

Homo sapiens, Homo legens

NATIONAL PROGRAM

for Reading Promotion and Development
in Russia



FEDERAL AGENCY FOR PRINT AND MASS MEDIA
RUSSIAN BOOK UNION

**National Program
for Reading Promotion and Development
in Russia**

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The National Program for Reading Promotion and Development offers a comprehensive view of reading. It is regarded in an extensive context of problems Russia is tackling as a transition society. These are national political and economic reforms, globalization and information society development. The Program specifies the aims and the means, comprises goals, objectives, guidelines and tactics. It provides a schedule of its stage-by-stage implementation.

The Program was elaborated by a joint team of the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre and OOO Strategica on order of the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media and the Russian Book Union.

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Why Does Russia Need Its National Program for Reading Promotion and Development?

On November 24, 2006, the St. Petersburg book show hosted an event whose significance still remains obscure despite a tremendous part it promises to play in Russia's development. Mikhail Seslavinsky, Head of the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media and member of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, and Sergei Stepashin, Chair of the Russian Book Union, which brings together all leading book publishers and distributors, signed a National Program for Reading Promotion and Development.

Many clever heads wonder just why a country renowned for its literature—a country that recently flattered itself on the world's largest readerships—would need the Program at all.

We come at an answer when we think just what reading is, and what part it plays.

4 Political and economic reforms are progressing in Russia as globalization marches on, and information society is emerging apace worldwide. Naturally, Russia faces many problems. It must develop and keep afloat in a pressing competition. For that, the entire population, including the political class and the business and managerial community, must be knowledgeable and culturally competent enough to permanently adapt to a life that gets ever more complicated.

If we take all that into consideration, we see that mere leafing through fiction books is not what reading is really about. To read means to get home a volume of information and knowledge necessary in everyday life and professional activities—hence an extensive and complicated range of involved problems.

Public interest in reading is dwindling worldwide with a stormy progress of the electronic media and the entertainment industry. Certainly, reading as a prestigious source of information and pleasant pastime recedes into the background.

Russians' indifference to books has come to a fatal level, with an all-round crisis of reading and creative writing culture. The share of young regular readers has come from 48% in 1991 down to 28% in 2005. In 1991, 79% of the population read at least one book a year—as against 63% in 2005. 61% of Russians regularly read newspapers in 1991—as against 24% in 2005. The respective percentages for magazines were 16

and 7. Books were regularly read to children in 80% of families in the 1970s—now, in a mere 7%. Public choice of fiction and professional literature shows tastes degrading even in the intellectual circles. We are facing a dark future if those trends persist.

That is why Russia vitally needs its National Program for Reading Promotion and Development.

The work at program drafts made it clear how big, complicated and multilevel the problem of reading was in Russia. Text accessibility and adequate understanding, book and periodical circulation, the situation in publishing, libraries, media outlets and the entire information environment, the content and priorities of cultural and education policies and, last but not least, children's and adults' reading habits—all that is closely interconnected and mutually conditioned.

A huge amount of printed matter comes out in Russia now. Its variety has never been so great as today. Its potential is tremendous—but the book trade infrastructure is underdeveloped, and the population and the libraries are poor, so the potential is drastically reduced.

Russia must urgently enhance the erudition and cultural competence of its entire population. For that, it needs a public climate, an information environment and conditions to make **all** people read, and give them easy access to whatever contemporary publications—be it in bookshops, libraries or the Internet. Russia needs institutions and establishments whose official duties include promotion of reading. Their personnel must possess necessary technologies and working habits. Meanwhile, no one in Russia is politically or morally responsible for promoting reading, and there is an acute shortage of high-class experts.

Program implementation is going through its initial stage in 2007. That is when all interested parties must provide together an atmosphere for each and every to see the necessity of permanent untiring toil for that goal—which is a work of gripping interest—and get down to it.

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National Program for Reading Promotion and Development in Russia

Introduction

Russia needs all-round modernization to raise its living standards up to the universally recognized as globalization is going on, and to become politically and economically competitive as it constructively cooperates with other countries. Lack of constructive ideas, knowledge and information in every part of Russian society impedes progress to those goals, while comparatively low cultural competence of the entire nation, including the political class and business and managerial circles, does not suffice to cope with involved problems stocked up.

6 The growing deficit of knowledge and constructive ideas in the Russian community, with other acute and all-penetrating problems in the background, is largely due to waning public interest in reading. What we have today is an all-round crisis of reading culture. Russia has approached the *critical limit of contempt for reading*.

In this situation, the nation runs many hazards, as reading is an essential way to receive vitally necessary information. Without reading, personal integration into the multi-tier and multi-ethnic Russian culture is impossible. Russian culture is understood as the entire range of spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional values; a mode of life; basic human rights; and, last but not least, the systems of world-views, i.e., values, norms, traditions and education characteristic of a particular community. At the same time, the economy, politics, security and competitiveness of a country largely depend on the cultural competence of its citizens.

A certain decrease of interest in reading is a current global trend. Many countries are actively fighting it, as they realize what reading matters to the development of any nation.

As those countries' experience testifies, the situation can be improved. Yet it takes *permanent unremitting efforts, and presence of effective institutions for the development and promotion of reading/writing culture* to maintain written and oral verbal culture at a high level.

The principal goal of present-day transitional Russian society is to *arouse interest in reading in the young generation, and bring back to active readers' ranks the numerous groups of comparatively well-educated Russians*, who determine their country's present, lay the foundations of its future and who, for some reason, have almost given up reading within the last 20 years. *In other words, it is necessary to provide conditions for mass intensification of reading, for improving the standards of literature and its variety in every branch of knowledge, for opinion exchanges on what has been read, and for greater prestige of reading as a cultural value.*

The National Program for Reading Promotion and Development regards the phenomenon of reading comprehensively against an extensive background of socio-cultural processes and problems which Russia, as a transition society, faces in the context of current political and economic reforms, globalization and information society development.

The implementation of the Program will spectacularly change attitudes to book culture and the culture of reading in the public and government agencies alike. The Program promises to become a launching pad for planned and consistent formation and implementation of an effective national policy of promoting and developing reading by government bodies, public organizations and business.

Such a policy will enhance the national intellectual potential, and become an essential instrument of preserving and developing Russian culture and language. That will help to solve vital problems and attain national strategic goals.



Name of program	National Program for Reading Promotion and Development
Clients	Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media
The Russian Book Union Principal program developers	Interregional Library Cooperation Centre OOO Strategica
Program goals and aims	<p>The National Program for Reading Promotion and Development aims to enhance public cultural competence through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of reading competence, i.e., the sum total of knowledge and habits allowing to select, understand and digest information offered in print/writing and use it to great effect for private and public needs. • An increase of public reading activity (scope and intensity) to raise it to a level sufficient for the successful adaptation to the dynamic and problem-laden transition society. <p>GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlining the socio-cultural reading environment and strengthening the principal infrastructural institutions of the reading promotion and development—libraries, cultural and educational establishments, book industry, the production and dissemination of other kinds of content on the various carriers—newspapers, magazines, documents, etc.—and the systems of popularizing reading, reading infrastructural personnel training, reading problems research, and creation of a methodological background to study reading problems. • Establishing a system of effective information exchanges between reading infrastructural institutions, and between such institutions and the managerial system to streamline the relevant socio-cultural environment.

