

ANNEX I TO THE INVITATION TO TENDER

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

INFORMATION SERVICES, CONSULTANCY AND ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNICATION
ACTIVITIES OF THE INFORMATION CENTRE OF THE EC REPRESENTATION IN BULGARIA

OPEN CALL FOR TENDERS

COMM/SOF/2019/OP/0004

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1. OBJECTIVE AND CONTEXT

The European Commission Representation in Bulgaria, hereinafter called "**the EC Representation**", shall be the Contracting Authority for this Contract.

The EC Representation acts as the official representative of the Commission in Bulgaria as a Member State of the European Union, and serves the interests of the institution as a whole under the guidance of the Directorate-General for Communication.

One of the main tasks of the EC Representation is to communicate about the European Union policies in a Bulgarian context to Bulgarian target audiences. The EC Representation communicates daily with a wide range of stakeholders such as representatives of government offices, non-governmental organisations, business associations, universities, media and a general public, including schools. In order to increase awareness on the EU functioning and policies, the EC Representation organises conferences, lectures and other communication activities in Sofia and elsewhere around Bulgaria and interacts with citizens online.

The EC Representation also acts as an interface between the Commission and the political circles and civil society in Bulgaria. As such, its role is to listen and provide the Commission with in-debt, accurate and timely analysis regarding developments in the Member State and the views of the government and civil society on issues within the Commission's remit.

One of the main communication channels for the EC Representation is **a public EU information centre in Sofia**. The EU information centre is located in the House of EU, the joint premises of the EC Representation and the European Parliament Liaison Office in Bulgaria (hereafter EPLO). The two institutions also share the premises of the EU information centre, which are suitable for hosting debates, meetings, seminars and lectures. The premises are located on the first floor and are duly signposted, barrier-free and easily accessible to the public with an area for receiving visitors, EU publications stored and displayed on shelves and an office space with the necessary equipment.

The EU information centre acts as the first contact point. It fulfils the task of establishing direct contacts with the general public and stakeholders and satisfying their information needs on-the-spot. It has a prominent role in supporting the EC Representation's efforts to communicate the EC political priorities also through organising events for important regional and local stakeholders.

The specific purpose of the Centre is to provide visitors, visiting groups and participants at events organized at the EU house premises with quality information services about the EU, such as:

- answering enquiries;
- assisting citizens in their search for information;
- ensuring availability and distribution of publications/information materials;
- managing and coordinating events at the Conference hall of the EU House;
- organising seminars, visits and trainings for citizens;
- providing support to special campaigns and events;
- ensuring that the premises are kept presentable and attractive to visitors;
- managing traineeships at the Centre;
- administrative and other tasks;
- participating in fairs or other events on request of the Contracting Authority.

All these services are free of charge for the citizens.

The EU information centre receives spontaneous visitors, groups from schools and other organisations. The total number of visitors is approximately 650 random visitors per year. It holds around 20 presentations on EU policy areas, provides publications, answers questions from the general public and organises dedicated seminars and events on specific EU topics, often involving partner organisations and external speakers.

The aim is to increase quality and outreach of services offered by the EU information centre, enhancing dialogue and debate with stakeholders and general public, attracting new audiences and finding innovative ways to communicate and explain the role of the EU, policies and instruments at the EU disposal and political priorities of the European Commission.

The information search tools used at the Centre are mainly Internet-based. The staff at the Centre should be able to find the requested information after using the research tools or else redirect the citizens to the relevant EU information network. When the question is very complex, the staff should contact the Europe Direct Contact Centre and the Representation.

2. SUBJECT OF THE CONTRACT

The subject matter of the contract is the provision of services for the EC Representation. The EC Representation, as the Contracting Authority, is seeking a qualified and experienced contractor that must provide information and assistance services for the EU information centre, mostly at its premises, in Sofia.

The main services requested from the contractor:

- **Information service** (e.g. receiving random visitors, visiting groups, schools and different stakeholders; answering citizens' questions and requests in person, by telephone or e-mail; assisting in finding information on-line; offering and distributing EU publications);
- **Organisational and logistic support to inter-institutional relations, consultancy and support services** (e.g. establishing direct contacts with stakeholders, maintenance and update of stakeholders' databases; assistance in monitoring and reporting on actual political, economic and social developments in Bulgaria; policy analysis, creating and delivering interactive presentations);
- **Technical assistance** to the EC Representation's communication activities.

To provide requested services, the Contractor shall secure at least one "Senior Assistant" and two "Assistants", (referred to as "staff" in these Tender Specifications), designated to perform the tasks indicated under point 2.1. The Senior Assistant shall act also as the contact person responsible for ensuring liaison and collaboration with the Representation. The staff shall possess appropriate qualifications required for the performance of the tasks, as indicated in the selection criteria under point 8.3.

