

## The Government Might Request a Reduction of the Funding from ISPA

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"By the end of the month a decision will be made on whether our country would request a reduction of the ISPA funding for road building on the grounds of the finances that have already been put to use" Vice-Premier Miglena Plugchieva stated on Tuesday (Mediapool).

She further explained that the procedure in those cases involved a correction in the financial resources from 2 to 10%. That will be done in order to avoid a sanction by the European Commission which could otherwise decide for itself on the financial reduction of the pre-accession programme.

Due to a scandal with conflict of interests and corruption in Republican Road Infrastructure Fund, Brussels froze payments on two of the ISPA projects with total cost of 115 million euros. One of them is for "Liulin" highway in the segment between Sofia bypass road and Daskalovo road junction, the other project is Technical aid for preparation of road projects in regard with the Pan-European transport corridors. Another 226 million euros are expected for the construction of Danube Bridge II. All those projects have been delayed more than half a year. The deadline for the implementation and respectively the funding of the ISPA projects is the year 2010.

"The agreements on PHARE programme were concluded in such a manner which does not allow a prolongation" Plugchieva added. PHARE programme ends on November 30th this year. We will irreparably lose 66 million euro initially meant for road building and will even have to return some of the funds because of delays in the implementation of the projects.