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THE ESSENCE OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN UKRAINE

The nature of public procurement performed according to Ukrainian legislation is discussed in the article. The role of public procurement in economic relations development is studied as well as its influence on anti-corruption legislation development and European integration of Ukraine. The procurement principles are described as the basis of the public procurement process and grounds for reasonable competition.

Special attention is paid to regulations of public procurement in Ukraine. The content of legal acts is analyzed as well as their evolution as a result of signing an international document by Ukraine in 2016 – Agreement on State Procurement developed by the World Trade Organization.

Keywords: public procurement, procurement principles, law of Ukraine «On Public Procurement», anti-corruption legislation.

One of the most efficient ways to implement the conceptual idea of rational budget funds spending is the necessity to improve procurement process of goods, works and services for state needs on the basis of fair competition, transparency, non-discrimination and decentralization. The issue of public procurement formation in Ukraine remains one of the primary focuses in national economy development. Ukraine is not an exception in this context as far as procurement legislation of other countries is developed first of all to protect own economic interests.

Moreover, institute of public procurement is one of the most powerful anti-corruption means. Thus, in 2011 Presidential Decree of Ukraine “On National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the Period of 2011-2015” was signed, in 2014 – Law of Ukraine “On the Fundamentals of State Anti-Corruption Policy in Ukraine (Anticorruption strategy) for the Period 2014-2017”¹.

To implement OUN Convention against corruption, acting on the ground of recommendations for Ukraine provided by Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as well as EU experts, our country must develop and implement effective well-coordinated anticorruption policy. Accordingly, in 2014 the Law of Ukraine “On corruption prevention” was signed establishing legal and organizational fundamentals of anti-corruption system functioning in Ukraine, the essence and order of preventive anti-corruption mechanisms implementation as well as rules to overcome the consequences of corruption offences².

Recent years, considerable attention is paid to the research of development and reforming of public procurement institute by both Ukrainian scholars and abroad (Yu. Falko, O.Krytenko, I.Vlialko, Ya. Petrunenko, O.Kulak, N.Osadcha, V. Liashenko, K.Kuznietsov, V. Smyrychynskyi, N.Tkachenko, Yu. Umantsiv, O. Ovsianiuk-Berdadina and others).

Terminological arguments concerning the use of notions “state procurement” and “public procurement” are being gradually solved as far as correspondent legal acts are passed where the terms “state” and “public” are homologated. Additional factor to support this – is the Law of Ukraine adopted in 2015 “On the Openness of Public Funds Use” which introduces the notion “Public Funds”. Public funds – are funds of the state budget, local budgets, credit resources provided on the state and local security, funds of National bank of Ukraine, state banks, state specialized funds, Pension fund of Ukraine, funds of compulsory state social insurance as well as funds of the state and municipal economic subjects obtained from their economic activity³.

According to the Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Public Procurement”

¹ Закон про засади державної антикорупційної політики в Україні (Антикорупційна стратегія) на 2014-2017 роки 2014 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1699-18>> (2019, December, 28).

² Закон про запобігання корупції 2014 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1700-18>> (2020, January, 05).

³ Закон про відкритість використання публічних коштів 2015 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/183-19>> (2020, January, 10).

and some other legislative acts of Ukraine concerning public procurement improvement” – public procurement is purchasing of goods, works and services by a customer, as determined by the Law¹.

Some scholars suggest introducing a definition of “state (public) procurement” in Commercial Code of Ukraine. Thus, A. Olefir finds it reasonable to introduce the amendment to Commercial Code of Ukraine with the following article: “State procurement – is the means of state regulation of economy through purchasing of goods, works and services by customers on the competitive basis from commercial organizations at public expenses according to the annual procurement plan”².

According to the Article 13 of Commercial code of Ukraine, notion of procurement is used in the meaning of product supply (performance of work and rendering of services) for State requirements. Alongside it is stated that the grounds and general procedure of state order forming for products supply, work performance and service rendering for prior state needs are predetermined by the Law³.

According to the legal norms of Commercial code of Ukraine, activity of state enterprises, subsidiary enterprises as well as the enterprises, commercial partnerships nominal capital of which is 50 percent owned by state enterprises, associations of such enterprises, fiscal enterprises, municipal enterprises, commercial partnerships, in case of performing procurement on the costs compliant to legal norms of the Law of Ukraine “On public procurement” is regulated by the mentioned Law (art. 75-79 of Commercial code of Ukraine).

