

GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Guidance for the Public Sector

THIRD EDITION: 2024

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This guidance has been updated in April 2024
in line with policy and legislative changes.

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- Climate Action Regional Offices
- Community Resources Network Ireland
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- Cork University Hospital
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- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
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- WEEE Ireland

This document is designed to provide general guidance and information. It is not an interpretation of any legal provisions governing public procurement. Legal or other professional advice should be obtained if there is doubt about the interpretation of legal provisions or the

correct application of such provisions. It should also be noted that the content of this document is subject to the evolution of EU and Irish law including the revision of the Procurement Directives, and case law of the Irish courts and the Court of Justice of the European Union.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ireland has committed to implementing green public procurement (GPP) in all tenders using public funds. Since the previous edition of this guidance was published in 2021, considerable progress has been made across many parts of the public sector in implementing GPP. At the same time, national and EU policy and legislation impacting GPP has evolved rapidly. The *Green Public Procurement in Practice* event hosted by the EPA in November 2023 highlighted the growing body of good practice across many parts of the public sector, covering a wide range of product and service sectors.

Ireland's *Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027* ('Buying Greener'), adopted in April 2024, aims to accelerate the implementation of GPP and introduces a comply or explain approach to the use of environmental criteria in tenders. It also introduces new requirements for monitoring and reporting on GPP across the public sector. This Guide and the accompanying criteria, which are also available via the *GPP Criteria Search* tool, provide practical assistance to public bodies in meeting these requirements.












The Guide offers:

- Clear summaries of the policy and legislation underlying GPP in Ireland and the EU, including the *Green Deal* and *Fit for 55* legislative package and Ireland's GPP Strategy and Action Plan;
- Explanation of the role which GPP plays in delivering Ireland's *Climate Action Plan*;
- Explanation of the links between GPP and the circular economy, including under Ireland's *Circular Economy Programme 2021-27* and *Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy*;
- Detailed information on the legal and organisational context for GPP, including the EU Procurement Directives and best practice from across Europe;
- Step-by-step advice for each stage of the procurement process, from needs assessment and market engagement through to contract management;
- Overviews of the GPP approach for eleven priority sectors which account for the largest environmental and economic impacts of public procurement;
- Links to further resources and legislation for each of the priority sectors; and
- Checklists to assist with GPP implementation.

The Guidance is accompanied by Irish GPP criteria for the eleven priority sectors, which have been developed based on common EU criteria with adaptations to reflect the Irish market and procurement practices. These criteria are

designed to be directly inserted into tender documents and include information on how to verify green claims, for example by reference to ecolabels or environmental product declarations.

The sectors covered are:

 Road transport vehicles and services	 Indoor and outdoor lighting (including road lighting and traffic signals)
 ICT products and services (including data centres)	 Heating equipment (including cogeneration, trigeneration and heat pumps)
 Food and catering services	 Energy-related products (white goods/appliances, electronic displays, vacuum cleaners)
 Cleaning products and services	 Paper products and printing services
 Building design, construction and management (due to be updated in 2024/5)	 Textile products and services (including uniforms and laundry services)
 Furniture and related services (new criteria set published in 2024)	

Purchasing recommendations for **professional services** and **electricity** are also included. For each of the covered sectors, the relevant actions and targets set out in Buying Greener are highlighted.

The Guide and Criteria were subject to consultation and incorporate comments made by the public and private sector bodies listed above.

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

BER	Building Energy Rating	LCA	Life Cycle Assessment/Analysis
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union	LCC	Life-Cycle Cost or Life-Cycle Costing
CO₂e	Carbon dioxide equivalent emissions	MEAT	Most Economically Advantageous Tender
CVD	Clean Vehicles Directive	nZEB	Nearly Zero Energy Building
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	OGP	Office of Government Procurement
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	OJEU	Official Journal of the European Union
EED	Energy Efficiency Directive	OPW	Office of Public Works
EMS	Environmental Management System	RDE	Real Driving Emissions
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme	REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
EPBD	Energy Performance of Buildings Directive	SME	Small or Medium-Sized Enterprise
ESPD	European Single Procurement Document	S.I.	Statutory Instrument
EU	European Union	TCO	Total Cost of Ownership
EUDR	EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation	TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
GHG	Greenhouse gases	WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
GPP	Green Public Procurement		
GWP	Global Warming Potential		

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The public sector has a vital role to play in leading Ireland’s transition to a sustainable, circular and carbon-neutral economy and society. Public procurement is one of the primary ways in which public bodies will help to shape this transition, and meet the 2030 targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improving energy efficiency. This guide provides step-by-step instructions and criteria for implementing green public procurement (GPP), in line with Irish and EU policy and legislation. In 2024, Ireland’s new national [GPP Strategy and Action Plan](#) was adopted, which requires all public bodies to apply environmental criteria in their tenders, or provide a justification for why they have not been included (the GPP Mandate).

While policy and legislation relating to climate action and the circular economy are evolving quickly, the underlying principles and priorities for GPP have been clear for some time. In 2012, Ireland adopted *Green Tenders: An Action Plan on Green Public Procurement*. This was followed up with the first edition of this guide and criteria published by the EPA in 2014, reflecting extensive consultation with public, private and third-sector bodies. At EU level, both the adoption of the 2014 Procurement Directives and the ongoing support for GPP provided by the European Commission have contributed to higher rates of implementation. In 2021, the second edition of the criteria and guide were published by the EPA, reflecting developments in legislation and practice up to that date.

This third edition of the guidance reflects a growing body of experience with implementing GPP, both in Ireland and other countries.

The guidance and accompanying criteria are aimed primarily at public sector procurers in central and local government, state agencies and other public bodies such as universities, hospitals and schools. They are also relevant for utility sector procurers and commercial semi-state organisations, and may be of interest to private companies whether they are responding to tenders or applying green criteria in their own procurement. They have been fully updated to reflect legislation and policy in place as of April 2024. Questions or comments on the guide and criteria are welcome and should be directed to info@epa.ie with “GPP Guidance 2024” in the subject line.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY WAYS IN WHICH PUBLIC BODIES WILL HELP TO SHAPE IRELAND’S TRANSITION TO A SUSTAINABLE, CIRCULAR AND CARBON-NEUTRAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY



1.2

GPP: REQUIREMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

GPP encompasses both mandatory legal obligations and voluntary practices. **Table 1** summarises the requirements for public bodies set out in *Buying Greener*. **Table 2** summarises the requirements under other policies and legislation which apply in Ireland. Note that this is subject to change as new policy and legislation is adopted at EU and national level.

In addition to these general obligations, a range of sector-specific GPP targets and obligations apply, for example relating to the procurement of zero-emission vehicles or recycled paper. These sector specific obligations are highlighted in the GPP criteria for the relevant product and service groups, and in **Section 5** of this document.

Table 1. Requirements for public bodies under *Buying Greener*

PLANNING/TRAINING		
REF	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
A5	All public bodies in updating their corporate policies and strategies, and Corporate Procurement Plans are to set out how they will adhere to GPP Strategy and Action Plan obligations related to their organisation.	From 2024
A6	All public bodies with an annual public procurement spend (on average over previous three years) above €200m to assess their procurement processes in order to deliver sustainable procurement in line with <i>ISO 20400:2017</i>	By end of 2025
A17	All public bodies to actively promote the use of <i>GPP Criteria Search</i> within their organisations and include this commitment in their Corporate Procurement Plans.	2024 onwards
A29	All public bodies to set out (e.g., within public sector Climate Action roadmaps) and fulfil annual staff training commitments in relation to GPP with a priority focus on key goods/services/works applicable to those organisations.	2024 onwards
IMPLEMENTATION		
REF	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
A18	All tenders where the individual procurement spend using public funds is above the EU threshold (or, in for Government Departments, the national threshold) must include GPP criteria, where possible. A 'comply or explain' approach applies as per the GPP Implementation Mandate (see Figure 1).	4 April 2024
A19	All tenders where the individual procurement spend using public funds is above the national threshold must include GPP criteria, where possible. A 'comply or explain' approach applies as per the GPP Implementation Mandate (see Figure 1).	From 2025
A21a	In line with the <i>Public Sector Climate Action Mandate</i> all public bodies shall specify low carbon construction methods and low carbon cement material as far as practicable for directly procured or supported construction projects from 2023.	From 2023

IMPLEMENTATION (CONTINUED)		
REF	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
A21b	Public bodies must include specifications for low carbon construction related components and sustainable building processes in accordance with <i>EPBD</i> , using <i>CPR</i> data where available and <i>EN 15978</i> , and reference to GPP criteria related to construction, including <i>National GPP guidance</i> , where appropriate in the Preliminary Project Brief. In addition, whole life cycle analysis in accordance with <i>EN 15978</i> , where appropriate, shall be used to inform the design of building projects over 1,000 m ² to ensure life cycle GWP is optimised at the building level and to facilitate declarations of embodied carbon for inclusion in the BER/EPC of buildings completed after 31 December 2027.	From 2026
A22	Life Cycle Costing to be used by all public bodies for all works contracts as defined by the <i>Capital Works Management Framework</i> .	From 2025
A23	For the procurement of low carbon cement material, public bodies and beneficiaries of grant (Exchequer) to implement construction related technical guidance, once established by the relevant body ¹ .	From 2024
REPORTING		
REF	REQUIREMENT	EFFECTIVE DATE
A36	All public bodies to report on use of GPP (via contract award information and notices) in relation to individual contracts valued over the applicable EU procurement thresholds in accordance with guidance and <i>Circular 05/23</i> . ¹	From 2024
A36	All public bodies to report on use of GPP (via contract award information and notices) in relation to individual contracts valued over the applicable national procurement thresholds (pending implementation of new below European Union threshold <i>eForms</i>), in accordance with guidance and <i>Circular 05/23</i> .	From 2025
A37	All public bodies to report explanation for not including GPP criteria in published tender documentation for contracts valued over the applicable national/EU procurement thresholds where <i>National GPP criteria</i> are available.	From 2025
A38/ A26	All Government departments to report in the Annual Report on i) GPP implementation in relation to contracts valued over the applicable national procurement thresholds, including explanation for not including GPP criteria in published tender documentation where <i>National GPP criteria</i> are available; and ii) Tenders awarded to social enterprises, voluntary and community organisations where GPP criteria have been applied.	Annual reports from 2025 onwards
A15	Sector specific GPP related criteria developed by public bodies (e.g., for energy related products, construction related) are to be incorporated into the <i>National GPP criteria</i> prepared by the EPA, where considered appropriate. Such new criteria shall be notified to the GPP Action Plan Task Force.	2024 onwards

¹ **A12:** The OGP to replace Circular 20/2019 to include updated instructions to Government departments and the public sector regarding new GPP obligations included in the GPP Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027. **A23:** Please refer to the [guidance on Reducing embodied carbon in construction](#) issued by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in June 2024. **A33:** DECC to consider available options for setting out in legislation mandatory requirements for reporting of GPP by public bodies (in relation to the comply or explain principle). **A34:** OGP to investigate potential of using data on GPP captured by procurement notices (eForms) published on eTenders and Tenders Electronic Daily to monitor GPP in different categories,

across the public sector, with a view to reporting on such data from 2026. **A39:** SEAI Monitoring and Reporting system to include Comply or Explain reporting on GPP in relation to procurement using National GPP criteria (for reference year 2024 and thereafter).

Table 2. Legal requirements for GPP in Ireland

LEGAL INSTRUMENT	CONTRACTS AFFECTED	REQUIREMENTS
<i>Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021</i> (section 17)	All contracts – inasmuch as these are part of the functions of a public body ²	A relevant body shall, in so far as practicable, perform its functions in a manner consistent with — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the most recent approved climate action plan; b. the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy; c. the most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans; d. the furtherance of the national climate objective, and; e. the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.
<i>S.I. 284/2016</i> European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts), Regulation 18(4) and <i>S.I. 286/2016</i> , Regulation 35(4)	All contracts above the EU threshold	Contract terms must require the main contractor and any subcontractors/suppliers to comply with all applicable obligations in the fields of environmental law that apply at the place(s) where the works are carried out or the services provided. ³
<i>S.I. 284/2016</i> European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts), Regulation 69(5) and <i>S.I. 286/2016</i> Regulation 93(5)	All contracts above the EU threshold	Abnormally low tenders must be rejected where they do not comply with the environmental obligations set out in Regulation 18(4)
<i>S.I. 339/2011</i> Clean and Energy-efficient Road Transport Vehicles Regulations as amended by <i>S.I. 381/2021</i>	Above-threshold contracts for the purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase of road transport vehicles AND service contracts for passenger transport, refuse collection, parcel and mail transport or delivery.	At least 38.5% of light-duty vehicles covered by all contracts awarded from 3 August 2021 to 31 December 2025, must be either zero or low-emission (maximum 50 g Co ₂ /km and 80% of Euro emission limits); At least 10% of trucks and 45% of buses must be low or zero emission.

² The definition of a public body is that set out in the Freedom of Information Act 2014

³ This includes applicable national, EU or international law, and the international environmental conventions set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

⁴ Eligible low-emission technologies are specified in the Directive for trucks and buses: Hydrogen, battery electric, plug-in hybrids, natural gas (CNG/LNG, biomethane), liquid biofuels, synthetic and paraffinic fuels, LPG. Restrictions apply to prevent the use of biofuels associated with land use change as specified in Directive 2018/2001, and to prevent the blending of liquid biofuels, synthetic and paraffinic fuels with conventional fossil fuels.

LEGAL INSTRUMENT	CONTRACTS AFFECTED	REQUIREMENTS
S.I. 151/2011 Energy Efficient Public Procurement Regulations and (S.I. 646/2016)	All contracts (regardless of value) for a wide range of energy-using equipment (ICT, lighting, HVAC, appliances, building energy management systems, electromechanical systems, vehicles and charging systems)	Public bodies must purchase equipment which, as a minimum, meets the criteria for inclusion on the <i>Triple E Register</i> for the relevant categories. ⁵
S.I. No. 426/2014 European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations	Contracts for purchase/lease of buildings, energy audits, energy using equipment and tyres.	Public sector is required to demonstrate exemplary energy management and undertake energy audits every four years. Central government must only procure highly energy-efficient equipment. ⁶
S.I. No. 393/2021 European Union (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2021	New and existing buildings or major building renovations	Requirements to install building automation and control systems, self-regulating devices for heat generation/temperature regulation, and electric vehicle charging points. ⁷
Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 concerning batteries and waste batteries	Above-threshold contracts which include any type of battery or accumulator (e.g. ICT devices, vehicles, light means of transport)	Technical specifications and award criteria must take account of the environmental impacts of batteries over their life cycle, with a view to ensuring that such impacts are kept to a minimum.

The legal obligations which apply as of April 2024 are reflected in this guidance and the accompanying Irish GPP criteria. A more detailed list of legislation applying for each of the product/service categories covered by the criteria is set out in **Section 6**.

Central Government Departments have been required to report on their application of GPP since 2020. These reports are available on the **EPA website**. The report published in 2024 set out a number of recommendations to effectively implement GPP:

1. Assign senior level responsibility within to prioritise the incorporation of GPP into procurement processes, including the Corporate Procurement Plan.
2. Implement relevant actions in the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications' *'Buying Greener: Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027'*
3. Provide GPP training to relevant staff and ensure awareness of the available resources, such as the national *GPP guidance and criteria* sets and *GPP Criteria Search*.
4. Put in place systems to monitor and report on GPP.
5. Include GPP data in Annual Reports.

⁵ To ensure adequate competition in a public procurement process, this requirement does not apply where, in the opinion of the public body concerned, there is, or is likely to be, an insufficient amount or number, as the case may be, of equipment or vehicles either listed on the Register or likely to satisfy the SEAI energy efficiency criteria.

⁶ A revised Energy Efficiency Directive was adopted in 2023 (Directive EU 2023/1791), which will extend requirements to purchase highly energy efficient buildings, products and services to all contracting authorities and entities. The deadline for implementation in Irish law is October 2025.

⁷ Under changes to the EPBD adopted in 2024, all new public buildings will need to be zero-emission from 1 January 2028, and new requirements will apply in relation to solar energy and electric vehicle charging.

A *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy*, Ireland’s National Waste Policy 2020-2025 acknowledges GPP as a vital policy lever in driving the prevention of waste and related environmental policy objectives. The public sector must be a leader in this regard. It states that:

Incorporating green criteria into public purchasing provides an opportunity to convert environmental policy objectives on carbon reduction, air and water quality, and waste reduction into delivered actions. The procurement of goods and services by government departments, local authorities and public bodies, in line with the Government’s own policies, will underpin the credibility of national policy objectives and enhance Ireland’s standing as a green economy.

GPP can thus be seen as an opportunity for the public sector to lead by example and actively support Ireland’s transition to a greener and more circular economy. The provision of guidance and common criteria is intended to support a consistent approach across the public sector, so that businesses can invest in providing sustainable products and services on the basis of clear standards.

This common approach is also expected to reduce the price premium associated with some green products and services, as economies of scale are achieved. Finally, the guidance and criteria are intended to reduce the risks and time involved in implementing GPP, as individual organisations can draw upon evidenced and established approaches at each stage of the procurement cycle.

GPP and the Circular Economy – Deriving Maximum Value from Resources

The current production model for many of the goods consumed by the public sector is not compatible with a decarbonised economy. Moving to net zero emissions means rethinking the way we use and dispose of many materials – particularly those which are in limited supply or have a high carbon footprint. In 2017 the Commission published a document entitled *Public Procurement for a Circular Economy: Good practice and guidance* which explains the concept as follows:

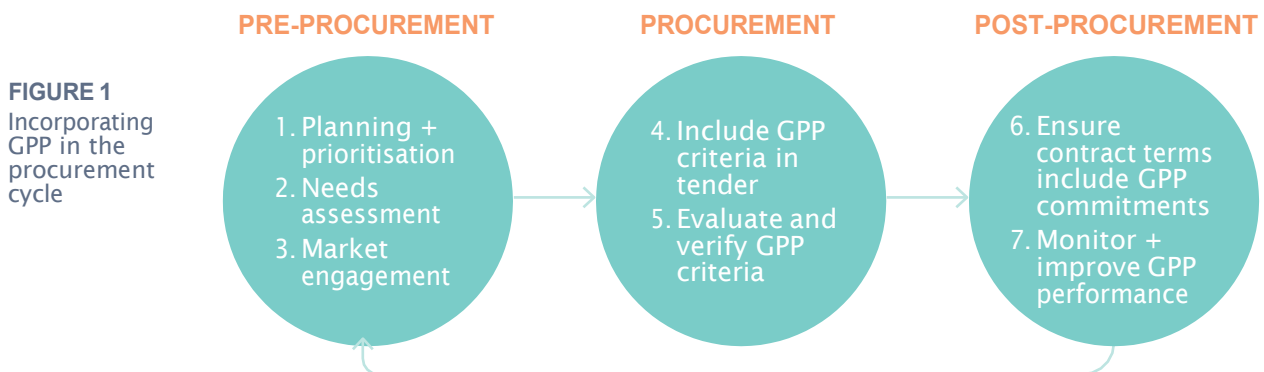
“Circular public procurement is an approach to greening procurement which recognises the role that public authorities can play in supporting the transition towards a circular economy. Circular procurement can be defined as the process by which public authorities purchase works, goods or services that seek to contribute to closed energy and material loops within supply chains, whilst minimising, and in the best case avoiding, negative environmental impacts and waste creation across their whole life-cycle.”

The Irish GPP Guidance and Criteria promote circular procurement in a number of ways, including:

- Identifying procurement approaches which reduce demand for new materials, for example by procuring remanufactured ICT equipment or recycled paper;
- Encouraging circular design, for example buildings which are modular or adaptable to different uses;
- Seeking to extend the useful life of assets, for example by requiring minimum warranties for vehicles and appliances, and putting in place service level agreements for maintenance and repair;
- Using award criteria to create incentives for products which are more durable and which can be readily repaired or upgraded (e.g. textiles, mobile phones, furniture);
- Addressing the end-of-(first)-life phase by requiring take-back, preparing for reuse and recycling for a range of products, components and materials (e.g. batteries, packaging, construction and demolition waste).

In order to implement GPP effectively, this Guide recommends a number of specific practices which have been proven to reduce the environmental

impact of public sector purchasing. These apply throughout the procurement cycle as shown in Figure 1.



Further information, examples and evidence of the impact of these practices is given in the relevant sections of the Guide. A number of public agencies in Ireland have sponsored the

development of training programmes to develop capacity for GPP across each of these areas of activity.

1.3

WHAT IS GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (GPP)?

GPP IS DEFINED AS:

“A process whereby public and semi-public authorities meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities by choosing solutions that have a **reduced impact on the environment throughout their life-cycle**, as compared to alternative products/solutions.”⁸

The concepts of **life-cycle analysis (LCA)**⁹ and **life-cycle costing (LCC)** are at the heart of GPP. They require buyers and suppliers to consider not just the up-front purchase costs of a given solution, but its total economic and environmental cost from cradle to grave or cradle to cradle.¹⁰ These are not new concepts, but they are becoming increasingly mainstream as part of procurement in both the public and private sectors. In addition to the strong focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, GPP takes a broader view of environmental sustainability by addressing issues such as the circular economy (maintaining the value of materials and products in the economy for as long as possible, reducing resource use and preventing waste), land use, biodiversity, and air, water and soil pollution.

More broadly, sustainable procurement includes the social dimension of public contracts by taking account of their impact on employment, social

⁸ European Commission (2016) *Buying Green: A Handbook on Green Public Procurement*

⁹ Life-cycle analysis or assessment is a method used to evaluate the environmental impact of a product through its life cycle encompassing extraction and processing of the raw materials, manufacturing, distribution, use, recycling, and final disposal. The EU GPP criteria are based on LCA studies for each of the covered product/service sectors.

¹⁰ Under a circular economy, costs and values should be considered within a ‘closed loop’, where materials are recycled or reused to make a new economically useful product, such as remanufactured furniture or recycled paper.

inclusion, human rights and ethical or fair trade. Increasingly, public authorities are implementing an approach to procurement which takes both environmental and social factors into account. This is important as a way of building public support for procurement which is seen to benefit

both people and the planet. Further information on the social dimensions of procurement, and examples of good practice, are available on the European Commission's *website on social procurement*.

1.4 GPP CRITERIA












Environmental criteria can be included in the procurement process:

- When defining the subject matter of the contract
- In exclusion grounds and selection criteria
- As technical specifications
- As qualitative award criteria
- In the application of life-cycle costing
- In contract performance clauses

The term 'GPP criteria' may encompass all or any of the above, depending on the nature of the contract. The development and application of common GPP criteria has benefits in terms of improving market response and lowering costs. The *process for developing GPP criteria*

at EU level is based upon life-cycle analysis of the environmental impact of each product/service, extensive market research regarding the availability and performance of products, and consultation with public, private and third-sector bodies.

This edition of the guidance includes updated Irish GPP criteria for **eleven priority sectors**:

 Road transport vehicles and services	 Indoor and outdoor lighting
 ICT products and services (including data centres)	 Heating equipment (including cogeneration, trigeneration and heat pumps)
 Food and catering services	 Energy-related products (white goods/appliances, electronic displays, vacuum cleaners)
 Cleaning products and services	 Paper products and printing services
 Design, construction and management of buildings	 Textile products and services (including uniforms and laundry services)
 Furniture and related services	

Note that the above criteria are applicable to service and works contracts where any of the covered products are supplied, as well as contracts where they are procured directly.

In addition, purchasing recommendations are included in this Guide for two important categories of public sector spending: *professional services* and *electricity*.

The sectors were chosen on the basis of public sector spend and associated environmental impact, availability and suitability of criteria at EU level, and their potential contribution to Ireland's emission reduction, energy-efficiency and waste targets. The main environmental impacts associated with each of these product and service groups, and the way in which the GPP criteria address them, are outlined in **Section 5**.

In most cases, the Irish GPP criteria are closely modelled on the European criteria, with some adjustments to reflect market conditions, procurement practices and legislation/policy in Ireland. For certain product/service sectors (e.g. paper products, furniture), up-to-date EU criteria were not available. In this case other national GPP criteria, ecolabel criteria and evidence of approaches applied by Irish contracting authorities were referred to. A public consultation on the Irish GPP criteria was carried out in 2023, with submissions from central and local government bodies, commercial semi-state bodies, industry associations, NGOs and others taken into account.

EU GPP CRITERIA

The European Commission, in partnership with the Member States, industry, environmental and social NGOs and other stakeholders, has developed GPP criteria for over 20 product and service categories. The Commission distinguishes between core criteria and comprehensive criteria, as follows:

- The **core** criteria are those suitable for use by any contracting authority and address the key environmental impacts of each product or service, including basic legal compliance. They are designed to be used with minimal additional verification effort or cost increases.
- The **comprehensive** criteria are for public bodies who aim to purchase products with enhanced levels of environmental performance. These may require additional verification effort or a slight increase in purchase price compared to other products with the same functionality.

You can access all of the EU GPP criteria, and background reports which explain how they are developed, [here](#).

