

Multiple deficiencies identified in Chisinau City Hall's procurement processes: lack of public access to information

Transparency International-Moldova (TI-Moldova) monitored public procurement carried out in the years 2023-2024 by the City Hall of Chisinau, some of its subordinate entities (Department of Education, Youth and Sport, Botanica and Ciocana sectors; General Department of Culture and Cultural Heritage; General Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Land Relations) and municipal enterprises (M.M. "Autosalubritate", M.M. "Urban Bus Park", M.M. Regia "EXDRUPO"). The results of the monitoring were made public [at a press conference](#).

Procurement related to areas with increased vulnerability factors/risks of corruption; procurement related to controversial and problematic issues, which have previously been the subject of public/media debate; significant value of procurement were analyzed. In the monitoring process, different stages of procurement were followed: planning and preparation of tender documentation; launching of the procurement procedure; evaluation of bids and award of the contract; where appropriate, depending on the availability of information—contract implementation and monitoring.

The monitoring results reveal that there are multiple irregularities/deficiencies in the activity of contracting authorities in providing access to information on public procurement, in proactive information (through websites) and in the conduct of public procurement procedures.

The contracting authorities did not fully comply with the relevant legal framework during the monitoring period. Some requests for information addressed to the City Hall of Chisinau and municipal enterprises were ignored, and the answers received were superficial and evasive, sent after the deadline established by the legislation. Although the City Hall of Chisinau provides users, through its website, with multiple information on planned and carried out public procurements, as well as redirects to the MTender SIA, the multitude of headings and portals dedicated to this subject may create confusion in searching and selecting information, as some of them duplicate, others are incomplete and outdated.

Procurement information on the websites of the monitored municipal enterprises was generally sketchy. In the area of procurement planning, the failure to prepare and publish notices of intent in the Public Procurement Bulletin, failure to indicate CPV codes in the procurement plans are noteworthy. Some contracting authorities have excessively updated procurement plans, which implies that there are problems in the planning process, leading to increased manpower and wasted working time of the members of the Procurement Working Group.

Although, for the most part, procurements were launched according to the annual plans, there are cases of discrepancies, when the procurement was not foreseen in the plan or procedures were cumulated, delayed, announced in a different amount.

There have been cases of overestimation of the value of the purchase, such as the purchase of image promotion services by ÎM "Self-Sanitation," the initial value was reduced by about 4 times during 2023. The same company, after initiating the procedure for the procurement of these services, subsequently canceled it "due to the disappearance of the need."

The contracting authorities did not always maintain fairness at the clarification stage, and questions from potential operators were not always properly dealt with. There were frequent cases where contracting authorities did not make clear and concrete references to the reason for the cancellation

of procurement procedures. There have been cases of unfounded cancellations of procedures, with the indication of formal reasons, which the ANSC considered as a lack of diligence of the working group in relation to the obligations provided for by the legislation.

Some contracting authorities did not place in the MTender EIS the information on low-value procurement made on the basis of direct contracts and invoices, as required by GD 870/2022. There were cases when contracting authorities ignored the provisions of HG 10/2021 and did not publish on their website the monitoring reports on procurement contracts, which leads to uncertainty as to whether the contracting authorities comply with the requirements for monitoring and ensuring the execution of procurement contracts within the prescribed time and conditions.

Although SIA MTender has been continuously improved, including through the introduction of new reporting modules, the information in this system is not always comprehensive and up-to-date, also because the contracting authorities are not sufficiently diligent in providing the information and are not held accountable for not publishing/updating the information. Searching for information in SIA MTender remains quite difficult, there are confusions between the data regarding the cancellation of some procurement procedures from this system and the information regarding the contracts concluded during the respective procedures from tender.gov.md.

Read more at transparency.md

The project [Increasing the Integrity of Public Procurement](#) is implemented by the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) Viitorul, in partnership with the American organization Partnership for Transparency. The project aims to support public procurement reforms in Moldova that will increase transparency and fairness in public procurement by empowering citizens to hold relevant institutions accountable.

[IDIS Viitorul](#) is an independent think tank established in 1993 that combines social, political and economic research with strong advocacy components. The institution conducts applied monitoring research in several areas: economics, social policy, EU policies, regional development, and security and foreign policy risks.

[Partnership for Transparency](#) (PTF) is based in Washington, DC and its mission is to promote innovative civil society-led approaches to improving governance, increasing transparency, promoting the rule of law, and reducing corruption in developing and emerging countries. Since 2000, PTF has supported over 250 projects aimed at promoting NGO involvement in decisions, processes, and laws that enforce transparency and accountability in public procurement.