Republic of Armenia Armenian e-Procurement System (ARMEPS)

ECONOMIC OPERATOR USER MANUAL

EUROPEAN DYNAMICS S.A.





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Acronyms / Abbreviations

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Explanation
PDF	Portable Document File
XML	eXtended Markup Language
CA	Contracting Authority
EO	Economic Operator (supplier)
CAPC	Contracting Authority Procurement Coordinator
CAPCA	Contracting Authority Procurement Coordinator Assistant
CAPO	Contracting Authority Procurement Officer
PO/TC	Procurement Officer Tender Coordinator
PO/OS	Procurement Officer Opening Staff
PO/ES	Procurement Officer Evaluating Staff
PO/ESR	Procurement Officer Evaluating Staff Responsible
CfT	Call for Tender
FA	Framework Agreement
MEAT	Most Economically Advantageous Tender
SA	System Administrator



1. ARMEPS workflow and terms

The current section aims at presenting a high-level depiction of the workflow of the ARMEPS platform (Figure 1) so as for the user to gain an insight on the different steps of the procurement procedure and understand the exact points were his/her involvement may be required. In addition the main terms that are mainly used throughout the application are being summarised.

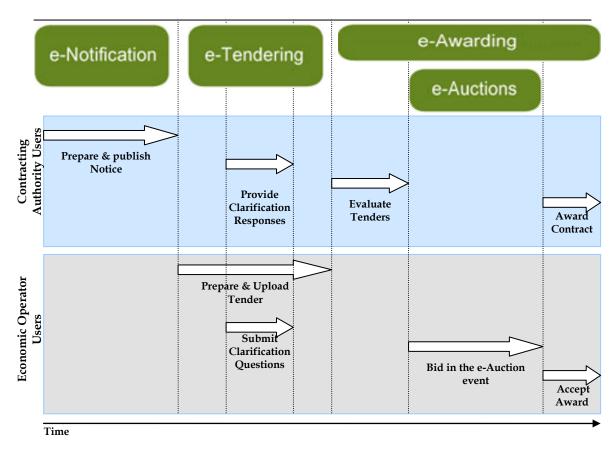


Figure 1 Workflow of Contracting Authority and Economic Operator users

The following terms are widely used within the ARMEPS platform:

- CfT stands for Call for Tenders, forming a public procurement competition
- **Captcha** is a type of challenge-response test used to limit the possibilities that response are generated by a computer.
- Archived CfT List is a list of completed CfTs which have been archived by the user
- Tender Package is the supplier's response (i.e. offer) in a Call for Tender (CfT)
- **Digital Signature** is a file containing a unique generated code based on the contents of the tender package and the creation date of the tender package
- Bid corresponds to an offer submitted during an e-Auction event



- One Envelope tender packing. Each tender will be packed into a single envelope. Unlocking will be performed simultaneously for all sections of the tender (eligibility criteria, technical envelope and financial envelope).
- Two Envelopes tender packing. Each tender will be packed into two separate
 envelopes. Unlocking is initially performed for the eligibility criteria and the
 technical envelopes. Financial envelopes are unlocked only for suppliers who
 have successfully passed the criteria of the other two sections.

The following deadlines are widely used within the system:

- Time-limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate (mandatory): Deadline for the Economic Operators to upload their tender solutions
- **Deadline for dispatching invitations (optional):** The deadline for dispatching invitations to participate for specific CfTs
- **Request for clarification From (mandatory):** The starting date of the clarification forum on which suppliers can ask for further clarifications
- **Request for clarification To (Mandatory):** The final date of the clarification forum on which suppliers can ask for further clarifications
- Tenders Opening Date (optional): The date for unlocking the received tenders. This date is set by default to be after the time-limit for receipt of tenders.



2. General Functionality

2.1.General usage guidelines

The ARMEPS platform provides the following common navigation behaviour/functionality:

 Tabular display. Any large-sized data displayed in tabular format will have the following header which helps the user to navigate:

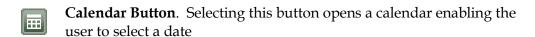


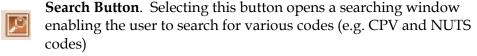
Figure 2 Example of a table header

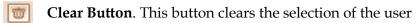
- The arrows are used for sorting the results in ascending or descending order according to the field selected. The button is used to hide/ show a number of fields in the table.
- Any search query or list, with more than a page of results, will include the following navigation buttons:



The following buttons are also widely used within ARMEPS:









2.2. The CfT Menu functionality

During the creation, editing and uploading of a Call for Tender (CfT), the CfT Menu displays all functionalities available to the user. The CfT Menu is collapsed by default:



Figure 3 The CfT Menu (collapsed)

If the user selects the "**Show CfT Menu**" button, the CfT menu will be expanded to show all available functionalities. The user can select any of the provided functionalities:



Figure 4 The CfT Menu (expanded)

The CfT Menu will collapse by selecting on "Hide CfT Menu" button (Figure 3).



2.3. Main Page

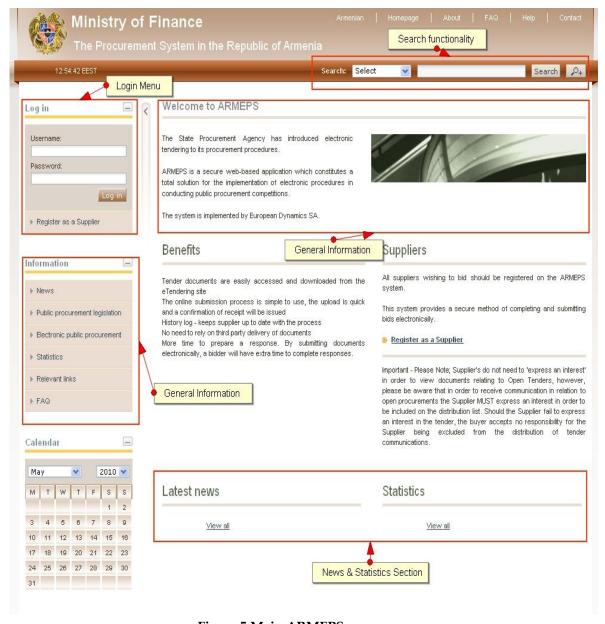


Figure 5 Main ARMEPS page

The main page of the ARMEPS platform consists of the following elements:

- Left column, which contains the Login panel, General Information Panel, and Calendar Panel.
- Central column, which contains general information regarding the system, the Economic Operators and the users of contracting authority. Furthermore, it lists any uploaded news and also statistical information about the system usage.
- **Static header** of the main page which provides functionalities accessible from all pages of the ARMEPS platform.



• **Static footer** of the main page which provides functionalities accessible from all pages of the ARMEPS platform.

The fundamental sections of the main page are further described in the following.

2.3.1. Login Section



Figure 6 Login panel

In this section, the system provides a functionality to enable all users (Contracting Authority, Economic Operators and Administrators) to login in the system, providing that they use the correct credentials (username and password). Additionally, functionality for the registration of Economic Operators within the system is provided.

2.3.2. Search Section



Figure 7 Search panel

The users can access this section to search for Call for Tenders, Organisations and users. Advanced searching functionality, (by selecting the button provided (Figure 7).



2.4. Login in the platform

All users of the ARMEPS module should have an appropriate user name and password. In order for a user to login in the system, he must provide his credentials in the login section of the main page:



Figure 8 User login

If the user provides incorrect credentials (either user name or password) an error message will be displayed:



Figure 9 Wrong credentials



If the user provides an incorrect password for a username more than 10 times, the user account will automatically get de-activated. In this case, the user should contact the System Administrator to re-activate the account:



Figure 10 De-activated account

2.5.Login to the platform for the first time

The following steps are available, when the user login to access the ARMEPS services for the first time:

1. As a first step, the user will have to provide the transaction number (which is received by email after his successful registration on the platform):

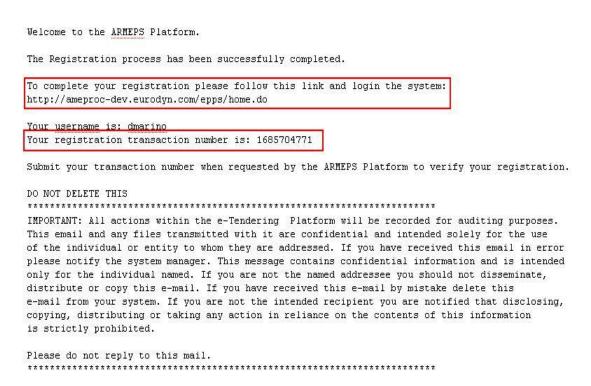


Figure 11 Confirmation email received during registration. The email contains the username and the transaction number

2. After providing his user credentials the user is requested to provide the transaction number received during the registration:

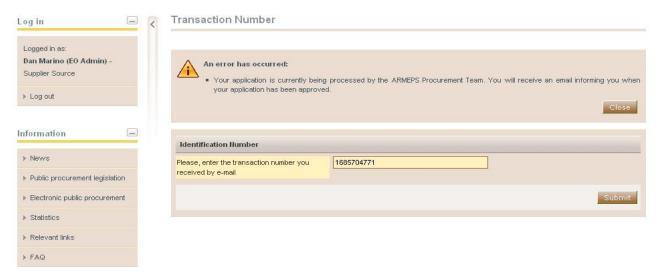


Figure 12 The user logins using appropriate username and password and provides the transaction number

3. Finally, the user is prompted to read and accept the following System User Agreement:



Figure 13 Confirmation of the user agreement

2.6.Logout from the platform

The user can exit the ARMEPS services by selecting the "Logout" functionality:



Figure 14 Logout functionality

2.7. Maintenance of user's profile

After successful authentication the user can edit his profile by selecting the "Edit Profile" functionality (accessible in the left column menu). The user can update the information fields and then, select the button "Save" to store the performed modifications.



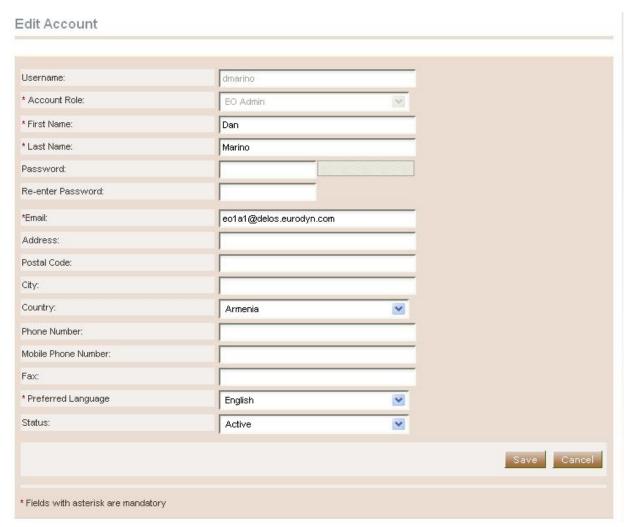


Figure 15 Edit User's Profile



3. Registration of Supplier

All Economic Operators are able to self-register to use the ARMEPS platform. In order for an Economic Operator to register in the system, the user should select the option "Register as Supplier" from the "Login Panel" of the main page (Figure 16).



