



AIG(2025)08REV

5 November 2025

Council of Europe Access Info Group (AIG)
Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents
(CETS No.205)

Thematic monitoring on document management and preservation
Questionnaire

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1. Questionnaire to the Parties to the Convention

A. Introduction

The Council of Europe Access Info Group (the AIG) has completed its baseline evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (CETS No.205, the Convention) by 15 Parties. It has also published its opinion on the definition of “official documents” according to Article 1, paragraph 2, sub-paragraph b, of the Convention. The AIG now continues its monitoring of the implementation of the Convention based on Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Convention. With this questionnaire, the AIG will collect information for the purpose of monitoring the issue of document management and preservation.

The efficient management of documents held by public authorities (see definition in Article 1, paragraph 2, sub-paragraph a, of the Convention) and the application of clear and established rules for their preservation ensures that documents are available and easily accessible. The AIG will, therefore, examine based on Article 9, paragraphs c and d, of the Convention, the issue of management and preservation of official documents.

Pursuant to Article 11, paragraph 2, of the Convention, and Rule 30.1 of its Rules of Procedure, the AIG will also invite non-governmental organisations to provide relevant information.

The reply to this questionnaire, along with any supporting documentation, should be submitted in one of the official Council of Europe languages (English or French).

B. Questions

1. How is management, preservation and archiving of documents by public authorities regulated? Please provide an official translation of the relevant regulations in one of the Council of Europe languages (English or French).
2. Are all documents held by a public authority registered? If so, what information about the documents is put on the register? Who is responsible for the registration? At which point does registration take place?
3. Are there any exceptions applied to the requirements for registration of documents based on their content?
4. Are there some instructions or policies in place as regards registration of correspondence sent directly to/from a public official?
5. Are the registers of official documents public?
6. Are electronic messages (emails, sms messages, etc) treated in the same way as physical documents?
7. Do public authorities use a common system for registering documents, or does each public authority use its own system for registration?

8. What criteria do public authorities apply for storing official documents? For example, in what format and where documents are stored?
9. What criteria do public authorities apply for the retention of documents and what retention periods are applied?
10. What criteria do public authorities apply for transferring documents to archives?
11. What criteria do public authorities apply for eliminating/destroying documents?
12. Describe case-law and/or practice which exist as regards document management and preservation (from courts, ombudsmen, information commissioners, etc)?

2. Invitation to Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)

The Council of Europe Access Info Group (the AIG) has completed its baseline evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (CETS No.205, the Convention) by 15 Parties. It has also published its opinion on the definition of “official documents” according to Article 1, paragraph 2, sub-paragraph b, of the Convention. The results of the AIG’s work are published on its [website](#).

The AIG now continues its monitoring of the implementation of the Convention based on Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Convention. With a questionnaire to the Parties (see appendix), the AIG will collect information for the purpose of monitoring the issue of document management and preservation.

The efficient management of official documents held by those public authorities (see definition in Article 1, paragraph 2, sub-paragraph a, of the Convention) and the application of clear and established rules for their preservation ensures that official documents are available and accessible. The AIG will, therefore, examine based on Article 9, paragraphs c and d, of the Convention, the issue of management and preservation of official documents.

Pursuant to Article 11, paragraph 2, of the Convention, and Rule 30.1 of its Rules of Procedure, the AIG invites NGOs to provide any analysis, information or experience that they may wish to share with the AIG on the management and preservation of official documents in your State.

Your reply should be submitted in one of the official Council of Europe languages (English or French).

Appendix: Questions addressed to the Parties to the Convention

1. How is management, preservation and archiving of documents by public authorities regulated? Please provide an official translation of the relevant regulations in one of the Council of Europe languages (English or French).
2. Are all documents held by a public authority registered? If so, what information about the documents is put on the register? Who is responsible for the registration? At which point does registration take place?

3. Are there any exceptions applied to the requirements for registration of documents based on their content?
4. Are there some instructions or policies in place as regards registration of correspondence sent directly to/from a public official?
5. Are the registers of official documents public?
6. Are electronic messages (emails, sms messages, etc) treated in the same way as physical documents?
7. Do public authorities use a common system for registering documents, or does each public authority use its own system for registration?
8. What criteria do public authorities apply for storing official documents? For example, in what format and where documents are stored?
9. What criteria do public authorities apply for the retention of documents and what retention periods are applied?
10. What criteria do public authorities apply for transferring documents to archives?
11. What criteria do public authorities apply for eliminating/destroying documents?
12. Describe case-law and/or practice which exist as regards document management and preservation (from courts, ombudsmen, information commissioners, etc)?

Table of relevant NGOs

Albania	Association of European Journalists – Albania (AEJ-Albania) (member of the Association of European Journalists) Association of Journalists of Albania (AJA) (member of European Federation of Journalists) Association of Professional Journalists of Albania – APJA (member of International Federation of Journalists) Institute for Democracy and Mediation Res Publica
Armenia	Freedom of information center of Armenia Union of Armenian Journalists Transparency International Anti-corruption Center

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia-Herzegovina Journalists' Association (BHN) Mediacentar Sarajevo Transparency International Bosnia Herzegovina
Estonia	Estonian Association of Journalists Estonian human rights centre Transparency International Estonia
Finland	The union of journalists in Finland Transparency International Finland
Hungary	ATLATZSO Hungarian Helsinki Committee Hungarian Civil Liberties Union Hungarian Press Union K-monitor Transparency International Hungary
Iceland	Association of Journalists press.is Transparency International Iceland
Latvia	Latvia Union of Journalists Transparency International Latvia DELNA
Lithuania	Lithuanian Journalists' Union Transparency International Lithuania
Republic of Moldova	Centrul pentru journalism independent Centre for Policies and Reforms Transparency International Moldova
Montenegro	MANS Trade Union of Media of Montenegro
North Macedonia	Association of Journalists of Macedonia Trade Union of Macedonian Journalists and Media Workers Transparency International Macedonia

Norway	Norsk Presseforbund Norsk Journalistlag Transparency International Norway
Slovenia	Association of journalists of Slovenia Union of Slovenian Journalists (SNS) Transparency International Slovenia – Društvo Integriteta
Spain	Access Info Europe Federación de Asociaciones de Periodistas de España (FAPE) Federacion de asociaciones de la prensa espanola (FAPE) La Fundación Haz (antes Fundación Compromiso y Transparencia) La Plataforma por la Libertad de Información (PLI) Transparency International España
Sweden	Swedish union of journalists Transparency International Sweden
Ukraine	Centre for democracy and rule of law Independent Media trade Union of Ukraine National Union of Journalists of Ukraine Transparency International Ukraine (Трансперенсі Інтернешнл Україна)