



UNECE

15th Session, 25-27th May

**Committee on Innovation,
Competitiveness, and
Public-Private Partnerships**



Provisional Programme

25 May 2022

10:00-17:00 CEST

Room Tempus 2
and online
Palais des Nations
Geneva

Opening and Welcome Remarks

- **Stefano Firpo**, Chair, UNECE Committee on Innovation Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships
- **Olga Algayerova**, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, UNECE

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda item 2: Election of Officers

Policy Dialogue:

"Unlocking the Potential of Procurement and Public-Private Partnerships to Boost the Innovation Needed for the 2030 Agenda and the Circular Economy Transition"

As the latest report of the UN Secretary General shows [1], the world is not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has further delayed the transition to an environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive and prosperous world.

To get back on track, the Secretary General's report inter alia calls for "strengthening [...] public services (including health systems, education, water, sanitation and other basic services); increasing investment in science, technology and innovation; [...] taking a green-economy approach and investing in clean energy and industry". In fact, in the UNECE region, the data show that progress on innovation needs to be accelerated, and that on infrastructure, the trend even points in the wrong direction. [2]

The policy dialogue will discuss how Governments can address the above challenges. It will focus on one particular policy tool, public procurement, which is a large demand lever. It has tremendous underused potential to accelerate sustainable development, including in the areas of the circular economy transition and digital transformation. [3]

[1] The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/>

[2] Halfway to 2030: How Many Targets Will Be Achieved in the ECE region? <https://w3.unece.org/sdg2022/>

[3] The policy dialogue responds inter alia to the decision of the Economic Commission for Europe at its 69th session "to mainstream circularity and the sustainable use of natural resources into UNECE's existing relevant sectoral work programmes" (E/ECE/1497 bit.ly/3NkgNdo). Its results will also feed into the high-level segment of the 70th session on "digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the UNECE region." (UNECE Executive Committee Informal Document No.2021/32 bit.ly/3nBs2Uj)

High-level Panel 10:30-12:00 CEST

Public procurement spending is large in the UNECE region, reaching up to 20 percent relative to GDP in some countries. At the same time, the fiscal strain imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic has made obtaining the best possible value for money even more important, especially in UNECE member States with economies in transition.

The high-level panel will frame the discussion and explore strategic opportunities and challenges for public procurement to promote innovation and sustainable infrastructure, and thereby help achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, including on digitization, the circular economy transition, and greening the economy in the UNECE region.

Discussion starters

- The state of sustainable development and the need for accelerated action in the UNECE region
- Strategic opportunities and challenges for public procurement to promote innovation and infrastructure investment for sustainable development, including on digital and green transformations and the circular economy transition
- The scope of innovation in sustainable green digital and circular public procurement, and the role of procurement in supporting innovation for sustainable development
- The scope for green and sustainable practices and instruments that can be promoted during the PPP procurement process
- The role of partnerships between the public and private sector in innovation-enhancing procurement, and the role of innovation in green PPPs
- The importance of agile governance, experimentation, demonstration effects and policy learning
- The scope of and priorities for multilateral, regional and sub-regional cooperation to support procurement as a key tool for delivering green and sustainable products, infrastructure projects and public services

Moderator:

- **Elisabeth Tuerk**, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE

Panellists (in alphabetical order):

- **Kerry Adler**, President and CEO, Skypower
- **Doris Chevalier**, CEO Infrabost, France
- **Charles Edquist**, Professor, Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in the Learning Economy at Lund University
- **Stefano Firpo**, Chair of the UNECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and PPPs, and Chef de Cabinet, Ministry of Technological Innovation and Digital Transformation, Italy
- **George Katapodis**, Chair of the UNECE Working Party on PPPs, and Chairman of the Hellenic Single Public Procurement Authority, Greece
- **Shahlo Turdikulova**, First Deputy Minister for Innovative Development, Uzbekistan

Panel 1:
Green and
Sustainable PPP
Procurement
15:00–17:00 CEST

Long-term privately financed and integrated contracts is what distinguishes PPP procurement from traditional public procurement. This distinctive feature provides a greater scope for governments to promote and implement greener and more sustainable outcomes compared to traditional contracting.

The challenge is to ensure that governments are implementing the right policies and use adequate instruments to promote sustainable practices along the three PPP procurement stages: (1) procurement planning (including needs assessment); (2) procurement process (including bidding, bid evaluation and contract award); and (3) procurement implementation (including contract management).

