

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)



Purchase of sociological research conduction on multilevel governance in Ukraine.

Contract N° 9316/2026/12

The Council of Europe (CoE) Office in Ukraine is implementing from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2026 the Project "Strengthening multilevel governance and local democracy to support Ukraine's recovery" (hereinafter, the Project). The CoE is also planning its next Project in Ukraine for 2027–2030, in the same thematic area, under the next Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine. To ensure the desired impact in Ukraine, the CoE interventions are implemented in co-operation with local, regional, national and international stakeholders.

In that context, it is looking for Providers for the conduction of sociological research (opinion polls) on multilevel governance to be requested by the Council of Europe on an as needed basis.

A. TENDER RULES

This tender procedure is a competitive bidding procedure. **In accordance with Rule 1395 of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe¹, the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €6,000 and €184,000 tax exclusive.**

This specific tender procedure aims at concluding a **framework contract** for the provision of deliverables described in the Act of Engagement (See attached). A tender is considered valid for 180 calendar days as from the closing date for submission. The selection of tenderers will be made in the light of the criteria indicated below. All tenderers will be informed in writing of the outcome of the procedure.

The tenderer must be a legal person or consortium of legal persons.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: Tender - Application for the Contract No. 9316/2026/12.** Tenders addressed to another email address **will be rejected.**

The general information and contact details for this procedure are indicated on this page. You are invited to use the CoE Contact details indicated below for any question you may have. **All questions shall be submitted at least 5 (five) working days before the deadline for submission of the tenders and shall be exclusively addressed to the email address indicated below with the following reference in subject: Questions - Application for the Contract No. 9316/2026/12.**

Type of contract ►	Framework Contract
Duration ►	Until 31 December 2026, renewable until 31 December 2028
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ►	16 April 2026 at 16h00 Kyiv time
Email for submission of tenders/offers ►	congress.ukraine@coe.int
Email for questions ►	congress.ukraine@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ►	15 June 2026

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

¹ The activities of the Council of Europe are governed by its [Statute](#) and its internal Regulations. Procurement is governed by the Financial Regulations of the Organisation and by [Rule 1395 of 20 June 2019 on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

Background of the Project

The Council of Europe Office in Ukraine is currently implementing the Project "Strengthening multilevel governance and local democracy to support Ukraine's recovery" (1 April 2025 – 31 December 2026) within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine "Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction" for 2023-2026. The Project seeks to strengthen Ukraine's multilevel governance and local democracy during the war and post-war period by improving legal frameworks, enhancing the quality of local and regional governance, and promoting democratic innovations based on human rights, transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. This contract could potentially be used for the next project in the same thematic area, as part of the upcoming Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine, subject to securing the necessary funds.

In that context, it is looking for a maximum of 6 (six) (a maximum of 3 (three) per Lot) Providers with a particular expertise for the organisation and conduction of sociological research (opinion polls) on multilevel governance in Ukraine (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) to be requested by the Council on an as needed basis.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 4 sociological researches (opinion polls) on multilevel governance, to be held by 31 December 2028. This estimate is for information only and shall not constitute any sort of contractual commitment on the part of the Council of Europe. The Contract may potentially represent a higher or lower number of activities, depending on the evolving needs of the Organisation.

For information purposes only, the total budget of the Project amounts to 2,846,533.00 Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed 150,000.00 Euros tax exclusive** for the whole duration of the Framework Contract. This information does not constitute any sort of contractual commitment or obligation on the part of the Council of Europe.