Name of program	National Program for Reading Promotion and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a system of infrastructural management to promote and develop reading, i.e. effective mechanisms of coordinating and cooperating agencies and institutions that form and implement policies in the field of reading.
Principal targets and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing public cultural competence to a level comparable to that of the developed and actively developing countries. • Enhancing public reading competence to a level comparable to that of the developed and actively developing countries. • Increasing public reading activity (scope and intensity) to raise it to a level sufficient for successful adaptation to the dynamic and problem-laden transition society (the share of occasional and active readers in the population). • Increasing the share of people involved in the system of reading competence enhancement and satisfied with their achievements. • Increasing the share of people involved in effective measures to popularize reading. • Increasing the share of people and institutional content users satisfied with the accessibility of the content.
Program implementation stages and deadlines	<p>2007-2020</p> <p>1st stage – 2007-2010</p> <p>2nd stage – 2011-2015</p> <p>3rd stage – 2016-2020</p>

SECTION 1

PREREQUISITES OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Russia has every necessary prerequisite and resource to implement National Program for Reading Promotion and Development:

- ◆ it has institutional bodies to store and disseminate printed matter and written documents (libraries, educational and research establishments, publishing houses, bookstores and archives);
- ◆ there is a vast amount of socially important information stored in precise order by those institutions;
- ◆ professional literati—journalists, fiction authors, translators, and literary scholars and critics—and their organizations are actively working in Russia;
- ◆ government and private publishers steadily supply books, magazines and newspapers to the market;
- ◆ specialized stores, supermarket departments and bookstalls offer readers an extensive choice of printed matter;
- ◆ book fairs and exhibitions are regularly held;

Russia has a group of readers oriented on serious special literature and quality fiction; it also has public organizations of booklovers and amateur writers;

- ◆ it has sufficient mass media resources, which can be used to promote reading;
- ◆ it has a developed network of educational establishments and libraries;
- ◆ the public has not entirely broken with its developed reading traditions, and has not lost the desire to pass it to the young generation.

The implementation of the National Program for Reading Promotion and Development helps unify state policies in the sphere of reading, build up the available resources, however dispersed they might be, and orient the public on attaining one of the principal national goals.

LIBRARIES

Libraries are the only social institutions to monitor the entire range of national printed matter and acquire as many publications as possible to offer them for public use—free, for the most part. As all institutional spheres are regionalized, and with low public purchasing ability (especially in small towns and in the countryside), libraries are one of the principal social institutions that **can assume a major part of responsibility for information accessibility in such a vast country as Russia is—all the more so as library attendance (roughly a billion visits a year) thrice exceeds that of all other cultural establishments taken together.**

Russia presently has more than 130,000 libraries of various types. That number remains steady thanks to professional community efforts. On the whole, despite all hardships of the transition period, libraries are among the few systems in culture, education and research to largely preserve their personnel and organizational resources.

Federal and regional comprehensive research, public and university libraries (roughly 1,000, all told) develop in keeping with world standards. Their majority is up to the latest information technological demands. A union catalogue of Russian libraries is being compiled on the basis of the national Libnet library information centre. It uses latter-day technologies of corporate meta-database formation. Russia has several hundred thousand librarians—most of them with higher library or pedagogical education. Vast library stock, mainly in the largest libraries, is an essential and inalienable part of the national cultural heritage and information resources.

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THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Universal compulsory education is, for today, the primary institution of socialization to many Russians, and is extremely important to a considerable part of the nation. The school lays the basis for students' future social achievements and forms their personality, attitudes to themselves and others, and cultural competence. The fate of Russian research, economy, art and entire community today depends on the state of the school. Compulsory education is presently the only institutional structure responsible for the development of basic public competences.

This social institution has accumulated considerable experience, and possesses a methodological basis and other resources it takes to promote readers' competence, with a wide range of methods of teaching children to read, including limited-abilities pupils, who study in special corrective schools. More than 90% of instructors who teach reading have higher education.

The family tradition of reading aloud to children is receding into the past. So the school and its library is, to the majority of children, the place where they open their first books. The Russian universal compulsory education system includes a ramified net of institutions, which involves almost the entire population of the relevant age groups—which means that it is the basic institution fostering future readers' generations.

Education has been lately undergoing major changes, especially with the adoption of the Concept of Modernizing Russian Education for the Period up to 2010. It was elaborated on the basis of documents of the State Council of the Russian Federation of August 29, 2001. Contemporary society realizes the essential role of education in forming human capital, the preservation and promotion of the country's competitiveness, and guaranteeing national and individual information security. The nation has recognized the necessity of advanced (as against present-day social demands) development of education, re-orienting it on the world standards, and shifting the focus on the development of competences that would provide learners an equal start for further integration into active socio-cultural life—competences that are indispensable for lifelong education and self-improvement.

THE SYSTEM OF POPULARIZING READING

All these institutions must work for the following reading promotion goals:

- ◆ Promotion of an information environment conducive of reading, and of conditions that provide public access to literature useful in life and socially necessary;
- ◆ Promotion of the best literary samples (texts, books, genres and publication types) in a wide range of readers;
- ◆ Formation of public ideas of the value and importance of reading and book learning;

- ◆ Promotion of an attractive public image of readers, books, literature, libraries, bookstores and other social institutions connected with reading;
- ◆ Attraction of people who never or seldom read to active and discriminatory reading.

Russia has not completely abandoned traditions of popularizing reading, which were established in the pre-revolutionary time, and preserved and developed in the Soviet years. These are the popularizing role of libraries, schools and booklovers' clubs; book fairs and festivals; and literary museums. Much is also done in contemporary Russia on individual projects.

BOOK INDUSTRY

To publish diversified quality literature and efficiently disseminate it countrywide through traders are the basic functions of book industry. The Soviet Union possessed a ramified network that included major publishers, printers, bookstores, a personnel training system and much else. The shift of this industry to market relations in the late 1980s and early 90s had its pros and cons (to which we shall refer in detail later on). Be that as it may, the industry has lately made considerable progress.

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Russia has outrun the Soviet Union for the number and diversity of published books (more than 90,000). The market volume exceeded \$2 billion in 2005. A wide range of publications, especially in large cities, has replaced customary book shortages of the Soviet time, when trade could not supply enough books in great demand. Russia presently has several thousand major publishing companies, the largest of which are, at the same time, Eastern Europe's largest. Russia has not only prosperous bookstores but also online companies based in many parts of the country. National bibliography of books and other publications is being made on the basis of the Russian Book Chamber. The Books in Print system is making progress.

SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGICAL MAINTENANCE

The sophisticated infrastructure of reading support and promotion demands a powerful basis of scientific methods to be run effectively. This point is especially topical for Russia, which is traditionally self-reliant for research and education resources.

