Public procurement

2024/2103(INI) - 09/09/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 432 votes to 95, with 124 abstentions, a resolution on public procurement.

The resolution presents a series of **recommendations** aimed at modernising and strengthening the European public procurement framework.

Revision of the EU framework

Members called for a **review of the EU public procurement framework** to boost European competitiveness, promote a more sustainable economy, strengthen resilience and ensure legal certainty, **while digitalising procedures**, **reducing and simplifying rules** for both contracting authorities and tenderers, **ensuring security of supply** for certain vital products, technologies and services, **promoting quality jobs**, providing services to citizens and respecting collective agreements in accordance with national law and practice.

The Commission should propose **harmonisation** where it can bring the greatest added value, for example regarding **digital procurement tools** and the standardisation of public procurement procedures and structures, both at national and cross-border level. It should also increase funding for further **training** for contracting authorities.

Parliament noted that awarding public contracts solely on the basis of the lowest price can encourage unfair competition and is detrimental to quality, sustainability and social standards. It insisted that more public contracts, particularly for intellectual services, should be awarded on the basis **of best value for money**, using the criteria of **the most economically advantageous tender**, meaning that tenders should be evaluated not only on the basis of price, but also on factors such as quality.

Transparency

Parliament recommended that the Commission propose concrete measures to **combat corruption and increase transparency** in the use of negotiated procedures without prior publication. In this regard, it called for a review of exclusion criteria in public procurement procedures, which would better address sector-specific risks related to fraud, corruption, and criminal infiltration. Any economic operator that fails to comply with its obligations in the areas **of labour law and environmental law** should be effectively excluded from the public procurement procedure in question.

Members encouraged greater **cross-border cooperation** in public procurement. They called for a streamlining of sectoral rules and the introduction of non-binding uniform guidelines and recommended the development of monitoring tools, compliance mechanisms and independent supervisory bodies.

Non-EU companies

To prevent **non-EU companies** from gaining unfair advantages in public procurement procedures by benefiting from direct or indirect public subsidies, Members urged the Commission and Member States to take decisive action against non-EU entities that exploit such subsidies to undercut prices or dominate tenders in a manner inconsistent with EU competition rules. In this context, the Commission is invited to put forward a clear and harmonised methodology for assessing the notion of ‘abnormally low price’, in order to provide contracting authorities with greater legal certainty.

Furthermore, the Commission should explicitly state that bidders from non-EU country are not eligible to participate in public procurement procedures conducted within the EU if their country of origin does not give, on the basis of a plurilateral or bilateral agreement on public procurement signed with the EU, **reciprocal market access** for EU bidders.

With a view to ensuring that public procurement includes mechanisms that will support regional economic resilience, the creation of quality local jobs and the viability of local economies, Parliament called on the Commission to assess the recommendation of the Draghi report which calls for giving contracting authorities the option of setting an **explicit minimum quota for selected locally produced goods** in public procurement where appropriate and feasible.

EU label

The resolution supports greater flexibility in **public-public partnerships** and called on the Commission to promote **labels at EU level** that help contracting authorities implement sustainability objectives. It encouraged contracting authorities to systematically integrate **social criteria** into public procurement procedures and called on the Commission to consider establishing a toolbox of sectoral sustainability criteria.

Parliament called on the Commission, as part of the upcoming review of the public procurement framework, to carry out an in-depth impact assessment on possible ways of prioritising the **'European preference'** principle and the implications thereof for public procurement in strategic sectors.

SMEs and start-ups

The resolution called for **strengthened support mechanisms for very small entities, SMEs, start-ups and social economy actors** to enable them to be effectively competitive in public calls for tender (advice and support for SMEs, reduction of administrative burdens, creation, at Union level, of a digital database of pre-selected SMEs and small players, division of contracts into smaller lots).

The Commission is called upon to ensure that public procurement procedures are made **more accessible and transparent** and that the 'once only' principle is applied consistently at all levels of administration in public procurement.

Lastly, Parliament supports **contract pricing flexibility** through the extension of the maximum duration of framework agreements for contracting authorities, the introduction of provisions that allow price adjustments in response to disproportionate cost increases that the bidder could not reasonably have anticipated, such as inflation, material or energy cost increases and changes in labour laws.