

GENPROCURE

GENDER INCLUSION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



CITY OF
ZAGREB

URBACT



Co-funded by
the European Union
Interreg



GenProcure

Zagreb

Integrated

Action Plan for

GenProcure

Action Planning

Network



GenProcure

Zagreb

Integrated

Action Plan

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1. Executive Summary

Through the GenProcure Action Planning Network (hereinafter: APN), the City of Zagreb will be taking innovative steps to enhance inclusivity and sustainability in public procurement. This will continue into the future through the delivery of this Integrated Action Plan (in the following text: IAP) and particularly six interconnected actions. These initiatives will aim to incorporate gender equality criteria, engage the public, and adopt broader social and environmental standards to create a robust framework that will improve the efficiency of public procurement while promoting gender equality. This chapter will describe the key elements of these future initiatives, the challenges that will be faced, and the strategies that will be employed to address them.

Action 1: In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement

The first initiative will focus on internal training for employees to integrate gender equality criteria into public procurement processes. It strengthens employees' skills and promotes cultural change within the institution. Training will be supported by joint meetings with various city offices, aimed at fostering a city culture that will understand gender principles. The challenge will lie in the effective application of these criteria, so the training program will include assessing employees' ability to recognize opportunities for integrating gender equality into procurement decisions.

Action 2: Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement

The second initiative introduces gender equality criteria, as well as social and environmental aspects, into public procurement, specifically for a park development project. It applies new policies to practical cases and enables the measurement of results. The evaluation process faced challenges, as there were no bids submitted, leading to the need to adjust the criteria to align with market capabilities to ensure operational efficiency. We will look to include further gender criteria into procurements in the future.

Action 3: Procurement application

The third action will focus on developing an application that will facilitate a continuous feedback loop, aimed at improving procurement processes based on vendor feedback. It facilitates the application of new criteria in everyday work and reduces the possibility of errors. The main challenge will be to simplify the complexity of procedures so that the application will be useful and accessible. The city will plan to create clear guidelines and useful tools to make the procurement process more accessible to all users.

Action 4: Implement gender sensitive procurement policies

This action will focus on revising public procurement policies to incorporate gender-responsive criteria, ensuring that all public procurement activities explicitly consider their impact on promoting gender equity. Additionally, the possibility of introducing quotas for women owned business or inclusion of women experts in nominated project teams, as an award criterion will be explored in suitable public procurement procedures to enhance their participation and

foster greater inclusivity in economic opportunities. It creates a formal, binding framework that serves as the basis for all other activities.

Action 5: Monitor and evaluate gender impact

This action will establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks to regularly assess the gender impact of public procurement activities. Data and insights gathered from these evaluations will be utilized to continuously improve gender-responsive public procurement practices.

Action 6: Promote cultural change and awareness

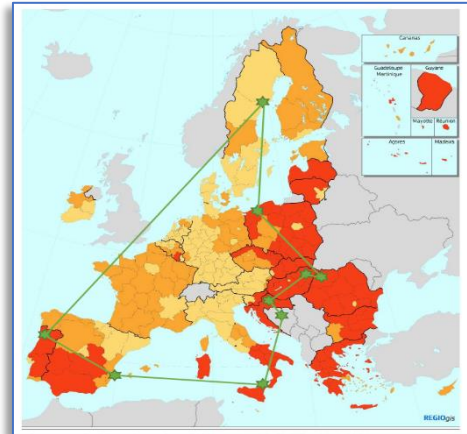
During the sixth activity, efforts will be focused on launching awareness campaigns aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and promoting the value of women-owned businesses in procurement processes. It influences the wider environment and ensures the long - term sustainability of changes. Additionally, the activity will involve creating mentorship and networking opportunities designed to support women entrepreneurs in effectively navigating the procurement landscape.

PICTURE 1. THE COURSE OF THE INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN



2. Introduction

The "Integrated Action Plan" is the outcome of the "GenProcure – Gender Equality in Public procurement" project, which aims to support partner cities in integrating gender equality into their public procurement processes, based on each city's capacities. The project is part of the URBACT IV Programme, which promotes integrated sustainable urban development through city networks that exchange best practices and ideas.



2.1 An introduction to the GenProcure APN and its thematic focus

GenProcure is one of 30 Action Planning Networks funded by the URBACT Programme, running from June 2023 to December 2025. Through transnational and local knowledge exchange, the project supports nine cities in developing Integrated Action Plans on gender responsive public procurement. Led by Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal), partners include cities and institutions from Poland, Italy, Romania, Sweden, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Spain, and Croatia (Zagreb).

2.2 An introduction to your city and why you decided to participate in the GenProcure APN

As Croatia's largest city and a key economic hub, Zagreb faces challenges in public procurement, including lengthy procedures, appeals, and ensuring quality. Public procurement accounts for 15% of the EU's GDP. Through GenProcure, the City of Zagreb - committed to fostering inclusive and transparent governance - collaborated with partner cities to develop integrated solutions addressing gender inequality in public procurement. Motivated by the need to embed gender-responsive practices into procurement processes, the partnership focused on sharing best practices, drafting tailored action plans, and formulating concrete implementation recommendations.

2.3 An introduction to URBACT, the concept of Sustainable Urban Development, the integrated and participatory approach, and APNs

URBACT, a transnational EU cooperation programme co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (in the following text: ERDF) and Member States, promotes knowledge exchange among small and medium-sized cities on sustainable urban development; within this framework, GenProcure - one of 30 funded Action Planning Networks - focuses on Gender - Responsive Public procurement (in the following text: GRPP) by supporting public sector contracts that actively incorporate gender equality measures to reduce inequalities between men and women.

Sustainable urban development in Zagreb

As the intermediary for integrated territorial investments within the Zagreb Urban Agglomeration, the City of Zagreb has accessed significant funding despite public procurement not being a direct priority in the 2021–2027 EU budget. It benefits from the

National Recovery and Resilience Plan (2021–2026), especially for public sector investments (Component 2), and from nearly €2.5 billion in ESF+ and ERDF funds supporting employment, education, healthcare, and vulnerable groups. Zagreb also actively participates in initiatives like URBACT III and Resourceful Cities to advance the circular economy and sustainable urban development.

2.4 Integrated and participatory approach, and APNs

GenProcure focuses on gender responsive public procurement, acknowledging that cities across Europe face major challenges in this area due to its often bureaucratic and technical nature. To address this, the project embraces an integrated and participatory approach, actively involving local stakeholders - including public authorities, civil society organizations, and procurement professionals - in co-designing practical solutions. Through this inclusive process, cities ensure that diverse perspectives shape action plans and that proposed measures are both context-sensitive and implementable.

[An introduction to how the IAP has been developed in terms of methodology and by referring to the role of Transnational Meetings and Online Masterclasses, exchange with other Partners, and the role of your ULG](#)

URBACT is an EU transnational cooperation programme, co-funded by the ERDF and the 27 Member States, promoting knowledge exchange among small and medium-sized cities on Sustainable Urban Development (hereinafter: SUD). Among its network types, APNs involve up to 12 cities over 2.5 years to co-develop future actions through transnational meetings and local stakeholder input (ULGs), coordinated by a Lead Partner (LP) and supported by a Lead Expert (LE) for thematic guidance.

Methodology and Transnational meetings

The IAP was developed through a participatory and iterative process, combining stakeholder engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and continuous refinement to ensure its relevance and feasibility. Transnational meetings played a central role, fostering knowledge exchange and enabling the identification of best practices that can be adapted across partner cities.

Online Masterclasses and exchange with other Partners

Online Masterclasses and partner exchanges enriched IAP development with expert insights, skill-building, peer learning, and collaborative problem-solving. Key topics addressed through both online and face-to-face meetings include:

Online Meetings: Spend Analysis (February 2024), Influencing Anchor Institutions (May 2024), Masterclass from the City of Vienna (November 2024), Contract monitoring (May 2025)

In-person Meetings:

-) Gender equality and public procurement strategy (Umeå – March 2024)
-) Social and environmental considerations (Messina – June 2024)
-) Gender action plans and gender mainstreaming (Famalicão – September 2024)
-) SME engagement in public procurement (Koszalin – November 2024)
-) Gender budgeting (Alcoi – March 2025)
-) Peer Review of IAPs (Ujfeherto and Satu Mare - May 2025)

Role of the URBACT Local Group (in the text below: ULG)

The URBACT Local Group's collaboration leverages diverse stakeholders' strengths, creating a comprehensive, effective action plan that addresses Zagreb's social, economic, and cultural development through a cohesive, sustainable approach.