Lots

The present tendering procedure aims to select Provider(s) to support the implementation of the Project and is divided into the following lots:

Lots	Maximum number of Providers to be selected
Lot 1 - Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 face-to-face interviews in total).	3
Lot 2 - Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 computer-assisted telephone interviews in total).	3

Lot 1 concerns the organisation and conduction of sociological research (opinion polls; 3000 *face-to-face interviews* in total) on multilevel governance in Ukraine. The fee rate, described in Section "Fees" of the Act of Engagement covers a lump sum of one unit, meaning it covers all the following aspects of one sociological research:

- 1) finalisation in close co-operation with the Council of Europe Project:
 - a) a concept, methodology and timing of conducting sociological research (opinion polls);
 - b) one questionnaire (up to 60 simple questions and maximum 8 table format questions, 40 minutes per 1 (one) interview) for opinion poll via 2000 *face-to-face interviews* with base sample) and
 - c) up to 4 (four) same or almost the same questionnaires for up to 4 (four) opinion polls via *face-to-face interviews* (1000 interviews in total for all the mentioned opinion polls) with specific target audiences;
- 2) conducting representative opinion polls among adult population *via 2000 and 1000 face-to-face interviews in total* using the mentioned above questionnaires in all the territories of Ukraine or in some clearly defined areas except occupied ones within agreed research design, taking into account the demographics, proximity to the front line, gender, age, social status, current structure of territorial communities and other criteria. As the opinion polls are conducted *via face-to-face in-household interviews (with a random sample that is random at all stages)*, they should have comparable methodology to the opinions polls commissioned by the Council of Europe in 2021 for national and regional levels to guarantee correct and precise analysis of dynamics for the certain questions. The Council of Europe should be able to replicate the survey process at all stages;
- 3) processing data (data in the SPSS / PASW formats will be provided by the Council of Europe) of the previous opinion polls commissioned by the Council of Europe and conducted (a) in 2015-2021 via face-to-face interviews, and (b) in 2022-2024 via computer-assisted telephone interviews or face-to-face interviews to prepare comparative tables for all trend questions (for Ukraine as a whole, major macro

regions and other population groups identified by the Council of Europe) and analyse key changes that took place;

- 4) preparing and providing to the Council of Europe Project:
 - a) a final analytical report on sociological research (opinion polls) in the English and Ukrainian languages (A4, Times New Roman, size 12, DOC and PDF formats – about 150 pages); the final report should consist of (at least) the following parts (a) methodology (including the analytical expertise on how the ongoing war affects the representativeness of the sample); (b) separate section on the comparability of current year results vs. previous years (starting from 2015); (c) main results of the research; (d) explanation of the results and dynamics on every question with processed statistical information in tables and diagrams with analysis and comparison of key changes since 2015 till the present year for all trend questions;
 - b) detailed uni- and bivariate distributions that will be calculated taking into account complex sample design;
 - c) all the source data of the research for possible verification of the data (in the SPSS / PASW format);
 - d) presentation of a final analytical report not less than 50 slides in Ukrainian and English in PPT format;
- 5) presenting the results of the sociological research (opinion polls) during a public event that will be organised by the Council of Europe;
- 6) developing a draft news item based on the results of the sociological research (opinion polls), publishing results of the sociological research (opinion polls) on a Provider's website and social media resources.

Lot 2 concerns the organisation and conduction of sociological research (opinion polls; 3000 *computer-assisted telephone interviews* in total) on multilevel governance in Ukraine. The fee rate, described in Section "Fees" of the Act of Engagement covers a lump sum of one unit, meaning it covers all the following aspects of one sociological research:

