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# Welcome

## Welcome to the State Archives in Milan !

Those of you who are unable to visit the Archive in person may send a letter or an email with a clear description of the object of your study. An archivist will reply within 30 days with general advice regarding your research, which, in any case, must be undertaken by you in person or by someone you have delegated for the purpose. Requested reproductions of archival material will be sent upon payment by Postal Order for the amount owed.

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- [map](#) [1] (link to google maps)
- [Rules](#) [2] (pdf, 11 KB)
- [Schedule](#) [3] (pdf, 12 KB) (please note that the **Library** is now **open on Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**)

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## The State Archives in Milan

This institute is called "Archivio di Stato di Milano", the State Archives in Milan. It is but one of a network of State Archives located in the capitals of every Italian province. The State Archives are a peripheral body of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, which also controls twenty archival supervision agencies (the "Soprintendenze archivistiche"). State Archives are charged by law with the conservation of records of importance for historical and juridical purposes. State records are normally transferred to State Archives when they are at least 40 years old. In addition to State documents from the early mediaeval period to the present, these archives also hold notarial archives older than 100 years and the archives of suppressed ecclesiastical bodies or religious corporations whose property was confiscated by the State. State Archives may also accept the custody of private archives and the records of public bodies. In the State Archives of Milan there are documents produced by State Magistracies in the city and in its territory from the time of the Longobards all the way up our days, through the Viscontis, the Sforzas, the Hapsburgs, Napoleon, the Restoration and the Risorgimento, up until the Italian Unification, the rise of industry and, in general, of the economy of the "moral capital." The holdings of the Milan State Archive amount approximately to 40 kilometres of shelves, with a total of over 180,000 "items" (files, volumes, scrolls, registers, maps etc.), and 150,000 parchments, including the oldest document on parchment kept in Italian State Archives.

### Palazzo del Senato

The State Archives are housed in the Palazzo del Senato (Senate Palace). This building was originally the Swiss College for the training of the Swiss lay clergy, engaged in opposing the Protestant Reform which was spreading in the Swiss cantons. Its construction began in 1608, following projects of the best known players in the Milanese architectural milieu of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Fabio Mangone, Francesco Maria Richini, Gerolamo and Giovanni Battista Quadrio and Leopoldo Pollack. At the end of the eighteenth century, after the closing of the Swiss College, the building was put to various uses and some changes were made to its structure, based on projects by Giuseppe Piermarini (the architect of La Scala theatre) and Marcellino Segrè. In the two decades of Napoleonic rule and in the ensuing years the building housed various public offices, among them the Senate of the Kingdom of Italy (1809-1814), which gave the palace the name by which it is still best known today. Eventually, since 1886 the Milan State Archive, with the School of Archive Studies, Palaeography and Diplomatics, became the only institution occupying the Senate Palace. In August 1943, during the devastating bombardments of Milan, the building suffered considerable damage both to its masonry structure and to the archival fonds.

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## History of the State Archives in Milan

The first body of documents held in these Archives includes those created during the dominations of Visconti and Sforza (1277–1535), the Spanish (1535–1707), the Austrians (1707–1796; 1815–1859) and the French (1796–1815). Since 1861, after the national unification, Archives from provincial Offices such as the Cadastre, the Prefecture, the Police Headquarters, Courts, Military Districts, Notarial Archives, and so on, transferred their historical records. The State Archives must preserve their holdings both for historical and administrative research. Moreover, they are charged with overseeing the archives of provincial Offices. State archivists also prepare finding aids such as inventories, exhibitions and catalogues, conferences and seminars. Teaching activities include training seminars and guided tours; in addition, in some State Archives, such as these in Milan, there is a school of Archive studies, palaeography and diplomatics, releasing a diploma. Among the most important services offered there are: a search room, a consultation room dedicated to digital resources, a library, the possibility to have photocopies and photographs, and of course, reference and research help.

**Collegamenti**

- [1] <http://maps.google.it/maps?q=via+Senato,+10+Milano&hl=it&ll=45.469822,9.198196&spn=0.011151,0.022724&sll=45.46407,9.171906&sspn=0.178426,0.363579&hnear=Via+Senato,+10,+Milano,+Lombardia&t=m&z=16>
- [2] <http://archiviodistatomilano.beniculturali.it/getFile.php?id=173>
- [3] <http://archiviodistatomilano.beniculturali.it/getFile.php?id=511>