

How to register a Ukrainian company for UN tenders

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1. UN procurements

The UN is one of the world's largest procurers of goods and services. The volume of tenders for peacekeeping, humanitarian aid for millions of affected people, and aid to the countries during pandemics, disasters, and armed conflicts, including Ukraine, amounts to nearly USD 20 billion a year.

Ukrainian companies have been working with the UN agencies for a long time, and Ukraine is one of the top 30 suppliers of goods and services to the UN. That shows that Ukrainian businesses have the potential to serve the needs of the UN. Moreover, in the context of a super-tough economic situation, as well as the unprecedented international funding of support programs for Ukraine, participation in UN procurement is a real opportunity for Ukrainian businesses not only to survive and keep developing but also to support the country in its fight against the Russian invaders.

The UN procurement system includes tenders that ensure the procurement of goods, works, and services by various organizations such as the UN Secretariat, the WFP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, etc. Each of these organizations has its own needs, programs, and budgets. Procurement in the UN system is governed by the established financial standards and rules of each UN organization, accordingly. These rules may differ in detail from organization to organization. Likewise, policies, practices, and procedures related to the procurement organization, key procurement areas, types of procurement and evaluation tools, awarding of contracts, levels of authority, monetary thresholds, procedures for approving tender results, and for monitoring as well as the accountability for the proper (or improper) use of resources, may vary.

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As a rule, each UN organization has its information resources for procurement announcements. However, they all use the specialized website, The United Nations Global Marketplace.

By registering on this platform and passing verification procedures, Ukrainian suppliers come into the sight of all UN organizations that create a database of suppliers based on the information from the UNGM platform. This platform is a unified electronic space for the disclosure of bid opportunities by 39 UN agencies all over the world.

2. Register of the UNGM suppliers

The UNGM platform provides 3 levels of registration for UN suppliers:

- Basic Level

Suppliers registered at this level may take part in the procurements with a contract ceiling amount of up to USD 150,000;

- Level 1

Suppliers registered at this level may take part in the procurements with a contract ceiling amount from USD 150,000 to USD 500,000;

- Level 2

Suppliers registered at this level may take part in the procurements with a contract ceiling exceeding the amount of USD 500,000;

However, as a general rule, the suppliers cannot take part in any procurement unless they are registered at the Basic level.

3. Registration at the Basic Level

Suppliers are registered on the UNGM platform on a "one-stop-shop" principle. To register a supplier at the Basic level, it is necessary to complete an appropriate form.

An algorithm for completing the form is very important since the decision to register a supplier on the UNGM platform is made based on the information in this form obtained by the UN staff.

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4. How to complete the registration form at the Basic Level?

In order to complete the registration form, a Ukrainian supplier is required to take a series of consecutive steps by submitting reliable information about themselves and the goods (works or services) they intend to sell in the UN procurement system.

1. Please log in to your account on the UNGM website.

2. In the sidebar of the menu, please select the Registration at Basic Level section.

3. Please complete the registration form.

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You have to complete the consecutive sections of the registration form:

3.1. The General Information section

Completing the General Information section you have to specify:

- Supplier's name

Please note: The name shall be the same as the name indicated in the supplier's registration certificate or the registration statement. Given this, it is advisable to indicate the name of the supplier in English when registering a company that will participate in the UN procurements, to avoid any questions in terms of translations during the registration;

- License number

Please note: It is not referred to as a license for any particular type of activity. In this line it is necessary to specify the registration number of a supplying company (in the case of Ukrainian companies it is the EDRPOU code), reflected in the relevant statement or the certificate;

- The year when a supplying company has been established

Please note: the year shall be specified in the standard four-digit format (e.g., 2007);

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- Ownership type

You have to specify the entity (a legal entity or a physical entrepreneur), that exercises control over a supplying company, and choose the ownership type of a company from the list. The form also allows you to indicate that the supplying company (exceeding 51%) is a woman-owned business.

- Supplier's policy on inclusion of people with disabilities in its activities

If a supplier consistently implements an inclusion policy, you should select the 'Disability-inclusive supplier' option.

After entering the data in this section, please press Save and continue and proceed to the next section.

3.2. The Address section

In the Address section you have to enter the address of a supplier. It is desirable that the address, as well as other contact details, coincide with the supplier's registration information reflected in the registration certificate (statement, etc.).

