PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TOOLBOX

Belgium and development of technical specifications with businesses

Public Procurement Principle: **Balance, Capacity**

Procurement Stage: **Pre-tendering, Tendering**

Audience: **Policy maker, Procuring entity, Private sector**

Description

The Belgian Government places great importance on sustainable development issues. In 2014 a knowledge centre, the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development (FIDO), was established. It was recognised that in order to roll out a sustainable public procurement policy, a web-based user's guide was needed to outline the technical sustainability criteria to be included in specifications for the purchase of supplies and services. The FIDO continuously updates this Sustainable Procurement Guide and advises on the correct interpretation of technical specifications and other clauses contained within it. The FIDO also conducts studies on methodologies such as life cycle costing. The FIDO had 11 staff in 2014.

To ensure good results, the Sustainable Procurement Guide must:

1. Be kept constantly up to date
2. Match the characteristics of the sector concerned, without losing sight of competition and price considerations.

A methodology was developed to reach out to businesses when compiling or updating technical specifications for products and services belonging to an industrial sector. A standing working party established by the FIDO, consisting of members of the community, regions, provinces and municipal councils, contacts the professional organisation that represents the sector (not individual industrial sector companies). The professional organisation mobilises the companies that it believes are best placed to help establish technical specifications that match the capabilities of suppliers in the industrial sector in

question. This working method has helped establish realistic specifications that support improved levels of competition.

Source: OECD (2019), [Reforming Public Procurement: Progress in Implementing the 2015 OECD Recommendation](#), OECD Publishing, Paris