

GenProcure – Quarterly Report – January to March 2025

1. What is GenProcure about ?



GENPROCURE NETWORK IMAGE

GenProcure is one of thirty Action Planning Networks (APNs) funded through the [URBACT](https://urbact.eu/)¹ Programme. Operating between June 2023 and December 2025, and through a series of transnational and local level learning and knowledge exchanges, GenProcure will seek to support nine Partners to create [Integrated Action Plans \(IAPs\)](#)² around the topic of **Gender Responsive Public Procurement**.



GENPROCURE NETWORK MAP

The GenProcure APN is being led by the City of Vila Nova De Famalicão (Portugal) and includes the following Project Partners (PP): Koszalin (Poland), Satu Mare (Romania), Umeå (Sweden), Alcoi (Spain), Messina (Italy), Department for Development and International Projects (DDIP) of Zenica-Doboj Canton (Non-City Partner - Bosnia and Herzegovina), Zagreb (Croatia), and Újfehértó (Hungary). Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson is supporting the Network as Lead Expert.

The thematic focus of GenProcure is the topic of Gender Responsive Public Procurement. The Network recognises that cities across Europe face significant challenges in the way in which they undertake Public Procurement because it is often seen as very bureaucratic and technical. The Network also recognises that cities across Europe also face significant challenges around Gender Inequality and in particular around representation, pay and access to services. The City of Famalicão as Lead Partner believes this APN is an opportunity to link together the themes and challenges of Public Procurement and Gender Inequality, and through exchange and learning enable themselves and the Project Partners to develop actions that will enable Public Procurement to be undertaken in a way that considers and realises Gender Equality – this is commonly termed as Gender Responsive Public Procurement.

¹ <https://urbact.eu/>

² The URBACT IAP Study from 2023 provides some pointers on how to develop a good IAP:
<https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/2023-04/IAP%20Study%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>



CYCLE OF PROCUREMENT

The GenProcure Network is also shaped by URBACT's and our Lead Expert's historical work and knowledge around Strategic Procurement. Framed by the activities of the [Procure APN](#)³ (2015-2018) and the [Making Spend Matter Transfer Network](#)⁴ (TN) (2018-2021), URBACT developed an [Online Training Course on Strategic Procurement](#)⁵. The Course was shaped by the 'Cycle of Procurement' image on the left and recognised that for Public Procurement to become more strategic, cities needed to think about local economic, social and environmental considerations at each of the six stages of the cycle.

In GenProcure, we have used the 'Cycle of Procurement' to shape our Network Methodology for the period January 2024 to December 2025. Through a series of Transnational Meetings, our Partners will learn about the different stages of the 'Cycle of Procurement' and specifically how Gender can be considered at each stage. Partners will subsequently look to test aspects of the 'Cycle of Procurement' and Gender considerations in their cities and as part of developing wider actions for their IAP.

2. About this Quarterly Report (January to March 2025)

This fifth Quarterly Report reviews the activities undertaken by the GenProcure APN at transnational and local levels in the period January to March 2025 and the learning derived by Partners. In particular, the Quarterly Report details:

-) Information about the content of our collective meeting held in the period:
 - o A Core Transnational Meeting, held in the City of Alcoi on the topic of 'Gender Budgeting, and developing the GenProcure Gender Clauses Catalogue' on Tuesday 11th and Wednesday 12th March 2025.
-) Information about the key learning from our Partners in relation to those topics.
-) Information about the activities undertaken by each of the GenProcure Partners at the local level and including progress made in developing actions for IAPs.
-) Information about other activities involving GenProcure Partners.
-) The next steps of activity for GenProcure into Quarter 6 (April to June 2025).

