

Procurement for Impact

Skanska's Vision for a Competitive, Sustainable EU





Foreword

Towards more strategic, resilient procurement

Representing around 14 percent of EU GDP, public procurement is one of Europe’s most powerful policy tools. As Europe faces climate transition pressures, geopolitical uncertainty and growing infrastructure investment needs, procurement is increasingly becoming a strategic lever for strengthening competitiveness, resilience and industrial capacity.

At Skanska, we see these challenges and opportunities firsthand across infrastructure and construction projects in the Nordics, Europe and the United States. We also see that many of the solutions already exist. More collaborative procurement models, earlier contractor involvement, lifecycle-based evaluation and clearer sustainability criteria are already helping projects reduce emissions, improve delivery certainty and strengthen long-term infrastructure performance.

But to scale these approaches further, procurement frameworks also need to evolve. The European Commission’s 2025 evaluation of the EU procurement framework found that the current directives have only partially met their objectives, with continued legal complexity, declining competition in many tenders and uneven uptake of green and innovative procurement across Member States.¹⁾ At the same time, public procurement across Europe still relies heavily on traditional procedures, limiting collaboration, lifecycle thinking and the adoption of low-carbon and resilient solutions.

In this updated edition of our Procurement for Impact report, we share project examples, policy insights and recommendations for how procurement frameworks can better support competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and long-term value creation. Our ambition is to contribute to a discussion where procurement is viewed not only as a technical or administrative process, but increasingly as a strategic tool for Europe’s future.

Anders Danielsson, President and CEO, Skanska Group and
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Key takeaways

Public procurement represents over EUR 2 trillion annually in the EU, positioning it as a powerful lever to enhance competitiveness, drive innovation and advance the green transition. Yet outdated regulations and inconsistent implementation too often default to lowest cost, sidelining long-term value.

This report outlines our vision for modernizing EU procurement. Grounded in real project experience, we show how lifecycle value and non-price criteria can lead to stronger outcomes. Our recommendations call for an EU-wide shift toward smarter, sustainability-driven procurement, where sustainability is mandated as a core evaluation factor and sustainable and non-price criteria become standard – not exceptions. We also call for a single EU regulation to ensure consistency and impact at scale, as well as early contractor involvement to enhance collaboration on innovative and sustainable solutions that improve efficiency.

We support stronger procurement rules that embed climate criteria, reward lifecycle value and empower authorities to choose bids based on long-term impact – not just price. With deep project experience and a strong focus on collaboration, we’re ready to help make public procurement a strategic tool for Europe’s climate and competitive goals.



Hyllie Terrace, Malmö, Sweden

About Skanska

Skanska was founded in 1887 to create solutions that are good for people and society. More than 135 years later, we are one of the world’s largest construction and project development companies, with 2025 revenue totaling SEK 179 billion.

We use knowledge and foresight to shape the way people live, work and connect. We operate in select markets across the Nordics, Europe and the United States. Together with our customers, partners and the expertise of our 26,000 employees, we create resilient and sustainable solutions for the built environment that support living beyond our lifetime.

Our operations are focused on four business streams:

- Construction
- Residential Development
- Commercial Property Development
- Investment Properties

Each stream collaborates and shares resources with the others. And we apply that collective experience and ingenuity to everything we do.

Current state – challenges and opportunities



Public procurement holds great potential to boost competitiveness, strengthen resilience, and advance the green transition. But its impact is still limited by outdated rules and a system that prioritizes lowest price over long-term value. Climate and circularity considerations remain optional and rarely applied, as procurement is still seen as transactional and not as a strategic driver. This mindset suppresses innovation and disadvantages those who lead on quality and sustainability.

Inconsistent application across EU Member States further fragments the market, making it harder to scale effective practices and technologies. This holds back demand for low-carbon, resilient solutions that align with Europe's climate ambitions.