Figure 16 Register Supplier

In the first phase of the registration procedure the user registers his organisation by providing the following mandatory information (Figure 17):

- Organisation Name
- Taxation ID
- Issuer of Taxation ID
- Taxation ID Issuer ID
- Country

Furthermore, the user can provide the following optional information:

- Company Registration Number
- Address
- Postal Code
- City
- Email
- Phone Number
- Fax
- Website
- Employer's Registration Number
- Unique ID



- Company Activities: Maximum Characters
- Industry Reference Number

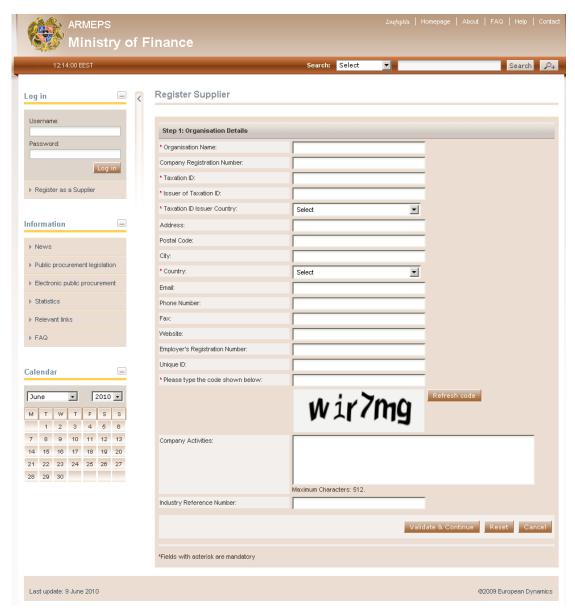


Figure 17 Registration of organisation

In order to proceed to the next phase, the user should have also typed, in the provided text field, the visual **CAPTCHA** code displayed by the system on the screen. Selecting the "**Refresh**" button updates the code (Figure 17). Finally, the user should select the button "**Validate and Continue**" to continue the registration process.

The next step (optional) is the association of CPV codes of interest with the organisation (Figure 18). The user can associate CPV codes by the use of the button. The button is used to delete a selected CPV code.

For more information about how to use the CPV codes see section 15.1 Inserting Common Procurement Vocabulary Codes (CPV) .

Register CPV Codes

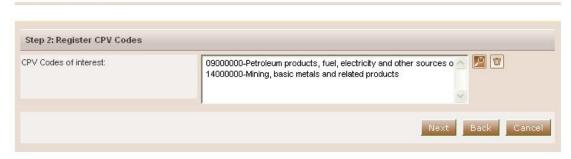


Figure 18 Registration of CPV codes

In order to continue, the user should select the "Next" button. The button "Back" returns the user to the previous phase (Figure 17).

At the final phase the user registers the administrator of the Economic Operator (EO Admin). The following details are mandatory (Figure 19):

- First Name
- Last Name
- Username
- Password
- Email
- Country
- Preferred language of GUI

Furthermore, the following details are optional (Figure 19):

- Address
- Postal Code
- City
- Phone number
- Mobile number
- Fax

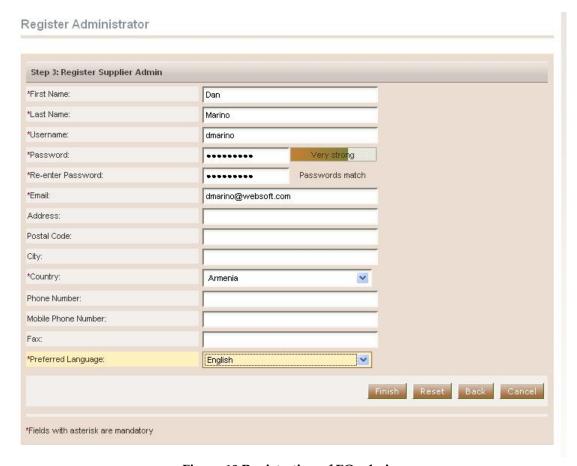


Figure 19 Registration of EO admin

In order to finalise the registration process the user selects the button "Finish". A message confirming the successful registration of the Economic Operator will be displayed:

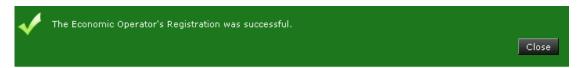


Figure 20 Confirmation of successful registration of the Economic Operator

The system will send an email to the user containing details of how to access the platform. Section 2.5 (Login to the platform for the first time) contains instructions on how to access the platform for the first time.



The EO Administrator must log in for the first time within 30 days **after the registration**. Otherwise, the account will be considered inactive and automatically deleted by the system.

The registration of an Economic Operator needs to be validated by the System Administrator. Until then, the following message appears when the Economic Operator accesses the platform:

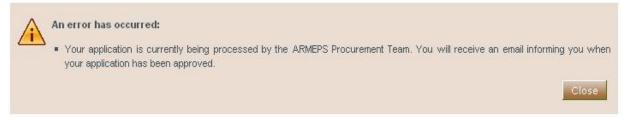


Figure 21 Pending validation by the System Administration

If this warning message occurs please contact the System Administrator, in order to activate the organisation account.



4. Economic Operator Management

The Users with a role of Economic Operator Organisation Administrator can perform the following activities for the management of their organisation:

- Edit organisation details
- View the users registered within the organisation of the Economic Operator
- Add new users in the organisation of the Economic Operator
- Edit user's details

This management functionality is provided through the "EO Management" option of the "EO Administration" menu:



Figure 22 EO administration menu

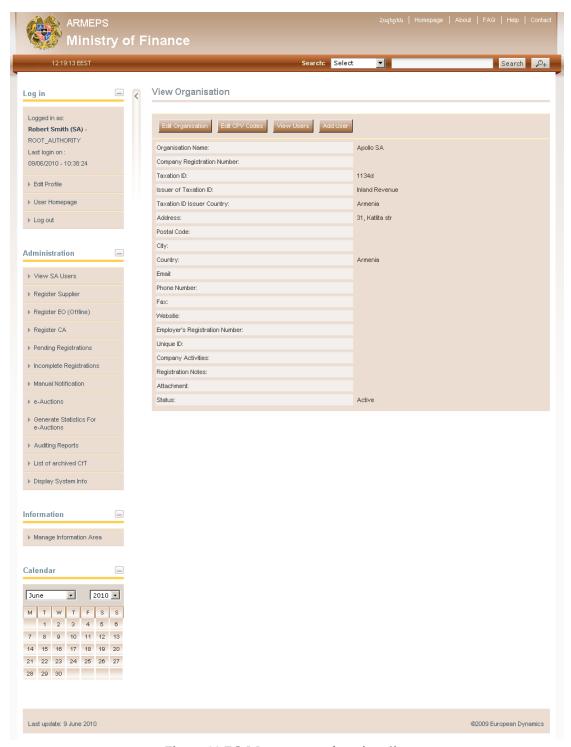


Figure 23 EO Management functionality

4.1. Edit organisation details

Selecting the option "Edit Organisation" allows the user to edit the organisation's details:

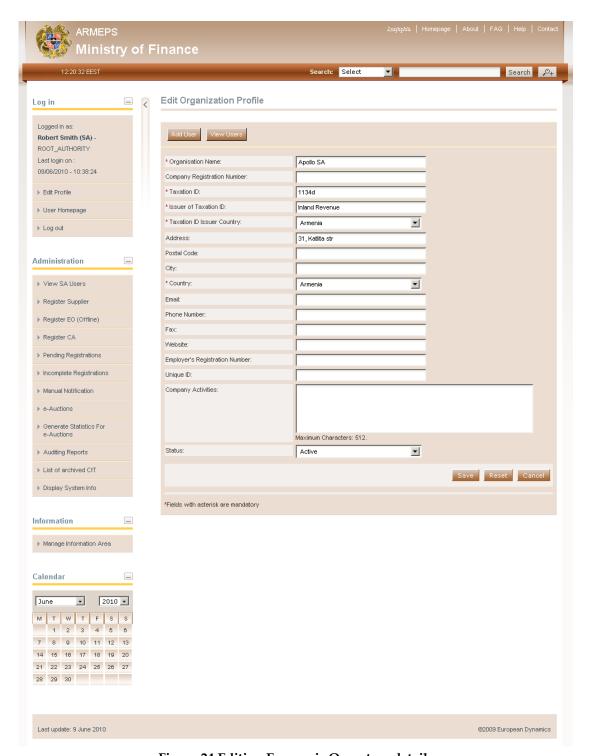


Figure 24 Editing Economic Operators details

Selecting the button "Save" will store the performed modifications, while the button "Reset" will reset the performed modifications.

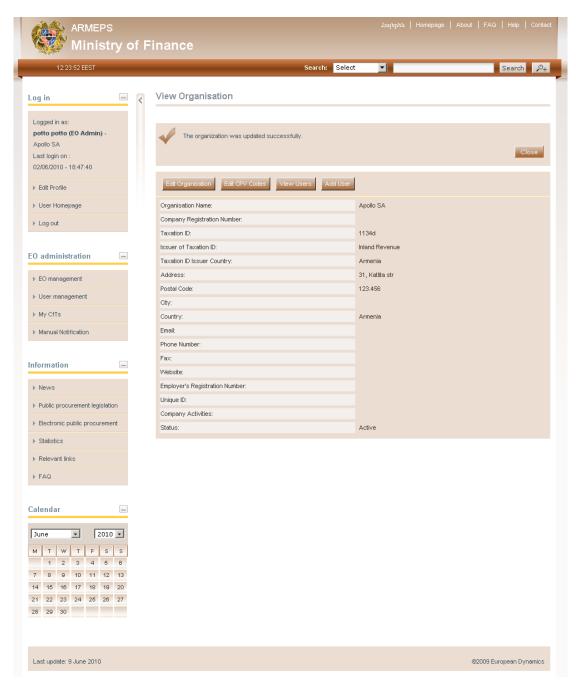


Figure 25 Organisation details were successfully updated



4.2. View the users belonging to the Economic Operator

Selecting the option "View Users" displays all the users registered within the selected Economic Operator organisation:



Figure 26 Display of users belonging to the Economic Operator.

In the above screen, the first name, last name and the role of each user are displayed. Furthermore, the current status of the each user account is also displayed:



The following user roles are supported:

- Economic Operator Administrator (EO Admin). Users with this type of role are authorised to manage the users and update the details of their organisation.
- Economic Operator users (**EO Users**). Users with this type of role are not authorised to manage the details and the users of their organisation.

4.3.Insert new user in the organisation of the Economic Operator

In order to insert new users in the organisation, the user needs to select the option "Add user". The mandatory information below must be provided:

Add User Organisation: Appollo SA Account Role: EO User ٧ * First Name: Dominique * Last Name: Raj * Username: draj * Password: ••••• * Re-enter Password: Passwords match * Email: draj@apollo.com Address: Postal Code: City: * Country: Armenia * Phone Number: Mobile phone: Fax: * Preferred Language: English × Save Reset Cancel *Fields with asterisk are mandatory

Figure 27 Insert a new user in the organisation

Initially, the account of the new user will be de-activated:

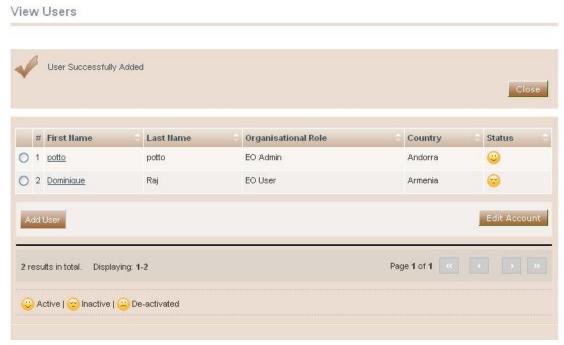


Figure 28 The account of the newly inserted user is de-activated

The system will send an email to the new user confirming the successful registration. The email will contain the relevant transaction number. In order to activate his account the user must provide this number during his first login. Thereafter, the status of the account will be active.



