

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)



Purchase of intellectual services in the area of anticorruption, asset recovery and management in Albania

Contract N° ECCD-VC-RAC

The Council of Europe is currently implementing the project 'Enhancing Public Sector resilience against Corruption' in Albania until 31 December 2027, co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Council of Europe, and implemented by the Council of Europe. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of Albanian public institutions against corruption and to improve the recovery, management, and social reuse of confiscated assets, thereby fostering integrity, public trust, and accountability. In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of intellectual services to be requested by the Council on an as needed basis to support the corruption prevention, asset recovery and management frameworks in Albania.

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: Tender - Enhancing Public Sector resilience against Corruption.** 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 - Enhancing Public Sector resilience against Corruption.**

Type of contract ▶	Framework contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2027
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	15 January 2026 23h59 CET
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	tender.tirana@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	tender.tirana@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	22 January 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 project "Enhancing Public Sector Resilience against Corruption in Albania" is co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Council of Europe, with a total budget of EUR 1,754,386 and a duration of 30 months.

The expected results of the project are:

1. Regulatory measures, open data tools and capacities for effective anti-corruption measures and their consistent application at national and sub-national levels are enhanced and improve the institutional mechanisms and response to corruption risks.
2. Capacities of Albanian institutions are strengthened for the recovery, management and social reuse of confiscated criminal assets.

The project aims at strengthening preventive anti-corruption measures and institutional capacities at national and local levels, improving legal frameworks, promoting integrity, and fostering transparency through open data tools. It will also aim at enhancing asset recovery and management systems by supporting the Asset Recovery Office (ARO) and Asset Management Office (AMO), promoting the social and environmentally responsible reuse of confiscated assets.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 14 Providers (7 per each lot) in line with the lots indicated below (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on anticorruption, asset recovery and management.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 30 (thirty) activities, to be held by 31 December 2027. 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 1,754,386 Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed 171,000 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: Corruption prevention and integrity regulatory, institutional and operational frameworks at national and local levels	7
Lot 2: Regulatory, institutional and operational measures for Asset Recovery and Asset Management Offices	7

Lot 1 concerns the provision of consultancy services and technical support in the area of anti-corruption legal and policy framework, including transparency of lobbying, ensuring coherence of the institutional framework, integrity measures for sub-national authorities. It includes legal and policy advice, support for the development and alignment of regulatory and institutional frameworks, and the design of preventive and integrity-promoting measures. It also includes capacity-building programmes for public authorities at all levels, with the aim of strengthening public sector resilience against corruption, promoting transparency, and ensuring the consistent implementation of anti-corruption standards across the central and local level.

Lot 2 concerns the provision of consultancy services for legal, policy and operational support to the consolidation of the Asset Recovery and Asset Management Offices. It includes support to the operationalisation of the recently established Asset Recovery Office, and on enhancement of the legal framework, competencies and practices of the Asset Management Office, including international cooperation, inter-institutional coordination mechanisms, social reuse of assets, through advisory services as well as capacity-building and training activities.

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 60 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:

Under Lot 1:

- Draft analytical and technical reports (e.g. institutional/needs assessments, comparative legal analysis, reviews, or gap analyses related to anti-corruption policies and practices).
- Prepare policy papers, technical papers, legal advice, and recommendations on integrity and transparency measures.
- Develop training modules and materials on corruption prevention, ethics, and integrity in public administration.
- Conduct trainings, workshops, and capacity-building sessions for national and local stakeholders.
- Participate and facilitate project events, such as conferences, expert meetings, and workshops.
- Prepare guidance or methodological tools to support implementation of anti-corruption measures.

Under Lot 2:

- Prepare analytical and mapping reports, including needs assessments to support the operationalisation of the Asset Recovery Office (ARO) and to enhance operational capacities and interinstitutional cooperation;
- Draft expert papers, legal opinions, reviews or recommendations to align the legislation and institutional framework for asset recovery and management with EU and Council of Europe standards and to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the ARO and the Asset Management Office;
- Develop action plans, guidelines, or standard operating procedures to improve the asset recovery and management system;
- Deliver training sessions, capacity-building exercises and technical workshops;
- Participate and facilitate coordination meetings, expert discussions, tables of consultations related to asset recovery and management;
- Contribute to the preparation of materials and promoting the social and environmentally sustainable reuse of confiscated assets.

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. Tenders proposing fees above the exclusion level indicated in the Table of fees will be **entirely and automatically** excluded from the tender procedure.

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/her 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.

Delivery

Each deliverable must be accompanied by the filled-out AI tool questionnaire which is appended to this document.

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

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;

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;
- 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:

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
<u>Education (applicable to both lots):</u> University degree 1 st cycle or higher in one of the following fields: in law, political or social science, economics or finance, or in a related field.	CV
<u>Work experience:</u> Lot 1: At least 5 (five) years of professional experience in public sector anti-corruption and integrity frameworks. Lot 2: At least 5 (five) years of professional experience in asset recovery or asset management.	CV
<u>Specific thematic expertise:</u> Lot 1: Confirmed expertise in anti-corruption and integrity related legal, policy and operational frameworks, including the design, review and implementation of preventive measures, institutional coordination arrangements, and capacity-building activities for public authorities at central and/or sub-national level, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents. Lot 2: Confirmed expertise in asset recovery and asset management legal, policy and operational frameworks, including support to Asset Recovery and Asset Management Offices, inter-institutional and international cooperation mechanisms, and asset management practices including social reuse of seized and confiscated assets, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents.	CV Samples of previous work Motivation letter
<u>Language skills:</u> Written and spoken fluency in English (minimum level C1 on CEFR)	CV Samples of previous work

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- 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).

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 4 (four)** 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.⁴

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 4 (four) 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 criteria or to reject a bid entirely if no profiles meet the eligibility criteria.⁵

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 (80 points), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality, extent and relevance of the bidder's professional experience and technical expertise in relation to the scope of the relevant Lot (50 points); ▪ Quality of the samples of previous deliverables submitted (30 points) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one sample of a previous written deliverable relevant to the scope of the tender, clearly evidencing its authorship and having been produced within the last five (5) years. Legal persons and consortia shall submit one such sample for each person assigned to the execution of the contract; • Motivation letter demonstrating relevant experience, knowledge, and length of involvement in the areas covered by the tender; • CV.
Financial offer (20 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

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

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.

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;⁶
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- All the documents listed above, under Section E, necessary for the assessment of the bid under the eligibility and award criteria;
- CV of the tenderer;
- CVs of persons assigned to the execution of the contract (for legal persons and consortia);
- Motivation letter demonstrating the tenderer's understanding of the Council of Europe needs as well as its compliance with the eligibility criteria listed above. The motivation letter shall also indicate the expertise of the Tenderer in the areas covered by the tender;
- At least one sample of a previous written deliverable in English, relevant to the scope of the tender, clearly evidencing its authorship and having been produced within the last five (5) years; legal persons and consortia shall submit one such sample for each person assigned to the execution of the contract;
- 3 (three) professional referees' contact details.

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.

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⁶ 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.