

EU Green Public Procurement programme – Key facts

1. Like all Member States of the EU, the UK is encouraged to follow the principles of Green Public Procurement (GPP) – “an initiative where environmental considerations are taken into account within the procurement process”. This factsheet explains more about how this affects government buyers in the UK.
2. The [EU GPP programme](#) aims to direct the combined spending power of government across the EU towards environmentally friendly products and services. Together, public authorities spend around 16% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the whole EU – a huge amount of expenditure which can be used to encourage the development of greener products and reduce environmental impact.
3. GPP can also provide an early market for innovative solutions and, in this way, government can help the private sector to develop sustainable technologies that can compete in the expanding global market for low-carbon, resource-efficient goods and services. Quite simply, GPP encourages public sector buyers across Europe to take account of environmental factors. It sets out key considerations for procuring different types of goods as well as technical specifications and criteria that products should meet.

How GPP are set

4. All Member States receive criteria for consultation / review that are based on [Ecolabel](#) criteria where available. Comments are fed back to the Commission and criteria are revised where necessary before approval by all Member States.

GPP and the Government Buying Standards

5. While GPP criteria are similar to the Government Buying Standards, there is one crucial difference – GPP is voluntary, while Government Buying Standards, on the other hand, are mandatory for all central government departments and their related organisations. However, the UK – like other Member States – has agreed to the EU’s proposal that “... 50% of all tendering procedures should be ‘green’, where ‘green’ means ‘compliant with endorsed common ‘core’ GPP criteria ... The percentage would be expressed in both number and value of green contracts as compared to the overall number and value of contracts concluded in the sectors for which common ‘core’ GPP criteria have been identified”.
6. Both the UK Government Buying Standards and the EU GPP criteria cover the same 10 priority product groups. However, there are sometimes differences between them depending on the product group. Work is taking place to try and make sure that the Government Buying Standards include and, where appropriate, match the relevant GPP criteria to ensure compliance.

7. Find out more about GPP, or register an interest in contributing to GPP standards development, at the dedicated [EU GPP website](#).

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