

EWA ROSOWSKA

## **REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SURVEY “APPRAISAL AND SELECTION OF DOCUMENTS”\***

### **Introduction**

The initiative to carry out a survey related to the appraisal and selection of documents currently produced at registries of existing institutions was raised by the European Board of the International Council on Archives and the Head Office of the State Archives of the Republic of Poland (Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych). The survey was carried out in 2002 in co-operation with the Polish archives and the ICA Committee on Appraisal.

The initial draft of the questionnaire was brought up for international discussion. Opinions and proposals were sent in by 10 countries (Finland, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Slovakia and Sweden). They were concerned with supplementing the questionnaire by adding some specific questions, as well as methodological issues and problems related to terminology. Some comments resulted from different understanding of archival terms expressed in English, which, in turn, indicated the great significance of multilingual works and terminological publications of any type, related to detailed aspects of archival sciences, such as selection and appraisal of documents. Many of those comments and proposals were taken into account upon consultation with Mrs Rosine Cleyet-Michaud. The questionnaire was prepared in English and in French.

The main objective of the survey was to review methods of appraisal and selection of current documents, both in respect to traditional paper documents and electronic ones, as presently used in European countries. The survey also aimed at an attempt to formulate a reply to the following question: Which institutions develop nationwide policies on archival holdings collection and by what means. One of the goals of the survey was also to examine whether, and if so, to what extent, we have to do with the concurrence of record appraisal principles and procedures in Europe, including countries of European Union.

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\* The report was prepared in cooperation with colleagues from the staff of the Head Office of the State Archives – Ms Danuta Rocka and Mr Kazimierz Schmidt. Mr Patrick Cadell has sent interesting and important remarks and opinions on the scope and context of this paper. I have an honour to thank very much all them.

A separate chapter was devoted to issues related to collecting documents recorded on modern electronic data carriers.

The questionnaire was addressed to archival administration authorities (national archives, archival services) of all the European countries. Replies were received from 30 countries:

Andalusia<sup>1</sup>, Andorra, Austria, Baden, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saxony, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Udmurtia<sup>2</sup>, Ukraine, the United Kingdom.

In Luxemburg, issues covered with the survey are not regulated on the level of nationwide provisions, therefore, the National Archives of Luxemburg have no knowledge allowing to provide detailed answers to the questionnaire. Some countries (Austria, Macedonia, Russia) responded to the survey in the descriptive form, presenting the general approach to the covered problems. With respect to this, they are not considered in the statistic tables and diagrams.

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<sup>1</sup> The system of archives in Andalusia is representative for all the remaining autonomous countries of Spain.

<sup>2</sup> The Republic of Udmurtia is a member of the Russian Federation. Udmurtia participated in the survey upon the request of the Russian Federal Archival Service (Rosarchiv) as a representative of solutions adopted at a regional level.





## **The Law on Archives in the area of appraisal and selection of documents**

In the majority of surveyed countries, general principles of protection, preservation and archiving of currently produced records are governed by the binding legislation on archives. Those provisions refer, first of all, to methods of handling materials of historical value, designated for perpetual preservation at historical archives. In the United Kingdom, issues related to the archiving of documents are regulated under the legislation on public documents. It determines the manner of handling public documents and imposes obligations on the authors of such records, as regards the protection, collection and archiving as well as the transfer to historical archives. In all the EU Member States and acceding countries, it is also the legislation on access to public documents which refers to issues related to documents. Those provisions are harmonized with the relevant European law. The majority of respondents positively replied to the question included in the questionnaire, whether any co-ordination would be necessary of national principles of selection and appraisal of documents on the ground of the EU legislation. One might propose carrying out wider research in co-operation with the Historical Archives of the European Commission, pertaining to such issues as: a) principles of archiving and gathering of documents produced by national authorities and institutions responsible for contacts with the EU institutions at historical archives of particular countries, b) principles of access to public documents (in the light of the Regulation (EC) No. 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001, regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents); c) detailed requirements concerning the archiving of documents produced in the course of implementation of European programmes and projects by public and private entities. The INSAR initiative, taken up by the Historical Archives of the European Commission might become a common ground for such research and discussion.

Apart from the law on archives, which sets forth standards of general nature, in various countries there are several other legal acts in force which regulate the principles of the preservation of different types of documents. In all the above mentioned countries, special provisions cover public registry records (B.M.D. registers), documents of notaries and courts. Less frequently, separate provisions regulate handling documents of fiscal character, related to conditions of the natural environment, pension security, health insurance, employment, public statistics, etc. Such provisions are in force, to a wider or more limited extent, narrowed down just to certain categories of records, in Austria, Baden, Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Saxony, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The number and the scope of such legal acts are partly determined by processes of the harmonization of the law. As examples relevant in that respect one should mention the Directive 90/313/EEC, pertaining to citizens' rights of access to

information on the environment, providing for the protection and gathering of documents on conditions of the natural environment by competent offices and authorities in their registries, or the Directive 87/18/EEC, which implements good laboratory practices for chemical research, including a separate section regarding the preservation, protection and collection of research documents at archives.

Such countries as Andalusia, Andorra, Belgium, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Udmurtia have no separate legal regulations referring to different types of documents. In those countries, a standardized procedure of appraisal and selection, as discussed hereinafter, applies to all types of documents.

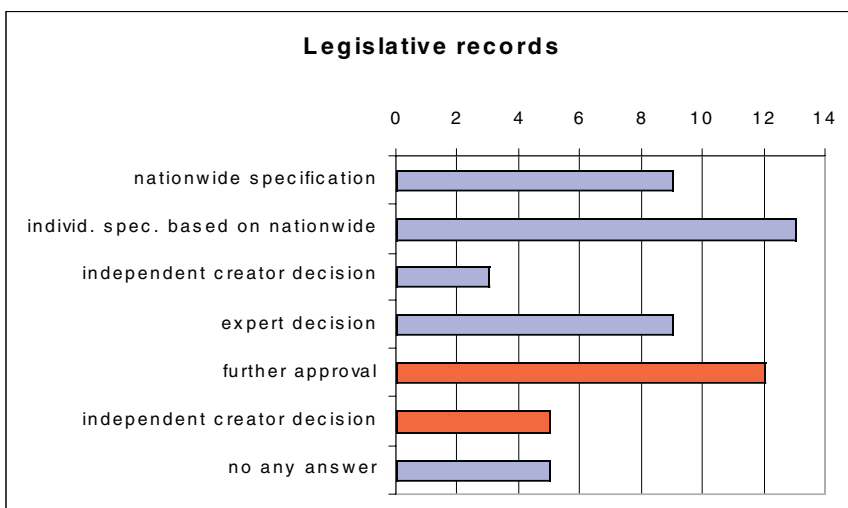
The law on archives in force in surveyed countries covers mostly documents produced by authors from the public sphere, i.e. public administration offices and institutions. The principles of the archiving of documents produced by those institutions are governed by uniform rules, binding in a given country, determined under the legislation on archives and regulatory provisions. Documents produced by legislative bodies (parliaments) are also treated as public institution materials in the majority of countries. However, in some countries (Finland, France, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the United Kingdom), parliaments independently make decisions on the selection of materials produced for perpetual preservation. Therefore, the principles and procedures of the appraisal of records of legislative bodies in the above-mentioned countries are excluded from any supervision on the part of national archives or authorised bodies (directorates of state archives).

Significant differences in national regulations on the appraisal and selection of documents refer to authors other than public, including the government, administration offices or organisational units. They include such categories of authors as schools, scientific institutes, private institutions which exercise public tasks, private entities, political parties, etc. Procedures which refer to particular categories of authors are discussed in detail in the chapter on the principles of holdings collection. It should be emphasized, that differences in that respect among particular countries result, first of all, from the structure, competences and functions of public authorities and bodies, existing tradition, law in force, or, finally – religious tradition. The scope and the competences of the legislation on archives are the consequences of those general solutions. It has found its particularly explicit reflection with respect to records of churches and religious denominations. In France these records, created until 1905, are treated as public records. In Norway records of the Lutheran State Church are treated as records of the state administration, other churches – as records of private entities.

