Foreword

Used strategically, public procurement can be a powerful tool for delivering public services effectively to citizens and for achieving the digital transformation of society and the economy. Information and communications technology (ICT) procurement, specifically, plays a decisive role in the implementation of any national digital government strategy.

OECD countries have started to experiment with using their public procurement frameworks for purchasing ICT goods and services in innovative and flexible ways. Agile approaches -- such as involving service providers, end-users and other stakeholders in the process as early as possible; modular contracting methods; iterative delivery; and constant adjustment to develop effective solutions -- are being used more often. Agility also reinforcing complementary policy goals in public procurement, such as sustainability and circularity. Indeed, ICT procurement has a clear role to play in delivering social value.

Agility, however, is increasingly becoming an important feature of public procurement processes beyond ICT. The main principles of agility, such as collaboration between the public sector and non-governmental actors, mutual engagement, trust, openness, and inclusivity, can help align the public sector and the market towards common goals, such as increased sustainability. The COVID-19 pandemic clearly showed that countries that have invested in governance, people, and technology, and that built strong digital leadership and processes in the last decade, were able to provide quick and effective digital responses to this unprecedented situation and to apply innovative approaches under stressful conditions, including in the field of public procurement.

This report aims to help the Slovak government and contracting authorities in the Slovak Republic adopt agile procurement practices for purchasing ICT solutions that are in line with the needs and trends of the digital age and contribute to the successful implementation of the 2030 Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Slovakia. The report describes current practices for ICT procurement in the Slovak Republic, identifies the bottlenecks in the current policy and regulatory framework, summarises the efforts of the Slovak government to achieve efficiency in ICT expenditure, and highlights opportunities for improving the practices building on current system's strengths. The report provides evidence-based strategic policy advice for the Slovak government on how to build a more co-ordinated governance structure for implementing ICT procurements and adopt more innovative and agile approaches in ICT procurement. Although the focus of the report is on ICT procurement, agility can be applied to many procurement areas, either as standard for sustainability and circularity or as a tool to support public buyers in digital procurement.

The report was developed under the project *"Developing agile practices for ICT procurement in the Slovak Republic",* designed by the Slovak Republic, the European Commission (EC) and the OECD, and funded through EU's DG REFORM services. The aim of the project is to support the Government of the Slovak Republic in developing tailored agile procurement practices and to ensure strategic alignment with government-led digitalisation initiatives for delivering public services.

Acknowledgements

From:

Towards Agile ICT Procurement in the Slovak Republic
Good Practices and Recommendations

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/b0a5d50f-en