Present-day Russia has every opportunity for scholarly studies of the problems of reading, literacy, libraries, education, book industry, etc. There are the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Education, leading related higher educational establishments—culture and printing universities, the Literature Institute and others—and public organizations, to mention but few. Not only national libraries—the Russian State Library and the Russian National Library—but also many federal and regional libraries have a considerable research potential.

The reform years brought many negative changes (see below) to the Russian research practice, in particular, connected with reading. We must, however, highlight the importance of such research and educational establishments as have not merely preserved but augmented the potential of knowledge in this field. More than that, enthusiastic lone wolves, however they might lack funds, engage in educational R&D none below the best samples the developed countries have to offer.

PERSONNEL TRAINING

14 Russia possesses a well-knit personnel training system for particular institutions in the reading infrastructure. There is a ramified network of teacher-training and postgraduate pedagogical institutes, culture institutes (which train librarians, among others), the Printing University, the Literature Institute, etc.

Many Russian-based educational establishments have elaborated leading-edge methods of training teachers and librarians for public, school, children's and youth libraries, editors, proof-readers, market experts and others.

The personnel training system leaves much room for progress, for a number of reasons (see below for details). However, it needs updating and reforming—not starting from scratch.

READING INFRASTRUCTURAL MANAGEMENT

Pre-revolutionary Russia, and later the Soviet Union had a sufficiently effective system of running individual reading-related institutions. Though the reform years partly dismantled that system, or it could not cope in the changed socio-economic situation, there is every prerequisite to rather quickly revive the entire managerial

structure. This will be possible if relevant government bodies—the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture, the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media, the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, and the Federal Agency for Education—pool their efforts to blueprint and implement latter-day state policies to systemically link between themselves the basic parts of the reading infrastructure.

The state and the library community have done much within the preceding 15 years to designate the bearings of library policy. The federal laws “On Libraries” and “On the Legal Deposit”, adopted in 1994, laid the basis of numerous regional bylaws and other legal and normative acts. Government and professional library standards are being blueprinted—in particular, on the Russian Library Association line. Fundamental research methodological centers are functioning on the basis of two national and twenty federal libraries, and the central public libraries of all constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

The regulatory and legal framework of education management is undergoing a major reform to grant extensive competences to ever more of its participants:

- ◆ Amendments to the law “On Libraries” grant regional and municipal education managerial bodies greater freedom in determining the educational content. Educational establishments are granted, at an institutional level, the right to independently elaborate curricula, and choose teaching methods and tutorial material;
- ◆ The presently elaborated concept of ethnic cultural development supposes adapting the educational content and process to the interests of all ethnic entities represented in Russian general educational establishments;
- ◆ The federal bill “On Amending Legal Acts of the Russian Federation” aims to enhance the role of employers’ organizations in drawing the lists of trades and professions for vocational training, elaborating national standards for vocational training, and monitoring its quality;
- ◆ A trend is emerging for greater participation of pupils’ parents in educational establishment management.

The newly emerged national associations of publishers and distributors of printed matter are actively voicing their desire for joint decision-making on not only departmental but also socially important problems, such as the promotion of reading in the Russian community.

THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM THE PRESENT PROGRAM IS TO COPE WITH

As follows from the above, certain institutions of the socio-cultural reading environment not merely survived in the reform years but made progress. On the whole, however, the national infrastructure of reading promotion and development suffered considerable losses. More than that, Russia closely approached the critical threshold of disrespect for reading. At present, we can say that irreversible processes are starting in which the national cultural nucleus may perish.

The volume of information has been snowballing in every country and worldwide since the 20th century's second half. It is becoming ever more diversified, and its dissemination is ever more rapid. The global information society is taking shape at lightning speed. In this situation, Russia's progress depends ever closer on the content, organization and digestion of information circulating in it.

Russian society is rapidly changing and getting more complicated, as all other transition societies. Information processes are getting *more disorderly*, as compared either to the Soviet years or to the developed countries:

- ◆ Information exchanges are impeded ever worse between Russian regions, between the various types of settlements (megalopolises, large cities, medium-size towns and villages), between population groups and strata, and between people of different trades and professions. Information exchanges between Russia and other countries are also insufficient;
- ◆ Dominating the national information environment are sources and channels of fragmentary audio-visual information, while demands of an overwhelming part of the population for reliable systematized written (printed and/or electronic) information are not met;
- ◆ Necessary knowledge does not reach the mass consumer in time and in accessible forms, while available information is inadequate to help with essential problems;
- ◆ Essential information exchanges between the state and the public are insufficient, and so impede broad public participation in solving socially important problems;
- ◆ Socially necessary knowledge spreads slower than it should for effective socio-cultural adaptation of society.

All this *impedes the development* of Russia as information society, i.e., postindustrial society with an innovation economy—a society adapted to contemporary global processes and competitive in the global economy, politics and culture.

In this situation, *exchange of written (printed and electronic) information and reading—that is, active absorption of written information*, is essential for national development, because none other than written information, mainly in book form (printed or electronic), and written documents (manuscripts, diaries, and private and office correspondence) guarantees the *storage of socially important information and knowledge*. *Reading is the basic and irreplaceable source of social experience past and present, Russian and foreign*. All other channels (television, radio, everyday communication, etc.) carry the more superficial information, whose value is all too often short-lived. They are auxiliary—a kind of guide to reliable written information or illustrations of the past and current events.

Reading is the crucial way to absorb *basic* socially important information—professional and everyday knowledge, cultural values of the past and present, information about present-day developments and those rooted in the past, and normative ideas. Reading is the systemic nucleus of the multi-ethnic and multi-tiered Russian culture. It is also an indispensable mechanism of maintaining that nucleus—both its professional and everyday parts. Reading is the most powerful machinery of supporting and enriching the native language.

National and global changes are especially rapid with globalization underway. Their understanding, evaluation, absorption and integration into the available socio-cultural context largely depend on the degree of *absorption* of written culture, as fixed in printed matter and concentrated in specialized institutions—educational and research establishments, libraries, archives, publishing houses, and distribution agencies. All this demands a level of *readers' competence* sufficient for effective search, selection, organization and conscious use by the public of information/texts necessary and important to it.

Reading provides:

A) in the economic field, profound realization of economic trends and their social results;

B) in the political field:

- for professional politicians, professional knowledge and habits of decision-making and control of socially acceptable decision implementation;
- for the public-at-large, means of recognition and avoidance of manipulation by politicians;

C) in the legal field:

- for professionals, storage and organization of legal experience bred by society;
- for the public-at-large, mass access to legal information;

D) at the level of world-views, accumulation, generalization and organization of philosophical, religious, scientific and esthetic positions of the past and present;

E) at the level of disseminating socially significant experience, reception of universally necessary socially significant knowledge; opportunities to enhance personal cultural competence; and receiving information about current events.