All persons must have mother tongue level of Bulgarian language or equivalent (see requirements in section 8.3.c) with an excellent knowledge of English and at least basic knowledge of the EU institution and to be able to provide information services, maintain high quality inter-institutional relations and relations with public and perform monitoring of political, economic and social developments in Bulgaria upon request. At least two staff members shall be present during the opening hours of the Centre specified below. In case of external events or events taking place at EC Representation, one person should always be present at the EU information centre to ensure continuity of the services.

The Contracting Authority shall train the staff on the nature of the assignments, functioning of the Representation, information on existing equipment, safety instructions in the EU House, etc. However, in-depth technical knowledge is expected from at least one staff member who must be able to carry out minor urgent maintenance tasks and operate the technical installations specified under point 2.1.3. without prior training.

In order to ensure continuity of the service the members of staff shall be able to replace each other in case of absence. The Contractor shall be responsible for appointing additional staff, if needed, in order to perform the tasks indicated in these Tender specifications and avoiding/minimising the rotation of the staff to the necessary minimum.

Before taking up duties, the replacement staff approved by the Representation shall undergo the necessary days (minimum three days) on-the-job coaching and training (generally provided by the EU offices) at the Contractor's expense. The Representation reserves the right to reject persons proposed by the service provider who do not fulfil the selection criteria and to request the Contractor to offer additional training to the persons appointed in question and/or request an immediate replacement without having to justify its decision. The persons and Contractor may not seek compensation for any costs that may be incurred as a result. The replacement staff shall possess appropriate qualifications required for the performance of the tasks, as indicated in the Selection Criteria under point 8.

Throughout the contractual period the Contractor is and shall remain the employer of his staff. Under no circumstances can the Contractor or his staff have an employment contract with the Contracting Authority (European Commission).

The full scope of qualified services possibly required during the duration of the contract is stated under point 2.1. The actual tasks at any time will be determined between the Contracting Authority and the Contractor. For all services provided and detailed in this document, staff will not interact with the media, nor provide answers to questions of a political or sensitive nature. Questions of such nature will be referred to the person(s) designated to deal with media in the Representation. The Contractor's staff must under no circumstances act on behalf of the European Commission or the European Parliament.

Dress code for the staff is neat but informal. Staff will have professional approach and courteous manners.

The services indicated under point 2 will be carried out throughout the year (Monday till Friday 9:00–18:00 local time), excluding the period between Christmas and New Years' Eve and during other official public holidays in Bulgaria (fixed services).

The detailed list of holidays when the EU information centre is closed will be provided to the contractor by 30 November (for the following year).

The services will be performed mainly in the EU information centre. Occasionally, the contractor will be requested to organise or participate in activities outside the EU information centre.

These services may also be occasionally required during public holidays or outside of normal working hours (additional services). Working outside of regular working hours, or working on Saturdays, Sundays or during public holidays, are considered as overtime and are paid in accordance with the price table in Annex V of these specifications. Working overtime will only be possible with the prior notice written by the Representation at least 24 hours before the required services commence.

The EU information centre consists of:

- **an information desk room** located on the first floor, open to general public. It contains reception area, service desk, reading area with computers and shelves with displays of publications. The fully equipped facilities offer to visitors high quality information and advice, access to up-to-date information material, audio-visual content and other on-line EU sources, and a diverse programme of activities on EU topics.
- **a conference room** for events located on the second floor used for presentations and for receiving visiting groups. This room can host up to 100 visitors and is equipped with standard conference

equipment, namely projector, projector screens, speakers and microphones (table, hand held microphones etc.). Free Wi-Fi is available for visitors. A kitchen for catering is also available;

- a security guard acting as receptionist, hired by the contracting authority will always be present during opening hours on the ground floor.

The technical equipment, documentation and stationary necessary for the fulfilment of the tasks will be provided by the EC Representation.

2.1. Services required

The contractor must perform the following basic services:

2.1.1 Information services

The contractor receives visitors, answers citizen's questions, distributes and ensures the availability of EU brochures and other information materials, reserves the facilities within the EU information centre and coordinates the schedule of events.

► *Answers to citizens' questions on EU topics*

The staff answers citizens' questions on EU topics (in person, by e-mail, regular mail, via social media or telephone inquiries), all answers must be in Bulgarian language, or in English if the question was in English, unless specifically agreed otherwise. The staff also replies to citizens' questions (by e-mail or phone) redirected from the EC Representation and assists in replying to complaints of citizens.

Answers are to be given by the same means of communication as used by the enquirer as soon as possible but at the latest within maximum 5 working days after the receipt of the request.

The response limit for the questions that only need to be redirected to the suitable source of information, is maximum 2 working days. For example, questions on EU citizens' rights in different EU countries are immediately to be redirected to [Your Europe portal](#)).

