



Portugal's first 'green deal' promoting circular economy through public procurement

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The City of [Torres Vedras won the European Green Leaf in 2015](#) for its actions on sustainability. Torres Vedras is part of the Region of Lisbon and has a population of around 80,000 people.

What is Torres Vedras' prime ambition behind circular procurement?

Torres Vedras' prime ambition is to contribute to build a local circular economy, through amongst others, changing current public procurement practices to more sustainable and circular practices. This transition requires an active engagement in changing consumption patterns and supporting suppliers to become providers of more sustainable and circular products/services. Leading by example, we believe that we can help boost the demand for goods and services that better align with the principles of circular economy, by stimulating the shift of purchasing decisions towards more sustainable and circular choices.

Interest in circular public procurement (CPP) is further supported by top level management in the City and is linked with other City policies like our Climate Change Strategy, guaranteeing a significant contribution to promote the efficient use and productivity of resources, through products, promoting business models based on dematerialisation, reuse, recycling

and recovery of materials, with environmental benefits, through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of pressure on natural habitats.

We believe that CPP also has an important role to play in reaching the global Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, [goal 12 on responsible consumption and production](#).

Our ambitions are aligned with those of the Regional Agenda for Circular Economy, which is currently being developed by the [Central Portugal Region](#).

Can you tell us about the 'Green Deal Centre in Public Procurement' (GD Centre), and why Torres Vedras has become a member of this group?

Torres Vedras accepted the invitation from the [Centre's Regional Coordination and Development Commission](#) (CCDR-C) to take on a pilot project which is part of the Centre's Regional Agenda for the Circular Economy. The project - called the [Green Deal Centre on Public Procurement](#) (GD Centre) is designed in the same

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way as the [Green Deal on Circular Procurement](#) developed by the Dutch Government (by the Dutch Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat, in Dutch). The GD Centre has been adjusted to the context of the Central Portugal Region, and is supported by experts from Rijkswaterstaat, The Green Deal approach aids sustainable initiatives to get off the ground by fostering agreements (or deals) between companies, civil society organisations and public entities concerning concrete actions.

Torres Vedras is going to integrate this learning and sharing network in the area of CPP, where each participating entity agrees to assume two commitments: the launch of two public procurement competitions, which include the principles of circular economy, and sharing knowledge gained during these processes.

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What activities does Torres Vedras have planned to increase actions on CPP?

Some of the activities that we are planning in the short term are two pilot procedures as part of the GD

Centre. We expect to prepare tenders for food as part of school meals.

We will also be working on another project funded through Portugal's national 'Environmental Fund' call, which is integrated in the [National Action Plan for Circular Economy](#) to boost CPP actions at the local government level. Our project on CPP aims to promote:

1. Training: an internal training plan will be implemented to ensure the development of CPP skills, targeting municipal employees directly or indirectly involved in public procurement, as well as intermediate and top level managers.
2. Circular procurement pilots: two or three procurement processes will be prepared which include circularity criteria during their implementation phase (mentioned earlier). This will help materialise the change in internal tender/procurement preparation processes.
3. Market engagement. In order to assess the ability of suppliers to meet circularity criteria to be considered in procurement procedures, dialogue actions will be carried out with potential suppliers, initiating a mutual learning process that will last after the end of the project.
4. Strategies. In order to make lasting changes, the existing Policy for Sustainable Procurement in Torres Vedras will be adapted to circular procurement, and in the short to medium term, a plan will be developed to prepare the introduction of criteria into other procedures, including new training needs and actions on engaging the market.
5. Dissemination: project results will be disseminated to other organisations at a regional and national level, aiming to spread good practice on circular procurement.