

6

Maximising capacities of the public procurement workforce through professionalisation

This chapter focuses on the capacity of the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico. Public procurement has been experiencing a major transition from an administrative function to a strategic one due to its increasingly complex rules and multidisciplinary nature. Therefore, a highly skilled public procurement workforce is required for a sound procurement system. The chapter reviews the existing regulatory frameworks, strategies, and institutional frameworks related to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce at the State of Mexico. Then, it analyses key priority areas to establish an effective professionalisation and capacity building system: (i) assessing capacity of the public procurement workforce, (ii) developing a competency framework and a certification framework, and (iii) developing a capacity-building system. Lastly, the chapter provides proposals for action that the State of Mexico could consider to advance the professionalisation agenda by enhancing the recognition of public procurement as a professional task.

Introduction

Capacity of civil servants is fundamental to the success of public policy and service delivery. Currently, civil servants address problems of unprecedented complexity in societies that are more pluralistic and demanding than ever. (OECD, 2017^[1]) Under fiscal constraints, governments are required to do more with less. These circumstances also apply to civil servants who work on public procurement.

Adequate capacity of the public procurement workforce is a key element to ensure a sound procurement system in order to deliver efficiency and value for money in the use of public funds. Public procurement is a key economic activity, given the fact that it accounts for a significant share of public spending. In 2017, public procurement represented on average 11.8% as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) and 29.1% in terms of general government expenditures in OECD countries (OECD, 2019^[2]). Recently, public procurement has been experiencing a major transition from an administrative function to a strategic one due to its increasingly complex rules and multidisciplinary nature.

The *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Procurement* (hereinafter referred to as “Recommendation”) establishes a principle related to the capacity of the public procurement workforce. It calls upon countries to develop a procurement workforce with the capacity to continually deliver value for money efficiently and effectively (OECD, 2015^[3]) (see Box 6.1).

Box 6.1. OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Procurement: Capacity

IX. recommends countries to develop a procurement workforce with the capacity to continually deliver value for money efficiently and effectively.

i) Ensure that procurement officials meet high professional standards for knowledge, practical implementation and integrity by providing a dedicated and regularly updated set of tools, for example, sufficient staff in terms of numbers and skills, recognition of public procurement as a specific profession, certification and regular trainings, integrity standards for public procurement officials and the existence of a unit or team analysing public procurement information and monitoring the performance of the public procurement system.

ii) Provide attractive, competitive and merit-based career options for procurement officials, through the provision of clear means of advancement, protection from political interference in the procurement process and the promotion of national and international good practices in career development to enhance the performance of the procurement workforce.

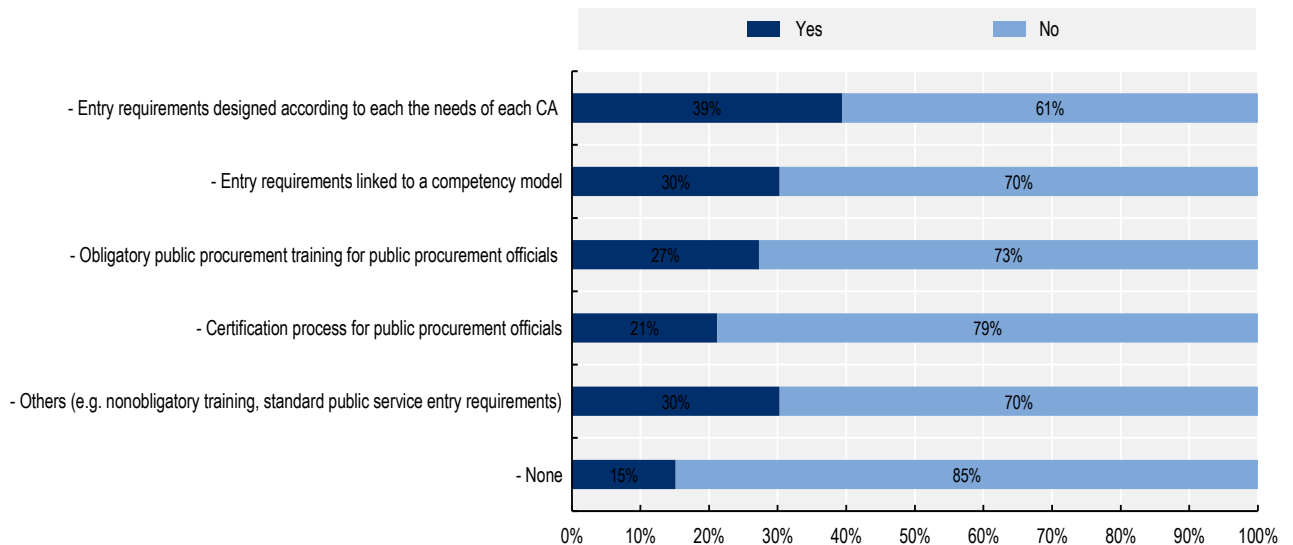
iii) Promote collaborative approaches with knowledge centres such as universities, think tanks or policy centres to improve skills and competences of the procurement workforce. The expertise and pedagogical experience of knowledge centres should be enlisted as a valuable means of expanding procurement knowledge and upholding a two-way channel between theory and practice, capable of boosting application of innovation to public procurement systems.

Source: (OECD, 2015^[3])

The capacity of the public procurement workforce has a significant impact on the functionalities of other principles of the Recommendation. In fact, any public procurement functions discussed in other chapters would not work in an efficient and effective manner without highly skilled officials who are capable of implementing procurement procedures on a daily basis. Therefore, it is essential to enhance the professionalisation and capacity of the procurement workforce so that public procurement policies and systems are fully enforced to ensure their maximum impacts.

Recognising the relevance of capacity of the public procurement workforce, many countries have been aiming to reinforce their capacities through different approaches. Figure 6.1 shows the main measures that OECD countries have taken.

Figure 6.1. Measures in OECD countries to ensure adequate capacity of the public procurement workforce



Note: "None" means no specific measure to ensure capacity of the procurement workforce. Data for 33 respondent countries (30 OECD countries plus Morocco, Costa Rica and Peru).

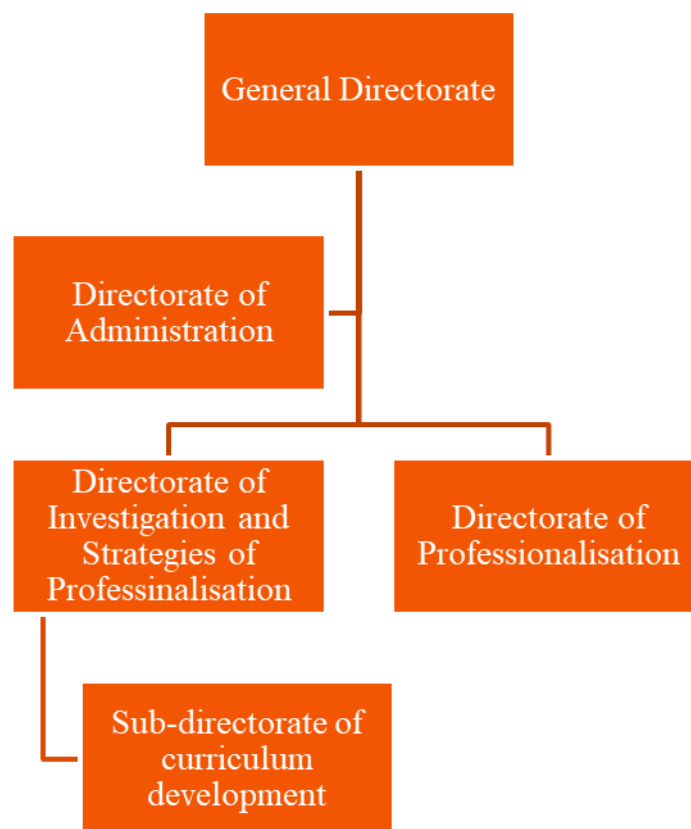
Source: (OECD, 2019^[4])

Indeed, 61% of OECD countries recognised public procurement as a professional function (OECD, 2013^[5]).

Professionalisation and capacity building of the public procurement workforce poses a big challenge in the State of Mexico, as the OECD study *Review of Practices of Local Public Procurement in Five Mexican States* pointed out in 2015 (OECD, 2015^[6]). Currently, public procurement is not recognised as a professional task in the State of Mexico.

This chapter will review the state of play of professionalisation and the current capacity building system of the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico by benchmarking it against the OECD Recommendation and international best practices. The chapter reviews the existing regulatory frameworks, strategies, and institutional framework related to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce at the State of Mexico. Then, it analyses key priority areas to establish an effective professionalisation and capacity building system: (i) assessing capacity of the public procurement workforce, (ii) developing a competency framework and a certification framework and (iii) developing a capacity building system.

Figure 6.2. Key priority areas to establish an effective professionalisation and capacity building system in the State of Mexico



It should be noted that carrying out a survey for the identification of the needs and capacity assessment of the public procurement workforce would be the first important step and the foundation on which to establish not only a professionalisation strategy, but also a competency framework and a certification framework, as well as a capacity-building system.

6.1. Overview of the regulatory framework, strategy, and institutional framework related to the public procurement workforce

6.1.1. The State of Mexico would benefit from establishing a regulatory framework and strategy tailored to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce

Establishing a sound regulatory framework and a tailored strategy is a key step when countries intend to advance the agenda of professionalisation of the public procurement workforce.

