

COORDINATES OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: This article provides an overview of the evolution of public procurement procedures on the Electronic Public Procurement System (SEAP) used in Romania over the last ten years, identifying the trend and the patterns in their structure. The research method used is the analysis of secondary data from statistical reports on public procurement procedures carried out within the SEAP electronic platform in Romania, collected from the official website of the National Agency for Public Procurement (ANAP). According to the results obtained, public spending has increased significantly in recent years. This evolution in the growth rate of budgetary expenditure has caused large budget deficits, which have raised numerous problems in attracting the funds needed to cover expenditure.

JEL classification: H0, H50, H51, H57, H60, H61, G28

Key words: public procurement, state budget, domestic product, public expenditure on products, services and works

INTRODUCTION

Public procurement is primarily aimed at obtaining the products, services and works necessary for public institutions to accomplish the purpose for which they were created in a timely, cost-effective, and efficient manner. The OECD (2023) claims that "Public procurement contributes to service delivery through the acquisition of products and services needed in the private sector."

Public procurement is considered an important element in achieving government objectives in accordance with the OECD 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2024) such as the promotion of a circular and green economy, encouraging innovation, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and adopting ethical and professional conduct.

In 2022, the value of public procurement of goods and services in the EU was estimated at around EUR 2,329 billion or approximately 14.6% of GDP (Public Procurement Indicators, 2024). Considering this high level of public spending and its strategic importance, public procurement is an essential governmental activity influencing the economic and social development of each country. Given the high level of public spending and its strategic importance, public procurement is an essential government activity that influences the economic and social development of every country. As we have all witnessed during the period of the global pandemic crisis caused by COVID-19, public procurement has been an important source of supply for essential public services, with vaccines and medical protective equipment, as well as for facilitating the functioning of vital infrastructure (OECD, 2020).

Currently in Romania, the National Agency for Public Procurement (ANAP, 2023) has implemented the National Strategy for Public Procurement (SNAP) 2023-2027, which was approved by Government Decision no. 554/12.06.2023 and is being implemented. The Strategy is a public policy document that embodies the government's target on the further process of implementation of the public procurement system in the period 2023-2027. The goal is to establish a more efficiently organized public procurement system oriented to innovation and sustainability. With this new strategy, public procurement is recognized as a strategic mechanism that can support the growth and recovery of Romania's economy, by ensuring social, environmental and innovation advantages in the process of implementing the National Recovery and Resilience Plan according to the European Commission Communication (PNRR, 2023).

The objective of this article is to analyse the evolution of tender procedures for public procurement contracts carried out within the SEAP electronic platform in Romania from 2015 to 2024, and more specifically an evolution of: the value of public procurement, the number of estimated procedures and the types of contracts for the years 2021-2024 in Romania. According to the results obtained, public spending has increased significantly in recent years. This

evolution in the growth rate of budgetary expenditure has caused large budget deficits, which have raised numerous problems in attracting the funds needed to cover expenditure.

1. LITERATUTE REVIEW

Public procurement plays a vital role to improve the environment for companies, to support the transitions to a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy, and to improve the business environment (Caranta & Gomes, 2021). Governments play a key role in promoting sustainable development (Bleda and Chicot, 2020). Public procurement is used as a policy tool for governance, directing market demand towards products and services (Dongyang et al., 2025) Public procurement also has a remarkable potential to boost the supply market. It can boost research and development and can increase product innovation by proactively bringing in new products and services for customers and accelerating the implementation of new customer solutions, thereby contributing to the development of the supply market (Miller and Lehoux, 2020). The main purpose of public procurement is to obtain the products, services, and works necessary for public authorities to fulfill the objectives for which they were established, in a prompt, cost-effective, and efficient manner. The OECD (2023 a) claims that "Public procurement contributes to the provision of services by purchasing necessary products and services from the private sector."

Each government uses the tendering procedure for public procurement to purchase goods, services and works. On average, if we talk about the amounts of public expenditure allocated through public procurement contracts in Romania, as well as among the Member States of the European Union, it amounts over 16% of the total gross domestic product (GDP) of annual public expenditure. This makes public procurement a significant policy tool, which, if used strategically, can help countries to stimulate the creation of new jobs, significant economic growth, and new investment so that a more innovative economy is created, as well as more resource-efficient and global energy use. (European Parliament, 2025). The public sector's role in promoting the well-being of citizens by facilitating innovation has been widely debated in literature and policy development on public procurement (Evans et al., 2025).

Public procurement can play a key role in boosting the productivity of economies, improving the efficiency of public sectors, and increasing citizens' trust in institutions. (OECD, 2023 b).

