

Strasbourg, 13 June 2014

DS/FCNM(2014)1

Retention/Disposal schedule Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)

Anti-discrimination and Social Cohesion Department -
Directorate of Human Dignity and Equality -
Directorate General of Democracy (DGII)

1. Activities

The Secretariat of the FCNM was set up under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which came into force in 1995.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities provides for a monitoring system to evaluate how the treaty is implemented in State Parties. It results in recommendations to improve minority protection in the States under review. The Committee responsible for providing a detailed analysis on minority legislation and practice is the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC).

The Secretariat ensures the functioning of the Framework Convention and its Advisory Committee.

2. Explanatory notes

Access

Access to FCNM documents is governed by the following texts:

- [Resolution amending Resolution \(97\) 10 on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24-26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) (CM/Res(2009)3 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 April 2009 at the 1054th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies);
- [Rules of procedure of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) (ACFC/INF(1998)002 adopted by the Advisory Committee on 29 October 1998);
- [Rules adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) (Res(97)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 September 1997, at the 601st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

Access to documents of the predecessor committees - DH-MIN, CAHMEC, CAHMIN – is governed by:

- [Resolution\(2001\)6 on access to Council of Europe documents](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 June 2001 at the 756th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

Vital records

The record series of the FCNM Secretariat which are vital for the continuity of activities have been highlighted in italics in the schedule. This is the last version of the FCNM monitoring procedures and guidelines.

Abbreviations used in the schedule

AC: Archive Correspondent

GDD: 'Gestion des déplacements' / Travel management application

PR: Permanent Representation

4. Approval

	Nom	Signature	Date
Head of FCNM Secretariat	Michèle Akip		
Archive correspondent	Nicola Markes		
Head of Information Management Division	Eva Sodomova		

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Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
Establishing monitoring and guidance							
RS010 Monitoring procedures and evaluation standards							
<i>FCNM monitoring procedures and guidelines</i> Collection of ACFC working documents (including thematic commentaries) and CM adopted texts, which serve as essential reference tools for the FCNM work (also called "bible").	Copy	RMS	Keep current	n/a	Confidential	Some are public. Realised as links to ACFC meeting records and CM meeting records.	By type
Coordinating monitoring programmes							
RS010 General monitoring coordination records							
General FCNM monitoring coordination records Records documenting the general preparation of FCNM monitoring with regard to planning and co-ordination - Monitoring cycle outlines for state reports ----- - Monitoring table ----- - Country working group tables ----- Previous versions of monitoring tables and country working group tables	Master	Word (RMS)	Permanent	Conservation	Public	Also reproduced as CM document.	By type of record
		Word (PF)	Keep current	n/a		Monitoring table content also published on the website (HTML)	
					Confidential	Not declassified due to personal data.	
		Word (RMS)	2 years	Destruction	Confidential		

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
Exchanges with other monitoring mechanisms Includes: - Joint FCNM, ECRI and ECRML meetings - Annual meetings of human rights monitoring bodies of CoE	Master	Word, E-mail (RMS)	10 years	Destruction	Confidential	Head of FCNM Secretariat decides on selection of documents to be filed here.	By type of exchange
Capacity-building and induction for monitoring							
RS010 Monitoring capacity-building event records							
Includes the following sub-series:							
FCNM capacity-building event records Records documenting the organisation of capacity-building events directly related to the monitoring, organised to assist national authorities and NGOs in the preparation of their respective reports. Generally includes: - Scanned invitations with cover e-mails - Completed evaluation forms, - Exchanges about the content etc. ----- - List of participants with personal data - Training material ----- - Programme - Presentations - Speeches	Master	Word, PDF, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Destruction	Confidential		By year then by event
		Word, PDF (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		
					Public		
Conducting monitoring instances							

