

Archival Review, Issue 3 (2025)

The third issue of Archival Review in 2025 features several overview studies. The opening article provides a comprehensive overview of the entire Hungarian archival system and continues a previously launched thematic series (Viktor Haraszti). Drawing a broad historical arc, the study presents the development and evolution of legal sources in the life of archives. Continuing the series addressing professional questions related to earlier less frequently discussed source types, Anett Ogoľjuk-Berzsenyi examines the source value of medical records and its role in genealogical research, also discussing issues of data protection and archival preservation. Márta Kőfalviné Ónodi introduces a special type of archival source material by presenting the way of publication and utilization of musical manuscripts preserved in archives. The issue also contains two Hungarica-related studies: one on diplomatic relations between the GDR and Hungary (Balázs Wencz), and another on the research conducted by the Archives of the Otto von Habsburg Foundation (Szilveszter Dékány and Zita Lőrincz). József Ö. Kovács summarizes several decades of archival experience in contemporary historical research; mentioning several archival projects, he responds to some of the criticism levelled at the activities of the regional history research group over more than ten years, while also summarizing the work and results of the research group to date (Reflections on our contemporary history texts). The issue also includes a description of an interesting and colorful virtual archival exhibition (Tamás Polgár and Balázs Récsei: Virtual Archival Exhibition on Somogy County during the Reform Era), reviews and a report on the travelling conference of the Council of Directors of Hungarian Archives (MLVT).

Viktor Haraszti: Legal Norms and Sources of Law in the Life of Archives

The first part of the study briefly outlines the historical development of Hungarian legislation, with particular emphasis on regulations concerning archives, from the Middle Ages to the present day. The presentation places great emphasis on 20th-century processes, particularly changes relating to the period of state socialism. In the second part, the author presents examples of how individual judicial interpretations may influence the application of legal regulations. Knowledge of these may be useful to archivists not only because it helps them interpret the specific regulation, but also because it can be used in legal disputes involving the archive.

Anett Ogoľjuk-Berzsenyi: Medical Records as a Possible Source for Genealogical Research

In recent years, individual genealogical research has been on the rise again, but with a changed focus. There is a growing demand for researchers to receive not only a family tree with names, but also as much detail as possible about their ancestors. This approach requires the inclusion of new types of sources in the research. This study attempts to present the value of one such underutilized source type, medical records, from the perspective of family history research. It describes the source characteristics for each type of document, the limitations of archival preservation, and the content criteria that may be additionally useful to family researchers.

Márta Kőfalviné Ónodi: The Sound of the Tárogató – Archival Sheet Music on Recordings

Archives often preserve documents that are surprising or perhaps less commonly sought after, in addition to the well-known types of sources. Handwritten musical manuscripts represent one such lesser-known category. This study presents the history of the music book compiled by Imre Boczonádi Szabó, which is kept in the Kiskunfélegyháza Branch of the Bács-Kiskun County Archives of the National Archives of Hungary. The article presents the author's life story, describes the source, and also its afterlife, given that in 2025, a selection of the songs in the volume may be released as an audio recording.

Szilveszter Dékány – Zita Lőrincz: The Archives of Muri Abbey and Queen Zita

From its foundation, the history of Muri Abbey has been closely intertwined with that of the Habsburg family. Several members of the family were buried here. The last monk of the abbey passed away in 2017, so today the complex no longer functions as a monastery, but is home to a number of institutions. One of these is the archive of Queen Zita, wife of King Charles IV. The Otto von Habsburg Foundation works closely with the institution operating in Muri Abbey, and it was within the framework of this cooperation that part of the archive's photographic material was organized and digitized. This study not only describes the project and its plans for the near future, but also outlines the circumstances surrounding the creation of the archive and the history of the relationship between the abbey and the family.

Balázs Wencz: An East German Party and Government Delegation in Hungary, 2–4 June 1982

In addition to Hungarian archival sources, documents relating to cooperation between Hungary and the German Democratic Republic can also be found in several collections at the Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts) and the Bundesarchiv in Berlin. Among the documents relating to bilateral relations between the two countries, the minutes, summaries, and memoranda of bilateral meetings, as well as verbatim records of one-on-one talks between the leaders of the ruling parties and surviving copies of official toasts, are of particular significance. This article uses documents relating to the visit of the East German party delegation led by Erich Honecker to Hungary in June 1982 to provide an overview of bilateral relations in the preceding period, the preparations for the delegation's arrival, and the results of the visit.