Electronic Archiving and
Document Management
in the **European Commission**

e-Domec Toolkit

Some handy tools for good document management

How to use this toolkit?

With this toolkit we[1] have created something personal for you to explain the basics of the Commission's document management policy, better known under the acronym e-Domec (Electronic archiving and Document Management in the European Commission).

You can use this toolkit as an interactive tool to improve your knowledge or clear your doubts (e.g. useful tips, "need to know" summaries), to write down in the spaces provided those aspects of document management that concern you (YOUR contacts, YOUR favourite files, YOUR profile etc.) or to test what you have learned (using the self-assessment quizzes found in most chapters).

"Further reading" sections give you additional references to broaden your knowledge on different issues related with document management and you can always consult the e-Domec website (see page 5).

Help !
Who to contact

This is YOUR tool-kit

Good to know
Tips and summaries

Useful information
Take note

Quiz
Self assessment

To know more
Widen your knowledge

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1 SG's e-Domec team: http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/index.cfm?lang=en&page=suppsg

PERSONAL DETAILS AND CONTACTS

NAME

TEL

OFFICE ADDRESS

DG-UNIT

MY ARES PROFILE[2]

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICER (DMO)[3]

NAME

TEL

OFFICE ADDRESS

OTHERS IN DMO NETWORK (CHECK WITH YOUR UNIT SECRETARIAT)

NAME

TEL   OFFICE ADDRESS

NAME

TEL   OFFICE ADDRESS

NAME

TEL   OFFICE ADDRESS

E-DOMEC SUPPORT = YOUR DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT CENTRE (CAD)[4]
OR DMO FUNCTIONAL MAILBOX

IT SUPPORT = YOUR DG's HELPDESK

LOCAL SECURITY OFFICER (LSO)[5]
(DEALING WITH CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AND MARKINGS)

NAME

TEL

OFFICE ADDRESS

6 A list of the Data Protection Co-ordinators for each DG can be found on the website of the Data Protection Officer: http://www.cc.cec/dataprotectionofficer/index.cfm?TargetURL=D%5FDGS

DATA PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR (DPC)
(COORDINATOR OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA)[6]
NAME
TEL
OFFICE ADDRESS

FUNCTIONAL MAILBOXES

OTHER SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

e-Domec Website

http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/index.cfm

Good to know

Highlight on this page the sections which interest you the most

Contents Page

what is e-Domec ?

e-Domec is a policy for the future whilst ensuring the past

All the Commission's activities and decisions (legislative, political, administrative, technical and financial) lead to the production of documents. Thousands of them! Some of them are received or produced in paper form, others are sent or received electronically, by e-mail or through specific applications. These documents need to be managed according to basic common rules applicable throughout the Commission.

Document management policy in the Commission is known under the acronym e-Domec (Electronic archiving and Document Management in the European Commission).

E-Domec applies to all Commission DGs and associated services (cabinets, offices, representations) as well as to the Executive Agencies and the European External Action Service (EEAS) and its Delegations.

e-Domec is relevant to everyone in the Commission who receives or produces a document. That, therefore, **includes you!**
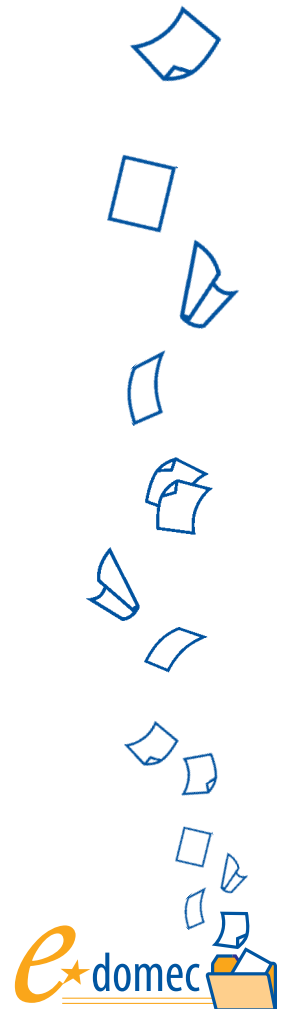
The Commission must ensure that it is able, at any time, to provide information on the matters for which it is accountable. **The documents and files that it manages, must allow it to:**

➔ **increase its efficiency** and ensure improved business continuity
➔ retain **proof of activities** performed (accountability)
➔ support **quick and easy access to information for the European citizen** (transparency) **and, when requested, for audit or legal reasons**
➔ maintain a **record of its past activities** as a European institution and as a European public administration (Institution's memory).
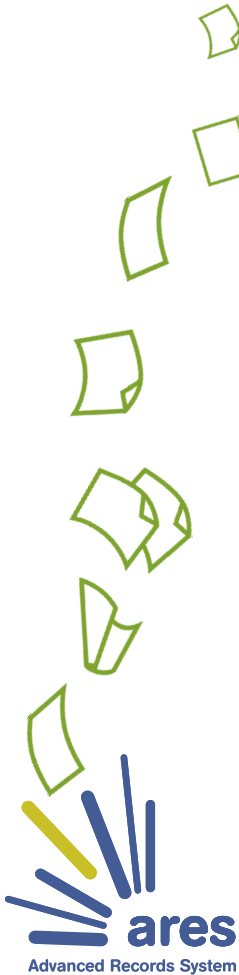
The creation of electronic registers, in particular **ARES**[7], which contain the metadata and the documents themselves[8] received or produced by Commission staff, is an important aspect of efficient document management. Furthermore, as the filing of these documents is organised through a filing plan, which covers all the activities of the Commission, all documents are easily found when needed (transparency, audits, needs of the service …).

Who are the key players in e-Domec?

The **Secretariat General (SG)** is responsible for adopting and coordinating document management policy, monitoring how the rules and common standards are applied in practice in all DGs and associated services and developing, together with DIGIT, IT tools that ensure electronic document management covering the whole life-cycle of documents. The SG also organises centrally, with the help of DG HR and DIGIT, training sessions on document management whose content is adapted for the different players (see Chapter 8 for more details).

The **Directorate General for Informatics (DIGIT)** develops, in close cooperation with the SG and the DMOs (Document Management Officers), the IT tools that are necessary for efficient electronic document management throughout the Commission.

The **Historical Archives Service (HAS)** receives and manages all the archives transferred by the DGs after a first review and in accordance with the document management rules. The archives, identified by the HAS, for permanent preservation (definitive or historical archives), will be opened to the public, wherever possible, following the 30 years rule.

The **DMOs (responsible for the administration of documents)**, appointed by their Director General or Head of Department, ensure the application and respect for e-domec rules in their DG or service. They are assisted in their work by the **CAD** (*Centre d'Administration des Documents*) and their **network of correspondents** (in general one person per unit).

Each **Head of Unit** is responsible for correct document management within his/her service.

Each **staff member** has a contributory role in good document management by taking part in the registering and filing of documents, received or written, on the one hand, and the preservation and transfer of files, on the other.

