

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° BH9288_ARM_2025



The Council of Europe is currently implementing the project "Ending violence against women and promoting gender equality in Armenia"- Phase II. The project will end on 31 December 2026. In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of 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 €6,000 for intellectual services) and €171,000 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 either a natural person, a legal person or consortium of natural and/or legal person.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: BH9288_ARM_2025_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 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 - BH9288_ARM_2025_National Consultancy Service in VAW/DV and Gender Equality in Armenia**

Type of contract ▶	Framework contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2026
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	25 March 2025 23h59
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	tender.armenia.BH9288@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	tender.armenia.BH9288@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	14 April 2025

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", Phase II.

This project continues the critical work achieved in Phase I of the Council of Europe project "Ending violence against women and promoting gender equality in Armenia" (2023-2024) on preventing and combating violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence (DV), while promoting gender equality.

The overall goal of this project is to enhance the protection and promotion of women's rights in Armenia, with a specific focus on preventing and combating VAW and DV, including its digital dimension, and promoting gender equality.

The project is implemented across two key complementary areas:

Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence: with a focus on the Istanbul Convention and on the GREVIO General Recommendation No.1 on the digital dimension of violence against women.

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment: this area supports the integration of gender equality into educational curricula, enhance gender-responsive practices, and empower women, particularly refugee women and girls, to facilitate their active participation in political, public, and social life.

This will be achieved through:

Strengthening policy and institutional frameworks: to align Armenian legislation/ regulations with Council of Europe standards on gender equality and VAW/DV, including the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence known as the Istanbul Convention.

Improving practices, capacities, and awareness: to enhance the knowledge and skills of authorities, legal professionals, public officials, educators, media, and civil society to effectively address VAW/DV, promote gender equality, and combat stereotypes.

Supporting women's empowerment particularly refugee women and girls: to facilitate their active participation in political, public, and social life and to ensure their protection from violence.

The Council of Europe is looking for establishing a pool of maximum 29 Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise outlined in below lots.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 25 activities to be held by 31 December 2026. 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 700,000 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
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<p>Lot 1:</p> <p>Adapt, proofread, pilot, and tutoring the Council of Europe online course HELP (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals) on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.</p>	2
<p>Lot 2:</p> <p>Contribute to raising awareness and promoting knowledge on violence against women, including its digital dimension and domestic violence, gender equality, and combating sexism among various targeted groups (general public, decision-makers, etc.).</p> <p>This support may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - running awareness-raising initiatives - developing awareness raising materials (such as podcasts, interviews, articles in media, etc.) - participating in relevant events - drafting publications, etc. 	4
<p>Lot 3:</p> <p>Develop and deliver capacity building programmes (trainings, seminars, meetings, training materials, multi-agency co-operation events, networking, etc.) on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, digital dimension of violence against women, gender equality and gender mainstreaming, women empowerment, fighting sexism, domestic violence perpetrator programmes, refugee rights, etc.</p> <p>The programmes, based on the Council of Europe standards, may be provided to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - frontline professionals (public officials, civil servants, social workers, journalists, media, educators, etc.), - legal and law enforcement professionals (police officers, investigators prosecutors, judges, etc.) - decision makers - civil society organisations 	12
<p>Lot 4:</p> <p>Provide technical advice to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia, the Ministry of Justice of Armenia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Armenia on aligning national laws, policies, and practices with Council of Europe standards related to preventing and combating violence against women, including its digital dimension, domestic violence and ensuring gender equality.</p> <p>This support may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drafting reports, gap analyses, research, regulations, publications, etc. - providing consulting services <p>Specific areas of support may include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring the rights of refugee women and girls, addressing challenges and proposing solutions - providing support services to victims and survivors of domestic violence - designing programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence - addressing tech-facilitated violence against women, etc. 	8
<p>Lot 5:</p> <p>Provide 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, and school principles on gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence</p>	2
<p>Lot 6:</p> <p>Revise, proof-read, and edit legal and gender terminology in 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 online course on gender equality and gender mainstreaming to the country specifics, national legislation and practices and participating in the launching of the course and tutoring this online course for a wide range of professionals, including public servants, educators, social workers, journalists, etc. The tutor will pass the CoE HELP tutors' training.

Lot 2 concerns to contributing to running awareness-raising initiatives, 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, legal and law enforcement professionals including (but not limited) public officials, civil servants, social workers, journalists, media, judges, prosecutors, investigators, police officers, and civil society representatives on issues related to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, gender equality and gender mainstreaming, preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence , 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 in particular the CoE Istanbul Convention.

Lot 4 concerns implementing actions to provide technical advice and support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia, the Ministry of Justice of Armenia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Armenia to 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. The support may include drafting reports, gap analyses, research, regulations, publications, providing consulting services, etc. in different areas including but not limited to:

- protecting rights of refugee women and girls, collaborating with stakeholders and CSOs in developing comprehensive policy recommendations, analyses and mechanisms for addressing challenges faced by refugee women and girls in accessing their rights and protections in Armenia;
- providing protection, support and services to victims and survivors of domestic violence
- drafting regulations, guidelines, preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. These programs are designed to address the behaviour of perpetrators with the goal of reducing reoffending and preventing further violence.
- addressing tech-facilitated violence against women
- enhancing inter-agency co-operation, etc.

Lot 5 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 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 6 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;
- 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;
- 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

- 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)

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;
- 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).

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (90%), including:
 - Expertise in given areas (related to gender equality, gender mainstreaming 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, 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;
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- registration documents, 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.

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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.