The upcoming 2026 revision of the EU procurement framework offers a critical opportunity to change course. Proposals such as mandatory sustainability and resilience criteria, preferences for European and low-carbon products, and joint procurement of critical materials signal a shift toward more strategic public spending. If aligned with broader policy goals, procurement can reduce dependency, unlock innovation and drive industrial decarbonization.

Enabling low-carbon and resilient construction

To decarbonize construction, procurement must drive demand for solutions that lower emissions and improve resilience across both buildings and infrastructure. This goes beyond materials, it includes building design, technical systems, innovative construction methods like 3D printing or digital tools that optimize energy performance throughout the lifecycle.

Public authorities can lead by requiring, not just encouraging, sustainable approaches in major projects. Setting clear, measurable targets, such as thresholds for low-carbon solutions or energy efficiency performance, helps create lead markets that stimulate innovation across the value chain. This approach is already being applied in several EU countries and supports the Green Deal Industrial Plan and the Net-Zero Industry Act.²⁾

A shift to lifecycle value and why it matters

Public procurement that focuses on the lowest upfront cost risks overlooking broader societal, environmental and financial implications. Purchase price is just a fraction of total cost when long-term maintenance, energy use, emissions and end-of-life considerations are factored in. According to the European Commission's *Buying Green!* handbook, lifecycle costing (LCC) better captures real ownership costs. Yet it's often handled by separate entities misaligning incentives and favoring short-term savings over long-term efficiency.³⁾

Environmental certifications like BREEAM and LEED are effective tools for embedding lifecycle value into procurement. They offer structured, science-based frameworks to assess a building's performance across energy use, material impact, water efficiency and operational cost over time. At Skanska, we apply these certifications regularly to ensure our projects meet high sustainability standards and deliver long-term value. Including them in procurement criteria not only simplifies bid evaluation for public buyers – it also supports alignment with long-term climate and performance goals, enabling smarter, more sustainable investments.

Private procurement: a model for long-term value

In the private sector, procurement is increasingly recognized as a strategic function used to drive innovation, sustainability and long-term value.

According to the report *2025 State of Procurement Data*, which includes insights from 3,500 global procurement and organizational executives⁴⁾, companies place less emphasis on immediate cost and instead assess suppliers based on broader criteria like carbon performance, technological innovation and social impact. They also use data, sustainability metrics and supplier innovation to create value beyond cost control. Public procurement should adopt this mindset – moving beyond price to focus on lifecycle and societal value.

Public-private partnerships: bridging public goals with private innovation

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) represent a collaborative model in which public sector goals align with private sector expertise and resources. By sharing risk and responsibility, PPPs can deliver infrastructure more efficiently and cost-effectively. The World Bank notes that well-structured PPPs often achieve on-time and on-budget delivery – leveraging private innovation for public gain.⁵⁾

Shared momentum for reform

Across Europe, momentum is growing to make procurement more strategic. The Call for Evidence and public consultation on public procurement⁶⁾ (Dec 2024–Mar 2025), along with the recent Draghi and Letta reports, echo a shared goal: to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and reward long-term value – not just the lowest bids. *"There is an enormous commitment in the construction industry*

and there are many technical solutions. It is possible to considerably accelerate the climate transition and at the same time build more or less climate-neutral buildings at a significantly lower cost by 2030. However, many construction projects fail to contribute to this because their economic incentives are built around short-sighted lowest price procurement", says Karl Jonasson Collberg, City of Stockholm, responsible procurement officer for Skanska's project Slakthusområdet E101.

Research also supports this shift. Innovation-driven procurement has been shown to boost both sustainability and business performance. In a recent paper, Chiappinelli et al. (2025)⁷⁾ found that green contracts significantly improved contractors' environmental and economic performance without crowding out private sales. The consequences of ignoring sustainability are equally clear. Krieger et al. (2024)⁸⁾ show that price-only contracts stifle innovation, while green procurement creates lead markets – especially in construction, where public authorities are major buyers.