An important analysis conducted by Rejeb et al. (2024) found that SMEs are one of the more highly cited and established research topics in the field of public procurement.

Public procurement of works represents over 25% of total public procurement in the European Union. Therefore, public works procurement should be seen as a strategic tool for pursuing sustainable procurement policies, however, very often the sustainability objectives are not reflected in the award criteria (Tavares et. al., (2022)).

Public procurement is also seen as an important element in achieving government objectives in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development implemented by the OECD (2024), such as promoting a circular and green economy, encouraging innovation, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and adopting ethical and professional conduct.

The electronic public procurement system plays an essential role in budget implementation because, until the budget is approved, the contracting authority can take the necessary steps to sign the public procurement contract. Another important strategy in budget implementation is when the budgetary costs for each institution are estimated for the budget year for which the draft budget is being drawn up, i.e. for the next three years, thus leading to a strategy for improving logistics in the public procurement market.

In Romania, all public institutions use The Electronic Public Procurement System (SEAP), which is an electronic public procurement platform that allows these institutions to purchase goods, services, and works electronically. The contracting authorities and the economic operators must register in SEAP every two years and pay a fee to get digital certificates to authenticate themselves in the system and to digitally sign. SEAP characteristics include the electronic publication of participation notices and award documentation, facilitating interconnection with the EU Official Journal, and electronic submission of bids (ADR, 2025). The current economic context will significantly influence a certain upward trend in the value of award procedures related to public procurement contracts carried out on Romania's SEAP electronic platform. Another perspective that may influence this prediction is that of government policy, where the government determines the increase in budget revenues and the decrease in the number and value of award procedures related to public procurement contracts in Romania, depending on the national context.

The wars in Ukraine and Israel, as well as the current state of uncertainty in Romania, are having a negative impact on the prices of goods, services and works; high inflation and worsening



international financing conditions will contribute to a slowdown in economic activity in Romania.

2. METHODOLOGY

The databases on the statistical reports on public procurement procedures conducted within the SEAP electronic platform in Romania are retrieved from the official website of the National Agency for Public Procurement (ANAP, 2025).

The research method used is the analysis of secondary data from the "Statistical reports on the procedures for the award of public procurement contracts / sectors initiated within the electronic public procurement system through the publication of a notice / simplified participation notice/invitation to tender" accessed on the ANAP website and refers to: the value of public procurement, the number of estimated procedures and the types of contracts.

During the period 2015-2017, in the statistical reports provided by ANAP we find the values expressed in Euro, while for the period 2018-2024 the statistical reports provide data expressed in Ron; so, we converted into Euro using the exchange rate BNR (BNR, 2025) as of December 31 of each year.

3. Results

3.1. The evolution of the value of public procurement in Romania

Over the last decades Romania has gone through major transformations, leading to economic growth with a high degree of uncertainties, namely: the 2008 global crisis that generated a turmoil in the financial markets; the economic shock caused by Covid 19, a period of above-average money printing, which produced inflation; the impact of the war in Ukraine with Russia, which led to an increase in oil, gas and electricity prices, which caused a massive increase in the prices of products, works and services.

