



# Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais Office of Government Procurement

## OGP Newsletter



### Welcome

I hope you, your colleagues and families are all safe and well in these challenging times.

I want to take this opportunity to update you on how the OGP is responding to the current situation.

### Operations

Our offices have been mobilised from mid-March to work remotely in accordance with government instruction.

Government has been clear on the need to provide support to business to sustain economic activity and to keep money flowing during the difficult months ahead. Public bodies that have identified procurement requirements should not delay in bringing these opportunities to market.

Many of our frameworks are available on a direct drawdown basis with no need for clients to run a competitive process.

Where mini-competitions are required, the OGP is available to assist and all OGP Categories are continuing to progress mini-competitions. As we all adapt to new ways of working, it is possible in some cases that the process may take a little longer than usual.

The OGP wants to ensure our activities continue as efficiently as possible so that your requirements are met. We have been in contact with suppliers on our frameworks and, for the most part, they are also set up remotely. Time in the market may need to be extended to support framework members to respond but continuity in contract awards and publication of competitions is an important signal to the supply base that business continues.

In our Facilities Management category, certain challenges have been identified where site visits must be put on hold until such time as current restrictions are lifted. These competitions however can be progressed up to the site visit point.

We are aware that this new way of working requires all of us to be innovative to ensure that all steps in the procurement process are carried out effectively. In terms of evaluations, for instance, the OGP continues to act as chair where clients are able to join us remotely.



# Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais Office of Government Procurement

## Policy

The OGP Policy Team published a COVID-19 Information note to keep clients abreast of pertinent procurement guidance (e.g. appropriate conditions in which to apply exceptions clauses, and when normal procedures must be followed). This is a live document that will be refreshed as necessary. We would encourage you to share this note with colleagues in your organisations' business units who are involved in procurement.

Our Construction Procurement Policy team have also published guidance on managing the impact of the current situation on works projects, and that guidance is available [here](#).

## Your perspective

We are interested to hear from our clients to gain an understanding of challenges you and your colleagues may be experiencing and the impact of these challenges on procurement activities.

Please contact [support@ogp.gov.ie](mailto:support@ogp.gov.ie) to share your views.

Together, we can identify solutions to support each other as we respond to the current crisis and lay the groundwork for our future recovery.

**Paul Quinn**

Chief Procurement Officer

# Office of Government Procurement

## Public Sector Purchasing Cards

 **Ulster Bank**



### Covid-19 Update on additional supports available to Purchasing Card Programme

The OGP's Framework Agreement for the provision of Purchasing Card Programmes is available by direct drawdown to all Irish Public Sector bodies.

There continues to be no charge to Clients for using Purchasing Cards and all related services, other than Government fees and duties.

Ulster Bank Ireland DAC have made contact with the OGP to offer **additional support to Framework Clients** in these unprecedented times during the COVID 19 crisis.

#### Additional Supports include:

A Fast track Credit Process to get limit increases for the OGP Framework Members.

The Dispatch of Commercial Cards to cardholder's homes, if required.

Availability of ClearSpend to manage your card programme, for example to update credit limits on cards.

If you are not currently registered on ClearSpend, please contact Ulster Bank who will assist with registration.

Further support and information can be found on <https://digital.ulsterbank.ie/business/cards.html> or alternatively please contact Aoife Walsh / Cathal Nolan of Ulster Bank via email. (email contact details below).

The use of the Purchasing Card during the COVID19 crisis will provide Procurement Officers with the flexibility to efficiently purchase goods and services and to make on line purchases, in line with their organisations control requirements. Each Framework Client will need to be mindful of the need to monitor reports in relation to compliance of their suppliers with the €10,000 threshold for Public Sector business, for Tax Clearance purposes.

At this time, one of the key benefits of the Purchasing Card Programme is the **Prompt Payment** to small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and all suppliers.

#### Contacting Ulster Bank:

The most effective method of contacting the Ulster Bank during the COVID 19 crisis is via email. Contact details are as follows; Aoife Walsh at: [aoife.walsh@ulsterbank.com](mailto:aoife.walsh@ulsterbank.com) & Cathal Nolan at: [cathal.nolan@ulsterbank.com](mailto:cathal.nolan@ulsterbank.com)



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# eInvoicing

## Spring marks key eInvoicing implementation milestone – the European Directive deadline of 18 April 2020 for ALL public bodies

As we are now getting used to a distributed or remote working model, the importance of enabling the greener Digital Single Market across Europe is more apparent than ever. Key to digitising how governments transact better with businesses across Europe is the European Directive on eInvoicing in public procurement 2014/55/EU. The eInvoicing Directive deadline for all public bodies to be able to receive and process eInvoices was 18 April 2020.