A recent report by Innovationsföretagen warns that Sweden's transport infrastructure investments risk losing up to SEK 225 billion in value due to declining productivity and a narrow focus on lowest price.⁹⁾ The report calls for reforms that prioritize lifecycle value, early-stage collaboration and alternative procurement models like PPPs – recommendations that align closely with our own perspective.

When done right, public procurement is not a bureaucratic process but a powerful industrial strategy for the green transition. Skanska is ready to lead. Now, we need the rules to follow.

Strategic procurement in practice: understanding EU tendering tools

To enable sustainable outcomes, contracting authorities must select appropriate procedures that align with the complexity and ambition of their projects. Under Directive 2014/24/EU, public buyers can choose from several tendering models:

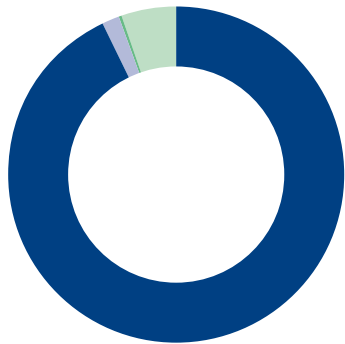
- **Open procedure:** All interested suppliers may submit a full tender. Most commonly used
- **Restricted procedure:** Open for all to express interest, but only pre-qualified candidates can submit tenders
- **Competitive procedure with negotiation:** Suitable for complex purchases; allows dialogue and refinement of bids
- **Competitive dialogue:** Ideal when the buyer's needs are not fully defined. Enables in-depth engagement before tendering
- **Innovation partnership:** Used when no existing product or solution meets the need. Facilitates co-development
- **Design contest:** Solicits creative ideas through competition, typically for architectural projects

As shown in the table, usage of these procedures varies significantly. Although underutilized, competitive dialogue holds great potential – especially when sustainability goals or emerging technologies are involved. It promotes collaboration and helps align procurement with market capabilities with public objectives.

Why this matters

Choosing the right procurement method is critical. Strategic procedures like competitive dialogue can unlock smarter, more sustainable outcomes – especially when supported by clearer guidance, political will and the right incentives. The following chapter provides the technical foundation for our recommendations to modernize the EU procurement framework.

Procedural use 2025 vs 2015



Share of procurement procedures initiated under Directive 2014/24/EU (2025, with 2015 comparison)⁽¹⁰⁾

- **Open procedure 92.9%** (94% in 2015)
- **Restricted procedure 1.8%** (5.5% in 2015)
- **Innovative partnership 0%** (0% in 2015)
- **Competitive dialogue 0.2%** (0.6% in 2015)
- **Competitive procedure with negotiation 5.1%** (<0.1% in 2015)

How the United Kingdom is using procurement to drive value, innovation and sustainability

The United Kingdom has undertaken significant procurement reforms to strengthen the role of public procurement in delivering economic, social and environmental value. The reform process began with the 2020 Green Paper *Transforming Public Procurement*⁽¹¹⁾, that was implemented through the Procurement Act 2023⁽¹²⁾, which entered into force in February 2025 and now forms the foundation of the UK's post-Brexit procurement framework. A key change is the shift from the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) to the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT), enabling contracting authorities to consider sustainability, innovation, resilience and social value alongside cost. Supported by the National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS), the framework encourages procurement that advances priorities such as climate action, resource efficiency, economic growth, supply chain resilience and SME participation.

The reforms also promote greater flexibility and earlier market engagement. Approaches such as Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) can improve project planning, reduce risk and support innovative and low-carbon solutions, while alignment with the Development Consent Order (DCO)⁽¹³⁾ process helps embed environmental commitments from planning through delivery. Together, these reforms reflect a broader shift toward procurement as a strategic tool for competitiveness, sustainability and long-term resilience.