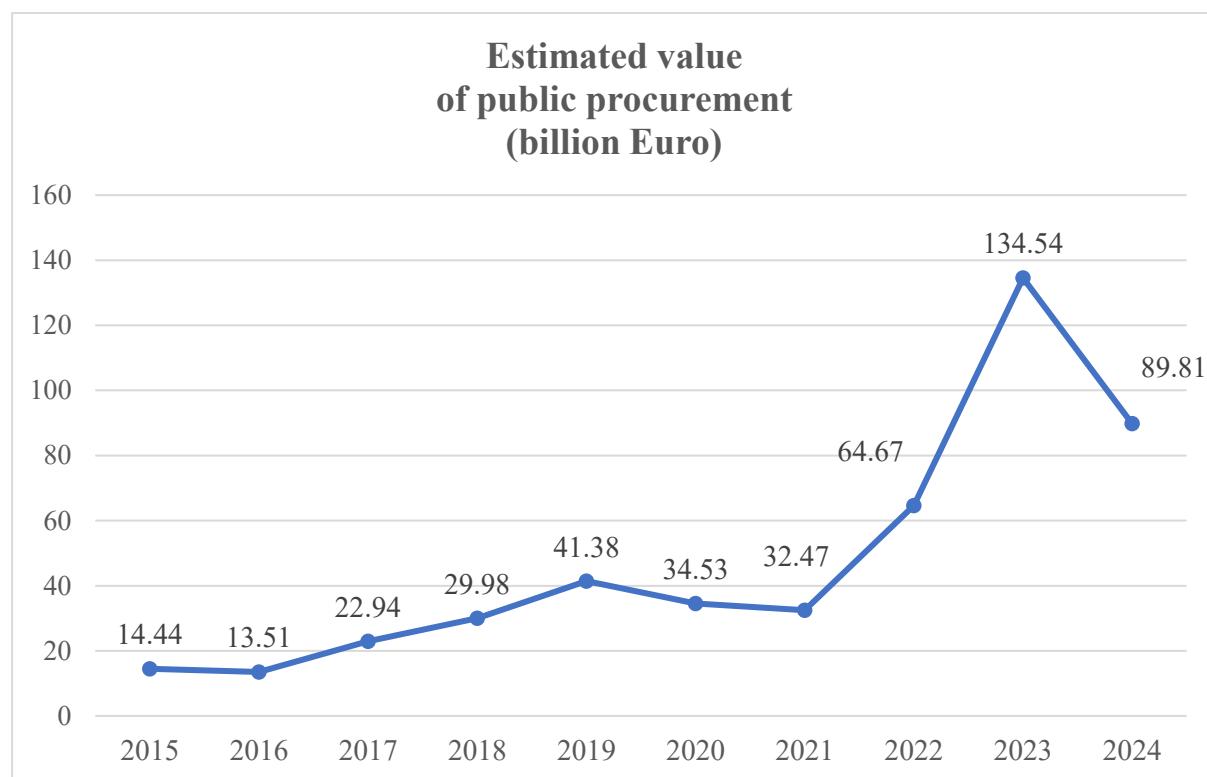


Fig. 1: The value of public procurement in Romania (2015-2024)
(Source: National Agency for Public Procurement (2025))

Analysing the evolution of the value of Romania's estimated public procurement since 2015 (see Figure no. 1), we observe a relatively upward trend from year to year. In 2016 we observe a decrease in the value of public procurement by 6.44% compared to 2015, i.e., with a difference



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of 0.93 billion Euro. We will have an increase in public procurement expenditure in 2019 by 38.03% compared to 2018, i.e., a difference of 11.4 billion Euro. From 2020 we see a relaxation of public procurement spending by 6.85 billion Euro compared to 2019, and in 2021 we still have a downward trend of 2.06 billion Euro compared to 2020 (Figure no.1).

The year 2022 was marked by the war in Ukraine, with both economic and humanitarian effects, many of the Government decisions are directed to provide support and humanitarian assistance to Ukrainian citizens or stateless persons from the area of armed conflict in Ukraine, that is why we record an increase in the value of public procurement of 32.2 billion Euro compared to 2021. The biggest increase in the value of public procurement is in the year 2023 of 69.87 billion Euro compared to 2022. Considering the evolution of the increase in the value of public procurement in Romania (Figure no. 1) for the period 2015-2024, we can estimate that the value of public procurement will have an upward trend.

3.2. The evolution of the number of public procurement procedures in Romania

Based on the secondary data taken from ANAP, we observe that in 2015 more public procurement procedures were concluded compared to 2016, i.e., 3,148 procedures, registering a decrease of 14.16% compared to 2015 (Figure no.2).