2.5 An introduction to who has developed your IAP and details on the key stakeholders that have been involved in your ULG

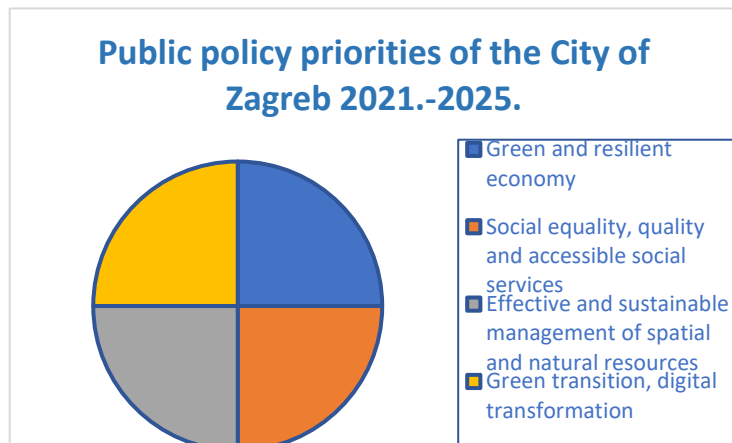
TABLE 1. URBACT LOCAL GROUP PARTICIPANT TABLE

MEMBERS OF ZAGREB URBACT LOCAL GROUP	
Stakeholder	Short description
Representatives from associations	- Project coordinators at the Sofia association, an association for the protection and promotion of human rights, Program managers at CESI – Center for education, counseling and research (women's, feminist, non-profit organization)
Entrepreneurs	- Entrepreneur (owner), portal founder, business advisor for small entrepreneurs
Academic community	- Associate professor at the University of Zagreb Faculty of agriculture, Associate professor at the University of Zagreb Faculty of economics, Associate professor at the University of Zagreb Faculty of law
City employees	- Head of department at the City office for social protection, health, veterans and persons with disabilities, Deputy head of the City office for finance and public procurement, Senior expert advisor in the Department for preparation and implementation of EU projects, Head of department at the City office for finance and public procurement

2.6 An introduction to the following sections of the IAP (city context and vision, overall logic and integrated approach, action planning details and implementation framework)

The City of Zagreb, with dual county and city status, is required to adopt a City Development Plan, currently covering 2021–2025, with 386 activities, 41 capital, and 113 ongoing projects valued at EUR 7.9 billion, all aiming for a green, innovative, and sustainable city. This IAP is structured as follows: Section 3 covers the policy landscape and gender equality challenges, Section 4 outlines strategic objectives and interventions, and Section 5 presents detailed action tables.

Following the introduction of the context and challenges, the remainder of this IAP is organized as follows: Section 3 provides an overview of the policy landscape surrounding GenProcure, outlining the challenges we encounter in Zagreb regarding gender equality, as well as our vision for the future. Section 4 outlines our strategic objectives and key areas of intervention. Finally, Section 5 presents our action tables in detail.



3. Context, Needs and Vision

TABLE 2. DETECTED PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

DETECTED PROBLEMS	DETECTED NEEDS
- there is no methodology and elaborated plan at the national level	- include the perspective of gender equality in all area of responsibility of the City of Zagreb
- unequal participation of women and men in making decisions	- include the principle of gender equality in everything activities of the City of Zagreb in the preparation of regulations, strategy
- the presence of gender stereotypes	- encourage and promote equal participation of women and men in decision-making
- the process of harmonizing family, private and professional life	- encourage the elimination of gender stereotypes and inequality in the social position of men and women
- insufficient exchange of good practices between the City Zagreb and other cities	- encourage the exchange of good practices between the City Zagreb and other cities

3.1 Details on the overarching theme of the GenProcure APN of gender responsive public procurement

GenProcure will promote gender equality in public procurement, known as gender-responsive public procurement, by ensuring that future contracts will include measures that benefit both men and women and help reduce gender inequalities. While traditionally viewed as bureaucratic and primarily focused on the lowest price, public procurement is expected to continue evolving through initiatives like URBACT Networks and online training. Cities across Europe are increasingly adopting a strategic approach, considering not only price and quality but also how procurement can support broader economic, social, and environmental goals.

Promoting gender equality through public procurement

The URBACT Programme aims to promote gender equal cities by integrating gender considerations into public procurement. The GenProcure Network, led by Vila Nova De Famalicão (Portugal), seeks to shift public procurement cultures to consider gender impacts, addressing issues like the gender pay gap and representation. Although cities focus on social and environmental aspects in procurement, they often overlook gender inequality. Challenges include rigid laws, lack of trained staff, market resistance, and cultural barriers. The network's goal is to foster a culture where gender becomes a standard consideration in relevant public procurement opportunities.

New approaches to integrating gender equality

The GenProcure APN aims to help cities integrate gender equality into public procurement over the next two years. Through IAPs, they will plan how to shift public procurement cultures to prioritize gender considerations. The process is based on the 'Cycle of Public procurement,' covering six key stages where social, environmental, and gender factors can be integrated. Partners will learn to assess women-owned enterprises in their supply chains, incorporate gender outcomes into strategies, reflect gender in service design, embed gender in tender procedures, and measure gender impacts in contract delivery.

Strategic and inclusive approach

The GenProcure Network highlights how public procurement can contribute to addressing inequalities by integrating gender considerations where relevant, while allowing flexibility in their application across procedures.

Overcoming challenges and promoting gender equality

Transforming the procurement cultures of our nine partner cities regarding public procurement and gender equality was challenging. Gender equality efforts were hindered by cultural norms, inexperience, and gaps in women's pay and representation, with overall limited experience in gender-responsive public procurement.

Over the following two years, the GenProcure helped cities incorporate gender equality into public procurement through the development of individual Integrated Action Plans (IAPs). The network used the 'Cycle of Public procurement,' focusing on six stages where social, environmental, and gender factors could be integrated. Partners learned to assess women-owned businesses, embed gender outcomes into strategies, consider gender in service design, ensure gender was included in tender procedures, and measure gender impacts in contract implementation.

3.2 Details on the current situation in City of Zagreb around both gender equality and public procurement

City organization

The City of Zagreb, as a unit of local and regional self-government and as a public procurement authority, is obliged to conduct the public procurement of goods, works, and services in accordance with the applicable Public procurement Act (in force since January 1, 2017) and subordinate legislation. According to these regulations, the Mayor of the City of Zagreb adopts an official public procurement plan at the beginning of each year, which serves as an informative (but mandatory) list of all needs for which certain goods, works, and services must be procured. City is structured from 15 city administrative bodies and one of them is the City office for finance and public procurement, to which all other (14) city administrative bodies submit their requests for initiating individual procurements as stated in the public procurement plan.

Centralized procurement process

In addition to the procurement processes individually listed in the procurement plan, this office also conducts procurement processes for all city administrative bodies, as consolidated procurements, primarily for greater economy and savings from such procurements. Consolidated procurement refers to goods and services that are common to the functioning of all administrative bodies, such as the procurement of furniture, office materials, cleaning and hygiene supplies, petroleum products, gas procurement, telecommunications services, postal services, etc.

Overview of goods and services

PROCUREMENTS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES WITHIN CITY INSTITUTIONS COVER THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- **EDUCATION:**
 -) textbooks
 -) food
 -) telecommunications services
 -) cleaning supplies for educational institutions, kindergartens, and schools
- **CULTURE:**
 -) all items necessary for the functioning of museums, galleries, etc.
- **SPORTS:**
 -) maintenance of sports facilities
 -) procurement of goods, equipment, and materials for the operation of sports facilities
- **HEALTH:**
 -) cleaning supplies
 -) medications
 -) necessary medical equipment and supplies for health centers, city hospitals, and pharmacies

PROCUREMENTS ARE CARRIED OUT BASED ON:

-) signed mutual agreements and/or
-) announced procedures
-) special authorizations for each individual procurement

Statistics

Annually, the City office for finance and public procurement conducts a total of approximately 900 public procurement procedures and over 3,500 simple procurement procedures. In the structure of public procurement procedures, more than 70 % of the procedures relate to the procurement of works (construction and reconstruction of facilities such as kindergartens, schools, traffic and municipal infrastructure, etc.), while the remaining 30 % of the public procurement involves various goods and services. In addition to the previously mentioned goods and services procured as consolidated procurements, a significant portion of the procurement of services encompasses spatial planning services, expert supervision over reconstruction and construction works, project management, etc.

