Vietnamese Law on Private Archives During the National Renewal Period (1986 - 2025)

Do Van Hoc[1], Vu Thi Yen[2], Hoang Thi Thuy[3]

[1]Faculty of Information and Management, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

[2] Faculty of Political Theory and Law, Electric Power University, Ha Noi, Vietnam (Corresponding Author)

[3] Faculty of Political Theory, Thuongmai University, Vietnam

HOW TO CITE:

Do Van Hoc, Vu Thi Yen, Hoang Thi Thuy (2026). Vietnamese Law on Private Archives During the National Renewal Period (1986 - 2025). International Journal of Special Education, 41(4s), 313-322.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT:

Copyright: © 2026 Authors. Open access publication underthe terms and conditions of the Creative CommonsAttribution (CC BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

ABSTRACT:

This article presents the results of a study on the formation and development of Vietnamese law governing private archives and private archival materials during the national renewal (Đổi mới) period from 1986 to 2025, situated within the broader context of changing state perceptions and the demands of international integration. In Vietnam, from the late twentieth century, private archives gradually emerged as a subject of scholarly attention; however, the early legal framework remained largely focused on records from the public sector. Legal instruments such as the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials and the 2001 Ordinance on Archives recognized private archives as an independent legal category, yet related regulations primarily emphasized registration, guidance, or protection of archival materials deemed to be of "special value" held by individuals, families, and lineages. A major turning point was marked by the 2011 Law on Archives, which for the first time formally acknowledged ownership rights and rights of disposition over private archival materials, while establishing mechanisms for registration, donation, and deposit in state archival institutions. This process of legal refinement was further consolidated in the 2024 Law on Archives (effective from 1 July 2025), which provides a clear definition of "private archives" and devotes an entire chapter to regulating this field. This new approach reflects a more open and objective legal mindset, expanding the regulatory scope from the public sector to include the private sector, thereby ensuring equality, respecting ownership rights, and encouraging the use and promotion of the value of private archival materials. Employing historical and logical methods alongside an interdisciplinary approach, the study elucidates the transformation in Vietnam's legal perception from viewing private archives merely as a supplementary element to recognizing them as an integral component of the national archival system. The current legal framework not only establishes safeguards and mechanisms for enhancing the value of private archival

materials but also promotes scientific research, fosters international cooperation, and meets the requirements of integration in the new development stage.

Keywords: private archival materials; private archives; people's archives; archival law; Vietnamese archives.

INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam, the terms *"private archives," "private archival materials,"* and *"people's archival materials"* have been used for many years. In particular, scholars in archival studies and archival law have shown increasing interest in and made more frequent use of these concepts since the early years of the twenty-first century (Vuong, 2015). Vietnam's legal system has gradually not only acknowledged these terms and related concepts but has also increasingly expanded, specified, and clarified regulations governing private archives in legal instruments of higher normative value, covering a wide range of relevant issues.

In this study, *private archives* are understood as archives that do not fall within the scope of public archives of the state or archives assigned tasks and funding by the state. According to the 2024 Law on Archives of Vietnam, "private archives are archives of individuals, families, lineages, communities, and organizations that are not mass organizations assigned tasks by the Party or the State" (National Assembly, 2024). The concept of *private archival materials* falls within the broader concept of archival materials and refers to archival records owned by private archives.

During the early stage of Vietnam's national renewal period, archival legislation continued to be governed by the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials promulgated by the State Council. In 2001, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, the permanent body of Vietnam's National Assembly, issued a replacement legal instrument, the Ordinance on National Archives. Overall, the provisions of these legal documents primarily focused on the public archival sector, while private archives were not yet regarded as an independent object of legal regulation. Both the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials and the 2001 Ordinance on National Archives confined their scope to archival materials and archival activities of state agencies and public-sector organizations. During this period, the state had not yet adopted policies recognizing ownership rights over private archival materials, nor had it encouraged the collection, preservation, and promotion of the value of private archives, including the development of private archival services.