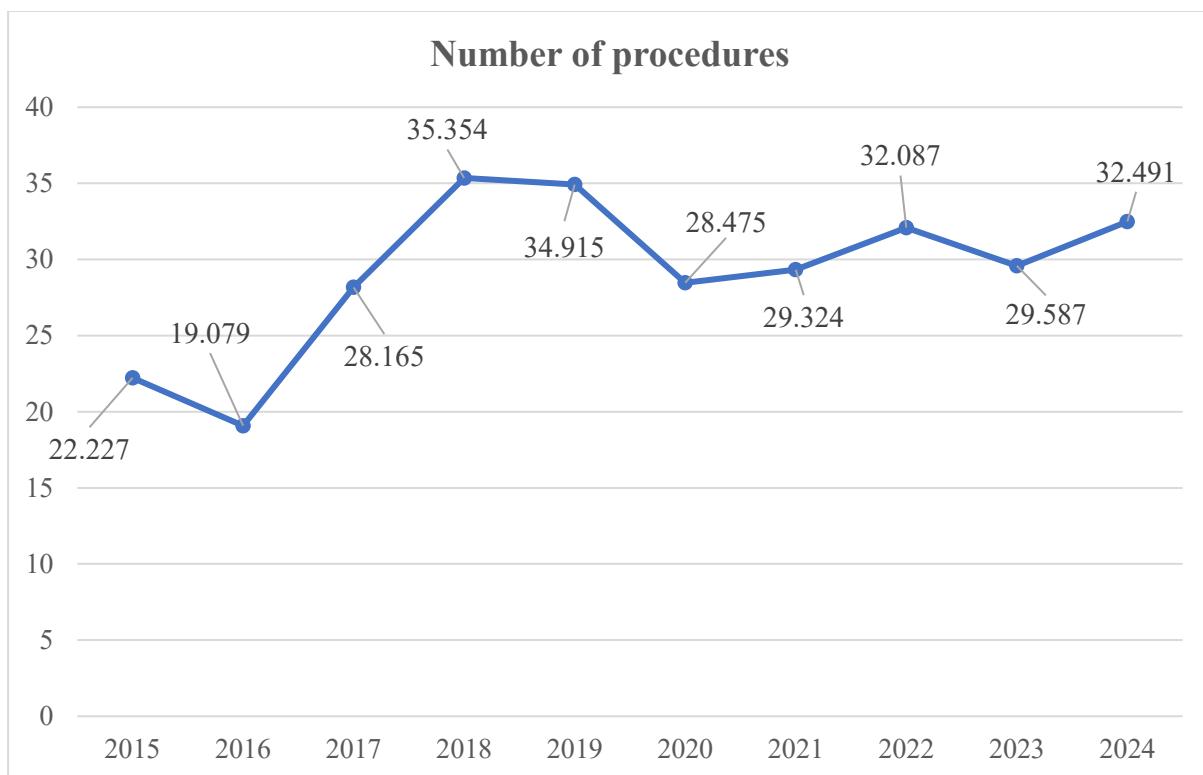


Fig. 2: The estimated number of public procurement procedures in Romania
 (Source: National Agency for Public Procurement (2025))

In 2017 a number of 28,165 public procurement procedures were concluded, registering an increase of 47.62% compared to 2016, i.e., with a difference of 9,086 more procedures concluded. The most public procurement procedures were recorded in the year 2018 of 35,354 procedures, with a difference of 439 more procedures compared to the year 2019.

In the year 2020, there was a decrease of 18.44% in the number of procurement procedures compared to 2019, with a difference of 6,440 procedures. In 2022 we record 32,087 procedures, showing an increase of 9.42% of procedures compared to 2021, i.e., 2,763 procedures. Although the year 2023 has the highest expenditure on public procurement in the period 2015-2024, i.e., 134.54 billion Euro (Figure no. 1), we observe that in 2023 only 29,587 procedures were concluded, registering a decrease of 7.79% of procedures compared to 2022.

3.3. The evolution of types of public procurement contracts in Romania

The Romanian e-procurement system includes three types of contracts: supply of products, works and services.

