[RO] Public Procurement Rules Adopted

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The Ministerul Comunicatiilor si Tehnologiei Informatiilor (Romanian Ministry for Communication and Information Technology - MCTI) is hoping that liberalisation of the communications market will be complete by 1 January 2003.

The set of new laws that has been drafted for this purpose, and which is still at the planning stage, is intended to take into account all relevant EC directives. It will include provisions concerning electronic services and "e-procurement".

At the beginning of March 2002, Government Decree 20/2002 on public procurement via electronic auctions entered into force. The Decree requires certain public institutions in Romania to conduct all their procurement activities "online" from now on. The list of public institutions to whom this applies was published in Government Resolution 182/2002.

At present, there are 159 such publicly-funded institutions. Those classified as cities or municipalities have nine months, and smaller towns have twelve months, in which to switch over to e-procurement for transactions worth EUR 200,000 or less. National prices are to be introduced for certain items. The provisional list of products contains seven categories of goods that are in particular demand, ranging from agricultural products such as fruit, milk and eggs, to textiles, paper and cellulose products, medicines and electronic components.

The legislature hopes that the automated selection, audit and control procedure will create greater transparency at government level, reduce bureaucracy and corruption and, not least, save money.

The MCTI will ensure that council offices are equipped with the new technology and that staff are trained by the date indicated. The new laws also describe the main features of an electronic system to be used in the future to levy taxes and charges. Such a system should be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Via an Internet portal, the Treasury will have to inform all interested taxpayers about taxes, which they will also be able to pay electronically. By registering as an interested user, all Romanian taxpayers should be able to use this system.

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