Welcome!

The State Archives of Belgium is pleased to welcome you.

Our institution watches over the due preservation of the records produced and administrated by the public authorities. The State Archives thus acquires and keeps all records older than 30 years originating from the courts and tribunals, the public administrations, notaries, etc. Also, companies, politicians, and individuals having played an important role for the country can hand over their records to our institution. The State Archives is in charge of the management and preservation of all these types of records and ensures that the public can easily have access to them.

These are the vast and varied tasks we accomplish for you - the researcher, historian, genealogist, student, professional or amateur. Accordingly, our 19 reading rooms are fitted with a suitable infrastructure in order to welcome a varied public. We spare no efforts to ease your research in over 275 km of archives and 25 km of books! A large choice of guides and inventories are of course at your disposal and our personnel will be pleased be of further assistance.

Having passed its bicentennial anniversary, our institution looks into a bright future - archival work indeed never ends. With the most modern means at our disposal, we continuously endeavour to better respond to the needs and wishes of our clients; for example, with our Website and its powerful search engines that enable the user to search for archives online.

The State Archives of Belgium holds thousands of stories of institutions and individuals. You too can probably find a piece of your own history hidden in them.

We wish you a fruitful research.

Karel Velle
National Archivist
Archives: a history of its own ...

From the Latin “archivum” and the Greek “arkheion”

From the moment people have authored official documents, they also realised the need to archive them: The first archives were born. As early as the Antiquity, archives services were created, in which the selection, sorting and preservation of documents took place. Little has changed about these principles in the course of the centuries. The creation of the State Archives of Belgium dates back to the Austrian period. Later, during the French period, a law was passed that stipulated the creation of one archive depository in every Department. Eventually, in 1830, the repository in Brussels was elevated to the status of National Archives of Belgium, and Louis Prosper Gachard was appointed as first National Archivist.

What do we preserve?

The State Archives primarily keeps public records dating from the Ancien Regime until 1795 and from the subsequent contemporary period. These records originate from the governments and public administrations at local, provincial and federal level.

The State Archives also keeps private records: archives of ecclesiastic institutions (abbeys, cloisters, churches, chapels, etc.), archives of private individuals (politicians, ministerial cabinets, etc.), family archives (nobility), and archives of businesses and associations. Various collections (maps and plans, placards and ordinances of the Ancien Regime, obituary notices, etc.) complement these archival fonds.

Private life, public archives and free consultation

In principle, all records older than 30 years handed over by a Belgian public authority to the State Archives are considered as public (Law on archives of 1955, amended by the law of 6 May 2009, and the legislation on the publicity of the administration). Special authorisations can be granted for the consultation and reproduction of more recent archives. Our institution watches over the protection of privacy, which is why in some cases, public records and especially private records can only be consulted under certain conditions. Consultation is also restricted depending on the state of preservation of the records. Consequently, originals are never handed out when a copy is available (on microfilm or in a digital format). In either case, consultation is prohibited if it might cause irreversible damage to the document.
At your service

The State Archives is composed of the National Archives - the seat of the institution located in the heart of Brussels - and the 18 State Archives repositories in the Provinces. It is a federal scientific institution and forms part of the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO) under the authority of the federal minister for Science Policy. Prof. Dr. Karel Velle, the National Archivist, is director-general of the State Archives. The institution employs about 300 personnel from the 3 regions of the country. The archivists, as members of the scientific staff, make up over one third of the total number of personnel. Visitors most often come into contact with the State Archives via one of the 75 collaborators that manage the reading rooms and provide service to the public.

The State Archives counts a total of 19 repositories spread across the country. Each one is fitted with a traditional reading room for paper documents and a digital reading room. After purchasing a reader’s card, you can consult all the records of your interest. Fragile documents are only available on microfilm or in digital format. Of course, the personnel in our reading rooms will be glad to provide support and guidance for your research.

A vast array of aids is at your disposal for your research: In the reading room you will find printed search instruments (e.g. inventories, archive guides, research guides) as well as specific databases that can be consulted in the different archives repositories to which they refer. A number of search instruments are also available online as PDF files.

Our search engines can be accessed on our Website (www.arch.be) per Internet or in the reading rooms. They enable online research for information about records, archives creators and persons. The collections of our library can be searched as well.

Collaborate on the large-scale “Demogen” project to help us to feed and expand our database. You can share your data with other genealogists and researchers or register as a “demogenist” and analyse birth and death certificates, etc. from your home computer. Surf to http://demogen.arch.be

Become a reader

In order to fully benefit from our reading room services, you have to register as a reader. Take your ID card with you and register at any State Archives repository you want. The reader’s access card costs 20€ and is valid one year in all of our 19 reading rooms. Students enjoy a 50 % discount. A one week ticket for 5€ gives access to the archives repository in which you bought it for seven consecutive days. The visitor regulations are available on our Website and in the reading rooms.

