



Newsletter

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Procure Team

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Welcome to the first edition of the PROCURE project newsletter!

Silvia Bossio De Stefano

Earlier this year, partners from public and private organisations across EU Member States were awarded EU4Health funding to conduct an in-depth assessment of healthcare procurement practices. This cross-European collaboration, titled **PROCURE**, unites a diverse group of **healthcare institutions, procurement organisations, suppliers, and supporting networks** from countries including Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Spain, Sweden, Portugal, and Romania. Together, these partners will explore ways to improve healthcare procurement systems to meet the challenges that future public health emergencies will have to face.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light significant vulnerabilities in the healthcare supply chain, underscoring the **urgent need for coordination and cooperation at every level**: EU, national, regional, and local. **PROCURE's goal is to create resilient, efficient procurement systems** that can better withstand crises and ensure rapid, effective responses in times of need.

To achieve this, PROCURE partners have developed **an ambitious work programme**. They will conduct a comprehensive assessment of healthcare procurement practices, examining the impacts of COVID-19 on procurement organisations and the changes implemented in response to the pandemic. By comparing pre- and post-COVID-19 procurement processes, **the project will identify best practices, new strategies, and policies** that can inform a future-ready procurement framework across the EU.

Throughout the project, partners will engage directly with healthcare institutions and procurement organisations, sharing insights and lessons learned. These exchanges will play a crucial role in establishing adaptable, resilient procurement practices applicable at all levels of healthcare governance.

PROCURE will provide a set of recommendations and a policy framework for EU healthcare procurement. The project's final outcomes will be shared with healthcare institutions and procurement organisations at **a major conference in mid-2025**.

For ongoing updates and to join the conversation on healthcare procurement, please **follow PROCURE**.



[@projectprocure.eu](https://www.projectprocure.eu)

Raquel Ares Morandeira Manager, Funding Unit, SILO

Interview to the project coordinator by Maddalena Illario

In an exclusive interview with SILO team, **Raquel Ares**, the project coordinator of PROCURE, help us to explore **the complexities of healthcare procurement within the European Union** and the pivotal role of the project in fostering resilience across healthcare systems. As someone deeply embedded in the network of European procurers and stakeholders, Raquel offers valuable insights into the current challenges faced by the healthcare procurement sector, particularly as it prepares to handle future crises and pandemics. Through this interview, Raquel discusses **both the obstacles and the opportunities** within the healthcare procurement landscape, explaining how the **PROCURE project** aims to strengthen collaboration, enhance efficiency, and ensure more resilient procurement practices for the European healthcare sector.

In your role as Procure coordinator you have a special point of view on the European community involving procurers and their stakeholders. According to your view, what are the challenges they face, to make current healthcare procurement practices more resilient and efficient towards future emergency crises & pandemics?

The challenges in making healthcare procurement more resilient and efficient are considerable but not insurmountable. Overcoming these challenges requires a combination of regulatory reform and greater international cooperation to overcome the fragmented procurement practices across EU Member States and supply chain vulnerabilities, technological investment in order to face the slow integration of digital tools and innovative solutions in procurement processes, and a focus on capacity-building within procurement teams to be adequately trained and equipped to handle the complex, high-pressure environment of emergency procurement.

How do you think the procurers network you are creating will strengthen the resilience of European Health Care System?

The PROCURE procurers network is helping to build a more resilient European healthcare system by creating a collaborative framework for the efficient and equitable procurement processes. By fostering cross-border cooperation, ensuring evidence-based decision-making, and promoting sustainability and patient-centeredness, the network will



Raquel Ares Morandeira Manager, Funding Unit, SILO

enable healthcare systems to better respond to emerging health challenges, improve access to high-quality care, and reduce inequalities across Europe. In the face of future healthcare challenges—whether related to pandemics, aging populations, or technological disruptions—this network will provide the tools, resources, and collaborative structures needed to ensure that European health systems remain robust, adaptive, and inclusive. Thank you, Raquel, for sharing your perspective on the challenges and potential of healthcare procurement in Europe. Your insights into the PROCURE project's role in enhancing resilience and fostering collaboration offer a clear vision of how European healthcare systems can better prepare for future challenges. We look forward to seeing the positive impact of the PROCURE project recommendations on healthcare procurement across the EU.