The principles of the records appraisal and selection of the legislative bodies, state (public) administration, courts, public notaries and B.D.M. registers are as follows:

Country	Legislative records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1				1		
Bulgaria		1			1		
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia		1		1	1		
Finland			1			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1			1	1		
Italy	1	1		1	1		
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	
Portugal		1	1	1	1		
Romania							1
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1			1		
Slovenia							1
Spain, Andalusia		1			1		
Sweden	1						
Switzerland		1					
Ukraine	1						
United Kingdom	1			1			
total	9	13	3	9	12	5	5

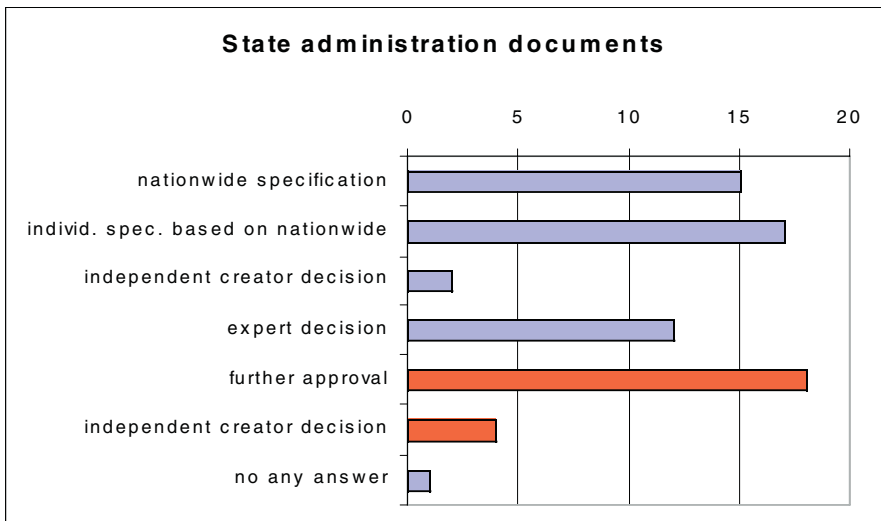
1 – answer “yes”



Country	State administration documents						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1			1	1		
Bulgaria		1			1		
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia		1		1	1		
Finland	1	1				1	
France	1	1		1	1		
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1			1	1		
Italy	1	1		1	1		
Latvia	1			1	1		
Liechtenstein		1			1		
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			

Poland	1				1		
Portugal		1	1	1	1		
Romania	1	1			1		
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1	1		1		
Slovenia	1	1			1		
Spain, Andalusia		1			1		
Sweden	1						
Switzerland		1					
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom	1			1	1		
total	15	17	2	12	18	4	1

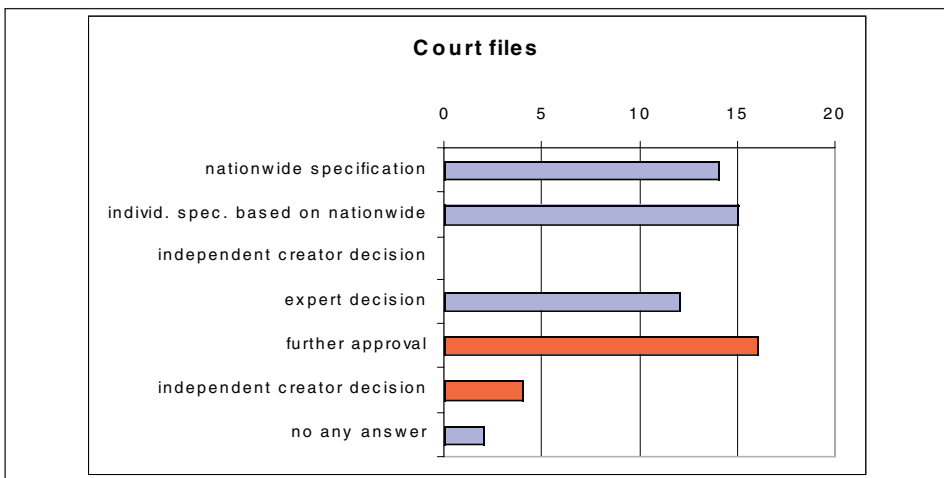
1 – answer “yes”



Country	Court files						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	

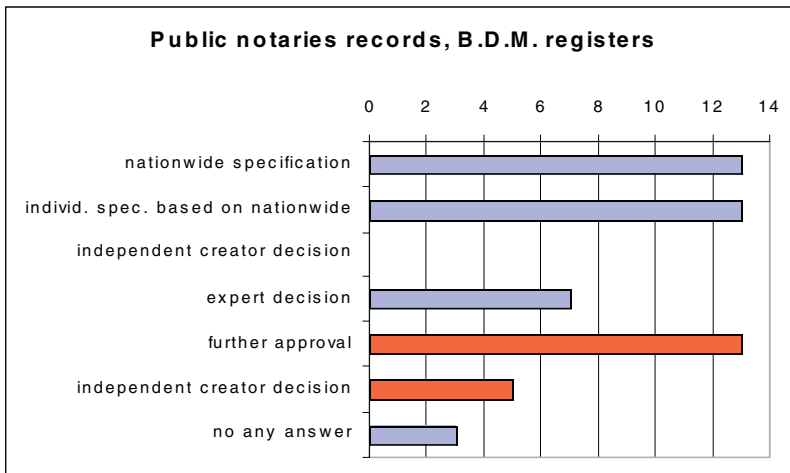
Belgium	1			1	1		
Bulgaria		1			1		
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia		1		1	1		
Finland	1	1				1	
France							1
Germany, Baden- -Wurtemberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1			1	1		
Italy	1	1		1	1		
Latvia	1			1	1		
Liechtenstein		1			1		
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			
Poland	1				1		
Portugal		1		1	1		
Romania	1	1			1		
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1		1			
Slovenia	1	1			1		
Spain, Andalusia				1	1		
Sweden	1						
Switzerland		2					
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom	1			1	1		
total	14	15	0	12	16	4	2

1 – answer “yes”



Country	Public notaries records and land and mortgage registers						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1				1		
Bulgaria		1			1		
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia		1		1	1		
Finland	1					1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia	1				1		
Liechtenstein		1			1		
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			
Poland	1				1		
Portugal		1		1	1		
Romania	1	1			1		
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1		1			
Slovenia	1					1	
Spain, Andalusia		1			1		
Sweden	1						
Switzerland		2					
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom	1			1	1		
total	13	13	0	7	13	5	3

1 – answer “yes”



### **Archival holdings development policy and collection principles**

In the majority of responding countries, archival material collection policy is determined on the nationwide level. Two general criteria are taken into account in those strategies: the criterion, which may be referred to as the structural one, based on social, political, etc. role and significance of the author of materials, and the one referring to the function, contents and character of documents themselves. In the prevailing number of countries participating in the survey, the group of authors of documents of archival value, designated for perpetual preservation at historical archives, includes legislative authority bodies (legislature), public, government and self-government administration offices and institutions (executive), and judicial authorities. Differences in approach to that group of record producers, as it was indicated above, exist in few countries (Finland, France, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom, as mentioned above), only as regards the indication of the body responsible for the collection of those materials.

Records of notaries and public registry records (B.M.D. registers), regardless of the legal status of their producer, are also usually designated for perpetual preservation.

Laws on archives or on public records (the United Kingdom) constitute legal grounds for national archives collection strategies in those countries in which such strategies have been adopted. General schedules of records or general plans of records (Federal States in Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal) are basic legal instruments of the national holdings development.

In those countries which have their national strategies, differences in approach to archival material collection exist with reference to other categories of record producers than those mentioned above. They include such authors as private institutions and individuals, scientific institutes, enterprises, political parties, associations and unions, churches and denominations. This diversity is usually deter-

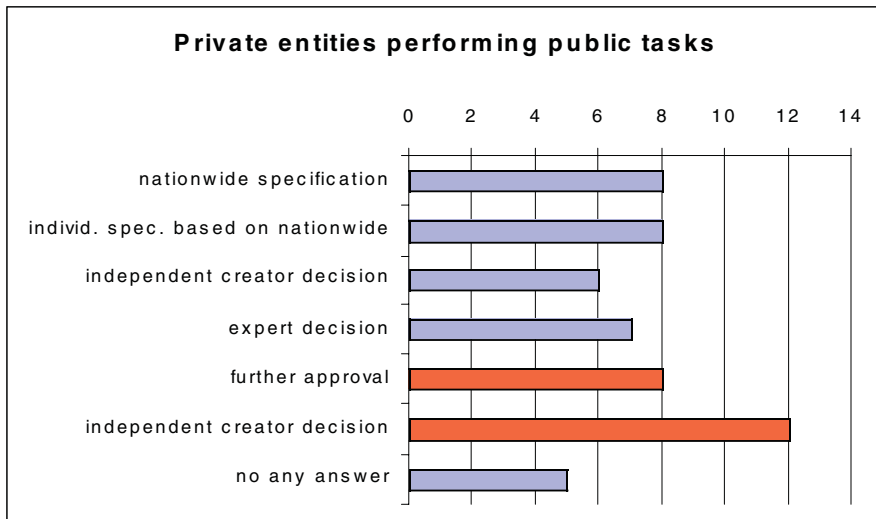
mined by the tradition of an archival system functioning in a given country. The legislation on archives, based on that tradition, in many different ways designates the scope of authors obliged by law to collect and protect documents produced and to transfer materials of lasting value to historical archives. The above also signifies the obligation imposed on those institutions to follow the archival qualification procedure of documents produced, as specified by law and under the supervision of authorized bodies of the State (national archives, in the majority of cases). One may distinguish two prevailing models: the first model being the one, in which the term “authors of national archival holdings” refers to all institutions producing documents, regardless of their legal or ownership status, etc. In such systems of archives, documents of almost all such institutions are subjected to appraisal from the point of view of their historical value, although it does not mean that they will be in whole recognized as historical documents (Belarus, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia). In practice, the size of archival holdings of private provenance is much smaller than the size of holdings coming from authors from the state and public sphere. In Andalusia, private archives, by virtue of the law, become the national heritage and are subjected to perpetual preservation after 100 years of their preservation by the author. The other approach consists in limiting the term of authors of national holdings to public institutions mostly (state institutions or those of public character). That is the case, among others, in Belgium, Norway and the United Kingdom. The inclusion of currently produced materials of private authors to historical archives is effected there only in extraordinary cases, specified by law, such as the liquidation of the author and the lack of any successor, giving up records, nationalisation, etc.