Online consultation of archives

The consultation of digitised archives on our Website is free of charge, but to access the digitised records, you first need to register on http://search.arch.be. Once you have chosen a login and password, you will receive a confirmation email with a link you have to click to activate.
ARCHIVES INSPECTION AND ADVICE TO ARCHIVE CREATORS

One of the primary missions of the State Archives is the inspection of the records of the Belgian federal public services, tribunals, courts, administrations and public bodies. Inspection missions are carried out regularly and a surveillance and selection policy has been clearly defined in order to enable a sustainable preservation of the records with a historic interest or a legal value that prohibits their destruction. The State Archives also provides aid, advice, work instruments and specialised training to administrations keen to improve their document and archive management.

THE PUBLICATIONS

The State Archives issues a large number of publications: archive guides, inventories, research guides, studies (Studia) on various historical and archival subjects, studies on the First World War, as well as management and selection lists for the archives creators. These publications are of course aimed at simplifying and supporting your research in our archives. They can be purchased at the Shop of the National Archives or via publicat@arch.be.

DIGITAL ARCHIVES

Past and future blend at the State Archives. Indeed, in order to best preserve our very rich historic heritage, the State Archives digitises parchment and paper documents. Priority is given to those records that are consulted more frequently. To date, some 25,000 parish registers from all over Belgium and countless civil status registers have been digitised and can be viewed as digital images in our digital reading rooms or on our Website, where you can also find additional digital collections: around 20,000 seal moulds, proceedings of the Councils of Ministers (1918-1979), the statistical yearbook of Belgium (and of Belgian Congo) (1870-1995), and more.

Digitisation prevents documents from being spoiled by the effects of time and eases your research.

COLLOQUIA AND EXHIBITIONS

On a regular basis, the State Archives organises exhibitions for the large public about topics related to historical events but that also have a connection with current events. For instance: the celebration of the 175th anniversary of Belgium, the 50th anniversary of the Expo 58 in Brussels or the one hundredth anniversary of football in Belgium. Such exhibitions enable the State Archives to present and valorise its rich and unique documents, supplemented with photographs and films, or even objects from private collections, to the public.

In order to present research results and to foster international cooperation, the State Archives regularly organises colloquia and conferences.

Three virtual exhibitions can be visited online:
- Archives and Democracy
- Archives I presume? Traces of the colonial past
- Goaaal ! One hundred years of football in Belgium

Visit our exhibitions at www.arch.be/expo

Digitisation prevents documents from being spoiled by the effects of time and eases your research.
At your service throughout the country

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

1. Rue de Ruysbroeck 2-6, 1000 BRUSSELS
   Tel: +32 (0)2 513 76 80 / Fax: +32 (0)2 513 76 81 / archives.generales@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES 2 - JOSEPH CUVELIER REPOSITORY

2. Rue du Houblon 26-28, 1000 BRUSSELS
   Tel: +32 (0)2 274 15 00 / agr_ar_2@arch.be
   Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 9 am-noon / 1 pm-4.30 pm, upon appointment per e-mail.

ARCHIVES OF THE ROYAL PALACE

3. Rue Ducale 2, 1000 BRUSSELS
   Tel: +32 (0)2 512 56 85 / cap@kprr.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-12.15 pm / 1.30 pm-4.30 pm. Upon appointment only!

BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION

4. Quai Demets 7, 1070 ANDERLECHT
   Tel: +32 (0)2 524 61 15 / Fax: +32 (0)2 520 93 21 / archives.anderlecht@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

WALLOON BRABANT

5. Rue Paulin Ladeuze 16, 1348 LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE
   Tel: +32 (0)10 23 00 90 / Fax: +32 (0)10 23 00 98 / archives.louvain-la-neuve@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

HAINAUT

6. Avenue des Bassins 66, 7000 MONS
   Tel: +32 (0)65 40 04 61 / Fax: +32 (0)65 40 04 61 / archives.mons@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

7. Rue des Augustins 20, 7500 TOURNAI
   Tel: +32 (0)69 22 53 76 / Fax: +32 (0)69 54 54 83 / archives.tournai@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

LIÈGE

8. Rue du Chêra 79, 4000 LIÈGE
   Tel: +32 (0)4 252 03 93 / Fax: +32 (0)4 229 33 50 / archives.liege@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