Geopolitical instability highlights the need for resilient supply chains

Recent years have exposed vulnerabilities across construction and infrastructure value chains, affecting material availability, lead times and project delivery across Europe. According to PwC's *Emerging Trends in Real Estate Europe 2026*⁽¹⁴⁾, 90 percent of industry leaders expect political instability to affect the sector, while concern about global trade relations has more than doubled in just two years. As geopolitical uncertainty and supply chain disruptions reshape global markets, procurement is becoming increasingly important for managing risk and strengthening resilience.

EU initiatives such as the Preparedness Union Strategy⁽¹⁵⁾, the Industrial Accelerator Act⁽¹⁶⁾ and the recent agreement on Critical Medicines Act⁽¹⁷⁾ reflect a broader shift toward using procurement as a strategic tool to strengthen economic security, resilient supply chains and industrial competitiveness. Together with the upcoming revision of the EU Public Procurement Directives, these developments highlight the growing role of procurement in supporting Europe's long-term resilience and competitiveness.

Proving the possible: Our projects in action

Across our markets, we see how more collaborative, lifecycle-oriented and outcome-focused procurement approaches can strengthen coordination, support low-carbon and circular solutions, improve delivery resilience and create better long-term project outcomes. On the following pages, we share four examples that illustrate how these approaches are already being applied across our projects in different markets.





Managed by: National Highways
Vehicles: Around 17 million/year
Project start: 2026
Project finished: Early to mid 2030s
Number of construction actors: Bouygues Travaux Publics and Murphy Joint Venture, Skanska, Balfour Beatty and 100+ subcontractors
Country: England, United Kingdom

Lower Thames Crossing, England, United Kingdom

About the project
The Lower Thames Crossing is a major infrastructure initiative in south east England, designed to connect Kent and Essex via a new road and tunnel beneath the River Thames. Spanning approximately 14.3 miles (23 km), the route aims to alleviate congestion at the existing Dartford Crossing.

Once operational, the Lower Thames Crossing is expected to accommodate a substantial volume of traffic, nearly doubling road capacity across the Thames east of London. The new Lower Thames Crossing is expected to carry in the order of 17 million vehicle crossings annually. By comparison, the existing Dartford Crossing currently carries around 49 million vehicle crossings per year, which is more than it was designed for – resulting in congestion, longer journey times and a barrier to economic growth.¹⁸⁾

The project is a transformative infrastructure project that will drive sustainable economic growth across the United Kingdom. It is set to deliver substantial benefits by promoting social mobility, addressing regional inequalities, and enabling businesses and communities to thrive. It forms a key part of the UK Government’s strategy to enhance connectivity, resilience, and productivity in the region.

In March 2025, the project was granted Development Consent Order approval, providing planning permission for construction of the new road. Early works started in March 2026, focusing on elements such as archaeology, ecology and habitat creation and

utilities diversions. Main construction will begin in 2028, when the tunnels and new roads will commence, with completion expected in the early to mid 2030s. The project will be financed in various ways, both through public and private finance. In November 2025, the Government confirmed its continued support for the project, providing initial funding to enable works to begin and paving the way for a privately financed Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model from 2028.

Our role in the project
The Lower Thames Crossing project is divided into three main construction packages, with Skanska being awarded one of them together with design partner Mott MacDonald. Our scope covers the Kent roads – all approach roads south of the River Thames. This includes connecting the A2/M2 to the tunnel entrance by constructing approximately four miles of new roads and structures.

A key highlight of this work is the delivery of one of Europe’s widest “green bridges”, which allows wildlife to cross, and which is designed to bring long-term benefits to both the local community and the environment. The project is being delivered in close collaboration with local authorities, education providers, and the regional supply chain. In working towards its sustainability objectives, the team has already trialed a JCB hydrogen digger – the first to be deployed on a live construction site anywhere in Europe – paving the way for the use of low-carbon plant and equipment. A new 25-acre ecological habitat close to Thong village has been completed and three apprentices from the local community have joined the team. Two are

being supported in their early career as Chartered Engineers and one as a Quantity Surveyor.