The principles of collecting documents produced by authors from outside the sphere of public bodies and institutions are significantly varied in different countries. They are as follows:

Country	Private entities performing public tasks records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1			1	1	1	
Bulgaria			1			1	
Croatia			1			1	

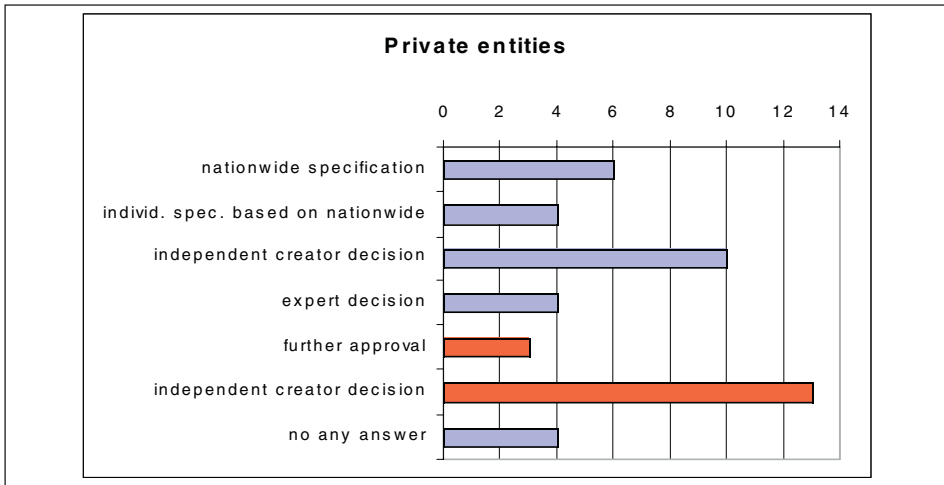
Estonia			1			1	
Finland			1			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden- -Wurtenberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	
Portugal			1	1	1	1	
Romania	1						1
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia	1	1			1		
Spain, Andalusia			1			1	
Sweden							
Switzerland							
Ukraine		1		1	1		
United Kingdom	1			1	1		
total	8	8	6	7	8	12	5

1 – answer “yes”



Country	Private entities records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra			1			1	
Belarus			1			1	
Belgium	1			1	1		
Bulgaria			1			1	
Croatia			1			1	
Estonia			1			1	
Finland			1			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg			1			1	
Germany, Saxony							
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania		1				1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	
Portugal			1			1	
Romania	1					1	
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia	1						
Spain, Andalusia			1			1	
Sweden							
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom		1			1		
total	6	4	10	4	3	13	4

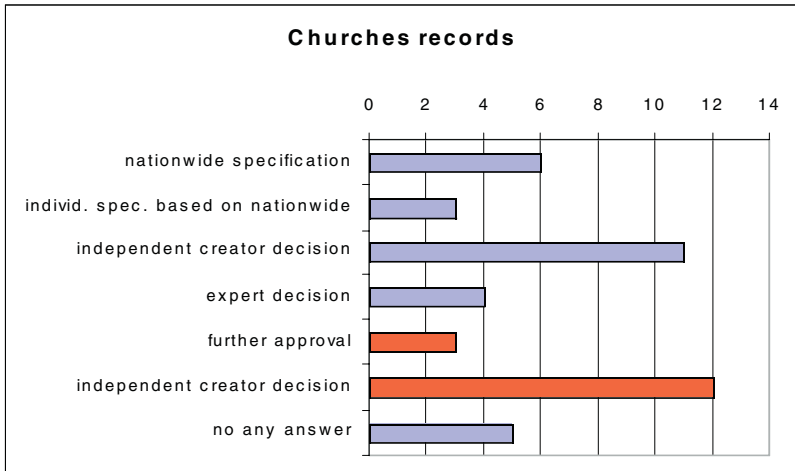
1 – answer “yes”



Country	Churches and religious communities records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra			1			1	
Belarus			1			1	
Belgium		1			1		
Bulgaria			1		1	1	
Croatia			1	1		1	
Estonia			1	1		1	
Finland	1a		1b			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg			1			1	
Germany, Saxony							
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania**	1		1			1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	

Portugal			1			1	
Romania			1			1	
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia			1			1	
Spain, Andalusia	1						
Sweden	1						
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom							1
total	6	3	11	4	3	12	5

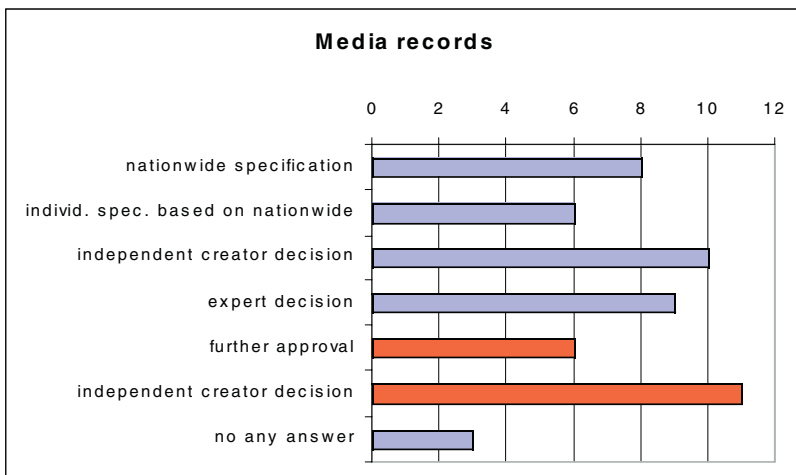
1 – answer “yes” \*\* nationwide spec. for state church <sup>a</sup> For the Orthodox Church <sup>b</sup> For the Evangelic-Lutheran Church



Country	Mass media records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra			1			1	
Belarus			1			1	
Belgium	1				1		

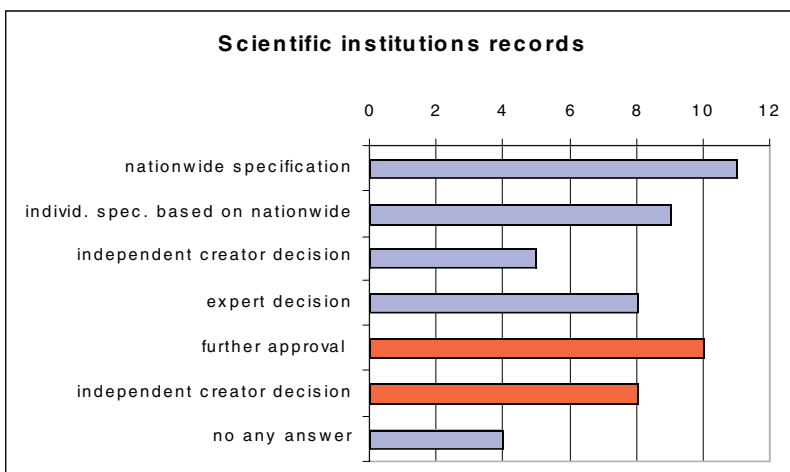
Bulgaria			1			1	
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia				1		1	
Finland			1			1	
France	1	1		1	1		
Germany, Baden- -Wurtenberg		1				1	
Germany, Saxony							
Hungary	1			1			
Italy	1	1		1	1		
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania			1			1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	
Portugal			1	1	1	1	
Romania			1			1	
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1	1				
Slovenia	1						
Spain, Andalusia			1			1	
Sweden							
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom							1
total	8	6	10	9	6	11	3

1 – answer “yes”



Country	Scientific institutions records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra	1	1		1	1		
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1				1		
Bulgaria			1			1	
Croatia	1	1		1	1		
Estonia			1			1	
Finland	1					1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg			1			1	
Germany, Saxony							
Hungary				1	1		
Italy	1	1		1	1		
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania	1					1	
Norway				1			
Poland		1	1		1	1	
Portugal			1	1	1	1	
Romania		1			1		
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia	1				1		
Spain, Andalusia		1			1		
Sweden	1						
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom							1
total	11	9	5	8	10	8	4