- 1) finalisation in close co-operation with the Council of Europe Project:
 - a) a concept, methodology and timing of conducting sociological research (opinion polls);
 - b) one questionnaire (up to 60 simple questions and maximum 8 table format questions, approximately 40 minutes per 1 (one) interview) for opinion poll via 2000 *computer-assisted telephone interviews* with base sample) and
 - c) up to 4 (four) same or almost the same questionnaires for up to 4 (four) opinion polls via *computer-assisted telephone interviews* (1000 in total for all the mentioned opinion polls) with specific target audiences;
- 2) conducting representative opinion polls among adult population *via 2000 and 1000 computer-assisted telephone interviews in total* using the mentioned above questionnaires in all the territories of Ukraine or in some clearly defined areas except occupied ones within agreed research design, taking into account the demographics, proximity to the front line, gender, age, social status, current structure of territorial communities and other criteria. As the opinion polls are conducted *via computer-assisted telephone interviews (with a random sample that is random at all stages)*, they should have comparable methodology to the first opinion poll commissioned by the Council of Europe *via computer-assisted telephone interviews* under this Contract to guarantee correct and precise analysis of dynamics for the certain questions. The Council of Europe should be able to replicate the survey process at all stages;
- 3) processing data (data in the SPSS / PASW formats will be provided by the Council of Europe) of the previous opinion polls commissioned by the Council of Europe and conducted (a) in 2015-2021 via face-to-face interviews, and (b) in 2022-2024 via computer-assisted telephone interviews or face-to-face interviews to prepare comparative tables for all trend questions (for Ukraine as a whole, major macro regions and other population groups identified by the Council of Europe) and analyse key changes that took place;
- 4) preparing and providing to the Council of Europe Secretariat:
 - a) a final analytical report on sociological research (opinion polls) in the English and Ukrainian languages (A4, Times New Roman, size 12, DOC and PDF formats – about 150 pages); the final report should consist of (at least) the following parts (a) methodology (including the analytical expertise on how the ongoing war affects the representativeness of the sample); (b) separate section on the comparability of current year results vs. previous years (starting from 2015); (c) main results of the research; (d) explanation of the results and dynamics on every question with processed statistical information in tables and diagrams with analysis and comparison of key changes since 2015 till the present year for all trend questions;
 - b) detailed uni- and bivariate distributions that will be calculated taking into account complex sample design;
 - c) all the source data of the research for possible verification of the data (in the SPSS / PASW format);

- d) presentation of a final analytical report not less than 50 slides in Ukrainian and English in PPT format;
- 5) presenting the results of the sociological research (opinion polls) during a public event that will be organised by the Council of Europe;
- 6) developing a draft news item based on the results of the sociological research (opinion polls), publishing results of the sociological research (opinion polls) on a Provider's website and social media resources.

The Council will select the abovementioned number of Provider(s) per lot, provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below. Tenderers are invited to indicate which lot(s) they are tendering for (see Section A of the Act of Engagement).

Only those Providers whose score, following the assessment of the Award Criteria (see Section E below), is **equivalent to or higher than 70 out of 100** will be selected under each Lot.

Scope of the Framework Contract

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, pre-selected Providers may be asked to provide the deliverables listed in the Act of Engagement (See Section A – Terms of reference). This list is considered exhaustive.

In terms of **quality requirements**, the pre-selected Service Providers must ensure, *inter alia*, that:

- The services are provided to the highest professional/academic standard;
- Any specific instructions given by the Council – whenever this is the case – are followed.

In addition to the orders requested on an as needed basis, the Provider shall keep regular communication with the Council to ensure continuing exchange of information relevant to the Project implementation. This involves, among others, to inform the Council as soon as it becomes aware, during the execution of the Contract, of any initiatives and/or adopted laws and regulations, policies, strategies or action plans or any other development related to the object of the Contract (see more on general obligations of the Provider in Article 3.1.2 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

Unless otherwise agreed with the Council, written documents produced by the Provider shall be in English (see more on requirements for written documents in Articles 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

By submitting an offer in the framework of the present Call for Tenders, the Tenderer acknowledges that the persons involved in the implementation of the contract will be exposed to an increased risk of death and injury due to the ongoing war against Ukraine. The Tenderer also acknowledges that, if selected, it will carry out the implementation of the contract at its own risk.

The Tenderer confirms in addition that, if selected, it will perform systematic security assessments before implementing any activity related to the implementation of the contract. The Tenderer acknowledges that the Council of Europe does not assume any liability for the death, any injury or any damage that the Provider or persons involved in the implementation of the contract may sustain in Ukraine.

C. FEES

Tenderers are invited to indicate their fees, by completing and sending the table of fees, as attached in Section A to the Act of Engagement. These fees are final and not subject to review.