Spotlight on PROCURE Work Package Leaders

In this section of the newsletter, we have prepared a spotlight on the five leading organisations of the PROCURE project. Each Work Package leader plays a crucial role in shaping the future of healthcare procurement across Europe. Their expertise, collaboration, and leadership are key to delivering innovative recommendations that will enhance resilience, efficiency, and sustainability in public healthcare systems.

Let's explore the contributions of these partners as they work together with the consortium to transform healthcare procurement practices and ensure that public buyers are equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow.



Science and Innovation Link Office - SILO

www.silocompany.com

SILO, a consultancy firm based in Spain, specialises in innovation policy and business development within the healthcare and biotechnology sectors. With extensive public-private expertise, SILO excels in designing, implementing, and evaluating tailored solutions for a wide range of innovation agents.

As the Project Coordinator of the PROCURE Project and leader of WP1, SILO leverages its extensive knowledge of public procurement processes and the healthcare ecosystem. Through access to 90% of Spain's regional health services and a deep understanding of EU-funded projects, SILO has developed unparalleled expertise in creating and executing effective public procurement strategies.

John Doe, representing SILO partners, shared their vision for the project:

"We are eager to share our pioneering work with the PROCURE community to ensure public buyers—particularly in healthcare—are equipped with innovative procurement solutions that address the challenges of today's world. This way, PROCURE can play a pivotal role in shaping the future of procurement."

With SILO leading the way, PROCURE is set to drive significant advancements in procurement practices, contributing to a more resilient and efficient healthcare system across Europe.



RESEAU des Acheteurs Hospitaliers

<https://resah.fr>

RESAH is a public Central Purchasing Body specialising in healthcare and medical-social sectors in France. As the only organisation of its kind in the country, RESAH optimises procurement for hospitals and nursing homes, offering over 4,000 public contracts that address all hospital needs, from medical supplies (pharmaceuticals, PPE, medical devices) to non-medical requirements (ICT solutions, catering, energy). With a network of 700 suppliers, including 45% SMEs, Resah ensures efficient and diverse procurement solutions.

With a procurement volume of €2.8 billion in 2023 and a growing base of 2,100 beneficiaries, RESAH supports nearly all French public and not-for-profit hospitals, nursing homes, and public organisations such as the National Public Health Agency. Its vital role extends beyond France as a founding member of the European Health Public Procurement Alliance (EHPPA), influencing healthcare procurement across Europe.

As the leader of WP2 in the PROCURE project, RESAH spearheads the Observational Study on European Healthcare and Public Procurement Environment, laying the groundwork for the project with its partners. This Observational Study will serve as a valuable resource for organisations across Europe, fostering a deeper understanding of national healthcare systems and procurement processes to promote resilience and efficiency.

With RESAH's expertise we are paving the way for innovative and effective procurement practices.



Instituto Aragonés de Ciencias de la Salud

www.iacs.es

IACS is dedicated to promoting research, innovation, and knowledge brokering in biomedicine and health sciences for the Aragon Regional Health System. Its core mission is to contribute to high-quality public healthcare by supporting excellence in research, innovation, and training. IACS also plays a key role in fostering economic growth through its efforts to advance biomedical research and healthcare innovations.

IACS supports stable research and innovation groups in clinical and translational medical research, biomedicine, public health, and health systems policy research. Additionally, IACS manages several technological platforms supporting biomedical research, providing scientific technical services in Bioinformatics, Genomics, Proteomics, Microscopy, Biobank services, and more.

Beyond its role in research, IACS is the regional authority for the authorization and monitoring of clinical trials and post-authorization observational studies. The institute is also deeply involved in knowledge transfer and decision-making support, particularly through its Evidence-Based Decision-Making Department, where it aims to improve the quality, safety, and sustainability of healthcare systems.

In the PROCURE project, IACS leads WP3, focusing on Identifying Key Elements for Successful Public Procurement Practices in the Healthcare Sector. WP3 uses the Delphi methodology to create a systematic approach for developing consensus at the EU level on the key elements needed for successful public procurement that is resilient to health crises.

This process involves two rounds of online questionnaires and a subsequent face-to-face meeting where procurement experts come together to reach consensus on the most effective public procurement practices for healthcare.