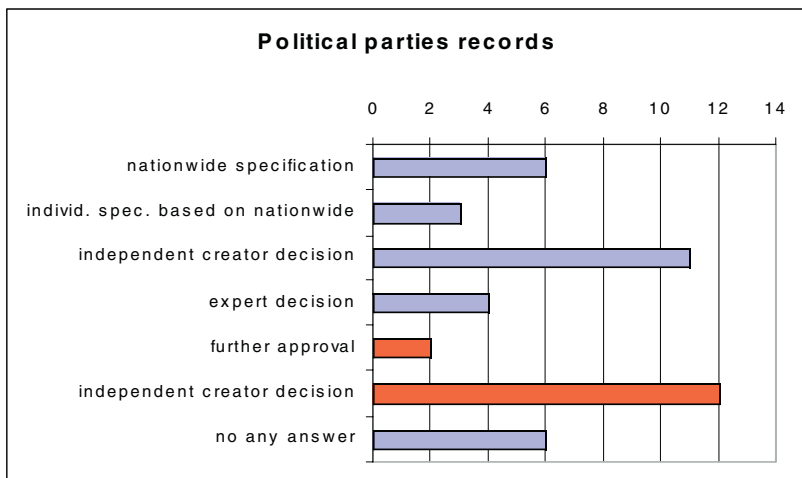
1 – answer “yes”



Country	Political parties records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra			1			1	
Belarus		1				1	
Belgium	1			1	1		
Bulgaria			1			1	
Croatia			1			1	
Estonia			1			1	
Finland			1			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden-Wurtemberg			1			1	
Germany, Saxony							1
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania			1			1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	

Portugal			1			1	
Romania			1			1	
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia	1						
Spain, Andalusia			1			1	
Sweden	1						
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom							1
total	6	3	11	4	2	12	6

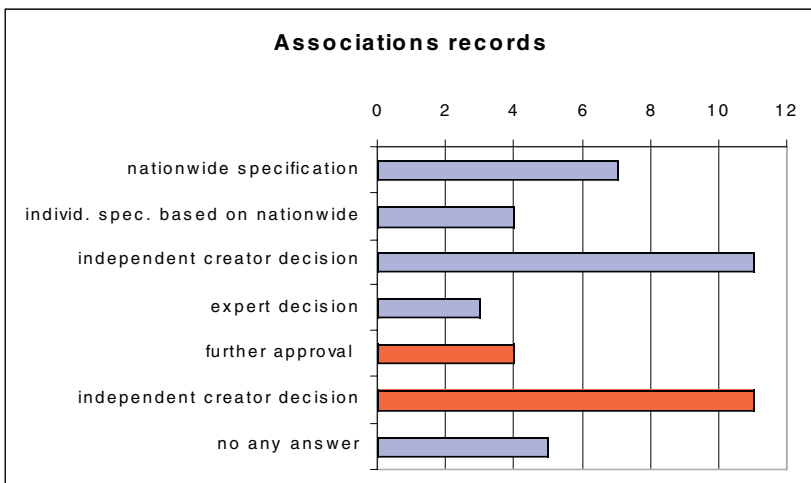
1 – answer “yes”



Country	Associations records						
	The way of process				destruction decision		
	nationwide specification	individ. spec. based on nationwide	independent creator decision	expert decision	further approval	independent creator decision	no answer
Andorra			1			1	
Belarus		1	1			1	
Belgium	1				1		
Bulgaria			1			1	

Croatia	1	1			1		
Estonia			1			1	
Finland			1			1	
France							1
Germany, Baden- -Wurtenberg			1			1	
Germany, Saxony					1		
Hungary	1						
Italy							1
Latvia		1		1	1		
Liechtenstein							1
Lithuania			1			1	
Norway				1			
Poland			1			1	
Portugal			1			1	
Romania			1			1	
Russia, Udmurtia							1
Slovak Republic	1	1					
Slovenia	1						
Spain, Andalusia			1			1	
Sweden	1						
Switzerland							
Ukraine	1			1			
United Kingdom							1
total	7	4	11	3	4	11	5

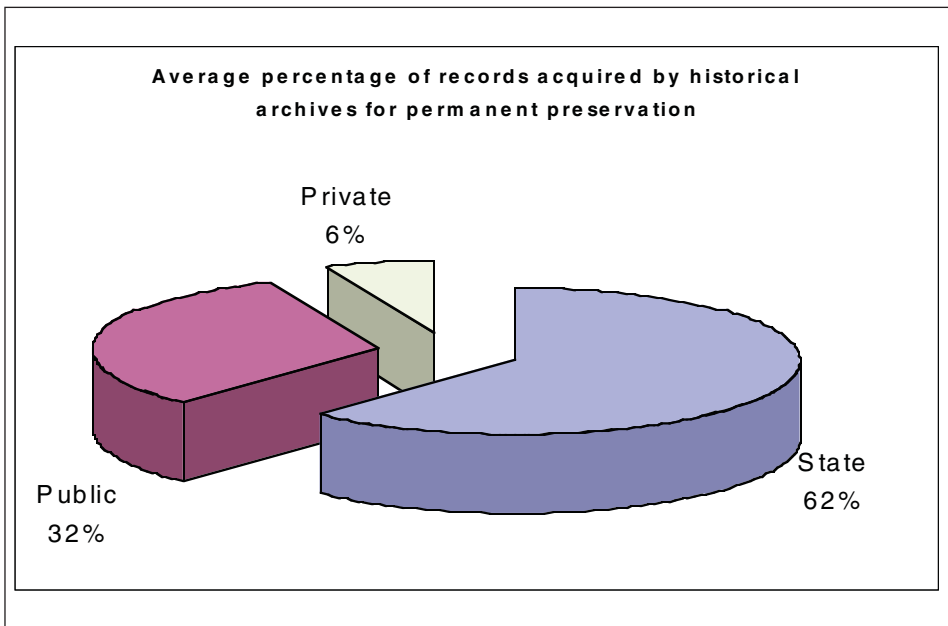
1 – answer “yes”



In the surveyed countries, records produced by state and public institutions are qualified for perpetual preservation in a much higher percentage than those produced by private authors.

In Andorra, Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Portugal, Saxony, Slovenia, Udmurtia and the United Kingdom the size of the records intended for permanent preservation oscillates in the limits of 50–90% for the state and public creators and 5–30 % for the records of private creators. In some countries, the percentage of records from state and public institutions collected at historical archives oscillates below 50%, and about 5–10 % from private entities. This is so in Baden, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia.

Although not all of the respondents have such estimates (Andalusia, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Poland), the diagram presented below reveals that documents produced by those institutions mostly are collected at historical archives.



The principles of historical archives collection in different countries are described below.

**Slovenia:** basic elements of the general policy on archival holdings collection are determined by the law on archives. It defines materials of perpetual preservation as those which are of historical value for science and culture.

**Russia:** the law on archives and regulatory provisions provide that archival materials included into the national archival holdings of the Russian Federation are collected on the basis of the following criteria:

- criterion of the author’s significance, taking into account functions performed (special role or standard character), importance of a person in social life (in the case of documents of private individuals),
- criterion of the date and place of record creation,
- criterion of the contents of a document, consisting of the value of information included therein (unique or standard), recurrence of information in other documents, function of a document, its original character,
- criterion of the external character of a document, such as the form of data fixation, transmission, attestation, external attributes, physical condition of a document.

Those criteria apply to all authors of documents, regardless of their legal status or the form of ownership.

**Slovakia:** the archival holdings collection strategy is based on two general criteria:

- criterion of the archival value of a document,
- classification of authors of documents, taking into account their place and functions in the State and significance for the society, culture, etc.

**Romania:** general collection principles are determined by the law on archives. The most essential criterion is the historical value of information included in a document.

**Lithuania:** uniform archives collection criteria are set forth in provisions related to the archiving of documents by their authors (provisions on chanceries and archives). They are under the obligation of getting the approval of the Directorate of Archives of Lithuania. According to the provisions, documents which need to be archived are those which meet the following criteria:

- they are of practical value for the author’s administrative and information purposes,
- they document and evidence functions, competences and activity of the author,
- they serve the purpose of protecting the citizens’ rights,
- they are of historical value as sources to studies,
- they constitute the evidence on and the source of information on the policy, relations, responsibility and activity of the author.

**Estonia:** no general archival holdings collection strategy has been adopted. General criteria are determined by the law on archives, specified in more detail under regulatory provisions. Competences and responsibilities with respect to the setting of collection criteria, referring to individual institutions, have been entrusted to public archives and they are set forth in respective provisions on chanceries and archives.

**Hungary:** no general historical archives collection strategy has been adopted. However, all public institutions are obliged to use lists (specifications) of

records approved by the National Archives. They constitute the basis for the selection of documents produced by those institutions. Lists of records classify current production of records into subject groups and classes according to the types of records, and they also systematize documents according to the scope of responsibility, competences and organisational structure of a given public institution. Lists of records specify life cycles of documents – their usefulness for the activity of the author, upon the expiry of which documents may be weeded (those of no historical value) and periods of the preservation of documents of lasting value by the author, upon the expiry of which, documents are transferred to historical archives. There are no precisely defined classification criteria for individual documents to be classified as materials of lasting value. They should be materials of significance from the point of view of economy, society, politics, science, culture, etc., indispensable for historical studies. Furthermore, while designating perpetual documents in lists of records, such criteria are taken into consideration as the one of preserving documents necessary for the implementation of certain functions of the State in the future and protection of civil rights.

