

CMS | Romania sells BITCOIN and ETHEREUM in public auction for the first time



In late 2020, the Romanian National Agency for the Management of Seized Assets (ANABI) conducted two public auctions of seized BITCOIN (BTC) and ETHEREUM (ETH).

The sale of the seized BTC and ETH was ordered by the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Ploiesti District Court in a criminal file involving investigations for perpetration of criminal fraud. ANABI was given oversight on the auctions and announced them on its website.

The public auction for BTC took place on 21 and 22 October 2020. The auctioned BTC was sold during the auction at the starting price of USD 7,358.17 (RON 30,535).

The initial bid for 0,971811337108517277 ETH was set at the valued price of USD 402.3 (RON 1,670). As there were no offers registered, ANABI organised a second public bid for a 10% lower price of USD 301.73 (RON 1,243.43). The second auction for ETH took place between 26 and 27 November 2020. According to ANABI, the ETH was successfully sold during this auction.

Both transactions were VAT exclusive and the costs for transferring the BTC and ETH from ANABI's electronic wallet to each successful bidder were supported by the bidders.

According to ANABI, the successful bidders had to communicate public addresses for BTC and ETH associated with a virtual trading platform meeting several conditions. Firstly, the platform had to belong to a legal entity, which abides by the legal norms on the functioning and operation of financial instruments and by the laws of the state where the legal entity is registered. Secondly, the trading platform needed a user registration process in place for KYC verifications and needed to abide by all national and international legal procedures regarding money laundering.

As per the information made public by ANABI, the two public auctions observed FATF and MONEYVAL AML international standards.

This public auctions of BTC and ETH appear to have been a success and stand as a precedent for future practices in Romania, related to both criminal and commercial enforcement procedures.

*For more information on this or future auctions, contact your CMS partner or local CMS experts: **Horia Draghici** and **Anna Morogai**.*