Figure 29 The account of the new user is activated

4.4. Edit user's details.

The user can select the option "Edit Account" to edit the details of a specific user. The platform will display all user details allowing their modification (Figure 26):



Edit Account

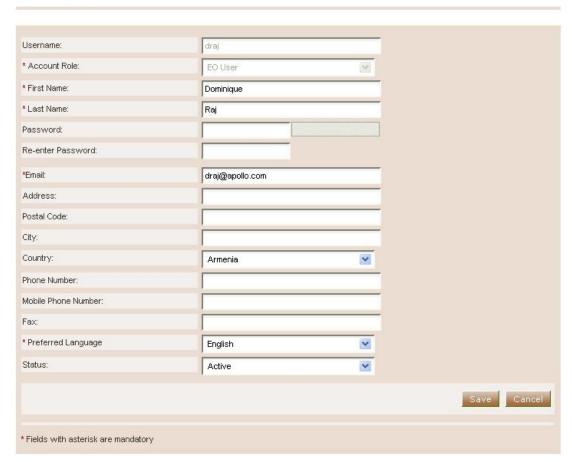


Figure 30 Editing user details

Selecting the button "Save" will update the users details (Figure 30).

4.5. Edit CPV codes

In order to edit the CPV codes associated with the Economic Operator the user selects the "Edit CPV codes" option in EO Organisation management page (Figure 23). The platform displays the CPV codes which are currently associated with the Economic Operator:

Edit CPV Codes

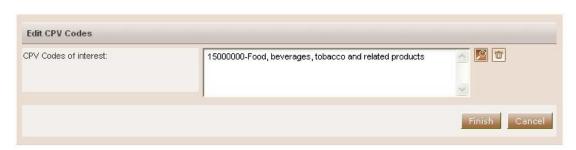


Figure 31 Associated CPV codes

The user can add new CPV codes by the use of the button. The button is used to delete a selected CPV code. For more information about how to use the CPV codes see section 15.1 Inserting Common Procurement Vocabulary Codes (CPV).

After modifying the associated CPV codes (Figure 32), the user can select the button "Finish" to store his changes.



Figure 32 Edit CPV codes



5. Searching Functionality

The ARMEPS platform provides "Simple" and "Advanced" search mechanisms. Both functionalities allow searching for Call for Tenders (CfTs), Organisations and Users.

5.1.Simple Search

The simple search functionality covers searching for available Call for Tenders (CfT), registered Organisations and registered Users.

Simple search queries are performed by:

- 1. Selecting the type of searching (CfT, Organisations, and Users) from the selection list.
- 2. Providing the full name of the required record or part of it using the "*" wildcard.
- 3. Selecting the button "Search".

The results, if any, are then presented in a tabular form.

Advanced search



Figure 33 Simple search for Call for Tenders

5.2. Advanced search

The advanced search functionality enables searching for Call for Tenders (CfTs), Organisations and Users. In order to perform an advanced search query, the user should:

- 1. Select the type of the search by using the appropriate button
- 2. Provide information in one or more fields (use of * wildcard is also enabled).
- 3. Select the button "Search"

The results, if any, will be presented in a tabular form.



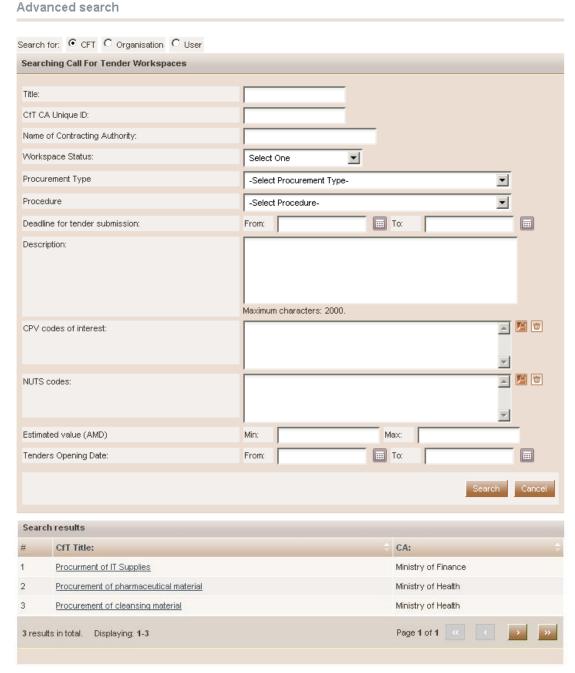


Figure 34 Advanced search for a Call for Tenders

In order to search for an organisation, the user needs to first provide the organisation type (Contracting Authority). Figure 35 provides an example of a search query for Contracting Authorities.



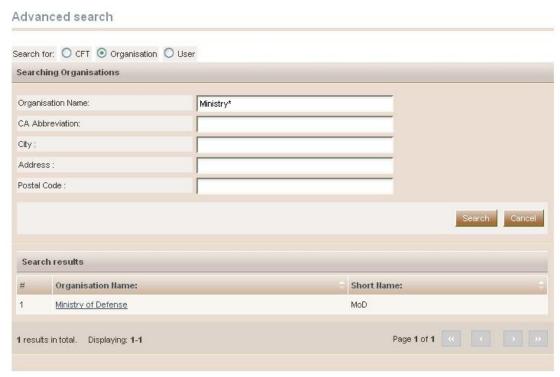


Figure 35 Advanced search for a Contracting Authority

In order to search for a specific user of an organisation, the organisation type (Contracting Authority and Economic Operator) must be selected. Figures 36 and 37 provide examples of search queries for users registered within Contracting Authorities (searching is only enabled for Contracting Authority Procurement Coordinators) and the organisation of Economic Operator.

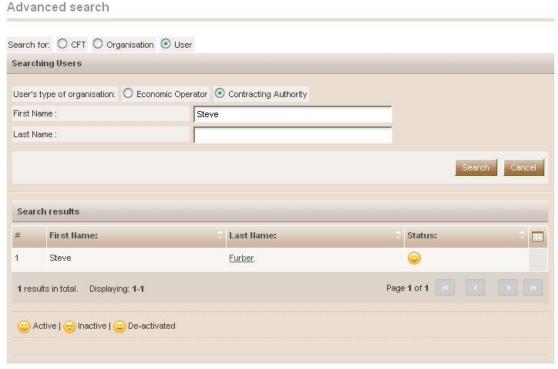


Figure 36 Advanced search for Contracting Authority users

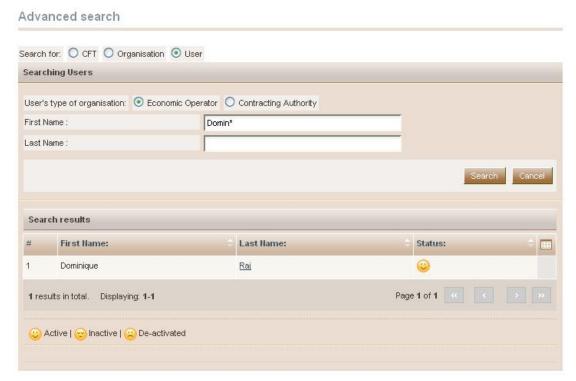


Figure 37 Advanced search for user of the Economic Operator



6. View CfT Workspace

In order for the user to preview the details of the call for tender (CfT) he needs to select the option "View CfT" from the CfT Menu (Figure 38).



Figure 38 CfT Menu, option "View CfT"

The platform will display all details (Figure 39) of the particular CfT (e.g. Title, Procurement Type, information regarding associated deadlines, etc).

View CfT Workspace

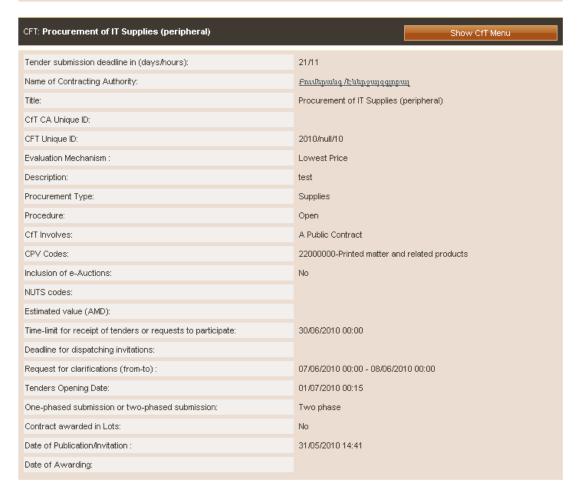


Figure 39 View CfT workspace



7. View CfT Documents

In order for the user to preview and download all documents associated with the particular CfT (i.e. publication notices being published for this call), he needs to select the option "CfT documents" from the CfT Menu (Figure 40).



Figure 40 CfT Menu, option "CfT documents"

The platform displays all notices and contract documents which are associated with the CfT. The tab "Notices" (Figure 41) contains a list of all notices in the CfT. The list provides the type of the notice, the date when the notice was uploaded in the system, the status of the notice and the redirection URL towards this notice on the OJEU site, after the official publication of the notice on OPOCE is confirmed. In order for the user to download a notice he needs to select the relevant link in the column "Type" (Figure 41).

Notice & Contract Documents



Figure 41 Contract Notices

The tab "Contract Documents" lists all documents which are associated with the CfT (Figure 42). In order for the user to download a document he needs to select the relevant link from the column "File".

Notice & Contract Documents



Figure 42 Contract documents

Selecting the button "**Download Zip file**" the user can download a zip file containing all associated notices and contract documents (Figure 42).



8. Expression of Interest for a CfT

In order for the user to express his interest to a call for tender (CfT), he needs to download one of the CfT resources (eg. Notice, Contract Document, Clarification attachment) and submit a tender.

The system prompts the user to (Figure 43):

- Express Interest by associating all users of the EO with this CfT
- Express Interest by associating only himself with this CfT
- Express Interest by not associating any user from the EO with this CfT

Association with CfT

The ARMEPS system supports automated notifications to keep associated users up to date with all CfT advances. These comprise the publication of new Notices, Addenda, Corrigenda, Clarifications, while there are also notifications for informing associated users about approaching important dates of the CfT. Please select a type of association for this CfT.

If you select options 1 or 2 below, you will be able to individually manage the list of users of your organisation with the CfT, through the new "Manage associations" tab in the CfT workspace. If you select option 3, these options will appear in your next CfT document download.



Figure 43 Expression of Interest, association of users



9. User notifications

In order to associate and disassociate the users of the EO organisation from receiving notifications for the particular CfT, the user needs to select the option "Automated Notifications" from the CfT Menu (Figure 44). In addition, the user can also specify the timing of the various alters of the particular CfT by selecting the option "Specify Alerts" from the CfT Menu (Figure 44).