**Austria:** there are no general provisions in force on the federal level pertaining to the national archival holdings collection. The only exception is the law on courts, which sets forth uniform criteria of archiving court files. Provisions which would determine the principles of the collection of materials produced after 1945 by the State Archives in Austria are currently under discussion. Individual provinces (Federal States) issue separate legal regulations referring to the principles of archiving some types of documents (social security and health insurance, civil status records, accounting and financial records, etc.). Individual Federal States, however, vary in that respect to a significant extent.

**The United Kingdom:** the main goal of the general public records collection strategy, adopted at the governmental level, is to secure documents reflecting main policies and activities of the central UK Government, the sphere of mutual relations between the State and the citizens, as well as the condition of and changes in the natural environment. This strategy includes two groups of issues: 1) administrative processes and the policies of the State; 2) mutual relations between the State and the citizens, communities and organisations, reaching beyond formal, official procedures, and the influence of the State on the environment. Documents which reflect the administrative context of politics (in particular those pertaining to the most important reforms of the organisational structure of the State) and court files are also collected.

Collection themes include:

1) State management policies and processes: development of those policies, public resources management by executive agencies, administration of economy, foreign relations and security policy, administration of justice and ensuring internal security, determination and implementation of social security policy, cultural policy,

2) relations between the State and the citizens and the influence of the State on the environment: economic, social and demographic situation in the United Kingdom as the evidence of mutual relations between the institutions of the State and the citizens, communities and organisations; influence of the State on the development of the environment.

The above themes include documents produced by public authors. Institutions covered with collection processes are specified in the public records law (in the general list being the attachment thereto). The list includes, first of all, authors producing official documents: the central Government, ministries, commissions and other government institutions, courts and such institutions as the National Health Service, national museums, etc. The records of the Parliament are not considered as public records.

**Norway:** the archival holdings development strategy is currently under preparation.

**Udmurtia:** the archival holdings collection policy is based on the following general criteria: value of a document as a historical source, record provenance, information content and external character of a document.

**Belarus:** the archival holdings development policy is based on uniform criteria: significance of the author of documents, contents and external character of a document.

**Andorra:** there are no uniform record collection criteria. The National Archives are currently carrying out work on the examination of the condition and contents of current records of public administration offices and institutions. On that basis, the general national archival holdings development strategy is planned to be worked out. The main, currently used criterion of record archiving is the collection and preservation of materials produced before 1984 (the date of the establishment of the Government of Andorra and the transfer of competences and functions from the Parliament to executive bodies).

**Macedonia:** the archival holdings collection principles are determined by the law on archives and provisions on the production and protection of documents and archives. They set general criteria of the archival value of documents: significance of the place and date of creation, provenance, information value, etc.

**Portugal:** no national collection policy has been formulated. The law provides for the obligation of transferring materials of lasting value for the State and regional authorities, such as records of tribunals, the police, public (B.R.D) registers and notaries' files, records of subordinated institutions and private archives of historical value to the national and public (departmental) archives.

**Andalusia:** the general strategy specifies uniform criteria of the archival holdings collection. They are included in the “Plan of Identification and Appraisal of Series of Documents”. The “Plan” refers to the appraisal and selection of public documents and it does not apply to private authors. It does not specify detailed appraisal procedures for each category of documents included in the “Plan”. Their actual selection is made by the Administrative Records Qualification Committee (except for documents of scientific institutes).

**France:** the determination of the general archives collection policy, in compliance with the law on archives, belongs to the competence of the Directorate of Archives of France. That body, in consultation with interested ministries and institutions, issues instructions related to the archiving and weeding of particular types of records created by them. The principles of selection and qualification included in those instructions take into account the needs of the authors of records and the goal to preserve materials of historical value. Instructions cover such types of materials as court files, records of educational institutions, election records, or modern town planning materials, according to the recently issued instruction. The archival qualification of materials of lasting value is made on the basis of two general criteria: the functional one, referring to the value of a document as the evidence, significance and functionality of a document for the activity of its author, and the criterion of contents, consisting in the appraisal of the information value of a document.

**Saxony:** no general archival holdings collection policy. The basic legal act is the law on archives of Saxony, constituting the grounds for the appraisal and selection of documents to be preserved perpetually.

**Bulgaria:** uniform criteria of appraisal and selection of materials for perpetual preservation are applied. They include the following elements: significance of the author of documents, significance of the event reflected in the message, date and place of the creation of a document, its information value, state of preservation, contents, legal value and physical condition.

**Belgium:** no special criteria are used for the appraisal of records to be allocated for perpetual preservation at historical archives. Each author of documents is responsible to archive the records produced.

**Liechtenstein:** the general archival holdings collection strategy, formulated by the National Archives, sets uniform criteria of appraisal of the archival value of documents. In accordance with those criteria, the significance of the author of materials (priorities are determined by the National Archives) is assessed on the one hand, and the value of the document itself, on the other hand. In view of the above, materials qualified for perpetual preservation include administration, legislative records, records of decision-making processes, etc.

**Baden:** the general records collection strategy is based on the model of “vertical and horizontal” appraisal. Archives of a given office are assessed with respect to their archival value upon the expiry of their “life cycle”, i.e. the periods of their usefulness for the current operation of the author, as specified in plans of records. The appraisal is performed by public archives. Competences and functions of the author are analyzed. On those grounds, records of organizational units which best reflect a given domain of the activity of the State, or social and economic life, etc. are selected. That stage of the appraisal procedure is called the vertical appraisal. Documents which are of the greatest information value as the evidence and messages informing on particular aspects of the authors’ activity are qualified for perpetual preservation (horizontal appraisal). Selected materials are specific for their high information value, often being quite insignificant in size. Thus, any excessive collection of printed documents may be avoided.

**Croatia:** the general archival holdings collection principles are based on four criteria: the role of the author of documents in the area of that author’s activity, completeness of collected documents as the source of knowledge on the author’s functions, competences and activity, documentary and information value of records, and the significance of the date of its establishment.

**Poland:** the general archival holdings collection policy is based on the provisions of the law on archives. The General Director of the State Archives issues a legal act including an exemplary list of records with the preservation periods of records and their archival value specified. Referring to that legal act, individual authors are obliged to prepare their own lists of records subject to the approval by the state archives. They are also authorised to control the protection and preservation conditions with respect to the documents produced. The law on archives specifies the group of authors bound by the provisions thereof. They are legislative and executive bodies of the State, self-government administration, institutions of culture and science of public character, and companies with the State Treasury as the majority shareholder. Appraisal criteria are based on the tradition of the European organization of archives and refer, first of all, to the value of a document as the source for historical studies. Such criteria as standard or unique character of a document and the importance of the date and place of the event reflected in a document are also taken into account while both classifying authors of documents and making the appraisal of documents themselves.

**Finland:** the mission of the National Archives Service is to preserve the archival materials significant for individuals and society in a compact and usable form. The collection policy is based on the General Records Management Schedules, approved by the National Archives Service. The particular ministries are obliged to prepare records management schedules, which have an individual character for a given institution. According to the archival

law, individual records management schedules must be approved by the institutions of the state administration and public sphere.

**Ukraine:** the general principles of the archival material collection policy are based on two legislative acts: Law of the National Archival Fonds and Archival Institutions and Law on Ensurance Fond of Documentation. This law determined two general criteria: historical and cultural value of the records. The appraisal of documents is based on the nationwide, uniform general records schedules. This procedure applies to the materials created by institutions from public sphere (legislative, executive, courts etc.) as well private creators. In addition, in respect of photographs, video and phono documents the Law on Obligatory Copy of Documents is applied, according to which all creators of this type of documents, public as well as private institutions and individual persons have the obligation to transfer a copy of materials to Central State Archives of Audiovisual Documents. Special provisions concern civil registers and notary records. The latter are collected in the regional state notary archives after 75 years from their creation.

**Italy:** the general principles of archival holdings collection policy are based on the general records schedules (documents selection schedules), covering all records creators, independently of their legal status. For the creators from the public sphere these schedules have a nationwide character. They are the ground for the appraisal and selection of documents. Moreover individual records schedules are issued, concerning special types of documents. They cover almost all types of records considered in the survey, such as fiscal, bussines, civil etc. documentation. Private creators issued their own schedules, based on the uniform nationwide recommendations.

The procedures and processes of taking over documents of historical value by public archives are the consequence of historical holdings collection principles as adopted in particular countries. In some countries, the provisions in force provide for one period for all the types of documents, regardless of the character of the author, purpose, function or contents. That period is the following: 40 years in Finland, 20 years in Estonia and in Macedonia, 25 years in Norway and in Poland, 15 years in Lithuania and in Hungary, 30 years in the United Kingdom and in Croatia, 10 years in Latvia and in Liechtenstein.

Public (civil) registry records and B.M.D. registers are the exception here, as such periods with respect to them in some countries are much longer – from 75 up to even 130 years.