1.4.1 HOW TO USE THE IRISH GPP CRITERIA

The Irish GPP criteria can be accessed on the EPA website or using the GPP criteria search tool. The criteria are designed to be inserted directly into tenders and contracts and are accompanied by notes on the relevant legislation, standards and labels in each sector and information on how the criteria can be evaluated and verified. They are applicable to different modes of procurement: one-off purchases, framework agreements, service contracts, leases etc.

The updated Irish core and comprehensive GPP criteria:

- Enable compliance with the mandatory GPP requirements outlined in Section 1.2
- Reflect Ireland’s broader policy objectives and targets
- Ensure compliance with relevant EU and Irish legislation in each sector
- Reflect the EU GPP criteria to the greatest extent practicable
- Aim to ensure acceptable levels of competition, cost and quality as well as measurable environmental gains
- Are capable of verification with reference to commonly available certifications, tests and standards.

Not all of the criteria for a given product/ service category will be relevant for each tender. The principles of **proportionality** and **equal treatment** must be considered in every procurement, and these are relevant to both the selection of appropriate GPP criteria and their evaluation. While the Irish and EU GPP criteria are designed to respect these principles and offer all operators (including SMEs) the opportunity to compete, the following steps are recommended to ensure a good response to the criteria:

1. Identify the **main environmental impacts** associated with the specific goods, services or works being awarded. A summary of the most relevant environmental impacts for each of the categories covered by the Irish and EU GPP criteria is included at the start of the criteria documents.

2. Conduct a **needs assessment** to identify the scope for reducing demand and/or introducing greener alternatives. See **Section 4.2** for guidance on needs assessment.
3. **Inform and engage the market** about your planned use of GPP criteria, and to confirm capacity to respond to them. See **Section 4.3** for guidance on market engagement.
4. Finalise your **procurement strategy and tender documents**, including relevant and appropriate GPP criteria from Irish, EU or other sources. See **Section 4.4** and **4.5**.
5. Evaluate compliance and performance under the GPP criteria, based upon the **verification provisions** which are part of the criteria. See **Section 4.6** and **4.7** for more details.
6. Put in place robust **contract management measures**, including monitoring and reporting on GPP and measures to promote continuous improvement. See **Section 4.8** and **4.9**.

Further relevant guidance on (pre-) procurement and sustainability is available from the following Office of Government Procurement publications:

- *Opportunities and approaches for Sustainable Public Procurement*
- *Public procurement guidelines for goods and services*

1.5 COSTS & BENEFITS OF GPP

Ireland has made far-reaching commitments in terms of climate change, and these must be reflected in public procurement even if there is a cost premium in some contracts. Applying life-cycle costing can help to identify products and services with the optimal combination of whole life costs, quality and environmental performance. In certain areas, GPP may imply higher upfront costs due to the need to invest in innovative materials, production methods, testing/certification and management processes. This can be particularly true in areas where the public sector provides the core or sole market for a product or service, and thus has to bear the cost for research and development work undertaken. But in many other areas, including sectors covered in this guidance, there are **significant opportunities to improve environmental performance without additional costs or impacts on competition.**¹¹

Many suppliers, including Irish SMEs, have already invested in green technologies and processes in order to save costs and compete for private sector clients who increasingly demand more sustainable solutions.¹² From greener cleaning products through to electricity from renewable sources, there are environmentally responsible options available for most categories regularly purchased by public bodies which offer excellent performance and value. In addition, **as the cost of emissions increases and regulations tighten, companies and products which have not invested in low-carbon products and processes will become more expensive.** Purchasing greener products at an early stage of their development allows public bodies to benefit from innovation and to help shape future product and service offerings.

Beyond value and sustainability, there are additional benefits from implementing GPP:

- **COMPLIANCE** – while GPP criteria go beyond basic legal compliance, they incorporate a broad range of environmental legislation which applies to public bodies, producers and suppliers. As this body of legislation is complex and constantly evolving, applying up-to-date GPP criteria helps to ensure that all relevant requirements are included in tenders. This reduces the risk of environmental damage, health and safety hazards and liability associated with breaches of environmental law.
- **COMPETITIVENESS** – Irish SMEs and other businesses are seeking to build their capacity to compete both domestically and abroad. The use of GPP criteria which are built on a common EU framework can help to prepare businesses for public sector tendering requirements in other Member States where similar criteria are used.
- **REPUTATION** – the public sector as a whole has a responsibility to display leadership on environmental issues such as climate change, energy and water use, waste management and protection of our natural resources. Individual public authorities will also want to protect their reputation from environmental risks such as those linked to hazardous substances, food contamination or illegal waste practices.
- **RESILIENCE** – reducing Ireland’s dependence on fossil fuels and improving our management of energy, water and natural resources have clear long-term benefits – economic, social and political. GPP is only one part of this effort, but given the **approximately €20 billion** spent by government on goods, services and works each year, and the undoubted potential to do more, it cannot be ignored.

¹¹ A number of studies on the impacts of GPP on cost, product availability and other factors have been carried out at EU level (see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/studies_en.htm) and find minimal or no cost increases associated with GPP for these product groups when life-cycle costs are taken into account. The core GPP criteria included in this document have been designed to avoid any significant impact on cost or product availability.

¹² A 2013 Eurobarometer survey of SMEs, including those in Ireland, found that of those who had bid for public contracts including GPP criteria, 77% said that did not experience any difficulty with these requirements, while 21% reported some difficulty. The survey also found that over a third of Irish SMEs offer green products or services, higher than the EU average of 26%. (Flash Eurobarometer 381: SMEs, Resource Efficiency and Green Markets, p 73)

1.6 STRUCTURE OF GUIDANCE

The next two sections of this document look at the *legal* and *organisational* context for implementing GPP in Irish public bodies. This takes account of both the mandatory environmental legislation which applies in the sectors covered, and the EU and Irish public procurement rules.¹³ The key concepts and requirements for implementing GPP are outlined, along with the way in which it can be monitored.

Section 4 looks at each stage in the procurement process to identify how GPP can be implemented – from early market engagement through to contract management. Particular attention is given to *verification* (including through ecolabels and other forms of third-party certification) and how *life-cycle costing* can be used effectively, as well as the specific opportunities under the 2014 procurement directives to apply environmental *exclusion grounds, selection criteria, technical specifications* and *award criteria*.

Section 5 explains the process and thinking behind the GPP criteria proposed for each sector. This includes an analysis of the main environmental impacts associated with each product and service group, and an overview of how these have been addressed in the criteria developed at EU level and for Ireland. The recommended criteria for each product group bring together this research and the specific information gathered from Irish public bodies and suppliers during the consultation process.

A table of relevant legislation for each of the sectors covered by the GPP criteria is given in **Section 6**. **Section 7** provides links to relevant resources and websites for each GPP sector. The guidance concludes with a series of *checklists of actions* to assist with implementing GPP.

¹³ Directive 2014/24/EU (Public Sector Directive), Directive 2014/25/EU (Utilities Directive) and Directive 2014/23/EU (Concessions Directive). These have been implemented into Irish law by S.I. No. 284/2016, S.I. No. 286/2016 and S.I. No. 203 of 2017.

2. LEGISLATION RELEVANT TO GREEN PROCUREMENT

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

Article 11 of Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states:

“ Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union’s policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.”

A wide range of EU legislation gives effect to this principle, with a significant number of new instruments adopted in the period 2020-2024 as part of the EU Green Deal. While some of this legislation sets basic requirements for products to be placed on the EU market (such as the Ecodesign regulations or EU Deforestation-free products regulation), increasingly it includes specific obligations which must be met by contracting authorities or entities as part of procurement. The list below provides an overview of relevant sectoral legislation.

There are other areas where EU or national legislation creates specific environmental obligations which must be taken into account in public procurement. These range from the




requirement to conduct an *environmental impact assessment* in advance of certain construction projects, to *minimum energy-efficiency standards* which must be applied when buying office IT equipment, through to rules on the handling of *hazardous substances* and *waste*.

Where an external contractor will be responsible for one or more activities which are governed by such legislation, the contracting authority needs to ensure it has included the appropriate information in tender documentation, accompanied by contract clauses with sanctions in case of breaches. The following examples illustrate some of the relationships and linkages between environmental legislation and procurement. A more comprehensive list of the relevant laws for each sector can be found in *Section 7*. The GPP criteria for each sector also highlight the applicable legislation and how it can be referenced in tenders.

If you are buying...

	WOOD, CATTLE, COCOA, COFFEE, OIL PALM, RUBBER AND SOYA – OR PRODUCTS MADE FROM THESE COMMODITIES	Under the EU Deforestation-free products Regulation ¹⁴ (EUDR), operators placing these products on the EU market must demonstrate that they have exercised due diligence in ensuring that the products are deforestation-free and have been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation of the country of production. The EUDR applies to products placed on the market from 30 December 2024; for wood or paper products placed on the market prior to this date, compliance with the EU Timber Regulation ¹⁵ is required.
	IT EQUIPMENT	The Energy Efficiency Directive ¹⁶ requires central government authorities to only purchase office IT equipment which meets minimum energy-efficiency standards. Under the revised EED adopted in 2023, ¹⁷ the requirement is being extended to all contracting authorities and entities. The Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Directive ¹⁸ requires producers to take back used equipment as well as registering with a designated authority and complying with hazardous substance controls
	FOOD & CATERING SERVICES	The Waste Management (Food Waste) Regulations ¹⁹ require all major producers of food waste to place it into a dedicated bin and ensure that it is not mixed with other waste. ²⁰ The Packaging and Waste Directives set requirements for packaging including its separation and recovery. The EU Organic Regulation ²¹ specifies the requirements for organic production and use of the EU green leaf logo.
	VEHICLES	The Clean Vehicles Directive ²² sets targets for the procurement of low and zero-emission vehicles for all contracting authorities and entities in contracts for the purchase, lease, rental or hire-purchase of vehicles and service contracts for passenger transport, refuse collection, parcel and mail transport or delivery. The Euro emission standards ²³ set maximum levels of emissions for new vehicles placed on the market on or after a given date (Euro 6d applies from 2021). Legislation also applies in respect of noise, tyres, lubricants and other aspects.
	CLEANING PRODUCTS & SERVICES	The Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation ²⁴ requires producers and suppliers of dangerous substances to classify the harmful properties of their chemicals and to provide users with detailed health, safety and environmental information and advice about their products.

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115¹⁵ Regulation (EU) No 995/2010¹⁶ Directive 2012/27/EU as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/2002.¹⁷ Directive 2023/1791. This requirement must be implemented in national law by October 2025.¹⁸ Directive 2012/19/EU as implemented by S.I. No. 149 of 2014¹⁹ S.I. No. 508 of 2009, as amended²⁰ Directives 94/62/EC, 2004/12/EC and (EU) 2015/720 as implemented by S.I. 282 of 2014 and S.I. 542/2015. A new EU Packaging Directive is expected to be adopted in 2024, setting higher standards for the sustainability and reuse or recycling of packaging.²¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products.²² Directive 2009/33/EU as amended by Directive (EU) 2019/1161, implemented by S.I. 339/2011 and 381/2021.²³ Regulation (EC) No 715/2007, as amended²⁴ Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, as amended.

	CONSTRUCTION WORKS	Legislation applies in respect of Environmental Impact Assessment, Energy Performance of Buildings, ²⁶ Construction Products, ²⁷ Waste Management ²⁸ and many other areas. Ireland's implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive also creates specific obligations for the renovation of existing buildings.
	ENERGY	The generation and use of electricity is governed by a number of EU Directives and there is a Guarantee of Origin scheme for establishing that electricity has been produced from renewable sources. ²⁹ Energy-using products such as lighting and white goods are subject to mandatory labelling requirements and public bodies in Ireland must purchase products which meet the Triple E Register criteria. Public bodies must report annually on their energy performance.
	TEXTILES	The chemicals, dyes and treatment agents used to produce textiles are subject to the REACH Regulation where significant quantities of chemicals are used. In addition, requirements for the sustainable use of pesticides on crops used to produce textiles apply. ³⁰

The above requirements are only part of the picture, but give an indication of how environmental requirements affect almost every product and service commonly purchased by the

public sector. More detailed information about how environmental legislation affects GPP can be found in **Section 5** and in the criteria for each product/service group.

²⁵ Directives 2011/92/EU and 2014/52/EU as implemented in a number of Irish statutory instruments. See www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/eia/

²⁶ Directive 2010/31/EU as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/844; a new version of the EPBD was adopted in 2024.

²⁷ Regulation (EU) No 305/2011. A *proposal for a revised CPR* was published by the European Commission in 2022.

²⁸ Directive 2008/98/EC as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851

²⁹ Directive (EU) 2018/2001

³⁰ Under Directive 2009/128/EC.

2.2

EU PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES

The 2014 Procurement Directives specifically support the application of environmental criteria throughout the procurement process. This reflected growing concern across Europe about the environmental impact of public purchasing as well as understanding of how procurement can contribute to broader policy objectives.

The key GPP provisions in the Directives are highlighted in the box below. These provisions are also discussed in the document *Opportunities and*

approaches for Sustainable Public Procurement published by the Office of Government Procurement in 2023.

In 2016, the European Commission published an updated *Handbook on GPP* under the 2014 procurement directives. This includes a number of examples of how public authorities across Europe are implementing GPP in practice, and a collection of further good practice examples covering many product and service sectors is available [here](#).

GPP UNDER THE 2014 EU PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES

(Article numbers refer to Public Sector Directive, equivalent provisions apply under the Utilities Directive)

- Contractors must comply with applicable environmental obligations set out in Irish law, EU law or certain international conventions on protection of the ozone layer, persistent organic pollutants and treatment of hazardous chemicals or waste (Article 18.2);
- Abnormally low tenders must be rejected where this is due to breach of any of the above laws (Article 69.3);
- Evidence of the environmental management measures which a supplier will be able to apply in the execution of any contract may be requested at selection stage (Article 58/Annex XII);
- Technical specifications can be formulated with reference to production processes (e.g. organic agriculture or chlorine-free bleaching of paper), or any other life-cycle stage (e.g. end-of-life management) (Article 42.1);
- Award criteria may include social or environmental characteristics of the goods, services or works being purchased, e.g. electricity from renewable sources or fairly traded products (Article 67.2);
- Third-party ecolabels or certifications can be requested to demonstrate compliance with technical specifications, award criteria or contract performance conditions, provided these meet certain standards of openness and transparency (Articles 43 and 44);
- Life-cycle costing can be applied to measure and compare costs including environmental externalities such as greenhouse gas emissions (Article 68);
- Contracting authorities can refuse to award a contract to the operator submitting the most economically advantageous tender where it does not comply with certain minimum social and environmental obligations set out in Annex X of Directive 2014/24/EU (Article 56.1).

Specific rules are attached to each of these provisions and designed to balance the pursuit of environmental objectives with the Treaty principles of transparency, equal treatment, proportionality and free movement/competition. With the exception of the first two in the above list, the provisions are voluntary for contracting authorities to adopt, not mandatory. However as discussed in Section 1.2, the application of GPP criteria is becoming mandatory for all procurement using public funds in Ireland.

3. GPP & YOUR ORGANISATION

3.1 KEY FACTORS DRIVING GPP IMPLEMENTATION IN IRELAND

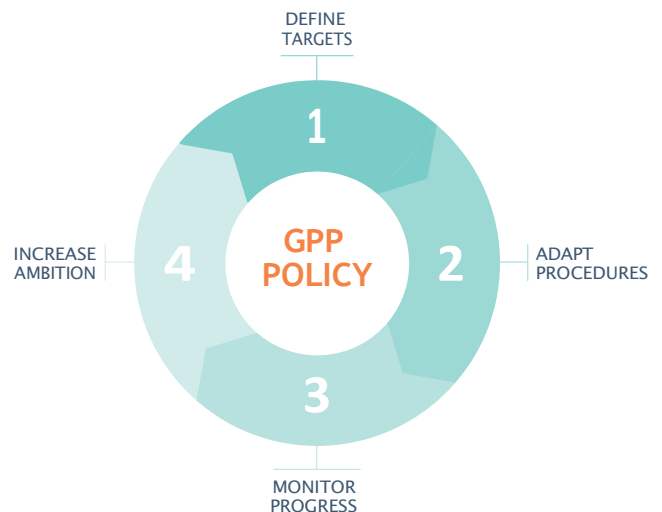
In addition to the national targets and commitments mentioned in the introduction, many Irish public bodies have adopted GPP in response to specific concerns about the environmental impact of their activities. Public authorities across Europe have been implementing GPP for a number of years, and many now have more than 25 years of experience. This means that there is a considerable body of experience to draw upon when considering how to structure and implement a GPP policy. Naturally, the best approach will depend upon an individual organisation's priorities, resources and level of existing knowledge of GPP. The steps described below are intended to provide a framework for introducing and managing GPP which is flexible enough to be used by any Irish public authority.

The advantages of adopting GPP as a formal policy rather than just as an ad-hoc practice are:

- It signals commitment from the highest levels of an organisation and can help to provide resources to implement GPP
- It is more likely to provide a consistent approach which will help the market to adapt
- It can link GPP to other important procurement or environmental policies, and to the organisation's training programme and standard tender documentation and procedures
- It allows for the ongoing monitoring and improvement of GPP results over time

A GPP policy should be clear in terms of the scope of procurement activities covered, how compliance will be monitored, and outcomes reported. Staff should be given adequate time to consider the impact of the changes and identify any specific steps which need to be taken on their part. Where possible, GPP criteria should be discussed with existing and potential suppliers in advance of their use in tenders, as part of a pre-procurement consultation exercise or technical dialogue. The framework for implementing a GPP policy may be visualised as follows:

FIGURE 2
GPP Policy Implementation



This obviously only gives a high-level view of how to implement a GPP policy. The steps involved each of these stages are examined below.

3.2

DEFINING PRIORITIES & TARGETS

Ireland's Climate Action Plan and Programme for Government commit to green criteria being included in all tenders using public funds by 2023. Organisations implementing GPP for the first time may wish to assess their overall procurement

spend and prioritise certain product and service groups in order to reach this target. Prioritisation may be based on any of the following considerations in respect of each product/service group.

- Total value of spend and frequency of procurement
- Environmental impacts and risks
- Ability to do more, i.e. are high environmental standards already in place or are better-performing products and services available?
- Strategic position vis-à-vis suppliers – are you an influential buyer?
- Cost considerations
- Reputational considerations
- Availability of GPP criteria and resources

Based on this analysis, some products and services may be deemed suitable for application of core GPP criteria, some for comprehensive, and some for an alternative approach (such as demand reduction). For those categories where GPP actions will be undertaken, information about the existing

environmental requirements applied and any feedback from buyers, suppliers and contract managers/users should be collected. This will help to define appropriate targets for that category, within achievable timeframes.

3.3

ADAPTING PROCEDURES

Section 4 provides detailed guidance on how procurement procedures can be adapted to take account of environmental considerations and incorporate specific GPP criteria. This covers the full procurement cycle from pre-procurement market consultation and planning through to contract management. Before any significant changes are undertaken, it is important to

identify the individuals who will be responsible for implementing, managing and reviewing GPP in practice. Ownership of the specific actions and targets identified should be assigned in order to ensure clear responsibility for GPP. As e-procurement systems play a large role in the procurement process, they need to be adapted to facilitate the application and monitoring of GPP.

EXAMPLES OF HOW THIS CAN BE DONE INCLUDE:

- Incorporating GPP requirements into templates, documents and forms;
- Adding one or more 'gateways' where procurers must confirm that GPP criteria have been applied in order to proceed to the next stage of the tender – these
- may be prior to publication of a notice or tender documents; prior to completing the evaluation; and/or prior to awarding the contract.
- Generating notifications and reports linked to GPP

The aim of all of these activities is to integrate GPP into existing workflows rather than it being an 'add-on' which requires deviation from normal procedures. **As staff time and resources are**

needed to implement these activities, securing senior management support for GPP is essential.

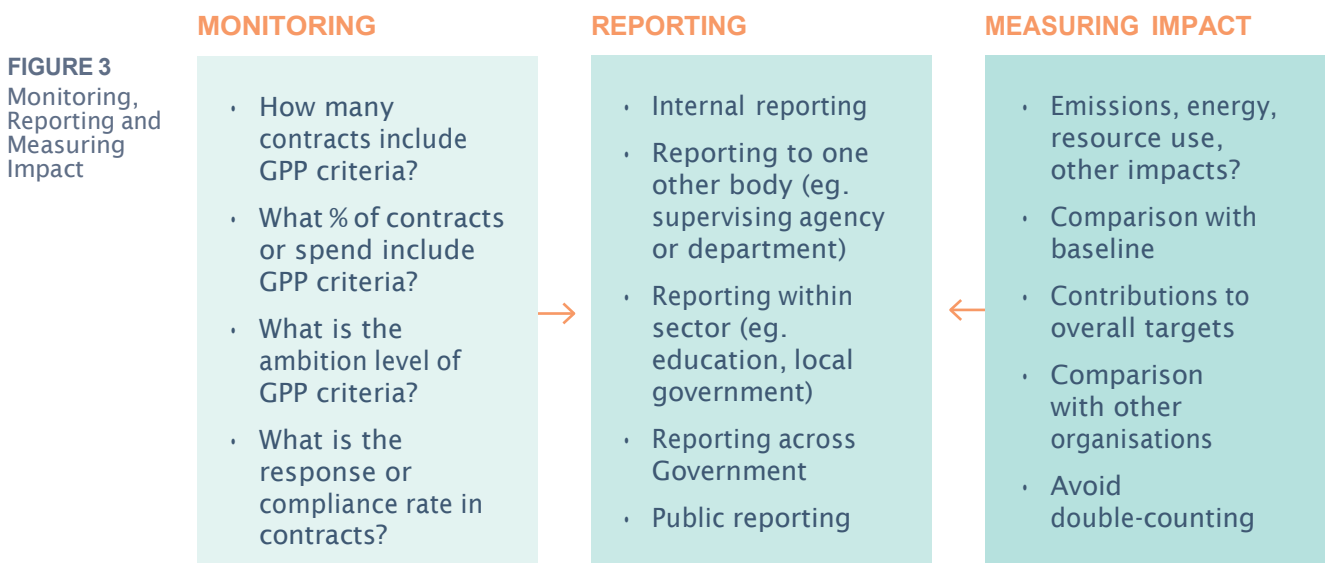
3.4 MONITORING GPP IMPLEMENTATION

As with other policies implemented via procurement, it is necessary to consider from the outset how progress will be tracked. Procurement data can be extremely valuable to an organisation, and GPP implementation may provide an opportunity to improve overall data collection and analysis. At a basic level, organisations will need to be able to count the number and value of contracts including GPP criteria.

A *GPP reporting template* has been developed for Government Departments, with the process for reporting across the public sector set out in the 2024 national *GPP Strategy and Action Plan*. The template requests information about the number and value of contracts signed in priority sectors valued above €50,000 which have included criteria designed to ensure that the product or service procured will have a reduced impact

on the environment. The reporting template stipulates that the criteria may either be the Irish GPP criteria, the EU GPP criteria, or other environmental criteria. The template also requests information on the existence of a GPP policy or strategy, the level of ambition, any challenges encountered and whether staff have received training on GPP.

Beyond basic monitoring and reporting on the application of GPP, public bodies should consider how to measure the impact of this in terms of CO₂e emissions, energy consumption, waste or other environmental indicators. This will allow you to quantify the contribution of GPP to your organisation's overall carbon budget and other environmental targets. Figure 3 illustrates the different activities involved in monitoring, reporting and measuring impact.



To monitor GPP during the tender process you may apply 'checkpoints' at various stages: in order to approve the business case, issue the notice and tender documents, finalise evaluation results, award the contract, and renew or extend a contract. To be effective, these checkpoints should be clearly reflected in your online procedures and standard documents. To monitor GPP

during contract performance, you may rely on a combination of self-reporting by the contractor and checks carried out by you as the client. In some cases, it may also make sense to involve a third party, such as an environmental auditor or inspector. Most of the Irish GPP criteria include contract clauses designed to facilitate effective monitoring.

