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PLATFORM OF PARTNERSHIP FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION & NATIONAL CONVENTION FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Working Group for Chapter 5 – Public Procurement: Update on the current status of meeting the closing benchmarks and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the public procurement system

Thursday, 18 June 2026, 10:00 – 12:00

Recommendations

The European Movement in Albania (EMA), in cooperation with the Public Procurement Agency, organized a **Discussion and Consultation Roundtable** on 18 June 2026 for Chapter 5 – Public Procurement, focusing on the fulfillment of the closing benchmarks of this chapter, the current state of the process, and the use of artificial intelligence in the public procurement system. The event was held within the framework of the Partnership Platform for European Integration (PPIE) and the National Convention on European Integration for this chapter. Based on the discussions held with representatives of civil society organizations, academia, public administration, and other stakeholder groups, the following points were identified and recommended:

- The need to draft a National Artificial Intelligence Strategy was highlighted, which would serve as a guiding framework for the development of public policies in this field and beyond. The absence of such a strategic document creates the risk of fragmented and uncoordinated development of artificial intelligence systems within public administration, including public procurement.
- Along the same lines, it was recommended to draft and adopt internal institutional regulations that clearly and comprehensively define the use of artificial intelligence in public procurement processes. These regulations should address the procedural and functional aspects of technology use, specifying the concrete stages at which AI may be applied, the division of responsibilities among institutional actors, and the permissible limits of automation in public decision-making.
- The importance of full alignment with the EU acquis, including the latest developments in the field of artificial intelligence such as the EU AI Act, was recommended. This process was considered essential for ensuring the compatibility of Albania's public procurement system

*The Discussion and Consultation Roundtables for Chapter 5 are organized pursuant to Prime Minister's Order No. 113, dated 30 August 2019, "On the Forms of Participation, Operation and Institutional Structure of the Partnership Platform for European Integration."

*This roundtable was held within the framework of the project "Building Partnership on Fundamentals: Empowered CSOs in the EU Accession Process," financially supported by the European Union under the IPA Civil Society Facility 2021. The project is implemented by the European Movement in Albania (EMA), in cooperation with the Academy of European Integration and Negotiations (AIEN), the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA), and the Center for Transparency and Freedom of Information (CTFI).



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with European standards and for preparing the country for the advanced stages of the integration process.

- Regarding technological development, the importance of ensuring full interoperability between artificial intelligence systems, existing electronic procurement platforms, and other public databases was emphasized. AI integration cannot be effective if it remains fragmented; it must be supported by an integrated digital system that enables real-time data exchange, auditability, and sustainable use throughout the entire public procurement cycle.
- The development of artificial intelligence in public procurement should progress in parallel with the strengthening of institutional and human capacities. It was assessed that the implementation of new technological systems should be accompanied by structured training programs for public administration staff, including the Public Procurement Agency, contracting authorities, and other actors involved in the development and use of the system. These training programs should focus not only on the technical use of the technology but also on the interpretation of risks and results, as well as on ensuring responsible decision-making.
- During the discussions, the need to guarantee the principle of non-discrimination in the use of artificial intelligence, particularly in the selection of economic operators and the evaluation of bids, was also emphasized. In this regard, it was considered essential that systems be based on verified and balanced data and be accompanied by continuous auditing mechanisms and human oversight, especially at critical stages of decision-making. Despite process automation, final decisions should always remain under the control of an individual (human oversight), who ensures verification, accountability, and the correction of potential algorithmic errors.
- It was emphasized that the use of artificial intelligence depends directly on the quality of the data on which it is trained and operates. Where data are incomplete, fragmented, or influenced by problematic practices, there is a risk that AI systems will reproduce and amplify the same existing distortions. In this context, the need for full compliance with personal data protection standards was also highlighted as an integral part of any digitalization process.
- It was stressed that citizens and economic operators should have clarity regarding how automated systems function and the institutional rationale behind their use. To this end, strengthening institutional transparency and documenting decision-making processes are considered necessary to ensure that the use of AI is understandable and publicly justifiable.

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- The establishment of a sustainable system for periodic reporting on the performance of artificial intelligence in public procurement was considered necessary. Such a mechanism would enable continuous monitoring of system effectiveness, identification of problematic contracts or procedures, and ongoing improvement of algorithm performance. In this context, international examples were also cited, where various countries have used post tender analyses to identify risk patterns and strengthen the integrity of the system.

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