



Ms Katharina Knapton-Vierlich
Acting Head of Unit G/1 Public Procurement Strategy
DG GROW, European Commission

Brussels, 9 April 2019

Subject: Current revision of the Buying Social Guide

Dear Ms. Knapton-Vierlich,

In the framework of the revision of the Buying Social Guide (“the Guide”), the Social Partners in Private Security, Contract Catering and Industrial Cleaning would like to draw your attention to their respective Best Value guides. The guides [“Buying quality private security services”](#) and [“Selecting Best Value - A Guide for private and public organisations awarding contracts for cleaning services”](#) were developed within the framework of the Sectoral Social Dialogues and with the financial support of the European Commission. The guide “Choosing best value in contracting food services” is currently being developed, also under a project funded by the European Commission in the context of the Contract Catering Social Dialogue, and will be published in September.

These reference guides highlight the benefits of choosing quality services in the procurement process to help ensuring that employees are treated fairly. They offer to public authorities – but also to private organisations awarding contracts – a balanced and thorough approach on how to ensure the selection of best value, reflecting the experience in each of the mentioned sectors. They provide specific examples on how a quality-based approach ensures the best working conditions of employees and compliance with European and national legislation and collective agreements before and during the execution of security, cleaning and catering service contracts.

Against this background, we would like to draw your services’ attention to the importance of these sectoral guides and their content, and to the need for them to be used and referred to in the next edition of the Buying Social Guide. Not only can they provide valuable examples and ideas to the drafters of the revised Guide, but they can also help disseminate the sectoral guides, as tools developed with the support of the European Commission, which will be of help for procurers and, consequently, improve socially-focused public procurement.

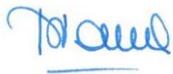
Furthermore, whilst we welcome the Commission's initiative to revise the Buying Social Guide, we would like to express our concern regarding the Commission's intention of adopting the Guide without any further public consultation. We understand the project is delayed and there is a will to move faster, but we would like to suggest that at least Social Partners are consulted.

The European Commission considers public procurement a strategic tool for policy makers, which should not be seen as an administrative process, but as an instrument to deliver societal value for public money through smart spending. We believe that societal value can only be created through the inclusion and democratic participation of those sectors directly impacted by public procurement.

For the same reasons, we also demand an active role in the review of the Public Procurement Directive from its beginning in 2021. All our organisations remain at your disposal to provide valuable sectoral expertise in public procurement in our respective sectors.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this letter. We remain at your disposal for any further information you may need.

Your sincerely,



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CoESS



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