7 ARES is the acronym for **A**dvanced **Re**cords **S**ystem

8 With certain exceptions, as for example Restreint UE documents for which metadata are encoded in the register but the document itself is managed by another IT application – RUE–

What do you need for good document management?

A clear understanding of the issues and aims
e-Domec policy

Tools and procedures
IT Tools
Implementing rules
Manuals

Appropriate knowledge and skills
Training: e-Domec and ARES-NOMCOM
e-Domec website
Your DG's website
Help on line

…. and practice!

Steps in the document life cycle

1 Receipt or creation of a document

2 Analysis and registration of the document

3 Filing of document into one or several files

4 Storage and preservation of files

9 Repository and opening of the Historical Archives to the Public

7 Transfer of files to the Historical Archives Service

5 Access and/or distribution to the public

8 Second review of files (where appropriate)

Destruction of documents and files in accordance with the rules

6 First review of files by the service responsible

Q

Which is NOT part of the life cycle of a document?

a. Destruction
b. Storage
c. Creation
d. Assignment

LEGAL FRAMEWORK and rules
(for full list see e-Domec site)

Direct legal documents

Commission Decision 2002/47/EC, ECSC, Euratom on Document Management[1]

Commission Decision 2004/563/EC, Euratom on Electronic and Digitised Documents[2]

Implementing Rules for Document Management (Decision 2002/47) and Electronic and Digitised Documents (Decision 2004/563) [SEC(2009)1643 of 30 November 2009]covering registration of documents, their filing, preservation and appraisal and transfer of files to the Historical Archives, and also the legal value and the management of electronic and digitised documents

Related legal documents

Internal Control Standards[9]

11: Document Management
6: Risk Management: covers the protection of information
8: Processes and Procedures: the establishment of procedures
to ensure the continuity of public service
9: Management Supervision: complying with applicable provisions
10: Business Continuity includes transmission files (handover) in particular
13: Accounting and Financial Reporting: obligation for all staff concerned
to keep up-to-date and make accessible accounting and financial documentation

Provisions on public access to documents
Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and the Council[3] +
Commission Decision 2001/937/EC, ECSC, Euratom[4]
Provisions regarding security Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom[5]

Provisions regarding the protection of personal data
Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and the Council[6]

The Code of Good Administrative Behaviour
Commission Decision 2000/633/ EC, ECSC, Euratom[7]

The opening of the Historical Archives to the public
Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 354/1983 modified
by Regulation (CE, Euratom) No 1700/2003 of the Council[8]

1 OJ L 21 of 24.01.2002, p.23
2 OJ L 251 of 27.07.2004, p.9
3 OJ L 145 of 31.05.2001, p.43
4 OJ L 345 of 29.12.2001, p.94
5 OJ L 317 of 03.12.2001, p.1
6 OJ L 8 of 12.01.2001, p.1
7 OJ L 267 of 20.10.2000, p.63
8 OJ L 243 of 27.09.2003, p.1

9 http://intracomm.cec.eu-admin.net/budg/man/icrm/ic/ics/ics_en.html

Documents and Files

Documents

Documents are received or created by Commission staff in the context of a **case** i.e. concerning a matter relating to the **policies, activities and decisions falling within the Institution's competence and in the framework of its official tasks.**

Documents can be in **any medium:** paper, electronic (electronic born or digitised, including e-mails) or audiovisual (sound recording, video, photo, film, etc.).

File

A **file** is the collection of all documents (paper and/or electronic) concerning the same case, **organised in a coherent manner.**
It has a **start** date and an **end** date and tracks **all the pertinent steps** of the action or project being dealt with. **For each case** it is necessary to create **at least** one official file.

For example:
① "LIFE Project-2009 No 5475";
② "Proposal for a directive on XXX";
③ "Interservice consultation on YYY";
④ "Infringement procedure Greece YYYY/No ZZZ".

When you deal with frequently recurring, similar cases, you can use **serial (annual or pluriannual) files**.

For example:
① "Positive replies to demands of public access to documents in 2009";
② "Unit meetings in 2009 and 2010";
③ "Meetings of the expert group XXX in 2009".

Good to know

What is an (official) file?

A file that contains all the registered documents (and others that can be useful in order to understand the affair) concerning a certain case. It is managed by a *chef de file* (lead unit).

Not all documents have to be registered but each registered document must be filed.

Types of Files

Serial Files

- Repeated – normally on a yearly basis
- Management of the file is always the same independently of the period of time
- The file is closed on a predetermined date (every two years, each year, each semester) and then, a new one opened (avoid the use of sub files per year or the file will never be closed)
  e.g. Annual Management Plan 2011

Action Files

- An isolated one-off case
- Easy to identify the beginning and end
- An action that will not be repeated
  e.g. Contract for the planning of a study

It is perfectly possible to file a document in several files

By organising documents in a file, all information relating to a case can be found **quickly and easily.**

Complete and reliable files ensure **accountability** and guarantee **continuity of service** in the event of mobility. Checking the file should essentially make clear what has been done and what still needs to be done.
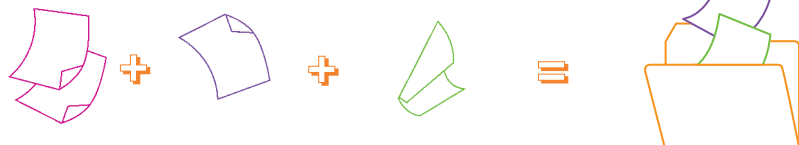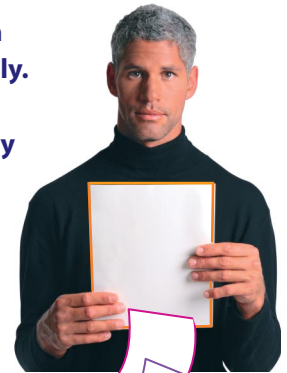
Several documents = **1 File**

A file may have several sub-files. Sub-files help to better organise the documents in a file which is very big or very varied. They can reflect the steps of a procedure by stages (first reading, negotiation, approval) or by aspects (technical, financial) or by geographical criteria, etc.

But don't create sub-files with criteria that make it difficult to close the main file.

For example:

FILE
"Framework Contract YYY"

SUB FILE
"Contracts 2008"

SUB FILE
"Contracts 2009"

SUB FILE
"Contracts 2010"

This makes closing the main file impossible!

(!)
Avoid having sub-files by year

YES

FILE
"Framework Contract YYY 2008-2009"

SUB FILE
Technical Aspects

SUB FILE
Financial Aspects

Files, as understood in the context outlined above, are official Commission files, and as such **fall under document management rules.**

There are often also **working files** of different kinds in parallel, created by staff members to facilitate daily work or to share information within services (Outlook folders, shared drive folders, paper copies, etc.).
Such **working files do not fall under document management rules**, and may be disposed of as those responsible see fit.

