



Bringing about real, sustainable change in the market

An energy-efficient future was on the international agenda when Birmingham played host to the Procura⁺ Seminar on 'smarter engagement with the market' on 6-7 November 2008.

Procura⁺ is the European Campaign designed to help support public authorities across Europe in implementing sustainable procurement and help promote their achievements. This year's participants meeting was held on 7 November 2008 following the Seminar. "Procura⁺ gives most value for money and offers great networking possibilities, combined with new and interesting information on latest approaches such as pre-procurement of sustainable innovations." said Collan Murray, Senior Procurement Manager from the Greater London Authority - participating in the Campaign since early 2008.

Birmingham City Council's Sustainability Team and Corporate Procurement Services, in conjunction with the regional development agency Advantage West Midlands, and the local strategic partnership for Birmingham, Be Birmingham, organised the event with ICLEI.

The Procura⁺ Seminar provided an excellent opportunity for local and regional government representatives from across Europe to learn and exchange experiences on how to use the pre-procurement phase to make smarter purchasing decisions, facilitate dialogues between procurers and suppliers, and reduce their cities' energy and CO₂ emissions. Supported by the SMART-SPP, project participants discussed next steps towards procurement of sustainable innovations. A dialogue between manufacturers of electric vehicles and LED lighting with procurers and other experts was encouraged.

Speakers included Lieve Bos from the European Commission (Pre-Commercial Procurement), Hans Wendschlag representing Hewlett Packard (Sweden), Dave Starling, Head of Procurement, Bromley Council (United Kingdom), Robert Stüssi from AVERE – European Association for Battery, Hybrid and Fuel Cell Electric Road Vehicles (Portugal) and Keith Sequeira from the European Commission's Lead Market Initiative.

Councillor Paul Tilsley, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council and Chair of Be Birmingham said "Communities all over the world are facing the dramatic consequences of climate change, excessive use of natural resources, threats to biodiversity and increasing poverty. Sustainable procurement – spending public money responsibly on products and services that foster sustainable development – must therefore be a priority. On Birmingham's behalf I welcome the work of ICLEI and the role our city can play in making a more sustainable future".

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Notes to editors:

1. The Procura⁺ series of seminars, formerly known as the "Buy it Green"-Network (BIG-Net) Seminars, provide a European platform to promote exchange amongst purchasers from all levels of governments, suppliers and manufacturers, policy-makers and multipliers on specific topics related to sustainable procurement.
2. The Procura⁺ Sustainable Procurement Campaign was established in 2004 by ICLEI to help drive the mainstreaming of sustainable public procurement throughout Europe. Through participating in the Campaign, public authorities can contribute to a growing international movement and help bring about real change on the market. ICLEI works with a number of organisations in different European countries who act as National Partners to the Campaign. In the United Kingdom, this role is taken on by Global to Local.
More information on Procura⁺:
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ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a world-wide membership organisation of more than 1000 local governments and their associations (over 185 in Europe). ICLEI is dedicated to building and supporting a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions. ICLEI was founded in 1990 as the 'International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives'. The Council was established when more than 200 local governments from 43 countries convened at our inaugural conference, the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future, at the United Nations in New York. More information about ICLEI: <http://www.iclei.org>

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