Assessment of customer and business satisfaction with MTender
Goals of the research:

- Study the level of satisfaction with the electronic procurement system MTender of both the entrepreneurs (tender participants) and customers (tender organizers).
- Assess the level of perception of the convenient use of each of the elements of the electronic procurement system MTender.
- Identify the main factors that influence the level of satisfaction with system interaction.
- Assess the level of corruption in the state procurement system and the changes therein with the implementation of MTender.
Method of information collection – separate online surveys of procuring entities and of business representatives who have participated in the tender.

Period of collection of information: 4 – 12 November 2019

Sample:
- 126 responses from the customers
- 112 responses from the businesses

The invitation to participate in the survey has been sent via the electronic platforms of the system.
Profiles of survey participants

- **76%** participated in state procurements before the implementation of MTender
- **53%** take part in procurements two or more times per month
- **38%** have so far participated in less than 10 procurements via MTender
Profiles of survey participants

When did you (the company you represent) start working with state procurements?

75.9%
We took part in procurements even before MTender

24.1%
We started working with state procurements with the appearance of MTender
Profiles of survey participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Participation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times per year</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a quarter</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 times a month</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 times a month</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have never participated in state procurements</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We no longer participate in state procurements</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In how many MTender procurements have you already participated?

- Up to 10 procurements: 38.4%
- 11-30 procurements: 25.0%
- 31-50 procurements: 10.7%
- 50-70 procurements: 6.3%
- More than 70 procurements: 19.6%
37% of survey participants have won in about 10% of procurements in which they participated, and other 17% - in up to a quarter of procurements. At the same time, 27% of the surveyed won in more than half of the procurements in which they took part.

91% of the surveyed say they plan or rather plan to participate in Mtender procurements in the future.

In what proportion of the procurements in which you took part your company won?

- **36.6%** in up to 10%
- **17.0%** in 11-25%
- **19.6%** in 25-50%
- **13.4%** in 51-75%
- **13.4%** in 76-100%
Satisfaction with the work of MTender

Businesses and customers in general are satisfied with the work of MTender – most of them assessed it positively. 57% of customers and 63% of businesses are satisfied and rather satisfied with the system. 24% of customers and 19% of businesses are still neutral in their assessments. 19% of each target group have expressed their dissatisfaction with the system.

“How satisfied are you with the work of MTender?”

- Very unsatisfied: 8.0% businesses, 4.0% customers
- Rather unsatisfied: 10.7% businesses, 15.1% customers
- Neutral: 18.8% businesses, 23.8% customers
- Rather satisfied: 42.9% businesses, 39.7% customers
- Very satisfied: 19.6% businesses, 17.5% customers

“Many thanks! The support service always helps! The system permanently improves. In principle, no big problems arose.”

Customer representative
19% of the businesses surveyed say they are not satisfied with the work of the system compared to submitting bids in hard copies, and 63% say they are satisfied.

“How satisfied are you with the work of Mtender compared to submitting bids in hard copies?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very unsatisfied</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather unsatisfied</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather satisfied</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very satisfied</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Unfortunately, the state procurement platforms are poorly focused on the wishes of businesses and, most of the times, the technical support service responds that it is not in its competence. Unfortunately, the electronic platform has become a bureaucratic intermediary between the procuring entity and the business.”

Business representative
The majority agreed that Mtender significantly helps save both time and financial resources:

- **Businesses**: 73%
- **Customers**: 65%

The breakdown shows:
- **Definitely not** (7.1% businesses, 10.3% customers)
- **Rather not** (8.0% businesses, 14.3% customers)
- **No changes** (11.6% businesses, 10.3% customers)
- **Rather yes** (35.7% businesses, 27.0% customers)
- **Definitely yes** (37.5% businesses, 38.1% customers)
Over 70% of both customers and businesses consider MTender useful for their work. The higher the level of contact with the system, the higher the assessment of its usefulness by the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful to Work</th>
<th>BUSINESSES</th>
<th>CUSTOMERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>totally useless</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather useless</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no influence on usefulness</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather useful</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

72% of businesses and 71% of customers consider MTender useful.
Both businesses and customers are highly satisfied with the electronic platforms – 67% and 59% accordingly. 21% of each group are neutral. 11% of businesses and 21% of customers are dissatisfied with their interaction with the electronic platforms.
67% of customers think that the help desks of the new system are more convenient than previous ones. 23% disagree with this and 10% think they have not changed.

