

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of national consultancy services in the areas of violence against women, domestic violence, and gender equality.

Contract N° BH8088_ARM_2023_01



The Council of Europe is currently implementing the Project "Ending violence against women and promoting gender equality in Armenia". The project will end on 31 December 2024. In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of intellectual national consultancy services to be requested by the Council 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 €2,000 (or €5,000 for intellectual services) and € 55,000 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 120 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 either a natural person, a legal person or consortia of legal and/or natural 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 – FC BH8088_ARM_2023_01 National Consultancy Service in VAW/DV and Gender equality in Armenia.** 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 Council of Europe 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 - FC BH8088_ARM_2023_01 National Consultancy Service in VAW/DV and Gender equality in Armenia**

Type of contract ►	Framework contract
Duration ►	Until 31 December 2024
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ►	25 March 2023
Email for submission of tenders/offers ►	tender.armenia-bh8088@coe.int
Email for questions ►	tender.armenia-bh8088@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ►	10 April 2023

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](#).

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background of the Project

The consultancy services are to be delivered in the framework of the Project "Ending violence against women and promoting gender equality in Armenia".

The Project builds on the previous Council project "Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women (VAW) and Domestic Violence (DV)" which ended in December 2022. It aims at further strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to prevent and combat VAW and DV, including digital violence and enhancing inter-agency co-operation in line with the Council of Europe standards, in particular the Istanbul Convention. The Project is directed towards contributing to de facto gender equality by empowering women and countering sexism and gender stereotypes.

The project focuses especially on supporting authorities in their efforts to align their policy and institutional framework to the Istanbul Convention as well as on providing evidence-based information and best practices about the application of the relevant European standards, in particular the Istanbul Convention, after over eleven years of its national implementation in Council of Europe member states. Target professionals include public officials, law enforcement and justice professionals as well as other relevant target groups. Special emphasis will be put on promoting inter-agency cooperation. Due to emerging trends in this field, the project will initiate work on online VAW following the adoption of the first GREVIO General Recommendation N.1 on the digital dimension of VAW.

Also, the project focuses on supporting authorities and civil society in their efforts to enhance women's empowerment, promoting participation of women in decision-making, and combating stereotypes and sexism which can result in gender inequality and are an obstacle to women's full enjoyment of human rights. The support will be based on the relevant European standards and strategic documents, in particular the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023) and its successor as of 2023, the recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on preventing and combating sexism, as well as on good practices in the Council of Europe member States. Awareness-raising activities will be carried out in both areas of the project. They will also be aimed at building the capacities of journalists on gender sensitive, non-sexist, and non-stereotyped reporting.

The Council of Europe is looking for establishing a pool of maximum 20 Provider(s) (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise outlined below in lots.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up 20 activities to be held by 31 December 2024. 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 670,000 Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed 55,000 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: Adapting, proofreading, piloting, and tutoring the CoE HELP (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals) online course for law enforcement on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.	2

<p>Lot 2: Contributing to running awareness-raising initiatives, developing awareness raising materials (such as podcast, interview, articles in media, etc.), relevant events, publications, etc. on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, promoting gender equality, fighting sexism and promoting participation of women in political life, women empowerment, etc. based on the Council of Europe standards on gender equality and in line with Council of Europe visual identity.</p>	5
<p>Lot 3: Developing and delivering capacity building programs, trainings, seminars, meetings, research, etc. on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, digital dimension of violence against women, multi-agency co-operation, gender equality and gender mainstreaming, women empowerment, fighting sexism, etc. based on the Council of Europe standards for frontline professionals (public officials, civil servants, social workers, journalists, media, etc.) and civil society organisations.</p>	6
<p>Lot 4: Developing and delivering capacity building programs, trainings, seminars, meetings, research, etc. on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, digital dimension of violence against women, gender equality, etc. for legal and law enforcement professionals (judges, prosecutors, investigators, police officers, etc.) based on Council of Europe standards, in particular the Istanbul Convention.</p>	6
<p>Lot 5: Providing technical advice to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on aligning national laws, policies, and practices with the Council of Europe standards related to preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and ensuring gender equality, women empowerment, etc. In particular, on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy Strategy for Armenia 2019 -2023; - developing the new Gender Equality Policy Strategy for Armenia and analysing other national strategies (Employment Strategy, Social protection Strategy, etc.) other relevant documents, policies and needs from a gender perspective; - providing support to the Ministry with its work with the centres (CSOs) in providing support and services to victims and survivors of domestic violence on request (for example, in developing relevant rules and procedures, etc.). 	4
<p>Lot 6: Providing technical advice to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs on aligning the national laws, policies and practices with the Council of Europe standards related to preventing and combating violence against women, domestic violence and for ensuring gender equality and women empowerment.</p>	4
<p>Lot 7: Providing technical advice to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport on mainstreaming gender in secondary school curricula and teaching materials as well as developing training courses (including online courses) for educators, schoolteachers, school principles on gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.</p>	3
<p>Lot 8: Revising, proof-reading, and editing legal and gender terminology in the Armenian translations of publications, handbooks, reports, etc. on topics related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, gender equality, women empowerment, etc.</p>	3

Lot 1 concerns implementing actions related to adapting a new **HELP course** for law enforcement professionals on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence to the country specifics, national legislation and practices and participating in the launching of the course and tutoring this

online course for selected professionals such as police officers, investigators, law enforcement officers, social workers, etc. The tutor will pass the CoE HELP tutors' training.

Lot 2 concerns contributing to running awareness-raising initiatives, related to developing **awareness raising** materials (such as podcast, interview, articles in media, etc.), relevant events, publications, etc. on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, promoting gender equality, fighting sexism and promoting participation of women in political life, women empowerment, etc. based on the Council of Europe standards on gender equality and in line with Council of Europe visual identity.

