

Austria

Upper Austria

Current national procurement legislation/standards for the project-relevant fields

- IT
- household appliances
- lighting
- general/universal

Current national / regional practice

Legal basis for Austrian procurement is the law "Bundesgesetz über die Vergabe von Aufträgen" (Bundesvergabegesetz 2006 – BVergG 2006), a rather complex document with more than 330 pages which mainly concerns public procurement and related issues. Recently the threshold for tendering procurement was raised from 40,000 to 100,000 €.

A central institution supporting primarily national procurement was established in 2001. The "BBG – Bundesbeschaffung" was established by the Ministry of Finance with the aim to establish a central procurement platform for procurement done by national authorities. The BBG is also open to regional and municipal authorities. More than 30 product groups are offered covering a wide range of goods and services. Most of the items can be purchased electronically via the e-shop.

Besides e-procurement for public authorities, in Austria e-procurement is mainly done in the private sector, e.g. for energy suppliers, electronics and electrical industries, steel industries, sector of plant engineering and construction and for the automobile industries, it is even requested by customers. Procurement for the regional administration and for other regional authorities (e.g. district authorities) is done by a fairly new established department of the regional administration ("Zentrale Beschaffungsorganisation – ZeB"). The ZeB was established in summer 2006 to ensure an efficient procurement. There are 5 different purchasing groups established covering everything from IT, office materials (paper, etc.), office and other electric appliances to fuels and maintenance. In total, ZeB purchased in 2007 goods at about 28.35 mio €. Within the IEE-project GreenLabelsPurchase, a working group was started to include energy efficiency criteria in the ZeB purchasing procedures. Presently the implementation of an e-procurement system (at the beginning for selected items) is under preparation.

Recognised barriers

Although there are a number of initiatives for efficient procurement for the public sector (e.g. "Ecological criteria of the federal government" www.ifz.tugraz.at/oekoinkauf/), the private sector is so far somehow neglected. Moreover existing ecological criteria are mainly environmental criteria (e.g. for paper) but do not specifically pay attention to energy efficiency criteria.

Opportunities

The awareness for energy efficiency in general is very high. However, so far energy efficiency is in general not included in procurement procedures due to lack of information and know-how on possible savings.

In addition green procurement is supported on European level by the Communication "Public procurement for a better environment" (COM(2008) 400/2).