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However, the status of reading is evidently deteriorating in present-day Russian society:

- ◆ The share of people who never read at all or read occasionally is growing. 75% of the population read at least a book a year in 1991, as against 63% in 2005. The share of young regular readers fell from 48% in 1991 to 28% in 2005.
- ◆ Traditions of family reading are receding into the past. 80% of families regularly read aloud to children in the 1970s as against present-day 7%.
- ◆ Public interest in the printed mass media is shrinking. 61% of Russians read newspapers every day in 1991. Only 24% did so in 2005, with a respective 16% and 7% for journals and magazines.
- ◆ Reading tastes and preferences are ever more indiscriminate. The choice of professional literature, classics and entertaining fiction shows tastes degrading even in the intellectual circles.
- ◆ The command of the native language is deteriorating. Oral Russian speech is getting more and more primitive. In response, the use of

English-language equivalents even of widely-used and long-established Russian words is getting more frequent among young people and in the intellectual and business circles.

- ◆ Public literacy is deteriorating. PISA international sampling revealed functional illiteracy of more than 10% of Russian school pupils as against 1% for the best-developed countries.
- ◆ Publishing policies are shifting toward books of primitive form and content, and small informative value.
- ◆ Entertainment is getting into the foreground of the functions of reading. Readers, especially young, want to reduce intellectual efforts to the smallest possible.
- ◆ Requests for the most complicated and informative professional literature and classics of artistic writing are ever more seldom even in large libraries.
- ◆ Library popularity shrinks with a growing gap between readers' demands and their satisfaction by medium and small libraries, especially small-town and rural.
- ◆ Value orientations are being erased in literary culture: there are no influential people who would introduce a fashion for reading quality books.
- ◆ The public—even the intellectual and managerial elite—is ever more sure that the Internet is ousting books and libraries, and their social role will be reduced to naught with its progress.

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The number of readers is shrinking, and their preferences deteriorating, however irreplaceable and socially important reading might be for:

- ◆ the development of the human potential—improving the population's culture and raising its educational level;
- ◆ competent decision-making at the federal, municipal, departmental, corporate and public organization levels;
- ◆ development of an intellectual elite capable of maintaining and improving general national cultural standards;
- ◆ improving public living standards and promoting cultural activism;
- ◆ enhancing Russia's status in the world.

That is the whole problem.

All this inevitably leads the community to rapid social degradation. General and professional public competence is deteriorating. People are unable to understand and accept other cultures (xenophobia is an extreme manifestation of this trend) and even such fields of their national culture that they do not know. Unsolved social problems stock up to threaten social unrest and upheavals as incompetent people cannot adequately pinpoint and formulate socially important problems, let alone solve them.

A certain decrease of interest in reading is a global trend now. It is due to mass media globalization and the rapid growth of entertainment industry, which oust reading as a prestigious source of socially important information and a means of relaxation. However, cultural, intellectual, political and business elites in many countries—both modernized and actively modernizing—are actively opposing those trends. They are aware of how pernicious the receding interest in reading is to public culture, to fruitful social contacts and international information exchanges. So they are groping for effective remedies.

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Russian reading problems have their specifics bred by the country's transitional state. Factors that decrease mass reading activity have emerged and are gaining momentum as old institutions, which promoted the mass popularity and prestige of reading in the Soviet years, no longer work in the present conditions, while the new are only in the making.

LIBRARIES

Libraries presently have ever more duties, and their social role must be enhanced. Regrettably, neither authorities at all levels nor the public-at-large realize this point.

Librarians' remuneration is far below the national average wage, and even that in culture. This rules out any notable progress of library information services. The problem is all the more topical as information society is ever more demanding of librarians, while the available personnel is advancing in age, and there is no inflow of young people to the library staff.

The library network has no proper managerial system, and performs in an unfriendly, and occasionally hostile, regulatory and legal environment:

- ◆ The Statute of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation does not even specify its direct responsibility for the elaboration of state policies toward librarianship and the network of universally accessible (public) libraries, while speaking in detail about other branches of culture, such as archives, cinematography and museums.
- ◆ The Office for Library Affairs, and later the Library Department of the Ministry of Culture were disbanded one after another. At present, the ministry has no specialists responsible for libraries and librarianship. The Library Department of the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography has no sufficient resources and powers to influence Russian library performance any notably¹.
- ◆ Libraries subordinate to various administrative bodies (the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Sciences, and others) that have no departments with sufficient resources and powers for efficient management of library subsystems. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the principal federal bodies in the library development field, do not coordinate activities between themselves. No one is responsible for the development of the entire Russian library network.
- ◆ The adoption of federal laws Nos. 94, 122 and 131 in the absence of a State Library Standard, and with all too frequent incompetence of municipal and regional authorities, leads not only to a reduction of library replenishment but also to libraries closing down in many regions.

The funding of a majority of libraries almost entirely finished in the 1990s to cover only personnel remuneration. Stock replenishment and renovation was in a critical state, and libraries became far less accessible to the public.

The inflow of new editions to public libraries in 2005 was a mere half of what they received in 1990. The UNESCO norm for developing countries demands 250 new books acquired a year per thousand population. The difference between Russian regions on this criterion

¹After the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation was abolished in 2008, the ministry established a Library and Archive Division of its Cultural Heritage Department.

is several tens. Libraries in more than a half of the country receive a hundred—150, at most—books a year, so we have every reason to describe that area as an information isolation zone.

Most rural libraries have made only token acquisitions of new literature since the start of the 1990s. Several thousand settlements have not a single copy of the federal Constitution, the Civil Code, a map of Russia, and government editions.

Two federal libraries with the status of national—the Russian State Library and the Russian National Library—have drastically reduced their activities for methodological leadership of the country's libraries. It is presently far below the necessary. There are no systemic efforts to highlight and disseminate promising innovation library services. Library research work in the sociology and psychology of reading is in practically no demand by book industry and trade, and by administrative bodies.

A typical municipal public library is far below contemporary public standards for the following reasons:

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- ◆ Library premises and book arrangement are inconvenient and outdated, with a greater part of the stock not shelved for public access but preserved in depositories;
- ◆ There are no comfortable premises for public cultural events, no conference rooms and classrooms;
- ◆ The location is inconvenient for users;
- ◆ The stock cannot satisfy users' demands;
- ◆ Computers, photocopiers, audio, video and other technologies are scanty or absent;
- ◆ Librarians have a low social status, and their qualifications are frequently inadequate;
- ◆ There are no material and technical facilities for limited-abilities users, e.g. blind and visually impaired.

Due to all these problems, libraries presently cannot cope with the entire range of their essential functions to provide necessary information for the population.

At the same time, a well-developed book market, which assumes a sizeable part of duties to promote reading in developed countries, demands a long time, major efforts and big money to get on a proper footing in Russia. Its development rate closely depends on the increase of the public purchasing ability and interest in reading. This is why new literature, i.e. the latest ideas, knowledge and information, must get more accessible mainly through public libraries.

BOOK INDUSTRY

Russia's transition to market relations spurred on book publishing and trade in major cities while badly hitting the industry in other parts of the country. *Up to 90% of books coming out countrywide presently do not reach bookstores in a greater part of medium and small towns, even where such stores survive.* Provincial traders prefer an extremely limited assortment of books—initially due to inadequate commercial arrangements and lack of operating assets, and now with the poverty of a majority of customers.