The State of Mexico has a long history of regulatory frameworks and strategies to advance the professionalisation and capacity building of its civil servants. In 1998, the State of Mexico enforced the Labour Law of Public Servants of the State and Municipalities (*Ley del Trabajo de los Servidores Públicos del Estado y Municipios*). This law foresees the establishment of capacity building programmes (Article 101) and a career promotion system (Article 99) as part of the professionalisation system of civil servants in the State of Mexico (Gobierno del Estado de México, 1998^[7]).

The Regulation of Professionalisation for Public Servants of the State of Mexico (*Reglamento de Profesionalización para los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo del Estado de México*) stipulates some aspects of the capacity building system, for example (Gobierno del Estado de México, 2015^[8]):

- rights and obligations of civil servants in terms of capacity building (Articles 41-48)
- needs identification of professionalisation (Articles 60-68)
- introductory trainings for newcomers (Articles 90-92)
- methods for capacity building, such as workshops and distance learning (Articles 93-96)
- partnership agreements with other entities, including universities (Articles 112-122)

Civil servants of the State of Mexico have the right to access capacity-building opportunities and request training, on top of completing mandatory training courses (Article 86 and 88 the Labour Law of Public Servants of the State and Municipalities).

The Development Plan of the State of Mexico 2017-2023 (*Plan de Desarrollo del Estado de México 2017-2023*), a policy priority and strategy document published by the Governor at the beginning of the administration, also refers to enhancing the professionalisation and capacity building of civil servants: capacity and professionalisation programmes for civil servants in municipalities, and capacity building for officials at the control/audit offices (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico, 2018^[9]).

However, these regulatory frameworks and strategies focus on civil servants in general, and could be better oriented to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce. Therefore, the State of Mexico could benefit from improving regulatory frameworks and setting up strategies tailored specifically to public procurement professionalisation.

Recognising its strong impact on the public procurement system, some countries developed a tailored national strategy to enhance the capacity of the procurement workforce. For example, New Zealand set up initiatives to build the knowledge and skills of its procurement workforce (Box 6.2). PEMEX, the state-owned petroleum company of Mexico, also developed a strategy related to the capacity building of its public procurement workforce, “Professionalising to Transform” (*Profesionalizar para Transformar*).

Box 6.2. Key initiatives to professionalise and empower the public procurement workforce in New Zealand and PEMEX

New Zealand

New Zealand defined the following key initiatives to professionalise and empower the public procurement workforce:

- Developing a Procurement Capability Index (PCI), a self-assessment tool that measures agencies' procurement capability
- Assessing agency procurement capability on site and providing action plans for development
- Developing standard procurement role competency requirements and implementing in agencies
- Benchmarking key agency procurement and price performance against the private sector
- Increasing migration of skilled and qualified procurement officials to fill skills gap
- Ensuring that government procurement salaries reflect market standards
- Allocating resources to reform procurement practice in agencies
- Identifying opportunities for procurement shared service centres
- Including procurement professionals in works project teams

- Establishing a small team of strategic procurement experts (Commercial Pool) to support high risk/value projects across government
- Establishing resources to support Public-Private Partnership projects
- Determining procurement training needs and source providers
- Ensuring that procurement staff are trained to fill skill gaps
- Providing e-learning to support procurers to gain a professional qualification
- Targeting key procurement personnel within agencies to fast track their professional procurement education
- Developing and launching career development plans for procurement personnel
- Developing New Zealand procurement academy
- Encouraging and subsidising public sector procurement professionals in gaining recognised procurement qualifications
- Launching a procurement graduate programme to increase New Zealand capacity
- Facilitating secondments and career progression planning between agencies for procurement professionals
- Establishing and facilitating a Procurement Leaders Group (aged under 35 years) of future procurement leaders
- Developing “Demystifying Procurement” as a two-day introductory course to procurement in a public sector context or alternatively for learning on line.

PEMEX

In the context of its transition to a new mission focused on creating value, PEMEX, Mexico’s state-owned oil company, needed to be endowed with the right number of procurement officials with a fit-for-purpose set of competencies and skills. Hence, PEMEX established a strategy “Professionalising to Transform” (*Profesionalizar para Transformar*), its first intensive effort to establish a basic platform of standardised knowledge related to public procurement. As part of this strategy, seven e-learning courses were developed for its procurement staff, which concentrated on the basic procurement concepts, methodologies, and strategies (See Box 6.8 for the details of the courses).

Source: adapted from (OECD, 2016_[10]) and (OECD, 2017_[11])

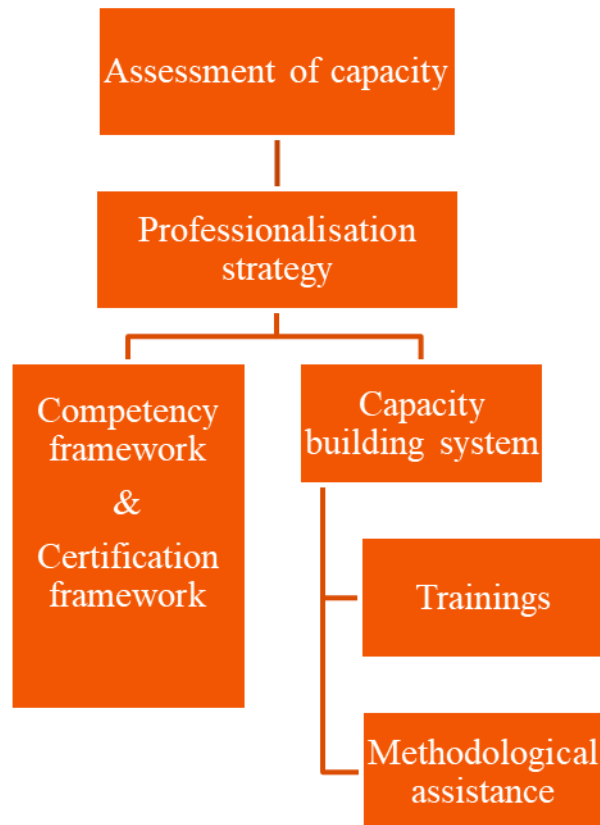
6.1.2. The Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants of the State of Mexico is a key actor in advancing the professionalisation agenda

It is indispensable to set up an institutional framework that clearly states which institution is responsible for implementing a professionalisation strategy of the public procurement workforce. Indeed, professionalisation and capacity building are considered as the main functions of the institutional framework of the public procurement system (OECD-SIGMA, 2016_[12]).

In the State of Mexico, the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants of the State of Mexico (*Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo del Gobierno del Estado de México*) is in charge of the professionalisation and capacity-building of civil servants, in accordance with Article 35 Bis of the Internal Regulation of the Ministry of Finance (*Reglamento Interior de la Secretaría de Finanzas*). Thus, the Institute for Professionalisation contributes to strengthening the public administration and improving the quality of public service delivery. It is a deconcentrated entity of the Ministry of Finance, which was established on 25 June 2003 (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Gobierno del Estado de México, 2020_[13]).

The Institute for Professionalisation consists of two technical units: Directorate of Professionalisation and Directorate of Investigation and Strategies of Professionalisation (Article 7, section XXVII of the Internal Regulation of the Ministry of Finance of the State of Mexico, 2019).

Figure 6.3. Organisational chart of the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants



Source: (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo, n.d.^[14])

Box 6.3. Mandates of the Directorates of the Institute for Professionalisation

The Internal Regulation of the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants of the State of Mexico defines the mandates of the following Directorates and Sub-Directorate:

Directorate of Investigation and Strategies of Professionalisation (Article 10)

- I. Monitor and propose to the General Director, compliance with guidelines, policies, general rules and other
- II. dance with the mandates that correspond to each General Directorate.
- III. Coordinate actions to modernise professionalisation through the introduction of new information and communication technologies.
- IV. Propose professionalisation instruments that regulate the organization, operation and development of the Professionalization System of the Government of the State of Mexico.
- V. Validate and submit to the consideration of the Director General, the regulations, administrative manuals and other provisions that govern the operation of the Institute, in order to ensure compliance with the provisions on Transparency, Access to Public Information and Protection of Personal Data, in terms of the applicable regulations.
- VI. Design and update the methodology for the identification of professionalization needs of the public servants, in order to align the programmes to the needs of the position and the substantive functions of the administrative units.
- VII. Define an institutional capacity-building model that considers the profile of public servants, the curriculum structure, the didactic-pedagogical strategies and the learning evaluation strategies.
- VIII. Design and propose to the General Director, studies, research and development of technical, normative, theoretical-methodological and administrative instruments that support the execution of the General Professionalisation Programme.
- IX. Formulate and propose to the General Director, investigations, procedures and strategies that allow to determine the feasibility, conformation and operation of the Professional Career Service in the State of Mexico.
- X. Implement and propose to the General Director, theoretical-methodological strategies for the certification of competencies of the public servants of the State of Mexico.
- XI. Carry out and participate in the integration of studies and research related to the professionalisation of the public servants, fostering the collaboration of public and private academic institutions related to this area, and from these experiences prepare action plans for improvement in accordance with the mandates of the Institute.
- XII. Define the guidelines that promote the participation of public servants as facilitators, organizers, and evaluators.
- XIII. Formulate actions for the implementation of professionalisation proposals that meet current needs of public servants and participate, where appropriate, jointly with the ministries and auxiliary bodies in the design of thematic content of the capacity-building events imparted by the Institute, in order to improve the professionalization of the public service.
- XIV. Incorporate a modern scheme of educational management through coherent processes and collective decision-making to guarantee the effectiveness, transparency and quality of professionalisation.

