

SMEs' access to public procurement

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Basic data about SMEs in the EU

- 99.8% of 25 million enterprises
- 70% of total employment
- Average firm size: 5
- About 50% of all European SMEs do not have employees

Just a reminder....

Size class	% of firms	Average size
Micro (0-9)	93.0	3
Small (10-49)	5.9	19
Medium (50-249)	0.9	100
SMEs	99.8	5
Large (≥ 250)	0.2	1,049

Study on SMEs' access to public procurement

- Commissioned by DG Enterprise
- Objective: measuring the access of SMEs to 'European-scale' public procurement and identifying possibilities to improve their access (in 15 MS)
- Study carried out in 2003, using a database of contracts awarded in 2001

Awards in TED 2001

- 52,000 award notices
- Average contract € 345,000
- Average contract for SMEs: € 249,000
- Local authorities: 60% of all contracts
- Many differences between countries

Average size of contract (x € 1,000)

	SMEs	Large
Construction	216	1,232
Manufacturing	248	386
Bus. services	319	348

Experiences of SMEs - I

- Successful involvement of SMEs on PP-market: 78%
- Winning SMEs:
 - Are experienced in PP (tender a lot; PP is mostly part of their strategy; update administrative documents regularly)
 - Get mainly contracts from local authorities

Experiences of SMEs - II

- Winning SMEs face the following main problems:
 - shortage of information;
 - unclear information;
 - administrative burden;
 - short time span.

Experiences of SMEs - III

- Improvement is expected by more (electronic) information and less administrative burden
- SMEs benefit from prior information, pre-selection and external help and training

Experiences of Awarding Authorities

- SMEs strong point: flexibility
- SMEs weak points: financial capacity and continuity
- Expected key solution for improving access of SMEs to public procurement: more and better information; simplification of rules; subcontracting (indirect access to PP)

Links

- **Procurement reports:**

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-studies/craft-publicprocurement.htm>

- **EIM:** <http://www.eim.nl/>

- **ENSR:** <http://www.ensr-net.com/>