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Council of Europe Central Archives

Helpdesk Rules

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1. Role of Central Archives

The Archives are the Council of Europe's memory. They consist of records that the Council of Europe, has created or received since its foundation in 1949, and which have been selected for permanent preservation:

- referenced documents,
- publications,
- administrative records,
- audiovisual records.

The role of the Archives' staff is to catalogue and preserve these records in suitable conditions, and to make them available for consultation.

2. Using Central Archives

Most of the Council of Europe's official texts have been digitised. These electronic documents can be accessed online by using the search tools available [on the Archives' website](#).

Council of Europe staff wishing to consult the physical archives should make their request via Multiservice Assistant [form 1602](#) (only available to Council of Europe staff).

Potential users should check that the documents they wish to consult are not already available [on the Council of Europe's websites](#).

The Archives do not have a research unit.

3. Conditions for using Central Archives

The number of documents which each user may consult per day depends on the availability of the helpdesk team.

When a request have been made to consult files, only one file will be made available at a time.

Users must treat documents with care and make sure they are kept in the correct order in files and folders.

Documents are made available in accordance with their security classifications and users' access rights. The rules on access and declassification are set out in texts available on the [Archives' Internet site](#).

Documents can be digitised on request and sent out electronically, depending on the availability of the helpdesk team (maximum of 10 documents per person in any four-week period).

It is not possible to provide copies of documents that are not authored by the Council of Europe. Users do not have free access to the documents stored in the reading room. Anyone wishing to consult these documents must first inform the Archives' staff who are present.

The Council of Europe does not guarantee that the information, documents and material contained in its archives are complete and correct. It is not liable, under any circumstances, for any losses incurred as a result of using the Archives.

4. Copying documents

Documents may be photocopied, provided that users do not damage them.

Photocopies are ordinarily free of charge, but the Organisation reserves the right to ask for a financial contribution if they are made in large numbers.

Copies of documents may be made with personal cameras, but flashes or any additional lighting may not be used.

Documents deemed to be too fragile may not be copied.

All copies shall be for private and non-profit-making purposes only. Prior authorisation is required from the Council of Europe for any other usage. (Requests should be sent to the Council of Europe Directorate of Communications at publishing@coe.int). If any documents are quoted or copied, the source must be properly indicated (see [examples](#)).

The Council of Europe cannot exempt users from any royalties payable to persons whose works are in the Archives. Users are responsible for obtaining the required permissions from third parties.

5. Loans

Council of Europe staff may borrow the "loan copy" of Council of Europe publications.

Council of Europe publications may be lent to Council of Europe trainees if their supervisors have given them permission.

A maximum of five publications may be borrowed by any one person.

Loans are for a period of one month. They may be renewed for another month.

External users wishing to borrow a Council of Europe publication should make an inter-library loan request at a library in their own country.

Archive material can be lent to cultural institutions for exhibitions. In such cases, the material is included in a contract (see [model contract](#)). Requests should be sent to archives@coe.int.

6. Behaviour in the reading room

Archive users should not cause any disturbance to staff or other users. Silence must be maintained and mobile telephones switched off.

Eating, drinking and smoking are prohibited.

Users are required to obey any instructions given by the Archives' staff.

Users may make use of their own laptop computers and USB flash drives. The reading room is a WiFi hotspot, so there is access to Internet.

7. Donating publications

Users who base publications, dissertations or theses on the documents they have consulted are asked to deposit a copy in Central Archives.