- XV. Coordinate actions with the General Directorate of Personnel to strengthen and operate the Professionalization System in accorion programmes that promote interculturality, inclusive labor, gender equality, respect for human rights, and anti-corruption.
- XVI. Administer the development of forums, colloquia, seminars and other events related to the professionalisation of public servants of the Government of the State of Mexico.

Sub-directorate of curriculum development (Article 11)

- I. Develop the profiles of public servants based on the performance criteria, the essential knowledge required and the attributes of the competencies required by the position.
- II. Develop formative and informative contents based on the knowledge and skills required by the profile of public servants.
- III. Operate systems of evaluation and certification of the basic labour competencies of the public servants of the State of Mexico.
- IV. Determine the objectives, syllabus, resources, content, teaching methods, evaluation and bibliography of the capacity-building activities to integrate the professionalization catalogue and keep it updated.
- V. Design and evaluate proposals for training for middle and senior managers and its updating.
- VI. Select, elaborate and apply evaluation instruments (of the contents, of the instructional methodology and of learning).
- VII. Generate mechanisms to integrate a staff of facilitators with public servants who show interest in the academy and knowledge of their area of competence.
- VIII. Monitor and evaluate the performance of the facilitators who participate in the professionalisation activities promoted by the Institute.
- IX. Promote, select and coordinate the participation of public servants in the development and validation of thematic contents through the Academic Technical Committees.
- X. Other mandates foreseen in other legal provisions and mandated by the General Director of Investigation and Strategies of Professionalisation.

Directorate of Professionalisation (Article 12)

- I. Monitor compliance with the guidelines, policies, general rules and other instruments that regulate the organization, operation and development of the Professionalization System of the Government of the State of Mexico.
- II. Propose the General Director, the design, implementation and execution of the General Professionalisation Programme, which must be consistent with the Identification of Professionalisation Needs and contemplate the different teaching modalities, in order to strengthen and develop competencies of public servants.
- III. Coordinate and participate in the evaluation of the events that integrate the General Professionalisation Programme, as well as propose actions for the fulfilment of its objectives in accordance with article 94 of the Regulations of Professionalisation for Public Servants of the State of Mexico.
- IV. Periodically present the General Director, the progress of the General Professionalisation Programme in its three modalities: Face-to-face, online and mixed.
- V. Proposing open education systems for basic and middle and upper level school levels, closed education systems such as postgraduate specialisation, or those linked to the professionalisation of the public service.

- VI. Promote the collaboration of public, social and private institutions in the execution of professionalisation programmes for public servants, ensuring compliance with the Institute's objectives.
- VII. Organise and coordinate the submission of documents that certify the participation, utilization or performance of public servants in the professionalization programmes administered by the Institute.
- VIII. Coordinate the activities related to the conferral of recognitions for outstanding performance to public servants who are entitled to them.
- IX. Identify and establish communication with the points of contact for the professionalisation of each administrative unit, which allows it to fulfil its duties.
- X. Request authorization from the General Director for the project administration and actions derived from the General Professionalisation Programme.
- XI. Other mandates foreseen in other legal provisions and mandated by the Director General.

Source: (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Gobierno del Estado de México, 2020^[13])

6.2. Assessing capacity and professionalisation needs to establish an effective professionalisation strategy

Assessing the capacity and the professionalisation needs of the public procurement workforce is a pivotal element in order to establish an effective professionalisation strategy. It could contribute to identifying knowledge and skill gaps. Capacity of the public procurement workforce has two aspects: the number of officials that work on public procurement and their capabilities (skills-based ability for an individual, group or organisation to meet obligations and objectives) (OECD, 2019^[15]).

6.2.1. The State of Mexico could establish a basic profile database of the public procurement workforce

Public procurement officials have the status of civil servants in the State of Mexico. As of 2019, there were 108 contracting authorities (18 ministries and other 90 auxiliary bodies) with 2 970 public procurement officials registered in the Information System of Registration of Public Servants of the State of Mexico (*Sistema Informático de Registro de Servidores Públicos del Estado de México*, SIRESPM), the database administered by the Ministry of Control, which is in the process of being interconnected with the State Digital Platform (*Plataforma Digital Estatal*, PD) of the SAEMM.

Table 6.1. Public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico

Institution	Number of public procurement officials
1. Ministries (in total 18)	1 408
Ministry of Finance	375
Ministry of Control	32
Ministry of Public Works	118
Other Ministries	883
2. Auxiliary bodies	1 562
SEIEM	19
ISEM	121
ISSEMYM	110
CAEM	78
IMIFE	91
JCEM	84
SAASCAEM	18
SITRAMYTEM	20
Others	1 021
TOTAL	2 970

Note: SEIEM: (*Servicios Educativos Integrados al Estado de México*, Integrated Education Services of the State of Mexico), ISEM (*Instituto de Salud del Estado de México*, Health Institute of the State of Mexico), ISSEMYM (*Instituto de Seguridad Social del Estado de México y Municipios*, Institute for Social Security of the State of Mexico and Municipalities), CAEM (*Comisión del Agua del Estado de México*, Water Commission of the State of Mexico), IMIFE (*Instituto Mexiquense de la Infraestructura Física Educativa*, Institute for Education Infrastructure of the State of Mexico), JCEM (*Junta de Caminos del Estado de México*, Road Board of the State of Mexico), SAASCAEM (*Sistema de Autopistas, Aeropuertos, Servicios Conexos y Auxiliares del Estado de México*, System of Highway, Airports, and Related and Auxiliary Services of the State of Mexico) and SITRAMYTEM (*Sistema de Transporte Masivo y Teleférico del Estado de México*, Massive Transport System and Funicular of the State of Mexico).

Source: Information provided by the State of Mexico based on the *Sistema Informático de Registro de Servidores Públicos del Estado de México* (SIRESPM).

In addition to the number of public procurement officials, it is useful to identify the basic profile of each one, such as academic background, years of professional experience and area of responsibility related to procurement (tender preparation, tender evaluation, contract management, control, etc.). In the State of Mexico, however, there is no unified database system that includes this information. According to the short survey carried out in ten major public institutions, including ministries and auxiliary bodies, only three out of the ten have this information to some extent.

The Ministry of Finance requested the General Directorate of Personnel (*Dirección General de Personal*) to develop a database of public procurement officials. However, there has not been progress on this initiative. This situation further implies that public procurement has not been recognised as a professional task in the State of Mexico. In addition, the Anti-corruption System of the State of Mexico requires that a platform be developed in order to identify public procurement officials and other high-risk positions, to be incorporated into the PD of the SAEMM. In fact, the Co-ordination Committee of the SAEMM is the institution entitled to dictate guidelines for the functioning of the PD and, as such, it could contribute to the development of a more robust database by requiring the information suggested in the previous paragraph about public procurement officials.

The State of Mexico would benefit from establishing a database that includes not only the number of its public procurement officials, but also their basic profiles, in order to plan professionalisation and capacity building strategies.

6.2.2. The State of Mexico could carry out a survey to assess the capacity and needs of the public procurement workforce in order to establish an effective professionalisation strategy

Assessing the capacity and the needs of the public procurement workforce is another pivotal element in establishing an effective professionalisation strategy. The result of an assessment can be used as the basis for developing key priority systems related to professionalisation of the public procurement workforce: a competency framework including specific job profiles, a certification framework, and a capacity-building programme. Given these benefits, the State of Mexico could carry out an assessment of the capacity of its public procurement workforce in the future.

The State of Mexico has some advantages in this area. The Ministry of Control already holds the Information System of Registration of Public Servants of the State of Mexico (SIRESPM) with the number of workers that constitute the public procurement workforce. In addition, the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants has rich experience in carrying out large-scale surveys. For example, the Institute implemented an online-survey of 11 998 public servants in 2019 in order to identify professionalisation needs. Therefore, it would be feasible to carry out an online survey for 2 970 public procurement officials in order to identify their basic profiles and assess their capacities.

There are many international good practices on how to identify the basic profile of the public procurement workforce and assess their capacity. For example, Peru carried out a survey for individual public procurement officials through examinations. (See Box 6.4)

Box 6.4. Capacity assessment of the public procurement workforce in Peru

SERVIR (National Civil Service Authority) undertook two diagnoses of the capacity and knowledge gaps in the area of public procurement in 2010 and 2014. In 2014, SERVIR identified 6 158 public procurement practitioners, 78% of which participated in the evaluations.

The diagnosis was based on the scoring of a test of 30 questions. Then, the accuracy answer rate was used to classify the public procurement workforce into four categories:

- From 0% to 50%: Capacity building is needed for general and specific issues, in accordance with the functions of the public procurement staff (category 1)
- From 51% to 70%: Specific knowledge needs to be strengthened in order to carry out the functions of the public procurement staff (category 2)
- From 71% to 85%: Specific knowledge needs to be strengthened in order to advance the capabilities of the public procurement staff (category 3)
- From 86% to 100%: Optimal knowledge in order to carry out the functions of the public procurement staff (category 4).

The result reveals that the majority of the workforce (almost 40% out of 4 793 public procurement staff evaluated) needed specific knowledge to be strengthened in order to carry out their functions (category 2). Indeed, only 9.62% had enough knowledge in order to carry out their functions in an optimal way (category 4). In addition, the results showed that capabilities were stronger at national than at subnational level. This assessment also pointed out that the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce in Peru was most needed at the beginning of the career: almost 50% of public procurement staff with less than one year of experience are not meeting the criteria. The results of the capacity assessment will be useful to develop the professionalisation and capacity building strategy.

