

**Question for written answer E-003593/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Ioan-Rareş Bogdan (PPE)

Subject: Public procurement reform: Higher bills for councils and backroom negotiations?

The Commission is proposing a root-and-branch overhaul of the public procurement market which would see the existing directives replaced by a directly applicable regulation. The proposal does away with the traditional lowest-price criterion and introduces mandatory “quality” criteria with weightings of up to 50 % and direct negotiations between authorities and firms.

In practice, these mechanisms could make local projects hugely more expensive and public spending less transparent.

1. How will the Commission financially offset the inevitable rise in costs for local authorities in less developed regions due to the requirement to introduce social and environmental criteria with weightings of at least 30-50 %?
2. What specific corruption control mechanisms does the new framework introduce to prevent backroom deals, against the backdrop of the legalisation of direct negotiations between contracting authorities and certain tenderers?
3. What economic data did the Commission rely on when it concluded that the restriction of competition through the “European preference” clause would not lead to an increase in the end prices paid by taxpayers for large-scale infrastructure projects?

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