

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of Facilitation, Moderation and Expert Consultancy Service in Support of Local Governance and Community Recovery in Ukraine

Contract N° 9316/2026/175



The Council of Europe supports Ukraine in strengthening local democracy, multilevel governance, human rights and democratic governance, while also contributing to the recovery and reconstruction of Ukrainian communities in line with European standards and good practices.

In response to recent developments and the growing need for support to local governance, democratic participation and community recovery processes in Ukraine, the Council of Europe is looking for Providers for the provision of facilitation, moderation and expert consultancy services 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 for intellectual services and €54,000 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: Tender - 9316/2026/175.** 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, in English, at least 2 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 - 9316/2026/175**

Type of contract ► ☐	Framework Contract
Duration ►	Until 31 December 2026
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ► ☐	27 May 2026 14h00 EEST
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

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 Council of Europe supports Ukraine in strengthening local democracy, multilevel governance, good democratic governance and human rights at local and regional levels, while also contributing to the recovery and reconstruction of Ukrainian communities in line with European standards and good practices. This includes support for democratic participation, transparency and accountability, inclusive decision-making, open government approaches, institutional resilience and sustainable community development in the context of war and post-war recovery.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 30 Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise in the fields of *local democracy, good governance, human rights and community recovery and reconstruction*.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 20 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 2 850 000 Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed €54,000 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: Facilitation and moderation consultancy on activities related to local democracy and human rights	15
Lot 2: Expert support and consultancy on • cultural heritage • local finance • public ethics • anti-corruption • and related areas relevant to the sustainable development of Ukrainian communities	15

Lot 1 concerns facilitating and moderating events and activities, as well as providing expert consultancy, in the field of local democracy, good governance and human rights. This may include working groups, roundtables, workshops, conferences, peer exchange meetings and other relevant activities organised under the Congress projects in Ukraine.

Lot 2 concerns providing expert support and consultancy to local and regional authorities, their associations and other relevant stakeholders on issues related to the recovery and reconstruction of Ukrainian communities, including cultural heritage protection, local public finance, local service delivery, public ethics, anti-corruption and related aspects of sustainable community development and post-war recovery. Providers under this lot will also conduct needs assessments, develop methodological tools and support capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening the resilience and recovery capacities of Ukrainian communities.

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:

Under Lot 1:

- Facilitating working groups, roundtables, workshops, conferences and peer exchange meetings;
- Moderating discussions, panels, thematic sessions and dialogue formats;

- Preparing facilitation concepts, session designs and methodologies for project activities;
- Developing agendas, facilitation notes and guiding questions for meetings and events;
- Supporting participatory processes involving local authorities, civil society, national stakeholders and other relevant actors;
- Facilitating consultations and structured dialogues on local democracy, good governance, human rights and open government;
- Preparing summaries, key messages and outcome notes following facilitated activities;
- Providing expert input during meetings, workshops and consultations related to local democracy and human rights;
- Supporting the design and facilitation of group work, practical exercises and interactive sessions;
- Assisting in identifying lessons learned, challenges, needs and recommendations emerging from project activities;
- Contribution to the development of training materials, learning content and methodological guidance;
- Facilitating discussions on democratic governance, citizen participation, transparency, accountability and inclusion at local level.

Under Lot 2:

- Conducting needs assessments and situational analyses related to community recovery, cultural heritage, local finances, public ethics and anti-corruption;
- Developing methodological frameworks, guidelines and practical tools for recovery and reconstruction planning at local and regional level;
- Providing expert advice and recommendations on cultural heritage protection, preservation and restoration in the context of war and post-war recovery;
- Providing expert advice and recommendations on public ethics and integrity at local level;
- Providing advice on project design, investment readiness, fundraising and engagement with national and international partners;
- Delivering expert inputs and presentations on local public finances, public investment management and financial resilience of communities;
- Supporting local and regional authorities in developing recovery plans, strategies and action frameworks;
- Contributing to workshops, roundtables and working groups on recovery and reconstruction topics;
- Developing and delivering training modules and capacity-building activities for local officials and other relevant stakeholders on recovery-related issues;
- Preparing analytical reports, policy briefs, assessments and studies on topics relevant to community recovery and reconstruction;
- Supporting the design and implementation of surveys, interviews and focus groups for data collection and evidence-based analysis;
- Drafting recommendations, good practice compilations and comparative analyses drawing on European and international experience;
- Contributing to the preparation of activity reports, meeting records and follow-up documents;
- Providing expert support in identifying challenges, lessons learned and recommendations emerging from project activities related to recovery and reconstruction of the communities.

