

Foreign Ministry archives services of the European Union MEMBER STATES

HUNGARY

1. Full title of the Ministry and of the archives service

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary.
National Archives of Hungary.

2. Contact details

Foreign affairs documents created between 1918-1944 can be found at:

National Archives of Hungary - Department II. /Department of Records of Government
Organs of the Period 1867-1945

Address: 1014 Budapest, Bécsi kapu tér 2-4

Postal Address: 1250 Budapest POB. 3

Telephone (main) (+36.1) 225-2800

Fax (+36 1) 225-2805

Opening hours of the research room:

Monday-Thursday: 8.30-17.45

Friday : 8.30-15.45

e-mail: info@natarch.hu

Foreign affairs documents created after 1944 can be found at:

The National Archives of Hungary - Department V. /Department of Records of the Post-
1945 Political Government Agencies

Address:

1014 Budapest, Hess András tér 5.

Postal Address: 1250 Budapest POB. 3

Telephone (main) (+36 1) 225-2860

Fax (+36 1) 225-2892

Opening hours of the research room:

Monday-Thursday: 8.30-17.45

Friday: 8.30-15.45

e-mail: hesskut@natarch.hu

Foreign affairs documents on microfilm can be found at:

The National Archives of Hungary - Department VIII. /Department of Reprography

Address: 1037 Budapest, Bécsi út 314-324

Postal Address: 1250 Budapest POB. 3

Telephone (main) (+36 1) 437-0660

Fax (+36 1) 437-0695

Opening hours of the research room:

Monday-Thursday: 8.30-17.45

Friday: 8.30-15.45

e-mail: gzzs@natarch.hu

Internet: www.natarch.hu

3. Summary of historical background of the archives service

There are no independent Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hungary. The duties corresponding to this purpose are done by the National Archives of Hungary under the supervision of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

In Hungary the Archives Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could be established only after the foundation of the independent Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1918. Between 1867 and 1918 foreign affairs were handled by the common Imperial and Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs run together with Austria. The documents created during its work can be found in Vienna. During the Hungarian Soviet Republic a People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs was in charge.

The documents created between the two world wars can serve as primary sources not only for studying Hungarian foreign politics, but also for the history of the region.

After 1945 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only occasionally handed over documents to the National Archives of Hungary, then after the beginning of the 1970s to the New Hungarian Central Archives. (This institution collected and elaborated the documents of the central organs created after 1945.) Originally the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wanted to establish his own special archives, but this plan could not be carried out because of the lack of financial resources; that is why it started to hand over documents regularly from the beginning of 1980s to the new Hungarian Central Archives and after 1992 to the reunited National Archives of Hungary.

For the time being the National Archives of Hungary takes in documents older than 15 years according to the Law of LXVI of 1995 every year from the archives working within the frames of the Documentary Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Foreign affairs documents created after 1945 can serve as a primary source for studying the history of the cold war and the communist movement as well.

4. Physical access

The documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are preserved in two departments at the National Archives of Hungary. *Department of Records of Government Organs of the Period 1867-1945* (Department II.) handles the documents created between 1918-1944. The documents created after 1945 are preserved in *the Department of Records of the Post-1945 Political Government Agencies* (Department V.).

According to the rules, if there is a microfilm copy of the original material, only the microfilm can be researched in the Department of Reprography (Department VIII.). Documents of foreign affairs of other countries can also be found in this department on microfilm.

5. Practical facilities

National researchers (and citizens of those countries that have a data protection agreement with Hungary) can study the documents containing personal data with the permission of an institution which deals with scientific research (e.g. universities, academic research institutions, bigger public collections etc.) Those foreigners whose countries do not have a data protection agreement with Hungary cannot study documents containing personal data.

According to the research regulations of the National Archives of Hungary the researcher has his name registered, gives his personal data, the aim and time scope of his research and encloses the above-mentioned permission. The researcher can order the documents in writing from the appropriate department at least 8 days before the start of the research. In this case he should indicate the exact reference number of the documents he wishes to study. If these documents are not under restriction and the necessary permissions are available, the research can be started at once.

The research of the documents takes place in the research room of that building where the documents are preserved. The quantity of the documents to be given out is limited, it cannot be more than some piles or bunches. The archival material asked on the order card can be researched for 30 days after production.

See **2** above for opening hours of reading rooms.

6. Reproduction of records

Microfilm frames of foreign affairs archival documents in the National Archives of Hungary are distributed in the following way: at present we have 229.291 microfilm frames of foreign affairs documents between 1918-1944, which corresponds to 31 linear meters. This quantity grows from year to year because of continuous archival microfilming.

The number of the microfilm frames taken of foreign affair documents created after 1945 is 1.168.248, about 117 linear meters.

Analogous (microfilm, photo, photocopy) or digital copy can be ordered of the documents if the access regulations are satisfied.

