Public Procurement Indicators 2014

DG GROW G4 - Innovative and e-Procurement *

February 2, 2016

1. **Summary of main facts**

This document provides various indicators describing the public procurement market in the European Union and its member states in 2014. The results are presented along with the indicators for the previous two or three years to illustrate the evolution on the market. The main results are the following:

1. The estimated value of tenders published in TED (including utilities and defence) amounts to 421.31 billion euros, 0.16% more than in 2013. Excluding utilities and defence, there is a decrease of 4.46%, from 334.56 in 2013 to 319.64 billion in 2014. The value of procurement published in TED, including utilities and defence, has notably increased in Croatia (142% linked with its EU accession), Ireland (46%), Malta (35%), Austria (28%), Slovakia (28%) and Estonia (27%). Excluding utilities and defence, significant increases were in Croatia (86%), Ireland (53%), Estonia (36%), Malta (36%), Austria (36%), Latvia (25%) and Lithuania (25%).

2. The estimate of total general government public procurement expenditure (TGGPPE), excluding utilities and defence, was 1931.5 billion euros in 2014, 2.7% higher than in 2013, continuing the increased trend of recent years. Certain countries like Spain, Italy or Cyprus seem to follow the opposite direction with their TGGPPE the minimum in the last four years. On the other hand, Poland, Ireland and Portugal seem to break in 2014 with the decreasing trend of previous years, while Greece is slowing down its TGGPPE decrease. The estimated TGGPPE, excluding utilities and defence, represented a 13.0% of the EU GDP in 2014, same as the average for the last 4 years.

3. Publication rate in terms of GDP, excluding utilities and defence, has slightly decreased from 2013 to 2014. Among the member states with the lowest publication rates in 2013, Austria, Luxembourg and Ireland have increased their publication rates, while Portugal, Spain, Greece and Germany have maintained or lowered their respective rates.

4. Portugal and Greece have remarkably increased in 2014 the number of notices of small value, suggesting that voluntary publication of below thresholds procurement may have become more prominent in those countries.

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5. The concentration of procurement in large notices is outstanding in the UK, particularly in the procurement of services, where the UK alone accounts for 84% of the total value procured at EU level in awards of more than 100 million euros. Other member states like Czech Republic (goods), Finland (goods), Austria (goods and services), Hungary (goods), Denmark (works), Slovakia (works) or Ireland (works), also show a high level for this indicator. Among the larger member states only Italy displays a clear pattern of concentration, although to a lower extent than the UK.

2 Methodology

2.1 The value of procurement published in TED

The information on monetary values published in TED notices often suffers from missing values and reporting mistakes (particularly in the form of nonsensically large values). These problems prohibit computing the annual value of public procurement opportunities published in TED as the simple sum of the values of the contract notices (CNs) published. Therefore, a method to impute the missing values of procurement notices published in TED and correct for outliers is needed.

The method to compute the estimated value of procurement published in TED remains essentially unchanged in respect to previous editions of the report:\footnote{See for instance the 2011 report at:
\url{http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/docs/modernising_rules/public-procurement-indicators-2011_en.pdf}}: for each category of works, supplies and services, the number of CNs with a value below 100 million euros (ignoring cancellations) is multiplied by the average value of the contract award notices (CANs) between 4500 and 100 million euros published during the year. For the member states publishing a smaller number of CNs and CANs, these averages are based on all CANs published during the last four years (2011-2014) in order to have more reliable estimations. The member states concerned by this rule are: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia. CANs of more than 100 million euros are excluded from the computation these averages and are taken at their full value. In order to control for outliers, the value of these larger notices is manually checked and corrected if necessary.

Values from contract award notices for services listed in Annex II B of Directive 2004/18/EC, Annex XVII B of Directive 2004/17/EC or Annex II of Directive 2009/81/EC which have not been competitively tendered and for which contract notices have not been published are not used to establish the averages.

However, contracts for services listed in Annex II B of Directive 2004/18/EC, Annex XVII B of Directive 2004/17/EC or Annex II of Directive 2009/81/EC for which a contract notice has been published and which have effectively been competitively tendered have been included in the total.

