

Electronic Public Procurement: Assessment of Official E-Trade Platforms in Belarus

Uladzimir Kavalkin, Andrey Sushko

Executive Summary

This paper aims to assess the degree of compliance of official e-trade platforms (ETPs), through which public procurement is carried out in the Republic of Belarus, with best international practices. The study shows that the official Belarusian ETPs significantly lag behind functional requirements for similar contemporary software-hardware complexes. This paper shows that the degree of compliance with best practices is only 50 per cent.

In order to address this problem, it is necessary to develop a new software-hardware complex for ETPs that will meet current functional requirements. It is also recommended to identify one organization tasked with developing state public procurement policy, and another one charged with implementing this policy.

Introduction

Public procurement is one of the most corruption-prone areas of government work. Corruption-associated risks are often exacerbated by the complexity of procurement processes and close interaction between government officials and stakeholders.

The OECD Foreign Bribery Report (2014)¹ provides additional evidence that public procurement is vulnerable to corruption. More than half of bribery cases are linked with procedures for securing public procurement contracts. Almost two thirds of foreign bribery cases were identified in sectors closely related to contracting or licensing through public procurement: mining, construction, transport, logistics, and information and communications.

¹ www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/governance/oecd-foreign-bribery-report_9789264226616-en#.WaOu4NNJZE4

Direct costs of corruption include the loss of public funds at the expense of higher costs and lower quality of goods, services and works. Those who give bribes intend to get their money back through raising prices, billing for uncompleted work, failing to meet standards, lowering the quality of work or using defective products in public procurement-related works. This leads to increase in costs and decrease in quality².

As regards indirect costs, corruption in public procurement leads to unfair competition, limited access to markets and decrease in business attractiveness for foreign investors.

In public procurement, an integrated approach is needed to mitigate risks and prevent corruption. Focusing exclusively on one stage of the process can increase risks at other stages. Similarly, eliminating only one type of risk can lead to integrity violations through other mechanisms. By applying a holistic approach, the OECD recommendations on public procurement stress a set of complementary principles that can directly or indirectly prevent corruption and promote good governance and accountability in public procurement.

Abbreviations and definitions used

Public procurement: as defined in art. 1 Ch. 1 of the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Work, Services) of 13 .07. 2012 No. 419-Z (hereinafter - the Law)

ETP: e-trade platform; an official website as per the Council of Ministers' Resolution On Certain Measures to Implement the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services)

EDS: Electronic Digital Signature

API: Application Programme Interface; a set of ready classes, procedures, functions, structures and constants offered by the application (library, service) or operating system for external software products. Used by programmers in developing applications

MART: Ministry of Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade of the Republic of Belarus

PPL: Public Procurement Legislation; laws and regulations governing public procurement

² www.oecd.org/gov/ethics/Corruption-in-Public-Procurement-Brochure.pdf

Methodology

Our research approach was to study public procurement practices on the official ETPs in the Republic of Belarus. Our methodology is based on the assessment of functionality of the official ETPs in Belarus, analysis of the national PPL pertaining to electronic procurement, and PPL compliance with best international practices in conducting public procurement through official ETPs.

The purpose of the study is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the official ETPs, in order to develop recommendations for further improvement of the ETPs functionality. The results of the assessment will eliminate shortcomings in the national electronic public procurement system, and will allow to develop an action plan to improve the public procurement system as a whole.

The evaluation methodology includes 26 identical indicators of compliance with best practices, which are divided into smaller components. The evaluation covers all the main components of the public procurement system through the official ETPs, including publishing invitation to tender, procurement outcome report, systems for electronic document exchange, for requesting clarification regarding tender-related documents, for complaints and for API support, as well as the level of access to public procurement contracts, issued invoices and certificates of acceptance of goods, works and services.

Selection of indicators is based on international best practices, international standards and borrowings from other existing methodologies in public procurement such as:

- Methodology and Standards of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development;
- Government Procurement Agreement standards (GPA, World Trade Organization);
- Methodology and Principles of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;
- Standards of the European Union (Directive 2014/24/EU);
- TPPR methodology³;
- Own experience based on the analysis of the best ETP samples.

The indicators are divided into two groups: transparency of public procurement and ETPs characteristics.

³ www.tpp-rating.org/page/rus/methodology

For the final evaluation of the official ETPs and determining the degree of their compliance with the best international practices, a scoring system was applied with all indicators carrying equal weight, and rating varying from 0 to 1 point. Possible scores:

- 1: full compliance with best practices
- 0.75: the system does not meet the standards in full and minor improvements are needed
- 0.5: significant reforms are needed
- 0 and 0.25: low compliance or non-compliance with international standards.