Special procedure is predetermined for agricultural operations. Thus, state procurement of agricultural products is performed according to contracts concluded on the basis of state order for agricultural products supply for state needs. According to contract, a producer of agricultural products is obliged to transfer to purchasing or recycling enterprise or organization (contractor) produced goods in terms, quantity and assortment as stated in the contract. Alongside, a contractor is obliged to support the producer in mentioned goods production, accept it and pay for it (art. 272 of Commercial code of Ukraine).

In our opinion, the amendments to the Commercial code of Ukraine proposed by some of the scholars are not constructive, as far as the content of the correspondent articles of this Code contain reference to the legal norms of the Law of Ukraine “On Public Procurement” which is logical and sufficient enough. Introduction of the definition “public procurement” to the text of Commercial code of Ukraine will only duplicate the content of the Law.

We consider that the procurement should be performed taking into account procurement principles. Generally accepted principles are established by the International Agreement on State Procurement within World Trade Organization, documents and directives of EU member states.

Procurement is a unity of practical methods and techniques which maximum help to satisfy buyer’s needs during purchasing campaign through bidding.

Procurement as an art of purchasing goes back to the times of Roman Empire when providing legions with everything necessary (starting from food and ending with armor) was one of the most important functions performed by procurators.

The aim of procurement is the most effective meeting of objective needs of organizations regarding goods, works and services. Thus, it is important to specify which products out of the range available at the market best meet the organization’s needs and the ways to purchase those at optimal cost and conditions. This issue is solved through competitive ways of purchasing.

Procurement goals can be achieved by implementing the following principles:

– The principle of transparency means that all the stages of competitive bidding are carried out in the public. Procurement information should be timely and fully accessible to all potential suppliers. It means that suppliers should have a sufficient amount of time to prepare their business offers and have a clear understanding of the procedure and requirements for qualification as well as criteria, according to which a customer chooses a contractor. All procedures and decisions implemented must be transparent and clearly documented;

– The principle of equality and fairness presupposes that the bidding terms, principles, criteria and procedure for determining the winner shall be established in advance and shall be the same for all participants. Discrimination against the participants and any rule changes during the procurement process are not allowed.

¹ Закон про внесення змін до Закону України «Про публічні закупівлі» та деяких інших законодавчих актів України щодо вдосконалення публічних закупівель 2015 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/114-IX>> (2020, January, 10).

² Олефір, А.О. (2012). *Господарсько-правове забезпечення державних закупівель у сфері охорони здоров’я: теоретичні та практичні аспекти*. Харків: Юрайт, 203.

³ *Господарський кодекс 2003* (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/436-15>> (2020, January, 11).

Any preference should not be excessive (more than 5-15%). And, ideally, they should be used only in case of offer equality ('all other things being equal');

– The principle of efficiency aims at the maximum final result of competitions. They should result in the procurement of the necessary resources with the maximum economic benefit for a customer. Procurement should be carried out with the highest overall efficiency, taking into account expenditures of a customer and the economic benefit from the goods purchased;

– The principle of cost-efficiency involves the implementation of the procurement procedure with minimum resources costs. For this purpose, it is necessary to consider production costs, the cost of procurement and total operating costs.

– The principle of accountability and responsibility means that during the procurement process the organizer must strictly adhere to the established rules and procedures, being responsible for the procurement. In case the rules and procurement procedure are violated, employees are personally responsible. All the key points should be recorded in the relevant documents (protocols, reports, etc.). If necessary, they shall be submitted for review by the authorized bodies;

– The principle of reasonability implies that a customer should purchase goods that are really required and meet their needs in the best way. Reasonability evaluation is internal matters of a customer, which is conducted regardless of the end user of the product. In a number of countries it is not allowed to mention specific brands, models, and items (excluding exceptional cases) in the procurement documentation. In practice, the possibility to refer to a specific product is more common. In most cases, the customer is not able to specify the product characteristics;

– The principle of competitiveness means that the best possible procurement result can be achieved only under the conditions of free competition. Therefore, the choice of a contractor should be made on the basis of competitiveness. This suggests that suppliers should compete to receive the order. However, competition should not be absolute. Only suppliers meeting the requirements of a customer in terms of qualifications and reliability should be allowed to participate in the procurement procedures. The number of suppliers participating in the procurement should also be limited by the 'qualification barrier'. Otherwise, the costs of evaluating a large number of offers will exceed the cost efficiency of choosing the best one.

