

MUNICIPALITY OF AMAROOUSSION, GREECE

### Procurement objectives

Amaroussion was the first municipality in Greece to be registered under the [EMAS](#) scheme in 2006; and under [ISO 14001:2004](#) in 2010. It also received the National EMAS Award (2009) for applying green criteria in its purchasing practices.

Public procurement criteria are amended by the Municipality to purchase goods and services that are environmentally friendly. Amendments are made based on the results of regular market research carried out to identify “green” products available on the Greek market; information is then used to develop technical specifications.

### Background

Amaroussion’s GPP activities stem from its municipal environmental policy, which is put into practice through its environmental management system, (EMS) approved by the Municipal Council. GPP is one of the main components of the EMS.

Amaroussion’s involvement in two EU-funded projects - GALA (Green Games and Local Authorities) and LEAP ([Local Authority Environmental Management and Procurement](#)) - are the driving forces behind the city’s actions on GPP.



### Criteria used

The Environmental Office in Amaroussion conducts research on the availability of green products on the Greek market. Based on this, technical specifications are determined for each product group. Generic criteria are set for all products – specifically, they must:

- Reduce demand of natural resources (raw and subsidiary material, energy, water) during the production and operation of the products
- Exclude dangerous substances as ingredients
- Be re-useable
- Be recyclable
- Use packaging material made from recycled material, that is itself recyclable

Upon approval of these specifications by the Council, they were communicated to the relevant municipal procurement departments. Since then procurement has been conducted using these specifications for the following products:

- Office consumables (for example, printing paper, envelopes, folders, posters, paper blocks and pencils)
- Electrical objects (light bulbs, cables)
- Electrical and electronic devices (such as printers, fax machines, air conditioners, computers)
- Cleaning products and sanitation
- Fertilisers and pesticides
- Vehicle batteries

Several ecolabels, such as the [EU Ecolabel](#), [Blauer Engel](#) and the [Nordic Swan](#) are included as references in the verification criteria.

### Results

As the Municipality of Amaroussion is registered under ISO 14001, all suppliers are acquainted with its environmental policy concerning GPP. Furthermore, all municipal tenders (usually under the EU public procurement threshold amounts) include environmental criteria. The application of ISO 9001: 2008 (quality management requirements) has also led to improved environmental practices.

The Municipality of Amaroussion cooperates with approximately 233 suppliers, 57 of which supply Amaroussion with “green” products. As one of the pioneers on green procurement in Greece, Amaroussion also acts as a consultant in this field for interested parties - such as other municipalities - in order to help them to set up and implement green purchasing criteria.

### Environmental impacts

The use of green cleaning products over conventional alternatives minimises air pollution, reduces health risks and prevents hazardous effects on aquatic ecosystems and soil degradation. Greener office consumables (such as recycled paper) and sanitation products contribute to lessening Amaroussion’s reliance on natural resources and minimises health issues, as they are free of harmful chemicals. The use of green fertilisers and pesticides prevents the pollution of soil and aquatic resources and diminishes the impact on biodiversity. Finally, the use of A class (according to the [EU Energy label](#)), electrical equipment reduces energy consumption and therefore reliance on fossil fuels.

### Lessons learned

The absence of a National Action Plan on GPP in Greece causes some difficulties in terms of implementation and securing political support. This is in view of the fact that one of the fundamental factors for successfully implementing green purchasing is obtaining and relying on the commitment and support of top level management.

Amaroussion’s experience also highlights the practical importance of:

- Acquiring information about the market potential,
- Acquiring information about purchase prices, as the majority of green products are more expensive (in Greece) than conventional products, and
- Employing clearly defined technical specifications.

For more information, please see European GPP criteria for [copying and graphic paper](#), [cleaning products and services](#), and [gardening products and services](#).