In addition to this diagnosis carried out by SERVIR, the OSCE (Government Procurement Supervising Agency) has been implementing the assessment of the professionalisation and capacity of the public procurement workforce in Peru by applying the methodology of the OECD MAPS (Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems).

Source: (OECD, 2017^[16])

Likewise, OECD worked jointly with the Slovak Republic to assist the development of a training action plan to support a strategy for improving procurement performance. For this purpose, a questionnaire was developed for the structured assessment of the existing training offering, its content and structure, and both trainers' and trainees' perspectives (OECD, 2017^[17]) (See Box 6.5).

Box 6.5. Gap analysis of training needs in Slovakia

The OECD conducted a targeted training gap analysis exercise featuring detailed discussions with key individuals in Slovakia. The analysis was not restricted to the capability gaps of the workforce – it also explored the effectiveness of the institution's entire training programme, including the employees who were targeted, the training methods used, and how applicable the training content was for the areas in greatest need of development. A gap analysis was conducted using a questionnaire that sought to capture the current training situation. The questionnaire focused on three dimensions, each identified as being significant in determining the capability of the procurement workforce. Sample questions have been provided for each of the three dimensions below:

- Characteristics of the procurement workforce:
 - Is the procurement workforce clearly identified?
 - How is the workforce composed?
 - What is the typology of the public procurement workforce in terms of professional experience?
- The performance of the procurement system:
 - What is the share of procurement operations subject to open tender?
 - How many instances are there of irregularities leading to financial corrections?
 - What are the main grounds for challenges and complaints?
 - Which secondary policy objectives are most frequently implemented (green procurement, innovation, support to SMEs, etc.)?
- The training system in place:
 - Are there eligibility criteria for training participants?
 - How visible are training opportunities to staff members?
 - Are training courses structured according to seniority or according to different roles in the procurement life cycle?
 - What subjects are currently included in the training curriculum?
 - What types of delivery models are available (in-class, e-learning, distance learning) and are classes a mix of theory and practice?
 - What is the frequency of trainings and are there mandatory hours/events for staff to attend?
 - Is feedback collected from training participants?

This analysis enabled a thorough assessment of the existing trainings, their content and structure, and perceptions from both trainers and trainees. Fifty responses were gathered from trainers and participants, allowing for the identification of areas in greatest need of focus. Thirty-five individuals from 20 different entities were interviewed to discuss responses in more detail and investigate further training needs.

Source: (OECD, 2017^[17])

Section 6.4. *Strengthening the capacity-building system* will briefly show the results of the short survey to identify the challenging procurement tasks, which was carried out by the OECD to ten contracting authorities at the State of Mexico.

6.3. Developing a competency framework and a certification framework

Public procurement is a multidisciplinary process that requires specific skills and competencies. They include not only technical skills (market analysis, preparation of tender and contract documents, tender evaluation, contract management, etc.) but also soft skills (communication, negotiation, project management, etc.). These skills and competencies have to be clearly defined to ensure the sound and effective functioning of the public procurement system. The State of Mexico could consider the possibility of establishing a competency framework and a certification framework for the public procurement workforce, built on the results of the capacity assessment.

6.3.1. The State of Mexico could establish a competency model for the public procurement workforce

A competency framework maps critical skills and capability levels that are required for the overall strategic direction of an organisation. It helps procurement officials identify their skill gaps and can be used for different purposes of human resource management: recruitment, promotion and training. By 2018, 30% of OECD countries such as the United Kingdom (see Box 6.6) had developed a competency framework for public procurement officials. (OECD, 2019^[4]) The European Commission has also been developing a European competency framework for public procurement. This framework intends to support professionalisation policies at the national level, so that public procurement officials have the necessary skills, knowledge and integrity, as well as the opportunity to address training needs and career management (OECD, 2019^[4]).

The Institute for Professionalisation established a competency model (*Modelo de Competencias de Desempeño*) for civil servants of the State of Mexico in 2011. It consists of five areas of competency (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo, n.d.^[18]):

- Knowledge of public service (Conocimiento del servicio público)
- Public administration processes (Procesos de la administración pública)
- Public management (Gestión pública)
- Competencies specific to each position (Propias de la especialidad del puesto)
- Human and social development (Desarrollo humano y social)

However, the State of Mexico does not have a competency framework tailored to public procurement officers, although “competencies specific to each position” could cover it. In addition, there are no specific job profiles for public procurement officials.

The examples of the competency frameworks in the United Kingdom and Scotland could be instructive in the consideration of the establishment of a competency model tailored to the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico. (See Box 6.6).

Box 6.6. Procurement competency framework in the United Kingdom and Scotland

United Kingdom

Commercial skills and behaviours are identified as one of the four priority areas within the Civil Service Capabilities Plan 2014. These cover the pre-procurement phase (when the ability to build markets, engage with suppliers and manage financial and investment risk is key) and effective contract and supplier management after the contract is agreed.

The Commercial Skills and Competency Framework for Developing and Practitioner Levels (hereinafter referred to as the “Framework”) sets out the current skills, behaviours and competencies that civil servants undertaking public procurement should demonstrate in delivering highly efficient, dynamic and professional procurement roles that lead to value for money. The Framework covers the three key components of the commercial cycle – pre market, sourcing, and contract and supplier management.

- Pre-Market: the process and skills to understand the market place in the development and delivery of a commercial strategy.
- Sourcing: the commercial process, agreements and skills required to acquire goods, works and services that will deliver business outcomes, specifically legality and value for money maximisation from existing commercial agreements.
- Contract and supplier management (Post-contract award): the process and skills used to manage the successful delivery of business outcomes and seek to maximise value through the duration of the contract.

It also incorporates two levels of integrated commercial skills and competencies – developing and practitioner.

- Developing – It demonstrates that somebody is able to understand key issues and their implications, and to ask relevant and constructive questions on the subject. They may be at the start of their career or a practitioner of another profession with some involvement in commercial activities beyond awareness. The developing level individual demonstrates behaviours and outcomes above an awareness level, but has not had sufficient opportunity or experience to put the skill into practice to merit Practitioner level.
- Practitioner – They display detailed knowledge of the subject and are capable of providing guidance and advice to others as well as undertaking commercial activity, based on significant commercial experience and qualifications.

The Government Commercial Profession Skill Levels cover those specialists who have developed their commercial expertise and experience beyond Practitioner level to reach Government Commercial Profession status. This status is sub-divided into four levels: Commercial Lead, Associate Commercial Specialist, Commercial Specialist and Senior Commercial Specialist. The levels within this grouping correspond to the “Expert” level included in the previous version of the Commercial Skills and Competency Framework.

It can be used to identify skill and knowledge requirements for different roles, plan career development and as a consistent reference for learning and development. All departments are expected to adopt this procurement skills framework in order to ensure a common approach to public procurement.

Scotland

The procurement competency framework in Scotland identifies the skills and competency levels required by all staff involved in the procurement process. It helps procurement practitioners take ownership of their personal development through a skills assessment, identifying training and

development needs and supporting career planning. Each competency has a number of skills listed with the description that identifies the level of competency: Level 1 (Foundation/Awareness), Level 2 (Developing/Working knowledge), Level 3 (Practitioner), Level 4 (Expert) and Level 5 (Master/Leader). The framework was updated in 2016 to reflect the changing Scottish procurement context and be aligned with CIPS (Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply) Global Standards.

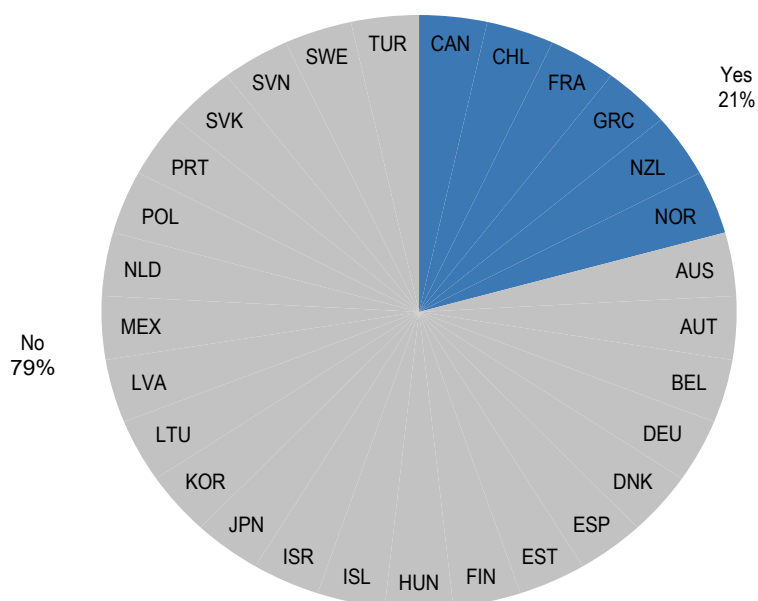
Table 6.2. Procurement competency framework in Scotland

Procurement Competency Framework (aligned to Government Purpose & CIPS Global Standards)								
Infrastructure Foundations (Why)	Process (How)			Performance (What)	People (Who)			
	Planning	Implementation	Delivery					
	Corporate Strategy	Pre-market engagement	Tender			Post contract	Performance Management & Measurement <small>(Including Benefits Tracking & KPI's)</small>	Self-development Managing High Performing Teams Leading & Influencing
Procurement Strategy and Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commodity, Supplier & SC Profiling Spend Analysis Market & SC Analysis Specification development Building tender documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Law & T's & C's EU and Regulated Tender Process Tender Evaluation Award & Debrief Negotiation Alternative routes to market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract management Supplier management Supply chain management Inventory Management Distribution fleet and logistics 	Continuous improvement <small>(Including change Methodologies)</small>	Stakeholder Relationships Communications			
Legislation	Commercial and Financial Awareness Commercial competence and business acumen; Commercial models; Business case development; Financial Management; Budgeting							
Governance and Compliance					Planning and Risk Management Project and Programme Management (PPM); Risk Management			
Technology								
Standards & Conduct								
Standards & Conduct	Early Engagement & role of intelligent client <small>(drives better outcomes)</small>							

Source: (Government Commercial Function, 2015^[19]) and (Scottish Government, 2016^[20])

6.3.2. The State of Mexico could also establish a certification framework for the public procurement workforce

A certification framework is another strategic tool to promote the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce. A certification framework can contribute to providing regular and specific training on the skills relevant to the procurement workforce (OECD, 2019^[21]). Therefore, it is closely linked to a competency framework that maps skills to ensure the sound and effective functioning of the procurement system. Establishing a certification framework is an emerging good practice of OECD countries in order to enhance the professionalisation culture of the public procurement workforce. In 2018, 21% of OECD countries had a certification framework in place.

