

Foreign Ministry archives services of the European Union MEMBER STATES

DENMARK

1. Full title of Foreign Ministry and of archives service

Udenrigsministeriet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Arkivet (Archives Division)

2. Full address

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3. Summary of historical background of the archives service

A separate Department for Foreign Affairs as a fully independent administration was established in 1770. An Archives Service existed from the beginning and even earlier in the eighteenth century. It has existed since then and is today organised as the Archives Division. The tradition and present situation is that this unit deals with all archives and registry matters. It is a centralized archive with a field of activity covering the paper flow from the moment of reception, classification and distribution of incoming mail of all kinds until the transfer of the historical records, presently until 1972, to the National Archives. Historical matters and records are dealt with by a special section of the archives. Approximately 90 percent of the resources are being used on the proper formation of files.

4. Physical access

The public has no direct access to the archives of the Ministry and no reading room facilities etc.

5. Practical facilities

Since the files up to 1972 have been transferred to the National Archives (Rigsarkivet), researchers will usually work at the reading room in Rigsarkivet, Rigsdagsgården 9, 1218 København K., Telephone: +45 33 92 33 10. Admission is free without distinction of nationality. Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 09.00-16.00 hrs. Saturdays: open (with limited service) September 1 - April 30: 09.00-16.00 hrs; May 1 – August 31: Closed. At the first visit, visitors are requested to fill in a card with name, address and purpose of the study as a proof of identity.

The homepage of the National Archives: www.sa.dk.

6. Reproduction of documents

The National Archives can provide copies with modern reproduction techniques at approved prices.

7. Access regulations

According to the Law on the Archives of the State from 1992, with its latest revision in 2002, records of the Foreign Service with certain exceptions are available to the public after 20 years. The Ministry may grant access to records younger than 20 years, and to files not prescribed by the 20-year rule, on the basis of written application, which should be sent to the National Archives. Official letters of introduction for aliens are not required, not any academic degree, and no distinction is made between Danish and foreign citizens.

In 1970 the Danish Parliament adopted the Access to Public Administration Files Act (Act No. 280 of 10 June 1970). The Act, which has later been amended, entered into force on 1 January 1971.

The Act covers administrative authorities only, and applies to documents drawn up by an authority or having come into an authority's possession after the entry into force of the Act.

According to the general provisions of the Act, everyone - regardless of whether he is national of or a resident in Denmark - is entitled, upon request, to examine documents in cases, which are or have been under consideration by an administrative authority.

To this general rule, there are a certain number of exceptions such as the security of the State, relations to other States, and the right of individuals to privacy. The same set of circumstances leads to the above-mentioned exceptions from the 20-year rule in the Archive Law.

8. Concise description of the principal record groups and collections

There are two main record groups: 1. The Foreign Ministry. 2. The Diplomatic and consular missions abroad. As to the first group all incoming papers, telex etc. are, upon reception in the Ministry and before action is taken in the departments, registered by subject in accordance with a general plan ("key"). For the whole Ministry the basis for this plan ("key"), the so-called dossier system was laid down in 1908 and has since developed gradually. The records in the Ministry thus constitute one collection only, divided into various groups.

Group 1 is the Royal House, group 52 the consular representatives, group 104 assistance to developing countries etc. There are parallel plans for the diplomatic posts and the consular service.

The volume of the archives is about 17 000 linear metres. 10 000 linear metres have been transferred to the National Archives, and 7 000 linear metres are being kept by the ministry. Of this volume, files in current use account for about 3 000 linear metres.

9. Finding aids and computerisation

At the National Archives the researchers are allowed access to use guides and inventories already made. No inventory on current matters is published.

A useful guide is the inventory of files delivered to the National Archives covering the period 1909-1945 and 1946-1972 giving (in Danish) the box number, file number, the period covered and the subject (copy by request addressed to the National Archives).

Rigsarkivet 1. afdeling: *Registratur over Departementet for udenrigske Anliggender. 1984.* (Foreign Affairs 1770-1848, in Danish only)

Rigsarkivet: "Udenrigsministeriet (Kommercekollegiet) Samlede Sager 1762-1866". *Foreløbig Arkivregistratur Serie 1, Nr.1* (in Danish only)

Rigsarkivet: *Sager til Konsulatsjournal. København 1963.* (in Danish only)

Hassø, Arthur G. and Kroman, Erik, *Danish Department of Foreign Affairs until 1770.* Published by Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen 1973. (seulement en danois)

Hassø, Arthur G. og Kromann, Erik, "Tyske Kancelli II", *Vejledende Arkivregistratur XI* Published by Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen 1962.

Rigsarkivet: *Rigsarkivet og Hjælpemidlerne til dets Benyttelse 1-6, 1983-91* (in Danish only)

10. Ouvrages de référence et articles

Sjøkvist, Viggo: "Udenrigsministeriets Arkivsystem", *Afhandlinger tilegnede Arkivmanden og Historikeren, Rigsarkivar Dr. phil. Axel Linvald af nordiske fagfæller på halvfjerds-årsdagen 28. januar 1956*. København 1956. (In Danish only.)

Kjølsen, Klaus: "Udenrigsministeriets Arkiv 1770-1905". *Afhandlinger om arkiver ved Rigsarkivets 75 års jubilæum 1964*. (In Danish only).

Kjølsen, Klaus et Sjøkvist, Viggo : *Den Danske Udenrigstjeneste 1770-1970. I-II*, Copenhagen 1970.

Kjølsen, Klaus: *The Service of the Danish Foreign Ministry 1770-1970*. Copenhagen 1970. (Also in French and German).