Figure 44 CfT Menu, options "Automated notifications" and "Specify alerts"

9.1.1. Automated notifications

The platform lists all user members of the EO organisation (Figure 45). In order to disassociate an EO member from receiving notification of the CfT, the user changes the status from associated to disassociated from the drop-down menu in the column "Associate / Disassociate" (Figure 46). Similarly, changing the status from disassociated to associated will enable notification for the particular CfT.



Figure 45 List of associated users with the CfT

Manage automated notifications



Figure 46 Disassociation of a user with the CfT

9.1.2. User alerts

The users can specify the timing of alert of the following events (Figure 47):

- Time limit to receive for receipts of tenders or request to participate
- Request for clarification From
- Request for clarification To

For these events, the user can select to be notified (Figure 47):

- 24 hours prior of the event
- 48 hours prior of the event
- 1 week prior of the event
- 2 weeks prior of the event

Specify Alerts

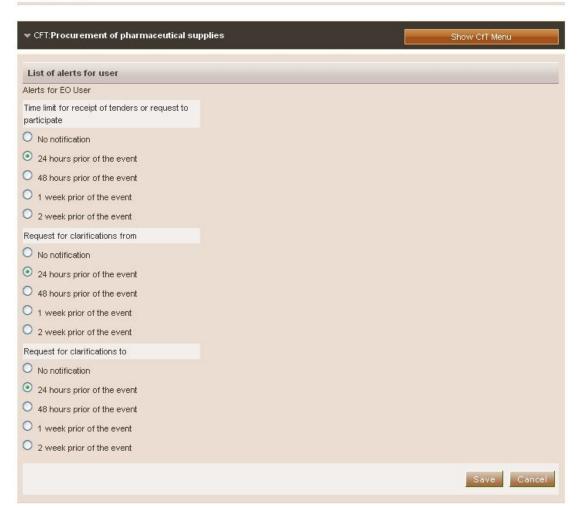


Figure 47 Specification of user alerts



10. Clarifications

In order to create a clarification request and to preview a clarification response, the user needs to select the option "Clarifications" from the "CfT Menu" (Figure 48). This option is available in the "CfT Menu", during the clarification period.



Figure 48 CfT Menu, option "Clarifications"

10.1.1. Create a clarification request

In order to create a clarification request, the user selects the tab "**Requests for Clarification**" from the main Clarifications page (Figure 49).



Figure 49 CfT Clarifications

The user completes the request for clarification by providing the following information (Figure 50):

- Title
- Language
- Description for the request
- A file attachment for the request (optional)



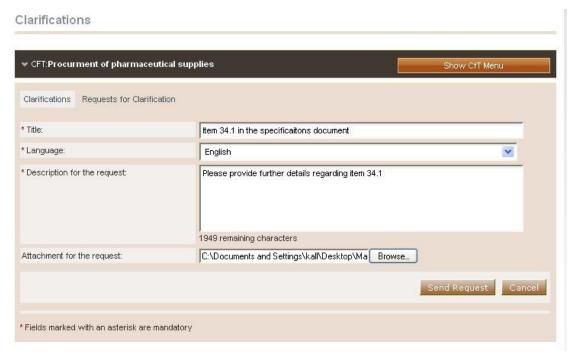


Figure 50 Request for clarification

Selecting the button "Send Request" sends the request to the tender coordinator.

10.1.2. View a clarification response

The user can visualise a clarification response only after it is published by the Procurement Officer. A list of all clarification responses is displayed in the "Clarifications" tab of the main Clarifications page (Figure 48).



Figure 51 List of clarification responses

In order to preview the content of the response, the user selects the displayed title. Then, the system expands the details of the response (Figure 52):

- Description for the request
- Procurement Officer's clarification response

Figure 52 Response to a clarification request

The procurement officer can also attach a file to the clarification response (Figure 53). Furthermore, please note that the procurement officer is provided with functionality to edit the clarification request in order to remove any confidential information.

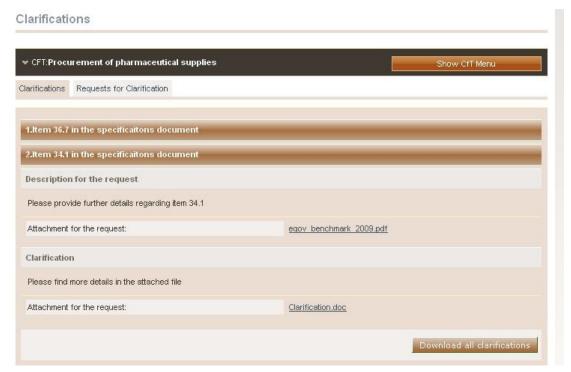


Figure 53 Attachments in the clarification response

Selecting the button "**Download all clarifications**" enables to download an archive file with the details of all clarification requests submitted and their associated responses.



11. Creation of a tender

The tender return is created by the Economic Operator and comprised of the answers to the tender questions plus any other file included within. In order to create (or edit) the answers for a tender, the user needs to select the option "**Tenders**" from the "**CfT Menu**" (Figure 54).

The following procedure is followed for the creation and submission of tender:

- The user creates the new tender (section 11.1 Creation of a new tender)
- The user uploads the digital signature of the tender (section 11.3.1 One phase submission.)
- The user uploads the tender package (which matches the uploaded signature) (section11.3.2 Two phase submission)



Figure 54 CfT Menu, option "Tenders"

11.1. Creation of a new tender return

In order to create a tender return, the user selects the button "Create a Tender online" (for the offline line creation of a tender see section 11.2.14) in the main tender preparation page (Figure 55).

View Tenders

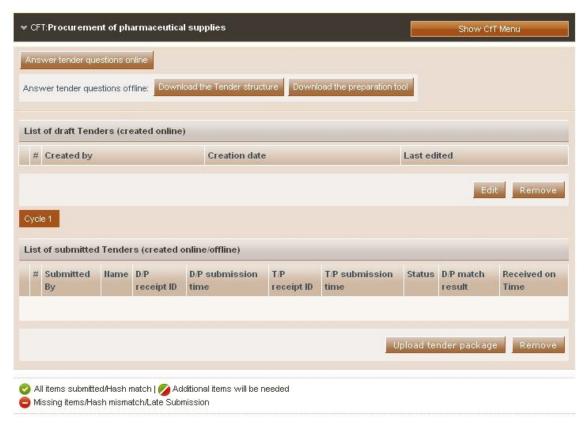


Figure 55 Main tender preparation page

The button "Create a Tender online" is enabled prior to the expiry of the tender submission deadline. Selecting this option redirects the user to the online tender preparation tool.

11.2. The tender preparation tool

The tender preparation tool is an online tender preparation environment which allows the user to rapidly create a tender return. The tool provides functionality for the Economic Operator to answer all tender questions (mandatory and optional). Furthermore, the Economic Operator can validate whether the created tender return conforms to the tender specifications.



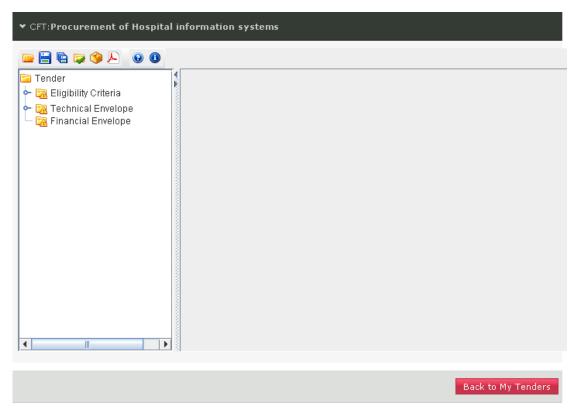


Figure 56 The tender preparation tool

Figure 56 provides an example of the tender preparation tool main GUI. The following buttons are widely used in the tool:

Open tender structure

Save tender

Save as the tender

Validate that the tender conforms to the specifications

Pack the content of the tender

Create a PDF file of the tender

Help on how to use the tender preparation tool

Information regarding the tender preparation tool

Expand a section of the tender

The left panel of the tool displays all the envelopes contained within the tender (e.g. Eligibility Criteria, Technical envelope, Financial Envelope). Each envelope is displayed as a hierarchical tree-structure. An envelope can be expanded to display the contained sections and subsections (Figure 57).



26/07/2010

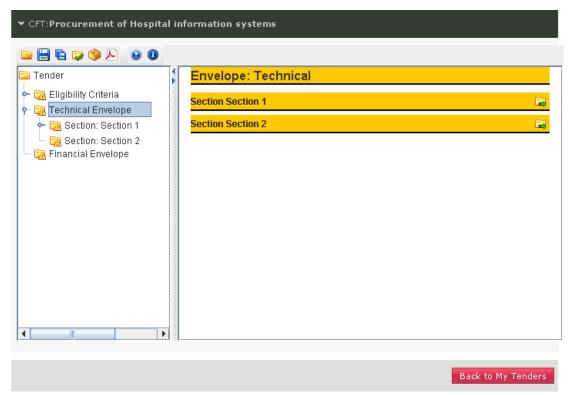


Figure 57 Tender preparation tool, technical envelope

The right panel of the tool is used to display sections and the criteria of the tender (Figure 58). Sections can be expanded by selecting the button.

The following icons are used (within the hierarchical tree-structure) to navigate the tender:

🛅 Tender	The top level node to the tree hierarchy
🔀 Eligibility Criteria	The top level node of the eligibility criteria
🔀 Technical Envelope	The top level node of the technical envelope
🔀 Financial Envelope	The top level node of the financial envelope
7	Indication of attention : There is information missing or incorrect information within the section (or its subsections)
3	Indication of acceptance: All criteria within the section and its subsections have been correctly filled
🧾 Year	Years: Within the financial envelope, each year will be displayed separately
0-	Collapsed: The section is collapsed
Υ	Expanded: The section is expanded
❤	Indication of successful validation: The criterion has been successfully validated
*	Indication of unsuccessful validation: The validation of the criterion has failed

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Navigate in the parent section **Expand** a section of the tender

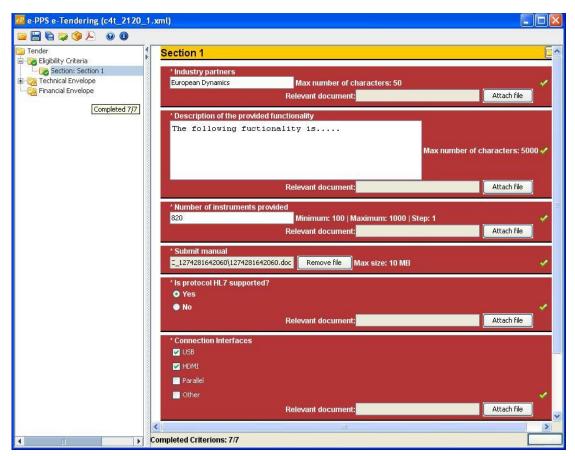


Figure 58 Tender preparation tool, technical envelope



11.2.1. Completing the eligibility criteria and the technical envelope

The ARMEPS platform supports the following types of criteria:

- Text Field
- Number
- File
- List
- Date
- Date Period

A description of how to complete criteria of the above types is given in the next sections.