Figure 6.4. Certification process for public procurement officials

Note: Data for the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States are not available. In Norway there is a certification for procurers at basic level, Innkjøpskortet, but it is not widely used.
Source: (OECD, 2019^[2]).

Currently, the State of Mexico does not have a certification framework for the public procurement workforce. However, the Institute for Professionalisation has experience in establishing a certification framework for specific topics. Indeed, it established twelve certification programmes.

Table 6.3. Certification programmes established in the State of Mexico

Requesting institution	Certification programme
COPLADEM	Strategy for planning and evaluation of public management
Ministry of Control	Evaluation of Institutional Performance
Ministry of Control	Responsibilities in Public Service
Ministry of Finance (Deputy Ministry of Administration)	Administrative Management
State Regulatory Improvement Commission	Regulatory Improvement
Institute for Professionalisation	Professionalisation Management
DGSEI	Strategic Management of Information Technologies
Ministry of Education	Professionalisation of high school teachers of the State of Mexico
Ministry of Education	Professionalisation of teachers who use information and communication technologies
Ministry of Finance (Evaluation and Performance)	Results management
ISSEMyM	Diploma in nursing
ISSEMyM	Diploma in social work and public relations

Note: COPLADEM: Committee of Planning for the Development of the State of Mexico, DGSEI: State Computer System, ISSEMyM: Institute of Social Security of the State of Mexico and Municipalities

Source: (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo, n.d.^[18])

These certification programmes were developed based on the specific needs for the specialisation of public institutions, as well as the Competency Model (*Modelo de Competencias de Desempeño*), with the participation of public servants who are familiar with the topics.

Therefore, the Institute for Professionalisation should be considered as a key actor when the State of Mexico plans to establish a certification framework for the public procurement workforce. Of course, this initiative should be requested by the institutions related to public procurement including the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Works and other contracting authorities.

All the stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance, the Institute for Professionalisation, and auxiliary bodies, expressed their positive views on establishing a certification framework for the public procurement workforce in order to advance the professionalisation agenda, during the fact-finding missions and according to the short survey carried out by ten major public institutions, including ministries and auxiliary bodies.

The example of the certification framework in Croatia (see Box 6.7) may be instructive to consider when establishing a certification system for the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico. In addition, it should be reiterated that carrying out a capacity assessment survey of the public procurement workforce would be the first important step to establish a competency framework and a certification framework.

Box 6.7. Certification frameworks in Croatia

Croatia has a comprehensive training system for procurement officers. The Directorate for the Public Procurement System (DPPS) within the Ministry of the Economy and Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Crafts (MOEEC) is in charge of implementing the public procurement policy through the following mechanisms:

- Developing, improving and coordinating the entire public procurement system; proposals, preparation and coordination of the development of draft proposals of laws and other regulations on public procurement.
- Operating a help desk and hotline.
- Publishing opinions and most frequent errors.
- Ensuring training in the field of public procurement.

DPPS launched a nation-wide certification scheme for public procurement officers in order to address the challenges regarding limited capacity. In order to obtain a certificate, candidates in the certification programme must pass an examination after taking 52-hour courses on public procurement. However, completing 52-hour courses is not a prerequisite for taking an exam. Candidates need to accomplish 70% accuracy of the 50 questions in order to pass the exam; the pass rate is about 75%. The certificate is valid for three years after which a 32-hour programme must be completed for renewal. The main certification costs EUR 500, while the renewal course costs EUR 150. The certificate has been issued to more than 5 000 people.

Source: (OECD, 2019^[21])

6.4. Strengthening the capacity-building system

Supporting a learning culture in the civil service will ensure that skills are reinforced and regularly updated. It allows the workforce to keep up with the fast-changing nature of work. This means making investments in learning opportunities for civil servants (OECD, 2017^[1]).

This section reviews the state of play in the capacity-building system of the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico: training and methodological assistance (guidelines and manuals, standardised templates and help desk).

6.4.1. The State of Mexico could strengthen the quality and coverage of training on public procurement

Reinforcing the capacity of the public procurement workforce requires the development of an adequate training system. In the State of Mexico, the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants of the State of Mexico is in charge of capacity building for civil servants in accordance with Article 35 Bis of the Internal Regulation of the Ministry of Finance. The Institute for Professionalisation can propose specific training programmes upon the results of needs identification of professionalisation or the request from public institutions, in accordance with Article 74 of the Regulation of Professionalisation for Public Servants of the State of Mexico.

In fact, the Institute for Professionalisation is a key training provider in the State of Mexico. It trained 132 772 civil servants through the provision of 4 220 face-to-face trainings between 2013 and 2016. In 2015, 6 867 civil servants were trained through online courses.

Table 6.4. Trainings organised by the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013-2016
Number of public servants trained	27 135	25 633	30 655	39 092	132 772
Number of trainings	1 046	831	1 091	1 252	4 220
Average number of public servants per training	26	31	28	31	31

Source: (Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo, n.d.^[18]).

The Institute of Professionalisation has a Talent Management Model (*Modelo de Gestión del Talento Humano*) and offers online and face-to-face capacity building opportunities, such as courses, workshops, conferences, diplomas and certifications. The Institute of Professionalisation provides civil servants with a programme that is composed of general and technical topics. On the one hand, the general topics have four categories: institutional culture, work climate, organisation and, processes and human development. On the other hand, the technical issues consist of categories such as level and function, as well as the regulatory framework. The duration of each capacity building activity varies in accordance with the needs of the public entities, but the face-to-face courses are 20 hours long.

In addition, public servants have access to the following 16 online courses in the digital platform:

- Responsible behaviour in the public service
- Ethical and professional conduct in the public service
- Service management
- Interpersonal communication
- Social and institutional communication
- Negotiation in the framework of behaviour of the public service
- Innovation, organisation and methods
- Strategic planning
- Analysis and problem-solving
- Administration of public projects
- Senior management in government

- Analysis and design of public policies
- Management control
- Performance-based budgeting and Integrated System of Performance Evaluation
- Systems of organisation and control of digital information
- Public Procurement Law of the State of Mexico and Municipalities and its Bylaws

Regulation of the Institute for Professionalisation of Civil Servants of the State of Mexico foresees conferring an award to civil servants for outstanding performance. (Article 49-52) This award is conferred to public servants who participate in face-to-face training courses at least 20 hours per year, recorded the best performance (10, in the scale of 0 to 10) and kept 100% attendance rate during the year. The Institute for Professionalisation conferred awards to 410 civil servants in 2018.

However, the Institute for Professionalisation provides limited training on public procurement. It has offered two training courses: (i) a 20-hour training on the legal framework of public procurement (Public Procurement Law of the State of Mexico and Municipalities, *Ley de Contratación Pública del Estado de México y Municipios*) and (ii) a 20-hour training on the procedures of *contrato pedido* (direct award due to small amount), according to the interviews carried out during the OECD fact-finding mission. In addition, the Institute does not have trainers exclusively for public procurement courses. It invites experts from public and private institutions to provide trainings on public procurement.

To fill in this gap, some contracting authorities have taken their own initiatives to train their public procurement officers. In fact, two out of the ten contracting authorities surveyed by OECD organised face-to-face trainings on public procurement in 2018, according to their answers. For example, some contracting authorities organised two courses on public procurement under the regulations of the federal government.

In addition, two contracting authorities provided online training courses. The Ministry of Finance provided 63 procurement officials with a 25-hour online course on the Public Procurement Law of the State of Mexico and Municipalities and its Bylaws. One contracting authority offered an online training module on soft skills such as teamwork, leadership and effective communication.

These initiatives from contracting authorities are considered as a positive step to improving the capacity of the public procurement workforce. However, these trainings focus only on the legal framework, as in the case of the trainings on public procurement provided by the Institute for Professionalisation. In addition, it should be noted that public procurement training is not available for economic operators who are interested in participating in public procurement. Therefore, public entities like the Ministry of Finance could consider the possibility of providing public procurement training to the economic operators, given that the Institute of Professionalisation is mandated to provide trainings only to public servants.

With increasing complexity and multidisciplinary characteristics of the public procurement function, procurement officials need to be trained to go beyond administrative tasks. Table 6.5 lists potential technical topics on public procurement and their availability in the State of Mexico.

