

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the dissertation was to assess the impact of instruments designed to facilitate SME access to and effective operation in the public procurement market for construction works and to identify, systematize and prioritize the reasons why, to date, these instruments have not been sufficiently impactful. In order to achieve a thus formulated objective of the dissertation, a detailed search of Polish and foreign literature on the subject was conducted as was a statistical and econometric analysis of the Polish procurement market for construction works. Sociological tools were also used in the form of a questionnaire of the contracting authorities and a free form interview conducted with the contractors.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter addresses the situation of the SME sector in the public procurement system of the European Union and the facilitations available within this system that can be leveraged by small and medium enterprises under EU directives and other documents. The second chapter presents a detailed analysis of facilitations targeted at small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland, against the backdrop of a retrospective characterization of the Polish public procurement system from the interwar period in the 20th century to the present day. The chapter also includes a normative and statistical identification of the SME sector in Poland, with an in-depth characteristic of its potential drawn up on the basis of research conducted from 2002 to 2015. Chapter three provides a comprehensive coverage of the public procurement market for construction works in Poland from 2000 to 2016. Drawing on available sources, the salience of public contracts for construction works within the context of the public procurement market in Poland was discussed and the segmentation of this public procurement market for construction works in Poland was provided. An attempt was also made to identify and evaluate the significance of the basic competitiveness determinants of the Polish public procurement market for construction works by means of a developed econometric model, as evidenced for years 2000 - 2014. Chapter four features a theoretical analysis of factors that may limit the effectiveness of pro-SME instruments in Poland's public procurement market for construction works. A systematization of identified disincentives was proposed, with their classification into four generic groups, and potential causes of

ineffectiveness of pro-SME instruments were listed in detail for each of these groups. Chapter five charts the pursuit of validation and evaluation of the reasons behind the limited effectiveness of pro-SME instruments basing on the opinions of contracting authorities and contractors by means of sociological tools. The obtained results were analyzed in order to pinpoint the actual reasons for the compromised effectiveness of the instruments in question. The dissertation concludes with a summary highlighting key findings from the research.

Four research hypotheses were put forward in the dissertation. The first, H1, stipulates that stimulating the expansion of SMEs on the public procurement market, including construction works, was an important subject of reflection and activity of the Polish legislator in the years 2004 - 2021. It was verified in the affirmative. The second research hypothesis, H2, which expresses a presumption that the subjective and generic structure of both the demand and supply side of the Polish public procurement market for construction works elicits conditions conducive to the expansion of small and medium enterprises on this market, was also verified positively. This presumption was corroborated by the results of the analysis of the market under study. The third research hypothesis, H3, posits that the reason for the insufficient expansion of SMEs in the Polish public procurement market for construction works is the negative impact of many disincentives of various nature. It was also reviewed favorably. This was evidenced by the as many as 38 identified disincentives classified into four generic groups and described thoroughly. The final research hypothesis, H4, implies that, amongst the disincentives attenuating the impact of statutory pro-SME instruments, imperfections in the normative construction of many of these instruments hold particular importance. This hypothesis was proved wrong. The findings of the research reported in the fifth chapter of the dissertation showed that inadequate normative design of a number of pro-SME instruments prevailed over many other disincentives. Nevertheless, the design flaws of some instruments failed to have a major impact.

What this study contributes to science is an original research approach towards the subject matter at hand. The outcome of the study brings a resolution as to what groups of disincentives attenuate the effectiveness of pro-SME instruments on Poland's public

procurement market for construction works. Thus, they lay the groundwork for subsequent efforts to improve the efficiency of this system.

Keywords: public procurement, construction works, small and medium enterprises, public procurement law, investment process, construction industry.

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