The Council will indicate on each Order Form (see Section D below) the number of units ordered, calculated on the basis of the unit fees, as agreed by this Contract.

D. HOW WILL THIS FRAMEWORK CONTRACT WORK? (ORDERING PROCEDURE)

Once the selection procedure is completed, you will be informed accordingly. Deliverables will then be delivered on the basis of Order Forms submitted by the Council to the selected Provider (s), by post or electronically, on **an as needed basis** (there is therefore no obligation to order on the part of the Council).

Pooling

For each Order, the Council will choose from the pool of pre-selected tenderers for the relevant lot the Provider who demonstrably offers best value for money for its requirement when assessed – for the Order concerned – against the criteria of:

- quality (including as appropriate: capability, expertise, past performance, availability of resources and proposed methods of undertaking the work);
- availability (including, without limitation, capacity to meet required deadlines and, where relevant, geographical location); and
- price.

Each time an Order Form is sent, the selected Provider undertakes to take all the necessary measures to send it **signed** to the Council within 2 (two) working days after its reception. If a Provider is unable to take an Order or if no reply is given on his behalf within that deadline, the Council may call on another Provider using the same criteria, and so on until a suitable Provider is contracted.

Signature of orders

An Order Form is considered to be legally binding when the Order, signed by the Provider, is approved by the Council, by displaying a Council's Purchase Order number on the Order, as well as by signing and stamping the Order concerned. Copy of each approved Order Form shall be sent to the Provider, to the extent possible on the day of its signature.

Delivery

Each deliverable has to be accompanied by the filled-out AI tool questionnaire which is appended to this document or otherwise provided at the ordering stage.

E. ASSESSMENT

Exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interests

(by submitting a tender, you declare on your honour not being in any of the below situations)²

Tenderers shall be excluded from participating in the tender procedure if they:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
- have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
- are or appear to be in a situation of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest; a conflict of interests arises where any person has a personal interest which is such as to influence, or appear to influence, the impartial and objective exercise of their responsibilities under this procedure. A personal interest includes any advantage to themselves, their relatives or personal relationships (including based on political or national affinity), business or financial interests or any other interest shared with another party. If tenderers have any personal interests that are relevant to this tender procedure, **they must fully disclose these in a separate document submitted with the tender;**
- are retired Council of Europe staff members or are staff members having benefitted from an early departure scheme;
- are currently employed by the Council of Europe or were employed by the Council of Europe on the date of the launch of the procurement procedure;

² The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask tenderers, at a later stage, to supply the following supporting documents:

- An extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country of incorporation, indicating that the first three and sixth above listed exclusion criteria are met;
- A certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of incorporation indicating that the fourth criterion is met;
- For legal persons, an extract from the companies register or other official document proving ownership and control of the Tenderer;
- For natural persons (including owners and executive officers of legal persons), a scanned copy of a valid photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport).

- have not fulfilled, in the previous three years, their contractual obligations in the performance of a contract concluded with the Council of Europe leading to a total or partial refusal of payment and/or termination of the contract by the Council of Europe;
- are subject to restrictive measures applied by the United Nations Security Council or the European Union. In the case of legal persons, the restrictive measures imposed on the tenderer's owner(s) or executives will also exclude the tenderer from participating in this tender procedure.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria determine the conditions for participating in a procurement procedure and define the essential requirements that each bidder must comply with. Bidders shall demonstrate that they fulfil the following criteria (to be assessed on the basis of all supporting documents listed in Section G):

Lot 1 – Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 face-to-face interviews in total)

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Being registered as a legal person specialised in the field of providing sociological research in Ukraine	Registration documents
Minimum 10 years of experience in organising and conducting sociological services in Ukraine	Registration documents Company portfolio

Lot 2 – Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 computer-assisted telephone interviews in total)

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Being registered as a legal person specialised in the field of providing sociological research in Ukraine	Registration documents
Minimum 10 years of experience in organising and conducting sociological services in Ukraine	Registration documents Company portfolio

The above eligibility criteria will be assessed on the basis of the documents listed in the table and, where relevant, on the basis of other supporting documents listed in Section G.

