



Thessaloniki, 25/07/2013

OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER
AO/RES/SAN/ICTSS/010/13 - "ICT SUPPORT SERVICES"
REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION (1) – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question Nr. 1

We would like to kindly draw your attention to some important issues regarding the tender "ICT support services" 2013/S 121-206345. These issues involve the minimum requirements for the profile of consultants for Lot 1 - consultancy and technical support related to Windows servers and desktop administration.

These requirements include a series of Certifications that are very recently announced by Microsoft. In order for example, an IT consultant to qualify for these certifications, apart from taking the appropriate exam, it is strongly proposed by Microsoft to attend certain courses that in some cases were introduced only ten (10) days before the tenders publishing date (for example, Course 20331B: Core Solutions of Microsoft SharePoint Server 2013 was published on June 17, 2013). Most of the Microsoft official courses for the certifications needed by CEDEFOP were published just one month before the tender's publication. It is practically impossible for an IT professional to accomplish the required exams due to lack of time. Only Microsoft Certified instructors currently hold all the requested certifications for obvious reasons.

Taking in to account the above considerations, a great number of IT consultants, with experience and numerous Microsoft certifications cannot attach their CVs to a proposal for this tender, thus eliminating our options to provide the best qualified personnel, or even more to participate in your tender at all.

In conclusion, we would kindly like to request a time extension for this tender of at least 40 days. We believe that your organization will benefit as you will have the opportunity to choose from more tenders and also from a larger database of experienced and qualified IT consultants that will meet and cover all your requirements.

Cedefop's clarification to Question Nr. 1

Cedefop's ICT service provides the underlying infrastructure to support dozens of servers and ensure internet accessible services that function 24/7, for this reason it needs to be itself supported in the context of this framework contract by a company able to provide experienced, motivated and dynamic staff that holds the certifications required by the technical specifications of the call for tenders. These requirements are formulated based on our experience and due knowledge of our needs.

Cedefop believes that the argument presented above do not represent a blocking factor in having any company submitting their proposals to this call for tenders as:

a) Sections 3 and 4 of the call for tenders allow companies that believe to be up to the requirements of the call but do not possess themselves all requested elements, to rely on the capacities of other entities, to sub-contract, or to form co-operations (consortia) in order to jointly cover the specified requirements; we assume however that the majority of expert companies in the field fulfil all requirements on their own;

b) Cedefop has not mentioned the SharePoint **2013** when indicating the level of certification and expertise of the Microsoft SharePoint Server certification, for this reason it makes an addition to the specific requirement and changes the relevant text (see Cedefop's correction as published on our website) in order to include previously earned SharePoint expertise certifications which should be valid at least until the deadline of submission of tenders as required for all certifications.

Based on the above no extension of the deadline for submission of tenders is foreseen.

Question Nr. 2

The purpose of this letter is to address the issue about the requirements of the tender "ICT support services" (2013/S 121-206345).

a) In particular in Lot 1 - consultancy and technical support related to Windows servers and desktop administration - there is a request for certain "extremely" recent certifications.

The Microsoft Certified Solution Expert (MCSE) certifications required for IT Consultants are rare to find as the official courses were very recently published by Microsoft (just one or two months ago). This means that numerous experienced system engineers and consultants having vast experience in field service, that already hold previous Microsoft Certifications are not allowed (although being MCSE for years) to participate with their CVs and offer their services. In conclusion it is obvious that such practices lead to a tender procedure without competition (probably with just one participation in the tender) counter to the European legislation intendment.

b) We could also mention that there is a request for MCSE: communications and MCSE: sharepoint but there is no mention of use of Lync server or Sharepoint at your ICT profile.

We are asking for your actions in order to postpone the tender procedure and change the requirements for LOT 1 and accept the previous certifications.

Cedefop's clarification to Question Nr. 2

Concerning point a) please refer to Answer to Question No 1 above as well as to Cedefop's correction published on our website. Please note that this is an open call for tenders, with requirements and technical specifications written in such way as to attract the highest possible number of appropriate tenderers in view of genuine competition, as in all procurement activities of Cedefop.

Concerning point b), indeed in Cedefop's ICT profile there is no mention of Lync server or SharePoint as one of the purposes of the call for tenders in subject is to acquire the expertise needed to introduce them during the execution of the Framework Contract.