Fundamentals

File

- Collection of documents justifying, proving or informing on an action undertaken by a service
- Managed by the "chef de file" service
- Must be complete
- Must be closed when the action is finished
- Must be preserved
- Could be subject to controls and audit
- Will be appraised before eventual transfer to the historical archives

Working File

- Collection of working documents (not registered) with certain information
- Can be created by anyone
- No legal value
- Can be destroyed at any time (usually when the case is closed)
- Excluded from transfer to the intermediate and to the historical archives
- *The shared drive is just a working space, therefore, contains working files*

Content

File

- All documents relative to a case and which have been registered
- Certain other documents which are useful to the matter in hand

Working File

- Notes, reference materials, copies of articles, copies of documents, discussion papers

Documents and Files

Q
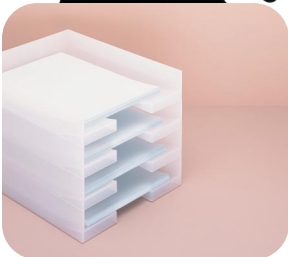
1 In the framework of document management policy, what do we understand by "file"?

a. all the documents stored on a USB stick
b. a paper folder containing printed copies of all received and sent documents (paper or electronic)
c. a collection of paper and/or electronic documents concerning the same affair
d. a folder on the share drive of the unit

2 Check which of the following statements is Untrue

a. there is no limit to the number of sub-files within a file
b. a new official file must be created for each and every registered document
c. the same document can be filed in more than one file
d. a working file can be destroyed at any time

3 True or False

A chrono is an official file[10]

4 Do you know perhaps what is meant by a "mixed file"[11]

5 An (official) file

a. only contains Commission documents
b. only contains documents of Cabinets
c. only contains registered documents
d. can contain registered documents and certain other documents which are useful

10 A chrono has all documents ordered chronologically but it is a miscellaneous collection of documents with no defined relationship to each other or one particular case

11 A mixed file is where some documents exist in paper version and some purely electronic. This is not a problem for "filing" as the file code is indicated on the paper version and in the electronic register. Where storing is concerned there needs to be a line in the "comments" field in the electronic register saying for example "paper documents found in the XXX binder". AVOID PRINTING OUT ALL DOCUMENTS JUST TO HAVE A COMPLETE PAPER FILE!

Correct answers: 1 c, 2 b, 3 False, 5 d

What are the official files I am responsible for?
(Check with your unit secretariat or your DMO)

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Consult the mission statement of your unit, the Organisation Chart of the DG and the Annual Management Plan

Registration

Every important document for the Commission requires registration

How to decide what document should be registered?

Analyse the documents (e-mails included) and look for clues!

Is the document formally drawn up?

or

Is the document formally received?

and

Is the document important for the Commission?

i.e. has it been approved by the author and is it ready for formal transmission?

i.e. is it available to the service(s) for which it is intended?

i.e. does it concern the activities of at least one department or service and requires **action, follow-up** or a **reply**, or does the Institution have a responsibility?

Some important documents are clearly temporary and rapidly lapsing because, after a short period, it no longer matters if the action can be defended or explained. Information is considered unimportant and short-lived if its loss would have no negative effect for the Commission's administrative or legal needs.

Does the document contain important information which is not short lived?

Documents which fulfil the conditions above must be registered

i

Documents useful for audit or litigation must be registered

Administrative or legal evidence

Documents that are drawn up as effective administrative or legal evidence of decisions, situations, intentions or events linked to the activities of the Commission or its departments …

must also be registered

2 CHAPTER

Professionals spend 5-15 % of their time reading information, but up to 50 % looking for it

ℹ️

Even if they meet these conditions, it is not necessary to register:
➜ documents distributed widely and under the responsibility of another department e.g. COM documents
➜ documents which are managed and preserved by another reliable electronic system e.g. SYSPER2, SYSLOG, etc.
➜ informal documents and communications shared between services (briefings and e-mails offering comment)

When to register?

ASAP! A document must be registered as soon as possible after having been formally drawn up or received. ASAP normally means the same day!

Which e-mails to register?

E-mails are documents.

Therefore, **any e-mail containing important information, which is not short-lived and which is likely to require action, follow-up or a reply from the Commission must be registered.** Of course, e-mails which are an informal exchange between two or more members of staff should not be registered. Functional mailboxes used to receive e-mails, that often are registered, **must be checked frequently.**
Remember: registration must occur as soon as possible.

Where to register?

In **ARES,** the **single general register** in use in the Commission introduced in 2008 and which has replaced the ADONIS databases which were used previously in the various DGs of the Commission (see Chapter 3)[12], or

… in a **specific register**, classed as e-Domec compliant[13] which follows similar rules or procedures but which is separate from the general register.

See:

List of e-Domec compliant registers
http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/
index.cfm?lang=en&page=compliance#comp

12 For the moment, in the Delegations, the general register is Delores or Adolight. Ares will be progressively introduced in the Delegations of the EU

13 "e-Domec compliant" means that the SG's e-Domec team has looked at the IT application concerned and confirmed it is in line with the Commission's document management rules

e★domec

And what is the registration process?

Registration of a document consists of two distinct operations to be carried out in the presence of the original

→ saving the metadata (descriptive information)

→ permanently linking the document to its metadata

Registration **Q**

❶ **Documents which are not registered**

a. should in any event be filed
b. must be included in a working file but not in an official file
c. can be filed in an official file
d. should not be read

❷ **E-mails exchanged between members of staff and which constitute a major step in the procedure of finalising a document must**

a. always be registered
b. be registered only if the chef de file says so
c. be registered only if the sender agrees
d. never be registered

❸ **We need to register a document for**
a. identification
b. traceability
c. attribution

Correct answers: 1 c, 2 a, 3 a and b

A registered document may not be changed[14]

14 Except if to correct erroneous metadata or data: in which case, the request has to be made with justification to the DMO

What types of documents are likely to be registered in the framework of your activities? (Check with your unit secretariat and/or DMO)

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Ares

http://www.cc.cec/Ares
Remote access[15]:
https://intracomm.ec.europa.eu/Ares/welcome.do

Ares is the acronym for Advanced Records System, an application developed and managed by DIGIT under the SG's guidelines, in strong cooperation with the DMOs and the Security Directorate.

Ares is the **single general register for documents[16]** of the Commission, executive agencies and the European External Action Service (EEAS)[17].

Ares is a100% e-Domec compliant register i.e. it respects all document management rules and is an important step forward to the e-Commission.

Ares is an integral part of the HERMES[18] IT platform whose goal is to bring together the various applications for document management used in the Commission under one single and unique central document and electronic file repository. Within a short time, Hermes will incorporate the complete life cycle of all the Commission's electronic documents and files.

3 CHAPTER

There is a tremendous hidden cost generated by the time consuming manipulation of paper files. On average, an employee may spend about five minutes searching for a requested document and then transporting it to a specific location. If each person uses, say, four documents daily, the time wasted this way by that person would be about two weeks per year.

ares
Advanced Records System

Hermes Repository Services (HRS)

The HRS is made up of a group of services which local and corporate applications can use to integrate with Hermes. Their use guarantees that document management rules for these local and corporate applications are respected

Hermes

Hermes implements the rules for document management defined in the framework of the e-Domec project. Official documents are stored once in a central repository

Corporate Systems

Local Systems

HERMES REPOSITORY SERVICES

HERMES

Common Electronic Repository

ARES

NOMCOM

ARES Advanced Records System

Ares is a web application for registering official documents in Hermes that provides adequate security, electronic workflows and full-text search.