The indicators that are divided into components also carry a total weight of 1 point. Two methods of calculating points are used:

- method for assigning a rating: involves assigning a score depending on the degree of compliance with best practices;
- summation method: involves dividing the indicator into components, each carrying equal weight, with subsequent summation to obtain the final value of the indicator.

Evaluation of ETPs and e-procurement system

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section is a PPL score in the field of electronic procurement and ETPs functionality. The second - an analysis of public procurement conducted through ETPs.

The PPL score in the field of electronic public procurement and ETPs functionality

This section evaluates functionality the of official ETPs in Belarus, and the degree of compliance of the national PPL in the field of electronic procurement with best international practices. This is followed by an analysis of ETPs' strengths and weaknesses, an analysis of the process of conducting public procurement through ETPs, and recommendations for improving the software-hardware complex used in ETPs.

Transparency of Public Procurement			
#	Indicator	Score	Relevant legislation, articles, remarks
1.	Government register of legal entities is available online; [Score: 1]	1	Resolution of the Council of ministers of the Republic of Belarus "On the Unified State Register of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs", Art. 19 Legal act: https://goo.gl/6mJ7Zw Online access: http://egr.gov.by/egrn/
2.	Public procurement plans available online [Score: 1]	1	Law on Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 18 (2) Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx Online access: https://goo.gl/TWxvmm
3.	Civil servants are required to submit income and property declarations. [Score: 1] Distribution of values:	0.5	Law of the Republic of Belarus On Combating Corruption, Chapter 4 Legal act: https://goo.gl/X873Me

	<p>a) Declarations are submitted to the supervisory bodies but are not published [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>b) Declarations are available online [Score: 0.5]</p>		
4	<p>In line with PPL, electronic means are the main way of conducting public procurement and of exchanging documents and information between tendering parties</p> <p>Distribution of values:</p> <p>a) electronic means are key method in public procurement [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>b) electronic means are the key channel of communication between tendering parties [Score: 0.5]</p>	0	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 24</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
5	<p>PPL provides for a single official access point (i.e. an online platform) for all information related to public procurement [Score: 1]</p>	1	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Work, Services) Art. 1 (11)</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p> <p>Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus On certain Measures to Implement the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 12)</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/kGwmX0</p>

Assessment of ETP functionality			
#	Indicator	Score	Remarks
1.	<p>Search for sites and documents is possible depending on the filter [Score: 1]</p> <p>Distribution of values:</p> <p>a) Search by subject of procurement [Score: 0.3]</p> <p>b) Search by any field on the site [Score: 0.4]</p> <p>c) Search by any field and attached documents [Score: 0.3]</p>	0.7	Search is possible both by subject matter of the procurement and, in expanded search, by any type of invitation and procurement outcome. Search by attached documents is missing.
2.	<p>View tender documents of the purchaser and issue a request for clarification of tender documents [Score: 1]</p> <p>Distribution of values:</p> <p>a) Viewing tender documents is possible in an electronic format [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>b) Viewing tender documents is possible in machine-readable format [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>c) Request for clarification of tender documents via ETP [Score: 0.5]</p>	0.5	Access to tender documentation is possible in any format, but additional documentation may be published in a non-machine-readable format. No modality for submitting a request and receiving response about terms of the tender, and for clarification of tender documents on the ETP.
3.	<p>Exchange of documents, information and updates in the tender documentation takes place via ETP [Score: 1 point]</p> <p>Distribution of values:</p>	0.5	No exchange of documents and information among the tendering parties through the ETP. At the same time, it is possible to publish information on exchange of documents and information through ETP

	<p>a) Information on documents and information exchange is published on ETP [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>b) Information on documents and information exchange of is conducted via ETP [Score: 0.5]</p>		
4	ETP supports API, through which all interested parties can access central ETP database [Score: 1]	0	No API support
6	ETP supports EDS [Score: 1]	1	EDS is supported on ETP http://www.goszakupki.by
7	ETP secures contracts registration and issuance of requests for payments to the Treasury [Score: 1]	0	No integration
8	It is legislatively enshrined that the software used for electronic procurement and relevant information exchange should be non-discriminatory, free to use and exchange data with ETps, and it must not restrict tendering parties' access to the procurement procedure [Score: 1]	1	Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Work, Services) Art. 24 (4) Legal act: https://goo.gl/murOMx
9	<p>ETP secures free online access to complaints [Score: 1]</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <p>a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1]</p> <p>b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75]</p> <p>c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>d) paper only [Score: 0.25]</p>	0.5	Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus On certain Issues of Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 1.15 Legal act: https://goo.gl/qLqcTA