9. Kaperberg 2-4, 4700 EUPEN
   Tel: +32 (0)87 55 43 77 / Fax: +32 (0)87 55 87 77 / staatsarchiv.eupen@arch.be
   Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
   Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

LUXEMBURG

10. Parc des Expositions 9, 6700 ARLON
   Tel: +32 (0)63 22 06 13 / Fax: +32 (0)63 22 42 94 / archives.arlon@arch.be
    Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
    Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

11. Place de l’Abbaye 12, 6870 SAINT-HUBERT
    Tel: +32 (0)61 61 14 55 / Fax: +32 (0)61 50 42 12 / archives.saint-hubert@arch.be
    Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
    Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

NAMUR

12. Rue d’Arquet 45, 5000 NAMUR
    Tel: +32 (0)81 65 41 98 / Fax: +32 (0)81 65 41 99 / archives.namur@arch.be
    Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
    Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.
ANTWERP
13. Kruibekesteenweg 39/1, 9120 BEVEREN (works being carried out — provisional address)
Tel: +32 (0)3 236 73 00 / Fax: +32 (0)3 775 26 46 / rijkarchief.antwerpen@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.
13'. Sanderusstraat 81-85, 2018 ANTWERP (genealogical research only)
Tel: +32 (0)3 677 34 99 / Fax: +32 (0)3 677 39 23 / rijkarchief.antwerpen@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm. Closed on Saturday and in July and August.

FLEMISH-BRABANT
14. Vaartstraat 24, 3000 LEUVEN
Tel: +32 (0)16 31 49 54 / Fax: +32 (0)16 31 49 61 / rijkarchief.leuven@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

WEST-FLANDERS
15. Predikherenrei 4A, 8000 BRUGES
Tel: +32 (0)50 33 72 88 / Fax: +32 (0)50 61 09 18 / rijkarchief.brugge@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.
16. G. Gezellestraat 1, 8500 KORTRIJK
Tel: +32 (0)56 21 32 68 / Fax: +32 (0)56 20 57 42 / rijkarchief.kortrijk@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

EAST-FLANDERS
17. Geraard de Duivelstraat 1, 9000 GENT
Tel: +32 (0)9 225 13 38 / Fax: +32 (0)9 225 52 01 / rijkarchief.gent@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.
18. Kruibekesteenweg 39/1, 9120 BEVEREN
Tel: +32 (0)3 750 29 77 / Fax: +32 (0)3 750 29 70 / rijkarchief.beveren@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

LIMBURG
19. Bampslaan 4, 3500 HASSELT
Tel: +32 (0)11 22 17 66 / Fax: +32 (0)11 23 40 46 / rijkarchief.hasselt@arch.be
Open Tuesday to Friday: 9 am-4.30 pm.
Every first Saturday of the month: 9 am-12.30 pm / 1 pm-4 pm.

Summer opening hours and public holidays

The respective State Archives repositories have different opening hours. In July and August all repositories are closed between noon and 1 pm and on Saturday.

Public holidays:
• 1 January (New Year)
• Easter Monday
• 1 Mai
• Ascension
• Whit Monday
• 15 August (Assumption Day)
• 1 and 2 November (All Saint’s Day)
• 11 November (Armistice)
• 15 November (King’s Feast)
• From 25 December to 1 January

Additional dates may be added.
The complete and annually updated list of public holidays can be consulted on our website: www.arch.be

www.arch.be

A WEBSITE
Everything you want to know about the State Archives, its history and functioning. Details about what we preserve for you and which services we offer. Plenty of useful practical information!

A NEWSLETTER
Keep up-to-date about current events and news relating to the State Archives via our digital newsletter. Subscribe now for free and click onto “Newsletter” on the Main page of our Website.

A FACEBOOK PAGE
Here you can get news updates of the State Archives twice or thrice a week to keep you informed about our institution. Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/archives.etat and click on the “like” button.
Guided tours

You have always wanted to sneak a peek behind the closed doors of an archives repository? You are keen to have a close look at our most precious and outstanding pieces of archive? You want to know what is the work of an archivist? You wonder how our most valuable and unique records are stored and preserved for the future?

Take a guided tour with one of our archivists in a State Archives repository of your choice!

Guided tours are only organised for groups or associations upon reservation (65€ per group and per hour). Please contact the State Archives repository you wish to visit for further information.

For guided tours through the National Archives in Brussels please contact us per e-mail via visite@arch.be.

On open days (for instance on Days of the Open Monument) single visitors can discover how the State Archives of Belgium works and which treasures it holds.
The State Archives is the perfect place for your archival research.

**OUR DOORS ARE WIDE OPEN TO YOU!**

www.arch.be

www.facebook.com/archives.etat

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