

Circular & Green Public Procurement for a circular economy

CE-PRINCE

CE-PRINCE Capacity building activities

Venue | Date

Central Europe Green PRocurement and
Innovation Network for Circular Economy

Context and introduction

Context

The **European Green Deal** (2019) and the **new Circular Economy Action Plan** (2020) aim to deliver a sustainable, low carbon, resource efficient and competitive economy.

Adopting a circular economy **de-couples resource consumption from economic growth**, by extending product life-cycles through recycling, reusing, refurbishing and remanufacturing. This reduces reliance on imported and virgin raw materials, mitigates price volatility, and creates new business opportunities.

Circular value chains are essential to achieving climate neutrality by 2050: *«In a circular economy, carbon dioxide emissions would halve by 2030 and resource consumption by cars, construction materials, real estate land, synthetic fertilizer, pesticides, water use, fuels and non-renewable electricity could drop by 32% by 2030 and 53% by 2050, compared with today» (The circular economy index, 2016).*

The Circular Economy Action Plan specifically calls out **Green Public Procurement as a key driver in the transition towards circular economy:** through the integration of «circular economy principles», **C/GPP seeks to leverage the purchasing power of the public sector to advance environmental policy objectives and achieve the market's goals** of improved environmental, economic, and social sustainability, boosting the motivation for eco-innovation.

Public spending in EU countries represents approximately 14% of European GDP



The CE-PRINCE project

CE-PRINCE's objective is to advance Circular Economy in Central Europe through Circular/Green Public Procurement to improve companies' circularity while reinforcing the public sector capacity to publish tenders containing more and more elements of circularity.

Since no common standards exist so far and requirements for incorporating circular criteria into public tenders vary from country to country, **CE-PRINCE aims to standardise Circular Public Procurement approaches and standards across Central Europe.**

In order to make its adoption more homogeneous and consistent in the Central European context and to prevent distortion of the single market, transnational environmental criteria for public tenders will be developed, emphasising circular economy aspects in new or updated sets of EU GPP Criteria.



The CE-PRINCE project

Name:	CE-PRINCE
Project ID:	CE0200688
Programme Priority: central Europe	SO2.3 - Taking circular economy forward in
Starting date:	1 st June 2024
Duration:	30 months >> 30 November 2026
Eligible Budget:	2.094.411,10 €
Partners:	10, from 7 countries
WP structure:	3 WP (Governance, Public and Private)



GPP for a circular economy

The Circular Economy Model

The circular economy represents an economic model of production and consumption designed to **minimize waste and make the most of resources by extending the lifecycle of products and materials.**

Unlike the traditional linear economy, which follows a "**take, make, dispose**" approach, the circular economy focuses on **keeping products, components, and materials in circulation for as long as possible.**

This is achieved through numerous practices such as **sharing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and remanufacturing, recycling.**

European Parliament, 2023

Key principles:

- Sustainable design and eco-design
- Use of recycled/regenerated materials
- Repairability, reuse, remanufacturing
- Sharing services instead of purchasing
- Recycling and material recovery

Expected systemic benefits:

- Reduced dependence on critical raw materials
- Lower environmental impacts and reduced emissions
- Increased economic resilience
- Greater business efficiency and competitiveness
- Creation of new markets and new professional skills

The circular economy model:
less raw material, less waste, fewer emissions



Source: European Parliament Research Service



GPP for a circular economy

Green Public Procurement (GPP) is an approach through which **public administrations integrate environmental criteria into their tender procedures**, with the aim of:

- reducing the environmental impact of purchased goods, services, and works;
- promoting more efficient use of resources;
- stimulating the market toward more sustainable and innovative solutions.

GPP requires the **integration of minimum or recommended environmental criteria** (i.e. EU GPP criteria) into public tenders, which establish verifiable environmental requirements for products/services (e.g., energy efficiency, reduction of hazardous substances, reduced water consumption), based on life-cycle approach and scientific evidence.

GPP becomes C-GPP when it integrates specific criteria related to the circular economy, such as reparability, reuse, service models, recycled content, extended useful life.



Photo by Geralt - pixabay

How C-GPP supports circular transition

1 – Specific problem



- GPP is not fully exploited but represent a great **driver to boost circularity** and, at the same time, a way to **increase market share** of companies. GPP goes at different speeds in Central Europe Countries

2 – Solution



- Improve the capacity of public and private actors to face the challenge of a circular market, exchanging knowledge and providing the public sector with standard **circular tenders** and the enterprises with **circular business models** able to respond to GPP criteria

3 – Change



- **Reduced market barriers** that prevent the spread of the potential of C/GPP preserving the environment and giving enterprises an **opportunity of growth**

4 – Transferability



- **Standard circular tenders** should be available for the public sector as well as **specific tools to assess and increase circularity** for enterprises and their capacity to participate in public tenders

Role and benefits - Public administrations

Circular and green Public Procurement is a procurement approach that highlights the crucial role public authorities can play in **driving the shift toward a circular economy**.

It involves the **acquisition of works, goods, or services by public bodies that aim to foster closed loops of energy and materials within supply chains, while reducing – or ideally preventing – waste and environmental harm throughout their lifecycle**.