	e) no access [Score: 0]		
10	<p>ETP provides free online access to complaints [Score: 1]</p> <p>ЭТП обеспечивает бесплатный онлайн доступ к системе разрешения споров</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <p>a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1]</p> <p>b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75]</p> <p>c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>d) paper only [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>e) no access [Score: 0]</p>	0.25	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 54 (1)</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
11	<p>ETP provides free online access to the machine-readable invitation to participate in the procurement procedure (including supplementary documents)</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <p>a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1]</p> <p>b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75]</p> <p>c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>d) paper only [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>e) no access [Score: 0]</p>	0.5	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 21</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
12	<p>ETP allows for publishing an electronic machine-readable tender invitation, including at least: [Score: 1]</p> <p>(a) name and address of the procuring entity and other information necessary for communication with the procuring entity and for receipt of all</p>	<p>Total: 7/8</p> <p>A) 1/8</p> <p>B) 1/8</p>	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 21, 25, 33</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>

	<p>relevant documents, as well as costs and timeframe [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(b) description of procurement, including type and quantity of goods or services purchased [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(c) product or service code [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(d) estimated cost of procurement [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(e) timeframe of delivery [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(f) type of procurement procedure [Score: 1/8]</p> <p>(g) place and time of bid submission [Score: 1/9]</p> <p>(h) additional requirements for bidders [Score: 1/8]</p>	<p>C) 1/8</p> <p>D) 1/8</p> <p>E) 0</p> <p>F) 1/8</p> <p>G) 1/8</p> <p>H) 1/8</p>	
13	<p>ETP allows for publishing an electronic machine-readable tender invitation, including at least: [Score: 1]</p> <p>a) terms of payment [Score: 0.2]</p> <p>b) level of contract performance security [Score: 0.2]</p> <p>c) source of funding [Score: 0.2]</p> <p>d) information on payments for multi-year contracts [Score: 0.2]</p> <p>e) draft contract [Score: 0.2]</p>	<p>Total: 0.6</p> <p>A) 0</p> <p>B) 0.2</p> <p>C) 0.2</p> <p>D) 0</p> <p>E) 0.2</p>	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 21, 25, 33</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
14	<p>ETP provides free online access to bidders' offers in machine-readable format (including attached documents)</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <p>a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1]</p> <p>b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75]</p> <p>c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>d) paper only [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>e) no access [Score: 0]</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 24</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>

15	<p>ETP provides free online access to bidders' offers in machine-readable format</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1] b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75] c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5] d) paper only [Score: 0.25] e) no access [Score: 0] 	1	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 28</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
16	<p>ETP provides free online access to the decisions of the tender commission in a machine-readable format</p> <p>Scoring method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1] b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75] c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5] d) paper only [Score: 0.25] e) no access [Score: 0] 	0.5	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 29</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>
17	<p>Following the end of the bidding process and the award of bids, ETP allows for publishing the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) name, ownership type, identification number, address, telephone number, fax number (if applicable) and e-mail address of procuring entity [Score: 0.1] b) subject of procurement [Score: 0.1] c) product code [Score: 0.1] 	0.7	<p>Law of the Republic of Belarus On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services) Art. 28</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/mur0Mx</p>