[3.3 Details on how the IAP and the theme of gender responsive public procurement links to wider strategy and policy locally in your city, regionally, nationally and internationally](#)

International policies

Zagreb, in the category of cities over 50,000 inhabitants, won a European Commission gold award in April and was named European capital of inclusion and diversity 2024. It is also an active member of the FemCities Network, promoting women's political participation.

In 2018, based on a City Assembly decision, the City of Zagreb joined the European Charter for equality of women and men in local life, committing to uphold its principles and implement its provisions.

On March 16, 2021, the City Assembly unanimously adopted the Action plan of the City of Zagreb for the implementation of the European Charter for equality of women and men in local life for the period 2021–2025. The project is particularly supported by measure 3.1. Inclusion of gender equality perspective in public procurement, Activity 3.1.1. Preparation of a public procurement contract.

National policies

IAP aligns with Croatia's "National plan for gender equality up to 2027¹," focusing on raising public awareness, improving women's employment, preventing gender-based violence, and integrating gender equality into policies. Challenges remain in including gender considerations in policymaking, such as collecting sex-disaggregated data, gender analysis, and gender-sensitive budgeting, requiring political commitment. The European Commission's strategy for gender equality (2020-2025) aims to eliminate gender-based violence, combat stereotypes, close gender gaps in the labour market, ensure equal participation across sectors, and promote gender balance in decision-making.

3.4 Details on the specific problem that you are looking to address at local level around gender responsive public procurement and the causes and effects of that problem

Problem identification

Addressing the problem of gender-responsive public procurement at the local level is crucial for promoting economic and social equity. By understanding the specific barriers and their impacts, we can develop targeted interventions that create a more inclusive and equitable procurement process. The specific problem we aim to address at the local level revolves around the lack of gender responsiveness in public procurement.

TABLE 3. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

CAUSES	PROBLEM	EFFECTS
<p>1.Structural barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women-owned businesses - less access to financial resources (difficult to compete) -limited access to information about public procurement opportunities - lack the capacity to meet the requirements of large public contracts 	<p>1.Lack of gender-sensitive and social criteria</p> <p>2.Gender inequity in contract awards</p> <p>3.Underrepresentation of women-owned businesses</p>	<p>1.Economic inequality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -reduced opportunities for women-owned businesses contribute to broader economic disparities between men and women

¹ Croatian National plan for gender equality up to 2027 (available at: <https://ravnopravnost.gov.hr/UserDocImages/dokumenti/NPRS%202027%20APRS%202024/Nacionalni%20plan%20za%20ravnopravnost%20spolova,%20za%20razdoblje%20do%202027..pdf>)

<p>2.Institutional biases: -existing procurement policies and frameworks may not explicitly encourage or mandate gender considerations -biases in decision-making processes can lead to the marginalization of women-owned businesses -lack training and awareness on the importance and methods of gender-responsive public procurement</p>		<p>2.Social inequities: -limiting access to public procurement opportunities hampers efforts to empower women economically and socially -communities miss out on the benefits that diverse suppliers can bring (innovative solutions and inclusive growth)</p>
<p>2.Institutional biases: -existing procurement policies and frameworks may not explicitly encourage or mandate gender considerations -biases in decision-making processes can lead to the marginalization of women-owned businesses -lack training and awareness on the importance and methods of gender-responsive public procurement</p>		<p>2.Social inequities: -limiting access to public procurement opportunities hampers efforts to empower women economically and socially -communities miss out on the benefits that diverse suppliers can bring (innovative solutions and inclusive growth)</p>
<p>3.Cultural and societal norms: - disrupted perception of women's abilities in business - less access to support systems for woman (mentorship and advisory services)</p>		<p>3.Reduced innovation and diversity: -lack of diversity among suppliers can lead to a less dynamic and innovative supply chain -public procurement processes that are not gender-responsive miss out on the unique perspectives that women-owned businesses can offer</p>

THE CORE ISSUE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IS THE ABSENCE OF GENDER RESPONSIVENESS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCESSES.

Public procurement, if left gender-neutral or unaware, can unintentionally sustain existing gender inequalities by favoring traditional, male-dominated suppliers and failing to consider the unique challenges faced by women-owned businesses. This lack of gender responsiveness results in:

-) Economic disparities, where women-owned enterprises have less access to contracts and resources.
-) Social inequalities, where procurement fails to support inclusive community development.
-) Reduced innovation and diversity, limiting the benefits that diverse suppliers bring to public services.

GENDER RESPONSIVE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (IN THE TEXT BELOW: GRPP) IS THEREFORE REQUIRED TO TRANSFORM PROCUREMENT INTO A STRATEGIC TOOL THAT:

-) Breaks down structural and institutional barriers for women entrepreneurs.
-) Integrates gender and social criteria into decision-making.
-) Promotes equal participation and economic empowerment of women.
-) Enhances the quality and impact of public procurement by including diverse perspectives and solutions.

In essence, GRPP is vital to making public procurement a driver of gender equality and social progress at the local level.

3.5 Detail on the Vision you are looking to realise through the IAP

« Our vision is to establish a public procurement system that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to gender considerations by providing in-house training for employees, integrating gender equality, social, and green criteria into procurement processes, promote cultural change, evaluation and developing an application to support these procedures in next three years. »

The vision for the IAP of the City of Zagreb is to create a city that offers a high quality of life, robust economic opportunities, social inclusiveness, and environmental sustainability. By implementing comprehensive and integrated strategies, Zagreb aims to become a resilient and thriving urban centre that meets the needs of its current residents while ensuring a prosperous future for generations to come.

3.6 Discussion around the concept of Integration and which of the 12 aspects of Integration are most important for the topic of gender responsive public procurement and for your city. It should also include an assessment of current levels of Integration and the key aspects of Integration for improving through the IAP

Among the 12 aspects of urban development, the City of Zagreb emphasizes sustainable urban development - encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions - and the importance of long-term integration. The most influential aspects for the city are spatial integration, which ensures balanced urban connectivity and accessibility; territorial integration, which fosters harmonious development between the city and its surrounding areas; and multi-level governance, which involves effective collaboration across various government levels and stakeholders to implement cohesive and sustainable policies. These elements are crucial for achieving Zagreb's vision of a resilient and inclusive urban environment.

TABLE 4. URBAN DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS RELEVANT TO ZAGREB

ASPECT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT	ZAGREB'S EMPHASIS / DESCRIPTION	IMPORTANCE / ROLE FOR ZAGREB
Sustainable Urban Development	Focus on economic, social, and environmental sustainability across urban policies. The overarching frame aligning social, economic and environmental aims through public procurement. Levers: organization-wide SRPP strategy and targets.	Foundation for long-term urban resilience and quality of life.
Spatial Integration	Ensures balanced connectivity within the city, including transport and accessibility. Using place-based needs assessments to guide tenders in enhancing safety, accessibility, and service reach in underserved districts (e.g., lighting, transport nodes, public spaces).	Supports equitable access to services and opportunities across all city areas.
Territorial Integration	Harmonizes development between Zagreb and its surrounding municipalities. Coordinating with surrounding municipalities to avoid fragmentation and scale inclusive supplier markets.	Promotes regional cohesion and balanced growth beyond city limits.
Multi-level Governance	Collaboration between city, regional, national authorities, and stakeholders (policy alignment, shared KPIs, common templates). Levers: policy updates; joint governance boards; framework guidance and shared clause library.	Enables coordinated and effective policy implementation and resource allocation.
Economic Development	Supports local economy, job creation, and innovation. Reducing barriers for women-owned or women-led SMEs by dividing contracts into smaller lots and engaging suppliers through targeted consultations. Key levers include lot division and preliminary market consultations.	Drives prosperity and competitiveness of Zagreb in the national and European context.
Social Inclusion	Addresses social equity, inclusion of vulnerable groups, and community engagement. Using tenders to advance women's economic participation, safety, accessibility and care infrastructure. Levers: award criteria on workforce equality; contract clauses on equal pay/training; accessibility specs; reserved contracts where lawful.	Enhances social cohesion and ensures all citizens benefit from urban development.
Environmental Protection	Promoting pollution reduction, green spaces, and climate resilience, while delivering co-benefits (e.g., safer green spaces, better air quality) tailored to women's usage patterns. Levers: life-cycle, quality, and accessibility criteria.	Protects natural resources and improves urban living conditions.
Infrastructure Development	Development and maintenance of transport, utilities, and digital infrastructure. Embedding gender-sensitive design in construction/transport/utilities (e.g., safety by design, facilities design, equitable access). Levers: technical specs, labels, contract clauses.	Supports efficient urban functioning and connectivity.

