



Strengthening action on GPP – the Danish approach

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What are the Ministry's main actions on fostering sustainable procurement in Denmark?

The Ministry has three main initiatives to promote green purchasing in Denmark.

We have a national network called [Forum for Sustainable Procurement](#), which is a knowledge sharing forum where procurers from both public and private organisations can keep updated on best practice, methods and tools for green procurement, through a website, newsletters and various events.

The [Partnership on Green Public Procurement](#) is a collaboration between frontrunner municipalities, regions and other public organisations who are committed to making extra efforts in partnership with other organisations to reduce their environmental impact from their procurement actions. Joining the partnership is purely voluntary, however signing up commits the organisation to put certain green procurement criteria into action for 10 different product groups.

The main stimulus behind the partnership is the potential impact it can have on the market: the more partners involved, the greater the procurement volume and the greater the impact on the market. Use of the same green criteria will also make it easier for the market to meet the procurement needs of the contracting

bodies. The partnership currently consists of a total of 14 partners, including 10 municipalities and two regions. The municipalities in the partnership represent around a third of the total procurement volume of the Danish local government level.

Finally, we have a website called [The Responsible Procurer](#) where procurers can find green criteria ready to copy paste into tender documents for a number of product areas. These criteria stem from the recommended [EU GPP criteria](#) and further national recommendations. For example, the Energy Agencies Recommendations for Public Procurement of Energy Using Products, and the Nature Agencies' Recommendation for Buying Sustainable Timber.

In addition to the three main initiatives above, we have also launched a national task force on GPP to assist public authorities to implement GPP; we have developed tools to calculate the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) in public procurement; we organise an annual event on green purchasing, called the GPP Week; and we bring in further knowledge and experiences through our participation in different GPP projects both nationally and internationally.

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criteria, tools and training.

We try to connect the different initiatives. The Forum is our main communication platform for providing different information on tools, initiatives, best practice examples, etc. The Partnership consists of frontrunners where members test and demonstrate how GPP can be implemented in different ways. The two initiatives are closely coordinated by a common secretariat.

In your opinion, what is motivating municipalities to join the Danish GPP Partnership?

Most of the municipalities and regions in the partnership have ambitious

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environmental policies and targets. Through the Partnership on GPP, they can use public procurement as a strategic tool to help reach these targets. In the Partnership they commit to putting action behind words. Municipalities and regions join the Partnership because GPP

is a priority for them and the Partnership helps them to save time and resources in this area strengthen their green image, and the connection between environment and economy.

What are the challenges that are being addressed?

In the Partnership on GPP, we have a monitoring system tracking the use of green criteria in procurement procedures by the members of the Partnership. Each year, members report back to the secretariat on whether they used the green criteria in their procurement and how they implemented the various green goals. For now, however, it isn't possible for us to monitor real life implementation in a uniform way by looking at compliance in green tenders or framework agreements. We can monitor if the tender or framework agreement is green but not to what extent they are being used in the organisation.

To reveal the effect of the green purchasing actions from the Partnership on GPP we have prepared case stories which detail, for example, reductions made in CO2 emissions, financial savings, etc. So we can say, on a case by case basis, what some of the typical effects from the green procurement criteria have been. And when more organisations use the same criteria, these will have a bigger effect both on the environment, the market and long-term budgets.

When it comes to challenges faced, the focus is very much on implementation. For many years we have developed green criteria, and last year we developed TCO tools for five different product areas, and two more will be developed this year. So we have the basic criteria and tools to enable green procurement. The challenge then is to implement the criteria and tools in public organisations and in the actual procurement practices – and then make sure that the green contracts and frameworks are being used and that suppliers live up to the contracts. In the Partnership we're dealing with this in one of the working groups, which focuses

on different implementation methods and exchange of best practice. In this way, public authorities can further learn from each other and develop common approaches.