In our opinion, the introduction of the principles, which are being currently applied in foreign countries, into practice of Ukraine's public procurement is one of the priority directions for improving the economic policy of the state. Implementation of the procurement principles will allow absorbing taxpayers' funds more efficiently, stimulating technological development, increasing confidence in the state, reducing corruption risks and more.

Thus, we can say that the role of open competitive procurement has increased significantly, since the use of competitive approaches encourages purchasing goods, services and works, where the principle of a good value for money is observed.

The evidence that the procurement principles are implemented during public procurement in Ukraine is that the purpose of the Law of Ukraine 'On Public Procurement' was formulated. Thus, the purpose of this Law is to ensure an efficient and transparent procurement, to create a competitive environment in the field of public procurement, to prevent corruption in this area, to develop fair competition¹.

The approaches of scientists who describe public procurement are quite different. V. Smyrchynskyi views public procurement as government spending on the purchase of goods and services produced in a given year, a direct-acting tool used in the fiscal policy as well as a means of providing financial support for measures aimed at solving nation-wide cross-sectoral problems and social issues. O. Ovsianiuk-Berdadina supplements and improves this definition. She believes that the implementation of public procurement system enables society to receive full social services. Whereas those services, which cannot be provided by public sector institutions because of lack of production, financial and innovation possibilities, and weak infrastructure, can be delivered by the means of a tender mechanism for private business entities, thus providing social protection and a standard of living for the population².

N. Tkachenko and Yu. Umantsiv are convinced that the state fulfills various functions in the course of public procurement. These functions are aimed at achieving greater control, preventing an uncontrolled

¹ Закон про внесення змін до Закону України «Про публічні закупівлі» та деяких інших законодавчих актів України щодо вдосконалення публічних закупівель 2015 (Верховна Рада України). Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/114-IX>> (2020, January, 10).

² Овсянюк-Бердадіна, О.Ф. (2009). *Організаційно-економічний механізм державних закупівель послуг*: дис ... канд. екон. наук. Тернопіль, 13.

increase in costs, reducing state budget expenditures, and managing material flows provided that they comply with the market relations¹.

The impact of public procurement on the economy lies in the implementation of key functions. They include financial support for the functioning of state institutions, which are maintained at the expense of the state and local budgets; creation of new job opportunities; regulation of an economic environment, which occurs in the markets of certain types of products, using economic methods².

V. Zubar claims that the purpose in developing the public procurement system is to save budgetary funds and prevent corruption, which can only be achieved if procurement is centralized and progressive methods of its implementation are used. According to O. Melnykov, the purpose of public procurement is to save state funds by reducing purchase prices as a result of attracting as many suppliers as possible³.

V. Novakovets determines the following goals of public procurement: improving the efficiency of spending public funds of all levels; improving the level of financial flow management; preventing an uncontrolled increase in costs; reducing public funds spending⁴.

S. Pappas points out, that a proper public procurement policy, which aims at preventing an inefficient use of state funds and corruption, can testify taxpayers that their money is used for an intended purpose, thus enhancing their confidence in the government. Although measures against corruption are not the priority of public procurement, improvement of its procedures can make a significant contribution to the corruption prevention⁵.

V. Novakovets suggests considering public procurement as a specific tool for financial and legal regulation of legal relations concerning the formation, rational allocation and efficient use of public funds, which is used in the fulfillment of the public interest in purchasing goods, works and services for public funds⁶.

It is reasonable to pay attention to the definition and role of government order in the context of public procurement research. M. Dovhan considers public procurement as a part of government order. She believes that public procurement is the way to complete the government order, which involves the purchase by the public administration of goods, works and services for public funds on a competitive basis (or in the absence of it), by a procedure established by law to satisfy the public interest⁷. I. Smotrytska views government order as a category, which reflects social needs expressed in the form of state demand. Meanwhile public procurement is a satisfied public need. In other words, public procurement is the result, the final stage in the process of meeting social needs. At the same time it is a form to provide social needs, as the exchange of goods between producers and consumers is carried out in the process of purchase and sale in the commodity market⁸.