ASPECT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT	ZAGREB'S EMPHASIS / DESCRIPTION	IMPORTANCE / ROLE FOR ZAGREB
Housing	Ensures availability of affordable, quality housing. Integrating needs of women (e.g., survivors of GBV, single parents, elderly, young families) into housing works/services public procurement. Levers: social/quality criteria; coordination with social services.	Addresses demographic needs and prevents social segregation.
Cultural Development	Supports cultural institutions and heritage preservation. Ensuring inclusive representation and safe access through event and cultural contracts. Levers: award criteria on inclusion and safety; contractor workforce standards.	Enriches urban identity and citizen well-being.
Public Services	Provision of health, education, and social services. Applying GRPP to high-impact services (cleaning, security, waste, care, health, education adjuncts) where workforce composition and service design directly affect women. Levers: quality and social criteria, performance clauses.	Improves quality of life and supports vulnerable populations.
Innovation & Smart City Initiatives	Integration of technology and innovation in urban management and services. Developing data pipelines to tag and analyze spending, monitor social outcomes, and publish transparent results. Key levers include an organization-wide "Buying Social" strategy and regular monitoring and review cycles.	Enhances efficiency, sustainability, and citizen engagement.

3.7 Details of your initial ideas for testing actions

Taking into account spend analysis, anchor institutions and the introduction of social and environmental criteria, the most likely is the introduction of social, green and gender equality criteria during design process. Spend analysis currently seems impossible to carry out because the City of Zagreb does not yet have a database of all public procurement procedures. It is certainly planned, but it is still uncertain when it will be realized.

The City of Zagreb has six core actions that it has tested during the Network and will continue to work upon into the future through the delivery of this IAP:

Actions	in-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures;
	integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement;
	procurement application;
	implement gender sensitive procurement policies;
	monitor and evaluate gender impact;
	promote cultural change and awareness.

Action 1

Test Action 1 involves in-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures, supported by meetings with various City offices to ensure city-wide implementation. The challenge is ensuring employees fully understand and apply these criteria effectively. To address this, the initiative tests whether employees can recognize opportunities to integrate gender equality into procurement decisions and overcome application challenges. The approach includes ongoing meetings and efforts to consistently incorporate gender equality aspects into public procurement wherever relevant.

Action 2

Test Action 2 involves integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement for a landscape design project in an existing park. The local committee, with professionals, institutions and citizens, developed a study to ensure the park is accessible for persons with disabilities, includes designated spaces for changing and breastfeeding, multiple entrances for safety, enhanced lighting, and easy-to-maintain green spaces. The challenge is integrating these criteria without compromising procurement efficiency, but market readiness remains a concern, as initial test procedures resulted in no bids. The City office now aims to adjust criteria and procurement value to better match market capacity, ensuring a balance between innovation and practicality.

In this procedure we did not conduct pre-market research because, given the low estimated value, it was not mandatory. However, our experience shows that whenever we introduce new award criteria — especially *social criteria* — pre-market engagement becomes essential in order to:

-) test market maturity and whether suppliers understand the evidence required;
-) ensure proportionality and a clear link to the subject-matter;
-) calibrate measurable indicators and evidence standards (to avoid unverifiable or overly burdensome asks);
-) safeguard competition, including access for SMEs and socially responsible suppliers;
-) anticipate cost and delivery implications (e.g., training, occupational safety, outcome reporting) and prevent abnormally low tenders;
-) design contract clauses and monitoring mechanisms that actually deliver outcomes.

Action 3

Test action 3 focuses on making public procurement application that enables feedback loop to continuously enhance processes based on bidder input and piloting new processes in low-risk, simple procurements to identify and address issues before full implementation. The challenge is to clearly define and streamline the preparation and implementation processes for the new public procurement application, ensuring it is user-friendly and accessible. The potential issues include complexity or time-consuming procedures and unclear criteria that may lead to non-compliance or disputes. The solution involves developing clear guidelines, user-friendly tools and support resources, such as templates and step-by-step instructions, to simplify and improve the application process for all users.

Action 4

Test Action 4 will focus on revise procurement policies to incorporate gender-responsive criteria, ensuring that all procurement activities explicitly consider their impact on promoting gender equity. Additionally, the possibility of introducing quotas for women owned business or inclusion of women experts in nominated project teams, as an award criterion will be explored in suitable public procurement procedures to enhance their participation and foster greater inclusivity in economic opportunities.

Action 5

Test Action 5 will be made to establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks that regularly assess the gender impact of procurement activities. Data and insights gathered from these evaluations will be utilized to continuously improve gender-responsive procurement practices.

Action 6

Test Action 6 will be focused on launching awareness campaigns aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and promoting the value of women-owned businesses in public procurement processes. Additionally, the activity will involve creating mentorship and networking opportunities designed to support women entrepreneurs in effectively navigating the procurement landscape.

4. Overall logic and integrated approach

These actions are in addition to the core actions that we have tested in the duration of the APN.

4.1 Details of each strategic objective for the IAP

Key objectives of the Vision

-) Gender-sensitive procurement practices: Embed gender-responsive criteria in all stages of the procurement process.
-) Capacity building and support: Enhance the capacity of women entrepreneurs to compete effectively in public procurement.
-) Cultural and institutional change: Foster a procurement environment that values and actively promotes gender equity.

4.2 Details on the overarching areas of intervention that will enable you to deliver your strategic objectives and vision

Implementation strategies

1. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration

-) Engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, women's business associations, NGOs advocating for women's social position and human rights, private sector partners, academic representatives (Faculty of Economics, Law and Agronomy) and city employees working in human rights and social protection—to support the vision.
-) Foster partnerships to leverage resources, expertise, and networks in promoting gender-responsive public procurement.

2. Policy advocacy and reform

-) Advocate for policy changes at local, regional, and national levels to institutionalize gender-responsive procurement practices.
-) Work with policymakers to design and implement procurement frameworks that support gender equity.

3. Capacity building programs

-) Develop and deliver training programs for women entrepreneurs on how to participate effectively in public procurement.
-) Provide ongoing support through workshops, seminars, and one-on-one coaching sessions.

4. Technology and innovation

-) Utilize technology platforms to streamline procurement processes and make them more accessible to women-owned businesses.
-) Develop online resources and tools to assist women entrepreneurs in understanding and complying with procurement requirements.

IF WE ACHIEVE THE ABOVE KEY OBJECTIVES, THE OUTCOMES WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Enhanced economic empowerment

-) Increased revenue and growth for women-owned businesses through greater participation in public procurement.
-) Reduced economic disparities between male and female entrepreneurs.

2. Greater diversity and innovation

-) A more diverse and innovative supply chain that leverages the unique strengths and perspectives of women-owned businesses.
-) Improved quality and effectiveness of public services and goods procured.

3. Social equity and inclusion

-) A more inclusive society where economic opportunities are equitably distributed.
-) Strengthened social fabric through the economic empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equity.

By embedding gender responsiveness into procurement, we aim to create a more equitable, innovative, and inclusive economic environment. This vision aligns with broader goals of social justice and economic development, ultimately contributing to a more balanced and prosperous society.

4.3 Details on the specific actions you will undertake in relation to each area of intervention and that will enable you to realise your strategic objectives and vision

The **Integrated Action Plan** outlines six key actions designed to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of the City of Zagreb's procurement processes.

1. In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures

This action focuses on building internal capacity through continuous training for city staff. The goal is to ensure a solid understanding of how to integrate gender and social criteria into procurement activities. The training program will be supported by regular collaboration with relevant city offices—such as Social Protection, Human Rights, Municipal Self-Government, and Reconstruction and Urban Development—to guarantee a comprehensive and practical application of these criteria across departments. An important related activity is the preparation of the **2025 Procurement Plan**, which will help identify specific items and procedures where these principles can be implemented effectively.

2. Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement

The second action targets two procurement initiatives. The first involves revising criteria for an upcoming **public park renovation** to better reflect gender and social considerations. The second focuses on transforming an existing **city market into an Intercultural Community Center**. This new center will be designed through a participatory process, incorporating input from local communities and reflecting a wide range of cultural, educational, and social needs. The procurement process will emphasize inclusivity and equitable access, ensuring the final space promotes community cohesion.