IACS brings significant expertise to this work, having developed over ten Delphi exercises under previous European projects, such as PARADIGM and CHRODIS, focusing on improving medicines generation and addressing chronic diseases, respectively.

Through its participation in PROCURE, IACS expects to enhance its knowledge in public procurement while expanding its European network, which already includes connections from related projects like ROSIA and Procure4Health. With its expertise in Delphi methodology, IACS aims to contribute to refining the procurement process and practices at the European level, working closely with the other consortium members to improve procurement strategies across Europe.



Andalusian Health Service - SAS

www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/saludyconsumo.html



Foundation for Research in Biomedicine and Health

<https://fimabis.org/es/>



Foundation for Health Research Management in Seville

fisevi.com

SAS is a public agency dedicated to delivering high-quality, accessible healthcare to the residents of Andalusia, Spain. Its mission prioritises user satisfaction, efficiency, and optimal resource utilisation to meet the healthcare needs of the region. In the PROCURE project, SAS collaborates with two non-profit organisations, FISEVI and FIMABIS.

Both entities are closely linked to the Andalusian Public Health System, with a shared goal of promoting and managing R&D&I activities in their respective provinces. SAS plays a pivotal role in PROCURE, contributing in three key ways:

- Coordinator (Work Package Leader) of WP4
- SAS oversees WP4, ensuring the timely delivery and quality of expected outcomes. This work package focuses on fostering structured dialogue among experts, drawing on insights from previous studies and regional data to create new procurement strategies. It also develops action plans, policy recommendations, and approaches aligned with the European framework.
- Task Contributor
- SAS actively supports various tasks within PROCURE, contributing to the overall objectives and initiatives of the project.
- Country Leader
- SAS leads the establishment of a "Country Node" to coordinate and share information among organisations in Andalusia.

FIMABIS and FISEVI play critical roles in managing the financial and administrative aspects of SAS's participation, ensuring the seamless execution of the project.

The collective effort of SAS, FISEVI, and FIMABIS aims to develop resilient acquisition strategies for public health systems, especially in the contracting of medical supplies to respond to health emergencies and to consolidate lessons learned from previous pandemics, enabling European health systems to adopt best practices and strengthen preparedness. Together, these Andalusian organisations bring a wealth of expertise to PROCURE, driving innovation and collaboration for a more resilient and efficient healthcare procurement landscape across Europe.



AHL Reference Sites Collaborative Network

www.rscn.eu

RSCN is a network dedicated to promoting and facilitating the exchange of knowledge to support the scaling-up of innovative digital solutions in healthcare, specifically in the context of active and healthy ageing. The network brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including public authorities, healthcare providers, social care providers, education bodies, businesses, researchers, policymakers, patient and citizen groups. By connecting these stakeholders, RSCN creates opportunities for collaboration, promotes good practices in healthcare and social care pathways, and helps to align strategies and policies with European priorities.

As the leader of WP5, RSCN is responsible for the dissemination, communication, exploitation, and impact assessment activities within the PROCURE project. Through its participation in PROCURE, RSCN aims to deepen its understanding of healthcare procurement and its contribution to the delivery of safe, effective healthcare services. RSCN is committed to disseminating the project's recommendations widely, particularly within its network of 66 AHA Reference Site regions across Europe. By doing so, RSCN seeks to maximize the project's impact and encourage the adoption of procurement strategies that lead to more resilient healthcare systems. RSCN hopes to influence policymakers, healthcare providers, and procurement organizations to integrate the project's findings into their plans, thereby ensuring that these innovative strategies are adopted and sustained, especially in response to future healthcare emergencies.

Strengthening European Healthcare Procurement through the PROCURE Project: Key Findings and Future Impact

RESAH

The PROCURE project is making remarkable headway in advancing healthcare procurement across Europe. A central achievement has been the creation of “Country Nodes” in 10 Member States involved in PROCURE. These Country Nodes serve as collaboration hubs, bringing together public and private healthcare organisations as well as institutions and suppliers from each country under the guidance of dedicated Country Leaders. By gathering local insights and sharing expertise, these nodes have significantly contributed to PROCURE’s cornerstone effort—the “Observational Study on European Healthcare & Procurement Environment.”