The legal grounds for introducing public procurement in Ukraine emerged when Ukraine joined the Agreement on Government Procurement, which was confirmed by the relevant law⁹. On this basis, the International Agreement on Public Procurement¹⁰ came into effect for Ukraine on May 18, 2016.

Further reforming took place when the Law of Ukraine on Implementation of Public Procurement

¹ Ткаченко, Н.Б., Уманців, Ю.М. (2009). Макроекономічні аспекти державних закупівель. *Фінанси України*, 8, 82-88.

² Фіц, О.Ю. (2012). Сучасний стан планування державних закупівель. *Держава та регіони*, 2. <http://archive.nbuv.gov.ua/portal/soc_gum/Ptdu/2012_2/files/PD212_35.pdf>. (2019, November, 24).

³ Мельников, О.С. (2012). Економіко-математична модель оцінки доцільності проведення конкурсних торгів при здійсненні державних закупівель. *Економіка України*, 9, 47.

⁴ Новаковець, В.М. (2012). *Фінансово-правовий механізм регулювання державних закупівель*: дис. ... канд. юрид. наук. Київ: ДНДІ Міністерства внутрішніх справ України, 65.

⁵ Паппас, С. (2005). *Політика ЄС у сфері державних закупівель*. Київ: ІМВ КНУ ім. Тараса Шевченка, 8-9.

⁶ Новаковець, В.М. (2012) *Фінансово-правовий механізм регулювання державних закупівель*: дис. ... канд. юрид. наук. Київ, 72.

⁷ Довгань, М.Ю. (2013) *Адміністративна відповідальність за порушення порядку державної закупівлі товарів, робіт і послуг*: дис. ... канд. юрид. наук. Київ: Нац. авіац. ун-т, 10.

⁸ Смотрицкая, И.И. (2009) *Трансформация системы государственных закупок в российской экономике*: автореф. дисс. ... докт. экон. наук. Москва, 19-20.

⁹ *Закон про приєднання України до Угоди про державні закупівлі 2016* (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1029-19>> (2020, January, 05).

¹⁰ *Угода про державні закупівлі 1994* (Світова організація торгівлі). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України*. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/981_050> (2020, January, 05).

(2014)¹, and the Law of Ukraine on Public Procurement (August 1, 2016) were adopted.

On April 19, 2020, the Law of Ukraine on Amendments to the Law of Ukraine on Public Procurement and some other legislative acts of Ukraine on improvement of public procurement shall come into effect². They define legal and economic principles for purchasing goods, works and services in order to meet the needs of the state, territorial communities and united territorial communities. This law aims to adapt the legislation of Ukraine to the legislation of the European Union concerning the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, on the other.

The creation of a new public procurement system is based on the innovative system of authorized electronic platforms and the web portal prozorro.gov.ua, which is a central database.

According to the Law of Ukraine on Amendments to the Law of Ukraine on Public Procurement, an authorized electronic platform is an authorized information and telecommunication system. It has a complex system of data protection with a confirmed compliance in accordance with the Law of Ukraine on Data Protection in Information and Telecommunication Systems. Besides, it a part of the electronic procurement system and an online-service that provides registration of persons, automatic placement, receipt and transfer of information and documents during the procurement, use of services with an automatic exchange of information accessed through the Internet.

According to the Law, an electronic procurement system has been introduced, which is an information and telecommunication system that has a complex system of data protection with a confirmed compliance in accordance with the Law of Ukraine on Data Protection in Information and Telecommunication Systems. It ensures the process of procurement, creation, placement, disclosure, exchange of information and documents in an electronic form. The system includes the web-portal of the Authorized Body, authorized electronic platforms, which ensure an automatic exchange of information and documents.

Thus, the introduction of public procurement in Ukraine is one of the priorities in the national economic development, corruption prevention and integration of our country into the European space.

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¹ *Zakon pro zdiisnennia derzhavnykh zakupivel 2014* (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy). *Ofitsiyni sait Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainy*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1197-18>> (2020, January, 05).

² *Zakon pro vnesennia zmin do Zakonu Ukrainy «Pro publichni zakupivli» ta deiakykh inshykh zakonodavchykh aktiv Ukrainy shchodo vdoskonalennia publichnykh zakupivel 2015* (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy). *Ofitsiyni sait Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainy*. <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/114-IX>> (2020, January, 10).

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