Public bodies looking to reach compliance with the Directive have been accessing solutions through the OGP's eInvoicing and Peppol Framework in the run-up to the deadline. Indeed public bodies looking to move more of their business processes online to better manage the current situation have been keen to accelerate eInvoicing implementation. At the same time, eInvoicing Ireland are conscious that the current situation may have had an impact on the capacity of some organisations to implement eInvoicing in time for the eInvoicing Directive deadline. We are in contact with our colleagues in the European Commission who continue to offer support to Member States at this time. We are working to keep the Commission informed of the evolving situation in Ireland and to track eInvoicing implementation progress in Ireland.

As the deadline has arrived, it may be a good time for many to recap on the wide range of eInvoicing information supports and aids we have made available online over the last year. In particular, the presentations from the eInvoicing Implementation event in February 2020 are available on the OGP YouTube Channel, including Mary Behan's presentation on Kildare County Council's eInvoicing journey so far, available at this [link](#)

Also accessible from the OGP YouTube Channel is a video guide to filling out the NASF to engage with service providers on the OGP eInvoicing and Peppol Framework.

**eINVOICING**  
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# eInvoicing



eInvoicing Ireland continues to offer support to public bodies trying to implement eInvoicing to reach compliance with the Directive and is monitoring levels of compliance across the respective sectors. The suite of information materials eInvoicing Ireland has created to support public bodies in reaching compliance with the eInvoicing Directive including the eInvoicing Implementation pyramid, the eInvoicing factsheets, and implementation preparatory worksheets are all available from the eInvoicing Ireland webpage accessible on [www.ogp.gov.ie/eInvoicing](http://www.ogp.gov.ie/eInvoicing).

The current pandemic makes us all the more aware of the efficiencies and opportunities offered by improved digital working, such as eInvoicing. Countries which have already truly embraced digital transformation, by taking an integrated approach to eInvoicing, which enables greater automation of the process, are, in the current situation, realising unexpected benefits in trying to operate remotely and keeping payments flowing to suppliers. An integrated approach to eInvoicing allows eInvoice data to be transmitted directly into an organisation's back office financial management systems. This approach properly automates the invoice process, allowing for greater efficiencies in processing invoices and payments, as well as providing facilitating data and spend analysis.

The eInvoicing Ireland team continue to be available offering support during this challenging time; for further information log onto [www.ogp.gov.ie/einvoicing](http://www.ogp.gov.ie/einvoicing) or contact: [einvoicing@ogp.gov.ie](mailto:einvoicing@ogp.gov.ie)

## Accessing the Framework

For anyone looking to access the OGP eInvoicing Framework, please log onto [www.ogp.gov.ie](http://www.ogp.gov.ie) and the Buyer zone and select/ search as follows:

**Category:** Managed Services

**Keyword:** 'PEPPOL' or 'eInvoicing systems'

OGP Clients must register to gain access to the Buyer zone available to all public service buyers accessing live contracts/frameworks.

# OGP Policy

## National Response to Covid-19

The policy team is utilising its expertise, experience, knowledge and networks to ensure that OGP supports the national response to Covid-19 through the official structures (Senior Officials Group (SOG), Cabinet Sub Committee) established by Government and to advise and support the OGP. This includes providing briefings for the SOG.

## Covid-19 Information Note

An initiative under the NPPPF, and in response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, Policy developed a comprehensive policy information note for use by all public bodies informing them of the flexibilities contained in the public procurement rules at time of crisis. The note takes account of, and is aligned to, national developments and guidance published by, for example, EU and UK and has been well received from our colleagues across Government as well as Commission colleagues.

The OGP's Construction Procurement Policy has also provided guidance on procurement and contractual matters associated with the Covid-19 Response Measures.

The Note is available to download [here](#).

Given the evolving situation around Covid-19, these information notes are subject to change. Please check the website for the latest guidance.

## eTenders Top Tips

Policy in collaboration with our colleagues in Systems and Data, produced Top Tips When Using eTenders. The advice is presented in an accessible plain language format and supports the return of consistent and accurate information via eTenders. It was developed in response to feedback from our sector partners on the Procurement Executive and is available on the Buyer Zone and OGP website [here](#).

**Top Tips When Using eTenders**

Here is a short checklist and brief instruction that will help you provide consistent and accurate information when publishing competition notices on eTenders.

