

Action Plan on Electronic Public Procurement

06/09/2004 - 15/11/2004

Section 1

Please indicate whether you are:

		%
a company	354	(85.7%)
a business association	59	(14.3%)

Please indicate your main sector of activity.

		%
Manufacturing	67	(16.2%)
Services	223	(54%)
Construction	36	(8.7%)
Trade	40	(9.7%)
Other, please specify:	47	(11.4%)

Please indicate whether your business association is:

		%
National	33	(8%)
European	9	(2.2%)
International	7	(1.7%)
Other, please specify:	6	(1.5%)

Please indicate the number of employees in your company.

		%
1 - 9	100	(24.2%)
10 - 49	74	(17.9%)
50 - 249	83	(20.1%)
> 250	92	(22.3%)

Please indicate in which country you are based.

		%
EU Member State	379	(91.8%)
European Economic Area (Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein)	3	(0.7%)
Rest of Europe	14	(3.4%)
Asia	2	(0.5%)
North America	8	(1.9%)
Rest of the world	3	(0.7%)

Please specify:

		%
Austria	11	(2.7%)
Belgium	17	(4.1%)
Cyprus	0	(0%)
Czech Republic	5	(1.2%)
Germany	65	(15.7%)
Denmark	3	(0.7%)
Estonia	0	(0%)
Greece	2	(0.5%)
Spain	14	(3.4%)
Finland	14	(3.4%)
France	74	(17.9%)
Hungary	6	(1.5%)
Ireland	5	(1.2%)
Italy	7	(1.7%)
Lithuania	0	(0%)
Luxembourg	1	(0.2%)
Latvia	4	(1%)
Malta	2	(0.5%)
Netherlands	31	(7.5%)
Poland	3	(0.7%)
Portugal	11	(2.7%)
Sweden	33	(8%)
Slovenia	2	(0.5%)
Slovak Republic	1	(0.2%)
United Kingdom	50	(12.1%)

Apart from your home country, in how many countries of the European Union do you regularly sell products and / or services?

		%
1 - 4	126	(30.5%)
5 - 10	46	(11.1%)
11 - 15	15	(3.6%)
> 15	11	(2.7%)
all Member States of the European Union	32	(7.7%)
none	107	(25.9%)

Do you do business electronically with other businesses?

		%
Never	38	(9.2%)
Considered the possibility only	23	(5.6%)
Occasionally	124	(30%)
Often	110	(26.6%)
Main way of doing business	42	(10.2%)

Which of the following do you use when doing business electronically? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Online search for business opportunities	278	(67.3%)
Electronic catalogues	211	(51.1%)
Electronic marketplaces	89	(21.5%)
Electronic auctions	87	(21.1%)
Downloading of specifications and business related documents	303	(73.4%)
Submitting of offers online	178	(43.1%)
Electronic signatures	80	(19.4%)
Receiving orders electronically	180	(43.6%)
Sending electronic invoices	118	(28.6%)
Electronic payments	207	(50.1%)
Exchange of data using XML standards	84	(20.3%)
Other EDI based applications	51	(12.3%)
I am not familiar with any of these tools	10	(2.4%)
Other	24	(5.8%)
Not applicable	16	(3.9%)

Section 2

Have you ever bid for public tenders in your home or in another Member State?

		%
Never	74	(17.9%)
Considered the possibility only	28	(6.8%)
Occasionally	104	(25.2%)
Often	150	(36.3%)
Main area of business	57	(13.8%)

In relation to public tenders using electronic means, which of the following aspects would you consider most important? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Fewer legal requirements than traditional paper based procedures	121	(29.3%)
Investment costs in IT tools must be reasonable	139	(33.7%)
The required IT tools must be generally available	177	(42.9%)
The required IT tools must be easy to use and reliable	258	(62.5%)
It must require less effort than traditional paper based means	264	(63.9%)
Confidence in the fairness of the contract awarding procedure	217	(52.5%)
Training of my staff	58	(14%)
A secure environment for transactions	204	(49.4%)
Transparency of the electronic tendering procedures	261	(63.2%)
Other	15	(3.6%)
I don't know	15	(3.6%)

Section 2.1

a. The online search for tender opportunities:

		%
is not useful	11	(2.7%)
makes no difference	19	(4.6%)
is useful	337	(81.6%)
I don't know	11	(2.7%)
I have no experience with this tool	34	(8.2%)

b. Electronic marketplaces:

