for the success of the GPP policy. This axis is the most resource-consuming, and for this reason, the Ministry of Environment applied for European funding inside two projects:
 - Project application funded by the Norwegian Cooperation Programme (Innovation Norway) for the project EcoEmerge (Developing Emergent Ecological Markets in Romania) to promote green public procurement among producers and public procurers.
 - Project application funded by structural funds (FES) to create a favourable framework in training public procurers on GPP.
3. Imposing a mixture of obligatory and mandatory targets, to be fulfilled by the public administration. The targets are modest at the beginning (a voluntary target of 15% green IT equipment for 2009), but the level of ambition increases year by year. Thus in 2013, an obligatory target of 19% will be in place for the same product category.

The National Action Plan on Green Public Procurement will be formally approved in a few months time but some measures contained within the plan are already implemented.

Independent of the Action Plan's adoption, work on GPP has already started. Through the activities already performed, there are signs that green products and green consumption will make their way in the Romanian society and market while green public procurement will be a major instrument in leading the way in this direction.

Resumé

Ms. Stroia is a public manager working at the Ministry of Environment. A valuable member of the sustainable production and construction team, she is the coordinator of the Romanian Green Public Procurement policy, working in drafting the legislative framework, attracting projects and promoting GPP in Romania.

Ms. Stroia holds a Bachelor degree in Public Administration from Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca and a Master in Public Management from Potsdam University (Germany). The last five years of her

career were dedicated to environmental protection policies. Her approach was both scientific (by editing books and articles in the field) as well as practical (Ms. Stroia worked in an European

project dedicated to the improvement of air quality, afterwards joining the Sustainable Consumption and Production team of MESD).

Recommended reading:

The draft GPP National Action Plan together with the draft Governmental Decision that approves the Plan can be downloaded (in Romanian language only) from the web addresses:

<http://www.achizitiiecologice.ro/doc/Plan.pdf>

http://www.achizitiiecologice.ro/doc/HG_achizitii.pdf

Other information about the promotion of GPP in Romania can be found on the following websites:

www.achizitiiecologice.ro

<http://www.mmediu.ro/upp/achizitii.htm>

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