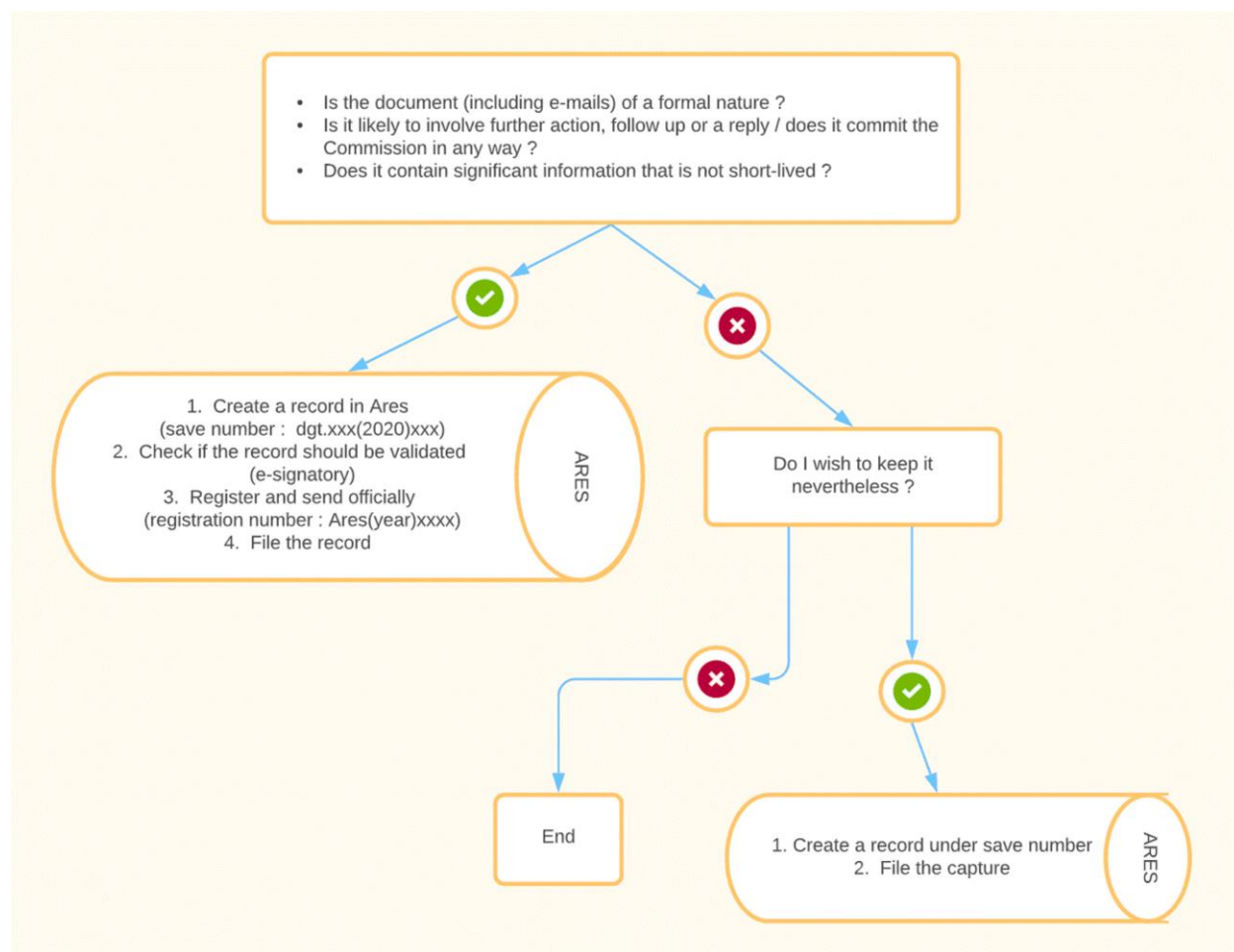


Document lifecycle step by step

Registration

To decide whether a document needs to be registered in ARES or not, use this flowchart:



Validating electronic documents via an e-signatory workflow in ARES

Following improvements in the ARES e-signatory workflow (Ares version 2.7.1 deployed in October 2015) and as stated in [Ares\(2016\)865938](#), the **electronic document** is considered as the **reference document** whereas the paper copy has become accessory (*). Therefore, **before registration**, all documents that should be submitted to a superior for opinion/agreement or to the Director-General/Directors for signature, **must be validated in ARES via an electronic signatory workflow** (see e-signatory tab in Ares).

(*) *except for documents for which there exists a **legal obligation to blue-ink sign** such as contracts for instance – see info under [Ares \(2020\)793304](#) (provisional list). Also for this category of documents, in parallel, an e-signatory workflow should be created in Ares.*



Signed paper copies of (electronic) documents for which there is **no** legal obligation to blue-ink sign are to be considered as “**courtesy copies**”. Once duly uploaded as such in the Ares application, they should no longer be kept on paper.

For blue-ink signed documents, there is a legal obligation to keep them in an official paper file, linked to the electronic ARES file.


