

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of intellectual services under the Project "Support to Civil Dialogue in Georgia" *Contract N° BH9404-27/01/2026*



The Council of Europe is currently implementing a Project on "Support to Civil Dialogue in Georgia" until 31/12/2027. In that context, it is looking for Providers for the provision of intellectual services on democracy and human rights - with a focus on civil dialogue and democratic participation to be requested by the Council on 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: Tender – intellectual services for civil dialogue.** 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 3 (three) 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 -tender – intellectual services for civil dialogue.**

Type of contract ▶	Framework Contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2027
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	13 March 2026 16:00
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	civildialogue@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	victoria.koplatadze@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	17 April 2026

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background of the Project

The Council of Europe is currently implementing a Project on "Support to Civil Dialogue in Georgia". The overall objective of the Project is to enhance democratic culture and civic engagement in Georgia. It aims to empower citizens and civil society organisations to engage in informed, inclusive and constructive dialogue on democracy and human rights in line with Council of Europe standards. Gender equality and non-discrimination will be addressed as a cross-cutting issue across all policies and programs. The Project will be implemented till 31/12/2027.

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](#).

The Council of Europe is looking for up to 31 Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) to support the implementation of the Project with a particular expertise on democratic rights and freedoms - with a focus on civil society development, civil dialogue, democratic participation, gender equality and non-discrimination. Completion of the Tbilisi School of Political Studies (TSPS) will be considered as an additional asset (TSPS alumni) while assessing the candidates.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 30 activities, to be held by 31/12/2027. 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 750 000 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: Democratic rights and freedoms	13
Lot 2: Deliberative and innovative participatory democracy	10
Lot 3: Gender equality and non-discrimination, countering hate speech	3
Lot 4: Participatory facilitation for civil dialogue and democratic engagement	4

Lot 1 concerns:

- Strengthening the legal, institutional, and social frameworks and environment for effective and inclusive civic participation with a focus on capacity-building and addressing structural barriers that limit Georgian citizens - civil society representatives, as individuals and organisations - to understand, exercise, and promote democratic rights and freedoms.

Lot 2 concerns:

- Development, piloting and assessment of deliberative and innovative participatory democracy approaches and mechanisms that enable meaningful, informed, and inclusive citizen participation in public decision-making. The lot addresses obstacles that reduce the quality of inclusive representativeness, and impact of participatory processes. It focuses on the use of rights-based methods, innovative democratic practices (among others an Applied Theatre method), and the meaningful involvement of under-represented groups. It also supports the creation and dissemination of knowledge that strengthens the effectiveness, and long-term sustainability of democratic decision-making.

Lot 3 concerns:

- Promotion of gender equality, prevention of non-discrimination, and countering of hate speech as pivotal to sustainable civic participation and as core components of inclusive, rights-based democratic society. The lot places emphasis on the use of inclusive, gender-sensitive, intersectional, and rights-based approaches, and on the development and dissemination of knowledge to support sustainable and long-term change.

Lot 4 concerns:

- Facilitation and organisation of inclusive civil dialogue processes, engaging diverse stakeholders through structured participatory and dialogue-based practices to strengthen grass-root democratic engagement. It focuses on strengthening the quality, accessibility, and impact of dialogue-based democratic practices by applying participatory and inclusive facilitation approaches.

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: carry out capacity development activities, public engagement initiatives, develop materials, specifically:

Lot 1: Democratic rights and freedoms

Under Lot 1, the Consultant shall provide intellectual services related to democratic rights and freedoms, including the following activities:

- Capacity development design and implementation: Design and delivery of capacity-building programmes aimed at development of civil society, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders, including underrepresented groups. This may include needs assessments, drafting agendas, developing curricula, selecting participatory and rights-based methodologies, delivering training sessions, workshops, and multi-stakeholder dialogues. Integrate monitoring and evaluation tools to assess learning outcomes and adapt approaches based on feedback.
- Training and educational resources: Design and develop tailored training and educational materials, including handbooks, practical guides, presentations, and data visualisation products. Materials shall be adapted to different target groups and contextual needs, ensuring accessibility, inclusiveness, and gender sensitivity.
- Thematic expert input and facilitation: Provide high-level thematic expertise, and peer-learning exchanges on democratic rights and freedoms topics.
- Documentation of good practices and lessons learned: Identify, analyse, and document good and innovative practices in the promotion and protection of democratic rights and freedoms. Produce case studies and analytical notes to support knowledge sharing, replication, and scaling across different contexts.

Lot 2: Deliberative and innovative participatory democracy

Under Lot 2, the Consultant shall provide intellectual services related to supporting inclusive decision-making by engaging citizens through structured dialogue and practical participatory tools. It empowers citizens and civil society, including youth, promotes community-driven action:

- Capacity development design and implementation: Design and deliver capacity-development initiatives aimed at promoting civil dialogue and public debate culture among various segments of society and community groups. Activities may include participatory workshops, Applied Theatre method and other creative methodologies, and training on democratic participation. Evaluation mechanisms shall be embedded to assess effectiveness and inform continuous improvement.
- Training and educational resources: Develop training and awareness-raising materials such as manuals, toolkits, audiovisual products, and creative formats adapted to diverse audiences.
- Documentation of good practices and analytical outputs: Identify and document effective practices and methodologies for civil dialogue and civil society development. Share these practices with stakeholders to encourage replication and adaptation in different contexts.

