

# Professionalism in Public Procurement

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Katarina Radović

Secretary General of the Commission for the Control  
of Public Procurement Procedures in the Republic of  
Montenegro

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Public procurement and its legislative basis, together with consistent implementation of regulations are among the most significant barriers to corruption, organized crime and inappropriate spending of the budget, which calls for high standards in both the quality of public procurement procedures and professionalism of implementing entities.

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Professionalism in public procurement allows for functionality, transparency and significant savings in public expenditure and, for a country like Montenegro, a major step forward on its long and painstaking journey towards its final destination, the approximation of national legislation to EU legislation and full membership in EU.

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# Professionalism implies:

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- ❑ Legislative framework (Law and secondary legislation),
  - ❑ Institutional framework (agency and commission) present in any developed system:
    - democratic Government,
    - independent judiciary,
    - independent SAI,
    - anti-corruption measures,
    - active NGO sector,
    - free media
  - ❑ Professional staff (precisely defined remuneration and career promotion systems with which to attract young people, with compulsory permanent professional development)
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- ❑ Full transparency of procedure  
(a broader range of documents published) and
  - ❑ Modernization of procedure  
(use of new information and communication technologies)
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Therefore, it is necessary that everyone involved in the public procurement system (Public Procurement Agency, Public Procurement Commission, Administrative Court, internal and external audit, anticorruption initiative agency, bidders and non-governmental sector) efficiently carries out the activities entrusted to it in various areas of public procurement, communicates and coordinates work with others.

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# Public procurement stages:

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- ❑ Preparation stage – planning of public procurement,
  - ❑ Implementation stage – stage of implementing the procedure and procedures following appeals,
  - ❑ Contract conclusion stage and
  - ❑ Contract performance stage
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# Prerequisite for professionalism and efficiency of public procurement:

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- That the stages are carried out transparently and in accordance with the Law
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- A system in place with strong institutions with clearly defined competencies and duties in the implementation of each of the public procurement stages mentioned above is a prerequisite for professionalism in public procurement.
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# Next steps in establishing professionalism include:

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- ❑ Comprehensive training programme for various levels,
  - ❑ Establishing a group of public procurement professionals,
  - ❑ Use of modern information and communication technologies, together with full transparency of the work.
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# Comprehensive training programme implies:

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- ❑ Training of all entities involved,
  - ❑ Motivation factor (graded certificates issued for a limited period of time and confirmed at regular intervals, which is meant to avoid elitism in public procurement),
  - ❑ Keeping a register of entities holding certificates and publishing it, which is meant to help establish public procurement office as elite profession). The register is to be kept and published by the Public Procurement Agency.
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# Use of modern information and communication technologies

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- ❑ Introduction of electronic public procurement
  - ❑ Establishment of the legislative framework through secondary legislation
  - ❑ Increase in the number of electronic public procurement conducted by certified entities, among both contracting authorities and bidders
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# To achieve this goal, we need to:

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- ❑ Conduct a public campaign to raise awareness at all levels of the decision making of the significance of public procurement and the effect it has on the efficient expenditure of the budget.
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To that end, it is necessary to:

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- Educate media representatives about public procurement so that they can report professionally and that the presented information is reliable and accurate and the profession of public procurement placed at a highly professional level.
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# Discussion

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