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
RS005 Country/thematic background information Includes the following sub-series							
Country and thematic background information Internal and external information sources such as news, press clippings, reports or correspondence emanating from IGOs, NGOs or internal bodies. They document the situation in a country in general or thematically, and are continuously updated.	Master	Hybrid: Word, PDF (PF) Paper (Agora Socle, FCNM Documentation Centre or Office of AC)	Keep current	n/a	Confidential	Previous versions of country information in paper: to be weeded out. Comprises also collections of publications ("mini library"), doctrine, basic documents and case law.	By type of information
Administrator country hand files Printed version of all relevant information used in the ACFC opinion drafting process.	Copy	Paper (Office of administrator in charge)	Keep until next monitoring cycle	Review for useful information	Confidential	Files will be handed over to next administrator.	By country
RS010 Specific monitoring preparation records							
Specific FCNM monitoring preparation records Records documenting the preparation of a specific country FCNM monitoring instance and its follow-up. Includes documents such as: - Country information package (lists of links and news items) - Shadow report (NGOs) - Country visit programme and list of participants	Master	Word, PDF (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential	Includes image scans.	By cycle then by country

* Cycles cover also ad hoc special procedure visits.

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country visit information note - Completed pre-visit questionnaires (GOVs and NGOs) - Exchanges with NGOs - Informal exchanges with GOVs - Relevant exchanges with ACFC Bureau 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-up dialogue programme - Speeches prepared for follow-up dialogue 					Public		
RS020 Exchanges with monitored state							
<p>FCNM exchanges with monitored state</p> <p>Records documenting the official exchanges with the Contracting Party around state report (SR), visits, ACFC opinion (OP), government comments (GCOM) and ad hoc ACFC report if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due date letter (including questionnaire for 1st/2nd cycle and outline) - Reminders and replies SR - Submission SR to Secretariat - Acknowledgement SR - Exchange on ACFC visit - Official transmission of OP to PR - Reminders and replies GCOM - Submission GCOM to Secretariat - Government consent or non- 	Master	Word, E-mail, PDF (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential	Material which arrived on paper is scanned (image scans) and the paper version discarded.	By cycle then by country*

* Cycles cover also ad hoc special procedure visits.

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
consent with publication of ACFC OP and GCOM - Confirmation of publication to PR							
RS030 Exchanges within monitoring mechanism							
FCNM exchanges within monitoring mechanism Records documenting the exchanges between the monitoring actors, (FCNM Secretariat, ACFC, CM, Private Office or other). May concern for example the preparation of cycle outlines, opinions, visits etc.	Master	E-mail (RMS)	5 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		By cycle then by topic*
RS050 Monitoring reports							
FCNM monitoring reports Records documenting the compliance of a state with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Includes: - State report - ACFC opinion - Government comments on the ACFC opinion [- CM resolution with conclusions and recommendations] May also include: - Ad hoc ACFC report	Master	Word (RMS) Some only exist in PDF	Permanent	Conservation	Public	Includes translated versions (local languages) provided by the state. ACFC opinion and Government comments are reproduced by CM. Includes image scans. CM resolution is owned by CM; to be added as link to the master.	By cycle then by country*
Restricted version of - ACFC opinion			Keep until their publication	Destruction	Restricted	As long as the state under review, or	

* Cycles cover also ad hoc special procedure visits.

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
- Government comments on the ACFC opinion						CM, has not authorised their publication, opinion and comments remain restricted.	
FCNM compilations of ACFC opinions Synthesis records providing compilations of ACFC opinions by article and by cycle.	Master	Word (RMS)	Keep current		Restricted	Current version is not declared as record.	By cycle then by article
- Annual snapshots of ACFC compilations			2 years	Destruction		To be established before end of business at the end of each year.	Chronologically
- Part on ACFC public opinions extracted for web use		PDF	Until next version is available	Destruction	Public		n/a
Transitory records related to conducting monitoring instances - News dissemination e-mails - Draft versions of ACFC opinion and CM resolution. - Exchanges which need to be kept only until the relevant procedure is finalised.	Master	Electronic (mailbox or PF)	Keep until relevant procedure is finalised	Destruction	Confidential		Various
Conducting committees							
RS005 Committee membership records Includes the following sub-series:							
ACFC member election records Records documenting the preparation of elections of ACFC	Master	E-mail, Word, PDF (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential	CVs and election results are part of restricted CM	