³ <https://urbact.eu/networks/procure>

⁴ <https://urbact.eu/networks/making-spend-matter#:~:text=Making%20Spend%20Matter%20Transfer%20network,local%20economy%20and%20its%20citizens.>

⁵ <https://urbact.eu/knowledge-hub/procurement>

3. Collective Activities

Transnational Meeting – Gender Budgeting and Developing the GenProcure Gender Clauses Catalogue (Tuesday 11th and Wednesday 12th March 2025)

GENDER BUDGETING



The Transnational Meeting was split into two parts. **In part 1**, Giulia Sudano from the Period Think Tank provided an online masterclass on the topic of Gender Budgeting. The Period Think Tank are a member of the ULG of the City of Messina and are providing them with support around Gender Mainstreaming. Giulia's masterclass focused upon three things. First, it discussed the importance of disaggregated data collection and analysis to Gender Mainstreaming. Through a series of graphs and charts,

Giulia explained gender-based differences in access to services and around topics such as mobility, social fragility, caregiving, and economic dependence in our cities. Giulia then asked our partners to identify whether they had gender disaggregated data in their cities and if not, what types of data they aspired to have.



Second, Giulia explored definitions for Gender Budgeting and the objectives of Gender Budgeting, with the definition being: "gender-based assessment of budgets incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditure in order to promote gender equality". Giulia also discussed the key sections of a Gender Budget as being: context analysis, analysis of the entity's identity, analysis of municipal policies from a gender perspective, budget analysis, and analysis of relevant services for Gender Equality. Giulia then asked Partners to identify what gender indicators they use. Third, Giulia provided some examples of direct gender expenditures such as actions to address gender-based violence; and also examples of indirect gender expenditures such as public transportations.

GENDER CLAUSES CATALOGUE

In part 2, the Lead Expert of GenProcure facilitated a workshop, where Partners started to co-produce the core output of the Network which will be a Catalogue of Gender Clauses for including in Public Procurements. In this, Matthew explained the purpose of the Catalogue, its objectives and its target audience, before facilitating a series of tasks whereby examples were provided and Partners started to identify content for the catalogue. In this, we explored:

-) The types of Gender specific data that could be collected through Spend Analysis.
-) The types of Gender outcomes for including in the Catalogues – effectively a long list.
-) The types of goods, services and works it is relevant to apply Gender considerations to.
-) Examples of questions, technical specifications and award criteria that could be utilised around the chosen Gender outcomes.

We will continue to work collaboratively on the Catalogue in the coming months and launch it at our Final Conference in Zagreb in October 2025.

Following the Meeting, Partners were asked to populate Key Learning Tables and to detail in particular what they had learnt from the Transnational Meeting and what the implication for their IAP would be.

The Key Learnings were as follows:

“We learnt about the testing actions implemented by other partners and particularly around gender clauses and utilising questionnaires to gather evidence about challenges around public procurement.” (Satu Mare).

“We learnt about how to embed Gender Considerations and clauses in procurement and will adapt our IAP to include key actions around this”. (Umeå)

“We learnt about the importance of supporting public administrations in identifying policies and measures aimed at eliminating existing inequalities between women and men and integrating the collected gender data within the planning and budget documents.” (DDIP of Zenica-Doboj Canton)

“In our legal context, public procurers cannot use gender clauses in public procurement above the national threshold (equivalent to approximately EUR 30,000), however, we can focus in the IAP on procurement below this threshold and include in the Plan other actions that will contribute to achieving the same effect by other methods.” (Koszalin)

“Incorporating clear gender-sensitive criteria into the Municipality of Messina's procurement policies, ensuring that gender equality is not an afterthought but a key consideration in all public procurement decisions.”

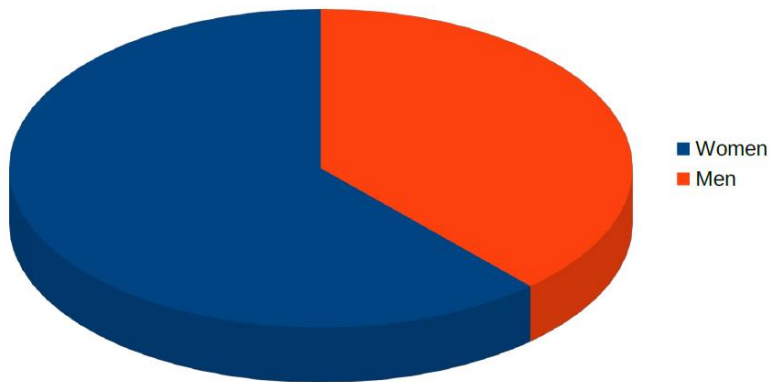
“The analysis and monitoring of contracts concluded in public procurement can be developed within the framework of test activity 3 – application development. This analysis will provide us with insights into the number of concluded contracts and the types of procurement items categorized by gender.” (Zagreb)

