The European federation of PPP operating companies (E3PO) is the voice of national, European and international federations of private companies engaged in public-private partnerships (PPP). E3PO advocates a level-playing field between public service operators, transparency, and well-designed legislations to achieve high-quality PPP.

In Europe, private operators of public services and infrastructures are involved in a wide range of sectors such as motorways, water and sanitation, waste management, energy efficiency, public transport, telecommunications, management of sport infrastructures, catering, elderly care and other services. Together in these sectors, private operators represent EU-wide:
What PPP are:

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are contracts awarded to private operators that are entrusted with the mission to manage public services and infrastructures for the benefit of EU citizens. These companies are a source of jobs that cannot be offshored. They provide secure construction and management plans for public infrastructures and services, bear business risks and allow safe financing by third parties, which helps control the public deficit in a sustainable way.

PPP are diverse in nature and purpose, with various business models. They may cover local public services (such as water services) as well as large-scale projects (such as motorways). They may also vary in duration, several months up to decades for the most complex missions.

All PPP have in common that they are set up after a competitive process where the best offer in the market is selected. This competition is the core of the multiple benefits provided by PPPs:

- In Public-private partnerships, private operators have to constantly develop their know-hows and expertise to keep up with competitive processes (anticipation of technological changes, R&D essential to public service quality, staff training,...).

- In Public-private partnerships, competitive processes ensure transparency and that the service is run only in the user’s interest (objectives set by the public contract such as price & quality, limited duration, public monitoring of the service...).

- Public-private partnerships allow public authorities and citizens to get the best value-for-money while fulfilling environmental and social requirements (cost and delay control, continuous quality and efficiency improvements to ensure the best performance of the service...).

What PPP are not:

- Public-private partnerships are not privatised services: private operators do not own public infrastructures; they manage public services under the supervision of public authorities and are bound to achieve the objectives defined by the awarded contract.

- Public authorities are always free to choose their management model: once a public contract is over, it is up to the public authority to decide whether it is best to start a new competitive process or to run the public service by itself.

- Private operators do not unilaterally set the service price for end-users which is determined by public contracts or by public regulatory authorities.
E3PO advocates the following values and objectives:

- Promotion of efficient, sustainable and well-designed Public-Private Partnerships
- High-quality of services as the challenge to be continuously achieved by PPPs
- A level-playing field between public service operators, be they public or private
- Legal certainty in the implementation of public contracts, in the interest of public authorities, private operators, and EU citizens
- Transparency and regulatory compliance in tender processes to ensure fair competition and value-for-money in public service provision.

OUR MAIN TOPICS OF INTEREST

- Implementation of the 2014 Directives on public procurement and concessions
- Investment in public infrastructures and services
- Legislation on State Aid rules
- Fair competition between EU and non-EU operators
- Access and re-use of private operators’ data
- Accountancy of PPP and concession contracts in public debt
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