		%
are not useful	14	(3.4%)
make no difference	31	(7.5%)
are useful	218	(52.8%)
I don't know	27	(6.5%)
I have no experience with this tool	119	(28.8%)

c. Electronic catalogues:

are not useful	8	(1.9%)
make no difference	29	(7%)
are useful	285	(69%)
I don't know	21	(5.1%)
I have no experience with this tool	65	(15.7%)

d. Electronic auctions:

are not useful	71	(17.2%)
make no difference	20	(4.8%)
are useful	136	(32.9%)
I don't know	26	(6.3%)
I have no experience with this tool	148	(35.8%)

e. The downloading of specifications and tender documents:

is not useful	3	(0.7%)
makes no difference	11	(2.7%)
is useful	371	(89.8%)
I don't know	6	(1.5%)
I have no experience with this tool	17	(4.1%)

f. The submission of offers online:

is not useful	18	(4.4%)
makes no difference	21	(5.1%)
is useful	293	(70.9%)
I don't know	10	(2.4%)
I have no experience with this tool	67	(16.2%)

g. Electronic signatures:

are not useful	14	(3.4%)
make no difference	42	(10.2%)
are useful	216	(52.3%)
I don't know	17	(4.1%)
I have no experience with this tool	120	(29.1%)

h. The tracking of orders online:

is not useful	11	(2.7%)
makes no difference	17	(4.1%)
is useful	279	(67.6%)
I don't know	16	(3.9%)
I have no experience with this tool	79	(19.1%)

i. Receiving orders electronically:

		%
is not useful	6	(1.5%)
makes no difference	27	(6.5%)
is useful	291	(70.5%)
I don't know	16	(3.9%)
I have no experience with this tool	69	(16.7%)

j. Electronic invoicing:

		%
is not useful	7	(1.7%)
makes no difference	36	(8.7%)
is useful	247	(59.8%)
I don't know	16	(3.9%)
I have no experience with this tool	99	(24%)

k. Electronic payments:

		%
are not useful	6	(1.5%)
make no difference	28	(6.8%)
are useful	289	(70%)
I don't know	19	(4.6%)
I have no experience with this tool	68	(16.5%)

l. Documents using XML standards:

		%
are not useful	6	(1.5%)
make no difference	12	(2.9%)
are useful	177	(42.9%)
I don't know	68	(16.5%)
I have no experience with this tool	140	(33.9%)

Section 3

Which, if any, significant problems or barriers have you encountered - or do you anticipate - when using electronic means whilst participating in public procurement in your own country? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Incompatible IT standards	123	(29.8%)
Inappropriate design of tendering systems	181	(43.8%)
Lack of IT skills	58	(14%)
Inappropriate security arrangements	106	(25.7%)
High adjustment costs	66	(16%)
Inadequate legal framework	97	(23.5%)
Insufficient commercial benefits	86	(20.8%)
My business is not suited for electronic trade	42	(10.2%)
The necessity of reorganising our company	35	(8.5%)
Other	21	(5.1%)
No barriers encountered	50	(12.1%)
I don't know	52	(12.6%)

Which, if any, significant problems or barriers have you encountered - or do you anticipate - when using electronic means whilst participating in public procurement in other EU Member States? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Incompatible IT standards	119	(28.8%)
Inappropriate design of tendering systems	135	(32.7%)
Lack of IT skills	52	(12.6%)
Inappropriate security arrangements	84	(20.3%)
High adjustment costs	53	(12.8%)
Inadequate legal framework	102	(24.7%)
Insufficient commercial benefits	54	(13.1%)
My business is not suited for electronic trade	31	(7.5%)
The necessity of reorganising our company	25	(6.1%)
Linguistic barriers	141	(34.1%)
Other	21	(5.1%)
No barriers encountered	14	(3.4%)
I don't know	121	(29.3%)

Which other factors do you think may limit the generalised use of electronic public procurement? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Different rules in Member States	248	(60%)
Lack of information on how electronic tendering works	193	(46.7%)
Complex rules in tendering procedures	212	(51.3%)
Unsatisfactory rules on the security of data transmission	121	(29.3%)
Lack of trust in electronic tools	118	(28.6%)
Risks involved in doing business electronically	104	(25.2%)
Fear of corrupt practices	131	(31.7%)
Other	16	(3.9%)
None of the above	15	(3.6%)
I don't know	20	(4.8%)

Are you aware that the recently adopted European Directives on public procurement introduce, for the first time, the use of electronic means in public procurement?

		%
Yes	221	(53.5%)
No	145	(35.1%)
I don't know	47	(11.4%)

Do you believe that the new rules on the use of electronic means in public procurement will resolve the concerns you mentioned earlier?

		%
Yes	48	(11.6%)
No	62	(15%)
I don't know	102	(24.7%)

In which fields do you think the European Commission should further undertake action in order to resolve the concerns you mentioned earlier? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

		%
Environment for secure transactions	142	(34.4%)
Standardisation of forms and documents	278	(67.3%)
Remove obstacles to crossborder transactions	127	(30.8%)
Interoperability between electronic procurement systems	167	(40.4%)
Standardisation of electronic tools	194	(47%)
Modernisation of the legal environment	182	(44.1%)
Promotion of simple and generally available tools for procurement	249	(60.3%)
I don't know	20	(4.8%)
Other	13	(3.1%)

Section 4

Do you think that using electronic means in public procurement will make it easier to do business with the public sector?