“The first step in implementing Gender Budgeting is the collection and disaggregation of data by gender, ensuring the necessary conditions to conduct a diagnostic gender impact assessment of the actions to be implemented. Given that Vila Nova de Famalicão has already taken this step with the recently launched city Observatory, which aggregates municipal, regional, and national data, the next step is to transform the collected information into public policies.” (Famalicão).

4. Partner Activities

4.1 Alcoi

Percentage of unemployment by gender



The City of Alcoi has spent the quarter further developing their IAP. They now have in place six key actions of:

-) To create an online guide for business on how to access public procurement and including advice on gender criteria.
-) To develop a post-contract monitoring protocol for major contracts to assess their impact on the local economy and in realising gender equality outcomes.
-) To draft an internal guide for municipal staff on gender equality clauses and to

facilitate their inclusion in contracts.

-) To conduct a study on past gender equality clauses included in public tenders and specifically how they can be improved.
-) To create a directory of all SMEs in the region, highlighting whether they are women led.
-) Organise a networking event where women entrepreneurs can share their experiences with local procurement processes.

4.2 Famalicão

World Café - Questionnaire

Table 1: Testing Template

Name of Partner	Vila Nova de Famalicão
The Challenge	<p>We do not have a detailed understanding of the universe of our target audience of suppliers; they may be organizations participating in public procurement processes in Vila Nova de Famalicão (companies) or individuals providing services directly to the municipality or other public entities present in our ULG.</p> <p>Not only do we not know all of them, but we are also unaware of their opinions on public procurement and practices that promote Equality. This diagnostic phase presents an ideal opportunity to gain such insights.</p>
What if....	<p>What if we could conduct a diagnostic assessment of the universe of potential service providers, adjusting future public contracts to meet the needs of both parties while gaining prior knowledge of these organizations' characteristics, needs, and organizational objectives?</p>
We want to test if....	<p>We aim to assess whether this diagnostic knowledge can positively influence the planning of activities within the scope of public procurement and equal opportunities, facilitating the definition of the strategic objectives of our Action Plan and its areas of intervention.</p>

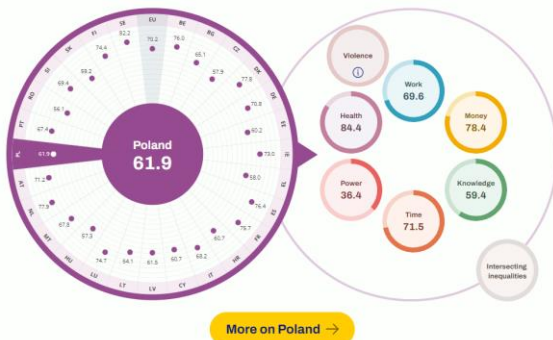
The city of Famalicão has spent the quarter undertaking further work on their testing action, which is a questionnaire designed to understand current and future involvement of stakeholders in procurement procedures. The slide to the left details the challenge they are seeking to address, the focus of the test, and how they are undertaking the test. The questionnaire is for 2 distinct entities:

-) Questionnaire 1 is for organizations that participate in public procurement procedures launched by public entities within the ULG, identifying those that work directly with the municipality and understanding the reasons behind the non-participation of others.
-) Questionnaire 2 is for organizations outside this sphere, with no involvement in public contracts, to determine the reasons for this situation

The response to the questionnaire so far has been good with 18.1% of organisations responding. Initial findings suggest that for 63.9% of procurement procedures participated in have NOT included social or environmental criteria and that the main barrier to participating in procurement processes for potential suppliers is its slow and bureaucratic process.