Ares is integrated with:

NOTIS: for instant user notification of tasks and documents

MS Exchange: via Areslook

UBS: used to upload scanned documents

Nomenclature Commune

NOMCOM manages the filing plan and the file list for the whole of the Commission. It also gives a single identifier to all official files.

HAN
is the acronym
for **HERMES**,
ARES, **N**OMCOM

Ares is used by everybody in the Commission: to approve the final version of a document (electronic signatory or e-signatory), register documents (or simply save them), file them in the correct file(s), send or receive attributions or tasks to perform with the documents (reply, register, file …), search for documents or files, etc.

Ares users receive in their Ares inbox new documents sent to them and tasks relating to a document as assignments or actions. These tasks are defined by **action codes.**

When the Ares application is not open on your pc, - how will you see an incoming task?

Don't worry - your pc is or will be configured with **NOTIS**[19] which is an information system managing the notifications produced by some information applications of the Commission, including Ares. It alerts you that there is a new task or document for you in Ares **even if you are not connected to Ares.** In addition, you are able to set your preferences in Notis to receive automatic **Ares notifications by e-mail**.

Around 10,000 users connect to Ares every day, making it one of the most widely used corporate systems, along with Outlook and SYSPER2. As an example, in December 2010, users created 200,000 documents and 600,000 tasks.

19 NOTIS manual
via the ARES homepage:
http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/digit/
newsrep/doc/Notis_User_Manual_en.pdf
20 http://www.cc.cec/Ares/welcome.do
and the e-Domec site
21 The Quick Reference Card (QRC) can
be found:
www.cc.cec/wikis/display/Ares/Ares+
Documentation

My use of ARES

Ares is an application you use often and so is a "need-to-know" for everyone.

- My Ares **profile** is
- With this profile I can (save, register, etc.):
- My **"preferences"** are: …
- I have received a **delegation from**
- I have given a **delegation to**
- Under the tab "Document", if it is finalised and approved do you click **"save"** or **"register and send"**?[22]

- Under the tab **"Filing"**, there are three main ways to file: what are they?[23]

- Have you selected your **favourite files** and made a list in Ares?
- Do you know the meaning of these **action codes**?
  - ➜ Assignment: **CF; ASSOC; INFO; CLASS**[24]
  - ➜ E-Signatory: **RED; CONTRIB; VISA; SIGN; EXP**[25]
- In your **Ares Inbox** check that you know how to:
  - ➜ Finish a task
  - ➜ Send a task back to the sender
  - ➜ Delegate a task
- Only the secretary who launched the **e-signatory** can follow its circulation. True or False?[26]
- I can connect myself as a **virtual entity**: YES/NO
  If yes,
- Do you know how to change **your role** to access your virtual entity? YES/NO

22 Register and send
23 Favourites, Search and Filing Plan
24 The assignment action codes have the following meaning: **CF** -Chef de File-; **ASSOC** -Associated Service- (followed by the name of the user that has to provide input but is not Chef de File for the document in question); **INFO** -For Information-; **CLASS** –Filing or "Classement" in French- (followed by the name of the user required to file the document in question)
25 The e-signatory action codes have the following meaning: **RED** –Author or "Rédacteur" in French- (a user responsible for drafting a text); **CONTRIB** -For contribution- (followed by the name of the user who may need to contribute to the text); **VISA** –For approval- (followed by the name of the user who needs to give his/her visa or needs to initial the document); **SIGN** –For signature- (followed by the name of the user who needs to approve and sign the final version of the document); **EXP** –Sender or "Expéditeur" in French- (followed by the name of the user required to register, file and dispatch a finalised document)
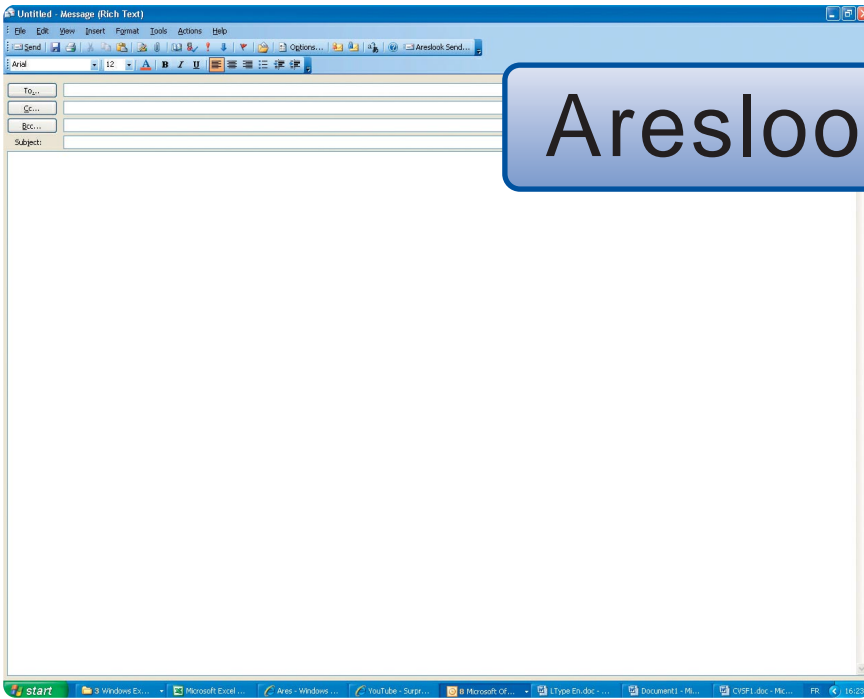**26** False

How do you register e-mails in Ares ?

VIA ARESLOOK

It is possible to use ARESLOOK for incoming and outgoing e-mails which, according to the rules, must be registered. This tool is immediately accessible in Outlook.

The current **Ares User Manual**[27] describes in detail how to use AresLook.

Areslook ▼

27 http://www.cc.cec/wikis/display/Ares/Documentation+ARES

ARES CHECKBOX

❏ I know how to access Ares

❏ I know the action codes for assignment

❏ I know the action codes for e-signatory

❏ I have selected my preferences …

❏ … and my delegations

❏ I know how to create an e-signatory

❏ I know how to launch an e-signatory

❏ I know how to import a document (from my pc)

❏ I know how to attach a scanned document

❏ After a document has been scanned,
    may I throw away the paper version?[28]

❏ I know how to follow the circulation of an e-signatory

❏ I know how to create a new document

❏ I know the difference between saving
    and registering a document

❏ I know how to create assignment tasks

❏ I know the three ways of searching
    for my unit's files

❏ I have made a list of my favourite files

❏ I know how to register documents
    with sensitive data using appropriate markings

❏ I know whom to ask for help

28 Refer to Chapter III.2.2.6 of the Implementing Rules. All digitised documents are kept in their original medium for at least six months. When the original is a paper copy for which signature is a substantial formality, this original is preserved according to the CRL.

