

ProcurComp^{EU} implementation in Estonia

Project leader



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The **Estonian State Shared Services Center (RTK)** is a government agency under the Ministry of Public Administration. It provides services centrally to the government agencies, including performing the function of management and payment authority for the European Union structural funds and cross-border programmes, and public procurement. With 16 employees, the RTK conducted in 2019 about 270 public procurement contracts with a total value of EUR 72 million.

Website: <https://www.rtk.ee/>

Context and objectives of the provided support



Context: The Public Procurement Department of the Ministry of Finance (PPD) is the institution responsible for the design and implementation of public procurement policy, and as such supervises all contracting authorities. Committed to the professionalisation of public procurement professionals with a view to support the capacity development of public administrations, the PPD expressed its interest in the ProcurComp^{EU} tools and their application in the Estonian context. This materialised in the implementation of an organisational gap analysis, targeting the State Shared Services Center (RTK), which is the central purchaser for government authorities.



Objective: The RTK received support from the European Commission to implement an organisational assessment, with a view to i) assess their staff members' level of knowledge and skills to achieve their current policy and organisational goals; ii) better align the training activities of the RTK with its training needs by shifting the rationale for training from a legal/compliance type of exercise to evidence-based analysis of training gaps/needs; and iii) test how the assessment can be rolled out with other central and local contracting authorities.

Target and timeline



Target group: Officials of the RTK (12 Procurement Specialists and 3 Lawyers, all of whom participated to the organisational assessment), and further roll out to other contracting authorities.

Duration of the intervention: 6 May 2020 until 7 July 2020.

Actions



- 1. Review of the competency matrix:** Review of the competences selected by the State Shared Services Center (RTK).
- 2. Review of the job profiles:** Review of the job description, and associated proficiency target levels.
- 3. Creation of the Self-Assessment Tool:** Development of the self-assessment questionnaire, and the survey file on EUSurvey.
- 4. Organisational assessment:** Implementation of the self-assessment tool and review, collection and analysis of the results.
- 5. Communication activities:** Dissemination of the results to the staff participants, and high-level presentation of the next steps in terms of capacity building activities.

Implementation



The review of the competency matrix and the job profiles assessed their coherence compared to ProcurComp^{EU} with the goal of verifying that they include all relevant competences and proficiency levels. Based on these, the RTK developed the self-assessment questionnaire on EUSurvey. Once reviewed, the survey was distributed to RTK's staff who had three weeks to complete it.

In addition to identifying a focal point person to provide ad-hoc support, the RTK implemented a review process to ensure that the answers provided by the staff reflect their actual skills and knowledge. The review process was hence undertaken by their Line Manager (who has an overview of staff's proficiency level per competence), and consisted of checking the answers to spot any under/overestimation. The RTK then collected the results by using the ProcurComp^{EU} calculation spreadsheet and analysed the results at profile and organisational level.

A webinar was organised to present the results of the organisational assessment, with a view to highlight where the main competency gaps and training needs are, and inform the participants about the next steps in terms of capacity-building activities.

Results and impact

- The RTK has an overview of the competency gaps at the individual, job profile and organisational levels, and is hence better equipped to identify the capacity building activities that will allow the organisation to perform more effectively and efficiently thus maximising value for money.
- Based on the organisational assessment, its resources (both in terms of human and financial capital), and strategic priorities, the RTK is able to prioritise the trainings that can deliver most impact by targeting priority competence areas for the organisation.
- A close collaboration between the PPD and the RTK on the preparation of the organisation assessment ensured first-hand experience in the implementation of ProcurComp^{EU}. This will help the PPD further promote and support the implementation of the tools in other contracting authorities.

Next steps

- The RTK will take advantage of the annual staff performance evaluation to present the individual self-assessment results to their staff, with a view to discuss and agree where trainings could be most useful to strengthen their skills and knowledge.
- The RTK will develop their capacity building plan, by identifying the key actions, potential sources of funding and the overall timeline for implementation.
- The PPD, supervising all contracting authorities in Estonia, will plan the roll out of the organisational assessment at the level of other central purchasing bodies and contracting authorities, supporting them in each step of the process.

Lessons learnt

- The RTK set up a review process by Line Managers that consisted of Line Managers checking participants' responses to the Self-Assessment questionnaire to correct possible over or under-estimation. This helped ensure that the results collected reflect the reality on the ground, thus ensuring the accuracy and relevance of the competency gaps identified.
- The RTK presents the results of the organisational assessment using average scores and maximum scores (the latter refers to the maximum score obtained by an individual from the same profile/organisation). Maximum scores were found to be particularly useful in discussing training formats, as they indicate the extent to which the internal expertise can be leveraged to organise trainings.
- Constrained by time, the RTK did not have the chance to provide detailed guidance on the interpretation of the competency framework, which generated questions from the participants during the Self-Assessment. Reflecting on this aspect, RTK recommends organizing a workshop at the start of the implementation of the Self-Assessment to support the smooth and efficient implementation of the assessment.

Where to find ProcurComp^{EU}?

ProcurComp^{EU} is available in all official EU languages on the website of the European Commission:
https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/public-procurement/support-tools-public-buyers_en

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