

**Central America-European Union Association Agreement**  
**Grupo Ad-Hoc on Public Procurement**  
**Friday June 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**Agreed Minutes**

**1 Adoption of the agenda. The Parties discussed and agreed the agenda attached on Annex 1.**

**2 Implementation of the Title on Government Procurement.**

**2.1 Single point of access.**

Central America shall analyze appropriate ways to comply with the commitments in Article 212 for the implementation of a single contact point, since it is a matter of mutual interest. Central America requested to receive a copy of the report submitted to the EU by the Central American Economic Integration Secretariat (SIECA for its acronym in Spanish) regarding this issue. The European Union appreciates the willingness of Central America to work on the implementation of a single contact point and invites Central American Countries to present their specific needs to the European Union. The European Union will provide comments on the basis of the Central America's proposal.

**2.2 Transparency mechanisms on government procurement for tenders and use of electronic systems.**

**Central America**

Central American countries indicated that their procurement systems are open, and the information is available to the public, there are different stages of development regarding the use of electronic systems.

**Costa Rica**

There have been legal amendments in order to officialize a single system on electronic procurement. The Costa Rican Government Procurement System (*SICOP for its acronym in Spanish*) [www.sicop.go.cr](http://www.sicop.go.cr), is currently used by 80% of the public institutions. It is a transactional system and is able to manage electronic procedures at 100%.

**Guatemala.**

All the information related to procurement processes is available at [www.guatecompras.gt](http://www.guatecompras.gt). This is the official transactional system that allows the whole process to be managed electronically.

**El Salvador.**

El Salvador is currently working on a transactional government procurement system. All the information regarding government procurement is available at <https://www.comprasal.gob.sv>.

**Honduras**

The National Office on Government procurement (ONCAE for its acronym in Spanish), is the entity in charge of issuing rulings and guidelines of general application to improve government procurement systems. Each institution at the central or sub central level is in charge of managing their government procurement processes. Information related to yearly procurement plans is submitted to this office, who is in charge of making them available to all providers. This unity follows transparency rules in all the processes.

## **Nicaragua**

Nicaragua has the System on Electronic Government Procurement (SISCAE for its acronym in Spanish) <http://nicaraguacompra.gob.ni/>, which makes all the information related to government procurement performed by the procuring entities available to the public.

## **Panama**

The official government procurement system of Panama allows all the procedures to be managed electronically. The official website is [www.panamacompras.gob.pa](http://www.panamacompras.gob.pa).

## **European Union**

The European Union has implemented a government procurement system, that covers the procurement cycle and workflow. Documents are available to the public in the official languages of the EU. The official website is [www.ted.europa.eu](http://www.ted.europa.eu).

The EU will provide the official information related to the use of the system.

### **2.3 Public procurement law and recent developments in government procurement.**

#### **Central America**

Costa Rica amended its government procurement law through Law 9576, in order to allow SME's to bid as consortiums. As to date, there is a draft law to amend the government procurement law.

Guatemala made some amendments, in order to include auctions and electronic procurement.

El Salvador is working on a draft law to amend the Law on Procurement of the Public Administration, to update the procurement processes and include electronic auctions.

The rest of the countries have not amended their domestic legislation.

#### **European Union**

New EU Directives were adopted in 2014 and EU Member States had to transpose these Directives into national legislations by 2016. In addition, the EU developed new policies to improve transparency, promote joint procurement, professionalize the procurement staff and improve SMEs participation on government procurement.

### **2.4 Statistics related to government procurement.**

Statistics are available in the following websites.

### **Central America**

**Costa Rica:** <https://www.cgr.go.cr/02-consultas/compra-fp/consulta-compra-fp.html>

**Guatemala:** [www.guatecompras.gt](http://www.guatecompras.gt)

**El Salvador:** <https://www.comprasal.gob.sv>

**Panamá:** [www.panamacompras.gob.pa](http://www.panamacompras.gob.pa).

There is no information in the case of Honduras and Nicaragua.

### **European Union**

The information is available at: [www.data.europa.eu](http://www.data.europa.eu) , which has information on statistics related to fulfillment of international trade agreements as well as performance of government procurement, among other information.

#### **2.5 Disclosure of the provisions of the Government Procurement Title.**

Costa Rica has been working with its national authorities on government procurement. Since there is a draft law, there will be a coordination process in order to grant adequate implementation of international government procurement commitments, consistent with such amendments.

In Nicaragua the General Directorate on Government Procurement from the Ministry of Finances trains and provides technical advice to all public entities.

There is a draft “Single Manual on Government Procurement” which is being reviewed, and rulings were issued on “*Basic criteria to determine the application of International Trade Agreements*”, which is applicable to all trade agreements and has been helpful for all the procuring entities.

El Salvador has issued a “*Manual of application procedures on government procurement for the Public Administration*”, which recognizes provisions of the Association Agreement.

The other countries have also coordinated training activities with their public entities.

### **3 Transparency, harmonization and integration within the framework of the Customs Union between the three countries of the Northern Triangle.**

The Northern Triangle countries informed that the approach of the Customs Union is to work toward trade facilitation. Thus, government procurement issues have not been addressed.

### **4 Cooperation**

The EU will provide information on how to canalize cooperation initiatives, within the framework of the Association Agreement.