About the public procurement
The Lower Thames Crossing project adopted a groundbreaking procurement method that emphasized carbon reduction, value for money, and Early Contractor Involvement (ECI). Contractors were brought in before final design and construction to contribute expertise, improve constructability and reduce risk. This approach allowed for collaborative design refinement and early integration of low-carbon solutions.

Several criteria included in the procurement process were key in ensuring a climate smart project. One of them was making carbon reduction a central selection criterion in the procurement process. Bidders had to demonstrate how they would minimize whole-life carbon emissions – from materials and construction to maintenance. Another was making sure that the procurement strategy was aligned with the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, ensuring that environmental and planning commitments were embedded in contracts.

Competitive tendering and ongoing stakeholder engagement are central to the procurement strategy for the Lower Thames Crossing. This approach ensures that the project delivers maximum public value while upholding the highest standards of governance and contract management.

Business Area: Skanska Sweden
Apartments: 3000
Workplaces: 14 000
Project start: 2022
Project finishes: 2025
Number of construction actors: 20
Country: Stockholm, Sweden

Stockholm’s Meatpacking District (Slakthusområdet E101), Sweden



About the project

Stockholm’s Meatpacking District (Slakthusområdet) is being transformed from an industrial area into a new vibrant district, with 3,000 homes and 14,000 workplaces. With respect for its unique history, this more than 100-year-old district is being transformed into an urban neighborhood with a focus on food, culture and experiences. The district is set to be completely ready by 2033.

Our role in the project

Skanska was commissioned by the City of Stockholm to carry out part of the development of the district, called Slakthusområdet E101, from 2022 until 2025. The work has included construction of street structure, extensive work to lay cables for electricity, fiber, water and sewage, district heating

and cooling, gas, and waste suction in collaboration with the utility owners. It has also included both earth and rock excavation; a total of 75,000 tons of rock and 96,000 tons of soil has been excavated. The project has had an extensive focus on sustainability.

Production was carried out using a fully fossil-free model with approximately 10 percent electrified operations and 90 percent powered by biofuels, combined with a high level of circularity, where around 70 percent of materials were reused. Together, these measures enabled up to an 80 percent reduction in climate impact compared to a conventional contract, significantly reducing emissions, noise and transport. During the 2024 Sweden Green Building Awards, Slakthusområdet E101 received that year’s

award for Sustainable Infrastructure, with the jury highlighting the project’s pioneering role in demonstrating how large-scale, low-emission civil engineering can be delivered in practice.

About the public procurement

The City of Stockholm has ambitious sustainability goals. One of them has been to test a procurement model for fossil-free construction sites in one of the city’s development areas; the choice fell on the Meatpacking District. In consultation with the procurement unit, the city chose to use competitive dialogue as the procurement procedure. Skanska was awarded the contract, largely because of our strong carbon calculations and our ability to introduce innovative solutions such as an electric excavator prototype.

“We chose competitive dialogue when we realized that what we were looking for was difficult to define. It was tricky to set requirements and ask for a price when we didn’t know exactly what we were looking for. With competitive dialogue, we could ask questions to potential suppliers and ultimately get more than we expected.”
– Karl Jonasson Collberg, procurement officer at the City of Stockholm, responsible for Slakthusområdet E101.

There were also other reasons for choosing competitive dialogue, according to Jonasson Collberg.

“What we are doing today in the construction industry is not working — there are delays, it costs too much, there is criminality

and there is a quality crisis. So maybe minimum price procurement is not the best way to go. A lot of unsuccessful contracts fail because they have been procured based on some kind of fixed-price concept and awarded at the lowest price. This leads me to believe that you should not only evaluate prices, but rather find partners based on quality. Competitive dialogue is an alternative, and I believe 100 percent that it could be used more.”

Per Erik Österlund, project manager at the Environmental Administration, City of Stockholm, believes that competitive dialogue will be an important tool in the coming years to contribute to more sustainable societies, even in other areas.

