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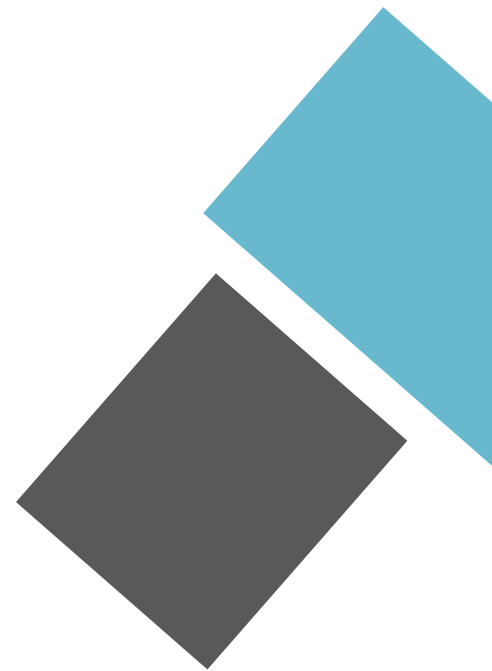
International Conference on  
Entrepreneurial Motivation

**Bold steps: Entrepreneurship in times of change**

**BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS**

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# **GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: ARE SLOVAK FIRMS READY?**

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## **Abstract**

This paper deals with the issue of green public procurement as a modern and optional tool of environmental policy. Given that public procurement accounts for 13% to 20% of global GDP, it is not surprising that nations are now seeking methods to use public procurement procedures not only as an efficient public purchasing tool but also as a tool for sustainable development and a catalyst for innovation in both the public and private sectors (Lember et al., 2014, Zipperer, 2019). Alkadry et al. (2019) pointed out that by integrating social, economic, and environmental considerations into its procedures, sustainable public procurement can be a crucial instrument for accomplishing the overall sustainability of human development. One particular element of sustainable public procurement is green public procurement (Brammer and Walker, 2011; Grandia et al., 2020). Dimand et al (2023) stated that green public procurement (GPP) is specific in the sense that more than 40% of the total carbon footprint of organizations is associated with procurement, which shows that green procurement practices are a crucial factor in responding to climate change and other environmental challenges.

The legal basis for GPP in Slovakia is Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on Public Procurement. The Public Procurement Act (PPA) allows Slovak contracting authorities to take environmental aspects of a contract into account at all stages of public procurement. GPP is still primarily a voluntary instrument in Slovakia. Although the 2022 amendment to the PPA introduced an obligation to apply an environmental perspective, this obligation is not universal. Environmental consideration is defined in Article 10(7), which imposes the obligation to take environmental and social considerations into account on contracting authorities that have launched or carried out at least ten public procurements, excluding low-value contracts, in a calendar year. The Slovak Government Resolution No 541/2022 also created a partial obligation to apply GPP tools in public tenders for the construction or reconstruction of civil engineering works. The obligation applies only to the State and

mandates the use of GPP tools with an emphasis on environmental aspects for construction works with a financial limit exceeding € 30,000. Outside these obligations, the use of GPP remains at the discretion of the contracting authority itself.

The main aim of this paper is to identify the state of application of environmental aspects in public procurement in Slovakia with an emphasis on the factors which influence the implementation of green public procurement, especially the readiness of Slovak firms to comply with environmental criteria. The research uses secondary data from the Public Procurement Office of the Slovak Republic on all green public contracts for 2023 and 2024 and data which are published in the tender documents of 40 selected contracts in the conditions of municipalities in Slovakia for the year 2024.

In 2023, 10,319 public procurements were carried out, with only 482 of them being assessed as green public procurement, i.e. only 4.67% were so-called green contracts. In 2024, a significant decrease in the absolute number of public procurements can be identified at first glance. Only 6,622 public procurements were carried out, which shows a decrease of 35.83% compared to 2023. This decrease is most likely related to legislative changes that significantly increased the financial limit for the application of public procurement procedures from €10,000 to €50,000. Of the absolute number of public procurements in 2024, only 429 green contracts were identified (6.48%).

Analysis of 40 randomly selected contracts showed that green elements appear in individual tender documents both in the form of environmental criteria (Energy efficiency, Recyclability of materials, Life Cycle Assessment, CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, Restriction of hazardous substances use) and in the technical specifications in the description of the subject of the contract. Technical specifications can be described as mandatory requirements for a specific subject of the contract, which means that they define the minimum environmental properties of a product, service or construction work that the offer must contain to be evaluated as acceptable. These can be guaranteed by ecolabels, e.g. EnergyStar. Out of the 40 analyzed contract, only 6 identified quality assurance requirements through ecolabels.

These data were triangulated in interviews with stakeholders (procurers, academic experts on public procurement and a representative from the Public Procurement Office of the Slovak republic). All responses uniformly suggest that the core GPP barrier in the conditions of Slovakia is the administrative character of the procurement process, and especially of its control. Procuring entities are reluctant to bear the risk of involving control bodies and the extra work involved in using more complex evaluation/qualification/performance criteria.

The results point to the problem of a formal implementation of the green public procurement principles in the conditions of municipalities in Slovakia. These findings are further linked to the practice of Slovak firm to innovate and comply with the evaluation criteria of green public procurement (Lundberg & Marklund, 2013; Ma et al., 2021; Schäfer et al., 2024; Deschamps et al., 2025).

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**Keywords:** green public procurement; environmental criteria; evaluation criteria; Slovakia

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