In the remaining countries, periods upon the expiry of which documents of lasting value are transferred to historical archives vary depending on the type of the author and the document:

Belarus – from 30 years (for materials of central offices) to 5 years (institutions of a local character),

Baden – usually 10 years, not longer than 30,

Andalusia – 30 years, documents of churches, denominations, political parties and private associations – 50 years,

Udmurtia – 15 years (administration records), 25 years – designs, 15 years – construction records, 10 years – photographs and films, 3 years – audio-visual records,

Romania – 30 years – administration records, 50 years – technical documentation,

Bulgaria – 10 years – central administration records, 5 years – records of local self-governments, audio-visual records, 25 years – technical documentation, 20 years – magnetic carriers.

Russia – there are several periods which have to be observed depending on the author, type of documents and the carrier. In general, 10–15 years – for public administration records, 5–3 years – for documents other than paper ones.

Ukraine – from 3 to 15 years.

Italy – generally the archival materials are transferred to the historical archives after 40 years from their creation. For the particular types of not paper records these periods are 5, 10 or 20 years.

In some countries, there are no standard periods effective with respect to the transfer of materials for perpetual preservation at public archives. They are transferred upon the expiry of their life cycle (usefulness for the author). Such solutions have been adopted in Portugal, France, Slovakia (usually 5 years), Belgium, Saxony and Slovenia.

In the surveyed countries, procedures of handling documents of liquidated authors are similar. Whenever a liquidated institution has no legal successor, materials of lasting value are taken over by the National Archives. Materials of temporary value are transferred to a founding institution or a superior body towards the institution under liquidation and entrusted to local (municipal) authorities held liable for the protection, preservation and use of such documents. In Romania, different types of records are transferred to competent state bodies: financial and payroll records – to the state pension authority, economic records – to the registration body for business entities. In some countries (Andorra, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal) all the documents are taken over by public archives. The procedure with respect to documents of privatised institutions and state enterprises is, in general, common for the majority of former socialist countries, in which the economic transformation processes and the transfer to market economy were very intense during the last 10–15 years. In those countries, the division of resources of a privatised unit is usually effected – materials of lasting value dated before the privatisation date are taken over by public archives. In Slovenia, one date only has been determined – the year of 1991, when the new constitution of independent Slovenia was enacted. Archival materials requisite for the current operations of private owners are entrusted to such persons on the basis of deposits (lending). Upon the expiry of preservation periods provided by law, they are returned to public archives. In some other countries, provisions

provide for the takeover of the entire documentation (perpetual and temporary) by a private owner. That is the case in Romania and Slovakia, however, the new owner is obliged to preserve the materials acquired at his own repository or current archives. In the United Kingdom and Bulgaria, and partly in Croatia, handling procedures with respect to documents in the event of privatisation or liquidation are not governed by the law on archives but by the economic law. It is a creditors' or a liquidation agreement which determine the future of documents. No special procedures in the event of privatisation are provided for under the legislations of Andalusia, Andorra, Belgium, Liechtenstein, Norway, Portugal, and Saxony. In Finland, if there is no legal successor, it is the duty of National Archives Service (central archives or provincial archives) to take over the archival materials of such governmental institutions. However, there are no specific regulation on this matter in Archives Law. In the case of privatization, the company that takes over the business work is responsible for the records of privatized institutions. The company is responsible for the selection, weeding and arranging those records before they can be transferred to the National Archives Service.

In general, historical archives of responding countries do not take over documents of temporary value under the statutory procedure. In some countries, as discussed below, such documents are taken over under separate provisions in the circumstances set forth therein. Such circumstances include the liquidation and the privatisation of the author of documents.

In Bulgaria, Latvia and Russia temporary documents may be, in a usual course, taken over by public archives as a deposit, under a relevant agreement concluded between the archives and the producer of records. In Poland, public archives are allowed by law to take over and service temporary documents against payment. In Andalusia and Andorra, temporary documents are preserved at transition archives (included into the public archives network) until the expiry of due preservation periods. In Estonia, the above refers only to the case of the liquidation of the author of materials and the lack of any successor, in Bulgaria – to privatisation (against payment), and in Liechtenstein – for legal and administrative reasons providing for the preservation period of 20–35 years for some types of records. In Ukraine, although the state archives don't take over records for temporary preservation, there are special archives (named labour archives) newly established for the temporary preservation of personal files.

### **Electronic documents (e-records) and electronic archives**

In very few out of the surveyed countries, issues of handling electronic documents at the author's registry, the collection, preservation and protection of electronic archives and the transfer thereof to historical archives are regulated by legal provisions.

At present, such countries as Andalusia, Andorra, Belgium, Baden, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Russia, Saxony, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Udmurtia have no special legislation in that respect.

In some countries, the creation of documents on electronic carriers is performed under detailed internal regulations of public administration authorities and offices (Russia). Similarly as in the case of their transfer to historical archives: decisions on the takeover of electronic archives are with respect to individual cases, made by the archives (Andalusia, Belgium, Baden, Russia, Udmurtia).

In the group of countries in which legal standard regulations have been adopted with respect to a widely understood electronic document (databases and electronic archives), the scope of such regulations varies. In the majority of cases, they refer to issues which are not directly related to the collection of records recorded on modern carriers for archival purposes. Those regulations usually cover three basic aspects: electronic signature, public (state) registers and records kept in the form of electronic databases, and protection of personal data. In some countries, the law has been enforced referring to problems of electronic archival records. However, the United Kingdom and Norway are the only countries in which standards defining procedures and technologies of the transfer of historical materials on electronic carriers are in force.

The current situation in that respect in individual countries is discussed below.

**Croatia:** only one act on the electronic signature is currently in force. Legislative efforts are being continued on other legal acts: the act on electronic transactions and the regulation on records management at public institutions. However, they include no detailed provisions on the appraisal of electronic records. Such materials are handled in the same manner as any others – regardless of the carrier. Public archives take over documents recorded on electronic carriers, no special regulations, however, have been adopted in that respect.

**Romania:** there are two acts in force: on the electronic signature and on electronic archives. Those provisions are currently incomplete, and data on their practical enforcement are missing. Historical archives take over documents on electronic carriers, there are, however, no special regulations or standards in that respect.

**Latvia:** a Government regulation on the archival qualification and selection of electronic documents is currently under preparation. It will set forth general requirements regarding the preservation of digital data by their authors, as well as the terms of appraisal of their archival value and procedures of transferring them to historical archives. As regards electronic databases, there are many provisions in force, which regulate the handling of data collected, stored and processed in electronic public (state) registers and records. They refer to population records, nationality, public elections and polls, registration of business entities, public statistics, fiscal system, social security and health insurance, mortgage and notarial registers. Data protection is governed by the Personal

Data Protection Act, which brought the State Data Inspection to existence. Its competences include control over the processes of data collection, processing and storage. The Act also provides that the decision, procedures and terms of the transfer of electronic registers to historical archives are specified by the said Inspection in consultation with the Directorate of the State Archives of Latvia. At present, the transfer of e-archives to historical archives is not regulated by law. Relevant national provisions are being prepared by the State Archives of Latvia.

**Lithuania:** there are two legal acts in force which refer to electronic documents and databases. The first one is the act on public (state) registers which regulates the structure, organisation and liquidation of registers kept in the form of electronic databases. The other one is the act on the electronic signature. At present, Lithuanian Archives do not take over documents recorded on electronic carriers, there are also no special legal regulations in that respect.

**Estonia:** only the act on databases is in force, referring to registers and records. Electronic archives are not taken over for perpetual preservation.

**The United Kingdom:** in 2001, the Public Records Law (of 1958) was amended allowing for the production of public records on electronic carriers. Special provisions on e-records will be included in the Law on the National Archives, which is currently under preparation. The Public Record Office takes over archive materials on electronic carriers. Transfer technologies are determined by the PRO in consultation with the Office of e-Envoy. The application of the Dublin Core standard is required with respect to metadata.

**Belarus:** issues related to the creation and preservation of documents on electronic carriers are regulated by the act on e-records. Furthermore, some national standards have been implemented referring to the technology of electronic signatures, documents, etc. Historical archives take over materials on electronic carriers, and any technological requirements in that respect are determined by the Committee on Archives and Office Management.

**Portugal:** some general standards pertaining to the creation and use of electronic documents have been set forth only in acts and regulatory provisions on the operations of the ministries of science and technology, finance and justice. Historical archives do not take over any such documents.