Lot 3: Gender equality and non-discrimination, countering hate speech

Under Lot 3, the Consultant shall provide intellectual services related to Gender equality and non-discrimination, countering hate speech including the following activities:

- Provide specialised thematic expertise: On gender equality, non-discrimination, and the prevention and countering of hate speech, in line with European and international human rights standards.
- Design, prepare, and contribute: To the delivery of multi-stakeholder dialogues, consultations, and participatory processes involving civil society, media, and community actors.
- Design and implement capacity-development activities: Trainings, workshops, and peer-learning sessions, applying gender-sensitive, intersectional, and rights-based methodologies.

- Develop training and knowledge products: Training modules, curricula, presentations, analytical and research papers, guidelines, and practical manuals tailored to different target groups and contexts.
- Ensure that all activities and outputs integrate inclusive, gender-sensitive, and intersectional approaches, and are accessible, context-appropriate, and responsive to the needs of diverse stakeholders.

Lot 4: Participatory facilitation for civil dialogue and democratic engagement

Under Lot 4, the Consultant shall provide intellectual services related to participatory facilitation for civil dialogue and democratic engagement including the following activities:

- Facilitate participatory, civil, and multi-stakeholder dialogues, consultations, workshops, and forums addressing topics envisaged by Lots 1, 2 and 3.
- Apply inclusive, participatory, and rights-based facilitation methodologies, which may include civil dialogue tools, Applied Theatre method, and other interactive approaches, as appropriate to the context and target groups.
- Support constructive engagement and trust-building among representatives of civil society and media, youth and women, ensuring inclusive environment for dialogue.
- Adapt facilitation approaches to diverse audiences and sensitive topics, ensuring accessibility, gender sensitivity, and the meaningful participation of underrepresented groups.
- Contribute to the documentation of dialogue processes, including summaries of discussions, key findings, and lessons learned, to support follow-up, learning, and knowledge sharing.

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/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 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)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;

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).

- 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 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 year 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, first cycle or higher, in one of the following fields: political and social sciences, law and related fields.	CV
<u>Work experience</u> : At least 5 years of experience in the field of political and social sciences, law and related fields for Lot 1 and Lot 3. At least 2 years of experience in the field of political and social sciences, law and related fields for Lot 2 and Lot 4.	CV
<u>Specific thematic expertise</u> : confirmed expertise in political and social sciences, law and related fields.	CV Motivation letter highlighting the specific areas of expertise related to the lot(s) the tenderer is applying for. Samples of previous work (such as research paper/study, concept/programme/training module for capacity development activity, scientific article)
<u>Language skills</u> : fluency in Georgian (native), knowledge of English language B2 level for the Lot 1, Lot 2, Lot 3, and C1 level for the Lot 4.	CV

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 3** 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 subProviders. **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 3 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 sub-Providers.

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 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
Lot 1: Democratic rights and freedoms Quality of the offer (80 points), including: - Extent and pertinence of the Provider's work experience in the field relevant for the lot (40 points) - Quality of the previous works (samples) (40 points)	Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a motivation letter highlighting the specific areas of expertise relevant to the lot(s) for which the tenderer is applying.
Lot 2: Deliberative and innovative participatory democracy Quality of the Offer (80 points) - Extent and pertinence of the Provider's work experience in the field relevant for the lot (40 points) - Quality of the previous works (samples) (40 points)	Samples of previous work, including but not limited to research papers or studies, surveys, concepts or programmes, training modules for capacity development activities, or scientific articles.
Lot 3: Gender equality and non-discrimination, countering hate speech Quality of the offer (80 points), including: Extent and pertinence of the Provider's work experience in the field relevant for the lot (40 points)	

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.

- Quality of the previous works (samples) (40 points) Lot 4: Participatory facilitation for civil dialogue and democratic engagement - Extent and pertinence of the Provider's work experience in the field relevant for the lot (40 points) - Quality of the previous works (samples) (40 points)	
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:

- 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.

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 and signed copy of the Act of Engagement;⁶
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria. **For legal persons only:** a detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, of each natural person allocated to the execution of the contract demonstrating clearly that they fulfil the eligibility criteria; **for consortia only:** a detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, of all consortium members clearly demonstrating that they satisfy the eligibility criteria;
- Motivation letter highlighting the specific areas of expertise related to the lot(s) the tenderer is applying for;
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- Registration documents, 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;
- Minimum 2 (two) samples of previous work, including but not limited to research papers or studies, surveys, concepts or programmes, training modules for capacity development activities, or scientific articles in accordance with lots only for Lot **1, Lot 2, and Lot 3.**
- Three references' contact details (including phone number and e-mail address)

All documents shall be submitted in English except from the registration documents which can be submitted in the local language, 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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