In addition to any mandatory reporting on GPP, you should consider how best to communicate activities internally and externally. This may involve monthly, quarterly or annual progress reports, a standing item on the agenda for meetings relating to procurement and/or sustainability, and preparation of case studies or reports focusing on a particular sector (e.g. transport or energy). In order to identify

the contribution made by GPP to overall emissions or energy reductions, you will need to set a baseline for comparison. This may be the last contract awarded, or, if the activity covered by a procurement was previously carried out in-house, internal data. A number of freely available tools can help you to set baselines and calculate emissions.³¹

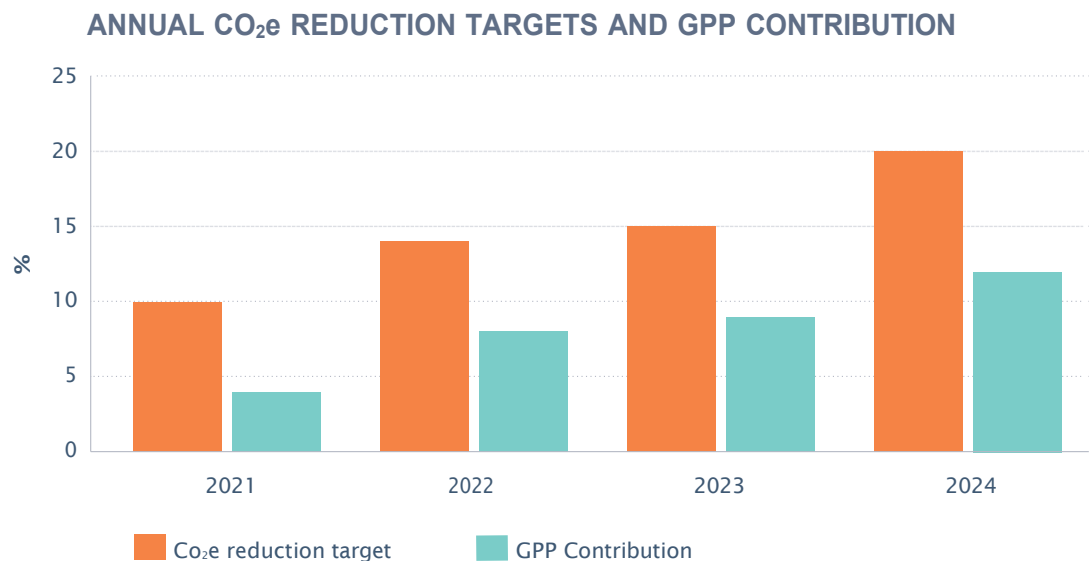
3.5

DRIVING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Once procedures have been adapted to implement and monitor GPP, reporting against the adopted targets can begin. Reporting may take any number of forms, but the key consideration is that relevant stakeholders are aware of progress and any areas which need to be improved. This

may include contractors who are responsible for delivering specific GPP commitments. Simple communication (e.g. a bar graph as per Figure 4 below) of progress towards targets should be complemented by an explanation of any areas where challenges have been encountered.

FIGURE 4
Graph showing contribution of GPP to CO₂e reduction targets



³¹ For example, the *GHG Protocol* and *Carbon Disclosure Project* tools. The *SEAI website* has guidance on monitoring and reporting for energy targets, and Ireland's *Infrastructure Guidelines* include guidance to monetise GHG/energy savings

It is important that contract terms allow sufficient flexibility for the ambition level of GPP to be increased over time, or for new areas to be

targeted. For example, the Irish GPP criteria for cleaning services include a contract performance clause requiring an annual report on:

- Staff training undertaken (dates, number of staff involved, topics covered)
- Implementation of corrective action/improvements to environmental practices
- Any changes in the type of products used to fulfil the contract
- Feedback received from staff regarding environmental aspects of the service
- Any other relevant information or ideas regarding environmental aspects of the service

This is accompanied by specific incentives and contractual remedies in the event of non-compliance.

Both informal and formal feedback from those involved in GPP implementation can be useful to assess the overall level of ambition for your organisation's policy and to identify areas where new targets can be set. For example, users of a catering service may be able to identify areas where environmental and cost savings can be made by reducing food waste or recycling or reusing packaging. Drivers of vehicles or fleet managers should be able to identify whether the

targeted level of fuel efficiency is being achieved. Such information can be used to drive the next round of GPP implementation in your organisation, and move from core to comprehensive levels where possible.

The guidance and criteria provided in this document are essentially a 'starter kit' for GPP – they cannot replace a detailed policy or the need to train staff and monitor outcomes. More detailed information about developing and implementing a GPP Policy/Strategy can be found in Module 2 of the *GPP Training Toolkit*.

Assistance and resources for developing and implementing GPP is also available via a number of European initiatives:

The European Commission GPP Helpdesk – this service exists specifically to assist public authorities and others who have queries about implementing GPP. It is free of charge and the Helpdesk can be contacted by *completing this form* or by telephone (+49 761 368 920.)

The Procura+ campaign and exchange – a grouping of public authorities from across Europe with a focus on sustainable public procurement (including economic, social and innovation aspects in addition to environmental). A manual is available with more detailed information on the Procura+ milestones and the website and exchange feature events, projects and funding opportunities. www.procuraplus.org

ICLEI (the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) – ICLEI's sustainable procurement team coordinates the Procura+ campaign and also manages a number of sector-specific projects, such as on sustainable timber, construction and catering. A regular email is sent out highlighting resources, training and research relevant to GPP. www.sustainable-procurement.org



Further resources to support GPP implementation are listed in *Section 7*.

4. THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

This section considers the legal and procedural context in which GPP takes place, and is essential reading for those applying the criteria. Although the GPP criteria have been developed and reviewed against the requirements of procurement law, like all procurement criteria it is possible to apply them in a way which would not be legal. The focus is primarily on contracts which are covered by the EU procurement directives,

however many of the same principles apply to below- threshold tenders.

The procurement process is complex and begins before the tender documents are drafted. A flow diagram of the procurement process showing relevant GPP actions at each stage is shown in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5
GPP at each stage of the procurement process



Not all of the above stages will be relevant for each contract, and public authorities can choose

the most relevant stages to implement GPP as explained below.

4.1 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Whether above or below the EU threshold, the award of public contracts must be done in a way which respects the basic principles set out in the EU Treaties.³² This means that all operators must be treated equally, and that no discrimination is exercised against those based in another Member State, for example. Equal treatment has been defined by the European Court of Justice as meaning “comparable situations must not be treated differently and different situations must not be treated in the same way, unless such treatment is objectively justified.”³³ In practice, this means that contracting authorities must ensure they do not confer any unfair advantage or disadvantage on potential or actual candidates and tenderers.

The principle of mutual recognition requires that professional qualifications, certifications or labels from other Member States are given the same recognition as their domestic equivalents. This can be particularly important at selection stage, when the technical and professional abilities of

candidates are being verified. It does not mean that any evidence submitted must be accepted, but that genuinely equivalent qualifications must be recognised.

Alongside the obligations of equal treatment/ non-discrimination and mutual recognition is the requirement of transparency in public tendering. This means that adequate publicity must be given to contracts, criteria must be well defined in advance, and information about the outcome of award procedures must be made available.

The principle of proportionality requires that any restrictions on the free movement of goods and services do not go beyond what is needed to achieve the legitimate objective pursued. If, for example, a contract is very low value and low risk it may not be proportionate to request an externally audited environmental management system, if the risks could be adequately addressed by an in-house system.

4.2 ASSESSING NEEDS

Reducing overall consumption of goods and services is the single most effective environmental action organisations and individuals can take. While public procurement

plays a vital role in ensuring public services can be delivered, procurement officers should also play a role in:

- Avoiding unnecessary purchases (e.g. by reducing demand for paper, vehicles, cleaning services)
- Re-thinking how the demand can be met in a way that requires fewer or better value goods to be bought (e.g. more durable and sustainable staff uniforms)
- Considering resource sharing or reuse options (e.g. by reusing furniture from other organisations or sharing materials for events and meetings)
- Ensuring goods and services purchased are fit for purpose, and can be adapted over time (e.g. by buying IT equipment and software which can be easily upgraded)
- Building flexibility into contracts and frameworks so that the nature and volume of supply reflects changing needs (e.g. by including a regular review of what is offered under a catering contract to avoid food waste, or under a facilities management contract to adjust maintenance or other activities based on need.)

³² For general guidance on the award of contracts both above and below the EU threshold, refer to the *OGP Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services*

³³ Joined cases C-21/03 and C-34/03 *Fabricom v État belge* at para 27.

If procurement staff are responsible for assessing needs, then **this should be clear in job descriptions and internal work processes**. This vital first step for GPP may be missed if procurement staff do not have the ability to challenge requirements put forward within the

organisation. A step-by-step approach for needs assessment, which involves developing a needs statement based on user consultation, is set out in Module 4 of the *GPP Training Toolkit*. It is also covered in the Irish GPP training programme.

4.3 ENGAGING THE MARKET

GPP often requires suppliers to innovate in order to provide more sustainable products and services. This cannot be done overnight. Even where products or services which meet GPP criteria already exist on the market, you will need to understand the range of potential suppliers (including SMEs) as well as any adaptations to procedures and contract management needed to ensure successful GPP. Pre-procurement market engagement is thus a vital part of the GPP process, and should be undertaken as soon as you have defined your needs. At a very basic level, market engagement involves:

- **Surveying the market** for new technologies, requesting samples or performing trials of products with enhanced environmental performance
- **Speaking to other public or private sector organisations** who have adopted environmentally friendly products and services, to establish their experience and note any benefits or drawbacks
- **Determining which environmental standards, labels, certifications and legislation** are relevant

Whenever possible, advance notice should also be given to potential bidders of the planned procurement and the inclusion of GPP criteria. This can be done by publishing a Prior Information

Notice (PIN) in the Official Journal, and/or a Request for Information on eTenders. You can also contact suppliers directly and advertise the market consultation on your website or other portals. At this stage, you may request direct feedback from suppliers on draft specifications, invite them to a meeting or event, or ask questions about their range of products and services which may meet GPP criteria. The scope for conducting preliminary market consultations is set out in Article 40 of Directive 2014/24/EU. In addition to consulting potential bidders, you may also request input/advice from independent experts. For example, you may wish to speak with environmental NGOs, consultants or public bodies with expertise on specific environmental topics.

For reasons of transparency and competition, any information should be made equally available to all interested parties. You also need to be mindful of the confidentiality of any sensitive commercial information or intellectual property shared by participants in a market engagement exercise. Article 41 of Directive 2014/24/EU sets out some important measures to take to ensure that no bidder in the subsequent tender procedure has an unfair advantage or disadvantage based on the preliminary market consultation. These include including all information you provide during the consultation as part of the tender documentation, allowing adequate time for bidders to respond and ask questions.

TIPS ON PLANNING MARKET ENGAGEMENT FOR GPP

- Advertise the process and then contact potential bidders directly
- Decide in advance how you will deal with confidentiality and intellectual property, and inform participants of this
- Consider the best format for any meetings – one-on-one may be better than an open day if collusion is a risk – but means there is less chance for groupings to form
- Consider which internal stakeholders to involve and any external parties, e.g. environmental organisations, community groups
- Make sure you are not just talking to the ‘usual suspects’ – include subcontractors/ second tier suppliers as they may be the ones responsible for delivering environmental aspects of the contract
- Keep a record of all market engagement activities and share the same information in tender documents, for any bidders who may not have taken part

Further information about market engagement in the context of GPP is available in Module 6 of the *GPP Toolkit* and in the *Buying Green* handbook

published by the European Commission. It is also covered in the Irish GPP training programme.

GPP AND SMEs

Research carried out at European level, as well as responses to the consultation on this Guide, indicate that most SMEs see green public procurement as an opportunity rather than a threat. This is particularly true where environmental criteria result in less focus on the lowest price in tenders. Many Irish SMEs are actively investing in carbon reduction, circular economy/waste reduction initiatives, energy efficiency, staff training and other relevant activities. Market engagement prior to launching a tender can help to ensure that you are aware of what SMEs are doing, and that they are aware of your needs. As SMEs may lack large or dedicated bid development teams, having advance notice of upcoming tenders which will include specific environmental requirements can be key to success.

The Irish GPP criteria have been prepared with a view to maximising participation in tenders and ensuring equal treatment between all bidders. The emphasis is on what is being offered for the specific contract, not on general corporate environmental

policy. Requirements regarding verification have been simplified wherever possible, while still ensuring that credible evidence of environmental claims is submitted and evaluated. The use of common GPP criteria, rather than every public body developing its own, is expected to reduce the costs and increase the benefits for suppliers in making the transition to greener production methods.

Some additional ideas to ensure GPP is SME-friendly include:

- Piloting GPP criteria on smaller contracts or lots prior to scaling up (for example, one room or one floor of an office block to be furnished with 100% reused furniture)
- Facilitating partnerships/consortium bids/ subcontracting to deliver environmental aspects of contracts, for example by hosting market engagement events

In addition, many specific supports for SMEs to green their operations are available from *Local Enterprise Offices*, *Enterprise Ireland* and the *SEAI*.

4.4 CHOOSING A PROCEDURE & CRITERIA

Decisions which affect the success of GPP implementation will often be made long before tender documents are drafted, at the contract definition stage. Choice of procedure will also influence the way in which environmental aspects are addressed. **The Irish GPP criteria are**

capable of being applied regardless of whether a contract or framework is being awarded, and in all types of procedures. For contracts awarded under an existing framework agreement, the scope of GPP criteria which can be applied will depend on the terms of the framework

ALTHOUGH MANY OTHER FACTORS ARE LIKELY TO AFFECT THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S CHOICE, THE FOLLOWING GPP CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND WHEN DECIDING ON PROCUREMENT SCOPE AND PROCEDURE:

- If the environmental criteria used are likely to require some up-front investment (e.g. in certification or an environmental management system), **a longer-term contract or framework agreement** will provide a greater incentive for operators to make that investment.
- In some cases, a **service contract** may provide better incentives for high environmental standards, for example where a printing service provider bears the cost of paper used or a building facility manager must pay for electricity and water.
- **Open procedures** in which a large volume of tenders can be expected to be received may make it more difficult to apply some of the comprehensive GPP criteria effectively, due to the additional verification effort involved.
- The **competitive dialogue** and **competitive procedure with negotiation** provide more flexibility to engage with suppliers around the authority's requirements, including those related to GPP. They are appropriate for use in more complex contracts or those which involve innovative elements.
- The use of **dynamic purchasing systems** may be appropriate for GPP when you are purchasing "off the shelf" products but want to allow new market entrants – including those who may be able to offer enhanced environmental performance, to join.

For any tender including GPP criteria, it is particularly important to allow sufficient time for bidders to respond and to seek clarification of the requirements if needed. **It is important that the person or people responsible for responding to clarification questions have a good understanding of the GPP criteria, so that they can explain what is needed to bidders.**

Whether a contract is being advertised in the Official Journal (OJEU) or on eTenders alone, the contract notice should highlight the application of GPP within the award process. Where possible, the title and/or short description of the contract should draw attention to the specific environmental requirements included, e.g. 'Supply of highly energy-efficient IT equipment' or 'Electric vehicles.' This allows suppliers to quickly identify relevant contracting opportunities and can also help with monitoring and analysis of GPP implementation. A statement of the

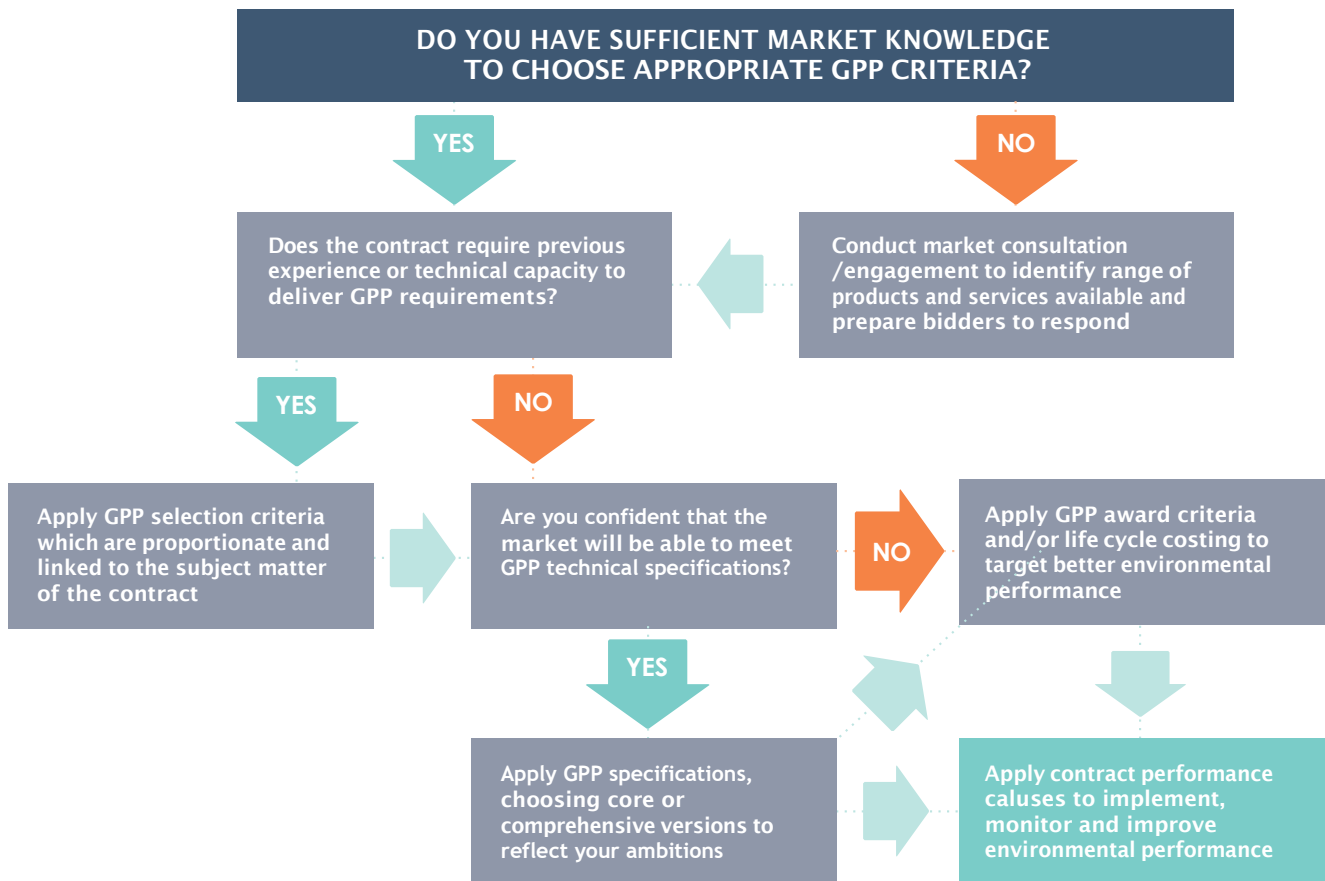
environmental objectives of a tender or a reference to your organisation's GPP policy can also be included in the short description.

THE IRISH GPP CRITERIA ARE CAPABLE OF BEING APPLIED REGARDLESS OF WHETHER A CONTRACT OR FRAMEWORK IS BEING AWARDED, AND IN ALL TYPES OF PROCEDURES

One of the key decisions to be made at the tender design stage is whether to include GPP criteria in the selection criteria, technical specifications, award criteria, contract performance clauses, or

some combination of these. The decision tool shown in Figure 6 gives an overview of factors to consider in making this choice.

FIGURE 6
Decision tool for GPP criteria



Whereas technical specifications set minimum requirements which must be met by all bidders, award criteria reward those bidders who offer enhanced performance under pre-defined headings. Tenders which do not meet technical specifications must be rejected, unless variants have been specifically authorised (see **Section 4.6.2**). Award criteria will not normally

be responsible for a supplier deciding not to compete, and may encourage competitors to invest in their environmental performance beyond the minimum required levels. The decision tool above can be used to help determine where technical specifications and award criteria may be appropriate to implement GPP.

4.5

EXCLUDING & SELECTING BIDDERS

4.5.1 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Article 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU sets out the possible grounds for excluding bidders from a procedure. These include several grounds which are relevant to GPP:

- Non-compliance with applicable national, EU or international environmental law (Art. 57.4(a)³⁴)
- Grave professional misconduct which renders integrity questionable (Art. 57.4(c))
- Significant/persistent deficiencies in performance of substantive requirement under prior contract which led to termination or comparable sanctions (Art. 57.4(g))
- Misrepresentation of any of the above or inability to submit supporting documents (Art. 57.4(h))

While compliance with exclusion grounds is normally evaluated by a standard declaration form, you are entitled to request further evidence of compliance at any time. For example, if you are aware of media reports suggesting a company has not complied with waste disposal regulations, then you can request proof from the bidder and may exclude them if they cannot demonstrate compliance.

The above exclusion grounds can only be applied for a period of three years from the date of the relevant event.³⁵ They are also subject to the right of bidders to attempt ‘self-cleaning’, by submitting evidence of concrete measures taken to address the underlying problems and provide redress.³⁶ It is up to the contracting authority to decide if any such measures are sufficient to allow the bidder to participate in the procedure.

4.5.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria allow you to check that bidders have appropriate experience and technical and human capacity to deliver GPP aspects of a contract. In procedures other than the open procedure, they may be weighted and scored to allow you to choose the best qualified bidders for your particular contract. Keep in mind that

selection criteria should always be proportionate and linked to the subject-matter of the contract, so you should avoid using the same standardised criteria for different contracts. Always consider the impact which selection criteria will have on SMEs and new market entrants, who may be able to offer green products and services.

SELECTION CRITERIA RELATED TO GPP MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Human and technical resources
- Experience and references
- Educational and professional qualifications of staff
- Environmental management systems and schemes (e.g. EMAS, ISO 14001)
- Supply chain management/tracking systems
- Samples of products
- Conformity assessment certificates

³⁴ This includes the environmental conventions set out in Annex X of the Directive, namely the Vienna Convention on the ozone layer, Basel Convention on hazardous waste, Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants, and PIC Convention (hazardous chemicals/pesticides).

³⁵ Art. 57(7) of Directive 2014/24/EU – unless a longer period has been set out in a judgment.

³⁶ Art 57(6) of Directive 2014/24/EU.

Several of the Irish GPP criteria include selection criteria. For example, the criteria for cleaning services require bidders to have skills and resources to deliver environmental aspects of

the contract, and to provide evidence in the form of previous contracts, staff training and qualifications, written procedures and/or external certification (e.g. ISO 14001; EMAS).

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN PROCUREMENT

Many public contracts require careful planning to manage environmental impacts – for example where works are undertaken, hazardous waste generated or natural resources affected. Any organisation, even those based in an office, can implement an environmental management system to identify the impact of its operations. The two best-known EMS in Europe are EMAS and ISO 14001.

You may request evidence of an EMS at selection stage provided this is relevant and proportionate to the requirements of your contract. Where bidders do not have external certification but present an in-house system this should be evaluated to determine whether it provides adequate assurance regarding environmental management

measures (see Case T-331/06 *Europaiki Dynamiki v European Environment Agency*). An EMS may also be a means of verifying compliance with technical specifications or performance against award criteria related to environmental aspects of a contract. It is important to check both the scope and dates of an EMS certificate to ensure it covers the specific activities and period for your contract.

In contracts for which an EMS is not deemed suitable, it may be relevant to assess bidders' environmental performance in previous contracts, for example by asking for evidence of reductions in packaging, energy or water use in carrying out activities to which the contract relates.

4.6

SPECIFICATIONS & AWARD CRITERIA

4.6.1 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Technical specifications may be formulated by reference to the detailed characteristics of the goods, services or works being purchased, by reference to their performance or function, or by a combination of these approaches. It is possible to include environmental characteristics or performance levels regardless of which approach is taken, provided this affords equal access for tenderers and does not create unjustified obstacles to competition. For example, it is possible to insist on organic production for food as this falls under the heading of 'production processes and methods'.³⁷ The use of standards in technical specifications is well-established, and a growing number of standards incorporate environmental requirements.

Some organisations use performance or outcome-based specifications in order to define the results which they wish to achieve from a particular product or service, rather than the way in which it is to be delivered. This can be a good way of allowing suppliers to innovate and can save time in the drawing up of detailed technical specifications. For example, instead of a detailed specification for heating and cooling systems in a building, an outcome-based specification may simply require an indoor temperature range of 18-24°C and compliance with the Buildings Regulations including the Nearly Zero Energy Building (nZEB) standard. This allows the designer or energy contractor to determine the most efficient solution.

³⁷ Ireland's GPP Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027 sets a target for a minimum of 10% by value (€) of food sought by public sector bodies under new contract arrangements (including via contractors such as canteen service providers), is to be certified organic in each of the following categories of Cereals, fresh Beef, Lamb, Pork, Poultry, Fish, Vegetables and Dairy products, where possible.

From a GPP perspective contracting authorities must ensure that the use of performance- or outcome-based specifications does not lead to environmental aspects of the contract being ignored or underperformed. In some cases, the time saved in developing detailed technical specifications will be lost due to the added

complexity of evaluation and clarification. One way of avoiding this problem can be to run a thorough market engagement exercise which allows both the buyer and potential suppliers to understand environmental and other requirements of the contract.

4.6.2 VARIANTS

Variants provide a way of introducing some flexibility to technical specifications, by allowing tenderers to submit alternative solutions, either in addition to or instead of the specified ones. Variants can be allowed in any procedure, provided this is indicated in the contract notice and the minimum requirements which variants must meet are defined in the tender documents. For GPP, authorising variants can be a useful

way of ‘testing the market’ to see if alternative environmentally-friendly solutions are available. For example, the GPP criteria for vehicles include an optional variant to allow bidders to propose the use of electric or hybrid-vehicles. These variant solutions would then be assessed against the award criteria to evaluate their performance on cost, reliability or other factors.

4.6.3 AWARD CRITERIA

At the award stage, contracting authorities compare the quality and costs of the tenders received according to a pre-determined set of award criteria and weightings. **Using award criteria to implement GPP is particularly sensible where the levels of environmental performance which the market can deliver**

are unknown, or the impact on cost or other considerations such as delivery time are uncertain. They send a signal to the market that the particular environmental factors targeted are important to the contracting authority, and that demonstrated performance under these headings will be rewarded.