Expanding the adoption of Circular/Green Public Procurement is an objective of sustainable development policies as well as a strategic tool for their implementation.

The **growing demand for more sustainable products could stimulate the development of new markets or expansion of the existing markets for circular/green and innovative products and services**. This also motivates businesses to invest in green technologies, leading to solutions that benefit both the environment and the economy.

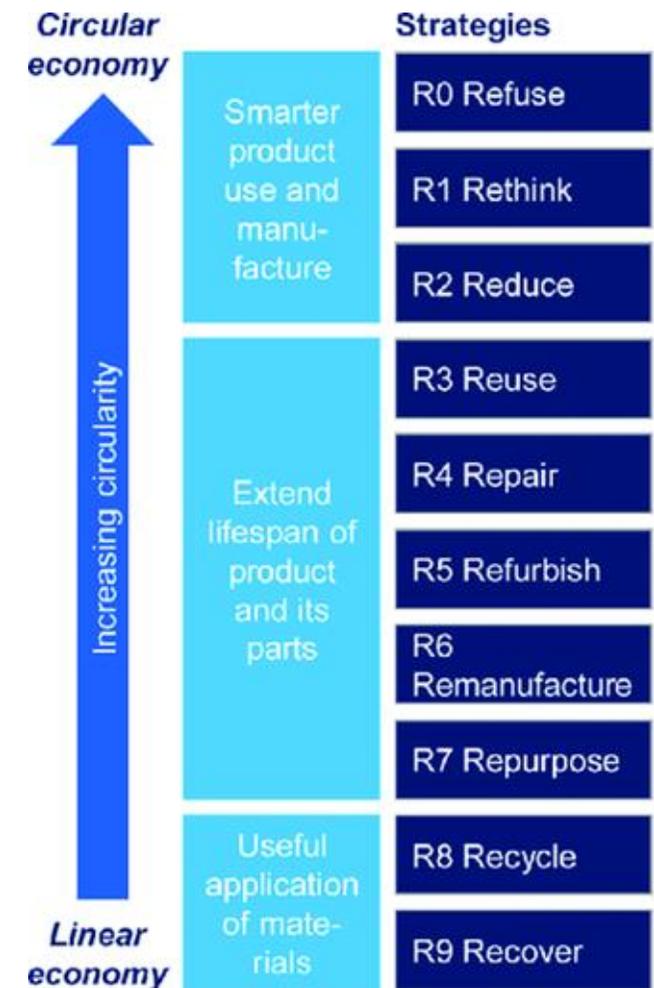


Role and benefits - Private companies

For companies, adopting circular economy principles offers several important **benefits**: firstly, by **reusing materials and integrating recycled components**, companies can reduce the cost of raw materials and waste management. Additionally, circular business models open up **new market opportunities**. As more consumers and industries demand sustainable products, companies that innovate with circular models can open to new customers.

Beyond the financial benefits, companies that embrace circularity can also **gain a competitive advantage**. As regulations on environmental sustainability increase globally, businesses that are proactive in adopting sustainable practices will be better positioned to **comply with new standards**. Finally, by adopting circular economy practices, companies contribute to **reducing their overall environmental impact**, helping to meet global sustainability goal.

For companies, **GPP represents an important development lever**, as it allows them to access new public and "green" markets, improve resource efficiency, reduce production costs related to materials and energy, strengthen their competitive advantage and reputation, and prepare in advance for emerging regulatory obligations, such as those introduced by [ESPR](#), [digital product passports](#), and [recycling requirements](#).



CE-PRINCE and the GPP for a circular economy

Matching Supply and Demand - CE-PRINCE initial assessment

The project's Initial Assessment highlighted a **significant gap between businesses and public administrations in the adoption of circularity and GPP**: businesses are more active in improving processes and resource management, while only a minority of public administrations systematically use circular criteria, generating a clear misalignment between public demand and private supply.

The picture is fragmented and uneven, with significant differences between procurement sectors and limited variations between countries, confirming that the **critical issues are primarily systemic: a lack of technical expertise, shared operational tools, and standardized criteria across national borders**.

Both public and private sectors report **common barriers**, including complex procedures, unclear criteria, limited internal resources, and difficulties in applying the life cycle in assessments. Dialogue between public administrations and businesses is still insufficient to foster adequate market alignment.

However, important opportunities are emerging, such as **businesses' growing interest in the competitive benefits of circularity, public administrations' willingness to strengthen their skills and tools**, and the shared need for harmonized approaches, which CE-PRINCE intends to develop through **capacity-building activities and common tools**.

Matching Supply and Demand - CE-PRINCE contribution

The transition to a circular economy can only succeed if public administrations and businesses move in the same direction, because public demand for sustainable goods and services must meet companies' genuine capacity to offer mature, competitive, and compliant circular solutions.

CE-PRINCE acts simultaneously on both sides of the market:

- on the one hand, it **strengthens the technical skills of public administrations so they can integrate sustainability and circularity criteria into tender procedures** in a consistent and homogeneous manner;
- on the other, it **supports businesses along the transformation path, helping them understand and meet these requirements, develop more circular products and services**, and seize the economic opportunities offered by GPP.



Thank you!

<https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/ce-prince/>