In 2011, the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam promulgated the Law on Archives. For the first time, the 2011 Law on Archives established legal regimes governing private archives, including ownership rights, rights of disposition, registration mechanisms, rights and obligations related to donation and deposit, and the state's responsibility for preserving materials of significant value. This legal framework was further developed and refined in the 2024 Law on Archives, which will take effect on 1 July 2025 and replace the 2011 Law on Archives with more comprehensive, explicit, and detailed provisions. Notably, the definition of "archival materials" now explicitly encompasses private archival materials, the concept of "private archives" is clearly defined, and numerous provisions are integrated throughout the law. Moreover, the dedication of an entire chapter to the regulation of private archives reflects a significant renewal and advancement in Vietnam's legal thinking regarding private archives and private archival materials.

METHODOLOGY

The object of this study is the process of formation and development of Vietnamese law governing *private archives* and *private archival materials* during the national renewal period from 1986 to 2025. The year 1986 marks the point at which the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated and comprehensively led the *Đổi mới* (Renovation) process. The year 2025 corresponds to the entry into force of the Law on Archives promulgated in 2024, which officially takes

effect on 1 July 2025.

This article analyzes the evolution of legal regulations on private archives and private archival materials in Vietnam. It explores the legal transformations affecting private archives, reflecting a shift in legal thinking from a framework that was limited to regulating archival materials and archival activities within the public sector to one that expands its scope to encompass the private sector. This transition demonstrates the state's growing attention to, and the adoption of important measures in response to, the objective existence and significance of private archives. Through legislation, the state intervenes in social reality to ensure fair and equal treatment, while promoting the potential and value of private archives and private archival materials.

To achieve these objectives, the study employs a historical method to reconstruct the chronological development of relevant laws and policies; a logical method to examine the internal coherence and theoretical foundations of these legal provisions; and an interdisciplinary approach that draws on perspectives from legal studies, history, and information science. This comprehensive methodological framework enables a deeper understanding of the evolving legal and social significance of private archives within Vietnam's archival system.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Private archival materials are records owned by the private sector and do not originate from the state. Such materials are of significant importance not only to their owners, namely individuals, families, lineages, and social communities, but also to the state and society at large (University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, 2013). For many years, the term *"archival materials"* has been a fundamental concept in archival science and has been widely used in agencies, organizations, and among researchers in Vietnam (State Archives Department, 1992; Hoan, 1987; Kham, 2011). In practice, however, this term has often been understood partially and inconsistently across archival studies, archival law, and social practice.

A comprehensive and accurate definition that fully reflects the attributes (conceptual content) of *"archival materials"* is closely related to the formulation of state policies and legislation on the management, preservation, organization of use, and promotion of the value of records formed in the activities of public agencies and organizations (public archives), as well as those created and held by organizations, individuals, and other actors in society (private archives). At present, there is no fully unified interpretation of this term worldwide. In Vietnam, the concepts of *"archival materials"* and *"private archives"* have been understood and regulated differently in law over time, reflecting an increasingly comprehensive legal and scholarly awareness of archival materials and archival activities, encompassing both public and private archives.

This study examines the renewal and development of Vietnamese law on private archives through two phases of the national renewal period. The first phase extends from the initiation of *Đổi mới* to the period prior to the promulgation of the 2011 Law on Archives (1986–2011). The second phase begins with the enactment of the 2011 Law on Archives and is further expanded and refined in the 2024 Law on Archives, which takes effect on 1 July 2025 (2011–2025). Together, these phases illustrate the progressive transformation in Vietnam's legal approach to private archives, from limited and implicit recognition to explicit regulation and systematic integration within the national archival framework.

The Period from the Initiation of National Renewal to the Enactment of the 2011 Law on Archives (1986–2011)

In 1986, at its Sixth National Congress (December 1986), the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated the national *Đổi mới* (Renovation) process. This reform focused on transforming the economy from a centrally planned, bureaucratic, and subsidized mechanism to a socialist-oriented market economy. Key areas of reform included economic renovation, political reform (the building of a rule-of-law state and the promotion of democracy), as well as reforms in culture and society, science and technology, national defense, and foreign affairs. Archival legislation was also situated within this broader context of national renewal in Vietnam.

During the early phase of the *Đổi mới* period (from 1986 to 2001), the legal instrument with the highest normative value governing archival matters remained the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials promulgated by the State Council. Provisions related to private archives and private archival materials under this ordinance were reflected in several aspects.