3. Procurement application

The third action centers on the development of a new **Procurement Application** to modernize and streamline procurement procedures. Following a thorough market analysis and internal review of existing practices, the team is designing an optimal model for the application that reflects both operational efficiency and public needs. The interdisciplinary project team - including representatives from the City's public procurement department, IT Department, and software developers - plans to roll out the first application modules by the end of the year.

4. Implement gender sensitive procurement policies

The fourth activity will focus on revising public procurement policies to incorporate gender - responsive criteria, ensuring that all procurement activities explicitly consider their impact on promoting gender equity. Additionally, the possibility of introducing quotas for women owned business or inclusion of women experts in nominated project teams, as an award criterion will be explored in suitable public procurement procedures to enhance their participation and foster greater inclusivity in economic opportunities.

5. Monitor and evaluate gender impact

In the fifth activity, efforts will be made to establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks to regularly assess the gender impact of public procurement activities. Data and insights gathered from these evaluations will be utilized to continuously improve gender - responsive public procurement practices.

6. Promote cultural change and awareness

During the sixth activity, efforts will be focused on launching awareness campaigns aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and promoting the value of women-owned businesses in public procurement processes. Additionally, the activity will involve creating mentorship and networking opportunities designed to support women entrepreneurs in effectively navigating the procurement landscape. The last three actions will be carried out concurrently at the beginning of 2026.

Strategic objectives and Vision

TABLE 5. CONNECTION BETWEEN STRATEGIC GOALS AND DESCRIPTION OF TEST ACTIVITIES

No.	Description of Test Action	Related strategic objective(s)	How does it contribute?
1.	In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Strengthening staff capacities) Promoting cultural change Enhancing gender equality and inclusion through public procurement, in line with the GenProcure project goals and the EU Gender equality strategy 2020-2025.	It strengthens employees' skills and promotes cultural change within the institution.
2.	Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation) Monitoring and evaluating impact Promotion of inclusive urban spaces through public procurement that fosters community engagement, cultural integration, and accessibility.	It applies new policies to practical cases and enables the measurement of results.

3.	Procurement application	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation) Strengthening staff capacities <p>To select or enhance an application that will optimize public procurement efficiency and streamline tasks within the broader project framework.</p>	It facilitates the application of new criteria in everyday work and reduces the possibility of errors.
4.	Implement gender sensitive procurement policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation <p>Promote inclusive economic growth through gender-responsive governance practices.</p>	It creates a formal, binding framework that serves as the basis for all other activities.
5.	Monitor and evaluate gender impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Monitoring and evaluating impact <p>Advance gender equality through socially responsible public procurement policies and practices.</p>	It allows us to determine whether we are successful and to adjust our approach based on data.
6.	Promote cultural change and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Promoting cultural change <p>Foster an inclusive, gender-aware public procurement ecosystem that supports equal access and actively addresses structural barriers to participation.</p>	It influences the wider environment and ensures the long-term sustainability of change.

4.4 Details on whether each Action selected is integrated

Following the URBACT methodology, the integrated nature of our six actions is assessed against the 12 Aspects of Integrated Urban Development. These aspects ensure that the plan is comprehensive, connecting the four main dimensions of sustainability (Economic, Social, Environmental, Governance) with key operational and territorial considerations.

The table below clearly outlines how each action contributes to the overall integration of the IAP:

ACTION	RELEVANT ASPECTS OF INTEGRATION (THEMATIC & OPERATIONAL)	FOR INTEGRATION
Action 1: In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures	Institutional Integration, Stakeholder Involvement	Integrates the new GRPP policy into the daily work of City staff (Institutional). It ensures the policy is adopted by involving multiple departments (Stakeholder) to create a shared understanding.
Action 2: Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement;	Social, Environmental, Territorial Integration	This action is the most multi-dimensional, combining gender criteria (Social) with environmental standards (Environmental) in a real project, which directly influences a specific location (Territorial).
Action 3: Procurement application	Institutional Integration, Stakeholder Involvement	It uses technology to formalize the feedback loop with the business community (Stakeholder) and streamline internal procedures (Institutional).
Action 4: Implement gender sensitive procurement policies	Social, Institutional Integration	Creates binding rules that promote women's economic participation (Social). It institutionalizes the change within the City's internal structure (Institutional).

Action 5: Monitor and evaluate gender impact	Stakeholder Involvement, Institutional Integration	It serves as excellent feedback, enabling the institution to make internal corrections and, where necessary, adapt to the needs of economic operators in the market.
Action 6: Promote cultural change and awareness	Social, Stakeholder Involvement, Territorial Integration	Directly addresses cultural barriers (Social) and supports women-owned businesses (Economic). It engages the wider public and business community (Stakeholder) to ensure the IAP's goals are accepted and implemented across the City's territory.

In summary, the six actions are not isolated measures but form a coherent, integrated system. Together, they ensure that the City of Zagreb's public spending actively advances the city's vision of sustainable, inclusive, and gender-equal urban development by linking social, economic, and environmental objectives with institutional and participatory mechanisms.

5. Action planning details

Considering the time that has passed since the beginning of the project, and after conducting the testing activities, our lead expert noticed some interesting things that are mentioned in the article “10 Key Lessons from the GenProcure Network so far.” Taking into account lesson 1 “public procurement is a key lever for gender mainstreaming” we concluded that promoting cultural change and awareness is also necessary. Lesson 4 “Gender Responsive Public procurement cannot be top down” is the reason why we focused on strengthening the capacities of public procurement staff. Lesson 5. “Testing is key” which is why we placed special emphasis throughout the project and testing activities on introducing gender-equal criteria in public procurement procedures. Lastly, due to lesson 9. “This all takes time” we concluded that adopting gender-equal criteria in public procurement requires time, which is why we have transformed some of the testing activities into actions that we will continue to implement after the project concludes.

TABLE 6. 4CS REVIEW

COHERENCE	COMPLETENESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the activities are real and feasible - by executing the activities, it is possible to achieve the set goals - the budget and resources are sufficient to enable the implementation of the activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the goals are clearly defined - the implementation plans are elaborately developed - all important details have been taken into account, including the division of responsibilities, resources, time, and the feasibility of implementation
CONCERNS	CONTINUATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the potential risk for the successful implementation of the project is the mayoral elections in the city, which will take place a few months before the project's completion, and we are the last partner country where the transnational meeting and the final conference of the project will be held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - after the completion of testing, we defined the activities we want to carry out after the project ends, which have proven to be of the greatest importance during the project's implementation

5.1. Action planning tables

Following the above-mentioned text, the tables with detailed activity descriptions are provided below.

Test Action 1

Test Action 1 involves in-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures, supported by meetings with various City offices, including those for social protection, human rights, local self-government and construction, to ensure city-wide implementation. All details about the test action are provided in the table below.

Test Number	Action	Test action Name						
1		In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures						
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action								
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 1.1 Conduct continuous training for staff on incorporating gender and social criteria in procurement processes.) 1.2. Organize regular meetings with city offices (including social protection, human rights, municipal self-government, and reconstruction and urban development) to ensure understanding and application of these criteria.) 1.3. Prepare the 2025 Procurement Plan in order to identify the procurement items and procedures which could include „ gender and social criteria“ in procurement documentation. 								
Link to strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Strengthening staff capacities) Promoting cultural change <p>Enhancing gender equality and inclusion through public procurement, in line with the GenProcure project goals and the EU Gender equality strategy 2020-2025.</p>							
Related area of Intervention	It strengthens employees' skills and promotes cultural change within the institution. Education, awareness-raising, and empowerment in gender equality within public procurement.							
Responsibilities								
Lead	Why	Partners						
City of Zagreb, Department of finance and public procurement	Achieving greater gender equality through planned public sector procurement procedures.	URBACT Local Group (ULG), including representatives from academia, entrepreneurs, associations, and other city departments.						
Contact details:	Department of finance and public procurement, City of Zagreb	Željka Sartori, Head of the Department for the promotion of human rights, City office for culture and civil society						
Implementation timeframe								
Q1 start date: 01.01.2024		Q8 end date: 31.12.2028.						
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	/	Initiate in-house training and meetings with departments	Continue training sessions and reinforce application of criteria		Continue training sessions and reinforce application of criteria evaluation of integration of criteria in procurement processes		Complete final report and assess implementation outcomes	/

Costings			Resources	
Cost category	Amount	Total cost	Resources secured	Resources needed
Training and development, materials, operational costs	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
			Funding source(s)	Funding source(s)
			City of Zagreb budget	
Monitoring of delivery				
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q2)	Target (Date: Q7)	
Number of completed training sessions and meetings, number of staff trained.	Regular tracking and reporting through URBACT Local Group meetings.	01.04.2024. – 0 training sessions completed	30.09.2025. – 2 training sessions completed	
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q2)	Target (Date: Q7)	
Number of completed training sessions and meetings, number of staff trained.	Evaluation surveys and reports after each training session.	01.04.2024. – 0 staff educated	30.09.2025. – education completed for at least 2 of staff involved in public procurement.	
Risk assessment				
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen	
Low awareness and acceptance of gender and social criteria among some staff, technical limitations in adapting procedures.	Medium	High	Additional training materials and support through consultations; regular communication with key departments to improve coordination and understanding of objectives.	