The Observational Study: Laying the Groundwork for Change

The Observational Study is a foundational component of the PROCURE project, providing qualitative data on healthcare procurement practices across Europe. Involving 148 healthcare organisations—including suppliers, contracting authorities (public procurers), private procurers, and healthcare institutions—this study captures diverse perspectives of procurement. The findings are summarised in Identity Cards (ID Cards) for each country, allowing for a comparative analysis that reveals both shared trends and unique national dynamics.

To standardise and effectively organise the data collected through questionnaires, RESAH designed an ID Card template. This tool enabled each Country Leader to classify and structure the data collected, item by item, into a cohesive document. These ID Cards served as working documents for RESAH’s final consolidation process. Each Country Leader submitted a drafted ID Card for their respective country, totalling 10 ID Cards, which collectively provided a comprehensive overview of European healthcare procurement practices.

Data Processing and Collaboration Through the ID Card Template

While completing the ID Card template, Country Leaders conducted a pre-selection of the data, adhering to detailed instructions from RESAH. This guidance covered aspects such as questionnaire categories, question numbers, response formats, and answer selection criteria. During monthly meetings, RESAH provided additional instructions and clarifications on using the template, allowing Country Leaders to raise questions and offer input as needed. This collaborative process ensured that the data collected was both accurate, uniform and anonymous, facilitating a smoother consolidation phase.

Key Shifts in European Healthcare Systems

The Observational Study revealed significant shifts in European healthcare, including a growing focus on efficiency, digitalisation, and sustainability. With technologies like remote healthcare, AI, wearable devices, and digital patient management systems, healthcare delivery is becoming more advanced and patient centred.

There is also a shift towards value-based care and sustainability, with innovative approaches in personalised medicine and preventive healthcare gaining traction.

Yet, challenges persist. Public healthcare systems are under increasing pressure from factors such as an ageing population, rising costs, and staffing shortages, as well as evolving regulatory demands. These trends underscore the need for adaptable procurement systems that can respond to future crises and ongoing demographic shifts.

Emerging Trends in Healthcare Procurement

The findings from the study point to several prominent trends in European healthcare procurement:

- Collaborative Procurement: Increasingly, Member States are pursuing joint procurement initiatives to pool resources and enhance supply chain resilience. This trend promotes mutual support and collective purchasing, which can lead to economies of scale and more efficient use of resources.
- Value-Based Procurement (VBP): Moving beyond cost alone, there is a shift towards procurement that prioritises value and outcomes. Contracts now frequently incorporate criteria that measure overall benefits for patients and healthcare systems.
- Digitalisation of Procurement Processes: Many countries have embraced electronic tendering and digital platforms to streamline procurement, making processes more transparent and accessible.
- Sustainable and Responsible Procurement: European healthcare systems are increasingly incorporating environmental and social criteria in procurement, aligning with Corporate Social Responsibility and circular economy goals.

Building Resilience and Responding to Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted vulnerabilities in supply chains, encouraging initiatives to increase resilience. The study shows that several countries have now prioritised strategic stockpiling and flexible procurement practices to respond better to future disruptions. Considering geopolitical tensions and economic constraints, European healthcare systems are also exploring ways to ensure resource availability across urban and rural areas, aiming to deliver equitable healthcare.

Charting the Path Forward: Best Practices and Tailored Recommendations

This Observational Study serves as the baseline for upcoming project phases, specifically the identification of best procurement practices and the development of targeted recommendations for EU Member States. Moving forward, the PROCURE consortium will use these findings to establish sustainable and effective procurement practices across Europe. These steps will address lessons learned from COVID-19 and meet the demands of evolving healthcare landscapes, helping Europe’s healthcare systems to build resilience and enhance patient care.

The results of the Observational Study, alongside the forthcoming Digital Statistical Tool developed by UPM called EU Contract Hub, are expected to shape these initiatives, helping Europe’s healthcare systems prepare for the future with a strong, unified procurement strategy.