With regard to terminology and conceptual definitions, the 1982 Ordinance did not employ the term *"private archives."* The concept of *"archival materials"* was defined in a manner that implicitly encompassed private archival materials through the category of "individuals," specifically as follows: "National archival materials are materials of value in political, military, economic, cultural, educational, social, scientific, and technical terms, formed in the course of activities of Party and State agencies, social organizations, armed forces units, and individuals, across historical periods of the Vietnamese nation, serving historical and scientific research and practical activities. National archival materials must be original copies of documents or other records on paper, film, photographs, tapes, audio discs, or other recording media; only in cases where the original no longer exists may it be replaced by a copy of equivalent value" (State Council, 1982).

More specifically, the phrase *"individuals"* was further clarified in several provisions of the Ordinance. With respect to the Archival Fonds of the Communist Party of Vietnam, it referred to "outstanding historical figures of the Party who were simultaneously key leaders of the State and socio-political organizations"; with respect to the State Archival Fonds of Vietnam, it referred more generally to "prominent historical figures" (State Council, 1982).

The Ordinance also recognized that private materials of "individuals, families, and lineages" possessing value would be registered and protected by the State; state agencies were assigned responsibility for providing technical guidance and assistance in preservation. In addition, the Ordinance encouraged the donation and deposit of private materials by individuals, families, and lineages to archival institutions, as well as the preferential sale of such materials to archival agencies.

Overall, during approximately the first fifteen years of national renewal, Vietnam's legal regulations on private archives continued to follow the framework established by the 1982 Ordinance. In terms of legal perception, this instrument confined regulation to archival materials and archival activities within the public sector. *"Private archival materials"* and *"private archives"* were not yet regarded as independent legal objects. The State considered private-sector materials only in limited aspects, primarily as materials of value serving specific purposes, and applied only certain regulatory measures, such as registration and protection, technical guidance and assistance in preservation, and encouragement of donation or deposit in archival institutions. By 2001, after fifteen years of implementing the *Đổi mới* process, Vietnam had achieved significant accomplishments across multiple domains of socio-economic life. Notably, the 1992 Constitution, the Constitution of the renewal period, had been promulgated, and the State enacted numerous codes and laws to establish a solid legal framework for regulating social relations. Within this context, the Ordinance on National Archives was promulgated in 2001 with the objectives of ensuring the safety and effective use of national archival materials, and of enhancing the responsibility of agencies, organizations, and all citizens for the protection, management, and use of national archival materials. Provisions related to private archives and private archival materials under this ordinance are reflected in the following aspects:

With regard to terminology and conceptual definitions, the 2001 Ordinance on National Archives did not employ the term *"private archives."* The concept of *"archival materials"* was defined in a manner that implicitly encompassed private archival materials, expressed more specifically as follows: "National archival materials are materials of value in political, economic, national defense, security, diplomatic, cultural, educational, scientific, and technological terms, formed during the historical periods of the Vietnamese nation in the course of activities of state agencies, political organizations, socio-political organizations, social organizations, socio-professional organizations, economic organizations, and units of the people's armed

forces (hereinafter collectively referred to as agencies and organizations), as well as outstanding historical figures, serving historical and scientific research and practical activities. National archival materials must be original or authentic copies recorded on paper, film, photographs, videotapes, video discs, audiotapes, audio discs, or other information-bearing media; where the original or authentic copy no longer exists, it may be replaced by a lawful copy" (Standing Committee of the National Assembly, 2001).

Accordingly, in the 2001 Ordinance, the term *"individuals"* used in earlier legislation was articulated more precisely as *"outstanding historical figures."* However, when defining the Archival Fonds of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State Archival Fonds of Vietnam, the content remained largely consistent with the interpretation provided in the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials. As a result, although the wording *"historical, outstanding"* was introduced, the substantive scope of the concept did not differ from earlier formulations.

In addition, other provisions of the 2001 Ordinance on National Archives relating to private archives were essentially the same as those in the 1982 Ordinance. It continued to recognize that private materials of "individuals, families, and lineages" possessing value would be registered and protected by the State, with state agencies responsible for providing guidance and technical assistance in preservation. The Ordinance also encouraged the donation and deposit of private materials by individuals, families, and lineages to archival institutions, as well as preferential sale to archival agencies.

In summary, during the period from the initiation of national renewal to the enactment of the 2011 Law on Archives (1986–2011), Vietnam's archival legislation in general, and regulations on private archives and private archival materials in particular, were characterized by several fundamental features.

