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EFCA calls for ambitious overhaul of public procurement rules

“Europe faces unprecedented challenges that require high-quality engineering solutions, not the cheapest, but the best suited for long-term societal benefit. The current overreliance on lowest-price awards undermines innovation and sustainability. The upcoming revision of the directive is a unique opportunity to put quality, value, and resilience at the heart of public procurement” says **EFCA President Inés Ferguson** as the European Federation of Engineering Consultancy Associations, publishes a position paper **urging the European Union to introduce decisive reforms in the upcoming revision of the Public Procurement directive**.

EFCA’s position paper underscores the urgent need to move away from procurement practices overly focused on the lowest price and instead adopt approaches that prioritise long-term value creation, quality, and sustainability, especially for intellectual services such as engineering and design.

For the upcoming revision of the Public Procurement directive, EFCA recommends curtailing the use of lowest-price criteria in the procurement of intellectual services; mandating the use of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), with safeguards to prevent de facto lowest-price awards; introducing price thresholds and mechanisms to eliminate abnormally low tenders; sound public procurement practices that can promote sustainable and durable solutions; promoting the “two-envelope system” to ensure quality is assessed independently from cost; cutting red tape and removing barriers for SMEs; enhancing digitalisation, simplifying procedures, and improving SME access and ensuring that intellectual property rights (IPR) generated in public projects are not unduly restricted.

Carl Fläring, Chair of EFCA’s Working Group on Public Procurement adds: *“EFCA believes that the upcoming revision of the Public Procurement directive is a key opportunity to remove barriers to innovation and professional quality. Our recommendations aim to support a shift towards more strategic, flexible, and innovation-friendly procurement practices that strengthen Europe’s competitiveness while delivering better value for society.”*

With Consulting engineers playing a vital role in the delivery of resilient, innovative, and high-quality infrastructure and built environments, EFCA also stresses the role of sound procurement practices in supporting sustainable investment. Well-designed infrastructure and buildings require upfront costs but generate long-term returns for society, in line with European Green Deal and resilience objectives.

As the European institutions move forward with the directive’s revision, EFCA urges policymakers to seize this opportunity to reframe public procurement as a strategic tool for delivering quality, sustainability, and innovation in Europe’s built environment.

[Download EFCA's full position paper.](#)

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EDITOR’S NOTE: EFCA has member associations in 27 countries and is the sole European federation representing the business interests of professional engineering consultancy and related services, a sector that employs more than one million staff in Europe.