Are the help desks of the e-platforms of MTender more convenient than of the previous state procurement system?

- 9.5% definitely not
- 13.5% rather not
- 9.5% no changes
- 42.9% rather yes
- 23.8% definitely yes

“more detailed consultations are needed when organizing a tender and more specific instructions when working in the system.”

“no big problems exist, except that the registration of contracts function is not working yet.”
Businesses prove a rather high level of satisfaction with such components of interaction with the system as convenience of submitting a bid (63%), system of notifications from the platforms (64%).

The assessment of the satisfaction with the possibility for customer–business interaction via the system is lower – 45%.
The implementation of the new system has made holding and participation in state procurement procedures easier for 60% of business representatives and for 62% of customers. If the participants had experience with participating in procurements earlier, their assessments of the level of easiness are higher.

### Assessment of the level of easiness of participating in the procedures after the appearance of MTender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has the holding of/participation in procedures of state procurements become easier after the appearance of MTender?</th>
<th>Businesses</th>
<th>Customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>definitely not</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather not</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no changes</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather yes</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>definitely yes</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
56% of customers agree with the statement that the new system has become more convenient than the previous one. 33% disagree with this.

When entering information by separate lots I did not find the function “save after each lot”. At some point, the information entered disappeared and I had to enter it again.

We cannot upload a scanned copy of the contract in the system and send it for registration. It is not possible to see all the documents of the businesses participating in the tender right after the opening of the tender.

Has Mtender become more convenient than the previous state procurement system?

- 19,0% definitely not
- 15,1% rather not
- 7,1% no changes
- 35,7% rather yes
- 23,0% definitely yes
The average level of satisfaction with various components of interaction with the system is roughly equal for businesses and for customers. Both customers and businesses note that MTender enables them to save time and company resources considerably as well as they highly assess the utility of the system for their work. Both groups have also assessed their interaction with the platforms relatively highly.

However, to note that, on average, customers assess slightly lower their satisfaction with and the utility of the system.
Main problems encountered by businesses

- **72%** Request for non-mandatory documents
- **58%** Expected cost of procurement below the market one
- **47%** Mtender requires the procuring entity to present the grounds for its decisions but they do not publish them in practice
- **39%** Mtender publishes all winning bids, received in the e-tender, which is not a very good commercial practice
- **38%** Groundless rejection of a bid
- **38%** Dumping of competitors
- **38%** We dislike the fact that the e-tender is anonymous
- **38%** Lack of customer answers/quality answers to clarifying questions
- **36%** Discriminatory requirements in the bid documentation
Main problems encountered by businesses

- Payment terms and conditions are not clearly stated: 28%
- Competitors give customers unreliable statements/documents: 23%
- Shipment dates for goods/works/services are too short: 22%
- The announcement about participation in MTender does not contain enough information for submitting a valid bid: 22%
- The electronic auction in MTender was not working, it was defective: 10%
- The support service of the electronic platforms of MTender did not help me when I needed it: 10%
- The MTender electronic platforms are hard to use: 7%
- Mtender does not enable the procuring entity to sign the contract: 13%
- I saw the tender/procurement and wanted to submit a bid but the system waits until the procuring entity answers all the questions and publishes the clarifications to the documentations upon award: 7%
- Not enough time for preparing the bid/receiving the necessary documents: 17%
- Mtender was inaccessible when I wanted to submit a bid, I could not get access to the system: 12%
- It is hard to use the MTender web portal: 12%
- The electronic procedures are not clearly described in the regulations: 21%
- Mtender does not enable the procuring entity to sign the contract: 13%
- It is hard to use the MTender web portal: 12%
- None of the above reasons were implied: 4%
Main problems encountered by customers