Contract Notice	Contract Award
<b>1. Type of Contract</b> Select the correct type of contract to be advertised. Options: Supplies, Services or Works.	<b>6. Contract Award Value</b> Provide an accurate estimate of the total value of the contract on the Contract Award Notice (OJEU Form).
<b>2. Estimated Value</b> Provide an accurate estimate of the total value of the contract. It is not sufficient to enter '€0' or any value other than the actual estimated value.	<b>7. Contract Award Notice</b> Publish a Contract Award Notice for every above threshold contracts and, where relevant, for contracts valued in excess of €25,000 (ex. VAT) for goods or services, or €50,000 (ex. VAT) for works.
<b>3. Procedure Type</b> Accurately specify procedure type: OJEU or non-OJEU. Publication level is national for all tenders between €25,000 (ex. VAT) for goods or services, or €50,000 (ex. VAT) for works, and the relevant EU threshold.	<b>8. Contract Finalisation</b> Through the contract management module, a contract is awarded when the contract is saved as final (for above and below threshold) and the Contract Award Notice (OJEU) is published.
<b>4. Framework Agreement</b> Complete Section IV-Contract Notice (OJEU Form) - indicating whether the procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement.	<b>Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais</b> Office of Government Procurement
<b>5. CPV Codes</b> Select the correct Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes for each competition to ensure that suppliers are alerted appropriately. CPV codes are required for all above & below threshold competitions.	Visit eTenders at <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a>

For technical support with eTenders contact the EU Supply Helpdesk at [etenders@eu-supply.com](mailto:etenders@eu-supply.com) and refer to eTenders user guides. For procurement advice, please refer to OGP's Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services and contact [support@ogp.gov.ie](mailto:support@ogp.gov.ie).

# New Government webpage available to receive offers of Covid-19 assistance

## How Individuals and business can help with supplies and services to respond to COVID-19

Since the arrival of Covid-19 in Ireland, many businesses have contacted public bodies to offer support through the supply or donation of goods and services. The OGP, on behalf of Department of the Taoiseach, has created a central database of these offers on behalf of the whole of the public service, including the HSE. The website has been developed with support from the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO).

If your organisation has received offers of goods or services to assist in Ireland's response to COVID-19, please now direct those businesses to [gov.ie/covidsupplies](https://gov.ie/covidsupplies) and ask them to submit complete details of their offer.

This form can also be used by other publicly funded and voluntary bodies, including educational institutions, who wish to offer goods or services to assist in Ireland's response to Covid-19.

Goods and services required by the health services are currently a priority but this may change as the situation develops.

A copy of the database of offers is being made available on the Buyer Zone of the OGP for public bodies who may wish to access offers of goods or services. The online database excludes those offers that have already been passed on to colleagues in the health services.

It should be noted that this database is provided solely for this emergency period. This service does not replace the normal procurement procedures already in place.

Please consult the [OGP website](https://www.ogp.gov.ie) for further information on Covid-19 (Coronavirus) and Public Procurement.



# OGP Support & Engagements

## Procurex 2020

ProcureX 2020 took place in the RDS, Dublin on 12 March and was attended by our Key Account Managers and Communications Team. Many suppliers and interested parties visited our central stand to discuss the range of procurement arrangements available to them. CEO Paul Quinn gave the keynote address.

The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment were also represented on the day, giving the audiences an in-depth understanding of how green consideration can be incorporated into public procurement.



## Small Firms Association (SFA) Business Connect



The OGP continues to promote the engagement of small and medium enterprises with opportunities in public procurement. On 06 February we attended the Small Firms Association (SFA) Business Connect Conference in the Aviva Stadium, Dublin. Located in the Exhibitor's Hall our staff engaged with a

large number of attendees from a variety of business sectors. Selling to Government, eTenders and eInvoicing were among the topics up for discussion.



# OGP Support & Engagements

## OGP Case Study Videos



The OGP has added a new SME case study to its YouTube channel. In the video, the Defence Forces set out their experience of working with the OGP and the eTenders platform as well as the difference that securing regular work will make to their business.

The video are available for use on social media and at presentations and events. Follow the [link](#).

## SEAI Public Sector Energy Conference

The SEAI Public Sector Energy Conference this year was held in the Helix Theatre at Dublin City University (DCU) where our dedicated Customer Service team engaged with Public Sector Bodies on a range of OGP related topics, such as eTenders, Tenderer Advisory Service (TAS), our live frameworks and our customer service helpdesk.