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
members by the CM, such as scanned letters, CVs, relevant exchanges with PRs etc.						records. Includes image scans.	
RS010 Committee meeting preparation records							
Includes the following sub-series:							
ACFC meeting preparation records Records documenting the preparation of ACFC meetings and documents, such as exchanges of the Bureau, exchanges with experts, other participants and CoE on content related issues, exchanges of working groups, preparation of consultations, e.g. on issues to be covered, documents to be elaborated or finalised etc.	Master	Word, E-mail (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		By meeting or by working group
RS030 Committee convocation records							
Includes the following sub-series:							
ACFC convocation records Concern convocations for ACFC plenary and Bureau. Include cover e-mails with scanned convocation and invitations letters attached.	Master	E-mail with PDF (PF)	5 years after Committee meeting	Destruction	Restricted		By meeting
RS050 Committee meeting records							
Includes the following sub-series:							
ACFC Bureau meeting records Records documenting the meetings of the ACFC Bureau until 2009: - Agenda	Master	Word (RMS)	Permanent	Conservation	Confidential	As of 2010 no records documenting ACFC Bureau meetings	By meeting

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working documents - Meeting report 						are created. Important issues are communicated in the plenary meeting report.	
<p>ACFC meeting records Records documenting the meetings of the ACFC or working group. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order of business - Programme - List of participants with personal data - Working documents - List of decisions <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting report (includes list of participants without personal data) 	Master	Word (RMS) Some older versions only exist in PDF	Permanent	Conservation	Confidential	Declassified on demand by decision of the ACFC, or after CM has taken note. Activity reports are reproduced by CM. Includes image scans	By meeting or by working group
					Confidential	Declassified at the following plenary. Old report types including personal data are not declassified.	
<p>DH-MIN meeting records Records documenting the meetings of the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) sub-committee to the CDDH, active 1992-2010, as well as of its Working Group on Dispersed Ethnic Minorities (DH-MIN GT-DEM), active in 1999. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda or order of business 	Master	Word (RMS) Some only exist in PDF	Permanent	Conservation	Public	Some are confidential and will be declassified after 10 years. Includes image scans. Electronic versions only 1998-2000 and 2005-2010.	By meeting

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
- Working documents - Meeting report (without list of participants) - List of decisions						Missing years available in archives. Digitisation in 2014.	
- Meeting report with list of participants					Confidential	Not declassified due to personal data.	
CAHMEC meeting records Records documenting the meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Implementation Mechanism of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (CAHMEC), active 1996-1997 mandated by the CM. Includes: - Agenda - Meeting report (without list of participants)	Master	Word (RMS) Some only exist in PDF	Permanent	Conservation	Public	Six records are image scans: OCRisation recommended.	By meeting
- Meeting report with list of participants					Confidential	Not declassified due to personal data.	
Conducting co-operation projects							
RS030 Co-operation project organising records Includes the following sub-series:							
Co-operation project organising records Records documenting the organisation of co-operation projects or programmes, including joint programmes, and related capacity building events such as seminars or workshops outside of the core monitoring. May include:	Master	Word (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		By year then by project

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project description - Synopsis of events - Training material - List of participants with personal data 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme - Speeches - Papers by external experts ("academic papers") - Report / Conclusions 					Public		
RS040 Co-operation project substantial records							
Includes the following sub-series:							
Co-operation project substantial records Records documenting the outcome of co-operation projects and programmes (FCNM projects, joint programmes etc). Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final report - Interim report 	Master	Word (RMS)	30 years	Review for conservation	Public	Co-operation projects under joint programmes are only concerned until November 2012. As of that date, reports of joint programmes are owned by DG-PROG.	By project then by activity
CoE institutional relations							
Inter-institutional exchanges Records documenting exchanges and relations with other bodies, committees and divisions within the Council of Europe on minority-related issues. Includes exchanges of views, about contributions, draft versions, including for legal and	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Destruction	Confidential		By year, by entity then by contribution