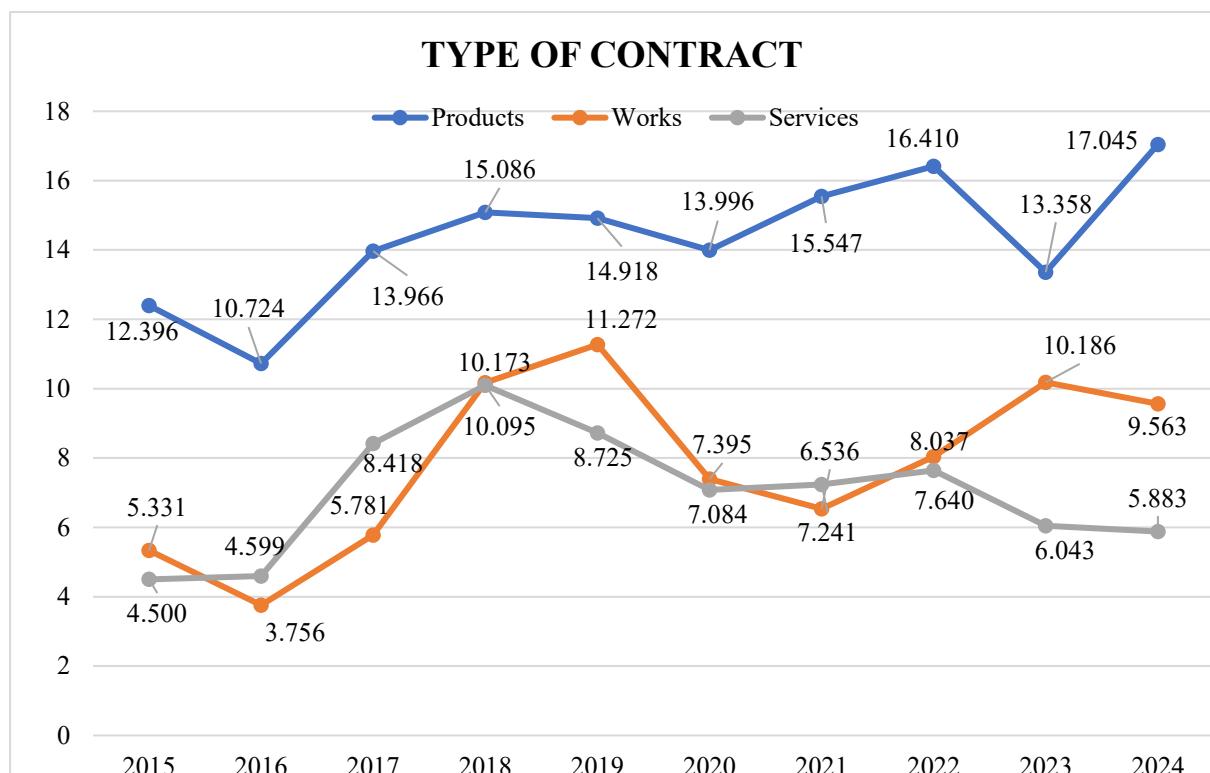


Fig. 3: Types of public procurement contracts in Romania for the years 2015-2024

(Source: National Agency for Public Procurement (2025))

Looking at the whole (Figure no. 3), we find the evolution of each type of public procurement contract at the territorial level over the period 2015-2024.

According to the secondary data collected from ANAP, we observe that the most contracts were concluded in the period 2015-2024 of type: Supply of products, followed by contracts of type: Works and in third place are positioned works with an annual average of 7,149 contracts. Contracts of type: Supply of products record the lowest level in 2016 with a total of 10,724 contracts; the most contracts were concluded in 2022, approximately 16,410 contracts. When we talk about the contracts of type works, we observe that the most contracts were concluded

in 2019, with 11,272 works, and the lowest level was reached in 2016, with 3,756 contracts. Contracts of type: Services have an annual average of 7,149 contracts with the highest level in 2018 of 10,095 contracts (Figure no. 3).

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study provides an overview of the evolution of public procurement procedures carried out on the SEAP electronic platform in Romania over the last ten years, identifying trends and patterns in their structure. The objectives of this scientific report have been fully achieved with the analysis of the evolution of the award procedures for public procurement contracts carried out on the SEAP electronic platform in Romania from 2015 to 2024.

Based on the obtained result, it was concluded that after 2015 Romania has gone through major transformations, leading to economic growth in the context of a high level of uncertainties, namely: the consequences of the 2008 global financial crisis, the economic shock caused by Covid 19, the impact of the war in Ukraine with Russia and the impact of the war in Israel, all of which have influenced the predictability of the growth in the value of the tender procedures for public procurement contracts in Romania.

According to the results, public expenditure has increased significantly in recent years. This development in the rate of growth of budget spending has caused large budget deficits, which have posed numerous problems in attracting the necessary funds to cover the expenditure. We can conclude that contracting authorities are finding it much easier to use the e-procurement system for the public procurement process, thanks to the modernization and innovation of the system, thus encouraging the best 'value for money' in every contract concluded, which is indispensable for the overall objective of protecting and serving the public interests. At the same time, we can see which type of contract is favoured by contracting authorities according to the secondary database provided by ANAP: the supply of products by contracting authorities is favoured because most procedures were concluded (the period analysed being 2015-2024), namely 143,443 procedures. In second place is the procurement of works contracts (in the period analysed, 2015-2024), with 78,030 procedures, and in third place is the procurement of services, with a total of 70,228 procedures.



Considering the evolution of the growth in the value of public procurement in Romania for the period 2015-2024, we can estimate that the value of public procurement will have an upward trend in the following years. The current economic context will significantly influence a certain upward trend in the value of award procedures related to public procurement contracts carried out on Romania's SEAP electronic platform. Another perspective that may influence this prediction is that of government policy, where the government determines the increase in budget revenues and the decrease in the number and value of award procedures related to public procurement contracts in Romania, depending on the national context. High inflation and worsening international financing conditions will contribute to a slowdown in economic activity in Romania.

In conclusion, we have identified that public procurement plays a key role in improving the business environment, supporting the transition to a resource-efficient economy, and improving the business environment at the same time public procurement has a remarkable potential to stimulate the supply side of the market.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PLAGIARISM:

We declare no conflicts of interest related to this research.

We certify that this piece of writing is the result of my own independent scientific work and that in all cases, the materials from other authors' works (from books, articles, essays, doctoral theses, and the internet) are fully acknowledged, and the quotations and paraphrases are clearly indicated.

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