There are 5-10 bookstores per 100,000 population in developed countries. In Russia, the figure is 1.5-2. The country has only few stores with an assortment exceeding 50,000 titles. A majority of stores offer no more than 2 or 3 thousand—which means they cannot fully cope with their cultural and educational duties.

Book delivery by mail to outlying areas takes 3 weeks, against less than 3 days in the United States and Canada. Exorbitant charges make this service unaffordable for a great part of the population. Administrative barriers and high rents impede book trade in a sizeable part of Russia—in fact, everywhere but in cities with the population exceeding a million. Municipal bookstore privatization is going on, and new owners usually turn to other, more profitable commodities as soon as they buy the store.

A greater part of bookstores (up to 90%, according to market participants) have no inhouse databases to badly impede the development of the sectoral return system, and so make traders based in medium and small towns limit their offers to bestsellers.

Instead of freely circulating countrywide, new quality literature stays, for the most part, in the cities where it comes out. Book famine has not

stricken only Moscow, St. Petersburg and another several dozen major cities. A greater part of the country makes do with inferior large-circulation fiction—thrillers and crime and love stories for adults, and horror and crime stories and comics for children. A majority of the adult and underage population has an extremely limited choice of reading. Foreign books appear on sale only on rare occasions.

The publication of popular scientific and technical literature is insufficient in Russia—11% of the total number of titles against 20-25% in developed countries. There is a shortage of books for children and adolescents (7% vs. 25-30%).

The population is badly informed, or not informed at all, about the latest publications in any field of knowledge. A majority of Russians have no access to such information. The small-town and rural young generation has the greatest problems of all: the absence of new and varied literature for that age group not merely nips in the bud its interest in reading but robs it of an equal start to rule out a good career, which depends on integration into full-blooded social and cultural life.

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The Internet provides ample and useful information—but a mere 15% of the Russian population use it. As for the television and radio, only one or two channels are accessible in small towns and the countryside.

There is a gap between the necessity to acquire and use information essential for socio-cultural adaptation during the transition period, on the one hand, and access to such information barred to many social groups in many parts of the country—i.e. a majority of the population, on the other. That is the main problem of the Russian book industry.

EDUCATION

Though it is generally recognized that education must shift its focus to the development of basic competences, Russian compulsory universal education does not pay sufficient attention to the formation of *reading competence*.

The goals of teaching reading and reading competence development have been limited to reading techniques. Such habits as understanding the context, integration of all information elements, correlation of the

text with knowledge from other fields and with the reader's personal experience, and critical appraisal of texts are presently outside the border of educational standards.

Succession has been severed between the developmental levels of reading competence at the different stages and in the various subsystems of education—standards applied to specialists have no reflection on the earlier educational stages.

Reading is extremely seldom regarded as the basic instrument of education and personal development. As the share of students' independent work with texts from the various fields of knowledge is growing, reading habits are drilled mainly on literary works. A simplistic approach to literary analysis reduces students' interest in reading—in particular, as leisure. Even the small time previously intended for reading competence development is gradually taken up by academic disciplines. As the result, students are not developing sufficient habits of digesting considerable amounts of specialized information.

Education does not make necessary consideration for the specifics of particular students, e.g., to adapt limited-abilities or immigrant children to basic schooling. General school is short of teaching aids and classroom equipment despite ample Russian R&D in latter-day technologies and reading instruction methods. Teachers are not qualified enough to use them. Unequal start for higher education and uneven preparation has to this day found no reflection in the organization and content of teaching reading.

There is no system of evaluating students' reading competence at the various stages of education, so we cannot pinpoint its greatest problems and properly coordinate teaching efforts to improve students' reading habits.

A majority of school libraries are in a deplorable state. Study books make 80% of their stock, experts say. Acquisition of fiction and popular science has practically stopped. Scanty even now, the school library stock of fiction and specialized literature will desperately outdate in a matter of 5 or 6 years. Libraries will be unable to keep abreast with current information and provide students a necessary amount of informative and entertaining literature.

School libraries have practically ceased to perform as centers of educating students and the personnel alike. Whatever pedagogical literature to be found there is outdated and badly worn.

School librarian training deserves special attention. Their qualification is below contemporary standards, while the system of their education is almost entirely destroyed. Higher education does not train librarians for schools and children's and youth libraries. Manuals written by few enthusiasts give school librarians their only chance to improve qualifications.

The Russian system of extended reading competence education is embryonic, and boils down to occasional initiatives.

On the whole, the available system of universal compulsory education cannot provide the presently necessary level of reading competence, while extended education cannot compensate its drawbacks. As the result, many secondary school leavers are not ready to properly absorb information flows that are growing ever greater and more sophisticated.

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THE SYSTEM OF POPULARIZING READING

Russia has not yet fully realized at the state and public level the role of reading among essential vehicles of national progress. That is why the system of popularizing reading is inadequate. There are no government and social policies in this sphere. Long- and short-term objectives have not been explicitly posed, and there is no properly developed legal basis.

True, public campaigns to promote book learning are occasionally held, but their number is far below that in developed and dynamically developing countries. Book advertising is not designed for particular social groups, and its effect is not monitored.

METHODOLOGICAL WARE

Russia has to this day no well-knit system of organizing research and method setting in teaching reading and fostering literacy. The few scattered centers of studying those problems and their scanty enthusiasts have no sufficient resources to solve them.

There is no long-term planning and coordination of relevant research. Book business makes only token investments in related R&D, whose achievements come against public indifference.

There is an acute shortage of research journals on the problems of reading, literacy and the development of reading infrastructural institutions.

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Present-day Russian specialists on reading are underpaid and have a low social status as compared to the Soviet time and to the developed and dynamically developing countries, and to people of other professions in Russia. That is the key problem of the entire system of such specialist training. The poverty of educational establishments and their teaching staff is an obstacle to attaining the necessary level of personnel training in this field.

Practically every element of personnel training for the reading infrastructure is far from perfect, though many of such infrastructural institutions have been working for decades.

Specialized library institutes of higher learning were incorporated in culture institutes back in the Soviet years to badly impede personnel training according to the latest standards. Besides, the system fails to train an adequate number of competent librarians. Thus, Russia has only three specialized chairs of children's librarian training. No more than 10 specialists a year graduate from them, while the number of Russian children's libraries approaches 5,000.

Russia has not enough reading competence instructors, and even the few available have an inadequate command of the latest teaching methods and technical means. This is especially noticeable in teaching students with specific demands to integrate them into general schooling, or immigrant children with poor knowledge of Russian, as there are ever more such children in schools with Russian as tuition language.

In the first formative years of post-Soviet book publishing and industry, market competitors were actively implementing the potential accumulated in the Soviet years, which has been almost completely

exhausted, while the new one is emerging very slowly. Publishers have an acute shortage of competent editors, proofreaders and other specialists, while higher educational establishments do not correlate their work with the needs of industrial development.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Information exchange is a major problem of the socio-cultural reading environment. Managers and the ranks of educational establishments, libraries, bookstores, etc. do not care that they are sharing the environment in which they work, and that all reading infrastructural institutions strongly influence the quality of this environment. Professional communities have not yet fully realized the necessity of effective communication between libraries and educational establishments, publishers and libraries, etc.