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
policy advice, requested by SG, PACE, CM, HR Commissioner and Venice Commission, participation in task forces (e.g. SOGI on sexual orientation and gender identity), feedback from meeting and exchanges of views: ----- - Contributions (original request and final reply)		Word, E-mail (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		
Managing relations with CoE member states							
Member country relations records Records documenting the relations of a general nature with authorities or academic institutions in CoE member countries. Usually includes: - Exchange - Invitation - Programme - Speech / Contribution	Master	Word, PDF, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		By year then by country
Managing external relations							
External contacts and exchanges Records documenting contacts of a general nature outside the core monitoring with other organisations such as OSCE, UN, EU, national authorities, academic institutions, NGOs etc. Covers participation of	Master	Word, PDF, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Review for useful information	Confidential	When filing into the RMS, a distinction is to be made between bodies in member countries and in non-member countries.	By year then by international organisation or country.

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
FCNM Secretariat or experts in events as presenter or observer, and the reception of visitors. Usually includes: - Invitation - Programme - Exchanges - Speech / Contribution							
Organisation of conferences and events							
Conference and event organising records Records documenting the organisation of conferences or events, such as speaking notes, exchanges with participants, invitation letters, list of participants with personal data etc	Master	Word, PDF, E-mail (RMS)	10 years	Destruction	Confidential		By year then by event
Conference and event records Records documenting the contents of ACFC anniversary conferences or of other high events such as launch of thematic commentaries or CM chairmanship events. Usually include: - Programme - Conference rationale document - Speeches / Presentations - Conclusions - List of participants without personal data.	Master	Word, PDF(RMS)	Permanent	Conservation	Public	Includes image scans.	By year then by event

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
Mail services management							
FCNM contacts database Data base including contact details of experts and FCNM mailing list.	Master	Outlook contacts (PF)	Keep current		Confidential		n/a
Transitory records related to mail services management - E-mail confirmation from GIBEX, exchanges on deliveries and stock situation.	Master	E-mail (mailbox of the person in charge)	6 months	Destruction	Internal		By Gibex request
Document management							
FCNM recordkeeping practice Any rules and procedures valid for the FCNM document management and recordkeeping, for example on the establishment of document references. Also includes: - FCNM document register - FCNM Agora listing of semi-current files stored in the Socle space available to FCNM Secretariat.	Master	E-mail, Word (PF)	Keep current		Confidential		By subject
Recordkeeping exchanges Exchanges with Archives (DIT) about FCNM retention schedule, transfers, deposits, destructions, procedures and any other issue related to FCNM document management practice. Includes draft versions.	Master/ Copy	MSA, E-mail, Word, PDF (PF)	5 years	Destruction	Confidential	Master kept by Archives.	By year
Transitory records related to	Copy	Word (PF)	Keep current		Confidential		By type

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
document management - Sample administrative letters and forms for reuse.							
Collection management							
Collection inventories Inventories of collections related to minorities: - Internal and external publications - Doctrine A-Z - Basic documents 1990-2009 - ECHR case law	Master	Excel, Word (PF)	Keep current	n/a	Confidential		n/a
Previous versions of collection inventories		Excel, Word (RMS)	2 years	Destruction			
Provision of logistic support to meetings							
Internal exchanges on logistics Confirmation of room bookings, request for interpretation and for badges, restaurant bookings etc. Includes also exchanges with Protocol Directorate.	Master	Electronic (MSA or mailbox)	Keep until after meeting	Destruction	Internal		By meeting
➤ Finance and budget							
Local resources monitoring							
Financial follow-up records Administrative files regrouping all important documents regarding finance and budget, covering all expenses (HR, suppliers, telephone, production, translation etc.). Includes salary tables, RBB	Master	Excel, Word, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Destruction	Confidential		By theme/ type of expense