Test Action 2

Test Action 2 involves integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement for a landscape design project in an existing park. All details about the test action are provided in the table below.

Test Number	Action	Test Action Name
2		Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action		

<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 2.1. Conduct a review of procurement criteria for the park renovation project and prepare for a reannouncement of the procurement process.) 2.2. Initiate a new procurement process to develop project documentation for the repurposing of a city market into an "Intercultural community center." This center will support a variety of cultural, educational, and social activities organized by non-profit and other organizations, public institutions, and individuals, focusing on inclusive programming.) 2.3. Implement a participatory process involving organizations, associations, and citizens to inform the center's design and usage, including a thorough community needs assessment. 								
Link to strategic objective		<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation) Monitoring and evaluating impact Promotion of inclusive urban spaces through procurement that fosters community engagement, cultural integration, and accessibility.						
Related area of Intervention		It applies new policies to practical cases and enables the measurement of results. Public procurement and participatory planning for urban and community development.						
Responsibilities								
Lead			Why			Partners		Role
City of Zagreb, Department of urban planning and public procurement			To ensure public spaces are developed inclusively, meeting diverse community needs, and fostering social and cultural integration.			Local non-profit organizations, cultural associations, community groups, public institutions, and citizen representatives.		Provide input during the participatory planning process and collaborate in reviewing project objectives and community engagement strategies.
Contact details:			Department of Urban planning and public procurement, City of Zagreb			Lidija Žunić, assistant manager in Department of finance and public procurement		
Implementation timeframe								
Q1 start date: 01.01.2024.						Q8 end date: 31.12.2025		
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	Finalize review of park procurement criteria; initiate project for community center documentation			Publish revised park procurement and launch center project		/	/	/
Costings					Resources			
Cost category		Amount	Total cost		Resources secured		Resources needed	
Consultancy fees, participatory process expenses,		TBD	TBD		TBD		TBD	
					Funding source(s)		Funding source(s)	

project documentation preparation.			City of Zagreb budget	
Monitoring of delivery				
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date: Q5)	
Number of revised procurement announcements completed.	Yearly report	01.01.2024 – no revised procurements published	1.4.2025 – 2 procurements successfully announced	
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date: Q5)	
We expect to have the project documentation and technical specifications completed to initiate the procurement procedure for construction works, in alignment with the contracted standards for the public park and intercultural community center.	Oversight of the preparation of the project documentation. Progress reports, along with a final project evaluation comparing completed work with contractual specifications and planned standards. Additionally, feedback from end-users after the facilities open can be utilized for further assessment of project success.	01.01.2024 – The construction project for the park and intercultural center has not commenced; no facilities are built.	1.4.2025 – The project documentation will be fully completed, and it will provide the foundation for launching the contractor selection process for the public park and intercultural community center, ensuring alignment with agreed specifications and quality standards.	
Risk assessment				
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen	
Potential delays in the implementation of public procurement procedures or no received offers, as no one responded to the tender.	Medium	High	Early stakeholder engagement, clear communication strategies, and contingency planning for procurement reapprovals.	

Test Action 3

Test action 3 focuses on making public procurement application that enables feedback loop to continuously enhance processes based on bidder input and piloting new processes in low-risk, simple procurements to identify and address issues before full implementation. All details about the test action are provided in the table below.

Test Action Number	Test Action Name							
3	Procurement application							
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action								
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 3.1. The preparation phase of the project is currently underway. A comprehensive market analysis and internal review of current procurement procedures have been completed, leading to the selection of the optimal model for the new public application. The main goal is to modernize and streamline procurement processes while embedding strategic functions that directly support Gender Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP).) The application will be designed to include specific features that allow procurement staff to flag tenders suitable for GRPP, track the use of gender and social criteria, and generate reports on the impact of such measures. This will ensure that GRPP becomes an integrated part of daily procurement practice rather than an isolated or optional step.) The project team includes representatives from the City's public procurement department, IT Department, and external developers. The first modules are scheduled for implementation by the end of the year. 								
Link to strategic objective			<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation) Strengthening staff capacities <p>To select or enhance an application that will optimize procurement efficiency and streamline tasks within the broader project framework.</p>					
Related area of Intervention			It facilitates the application of new criteria in everyday work and reduces the possibility of errors. Further digital transformation and operational efficiency in public procurement.					
Responsibilities								
Lead			Why	Partners			Role	
City of Zagreb, Department of finance and public procurement			Achieving greater effectiveness in conducting public procurement procedures, with the capability to generate analyses of completed procedures, including expenditure analysis and the inclusion of SMEs in public procurement processes.	Other city departments, application developer			Participation in planning and advisory roles to apply the best solutions.	
Contact details:			Department of finance and public procurement, City of Zagreb		Igor Kozina, Deputy head of the City office for finance and public procurement			
Implementation timeframe								
Q1 start date: 01.01.2024. – ongoing					Q8 end date: ongoing - 31.12.2025.			
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	A market analysis was conducted, along with an evaluation of the potential for upgrading the existing		The upgrade of the existing application		Further enhancement of the application.	Fine-tuning and revising	Full functionality of the	/

	application, and a decision was made to proceed with enhancing the current system.	has commenced	It is expected that the first modules of the application will be ready for use.	the current changes	application is expected to be achieved	
Costings			Resources			
Cost category	Amount	Total cost	Resources secured		Resources needed	
Application procurement or upgrade	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD	
			Funding source(s)		Funding source(s)	
			City of Zagreb budget			
Monitoring of delivery						
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)		Target (Date:Q7)		
Completion and functionality of the application supporting procurement procedures (e.g., installation, launch, employee training)	Monitoring progress through regular project reports and testing of the application at various stages of development. Additionally, conducting user evaluations after implementation to assess the application's effectiveness and functionality.	01.01.2024. – Owning an application that does not support all the processes required for conducting public procurement procedures.		30.09.2025. – The procurement application is implemented, functional, and used by staff after completed training.		
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)		Target (Date: Q7)		
Increased efficiency and accuracy in procurement procedures through the use of the application (measured by reduced processing time and an increase in the number of successfully concluded	Yearly analysis of system data, including time taken for each step of the procurement process and feedback from application users. Additionally, periodic evaluations of the application's use in practice to improve the user experience.	01.01.2024. – Owning an application that does not support all the processes required for conducting public procurement procedures		30.09.2025 – Reduced processing time in procurement procedures by at least 10% and an increased number of successfully concluded procedures with the help of		

procurement procedures).			the application.
Risk assessment			
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen
Delays in development	Medium	High	It is important to follow the project schedule (monitoring of the timeline) and keep in regular contact with stakeholders.

Test Action 4

Test Action 4 will focus on revising procurement policies to incorporate gender-responsive criteria, ensuring that selected procurement activities explicitly address their impact on promoting gender equity. Additionally, the possibility of introducing quotas for women owned business or inclusion of women experts in nominated project teams, as an award criterion will be explored in suitable public procurement procedures to enhance their participation and foster greater inclusivity in economic opportunities.

Test Action Number	Test Action Name		
4	Implement gender sensitive procurement policies		
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 4.1. Revise procurement policies to include gender-responsive criteria, ensuring that selected procurement activities consider their impact on gender equity.) 4.2. Pilot revised policies on selected procurement contracts.) 4.3. Evaluate pilot outcomes and refine policies accordingly. 			
Link to strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy implementation Promote inclusive economic growth through gender-responsive governance practices.		
Related area of Intervention	It creates a formal, binding framework that serves as the basis for all other activities. Gender equality in public procurement procedures and economic participation		
Responsibilities			
Lead	Why	Partners	Role
City of Zagreb, Department of finance and public procurement	Responsible for developing and implementing procurement policy	Other city departments	Support implementation and align internal procedures
Contact details:	Department of finance and public procurement, City of Zagreb	Igor Kozina, Deputy head of the City office for finance and public procurement	
Implementation timeframe			
Q1 start date: 01.01.2026.		Q8 end date: 31.12.2028.	

Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	Policy review, Stakeholder consultation,			Pilot testing	Evaluation and implementation		Training	Implementation
Costings				Resources				
Cost category	Amount			Total cost	Resources secured		Resources needed	
Training and internal capacity-building	TBD			TBD	TBD		TBD	
					Funding source(s)		Funding source(s)	
					City of Zagreb budget			
Monitoring of delivery								
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring			Baseline (Date: Q1)		Target (Date: Q7)		
Number of revised procurement procedures including gender-responsive criteria	Procurement documentation review			0 procedures revised		At least 5 procedures revised		
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring			Baseline (Date: Q1)		Target (Date: Q7)		
Improvement in gender equity awareness in procurement and increase in inclusive economic opportunities	Staff surveys			Low staff competence		High staff competence; measurable participation of target groups		
Risk assessment								
Implementation risk/challenges			Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen			
Lack of awareness or resistance to policy change			Medium	High	Awareness campaigns and internal capacity-building within city departments			
Insufficient data on women-owned businesses			Medium	High	Establish or update supplier registries with gender-disaggregated data			
Legal constraints in setting quotas			Low	High	Ensure alignment with national procurement law; use optional incentives			
Limited market response			Medium	Medium	Outreach and training sessions for potential suppliers			

Test Action 5

Test Action 5 will be made to establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks that regularly assess the gender impact of procurement activities. Data and insights gathered from these evaluations will be utilized to continuously improve gender-responsive procurement practices.

Test Action Number	Test Action Name							
5	Monitor and evaluate gender impact							
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action								
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 5.1. Establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the gender impact of procurement activities regularly.) 5.2. Use data and insights from evaluations to continuously improve gender-responsive procurement practices.) 5.3. Define measurable gender-sensitive indicators tailored to relevant procurement categories 								
Link to strategic objective) Monitoring and evaluating impact Advance gender equality through socially responsible public procurement policies and practices.					
Related area of Intervention			It allows us to determine whether we are successful and to adjust our approach based on data. Gender-responsive procurement (GRPP); evidence-based governance; institutional capacity building.					
Responsibilities								
Lead				Why	Partners		Role	
City of Zagreb, Department of finance and public procurement			Responsible for developing and implementing procurement policy		Other city departments		Support implementation and align internal procedures	
Contact details:			Department of finance and public procurement, City of Zagreb		Igor Kozina, Deputy head of the City office for finance and public procurement			
Implementation timeframe								
Q1 start date: 01.01.2026.					Q8 end date: 31.12.2028.			
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework design & indicator development • Baseline data collection • First evaluation round 			Initial policy improvements	Second evaluation cycle	Staff training updates	Final reporting & institutional integration	
Costings					Resources			
Cost category	Amount			Total cost	Resources secured		Resources needed	
Data collection and	TBD			TBD	TBD		TBD	

indicator development				
Training and internal capacity-building	TBD			
			Funding source(s)	Funding source(s)
			City of Zagreb budget	
Monitoring of delivery				
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date:Q7)	
Number of GRPP evaluations conducted	Internal reporting and analysis	0	Minimum 3 completed evaluations	
Number of procurement procedures revised based on M&E insights	Review of internal policies and procedures	0	At least 1 significant update (inclusion of gender-responsive award criteria: Procurement procedures are updated to include award criteria that reward bidders for offering gender-equal employment policies or measures that support women's participation in project implementation.)	
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date: Q7)	
Share of procurement processes including gender-responsive criteria	Procurement documentation review	0	By the end of Q7, a minimum of three public procurement procedures conducted by the City of Zagreb will explicitly include gender-responsive criteria—such as gender equality plans, equal pay policies, or support for work-life balance—as part of the	

			evaluation or award process. This will be verified through a systematic review of procurement documentation and tender specifications.
Risk assessment			
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen
Limited internal M&E capacity	Medium	High	Engage external experts; targeted staff training
Lack of disaggregated data	High	High	Improve internal data systems; strengthen interdepartmental collaboration
Low awareness of GRPP relevance	Medium	Medium	Continuous internal communication and tailored capacity-building workshops

Test Action 6

Test Action 6 will be focused on launching awareness campaigns aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and promoting the value of women-owned businesses in public procurement processes. Additionally, the activity will involve creating mentorship and networking opportunities designed to support women entrepreneurs in effectively navigating the procurement landscape.

Test Action Number	Test Action Name
6	Promote cultural change and awareness
Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this test action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) 6.1. Launch awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes and promote the value of women-owned businesses in public procurement.) 6.2. Create mentorship and networking opportunities to support women entrepreneurs in navigating the procurement landscape.) 6.3. Integrate gender-awareness modules into existing city training platforms and internal staff development. 	
Link to strategic objective) Promoting cultural change Foster an inclusive, gender-aware procurement ecosystem that supports equal access and actively addresses structural barriers to participation.
Related area of Intervention	It influences the wider environment and ensures the long - term sustainability of changes. Awareness-raising and communication; inclusive economic development; women's entrepreneurship; organisational culture change.
Responsibilities	

Lead				Why	Partners	Role		
City of Zagreb, Department of finance and public procurement		Responsible for developing and implementing procurement policy			Other city departments	Support implementation and align internal procedures		
Contact details:		Department of finance and public procurement, City of Zagreb		Igor Kozina, Deputy head of the City office for finance and public procurement				
Implementation timeframe								
Q1 start date: 01.01.2026.				Q8 end date: 31.12.2028.				
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Specific tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and message development Campaign launch and materials production Networking and mentoring programme launch 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training modules integration Monitoring reach and feedback 			Final evaluation and documentation	
Costings					Resources			
Cost category	Amount			Total cost	Resources secured		Resources needed	
Mentorship and networking programme	TBD			TBD	TBD		TBD	
Staff training and internal workshops	TBD				Funding source(s)		Funding source(s)	
					City of Zagreb budget			
Monitoring of delivery								
Output indicator	Mechanism of monitoring			Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date:Q7)			
Number of mentorship/networking events held	Event reports and participation logs			0	A minimum of two targeted events—such as mentoring sessions, networking meetups, or thematic workshops—will be implemented by the end of Q7 to actively support women entrepreneurs and promote gender equality			

				in public procurement.
Result indicator	Mechanism of monitoring	Baseline (Date: Q1)	Target (Date: Q7)	
Improved gender inclusiveness in public procurement participation and engagement.	Procurement participation records, stakeholder surveys, and event feedback forms.	Limited awareness and consideration of gender aspects in procurement-related engagement (to be determined)	Demonstrated increase in awareness, understanding, and integration of gender considerations in procurement-related engagement, as measured against baseline indicators collected in Q1.	
Risk assessment				
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen	
Low visibility or reach of awareness campaigns	Medium	Medium	Use multi-channel communication strategy, including social media, local events, and partnerships with women's organisations, primarily those who participated in the work of our local group.	
Internal resistance or low prioritisation	Medium	Medium	Integrate awareness activities into existing staff training frameworks; secure political support and leadership commitment.	
Sustainability of mentoring/networking programmes	Medium	Medium	Engage and support the initiatives beyond the project timeline.	

Besides the above-mentioned tables of activities that we will carry out even after the project concludes, during one of the aforementioned transnational meetings in Umeå, Sweden (March 2024), we also reflected on aspects that influence integrated urban development. Below is the description. Through collaboration with the URBACT local group at the April 2024 meeting, we aimed to assess and describe various aspects of urban development.

