

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of Technical and Evaluation Services for Language Assessment



The Council of Europe is currently implementing and will implement until 11 July 2029 a Project on "Enhancing Foreign Language Education Quality in Türkiye". In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of "Consultancy on Technical and Evaluation Services for Language Assessment" 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: Consultancy on Technical and Evaluation Services for Language Assessment.** 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 addresses indicated below with the following reference in subject: Questions - Consultancy on Technical and Evaluation Services for Language Assessment**

Type of contract ►	Framework contract
Duration ►	Until 11 July 2029
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ►	12 January 2026 23h59 CET
Email for submission of tenders/offers ►	ankara.office@coe.int
Email for questions ►	ankara.office@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ►	19 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 Foreign Language Education Quality in Türkiye" aims to enhance the quality and effectiveness of foreign language education in Türkiye and improve its compliance with international and European standards, in line with the Council of Europe's objective of assisting member states in implementing plurilingualism and intercultural education, as supported by the Council's European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). In line with Quality Education, the goals of the project are;

- to align foreign language education policy and practice with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by developing policy recommendations and designing nationally administered paper-based language proficiency tests,
- to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of National Education by improving foreign language teachers' implementation of the CEFR in teaching, learning, and assessment through a digital toolbox, and enhancing the skills of the BoE and Turkish and Language Education Research and Development Center (TLE R&D) staff
- to raise wider awareness of the CEFR among teachers, learners, as end beneficiaries, and their parents. Activities planned to achieve these goals will be conducted with particular attention to gender equality (e.g., by having an equal number of male and female participants in activities) and through partnerships (e.g., by cooperating with universities).

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 15 Provider(s) (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on provision of consultancy on technical and evaluation services for language assessment.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 107 activities, to be held by July 2029. 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 5,403,333 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: Psychometrician	5
Lot 2: Digitalisation of Listening Tasks and Items	5
Lot 3: Optical form reader	5

Lot 1 concerns the implementation of all statistical analysis for the development of language proficiency tests in collaboration with international and local consultants.

Lot 2 concerns the provision of specialised audio production support for the digitalisation of English-language tests.

Lot 3 concerns the provision of services to scan and process optical mark recognition forms for the test answer sheets of the language tests.

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 the following deliverables and to comply with the following specifications and requirements:

Under Lot 1: Psychometrician

- Conducting and reporting all statistical analysis related to language test development, including Rasch Analysis and many-facet Rasch Analysis;
- Collaborating with other international and local consultants on the test development process, planning, implementation and reporting of validation studies as well as standard-setting studies;
- Providing expertise in setting cut scores for language proficiency tests aligned with CEFR and CEFR Companion Volume (2020);
- Providing expertise on test development with a specific focus on test equating and scaling;
- Conducting the online rating process of the test takers' written and spoken answers in language assessment tests including data digitalisation and data curation;
- With respect to the above mentioned tasks, participating and contributing to the organisation and implementation of conferences, focus groups, roundtables, seminars, trainings, working group meetings, workshops, consultation meetings and other relevant events, including moderating/facilitating discussions and delivering presentations.

Under Lot 2: Digitalisation of Listening Tasks and Items

- Supporting the development of English-language educational materials through the production, editing, and mastering of audio content;
- Coordinating multi-voice recording sessions and managing end-to-end audio production workflows, including scheduling, recording, editing, mixing, and post-production;
- Using professional Digital Audio Workstations and AI-supported audio production tools;
- Ensuring all finalised audio recordings undergo quality checks by a native speaker of English and delivering high-quality outputs suitable for both classroom and online learning environments.

Under Lot 3: Optical form reader

- Delivering the services for scanning and processing optical mark recognition forms for up to 12,000 test-takers;
- Ensuring high-accuracy scanning and verification through trained personnel (data verification clerks);
- Providing timely, accurate, and efficient delivery of processed data and reports in the formats required by the contracting authority (e.g., CSV, XML, SQL);

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 their 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

For intellectual services, each deliverable has to be accompanied by the filled-out AI tool questionnaire which is appended to this document.

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.