The staff prepares a draft reply and ensures that replies provided are correct, concise, as well as comprehensible for citizens. The replies by e-mail or mail have to be approved by the EC Representation staff to whom this will be assigned depending on a nature of questions. Draft replies should therefore be sent to the EC Representation at least 1 day ahead of the 5 working days limit. The staff electronically files and archives all correspondence exchanged with the citizens in a transparent and user-friendly system.

The staff assists and guides visitors who seek information, and uses relevant EU information sources (information materials, EUROPA websites and databases, relevant EU-related national sources of information, EU publications, promoting other information networks and contact points of the European Institutions).

The quality of the information services provided will be assessed and jointly evaluated with the EC Representation. The staff is requested to encourage visitors to leave their feedback by filling-in short questionnaires (which are also to be prepared by the staff one month after the contract is signed) or give oral feedback.

The staff maintains statistics of the visits, questions received and feedback on user experience. The staff regularly updates a list of Frequently Asked Questions and replies. Statistics should be provided to the Contracting Authority on a yearly basis or per request. At the end of the contract, the database and data remain property of the EC Representation.

► *Distribution of EU brochures/information material*

The contractor maintains necessary stock of the publications displayed at the EU information centre and in the storage; informs the Contracting Authority in case of shortage of publications well in advance so enough time is allowed for ordering procedure. The staff monitors interest of visitors for publications, follows new editions of publications or other relevant brochures, takes notes and informs the Contracting Authority.

Staff is responsible for ensuring that recent and the most relevant brochures are displayed and properly arranged in the EU information centre.

Upon a request or guidance from the Contracting Authority, staff mails the brochures and/or other information material to citizens or various target groups (schools, associations, Chamber of Commerce, EC networks etc.). All necessary packaging materials will be provided by the Representation. Costs of mailing are covered by the EC Representation.

Staff also compiles publication packs to be distributed at various events. The Contractor shall ensure that each time a delivery of publications takes place (by courier service, post, etc.), the publications are brought to the internal storage or to the Centre (depending on the type and quantity of publications). The Contractor shall be responsible for unloading the heavy packages within one hour after the request of the Contracting Authority, since deliveries are made without prior notice.

► *Booking facilities within the EU information centre*

The Contractor shall manage the hosting of information events, trainings, seminars, debates/discussion forums, round tables, exhibitions, movie screenings, books presentations and other cultural/artistic events, information days about various European programmes and EU campaigns (e.g. Europe Day, European Night of Museums, European Literature Night, etc.). These activities shall take place during the opening hours indicated above. However, some events could take place outside opening hours.

The staff is responsible for coordinating requests for booking of the conference room and for updating the room reservation table and calendar of events, irrespective of whether these are organised by the Representation and/or the EPLO or by third parties, with the approval of both institutions. The conference room is also available to third parties at no cost for non-commercial events on an EU topic. The staff must comply with the internal rules regarding use of the conference room which will be provided by the EC Representation and/or European Parliament Liaison Office.

In case of events organised by third parties, the contractor/staff is required to set-up technical installations (including the sound system, incl. amplifiers, microphones, mixer, headsets, blue ray player, video beamer, projectors, TV, laptop(s), videoconference system, audio recorder(s), visitors' PCs, etc.) and, if needed, assist with technical problems. Exact instructions will be provided by the Contracting Authority at least 24 hours in advance, but these tasks do not require specific IT knowledge.

The Contractor shall monitor the appropriate adjustment of the heating/air conditioning by being the contact person for the technician of the EU House.

Around 130 bookings by third parties are to be expected each year (own events are excluded from this figure).

► *Maintenance of the general image of the EU Information Centre*

The EU information centre (centre, conference room, storage and kitchens) should be kept in order, presentable and attractive to citizens at all times.

Staff ensures that the most recent EU-related and relevant publications are at citizens' disposal at all times.

The staff handles with care the equipment in the EU information centre. In case of technical issues, the EC Representation must be informed immediately.

The cleaning service and computer maintenance is provided by the EC Representation.

2.1.2 Inter-institutional relations and consultancy

► *Inter-institutional relations, contacts with multipliers*

The staff is to search for potential partners and multipliers in order to promote the role of the EU and its policies, and to enhance visibility of the EU information centre among the existing networks. The objective is to identify specific groups of stakeholders for each of the EC priorities and to propose new promotional channels to make the EU information centre more recognisable in the city and in the public, all this with proactivity and creativity. However, it will be up to the EC Representation to take the decision whether to implement or not the proposed channels.

The staff shall maintain regular contacts with a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. state, regional and local authorities, business associations and companies, trade unions, NGOs, academia, etc.) also by means of regular and targeted mailing correspondence promoting and explaining new Commission initiatives or legislative proposals. Based on background provided by the EC Representation, the staff will prepare a summary to be forwarded to relevant target groups by e-mail. The staff promotes communication products and channels produced by the EC Representation, and informs visitors on new EC initiatives and upcoming events of the EC Representation.