11.2.2. Criterion Type: Text Field

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator will provide his text answer in the displayed text box. The maximum number of characters for the Economic Operator's answer is also displayed (Figure 59). The user can also attach an optional file to provide further details in his answer.



Figure 59 Supplier's view of the criterion of type text field

11.2.3. Criterion Type: Text area

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator will provide his text answer in the displayed text area box. The maximum number of characters for the Economic Operator's answer is also displayed (Figure 60). The user can also attach an optional file to provide further details in his answer.



Figure 60 Supplier's view of the criterion of type text area



11.2.4. Criterion Type: Number

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator will provide his answer as a number in the provided box. The minimum and maximum ranges of the number are displayed along with the specified step size (Figure 61). The user can also attach an optional file to provide further details in his answer.



Figure 61 Supplier's view of the criterion of type number

11.2.5. Criterion Type: File

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator will upload a file in the system. In order to select the file to attach the user should use the "Attach File" button. The maximum allowed size of the file is also displayed (Figure 62).



Figure 62 Supplier's view of the criterion of type file

11.2.6. Criterion Type: List

Three types of lists are supported by the system:

- Radio buttons
- Check boxes
- Combo box

The supplier will have the following views for a criterion of this type:



Figure 63 Supplier's view of the criterion of type list (radio buttons)





Figure 64 Supplier's view of the criterion of type list (check boxes)



Figure 65 Supplier's view of the criterion of type list (combo box)

11.2.7. Criterion Type: Date

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator needs to select a date. In order to select the required date, the user selects the button to expand the provided calendar functionality (Figure 66). The user can also attach an optional file to provide further details in his answer.



Figure 66 Supplier's view of the criterion of type date

11.2.8. Criterion Type: Date Period

For the criteria of this type, the Economic Operator needs to select a range of two dates ("From" and "To"). In order to select the required dates, the user selects the button to expand the provided calendar functionality (Figure 67). The user can also attach an optional file to provide further details in his answer.

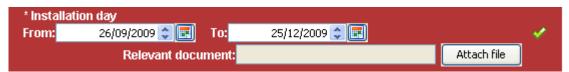


Figure 67 Supplier's view of the criterion of type date period



11.2.9. Supplier read only criteria

This choice is enabled for the criteria where the suppliers cannot provide any answer (e.g. scoring of meetings, presentations, site visits, etc). The supplier will view the existence of the criterion in the tender but the scoring will be provided directly by the evaluators.

The supplier will have the following view for the criterion of this type:

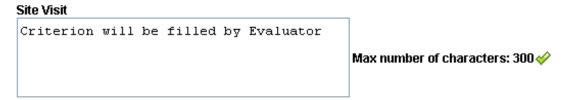


Figure 68 Supplier's view of the criterion which has been specified as supplier read only

11.2.10. Completing the financial envelope

The platform displays all financial criteria of the tender structure. The user completes the column "Value" and specifies an optional discount in the "Overall discount" section (Figure 69). The "Overall discount" section will be enabled only if the associated procurement officer has specified that discounts are permitted for the CfT. The "Present Value (ϵ)" and the "Discounted Present Value (ϵ)" are automatically calculated by the system.

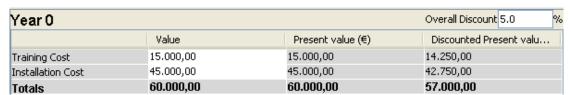


Figure 69 Financial Criteria

In case, the financial envelope has been defined over a number of year the user need to complete the financial criteria for each specific year (Figure 69). Selecting a year from the left panel allows the user to complete the values of the financial criteria for this specific year. Selecting the top level "Financial Envelope" will display a summary of the financial offer (Figure 70).

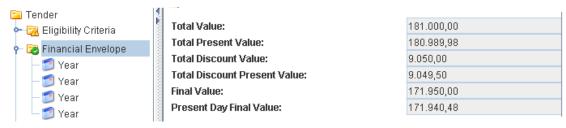


Figure 70 Financial Criteria over a number of years



11.2.11. Save the tender return

The user can save the created tender return using the buttons (Save) and (Save as). The system prompts the user to specify a location in his local environment and stores it as an XML structure (Figure 71).

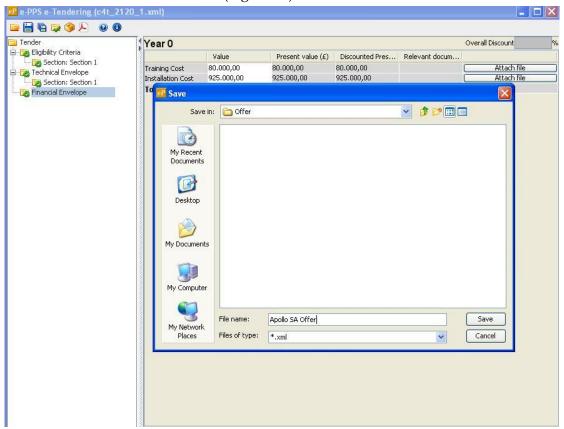


Figure 71 Save the tender structure

11.2.12. Validate the tender return

In order to validate the given answers the user selects the button. The system checks if the tender return conforms to the expected specification (e.g. values within range, all mandatory fields completed, etc.). The user is notified regarding the results of the validation (Figure 72). In case the validation is not successful, the system displays all questions which have not been properly answered (Figure 72).

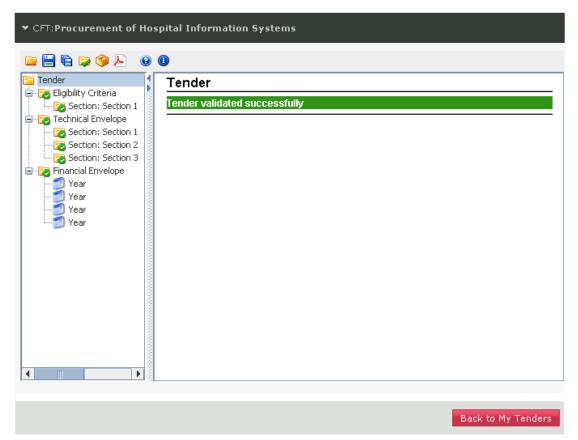


Figure 72 Successful tender validation



View Tenders

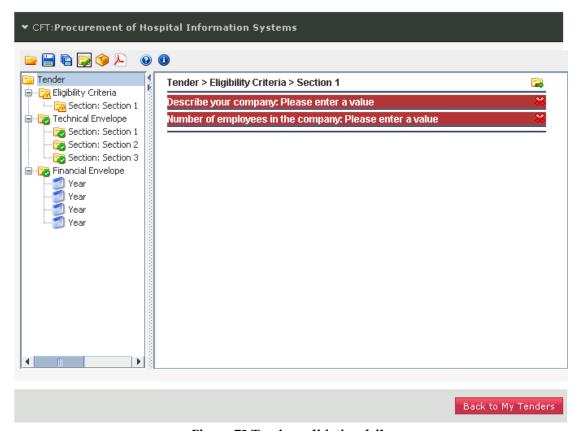


Figure 73 Tender validation fails

11.2.13. Pack the tender return

The packing of the tender return is a mandatory task which has to be performed when no more modifications are expected and prior to the uploading of the tender return in the system.

In order to pack the contents of a tender return the user selects the button. This action will generate one or more files depending on the type of submission defined for the tender:

- One phase submission

 The system will generate the tender return as a single, compressed and encrypted file, known within the application as the 'Tender Package'.
- Two phase submission

 The tender return generated by the system will comprise 2 files. One will be the 'Tender Package', mentioned in the above 'One phase submission' section and will contain all answers and files attached. The second one will be the 'Digital print'. This file is a digital signature of the 'Tender Package' used to assure the integrity of the 'Tender Package'.





- If the tender return is modified after the packing was performed, whether for 'One phase' or 'Two phase' submission, a new packing will be necessary to include the latest changes made.
- Please note that the packaged file (tender package) created through the above steps is encrypted. Therefore the user is being displayed an "incorrect file format" message when attempting to open this zip file using winzip, etc.
- Due to the above, for a last check before submitting the tender file packaged within the tender preparation tool, the supplier should use the functionality "View tender PDF"

The generated files are stored locally in the same location, with the tender structure. The system will inform the user regarding the successful completion of the tender packing (Figure 74).

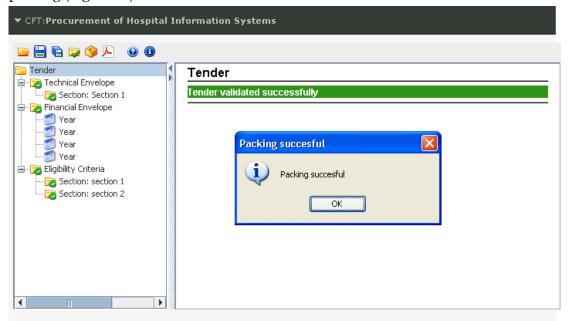


Figure 74 Packing of the tender

11.2.14. The offline tender preparation tool

The functionality to create the tender is also supported using an offline tender preparation tool. The functionality of the offline tender preparation tool is exactly the same to the one described in sections 11.2.1 - 11.2.13.

In order for the user to prepare his tender locally in his PC, the following steps need to be performed:

- 1. Download the tender preparation tool in the local environment (select the "Download the preparation tool" button) (Figure 75). Extract all files from the archive and execute the application (Figure 76).
- 2. Download the tender structure in the local environment (select the "**Download the Tender structure**" button).





Please, note that "tender structure" files are unique and created for each CfT. The Economic Operator user has to make sure that the downloaded tender structure corresponds to the CfT he/she intends to participate in. Otherwise the tender package generated in the tool, with the wrong tender structure, will not be consistent to the tender material requested by the Contracting Authority and may result in disqualification of the supplier.



Figure 75 Download the tender preparation tool

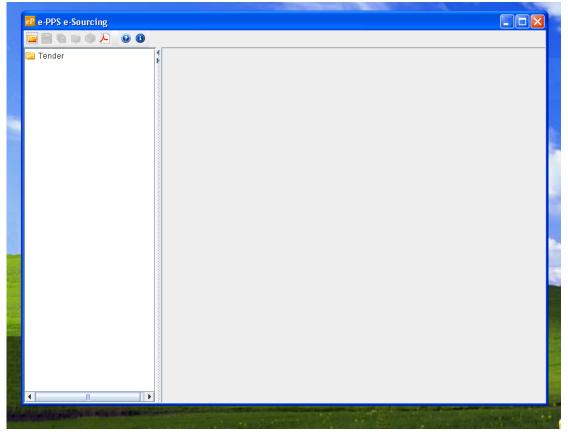


Figure 76 The offline tender preparation tool

- 3. Use the button is to open the stored XML structure (Figure 77).
- 4. Complete the tender by filling all sections in all envelopes (Figure 78). Sections 11.2.1 11.2.13 describe how to complete the tender.