12 ASPECTS OF INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT	RELEVANT (YES/NO)	WHY?	INITIAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF INTEGRATION (BASELINE) 0-10
Stakeholder involvement in planning	Yes	Because it promotes inclusivity, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness	2
Coherence with existing strategies	Yes	Ensures alignment with local, national, and EU-level goals for integrated development	5
Sustainable urban development (economic, social, environmental)	Yes	It's relevant because it drives society forward and it ensures that urban development initiatives are holistic, inclusive, and sustainable. The local government emphasizes the importance of these aspects	7
Integration over time	Yes	Planners can identify opportunities for incremental progress and phased implementation, allowing cities to make steady improvements while building on past successes and lessons learned. It takes into consideration changing needs and long – term sustainability	5
Stakeholder involvement in implementation	Yes	Stakeholder involvement during implementation is not only relevant but essential for success.	6
Sectoral integration	Yes	It's necessary to involve different sectors within the local government, as they are crucial in planning and implementation	4
Spatial integration	Yes	Spatial planning also has impact on urban development and it's important to ensure that all areas of the city are equally represented and have benefited from different activities	8
Territorial integration	No	/	5
Multi-level governance	Yes	Easy implementation	8
Integration of cross-cutting thematic aspects	Yes	Cross-cutting thematic aspects are the mirror of social realm. Citizens are at the same time e.g. women, young, ethnic minority, commuting, studying, or not being employed so it is needed to be recognised in policies	7
Complementary types of investment (hard/soft)	Yes	Hard and soft investments are complementary with urban development	5
Mobilising all available funding	Yes	To achieve maximum resources to finance	6

6. Implementation Framework

As previously stated, although the first three testing activities are already underway, activities 4. Implement gender-sensitive procurement policies, 5. Monitor and evaluate gender impact, and 6. Promote cultural change and awareness will begin implementation in January 2026, after the project has been completed. For now, the implementation of these activities is planned to continue until December 2028.

Implementation Strategies

To achieve our vision, we will focus on four key implementation strategies, each designed to produce significant and positive outcomes. We will focus on: Stakeholder engagement and collaboration, Policy advocacy and reform, Capacity building programs and Technology and Innovation, which are described in detail in chapter 4.2 under the title Details on the overarching areas of intervention that will enable you to deliver your strategic objectives and vision.

6.1 Details of the governance mechanisms and processes for implementing the IAPn

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan will be led by the City office for finance and public procurement, acting as the main coordinating authority. Strategic oversight will be provided by an IAP Steering Committee, composed of representatives from key city offices, including social protection and health, education and youth, culture and civil society, and EU projects.

For each of the six actions, thematic working groups will be established, bringing together representatives from the relevant city offices to ensure operational delivery and cross-departmental collaboration. While the URBACT Local Group will not continue as a formal body, cooperation with its former members—civil society organizations, academia, and entrepreneurs—will be maintained through consultations, awareness campaigns, and future projects.

Governance processes will rely on regular meetings, digital tools to track progress, and transparent publication of results, ensuring accountability and effective implementation of gender-responsive public procurement in Zagreb.

6.2 Details of how wider stakeholders that are not directly involved in the governance mechanism for implementation, but which have been involved in the ULG can remain engaged

To continue the collaboration, an ad hoc working group can be formed with individual ULG members to implement inclusive public procurement (including gender, green, and social criteria). The participants will meet depending on the need.

6.3 Details of the overall costs and funding approach for the implementation of the IAP

The City of Zagreb will assess the overall costs and potential funding mechanisms required for the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). A combination of municipal budget allocations, national funding programs, and available European Union instruments will be

considered to ensure a sustainable and effective implementation. Detailed planning and cost estimation will be finalized in line with project priorities and available resources, aiming to maximize the impact of EU funding while ensuring efficient use of public funds.

Action Number	Action Description	Cost of Action	Funding Source
1	In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget
2	Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget
3	Procurement application	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget
4	Implement gender sensitive procurement policies	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget
5	Monitor and evaluate gender impact	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget
6	Promote cultural change and awareness	0,00 EUR	City of Zagreb budget

6.4 Details of the overall timeline for the implementation of the IAP

	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1. In-house training of employees on integrating gender equality criteria into public procurement procedures																																					
1.1.																																					
1.2.																																					
1.3.																																					
2. Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement																																					
2.1.																																					
2.2.																																					
2.3.																																					
3. Procurement application																																					
3.1.																																					
4. Implement gender sensitive procurement policies																																					

2. Integrating gender equality, social, and environmental criteria into public procurement				
2.1., 2.2., 2.3.	Unreceived bids	High	High	Set a proportional number of experts and an estimated value of the procurement (included in test action 1 (sub-activity 1.1. and 1.2.)
	Potential delays in the implementation of public procurement procedures or no received offers, as no one responded to the tender.	Medium	High	
3. Procurement application				
3.1.	Difficulties encountered while attempting to simplify the application to make it user-friendly and accessible	Medium	Medium	Continuous meetings/educations with other city offices (included in test action 1 (sub-activity 1.1. and 1.2.)
	Delays in development	Medium	High	It is important to follow the project schedule (monitoring of the timeline) and keep in regular contact with stakeholders
4. Implement gender sensitive procurement policies				
4.1., 4.2., 4.3.	Lack of awareness or resistance to policy change	Medium	High	Awareness campaigns and internal capacity-building within city departments (included in test action 1 (sub-activity 1.1. and 1.2.)
	Insufficient data on women-owned businesses	Medium	High	Establish or update supplier registries with gender-disaggregated data (included in test action 6, sub-activity 6.2.)
	Legal constraints in setting quotas	Low	High	Ensure alignment with national procurement law; use optional incentives
	Limited market response	Medium	Medium	Outreach and training sessions for potential suppliers (included in test action 6, sub-activity 6.2.)
5. Monitor and evaluate gender impact				
5.1., 5.2., 5.3.	Difficult data collection data and insights gathered from evaluations	Medium	Medium	Difficulties encountered while attempting to simplify the application to make it user-friendly and accessible.
	Limited internal M&E capacity staff training	High	High	Engage external experts; targeted staff training (included in test action 6, sub-activity 6.2.)
	Lack of disaggregated data			Improve internal data systems; strengthen interdepartmental collaboration
	Low awareness of GRPP relevance	Medium	Medium	Continuous internal communication and tailored capacity-building workshops (included in test action 1 (sub-activity 1.1. and 1.2.) and test action 6 (sub-activity 6.1.)
6. Promote cultural change and awareness				
6.1., 6.2.	Refusal to change stereotypes	High	High	Continuous communication and raising awareness about the importance of gender equality ((included in test action 6 (sub-activity 6.1.)
	Low visibility or reach of awareness campaigns	Medium	Medium	Use multi-channel communication strategy, including social media, local events ((included in test action 6 (sub-activity 6.1.)
	Internal resistance or low prioritisation	Medium	Medium	Integrate awareness activities into existing staff training frameworks; secure political support and leadership commitment
	Sustainability of mentoring/networking programmes	Medium	Medium	Engage and support the initiatives beyond the project timeline

7. Conclusion

The successful implementation of this IAP hinges on sustained political commitment, robust cross-sectoral collaboration, and continuous capacity building. The central conclusion is that gender-responsive public procurement is both **achievable and indispensable** for a modern local government. All the planned actions—focused on internal training, tool development (application), policy revision, and establishing an impact monitoring system—are designed to ensure that the transformation of the procurement process is **systemic and enduring, rather than sporadic**.

By taking a pioneering role in this field, the City of Zagreb reaffirms its dedication to actively fostering an environment that dismantles structural and cultural barriers for women. We deliberately designed this IAP to be **highly implementable**, leveraging existing administrative capacities and employing a participatory approach through the URBACT Local Group (ULG).

Ultimately, success will be measured not solely by the number of actions executed, but by the tangible and measurable improvement in gender equality and inclusivity across the City of Zagreb.

7.1 The plans for communicating and disseminating the IAP locally

The dissemination plan will focus on three key target groups: internal administration, the business community (specifically women entrepreneurs), and the general public.

Target Group	Dissemination Activities
Internal Administration	Internal meetings, workshops, intranet announcements, mandatory training (Action 1).
Business Community	Public presentations, targeted information brochures, online webinars for bidders, collaboration with chambers and associations.
General Public	Media releases, publication of the IAP on the City of Zagreb's official website, social media, public events.

7.2 Immediate next steps in the coming six months (November 2025 to April 2026) for implementing the IAP

Test Action 4 - establishment of a working group (with members of ULG group) to revise internal acts and public procurement guidelines with the aim of integrating gender-sensitive criteria.

Test Action 5 - definition of initial indicators and collection of baseline data on women's participation in procurement for the first three months of 2026.

Test Action 6 - Launch awareness campaigns and integrate gender-awareness modules into existing city training platforms and internal staff development.

7.3 Contact details for key individuals responsible for implementing the IAP

-) Željka Sartori - zeljka.sartori@zagreb.hr
-) Lidija Žunić - lidija.zunic@zagreb.hr
-) Igor Kozina - igor.kozina@zagreb.hr

GENPROCURE

GENDER INCLUSION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



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