Where most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) is chosen as the award basis, contracting authorities can include environmental criteria, provided those criteria:

- Are linked to the subject-matter of the contract;
- Do not confer an unrestricted freedom of choice on the contracting authority;
- Are expressly mentioned in the contract notice and tender documents, together with their weightings and any applicable sub-criteria;
- Are not selection/eligibility criteria (e.g. general capacity); and
- Comply with the fundamental principles of EU law.

The Irish GPP criteria include a range of award criteria which meet these basic conditions and which are designed to target enhanced

environmental performance, beyond the minimum levels in specifications.

4.6.4 WEIGHTING APPROACHES

The weighting given to each award criterion determines the influence it has in the final evaluation. The weight given to environmental award criteria may reflect the extent to which environmental aspects are already addressed in the specifications. If there are strong environmental requirements in the specifications, they may be given a lower weighting in evaluation and vice versa. Under the procurement directives, there is no maximum or minimum weighting for environmental award criteria.³⁸

The Irish GPP criteria do not specify weightings for award criteria, as the appropriate scope and weighting for environmental award criteria will vary according to the subject matter of the procurement, supply market conditions and the organisation's GPP targets. It is not generally possible to set fixed weightings to be applied as the organisation's objectives or the market may change:

TO DETERMINE AN APPROPRIATE WEIGHTING, THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED:

- Do environmental considerations influence the value of the contract, e.g. are there future risks or costs associated with low levels of environmental performance?
- Are environmental objectives best addressed in award criteria, either in addition to or instead of in specifications, selection criteria and contract performance clauses?
- Will life-cycle costing be used to address some environmental impacts?
- What percentage of the award-stage marks will allow you to distinguish environmentally preferable bids? For example, if there is not a large degree of price variation for a product, but environmental performance varies greatly, it makes sense to allocate more marks to assess environmental characteristics.

You should also consider whether it makes sense to apply a minimum pass score (threshold) in relation to environmental award criteria.³⁹ This can help to ensure that all bidders address the criterion and ensure that a low-cost bid with very poor environmental performance could not win. However, if the GPP award criteria are particularly ambitious or you're unsure of the market's ability to respond, it may not be appropriate to apply a minimum threshold.

THE WEIGHTING GIVEN TO EACH AWARD CRITERION DETERMINES THE INFLUENCE IT HAS IN THE FINAL EVALUATION

For example, in a tender for vehicles, environmental performance will be very important. While some basic requirements will be addressed in the technical specifications, applying one or more award criteria linked to environmental matters is likely to deliver more efficient vehicles – and to allow this improved performance to be measured against any cost or other implications. If life-cycle costing is applied, you may still wish to use additional qualitative criteria to address considerations such as emissions performance and an extended warranty.

³⁸ In Case C-448/01 EVN Wienstrom the Court of Justice held that a weighting of 45% for an award criterion linked to renewable energy production was acceptable, provided the other requirements for award criteria were met.

³⁹ The use of thresholds in award criteria was approved of by the CJEU in Case C-546/16 Montte SL v Musikene

The award criteria weighting scheme might look like this:

AWARD CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
Total cost of ownership (including purchase/lease costs, fuel/energy consumption over a specified mileage and driving conditions, and maintenance costs where relevant)	45%
Vehicle handling/road test	20%
Co ₂ emissions – lower than specified maximum	10%
Air pollutant emissions – lower than specified maximum	10%
Extended warranty	10%
Zero tailpipe emission capability	5%
TOTAL	100%

Table 3. Sample award criteria for vehicles tender

This assumes that the core technical requirements have all been included in the specification.

4.7 EVALUATING BIDS

It is at the tender evaluation stage that GPP criteria are put to the test. An increasing number of companies make environmental claims about their products and services, and there is a growing list of standards, certification schemes and labels which aim to give credibility to such claims. Procurers are often called upon to distinguish promotional or unfounded claims from bona fide evidence. **GPP requires the application of these skills in order to avoid ‘greenwash’ and identify those products and services which genuinely meet criteria targeting environmental characteristics.**

Accurately assessing and verifying information submitted by tenderers in response to environmental criteria can be challenging. The Irish GPP criteria are all accompanied by verification provisions which include the possibility of submitting equivalent evidence where a specific label or certification is not available. Table 4 summarises the most relevant forms of verification and evidence for GPP.

PROCUREMENT STAGE	TYPE OF GPP CRITERIA	WHAT EVIDENCE CAN BE REQUESTED?
EXCLUSION	Exclusion for non-compliance with environmental law, grave professional misconduct, or significant/persistent defects in prior contracts.	A self-declaration should be accepted in the first instance (this may include the European Single Procurement Document), however further evidence may be required at any time to ensure the proper conduct of the procedure.
SELECTION	Ability to apply environmental management measures.	EMAS, ISO 14 001 or other independent third-party schemes. In-house environmental management systems may also be accepted if they include the specific measures required for the contract.
	Technical and human capacity.	Supply chain management and tracking systems; measures for quality control; experience and qualifications of staff; tools, plant and equipment.
	Previous experience related to GPP.	A list of previous similar contracts carried out over the past three years (for supply/service contracts) or the past five years (for works contracts).
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS	Environmental standards, production processes, minimum performance requirements (e.g. energy efficiency levels).	Ecolabels, certificates, test reports or technical documentation. Equivalent evidence must be accepted if it establishes compliance or performance under the specific criteria. If a bidder does not have a third-party label or certificate, they must prove that this is for reasons not attributable to them.
AWARD CRITERIA	Performance above minimum specified levels, life-cycle costs, added value.	As above. Method statements/descriptions may also be relevant for certain criteria. For life-cycle costing, bidders should complete a spreadsheet and may also be required to provide test reports, certificates etc.
CONTRACT PERFORMANCE CLAUSES	Key performance indicators, incentives, penalties or remedies linked to GPP.	Ecolabels, certificates etc may be required under the same conditions as above. On-site inspections, tests, or audits may be carried out and the contractor may be required to report on environmental performance.

Table 4. Verification of GPP criteria

4.7.1 UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVIDENCE

CERTIFICATES – certificates may be granted by a public or independent regulatory authority, or by a private industry body. Companies operating an environmental management system, for example, will receive a certificate (e.g. ISO 14001, EMAS). It is important to always check the source, scope and date of any certificate presented.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT DECLARATIONS (EPDs) – are used in particular in the construction sector. They are based on life-cycle analysis and include information about a range of environmental impacts in addition to carbon footprint. In Europe EPDs must conform to the standard EN 15804. Product Category Rules (PCRs) determine the information to be included and methodology, so that EPDs enable comparison between products fulfilling the same function. Further information about EPDs is available on the website of the *Irish Green Building Council*. *EcoPlatform* is a machine readable digitised database of EPDs from across Europe.

SELF-DECLARATION – in some cases, objectively verified third-party evidence may not be considered essential or may not be available. In these cases, a signed self-declaration, for example regarding compliance with environmental regulations, may be relied upon. The *ESPD* is a form of self-declaration, with reference to the sources where documents can be checked. A **technical dossier** is another form of self-declaration, but one which provides detailed technical information about manufacturing processes or the contents of a product, for example.

TEST REPORTS – test reports may provide evidence regarding the performance of a product or a specific aspect of its production. For example, when purchasing portable ICT equipment, a test report may be required to verify battery endurance. Tests must be carried out according to a specific standard or equivalent, by accredited testing bodies.

TYPE I ECOLABEL – Ecolabels can be extremely useful tools for GPP, as they demonstrate compliance with defined environmental criteria while minimising the effort involved for buyers

and suppliers in individual tender procedures. A wide range of ecolabels exist, however the ones which are of greatest use for procurement, and which are referred to in the GPP criteria, are ‘Type I’ or ISO 14024. Type I ecolabels have underlying criteria set by an independent body, are based on life-cycle analysis and are monitored by a certification and auditing process. As such they are a highly transparent and reliable source of information about the environmental characteristics of a product or service. Ecolabels may be used in two different ways as part of procurement:



- i. to define technical specifications, award criteria or contract performance clauses; and
- ii. to verify compliance with technical specifications, award criteria and contract performance clauses.

The 2014 directives allow contracting authorities to make reference to one or more specific ecolabels, provided the labels are appropriate to define the characteristics of the goods or services being purchased, and:

- the requirements for the label are drawn up on the basis of scientific information,
- the label requirements are adopted using a procedure in which all stakeholders, such as government bodies, consumers, manufacturers, distributors and environmental organisations can participate, and
- they are accessible to all interested parties.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Article 43 of Directive 2014/24/EU.

Most Type I ecolabels will meet these requirements, although they may also contain requirements which are not specific to the product or service being purchased, such as general management requirements. For this reason, it is important to always review the

criteria/specifications underlying a given ecolabel (which should be freely available online) prior to referring to it in tender documents. Where reference is made to a particular ecolabel, **equivalent labels must also be accepted.**

WHAT IS MEANT BY EQUIVALENCE IN EU PROCUREMENT LAW?

The term ‘equivalent’ appears in many provisions of the EU procurement directives, including the rules on technical specifications, labels, environmental management standards, and means of proof. Determining whether a particular document or other evidence submitted by a tenderer is equivalent to the standard specified in the procurement documents can be one of the most challenging aspects of tender evaluation, and is particularly relevant for GPP. In general, **the burden is upon the tenderer to prove equivalence**, but the contracting authority must know how to evaluate this information to enable a decision. Two judgments of the CJEU are particularly relevant here.

In Case T-331/06 *Evropaïki Dynamiki v European Environment Agency*, the applicant was awarded lower marks than the successful tenderer under an environmental award criterion. The contracting authority justified this decision based on the fact that the applicant did not hold a third-party certified environmental management system, whereas the successful tenderer did. The tender documents did not set an explicit requirement for a third-party certified system. The Court upheld the contracting authority’s decision, finding that it had made a comparative assessment of the evidence submitted by tenderers and decided that the third-party system provided the most convincing evidence. The decision not to treat the applicant’s system as equivalent to a third-party system fell within the contracting authority’s broad discretion based on the wording of the award criterion.

In Case C-14/17 *VAR Srl and ATM v Iveco Orrechia SpA*, which concerned a tender for

spare parts for vehicles, the Court considered the obligation to accept products meeting equivalent standards to those cited in the specifications. The Court found that **evidence regarding equivalence had to be submitted by a tenderer as part of its tender**, rather than at a later point. It also held that contracting entities enjoy:

“...discretion in determining the means that may be used by tenderers to prove such equivalence in their tenders. That discretion must, however, be exercised in such a way that the means of proof allowed by the contracting entity actually enable that entity to carry out a meaningful assessment of the tenders submitted to it and do not go beyond what is necessary in order to do so, by preventing those means of proof from creating unjustified obstacles to the opening-up of public procurement to competition... (para 34 of judgment)”

The Court thus applied a **proportionality test** to the question of how contracting authorities are to exercise their discretion in evaluating equivalence. Although this case related to technical specifications and was decided under the old Utilities Directive (2004/17/EC), it seems likely that this general approach to reviewing the way in which contracting authorities determine equivalence would also be applied under Directives 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU.

4.7.2 LIFE-CYCLE COSTING (LCC)

At the award stage, the cost of a tender is usually one of the most influential factors. In order to accurately assess the costs of an asset, life-cycle costing should be applied wherever significant costs will arise within the lifetime of the product or service which are not reflected in the purchase price. LCC can range from a relatively simple calculation of energy or fuel consumption, time to replacement and end-of-life costs/revenues, through to a more complex assessment including greenhouse gas emissions (where a nominal cost is assigned to these).⁴¹

While a number of different methodologies are available and appropriate for different sectors, the most important considerations are the transparency with which the methodology is presented, the ability of bidders to provide the information requested, and the ability of the

authority to assess and verify it. LCC may not be suitable for every contract, however it can play a key role in making a business case for GPP in sectors where upfront costs may be higher – for example lighting, vehicles or heating equipment.

LCC can be used both at the planning stages of procurement and to compare tendered costs. At planning stages, the methodology should be identified and the period over which costs will be assessed, as well as the discount rate for any future costs (if applicable). This will allow you to identify the information which will be needed from bidders during the tender.

For example, in a tender to retrofit a pump for a water treatment works, a contracting authority included the following in its LCC calculation:⁴²

The award criteria will be lowest life cycle cost which shall be the sum of the following:

kWh/m³ at main duty point of the pump (m³/hour) x expected flow per annum (m³) x Average cost (c/kWh) x assumed life cycle (e.g. 5 years).



kWh/m³ at a secondary duty point of the pump (m³/hour) x expected flow per annum (m³) x Average cost (c/kWh) x assumed life cycle (e.g. 5 years). There may be more than one secondary duty point.



Fixed price lump sum capital cost plus projected energy costs over 5 years.

The result (shown in Figure 7) was that the pump with the cheapest capital cost (Tender 4) became the second most expensive (out of five) when operational costs were taken into account,

whereas the second cheapest pump on capital costs (Tender 1) was the least expensive on a whole-life basis, due to its greater efficiency.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION TOOLS FOR LCC

In 2019 the European Commission published a number of *tools* to assist with life-cycle costing in tenders for:

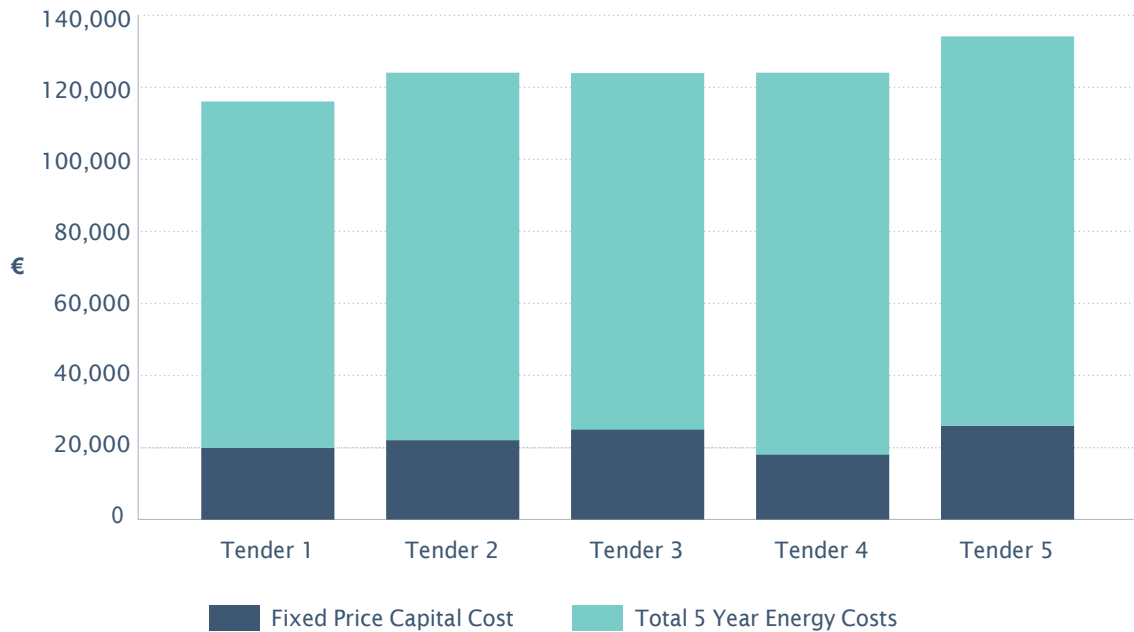
- Computers and monitors
- Imaging equipment
- Indoor lighting
- Outdoor lighting
- Vending machines

The tools are accompanied by detailed user guides. The spreadsheets are designed to be included directly in tender documents, with bidders completing the relevant fields to indicate the energy consumption and other aspects of their products. They can also be used to compare options at the pre-procurement planning stage. Each spreadsheet is accompanied by a detailed user guide.

⁴¹ *Guidance on valuing GHG emissions* forms part of Ireland's *Infrastructure Guidelines*.

⁴² Adapted from material provided by the Tipperary Energy Agency

FIGURE 7
Life-cycle cost calculation



4.8 COMPLETING THE CONTRACT

When tenders have been evaluated and the designated successful bidder(s) identified, all bidders must be informed of the outcome of the procedure. Unsuccessful bidders who have submitted a valid and responsive tender are entitled to receive an explanation of the characteristics and relative advantages of the selected tender. Take this opportunity to **provide a detailed explanation of where bidders have fallen short in relation to GPP criteria (if applicable) and to highlight the potential to improve their environmental offer in subsequent tenders**. Although care is required at this stage to avoid any legal challenges, it is also a key opportunity to emphasise the importance of GPP to your organisation and the role this has played in your decision.

At this stage contract documents need to be finalised. This may involve meeting with the designated successful bidder(s) to confirm contract terms. It is vital that GPP commitments made in the tender are explicitly included in the contract, and you may need to discuss how these will be implemented and monitored under the contract. Keep in mind that the people responsible for delivering the contract may be different to those involved in the bidding process, so it is worth **confirming their understanding of the environmental aspects of the contract and ensuring that the lines for reporting and escalating any performance issues are clear**. This may be equally true on both sides of the contract.

4.9 MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The Irish GPP criteria include a number of clauses which can be inserted into contracts to assist with the on-going management of GPP commitments and to drive continuous improvement. As the contract performance phase will last for longer than the procurement, there is more scope to work with contractors to deliver environmental improvements. From a legal perspective, contracting authorities should be aware that it is not possible to introduce changes which alter the overall nature of the contract after award. It is therefore important to include contract terms with tender documents, and to highlight any specific environmental commitments which they

include. For example, the Irish GPP criteria for Catering Services include contract management provisions relating to waste management, transport and staff training in order to minimise the environmental impact of the service.

Contract performance measures may also include agreed targets, known as **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs), for example to reduce energy consumption or emissions by 15% within two years of the contract start date. Table 5 shows examples of KPIs targeting environmental performance.

CONTRACTING AREA	SAMPLE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE METRICS
VEHICLES/FLEET	Fuel consumption; real driving emissions; maintenance events
WASTE COLLECTION	Recycling rates; missed collections; route optimisation
CLEANING	Use of cleaning products and consumables; use of water and energy
BUILDING DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION	Energy performance; use of renewable energy sources; recycling rates for construction waste

Table 5. Sample Environmental KPIs

Time is always a factor in procurement, but evidence suggests that targeting good contract management can have positive impacts such as the creation of shared cost savings and the embedding of sustainability along supply chains. It also ensures that environmental standards in contracts can be progressively improved based on the initial results achieved. **It is vital to have a system in place to record compliance/**

performance with GPP and to ensure lessons are learned for future tenders.

Ultimately GPP is a tool to support progress towards broader environmental and sustainability commitments. This means you will need to find ways to measure the impact of GPP, so that its contribution to these bigger targets can be calculated.

A NUMBER OF METHODS & APPROACHES ARE AVAILABLE TO DO THIS, FOR EXAMPLE:

- Ireland's *Infrastructure Guidelines* include guidance to monetise greenhouse gas (GHG) and energy savings.
- The *GHG Protocol* includes a range of tools for calculating emissions from different sectors.
- The *Carbon Disclosure Project* publishes a wide range of environmental data which may help to measure the impact of GPP activities.
- The SEAI website has guidance on *monitoring and reporting* for energy targets, plus *conversion factors* for different fuels.

5. OVERVIEW OF SECTORS COVERED BY IRISH GPP CRITERIA

This section summarises the key environmental impacts and GPP approach taken in each of the ten sectors covered by the Irish criteria. Further

background and links to dedicated resources can be found in the individual criteria sets.

5.1 ROAD TRANSPORT VEHICLES & SERVICES



Transport is responsible for approximately 20% of Ireland's overall greenhouse gas emissions.⁴³ The carbon intensity of transport in Ireland greatly exceeds the EU average, by as much as 40% CO₂e per head of population. In 2017, 96.7% of Ireland's transport energy demand was met by fossil fuels. To meet our 2030 targets, a 45-50% reduction in transport emissions is needed. The 2019 Climate Action Plan set targets for large scale roll-out of electric vehicles and charging points, and the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate states that only zero-emission vehicles will be procured from

the end of 2022, unless the vehicle category is exempt under the Clean Vehicles regulations. It also states that public sector contracts for delivery and haulage should specify zero-emissions vehicles where possible.

The Irish GPP criteria for road transport vehicles and services directly address these challenges and aim to assist public bodies in meeting legally binding targets for procurement of low- and zero-emission vehicles under the Clean Vehicles Directive (see box).

CLEAN VEHICLES DIRECTIVE

The recast Clean Vehicles Directive (Directive 2019/1161/EU, amending Directive 2009/33/EC) aims to increase the uptake of clean (low- and zero-emission) vehicles in public procurement by setting minimum Member State procurement targets and extending the scope to include leased, rented or hire-purchased vehicles and certain transport service contracts.

The revised Directive, implemented in Irish law by S.I. 381/2021, applies to cars, vans, trucks and buses (excluding coaches) where they are procured through:

- Purchase, lease, rent or hire-purchase contracts covered by Directive 2014/24/EU or 2014/25/EU
- Public service contracts for the provision of passenger road transport services (Reg. 1370/2007) valued above €1,000,000

- Service contracts for public road transport services, special-purpose road passenger-transport services, non-scheduled passenger transport, refuse collection services, mail and parcel transport and delivery.

Minimum binding targets for the share of clean (low- or zero-emission) vehicles procured apply to all public and utility sector bodies. **The core Irish GPP criteria reflect the requirements needed to meet the definition of a clean (low or zero-emission) vehicle under the CVD.** Note that the maximum emissions, and therefore the eligible vehicle technologies, will change from 1 January 2026.

⁴³ EPA emissions data, 2023.

The criteria cover the following types of vehicles and services:

1. Purchase, lease, hire or hire-purchase of cars, light commercial vehicles (LCVs – M1 and N1 vehicles) and L-category vehicles.
2. Purchase or lease of buses, trucks and coaches: N2, N3, M2 and M3 vehicles.
3. Bus transport services (including city buses and coaches).
4. Refuse collection vehicles and services.
5. Mobility services: (including special-purpose road passenger transport, non-scheduled passenger transport e.g. transport for pupils/students who are not able to travel by themselves; hire of buses and coaches with driver; taxi services; bicycles, cycle trailers, and electric bicycles).
6. Post, courier and moving services.

The key environmental impacts from road transport include:

- Climate change impacts linked to tailpipe emissions and fossil fuel extraction.
- Air pollution from combustion engines (PM, Nox, NMHC).
- Fuel consumption and air pollution from tyre wear.
- Emissions from electricity production for electric vehicles.
- Impacts linked to battery production and disposal.
- Noise pollution.
- Air, water and soil pollution from lubricants and tyres.

The GPP criteria address these impacts in the following ways:

- Setting maximum CO₂ emissions based on vehicle type for cars and vans.
- Requiring low or zero-emission technologies for heavy duty vehicles.
- Setting requirements for batteries in line with the EU Batteries Regulation.⁴⁴
- Setting maximum air pollutant emissions based on real driving conditions.
- Requirements for tyre pressure monitors and rolling resistance of tyres.
- Minimum energy efficiency and battery warranties for electric cars and LCVs.
- Addressing the climate impact of air conditioning gases.
- Maximum vehicle and tyre noise emissions.
- Lower impact lubricants and maintenance activities.

As with all the GPP criteria, the transport criteria contain detailed information on how compliance can be verified and links to relevant legislation, guidance and other resources.

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T11: 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of vehicles to procure zero emissions vehicles only, subject to exceptions as specified in the Public Sector Climate Action Plan Mandate 2023.



⁴⁴ Regulation (EU) 2023/1542.

DEFINITION OF ‘CLEAN VEHICLES’

EMISSION LIMITS & ELIGIBLE TECHNOLOGIES UNDER THE RECAST CVD

For light-duty vehicles (M1, M2 and N1), the following requirements apply:

VEHICLE CATEGORY	UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2025		FROM 1 JANUARY 2026	
	CO ₂ g/km	RDE* AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS AS A % OF EMISSIONS LIMITS	CO ₂ g/km	RDE AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS AS A % OF EMISSIONS LIMITS
M1	50	80%	0	N.A.
M2	50	80%	0	N.A.
N1	50	80%	0	N.A.

*Real driving emissions (RDE) refer to measured levels of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and other pollutants based on real driving conditions. This type of testing is mandatory for all new vehicles and the RDE are recorded in point 48.2 of the vehicle certificate of conformity.

The GPP criteria are designed to procure vehicles which meet or exceed the CVD requirements. The number of electric vehicles on the market and their range is rapidly increasing, while prices are decreasing – EV battery prices fell by 79% between 2012 and 2019, with a further 67% fall projected by 2030. For further information about costs and available models you may wish to consult the SEAI resources on EVs including *Buying an Electric Vehicle* and *Compare and Calculate* tool, and the *Topten.eu* website.

Heavy-duty vehicles (trucks, buses, refuse collection vehicles etc) classified as clean under the Directive are those powered by hydrogen, battery electric, plug-in hybrids, natural gas (both CNG and LNG, including biomethane), liquid biofuels, synthetic and paraffinic fuels, or LPG. Conventional hybrids (without the capacity to recharge externally) are not considered ‘clean’ vehicles.