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The Internet is not used to full effect to arrange communication because its Russian-language segment is not yet sufficiently filled with professional content, and because Russian specialists are not yet properly qualified to use its resources. The limited number of interdepartmental and interdisciplinary research conferences, seminars, roundtables and other meetings on reading problems cannot implement their communication potential to the full due to poor organization.

Access to the best samples of international practice is extremely limited. Only few Russian specialists have a chance of training abroad. Russian study of developed countries' experience is not so profound and timely as necessary.

READING INFRASTRUCTURAL MANAGEMENT

Russia presently does not precisely delineate the tasks and goals of the infrastructural development of reading between the state, public organizations and business. Unlike most developed countries, Russia has no comprehensive long-term national program of reading promotion, and no unified administrative body for the network of encouraging and popularizing reading. The state has no basic tool to effectively run this network. Without a uniform managerial system, it

cannot either identify problem reader groups and institutions of reading or set them developmental goals and priorities, or again, monitor the work for such goals.

Russia has only quite recently started to acknowledge the necessity for latter-day mechanisms of attracting private capital to maintain the nonprofit sector of the reading infrastructure. Indicative in this respect is the bill on endowment funds, which is expected for passing in 2007.

A number of federal and departmental target programs can be considered related to the reading/literacy problem (the federal program Development of Education in 2006-2010, the federal program Russian Language, the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography program Provisions for Library Work and Replenishment, and others). However, government support of reading habit teaching in Russia is below its analogues in developed countries by the factor of 20-30. If we transfer the sums into rubles, Great Britain annually spends on these goals 35,000 rubles per capita, Finland 23,000, and Russia 1,200.

CONCLUSION

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The following conclusion can be made from the above:

A rational, scientifically based, socially oriented, comprehensive and coordinated national program for reading promotion and development alone can sufficiently change public and administrative attitude to reading and book culture. Such a program promises to make the basis for a further planned and consistent government policy to develop and promote reading—a policy to be actively formed and rationally implemented through team efforts by government bodies, business circles and public organizations.



SECTION 2

THE BASIC GOAL OF THE PROGRAM AND ITS TARGETS

The present program is a system of interconnected measures put into practice by coordinated efforts of interested offices and persons at every stage of its implementation in Russia.

The goal of the National Program for Reading Promotion and Development is to *enhance the cultural competence of the population* through increasing:

- ◆ reading competence, i.e. the sum total of knowledge and practical habits allowing to select, understand and organize information received in printed/written form, and successfully use it for personal and social goals;
- ◆ reading activity (involvement and intensity) of readers for successful adaptation to the dynamic and sophisticated transition society.

Raising the level of reading competence is conditioned by:

- ◆ the increase of accessibility, amount, quality and variety of literature/texts;
- ◆ development of an environment in which it is possible to discuss the texts read;
- ◆ increase of opportunities to upgrade reading competence.

Public reading activity grows with the increase of:

- ◆ accessibility, quality and variety of the published content and its carriers/platforms;
- ◆ public interest in regular reading, which is conditioned by the involvement of potential readers in effective popularization of reading;
- ◆ accessibility and quality of the opportunities to raise the level of reading competence.

To achieve those goals, it is necessary to solve *the following problems*:

- ◆ *Bring into order the socio-cultural reading environment and strengthen the basic institutions* of the infrastructure of reading

promotion and development—libraries and other public educational institutions, the educational network, book industry, the production and dissemination of other kinds of content on the various carriers—newspapers, magazines, documents, etc.—and the systems of popularizing reading, reading infrastructural personnel training, reading problems research, and the successive creation of a methodological background.

- ◆ *Elaborate a system of effective information exchanges* between infrastructural institutions, and between them and the managerial system so as to bring the socio-cultural reading environment into order.
- ◆ *Elaborate a managerial system* for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development, i.e. effective mechanisms to coordinate and cooperate offices and institutions that form and implement reading promotion and development policies.

THE WAYS AND MEANS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program-related efforts and measures differentiate according to the types of:

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- ◆ regions (advanced; with progress zones; with progress points; depressive);
- ◆ settlements (megapolis; major city; medium town; small town; village);
- ◆ institutions (libraries; education; book industry; industry for the production and dissemination of other kinds of content—the press, documents, etc.) and the systems of popularizing reading, personnel training for the reading infrastructure, and methodological solution of reading problems;
- ◆ readers' groups (book-lovers, amateurs, people who read occasionally, people who do not read at all; children and the youth; immigrants; the intellectual elite, and others);
- ◆ content (educational, public educational, entertaining);
- ◆ means of disseminating information (books, newspapers, magazines, and documents in paper or electronic form).

The following total of all-purpose and special means are used to attain the Program goals:

All-purpose:

- ◆ monitoring and diagnosing the state of the reading infrastructure, i.e. the total of available institutional agencies and the services they provide; and information available to readers (offer); the diagnostic is achieved through correlating the demand and offer, and exposure of the reason of their discrepancies;
- ◆ pilot projects (social experiments) supposing targeted and controlled changes of the performance of respective agencies selected so as to represent with the utmost fullness each of the previously selected differential approaches;
- ◆ monitoring experiment results and the ensuing extended implementation of the Program;
- ◆ evaluation of the social and economic effects of implementing the Program;
- ◆ strengthening reading infrastructural institutions and guaranteeing their correspondence to their social necessity in Russian society.

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Special:

1. In readers' respect:

- study of readers' interests, demands and the reading competence of the various socio-cultural groups and strata;
- typical kinds of work with target groups of readers on the basis of educational establishments, libraries, literary museums, bookstores, clubs, etc., with support from the mass media;

2. In the respect of reading infrastructural institutions:

- elaboration of recommendations on the sphere of reading for the various socio-cultural groups of readers;
- change of curricula and development of new teaching methods in secondary and higher educational establishments, aimed to promote reading, and increase personal reading and information competence;

- elaboration of target projects and programs for professional and public educational establishments oriented on enhancing reading activity (schools, colleges, libraries, literary museums, etc.);
- highlighting effective work with readers in libraries and other public educational institutions, and promotion of its emulation;
- organization of government contracts for the publication of professional and popular literature and fiction;
- establishment, promotion and circulation of mass periodicals (as Reading-Matter, New Books, etc.);
- establishment of permanent radio, television and press rubrics devoted to reading problems;
- using the Internet to popularize reading.

3. In the respect of the National Program elaboration and amendment:

- contests of the most fruitful reading promotion ideas;
- contests of the most effective program implementation;
- monitoring, spotlighting and dissemination of etalon work for program targets in each of the enumerated fields;
- remuneration of the best program implementation efforts.

4. In the respect of persons responsible for promotion of reading:

- postgraduate education of children’s establishment personnel, teachers of basic schools and librarians, and streamlining the system of enhancing their qualifications;
- postgraduate education of professors of humanities not only in humanitarian and social science higher educational establishments but also in technical and natural scientific, and in respective university departments;
- organization of special educational courses for parents;
- contacts with regional and municipal administrations—mainly culture and education agencies—to improve reading-related cultural and educational programs, and enhance their scope.