4.3 Koszalin

Poland in 2023 edition

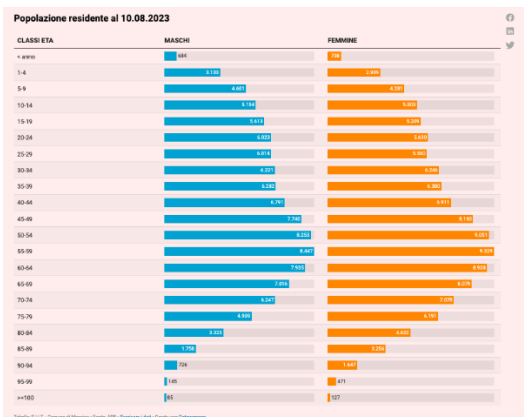


The City of Koszalin have spent the quarter further developing their IAP and in particular developing 10 key actions for including. These actions are framed around three strategic objectives and include:

-) Organisation of conferences and training related to the promotion of equality.
-) Adoption of gender equality plans/appointment of an equality officer.
-) Submitting a petition to the Government to include gender equality clauses in public procurement above the national threshold.

-) Planning public procurement that supports equality.
-) Increasing the participation of local businesses, especially those run by women, in public procurement.
-) Strengthening the capacity of public entities to apply social public procurement.

4.4 Messina



The City of Messina has spent the quarter working on the draft IAP and in particular developing seven key strategic objectives and accompanying actions, and which are:

-) To promote gender equality in the process of public procurement.
-) To enhance the capacity and awareness of public procurement stakeholders.
-) To increase the participation of women and gender equal enterprises in public procurement.
-) To integrate gender responsive budgeting in public procurement.

-) To monitor and evaluate the gender impact of public procurement.
-) To ensure gender mainstreaming across all sectors and services in public procurement.
-) To foster collaboration and partnerships for gender equality in procurement.

4.5 Satu Mare



In February 2025, the Satu Mare ULG hosted the Lead Partner Coordinator and Lead Expert for bespoke study visit on the topic of embedding social, gender and environmental criteria. Using the cycle of procurement as the basis we explored the types of outcomes that are relevant for Satu Mare County and Partners to embed in procurement; the relevance of those outcomes for different types of goods, services, and works contracts; the types of technical specifications and award criteria that can be utilised around outcomes; and how responses can be evaluated. Satu Mare have also be working on their IAP and have six actions in place:

-) Training sessions with procurement officers in Satu Mare County on innovative public procurement.
-) Continuation of Spend Analysis.
-) Elaborating a Public Procurement Strategy for Satu Mare County.
-) Including gender criteria in three public procurement procedures.
-) Applying a questionnaire to local companies regarding public procurement.
-) Online promotion of public procurement opportunities.

4.6 Újfehértó

The City of Újfehértó has been working on further developing their IAP and now has in place 4 Actions:



-) The formation of a women's council and its involvement in providing opinions on equal opportunities in all relevant public procurement tenders and in commenting on urban strategy documents.
-) Preliminary market consultation before the city council decision on the public procurement plan.
-) The preparation of a public procurement strategy and monitoring system (spending analysis)
-) The creation of a dynamic database of micro - regional SME's - relevant for the procurement of the municipality.

4.7 Umeå



The City of Umeå has three core areas of intervention included within their IAP and with Actions surrounding them:

-) **Area of Intervention 1:** Training Procurement Department staff on gender equality in procurement - this intervention focuses on equipping procurement officers with a thorough understanding of gender equality and how it applies to public procurement processes. The training will cover the importance of gender-sensitive criteria in procurement, strategies for promoting inclusivity, and practical steps to integrate gender considerations into the tendering process.
-) **Area of Intervention 2:** Training and capacity-building for SMEs and female entrepreneurs - Through workshops and seminars aimed at SMEs and female business owners, this action area will provide practical guidance on how procurement works and the resources available. This support is designed to better prepare them for participating in the tender process.
-) **Area of Intervention 3:** Implementation of gender equality criteria in the procurement process - this action area involves developing and applying specific gender equality criteria at all stages of procurement. For example, suppliers may be required to demonstrate how they work with gender equality, which can influence the awarding process.