Map of the 10 Country Leaders involved in PROCURE



EU Contract Hub: Revolutionising Access to Public Procurement in Europe

Alvaro Fontecha del Ser, Virginia Ramón Ferrer, Carlos Badenes Olmedo
Ontological Engineering Group of UPM

Introduction

Public procurement serves as a cornerstone of a nation's economic stability, shaping the delivery of essential goods and services. Within the European Union (EU), public procurement accounts for a significant share of GDP, underscoring the need for transparency and efficiency in this process. The EU has made strides in promoting transparency through platforms like the Supplement to the Official Journal and its digital counterpart, Tenders Electronic Daily (TED), which provide access to high-value procurement contracts.

However, these resources present challenges, particularly for non-expert users, such as data heterogeneity, language barriers, and difficulty in visualising trends. To address these issues, the EU Contract Hub emerges as a powerful platform that simplifies public procurement data consultation and analysis. Developed as part of the PROCURE project, this tool is tailored to meet the demands of the healthcare sector, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is the EU Contract Hub?

The EU Contract Hub is an innovative digital platform designed to unify, enrich, and streamline public procurement data from various EU countries. By consolidating over 1.2 million public contracts into a homogeneous format, the tool facilitates exploration, analysis, and visualisation of procurement data.

This platform plays a pivotal role in making public procurement data accessible to diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, healthcare institutions, and the general public. One of its most notable contributions is addressing the healthcare sector's procurement needs during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, providing insights into contracts for medical supplies and services.

Features of the EU Contract Hub

1. Unified Data Ingestion Pipeline

At the heart of the EU Contract Hub lies its robust ingestion pipeline. Public procurement contracts exist in various formats—eForms, XML, and CSV—each containing unique and complementary information. The platform processes these documents, resolves conflicts, and unifies the data into a clean, coherent structure.

For example, in cases of overlapping attributes such as contract values, CSV data is prioritised for accuracy. This comprehensive approach ensures that all relevant data from multiple formats is aggregated into a single source, facilitating better analysis and decision-making.

2. Multilingual Data Accessibility

The EU is home to diverse languages, posing challenges for users consulting procurement data in languages other than their own. The EU Contract Hub addresses this issue by employing machine translation tools like the Deep-Translator library with Google Translate. This technology enables cross-lingual exploration through a common language, with contracts translated into English.

Currently, 50% of the platform's contracts are translated into English, with ongoing efforts to achieve full multilingual coverage.

3. Dual Consultation Interfaces

The EU Contract Hub offers two primary interfaces to cater to different user needs:

- **Dashboard:** This interface enables analytical queries on aggregated contract data, allowing users to filter data and create customised graphs and tables. It supports natural language queries, making it particularly useful for policymakers and researchers seeking insights into procurement patterns.
- **Discover:** This interface enables retrieval of individual contract information. Users can apply filters to narrow down searches, customise displayed attributes, and access detailed contract information with a few clicks.

4. Visualisation and Analysis

A standout feature of the platform is its ability to create interactive visualisations. For instance, users can analyse trends such as the distribution of healthcare contracts by value or identify the monetary volume of contracts across EU countries.

Impact on Healthcare Procurement

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of efficient procurement in ensuring timely access to medical goods and services. The EU Contract Hub enables stakeholders to examine procurement trends, such as the volume and value of healthcare-related contracts.

In one use case, the platform was employed to compare healthcare procurement trends in Spain and France for contracts exceeding €100,000. Users could visualise the proportion of healthcare-related contracts, the total monetary value of these contracts, and their distribution across different categories. This capability extends beyond crisis management, providing insights that inform long-term strategies for healthcare procurement across the EU.

Development and Continuous Improvement

The EU Contract Hub was developed in collaboration with experts from the PROCURE project consortium, ensuring it meets the real-world needs of public procurement stakeholders. The tool is continually updated with new data, visualisations, and user feedback to enhance its functionality.

For example, feedback from healthcare procurement experts has led to the inclusion of inferred data points, such as legal mechanisms used in contracts, which are not explicitly stated in the original documents.

Future Directions

The EU Contract Hub represents a significant leap in public procurement transparency and efficiency. However, its developers have ambitious plans to further enhance its capabilities. These include:

Expanding multilingual translation to cover all contracts.