► *Maintenance of databases*

The staff shall ensure systematic maintenance of the databases of the EC Representation contacts in the area of economic and social policies in accordance with the GDPR¹ requirements. The databases should be regularly updated and if necessary new contacts added.

Upon a request, the staff will develop a dedicated database of specific target groups to be used for purposes of mailing either various information or invitations to events/meetings.

At the end of the contract, the database and data remain property of the EC Representation.

► *Consultancy and support services*

The staff assists in monitoring of the political, economic and social developments in Bulgaria and provides regular reporting, including on various events and bilateral meetings of the EC Representation staff held in Bulgaria. Upon a request, the staff prepares summaries of relevant EU policies as well as analysis of how EU policies and EC recommendations are being implemented (e.g. a state of play of national reforms, measures in the pipeline, new initiatives, views of the government and stakeholders).

► *Preparing, updating and delivering interactive presentations on EU*

Based on background documents or instructions provided by the EC Representation, staff prepares professional power point presentations on various subjects (e.g. general presentation about functioning of the EU and its institutions, relevant EU policies, the Investment Plan, etc.) for different target groups.

¹ General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679

The presentations should be tailor-made to respond to the needs of various target groups. They should be interactive, engaging and easy to follow. The contractor also adapts the existing presentations with new information. Interactive presentations on EU or dedicated workshops (containing photos, animations, infographics, video clips etc, and engagement of the audience) will be used to reach one of the important target groups - students. The Contractor must ensure that all his work is in compliance with copyright law as the European Commission is the leader in this area. The presentation has to be approved by the EC Representation.

In relevant cases, the staff integrates into the presentations and events surveys by using a "sli.do" application² or equivalent application decided by the EC Representation or any other tool that might be available in the future. The staff prepares relevant questions and process them in the format agreed, e.g. "sli.do". concerning general presentations on various EU topics (e.g. the legislative procedure, EU citizens' rights, the European single market, youth, Investment plan). At the end of the contract, all presentations and outputs remain property of the EC Representation.

Occasionally the staff might be asked to give presentations for schools also outside the EU information centre. Whenever a member of staff holds a presentation (in the conference room or outside our premises) another member of staff has to be present in the EU information centre (see point 2).

► *Support in special campaigns and events*

Whenever the Representation organises information campaigns or special events aligned with its information and communication policy, the Contractor's staff shall contribute mainly by providing presentations and distribution of information and promotional materials.

► *Business trips in Bulgaria*

The Contracting Authority may request the Contractor's staff to go on a business trip within Bulgaria. For effective organisation of business trips, the Contracting Authority shall notify the Contractor at least one week in advance of the forthcoming business trips. The business trip shall be related to: training of the Europe Direct Information Centres, annual meeting of the European Clubs in the schools, etc. Participation in the annual meeting of Information Providers shall not be considered as a business trip.

The role of the staff in these business trips shall not be organisational, but will involve active participation in the event, e.g. (s)he shall give presentations (agreed in advance by the Representation) and take part in the workshops and discussions in order to share best practices in providing EU related information services to the citizens, finding information on EU legislation and EU programmes, etc.

The total number of business trips per year for all staff together shall be 25 days per year on average. Travel and subsistence allowance for the business trips shall be reimbursed separately by the Contracting Authority as described under point I.3.3 of Annex VI – Draft Contract; therefore, these business trips should not be included in the financial tender.

2.1.3 Technical assistance to the Representation's communication activities

► *Technical assistance at other services or communication activities*

The staff shall provide the following assistance:

- setting up the premises for meetings and seminars, including moving furniture and exhibitions to and from storage areas;

² <https://www.sli.do/>

- assisting speakers and moderators in operating the technical AV installations before and during presentations and seminars;
- staff is required to set-up technical installations, operate the AV equipment (interactive screens, projectors, microphones) and, if needed, assist with technical problems at the activities in the EU information centre.

► *Administrative and other tasks*

The Contractor shall manage and monitor the external postal correspondence related to the information and communication services for the information centre.

2.1.4 Traineeships at the Information centre

The Contractor will have the possibility to organize regular (paid or unpaid) traineeships for students at the Centre. However, if the Contractor decides that one or more of these traineeships should be paid, it would not modify the financial conditions between the Contracting Authority and the Contractor. The potential candidates could contact the Contractor directly and apply for a traineeship at the Centre or could be proposed by the Representation or EPLO. The Contractor will be in charge of the selection of candidates, their further recruitment and on-the-spot training. The duration and programme of the training shall be determined by the Contractor.

2.1.5 Handover

At the end of the contract, the Contractor will ensure an orderly handover of the equipment, documentation and operational information. For this purpose, the Contractor will prepare a fully documented handover file covering all tasks and all relevant information gathered during the performance of the contract.

