

Sustainable cleaning services and associated services Dinan Agglomération (Agglomeration of Dinan), France

Background

Agglomération of Dinan is an intercommunal entity centered in Dinan, a French city located in the Region of Brittany (in the department of Côtes-d'Armor). The Agglomération of Dinan covers 64 municipalities and has around 100,000 inhabitants.

Starting from 2022, Agglomération of Dinan will implement its Territorial Climate Air Energy Plan (TCAEP), which was envisioned as a tool for facilitating and coordinating the energy transition of the territory at the intermunicipal level. Its aims are mitigating climate change, developing renewable energies, controlling energy consumption and reducing atmospheric pollution factors.

Indoor air quality is one of the TCAEP's focus areas P and the climate-energy department acts as a promoter of the related actions, in collaboration with other departments. In line with the objectives of the TCAEP, in June 2020, Agglomération of Dinan initiated a public procurement procedure for cleaning and associated services, with a low environmental impact and including a social responsibility component as well.

Procurement objectives

Agglomération of Dinan's approach was to focus on social, environmental and economic aspects. They identified indoor air quality as a priority by reducing effluent and indoor air pollution and by protecting natural resources. They incorporated social clauses through a socio-professional integration scheme (to fight against unemployment and social exclusion) and through social progress clauses as award criteria.



The approach taken was to procure services on the basis of both functionality and quality. The procurement aimed at harmonising the cleaning service for indoor and outdoor space and adapting the service to the specificities of each building, with the end goal of preserving Agglomération of Dinan's real estate by procuring a quality service. They included solid social and environmental components into the process.

Prior to initiating the procurement procedure, Agglomération of Dinan carried out a complete inventory of all its buildings and their functionality in order to establish the level of quality of cleaning services requested, based on the use of the buildings. The intercommunal entity owns a variety of buildings and the procurement in question targeted daycares, sports halls, waste disposal

centres, and other sites. Agglomération of Dinan aimed to purchase sanitary supplies with low environmental impact and distribute them to the various facilities to make them available for the cleaning services.

The inventory activity was accompanied by a market engagement phase, to get an understanding of potential bidders' capacity and to identify relevant social issues to tackle. Thanks to the market dialogue, the following challenges were recognised:

- Access to employment;
- Access to training for cleaning personnel;
- Gender inequality in accessing managerial positions;
- Rotating shifts and anti-social hours (which makes it difficult to find a proper work-life balance).

Criteria used

This procurement consisted of an open procedure to establish a framework agreement. The procurement was divided into three lots of different sizes, each including cleaning services for different facilities. Each company could win a maximum of one lot, in order to promote the diversity of economic players.

Subject matter of the contract:

- Cleaning services with a low environmental impact: cleaning of the premises, waste removal, disinfection of the premises, cleaning of indoor and outdoor glass surfaces, supply of eco-friendly sanitary products; and
- Associated services: supply and placement of hand towels, toilet paper, liquid soap and air freshener, reporting of defects;
- Supply of hand towels (recycled paper), toilet paper (certified with the [EU Ecolabel](#), or equivalent, and with the [FSC 100%](#) label, or equivalent), liquid soap and air freshener (certified with the [Ecocert](#) label, or equivalent).

Technical specifications:

Environmental criteria:

- Cleaning products: there was a requirement to purchase eco-label certified products for at least 90% of products. The 90% did not include specific disinfectant products required for the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Eco-friendly service management: tenderers were required to propose and detail as part of their tender, the methodology, means, solutions and processes in order to enable protection of the environment.
- Associated services: obligation to supply:
 - hand towels made from recycled paper;
 - toilet paper holding the [EU Ecolabel](#) or equivalent *and* the [FSC](#) label or equivalent;
 - liquid soap and air freshener holding the [Ecocert](#) label or equivalent.

Social responsibility criteria:

- Employment scheme (for lots 1 and 2): obligation to hire unemployed people for 35 hours per €25,000 invoiced by the contractor for lot 1 and 2.

- As per the French Public Procurement Code (Art. L2111-1), the contractor has to include in their workforce certain priority groups, such as disabled people, younger and less qualified people, unemployed and long term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups.

Award criteria:

The contract was awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

- Price: was given a weighting of 60% for each lot;
- Methodology of implementation (including methodology and materials proposed for the implementation and quality of products and materials): weighting of 25% for each lot;
- Axis of social progress (including methodology for implementation to favour daily work without interruptions, professional training and prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) and, for Lot 1 and 2, gender equality): weighting 15% for each lot. They entailed the following sub-criteria:
 - Social progress clause: organisation of working time that enabled staff to work daily and avoid anti-social working hours.
 - Gender equality and fight against discriminations: in Lot 1 and 2 tenderers were encouraged to undertake actions contributing to the achievement of equal pay for women and men and to staff development, by promoting, in particular female staff's access to positions of responsibility.
 - Staff training and prevention of MSD: tenders provide their staff with training opportunities and pay attention to the prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Contract performance clauses:

- Any breach of regulatory obligations concerning the protection of the environment, and the use of products holding ecolabels may lead to contract termination or will be subject to a penalty.
- In case the product performance is not satisfactory, the contracting authority is allowed to apply a penalty or terminate the contract early.

Quote

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Results

The contract was awarded on 12 October 2020 and entered into force on 1 January 2021. The value of the contract was €199,902 per year. It was concluded for a year, with a possibility of renewal for three times with a maximum length of four years. Three to four companies submitted offers for each of the three lots. Three companies of different sizes were selected for each of the three lots. All tenders met the environmental and quality requirements for the services.

Agglomeration of Dinan is expecting savings of 20.2% in comparison to the

previous contracts of the same kind, corresponding to €46,391.46 per year.

Environmental and social impacts

The first indoor air pollution measurement was carried out in June 2021 during cleaning operations. The measurement was carried out on two sites and aimed at analysing levels of volatile organic compound (VOC) and formaldehyde (CH₂O). It showed a reduction in indoor pollution. A reduction of air pollutants was recorded by the measurements for all three lots. In addition, a significant decrease in water consumption was also observed.

The frequency of measurements is four times per month.

In terms of social progress, training plans have been put in place for the companies concerned and attendance records showed a parity of female and male supervisors in the execution of the contract. The companies that won the two largest lots are already involved in a social inclusion process which goes beyond the employment requirements of the tender.

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and related expectations in terms of hygiene standards and disinfection, no significant incidents have occurred in any of the buildings since the start of the service.

Lessons learned

- One key learning is that price is not the sole criterion that guarantees savings. Costs can be saved by reducing the environmental impacts of the services provided and by enhancing social inclusion.
- An essential part of the preliminary stage of the procurement process is the definition of needs. The mapping activity carried out helped to optimise the services depending on the use made of each building.
- This contract also showed that even with a reduction of water consumption it is possible to ensure quality cleaning services. Moreover, purchasing products holding an ecolabel does not necessarily result in a more expensive service.
- In order to bring together the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, environmental and social) into a tender, it is necessary to establish the expectations on each of these issues in order to obtain a variety of bids.
- Organising a sustainable procurement process requires knowledge and capacity sharing between different departments, from the needs assessment to the execution of the contract.

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For related information, please see European GPP criteria for [Indoor Cleaning Services](#) and the [Technical Background Report](#).