Since September 2020, it has been possible in ARES to electronically sign documents for which we have an obligation to blue-ink sign, via the **Qualified Electronic Signature** (QES = via a Q-SIGN task in the e-signatory workflow).

In this case there is no need to keep an official paper file.

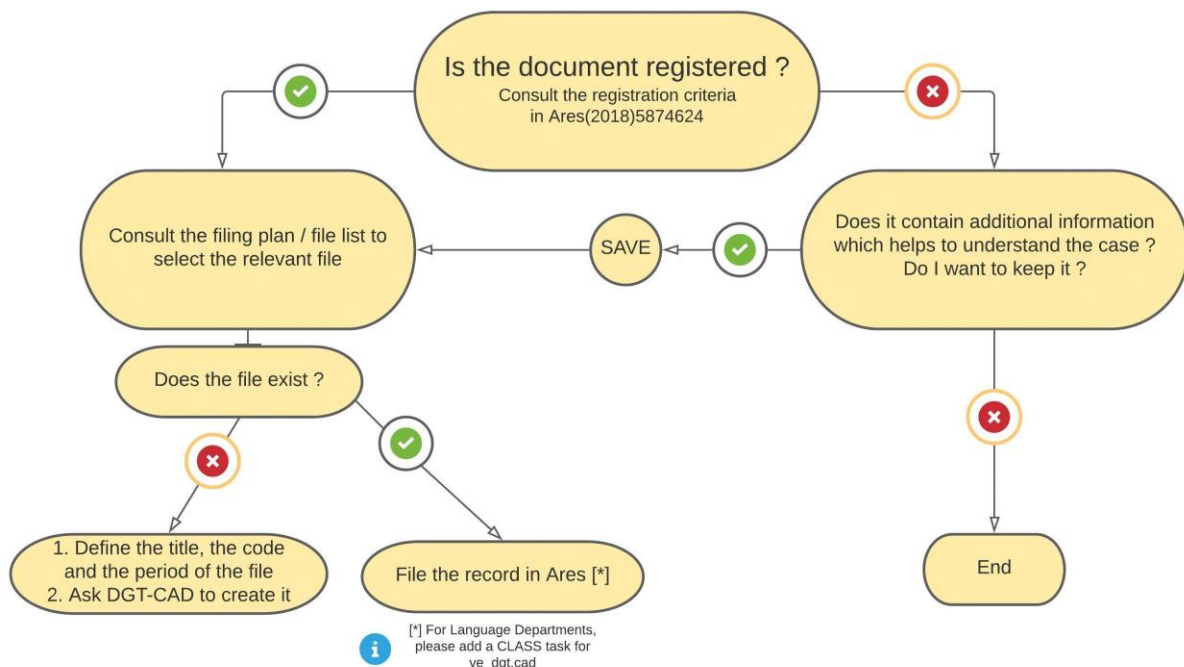
More info

- [Qualified electronic signature - QES & ARES](#) 
- [Types of electronic signature](#) 
- Questions? Contact your DMO

Filing

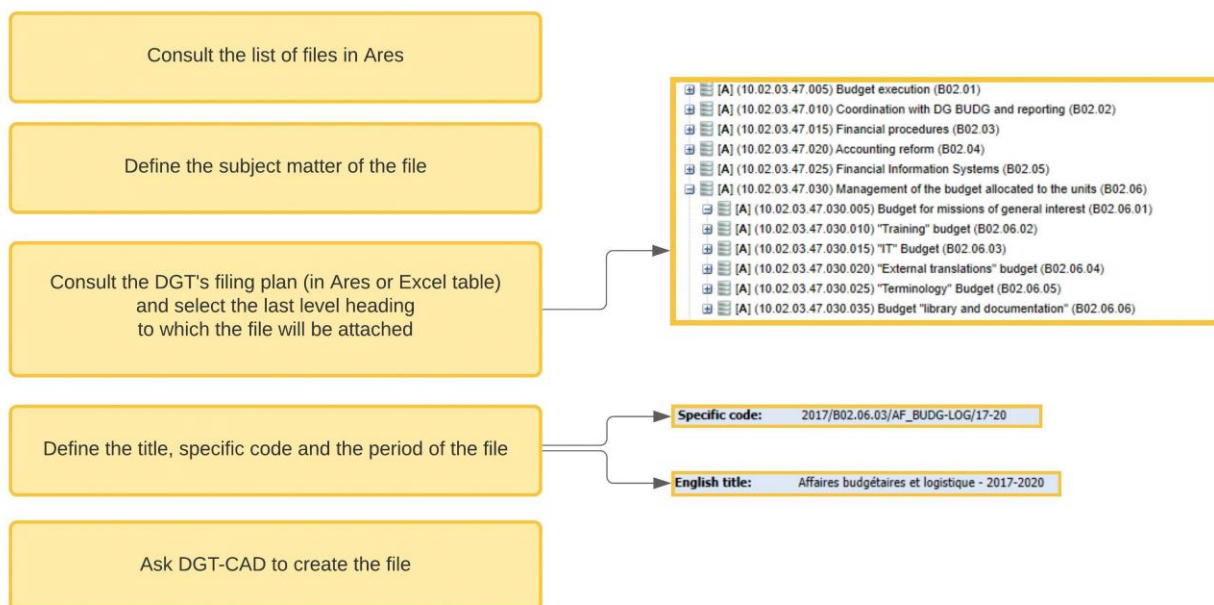
Registered mail items must be organised into files, i.e. sets of documents identified by a code from [DGT's filing plan](#)  (multiple worksheets).