5. In the respect of the channels and forms of popularizing reading:

- enhancing the prestige of reading with the help of the mass media (television, radio, press, Internet and advertising);

- street advertisements (cross-street banners, billboards, posters, etc.) and advertising books and reading in offices (posters, leaflets, bookmarks, etc.);
- extensive presentation of books and literary events in media outlets and the Internet;
- establishment of instruments of rapid response to changes of the reading situation;
- special public events (book and reading festivals, literary fetes, etc.).

EXPECTED RESULTS OF GENERAL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION, AS FOR 2020

- ◆ An increase of the Russian population's reading and cultural competence to a level comparable to the developed and actively developing countries:
 - An increase of reading activity (scope and intensity) to the level sufficient for successful adaptation to the complicated and dynamic transition society (the share of the reading, and of the actively reading population).
 - An increase of the share of the population involved in the system of enhancing reading competence and satisfied with its results.
 - An increase of the share of the population involved in effecting events popularizing reading.
 - An increase of the share of the population and institutional content consumers satisfied with its quality and diversity.
 - An increase of the share of the population and institutional content consumers satisfied with its accessibility.

Practical control indices for every goal and target will be elaborated wherever necessary as the initial program stage is implemented.

Long-term work for the above goals presupposes the establishment of strong reading infrastructural institutions and an effective system of their management, monitoring included, as well as effective information exchanges in the socio-cultural reading environment.

All that will help to spectacularly improve human resources and thus promote Russia's work for its strategic goals.

SECTION 3

THE STAGES AND DEADLINES OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION; GOALS AND INDICES

The Program shall be implemented in 3 stages.

The first stage (2007-2010) envisages the establishment of organizational mechanisms and the basis to build up the infrastructure of reading promotion and development. It aims to detect the opportunities to improve the situation, and seek and select effective tools of strengthening the reading infrastructure.

The goals and results of the 1st stage:

- ◆ Systemic analytical description of problems and the present state of reading development in Russia, and the positioning of goals and priorities for the later stages;
- ◆ Elaboration and implementation of effective mechanisms to strengthen the infrastructure with due consideration for the best Russian and world achievements;
- ◆ Elaboration of organizational prerequisites for successful program implementation and the further regular functioning of the reading infrastructure;
- ◆ Obtaining early effects wherever possible.

The practical tasks of the 1st stage:

- ◆ Differentiated study of the reading infrastructural situation at the level of institutions, regions, settlements, reader groups, the types of content and carriers/platforms, verifying medium- and long-term program goals and mechanisms, and generalizing positive achievements;
- ◆ Elaboration and implementation of pilot projects that have come through contest selection at the level of pilot (representative) objects, including the monitoring and result analysis of their implementation;

- ◆ Formation of organizational prerequisites for successful program implementation:
 - Establishment of a system for program implementation management, including monitoring and decision-making;
 - Mobilizing and rallying the most active and competent managers and specialists on education, librarianship, book industry, the media, etc., to promote the Russian reading infrastructure. Training top-notch standby experts from among the most gifted students and young specialists in the sphere of education, libraries, book industry, the media, etc.;
- ◆ Elaboration of methodological and information prerequisites for successful program implementation, including basic elements of the information exchange network;
- ◆ Implementation of urgent measures to improve the reading infrastructure, and a complex of low-cost measures with an evident positive effect.

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Ad hoc managerial structures established at the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media, the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, the Federal Agency for Education and other available or specially established government and public agencies must select pilot projects, monitor their implementation, analyze their achievements, and determine the opportunities of disseminating the positive experience of solving reading-related problems. They can attract task forces for analyses and expertise.

To apply final touches to the Program, the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media, the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, and the Federal Agency for Education aim to establish expert councils, which will include:

- ◆ experts on sociology (of reading and culture), social psychology and the psychology of reading, education, cultural and political studies, economics and the law;
- ◆ members of the public (writers, journalists, publishers, promoters, competent readers, etc.);
- ◆ representatives of interested ministries and other central offices (of the Economy, Finance, Social Development, Defense, Interior, etc.).

Managerial functions are entrusted to the Administrative Council, which consists of representatives of the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media and the Russian Book Union, with an expert council under it, before an optimum pattern of program management is elaborated.

The second stage (2011-2015) envisages all-round infrastructural strengthening. The achievements of the 1st stage will be disseminated, the available infrastructural mechanisms of reading promotion and development systemically strengthened, and the lacking mechanisms established.

The goals and results of the 2nd stage:

- ◆ Implementing innovations in agencies ready to do so; all-round strengthening of the reading promotion and development infrastructure and its further permanent functioning;
- ◆ Establishing a managerial system for the reading promotion and development infrastructure and gradual introduction of program managerial mechanisms into it;
- ◆ Establishing a regular goal-setting and result monitoring system for key program and infrastructural goals and indices;
- ◆ Practical achievements on key program goals, whose parameters received practical content at the 1st program stage.

Program measures shall be implemented in a differentiated arrangement in conformity with previously set approaches.

The third stage (2016-2020) envisages the implementation of the available potential and intensive progress. This stage must see the previously created potential implemented, and the focus shifting from the infrastructure to improving human resources through the growing public cultural competence.

The goals and results of the 3rd stage:

- ◆ Attaining key program goals, whose parameters received practical content at the 1st program stage and were verified at the 2nd, shifting to such criteria of Russian human resource evaluation as correspond to those of the best-developed countries;
- ◆ Regulatory consolidation of progress points and areas;
- ◆ Establishing regulatory mechanisms of reading and book culture reproduction, and of public cultural competence development.

SECTION 4

GUIDELINES OF THE 1ST PROGRAM STAGE

4.1. DIAGNOSIS AND FORECASTS FOR THE SPHERE OF READING, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PILOT PROJECTS AND URGENT MEASURES IN PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF THE READING INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1.1. Libraries and public educational establishments

4.1.2. Educational network

4.1.3. Book industry

4.1.4. Industry of the production and dissemination of other kinds of content by various means (newspapers, magazines, electronic publications, etc.)

4.1.5. Popularizing reading

4.1.6. Personnel training for the reading infrastructure

4.1.7. R&D and method setting in the sphere of reading

4.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND MONITORING SYSTEM IN THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT OF READING, AND THE VERIFICATION OF MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM PROGRAM GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

4.3. CREATION OF THE OPTIMUM SYSTEM OF READING INFRASTRUCTURAL MANAGEMENT

4.1.1. Libraries and public educational establishments

1. Establishment and development of library services and promising models of librarianship aimed to attract readers, and develop their reading competence.

2. Library stock modernization, in particular, through the formation and delivery of target collections of editions for municipal libraries (all-purpose socially important and specialized for particular categories of readers, for events of national importance, including jubilees, and on many themes) at discount prices (20-50% of the standard).