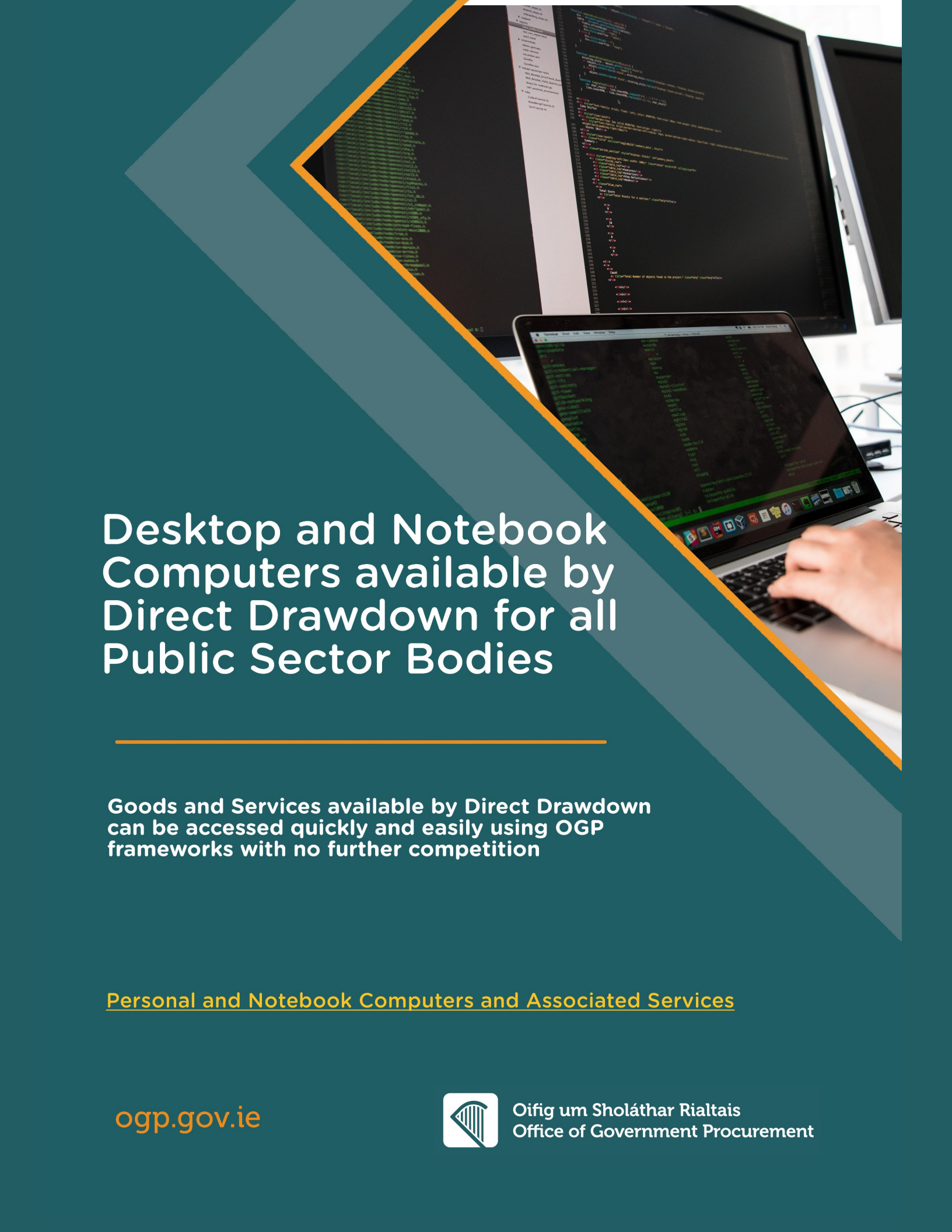


## CIPD Awards



OGP's People and Culture team were recognised as team of the year at the CIPD HR Awards. The organisation was also shortlisted in the Employee Empowerment and Trust category for our people strategy, EMPOWER. (see last issue)

This is a huge honour and reflects all the work which we have all put in place across the organisation.



# Desktop and Notebook Computers available by Direct Drawdown for all Public Sector Bodies

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Goods and Services available by Direct Drawdown can be accessed quickly and easily using OGP frameworks with no further competition

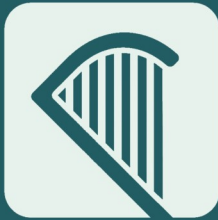
[Personal and Notebook Computers and Associated Services](#)

[ogp.gov.ie](http://ogp.gov.ie)



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This Direct Drawdown arrangement is expected to cater for 25% of all public sector Desktop and Notebook needs from 2019 to 2021, which equates to more than 10,000 devices annually.

Direct drawdown of personal computers is available for public bodies with small to medium requirements. Details in relation to what lot to use are available [online](#).

The advantages include:

- No need to run a competition which means reduced effort and reduced time.
- Stock of standard devices available for delivery within 10 days.
- Standard manufacturer's warranty of 3 years (can be extended to 5 years).
- Online web portal to configure and order devices and services.
- Supplier phone and email support to assist users as necessary.

Following devices available for delivery within 10 days:

- Standard Desktop Computer
- Mini Desktop Computer (VESA mountable)
- Standard 15.6" Notebook
- Lightweight 14" Notebook
- Ultraportable 13" Notebook

Upgrades and accessories such as:

- Upgrades to CPU, RAM, Storage and other elements
- Accessories, including monitors, keyboards, adapters, etc.

A range of associated services are also available, including:

- Basic and advanced installation
- Image creation, deployment and maintenance
- Hard drive destruction
- 24x7 and International support

Please visit the [OGP website](#) to access full details, see the relevant user guides and find the contact details for the suppliers (OGP Buyer Zone user id and password required).