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;
- 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:

Lot 1: Psychometrician

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
• <u>Education</u>: PhD or DPhil degree in educational measurement and evaluation, psychometrics, or quantitative methods in social sciences,	• CV with academic degree information
• <u>Work experience</u>: At least 2 years of experience in the field of educational assessment, large-scale testing, or assessment-related projects conducted by public and/or private institutions.	• CV with proof of work experience
• <u>Specific thematic expertise</u>: confirmed research expertise and publication record in academic journals or conference proceedings, or chapters in academic books in the field of	• CV

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).

educational measurement and evaluation, psychometrics, or quantitative methods in social sciences, as evidenced by the information included in the supporting documents • Holding ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management System (ISMS) certification	• Samples of previous work • Certificate
• <u>Language skills</u>: C1 level or native proficiency in Turkish, and at least B2 level proficiency in English	• CV • Proof of language proficiency

Lot 2: Digitalisation of Listening Tasks and Items

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
• <u>Education</u>: Bachelor's degree in humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, or any related field.	• CV with academic degree information
• <u>Work experience</u>: At least 2 years of experience in the development of educational materials in English, including the production, editing, and mastering of audio content	• CV with proof of work experience
<u>Specific thematic expertise</u>: • Demonstrated capacity to coordinate multi-voice recording sessions and manage audio production workflows including scheduling, recording, editing, mixing, and post-production, • Demonstrated capacity to access and use professional Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) • Demonstrated capacity to have finalized audio recordings undergo quality check by a native speaker of English and produce quality audio recordings that are suitable for both classroom and online use • Holding ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management System (ISMS) certification	• CV • Samples of previous work • Certificate
• <u>Language skills</u>: C1 level or native proficiency in Turkish, and at least B2 level proficiency in English	• CV • Proof of language proficiency

Lot 3: Optical form reader

Eligibility criteria	Document/s to be submitted
• <u>Work experience</u>: Minimum 2 years of professional experience in similar work conducted for public and/or private institutions	• CV with list of similar completed projects
• <u>Specific thematic expertise</u>: Holding ISO 27001 certification for data security and implementing all data management procedures in compliance with data protection legislations in Türkiye • The proven ability of scan and process optical mark recognition forms for test answer sheets for a maximum of 12.000 test-takers	• Certificate • Samples of completed 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 (ten)** 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 **10 (ten)** 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:

Lot 1: Psychometrician

Award criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Quality of the offer (80 points), including: ○ Experience in psychometric analysis used for language tests (40 points); ○ Experience in providing technical expertise in the context of public institutions in Türkiye and/or international co-operation programmes implemented by the Council of Europe or other intra-governmental organisations preferably in the region (20 points); ○ Familiarity with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (20 points);	• CV • List of previous projects • Reference list
Financial offer (20 points)	• Completed and signed Act of Engagement

Lot 2: Digitalisation of Listening Tasks and Items

Award criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Quality of the offer (80 points), including:	• CV

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.

○ Experience in providing technical expertise in the context of public institutions in Türkiye and/or international co-operation programmes implemented by the Council of Europe or other intra-governmental organisations preferably in the region (10 points); ○ Previous cooperation with public and/or private institutions related to educational material development in English, including course books, audio books, podcasts, and interactive learning materials (10 points); ○ Experience in delivering natural, character-driven performances suitable for various age groups and accents (i.e., voice talent diversity) in English audio recordings developed for educational purposes (25 points); ○ Experience in integrating appropriate sound effects, jingles, and musical cues to enhance learner engagement (25 points); ○ Availability of, or access to, professional studio-based production services (10 points);	• List of completed projects • Reference list
Financial offer (20 points)	• Completed and signed Act of Engagement

Lot 3: Optical form reader

Award criteria	Document/s to be submitted
Quality of the offer (80 points), including: ○ Experience in providing technical expertise in the context of public institutions in Türkiye and/or international co-operation programmes implemented by the Council of Europe or other intra-governmental organisations preferably in the region (20 points); ○ The extent of experience in providing optical form reading services. (60 points)	• CV • List of previous completed projects • Reference list
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

The bidders' attention is drawn to the following additional rules governing the assessment of the bids:

- For Consultancy services ONLY: 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 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

- **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
- (For lots 1 and 2 only) If English is not the native language, proof of language proficiency (a graduate degree from a department where the language of instruction is fully English, or proof of language test taken; i.e. TOEFL, IELTS, or national language exams);
- **List of at least two references for each lot including contact details**
- **Motivation letter**

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.