2.2 Reporting and invoicing

Each year, a **Specific Annual Contract** shall be agreed upon to set objectives, specify concrete topics and actions to be communicated, as well as detailed services to be provided. The Specific Annual Contract shall take into account lessons learnt and assessment of activities organised in the previous year and summarised by the contractor in Technical Progress Reports and eventually also in a **Final Annual Report** (point 2.2).

The Specific Annual Contract will cover (fixed) services indicated under point 2 which shall be carried out continuously throughout the year. The services which shall be occasionally required outside these hours (additional services), will be ordered by the order form depending on ad hoc need, before the required services commence.

Starting from the date of signature of the each annual Specific Contract, which will implement the Framework contract, the contractor will submit to the Commission a brief **Technical Progress Report** in one-month frame (within maximum 10 days of the following month) on the implementation of the contract. All reports (Progress Report and a Final Annual Report) must be written in Bulgarian language, unless specifically agreed to use English.

► *Reporting*

Technical Progress Report

Technical Progress Report consists of:

- description of the work carried out, including a list and brief summaries of events with a number of participants,
- number of visitors in the EU information centre,
- number of prepared and delivered presentations on EU,
- number of questions/answers to citizens and a list of the most frequent questions/areas,
- a summary of feedback from citizens visiting the EU information centre,
- outline of key achievements/success or best practice within the reported period and problems encountered and actions taken to find solutions,
- Monthly statistics concerning distributed publications with an indication of the types, quantities and places where publications were distributed,
- any other relevant comments.

One copy of the Technical Progress Report drafted in Bulgarian together with the related invoice, is to be sent to the Contracting Authority within 15 calendar days after the end of the reference period.

In case the Contracting Authority does not make any comments or requests for corrections to the report and invoice within 10 working days following its receipt, the report shall be deemed tacitly approved. In case the report is not approved, the Contractor shall have 5 working days in which to submit additional information or a new report.

Any information included in the technical reports may be published on the website of the European Commission. The Contractor will transfer its copyright to the European Union as stipulated in the Special and General Conditions of the framework contract.

Final Annual Report

A draft Final Annual report shall be submitted to the Contracting Authority one month before the expiry of the Specific Annual Contract. The **Final Annual Report** and related invoice shall be drafted by the Contractor taking into account comments from the Contracting Authority and submitted to the Contracting Authority at the latest 15 calendar days after the expiry date of the Specific Annual Contract. It shall contain description of the work delivered within the Contract, including a summary and evaluation of all activities performed and the results achieved within the Contract, measured against the objectives set and services required. It shall also include an evaluation of the reached results, recommendations for follow-up activities and an executive summary. Assessment and lessons learnt as outlined in Technical Progress Reports and the Final Annual Report will be taken into account when defining a new Specific Annual Contract for the next year.

In case the Contracting Authority does not make any comments or requests for corrections to the Final Report and related invoice within maximum of 15 working days following its receipt, the Final Annual Report shall be deemed tacitly approved. In case the Final Report is not approved, the Contractor shall have 10 working days to submit additional information or a new report.

Costs incurred for the production of the reports must be included in the global unit prices.

3. SIZE OF THE CONTRACT

The maximum budget for this tender is 55 000 EUR x four years/220 000 EUR VAT excluded.

This volume is an estimate only and there is no commitment as to the exact quantities to be ordered. The actual volumes will depend on the quantities which the Contracting Authority will order through specific contracts. In any case however, the maximum amount of the framework (framework contract ceiling) contract set out in Article I.5.1 of the contract will not be exceeded.

Pursuant to Points 11.1 and 11.4 of Annex I to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, the contracting authority may use a negotiated procedure for the award of new services which entail the repetition of similar services entrusted to the contractor who was awarded the original contract. That procedure may be used only during the three years following conclusion of the original contract.

4. CONTRACTUAL FRAMEWORK

The services specified above will be the subject of a Framework Contract drawn up between the EC Representation and the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded. The draft Framework Contract is attached in Annex II to the Invitation to Tender.

The services specified in Section 2 will be the subject of a Single Framework Contract drawn up between the EC Representation and the tenderer(s) to whom the contract is awarded. The draft Singel Framework Contract is attached in Annex II to the Invitation to Tender. In drawing up his bid, the tenderer should bear in mind the provisions of this draft contract and, notably:

Article I.4	Appointment of the contractor and implementation of the FWC
Article I.5	Prices
Article I.6	Payment arrangements
Article I.10	Exploitation of the results
Article II.4	Provision of services
Article II.4.3	related to the compliance with minimum requirements including applicable obligations under environmental, social and labour law
Article II.13	Intellectual property rights
Article II.21	Payments and guarantees

5. SUBMISSION OF BIDS

5.1 Content of the tender: what documents to submit with the tender?

The tenderer's bid must comprise the documents required in the checklist in Annex IV. – Part A, Part B of this annex lists the elements to be provided upon request at a later stage.