Table 6.5. Availability of trainings on public procurement in the State of Mexico

Topic	Availability of trainings in the State of Mexico	
	Institute of Professionalisation	Other institutions
Public Procurement Law	x	x
Market Analysis		
Calculation of reference price		
Selection criteria (Pre-qualification criteria)		
Technical specifications		
Award criteria		

Tender evaluation & contract awarding		
Contract management		
<i>Ex ante</i> & <i>Ex post</i> control / Risk management		
Integrity in public procurement		
E-Procurement		
Centralised procurement		
Strategic public procurement / Green public procurement		
Strategic public procurement / SMEs		
Strategic public procurement / Innovation		
Socially responsible public procurement		
Soft skills (negotiation, etc.)		x

Source: Information provided by the State of Mexico

Understanding the regulatory framework for public procurement is an essential step for public procurement officers to implement effective procurement procedures. It allows public procurement professionals to understand their roles and avoid problems that may lead to bid challenges and contract disputes.

Then, public procurement officers are expected to understand and implement public procurement processes to deliver value for money. Standard procedures of public procurement consist of the following three stages: (i) pre-tendering stage; (ii) tender stage; and (iii) contract management. The pre-tendering stage includes the specific procedures such as tender planning and preparation (market analysis, drafting technical specifications, setting award/selection criteria, preparing tender documents and calculation of reference price) and tender notice. The tendering phase is composed of the tender opening, tender evaluation, clarification / negotiation with the successful bidder, contract awarding and signing of contract. The contract management phase includes procedures such as the supervision of progress, modification of the contract, regular reporting of progress, and payment. These procedures of each procurement cycle require adequate technical knowledge and skills (OECD, 2019^[21]).

Enhancing the level of integrity and ethics in public procurement is indispensable, given the fact that public procurement is one of the government activities that is most vulnerable to corruption. Effective control mechanisms through ex-ante and ex-post control are pivotal in supporting accountability and promoting integrity in the public procurement process. They also generate valuable evidence on the performance and efficiency of the procurement cycle (OECD, 2016^[22]).

Public procurement officials are required to be familiar with how to use the E-procurement platform. E-procurement brings several benefits, such as increasing transparency, facilitating digital access to public procurement, reducing direct interaction between procurement officials and companies at moments of high integrity risks, increasing outreach and competition, but also allowing for easier detection of irregularities. Capacity building on e-procurement is further essential in the context of the State of Mexico: the uptake of e-procurement is identified as one of the main challenges, as already discussed in the chapter on E-procurement.

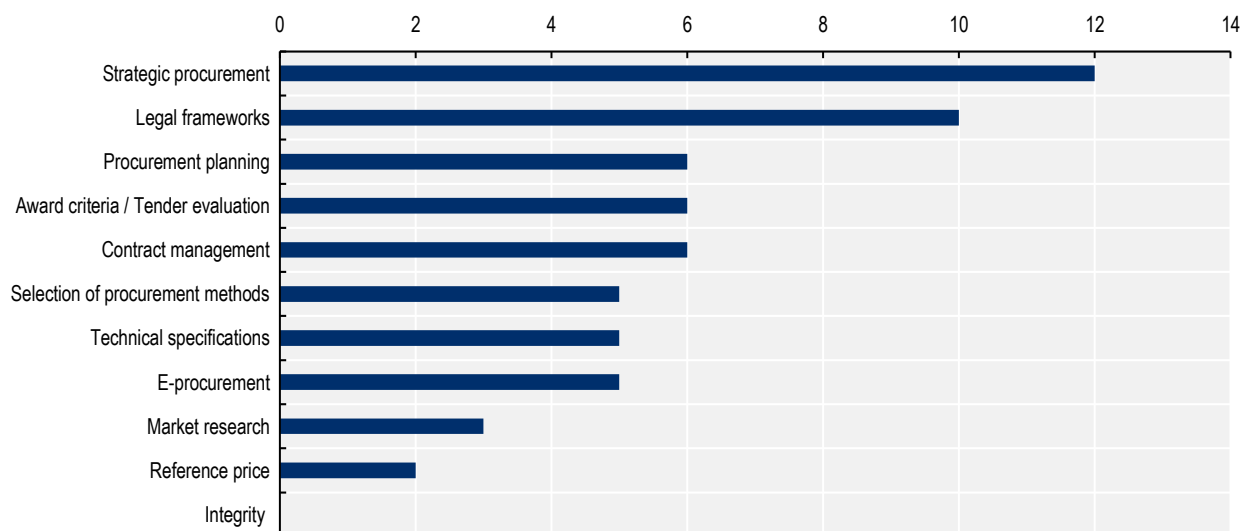
Strategic procurement is an emerging area of public procurement. Public procurement is used in order to pursue complementary policy objectives, while accomplishing its primary goal to deliver goods and services in a timely, economical and efficient manner. These policy objectives include SME development, environmental concerns (green public procurement), innovation and social responsibility.

Lastly, public procurement officials need to have adequate levels of soft skills, including but not limited to, negotiation, teamwork, communication, leadership, project management and information technologies.

Another issue is that the trainings provided by the Institute for Professionalisation and contracting authorities are not organised on a regular and systematic basis. It is not mandatory for procurement officers to take these trainings. In addition, no information is provided on the evaluation of these courses.

The development of a capacity building system is most effective when it reflects real training needs. Figure 6.5 shows the most challenging procurement areas identified by the contracting authorities surveyed by OECD in terms of capacity building:

Figure 6.5. Challenging procurement areas in terms of strengthening capacity building



Note: Each contracting authority was requested to choose and rank the five most challenging procurement topics in terms of strengthening capacity. Then, the result was summed up after the conversion in accordance with the following scoring rule: 1st challenge = 5 points, 2nd challenge = 4 points, 3rd challenge = 3 points, 4th challenge = 2 points, 5th challenge = 1 point.

Source: Based upon the answers to the questionnaire to ten major contracting authorities in the State of Mexico.

Strategic procurement was identified as the most challenging procurement topic in reinforcing the capacity of the public procurement workforce. Legal frameworks are selected as the second biggest challenge regardless of the availability of training provided by the Institute for Professionalisation and contracting authorities. This result implies that the State of Mexico needs to enhance the quality of training on the legal frameworks for public procurement. Indeed, while the legal framework is one of the most common topics for public procurement training in many countries, this is a topic where theory tends to prevail over practice. For example, lecturers tend to explain only the texts of articles without any practical examples and exercises.

These two challenges are followed by procurement planning, award criteria and contract management. The workshop on best practices of procurement provided by the OECD on January 2019 included a module on contract award criteria, in particular, on increasing the application of points and percentages award criteria to increase competition in public procurement processes. This workshop confirmed that there is much room and appetite for improving capacity on how to use points and percentages criteria.

It is essential to establish trainings based on the assessment of knowledge and skills gaps to reflect the specific need of the public procurement workforce. In addition, the application of the existing training, such as on the legal framework, should be improved. These trainings should be provided on a regular basis rather than ad-hoc. These trainings should also be aligned with a competency framework and a certification framework.

There are many examples that the State of Mexico could consider in order to develop training related to public procurement. In Mexico, PEMEX developed capacity-building programmes for their public

procurement officers. Topics covered are not only the regulatory framework of public procurement, but also various topics including e-procurement, tender evaluation and framework agreements (Box 6.8).

Box 6.8. Training modules of PEMEX and Canada

PEMEX

PEMEX developed training modules through e-learning to all the employees who carry out the procurement process as part of the strategy “Professionalising to Transform” on June 2014. They consist of four modules: 1) procurement context in PEMEX: structure and procedures under the PEMEX Law; 2) strategic supply; 3) framework agreements and preparatory contracts; and 4) bidding evaluation methods, which are composed of the seven e-learning courses described below.

These courses provide harmonised knowledge to incorporate good practices and standardise the procurement function.

Table 6.6. PEMEX's e-learning modules

Training Title	Length (hours)	Content
Module 1. Framework for PEMEX procurement		
Structure and procurement procedures under the PEMEX Law	9	Identify the regulatory framework applicable to PEMEX procurement in substantive activities.
Procurement under the PEMEX Law	4	Identify PEMEX's areas involved in procurement under its special procurement regime. Likewise, provide general and practical information to support the elaboration of documents needed to carry out procurement procedures.
Module 2. Strategic supply		
Introduction to strategic supply	2	Identify the concepts and stages of the strategic supply methodology to understand its importance to create value in the company, as well as to indicate the relevance of expenditure analysis.
Expenditure analysis in strategic supply	1.5	
Implementing the strategic supply methodology	2	
Module 3. Preparatory contracts (<i>Contratos preparatorios</i>)		
Preparatory contracts	5	Define preparatory contracts; identify the different types, and their advantages. Likewise, discuss the agreement, management and implementation of preparatory contracts.
Module 4. Methodologies to assess proposals		
Methodologies to assess proposals	9	Discuss different methodologies to assess proposals to facilitate a comprehensive analysis, identify optimal criteria and allow the selection of the proposal with the best conditions.

Source: (OECD, 2017^[11])

The Corporate Directorate for Procurement and Supply staff is also offered three additional courses on substance concerning strategic supply: Expenditure analysis (14 hours); Prioritising and selecting categories, stages of the methodology (15.5 hours); and Negotiation.

Canada

The curriculum in Canada consists of five courses:

- Who We Work For (C218)

- This course builds a foundational understanding of how Canada's non-partisan federal public employees serve the democratically elected government of the day
- Legal and Policy Environment for Procurement Material Management and Real Property (M714)
- This course provides an overview of the acts, regulations and policies, directives, national and international trade agreements and other instruments related to the procurement, material management and real property communities
- Introduction to Procurement (M718)
- This introductory course addresses basic responsibilities through all phases of the procurement process
- Overview of Material Management (C233)
- This course provides an overview of material management within the federal government context
- Overview of Real Property Management (C234)
This course provides an overview of real property management within the federal government context

The curriculum is periodically updated to reflect new or changing requirements. For example, a current update reflects newly defined technical government procurement competencies.

