

Romania to probe Microsoft reseller 'bribery' of ministers

October 3 2014

Romanian President Traian Basescu on Friday authorised public prosecutors to launch an inquiry into five former ministers suspected of receiving millions of dollars of bribes and kickbacks from resellers of Microsoft software.

"I have examined the key documents from the [public prosecutor's](#) office and believe an investigation should be launched soon and carried out thoroughly," Basecu told a press conference.

A total of nine former ministers are accused of [money laundering](#), abuse of office and bribery.

Parliament is due to vote to remove the immunity for three others, while one other former minister is a sitting member of the European Parliament.

The inquiry centres on state contracts to lease software from US company Microsoft that the Romanian government agreed with distributor Fujitsu Siemens Computers in 2004.

Witnesses quoted in a report sent to parliament by the [prosecutors'](#) office describe how tens of millions of dollars of commissions were paid to members of successive governments and businessmen between 2001 and 2012.

According to the prosecutors, "of the \$54 million (43 million euros) paid

by the government (for the contracts), \$20 million were commissions claimed by those involved, both within ministries and private companies".

Gabriel Sandu, who was Romania's communications minister between 2008 and 2010, allegedly received three million euros and demanded an additional 1.8 million euros to favour two companies.

Another 2011 contract with the education ministry provided for the purchase of 179,259 Microsoft licenses—"72,990 more than the number of compatible computers" under the ministry's management at the time, according to prosecutors.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Romania to probe Microsoft reseller 'bribery' of ministers (2014, October 3) retrieved 25 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2014-10-romania-probe-microsoft-reseller-bribery.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.