TED provides information on notices covered by both the “classical” and “sector” or “utilities” Directives\footnote{Available at \url{http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/public-procurement/rules/current/index_en.htm}}. The estimated value of procurement published in TED is computed both including and excluding utilities. This allows for an appropriate comparison with the total public procurement expenditure (see subsection 2.2 below) while offering the most of the information available in the database.
2.2 Total public procurement expenditure on works, goods and services

The estimate of total expenditure on works, goods and services for the general government sector can be interpreted as a measure of the total volume of public procurement, excluding utilities and defence. For this reason, this aggregate has been renamed to “total public procurement expenditure”. Nevertheless, this renaming does not imply any change in the way this magnitude is computed\(^3\). These figures include expenditure on items which are clearly exempt under the public procurement Directive 2004/18/EC, such as contracts below the thresholds of the Directives. They also include, for example, the costs of health care and medical products reimbursed through statutory health insurance funds or by government, i.e., they include expenditures on products which are purchased directly by households and therefore do not constitute government public procurement\(^4\).

The recent change in the European System of Accounts (ESA) from ESA95\(^5\) to ESA2010\(^6\) has not affected the definitions of the magnitudes used in this report. However, the historical values of those series have been updated, inducing a jump between the figures reported in tables (1), (2) and (7) and those presented in previous reports.

In this report, unlike in older editions, the total public procurement expenditure by utilities is no longer included due to the questionable reliability of the available figures. Therefore, this methodological change will induce a decrease between the value of total public procurement expenditure published in this report and those reported before 2012.

2.3 Contract award notice size and the concentration of procurement in TED across the EU

In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the patterns of procurement across member states, the report includes the density functions (figures 1 to 5) of contract award notices. Member states are ordered by GDP size.

All of these figures are computed using only the information from CANs (procurement standard forms 3, 6 and 18, i.e., including utilities and defence) which have their monetary value reported in TED. CANs with missing value or with reported value equal zero are excluded. The density function at aggregated EU level is displayed to facilitate comparisons.

The density functions plot the value of CANs (in the x-axis) and their respective frequency in the data. For example, figure 1 shows that the most frequent value of a CAN in France is near 200 000 euros, similar to the EU; it also shows that in Germany and Spain the CANs around 200 000 euros are relatively more frequent than in the EU.

Tables (10) to (15) show, for each size category of CANs, the total amount awarded in TED and the number of contract award notices per member state and type of procurement.

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\(^3\)It is the sum, for the Eurostat series “gov_10a_main”, of the aggregates P2 (intermediate consumption), P51G (Gross fixed capital formation) and D632PAY (social transfers in kind purchased market production, payable) for the “general government” sector (S13) of “main aggregates of general government”.

\(^4\)A fuller explanation and estimates of these various exemptions and exclusions is presented in the Evaluation Report: Impact and Effectiveness of EU Public Procurement Legislation, SEC(2011) 853 final (Part 1).


\(^6\)http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/5925693/KS-02-13-269-EN.PDF
(works, goods or services) published in TED in 2014. For example, table (10) shows that in France in 2014, 6.66 billion euros were awarded to CANs whose reported value as published in TED is between 5.186 and 25 million euros, excluding utilities and defence (third column). These have been produced using only information from CANs with non-zero and non-missing values. Therefore, the sum of country and EU totals for works, goods and services does not add up to the estimated value of procurement as reported in table (5), and computed as described in subsection 2.1, because the missing values in CANs have not been given an imputed value. The objective is that these tables reflect only the actual information provided in TED, as opposed to the estimated value of procurement published in TED. As an example regarding the number of contract award notices, table (11) shows that in France in 2014, there were 723 CANs whose reported value as published in TED was between 5.186 and 25 million euros, excluding utilities and defence (third column).