First, legal regulation was embodied in ordinances, sub-statutory legal instruments with the highest normative value before the promulgation of comprehensive laws. In the absence of an archival law, ordinances represented the highest level of regulation within the legal system, and many were later elevated to statutory laws. This demonstrates that Vietnam has shown concern and gradually adopted state management measures with respect to archival materials and archival activities. Nevertheless, these legal instruments confined their regulatory scope to national archives, that is, to archival materials and archival activities within the public sector of the State and certain organizations such as the Communist Party of Vietnam and socio-political organizations.

Second, private archives and private archival materials were not yet regarded by the State as independent objects requiring regulation within the archival legal system. The relevant legal documents contained only rudimentary and limited provisions addressing certain aspects of private archives and private archival materials, primarily in their relationship with the State and public archival institutions. Vietnamese law considered materials of individuals, families, and lineages only from the perspective of *"materials of special value,"* meaning that state registration and protection were applied only when such materials served historical research or public interests.

Third, the legal provisions on archives reveal that the legal awareness and thinking of state authorities responsible for archival administration and legislative drafting remained partial and narrowly focused on archival materials within the public sector, namely the State and a limited number of designated organizations. Consequently, a substantial volume of records formed in practice by individuals, families, lineages, and non-state organizations was not recognized or considered by law as archival materials, except where such materials were donated or deposited with the State and preserved in public archival institutions.

Finally, the practice of promulgating and implementing archival legislation during the early *Đổi mới* period (1986–2011) provided valuable experience for the subsequent development of archival law in Vietnam in general, and for the expansion and refinement of regulations on private archives in particular, in the following stages of legal reform.

The Period Marked by the 2011 Law on Archives and Its Further Development in the 2024 Law on Archives

On 11 November 2011, the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam officially adopted the Law on Archives. The 2011 Law on Archives consists of seven chapters and forty-two articles, regulating a wide range of issues, including archival activities; the rights and obligations of agencies, organizations, and individuals in archival activities; education and professional training in archival work; archival service activities; and state management of archives. Although the Law did not yet employ the term *"private archives,"* its scope of regulation explicitly included individuals, marking the first time that Vietnamese archival legislation extended its applicability to the private sector. Provisions relating to archival materials and private archives were reflected in several important aspects. With respect to terminology and conceptual definitions, the Law did not provide explicit definitions of *"private archives"* or *"private archival materials."* However, the concept of *"archival materials"* was defined concisely, clearly, and with broader substantive scope than in previous legal instruments, as follows: "Archival materials are materials of value serving practical activities, scientific research, and historical study that are selected for preservation. Archival materials include originals and authentic copies; where the original or authentic copy no longer exists, it may be replaced by a lawful copy" (National Assembly, 2011).

The Law continued to include provisions encouraging organizations and individuals to donate, deposit, or sell their archival materials to the State, similar to those contained in the 1982 Ordinance on the Protection of National Archival Materials and the 2001 Ordinance on National Archives. A particularly notable feature considered a legal turning point was the explicit affirmation of the State's policy to *"recognize ownership rights over archival materials"* (National Assembly, 2011). Accordingly, the Law formally acknowledged ownership rights in archival materials held by individuals, families, lineages, and non-state organizations, rights inherently belonging to the private archival sector under the Constitution and the Civil Code. This recognition provided a concrete legal basis for safeguarding the freedom to dispose of property while enabling the State to formulate appropriate support policies.

Furthermore, the 2011 Law on Archives introduced specific provisions on the management of materials held by individuals, families, and lineages. Archival materials of such entities that are of value to national and social interests are required to be registered within the National Archival Fonds of Vietnam. These materials include genealogies; royal decrees and titles; biographical records; manuscripts, annotated printed materials, scientific research works, creative works, and correspondence; films and photographs; audio and audiovisual recordings; electronic records; works and publications about individuals; and publications and materials collected by individuals (National Assembly, 2011).