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
plans, webfocus/FIMS reports and substantial exchanges with DPFL and DG2.							
Procurement							
Procurement supporting and accounting records Records documenting procurement requests for the FCNM Secretariat. May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request for proposals - Proposal by suppliers - Exchanges with suppliers - Request for payment - Invoices - Contract / Contract letter / Administrative arrangement - Order / Order letter 	Master / Copy	Hybrid: Paper (main secretariat) / E-mail, PDF (PF)	10 years after purchase	Destruction	Confidential	Purchase files are kept together during their active life. Supporting records can be weeded out 5 years after the purchase ¹ . Procurement records with signature and written notes are to be kept on paper.	By year then by activity (e.g. contracts with experts, ACFC plenary etc.)
Expenditure management							
Mission and travel reimbursement records	Master	Managed and kept exclusively in GDD since 2013.					
	Master / Copy	Hybrid: Paper (Socle) / E-mail, PDF (PF)	10 years	Destruction	Confidential	Concerns years previous to 2013. Retention period due to procurement records content in the paper file.	By year then by activity

¹ See [General Retention and Disposal Schedule, Support and enabling functions 2013](#), page 7.

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
Administrative exchanges with experts and DPFL Exchanges regarding missions, reimbursement of experts, participation, prepaid travel, refers also to homework allowance etc.	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	1 year after reimbursement	Destruction	Confidential	Transient, no residual value.	By meeting
➤ Human resources							
Management of posts and positions							
Job descriptions	Copy	Word (PF)	Keep current		Confidential	Masters are kept by DHR.	By post
Recruitment and career management							
Recruitment records Contains all or any of the following: - Interview records - Evaluation - Exchanges related to recruitment (including seconded staff).	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	2 years	Destruction	Confidential		By vacancy
- Applications including CVs	Copy	Paper	Keep until procedure is finalised				
Unsolicited applications Spontaneous applications including CVs (i.e not referring to a vacancy announcement)	Master	Word, PDF, E-mail (PF)	Keep until reply sent	Destruction	Confidential		Chrono- logically
- Replies of Secretariat			2 years				

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
Staff contract management / Remuneration and allowances management							
Staff issues follow-up records - Reference letters	Master	Word (PF)	5 years	Destruction	Confidential		Chrono- logically
Traineeship management							
Traineeship and study visit records Records documenting traineeships, and study visits outside the formal traineeship procedure, carried out in FCNM, covering the work carried out etc. Includes application and evaluation.	Master	Word (PF)	2 years	Destruction	Confidential		By name of trainee/study visitor
Transitory records related to human resources management - Exchanges on HR: records documenting informal exchanges concerning HR within entity and DHR (e.g. reminder of appraisal etc.)							
	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	Keep until relevant procedure is finalised	Destruction	Confidential		Chrono- logically
➤ Communication and public information							
Managing publications							
Publication drafting records Records documenting the process of preparing a publication including draft versions, publication authorisation specifications, exchanges with drafters and	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	5 years	Review for useful information	Internal		By publication

Series: title, description	Master/ copy	Medium, format & storage	Retention period	Disposition	Access level classification	Notes / Rationale	Folder structure
SPDP.							
FCNM awareness-raising material Glossy versions of thematic commentaries and opinions etc. prepared for a wider distribution.	Master	Word, E-mail, PDF (RMS)	10 years	Review for useful information	Public		By year then by publication
Web management							
Internet FCNM website on Council of Europe Internet	Master	Electronic	Keep current		Public	Archiving via Archive-IT	Web content structure
Web and communication exchanges Exchanges with other entities (e.g. DG2, DC, DIT) concerning website management and web contents, including related projects such as common search.	Master	Word, E-mail, PDF (PF)	5 years	Review for useful information	Confidential		By year
Transitory records related to communication and public information - Draft versions - Exchanges with drafters and the Secretariat - Visa'd press releases	Master	Word, E-mail (PF)	Keep until relevant procedure is finalised	Destruction	Confidential		By year then by publication