**Bulgaria:** the act on the electronic signature and e-records is the only one in force.

**France:** special rules of handling e-records are set forth in the amendment enacted in 2000 to the Act No. 79–18 of 1979 (Law on Archives). Article 4–1 of that amendment provides that any collections of data, including those created

with the use of computer technology are subjected to the principles and procedures of their appraisal, selection and qualification for permanent preservation in compliance with relevant provisions as applicable in the case of documents on other carriers. Information content of such collections is the subject of the appraisal procedure carried out to assess its scientific value, historical value, etc. Data included in such data collections may be deleted upon the expiry of their life cycle under the same rules as in the case of current records on traditional carriers (under the supervision of a competent archival administration body). Separate legislation is in force with respect to databases. It applies to population records and agricultural statistics. A special committee (CNIL), being an independent public administration body, exercises control over the data collected in such electronic databases. In December 1986, a new decree entered into force, which imposed upon individual ministers the responsibility for the development of the information system in respective offices subordinated to them. One of the essential aspects of that system operation was to facilitate communication along the line: the public administration – a citizen. In August 1998, MTIC was established (Interministerial Mission for the Development of Computer Technologies and Information in Administration), which aimed at the development of standards necessary in the spontaneously growing computer science. In January 1999, the ADER program (Administration in the Network) was made operational, the next step on that road was the establishment of a special Agency for Computer Technologies and Information in Administration – ATICA, in August 2001, which replaced MTIC, taking over its competences.

**Macedonia:** the principles of handling e-records in public administration are set forth in relevant provisions concerning the integrated national information system. As regards technology, the system is based on an object-oriented model, client-server methodology and the use of relational databases. The system is currently under implementation. At present, the State Archives of Macedonia do not take over any electronic documents or databases: they are made available to the Archives.

**Finland:** digital materials are transferred to the National Archives Service for permanent custody. There are the special rules for materials on the digital carriers. Transfer media: open reel tape, 3,81 DDS (Digital Data Storage) data cartridge, 8 mm data cartridge (Exabyte), CD-R. Transferred materials must be accompanied with relevant documentation (general description of data system and technical documentation). For the text files there are standards: ISO 8859-1 and ISO 8859-15 (character sets), 8-bit ASCII and HTML (text format). Actually, National Archives Service does not accept pictures files for permanent preservation. However, for digital preservation, JPEG and TIFF formats are recommended. In the respect of databases, only two dimensional flat files are accepted. Relational databases must be computed into two dimensional files and relevant documentation is required.

**Poland:** There are somewhere from ten to twenty legal acts and regulatory provisions pertaining to electronic documents and databases. They may be divided into three groups. The first group comprises legal regulations including standards of general character. They are the following ones: the Act on the Electronic Signature, the Act on Databases, and the Personal Data Protection Act. The other group comprises several dozens legal acts of various rank (acts, ordinances), which regulate issues related to the keeping of various public (state) registers and records in the form of electronic databases, starting from the register of dentists, through the register of motor vehicles, IACS register, and ending with the register of convicted persons. All the provisions of that type regulate in detail the collection, storage, processing and protection of data included in such databases. They do not, however, regulate problems related to the archiving of databases. The third group includes provisions on chanceries of central and local administration offices, issued in the form of standards of the Ministry of Interior and Administration. They standardise various aspects of the use of e-records and computer technology in the chancery of a modern Polish office of a local level and the scope of such use. It should be stated, however, that those provisions also pass over archiving of e-records in silence. In 2001, a new body was set up in Poland to deal with e-Government issues – the Minister for Computerisation. His responsibilities include issues related to the computerization of public administration, including problems pertaining to e-records in modern chanceries and the protection and storage of such documents for archival purposes. In the new act on the computerization of public administration, which is currently under preparation, with the Head Office of the State Archives being involved in those efforts, special provisions will be incorporated authorizing the General Director of the State Archives to issue (jointly with the Minister for Computerization) nationwide provisions determining standards and procedures related to the protection and transfer of any digital documents and data of lasting value to historical archives. At present, public archives in Poland do not take over materials on electronic carriers for perpetual preservation in a systematized manner. Such accessions occur only in exceptional cases justified due to the durability of materials being threatened in any way. There are no special provisions or standards in force in that respect.

**Norway:** computer solutions for archives have been implemented relatively early as compared with other European countries. Pursuant to the Government Programme for the years 1999–2001: “e-Government – Intersectorial Development of Information Technology in Central Government Administration”, computerization covered the sphere of electronic documents and e-records management in public administration. Standardized procedures and requirements as well as the basic software for the creation, management and archiving of e-records – Norwegian Record-Keeping System – NOARK<sup>3</sup> were developed and brought to

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<sup>3</sup> Standardsystem for edb-basert journalsystem i statsforvaltningen. Samlet kravspesifikasjon [Standardized system of computerized records management system for the state administration. Complete specification of requirements].

operation with the participation of the National Archives. In addition, the National Archives developed their own standard – ADDMML (Archives Data Description and Manipulation Markup Language).

**Italy:** there exists the special government organ AIPA (Office on the Informatization), issuing legal regulations and recommendations concerning the protection and preservation of the electronic archives. This office is responsible for supervising protection and preservation procedures with respect to the data kept in the electronic databases. Special legal regulations concerning data protection in the electronic databases were issued in 2000. Moreover a special research team was established to deal with the implementation of ISO standards in electronic documents and archives.

In all the surveyed countries, historical archives use modern technologies to protect holdings. Although microfilming still remains the basic method of paper materials protection, data transfer to digital carriers, photographs and audio-visual records, first of all, gradually becomes more and more popular. The most common reason is the need to ensure better protection of original materials and their wider accessibility. However, in no country, the digital technology has replaced microfilming as the basic method of reproduction for protection purposes.

## **Records management systems**

Records management systems adopted by individual countries significantly vary. Differences refer to the principles of records handling at the author's registries, division of competences between the authors of documents and other bodies as regards the determination of chancery provisions, supervision over the holdings accumulated at registries of offices and institutions. Almost in all the countries, archival legislation in force imposes responsibility for proper protection and preservation of records upon their authors. It also imposes obligation to issue internal (intradepartmental) provisions which regulate the records management system and provisions on archives, pertaining to the archiving of materials of lasting value. General lists or plans of records (Baden, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Saxony) are the basic legal instrument governing the accumulated holdings of documents. The most common form of such lists are general lists pertaining to one ministry (department), together with its subordinated entities, in which records are systematized in series of records. One may distinguish the following different manners of such systematization (arrangement of records within the list): structural, reflecting the organizational structure of the author of documents (Andalusia, Portugal), functional, reflecting the function of a document in the performance of tasks of the institution which created that document (France), and subject one (Hungary, Poland), in which the subject-matter of the case that the records refer to is the most important criterion of arrangement. In the majority of countries, the systematization of documents within the lists and plans of records is of a mixed character, depending on the needs of the authors

of documents or the nature of documents themselves. Chanceries are usually kept in a non-journal based system.

In responding countries, one may distinguish several models of chancery organization systems at public administration offices and institutions:

**A centralized model** is characterized by the functioning of the central administration body responsible for handling documents accumulated at chanceries of public administration offices. In this model, that function is usually performed by the national archives (directorates or head offices of state archives). In some countries, (Saxony, Slovenia) – by different ministries or departments (of public administration, internal affairs). The competences of those bodies with respect to the supervision over the chancery system significantly vary in different countries.

The greatest centralization is to be found in Belarus. The Committee on Archives and Office Management attached to the Council of Ministers in Belarus is the body responsible for the chancery system at public administration offices. It issues provisions related to uniform principles of keeping chanceries of offices at all the levels of public administration. The Inspection for Archives and Office Management exercises control over the enforcement of those provisions as the body set up specifically for that purpose.

A similar model is effective in Lithuania, where the competences of the Directorate of the Archives of Lithuania include the issuance of uniform provisions pertaining to records management in public administration and the supervision over the creation and protection of current records. The Directorate of Archives determines and implements the national policy in the area of keeping the chancery of modern offices and the development of accumulated holdings. The general list of records with relevant preservation periods of documents at the registries of their authors is the basic legal instrument in that respect.

Polish solutions are similar to the Lithuanian ones, although the authorities and competences in respect of the setting of chancery rules are vested in several different bodies. The Head Office of the State Archives, as the Government administration body, issues general regulations, determining general chancery rules for public administration units, while public archives subordinated to the Head Office control the handling of current records at individual offices. Such authorities and competences are shared by the archival service with the Ministry of Public Administration, and, since recently – with the Ministry for Computerization (as regards uniform technological standards). The chancery system of a contemporary Polish office is based on the chancery of files kept in a non-journal based system. It should be emphasized that the authority of both the Head Office of the State Archives and the Ministries of Public Administration or the Ministry for Computerization refer exclusively to offices and institutions of the Government administration, self-government units and state enterprises. Institutions, enterprises and organizations acting beyond the public sphere are not bound by provisions on the management and archiving of current records. They are also not supervised by public archives in that respect.

However, they may voluntarily implement those provisions and submit themselves to the control exercised by public archives. It should be stated that an increasing number of private business entities, financial institutions, foundations, private schools and universities, etc., interested in the implementation of nationwide solutions in their chancery systems, have been recently reporting to public archives.

Andorra also represents the centralized model. The archival service, subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, includes: the National Historical Archives, Public Records Management Section, Current Record Archives, central Archives of the Government of Andorra. The responsibilities of the archival service include the preparation of draft regulations concerning the keeping of the chancery, as well as the supervision over the correctness of processes of creation and preservation of documents at the registries of authors, and the compliance thereof with the regulations and legal standards in force.