Source: (OECD, 2017^[11]) and (OECD, 2019^[4])

The OECD collaborated with the government of Lithuania in order to propose a certification framework and develop Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes to build capacities for public procurement practitioners who in turn provide trainings required under the proposed certification framework (see Box 6.9).

Box 6.9. Establishing a certification framework and training programmes in Lithuania

The OECD worked with the government of Lithuania under the Structural Reform and Support Services (SRSS) from the European Commission. In this project, the OECD proposed a detailed outline of the certification framework and professionalisation strategy tools, built upon a comprehensive assessment of the challenges with the key stakeholders and close discussion with the Ministry of the Economy and Innovation (MEI) and the Public Procurement Office (PPO) of Lithuania.

The certification framework consists of two levels: Basic and advanced. Candidates will be required to complete in total 60-hour courses (42 hours and 18 hours for each level) on 19 procurement topics such as the public procurement law, market analysis, technical specifications, award criteria, integrity in public procurement and strategic procurement (green public procurement, SMEs, innovation, and socially responsible public procurement). The OECD also proposed tools to promote the professionalisation strategy. These tools include e-learning, degree programmes, self-support tools (manuals, guidelines and standardised templates), a one-stop shop procurement portal for the community of practice, an award system exclusively for the public procurement professionals and practical trainings (On-the-job training, job-swapping, mentor and internship programmes).

As part of the key delivery of this project, the OECD provided two one-week Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes, in order to build capacities for the future trainers who will provide the training sessions required in the certification framework. In order to deliver the ToT programmes, the OECD developed training materials that cover 11 procurement courses out of the total 19 courses required in the certification framework. This corresponds to 31 hours, which accounts for approximately half of the total 60 hours required to complete both levels.

Source: (OECD, 2019^[21])

6.4.2. The State of Mexico could develop user-friendly methodological assistance mechanisms on public procurement

Methodological assistance constitutes a key pillar to strengthen the capacity-building system of the public procurement workforce. It is a useful tool to support public procurement officials to undertake their missions effectively.

OECD countries developed tools such as manuals and guidelines, standardised templates, and help desks. For example, Ireland issued user-friendly guidelines and standardised templates to facilitate the daily tasks of public procurement officers. France and Lithuania operate a help desk to answer inquiries about public procurement from contracting authorities and economic operators.

This section reviews the current system of methodological assistance available in the State of Mexico: guidelines and manuals, standardised templates and help desk.

Guidelines and manuals

Guidelines and manuals provide practical information on specific procedures and topics. International experiences show that there are wide varieties of topics for these methodological documents: guidelines on how to set contract award criteria; how to evaluate offers; how to use e-procurement platforms; how to implement strategic procurement and how to prevent corruption and bid rigging. (European Commission, n.d.^[23])

Currently, the State of Mexico has a limited number of guidelines and manuals. As mentioned before, the Government of the State of Mexico issued a specific guideline for the public procurement process, POBALINES in 2013. POBALINES describes procurement rules such as the tender evaluation criteria (POBALINES-064) and the prior approval of technical specifications for specific categories of goods and services by the Ministry of Finance (POBALINES-059). The State of Mexico also issued guidelines on the procedures for market analysis (*Procedimientos de autorización y alta de estudios de mercado en el SICAPEM*) in 2017. Indeed, these guidelines contribute to reducing discretionary interpretation of the law and thus complement the existing legal framework by identifying clear responsibilities during the procurement process (OECD, 2015^[61]).

However, it should be noted that there are challenges on the scope and quality of these guidelines. Currently, the State of Mexico has only two guidelines (POBALINES and the guidelines on market analysis). For example, it is important to develop user-friendly guidelines on strategic procurement and on how to apply points and percentages award criteria. These topics were identified as key challenges in accordance with the OECD short survey. In addition, these existing guidelines are considered as an extension of the regulatory framework that lists articles and lacks practical examples, rather than a more user-friendly guideline and manual to explain their content with examples and visual images.

The State of Mexico could benefit from developing guidelines for a variety of procurement topics and improving the quality of the existing guidelines to be more user-friendly with practical examples and visual images, as in the case of Costa Rica (see Box 6.10).

Box 6.10. Guidelines and manuals on strategic procurement in Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, the General Directorate of Asset Management and Public Procurement (*Dirección General de Administración de Bienes y Contratación Administrativa*, DGABCA) of the Ministry of Finance (*Ministerio de Hacienda*) developed user-friendly guidelines and manuals to promote the strategic use of procurement and align with the National Policy of Sustainable Public Procurement.

In 2015, DGABCA issued the Technical Guidelines for the Application of Sustainable Criteria in Public Procurement and Guidelines for its Implementation with the support of the European Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). These technical guidelines cover dimensions of strategic procurement such as green public procurement, SMEs development, innovation and social responsibility.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of this technical guidelines, DGABCA also developed the following manuals:

- **Practical Guide for Sustainable Procurement in the Public Sector:**
This guide explains how to incorporate environmental considerations into each step of the procurement cycle and provides specific examples for each product and service category of green public procurement.
- **Guide on Social Criteria in Public Procurement Processes in Costa Rica:**
This guide explains how to integrate social considerations into each step of the procurement cycle and provides the templates of the actual clauses to be incorporated in tender / contract documents.

Source: (Ministerio de Hacienda, n.d.^[24])

Standardised templates

Standardised templates are ready-to-use forms that contracting authorities can use to facilitate their work. Such templates usually include, but are not limited to, tender notices, tender documents, contract documents and tender evaluation formats. The purpose of these templates is to help contracting authorities save time and avoid potential errors. They also contribute to assuring the quality of procurement procedures and decrease the administrative burdens of economic operators who prepare bid proposals.

Currently, the State of Mexico has the following standardised templates:

- Tender documents
- Contract documents
- Checklist for the submission of documents required for tender proposals
- Matrix to evaluate technical and financial proposals

In addition, the Ministry of Finance has been trying to develop the platform to prepare tender documents by inputting the necessary information. However, there are some challenges. First, these templates should be widely disseminated. The initiative to develop these templates and checklists arose from each contracting authority, and therefore these useful tools are not shared with all the contracting authorities. Although some contracting authorities said that they used the templates of tender documents and contract documents that the Ministry of Finance developed, it is worth considering the possibility of unifying templates to be shared across all the contracting authorities of the State of Mexico. Templates need to be aligned with the information required by the regulatory framework.

In addition, while the State of Mexico has useful templates, it does not have guidelines to instruct public procurement officials on how to use them. The example of Ireland is illustrative in developing straightforward guidelines on how to use standardised templates (See Box 6.11).

Box 6.11. Guidelines and standardised templates in Ireland

Ireland developed *Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services* and *Public Procurement Guidelines for Construction* to help procurement officers implement their daily tasks in accordance with the National Public Procurement Policy Framework. These guidelines provide a friendly explanation about the regulatory framework of public procurement by using visual charts.

Ireland also developed standardised templates of tender and contract documents for goods, services and public works. Templates of tender documents for goods and services are also accompanied with user guides on how to use these templates. There are ten forms of standardised contract documents for public works, each of which is appropriate for different circumstances, such as *Public Works Contract for Building Works designed by the Employer* and *Public Works Contract for Civil Engineering Works designed by the Contractor*.

These documents provide further opportunities to help professionalise, streamline and standardise the procurement function of contracting authorities in Ireland. They are also useful for economic operators by allowing them to understand better the public procurement system of Ireland.

Source: (Office of Government Procurement, n.d.^[25])

Guidance through help desks

A help desk is a contact point centre to assist contracting authorities and/or economic operators in clarifying their inquiries related to public procurement. It represents an efficient tool to provide quick and tailor-made

information. This function is essential because public procurement regulations can be modified frequently and involve complexity. A help desk can contribute to ensuring legal compliance and solving recurrent issues of daily procurement tasks, such as choice of procedures and award criteria. In general, the form of inquiries is a call centre and/or a mailbox (European Commission, n.d.^[26]).

Currently, the State of Mexico does not have a help desk to answer questions from public procurement officials and economic operators. According to Article 16 of the Internal Regulation of the Ministry of Control (*Reglamento Interior de la Secretaría de la Contraloría*), however, the Public Procurement Policy Unit of the Ministry of Control is in charge of providing contracting authorities with advice on the public procurement process. (Gobierno del Estado de México, 2018). The Unit receives 20-30 consultations per year. In addition, the Directorate of Public Procurement Policies (*Dirección de Políticas en Contrataciones Públicas*) accepts inquiries from contracting authorities on the regulatory framework of public procurement. However, it focuses on guidance about the legal framework, for example, the application of exceptions to ordinary competitive tender procedures, and does not cover technical questions such as those related to tender evaluation.

The State of Mexico would benefit from considering the possibility of setting up a helpdesk that could answer to the questions from both public procurement officials and economic operators, in a more systematic way. The examples of France and Lithuania provide insights on the development of a help desk (See Box 6.12).

Box 6.12. Help desk in France and Lithuania

France

The Ministry of Finance (Minefi) operates a call centre and e-mail inbox (CIJAP) with ten staff members who answer inquiries from contracting authorities, in particular, local contracting authorities. In 2014, 86% of the questions were answered on the spot. Most of the questions not answered on the spot are responded in writing within 48 hours. In the case where the question requires a more detailed legal interpretation, the inquiry is forwarded to a specialised Unit “Advice to buyers” of the Directorate for Legal Affairs of the Minefi. This unit generally produces written answers within 45 days. The call centre has been in high demand, dealing with 35 000 inquiries per year.