“I really want to advocate for this way of procuring. When we ask questions related to environmental requirements, we send signals to companies that it is important.”



Business Area: Skanska Norway
The care center: 8,000 square meters
Care homes: 72
The Health Building: 12,500 square meters
Short-term care units: 48
Project start: 2024
Project finished: 2028
Country: Lindesnes, Norway

Lindesnes Care Center and Health Building, Norway

About the project
Skanska and Lindesnes Municipality are developing a health and care center through a collaborative design-build process. The care center will include 72 assisted-living apartments and 48 short-term care units. The health building will total approximately 12,500 square meters. The care center was completed in December 2025, and the health building is scheduled to open in late 2027 or early 2028.

The health building will total 12,500 square meters and is designed to be the most energy-efficient of its kind in Norway. Construction will prioritize durable materials with a service life of more than 60 years, as well as recycled steel and flooring, with a climate target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Lindesnes Care Center and Health Building is set to become Norway's most energy-efficient health care building. Its exceptional energy performance is expected to reduce the municipality's annual electricity costs by several million Norwegian kroner.

Skanska has developed an innovative energy center, InoTherm+, which plays a key role in achieving this performance. The system reduces energy use for heating and cooling by as much as 90 percent. InoTherm+ builds on Skanska's Powerhouse and LowEx technology and has been further developed into a more efficient, scalable solution that optimizes the use of geothermal energy and hybrid solar panels in a new way.

Energy is sourced from both the ground and the sun through 5,000 meters of energy wells extending 400 meters below ground, along with rooftop solar panels. Several of the panels are hybrid units that also heat water, supplying both electricity and heat to the system.

Among other uses, the solar power generated on-site will help charge about 90 service

vehicles in the underground parking garage, while also powering the building and feeding surplus energy back into the grid.

Our role in the project
Skanska is delivering the project under a design-build contract structured in two phases. Phase one covers the care center, while phase two includes the health building, which will house mental health services and rehabilitation facilities. The buildings will be connected by a central structure and complemented by an underground parking garage and a sensory garden. The health building is intended to serve as an inclusive community hub for the residents of Lindesnes.

About the public procurement
Lindesnes Municipality has set ambitious climate goals for this project, which is ex-

pected to become Norway's most energy-efficient health building. Funding was made possible through an investment from Husbanken, the Norwegian State Housing Bank, which was a prerequisite for starting construction.

Lindesnes Municipality issued the tender through the official channels required for contracts above certain thresholds. Interested contractors were evaluated based on technical expertise, financial stability, experience with similar projects, and sustainability credentials. Prequalified bidders then submitted detailed proposals outlining technical solutions, schedules, and pricing. During this stage of the process, Lindesnes Municipality used Competitive Dialogue to further refine the project and identify the most sustainable solutions.

Business Area: Skanska US Civil
Passengers: 62.55 million/year
Cargo: 1.67 million tons/year
Project start: 2023
Project finished: 2027
Number of construction actors:
Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture (SHJV)
team and 100+ subcontractors
Country: New York, USA

JFK Roadways, Utilities and Ground Transportation Center, USA



About the project

John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) is New York’s global gateway and one of the busiest airports in the world. The project transforms its five-loop roadway system into a more intuitive three-loop layout and adds a centralized Ground Transportation Center (GTC) with 1,950 parking spaces, electric vehicle charging stations, and a 400-foot-long pedestrian bridge. Construction began in May 2023 and is scheduled for completion in December 2027.

The Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture (SHJV) has developed a Comprehensive Climate Resilience Plan, supporting the Port Authority’s goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The plan identifies flood-prone areas, assesses climate risk and prioritizes mitigation.

One initiative, ATC-04, reconfigures the Ground Transportation Center to eliminate through-traffic – removing a major security risk and eliminating the need for an energy-intensive ventilation system. The design also integrates rooftop solar, low-flow plumbing, natural ventilation and energy-efficient systems. Overall, operational energy use is expected to drop by more than 30 percent.