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.

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;

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).

- 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;
- 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:

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
<u>Education</u> : University degree 2 nd cycle or higher in one of the following fields: law, political science, social sciences, international relations, education or another related field relevant to local democracy, good governance, human rights or open government.	CV
<u>Work experience</u> : At least 5 years of professional experience in facilitation, moderation, training, teaching, research or expert support in the field of local democracy, good governance, human rights or related areas.	CV
<u>Specific thematic expertise</u> : confirmed expertise in facilitation, moderation, training or expert support in one or more areas of local democracy, good governance, human rights, open government, cultural heritage, public ethics, integrity and anti-corruption, local public investments, local finances, Ukraine's recovery or European integration, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents	CV Samples of previous work
<u>Language skills</u> : At least B2 level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and fluency in Ukrainian are required.	CV Samples of previous work

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 legal persons only: legal persons are requested to include in their bids the profiles of **a maximum of 10** natural persons proposed to be assigned to the contract. The status of each natural person included in the bid must be specified, and in particular whether they are employees or subcontractors. **Each natural person included in the bid will be assessed against the above eligibility criteria.** The Council reserves the right not to accept the inclusion in the contract of persons who do not meet the eligibility criteria or to reject a bid entirely if no profiles met the eligibility criteria.³

For consortia only: each consortium member **will be assessed against the eligibility criteria above.** Consortium members who are legal persons are requested to provide the profiles of a maximum of 10 natural persons proposed to be assigned to the contract. The status of each natural person included in the bid must be specified, and in particular whether they are employees or subcontractors.

Each natural person included in the bid submitted by a consortium – whether as an individual consortium member or as a natural person attached to a legal person – will be assessed against the above eligibility criteria. The Council reserves the right not to accept the inclusion in the contract of persons who do not meet the eligibility

³ If awarded a contract, legal persons undertake to entrust the execution of order forms only to the persons approved by the Council for inclusion in the contract. If, during the period of validity of the contract, it becomes necessary to replace one or more of the persons included in the contract, the legal persons undertake to assign to the contract only persons who satisfy the eligibility criteria above and to inform the Council without delay.

criteria or to reject a bid entirely if no profiles meet the eligibility criteria.⁴ 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:

Award criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Quality of the offer (70 points), including: - o Thematic knowledge, expertise and practical experience in facilitation, moderation, training delivery or expert support in one or more areas covered by the relevant lot, including local democracy, good governance, human rights, inclusive and accountable government, cultural heritage, public ethics, integrity and anti-corruption, local public finances, community recovery and reconstruction, as well as knowledge of the local self-government system in Ukraine (30 points); - o Demonstrated advisory, facilitation and communication skills, including the ability to design and lead multi-stakeholder processes, group work, interactive sessions, consultations, needs assessments or capacity-building activities relevant to the lot concerned (20 points); - o Writing, analysis and reporting skills (20 points).	CV Examples of previous work
Financial offer (30 points)	Completed and signed Act of Engagement

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, natural person may not submit a bid on his/her own behalf and, at the same time, be included in a bid submitted by a legal person or a consortium. In such cases, the Council of Europe reserves the right to exclude the bid submitted by the natural person from the procurement procedure;
- 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

- **One** completed and signed copy of the Act of Engagement;⁵
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria. For legal persons and consortia, the CV of each natural person who shall be allocated to the execution of the contract must be submitted;

⁴ If awarded a contract, consortium members who are legal persons undertake to entrust the execution of order forms only to the persons approved by the Council for inclusion in the contract. If, during the period of validity of the contract, it becomes necessary to replace one or more of the persons included in the contract, consortium members who are legal persons undertake to assign to the contract only persons who satisfy the eligibility criteria above and to inform the Council without delay.

⁵ 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.

- At least 3 examples of previously accomplished assignments relevant to the expected deliverables under the lot(s) applied for (e.g. facilitation reports, training materials, analytical notes and reviews). If a document was partially developed by the tenderer, the relevant sections should be highlighted;
- For legal persons only: registration documents (in Ukrainian with a summary translation in English)
- 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').

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.

Documents may be submitted via file sharing services such as WeTransfer, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc.). In this case, the link must mandatorily remain active for at least 30 days after the deadline for the submission of the bids. Failure to ensure this may lead to the bid being excluded from the procurement procedure.

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

* * *