Lithuania

The Public Procurement Office of Lithuania (PPO) set up a help desk in order to provide responses to questions. This help desk is open not only to contracting authorities, but also to economic operators. Currently, the help desk receives questions only through email in order to ensure consistency and accuracy on the quality of answers. Regardless of the high volume of questions received through e-mail (2 000 requests / month on average), PPO maintains the speed of answer: 33% of the requests are answered within 1 hour, 17% in 1-8 hours, 11% (8-24 hours), and the rest 39% in more than 24 hours.

6.4.3. The State of Mexico could promote collaborative approaches with knowledge centres in order to develop its capacity-building system

Collaboration with knowledge centres, such as universities, is a critical element to improve skills and competences of the procurement workforce (OECD, 2015^[3]).

The Regulation of Professionalisation for Public Servants of the State of Mexico (*Reglamento de Profesionalización para los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo del Estado de México*) states that the Institute for Professionalisation can sign collaboration agreements with academic institutions specialised in public administration, so long as that collaboration can address the capacity-building needs of public

servants (Article 112) (Gobierno del Estado de México, 2015^[8]) These partnership agreements can be training courses, post-graduate degrees and research projects on professionalisation. (Article 113).

The Institute for Professionalisation entered into a partnership agreement with the National Autonomous University of Mexico (*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, UNAM) and the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (*Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México*, UAEM). These agreements foresee collaborative actions on the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce. However, no specific actions have been confirmed yet. As the Regulation of Professionalisation for Public Servants of the State of Mexico foresees, the State of Mexico could pursue the possibility of collaborating with these universities through: (i) establishing a degree programme on public procurement; (ii) providing introductory courses of public procurement for students at undergraduate programmes; and (iii) organising joint research and studies on the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce. The State of Mexico would benefit from promoting collaborative approaches with knowledge centres in order to develop its capacity-building system.

Proposals for action

The State of Mexico does not have a specific professionalisation strategy for the public procurement workforce that addresses the points discussed in this chapter. This implies that public procurement is not recognised as a professional task in the State of Mexico. The progress of professionalisation of the public procurement workforce is very limited regardless of willingness to advance this agenda and appetite from procurement practitioners.

Table 6.7 summarises the current progress related to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico:

Table 6.7. Professionalisation mechanisms of the public procurement workforce in the State of Mexico

Issue	Available	Not available	Note
Assessment of the capacity of the PP workforce in the past		x	
Strategy to build the capacities of the PP workforce		x	
Competency model (job profile) of the PP workforce		x	The Institute for Professionalisation developed a competency model for civil servants, but it is not tailored to the public procurement workforce
Certification framework for the PP workforce		x	
Training for PP officers	x		The Institute for Professionalisation and contracting authorities offer some trainings, but topics are limited to the legal framework.
Training for suppliers		x	
Help desk		x	Currently, the Public Procurement Policy Unit of the Ministry of Control answers to questions related to the legal framework, but not to technical topics
Manual / guidelines	x		Only POBALINES and Guideline on market analysis. They could be more user-friendly.
Standardised documents / templates	x		Tender documents, contract documents, checklist of bid proposals and tender evaluation matrix. However, they are not widely shared among contracting authorities
Collaboration with knowledge centres (universities, etc.)	x		Partnership agreements with two universities. However, no specific actions done.

The State of Mexico would benefit from considering the following proposals for action to advance the professionalisation strategy of the public procurement workforce:

Regulatory, strategy and institutional framework

The State of Mexico could set up a regulatory, strategy and institutional framework tailored to the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce.

Identification of the basic profile and assessment of capacities

The State of Mexico should establish a database of public procurement officials, leveraging on the requirement of the National Anticorruption System. This database should include the basic profiles of

the public procurement workforce: number of officials, academic background, years of professional experience and area of their responsibilities.

In addition, the State of Mexico could benefit from carrying out a survey to assess the capacity of the public procurement workforce. This assessment could be the basis to identify strengths and weaknesses of the public procurement workforce, and be an important first step to setting up an effective professionalisation strategy, competency framework, certification framework and capacity-building system.

Competency framework and certification framework

The State of Mexico should develop a competency framework and a certification framework to advance the professionalisation agenda by recognising public procurement as a professional task. These frameworks could be used for planning and designing tailored and specific trainings for public procurement officials.

Capacity-building system (training and methodological assistance)

The State of Mexico should establish training systems that not only reflect specific needs of the public procurement workforce, but are also aligned with a competency framework and a certification framework. Currently, training topics are limited to legal frameworks. Training should be provided on a regular and systematic basis. Training should also be available for economic operators.

The State of Mexico should upgrade its methodological assistance system by enriching the scope and quality of guidelines, manuals and standardised templates, as well as by setting up a help desk.

In order to develop a well-organised capacity building system, the State of Mexico could take advantage of the current partnership agreements with UNAM and UAEM for collaborative actions for the professionalisation of the public procurement workforce.

References

European Commission (n.d.), *Helpdesk for contracting authorities*, <http://djn.mju.dov.si/narocniki/svetovanje> (accessed on 5 December 2019).

European Commission (n.d.), *Targeted thematic guidance materials*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/crown-> (accessed on 5 December 2019).

Gobierno del Estado de México (1998), *Ley del Trabajo de los Servidores Públicos del Estado y Municipios*.

Gobierno del Estado de Mexico (2018), *Plan de Desarrollo del Estado de México 2017-2023*, http://transparenciafiscal.edomex.gob.mx/plan_desarrollo_2017-2023 (accessed on 29 November 2019).

Gobierno del Estado de México (2015), *Reglamento de Profesionalización para los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo del Estado de México*.

Government Commercial Function, T. (2015), *Commercial Skills and Competency Framework for Developing and Practitioner Levels*, <https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/commercial> (accessed on 6 March 2019).

- Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Gobierno del Estado de México (2020), *Reglamento Interior del Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo del Gobierno del Estado de México*.
- Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo (n.d.), *Línea del Tiempo*, <http://iprofesionalizacion.edomex.gob.mx/acerca-de/linea-del-tiempo> (accessed on 29 November 2019).
- Instituto de Profesionalización de los Servidores Públicos del Poder Ejecutivo (n.d.), *Organigrama*, <http://iprofesionalizacion.edomex.gob.mx/organigrama> (accessed on 27 November 2019).
- Ministerio de Hacienda, R. (n.d.), *Compras Públicas Sustentables*, <https://www.hacienda.go.cr/contenido/13023-compras-publicas-sustentables> (accessed on 2 December 2019).
- OECD (2019), *Government at a Glance 2019*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/8ccf5c38-en>.
- OECD (2019), *Improving Lithuania's Public Procurement System - Component 1: Implementation of Professionalisation and Certification Frameworks*, <https://www.oecd.org/governance/public-procurement/publications/C1-improving-lithuania-public-procurement-system.pdf> (accessed on 24 September 2019).
- OECD (2019), *Public Procurement in Kazakhstan: Reforming for Efficiency*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/c11183ae-en>.
- OECD (2019), *Reforming Public Procurement: Progress in Implementing the 2015 OECD Recommendation*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/1de41738-en>.
- OECD (2017), *Developing Administrative Capacity for Public Procurement in the Slovak Republic: A Training Action Plan for 2016-2019*, OECD, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/public-procurement/publications/capacity-public-procurement-slovak-republic-training.pdf> (accessed on 4 February 2019).
- OECD (2017), *Public Procurement in Peru: Reinforcing Capacity and Co-ordination*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264278905-en>.
- OECD (2017), *Public Procurement Review of Mexico's PEMEX: Adapting to Change in the Oil Industry*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268555-en>.
- OECD (2017), *Skills for a High Performing Civil Service*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264280724-en>.
- OECD (2016), *Preventing Corruption in Public Procurement*.
- OECD (2016), *Towards Efficient Public Procurement in Colombia: Making the Difference*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264252103-en>.
- OECD (2015), *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Procurement*, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/public-procurement/recommendation/OECD-Recommendation-on-Public-Procurement.pdf> (accessed on 28 May 2018).

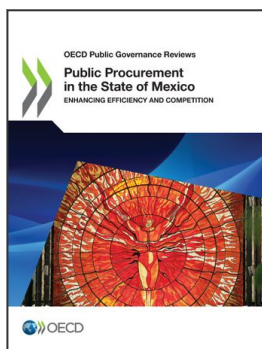
OECD (2015), *Review of Practices of Local Public Procurement in Five Mexican States*.

OECD (2013), *Implementing the OECD Principles for Integrity in Public Procurement: Progress since 2008*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201385-en>.

OECD-SIGMA (2016), "Brief 26- Organising Central Public Procurement Functions," <http://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Public-Procurement-Policy-Brief-26-200117.pdf> (accessed on 19 September 2019).

Office of Government Procurement, I. (n.d.), *Guidelines and Templates*, <https://ogp.gov.ie/> (accessed on 5 December 2019).

Scottish Government (2016), *Scottish procurement competency framework*, <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Procurement/Capability/proccompfw> (accessed on 28 June 2018).



From:
Public Procurement in the State of Mexico
Enhancing Efficiency and Competition

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/cc1da607-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2021), “Maximising capacities of the public procurement workforce through professionalisation”, in *Public Procurement in the State of Mexico: Enhancing Efficiency and Competition*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/38595cce-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.