

Green deal for reducing hazardous substances in kindergartens and pre-school environment – The green deal agreement on Sustainable Procurement in Finland

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Finnish national green deal for reducing hazardous substances in kindergartens and pre-school environment

- In November 2020, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of the Environment, the cities of Helsinki, Tampere, and Vantaa, and the procurement organizations Monetra Oulu Ltd. and Tuomi Logistiikka Ltd. announced a voluntary national green deal to reduce harmful substances in early childhood education environment.
- The agreement is valid until the end of 2025. KEINO network-based Competence center for Sustainable and Innovative public procurement supports the implementation of the agreement.
- The aim of the agreement is to reduce harmful chemicals in the early childhood education environment through public procurement. In addition, to increase the procurement of products and services that have been awarded the Nordic Ecolabel.

What is a procurement green deal?

The green deal is a voluntary procurement-focused contract model that a procurement unit makes with the ministry.

- The procurement green deal is a **new model in Finland**. The contract model has been developed in co-operation with procurement units and ministries.
- The Green Deal agreement supports the procurement units' **achieving their strategic goals**.
- Support is provided for the **preparation and implementation** of procurement.
- The agreement sets **ambitious and concrete targets for procurement**. The goals support sustainable development and innovation in procurement. The objectives and aimed level will be specified on a contract-by-contract basis.

Toxic-free environments are safer for children



Legislation is not enough to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of chemicals.

- Prohibition of chemicals by legislation is slow and requires particularly strong evidence of adverse health effects.
- New chemicals are entering to market all the time.
- Controlling and testing prohibited substances in products is challenging.
- There is a need to set requirements for chemicals in public procurement and monitor the implementation of the requirements.



Children are sensitive to the effects of harmful chemicals

- Based on science, exposure to chemicals can interfere with children's growth and development.
- The children's skin is more sensitive and does not protect well from harmful chemicals.

The green deal agreement on sustainable Procurement in Finland

- **Background:** The [EU's chemicals strategy's](#) (2020) aims to improve chemical safety, support the introduction of sustainable and safe products on the EU market.
- [Finland is currently preparing a national chemicals program.](#)
- The risks associated with harmful chemicals are minimized through chemicals legislation (REACH, CLP-legislation).
- Procurement units can make the green deal agreement if they can commit to the objectives and measures of the contract.
- All Finnish society's commitments to sustainable development can be found from:
[Society's commitment to sustainable development](#)

Objectives of the agreement

The goal of the green deal agreement (2020 - 2025) is to reduce the total exposure of children to chemicals through public procurement.



The agreement's goals:

- Reduce content of antimicrobial substances, fragrances and dyes as well as substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) in environments.
- Apply stricter chemical restrictions than is required by the EU Toy Safety Directives and Finnish law on the procurement of all toys (kids under 14 years old).
- Encourage municipalities and other contracting public authorities to require information on substances of Very High Concern on call for tenders.
- Create shared procurement criteria and contract terms for the reduction of harmful substances.



Product groups selected for the criteria work

- Municipalities and joint procurement organizations select the product groups to which the agreement applies.

Following product groups have been selected (2020 – 2022):

- 1) Detergents, Cleaning Services
(the criteria have been published in 2021)
- 2) Outdoor Playground Equipments and Furniture
(the criteria have been published in 2022)
- 3) Indoor Toys
(the criteria will be published in 2022)
- 4) Indoor Furniture
(the criteria will be published in 2022)



The development of procurement criteria is an ongoing process

- Aim for model criteria is to be applied by contracting entities. Usability has been ensured by a careful study of the current situation. Benchmarking with other criteria was done, such as EU Green Public Procurement and Swedish National Agency for Public Procurement.
- During the criteria work, KEINO and procurement units had dialogues with the markets.
- The published criteria will be updated based on experiences.
- The next year we will continue to develop criteria for the new product groups.

Thank you!

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