

# TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)



## Purchase of specialised expertise on remedies to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries

### Contract N° DAD-ADD/NHSCU (2021)9

The Council of Europe is currently implementing and until 31 December 2021 a Project on strengthening access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries. In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of specialised consultancy activities on redress to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes 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 Europe<sup>1</sup>, the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €2,000 (or €5,000 for intellectual services) and €55,000 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 120 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 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 – Eastern Partnership consultancy on remedies to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes.** 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 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 - Eastern Partnership consultancy on remedies to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes**

Type of contract ▶	Framework contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2021
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	<b>05 March 2021</b>
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	<a href="mailto:tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int">tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int</a>
Email for questions ▶	<a href="mailto:anti-discrimination@coe.int">anti-discrimination@coe.int</a>
Expected starting date of execution ▶	10 March 2021

<sup>1</sup> 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 "Strengthening access to justice through non-judicial redress for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in the Eastern partnership countries" is currently implemented by the Council of Europe and financed by the European Union and the Council of Europe in the framework of their Partnership for Good Governance phase II.

The project has the following objectives:

- Support the development of legislation on anti-discrimination, hate crime and hate speech and its implementation in line with European human rights standards
- Assist the country stakeholders in the improvement of their procedures and tools for disaggregated data gathering on discrimination, hate crime and hate speech
- Develop the capacity of Equality bodies/ Ombudsoffices and NGOs to assist men and women from vulnerable groups in pursuing discrimination complaints through relevant non-judicial redress mechanisms
- Raise awareness of the work of 'equality bodies' / Ombudsoffice and related non-judicial redress mechanisms is increased among women and men from vulnerable communities, general public, and NGOs
- Support the development of national comprehensive strategies on combating hate speech.

The project implementation phase started in May 2019 and continues until 31 December 2021.

The project foresees specific national level activities in the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Furthermore, the project foresees regional activities involving entities from the 6 project countries as well.

The key project partners are equality bodies/Ombudsoffices, relevant public authorities (e.g. Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior), civil society organisations in the 6 countries, as well as law enforcement agencies and public institutions working specifically on hate speech.

The project is implemented by a project team set in Strasbourg, at the headquarters of the Council of Europe, and in the field offices of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of *number of 24* Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on remedies to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 20 activities, to be held by 31 December 2021. 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 1265000 EURO Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed 55,000 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: Expertise on civil, administrative, criminal redress to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership Countries	8
Lot 2: Expertise on institutional development of Equality bodies/Ombudsoffices and streamlining their dialogue with other institutions and civil society in the Eastern Partnership	8
Lot 3: Expertise on the development of comprehensive national strategies against hate speech on the basis of ECRI GPR 15, in Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia	8

Lot 1 concerns the provision of consultancy on civil, administrative, criminal redress to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership Countries.

Lot 2 concerns the provision of consultancy on the institutional development of Equality bodies/Ombudsoffices and streamlining their dialogue with other institutions and civil society in the Eastern Partnership.

Lot 3 concerns the provision of consultancy on the development of comprehensive national strategies against hate speech on the basis of ECRI GPR 15, in Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia.

The Council will select the abovementioned number of Provider(s) per lot, provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below. Tenderers are invited to indicate which lot(s) they are tendering for (see Section A of the Act of Engagement).

### **Scope of the Framework Contract**

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, pre-selected Providers may be asked to:

Under Lot 1:

- Draft analytical reports (assessments, gap analysis, proposed modifications, awareness raising materials) on the civil, administrative, criminal redress to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership Countries
- Participate in project activities related to the mentioned Lot 1 topics
- Prepare training modules or training materials on the mentioned Lot 1 topics or adapted existing ones to the national context
- Conduct specialised workshops on these topics at the national or regional level.

Under Lot 2:

- Draft analytical reports (assessments, gap analysis, proposed modifications, awareness raising materials) on the institutional development of Equality bodies/Ombudsoffices and streamlining their dialogue with other institutions and civil society in the Eastern Partnership Countries
- Provide advice to the institutional and organisational strategic planning of the Equality bodies/Ombudsoffices in order to function according to the standards set in ECRI GPR 2 as specialised equality bodies in the field of combating racism and intolerance at national level
- Participate in project activities related to the mentioned Lot 2 topics
- Prepare training modules or training materials on the mentioned Lot 2 topics or adapted existing ones to the national context
- Conduct specialised workshops on these topics at the national or regional level

Under Lot 3:

- Draft analytical reports (assessments, gap analysis, proposed modifications, awareness raising materials) on the development of comprehensive national strategies against hate speech on the basis of ECRI GPR 15, in Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia
- Participate in project activities related to the mentioned Lot 3 topics
- Prepare training modules or training materials on the mentioned Lot 3 topics or adapted existing ones to the national context
- Conduct specialised workshops on these topics at the national or regional level.

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 quote<sup>2</sup> (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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## 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.

### 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)<sup>3</sup>

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 or are likely to be in a situation of conflict of interests;
- are or if their owner(s) or executive officer(s), in the case of legal persons, are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu)).

#### *Eligibility criteria*

- A master's degree
- At least 5 years of experience in the field of anti-discrimination, combating hate speech or hate crime
- Past experience of working with the countries concerned by the project (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine)
- Knowledge of at least one national language from the countries concerned by the project.

#### *Award criteria*

- Quality of the offer (70%), including:
  - Specialised expertise in the field of judicial and non-judicial remedies to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes
  - Relevance of previous written work to the topics and type of engagement expected.
- Financial offer (30%).

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

<sup>3</sup> 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 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).

- A completed and signed copy of the **Act of Engagement**<sup>4</sup> (See attached);
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- A list of references to written work of the tenderer (with at least 2 titles), with links to the work or the work attached. Written work can be articles, studies, manuals, with relevance to the topics of this tendering.

**All documents shall be submitted in English, failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the tender. Written work can be provided in other languages.**

**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 once printed.**

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<sup>4</sup> 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.