4.8 Zagreb

Public policy priorities of the City of Zagreb 2021-2025.



- Green and resilient economy
- Social equality, quality and accessible social services
- Effective and sustainable management of spatial and natural resources
- Green transition, digital transformation

The City of Zagreb has identified 6 key Actions for including in their IAP, with these being a mix of activities that they have already tested during GenProcure and new activities.

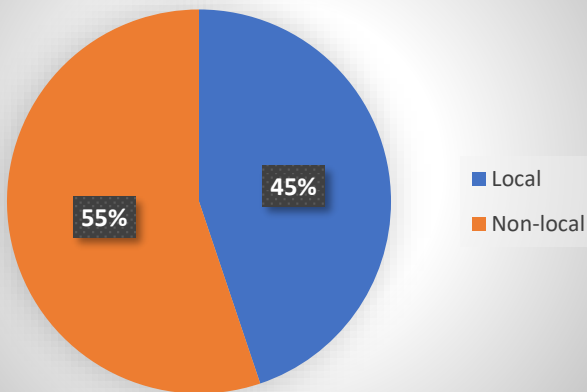
-) **Action 1** - In House Training for gender and socially responsible procurement.
-) **Action 2** – The inclusion of Gender Criteria in specific procurements.
-) **Action 3** – The creation of a Procurement Application and which aims to improve the existing procurement system, making the

process more efficient while ensuring the new application better aligns with the needs and requirements of public procurement operations.

-) **Action 4** - Revise procurement policies to include gender-responsive criteria, ensuring that all procurement activities consider their impact on gender equity
-) **Action 5** - The use of data (and spend analysis) and evaluations for the continuous improvement of gender-sensitive public procurement practices
-) **Action 6** - Initiate awareness campaigns on gender equality and promote the importance of women-led businesses

4.9 DDIP of Zenica-Doboj Canton

Number of contractors



DDIP of Zenica-Doboj Canton has framed its IAP around four key areas of intervention:

-) **Policy development and reform** – this area of interest focuses on revising the existing procurement policies and procedures and try to include gender-responsive criteria, encouraging the development of new policies that will promote gender equality, and at the same time ensure that they are in accordance with national and international gender equality standards.
-) **Capacity building and training** – this includes initiatives for creating an extensive training program for procurement officials and relevant stakeholders on gender-responsive procurement These will include but not being limited on workshops, seminars, and online courses focused on integrating gender considerations into procurement processes.

-) **Encouraging stakeholder engagement and collaboration** – Stakeholder input is very valuable and by including local communities, women's organizations, and private sector with women-owned and women-led companies can be seen as a good tool to ensure a collaborative approach to gender-responsive procurement.
-) **Monitoring and Evaluation** – Establishing extensive and timely organized monitoring and evaluation frameworks can impact gender-responsive procurement initiatives. This can be referred to collection and data analysis, and conducting regular assessments to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

5. Other Activities and Next Steps

5.1 Next Steps

As outlined in this report, Quarter 5 has been successful for the GenProcure Network. We have hosted a Transnational Meeting, and each of our Partners have moved forward with the development of their IAPs. More hard work awaits in Quarter 6 (April to June 2025) and in particular:

-) Partners will continue to draft their IAPs and particularly finalise their action tables.
-) We will hold an Online Meeting on Thursday 15th May 2025 on the topic of contract monitoring.
-) We will have a sixth Transnational Meeting on Tuesday 27th, Wednesday 28th, and Thursday 29th May 2025 Újfehértó and Satu Mare, and with a focus on Peer Reviewing the draft IAPs.
-) Our ULGs will continue to meet and share learning at the local level.

In addition to the above, we will continue to develop our final Network Results Product which will be a catalogue of Gender Considerations, Clauses and Criteria that can be included in Public Procurement and a step-by-step guide to including Gender Considerations, Clauses and Criteria across the 'Cycle of Procurement.'



SEE YOU NEXT TIME !

On behalf of Edgar, Joana, Sara, Vítor, Alice, Juliana, Sally, and Matthew, we look forward to keeping you updated on our future work as part of URBACT's GenProcure APN.