Where liquid biofuels, synthetic and paraffinic fuels are used, they must be used unblended (i.e. in concentrations of 100% without any fossil fuels), and be produced from feedstocks with low indirect land-use change (ILUC) emissions. This means that biofuels such as biodiesel produced from palm oil, which has very high ILUC emissions, are not considered clean.

The Directive also sets a separate definition for zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs), as a sub-category of clean heavy-duty vehicles. Zero-emission HDVs are trucks and buses without an internal combustion engine, or with an internal combustion engine that emits less than 1g CO₂/kWh as measured in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 595/2009, or that emits less than 1g CO₂/km as measured in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 715/2007.

5.2

ICT PRODUCTS & SERVICES



The purchase, use and disposal of ICT equipment, including through service contracts such as for data storage, has a heavy environmental footprint.

AMONGST THE KEY IMPACTS ARE:

- Climate change effects linked to energy consumption of ICT products
- Impact on air, water, soil, biodiversity and human health of hazardous substances found in ICT products
- Climate change effects and natural resource depletion linked to the manufacturing, delivery and disposal of new products
- Specific environmental impact of battery production and end-of-life, including use of hazardous materials
- Climate change effects and natural resource depletion linked to frequent replacement of mobile equipment
- Climate change effects and natural resource depletion linked to early/unnecessary replacement of ICT products
- Use of fossil fuels and accumulation of plastic waste
- End-of-life impacts including release of hazardous substances to soil, air and water

The growing demand for data centre services in Ireland also has major impacts including:

- Electricity consumption of ICT in data centres (primarily servers)
- Electricity consumption of mechanical and electrical (M&E) systems controlling the internal environmental conditions of data centres
- Direct and indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions linked to data centre operations, including electricity consumption, refrigerants, manufacturing of ICT systems and unexploited potential for waste heat reuse
- The use of high global warming potential (GWP) gases in cooling systems

Although public sector demand represents a relatively small share of the overall market for ICT products and services, it can be influential in driving higher standards, especially where common environmental criteria are adopted by many public buyers. This can be seen in countries

such as *the Netherlands* and *Scotland*, where GPP has been consistently applied. Experiences from these and other countries point to the importance of market engagement to ensure suppliers are able to meet requirements and that the impact on life-cycle costs for ICT are understood within the purchasing organisation.

**PUBLIC SECTOR
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The Irish GPP criteria cover the purchase or lease of ICT equipment, and the provision of facilities or services (e.g., outsourced ICT services including cloud services (IaaS, PaaS, SaaS), data entry, web

design, mobile communications contracts) which specify the use of any of the equipment in the following categories:

STATIONARY ICT DEVICES	MOBILE ICT DEVICES	ICT EQUIPMENT INCLUDED IN THE <i>Triple E Register</i>
Desktop computers	Notebook (laptop) computers	Rack Mounted Servers
All-in-one computers/ integrated desktop computers	Two-in-one notebooks/laptops	Enterprise Storage Equipment
Desktop Thin clients	Mobile thin clients	Precise Cooling
Workstations	Tablets	Centralised Direct Current Power Distribution
Computer displays	Smartphones	Power Management
—	—	Uninterruptible Power Supply
—	—	Blade Servers
—	—	Enterprise Communication Equipment
—	—	ICT Optimisation Solutions

Table 6. ICT equipment covered in GPP criteria

In addition, the GPP criteria cover the procurement of **data centres** or **services provided using data centres** (e.g. data virtualisation or consolidation services).

The Irish GPP criteria for ICT equipment set technical specifications, award criteria and contract performance clauses to:

- Specify ICT products which are highly energy efficient and free of hazardous substances or which contain these in minimal amounts considered to be safe, in line with recognised third-party certifications such as TCO certified and EPEAT Gold;
- Extend product lifespan including through service level agreements, manufacturer's warranty, availability of spare parts and reparability of products;
- Encourage the supply of refurbished/ remanufactured products where possible;
- Improve battery endurance and electrical performance and inform users about battery usage, as well as ensuring compliance with the EU Batteries Regulation;⁴⁵
- Require testing for durability and other factors affecting product lifespan;
- Apply criteria to ensure interoperability and reusability of components;
- Encourage the use of recycled plastic in ICT equipment;
- Ensure that equipment can be effectively recycled or reused, and that producers are registered with the appropriate WEEE compliance scheme.

⁴⁵ Regulation (EU) 2023/1542

The data centre criteria additionally address the following:

- Design and construction to achieve high energy-efficiency performance
- Require the highest possible share of renewable energy for the provision of data centre services
- Ensure waste heat reuse, e.g. in building or district heating networks
- Avoid use of refrigerants with high GWP, unless the use of close-to-zero GWP refrigerants is impossible due to exceptional circumstances or would reduce the energy-efficiency of the system

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T5: By 2025, a minimum of 80% of ICT end user products (desktop computers, portable computers and mobile phones) procured by public sector bodies under new contract arrangements are certified to **EPEAT Gold Standard** (or equivalent), TCO Certified (or equivalent) or will have been **remanufactured**.



ICT EQUIPMENT & DATA CENTRES: EVALUATING LIFE-CYCLE COSTS

The Irish GPP criteria for ICT products address a number of aspects of the design, operational lifetime and end-of-life management of ICT products and services that can serve to reduce life cycle costs. It is recommended that Irish public bodies also apply **life-cycle costing (LCC)** to evaluate and compare the true cost of different products/services. A spreadsheet-based Tool has been published by the European Commission for LCC of Computers and Monitors, together with a detailed **User Guide**. Note that this tool may be adapted to the specificities of your tender, e.g. by including or omitting different parameters and by setting the evaluation period based on your organisation's usage patterns. Further advice on the use of the tool is available via the **EU GPP Helpdesk**.

Life-cycle costs for data centres vary according to the type of business model applied. In the case of server rooms and enterprise data centres, the public authority

owner of the data centres /server rooms is responsible for the capital expenditure (CAPEX) costs, including purchase and installation of the IT, mechanical and electrical equipment in the building, together with the building infrastructure. Also, the end-of-life costs related to decommissioning the facility are directly covered by the public authority. The trend of purchasing data centre services (e.g. co-location or managed service provider (MSP) models) is instead changing the cost model for the public authorities towards less CAPEX and greater operational expenditure (OPEX) in the form of fees related to the services procured.

The Irish GPP criteria include a summary of the different cost categories involved in the procurement of data centres, and an indication of how the criteria can be expected to impact life-cycle costs for each category.

5.3

FOOD & CATERING SERVICES



In Ireland the agriculture sector was directly responsible for 38.4% of national Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) emissions in 2022.⁴⁶ Meat and dairy production are the most significant sources and GHG also have highest water/resource consumption and impacts related to land use change, together with palm oil and soya. Agriculture is a primary driver of species collapse and loss of biodiversity in every part of the world. Food waste is responsible for a significant part of this impact – 20% of food produced across the EU is wasted and for school and hospital meals, the percentage of plate waste has been measured as up to 65%. Life-cycle analysis studies indicate that in most cases, the transport of food is responsible for a negligible portion of its overall carbon footprint.⁴⁷

In Ireland, agriculture is responsible for a much higher share of total emissions – 34% in 2018 (compared with 21% for transport and 20% for energy) which is projected to grow to 38% by 2030. The agri-food sector accounts for 7% of GDP, 9.8% of exports and 8.5% of employment, and 67% of Irish land is used for agriculture. Since 2006, 4% of species have been lost and 30% are under threat. The market for organic food in Ireland grew by 10.5% in 2017 alone and there has been a 50% increase in land under organic production, but from a very low base.⁴⁸ Cost remains significant barrier to greater uptake of organic production, and this is an area where public sector demand can play a key role.

TOPIC	SUMMARY OF IRISH GPP CRITERIA FOR FOOD & CATERING SERVICES
PROCUREMENT OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD & BEVERAGES	SELECTION CRITERIA: Food safety management system.
	TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS: Sustainable meat, poultry, eggs, fruits and vegetables; Organic food products; Deforestation-free products; Sustainable marine and aquaculture products; Food packaging; Egg production methods; Measuring and reporting food waste.
	AWARD CRITERIA: Additional organic food products; Egg production methods; Meat and dairy production; Fair and ethical trade products; Environmentally responsible vegetable fats.
	CONTRACT PERFORMANCE CLAUSES: Evidence of compliance with environmental requirements.
PROCUREMENT OF CATERING SERVICES	All of the above food criteria plus:
	SELECTION CRITERIA: Environmental competence.
	TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS: Plant-based menus; Provision of tap water; Food and beverage waste prevention; General waste prevention; Disposal of food waste and FOGs; Recycling and residual waste; Service items and consumables; Energy and water use; Transport; Cooking appliances; Dishwashers; Refrigerating appliances
	AWARD CRITERIA: Food procurement; Environmental innovation; Cleaning consumables; Chemical products for hand washing, dishwashing and cleaning; Kitchen roll and paper; Low and zero emission delivery vehicles; Reduction of transport emissions through logistics and route planning.
	CONTRACT PERFORMANCE CLAUSES: Environmental reporting and audits; Staff training; Record of food purchases; Purchase of new kitchen equipment; Food and beverage redistribution; Delivery vehicles and transport plan.

Table 7. GPP Criteria for Food & Catering Services

⁴⁶ EPA emissions statistics, 2023

⁴⁷ Sources: EU Farm to Fork Strategy, University of Edinburgh, LM3, Health Care without Harm

⁴⁸ Environmental Protection Agency, Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine

The Irish GPP criteria for food and catering services are based on 2019 EU GPP Criteria with adjustments to reflect the Irish market and food policy. They cover the purchase of food and catering services including processed items, fruit and vegetables, aquaculture and marine products, meat and dairy, eggs and beverages. The criteria may be applied when purchasing directly from producers / processors /wholesalers as well as food purchased in the context of catering services (e.g. staff canteens, events). Table 7 summarises the content of the criteria.

As with all of the criteria sets, the food and catering criteria have both core and comprehensive versions to reflect different levels of ambition/market capacity. Contracting authorities can choose which level to apply for each criterion. Detailed guidance on how to evaluate the criteria is also provided, and links to further resources, legislation etc.

One area targeted is reducing food waste within catering services and event management by public sector bodies. Food waste prevention is part of climate action, and the public sector can play a significant role in reducing food waste through introducing green criteria in procurement.

The *EU Farm to Fork Strategy* (COM 2020 381) proposes a number of measures which would impact GPP in this sector:

- Minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement to promote healthy and sustainable diets, including organic products, in schools and public institutions
- Revision of food date marking system
- Review of the EU school scheme
- New EU level targets for reduction in food waste
- New food labelling framework

The strategy also sets out a number of initiatives which would impact sustainability in the sector more broadly:

- Regulatory framework for carbon farming
- Revision of Pesticides Directive
- Integrated nutrient management action plan
- Revision of animal welfare legislation
- Support for seed security and diversity
- Promoting increase in organic production to 25% of land by 2030
- Changes to Common Agriculture Policy and Common Fisheries Policy

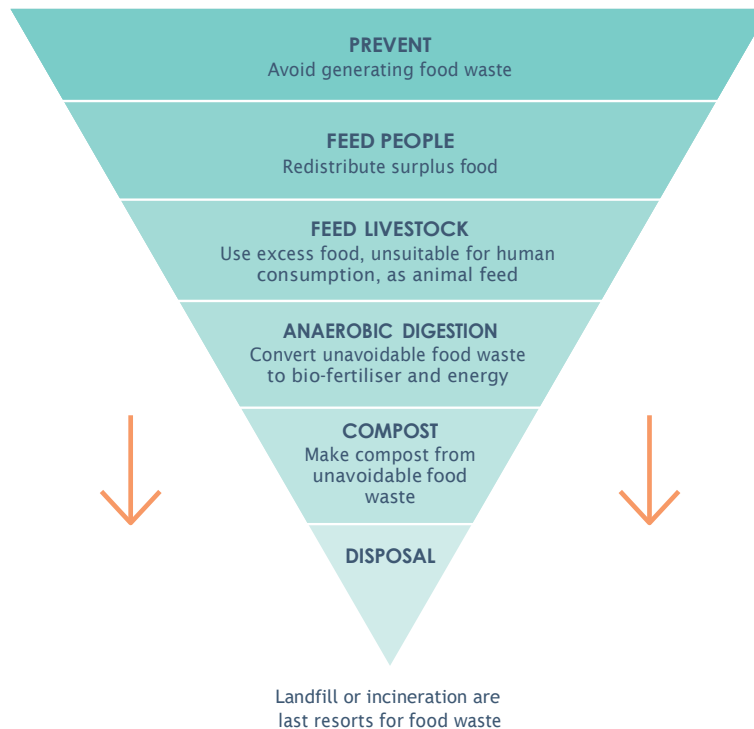
Updates on these initiatives are available [here](#).

FOOD WASTE IN IRELAND

Food waste accounts for a significant portion of the environmental impact of the food and drink sector. In Ireland, a total of 753,000 tonnes of food waste was generated in 2021. Source: *EPA Food Waste Statistics*.

The Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy sets a target for Ireland's food waste to be halved by 2030, in line with UN SDG 12.3 target. To reach this target, action is required all stages of the food waste hierarchy shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8
Food waste hierarchy
Source: EPA



PUBLIC SECTOR CLIMATE ACTION MANDATE – FOOD & CATERING SERVICES

The Public Sector Climate Action Mandate (as set out in the 2024 Climate Action Plan) sets the following requirements:

3.6 Food Waste

3.6.1 Measure and monitor the food waste generated on premises from 2024, using a standardised approach to food waste measurement set out in the EPA Protocol/Pathway.

3.6.2 All new contract arrangements related to canteen or food services, including events and conferences, to include measures that are targeted at addressing food waste, with a specific focus on food waste prevention and food waste segregation.

3.8 Water

Provide suitable drinking water refill points for all staff and in any premises accessed by the public and measure and monitor usage of the refill points.

3.9 Single Use

3.9.1 Cease using disposable cups, plates and cutlery in any public sector canteen or closed

facility, excluding clinical (i.e., non-canteen healthcare) environments, and in publicly funded advertising or broadcasting, where feasible.

3.9.2 Progressively eliminate all single use items within the organisation and from events organised, funded, or sponsored.

The Irish GPP criteria have been updated in 2024 to reflect these requirements. This includes a commitment to the *Food Waste Charter* developed by the EPA, which requires businesses to measure, reduce and report on food waste. By signing the Charter, food sector businesses commit to measuring and reporting on food waste in a clear and consistent manner, and to taking actions to reduce it in accordance with national targets and associated milestones. Further information on the Food Waste Charter and associated measurement protocols and guidance are available [here](#). *Guidance on the Public Sector Mandate* is available on the [SEAI website](#).

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER



T2: From 4 April 2024 a minimum of 10% by value (€) of food sought by public sector bodies under new contract arrangements (including via contractors such as canteen service providers), is to be certified organic in each of the following categories of Cereals, fresh Beef, Lamb, Pork, Poultry, Fish, Vegetables and Dairy products, where possible.

T3: From 2025, 100% of new contract arrangements related to canteen or food services to include measures that are targeted at addressing food waste, with a specific focus on food waste prevention, taking into account Ireland's commitment to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030, and food waste segregation.

T4: From 2024, 100% of new contract arrangements related to canteen or food services (including food services for public sector organised conferences) to cease using disposable/single use cups, plates and cutlery from any public sector canteen, closed facility, and public sector organised conferences, excluding clinical (i.e., non-canteen healthcare) environments.

EU DEFORESTATION-FREE PRODUCTS REGULATION

The production of cattle, soya, chocolate, coffee and palm oil are associated with deforestation in many parts of the world. Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 (EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation or EUDR) – requires all operators placing wood, cattle, cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber and soya – and products made from these commodities – on the EU market to demonstrate that they have exercised due diligence in ensuring that the products are deforestation-free and have been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation of the country of production. The EUDR applies to products

placed on the market from 30 December 2024, or 30 June 2025 in the case of micro- and small enterprises.

Compliance with the EUDR is addressed in the updated Irish GPP criteria published in 2024 for relevant categories, including food and catering services.

Further information is available from the European Commission and Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the competent authority for implementation in Ireland.



5.4 CLEANING PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Almost every public body purchases cleaning products and services, but this is an area which is sometimes overlooked in terms of sustainability. In addition to impacts on the natural environment and climate, cleaning products and methods affect human health – particularly for the workers delivering the service. The Irish GPP criteria for indoor cleaning, based on those developed at EU level, aim to address the following impacts:

- Raw material use, manufacturing, transport and disposal of cleaning supplies and packaging
- Climate change and air, water and soil pollution linked to chemicals used in cleaning products
- Risks to human and animal health from cleaning chemicals
- Energy and water consumption during cleaning operations
- Wastewater discharge
- Sorting of waste for recycling, composting or energy recovery

The approach taken in the GPP criteria involves:

- Reduction in product usage by environmentally conscious cleaning methods
- Use of ecolabelled cleaning products, accessories (e.g. microfibre cloths) and consumables (e.g. paper products) with lower environmental impact
- Requiring packaging which reduces waste to a minimum while still ensuring the safety and preservation of products. Packaging materials must be either reusable, recyclable or compostable at point of use except where safety considerations prevent this
- Training of staff in water and waste management
- Use of concentrated products and correct dilution practices
- Use of energy-efficient vacuum cleaners

GPP FOR CLEANING – BENEFITS OF MICROFIBRE

The benefits of using microfibre products in cleaning activities have been demonstrated through multiple studies. For example, it was found that the use of microfibre can result in a 95% reduction in water and chemical use, a 20% reduction in labour costs per day and a 60% reduction in cost over the lifetime of a mop (UNEP, 2008).

The same study also showed that the use of microfibre mops might reduce costs associated with worker injuries as microfibre mops are much lighter than conventional mops and they require less cleaning solution, reducing the need to repeatedly lift heavy buckets of water. These findings have been corroborated during consultation with cleaning service providers.

Conducting needs assessment, to check that **cleaning specifications do not go beyond actual requirements**, and market engagement to check **contractors have the capacity to deliver environmental improvements**, is essential. As cleanliness is linked to culture and expectations in a given setting, authorities should consult those who are responsible for and affected by cleaning services before making major changes to existing practices. This can help ensure that any changes are understood and well received. The GPP criteria also include contract performance clauses to guarantee that the delivery of services matches the requirements set out in tender documents.

GREEN CLEANING IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

In 2019, University College Cork procured cleaning services for its 110 buildings, with an approximate annual spend of €2 million. This includes a number of multi-functional spaces as well as classrooms and laboratories. The University used the Office of Government Procurement framework for cleaning services. In order to identify the scope for greening the services, a consultation was held with internal subject-matter experts. As a result, tenderers were required to outline their approach to:

- Chemical-free cleaning
- Water-free cleaning
- Reduced plastics, packaging and deliveries
- Innovative ideas on sustainable practices

In addition, an award criterion with a weighting of 5% evaluated tenderers' commitment to sustainability. The successful tenderer provided a tailored approach which addressed each of the University's concerns.

The contractor has implemented solutions including chemical-free cleaning, microfibre cloths, binless offices, staff training and engagement, energy-efficient equipment and electric vehicles. Their use of chemical-free cleaning resulted in an **80% reduction in hazardous chemicals**, and saved **264 cardboard boxes**, **792 plastic containers**, and **368 kg of CO₂** in a single year.

Full case study available [here](#).

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T10: From January 2025, 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of indoor cleaning services to include a requirement for tenderers to specify the **training** that will be put in place to ensure that all staff involved in delivery of the contract have the knowledge and skills to apply cleaning methods, which will reduce the environmental impact of the services.



5.5

DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & MANAGEMENT OF BUILDINGS



The construction and use of buildings in Europe uses approximately half of all materials extracted from the earth, consumes 40% of energy, a third of all water and generates a third of all waste.⁴⁹ In Ireland, while the energy efficiency of buildings has improved significantly in recent years there is still an extensive legacy of inefficient building stock. Under the *Energy Performance of Buildings Directive* (EPBD) Ireland and all other member states have committed to all new buildings meeting nearly zero energy building (*nZEB*) standards – which will soon be replaced by zero emission buildings under the revised EPBD. In addition, for major renovations (more than 25% of the building envelope) a Building Energy Rating of B2 or better must be achieved. These standards are being progressively tightened to meet overall emission and energy saving goals. Under changes to the EPBD adopted in 2024, all new public buildings will need to be zero-emission from 1 January 2028, and new requirements will apply in relation to solar energy and electric vehicle charging.⁵⁰

Beyond energy-efficiency, the design, construction and use/management of buildings have impacts on resource use, waste, transport emissions and local environmental conditions. They also have profound effects on human health and wellbeing. To address these impacts, the Irish GPP criteria for buildings include the following elements:

- Selection of the design team and contractors
- Detailed design and performance requirements
- Strip-out, demolition and site preparation works
- Building construction or major renovation works
- Lighting, heating and energy-related products
- Completion and handover
- Facilities management

The criteria have been developed based on detailed **life-cycle analysis** studies carried out at EU level, identification of **best practice** and **state-of-the-art technologies**, and consideration of costs over the lifetime of a building. **Circular economy** considerations, such as the use of recycled concrete and recovery of demolition waste, are also addressed. The role of project managers, design teams, construction and specialist contractors are all addressed as is the role of facility managers. The use of building energy management systems is encouraged and the installation and low or zero-carbon energy sources. In 2024, updated EU GPP criteria will be published which will explicitly incorporate the **Level(s) framework** (see box), to ensure all environmental impacts across the life-cycle of built assets are addressed in a consistent and measurable way. The Irish GPP criteria will also be updated to reflect this approach along with developments in national policy relating to construction procurement. In 2024, new requirements for the use of **Building Information Modelling (BIM) systems under the Construction Works Management Framework** also came into effect.

ENERGY EFFICIENT DESIGN & EXEED

All public bodies should adopt an Energy Efficient Design approach for buildings, as outlined in the standards *IS 399* and *ISO 50001*. Excellence in Energy Efficiency Design (EXEED) is a certification and grant scheme operated by the SEAI. It provides for three certifications (EXEED Designed, Verified and Managed) which attest to sustained energy savings. Projects can be of any scale or complexity, including greenfield, brownfield, major energy upgrades or renovations of existing assets. Grants are available up to a maximum value of €1 million per project per year.

Further information is available from exeed@seai.ie.

⁴⁹ Source: European Commission COM 445/2014

⁵⁰ *Directive (EU) 2024/1275 on the energy performance of buildings (recast)*

The SEAI is supporting public sector decarbonisation through its *Pathfinder Programme*, which helps public bodies to achieve their retrofit goals. The *Irish Green Building Council* also has a number of resources to assist with green procurement in the built environment sector.

THE LEVEL(S) FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

As legal requirements regarding energy-efficiency for buildings have been tightened, there is increasing focus on other environmental impacts within the construction sector. This includes everything from the extraction and processing of raw materials, to the impact of design on health and wellbeing, to construction and demolition waste. These impacts can be difficult to capture within procurement and planning process. As part of the Renovation Wave, the European Commission has launched an assessment and reporting framework that provides a common language for the sustainability performance of buildings, called Level(s).

Level(s) promotes lifecycle thinking for buildings and provides a robust approach to measuring and supporting improvement

from design to end of life, for both residential buildings and offices. It uses core sustainability indicators, tested with and by the building sector, to measure carbon, materials, water, health and comfort, climate change impacts. It takes into account lifecycle costs and value assessments.

Level(s) is open source and freely available to all. For all those in the sector, the challenges of cost control and environmental gain are met both by the reduction in energy, materials, and water use; and by future-proofing buildings. For those commissioning, designing, or occupying buildings, Level(s) helps them ensure that their high quality, fit-for-purpose buildings meet their cost and environmental objectives.

SPECIFYING REUSED FURNISHINGS & FITTINGS IN OFFICE BUILDINGS

Fixtures, fittings and furniture can account for more than **30% of the embodied greenhouse gas emissions** in office buildings over a 40-year life-cycle. Developing circular economy approaches to building fit out and furnishing thus has huge potential to reduce emissions and other impacts.

Examples include:

- *Repurposing existing fittings and non-structural elements in the construction of the Rediscovery Centre, Ballymun*

The Baukarussel project in Austria – a consortium involved in the planning and implementation of recovery-oriented demolitions through social urban mining

(Examples provided by *Community Resources Network Ireland*).

For further guidance on procuring reused/upcycled furniture, please refer to the Irish GPP criteria on furniture and related services.

PUBLIC SECTOR CLIMATE ACTION MANDATE – BUILDINGS

4.1 Promote the use of bicycles (including push bikes, electric bikes, and cargo bikes) and shared mobility options as an alternative to car use among employees and visitors by creating and maintaining facilities (both inside and outside of buildings) that support such options, including secure and accessible bicycle parking, shared mobility parking, and charging stations, as appropriate, with a view to achieving the National Transport Authority’s Smarter Travel Mark.

4.2 Phase out the use of parking in buildings that have access to a range of public transport services and active/shared mobility options for the majority of staff/visitors, while providing that sufficient accessible parking is maintained for those with physical mobility issues.