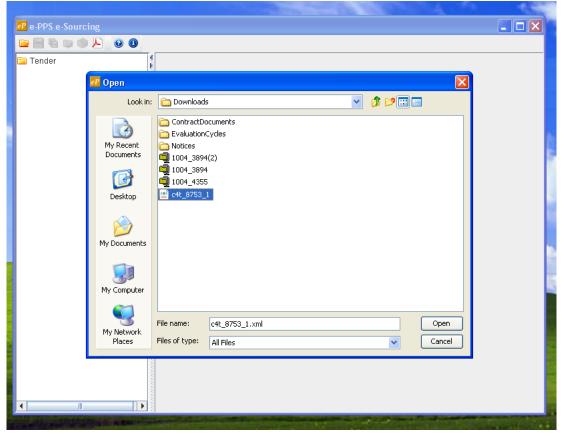


Figure 77 Open a tender structure in the offline tender preparation tool

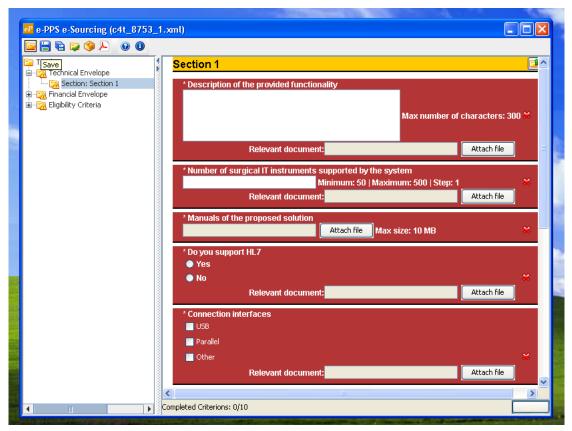


Figure 78 Completing sections with the offline tender preparation tool

11.2.15. Creating a tender for multiple Lots

The procedure of creating a tender for multiple Lots is the same with the procedure described in the previous sections. The tender preparation tool allows the user to navigate in different Lots using the functionality provided in the left panel of the tool (Figure 79).



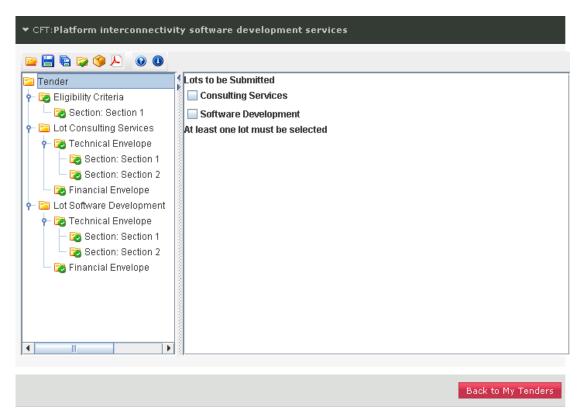


Figure 79 Completing a multi-lot tender

The only difference with the previously described approach, is that when the user validates the tender (by selecting the button), the system will prompt to select for which Lots a tender will be submitted (Figure 79). The selection of the lot to which the tender will be submitted is a fundamental step of the supplier tender submission. If no lots are selected, the uploaded tender package might not be considered by the Evaluator Officers during evaluation and awarding phase.

11.2.16. Edit the tender return

In order to edit a tender return, the user selects the particular tender, and then selects the button "**Edit**" (Figure 80). The button "**Remove**" is used to remove the selected tender from the list. Tenders returns prepared using the offline preparation tool are manually edited by opening the saved tender, editing it and finally saving it.

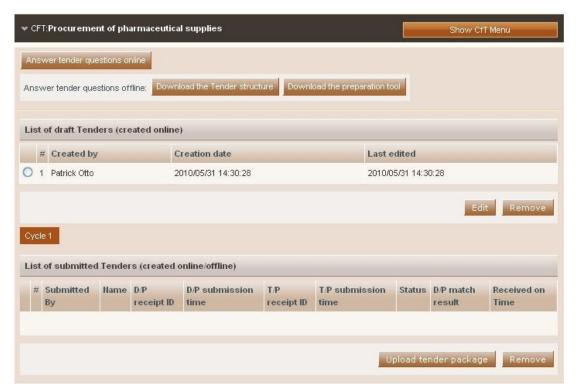


Figure 80 Tender creation and submission page

11.3. Upload the tender return in the platform

The submission of the tender returns in the system will depend on the type of submission

The following symbols are displayed in the page (Figure 80):



Additional items will be required



All items submitted / Hash match/ On time submission



Missing items/ Hash Mismatch/ Late submission

11.3.1. One phase submission.

In order to continue to the second step of the tender submission, the user needs to select the button "**Upload Tender Package**" (Figure 88).

The system prompts the user to confirm that his account details are correct (Figure 81). The user selects the button "Confirm" to confirm the validity of his account details (selecting the button "Edit Account" enables the user to edit his account details).



Figure 81 Confirm account details

After confirming the validity of the user account details, the user is prompted to accept the user agreement policy for this CfT (Figure 82). In order to accept the agreement the user needs to select the button "Accept".

Accept Agreement for this Cft

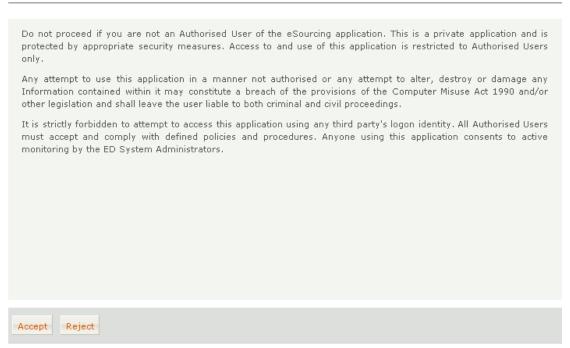


Figure 82 Accept agreement for this CfT.



After confirming the account details and accepting the agreement the user is prompted to locate the tender package to upload (Figure 84). The user selects the "**Browse**" button to locate the file of the tender package (Figure 83).

The tender package is the archive (the name of the archive contains the word "TENDER" at the end) which has been created during the "Pack" operation (section 11.2.13 - Pack the tender).

Upload tender package

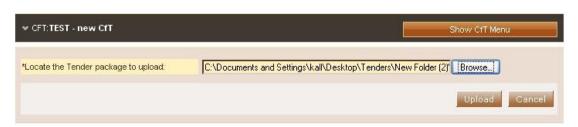


Figure 83 Upload the tender package

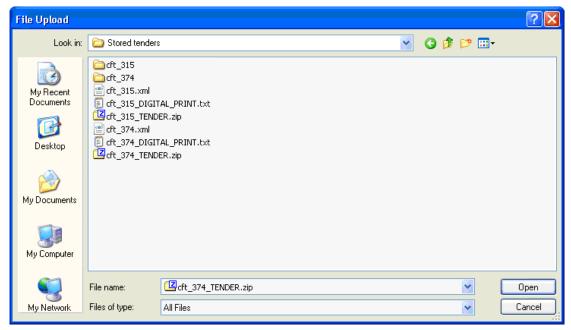


Figure 84 Selection of the tender package to upload

In order to complete his action, the user selects the button "**Upload**" to upload the tender package in the platform (Figure 84). The system generates a unique Tender "**Package Receipt ID**" and informs the user regarding the successful upload of the tender package in the platform



11.3.2. Two phase submission

The 'Two phase submission' comprises the following steps.

Note: The successful tender submission necessitates the execution of both steps. Otherwise, the tender is not considered submitted in the system.

1. Upload of the 'Digital Print'

The first step mentioned above is to upload the tender digital print. In this case, the user selects the button "**Upload D/P of tender package**" (Figure 80). In the new window (Figure 85), the user selects the "**Browse**" functionality to locate the digital print of the tender package (Figure 86). The digital print is created during the "**Pack**" operation, which is performed at the end of the creation of the tender (section 11.2.13 Pack the tender).



Figure 85 Upload new Digital Print

The name of the generated digital print file contains the words "DIGITAL_PRINT", which are appended at the end of the filename (Figure 86).



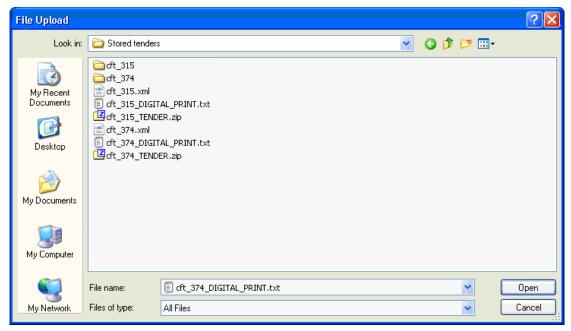


Figure 86 Selection of the Digital Print file

After selecting the appropriate file of the Digital Print, the user specifies the name of the tender and, finally, selects the button "**Upload**" to submit the Digital Print to the platform (Figure 87).

Upload new Digital Print



Figure 87 Specifying the tender package name

When the user successfully uploads a digital print, a message containing the unique "**Digital Print Receipt ID**" is displayed (Figure 88). The system lists the submitted tenders along with the following information:

- **Submitted by:** The user who submitted the tender
- Name: The name of the tender
- **D/P receipt ID:** The unique "**Receipt ID**" of the "**Digital Print**" submission time
- **D/P submission time:** The time of the submission of the "**Digital Print**"
- T/P receipt ID: The unique "Receipt ID" of the "Tender Package" (see below).
- **T/P submission time:** The time of submission of the "**Tender Package**"
- Status: The status of the submission



- **D/P match results:** A check whether the "**Digital Print**" matches the submitted "Tender package".
- **Received on time:** A check whether the tender submission has been received on time

At this stage, only the information regarding the submission of the digital print is available in the list. Furthermore, the status of the submission contains the symbol indicating that additional items (i.e. the tender package) are required, in order to finalise the tender submission process.

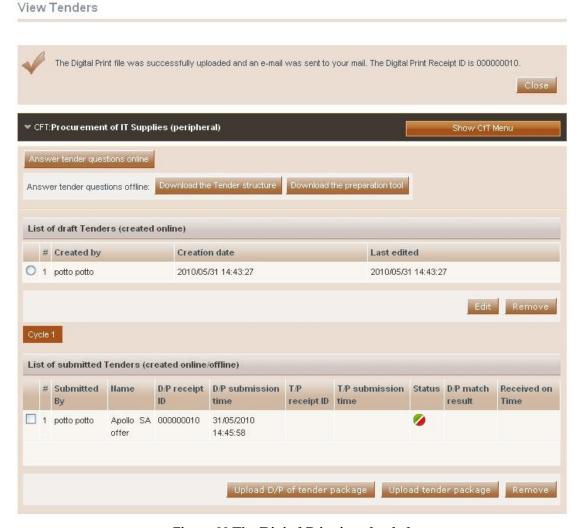


Figure 88 The Digital Print is uploaded

2. Upload of the 'Tender package'

To upload the 'Tender package', please follow the step described in the 'One phase submission' section.

If the submission was successful a page similar to Figure 89 will be displayed.