In Saxony and Slovakia, the rules of keeping the chancery are determined by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It issues general chancery provisions for public administration offices. The Ministry also exercises control over their due enforcement.

Similar solutions have been adopted in Slovenia, with the Ministry of Interior being the body responsible for the records management system in public administration. There is a special organisational unit functioning within the structure of the Ministry, set up for that very purpose – Public Administration Organization and Development Office. The Ministry also exercises control over the enforcement of provisions pertaining to records management at individual administration units. The Government information service is responsible for the implementation of new technological solutions.

Solutions related to records management systems in other countries are of decentralized character. In those countries, public administration offices most often independently determine the principles of the creation, protection, circulation and archiving of documents produced at registries in the course of their activities. The truth is that in the majority of countries with the decentralized model of records management organization, the supervision over the protection of records of lasting value is exercised by public archives. Individual countries, however, reveal significant differences related to legal instruments which regulate the affairs of a public office chancery, the scope of issues regulated by nationwide provisions, and those remaining within the competence of the record producer, organizational forms and the scope of the supervision over the chancery on the part of public archives or other bodies.

In Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia France, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Russia national archives perform two functions: they approve (sometimes they provide opinion on) chancery provisions, developed and issued by individual ministries for their own chanceries and the chanceries of subordinated units, and they exercise control and supervision over the due enforcement and execution thereof. The same procedure applies to the approval of lists of documents appro-

priated for destruction upon the expiry of their life cycle. Decisions about the archival value of a document are, in general, made by the author itself. Lists of records usually divide documents into two categories: those of lasting value, which upon the expiry of a specified preservation period at the registry (transition archives, repository) are transferred to historical archives, and those of temporary value, with life cycles designated in the list of records. Upon the expiry of the preservation period, documents are weeded, which is sometimes preceded with a repeated appraisal of their value. Thus, in those chancery systems, the archival value of documents is determined prior to the creation of documents.

Solutions of a slightly different nature have been adopted in the United Kingdom, Baden and Liechtenstein.

In the United Kingdom, each public administration office independently manages and bears responsibility for the documents it produces. It is fully liable for the preservation and protection of those documents. Such competences, however, do not refer to materials which are of no lasting value. The principles of handling documents designated for perpetual preservation at historical archives are determined by the national archives (Public Records Office). The archival holdings collection strategy is the basic legal instrument in that respect, which sets uniform criteria of record selection for permanent preservation. Preservation periods are specified (usually 30-year long), upon the expiry of which, any public documents should be subjected to the archival appraisal and selection procedure under the supervision of public archives.

In Baden, all public offices are obliged to follow nationwide chancery provisions which regulate chancery organization and records management rules. Those provisions determine the general plan of records with periods of preservation thereof at the registry of the author (usually from 10 to 30 years). Upon the expiry of the specified preservation period, documents are subjected to the archival appraisal performed by public archives. Similar solutions are effective in Liechtenstein, with the usual preservation period at the registry of 10 years.

There are no uniform solutions regarding records management in public administration at the nationwide level in Austria. Different Federal States issue their own provisions which regulate chancery-related issues, significantly diversified with respect to the solutions applied.

The legislation in force in Italy provides that all the offices and institutions are obliged to preserve the produced records in the records offices. These provisions determine the responsibility of the heads of these institutions for the management and protection of the records.

In Luxemburg in turn, the National Archives are of historical character only and do not participate in public administration records management processes.

In the majority of surveyed countries, the legislation in force provides for criminal and administrative liability for any infringement of provisions related to records management and protection. That group includes such countries as Andalusia, Andorra, Baden, Estonia, Finland, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saxony, Slovakia, the United Kingdom.

In Slovenia, such liability refers to data protection in databases only.

The law provides for no liability in the above mentioned respect in the following countries: Belgium, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Portugal.

## **Recapitulation**

On the basis of the results of the survey, one may formulate certain general conclusions regarding differences and common qualities of historical archival holdings collection models developed in various countries as well as methods and procedures of record appraisal and selection.

From the point of view of a general approach to the archival holdings development, two models have become apparent.

In the first one, the rule of provenance prevails. In accordance with that rule, under relevant provisions in force, those authors are indicated whose records constitute the source of historical holdings collection. That model prevails in European countries. Basic authors of archival holdings, throughout Europe, are legislative and executive authorities of the States, administration of justice, self-governments. The volume and character of records produced by remaining institutions are of varied and derivative nature, depending on the social, political and economic system. In that model, the term of the national record production (legacy), in general, refers to materials produced by the institutions of the State or in connection with the performance of functions entrusted by the State. From the practical point of view, this model is reflected in the percentage share of materials coming from state, public and private authors in the total volume of accumulated holdings.

The other model, represented by very few States (Andalusia, Italy, Liechtenstein, Saxony), is based on the principle of appraisal of documents produced regardless of the legal status of their authors.

An expert report entitled "Archives in the European Union", published in 1994 by EC, postulated a wide-scaled co-ordination of national archives and departments – authors in respect of the appraisal and selection of documents produced. On the basis of the survey discussed, one may claim that in the majority of countries that co-ordination is ensured by respective legal provisions, although the replies received do not allow to ascertain whether the course of that co-ordination is satisfactory. However, that law refers only to those institutions which belong to the public sphere in a given country. In the majority of countries, records of private institutions are not covered with the jurisdiction of national archives. That fact is of decisive importance for the provenance structure of the holdings of historical archives: they comprise, in a significant percentage, materials coming from authors which represent the bodies of the State and the public sphere. Therefore, a question may be raised whether the source base, thus developed, to future historical studies reflects the actual development processes and the condition of the society?

Therefore, one of the postulates resulting from the survey would be to carry out consultations among European countries on widely understood problems

related to the collection of historical materials of private authors.

On the basis of replies received, a certain regularity becomes apparent regarding appraisal procedures and processes.

One may indicate two main approaches in that respect. The first one consists in the determination of the historical value of a document at the stage of its creation at the author's registry. Such tools are used for that purpose as schedules and plans of records, in which individual categories (types, series) of documents are indicated as historical materials. That procedure is usually accompanied by the procedure of approval of lists of materials allocated for weeding by authorized bodies (mostly public or state archives). That mechanism is to guarantee the perpetual preservation of materials originally treated as non-historic ones, the value of which, however, in the course of time or as a result of special circumstances, acquired historical significance. One may indicate a few types of records schedules, distinguished from the point of view of the record arrangement (systematisation) system: the structural system, in which the arrangement of documents follows the structure of the producing institution (records of supervisory bodies, executive bodies, organisational units, etc.), the subject system, in which the subject (subject-matter) referred to in documents is the main arrangement criterion, and the functional system, which arranges documents according to their function (management files, personal files, financial documents, etc.). The survey results allow to claim that, at present, in the majority of surveyed countries, systematisation of records is rather of mixed character.

The other approach is characterized by the *ex post* expertise of the archival value of documents produced, i.e. upon the expiry of specified periods from the date of their creation. Documents produced at chanceries of authors are assessed with respect to their historical value upon the expiry of periods specified, under relevant provisions, somehow regardless of the function performed by those documents in the operations of the author. One may distinguish two ways of conduct in that respect: the first one based on the appraisal of the archival value carried out upon the expiry of the period of practical usefulness of documents. Materials which are not necessary for continued operations of a given institution are submitted for appraisal to archivists, who select historical materials designated for perpetual preservation. The other way of conduct – when the period upon the expiry of which documents are subjected to appraisal (often the same as the period of preservation of documents at the authors' registries) is determined in a standard way (for a given type of authors or documents).

The survey results do not allow to indicate explicit differences concerning records appraisal criteria. In all the surveyed countries, the criteria adopted and followed are those based on the tradition of the European organization of archives. They include three essential criteria: the structural one, reflecting the place and the function of the author of a document in social and political life of the country, the functional criterion – referring to the function of a document in the operations of the author, and the contents criteria (information value) of a document. In replies provided by individual countries, all the above mentioned

essential criteria were more or less extensively presented. Detailed criteria were mentioned concerning the contents of documents, such as the importance of events reflected in a document, date of the creation of a document, recurrence of information, typical or unique form of a document, etc. However, in all the countries participating in the survey, those criteria do not depart from the principles/standards generally accepted in the European organization of archives.

Report of the European Union from 1994 included some conclusions related to the appraisal and selection of documents on the ground of European legislation. Its authors postulated the harmonization of document qualification principles and preservation periods in the EU Member States<sup>4</sup>. That harmonization would serve the purpose of the standardization of historical material collection criteria with respect to materials produced by authors having similar competences in various EU countries. It seems that the above-mentioned postulate still remains fully valid.

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<sup>4</sup> According to Mr Patrick Cadell, the difficulty is less that of harmonizing these periods than of harmonizing the criteria which establish in each country the sensitivity of a particular document. There are countries in which a document can be closed for 100 years, and others where exactly the same type of document can be open from the moment of its creation. The reasons for this variation are much more to do with historical sensitivities, and with national culture (in ethnographical sense) than they are to do with archival logic.