5.2 Rules on access to procurement: who may submit a tender?

Participation in this call for tenders is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties, as well as to international organisations.

It is also open to all natural and legal persons established in a third country which has a special agreement with the European Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement. Where the Agreement on Government Procurement³ concluded within the World Trade Organisation applies, the participation to this call for tenders is open to all natural and legal persons established in the countries that have ratified this Agreement, on the conditions laid down therein.

The rules on access to procurement do not apply to subcontractors. Subcontracting may not be used with the intent to circumvent the rules on access to procurement.

³ https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_E/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm.

To enable the Contracting authority to verify the access to procurement, tenderers must indicate their country of establishment when registering in the Participant Register and be ready to present the supporting evidence normally acceptable under the law of that country.

👉 For tenderers established in the United Kingdom:

Please be aware that after the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the rules of access to EU procurement procedures of economic operators established in third countries will apply to tenderers from the UK depending on the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement. In case such access is not provided by legal provisions in force tenderers from the UK could be rejected from the procurement procedure.

6. TECHNICAL TENDER

Tenderers should include in their bid a technical tender detailing how they will continuously perform the tasks covered by the contract, in compliance with all the requirements of the tender specifications. The technical tender should follow the same structure as the subject of the contract. The technical tender should not exceed 25 pages of standard A4 format (+ or – 10%).

The technical tender must contain:

- a detailed description of how the tenderer intends to assure high-quality services throughout the duration of the contract. This description needs to explain the assurance of business continuity at all times (e.g. staff replacement in case of summer holidays, sick leave, staff training etc.). The tenderer is also expected to explain how it intends to assure that the staff is professional, with sufficient knowledge and pro-activeness, with the aptitude to meet all deadlines and implement quality control measures and follow-up when needed;
- Tenderers should draw up a proposition for handling and answering all 3 hypothetical cases:

Case 1: To provide an answer to a citizen's questions

Question a: "I have a very good project related to building a care home for elderly people. Is there any possibility that I can get a funding from the European structural and investment funds?"

Question b: I would like to complain about a real estate case in which my rights were not respected. Could you help me to get in contact with the European Court on Human Rights?

Question c: I have worked abroad for many years and now the time has come for me to retire. Could you help me with information how to make sure that my work experience abroad is taken into account by the Bulgarian authorities?

A reply must be drafted in Bulgarian. Answer should be realistic and should not exceed one A4 page.

Case 2 – To prepare a presentation for students of the secondary school on "What is the EU"

The presentation must be provided in both Bulgarian and English. It consists of a scenario of a 45 minute interactive presentation explaining the EU, its role and what it offers for young people in the language understandable to secondary school students. Tenderer has to demonstrate how it will engage with students and must submit a draft of the presentation.

Case 3 – To prepare a communication plan for a seminar on "Does Bulgaria need the euro"?

The communication plan should well explain the main objective of the event, specify speakers and participants/target groups, include key communication messages and a summary of actions with a timeframe, which would lead to timely organisation of the event.

Besides the communication plan, the tenderer has to provide the following examples: i) an invitation with a programme of the seminar ii) a short announcement for the web and a post for Facebook and iii) an evaluation plan, including an evaluation questionnaire. The invitation together with the programme of the seminar must be drafted in both Bulgarian and English, while the remaining documents shall be in Bulgarian.

The technical tender should not include any of the documents referred to under the exclusion or selection criteria, nor should it refer to issues already covered by the exclusion and selection criteria.

Only technical offers which meet all the minimum technical requirements listed below will be considered compliant and evaluated.

By submitting a tender, tenderers declare that their technical offer is compliant with applicable obligations under environmental, social and labour law established by Union law, national law and collective agreements or by the international environmental, social and labour law provisions listed in Annex X to [Directive 2014/24/EU](#).

The technical tender will be assessed in the light of the quality award criteria set out under point 9.

7. FINANCIAL OFFER

The financial offer must be quoted using the attached form in Annex V, which must be duly signed and dated. The prices must be fixed and quoted in euros, including for countries which are not in the euro-area.

The price must be all-inclusive and must cover all costs related to performance of the contract as described above.

All costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the tender are to be borne by tenderer and will not be reimbursed.

8. EVALUATION

The evaluation is based solely on the information provided in the submitted tender. It involves the following:

- Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria
- Selection of tenderers on the basis of selection criteria
- Verification of compliance with the minimum requirements set out in these tender specifications
- Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria

The contracting authority may reject abnormally low tenders, in particular if it established that the tenderer or a subcontractor does not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law.

The successful tenderer must pass all criteria to be awarded the contract.

The Contracting Authority will assess these criteria in no particular order.

8.1. Exclusion and selection criteria

Compliance with exclusion and selection criteria is evaluated as follows:

At tender submission stage, tenderers should include the following documentation:

- the declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria in Annex III duly completed, dated and signed, together with the relevant evidence related to the remedial measures if applicable.