- E-learning Ares
- Web Page Ares
  or
- Contact your DMO

Classified Documents and Markings

Classified Documents

Some documents bear a security classification. There are **four levels** of EU Classified Information (EUCI) documents (known usually by their French titles):[29]

* **TRES SECRET UE/EU TOP SECRET**
* **SECRET UE**
* **CONFIDENTIEL UE**
* **RESTREINT UE**

Documents bearing one of the first three security classifications are registered and managed by the Security Directorate (HR.DS) via their own Registry management.

RESTREINT UE documents have to be registered in Ares (i.e. their metadata) **but they can not be attached.** They are stored and preserved in RUE, a special IT application.[30]

Good to know

RESTREINT UE DOCUMENTS

➜ their **metadata must be recorded in Ares**
➜ The document itself MUST NOT be scanned or attached to the registration metadata
➜ These documents **can not be sent by normal e-mail**
➜ If these documents are **in paper** form they must be physically protected (stored) in a container or **steel cupboard** that can be locked with access and the key strictly controlled
➜ If these documents **are in paper form they must be disposed of by shredding**[31]

RESTREINT UE

How are Restreint UE documents transmitted as they can not be found in Ares?
➜ By RUE
➜ By hand
➜ By internal mail: in a single, sealed, opaque envelope which has no classification markings, bearing the name of the recipient
➜ Within the EU: by registered post in a single, unmarked, sealed, opaque envelope
➜ Outside the EU: by diplomatic pouch

29 For full details see Security Directorate's website: http://www.cc.cec/security/index_en.html
30 In the Delegations these documents are not registered but simply transmitted via RUE
31 For more information on the elimination and destruction of files, refer to "The Preservation of files, their Appraisal and Transfer to the Historical Archives" http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/doc/manuel/manuel_conserv_en.pdf

Security Markings

A **security marking** (*"timbre"* in French) is NOT a security classification but a concrete instruction on how to handle the document.

In Ares[33], the only users who can access a document with a marking are the stakeholders of the document (author, sender, addressee, participants to the workflow) and, once the document is filed, also the persons who have the File Reader right and who are, at the same time, a member of the group associated with the marking (marking group).

For example a document might have the marking "Staff matter" which limits its distribution on a need-to-know basis to the stakeholders, the personnel of HR departments (PMO, DG HR, human resources unit of the DG in question) and management concerned by the document.

In Ares a document can never have more than one marking.

The list of markings available in Ares can be found in Annex 2 of the Security Notice 1

Some typical markings:

Medical Matter	The content is covered by rules on medical confidentiality. The documents are processed only by the medical service (HR) and joint sickness insurance service (PMO). Recipients may use the same marking to reply to or to forward the documents
Staff Matter	To be used only for documents created by staff of personnel departments (HR and resources unit of the DG in question) and management concerned, and to be opened by addressee
Personal	Marking used to indicate that the document should only be opened by the addressee

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Classified Documents and Markings (Q)

True or False?

a. The stakeholders of a document with a marking keep access to the document once it has been filed

b. RESTREINT UE document metadata can not be recorded in a register

c. The full text of a RESTREINT UE document registered in Ares can be attached to its metadata

Correct answer: a – True; b – False (the metadata CAN be introduced but not the full text); c – False (the full text or image must **NEVER BE** attached)
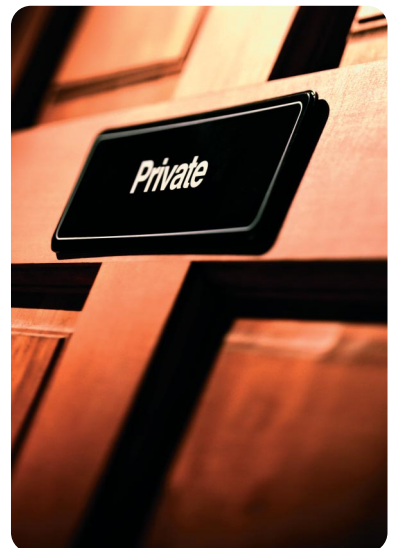
Filing

> If you file it, you'll know where it is but never need it. If you don't file it, you'll need it but never know where it is"
>
> Tillis's Organisational principle

A registered document should be kept in an official file.
Documents which have not been registered can also be filed and kept in an official file if they are an aid to a better understanding of how an issue has been handled.

The document is filed either in an already existing file or **a new official file must be created** when a registered document cannot logically be allocated to an already existing file.

All files must be linked to the **Filing Plan** where they are categorised by activity under an appropriate heading – **we want to find them easily!**

The decision to create a file, including its title and where to attach it to the filing plan, is taken by the chef de file (lead unit).

> "Without access to information there is no transparency; Without transparency there is no accountability; And without transparency and accountability there is no democracy
>
> Dr Harrison Mwakyembe

A complete and organised file guarantees

➔ documents are found for reasons of accountability or transparency

➔ all stages of an action can be tracked

➔ continuity of service is ensured

> Information which cannot be found is worthless
>
> *Belize Archives & Records Service*

> The value of the information is directly related to its accessibility
>
> Katie Geuin

How to create a new file?

1st step: Identify in the Filing Plan the final level heading to which the file is to be linked

This step is extremely important as it links the **action (file)** performed by a service to an **activity (heading)** for which the Commission is competent.

2nd step: Identify the category of the Common Commission-Level Retention List (CRL) or, for PMO files, the Specific DG/Service-level retention List (SRL) under which the file falls and which determines its preservation period (see Chapter 6)

3rd step: Create the file in the Ares database and encode its metadata
You will only be able to create a new file in Ares if you have the **rights** to do so. In almost every DG these rights belong only to the DMO and/or CAD staff.

Consult your DMO!

Which information (metadata) about a file is required?

➜ **Creation date** (date when file was opened)
➜ A specific detailed, yet brief, and meaningful **title**
➜ An alphanumerical **file code** to which a specific code can be added if necessary
➜ The *chef de file*
➜ The **code of the terminal heading in the filing plan** to which the file is linked
➜ **Status:** inactive+active, closed, transferred, destroyed (when you create a new file its status is "inactive" or "active")
➜ **Closure date** (date of the most recent document filed)
➜ **Level of security classification** (infrequently applied)
➜ **Content of a standard file,** where applicable.

File titles

A title of a file should be clear, specific, detailed yet brief and be sufficiently informative as to the nature of the contents of the file (e.g. "Development of DG X Archive Schedule").

Distinguish between "action files" and "serial files": the title of an action file should include the aim of the action (e.g. adoption of the "Services" Directive), the title of a serial file should include the date of the period covered (e.g. "Management report on external aid 2009").

Give the title in French and English for ease of research. Avoid the use of acronyms and abbreviations which other users will not understand.

File codes

NOMCOM automatically generates an **official file code** for each file with the format yyyy-AB1234. In addition a file can be given a **specific file code** that, depending on your DG, may be freely encoded or be subject to DG rules on structure and content.