The Law also stipulated that the historical archives where registration takes place are responsible for appraising the value of individual archival materials and defined six principal rights of individuals possessing archival materials. These include: (1) the right to register materials with historical archives and receive technical guidance and assistance in preservation, as well as support in promoting their value; (2) the right to decide on the donation or deposit of materials with historical archives; (3) the right to negotiate the sale of materials and priority access to materials that have been donated; (4) the right to permit others to use deposited materials at historical archives, provided that such use does not infringe upon national security, state interests, or the lawful rights and interests of agencies, organizations, or individuals; and (5) the right to receive commendations from the State in accordance with the law. Correspondingly, individuals bear obligations, including that materials related to national security may only be donated or sold to historical archives, and that preservation fees must be paid for deposited materials in accordance with legal regulations, except for materials that have been officially registered (National Assembly, 2011).

In addition, the 2011 Law on Archives provided regulations on archival education and professional training, as well as archival service activities. The Law affirmed the conditional permissibility of private archival service activities conducted by organizations and individuals. Organizations providing archival services are required to register their activities with provincial-level state agencies

responsible for archival management, possess adequate facilities and human resources, and ensure that individuals performing archival services hold professional practice certificates. Individuals wishing to independently practice archival services must meet conditions, including possession of a professional practice certificate, appropriate facilities, and registration with the competent provincial authority. Archival service activities include preservation, arrangement and processing, restoration, disinfection, deacidification, mold removal, digitization of non-classified archival materials, as well as research, consultancy, scientific application, and technology transfer in the archival field.

Thus, although the 2011 Law on Archives did not explicitly use the terms *"private archives"* or *"private archival materials,"* through its definition of archival materials, recognition of ownership rights, provisions on the management of materials held by individuals, families, and lineages, and regulations on archival training and services, it marked significant progress toward clearer, more concrete, and broader regulation of private archives compared with the early stage of the *Đổi mới* period. These provisions established an essential legal framework for a wide range of practical activities related to the private archival sector and private archival materials.

In 2024, Vietnam witnessed a major transformation in archival legislation with the promulgation of a new Law on Archives. The 2024 Law on Archives substantially expanded both the subjects and the scope of regulation to encompass the private archival sector, reflecting a comprehensive shift in the legal system and demonstrating a more advanced legal mindset and heightened social awareness regarding archival materials and archival activities.

Article 1 of the 2024 Law on Archives, which defines the scope of regulation, explicitly employs the term *"private archives"* and affirms that private archives fall within the Law's regulatory scope. This provision marks the first time in the history of Vietnam's archival legislation that *"private archives"* have been explicitly recognized as a regulated subject, possessing legal value and status equal to that of public archives.

Within its scope and subjects of regulation, the Law explicitly includes private archives. Regarding terminology, the concept of *"archival materials"* is defined as follows: "Archival materials are materials formed in the activities of agencies, organizations, individuals, families, lineages, and communities under different socio-political regimes, which are preserved in accordance with this Law and other relevant laws" (National Assembly, 2024).

Through this definition, the Law explicitly encompasses materials formed through the activities of individuals, families, lineages, and communities. At this stage, *archival materials* include both public and private archival materials; records created by state agencies and public-sector organizations, as well as those held by individuals, families, lineages, and communities, are placed on an equal legal footing and governed by the Law on Archives and other relevant legislation. Notably, the regulation of private archives and private archival materials operates not only under the Law on Archives but also in conjunction with other relevant legal instruments, such as the Civil Code and the Law on Marriage and Family laws that directly regulate civil life, including personal relations and property relations of individuals, families, lineages, and communities.

The 2024 Law on Archives defines *private archives* as "archives of individuals, families, clans, communities, and organizations that are not mass organizations assigned tasks by the Party or the State" (National Assembly, 2011). Based on recognizing private archives as falling within the scope of regulation of the Law, the concept of private archives has been clearly clarified. At the same time, the content of the 2024 Law on Archives reflects numerous specific provisions governing private archives and private archival documents.

First, the 2024 Law on Archives officially uses the term *"private archival documents"* and affirms that such documents include: (i) archival documents formed in the activities of individuals, families, clans, and communities; (ii) archival documents formed in the activities of social organizations and socio-professional organizations (excluding archival documents formed in the activities of mass organizations assigned tasks by the Party and the State); and (iii) archival documents formed in the

activities of non-governmental organizations and economic organizations that are not state-owned enterprises. This approach demonstrates a significant expansion of the scope of archival legislation, comprehensively encompassing the non-state sector.