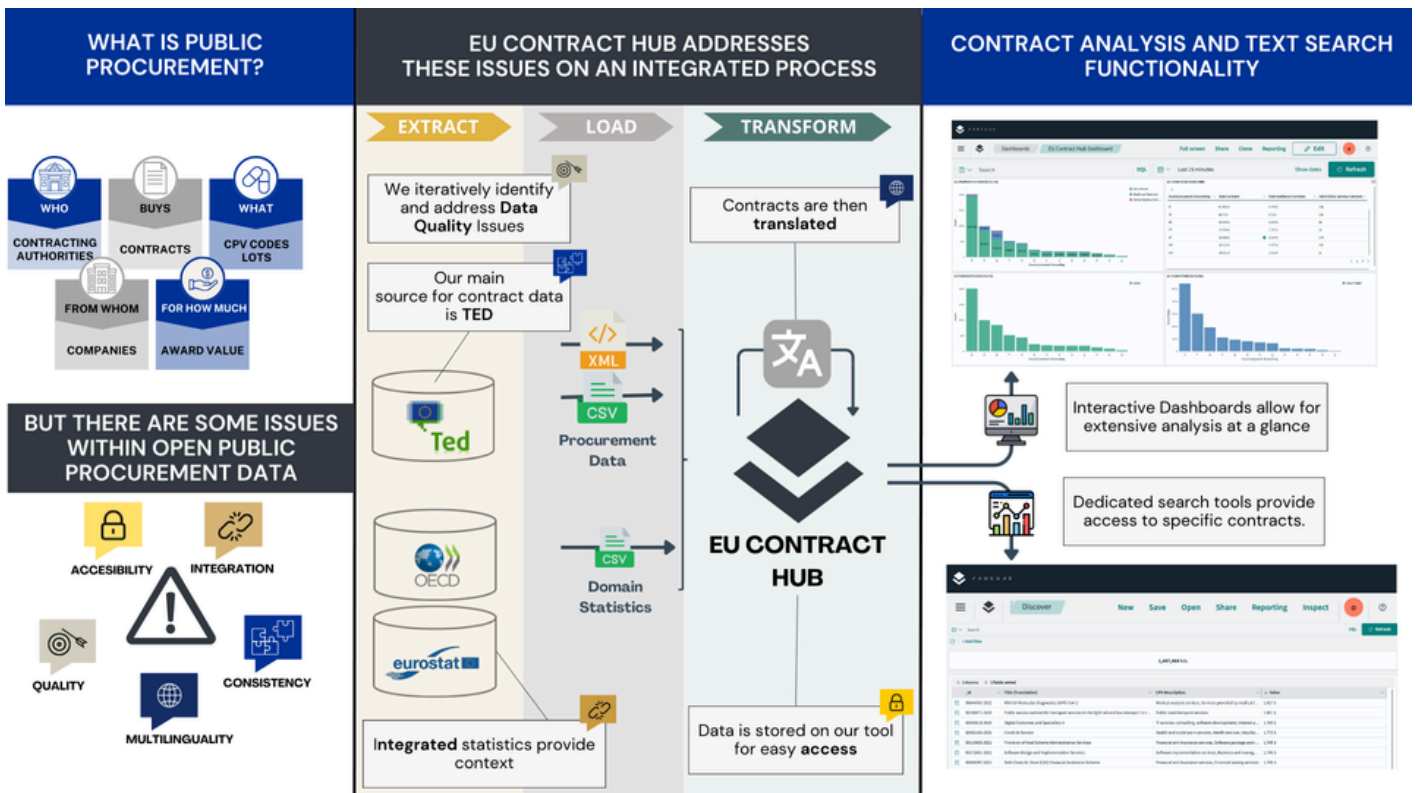
Developing additional visualisation options tailored to other sectors beyond healthcare.

Integrating predictive analytics to anticipate procurement trends and needs.

To Sum up, the EU Contract Hub is a game-changer in public procurement, making data more accessible, transparent, and actionable. By streamlining data from over a million contracts into a unified platform, it empowers stakeholders across the EU to make informed decisions.

In the healthcare sector, its impact is particularly profound, providing the tools needed to analyse procurement trends, address challenges, and improve resilience. As the platform continues to evolve, it promises to set a new standard for public procurement practices in Europe.

Explore the EU Contract Hub at <https://procure.linkeddata.es/>.



Stay posted for our newsletter to find out more updates on PROCURE!

www.projectprocure.eu