When and how to close a file?

When the case is finished, the file must be closed. If there has been no new document added to the file in the last months, ask yourself whether the file should be closed.

Before a file is closed, it must be first checked to ensure there are no missing documents and that any non-useful working documents have been removed. It now contains all the pertinent documents.

No changes can be made to a closed file!

The date of closure

The date of closure is the date when the most recent document has been added to the file. This date has to be introduced correctly as it determines the life of the file after its closure: how long has it to be preserved by the DG? will it be transferred to the Historical Archives?[34]

> **?**
> Check with your DMO whether specific rules apply in your DG concerning file titles and file codes.

34 The Common Retention List defines the retention period for each type of Commission file

Opening and Closing a File

1. A new file must be created:
a. when the Commission officially replies to an enquiry from a citizen
b. when the action is completed so that the file is a complete and accurate record of the progress of the case
c. when a registered document can not be filed in an existing file
d. before the auditors arrive

2. The main reason for closing a file is:
a. the auditors wish to see it
b. it is the end of a calendar year
c. the case manager has left the unit
d. all the actions relating to the case have been finished

Correct answers: 1c, 2 d

For hybrid files, use the same file code and file title in both the electronic and paper file

Chef de File

is in charge of the case

…even if another unit is involved in performing related tasks or providing assistance;

is not a person

…but the unit responsible for dealing with the case. The file manager is the agent(s) within the unit appointed to deal with the matter in question (case). They decide which document requires filing and in which of their files;

allocates every document to the appropriate file

…whether paper or electronic and ensures the completeness of the file to avoid missing documents. If the file is hybrid (both paper format and electronic), makes the necessary arrangements to be able to reconstitute the file easily;

opens and closes the file

The file is opened at the start of the case with the encoding metadata for the file. The file is closed when all the actions stemming from the case have been concluded and no further document should be added to the file. As *chef de file* each unit should have its own file list for which it is responsible.[35]

Chef de file

Q

1. The "chef de file" of a file is
a. the DMO of the DG
b. the Head of Unit
c. the agent who created the file
d. the unit responsible for the case

2. The file manager is
a. the DMO of the DG
b. the Head of Unit
c. the agent who is responsible for the case
d. the unit responsible for the case

Correct answers: 1d, 2c.

e-Domecly speaking the *"chef de file"* is a unit ("lead unit"). Within this unit the matter concerned can be managed by the Head of Unit or by any other agent, who is called the "file manager" (*"gestionnaire"*). In the course of our work it happens that the "file manager" is erroneously called *"chef de file"* (don't make this mistake!)

35 This list is directly exportable from Ares, Delores or Adolight

Filing Plan and File List

The **Filing Plan** drawn up at Commission level consists of a **number of headings** which are **organised in a hierarchical manner** and which reflect all the activities of the Institution, from more general (first level) to most detailed (terminal heading).

The first three levels of the filing plan, known as **"Common Nomenclature"**, are defined by the SG. The other levels (up to the 8th level maximum) known as "specific levels" are defined by each DG.

A **file list** is a document management tool listing and describing the files created under the headings in the filing plan and contains metadata for each file.

NOMCOM, one of the modules of the Hermes platform, is the IT application that manages the Filing Plan of the Commission and the file lists of all services. NOMCOM is available directly on the Intranet or via Ares.

Example

The terminal heading to which the file concerning the elaboration of this toolkit is linked is:
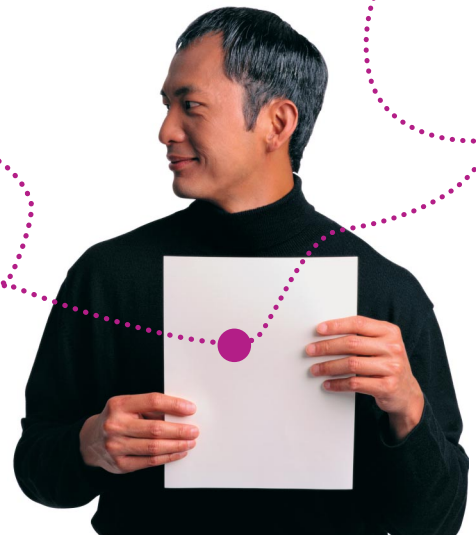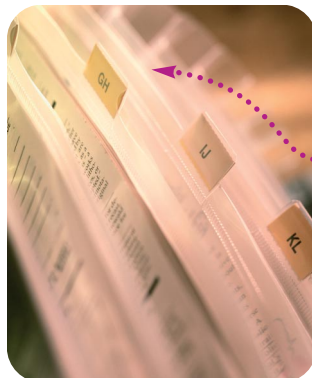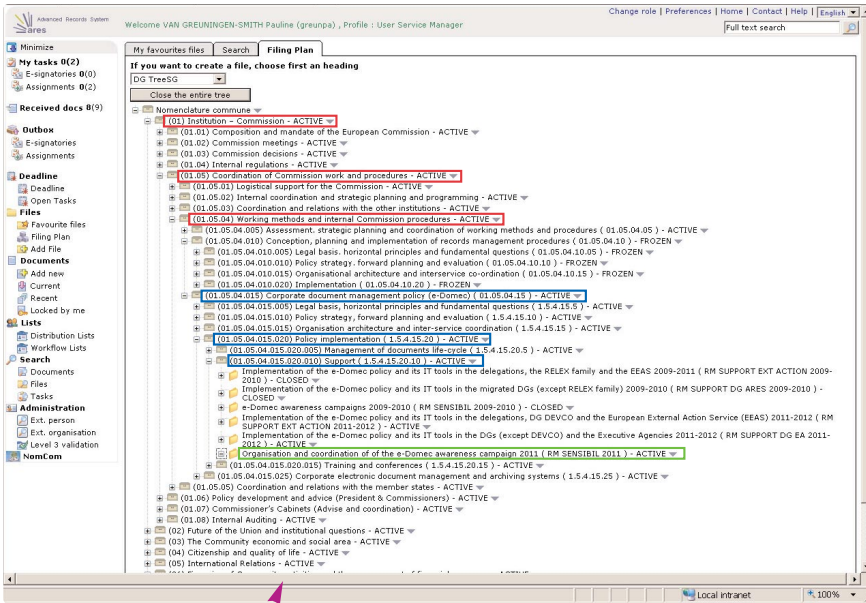
01.05.04.015.020.010

01.05.04. Common Nomenclature: first three levels
015.020.010 Specific levels defined by the DG

The "entire tree" of the filing plan is accessible **via Ares**

Which terminal headings in the filing plan concern my tasks
(where will I link my files)?

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Filing Plan & File List

Q

1. A file list is NOT
a. drawn up at Commission level and organised
according to the Commission's functions
b. a document management work tool
c. a description of files using metadata

**2. The filing plan of your unit needs to be updated.
If the hierarchy agrees with the update who should
make the modifications in NomCom?**
a. the unit secretary
b. my DMO
c. the file manager
d. the e-Domec team in the SG

Preservation

Why keep files?