After entering the data in this section, please press Save and continue and proceed to the next section.

3.3. The Countries of Business section

In the Countries of business section, you have to enter information about the territories of the supplier's business activity. This section provides two options that you can select:

- National level (a supplier mainly runs its business on the territory of the country of the supplier's incorporation). If you select the national level of doing business, you should specify the country of the supplier's business activity;
- International level (if a supplier mainly does its business on the territory of the country of the supplier's incorporation and in other countries).

After entering the data in this section, please press "Save and Continue" and proceed to the next section.

3.4. The Contacts section

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In the Contacts section, you should enter the contacts of a supplier. It's important to take into account that:

- Contacts have to correspond to the information indicated in the registration data (a certificate, a statement, etc.). It is also desirable to have these contacts corresponding to the publicly available information (e.g., on the supplier's website);
- You should enter an email address very carefully as you will be able to change it only via a separate procedure.

After entering the data in this section, please press "Save and Continue" and proceed to the next section.

3.5. The Goods and Services section

In the Goods and Services section, you have to enter information about the supplier's activities. This information should be entered by selecting a special UNSPSC code for goods and services.

First and foremost, you have to understand what this code means. The United Nations Standard Code for Products and Services (UNSPSC) is a global system for classifying products and services. These codes are used by the UNGM to classify suppliers' products and services. The selection of codes is extremely important because it is the basis for the selection of suppliers for the types of goods and services that UN organizations may procure.

When posting procurement offers on the UNGM platform, the UN staff uses the UNSPSC codes to identify the products and/or services which are subject to procurement. These codes are also used by suppliers to search for listings in the system, and the latter can send automatic notifications when relevant products and services appear in the bid opportunities.

To select the appropriate UNSPSC codes, you have to enter a keyword in the search bar. The system will offer several relevant codes. It is advisable to enter different keywords for the same product or service until the appropriate results are found. Please note that only one keyword can be entered at a time.

When you find the relevant goods or services in the list, you should mark the boxes next to them. It is necessary to select the codes thoroughly and in the fullest possible manner in order to describe the goods and services. To do this, please select the lowest level codes, making sure that these codes are in the appropriate categories.

To save the selected codes, please press "Save and Continue" and proceed to the next section.

3.6. The Statement of Compliance section

In the Statement of Compliance section you have to confirm the statements and assurances set forth therein. These are essentially abbreviated compliance conditions that the UN staff relies upon to verify the statements. They are filed in the registration form, in the sort of abbreviated form compared to the UN regulatory documents containing as a whole:

- Assurances that a supplier is not, or is not affiliated with a company that is prohibited from taking part in the UNO procurements;
- Assurances that a supplier has not been removed from the UN list of suppliers or any of its entities, including the World Bank, or its presence in such lists has not been suspended;
- Assurances that a supplier has not been under investigation or sanctioned for corruption, fraud, duress, conspiracy, or any other unethical practices in the recent 3 years;
- Assurances that a supplier is not in the bankruptcy process, and that any possible lawsuits or allegations that could lead to bankruptcy in the foreseeable future are absent;
- Supplier's liability to report any changes in the information indicated by such supplier in this section.

To verify these assurances you have to mark a box in the form.

After having marked the box on the confirmation of the assurances, please press "Save and Continue", and the process of registration form filling at the Basic level is completed.

After pressing Save and continue, the form will be sent to the UNGM platform and the decision regarding the supplier's registration will be made.

5. How to check the supplier's registration status on the UNGM platform?

Changes in the registration process are displayed by the system in the form of statuses, which can be checked in the My submission statuses section.

The statuses reflect the supplier's registration stage (at a certain level). The registration is assessed directly by the relevant UN organizations, and the status provides an insight into the supplier's chances to take part in the UN tenders.

It is important to make a special focus on the following statuses:

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- Supplier to update (the given information was insufficient or not up-to-date);
- Registered (a supplier is registered in the system);
- Declined (a supplier is denied registration).

More details about statuses on the UNGM procurement platform will be available in a separate article soon.

By registering at the Basic level, Ukrainian suppliers acquire access to participate in the UN procurement to be announced on the UNGM platform. In addition, a supplier has an opportunity to register at the Level 1 and the Level 2 to take part in larger procurements.