This session will consider how best to meet these challenges in the UNECE region.

Discussion starters

- What are the green procurement practices that can be promoted and implemented along the three PPP procurement stages?
- How are these practices impacting, if any, the whole life cycle costs?
- What about the bankability of innovative projects?
- What are the recommended public policy actions for Governments to ensure that PPP procurement becomes more sustainable and circular?

Moderator:

- **Steven Van Garse**, Member of the UNECE the Bureau of the Working Party on PPPs, Belgium

Panellists (in alphabetical order):

- **Petra Ferk**, Co-founder, S-Procurement d.o.o, Slovenia
- **Désirée Klinger**, Editor, European Procurement & PPP Law Review
- **Aikaterini Kyriazi**, Head of Coordination Directorate, Hellenic Single Public Procurement Authority, Greece
- **Iuliana Leon**, Managing Associate, Tuca Zbarcea & Associates, Romania
- **Anna Lupi**, Legal and Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission
- **Gabriele Pasquini**, Director, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy
- **Albina Rahmidinova**, Senior Lawyer, Kalikova & Associates, Kyrgyzstan
- **Natascha Schmitt**, Legal Adviser, Investment Partnership Programme, Ministry of Economy, Brazil
- **Scott Walchak, Director**, ADEC Innovations

End of Day 1

26 May 2022
10:00-18:00 CEST

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Panel 2:

The Role of
Procurement in
Boosting Innovation
for Sustainable
Development
10:00-12:00 CEST

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. This holds particularly for the circular economy transition and sustainable development because these require systemic shifts in production and consumption patterns, i.e. what might be called transformative innovation.

Public procurement can be a powerful policy lever to stimulate this demand and to catalyse experimentation with new disruptive ideas and technologies that set our societies on a sustainable path. 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.

To successfully mainstream innovation, sustainability and circularity into procurement practices, Governments need to set the right incentives, manage the associated risks, improve the skills and capacity of public procurement officials, and enhance data collection and monitor results. It is also crucially important to create new forms of partnerships and co-ordination with the private sector.

Discussion starters

- Opportunities and challenges in using public procurement to stimulate innovation
- The role of partnerships between the public and private sector in innovation-enhancing procurement
- Transferring lessons from approaches developed and tested in advanced economies to less advanced countries
- Adapting procurement policy frameworks and tools to support innovation for sustainable development, such as for the circular economy:
 - mission-oriented, transformative and systemic innovation
 - accelerating the up-take of existing green, circular, digital solutions
- Governing innovation-enhancing procurement: Establishing priorities, creating incentives, managing risks, building skills
- Public procurement and open innovation: Co-creation, diffusion, cross-border cooperation

Moderator:

Ralph Heinrich, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE

Panellists:

- **Isa-Maria Bergman**, Director, Circular Economy, Sustainable Public Procurement, Motiva, Finland
- **Luciana Trindade de Aguiar**, Programme Manager, Business Call to Action, UN Development Programme

**General
Segment**
15:00-18:00 CEST

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- **Costanza Caputi**, Policy Adviser, Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, OECD
- **Chris Carroll**, Director Building Engineering, Arup
- **Jenny Elfsberg**, Head of Innovation management, VINNOVA, Sweden
- **Nina Genovese and Frédéric Baervoets**, NIDO Public Service Innovation Lab, Belgium
- **Julija Sakovica**, European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)
- **Annie Vashakmadze**, Head of International Relations, Georgia Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency, Georgia
- **Farid Yaker**, Program Officer, UN Environment

End of the Policy Dialogue

Agenda item 4: Implementation of the Programme of Work

The Committee will review the work of its subsidiary bodies, the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships.

End of Day 2

Agenda item 5: Programme of Work for 2023, Inter-Sessional Implementation Plan for 2022 - 2023 and Outline of Key Components of the Programme of Work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration Subprogramme for 2024

The Committee will review the work of its subsidiary bodies, the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships.

Break 13:00 - 15:00 CEST

Agenda item 6: Areas of Common Interest with Other Economic Commission for Europe Bodies and International Organisations

The Committee will be briefed on areas of common interest and collaboration with other UNECE bodies and international organisations.

Agenda item 7: Other Business

Agenda item 8: Adoption of the Report

End of the 15th Session