2.4 Below threshold publication in TED

Tables (16) to (19) are intended to provide a basic insight into the importance of below-the-threshold publication in TED. They show the total number of contract award notices published in TED with non-zero or non-missing values and the percentage of those which have values under 134 000 euros. This is the lowest threshold contemplated by the Directive. Therefore, it can be seen as a simple boundary to characterize below threshold publication. Differences with real below threshold publication can arise for two reasons: i) Notices of more than 134 000 euros in areas such as public works contracts, subject to higher thresholds, will not be captured by this measure; ii) CNs that exceed the thresholds but are awarded through several CANs, each of them smaller than 134 000 euros, will be treated as below threshold by this measure. Nevertheless, the cut-off point of 134 000 should provide a rough indication of the importance of below threshold publication in terms of number of notices. In contrast with tables (16) to (19), the number of notices reported in tables (4) and (6) is computed using information from contract notices (standard forms 2, 4 when used as a call for competition, 5, 7, 17).

3 Results

Table 1 shows that the estimated value of total public procurement continues its increasing trend in 2014 at EU wide level. However, a number of countries seem to follow the opposite direction, like Spain, Greece, Italy and Cyprus, where total public procurement expenditure has consistently and remarkably decreased in the last four years. Others like Poland, Ireland and Portugal seem to break in 2014 with the decreasing trend of previous years, while Greece is slowing down its TGGPPE decrease. Also, a number of countries (Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, Austria, Luxembourg) present a continuous upward trend in the last 4 years.

The relative weight of public procurement total expenditure over GDP presented in Table 2 shows that the improvement of Greece is remarkable in relative terms (its GDP has also decreased in 2014), while Portugal, Poland and Ireland break again the decreasing trend of the last 3 years. There are a number of countries which exhibit a continuous increase.

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7For the exact current values of the thresholds see http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1398241682308&uri=CELEX:32013R1336
decreasing trend (Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Romania), while others have an upward trend in the last 4 years (Germany, Croatia, Hungary, Finland).

The estimated value of tenders published in TED, including utilities and defence (Table 3) has remained in 2014 almost at the same level as in 2013. Nevertheless, the aggregate figure hides large disparities in recent evolution across member states. For instance, in Ireland, Austria, Slovakia or the UK the value of procurement published in TED has sharply increased in 2014 compared to 2013, reaching maxima in the last four years. On the other hand, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, France or Slovenia have decreased the amount published in 2014, reaching in some cases the minimum of the last four years. These conclusions, regarding member states, also hold when looking at the procurement covered by the “classical” Directive (excluding utilities and defence), with the exception of the UK, where the weight of utilities in total publication in TED seems to have increased in recent years (Table 5).

As a result the publication rate in terms of total expenditure and excluding utilities and defence (Table 7)\(^8\) has remarkably increased in Slovakia, Austria, Croatia, Ireland or the Baltic countries. It has clearly decreased in most of the larger member states (Germany, UK, France, Italy, Poland) while partially recovering in Spain and, more clearly, in The Netherlands. Overall, this has led to a decrease in the publication rate in terms of total expenditure at the EU level.

These results are essentially mirrored by the publication rate in terms of GDP, both including and excluding utilities and defence procurement (Tables 9 and 8, respectively). However, it is worth noting that the publication rate in terms of GDP, excluding utilities and defence, has decreased while the rate including utilities and defence, has increased in 2014, reaching a maximum in the last four years despite the trend shown by the larger countries. From the member states with the lowest publication rates (excluding utilities and defence) in 2013, only Austria, Luxembourg and Ireland have increased their publication rates, while Portugal, Spain, Greece and Germany have maintained or lowered their respective rates. From the countries with the lowest publication rates (including utilities and defence) in 2013, some (Austria, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain and Ireland) have increased their rates in 2014, while others (Germany, Cyprus and Portugal) have maintained or even decreased their 2013 rates.

The number of contract notices published in TED (Table 4) has remained stable at the level of 2013. However, when looking exclusively at “classical” procurement (Table 6) there is a slight decrease in 2014. No remarkable or specific pattern seems to appear for any member state in this regard.

The distribution of contract award notices, excluding utilities and defence, in the area of works (Table 10) shows that at EU level roughly one third of the value awarded is awarded through contract award notices of 100 million euros or more. This relative concentration of procurement, in large awards, is extremely remarkable in the UK and to a lesser extent in Ireland, Italy, Slovakia or The Netherlands. On the opposite side Germany or France concentrate a large fraction of the value procured in the works sector in the smaller size awards.

