

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of intellectual services in the area of recovery and management of illicit assets

ECCD-VC-RAC-CBP-02



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 illicit 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 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 €184,000 tax exclusive.**

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

The tenderer must be either a natural person, a legal person or consortium of natural and/or legal person.

Bids shall be submitted via the e-procurement platform. Any bids received by email or letter will be rejected automatically.

All questions relating to this call for tenders must be submitted via the e-procurement platform, in English, no later than 07/08/2026. Questions sent by e-mail or post will not be processed.

Answers will be published on the e-procurement platform. You will be notified by e-mail when answers have been published.

We recommend that you register on the platform as soon as possible and select the "interested" option in the tool. This will enable you to receive email notifications of any changes to the call for tenders.

Please be advised that your account must be created on the platform and validated by the Council of Europe. The validation process may take up to one working day. If you are submitting an offer for the first time, **please start the registration process as soon as possible.**

Type of contract ▶	Framework Contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2027
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	14 August 2026 16h00 (Strasbourg time)
E-procurement link for submission of tenders/offers ▶	https://eproc.coe.int/callfortenders/11702#details
E-procurement link for questions ▶	https://eproc.coe.int/callfortenders/11702#details
Expected starting date of execution ▶	01 September 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" is co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Council of Europe, with a duration of 30 months, until December 2027. The project aims to support the Asset Recovery Office (ARO) and the Agency for the Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets (AMO) of Albania to enhance international and inter-agency cooperation in asset recovery and asset management as well as promote the social and environmentally responsible reuse of confiscated assets.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 6 Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with particular expertise in asset recovery and asset management. The required expertise will cover, in particular, inter-agency and international cooperation in asset recovery, as well as good practices in the management of seized and confiscated assets and social reuse mechanisms.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 4 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 30,000 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: Inter-agency and international cooperation in asset recovery	3
Lot 2: Good practices in the management of seized and confiscated assets and social reuse mechanisms	3

Lot 1 concerns the provision of intellectual services aimed at supporting the ARO in Albania in strengthening inter-agency and international cooperation. This support includes the development of operational procedures, cooperation mechanisms, capacity-building activities and the facilitation of information exchange and sharing of good practices in line with European and international standards and good practices.

Lot 2 concerns the provision of intellectual services aimed at supporting the AMO in Albania in strengthening the asset management framework and practices. This support includes the development of operational procedures, legislative and regulatory reviews, capacity-building activities, and the promotion of socially and environmentally responsible asset reuse mechanisms, in line with European and international standards and good practices.

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:

1. Develop analytical documents (Technical Papers) in the field of asset recovery, such as needs and gap assessments, mapping exercises, operational guidelines, standard operating procedures, cooperation protocols comprising tailored recommendations to strengthen inter-agency and international cooperation.

2. Design and deliver capacity building activities, such as workshops, seminars, peer-to-peer exchanges and practical exercises for representatives of the ARO and relevant national institutions, focusing on enhancing skills and knowledge pertaining to inter-agency and international cooperation in asset recovery.
3. Participate in and contribute to events (conferences, roundtable discussions, high-level meetings, working groups and on-site assessments) related to asset recovery and inter-agency and international cooperation.

Under Lot 2:

1. Develop analytical documents (Technical Papers) such as comparative analyses, operational guidance, standard operating procedures, methodologies and practical recommendations to strengthen the management of seized and confiscated assets, including the development of social and environmentally responsible asset reuse mechanisms.
2. Design and deliver capacity-building activities such as workshops, seminars, peer-to-peer exchanges and practical exercises on management of seized and confiscated assets as well as social reuse of assets.
3. Participate and contribute to events (conferences, roundtable discussions, high-level meetings, working groups and on-site assessments) related to management of seized and confiscated assets as well as social reuse mechanisms.

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 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 has to be accompanied by the filled-out [AI tool questionnaire](#).

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)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 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

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).

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;
- 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</u> : University degree 1 st cycle or higher in one of the following fields: law, political or social science, economics or finance, or in a related field.	CV
<u>Work experience</u> : Lot 1: At least 5 years of experience in the field of asset recovery at the international level. Lot 2: At least 5 years of experience in the field of asset management at the international level.	CV
<u>Specific thematic expertise</u> : Lot 1: Confirmed expertise in inter-agency and international cooperation, including operational coordination, information exchange and cooperation mechanisms in asset recovery, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents. Lot 2: Confirmed expertise in the development and implementation of good practices for the management of seized and confiscated assets, including social reuse mechanisms, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents.	CV Samples of previous work
<u>Language skills</u> : Written and spoken fluency in English (at least Level C1 on CEFR)	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 2 (two)** 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 2 (two) 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

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.

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 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 (80 points), including: ▪ 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)	• 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 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.

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 Council reserves the right to hold interviews with tenderers.

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 copy of the Act of Engagement;⁶
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- 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 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;

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.

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⁶ The Act of Engagement must be completed and uploaded, in Word format, on the e-procurement platform in its entirety (i.e. including all the pages).