Yes	291	(70.5%)
No	76	(18.4%)
No opinion	46	(11.1%)

In your opinion, are there any substantial differences between trading with businesses electronically and doing electronic procurement with the public sector?

Yes	209	(50.6%)
No	127	(30.8%)
No opinion	77	(18.6%)

Section 4.a

level of service:

worse	70	(16.9%)
more or less the same	53	(12.8%)
better	38	(9.2%)
No opinion	36	(8.7%)

procedures:

more unfair	55	(13.3%)
more or less the same	72	(17.4%)
fairer	37	(9%)
No opinion	34	(8.2%)

costs:

higher	56	(13.6%)
more or less the same	50	(12.1%)
lower	63	(15.3%)
No opinion	26	(6.3%)

level of trust:

lower	55	(13.3%)
more or less the same	82	(19.9%)
higher	35	(8.5%)
No opinion	25	(6.1%)

tendering systems:

complex to use	94	(22.8%)
more or less the same	41	(9.9%)
easy to use	28	(6.8%)
No opinion	35	(8.5%)

tendering systems:

not reliable	36	(8.7%)
more or less the same	71	(17.2%)
reliable	35	(8.5%)
No opinion	53	(12.8%)

Section 4.1

a. The use of electronic means in public procurement makes the process:

less transparent	42	(10.2%)
more or less the same	162	(39.2%)
more transparent	175	(42.4%)
No opinion	34	(8.2%)

b. Electronic means in public procurement provides:

less security	57	(13.8%)
more or less the same	218	(52.8%)
more security	86	(20.8%)
No opinion	52	(12.6%)

c. The use of electronic means in public procurement:

increases transaction costs	27	(6.5%)
more or less the same	82	(19.9%)
decreases transaction costs	266	(64.4%)
No opinion	38	(9.2%)

d. Using electronic means in public procurement makes the process:

slower	9	(2.2%)
more or less the same	86	(20.8%)
faster	287	(69.5%)
No opinion	31	(7.5%)

e. The use of electronic means in public procurement makes it:

		%
harder to find information	26	(6.3%)
more or less the same	58	(14%)
easier to find information	300	(72.6%)
No opinion	29	(7%)

f. Using electronic means in public procurement will help:

		%
competition to increase	215	(52.1%)
more or less the same	136	(32.9%)
competition to decrease	25	(6.1%)
No opinion	37	(9%)

g. Using electronic means in public procurement creates:

		%
less business opportunities within the Internal Market	30	(7.3%)
more or less the same	131	(31.7%)
more business opportunities within the Internal Market	205	(49.6%)
No opinion	47	(11.4%)

h. Using electronic means in public procurement:

		%
makes international co-operation more difficult	1	(0.2%)
more or less the same	33	(8%)
enhances international co-operation	77	(18.6%)
No opinion	10	(2.4%)

i. L'utilisation de moyens électroniques pour les marchés publics:

		%
limits access to new markets	22	(5.3%)
more or less the same	88	(21.3%)
allows easier access to new markets	272	(65.9%)
No opinion	31	(7.5%)

Section 4.2

How advanced is your country in the move from paper based means to electronic means in the area of public procurement?

		%
Procedures are all based on paper based means	56	(13.6%)
Electronic means are starting to be used in public procurement	262	(63.4%)
Electronic means are generally used in public procurement	35	(8.5%)
Procedures are all based on electronic means	3	(0.7%)
I don't know	57	(13.8%)

In what way do you think that electronic means should be introduced in public procurement within the EU?

		%
Immediately	128	(31%)
Progressively	246	(59.6%)
Maybe in 5 years..	12	(2.9%)
Never	8	(1.9%)
No opinion	19	(4.6%)

In which sectors do you think that the use of electronic means in public procurement will create most opportunities?

		%
Manufacturing	96	(23.2%)
Services	250	(60.5%)
Construction	103	(24.9%)
Trade	186	(45%)
No opinion	74	(17.9%)

In your opinion, how will a generalised use of electronic means in public procurement impact on SME's?

		%
SME's will have more opportunities to penetrate new markets	206	(49.9%)
The increase of competition will squeeze SME's margins	129	(31.2%)
SME's risk losing long-term business relationships	116	(28.1%)
SME's are outcompeted by larger companies	89	(21.5%)
SME's will have lower bidding costs	151	(36.6%)
Other	10	(2.4%)
None of the above	12	(2.9%)
I don't know	67	(16.2%)