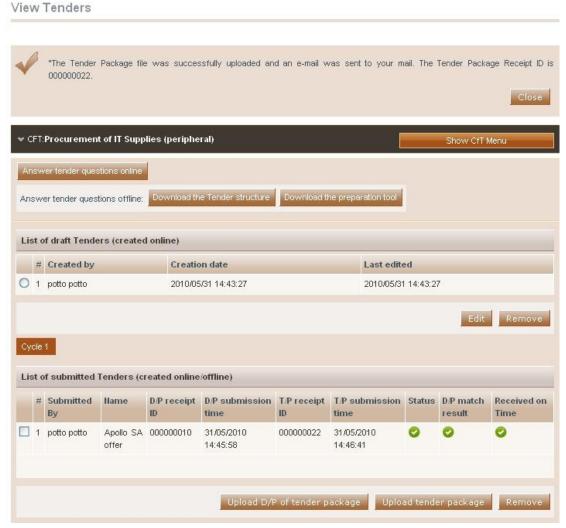


Figure 89 Submission of a tender

In the list of submitted tenders, the platform displays the following information relating to the submission of the tender package:

- T/P receipt ID
- T/P submission time

Furthermore, the "Status" of the submission must have the symbol indicating that all items have been submitted (Figure 89). The platform also checks that the uploaded "Digital Print" and the uploaded "Digital Package" match (i.e. the column "D/P match results" has the symbol and the tender has been submitted on time (column "Received on Time").

If any of the following columns have been marked by psymbol:

- **D/P match result**. The uploaded digital signature does not match the uploaded tender package.
- Received on Time. The tender has been received after the specified deadline.
 The contracting authority officer will decide whether it will be accepted or not.

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For this type of submission, the user should upload the Digital Signature prior to the deadline. Then, the system allows the user a period of 24 hours to upload his saved tender providing that he does not work on his tender after the generation of the Digital Signature. Please note that if the user works on his tender after the generation of the uploaded "Digital Signature", matching between the signature and the saved tender package will fail and the tender document will be rejected.

The user can modify his uploaded tender until the "Time-limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate" has been reached. Afterwards, the functionality to create, edit and upload a tender is disabled.

In order to modify the uploaded tender, the user first needs to remove the existing tender using the "**Remove**" button (Figure 89), and then upload the new tender. Otherwise an error message as displayed in Figure 90 will be shown. The user can upload more than one tender only for CfT where multiple tender submissions is allowed.



Figure 90 Only one tender is allowed to be submitted



12. Feedback

In order to submit a feedback request the user needs to select the option "Feedback" from the "CfT Menu" (Figure 91):



Figure 91 CfT Menu, option "Feedback"

The user provides the "Title" and the "Description" of the feedback request. An optional file attachment can be also uploaded in the platform (Figure 92). In order to complete and submit the feedback request, the user needs to select the button "Send Request".

♥ CFT:Feedback

Provide your feedback to the CfT

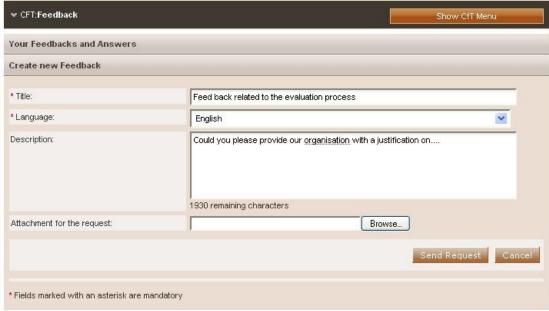


Figure 92 Creation of a feedback request



The platform informs the user that the feedback request has been successfully sent (Figure 93).



Figure 93 Feedback sent successfully

The response to the feedback request will be listed on the "Your Feedback and Answers" section (e.g. "1. Feedback relating to the evaluation procedure", Figure 94). Each listed feedback item can be further expanded, if the user selects on it, providing a detailed description of the request and the corresponding answer (Figure 95).

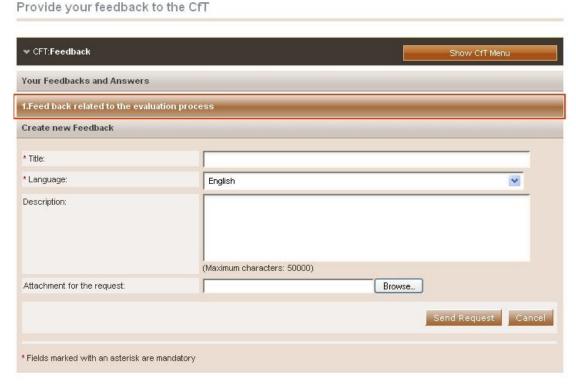


Figure 94 Feedback and Answers



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Figure 95 Response to a feedback question



13. Electronic Auctions

The e-Auction module provides all necessary functionality for the Economic Operators to participate in a live auction event for a particular CfT. In order to participate in the auction events, the Economic Operators must invited by the contracting authority user who coordinates the specific CfT.

13.1. Participation in an e-Auction event

In order to respond to the e-Auction invitation the user needs to select the task "**Respond to the e-Auction Invitation**" in his task list (Figure 96).

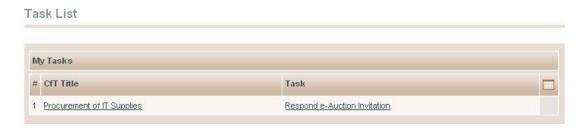


Figure 96 Respond to an e-Auction invitation

The user has the option to "Accept to participate in the e-Auction event" (Figure 97) or to "Decline to participate in the e-Auction event" (Figure 99). The system informs the user regarding acceptance (Figure 98) / rejection (Figure 100) decision.



Figure 97 Accept an invitation to participate in an e-Auction event

e-Auction Invitation Acceptance Results



Figure 98 e-Auction invitation acceptance results (accepted invitation)

Accept/Decline e-Auction Invitation



Figure 99 Decline an invitation to participate in the e-Auction event



Figure 100 e-Auction invitation acceptance results (declined invitation)

In order to participate in the auction event, the user needs to enter the e-Auction room. This functionality is accessible from the "e-Auctions" option of the CfT Menu (Figure 101).





Figure 101 CfT Menu, option "e-Auctions"

A list with all e-Auction events scheduled for the particular CfT will be displayed to the user (Figure 102). For each Lot contained in the CfT a separate e-Auction event will be held. The list contains detailed information regarding the event. In particular, the system allows to display information such as the type of event, whether the event is official or practice and the starting date for the event.

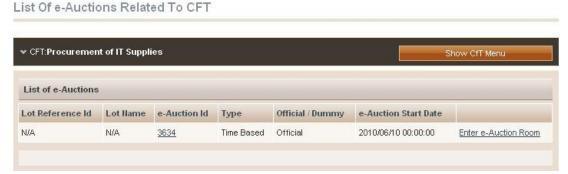


Figure 102 List of e-Auctions related to the CfT

Selecting the "e-Auction Id" (Figure 102) allows the user to preview all details of the event (Figure 103) while selecting the link "Enter e-Auction Room" (Figure 102) allows the user to enter the e-Auction room which provides all the bidding functionality (Figure 106).

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e-Auction Detailed Information



Figure 103 Detailed information regarding the e-Auction event

The detailed view of the e-Auction event provides the following information (Figure 103):

- 1. The type of the e-Auction:
 - a. **Rounds:** The Economic Operators compete based on a number of rounds (each participant can provide a single bid for each round)
 - b. **Time:** The Economic Operators compete based on a certain time period (each participant can provide any number of bids within the specified period)
 - c. **Combination**: The Economic Operators compete based on rounds with a certain duration (each participants can provide any number of bids within each round)
- 2. The evaluation method: Lowest Price or MEAT
- 3. Number of rounds and duration of each round
- 4. Duration of the interval between the rounds
- 5. Use of automated extensions
- 6. Maximum number of automated extensions
- 7. Duration of each extension
- 8. The time period before the end of the event by which, if a bid is received, an extension will be triggered
- 9. Scheduled date of the e-Auction
- 10. Currency of the e-Auction
- 11. Selected bid visibility



13.2. Submission of an offer

Access to the e-Auction room will be enabled only at the commencement date and time specified for the event. The user needs to select the button "Enter e-Auction Room" to access the e-Auction room.



Figure 104 e-Auction status

The e-Auction room provides all functionality for placing a bid for events containing only financial criteria (i.e. the evaluation mechanism is specified as being Lowest Price) or combination of financial and criteria specified in the technical envelope (i.e. the evaluation mechanism is specified as being MEAT).

In both cases the user can visualise the following information at the top of the page (Figure 105):

- The e-Auction state (status, round, etc)
- The e-Auction currency
- General instructions regarding the event (in order to download the instructions the user needs to select the associated link)
- Remaining time until the end of the e-Auction/ round



Figure 105 e-Auction room, main information regarding the e-Auction



13.2.1. Placing a bid in a lowest price based auction

In this type of events the bidding is performed only on the associated financial criteria. The system lists all the participating financial criteria (Figure 106). The user provides his financial bid in all participating criteria (i.e. "Cost of Consulting" and "Cost of Training" in Figure 106) and then selects the button "Submit" to submit the bid in the system.

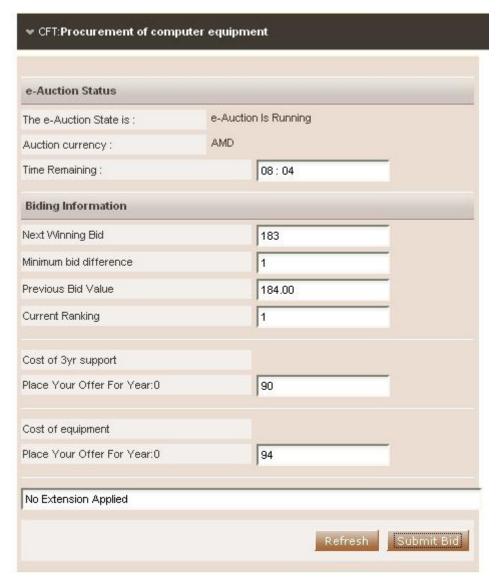


Figure 106 Submit a Lowest Price bid

In addition to the information described in Figure 105, the following information fields are displayed in lowest price e-Auctions (Figure 106):

• **Next Winning bid**: A suggestion of the total value of the next bid in order to rank at the first position



- **Minimum bid difference** (in terms of % or absolute value). The minimum difference with the previous bid
- Previous bid value. The value of the last bid

The section "User" (Figure 106) provides ranking information during the bidding process. The displayed information depends on the e-Auction visibility criteria which are specified by the Procurement Officer Tender Coordinator.

In Figure 106, the row "EO current" displays the last bid of the current EO, while the row "EO 1" displays the last bid of the other EO participating in the e-Auction. The names of the participating Economic Operators are always masked.

The system prompts the user to confirm the submission of his bid (Figure 107). The message contains all details regarding the particular bid. Selecting the button "**OK**" will submit the bid in the platform while, the button "**Cancel**" will cancel the operation.



Figure 107 Confirm submission of bid (lowest price based auction)

If the bid is valid, an acceptance message will be displayed (Figure 108). The acceptance message contains the unique "Bid Receipt Id" and the unique "Bid Hash".

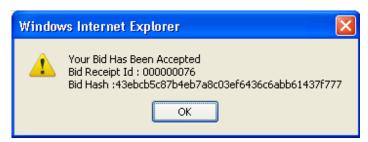


Figure 108 Acceptance message (lowest price based auction)

13.2.2. Placing a bid on a MEAT based auction

In this type of events the bidding is performed not only on the associated financial criteria contained within the technical envelope of the tender.



