difficult, if not impossible, to identify those buying and selling unauthorized copies of digital goods and to pin liability to them (Vogel, 2015; Gabison, 2016).

Although the technology presents interesting features, by making it easier to control and track the distribution of (un)registered IP and to fight piracy and counterfeiting, by simplifying the licensing and assignments of rights and making it possible to manage IP rights on a global scale, and by accelerating and optimizing payments of fees to ensure fair compensation of rights-holders, its full practical and legal implications still have to be thoroughly assessed. The sooner regulators and legislators start looking into these, the better.

4. Enhancing government procurement processes

To carry out their functions, government agencies often need to purchase goods and services using public resources. Such purchases are commonly referred to as government procurement or public procurement. Government procurement is a key aspect of international trade. It constitutes an important market, accounting for 10-15 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of an economy on average, and global government procurement is worth about US$ 9.5 trillion per year.[66]

Given the economic importance of public procurement markets, savings that can be achieved from more transparent and efficient processes can have a significant impact on a country's economy – not least to help curb corruption and fraud which are estimated to 20-25 per cent of procurement budgets in a sector like construction and close to 60 per cent of foreign bribery cases prosecuted under the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention (OECD, 2016). A 2004 study by the European Commission showed that a 10 per cent saving in public procurement would turn the budget deficits of some EU member states into surpluses, and no eurozone member state would run a public sector deficit that broke the 3 per cent limit (European Commission, 2004).

The need for more transparency and efficiency has prompted government agencies around the world, often with the support of multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to leverage information technology to enhance transparency, reduce costs, and better manage and monitor government procurement processes. Following Canada and its e-government MERX initiative, which went live in 1991, e-Government procurement (e-GP) systems – i.e., electronic systems designed to handle some or all steps of the government procurement process – have been developed and launched across the world. The use of e-GP is now widespread, and systems are becoming increasingly sophisticated (Asian Development Bank, 2013).