The distribution of procurement in the purchase of goods (Table 12) is still highly

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\(^8\)This table is obtained by dividing the values in table 5, which represent the value of tenders published in TED (excluding utilities and defence), by the values in table 1, which represent the estimated total public procurement expenditure by general government (excluding utilities and defence), for each year and country.
concentrated in large awards in the UK and Italy as well as in other member states like Czech Republic, Finland and Austria.

The procurement of services is the most concentrated category at EU level (Table 14). However, this result is clearly driven by the UK, which with its 55.97 billion euros accounts for 83% of the total value procured in awards of more than a 100 million euros. No other country shows such a degree of concentration. On the opposite side other large countries like France, Poland, Germany or Spain seem to concentrate most of the value of their procurement of services in awards of middle values, in the range of 134 000 to 100 million euros.

The number of contract award notices published in TED at EU level has remained fairly stable in the last four years (Table 16), with a slight increase in 2014 as compared with 2012 and 2013. It is remarkable the increase on the number of contract awards in Portugal and Greece. On the contrary, Sweden has reached in 2014 the lowest number in the last four years. The percentage of contract award notices below 134 000 euros continues to increase at EU level (Table 17). The performance of Portugal and Greece in 2014 is again remarkable with roughly half or more of the published contract awards below that level, joining the group of front-runners of below-threshold publication according to this indicator. Similar conclusions can be drawn by looking at contract award notices excluding utilities and defence (Tables 19 and 18).

The distribution of contract award notices confirms the above findings and shows that the larger proportion of notices below 134 000 published in Portugal, Greece, Lithuania or Bulgaria does not correspond to a “bunching” right below the threshold. On the contrary, the density functions clearly show that a significant amount of contract awards of a wide range of small values is published in those countries. Altogether, this may be an indication that voluntary publication of below thresholds procurement may have become more prominent in those countries. On the other side, the UK, Italy, Sweden and Denmark (an to lesser extent Slovakia, Finland or Austria) show distributions skewed to the right of the EU distribution, meaning that in these countries larger contract award notices are more frequently published as compared to the EU as a whole.

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9In other words, it does not seem that the driver of below-threshold publication is uncertainty concerning the obligation to publish.
Table 1. Estimate of total public procurement expenditure by general government on works, goods and services (excluding utilities and defence) in billion euros

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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EU total          | 1848.4 | 1866.8 | 1880.0 | 1931.5 | 1881.7 |
Table 2. Estimate of total expenditure on works, goods and services (excluding utilities and defence) as % of GDP

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<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
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EU average  | 3.11  | 3.40  | 3.32  | 3.28  |
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Table 12. Distribution of contract award notices by size of notice for goods (excluding utilities and defence), billion euro

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Total EU | 0.62 | 19.61 | 25.22 | 17.79 | 63.24 |
Table 13. Number of contract award notices by size of notice for goods (excluding utilities and defence)

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Table 14. Distribution of contract award notices by size of notice for services (excluding utilities and defence), billion euro

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Table 15. Number of contract award notices by size of notice for services (excluding utilities and defence)

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EU total         | 107 953 | 105 377 | 104 513 | 107 797 | 425 640
Table 19. Percentage of contract award notices below 134 000 euros with non-missing value (excluding utilities and defence)

<table>
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</table>

EU average    | 27.4 | 27.9 | 28.8 | 29.9 | 28.5 |
Density functions
Figure 1

Distribution of CANs above 0 euros

(Logarithmic scale in million Euros. Dashed-blue line represents EU distribution)
Figure 2

Distribution of CANs above 0 euros

(Logarithmic scale in million Euros. Dashed-blue line represents EU distribution)
Figure 3

Distribution of CANs above 0 euros

(Logarithmic scale in million Euros. Dashed-blue line represents EU distribution)
Figure 5
Distribution of CANs above 0 euros

(Logarithmic scale in million Euros. Dashed-blue line represents EU distribution)