

Building Back Better: Innovation-enhancing Procurement for Sustainable Development



WEBINAR

Friday,
23 October 2020
10:00–12:00 CET

Businesses often cite a lack of demand for innovative products or services as a major reason for not investing more in R&D and innovation. Public procurement can be a powerful policy lever to stimulate this demand, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises. There are many examples of technologies originally developed in response to government contracts that became the basis for large new industries and millions of new jobs, including the Internet, GPS, and platform technologies. And yet, so far only a fraction of the 10-15 percent of Gross Domestic Product that countries globally spend on public procurement targets innovation systematically.

Stimulating innovation will be essential to Build Back Better after the COVID-19 pandemic, including by accelerating the transition to a more circular economy, the theme of the 2021 session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Innovation-enhancing public procurement can be a particularly powerful tool to catalyze and promote experimentation with ideas conducive to the systemic shifts in production and consumption patterns needed for the circular economy transition and Sustainable Development Goal 12¹.

To successfully mainstream innovation, sustainability and circularity into procurement practices, Governments need to learn how to manage risks, improve the skills and capacity of public procurement officials, enhance data collection and monitor results, and try out new forms of partnerships and co-ordination.

A number of UNECE member States are reforming their approaches to public procurement along these lines. In many instances, these reforms have brought innovative solutions, such as advanced electronic and digital tools.

Part of the informal consultations of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies, the webinar will explore the existing policy experience with innovation-enhancing public procurement as a possible catalyst for the innovation necessary to Build Back Better and progress towards the circular economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also discuss how emerging economies can adapt successful approaches to their particular context.



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¹ SDG 12, target 7: Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.



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Guiding questions for discussion

- What are the general principles, legal frameworks and policy tools for innovation-enhancing public procurement in the UNECE region? How do they align with Building Back Better post COVID-19?
- What are the major challenges in using public procurement to stimulate innovation? How can they be overcome? How can approaches developed and tested in advanced economies be applied in less developed countries?
- How can existing procurement policy frameworks and tools be adapted to support innovation for sustainable development, such as for the circular economy?

Target Audience

Policy makers and government officials working on innovation and public procurement, innovative companies, entrepreneurs, business associations, international organizations and civil society.



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Programme

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10:00–10:10 Welcome and opening

- Ms. Elisabeth Tuerk, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE

Moderator

- Mr. Ralph Heinrich, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section, UNECE

10:10–11:30 Panel discussion

Panellists

- Mr. David Blanchard, Head of Unit, Innovative and Digital Procurement, Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission
- Ms. Erika Bozzay, Senior Policy Adviser, Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- Mr. Arik Ryvkin, Director, Ministry of Economy, Israel
- Ms. Eva Buchinger, Innovation Procurement Policy Advisor, Austrian Institute of Technology, Austria
- Mr. Jon Mikel Zabala-Iturriagoitia, Professor of Economics, University of Deusto, Spain

Discussants

- Mr. Kakha Demetrashvili, Deputy Head, National Public Procurement Agency, Georgia
- Ms. Liesbeth Casier, Policy Advisor, Public Procurement & Infrastructure Finance, International Institute for Sustainable Development
- Ms. Sharon Artzy, Founder, Managing Director, Circular Economy IL

11:30–11:50 Q&A

11:50–12:00 Conclusions and final remarks



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Registration

Participants can register on the INDICO portal at this link:

<https://indico.un.org/event/31372/>

Creating an account is necessary to be able to register.

Only registered participant will receive the link by email to join the webinar.



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