

International Standard for Archival Description

- 1.1 Reference code** UNHCR 4
- 1.2 Title** Records of the United Nations Office at Geneva
- 1.3 Dates of creation** 1947-1975
- 1.4 Level** Fonds
- 1.5 Extent (quantity)** 8.40 m
- 2.2 Administrative/Biographical history** During the first two decades of UNHCR's history, the European Office of the United Nations (today named the United Nations Office at Geneva or UNOG) provided financial services to UNHCR for administrative expenditures from the UN Regular Budget. In 1974, as part of the changes associated with the beginning of biennial programme budgeting in the UN system, these functions were transferred to UNHCR. The European Office's financial services unit created the records in this fonds during the period 1951-1975.
- 2.3 Archival history** In 1995, with the completion of the new UNHCR headquarters building, UNOG asked UNHCR to take the UNHCR financial files that UNOG was storing. The records were transferred in June of that year.
- 3.1 Scope and content** The records provide an understanding of the organization of UNHCR during its formative years. As each branch office opened, a file was created that usually shows where the office was located and who was its first director, while also recording such mundane information as requests for equipment and the problems of shipping of goods.
- The records also document the funds available to UNHCR at its inception and provide detailed financial records of the projects supported by Ford and Rockefeller grants as well as the Refugee Emergency Fund. They also show the relationships between UNHCR and many non-governmental organizations that carried out UNHCR-funded projects. The files are particularly valuable for the period 1951-1955, and they provide insights into the final efforts to settle refugees of World War II. Activities surrounding World Refugee Year from June 1959 to June 1960 are reflected in the records, as are early public information activities such as exhibitions and the production of sound recordings.
- Included among the records are some files relating to the UNHCR predecessor agencies, from the Nansen office of the League of Nations, through UNRRA, to the Preparatory Commission of IRO, and IRO itself. A few other files not directly connected with UNHCR are included, such as some records relating to Palestinian refugee matters. Separate files document the financial arrangements for the repatriation of Greek children (1949-1959) and on assistance to Korean refugees (1950-1952).
- 3.2 Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information** The financial files transferred from UNOG to UNHCR totaled 354.7 linear meters. Shortly after transfer, all but 15.4 linear meters were destroyed. In 2001 a further appraisal resulted in the destruction of 7 additional linear meters, principally records relating to the audit and tracking of projects between the years 1955 and 1962.
- 3.3 Accruals** Accruals are not expected.
- 3.4 Arrangement** The records are arranged in one series. The records are part of the 1950s Registry system of the European Office, and are all coded GI (General 1) and category 12 "Refugees."
- 4.1 Conditions governing access** Records are subject to the General Restriction Policy of the UNHCR Archives.

- 4.2 Conditions governing reproduction** Records are subject to the Copyright Policy of UNHCR.
- 4.3 Languages** Principally English, some French.
- 4.5 Finding aids** File Unit List
- 5.3 Related units of description** Fonds UNHCR 11, Series 1, 1951-1970, and Series 4, Project files 1951-1984. The other Registry files of the United Nations Office at Geneva, of which these files once formed a part, are with the UNOG Archives.
- 7.2 Rules or conventions** Internal UNHCR rules
- 7.3 Date(s) of descriptions** 6 July 2001