4.3 Display an up-to-date Display Energy Certificate in every public building that is open to the public to clearly show energy use.

4.4 The public sector will not install heating systems that use fossil fuels after 2023, in (1) new buildings, and (2) “major renovation” retrofit projects as defined in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) unless at least one of the following exceptions applies:

- The fossil-fuel use is only through using electricity from the grid.
- There is no technically viable non-fossil alternative (generally only related to applications for a purpose other than space heating).
- The installation of a renewable space heating system would increase final CO₂ emissions.
- The fossil-fuel use is provided for backup, peaking, or operational purposes (and

makes up less than 10% of annual heating energy).

- Where the direct replacement of existing fossil fuel heating is required for an emergency maintenance purpose.

4.5 In relation to existing buildings:

4.5.1 Public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should commence a deep retrofit of at least one building in 2024 in pursuit of the 2030 51% emissions reduction target. The planning of deep retrofit building measures will be undertaken at sectoral level for homogenous sectors, e.g., in relation to the Civil Service, the OPW will plan the deep retrofit of Government Departments’ building stock.

4.5.2 Public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should develop a portfolio building stock plan (including determining the buildings necessary for their activities), in line with guidance published by SEAI, by end 2024 to mobilise large scale programmes towards meeting the Climate Action Plan targets.

4.5.3 As part of the building stock plan, large public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should undertake data gathering and consider the long term (to 2050) retrofit key performance indicators to upgrade their building stock to Nearly Zero Energy Buildings or Zero Emission Buildings as outlined in the EPBD proposal and recast Energy Efficiency Directive.

4.5.4 Small public sector bodies should include a basic building stock analysis or statement as part of their Climate Action Roadmap, in line with the guidance published by SEAI.

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T1: From 2025, a minimum proportion of construction materials procured by public bodies under new contract arrangements comprise **recycled materials**.*

* This target will be updated following further data analysis, and publication of the 2nd Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy which will include sectoral targets in relation to the construction sector.





5.6 INDOOR & OUTDOOR LIGHTING

The Irish GPP criteria cover the procurement of:

- Lighting audits (a professional service to assess lighting needs and assist in drafting specifications)
- Lighting units
- Lighting controls
- Road lighting
- Traffic signals

Lighting units and lighting controls are included in the SEAI Triple E Register, meaning that it is a requirement under Irish law that public bodies only purchase products which meet the Triple E Register criteria (which are incorporated in these GPP criteria). The Triple E Register refers to products that are specifically designed to provide high efficiency interior or exterior illumination). In addition, under the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU as amended by 2018/2002) public bodies should only purchase lighting products in the highest energy efficiency class, provided this is compatible with sufficient competition. Similar requirements will be extended across the public sector under the revised EED.

For lighting, the pre-tender activities of needs assessment and market engagement are particularly important. This is to ensure specifications adequately reflect your lighting requirements and the current state-of-the-art (including energy efficiency), which changes quickly for lighting. The needs identified and market offerings will inform the choice of contract type – audit, design, installation and maintenance may be combined in a single contract or these may be separated into one or more contracts. In some cases, lighting will form part of a larger construction or retrofitting contract. It may also form part of an energy performance contract.

The design and efficiency levels of lighting will determine life-cycle costs (LCC) of installations, which can vary considerably depending on the choices made in your tender. The major cost

categories (other than purchase price) for both indoor and outdoor lighting are:

- Installation costs
- Energy consumption during operational lifetime
- Maintenance and cleaning costs
- Replacement of light sources
- Cost of disposal of light sources

Evidence from public authorities who have installed more efficient lighting systems indicates that cost savings of over 85% over a lifetime of 15 years are available (see example here), with even higher associated savings in terms of CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions. You can assess the potential LCC savings at the pre-tender stage as well as in the tender itself using tools which have been specifically developed for this purpose. In 2019, the European Commission published two separate tools for indoor and outdoor lighting, along with accompanying user guidance. You can access the tools and guidance [here](#).

⁵¹ Under S.I. No. 151/2011 and S.I. No. 426/2014 as amended by S.I. No. 646/2016. To ensure adequate competition, there is an exception to the requirement to purchase items meeting these criteria where, in the opinion of the public body concerned, there is, or is likely to be, an insufficient amount of equipment which meets the criteria.

⁵² Article 6 and Annex III of Directive 2012/27/EU, as implemented by S.I. No. 426/2014 and amended by S.I. No. 646/2016.

The award criteria included in the Irish GPP criteria are designed to be used with these tools, although it is also possible to use other formats for LCC. To ensure that suppliers will be able to provide the data requested, it is highly recommended to publish the spreadsheet at the pre-tender stage, for example as part of preliminary market consultation or in a Prior Information Notice.

The LCC tools will provide you with the cost information needed to compare tenders. In addition to figures, they provide graphical output to illustrate costs.

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T8: From January 2025, 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of energy related products, heating equipment, or indoor and outdoor lighting to include a requirement for tenderers to specify recommendations and options for the product, when the product or components of the product comes to the end of life, that consider environmental sustainability, including options for **reuse, repair, and recycling**.





5.7 HEATING EQUIPMENT

Heating is responsible for about 24% of Ireland’s overall greenhouse gas emissions.⁵³ Despite widespread investments in energy-efficiency measures, demand for heating has grown considerably in recent years. In 2020, heating accounted for 33% of public sector energy demand, with the majority of this need being met by fossil fuels.⁵⁴ Where solid fuel (such as coal, peat or wood) is used, heating can also have significant adverse effects on air quality. A number of sustainable heating systems are available on the market, from heat pumps and biomass boilers through to solar-powered systems and district heating. In addition to their environmental benefits, many of these systems can offer financial savings on a life-cycle basis.

In April 2022, the Office of Public Works (OPW) published a high-level roadmap for phasing out fossil fuels from public sector buildings.⁵⁵ It recommends an approach based on five pillars:

1. Enabling measures to overcome barriers to renewable heat.
2. No new fossil-based heating systems in new buildings, subject to some limited exceptions (this has been adopted as part of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate – see box on following page).
3. A portfolio-based approach to replacing fossil fuels in existing buildings as part of broader retrofitting initiative that improves efficiency, reduces fossil-fuel consumption, makes buildings ‘renewables ready’ and integrates renewable heat.
4. Restrictions on leasing buildings with fossil-based heating systems.
5. Provision of funding for phased retrofit programmes.

The report identifies a number of challenges and dependencies, particularly the need for large scale retrofitting of existing buildings to meet the energy-efficiency standard needed to make heat pumps or other alternative heating systems viable.

The Irish GPP criteria for heating equipment cover the procurement of:

- Electric and fuel-driven heat pumps
- Water heaters
- Gas, electric, liquid and solid fuel boilers, including biomass boilers and cogeneration equipment
- Steam systems
- Solar thermal collectors

The criteria for boilers are technology-neutral, so that they can be used in tenders for gas, liquid or solid (including biomass) fuel boilers. Under the CAP, fossil fuel boilers can only be installed in public buildings in specified circumstances. In some cases, contracting authorities may wish to allow bidders to propose different technologies. Specific requirements apply for biomass boilers, cogeneration and trigeneration based on the Triple E criteria. The GPP criteria incorporate the **Triple E register** criteria for relevant products and legal requirements such as **Ecodesign** and the **EU Energy Label** (see box on following page).

⁵³ SEAI (2022) National Heat Study

⁵⁴ SEAI (2021) Annual Report on Public Sector Energy Performance

⁵⁵ OPW (2022) *Climate Action Plan Action 57(a): Phasing out of fossil-fuel heating from public buildings*

The following heating systems provide an alternative to fossil fuels, and can be procured as part of GPP:

TYPE OF SYSTEM	FUEL/ENERGY SOURCE	KEY FEATURES
Ground source heat pump (GSHP)	Heat extracted from surrounding earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can offer very high efficiency and long service life • Initial installation relatively expensive
Air source heat pump (ASHP)	Heat extracted from surrounding air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require less space than GSHP and cheaper to install • May not be suitable for older buildings
Water source heat pump (WSHP)	Heat extracted from rivers, lakes, oceans or aquifers	Only suitable for certain locations and applications
Solar thermal collectors	Solar radiation	Renewable energy equipment which transforms solar radiation directly into thermal energy
Biomass boiler	Wood logs, chips or pellets; waste material such as poultry litter or straw	Sustainability depends on the energy source used, the efficiency of combustion and capture of particulate matter
Biogas	Food waste, animal slurry or specifically grown energy crops such as grass silage	Anaerobic digestion produces biogas or biomethane which can then be used for heating
Cogeneration/combined heat and power (CHP)	Any renewable fuel	Usable heat and power are generated in a single process
Trigeneration (CCHP)	Any renewable fuel	Usable heat, power and cooling energy are generated in a single process
District heating	Any – including waste heat from industry or electricity production	Space and water heating provided via a network of insulated underground pipes

Table 9. Alternatives to fossil fuel heating systems

EU ECODESIGN & ENERGY LABEL

European legislation provides a common framework of minimum environmental standards which must be met by all products placed on the market. In addition, it provides for common test methods and labelling of products so that consumers are informed about environmental performance levels.

The EU requirements for Ecodesign and Energy Labelling evolve over time, for example

the *rescaling of energy labels from March 2021*. While the Irish GPP criteria include the relevant requirements at time of publication, contracting authorities should check to the requirements applicable at the time of tendering. The easiest way to do so is by consulting *this page*.

A new space or water heater or solid fuel boiler (up to 70 kW) comes with an energy label showing its energy efficiency class. As of 1 January 2019, suppliers (manufacturers, importers or authorised representatives) need to register products requiring an energy label in the *European Product Database for Energy Labelling* (EPREL). For individual products, ratings may range from G (least efficient) to A+++ (most efficient). It is also possible to buy a combination of technologies, such as a boiler with a solar hot water storage tank, in order to reach an A+++ energy efficiency rating. **Under the Energy Efficiency Directive, public bodies should purchase products in the highest available energy class, unless this would lead to insufficient competition.**

The Ecodesign regulations set requirements for energy efficiency, nitrogen oxide emission levels,

“...annual emissions from energy used for heating have been on an increasing trend since 2014, when Ireland emerged from the effects of the global 2008 recession. This trend must be reversed immediately if the heat sector is to meet its share of the required emissions reductions.”

- SEAI (2022) *National Heat Study*

volume for storage water heaters, heat losses from hot water storage tanks, and a range of other criteria. The Ecodesign requirements are subject to evolution under the new Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, due to be adopted in 2024.

The key environmental impacts addressed for heating equipment are:

- Energy consumption in use phase
- Emissions of greenhouse gases, NO_x, OGC, CO and PM in use-phase, due to fossil fuel combustion or heat pump refrigerant leakage
- Suboptimal performance due to incorrect usage or maintenance
- Air emissions in use-phase
- Noise in use phase

The GPP criteria address these impacts by:

- Specifying minimum energy efficiency levels, ensure compliance with ecodesign principles and correct installation and commissioning
- Awarding marks for products with lower GHG and pollutant emissions and use of refrigerants with lower global warming potential
- Requiring comprehensive user instructions to be provided with products and contract clauses to ensure contractor is responsible for ongoing environmental performance
- Awarding marks for products with noise emissions below set limits

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER



T8: From January 2025, 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of energy related products, heating equipment, or indoor and outdoor lighting to include a requirement for tenderers to specify recommendations and options for the product, when the product or components of the product comes to the end of life, that consider environmental sustainability, including options for **reuse, repair, and recycling**.

T9: 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of heating systems to not install **heating systems that use fossil fuels**, in (1) new buildings, and (2) “major renovation” retrofit projects (as defined in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)) subject to exceptions as specified in the Public Sector Climate Action Plan Mandate 2023.

PUBLIC SECTOR CLIMATE ACTION MANDATE – HEATING SYSTEMS

The public sector will not install heating systems that use fossil fuels after 2023, in (1) new buildings, and (2) “major renovation” retrofit projects as defined in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) unless at least one of the following exceptions applies:

- The fossil-fuel use is only through using electricity from the grid.
- There is no technically viable non-fossil alternative (generally only related to applications for a purpose other than space heating).
- The installation of a renewable space heating system would increase final CO₂ emissions.
- The fossil-fuel use is provided for backup, peaking, or operational purposes (and makes up less than 10% of annual heating energy).
- Where the direct replacement of existing fossil fuel heating is required for an emergency maintenance purpose.

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE HEAT NETWORKS

One example of what is being done at local level is the development of a **low carbon district heating scheme** in Tallaght. The project will establish a sustainable district heating solution in the Tallaght area to provide low-carbon heat to public sector and residential customers. The heat network will be supplied by waste heat from a local data centre, utilised through a centralised large-scale heat pump. The pump house will include thermal storage facilities to take advantage of

off-peak electricity, while also providing a source of back-up. The project is expected to result in carbon emission savings of 1500 tonnes per year. You can read more about the project [here](#).

The GPP criteria for heating equipment include criteria for the purchase of **solar thermal collectors** and **heat pumps**, amongst other equipment.

5.8

ENERGY-RELATED PRODUCTS



The category of energy-related products includes the following products covered by the EU Ecodesign regulations and Energy Label regulations:

- Air conditioners
- Residential ventilation units
- Cooking appliances (professional and household)
- Dishwashers (professional and household)
- Electronic displays and televisions
- Refrigerating appliances (professional, household and vending machines)
- Washing machines and tumble dryers (professional and household)
- Vacuum cleaners

The Irish GPP criteria incorporate the requirements of the *Triple-E register*, for example for commercial ovens, dishwashers, washing machines and dryers. Under the Energy Efficiency Regulations (*S.I. 426/2014*) the following rules apply to central government contracts valued above the EU thresholds:

- For products subject to the EU Energy Label, only products belonging to the highest energy efficiency class possible in the light of the need to ensure sufficient competition may be purchased;
- Where a product is not subject to the EU Energy Label but is covered by an Ecodesign Regulation, only products complying with the energy efficiency benchmarks in the relevant Regulation may be purchased;
- For office ICT equipment, only purchase products that comply with the minimum energy efficiency requirements applicable under the Energy Star program⁵⁶;
- Only purchase tyres that comply with the highest fuel energy efficiency class as defined in Regulation (EC) 1222/2009⁵⁷;
- In service contracts, require that any new products purchased by service providers partially or wholly for the purpose of providing the service in question comply with the above requirements;
- Only purchase or lease buildings that comply with certain minimum energy performance requirements.

MARKET SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITIES

Market Surveillance Authorities (MSAs) play a key role in ensuring product safety and conformity to standards across the EU. Under the *Market Surveillance Regulation* (EU 2019/1020), economic operators are obliged to cooperate with these authorities and provide information about their products. This can play a role in GPP, for example if you wish to confirm that a given product complies with the relevant Ecodesign rules. For Ireland, different bodies act as the MSA for individual product categories. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment lists the relevant bodies on its [website](#).

In addition, under *S.I. 646/2016* a public body shall only procure equipment which

- is listed on the SEAI's Triple E Product Register, or;
- satisfies the published SEAI energy efficiency criteria for the equipment or concerned, and the public body shall specify this requirement in any documentation describing its procurement requirements.

⁵⁶ Although the EU-US Energy Star Agreement has ended, it is still possible to refer to the criteria under the Energy Star program. Both the IEEE 1680 standards and the EPEAT label incorporate the Energy Star criteria for office ICT equipment.

⁵⁷ This requirement shall not prevent public bodies from purchasing tyres with the highest wet grip class or external rolling noise class where justified by safety or public health reasons.

In 2023, a new Energy Efficiency Directive (2023/1791) was adopted, which extends the obligations for energy-efficiency in procurement across all contracting authorities and entities, when awarding contracts valued above the EU thresholds. The deadline for implementing the new Directive falls in October 2025. Under Article 7 and Annex IV of the Directive, the following requirements will apply:

- The ‘energy efficiency first’ principle must be applied in covered procurements;
- For products covered by the EU Energy Label, purchase only products that meet the highest two significantly populated classes of energy efficiency under the relevant label;
- Where a product is not subject to the EU Energy Label but is covered by an Ecodesign Regulation, purchase only products complying with the energy efficiency benchmarks in the relevant Regulation;
- Where a product or service is covered by EU or national GPP criteria with relevance to energy efficiency, make best efforts to purchase only products and services that respect at least the technical specifications set at ‘core’ level;
- Purchase only tyres that comply with the criterion of having the highest fuel energy efficiency class, as defined in Regulation (EU) 2020/740⁵⁸;
- In service contracts, require that any new products purchased by service providers partially or wholly for the purpose of providing the service in question comply with the above Energy Label and Ecodesign requirements;
- Purchase, or make new rental agreements for, buildings that comply at least with the nearly zero-energy level.

Depending on Ireland’s transposition of the Directive, additional requirements may apply, for example to take wider sustainability, social, environmental and circular economy aspects in procurement practices.

In addition to energy efficiency, the GPP criteria address a range of life-cycle considerations, including emissions of greenhouse gases, NO_x, OGC, CO and PM during use phase, due to fossil fuel combustion for energy or refrigerant leakage; product durability and longevity; water consumption during usage; suboptimal performance due to incorrect installation, usage or maintenance and end-of-life impacts from product disposal.

In February 2021, the *Ecodesign Omnibus Regulation* updated the testing and other requirements for several of the product categories included in these GPP criteria (refrigerating appliances, dishwashers and washing machines), in particular to ensure that defeat devices or software are not used to circumvent standards by detecting when tests are being run. In March 2021, Ecodesign rules regarding the reparability of refrigerating appliances, dishwashers and washing machines also come into effect. These establish requirements such as:

- Spare parts must be available for a minimum of 7 years from date of purchase for refrigerating appliances (10 years for door gaskets); 10 years minimum for household washing-machines and household washer-dryers; and 10 years minimum for household dishwashers (7 years for some parts for which access can be restricted to professional repairers);
- During the above specified periods, the manufacturer shall ensure the delivery of the spare parts within 15 working days;
- It must be possible to replace spare parts with commonly available tools and without permanent damage to the appliance.

To ensure that public purchasers are able to avail of these conditions, the GPP criteria specify compliance with the relevant Ecodesign rules. In addition, repair and availability of spare parts is required under warranty, with additional marks available for extended warranties. In 2022, the European Commission published a proposal for a new *Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation* (ESPR), which will extend Ecodesign regulations to a number of new product categories and broaden their scope.

⁵⁸ This requirement shall not prevent public bodies from purchasing tyres with the highest wet grip class or external rolling noise class where justified by safety or public health reasons.

In March 2023, the European Commission published proposed legislation to create a common set of rules promoting repair of goods ('**Right to Repair**'). This would help to ensure access to repair services, thus reducing waste and

greenhouse gas emissions. While these rules are not yet law, the Irish GPP criteria promote repairability of energy-related products, including under warranty. Further information is available *here*.

ENERGY-RELATED PRODUCTS & THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

A number of circular economy considerations are relevant when purchasing energy-related products. These include:

- Purchase of refurbished or second-hand equipment where suitable;
- Use of recycled materials or components in products;
- Design of products to ensure durability, repairability and flexibility in use;
- Design of products to ensure recyclability of components and materials;
- Extension of service life through maintenance, repair and availability of spare parts;

- End-of-life treatment which maximises reuse or recycling of parts and materials.

These considerations are reflected in the Irish GPP criteria, in particular through the requirements related to Ecodesign, warranties and end-of-life treatment. **Public bodies should ensure that any purchased electrical and electronic equipment is from a producer who meets the requirement to be registered with the national registration body (*Producer Register Limited*)**. Further information on Ireland's circular economy strategy can be found *here*.

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T8: From January 2025, 100% of all tenders for the public procurement of energy related products, heating equipment, or indoor and outdoor lighting to include a requirement for tenderers to specify recommendations and options for the product, when the product or components of the product comes to the end of life, that consider environmental sustainability, including options for **reuse, repair, and recycling**.





5.9

PAPER PRODUCTS & PRINTING SERVICES

Global paper consumption amounts to some 400 million tonnes per year (55 kg per person), a quarter of which is consumed in Europe.⁵⁹ Production and use of paper products has a heavy environmental footprint, including:

- Forest destruction, loss of biodiversity and climate change effects from unsustainable timber harvesting;
- Emissions to air and water during pulp and paper production, conversion and printing;
- Energy consumption during pulp and paper production, conversion and printing;
- Water consumption during pulp and paper production;
- Landfill due to failure to recycle paper products, especially where products also contain non-paper elements.

The GPP criteria aim to:

- Promote the procurement of 100% recycled paper products;
- Safeguard forests by ensuring any virgin fibres come from legally and sustainably harvested timber;
- Reduce emissions to water, air and soil during the production process;
- Promote energy-efficient production of paper products;
- Reduce environmental damage or risks linked to hazardous chemicals;
- Promote responsible waste management for paper and stationery products.

Ireland's *Climate Action Plan* (2024) commits to the following, as part of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate:

3.7 Paper

3.7.1 Review any paper-based processes and evaluate the possibilities for digitisation so it becomes the default approach. Eliminate paper-based processes as far as is practicable. Where paper must be procured, ensure that recycled paper is the default.

3.7.2 Measure and monitor paper consumption.

The Irish GPP criteria have been updated in 2024 to reflect these requirements. The Irish GPP criteria cover the following products and services:

- Graphic and copying paper;
- Envelopes and stationery paper products (e.g. notebooks, writing pads, drawing books);
- Printed paper products (e.g. forms, leaflets/brochures, annual reports, labels, diaries, business cards, calendars, posters, books);
- Paper carrier bags;
- Printing services.

Although there are no current EU GPP criteria for paper products, several European countries have developed national criteria (including the UK, Germany, France, Denmark, Netherlands and Malta) and these have been consulted in the preparation of the Irish criteria. The criteria for paper products rely heavily on three independent third-party environmental certifications (ecolabels): FSC, PEFC and the EU Ecolabel. While the precise criteria underlying these certifications differ, they all address the basic requirements of legal and sustainably managed forestry. In addition, the EU Ecolabel addresses other production-related environmental impacts, such as use of water, energy and chemicals in the production process.

⁵⁹ *Environmental Paper Network* (2018), p 4.

In Europe, approximately 52% of the total timber production area is certified under FSC/PEFC, or 105 million hectares. Worldwide, the figure is 430 million hectares.⁶⁰ Additional ecolabels or other forms of evidence which can be relied upon to

verify compliance are given in the GPP criteria. The criteria for print services also address issues such as staff training in printing methods with reduced environmental impact.

EU DEFORESTATION-FREE PRODUCTS REGULATION (EUDR)

The EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation (2023/1115) requires all operators placing wood, cattle, cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber and soya – and products made from these commodities (including paper products) – on the EU market to demonstrate that they have exercised due diligence in ensuring that the products are deforestation-free and have been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation of the country of production.

The EUDR applies to products placed on the market from 31 December 2024; for paper products placed on the market prior to this date, compliance with Regulation 995/2010 (EU Timber Regulation) is required. Further information on Ireland's implementation of the EUDR is available on [this page](#).

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T7: From May 2024, where office paper for printing and photocopying must be procured, **100% of the paper must be recycled paper.**



⁶⁰ *Forest Europe* (2020), p 108.

5.10

TEXTILE PRODUCTS & SERVICES



The primary environmental impacts associated with textiles arise from the production and processing of raw materials, including the application of pesticides, chemicals and dyes, energy and water use in the production process. Secondary impacts arise during the use phase, particularly if fabrics require special care or

cleaning (e.g. washing at high temperatures) or must be frequently replaced due to low durability, poor colour-fastness or shrinkage.

The Irish GPP criteria cover the following finished products, intermediate products and accessories:

- **Textile clothing and accessories:** uniforms, workwear, personal protective equipment (PPE) and accessories consisting of at least 80% by weight of textile fibres in a woven, non-woven or knitted form.
- **Interior textiles:** textile products for interior use consisting of at least 80% by weight of textile fibres in a woven, non-woven or knitted form. This includes bed linen, towels, table linen and curtains.
- **Textile fibres, yarn, fabric and knitted panels:** intermediate products intended for use in textile clothing and accessories and interior textiles, including upholstery fabric and mattress ticking prior to the application of backings and treatments associated with the final product.
- **Non-fibre elements:** intermediate products that are to be incorporated into textile clothing and accessories, and interior textiles. This includes zips, buttons and other accessories, as well as membranes, coatings and laminates that form part of the structure of clothing or interior textiles and which may also have a functional purpose. For the purposes of these criteria, textile fibres comprise natural fibres, synthetic fibres and man-made cellulose fibres.

The scope of textile fibres for which GPP criteria are provided is as follows:

- **natural fibres:** cotton and other natural cellulosic seed fibres, wool and other keratin fibres
- **synthetic fibres:** polyamide and polyester
- **man-made cellulose fibres:** lyocell, modal and viscose

The criteria have been developed based on the *2017 EU GPP Criteria for Textile Products and Services*, relevant Irish and European legislation and procurement practice in the sector. In the case of uniforms, prior consultation with the staff who will be wearing the textiles is a good way to ensure fitness for purpose and avoid over ordering or issues linked to quality, comfort and fit. Communication regarding the care requirements for textiles is also essential. Addressing the environmental impacts of textiles can also help to minimise costs and maximise user satisfaction over their life-cycle.