In addition, the 2024 Law on Archives contains numerous provisions related to private archives and private archival documents that are integrated into general regulations, such as the scope of application of the Law, archival principles, state policies on archival activities, the value of archival documents, and prohibited acts. The Law also clearly stipulates the authority of organizations, individuals, families, clans, and communities in managing and preserving private archival documents and private archival databases; identifies private archival documents of special value; and regulates the promotion and utilization of the value of private archival documents across historical periods. Notably, to concretize these general provisions, the 2024 Law on Archives devotes a separate and independent chapter to detailed regulations on private archives, thereby affirming the increasingly clear legal status of this field.

Archival service activities, which were already regulated in the 2011 Law on Archives, continue to be supplemented and developed into a distinct chapter in the 2024 Law on Archives. The Law clearly defines the content of archival service activities, the conditions that organizations providing archival services must meet, and the scope of archival services that organizations and individuals are permitted to provide. These provisions establish a legal foundation for the formation and development of an archival services market in the private sector.

An overall assessment of archival legislation in general, and private archives and private archival documents in particular, from the promulgation of the 2011 Law on Archives to its further development in the 2024 Law on Archives (effective from July 1, 2025), reveals several notable achievements.

First, archival regulations during this period are embodied at the level of a Law enacted by the National Assembly the highest legal instrument governing a sector or field of socio-economic life in Vietnam. This demonstrates the growing attention of the State to archival documents and archival activities, as well as continuous innovation in state management approaches to this field. Vietnamese law has gradually expanded from regulating primarily public-sector archives of the State and certain political and socio-political organizations to encompassing the private sector, including individuals, families, clans, and communities.

Second, private archives and private archival documents have gradually and officially been recognized by the State as objects and scopes of regulation within the archival legal system. From being unrecognized during the early stage of the Renovation period (1986–2011), private archival documents were partially acknowledged under the 2011 Law on Archives, which recognized certain types of valuable archival documents of individuals, families, and clans registered under the National Archival Fonds of Vietnam. This recognition has been comprehensively expanded under the 2024 Law on Archives to include private archival documents without restrictive limitations. Through the 2011 Law, and especially the 2024 Law, many aspects of private archives and private archival documents have been clarified and expanded, granting them an increasingly important legal status in social life.

Third, archival legislation reflects the advancement in awareness and legal thinking of state management agencies regarding archival activities. This progress is evident in the articulation of concepts, the systematic and interwoven presentation of provisions across articles and clauses, and the allocation of a dedicated chapter regulating private archives.

Fourth, building upon the foundations of the 2011 and 2024 Laws on Archives, a relatively comprehensive and inclusive legal framework for private archives and private archival documents has been established. This framework serves as an important basis for promoting the socialization of archival activities, enabling the private archival sector to develop robustly. It facilitates the establishment of private archival organizations, archival enterprises, and archival centers providing professional services, while also encouraging individuals, families, clans, and communities to pay

greater attention to the creation, preservation, and promotion of the value of their archival documents for personal, communal, and national interests.

CONCLUSION

The process of reforming and developing legislation on private archives in Vietnam during the period 1986–2025 reveals several salient characteristics, reflecting transformations in state governance thinking, the expansion of democratic access to documentary resources, and the requirements of national integration and development. From the perspectives of legal studies, historiography, and archival science, several important lessons can be drawn. First, the State and the law play a constitutive role in shaping the development of private archives. Over nearly four decades, Vietnam's archival legal system demonstrates that the State acts as a facilitator, guide, and regulator of private archival development. The law not only defines the rights and obligations of private archival document owners but also establishes a legal framework ensuring the implementation of professional archival activities such as collection, preservation, access to information, and the promotion of archival values. This approach reflects the State's recognition of private archival documents as an integral component of the national documentary heritage, complementing public-sector sources and contributing to the construction of a comprehensive, objective, and multi-dimensional historical narrative (Do, 2022). Thus, legal development is not merely administrative in nature but embodies progressive political, legal, and scientific awareness that views private archival documents as a valuable social resource requiring protection, recognition, and utilization in accordance with modern legal standards.