For consortia only: each consortium member will be assessed against the eligibility criteria above. For a consortium to be validly constituted, at least two consortium members must satisfy the eligibility criteria.

Award criteria

The award criteria aim at assessing the quality of a bid in order to **identify the bid/s offering the best value for money**. Eligible bids will be assessed against the following award criteria:

Lot 1 – Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 face-to-face interviews in total)

Criterion 1: Quality of the offer (75 points), including:

- Methodology of conducting sociological research (opinion polls) for face-to-face interviews in Ukraine (55 points);
- Experience in conducting sociological research on multilevel governance in Ukraine (20 points).

Criterion 2: Financial offer (25 points).

Lot 2 – Sociological research (opinion polls via 3000 computer-assisted telephone interviews in total)

Criterion 1: Quality of the offer (75points), including:

- Methodology of conducting sociological research (opinion polls) for computer-assisted telephone interviews in Ukraine (55 points);
- Experience in conducting sociological research on multilevel governance in Ukraine (20 points).

Criterion 2: Financial offer (25 points).

The above award criteria will be assessed based on the bidder's capacity, as outlined in the supporting document, or on the basis of a consolidated assessment of the combined capacity of all eligible profiles or consortium members if the bid is submitted by a legal person or a consortium.

Additional rules applicable to the submission and assessment of the bids

The bidders' attention is drawn to the following additional rules governing the assessment of the bids:

- The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with prima facie eligible tenderers;
- Unless expressly provided otherwise in the tender documents, a bidder may not submit more than one bid for the same procurement procedure. Bidding for more than one lot – where a contract is divided into lots – is allowed;
- In the same procurement procedure, a legal person may not submit a bid and, at the same time, be a member of a consortium also bidding under the same procurement procedure. In such cases, the Council of Europe reserves the right to exclude the bid submitted by the legal person from the procurement procedure;
- The Council reserves the right to reject any bid if, in its sole judgment, the financial offer is abnormally low or high. The Council may request clarification from the bidder before making its determination.

F. NEGOTIATIONS

The Council reserves the right to hold negotiations with the bidders in accordance with Article 20 of Rule 1395.

G. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

1. One completed and signed **Act of Engagement**.³
2. **A list of all owners and executive officers** (a copy of original documents with summary translation into English) in PDF format, for legal persons only.
3. **Registration documents** for legal persons (a copy of original documents with summary translation into English) in PDF format.
4. **Methodology** of conducting sociological research (opinion polls) for face-to-face interviews (Lot 1) and computer-assisted telephone interviews (Lot 2) (in English) in PDF format.
5. **Company portfolio describing the experience** in conducting sociological research (opinion polls) on multilevel governance in Ukraine (in English) including their list and, where possible, links to their reports or presentations (with summary description in English for each report/link/presentation) in PDF format.
6. **When relevant, a document disclosing the provider's personal interests that are relevant for this procedure, in compliance with the instructions laid down above under the 'Exclusion Criteria' above (Section 'Assessment');**
7. **All the documents listed above, under Section E, necessary for the assessment of the bid under the eligibility and award criteria.**

All documents shall be submitted in English. A list of all owners and executive officers and registration documents shall include a copy of original documents with summary translation in English. Failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the tender. If any of the documents listed above are missing, the Council of Europe reserves the right to reject the tender.

The Council reserves the right to reject a tender if the scanned documents are of such a quality that the documents cannot be read.

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³ The Act of Engagement must be completed, signed and scanned in its entirety (i.e. including all the pages). The scanned Act of Engagement may be sent page by page (attached to a single email) or as a compiled document, although a compiled document would be preferred. For all scanned documents, .pdf files are preferred.