The diversity of textile fibres that may be used, as well as the many different types of textile products and end-use applications, and a wide range of associated environmental impacts, means that a number of points along the life cycle need addressing. Analysis of the life cycle of textile products suggests that the following 'hot spot' areas of significant environmental impact should be the focus for improvement:

- fibre sourcing;
- chemical restrictions;
- durability and lifespan extension;
- energy conservation during use;
- design for reuse and recycling

There are significant potential environmental (and financial) benefits from product lifetime extension and more circular systems of resource use associated with the disposal (end-of-life) phase. These benefits can be realised through improved durability, reuse, recycling and energy recovery activities.

TEXTILES & THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The production, consumption and disposal of textiles poses both a challenge and opportunity for the circular economy. In Ireland, an estimated 170,000 tonnes of textiles are discarded each year, of which approximately 60,000 tonnes are reused or recycled, with 110,000 tonnes disposed of as waste (Source: *EPA 2021*). European consumption of textiles has the fourth highest impact on the environment and climate change, after food, housing and mobility (*European Commission 2023*). Globally, textile production has increased at five times the rate of population growth, and textiles are estimated to be responsible for up to 25% of microplastics in oceans (Source: *DECC 2022*).

To help address these impacts, the *Waste Framework Directive* requires Member States to implement separate waste collection systems for textiles by 1 January 2025. In Ireland, a *Textiles Advisory Group* has been set up by the Department for the Environment, Climate and Communications. It consists of relevant industry, community and regulatory representatives to identify opportunities to capitalise on the value of textiles present in Ireland and explore options to improve future circularity in the sector. The Group will support Ireland in meeting its obligations under EU legislation and to work towards realising the ambition of the *EU Textiles Strategy*.

The European Commission has also proposed introducing mandatory and harmonised Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for textiles in all EU Member

States. EPR schemes require producers to take responsibility for the entire lifecycle of their products, in particular at the end of the product's life. Under the proposal, the level of the financial contributions of the producers will be based on the circularity and environmental performance of textile products (referred to as "eco-modulation"). To reduce illegal waste shipments to non-EU countries, often disguised as intended for reuse, the Commission's proposal further clarifies the definitions of waste and reusable textiles. This will complement the proposed Regulation on waste shipments, which ensures that textile waste is only exported when there are guarantees that the waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner.

Many public sector organisations in Ireland have recognised the impact of textiles procurement and taken steps to reduce this, for example by specifying recycled or lower-impact materials for uniforms, and ensuring that they can be repaired and reused or recycled at their end-of-life. For example, Bus Éireann procured uniforms made from recycled plastic bottles (see case study *here*) and the Irish Defence Forces have included award criteria relating to sustainability and circular economy in tenders for uniforms. A number of social enterprises are involved in textile reuse and upcycling, as featured *here*.

Further information on the EU Textiles Strategy is available *here*. Further information about the EPA's Circular Economy Programme's work on textiles, is available *here*.

RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T6: By 2027, polyester fibre products procured by public sector bodies under new contract arrangements must be manufactured using a minimum **recycled content of 20%**, where possible and proportionate.



5.11

FURNITURE & RELATED SERVICES



In 2023-24 a new set of Irish GPP criteria for furniture and related services were developed. This category was selected due to the significant potential to save resources and contribute to the circular economy by implementing sustainability criteria in tenders. The criteria cover the following:

- Furniture products that are used for storage, placement or hanging of items and/or to provide surfaces where users can rest, sit, eat, study or work, whether for indoor or outdoor use. Bed mattresses are included within the scope;
- Furniture rental services;
- Furniture refurbishment, repair, and renovation services;
- Furniture end-of-(first)-life services

The criteria were developed based on existing GPP criteria (including the *EU criteria from 2017*, the Italian Minimum Environmental Criteria for *indoor* and *outdoor* furniture of 2022 and 2023 respectively, and the *Dutch Criteria*), review of relevant ecolabel criteria and guidance, relevant Irish and European legislation, and a consultation with a number of Irish public and third sector organisations.

The global furniture market is worth about USD 527 billion.⁶¹ European countries represent around 25% of global furniture production, with a consumption of around 10.5 million tonnes of furniture annually.⁶² Approximately 10 million tonnes of furniture are discarded by businesses and consumers in the EU each year.

Materials and components account for 80-90% of the environmental impacts across the life cycle of furniture products and manufacturing represents the second most impactful phase in the life cycle of furniture.⁶³

Key environmental impacts as identified in the 2017 EU GPP Criteria for Furniture⁶⁴ are as follows:

- Loss of biodiversity and soil erosion as a result of unsustainable forest management and illegal logging
- Depletion of resources due to the use of non-renewable resources such as oil/natural gas for plastics
- CO₂ and other emissions as a result of energy consumption in the production of materials
- Risks to workers, consumers or to the wider environment from the release of toxic substances
- Contribution to poor indoor air quality due to Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) emissions
- Wasted materials due to premature end of life of substandard quality furniture, and difficulties with repairing, acquiring spare parts or separating parts for recycling.

To reduce the environmental impacts associated with the furniture market, it is recommended to focus on durability: items should not only be fit for purpose but also easy to repair. The GPP criteria promote a circular approach, with repair and repurposing being preferred to buying new items.

⁶¹ Global furniture market size from 2020 to 2027, Published by Statista Research Department, Jul 27, 2022 (www.statista.com/statistics/977793/furniture-market-value-worldwide/)

⁶² CSIL processing of data from Eurostat, National Statistical Offices, National Furniture manufacturers associations, as cited in the EU Furniture Market Situation Report (2014).

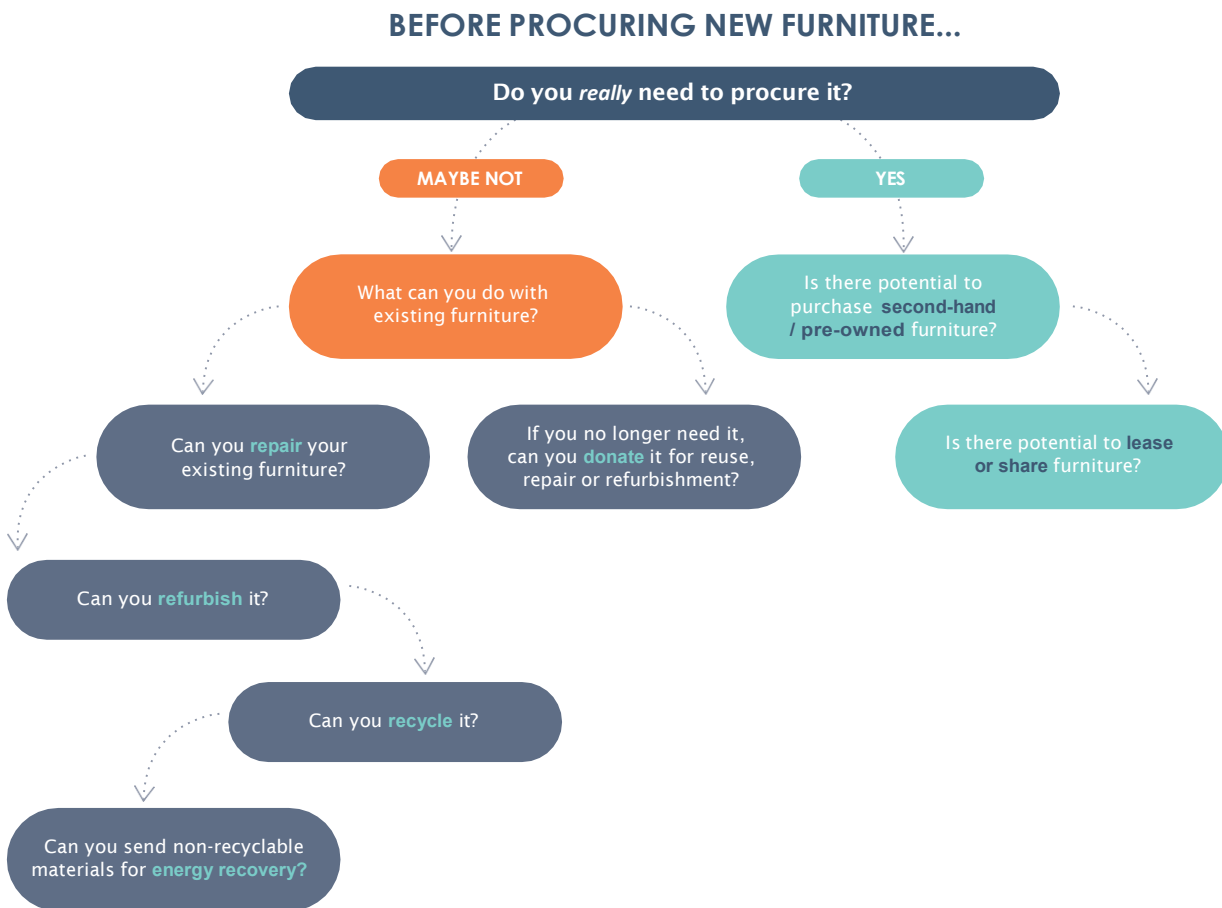
⁶³ Donatello, S., Gama Caldas M. and Wolf, O. Revision of EU Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria for Furniture. Technical Report: Final version, EUR 28729 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017, ISBN 978-92-79-71863-2, doi:10.2760/14246, JRC107824.

⁶⁴ European Commission's GPP Toolkit: ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/toolkit/furniture_gpp.pdf

The Irish GPP criteria aim to:

- Ensure sound environmental practices throughout the life-cycle of furniture
- Promote the use of traceable, sustainable materials and equipment, including recycled and renewable materials
- Procure easy-to-disassemble, repairable furniture that is covered by a warranty
- Ensure wood furniture is produced with timber derived from legal and sustainable sources
- Promote the reuse of furniture. If reuse is unsuitable, promote the repair or refurbishment of furniture
- Procure durable and fit-for-use furniture complying with relevant EN standards
- Address the environmental impacts of packaging and transport for furniture.

FIGURE 9 Infographic on furniture procurement



RELEVANT TARGETS FROM BUYING GREENER

T12: By end of 2027, where possible and available, a minimum proportion of annual procurement by public sector bodies shall include **used or repaired goods or materials**.*

* Availability of used or repaired goods will be informed by the national network to support and scale reuse and repair in Ireland that has been established by the EPA.



GPP IN CONTRACTS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The question is often raised of how GPP can be meaningfully applied in contracts for professional services, which make up a large part of public sector spending in Ireland. In 2019 total public sector procurement spend on professional services amounted to €738 million (15% of total), making it the second largest category of spending after medical supplies (Source: *OGP 2022*). The category includes a broad range of services from accountancy/audit, IT consultancy and legal through to advertising, architectural, research and personnel placement.

What type of GPP approach and criteria are suitable for these contracts? While this depends in part on the precise nature of the service, every activity has an environmental impact, and all organisations should be working towards decarbonisation in their business operations. Two key points need to be kept in mind

1 GPP should always be about identifying and rewarding enhanced environmental offers, rather than simply rewarding business-as-usual or encouraging vague claims

2 All criteria must be linked to the subject-matter of the contract, meaning they should relate to the specific services being provided and not general policies of the bidders

Within these parameters, the following specific approaches could be considered:

- **Selection criteria:** Require an environmental management system/ supply chain management system, or award marks for these. Request evidence of capacity to implement environmental measures, staff training and qualifications. Where appropriate, require examples of previous contracts implementing similar environmental measures.
- **Technical specifications/Project requirements:** Limit travel under contract or specify modes (e.g public transport/walking/cycling wherever possible); eliminate or reduce printed outputs; require environmental impacts to be evaluated in advance and reported for all project activities; if equipment or materials will be purchased to fulfil contract, specify energy-efficiency/environmental performance levels.
- **Award criteria:** Award marks for specific proposals to address environmental impact of services which result in measurable reductions in emissions, energy or resource use etc. You can either leave it open to bidders to propose actions, or define a list of environmental actions specific to the contract. The proposed actions will form part of the contract with the successful bidder.
- **Contract performance clauses:** Include specific environmental commitments made in tenders with timelines, monitoring, reporting, escalation and remedies; hold periodic reviews to increase environmental performance levels; provide for shared financial or other incentives linked to CO₂e, energy or waste reduction.

Note that all of the above considerations are **directly related to the services to be provided under the contract, rather than general corporate commitments such as a net zero policy**. This is required under the public procurement rules, as all criteria

must be linked to the subject-matter of the contract and not concern general corporate policies (Art. 67/Recital 97 of Directive 2014/24/EU). This also helps to avoid **greenwash** or vague environmental claims which cannot be enforced in contracts.

CASE STUDY: FUTUREENERGY IRELAND

FuturEnergy Ireland is a joint venture between Coillte and the ESB, launched in 2021. Its ambition is to develop more than 1GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and make a significant contribution to Ireland's commitment to produce 80% of electricity from renewable sources by the end of the decade.

In establishing new systems and services, it was necessary for FuturEnergy to complete a wide range of tender processes for professional services. Given its stated mission and work in a climate-related area, the decision was taken to include targeted sustainability criteria in the following tenders:

1. Audit Services (Internal Audit and Statutory Audit) (Selection and Award criteria for both competitions);
2. Legal Services (Selection Criteria);
3. Corporate Finance Services (Selection Criteria and Award Criteria);
4. Website Services (Award Criteria – Open Competition);
5. Grid and Modelling Services (Selection Criteria); and
6. Owner's Engineer Services (within the Award Criterion 'methodology and innovation' – requesting specific details of the approach to evaluation of environmentally sustainable materials and processes).

For weighted criteria, the applicable weightings ranged from 10-15% of the marks available. To date, FuturEnergy has been impressed with the detailed and comprehensive responses to these criteria received from many bidders, giving it confidence that the various services will be delivered in a sustainable manner.

For example, the following aspects were addressed in responses from bidders:

- Details of greenhouse gas inventory systems which will be used to collect data and measure emissions under the contract;
- Information regarding staff training on relevant environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics, and how updates are circulated;
- How ESG resources and training knowledge would be applied to the performance of fieldwork and review of documentation in order to provide insights and recommendations that reflect legislation, regulations and best practice;
- Details of paperless processes, consolidation and file sharing;
- Relevant third-party accreditations and certifications (e.g. ISO 14001);
- The inclusion of senior ESG experts on the project team;
- Experience in challenging clients on ESG commitments and identifying relevant standards; and
- Methodology for sustainable web design and related questions

Given the positive results to date, FuturEnergy Ireland plans to apply sustainability criteria in further tenders and to measure the impact, as its operations expand. The feedback from tendering parties has also been positive, many of whom have been glad for an opportunity to demonstrate the sustainability or ESG work which has been taking place within their companies in recent years. The experience has been very positive for FuturEnergy Ireland, and it will continue to show leadership in this area whenever and wherever possible.

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GPP FOR ELECTRICITY

Electricity is responsible for 45% of public sector primary energy demand and related CO₂ emissions in Ireland (*SEAI 2023*). Improvements in energy efficiency in recent years have led to significant financial savings and reductions in CO₂ emissions. However, there is still considerable work to be done to meet the targets of a 50% energy efficiency improvement and 51% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2030.

The majority of public sector bodies purchase electricity using frameworks established by the OGP. Public bodies may choose to purchase 100% green electricity which is produced from renewable sources as verified by the *Commission for Regulation of Utilities* in a fuel mix report. Renewable electricity may be produced in Ireland or elsewhere in Europe, as attested by a Guarantee of Origin. Under current market conditions, **there is little to no price premium associated with purchasing 100% green electricity**. The minimum percentage of renewable electricity on OGP frameworks is 42.5%, rising to 70% by 2028.

The *EU GPP criteria for electricity*, published in 2012, give an indication of how both the renewable origin and production efficiency of electricity purchased by public bodies can be taken into account in tenders, and provides wording for verification of these aspects.

Public sector demand also has the potential to play an important role in increasing investment in renewable energy. This is especially true where longer term contracts or frameworks are awarded, and where joint purchasing (for example, under a *power purchase agreement*) is used. The use of **locally installed renewable generation capacity** or *microgeneration* can also contribute to reducing carbon emissions. An overview of the support schemes available to the public sector can be found on the *SEAI website*.

It is recommended that public bodies:

1. Purchase 100% renewable electricity whenever available.
2. Invest in local renewables/*microgeneration* capacity.
3. Continue to improve energy-efficiency in line with national targets, employing approaches such as *energy performance contracts* where appropriate.
4. Work with energy suppliers and other public bodies to support investment in larger scale renewable generation capacity, for example through *power purchase agreements*.
5. Set targets in relation to each of the above measures as part of GPP policy, with appropriate reporting periods and implementation plans (see *Checklists*).

Under the Climate Action Plan, a number of actions are being taken to reduce Ireland's energy emissions, including funding for solar, wind and community energy projects, supporting deep retrofits and renewable energy installation in schools, and updating the rules on grid connection to facilitate microgeneration. You can track progress on these and other initiatives *here*.

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The below table identifies relevant legislation in each of the sectors covered by the Irish GPP criteria. This list is provided for guidance only and contracting authorities should ensure they are aware of all relevant legal obligations.

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
1. ROAD TRANSPORT VEHICLES & SERVICES	<p>Euro emission standards: Common, mandatory standards for emissions from vehicles placed on the market after a given date (e.g. Euro 6, Euro 7). See this page for further information.</p>
	<p>Clean and Energy-efficient Road Transport Vehicles Regulations 2021 (S.I. 381/2021): All contracting authorities and entities must meet minimum targets for the procurement of low and zero-emission vehicles, expressed as a percentage of their total vehicle procurement (including via service contracts) over specified time periods.</p>
	<p>European Union (End of Life Vehicles) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 281/2014) as amended by <i>S.I. 566/2016</i>, <i>S.I. 183/2018</i>, <i>S.I. 82/2020</i> and <i>S.I. 532/2023</i>: place obligations on producers (vehicle manufacturers and importers) including registration with local authorities, vehicle design requirements and the establishment of national collection systems for the recovery and treatment of end-of-life vehicles. The compliance scheme is operated by <i>ELVES</i>.</p>
	<p>Waste Management (Tyres and Waste Tyres) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 400 of 2017) requires any manufacturer, wholesaler, supplier, trader, retailer or waste tyre collector who, in the course of business, supplies tyres or waste tyres to other persons, to join the compliance scheme operated by the approved body (Circol ELT).</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2020/740 on the labelling of tyres with respect to fuel efficiency and other parameters specifies technical requirements relating to rolling resistance and noise and places a number of obligations on the suppliers (manufacturers / importers) and distributors (retailers) of tyres and vehicles. See the EU Energy Label site on tyres.</p>
	<p>Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency (Energy Efficiency Directive) significantly raises the EU’s ambition on energy efficiency. It requires the public sector to lead by example and set minimum requirements for energy efficiency in public buildings and in public procurement. These requirements will now apply to all contracting authorities and entities when carrying out procurement above the EU thresholds. In relation to tyres, only tyres that comply with the criterion of having the highest fuel energy efficiency class, as defined in Regulation (EU) 2020/740 may be purchased or used in service contracts, unless justified by safety or public health reasons (Article 7 and Annex IV of Directive 2023/1791).</p>
	<p>European Union (Paints, Varnishes, Vehicle Refinishing Products and Activities) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 564/2012) as amended by <i>S.I. 398/2014</i> sets requirements regarding Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) in the respraying or recoating of vehicles. It is an offence for facilities (including mobile operators) which carry out these activities to operate without a valid Certificate of Approval, issued by a local authority. A valid and up to date Certificate of Approval should be required from any operator engaged to provide such services.</p>

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
1. ROAD TRANSPORT VEHICLES & SERVICES (CONTINUED)	<p>Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 concerning batteries and waste batteries Companies placing batteries on the market must identify, prevent and address social and environmental risks linked to the sourcing, processing and trading of raw materials such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and natural graphite contained in batteries. In procurement, contracting authorities and entities must take account of the environmental impacts of batteries over their life cycle with a view to ensuring that such impacts are kept to a minimum.</p>
	<p>European Union (Batteries and Accumulators) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 283/2014) impose obligations on persons who supply batteries to the Irish market, whether as retailers, importers or manufacturers.</p>
2. ICT PRODUCTS & SERVICES	<p>S.I. 151/2011 European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 <i>setting a framework for energy labelling</i> and delegated regulations for each product group</p>
	<p>S.I. 669/2022 European Union (Energy Labelling) Regulations 2022</p>
	<p>Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, as amended by Directive 2018/2002 and Directive 2019/944</p>
	<p>Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency (repealing Directive 2012/27/EU from 12 October 2025)</p>
	<p>S.I. No. 426/2014 European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations, as amended by S.I. 646/2016 and S.I. 630/2022</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 concerning batteries and waste batteries</p>
	<p>Directive 2009/125/EC establishing a <i>framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products and delegated regulations for each product group</i> and Regulation (EU) 2021/341 (<i>Ecodesign Omnibus Regulation</i>)</p>
	<p>S.I. 454 of 2013 European Union (Ecodesign Requirements for certain energy related products) Regulations, as amended by S.I. 228 of 2016 S.I. 96/2021 and S.I. 671/2022</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 617/2013 of 26 June 2013 laying down ecodesign requirements for computers and computer servers)</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2019/424 of 15 March 2019 laying down ecodesign requirements for servers and data storage products</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2019/2021 of 1 October 2019 laying down ecodesign requirements for electronic displays</p>
	<p>Regulation (EU) 2019/1782 of 1 October 2019 laying down ecodesign requirements for external power supplies</p>
	<p>Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/1670 laying down ecodesign requirement for smartphones, mobile phones and slate tablets</p>
<p>Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1669 with regard to energy labelling of smartphones and slate tablets</p>	

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
2. ICT PRODUCTS & SERVICES (CONTINUED)	<i>Regulation 2019/2013 on Energy Labelling of Electronic Displays</i> as amended by <i>Energy Label Omnibus Regulation (2021/340)</i>
	<i>Commission Decision (EU) 2020/1804 establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for electronic displays</i>
	<i>Directive 2011/65/EU on the restriction of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS)</i>
	<i>Consolidated Regulation No. 1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)</i>
	<i>Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE Directive) and S.I. 149/2014, as amended</i>
3. FOOD & CATERING SERVICES	<i>Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products (as amended)</i> – specifies the requirements for organic production and use of the EU green leaf logo.
	Waste Management (Food Waste) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 508 of 2009, as amended) require all major producers of food waste to place it into a dedicated bin and ensure that it is not mixed with other waste.
	Waste Framework Directive (EU) 2008/98/EC (as amended) sets out various obligations regarding waste management as do the <i>Waste Management Act and Regulations in Ireland</i> .
	European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 282 of 2014) set requirements for packaging including its separation and recovery. These have been substantially amended by <i>S.I. 322/2020</i> and <i>S.I. 659/2022</i> . In 2022 the European Commission proposed a series of updates to <i>EU legislation on Packaging and packaging waste</i> . If adopted, new rules will apply on the sustainability of packaging, labelling and the management of waste. Further information is available here .
	<i>Regulation (EC) No 852 of 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs</i> (as amended) laying down general rules for food business operators on food hygiene, handling and storage.
	<i>Regulation (EC) No 853 of 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin, both processed and unprocessed</i> (as amended).
	<i>Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 (EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation)</i>
4. CLEANING PRODUCTS & SERVICES	<i>Consolidated Regulation No. 1907/2006</i> on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)
	<i>The Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 – Hazardous Substances and Biocides</i>

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
4. CLEANING PRODUCTS & SERVICES (CONTINUED)	<p>The European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 282 of 2014) set requirements for packaging including its separation and recovery. These have been substantially amended by <i>S.I. 322/2020</i> and <i>S.I. 659/2022</i>. In 2022 the European Commission proposed a series of updates to <i>EU legislation on Packaging and packaging waste</i>. If adopted, new rules will apply on the sustainability of packaging, labelling and the management of waste. Further information is available here.</p>
	<p><i>Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009</i> on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS).</p>
	<p><i>Regulation EU 666/2013</i> (as amended) on ecodesign of vacuum cleaners.</p>
	<p><i>Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE Directive)</i> and <i>S.I. 149/2014</i>, as amended.</p>
	<p>EU Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) and Irish <i>Waste Management Act and implementing Regulations</i>.</p>
5. BUILDINGS	<p><i>List of legislation will be updated to reflect new EU/Irish GPP criteria in 2024/25</i></p>
	<p>Directive 2010/31/EU on Energy Performance of Buildings as amended by Directive 2018/844/EU (implemented by <i>S.I. 183/2019</i>)</p>
	<p><i>S.I. 496/1997</i> Building Control Regulations</p>
	<p><i>S.I. 497/1997</i> Building Regulations (as amended, in particular Part L)</p>
	<p><i>Regulation (EU) 305/2011 on harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products</i> (as amended)</p>
	<p><i>Regulation (EU) 995/2010 on placing timber and timber products on the market</i> (as amended)</p>
	<p>Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, as amended by Directive 2018/2002</p>
	<p><i>S.I. 151/2011 European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011</i></p>
	<p><i>S.I. 366 of 2011 European Union (Energy Labelling) Regulations</i>, as amended by <i>S.I. 351 of 2014</i></p>
	<p><i>S.I. 454 of 2013 European Union (Ecodesign Requirements for certain energy related products) Regulations</i>, as amended</p>
<p><i>S.I. No. 426/2014 - European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations 2014</i>, as amended by <i>S.I. No. 646/2016</i></p>	
<p>Directive 2009/125/EC <i>establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products</i></p>	
<p>Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 <i>setting a framework for energy labelling</i></p>	