	<p>d) description of the subject of procurement: characteristics, volume, value for each lot [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>e) type of the winner selection procedure [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>f) date of signing the contract [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>g) contract performance timeframe [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>h) other bidders' offers and their value [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>i) name, type of ownership, identification number, address, phone number, fax number (if applicable), e-mail address of the successful bidder [Score: 0.1]</p> <p>j) name, address, telephone number of the body for revision or appeal of tender award decision [Score: 0.1]</p>		
18	<p>ETP provides free online access to contracts signed as a outcome of tender in a machine-readable format</p> <p>a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1]</p> <p>b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75]</p> <p>c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5]</p> <p>d) paper only [Score: 0.25]</p> <p>e) no access [Score: 0]</p>	0	<p>In line with the Council of Ministers' resolution On certain Measures to Implement the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 11</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/kGwmX0</p> <p>Information about the contracts and draft contracts should be published on the official website. It is not obligatory though to publish signed contracts.</p>
19	<p>ETP provides free online access to all amendments and additions to contracts signed following bidding (in the machine-readable format)</p>	0	<p>In line with the Council of Ministers' resolution On certain Measures to Implement the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 11</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1] b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75] c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5] d) paper only [Score: 0.25] e) no access [Score: 0] 		<p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/kGwmX0</p> <p>Information on contracts and draft contract should be published on the official website. It is not obligatory though to publish signed contracts.</p>
20	<p>ETP provides free online access to certificates of completion and goods delivery certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1] b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75] c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5] d) paper only [Score: 0.25] e) no access [Score: 0] 	0	<p>In line with the Council of Ministers' resolution On certain Measures to Implement the Law On Public Procurement of Goods (Works, Services), Art. 11</p> <p>Legal act: https://goo.gl/kGwmX0</p> <p>Information on contracts and draft contract should be published on the official website. It is not obligatory though to publish signed contracts.</p>
21	<p>ETP provides free online access to payment documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) online, machine-readable format, free [Score: 1] b) online, non-machine-readable format, paid [Score 0.75] c) online, non-machine-readable format [Score: 0.5] d) paper only [Score: 0.25] e) no access [Score: 0] 	0	

Total score: 13 points out of 26, or 50% of the total score.

Analysis of conducting public procurement through ETPs

This section briefly describes all official ETPs operating in Belarus, assesses their functionality, and tries to identify main shortcomings of said ETPs that significantly affect the efficiency, transparency and level of competition in public procurement procedures.

At the moment, there are three official ETPs in Belarus, through which public procurement is carried out: www.icetrade.by (focus on open competitions), www.goszakupki.by (focus on electronic auctions), and www.zakupki.butb.by (focus on stock exchange auctions). It is noteworthy that information on www.icetrade.by duplicates the information from the other two remaining platforms.

The ETP www.icetrade.by was launched in January 2002, and since then it has not progressed technically. It is obsolete and lags behind similar platforms in other countries in terms of functionality. This platform was developed mainly for the prompt provision of information on tenders and competitive tenders in Belarus and the CIS countries, and for creating a single point of access to the national legal framework governing public procurement. It should be noted that the www.icetrade.by handles these basic functions well. This ETP is run by the Republican (National) Unitary Enterprise National Centre for Marketing and Price Study.

As per the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of 22.08.2012, www.icetrade.by is declared an official site where information on public procurement and acts of law governing public procurement are posted. At present, the following information can be found on www.icetrade.by:

- annual public procurement plans and invitations to tender including those on public procurement, as well as procurement outcome reports, and documents on procurement procedures inclusive of amendments and additions;
- information on international procurement and UN tenders;
- information on contracts, inclusive of amendments and additions;
- list of fraudulent suppliers;
- list of persons vetted on the official website www.icetrade.by
- list of certifying centres;
- hyperlinks to lists of fraudulent suppliers from the states Belarus has signed public procurement contracts with;

- list of manufacturers of goods, works and services, and details of relevant organizations;
- hyperlinks to updated acts of law governing public procurement

The platforms www.goszakupki.by and www.zakupki.butb.by were developed for the purpose of conducting public procurement based on the procedures for electronic auction and for stock exchange trading, in accordance with the Law on Public Procurement of Goods (Work, Services), adopted and approved in 2012. Unlike www.icetrade.by, these platforms are true to their names and really are electronic trading platforms for EDS-certified electronic trading. However, the functional and technical discrepancies between www.icetrade.by and the two other ETPs end here. www.goszakupki.by and www.icetrade.by are run by the Republican Unitary Enterprise National Centre for Marketing and Price Study, and www.zakupki.butb.by – by PLC Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange.

During analysis of the legislative base and functionality of the abovesaid ETPs, the following shortcomings were identified:

- public procurement is not electronic means-friendly;
- documents on ETPs may be loaded in a non-machine-readable format, which excludes them from electronic search databases;
- official Belarusian ETPs lack basic functions of other modern ETPs such as:
 - 1) exchange of electronic documents and information;
 - 2) inquiries and clarifications procedure about procurement and bidding;
 - 3) registration of contracts and issuing payments requests to the Treasury;
 - 4) resolution of disputes and filing of complaints;
 - 5) publication of signed contracts with attachments, invoices and certificates of completion of goods, services or works;
- ETPs do not support API, through which all interested parties could access centralised ETP database;
- ETPs do not support data exchange with other official databases, which causes a large number of errors and a lack of uniformity in filling out official documents;

- ETPs do not support automatic verification of the correctness of data entered when creating electronic documents and filling out electronic forms; tender documents lack such important fields like deadlines or terms and conditions of payment.