Second, the process of legal refinement has been closely linked to international integration and convergence with global trends (La, 2021). A prominent feature of Vietnam's private archival legislation during this period is its alignment with international standards observed in countries with advanced archival legal systems. The inclusion of provisions on access to information, transfer, deposit, donation, international cooperation, and private archival services indicates a shift away from purely administrative control toward an open, flexible legal model that encourages social participation. These developments have created a modern legal environment suitable for international archival exchange, collaboration with foreign scholars, and engagement with transnational information institutions.

Third, the law has paved the way for the socialization of archival activities and the formation of a private archival market (Nguyen, 2011). One of the most significant transformations during Vietnam's Renovation period (1986–2025) is the recognition of private archives as a legitimate, protected component of the archival system. This recognition has fostered two major trends: the socialization of archival activities, encouraging individuals, families, clans, enterprises, and communities to collect, preserve, and promote the value of their own documents; and the emergence of private archival organizations providing services such as digitization, preservation, data exploitation, consulting, and professional archival services. These changes demonstrate that the State has expanded the operational space for the private sector in a field previously regarded as a state monopoly, thereby forming a diverse and dynamic archival ecosystem.

Fourth, the legal framework facilitates international cooperation and the participation of non-governmental organizations in the field of private archives. The 2024 Law on Archives and related legal documents establish a clear legal basis for international cooperation in private archival activities. This framework allows foreign non-governmental organizations to provide technical assistance, digital preservation, and training; enables international research centers and archival institutions to offer archival services in Vietnam; and promotes documentary exchange, academic collaboration, and the reconstruction of historical sources beyond the public sector. Such openness contributes to Vietnam's deeper integration into the global documentary space and enhances national capacity for preserving and promoting private archival documents in line with international standards.

Fifth, private archival legislation expands the research space of historiography and affirms private archival documents as essential historical sources.

From the perspectives of historical science and archival studies, the legal framework governing private archives provides a stable basis for accessing and researching private documents—resources that are abundant yet were previously unrecognized, unstandardized, and underutilized. With the improvement of the legal framework, scholars both domestically and internationally now have broader access to materials such as family manuscripts, clan genealogical records, community narratives, documents of private enterprises, religious organizations, social organizations, and personal collections. These materials significantly enrich national historical sources and enable the reconstruction of history from diverse, non-state perspectives.

Overall, the development of private archival legislation in Vietnam from 1986 to 2025 reflects a transformation in legal thinking, innovation in state governance, and efforts to expand the archival space. The legal system not only establishes a foundation for protecting and promoting the value of private archival documents but also contributes to advancing scientific research, strengthening international cooperation, and deepening Vietnam's integration into the global community.

REFERENCES

Department of State Records and Archives. (1992). *Vietnamese archival dictionary*. Hanoi, Vietnam.

Do, V. H. (2022). Supplementing and implementing legal regulations on private archives. *Archives and Times Journal*, (2), 40–44.

Duong, V. K. (2011). *Explanatory dictionary of Vietnamese records and archives professional terminology*. Culture and Information Publishing House. Hanoi, Vietnam.

National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2011). *Law on archives*. Hanoi, Vietnam.

National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2024). *Law on archives*. Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nguyen, V. T. (2011). *Selected issues on state management documents, archives – history and administrative management* (Selected articles). Political–Administrative Publishing House. Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nguyen, V. T., Vuong, D. Q., Dao, T. D., & Nghiem, K. H. (2012). *History of Vietnamese archives* (1st rev. ed.). Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Press. Hochiminh, Vietnam.

Standing Committee of the National Assembly. (2001). *Ordinance on national archives*. Hanoi, Vietnam.

State Council. (1982). *Ordinance on the protection of national archival documents*. Hanoi, Vietnam.

Tran, T. D. (2021). *State management of personal, family, and clan archival documents* (Ministerial-level scientific research report, Ministry of Home Affairs). Hanoi, Vietnam.

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. (2013). *Organization and promotion of the value of people's archival documents*. Vietnam National University Press.

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City. (2022). *Collection, preservation, and promotion of valuable and rare archival documents in contemporary Vietnam*. Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Press.

Vu, D. H. (Ed.). (1987). *Vietnamese archival practice*. Social Sciences Publishing House. Hanoi, Vietnam.

Vuong, D. Q. (2015). "Archival documents": A term requiring a more precise understanding and definition. In *History, theory, and practice of archives and office administration* (Selected articles). Vietnam National University Press.