

## ECHA Retention Schedule

### 1 Purpose

The list lays down the retention period for ECHA documents, taking into account their evidential value, legal obligations and the Agency's needs for the audit trails. The retention schedule complies with the provisions of Council Regulation 2015/496 and it provides the types of documents which are selected for permanent preservation (historical archives) which are going to be disclosed to the public after 30 years.

### 2 Scope

N/A

### 3 Contents

The list ensures the availability of documents per process and the efficient management of their disposal. The attached annex contains the process related retention schedules and is managed by the Information Management assistant. Process owners are responsible to define which document types are kept as evidence of their actions (records) and for how long these need to be kept in order to meet ECHA's legal obligations and audit requirements. The retention schedule defines also the post Administrative Retention Period (post-ARP) actions to be taken (elimination/transfer to permanent archives) after the expiration of the respective records retention period.

The potential historical value of documents (i.e. final decisions, opinions, recommendations, and meetings procedural documents) triggering their permanent preservation is also taken into account to comply with the Council Regulation 2015/496 and its implementing rules.

The annexed retention schedule is organised following LIS-0009 ECHA Activity and Process Structure (Filing Plan).

It is set out in seven columns:

- 1) Record types: Groups or types of records following the same retention rule.
- 2) Description: Further explanation of the record types contents or legal context.
- 3) ARP (Administrative Retention Period): Period (in years) during records under a specific record type are required to be kept depending on their usefulness for administrative purposes and the relevant statutory and legal obligations. The ARP established is usually calculated from the date the relevant scientific or other type of case is closed. For events (e.g. meetings) the ARP is calculated from the date of the event. From that day onwards no action would be regarded necessary, an appeal is not pending or can be issued and all possible reporting tasks have been fulfilled.
- 4) Post-ARP action / First Appraisal: Action to be taken at the end of the ARP period.

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Three courses of actions can be taken:

TPA (Transfer to Permanent Archive): the records are transferred to the permanent archives.

SAM/SEL (Sampling or Selection): a group of records is chosen for preservation, with all the rest being destroyed. The records identified for preservation are transferred to the permanent archives.

EL (Elimination): the records are physically destroyed or going through an automatic deletion (for electronic records).

- 5) Action post-transfer to permanent archives: The records which are transferred to permanent archives are for permanent preservation (PP). These records shall form the historical archives of the Agency and they will be disclosed to the public as foreseen by Council Regulation 2015/496 and its implementing rules.
- 6) Specific documents (if any): Specific documents which need to be retained as records for the specified ARP.
- 7) Observations: E.g. further instructions on the preservation of the records concerned or the legal basis which lays down a specific retention time per record type.

## 4 Definitions

Term or abbreviation	Definition
Appraisal	Evaluation of records in order to determine whether they must be eliminated or transferred to the permanent archives.
(Post-)ARP	(Post-) Administrative Retention Period
Document	Any (structured) content whatever its medium (written on paper or stored in electronic form) concerning a matter relating to the policies, activities and decisions falling within the institutions sphere of responsibility. In ECHA's context this shall include all documents created or received, regardless of the format (paper or electronic). Metadata form an integral part of the document.
Elimination (EL)	Regulated procedure or any other intentional action leading to the physical destruction of archives or any other operation resulting in a total or partial loss of information.
PP	Permanent preservation
Preservation	Processes and operations involved in ensuring the technical and intellectual survival of authentic records through time. (ISO 15489-1:2001)
Process Owner	Person or role responsible for the effective and efficient functioning of the process. He/she has the necessary authority to take action or make decisions with an impact on the process performance. (PRO-0008)
Record	The evidence documents (Records) are those operational/administrative documents created, received and maintained as evidence of the actions carried out in the framework of ECHA's official tasks. (PRO-0010)

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<b>Term or abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Sampling (SAM)	Method of appraisal whereby, on the basis of objective criteria, a representative portion of files is chosen for preservation from a larger body of files that will not be preserved in its entirety.
Selecting (SEL)	Method of appraisal whereby, on the basis of the selectors' assessment, a certain number of files are chosen for preservation from a larger body of files that will not be preserved in its entirety.
TPA	Transfer to Permanent Archive

## 5 References

<b>Associated document code</b>	<b>Document name</b>
(EU) 2015/496	Council Regulation

## 6 Annexes

Annex 1: ECHA Retention schedule in Sharepoint

(<https://activity.echa.europa.eu/sites/act-12/process-12-3/Lists/Storage%20plan/AllItems.aspx>)