

# THE AIMS OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, CONNECTED TO THE EU MEMBERSHIP

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Portal EUROPE received from a source on February 21 the documentation of the public procurement procedure for "Submitting consultancy and intermediation services, connected to speeding up the process of adhesion of Bulgaria to the EU on January 1, 2007".

The application deadline expired on February 18, 2006. (see the direct link to the Public Procurement Agency, [http://www.aop.bg/case.php?mode=show\\_case&case\\_id=40233](http://www.aop.bg/case.php?mode=show_case&case_id=40233))

As Portal EUROPE announced on February 7, the Foreign Ministry decided to offer EUR 100,000 to consultants because of "a possible delay in the ratification procedure" of the Treaty for adhesion of Bulgaria to the EU.

Motivated by the high degree of public interest into this matter, Portal EUROPE demanded on February 15 from the Foreign Ministry, the full description of the procurement's object, the technical task and the requirements for the candidates. The Ministry's press-office expressed readiness to cooperate, but so far the Europe.bg Team has not received official information from the Ministry concerning our request.

Portal EUROPE started an initiative for monitoring the process of ratification in the national parliaments of the EU member states of the Treaty for adhesion of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU. Within the framework of this initiative, Portal EUROPE decided to reveal to its readers the content of the document, received by our source.

Point 3 of the document reads, "Detailed description of the procurement's object". It is about submitting "consultancy and intermediation services, connected to speeding up the process of adhesion of Bulgaria to the EU on January 1, 2007".

According to the document, the **aim of the contract**, which will be signed with the winner-candidate, is:

- "1. Preventing the adoption of the safeguard close... with which the set date for the real membership will be postponed from 2007 to 2008.**
- 2. Speeding up the process of ratification before the end of the monitoring of the membership readiness.**
- 3. Increasing the support for the adhesion of Bulgaria to the EU in 2007 in key countries, namely: Germany, France, the Netherlands, Denmark."**

According to the document, the **object of the procurement** includes carrying out the below-listed activities:

- "- Analysis of the basic reasons for postponing the membership date;**

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- **Evaluation and categorization of the relevant important figures in the EU according to the role that they play in sticking to the originally membership date;**
- **Research and analysis of the possibilities and threats with respect to the key member - states;**
- **Determination and analysis of the key figures, who have influence, and those who are opinion makers in the relevant countries, concerning the adhesion of Bulgaria to the EU;**
- **Creating a database with contacts, that could be used by the contracting authority, of the basic people and institutions, influencing on the public opinion and opinion makers about the European membership of Bulgaria;**
- **Developing a strategy and tactics for each specific goal – concrete people, concrete action, that should be undertaken, message, that should be conveyed, expected result;**
- **Analysis of the whole process of research and assisting the contracting authority in the preparation of a common strategy, which will focus on the elimination of the negative reasons /for postponement of the membership/ and in the same time underlining and strengthening the positive reasons /because of which the membership date should be kept/."**

The document also says that the contract's duration will be from the moment of its signature to the end of October 2006.

The arguments of the contracting authority (the Foreign Ministry) for opening a fast public procurement procedure of this kind is, "... emerging problems and possible postponement in the ratification procedure of the Treaty (...) in part of the European states and, in particular, relating it to the results of the monitoring report of the European commission."

The Ministry explains that it is not possible to specify "explicitly enough" the technical specifications of the public procurement, because of the "difficulties in the thorough determination of the people, whose collaboration should be sought for increasing the support in each /European/ state".

The document reveals that the contracting authority does not demand from the candidates as a requirement specific profession, neither are they obliged to specify the names and professional qualification of their staff that will be involved in working under the contract. The key criterion for selection of the offers will be their economic relevance, the documents also read.

The procedure documentation is approved by Ivaylo Kalfin, vice-premier and foreign minister of Bulgaria, on February 3, 2006.

On February 18, 2006, Minister Kalfin told Darik radio that for the moment "we have no reasons to worry" that, because of procedure reasons, any of the member-states will not be able to complete the ratification process before the end of the year.

On January 27, 2006, Prime Minister Stanishev said he believes that the process of ratification will be completed until the end of the year.

**Portal EUROPE expresses readiness to publish all comments and official stands, connected to the ratification process.**