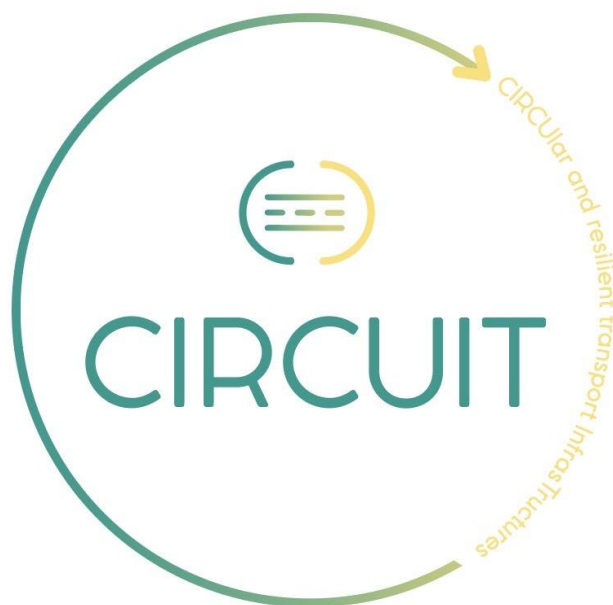




Deliverable 4.1

Manual for a Successful Deployment of GPP in CIRCUIT Pilots

Work Package: WP4 — Green and Innovative Procurement Models | Date: November 2024 | Authors: ERF (lead), Infra Plan, ACCIONA, Right-Click, ANAS, ZAG

Context

Green Public Procurement (GPP) — the practice of integrating environmental criteria into public tender specifications — is one of the most direct levers available to accelerate the green transition in transport infrastructure. Public authorities are the dominant clients in this sector; their procurement decisions shape market demand and investment flows across the entire supply chain.

This deliverable maps the current state of GPP across the European Union and in the five CIRCUIT pilot countries (Croatia, Spain, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Italy), identifies the barriers to wider adoption, and provides country-specific recommendations grounded in the experience of CIRCUIT pilot projects.

At a Glance

Countries covered: EU + Croatia, Spain, Netherlands, Slovenia, Italy

Data sources: Legal review + survey + pilot interviews

EU framework: MEAT criteria, LCC, EU GPP road criteria

Main barrier: Lack of internal expertise + risk aversion

Key tool: Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)



Key Findings

📖 The EU GPP legal framework is in place — including specific criteria for road design, construction, maintenance and street lighting — but implementation is highly uneven. Member states differ significantly in procurement thresholds, mandatory criteria and enforcement capacity.

✗ Main barriers across the five pilot countries: lack of in-house procurement expertise, institutional risk aversion, fragmented national regulations and the absence of whole-life cost (LCC) methodologies in standard tender evaluation.

✅ The MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) criterion is the legally robust mechanism for integrating green and circularity criteria without breaching EU procurement rules — yet it remains underused in infrastructure contracts.

🌐 Stakeholder mapping across the five pilots reveals that the supply chain structure, and therefore the appropriate procurement levers, differ significantly between countries — requiring tailored national approaches rather than a one-size-fits-all model.

💡 Country-specific GPP criteria recommendations were developed for each pilot, covering material recycled content, LCA-based environmental criteria, carbon footprint limits and requirements for Design for Disassembly.

Takeaways for Practitioners

1. Integrate whole-life cost (LCC) into all infrastructure tender evaluations — upfront-cost-only assessment systematically disadvantages circular and greener solutions.
2. Use the MEAT criterion to embed GPP criteria — award criteria can legally include material recycled content, carbon footprint, end-of-life recovery potential and LCA score without breaching EU procurement law.
3. Build internal GPP expertise within procurement teams — the most cited barrier is not legal but capacity-based. Training and peer-exchange programmes are high-leverage investments.
4. Map your stakeholder ecosystem before launching a GPP tender — who controls material choices, who bears life-cycle costs and who benefits from circular outcomes varies significantly between project types and national contexts.

Full deliverable (open access): www.circuitproject.eu/resources