In the case of joint tenders, all economic operators involved in the tender must provide the declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria.

In the case of tenders involving subcontracting, the tenderer shall submit a separate declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria, duly dated and signed by each known subcontractors whose tasks represent more than 20% of the tasks of the contract or who help fulfil the selection criteria.

- the checklist of documents to be provided in Annex IV duly completed, together with the relevant evidence required as a result of answers to the questions in Part A of the checklist and Part V of the Declaration on Honour (Remedial measures).

The other pieces of evidence listed in Part B of Annex IV may be requested by the contracting authority or by the EU Validation Services (The Research Executive Agency) from any tenderer at a later stage. They will in all cases be requested from the winning tenderer. The Contracting Authority may reject the tender if the requested evidence is not provided in due time.

The successful tenderer must provide the documents mentioned as supporting evidence in the declaration of honour before signature of the contract and within a deadline given by the contracting authority. This requirement applies to each member of the group in case of joint tender and to each known subcontractors whose tasks represent more than 20% of the tasks of the contract or who help fulfil the selection criteria.

8.2. Exclusion criteria

Bids from tenderers who do not meet the exclusion criteria referred to in Articles 136 and 141 of the Financial Regulation⁴ will not be considered for the award of the contract.

8.3. Selection criteria

The tenderer must demonstrate sufficient legal and regulatory, economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to be able to perform the tasks as specified in point 2 of these specifications.

An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities to achieve the required level of economic, financial and technical capacity, regardless of the legal nature of the links that it has with them (subcontractor, parent company, third party). It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary to perform the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

If a third party provides the whole or a very large part of the financial capacity, the contracting authority may demand that that entity signs the contract or that it provides a joint and several first-call guarantee, should that tender be awarded the contract.

a) Legal and regulatory capacity

⁴ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union - amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2018:193:TOC>

In the course of the procedure the EU Validation Services (REA, the Research Executive Agency) may contact tenderers via the Participant Register and ask for supporting documents regarding their legal status. Please note that a request for supporting documents in no way implies that the tenderer has been successful.

Upon request by REA the tenderer shall provide a 'Legal Entity File (LEF)' and a 'Bank Account File (BAF)' duly completed and signed, with the necessary annexes. The forms to be used are available at the following addresses:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm
http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm

For joint tenders, the LEF should be provided for each participating entity whereas the BAF is requested for the leader of the group only.

The tenderer (and each Member of the group in case of joint tender) should declare whether it is a Small or Medium Size Enterprise in accordance with [Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC](#). This information is used for statistical purposes only.

b) Financial and economic capacity

Tenderers must comply with the following selection criteria in order to prove that they have the necessary economic and financial capacity to perform the contract.

Minimum level of capacity: Average yearly turnover of the last two financial years above EUR 50 000 EUR. This criterion applies to the tenderer as a whole, i.e. a consolidated assessment of the combined capacities of all involved entities will be carried out

In the course of the procedure the EU Validation Services (REA, the Research Executive Agency) may contact tenderers via the Participant Register and ask for supporting documents: regarding their financial and economic capacity. Please note that a request for supporting documents in no way implies that the tenderer has been successful.

Upon request by REA the tenderer shall provide the following documents:

A statement of overall turnover during the last two financial years, with a minimum of 50 000 EUR per year.

If, for some exceptional reason which the Contracting Authority considers justified, the tenderer is unable to provide the references requested by the contracting authority, he may prove his economic and financial capacity by any other means which the contracting authority considers appropriate (evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance, business plan for newly created entities, etc.).

In any case the Contracting Authority must at least be notified of the exceptional reason and its justification in the tender. The Commission reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

c) Technical and professional capacity

The tenderer must demonstrate convincingly that he has the ability to undertake the tasks requested.

Any tenderer with a professional conflicting interest that may affect the performance of the contract may be rejected on the basis of not fulfilling selection criteria for professional capacity.

- **Criterion 1:**

As an evidence, a list of min three (max 10) relevant services carried out in the past three years, with the approximate sums, dates and recipients, showing at best his capacity in provision of similar information

and communication services together with project reference letters from the Contracting Authority must be provided.

