

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002575/25
to the Commission
Virginie Joron (PFE)
(25 June 2025)**

Subject: Public procurement: when Brussels finances Turkish and Iranian companies

Some French people find it difficult to watch their taxes being used to pay for free motorways in Poland, trains in Spain or nursery assistants in Romania. For example, the Commission has earmarked EUR 1.5 billion for the Romanian border ⁽¹⁾, EUR 419 million for railway infrastructure in Spain (Almeria) ⁽²⁾ and EUR 448 million for the training of nursery assistants in Romania ⁽³⁾.

Brussels should ensure a European preference when awarding public contracts.

In Spain, Romania and Greece, many EU public contracts are awarded or subcontracted to companies from non-EU countries that do not apply reciprocity or are not signatories to the GPA ⁽⁴⁾. For example, EU taxpayers finance companies supplying pipes and water pipes manufactured in Türkiye (SMS), China and Iran (Hanyco).

1. How does the Commission ascertain if products used for public contracts benefiting from EU subsidies are made in Europe or in a country with reciprocal access to public contracts?
2. Why does the Commission not publish a list of the countries that have not offered reciprocal access to their public contracts in the last five years? ⁽⁵⁾
3. Will the Commission require tenders — regardless of the amount and percentage rule ⁽⁶⁾ — containing products from third countries that do not apply reciprocity to be excluded, whether or not those countries have signed the GPA?

Submitted: 25.6.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(4 September 2025)**

Third-country economic operators, products and services can access the EU market on equal terms with EU-based firms if procurement is covered by international procurement agreements to which the EU is a party, such as the World Trade Organisation Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) or a Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

For suppliers from countries not covered by such agreements, without specific EU legislation governing such access, contracting authorities may decide on a case-by-case basis whether to admit or exclude them from a procurement procedure. This approach has been confirmed by the Court of Justice of the EU ⁽¹⁾.

To allow EU contracting entities to see which bidders are eligible to participate in public procurement procedures in EU Member States, based on provisions of the GPA and bilateral EU trade agreements, a dedicated Procurement for Buyers Tool ⁽²⁾ was developed. It is accessible via Access2Market Database ⁽³⁾.

Member States implementing cohesion policy funds should follow EU public procurement rules and procedures to ensure a level-playing field and effective cohesion policy investments.

Within this obligation, and in the absence of specific provisions in the relevant funds' rules, it is up to the individual buyer in the Member State to decide on participation of bidders from countries for which concerned contract is not covered by GPA or FTA and, if yes, on what conditions.

¹ ¹Border-Curtici-Simeria railway line. Total budget (2013-2023): EUR 1 809 360 168.12; EU contribution: EUR 1 537 956 142.91 (85%), <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3095706>.

² ²Murcia-Almería railway line. Total budget: EUR 523 966 300.00; EU contribution: EUR 1 419 173 142.91 (80%), <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3159194>.

³ ³'Progress in the quality of alternative childcare'. EU contribution: EUR 448 million out of a budget of EUR 530 million, <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/projects/Q3097484>.

⁴ ⁴WTO Agreement on Government Procurement, https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/memobs_e.htm.

⁵ ⁵Article 86(2) of Directive 2014/25/EU (water, energy, transport and postal services), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014L0025>.

⁶ ⁶Article 85(2): any tender submitted may be rejected where the proportion of the products originating in third countries exceeds 50% of the total value of the products.

⁽¹⁾ Cases C-652/22 *Kolin* and C-266/22 *Qingdao*, para. 64.

⁽²⁾ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/procurementbuyers/#/procurementlocation>.

⁽³⁾ <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/home>.

The Political Guidelines 2024-2029 ⁽⁴⁾ announced a revision of the 2014 EU public procurement Directives ⁽⁵⁾. The Commission is carrying out an evaluation of these Directives ⁽⁶⁾ to assess whether EU public procurement rules work as intended.

Once evaluated, the Commission will consider concrete measures and options to shape the new proposal, including on international aspects.

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/about/commission-2024-2029_en.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/23/oj/eng>; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/24/oj/eng>; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/25/oj/eng>.

⁽⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14427-Public-procurement-directives-evaluation_en.