The platform lists all participating criteria; financial and non-financial (Figure 109). The user provides his bid for all financial (i.e. "Cost of Consulting" and "Cost of Training" in Figure 109) and for all non-financial criteria ("Number of Departments participating in the project" and "Number of consultants working on the project" in Figure 109). The user selects the button "Submit" to submit the bid in the system.



Figure 109 Submit a MEAT bid

The system prompts the user to confirm the submission of his bid (Figure 110). The message contains all details regarding the particular bid. Selecting the button "**OK**" will submit the bid in the platform while, the button "**Cancel**" will cancel the operation.



Figure 110 The platform prompts the user to confirm his bid

If the bid is valid, an acceptance message will be displayed (Figure 111). The acceptance message contains the unique "Bid Receipt Id" and the unique "Bid Hash".



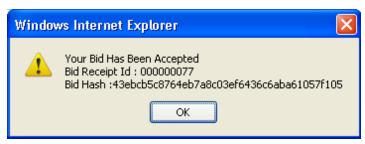


Figure 111 Bid has been accepted

If the bid is not valid, an error message will be displayed to the user (Figure 112). The error message will describe why the bid has not been registered in the system.

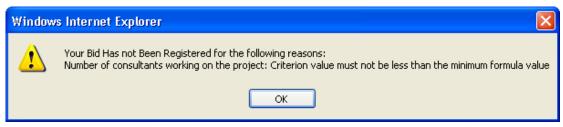


Figure 112 Bid has been rejected

For the technical criteria participating in the e-Auction process, the user can preview the criterion details by selecting the icon (displayed next to the criterion description). In the new window the platform displays the details of the criterion such as Criterion Parameters, Evaluation Parameters and Evaluation Formula Parameters (Figure 113).

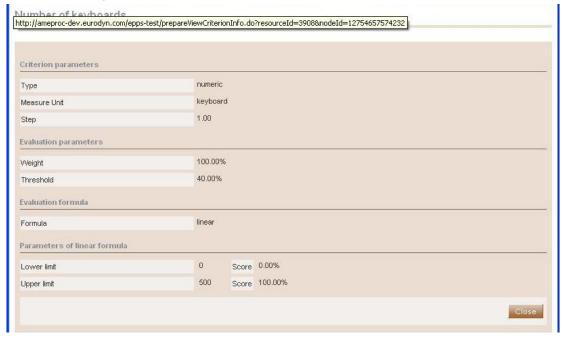


Figure 113 Details of a technical criterion



13.2.3. Extensions

Automated extensions are enabled by the Procurement Officer Tender Coordinator during the creation of the e-Auction event. Information regarding the use of automated extensions is available for the user when previewing the detailed information of the e-Auction event (Figure 103). The following information fields are available to the user (Figure 114):

- Maximum number of automated extensions
- Duration of each extension round
- Time before the end of e-Auction when extension is possible

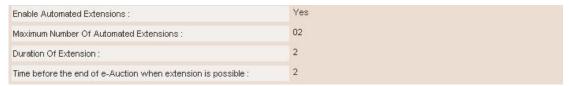


Figure 114 Detailed information regarding automated extensions

During the bidding process, the user previews if an extension has been applied (Figure 109 and Figure 108). At the bottom of the page, the message "**No Extension Applied**" is displayed when an extension has not be applied (Figure 115).

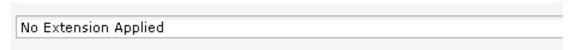


Figure 115 No automated extension is applied

When an extension is applied, the platform displays the extension number and end time and date of the extension (Figure 116).



Figure 116 Automated Extension is applied



13.3. Message Board

The e-Auction module provides a message board functionality for the prompt communication between Economic Operators and the administrator of the e-Auction (Figure 117).

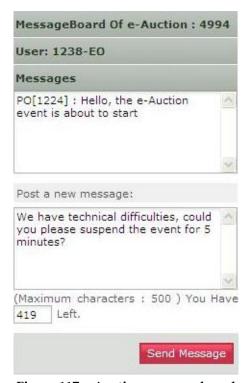


Figure 117 e-Auction message board

The upper part of the message board displays all messages posted by participating Economic Operators and also the messages/replies posted by the e-Auction Administrator.

In order to post a message the user fills the "**Post a new message**" section and then, selects the button "**Send Message**" to post the message on the board (Figure 118).





Figure 118 Posting a message on the message board

13.4. Suspension an e-Auction event

When the event is suspended no further bidding is permitted (during the suspension period). The platform informs all participating Economic Operators that the event is suspended and also when the event will resume (Figure 119). When the event is resumed, the user needs to select the button "Enter e-Auction Room" to access the e-Auction room and to continue bidding.



Figure 119 e-Auction is suspended

13.5. Preview of a completed e-Auction

At the end of each e-Auction round, the platform will present the details regarding the bidding activities of the Economic Operator (for example "Best Overall Bid Per Round"). Figure 120 provides an example.

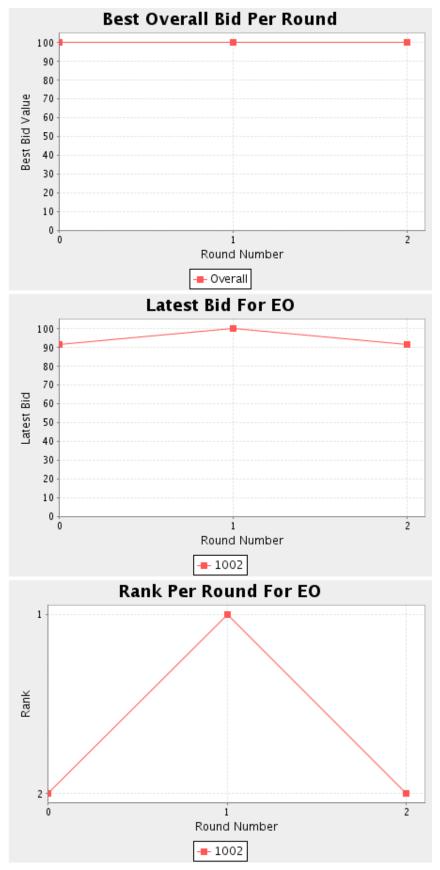


Figure 120 End of round information



At the end of the e-Auction, the platform will notify the Economic Operator that the event has terminated (Figure 121).

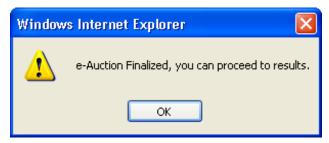


Figure 121 End of the e-Auction event

The platform will provide the following information to participating Economic Operator (Figure 122):

- Winning bid of the e-Auction
- Ranking of the Economic Operator
- Best bid of the operator
- Detailed information for all received bids from the Economic Operator
- Ranking information per round
- Several e-Auction charts (Figure 124 and Figure 125)



Economic Operator Report

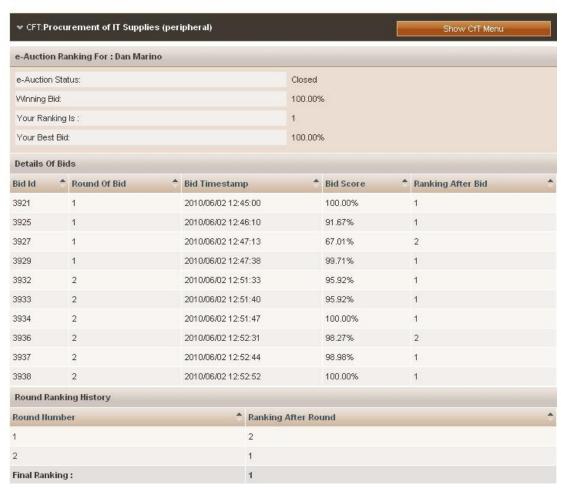


Figure 122 Bid information



Figure 123 Bid information

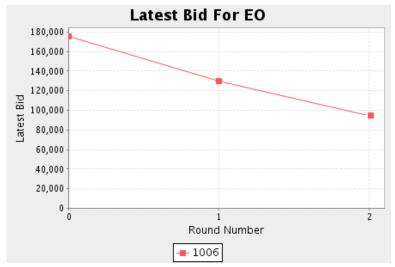


Figure 124 Latest Bid for EO

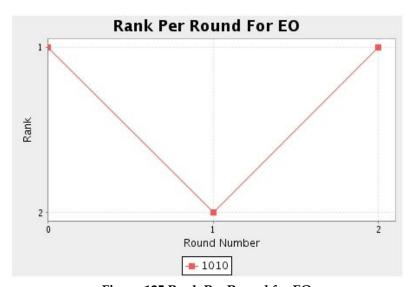


Figure 125 Rank Per Round for EO



14. Contract Awarding

If the Economic Operator is awarded the contract the task "**Reply to contract award**" will appear in the user's task list (Figure 126).



Figure 126 Reply to contract award task

The user has the option to accept or decline the award (Figure 127). In case the award is declined, a mandatory reason must be provided in the available text area (Figure 128).



Figure 127 Accept contract award



Figure 128 Decline contract award



15. Additional Functionality

15.1. Inserting Common Procurement Vocabulary Codes (CPV)

In order to insert a Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) code, the platform provides a code selector functionality accessible when the user selects the search icon next to the field:



Figure 129 CPV codes field

In the CPV code selection window, the following functionality is provided:

- 1. Select a CPV code from the main CPV window:
 - A detailed presentation of all codes in the tree hierarchy is enabled by using the \pm and \pm signs (Figure 130).



Figure 130 Hierarchical structure of CPV codes

- Double clicking on a CPV code adds it to the list of the selected items:
 - All selected codes are included in the selected items window.
 - Functionality is provided to define the presentation order of several CPV codes by using buttons and and . In addition the user can delete a selected CPV code by using the button (Figure 131).

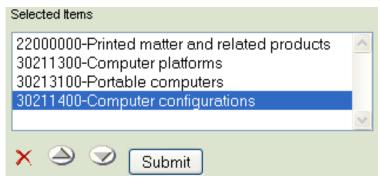


Figure 131 Selected CPV codes



- 2. The user can use the search functionality of a CPV code (Figure 132):
 - The user provides the title or the number of the code (entire or partial description) in the search field.
 - The user selects the button "Search".
 - The results are displayed in the search results panel. Selecting a CPV code and selecting the button "Add to the List" will include the CPV code in the selected items (Figure 133).



Figure 132 CPV search functionality

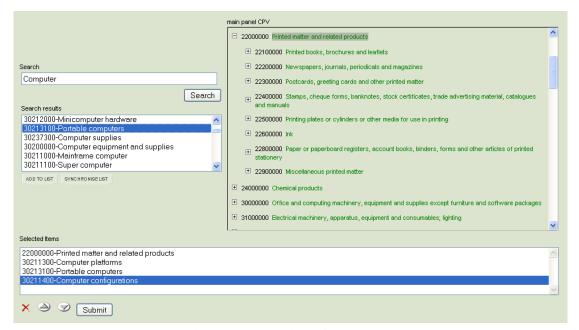


Figure 133 Selection of CPV codes

Finally, the user selects the button "Submit" to submit the selected codes to the application (Figure 133). All selected codes are, then, presented in the corresponding field.



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CPV Codes of interest:

22000000-Printed matter and related products
30211300-Computer platforms
30213100-Portable computers
30211400-Computer configurations

Figure 134 Submitted CPV codes

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