Lot 3 concerns implementing actions related to **capacity building of frontline professionals** including (but not limited) public officials, civil servants, social workers, journalists, media and civil society representatives on issues related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, gender equality and gender mainstreaming, etc. This may include development of training materials, guidelines, checklists, presentations and delivering training sessions, workshops, moderating discussions and round table meetings, drafting reports, etc. The training methodologies should be based on adult learning principles and on relevant Council of Europe standards.

Lot 4 concerns implementing actions related to **capacity building of legal and law enforcement professionals** (judges, prosecutors, investigators, police officers, etc.) on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, ensuring gender equality, etc. This may include development of training materials, guidelines, checklists, presentations and delivering training sessions, workshops, moderating discussions, round table meetings, drafting reports, etc. The training methodologies should be based on adult learning principles and on relevant Council of Europe standards, in particular the CoE Istanbul Convention.

Lot 5 concerns implementing actions to provide **technical advice** and support to the **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** to align with Council of Europe standards and international best practice. The support may include monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy Strategy for Armenia 2019-2023 and developing of the new Gender Equality Policy Strategy as well as analysing other national strategies (Employment Strategy, Social protection Strategy, etc.) from gender perspective. The support may also include assistance to the Ministry in working with the regional CSOs providing support and services to victims and survivors of domestic violence and ensuring their efficient and effective work.

Lot 6 concerns implementing actions to provide **technical advice** to the **Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs** on aligning the national laws, policies, and practices with the Council of Europe standards related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, ensuring gender equality. This may include implementing desk reviews and studies, lessons learned in the related areas, drafting reports, developing of gap analysis and recommendations, etc.

Lot 7 concerns implementing actions to provide **technical advice** to the **Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport** on mainstreaming gender in secondary school curricula and teaching materials, drafting reports and developing training courses (including online courses) for educators, schoolteachers, school principles on gender equality and combating and preventing violence against women and domestic violence based on Council of Europe standards and international best practice. This may include implementing desk reviews and studies, lessons learned in the related areas, drafting reports, developing recommendations, etc.

Lot 8 concerns implementing actions on **revising, proof-reading, and editing** versions of the documents in Armenian language, ensuring the usage of legal and gender terminology in the Armenian translations of publications, handbooks, reports, etc. on topics related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, gender equality, women empowerment, etc.

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).

Scope of the Framework Contract

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, pre-selected Providers may be asked to:

- Provide expertise in the areas outlined in lots
- Draft researches, guidelines, best practices, protocols, reports
- Prepare training modules and training materials

- Conduct workshops/training
- Participate at conferences, workshops, high level meetings
- Prepare presentations, background and other documents for events and serve as a speaker, panellist/moderator
- Edit Armenian versions of publications, documents in the areas outlined in lots

The above list is not considered exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to request deliverables not explicitly mentioned in the above list of expected services, but related to the field of expertise object of the present Framework Contract for the lot concerned.

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.

If contracted by the Council of Europe, the deliverables shall be provided personally by the persons identified in the offer of the Provider whose CVs have been presented to the Council of Europe (See section E. below), in accordance with the terms as provided in the present Tender File and Act of Engagement.

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).

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 global fee corresponding to each deliverable, 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.

Providers subject to VAT

The Provider, **if subject to VAT**, shall also send, together with each signed Form, a quote² (Pro Forma invoice) in line with the indications specified on each Order Form, and including:

- the Service Provider's name and address;
- its VAT number;
- the full list of services;
- the fee per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement), tax exclusive, the applicable VAT rate, the amount of VAT and the amount VAT inclusive.

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.

E. ASSESSMENT

Exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interests

(by signing the Act of Engagement, you declare on your honour not being in any of the below situations)³

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 conflict of interest;
- are retired Council of Europe staff members or are staff members having benefitted from an early departure scheme;

Eligibility criteria

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in the areas of the Project as defined in the applicable lot.
- Bachelor degree in Law, Public Policy, Social Sciences, Social Work, Gender Studies, Political science, Media and Communication, Journalism, Education or in other relevant field
- Fluency in Armenian
- Knowledge of English (at least B2 level CEFR)

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (90%), including:
 - Expertise in given areas (related to women's political participation and/or violence against women and domestic violence) gained from experience in drafting knowledge products such as books, articles, research and policy papers, studies, desk reviews, opinions, recommendations,

² It must strictly respect the fees indicated in the Financial Offer attached to the original Provider's tender as recorded by the Council of Europe. In case of non-compliance with the fees as indicated in the original Provider's tender, the Council of Europe reserves the right to terminate the Contract with the Provider, in all or in part.

³ 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.

handbooks, mass media publications, etc., and/or thematic expertise gained from experience in developing or applying methodologies, guidelines, toolkits, courses, awareness-raising materials, teaching/learning materials or from carrying out trainings, etc.(50%)

- Drafting skills in Armenian and in English (20%)
- Previous experience in the relevant type of activity and/or conducting work in international context/within international organisations (20 %)

- Financial offer (10%).

The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with tenderers.

Multiple tendering is not authorised.

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

- **A completed and signed copy of the Act of Engagement⁴** (See attached);
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- Registration documents, for legal persons only;
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- A motivation letter in English (1 page maximum) highlighting the most relevant expertise regarding the lot(s) tendered for;
- At least 1 sample of relevant work in English and/or Armenian relevant to the lot(s) for which they apply (articles, handbooks, research analysis, presentations, training materials, media publications, etc.)
- Two references (contacts including phone number and email address)

All documents shall be submitted 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 once printed.

* * *

⁴ 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.