Files need to be kept for the proper functioning of the Commission as a public service from an administrative and legal point of view. Preservation of files also ensures transparency and right of access[36] and allows the opening to the public of the historical archives after 30 years[37].

But not all files should be kept for ever!! The Commission established in a legal document [SEC(2007) 970] the periods of time during which all the different categories of files of the Institution should be preserved. Some are kept permanently, some for a maximum period of time, and others dependent on the result of the selection and/or sampling operations.

How to preserve documents and files?

Preservation is the physical protection of files whatever their medium (electronic and/or paper):
➜ for a certain length of **time** (compliance with the preservation periods defined in the common retention list or in the specific DG/Service retention list – in the case of PMO)
➜ in a safe **place** (suitable infrastructure for archives storage)
➜ saving **metadata** (in an electronic file repository)[38]
➜ following strict procedures for **elimination** where appropriate

36 Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 May 2001
37 Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1700/2003 of 22 September 2003
38 See Annex 1 of the Implementing Rules on Document Management and Electronic and Digitised Documents [SEC(2009) 1643]

There are many external causes of deterioration or damage to documents and files:

Records are food for thought, not for rats!!

Temperature and humidity
Don't file papers in damp cellars because incorrect temperature and relative humidity causes mould.

Theft or vandalism
Ensure paper files are carefully locked away and ensure that electronic files are kept in a secure informatics system (protected against viruses, hackers …).

Rodents
Mice and rats love paper! Ensure grills and procedures to eradicate rodents are in place if needed.

Light
Bright sunlight causes fading so use blinds and easily accessible light switches.

Fire
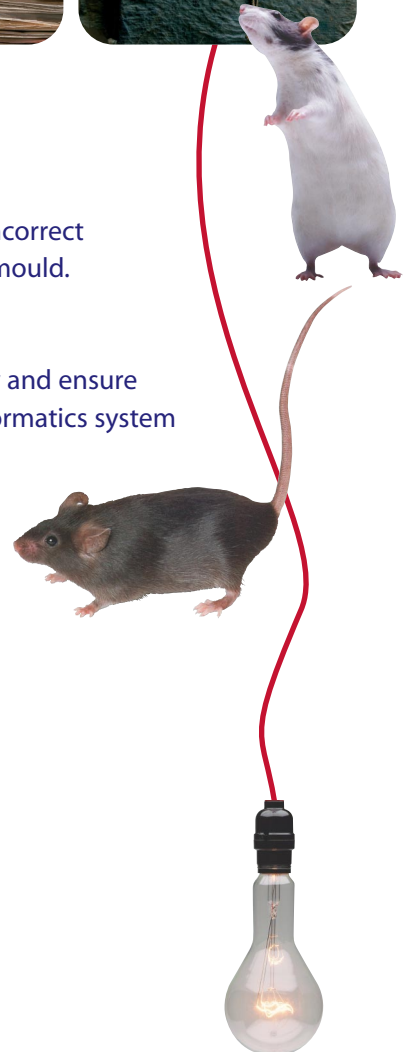Maintain a working fire detection system.

Flood
Keep files well away from floor level.

Pollution
Keep paper files away from dust and smoke.

Loss of information
Keep electronic files in an informatics system in which they will be migrated regularly to ensure their integrity and readability.

Each DG and service must ensure the physical protection of the files in its sphere of responsibility, and guarantee their access in the short and medium term, until they are transferred to the Commission's Historical Archives Service or until they are eliminated.

The *chef de file* is responsible for a file throughout its life cycle. This includes preservation, in cooperation with the archives service of the DG/Service.

How long to keep a file?

Files, once closed, are **kept for a certain period of time**

=

retention period

The retention periods for all type of Commission files are set out in the "**Common Retention List (CRL) of the files at European Commission's level[39]" or**, if the case arises, **in the Specific Retention List (SRL)**[40].
The Secretariat General draws up and updates the CRL in cooperation with the DGs.

The length of preservation of each file is determined by:

➡ the administrative retention period (ARP),
   i.e. how many years the closed file must be kept by the DG[41]
➡ the action to be taken at the end of the ARP ("first review")
➡ if the case arises, the action to be taken after transfer to the Historical Archives: permanent preservation or second review.

The ARP begins to run from the date of the closure of the file and, during this period, the file can not be destroyed.

It is essential that files are closed in order to respect the preservation deadlines determined in the CRL/SRL.

39 SEC(2007)970 of 4 July 2007
40 Only the PMO has a SRL
41 The ARP for each file type is fixed in the CRL or SRL taking account of the administrative usefulness of this type of file and the legal obligations which apply

Examples of ARP

File types	ARP	1st review
Management of grant agreements and decisions	10 years	SAM/SEL[1]
Contract Management	10 years	SAM/SEL
Cases before the European Courts	5 years	THA[2]
State Aid	2 years	THA

Specific File Types	ARP	
Cabinet File	corresponds to Commission's term of office	THA
Personal File	120 years after date of birth	EL[3]
Medical File	At least until person concerned reaches 75	EL

To implement the CRL in DGs, each **DMO** draws up an administrative document called an **"archive schedule"**[42] which **establishes**:

➜ how the preservation of files is organised (decentralised in the *chef de file* units; centralised in the DG's central archives)
➜ the link between every file of the DG with the corresponding file type in the CRL, giving, therefore, the retention period for each file
➜ who performs the first review of the files once the ARP has ended

At least once a year DGs should check their files and clear out those past their ARP date **(first review).** The DMO is responsible for the first review of files of his/her DG, either directly executing it or in a coordinating role.

42 The archive schedule common to all the Delegations is drawn up centrally by the DMOs of DEVCO, TRADE, ELARG, ECHO and the EEAS.

The first review can consist of one of these three post-ARP actions:

[1] **SAM/SEL**   **SAM**pling (objective criteria) and/or **Sel**ection (subjective criteria) = only some files are chosen to be preserved, rest eliminated. The files chosen to be preserved are transferred to the Historical Archives

[2] **THA**   **T**ransfer to the **H**istorical **A**rchives Service

[3] **EL**   **EL**imination – files are destroyed

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The **instructions in the CRL** are not guidelines but **an obligation** for all DGs and equivalent departments to transfer, eliminate, or sample/select the files. Any DG wanting an exception must apply for it and provide a valid justification

Preservation

Q

After how many years may a file be destroyed?[43]

Do you know the ARP of your files?
(Check with your DMO to find out
the archive schedule of your DG)

43 It depends on the type of file and what the Common Retention List [SEC(2007)970] establishes for each type of file concerned

Transfer to the Historical Archives

**ARCHIVES
HISTORIQUES
HISTORICAL
ARCHIVES**

When, according to the CRL or SRL, files should be transferred to the Historical Archives Service (HAS), this transfer is carried out under the responsibility of the DMO of the DG (establishes procedures, supervises, acts as point of contact).

The Commission archives in Kortenberg[44] (Belgium) receive the transferred files.

How do DGs transfer material to the Historical Archives?