To determine whether a document needs to be filed, use this flowchart:




File creation and preservation

To create a new file in ARES, use [DGT's filing plan](#)  (multiple worksheets) and follow this flowchart:



You should still file the original paper version as it is the only legally valid document.

Files must be retained according to their Administrative Retention Period (ARP), as defined in the [Commission's Common Retention List \(CRL\)](#) .

Based on the CRL, the [DGT's archive schedule](#)  (multiple worksheets) specifies the preservation rules for each file.

Change of a file's Lead Service ("chef de file")

When a file is transferred to another unit the Lead Service (chef de file) for this file changes. If you are transferring a file to another service follow the instructions below:

- inform the CAD (by mail to the functional mailbox), indicating the reason of the transfer or the details of the decision, the period of your file and the new Lead Service (CF)
- inform the new Lead Service
- check if the file is complete (if necessary file the documents which are not yet filed)
- check with the CAD the modalities to close the paper file
- transfer the closed paper file to DGT's Central Archives
- if applicable, transfer the paper file of the current year to the new Lead Service.

Transfer of files to DGT's Central Archives

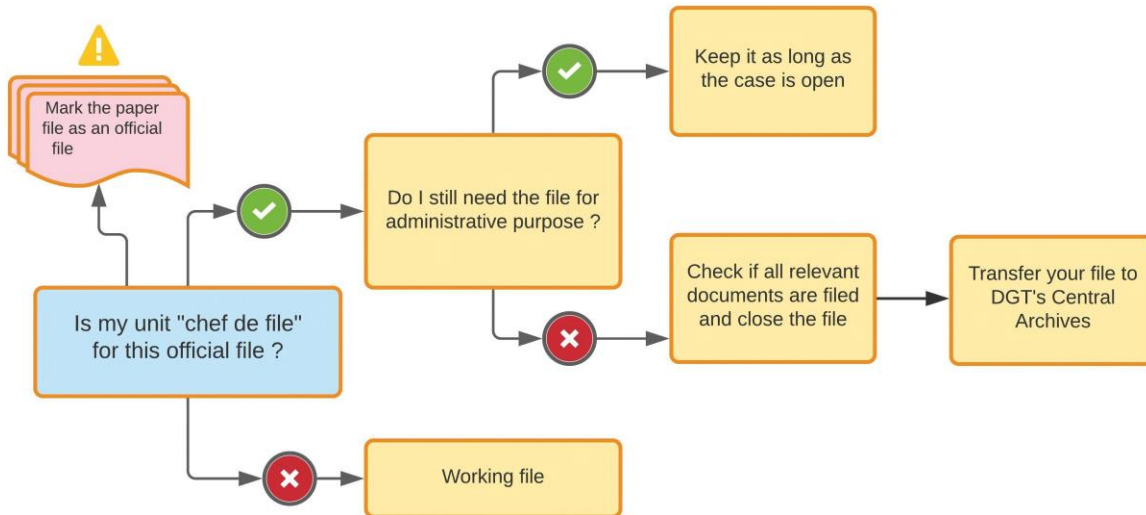
DGT has established its Central Archives in order to facilitate the archiving tasks of the units and to rationalise DGT's archiving system.

The DGT's central archives are located in Brussels: G-12, rooms 88-90-92.



- [Video: guided tour in DGT's central archives!](#)


File analysis

To decide whether a file needs to be transferred to DGT's Central Archives, use this flowchart:



File transfer

- Revise and prepare your unit's files indicated in [DGT's archive schedule](#)  (multiple worksheets) - for "SAM/SEL" before their transfer
- Download and fill in the [Basic file list](#) (available on the [Preservation, appraisal and transfer to HAS](#) page of the [e-domec](#) website) and the [Transmission form](#)  and send them to DGT-CAD
- Once the DGT Central Archives accept your basic file list, transfer the files physically. You will receive the confirmation of "conformity of basic file list" via DMO signature and Ares registration.

Your unit's files will be stored in the DGT's Central Archives during their administrative retention period (ARP). To consult them download and fill in the [Loan form](#)  and mail it to DGT-CAD.

Once the ARP of an official file has expired DGT Central Archives either eliminate it or transfer it to the Historical Archives of the European Commission. The basic file list and the transmission form for this transfer are registered in Ares, transmitted to the units and filed in an official file ("Chef de file" = DMO).

Please read the following info for official files (electronic/paper) which contain [documents classified as "Restreint UE/EU restricted \(RUE\)](#).