7. Access regulations

All the foreign affairs documents created between 1918-1944 can be found in the National Archives of Hungary. There is only one exception: documents that contain personal data. In this case if the law allows for the research of these documents, they can be researched at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Access to public records preserved in the National Archives of Hungary is regulated by the Archives Act (1995. LXVI., Amendment 1997. CXL., Enacting Clauses 19 and 20/1198.[V.13.] MKM), the Data Protection Act (1992. LXIII.) and the Privacy Act (1995. LXV.). The Archives Act establishes a dual time restriction system:

- records created before the 2nd of May 1990 (that is the date of the democratic return in Hungary) are made available to the public 15 years after their creation;
- records created after the 1st of May 1990 are made available to the public 30 years after their creation.

Documents without restriction can be researched and copied. The 4/1996 order of the foreign minister provides for the supervision of qualified documents. On the basis of the Privacy Act (1995. LXV.) about the State Secrets and Office Secrets and of the government order of 79/1995 (VII. 30.) about the handling of qualified data, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a committee to the National Archives of Hungary in 1997 to supervise the top secret foreign affairs documents preserved in the archives. As a consequence of their work a lot of documents were re-qualified. From 1998 the National Archives of Hungary takes in only re-qualified top secret documents (together with the non-restricted documents) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Those documents not re-qualified are taken in only after the expiry of the restriction.

8. Concise description of the principal record groups and collections

Funds created between 1918-1944 - if it is possible - are arranged according to the principle of provenance: subject, items, sub-items and chronological order is taken into account.

The principle of provenance was also taken into account by the creation of the lists of funds and sub-funds after 1945, although the principle of pertinencia was also applied in the case of collections.

We have also taken into account - when creating the sub-funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - the already existing document handling and keeping methods. According to this the sub-funds of foreign affairs documents can be grouped in the following way:

- a. documents handled centrally
- b. organizational units
- c. collections
- d. secretariats of heads of departments

In the funds and sub-funds created from the documents of foreign affairs can be found documents - especially in the case of top secret documents of independent embassy funds -which are arranged according to date (within this in order of reference numbers) and items arranged according to the spheres of activity of the organizational units.

The full extent of the fond of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs referring to the period of 1918-1944 is 486, 51 linear metres, and that of the embassies is 630, 04 linear meters.

The full extent of the documents of foreign affairs created after 1945 is 1434, 70 linear meters; within this 1228, 03 linear meters are for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The documents of the embassies and foreign representations form independent funds until 1964, but from 1965 they are arranged into the appropriate volume of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and transferred to the National Archives of Hungary. The quantity of the documents created after 1945 grows from year to year because of the continuous transport from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Documents created in 1987 are taken in during 2004.

9. Finding aids and computerisation

The structure of the administrative and secretly handled documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which were created between 1945-64 differs from the structure of the documents beginning in 1965. In the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs series have been formed during the arrangement of the material referring to the period 1945-1964. These series are arranged according to countries or can contain mixed documents. The series comprehend several years. Detailed finding-aids have been made to them, with item to item description. In contrast to this, in the case of documents created after 1965 volumes are formed together with the contemporary indexes and detailed finding-aids.

The description of foreign affairs documents is an important requirement. The central database of the National Archives of Hungary contains description of the documents on the level of fonds and subfonds.

See also **10** below.

10. Reference works and articles

- Finding aids of the National Archives of Hungary Nr. 12, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Volume I., Ministry of Foreign Affairs.: edited by Ferenc Nagy, Budapest, 2003.
- Sándor Balogh: *Hungary's Foreign Policy (1945-50)* Kossuth, 1988.
- László Borhi: 'Documents to the History of American-Hungarian Relationship Between 1956-1958'. Issue 3-4, *Historical Review*, 1998.
- Mihály Fülöp: *The Unfinished Peace*. Héttorony, Budapest, 1994.
- Mihály Fülöp-Péter Sipos: *Hungary's Foreign Policy in the 20th century*, Aula Budapest, 1998
- Lajos Gecsényi: *Documents to the History of Austrian-Hungarian Relationship, National Archives of Hungary*, Budapest, 2000.
- István Kertész: *Hungarian Peace Illusions. (Notes, postscript, selected by György Gyarmati)* Európa História, 1995.
- György Lázár: *Reports of Gyula Szekfű delegate and the Hungarian Embassy in Moskow (1946-1948)*, National Archives of Hungary, Budapest, 1988.
- Ibolya Murber: *Hungarian Refugees in Austria (Vorarlberg) and in Lichtenstein 1956*. Rheticus Gesellschaft Ungarisches Staatsarchiv. Historischer Verein für das Fürstentum Lichtenstein. Feldkirch 2002.
- István Vida-József Kiss-Zoltán Ripp: *Hungarian-Jugoslawien Relationship 1956-59*, Budapest 1997.
- Gábor Vincze: *Revision or Autonomy? Documents on the History of Hungarian-Roumanian Relationship 1945-47*. Teleki László Alapítvány 1999.

You can find detailed information on the National Archives of Hungary in English, in German and in Hungarian at the following website: www.natarch.hu