Consult : http://www.cc.cec/ historical_archives/ transfer_en.htm

for
➜ Transmission form (signed by the DMO)

➜ Basic file list (metadata of files transferred)

The rules and procedures are clearly explained on the website of the Historical Archives Service[45].

Even when files are transferred to the HAS, the *chef de file* continues to be responsible for their files, especially for access requests, be they from other EU institutions or the public.

Access to documents by the public after 30 years, on the other hand, is a duty of the HAS.

Consult your DMO before starting each file transfer

Not all the files transferred by the DG to the HAS will become definitive or historical archives. For some specific file categories, the HAS conducts a **second review**, no later than 25 years after the closure of the files in order to decide whether to keep them indefinitely or to destroy them.

Those files which are of historical interest and open to the public are sent to the European University Institute in Florence[46] which manages the Historical Archives of the EU.

30 Years Rule

This rule[47] states the opening to the public of the European institutions' historical archives 30 years after their closure.

46 http://www.eui.eu
47 Rule established by Article 1 of the Council Regulation (CE, Euratom) No 1700/2003 of 22 September 2003 amending Regulation (CEE, Euratom) No 354/83 concerning the opening to the public of the historical archives of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community.

Training

Document Management

Up to this point the toolkit has highlighted what you need to know for good document management.

Q **HOW do you put this knowledge into practice and develop the skills to achieve good document management?**

A **TRAINING** - Whoever you are, whatever your profile, there is training to suit you.

DIGIT and the SG provide information, training and the necessary support to help you apply document management rules correctly with the help of a number of IT tools.

ALL THE COURSE MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE TO YOU EVEN IF YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED FOR A COURSE

The SG shows you how to be on top from the beginning!

e-Domec training (SG)

In order that the rules of good document management are correctly applied, the SG's unit responsible for the Commission's document management policy has developed a series of training sessions whose content is adapted for the different types of users. These courses take place in Brussels and Luxembourg. Some are given by videoconference for Commission Delegations.

(i) Applications to the courses are made via syslog. Look up the courses by entering the key-word "EDOMEC"

All e-Domec course material (manuals and Powerpoint presentations) is available on the e-Domec web site[48]

[48] http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/index.cfm?lang=en&page=chantinfotrain (check the Support section of each training description)

Ares-NomCom Training (DIGIT)

http://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/serv/fr/digit/training_help_and_support/Pages/index.aspx

The central informatics training courses are provided by Digit Training Services (DTS)[49]. In particular, it is DIGIT that provides the Ares Hands-on training as well as providing on-line documentation and various e-learning modules.

You can find all the training offered by DIGIT via the Ares welcome page.

You have the tools

It's easy to get to the top –
you just need to train!

49 digit-training-servicxxxxxx@xx.xxxopa.eu

Role	All agents	Heads of Unit	Case Managers	Secretaries
❶ TRAINING ON DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT (type "EDOMEC" in the search box in Syslog)				
Ariane IV e-Domec	X			
Introduction to document management (INTRO)	X			
Secretary 1				X
Secretary 2				X
Chef de file (CDF)		X	X	
CAD/DMO/DMO network				
TRAINING FOR THE DELEGATIONS (CDF) This training us not available in Syslog. These sessions are planned by SG/DEVCO/				
Project Management e-Domec				
Advocacy skills for DMOs				
Change management for DMO/CAD				
Visit to the Historical Archives	X			
❷ ARES-NOMCOM TRAINING BY DIGIT (type ARES or NomCom in the search box in Syslog/IT Training)				
Essential training				
ARES – hands on base	X			
ARES –hands on for Managers		X	X	
ARES – training for Administrator DMO-CAD				
NomCom III				
Workshops				
Ares – Supporting				
ARES – Train the Trainer				
ARES – Administration for DMO-CAD				
Presentations – Hands off Training				

DMO	DMO Archivist Cabinet	CAD Staff	Correspondent Local DMO network
X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X
X	X	X	
X			
X	X	X	

EEAS

Speak with your DMO, determine your profile/role and discuss which trainings you should follow

Mark the trainings on this sheet

Role	All agents	Head of Unit	Case managers	Secretaries

❷ ARES-NOMCOM TRAINING BY DIGIT - continued

	All agents	Head of Unit	Case managers	Secretaries
ARESLOOK and External transmission module	X			
E learning				
ARES – Managing tasks, documents Search and Areslook	X			

❸ YOUR DG (ask your DMO)

❹ Other types of training (e- learning modules, animated presentations , Powerpoints and factsheets – a non-exhaustive are available via the Ares welcome page: http://www.cc.cec/Ares/welcome.do

	All agents	Head of Unit	Case managers	Secretaries
What is Ares	X			
ARESLOOK	X			
e-Signatory	X			
Filing	X			
Creation of files	X			
Delegation	X			
Registration	X			
Roles et profiles	X			
Visibility-security	X			
Tasks	X			
Etc.				

	DMO	DMO Archivist Cabinet	CAD staff	Correspondent Local DMO network

list and constantly evolving)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
1													1
2													2
3													3
4													4
5													5
6													6
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Trainings I need to follow

	Type of training	Completed
A		
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		

Applications are made via SYSLOG

Do you know ...   CHECK-LIST

Questions	Answer	Useful further reading
■ What is e-Domec?		
■ The main steps in a document's life cycle?		
■ Where to find the Implementing Rules for Document Management?		
■ What is the difference between a document and a file?		
■ What is a working file?		
■ The files for which your unit is *chef de file*?		
■ Your favourite files?		
■ The e-Domec duties of a *chef de file*?		
■ The conditions for registration?		
■ What types of documents are likely to be registered in the framework of your activities?		
■ What is ARES?		
■ What is NOMCOM?		
■ What are the filing plan headings relating to your tasks and where will you "hook" your files?		
■ Have you completed your ARES training?		
■ Which E Mails should be registered?		
■ Which are the special document management rules relating to classified documents?		
■ What is a marking (*timbre*)?		
■ What metadata are required for creating a file?		
■ What is the ARP for the files for which your unit is *chef de file*?		
■ The procedures for transferring files to the Historical Archives?		
■ The trainings you should follow?		
■ Who to contact for help?		

Useful Information

Websites

SG e-DOMEC
http://www.cc.cec//home/dgserv/sg/edomec/index.cfm

DIGIT ARES SUPPORT
(news, manuals training documents)
http://www/cc/cec/wikis/display/Ares/Home

Ares
http://www.cc.cec/Ares/welcome.do
 after encoding the ECAS password

Your DG's intranet

Strongly recommended Reading!

Implementing Rules for Document Management (Decision 2002/47)
and **Electronic and Digitised Documents** (Decision 2004/563).
[SEC (2009)1643]

Manuals on registration, filing and preservation
(all available on the e-Domec web site)

E-DOMEC training course manuals
(all available on the e-Domec web site)

Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserv/sg/edomec/index.cfm?lang=en&page=faq

Glossary

A-Z - Glossary of terms and source references
for e-Domec terminology (available on the e-Domec website)