

Access to case files

General rule

Article 40 § 2 of the Convention provides that documents deposited with the Registrar are accessible to the public unless the President of the Court decides otherwise.

The Rules of Court provide for two exceptions:

- documents deposited with the Registry in connection with friendly-settlement negotiations are not accessible to the public (Rule 33 § 1);
- in cases referred to the Court under Article 5 §§ 2 to 5 of Protocol No. 11, documents composing the case file of the former Commission, including all pleadings, remain confidential unless the President of the Chamber decides otherwise (Rule 106 § 4 of the Rules of Court).

Practical arrangements

Requests for permission to consult files should be made using the [online form](#).

You must give the exact references of each case you wish to consult (application number, date, etc.). To avoid unnecessary travel and expense, it should be noted that the internal documents of the Court are not accessible. The parties are reminded that “documents deposited with the Registrar” by the Government are forwarded for information or comments to the applicant and vice versa.

If the request is accepted the documents may be consulted at the European Court of Human Rights by appointment only, made at least 15 working days in advance.