Our role in the project

The Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture team comprises Skanska USA Civil Northeast Inc. and Halmar International, LLC, with Parsons Transportation Group of New York, Inc. as Lead Designer.

This design-build project includes reconfiguration of the on-airport roadway network, maintenance and protection of traffic, enhanced wayfinding and traffic technologies, at-grade pavement, retaining walls, and bridges, utility relocations and upgrades.

“I love this project. We are 100% committed to delivering an exceptional customer experience from start to finish. Our team is dedicated to integrity, safety, and quality, and I am personally committed to fostering trust, communication, and collaboration with the Port Authority and all project stakeholders. I’m proud to represent the Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture team.”

— **David Tullis**, PE, Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture team Project Manager

About the public procurement

The procurement process began with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in January 2020. Bid packages were published on the Port Authority’s procurement site, where firms registered for consideration.

This project is being delivered through a design-build approach – a form of alternative project delivery that integrates design and construction services under one contract.

As an example, The Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture team has reviewed the Climate Resilience Design Guidelines (CRDG) and identified opportunities to better integrate climate change vulnerabilities into the existing decision-making processes and infrastructure design. In collaboration with the Port Authority’s Resilience and Sustainable Design Group, The Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture team developed design criteria that address future risks such as extreme heat, increased precipitation, and other climate-related stressors.

In addition to operational and sustainability benefits, the Skanska Halmar JFK Joint Venture is committed to delivering high-quality outcomes and prioritizing collaboration with the Port Authority’s Mechanical Engineering Unit. Together, we are developing durable concrete designs that meet or exceed required service life standards. For instance, the Port Authority required both a Comprehensive Climate Resilience Plan and a Sustainability Plan. The Climate Resilience Plan needed to align with the Port Authority’s Climate Resilience Design Guidelines and the NYC Building Code. It was required to address the design and construction of the GTC Garage, along with all related roadways and utilities.

Throughout the design and construction phases, the Design-Builder was responsible for preparing and submitting a Sustainability Plan to document and track compliance with all sustainability requirements. These submissions were based on the Preliminary Sustainability and Resilience Plan included in the Design-Builder’s original proposal. Each submission was expected to provide increasingly detailed documentation of current and planned compliance with sustainability standards.

A smarter framework: Five recommendations for EU action

This report outlines a set of targeted recommendations for how public procurement can better support long-term competitiveness, innovation and the green transition. Our proposals are based on lessons learned from our own projects, dialogue with public and private stakeholders, and an in-depth understanding of how procurement impacts the construction and infrastructure sectors.

By aligning procurement rules with long-term climate and industrial goals, Europe can unlock the full potential of public spending. The following recommendations aim to contribute to that shift – offering practical, actionable steps for decision-makers at every level.

1. Mandate sustainability, resilience and low-carbon criteria

Move from voluntary to mandatory inclusion of climate, circularity and resilience criteria in all public tenders. Set minimum targets for low-carbon materials and climate-smart construction methods in large public projects to drive demand, strengthen resilient value chains and support industrial competitiveness.

2. Reward lifecycle value over lowest price

Encourage contracting authorities to assess long-term social, environmental and economic value – not just upfront cost.

3. Scale the use of strategic procedures like competitive dialogue

Promote tendering procedures that support innovation and collaboration – backed by clearer guidance to ease implementation.

4. Support capacity-building and guidance for public authorities

Equip public buyers with the tools, training and resources to apply sustainability criteria effectively.

5. Foster joint procurement, learning and performance

Enable coordinated procurement of climate-critical solutions like renewable materials, low-carbon infrastructure and resilient design. Encourage peer learning among public authorities and align buyers and suppliers around shared innovation and performance goals.

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Shaping Sustainable Places is a podcast about climate and the built environment, the construction and development industry, and their impact on the places where we all live, work and connect. Scan the QR code to listen to "The Power of Procurement" and other episodes.