- Mtender does not allow including several goods, services and works in one tender of various CPV groups (first three digits): 66%
- The electronic procedures are not clearly described in the regulations: 39%
- Mtender does not allow revising the documentation upon award during the bid submission period: 29%
- We dislike the fact that the electronic auction is anonymous; it should be held after the evaluation of technical bids: 19%
- Mtender was not accessible when I wanted to publish an announcement for participation; I could not get access to the system: 13%
- The support service of the electronic platforms of MTender did not help me when I needed it: 13%
- We dislike the fact that MTender blocks the receipt of bids until we answer all the questions and publish clarifications to the documentation upon award: 31%
- The electronic auction in MTender was not working, it was defective: 16%
- The MTender web portal is hard to use: 16%
- Mtender does not allow you to sign a contract if you do not have surplus funds in your treasury: 11%
One-third in each respondent group thinks that corruption should be eradicated: they assessed corruption as the biggest problem in state procurements as well as that corruption is a serious problem but that there are more serious ones. Studies prove that if there is a connection between the perception of corruption and the significance of this problem, this directly correlates with the level of satisfaction with the system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of the significance of the level of corruption in the procurement system</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32,1</td>
<td>corruption – the biggest problem of state procurements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,3</td>
<td>the problem of corruption is rather serious but there are more serious ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,4</td>
<td>the problem of corruption exists but it is not so important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>the problem of corruption is practically missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27,7</td>
<td>hard to say/i do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Has the implementation of MTender lead to a decrease in the level of corruption in the state procurements of Moldova?

Expected, on the one side, but surprising, on the other side, that nearly 40% of the surveyed could not answer this question.

39% think that the level of corruption went down with the coming of MTender while 21% think that the system has not influenced the level of corruption in the country's procurements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,7</td>
<td>definitely yes – the level of corruption has significantly decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26,8</td>
<td>yes – the level of corruption has decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,5</td>
<td>no influence – the level of corruption has not changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,7</td>
<td>no – the level of corruption has increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,8</td>
<td>definitely not – the level of corruption has significantly increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>hard to say/i do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both businesses and customers highly assess the implementation of MTender. Both groups surveyed indicate that the system has significantly helped save financial and human resources as well as is convenient and useful in their work.

The main problems for businesses are not of technical character but rather of meaningful engagement with the customers, as, for instance, the request for non-mandatory documents, low expected cost of procurement, lack of publication by customers of the grounds for their decisions, inconvenient schedule of payment for works. In addition, businesses, undoubtedly, are concerned with a range of technical issues with the system – lack of a final understanding of how the system works; lack of access at the time needed due to the lack of answers to customer questions, etc.

Conclusions:
For customers, the main problems lie in the triviality of technical limitations. Their top problem is the impossibility to include several goods, services and works in one tender from various CPV groups (first three digits).

Most business representatives consider corruption in procurements the biggest or one of the most important problems. At the same time, we note a decrease in the share of those admitting to facing corruption in procurements – personally or their acquaintances.
Recommendations:

1. Add technical possibilities for this target group in the system. If possible, react to the concerns raised through this study.

2. Hold intensive trainings and clarifications on using the new tool as well as on its importance with real examples.

3. Simplify the mechanism for customer interaction with the platforms. This will open up the possibility for a further more effective holding of procurements.
Recommendations:

1. Give them the technical possibility to protect their rights and interests in strict compliance with the regulations for the operation of the system.

2. Give them the possibility to undergo additional trainings for a more successful forecasting of their victory likelihood.

3. For the electronic platforms – improve their services and the quality of their customer service.