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
6. LIGHTING	<i>S.I. 151/2011 European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011</i>
	<i>S.I. 669/2022 European Union (Energy Labelling) Regulations 2022</i>
	<i>S.I. 454/2013 European Union (Ecodesign Requirements for certain energy related products) Regulations, as amended by S.I. 228 of 2016, S.I. 96/2021 and S.I. 671/2022</i>
	<i>S.I. No. 426/2014 - European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations 2014, as amended by S.I. No. 646/2016 and S.I. 630/2022</i>
	Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 setting a framework for energy labelling
	Directive 2009/125/EC establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products
	Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, as amended by Directive 2018/2002 and Directive 2019/944
	Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency (repealing Directive 2012/27/EU from 12 October 2025)
	Regulation (EU) 2019/2015 on energy labelling of light sources (taking effect from 1.9.2021)
	Regulation (EU) 2019/2020 on ecodesign requirements for light sources and separate control gears (taking effect from 1.9.2021)
	Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/341 (Ecodesign Omnibus Regulation) amending various Ecodesign regulations
	Commission Regulation 2021/340 (Energy Label Omnibus Regulation) amending various Energy Labelling regulations
	Directive 2011/65/EU on the Restrictions of Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment, as amended
	Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE Directive) and <i>S.I. 149/2014</i> , as amended by <i>S.I. 233/2019</i>

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
7. HEATING EQUIPMENT	<i>S.I. 151/2011 European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011</i>
	<i>S.I. 669/2022 European Union (Energy Labelling) Regulations 2022</i>
	<i>S.I. 454 of 2013 European Union (Ecodesign Requirements for certain energy related products) Regulations, as amended by S.I. 228 of 2016, S.I. 96/2021 and S.I. 671/2022</i>
	<i>S.I. No. 426/2014 - European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations 2014, as amended by S.I. No. 646/2016 and S.I. 630/2022</i>
	<i>Directive 2009/125/EC establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products</i>
	<i>Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, as amended by Directive 2018/2002 and Directive 2019/944</i>
	<i>Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency (repealing Directive 2012/27/EU from 12 October 2025)</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 setting a framework for energy labelling</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 811/2013 on energy labelling of space heaters, combination heaters, packages of space heater, temperature control and solar device and packages of combination heater, temperature control and solar device</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 2015/1187 on energy labelling of solid fuel boilers and packages of a solid fuel boiler, supplementary heaters, temperature controls and solar devices</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 812/2013 on energy labelling for water heaters and hot water storage tanks</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 813/2013 on ecodesign requirements for space heaters and combination heaters</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 814/2013 on ecodesign requirements for water heaters and hot water storage tanks</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) 2015/1189 on ecodesign requirements for solid fuel boilers</i>
	<i>Directive 2011/65/EU on the restriction of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS)</i>
	<i>Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 on fluorinated greenhouse gases and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2066</i>
<i>Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE Directive) and S.I. 149/2014, as amended by S.I. 233/2019</i>	
<i>Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise</i>	

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
8. ENERGY-RELATED PRODUCTS	<i>S.I. 151/2011 European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011</i>
	<i>S.I. 669/2022 European Union (Energy Labelling) Regulations 2022</i>
	<i>S.I. 454 of 2013 European Union (Ecodesign Requirements for certain energy related products) Regulations</i> , as amended by <i>S.I. 228 of 2016</i> , <i>S.I. 96/2021</i> and <i>S.I. 671/2022</i>
	<i>S.I. No. 426/2014 European Union (Energy Efficiency) Regulations</i> , as amended by <i>S.I. 646/2016</i> and <i>S.I. 630/2022</i>
	Directive 2009/125/EC <i>establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products and delegated regulations for each product group</i>
	Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/341 (<i>Ecodesign Omnibus Regulation</i>) amending various Ecodesign regulations
	Directive 2012/27/EU <i>on energy efficiency</i> , as amended by Directive <i>2018/2002</i> and <i>Directive 2019/944</i>
	<i>Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency</i> (repealing Directive 2012/27/EU from 12 October 2025)
	Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 <i>setting a framework for energy labelling and delegated regulations for each product group</i>
	Commission Regulation 2021/340 (<i>Energy Label Omnibus Regulation</i>) amending various Energy Labelling regulations
	<i>Directive 2011/65/EU on the restriction of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment</i> (RoHS)
	<i>Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment</i> (WEEE Directive) and <i>S.I. 149/2014</i>
9. PAPER & PRINT SERVICES	Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 (<i>EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation</i>)
	Regulation (EU) 995/2010 (<i>EU Timber Regulation</i>), Implementing Regulation (EU) <i>607/2012</i> and SI No <i>316/2014</i>
	Council Regulation (EC) 2173/2005 <i>on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme</i> as implemented by SI No <i>251/2015</i>
	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (<i>CITES</i>)
	Commission Decision (EU) 2019/70 <i>establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for graphic paper, tissue paper and tissue products</i>
	Commission Decision (EU) 2020/1803 <i>establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bag products</i>
	Directive (EU) 2023/2413 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (<i>Renewable Energy Directive</i>)

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
9. PAPER & PRINT SERVICES (CONTINUED)	Consolidated Regulation No. 1907/2006 on the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH)
	Consolidated Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures (CLP)
10. TEXTILES	Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic production and labelling of organic products (as amended) – specifies the requirements for organic production and use of the EU green leaf logo
	Commission Decision (EU) 2014/350 establishing the criteria for the EU Ecolabel for textile products, as amended by Decision 2017/1392.
	Commission Decision 2017/1219 establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for industrial and institutional laundry detergents, amended by Decisions 2018/993, 2019/418 and 2023/693
	Consolidated Regulation No. 1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)
	Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/1691 of 9 October 2019 amending Annex V to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)
	Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)
11. FURNITURE & RELATED SERVICES	The EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation No. 2023/1115 (EUDR) requires all operators placing wood, cattle, cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber and soya – and products made from these commodities – on the EU market to demonstrate that they have exercised due diligence in ensuring that the products are deforestation-free and have been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation of the country of production. The EUDR applies to products placed on the market from 31 December 2024; for wood placed on the market prior to this date, compliance with Regulation 995/2010 (EU Timber Regulation) is required.
	The EU Timber Regulation No. 995/2010 prohibits placing on the European market timber or wood products which cannot be traced to legal sources in the country of origin. Suppliers must be able to provide information about the origin and chain of custody for all new wood products. This regulation is repealed by the EUDR with effect from 30 December 2024.
	The EU Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation No. 1907/2006 requires producers and suppliers of dangerous substances to classify the harmful properties of their chemicals and to provide users with detailed health, safety and environmental information and advice about their products.
	The EU Classification, Labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures (CLP) Regulation No. 1272/2008 establishes requirements for companies to classify, label and package hazardous chemicals before distributing them.

SECTOR	APPLICABLE LEGISLATION (AS OF MARCH 2024)
11. FURNITURE & RELATED SERVICES (CONTINUED)	The Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Directive 1999/13/EC limits the VOC content of many paints, primers, and solvents, as transposed into Irish law by S.I. No. 543/2002 .
	S.I. No. 565/2012 Installation and Activities using Organic Solvents regulates VOCs in solvents used for activities including wood impregnation, surface cleaning, varnishing and coating of wood, textiles, metal or plastic.
	The EU Regulation No. 1021/2019 on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Irish S.I. No. 146/2020 , along with the National Implementation Plan on POPs under the Stockholm Convention (2018).
	The EU Biocides Regulation 528/2012 indicates authorised active substances in biocidal products, which also applies to furniture products (e.g. wood, leather and textiles).
	The EU Ecolabel Regulation No. 66/2010: Commission Decision 2016/1332 on Furniture and Decision 2014/391/EU on Bed Mattresses.
	The EU (Packaging) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 282/2014) and amendments.

7. REFERENCES & RESOURCES

The following sources have been consulted in the preparation of this guidance and the GPP criteria. Contracting authorities may wish to refer to them for further information relevant to each sector. In addition, a LinkedIn group has been set up for Irish GPP Practitioners, requests to join can be submitted [here](#).

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
1. ROAD TRANSPORT VEHICLES & SERVICES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 562 1425 629">1. European Commission – <i>EU GPP criteria for road transport</i> (2021) and <i>Technical Background Report</i> <li data-bbox="424 656 1390 723">2. Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland – <i>Information for the Public Sector</i> Department of Transport (2021) Summary of key provisions of S.I. No. 381 of 2021 <li data-bbox="424 750 1425 817">3. Local Government Management Association (2023) <i>Local Authority Fleet: Strategy to Decarbonisation</i> <li data-bbox="424 844 1390 934">4. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland – Resources on EVs including <i>Buying an Electric Vehicle</i> and <i>Compare and Calculate</i> tool; information on <i>Tyre Energy Labelling</i> <li data-bbox="424 960 1238 1005">5. Topten.eu – <i>Comparative data on electric and combustion vehicles</i> <li data-bbox="424 1032 1382 1099">6. <i>Big Buyers Community of Practice on Heavy Duty Electric Vehicles – Analysis of Market Gaps</i> <li data-bbox="424 1126 1417 1261">7. Non-road mobile machinery (NRMM): While NRMM is outside of the scope of the EU/Irish criteria for road transport, sample criteria and good practice examples are available from the <i>Big Buyers Initiative</i> and <i>Zero Emission Construction Sites Community of Practice</i>.
2. ICT PRODUCTS & SERVICES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="424 1283 1385 1350">1. European Commission (2021) <i>EU GPP criteria for computers, monitors, tablets and smartphones</i> and <i>Technical background report</i> <li data-bbox="424 1377 1361 1444">2. European Commission (2020) <i>EU GPP criteria for data centres, server rooms and cloud services</i> and <i>Technical background report</i> <li data-bbox="424 1471 1342 1538">3. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, <i>Categories and Criteria for Inclusion on the Triple E Register and Ecodesign and Energy Labelling for IT Products</i> <li data-bbox="424 1565 1334 1632">4. European Commission (2019) <i>GPP Training Toolkit: Module 7.1 Computers and Monitors</i> <li data-bbox="424 1659 1369 1727">5. European Commission (2020) <i>Life-cycle Costing for Computers and Monitors: User Guide</i> and <i>Excel Tool</i> <li data-bbox="424 1753 1401 1821">6. <i>EU Code of Conduct for Energy Efficiency in Data Centres</i> (2020) and <i>Best Practice Guidelines</i> (2023) <li data-bbox="424 1848 1374 1915">7. ICLEI and Electronics Watch (2020) <i>How to procure fair ICT hardware: Criteria for socially responsible procurement</i> and <i>Resources for Public Buyers</i> <li data-bbox="424 1942 1374 2009">8. iFixit – <i>Manuals for repair of ICT devices and rating of different devices based on repairability</i>

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
2. ICT PRODUCTS & SERVICES (CONTINUED)	9. CIRCULÉIRE (2022) <i>Circular ICT & EEE Good Practice Sectoral Guide</i>
	10. CIRCULÉIRE/WEEE Ireland (2023) <i>Fostering circularity in Ireland's electronics sector</i> (conference materials)
	11. Circular and Fair ICT Pact (2022) <i>Framework for Circular and Fair ICT Procurement</i>
	12. International Telecommunication Union (2023) <i>Circular and Sustainable ICT Procurement</i>
3. FOOD & CATERING SERVICES	1. EU GPP Criteria for <i>Food, catering services and vending machines</i> (2019) and <i>Technical Background Report</i>
	2. European Commission (2020) <i>Farm to Fork Strategy</i> and Accompanying Documents
	3. Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (2022) <i>National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap 2023-25</i>
	4. EPA resources on <i>Food Waste</i> including <i>Food Waste Charter</i> , <i>Food Waste Measurement Protocol</i> (for manufacturing sector) and <i>Food Waste Pathway</i> (for hospitality sector)
	5. Bord Bia <i>Quality and Sustainability Assurance Schemes</i> for Dairy, Poultry, Beef & Lamb, Horticulture and Eggs (various dates)
	6. Bord Bia <i>Information on Origin Green programme</i>
	7. DAFM (2023) <i>Draft National Organic Strategy to 2030</i>
	8. DAFM (2021) <i>Food Vision 2030</i>
	9. Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council <i>Guidelines/Codes of Practice</i> (various dates)
	10. Bord Iascaigh Mhara (2022) <i>Seafood Sustainability in the Marketplace</i>
	11. Food Safety Authority of Ireland <i>Food Donation Guidelines</i>
	12. Fumbally Stables (2019) <i>Environmental and Ethical Decision Making in Irish Food Business</i>
	13. SchoolFood4Change Project (2023) <i>Innovative criteria and models for procurement of sustainable and healthy school meals</i>
	14. Motiva (2023) <i>Guide for the responsible procurement of food: Recommendations for requirements and evaluation criteria</i>

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
4. CLEANING PRODUCTS & SERVICES	1. 2018 EU GPP Criteria for <i>Indoor Cleaning Services</i> and <i>Technical Background Report</i>
	2. EPA/Southern Region Waste Management Office/Clean Technology Centre (2014) <i>Greener Cleaning</i>
	3. EU Ecolabel for Cleaning Services – <i>Factsheet</i> (2018)
	4. Queensland Government (2018) <i>Sustainable Procurement Guide: Cleaning Services</i>
	5. EU GPP <i>Good Practice Examples on Cleaning Products and Services</i>
	6. Health and Safety Authority (2023) <i>Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality</i>
5. BUILDINGS	<i>List of references will be updated to reflect new EU/Irish GPP criteria in 2024/25</i>
	1. European Commission (2016) <i>EU GPP criteria for Office building design, construction and management</i> and <i>Technical background report</i>
	2. European Commission (2016) <i>Procurement practice document: GPP for office buildings</i>
	3. European Commission (2020) <i>Level(s): A Guide to Europe’s New Reporting Framework for Sustainable Buildings</i>
	4. European Commission (2020) <i>A Renovation Wave for Europe</i>
	5. Irish Green Building Council (2020) <i>National Readiness Report: Ireland</i>
	6. Irish Green Building Council (2018-2020) <i>Resources on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings</i>
	7. Irish Green Building Council (2018) <i>Towards a Circular Economy in Construction</i>
	8. SEAI (2020) <i>Information on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings</i>
	9. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2021) <i>Information on Energy Performance of Buildings Directive</i>
10. Dublin City Council, DCCAE and Dept of Housing (2018) <i>Repurposing existing fittings and non-structural elements in the construction of the Rediscovery Centre, Ballymun</i>	

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
6. LIGHTING	1. European Commission Joint Research Centre (2018) <i>EU GPP Criteria for Road lighting and Traffic Signals, Technical Background Report and Procurement Guidance Slides.</i>
	2. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (various dates) Triple E Register Criteria for <i>Lighting Units</i> and <i>Lighting Controls</i> , <i>Lighting Upgrade Tool</i> , <i>Lighting Upgrade Calculation Workbook</i> , <i>Lighting Replacement Calculation Workbook</i> and <i>Tubular Fluorescent Lighting and Controls Evaluation Tool.</i>
	3. Institution of Lighting Professionals (various dates) <i>Guidance Notes and Reports on Lighting Design and Installation.</i>
	4. Premium Light Pro Project (2017) <i>Indoor Lighting in the Public and Private Service Sectors.</i>
	5. Enigma Project (2014) <i>Report: State-of-the-Art in Urban Public Lighting.</i>
	6. SPP Regions Project (2018) <i>Model Tenders for Lighting.</i>
	7. Reports from the <i>French Association Nationale pour la Protection du Ciel et de l'Environnement Nocturne.</i>
7. HEATING EQUIPMENT	1. European Commission Joint Research Centre (2014) <i>EU GPP Criteria for Water-Based Heaters and Technical Background Report.</i>
	2. European Commission (2022) <i>Assessment of the European Union Green Public Procurement criteria for four product groups</i>
	3. Office of Public Works (2022) <i>Report on Phasing Out Fossil Fuel Heating in Public Sector Buildings</i>
	4. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (various dates), <i>Eligibility Criteria for Triple E Register</i>
	5. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (2019) <i>Biomass Boilers Implementation Guide</i> and <i>Sustainable Biomass in Ireland</i>
	6. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (2020) <i>Heat Pumps Implementation Guide</i> and <i>Heat Pumps Operation and Maintenance Guide</i>
	7. European Commission (2018) <i>Guidelines accompanying Regulations 811, 812, 813 and 814/2013 and Regulations 2015/1187 and 1189</i>

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
8. ENERGY-RELATED PRODUCTS	1. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (various dates) <i>Eligibility Criteria for Triple E Register</i>
	2. European Commission (2013) <i>Staff Working Document on Implementation of EED Article 6: Purchasing by public bodies</i>
	3. Topten Pro (2021) <i>Procurement Guidelines for Refrigeration, Dishwashers and Televisions</i>
	4. European Commission (2015) <i>Guidelines Accompanying Regulations 65/2014 and 66/2014 on Energy Labelling and Ecodesign of Domestic Ovens, Hobs and Range Hoods</i>
	5. European Commission (2019) <i>Guidelines on Ecodesign Requirements for Vacuum Cleaners</i>
	6. CIRCULÉIRE (2022) <i>Circular ICT & EEE Good Practice Sectoral Guide</i>
	7. CIRCULÉIRE/WEEE Ireland (2023) <i>Fostering circularity in Ireland's electronics sector</i>
9. PAPER & PRINT SERVICES	1. European Commission (2021) <i>EU Ecolabel Criteria for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products and Factsheet</i>
	2. European Commission (2019) <i>Final technical report: Graphic paper, tissue paper and tissue products and Factsheet</i>
	3. European Commission (2023) <i>Regulation on Deforestation-free Products – Overview and FAQs</i>
	4. Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine <i>Forestry in Ireland</i>
	5. Environmental Paper Network – <i>Tools and Resources</i> including <i>Carbon calculator for paper</i>
	6. UK Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2012) <i>Government Buying Standards for Paper</i>
	7. Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (2021) <i>Criteria for sustainable public procurement of paper</i>
	8. Carbon Disclosure Project (2023) <i>Policy explainer on the EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation (EUDR)</i>
	9. PEFC (various dates) <i>Standards and Guides</i> and <i>Information on EUDR</i>
	10. FSC (various dates) <i>Document Centre</i> and <i>Information on EUDR</i>

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
10. TEXTILES	1. 2017 <i>EU GPP Criteria for Textile Products and Services</i> and <i>Technical Background Report</i>
	2. European Commission Joint Research Centre (2020) <i>Guidance on EU GPP Criteria for Textile Products and Services</i> .
	3. ECAP Project (2019) <i>Reports, resources and case studies on sustainable public procurement of textiles</i>
	4. EU Ecolabel for Textile Products and Services – <i>Factsheet</i> (2017).
	5. EPA and DECC (2022) <i>Making a transition to a circular textiles system in Ireland</i>
	6. Community Resources Network Ireland (2023) <i>Developing a Circular Textiles System for Ireland</i> (project findings and webinar)
	7. European Commission (2023) <i>Factsheet on Extended Producer Responsibility for Textiles</i>
	8. CIRCULÉIRE (2021) <i>Good Practice Sectoral Guide: Circular Fashion & Textiles</i>
11. FURNITURE & RELATED SERVICES	1. <i>EU GPP criteria for furniture</i> (2017) and the related <i>technical background report</i>
	2. European Commission’s <i>Buying Green! Handbook</i> (2016)
	3. European Commission’s <i>GPP toolkit</i> : Module 7.4 is dedicated to furniture. It includes GPP criteria, environmental impacts, and green alternatives
	4. Environmental Protection Agency, <i>Irish GPP Criteria for Textiles</i> (2021 and 2024)
	5. European Environmental Bureau, <i>Circular Economy Opportunities in the Furniture Sector</i> (2018)
	6. Community Resources Network Ireland, <i>Procurement Directory</i> (including furniture, fit-outs and mattresses)
	7. European Commission, Guidance document ‘ <i>Public Procurement for a Circular Economy</i> ’
	8. EPA’s <i>The Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027</i> and the <i>Annual Report for 2022</i>
	9. Efeca/European Commission (2018) <i>Draft proposal: GPP/Ecolabel criteria for timber and timber products</i>
	10. Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine <i>Environmental Guidelines for Sustainable Forestry Management</i>
	11. EU Ecolabel <i>Factsheet</i> for Furniture
	12. <i>Cities4Forests</i> website – containing a number of resources and tools for sustainable wood procurement, including the <i>Sustainable Wood for Cities Guide</i>
	13. <i>Furniture reuse statistics for Ireland</i>

SECTOR	REFERENCES & RESOURCES
11. FURNITURE & RELATED SERVICES (CONTINUED)	14. <i>ReMark Quality Mark, an Irish reuse certification scheme</i>
	15. <i>Case studies</i> on procurement of furniture published by the European Commission
	16. The Italian Minimum Environmental Criteria for <i>indoor furniture</i> and <i>outdoor furniture</i>
	17. <i>The Dutch sustainability criteria for office furniture</i>
	18. <i>The Swedish sustainability criteria for furniture</i>
	19. <i>The Norwegian GPP criteria for furniture</i>
	20. Health and Safety Authority, <i>Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality</i>

8. CHECKLISTS FOR GPP IMPLEMENTATION

1. GPP POLICY DEVELOPMENT	✓
Identify people who need to be consulted.	
Consider the contribution needed from GPP to other policies/targets (e.g. carbon budget, social responsibility, SME engagement, innovation).	
Prioritise product/service categories for application of GPP.	
Set realistic targets and timelines.	
Identify changes to workflows and responsibilities, and training needs.	
Decide on how to monitor, report and measure the impact of GPP.	
Publish and disseminate policy, including to suppliers/public.	
2. PRE-PROCUREMENT	✓
Needs Assessment	
Prepare draft needs statement/business case.	
Consult with internal/external users, including on GPP.	
Develop specification and procurement strategy.	
Put specification and procurement strategy to environmental challenge.	
Investigate any available funding/grants for GPP.	
Market Consultation	
Initial market scan/consultation with other buyers.	
Publish PIN and/or make direct contact with potential suppliers.	
Invite responses to specific questions, including on GPP.	
Hold and/or attend supplier events and meetings.	
Document all information provided to include in tender documents.	
Notify all participants that market engagement has ended and expected start date for procurement procedure.	
3. TENDER DOCUMENTS	✓
Review available GPP criteria for specific product/service group.	
Exclusion grounds: require compliance with all applicable environmental law.	

3. TENDER DOCUMENTS (CONTINUED)	✓
Selection criteria: require specific experience and capacity to deliver environmental aspects of contract.	
Specifications: Apply core or comprehensive GPP specifications as appropriate.	
Award criteria: Apply one or more GPP award criteria to target better performance.	
Contract performance clauses: Include all GPP commitments plus monitoring and remedies in case of breaches.	
Check that none of the standard terms in tender documents/contracts conflict with the GPP criteria applied.	
4. LIFE-CYCLE COSTING	✓
Decide if LCC is appropriate based on review of GPP criteria/guidance and discussions with suppliers/other buyers at pre-procurement stage.	
Identify the main categories of financial and environmental costs.	
Review available tools/methodologies for LCC and choose one, or develop your own spreadsheet.	
Set evaluation period, discount rate and other parameters to be included.	
Identify the data which bidders must provide and how to verify it.	
Include LCC tool/spreadsheet in tender documents.	
Evaluate, compare and assign marks based on LCC.	
Include data from spreadsheet for winning bid in contract terms.	
5. VERIFICATION	✓
Check the verification provisions for GPP criteria at pre-procurement stage to ensure suppliers can meet them and evaluators understand them.	
List the specific form(s) of evidence requested for each GPP criterion, stating that equivalents will also be accepted.	
Consider how you will treat alternative evidence and determine equivalence.	
Decide whether expert input will be required at evaluation stage.	
Be prepared to ask bidders for clarification/further evidence where needed.	
6. MONITORING, REPORTING & MEASURING IMPACT	✓
Include checkpoints in the tender process to confirm GPP application (e.g. prior to issuing tender documents, finalising evaluation, contract award).	
Collect data on inclusion of GPP criteria (number of contracts/value/which type of criteria) and bidder responses/compliance.	

6. MONITORING, REPORTING & MEASURING IMPACT (CONTINUED)	✓
Include appropriate monitoring and reporting obligations in the contract.	
Include GPP data in monthly/quarterly/annual procurement reporting and environmental/sustainability reporting.	
Set baselines for measuring emissions or other impacts from procurement.	
Develop methodology for measuring GPP contribution to overall carbon, energy or other environmental targets.	
Require data from contractors to enable impact measurement for GPP.	



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