PPL stipulates that the main type of public procurement procedure in Belarus is open tender, which is conducted through www.icetrade.by. Although the law provides for the electronic publication of all key documents relevant to the bidding, the tender itself is not conducted in the electronic format. This is because preparation of tender documents, as well as the procedure for opening and reviewing tender proposals within the framework of the open tender procedures is conducted internally and with the use of hard copies of the tender-related documents.

It is important to note that electronic documents on all ETPs without exception may be downloaded in a non-machine-readable format, which means that these documents are not searchable electronically. This, on the one hand, adversely affects the competition level since potential suppliers may have problems searching for invitations to tender, and on the other – it reduces the availability of information and prevents interested parties from conducting electronic data analysis.

The lack of electronic document management function on official ETPs negatively affects their effectiveness as the main tool in public procurement. In the first place, tendering parties are forced to use hard copies and e-documents at the same time, which adds burden to their work. Secondly, tendering parties are forced to meet face to face, which increases corruption risks and takes extra time. Thus, Belarusian ETPs are more likely to function as an electronic information board and the place of publication of official documents, and not as fully-fledged trading platforms.

ETPs do not support data exchange with other official databases, which, combined with the lack of automatic verification of data correctness when creating electronic documents and filling out electronic forms, leads to mistakes and lack of general standards for filling out official documents.

Said shortcomings of the ETPs give fraudulent bidders the opportunity to withhold or publish incomplete or partially unreliable information about public procurement. Typical violations include:

- brand use in the description of procurement,
- use of Latin letters in the description of procurement,
- intentional grammar mistakes,

- no procurement outcome report,
- providing incomplete information about tendering parties etc.

The authorities are not interested in identifying said violations, which they consider insignificant. For them, the so-called ‘averted damage’ remains the main success indicator, and when incomplete and unreliable information is published, this indicator does not apply. Consequently, the authorities are not motivated to identify minor violations.

The shortcomings of the official ETPs combined turning a blind eye on minor violations creates a climate of impunity among public procurement officials. This, in turn, affects the process of publishing information, which is no more than a mere tick-box exercise.

An important shortcoming of the official Belarusian ETPs is that they are not integrated with the treasury payment system, which does not allow to effectively plan and manage the funds, increase the efficiency of budget funds use, and strengthen financial discipline. In addition, under the PPL there is no obligation to publish signed contracts in full with annexes and addendums, nor invoices and certificates of completion of goods, services or works. Too, the ETPs are not integrated with the treasury payment system, which makes it impossible to conduct a qualitative analysis of the fulfilment of parties’ obligations at the post-tender stage, both electronically and traditionally. All this reduces the openness of data and increases corruption risks.

The system for dispute resolution, making and handling complaints is not fully digitalised either. There are no options for filing EDS-enabled complaints on the ETPs, and it is possible that the outcomes of the dispute resolution outcomes will be published in a non-machine-readable format. Dispute resolution is possible only face-to-face.

Finally, ETPs do not support API, through which all interested parties could access the centralised ETPs database. As a result, there is no possibility for interested parties to develop side programmes and tender applications, and to obtain and analyse data on public procurement.

Conclusions and recommendations

General conclusions:

- Official ETPs serve as an electronic information board and a place for publishing official documents, but they are not fully-fledged trading platforms. Real auctions are only possible on www.goszakupki.by and www.zakupki.butb.by;
- Technical imperfections of the official ETPs open doors to fraudulent bidders who are able to get away with impunity and publish incomplete or partially unreliable information on public procurement;
- Absence of such necessary functions such as electronic document management, API, integration with the treasury payment system, dispute resolution systems do not allow for using the potential for digitalised public procurement to the full. Too, it reduces effectiveness, transparency and competition in conducting public procurement.

The above problems can be attributed to the lack of a single state body responsible for implementing public procurement state policy.

Recommendations:

- Since the existing ETPs are technically obsolete, the most reasonable move would be to develop and launch a new official ETP free of the shortcomings identified during said analysis. In order to save the budget funds through developing a modern ETP, it is recommended to use ready-made open source technologies. A good example thereof could be the Open Procurement software package, on which the Ukrainian procurement system ProZorro is built, which has already proved its effectiveness, transparency and accessibility;
- Identify a single body to develop public procurement policy, and a single executor of this policy. These should be different, independent from each other and from other ministries, agencies or organizations.