- Criterion 2:

Necessary human resources to perform the contract in line with the best professional practice:

The staff providing the services in the EU information centre shall fulfill the following conditions:

For the position "Senior Assistant"	For the position "Assistant"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Degree diploma in European Studies, Political Science, Law, Economy, Social Studies, Public Relations or other relevant studies; • minimum of 3 years of professional experience in the area of the European integration issues of which at least 2 years are in the area of the EU-related information services; • sound knowledge of the European Union and current EU affairs, to be proven by education and/or professional background on EU affairs; • knowledge of information techniques and internet search tools – by proposing a staff member in the tender procedure, the tenderer declares that this knowledge is existing and takes full responsibility for professional execution of tasks; • native level language skills (or equivalent) in Bulgarian, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience; • at least a C1 CEFR⁵ level language skills (or equivalent) in English, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience; • good communication and presentation skills (oral and written) – by proposing a staff member in the tender procedure, the tenderer declares that this knowledge is existing and takes full responsibility for professional execution of tasks; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Degree diploma in European Studies, Political Science, Law, Economy, Social Studies, Public Relations or other relevant studies; • at least 1 year of professional experience in EU affairs; • sound knowledge of the European Union and current EU affairs, to be proven by education and/or professional background on EU affairs; • knowledge of information techniques and internet search tools – by proposing a staff member in the tender procedure, the tenderer declares that this knowledge is existing and takes full responsibility for professional execution of tasks; • native level language skills (or equivalent) in Bulgarian, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience; • at least a B2 CEFR⁶ level language skills (or equivalent) in English, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience; • good communication and presentation skills (oral and written) – by proposing a staff member in the tender procedure, the tenderer declares that this knowledge is existing and takes full responsibility for professional execution of tasks;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-depth technical knowledge from at least one staff member to carry out minor maintenance tasks and operate the technical installations specified under point 2.1.3 	

⁵ CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

⁶ CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

As evidence, the tenderer will provide educational information and qualifications of the three persons mentioned above who will work at the EU Information Centre (profile CVs). Each profile provided should indicate the intended function in the delivery of the services.

8.4. Additional requirements for joint tenders and tenders including subcontracting

Please refer to the Checklist of documents to be provided (see Annex IV).

Any change in the composition of the group of economic operators during the procurement process (after submission of the offer) is limited to exceptional circumstances (e.g. a take-over) and must be agreed by the Commission.

Any change of subcontractor during the procurement process (after submission of the offer) is subject to agreement by the Commission.

The Commission will require a member of a grouping or a subcontractor to be changed if the member of the grouping or subcontractor proposed is in an exclusion situation or does not meet a specific selection criterion.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Bids from tenderers who do not satisfy the exclusion or selection criteria will not be considered for the award of the contract.

The contract will be awarded to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio on the basis of the criteria specified below.

9.1. Technical evaluation

The technical tender to be submitted as part of the bid (see point 6) will be assessed on the basis of Quality criteria as follows:

No	Evaluation criterion	Max points per criterion	Min points to be obtained (at least 60% per criterion and 60 in total)
1 a	Quality, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the technical bid showing that the tenderer will cover and perform all the tasks in compliance with all requirements of the tender specifications	15	9
1 b	Reliability of the means used to ensure the continuous and effective performance of the contract and the prompt performance of the tasks: description of the work organisation, distribution of tasks, coordination with the EC Representation, flexibility and deadlines	10	6
1 c	Relevance of the means used to guarantee the high quality of the services:	10	6

	description of means used to verify knowledge and qualifications of the proposed employees, description of means used to ensure that the staff's behaviour is suited to the workplace and the official nature of the institutions represented by the EU information centre, proposal of regular trainings for the staff.		
2	Quality of the measures implemented for a continuity of performance throughout contract period, including quality control measures: ability to ensure continuous delivery of requested services without any delays	20	12
3	Quality of case studies		
3 a	Case 1: Replies to questions from citizens on EU issue: relevance, comprehensiveness, knowledge of topics, presentation style	10	6
3 b	Case 2: Quality of the methodology and tools proposed to create, update and deliver interactive EU presentation for students "What is EU" : accuracy, understanding of the topic, ability to capture main message knowledge transfer, attractiveness, interactivity, engagement, motivation	15	9
3 c	Case 3: Quality and efficiency of the communication plan for an expert event: clear and concise invitation and communication messages capturing an essence of the issue, comprehensiveness and understanding of the topic, effectiveness of steps to organise successful event, innovation in outreach	20	12
Total		100	60

The result of the technical evaluation is the sum of the number of points obtained as a result of the evaluation of each criterion. Only those bids which are awarded at least 60% for each criterion and sub-criterion and a total score of at least 60 points will be considered for the award of the contract.

9.2. Financial evaluation

For the financial tender, the tenderer must use the standard price table in Annex V.

Any omission or amendment to the original price table may cause the bid to be considered null and void.

For the purpose of evaluation and comparison of the financial offers, the Commission will use a reference price: the total of the prices for the various services that are listed in Price Table in Annex V.

9.3. Award of the contract

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender, i.e. the tender offering the best price-quality ratio determined in accordance with the formula below. A weight of 60/40 is given to quality and the reference price.

Score for tender X	=	$\frac{\text{Cheapest Price}}{\text{Price of tender X}}$	x	100 x 40%	+	Total quality score (out of 100) for all criteria of tender X	x	60%
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