The GSC’s Document and File Management (DFM) policy stipulates that all documents shall be registered as soon as they are drawn up or received by the GSC. This guide aims at helping you to understand which types of content corresponds to the definition of a document and therefore must be registered.

To facilitate the understanding, the relevant elements of the DFM Policy are reproduced.

**What is a document?**

Any content, in whatever medium, which is drawn up or received by the GSC and is in its possession, and concerns a matter relating to the activities, policies and decisions falling within the sphere of responsibility of the institutions and other entities the GSC assists or relating to its official tasks.

**“...Drawn up or received by the GSC...”**

- it contains substantive information
- it is not of a personal nature
- it is not short-lived
- it is approved as ready for transmission by its author (i.e. it is validated by the person who is vested with the authority to adopt it or to take responsibility) or is intentionally delivered to the GSC by its sender.

**Registration**

- When a document is received or drawn-up it must be registered. Registration should be made only once.
- Registration means giving a document a unique identifier and recording metadata about the document in the GSC document registration system.
How to decide on what to register?

It is important to have a coherent approach. However, it is your decision whether or not to register content, based on the definitions in the policy.

Even if it is difficult to make a strict typology, we have designed the steps below to help you make this decision. These steps should assist you in answering questions such as:

- I found an interesting article on a website. Do I register this article?
- Do I have to register any incoming e-mail?
- Do I register the state of play on a “dossier” that I have prepared for my own reference purposes?
- Do I register a request for an offer?
- Do I register a document that a colleague from another institution shared informally with me before it was officially transmitted to the GSC?

Scope
Is the content related to the activities and decision making of the European Council or the Council?
Is the content related to a task undertaken by the GSC?

No? No registration required:
- Messages expressing personal wishes or private information
- Invitations for a lunch break with colleagues
- Personal photos

Yes? Continue to the next step

Origin
Is the content created by you?
Has the content been formally addressed to you or your service by a sender external to the GSC?
A document should only be registered once either by the originating GSC service or the first recipient in the case of an external message.

No? No registration required.
- Documentation found online or in a book
- An already registered email forwarded to you

Yes? Continue to the next step
Evidence
Does it serve as a proof of GSC’s rights and obligations? Is the content relevant for keeping record of the activities of the GSC? Does it record the result of an action? Does it require follow-up?
Yes? Continue to the next step

No? No registration required.
• Lists of contacts
• The confirmation receipt of an email sent to colleague
• A decision of the Parliament on the publication of Bureau decisions

Formalisation
Has the content been approved as ready for transmission by the person who is empowered to take responsibility for it?
Yes? Continue to the next step

No? No registration required.
• Internal initial drafts subject to changes and subsequently superseded by later versions
• Personal notes, including notes taken during meetings, drafted by an official purely for his/her own reference purposes
• An email sent to colleagues exchanging views about an ongoing drafting

Importance
Does the content reflect substantive information and is not short-lived? Could the loss of the content entail negative impact (such as administrative or legal)?
Yes? Register it!

No? No registration required.
• Emails circulated within an informal, preliminary exchange of views between colleagues or containing iterations on an ongoing drafting by way of a preliminary brainstorming without constituting the position of the administrative entity
• Logistical meeting arrangements