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Local Action Plan on Socially Responsible Public Procurement in the City of Gleisdorf, Austria



SOLARSTADT
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Local Roundtable in Gleisdorf (Summary)

The [City of Gleisdorf](#), located in the Styria region of Austria, is a partner in the project “Community Resilience through Social Procurement”, referred to as ‘CO-RESP’. The CO-RESP project funded by Single Market Programme (SMP COSME), aims to help the local economy – through the use of ‘Socially Responsible Public Procurement’ (SRPP) – to create new jobs for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups by coordinating the exchange of good practices and enhance the inter-regional collaboration between social economy actors and regional/local authorities at the European level.

In this context, and as part of the deliverables of the project, the City of Gleisdorf – with the support of the partnership – organised a Local Roundtable in Gleisdorf, Austria to bring together relevant local and regional stakeholders (local or regional social economy organisations, enterprises, local or regional public authorities, experts, etc.). The objectives of these Roundtables are:

- Sharing and discussing examples of good practices gathered during the Social Economy Mission (WP2);
- Gathering feedback from local and regional stakeholders and experts on the needs and plans on how to use the lessons learnt of socially responsible public procurement at local level.

The City of Gleisdorf (Austria), held the Local Roundtable on December 5th, 2023. It was attended by local authorities of the city of Gleisdorf, including the Mayor Christoph Stark, representatives of the cities of Ludersdorf-Wilfersdorf and Albersdorf-Prebuch, representative of the Die Oststeirische Städtekooperation (the Eight Cities Cooperation of Eastern Styria), social economy organisations employing persons with disabilities such as Hausmasters Chance B and the German Bundesverband der Inklusionsunternehmen (BAG IF), as well as stakeholders and experts from Zentrum für Sozialwirtschaft (ZfSW) and University of Salzburg.

Partners from ZfSW introduced the CO-RESP project and the project’s [Declaration on the use of Socially Responsible Public Procurement \(SRPP\)](#) (also referred to as ‘Gleisdorf Declaration’), which served as the one the main basis of discussion, besides the reflections on promises practices. Furthermore, participants discussed about the current state of SRPP in Austria and the cooperation in between cities for further maximising the use of the principles of SRPP to boost local growth and development. In this context, discussion ranged from public procurement and its impact on the creation of employment opportunities and inclusion, to environmental criteria and inter-regional cooperation between the neighbouring cities, identifying common goals, needs and joint measures.

Preamble

As part of sustainable development and in the pursuit of enhancing the well-being of citizens and the entire region, the cities and municipalities of Eastern Styria, within the framework of the 'Gleisdorf Declaration', commit to undertake socially responsible public procurement (SRPP) as a fundamental component of their socio-political, economic and environmental agenda.

Eastern Styria, a region characterised by agriculture, tourism, craftsmanship, innovative industry, and a diverse community, faces the challenge of aligning economic growth and social justice with ecological sustainability. This region, known for its rich tradition in promoting renewable energies and recognised as the Weiz-Gleisdorf energy region since 1996, focuses on renewable energy use, energy efficiency, and electromobility. Despite being a flourishing industrial location with low unemployment rates and continuous population growth, the cities and municipalities are confronted with challenges.

The evaluation of practices and the experience in the CO-RESP project, resulted in a reflection on how to address the challenges of smaller municipalities with 8,000 to 12,000 inhabitants that at time find it difficult in managing larger procurement projects alone. As a way to address these challenges, the focus is on partnerships to manage these risks and to effectively integrate social criteria into the procurement process that ultimately leads to local development, by creating more opportunities for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.

The City of Gleisdorf, alongside other cities and municipalities of the Eastern Styria region, are certain that supporting and promoting local and regional economies, creating jobs, especially for disadvantaged groups, and minimising the ecological footprint is a part of bigger and joint effort essential to ensure sustainable growth and enhance the quality of life for the population and the overall development of the region itself.

With this self-commitment, the City of Gleisdorf, alongside other cities and municipalities of the Eastern Styria region recognise that socially responsible procurement is not just a market participation tool but also a means to promote social justice, economic stability, and ecological integrity. In this context, the Action Plan is an expression of our commitment to act as a model for best practices and to bring about positive change that extends beyond the borders of our region.

Our common goal is to establish, through concrete measures and the involvement of all relevant actors, a robust system of socially responsible procurement that can serve as a model for other regions while simultaneously meeting the specific needs of our municipalities.

Local Action Plan

Objective

Maximising the use of socially responsible procurement in Eastern Styria to support and boost the local economy, by creating job opportunities for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups, while minimising the ecological footprint. Therefore, becoming a point of reference in SRPP at the national and European level.

Key Measures

- Creating and supporting the creation of job opportunities for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups, by promoting and stimulating the creation of jobs in the local economy through the use of public procurement.
- Maintaining reserved contracts for public gardening and winter services, and direct purchasing for catering distributed among all local caterers.
- Debating and evaluating the integration of social criteria in public contracts and/or in the conditions of their performance, in public contracts other than reserved markets.
- Promoting and supporting inclusive employment by cooperating with companies such as Hausmasters GmbH, Chance B-Group and other social economy organisations employing a high percentage of their workforce from disadvantaged groups.
- Promoting and leading the regional debate on SRPP, by actively coordinating the exchange of practices and organising regular meetings that bring cities and stakeholders to discuss about the status, progress, and way forward for SRPP.
- Building and broadening partnerships and networks by involving the Austrian Association of Cities and Municipalities and establishing a nationwide platform for sustainable and social procurement.
- Participating in the development of a training system for local authorities and civil servants in socially responsible public procurement.
- Debating, evaluating, and developing a set of rules and common standards to build a regional platform for SRPP that allows supervising, coordinating, measuring, and following the implementation process of a public contract.
- Improving and ensuring correct use of funding and budget control.
- Reducing the carbon footprint by purchasing products and services with lower CO2 footprints and prioritising sustainable materials and renewable energy.