3. Modernization of the library material and technical basis, including introduction of information technologies.

4. Establishment and promotion of public reading competence development centers on the basis of public libraries.

5. Personnel, information and methodological support of library work. Strengthening central libraries of all levels as methodological, educational and information centers of the library network.

6. Development of the system of monitoring library services and public demands.

7. Development of the system of monitoring the publishing business, establishment of a system to select and recommend literature for library replenishment and reading repertory formation.

8. Improvement of the regulatory basis of librarianship.

9. Elaboration of a future-oriented standard of the multi-functional library of a new type (“the 21st century Russian library”).

4.1.2. Educational network

1. Elaboration and implementation of latter-day quality curricula, and sets of teaching methods and technologies aimed to enhance public reading and cultural competence, develop readers’ interests, and promote books and reading in every type of educational establishments at all levels of the educational network.

2. Elaboration of a system of criteria to evaluate the progress of students’ reading and cultural competence. Studying reading problems in educational establishments.

3. Development of educational network monitoring from the point of conditions for developing students’ reading and cultural competence.

4. Provision of personnel, information and methods for the performance of educational establishments in promoting reading, and developing students’ reading and cultural competence.

5. Improvement of the regulatory basis of the educational network to enhance the role of reading, and attention to it in tuition.

6. Development of new forms of cooperation between educational and public cultural establishments.

7. Modernizing educational establishment libraries—the library stock, material and technical basis, and services.

8. Development of school library monitoring, establishment of a system of literature selection and recommendation to replenish libraries and form the reading repertory in educational establishment libraries.

4.1.3. Book industry

1. Implementing a complex of measures to promote book publishing, including the preparation and release of socially necessary literature on government contracts for target distribution in municipal public and school libraries; promotion of book publication in the interests of the various socio-cultural groups and strata in the Russian regions.

2. Improvement of the regulatory basis of the activities and performance terms of the producers of printed matter.

3. Employment, information and methodological services to the producers of printed matter.

4. Implementing a complex of measures to improve publishers' economic, planning and managerial activities.

5. Development of the research and monitoring of book publishing.

6. Implementing a complex of measures to increase the number of bookstores and improve and diversify their activities, in particular, drawing documents for easier public access to printed matter (discount postage, etc.).

7. Improvement of the regulatory basis of the activities and performance terms of book traders (reduced rents for bookstores, etc.).

8. Implementing a complex of measures to involve bookstores in the National Program for Reading Promotion and Development.

9. Employment, information and methodological services to book distributors.

10. Development of the research and monitoring of book trade.

11. Implementing a complex of measures to support Russian authors and enhance the effectiveness of writer-publisher contacts.

4.1.4. Production and distribution of other kinds of content on the various platforms (newspapers, magazines, electronic editions, etc.)

1. Implementing a complex of measures to involve content producers and distributors in the implementation of the National Program for Reading Promotion and Development.

2. Implementing a complex of measures to promote manufacture and distribution of the many kinds of content on the various platforms (newspapers, magazines, electronic editions, etc.), including the preparation and release of socially necessary literature on government contracts for target distribution in municipal public and school libraries; promotion of book publication in the interests of the various socio-cultural groups and strata in the Russian regions.

3. Improvement of the regulatory basis of the activities and performance terms of the producers and distributors of content on the various platforms.

4. Employment, information and methodological services to content producers and distributors.

5. Implementing a complex of measures to improve the economic, planning and managerial activities of content producers and distributors.

6. Development of the research and monitoring of content production and distribution.

4.1.5. The system of reading promotion

1. Elaboration and implementation of promising methods and technologies of popularization, aimed at attracting readers and developing their reading competence.

2. Public cultural, information and educational events on the mass media to promote books and reading—in particular, involvement of intellectual elites in promoting reading.

3. Employment, information and methodological services to participants in promoting reading.

4. Development of the monitoring of measures to popularize reading and enhance public interest in such events.

5. Improvement of the regulatory basis of the activities of authorities, educational and cultural establishments, book industry and mass media outlets to promote reading.

6. Implementing measures to popularize the present Program.

4.1.6. Personnel training for the reading infrastructure

1. Development of the system of labor remuneration and social support of persons employed in infrastructural institutions for reading promotion and development.

2. Support of students, young specialists and the best experts and managers employed in infrastructural institutions for reading promotion and development.

3. Elaboration and implementation of promising methods and technologies of personnel training for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

4. Strengthening the material and technical basis of educational establishments training specialists for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

5. Employment, information and methodological services to educational establishments training specialists for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

6. Development of the monitoring of the system of personnel training for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

7. Improvement of the regulatory basis of educational establishments training specialists for the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

4.1.7. R&D and methodology of reading

1. Strengthening the personnel, information, material and technical bases of research methodological centers of the infrastructure of

reading promotion and development, including the establishment of a research center (centers) to coordinate research and methodological work in this sphere.

2. Establishment of national expert councils on all basic components of the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

3. Development of the monitoring of the research and methodological background of the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

4. Improvement of the regulatory basis of research and methodological work in the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

4.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A SYSTEM OF INFORMATION EXCHANGES AND MONITORING IN THE SOCIO-CULTURAL READING ENVIRONMENT; SPECIFYING THE MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION PATTERNS OF THE PROGRAM

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1. Elaboration of future-oriented patterns and mechanisms of information exchanges to intensify communication within the reading-related professional community, and its communication with users.

2. Strengthening and development of professional mass media (including electronic) of the educational network, libraries and book industry in connection with program implementation.

3. Promotion of research conferences, seminars, roundtables and other forms of communication within the reading-related professional community.

4. Modernization of the material and technical basis of information databases and professional information exchanges, including the development of the system Books in Print.

5. Employment, information and methodological services to information exchange systems in the socio-cultural reading environment.

6. Development of monitoring of the information environment of reading and professionals' and readers' involvement in it.

7. Improvement of the regulatory basis of information exchanges within and between infrastructural institutions for reading promotion and development.

4.3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OPTIMUM MANAGERIAL SYSTEM FOR THE READING INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Elaboration and development of future-oriented patterns of community-state and private-state partnership in the management of particular institutions and the infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

2. Strengthening the material and technical basis of government agencies at the federal, regional and local levels for effective management of particular institutions and the entire infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

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3. Employment, information and methodological services to the managerial systems of particular institutions and the entire infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

4. Development of the monitoring of the managerial systems of particular institutions and the entire infrastructure of reading promotion and development.

5. Improvement of the regulatory basis of particular institutions and the entire infrastructure of reading promotion and development at the federal, regional and local levels.

6. Specifying the plan of program implementation, including necessary resource provision, responsible executors, key effectiveness indices, etc.



SECTION 5

THE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

The program implementation mechanism includes the following levels:

- ◆ national/regional;
- ◆ government agencies/private and public organizations.

Organization mechanisms of program implementation are determined and formed at the initial stage. Until organization mechanisms of program implementation take shape, managerial functions are assumed by the Program Board of Management, represented on which are:

- ◆ the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media;
- ◆ the Russian Book Union.

To arrange the formation of the said organization mechanisms of program implementation as soon as possible, and involve in them related government agencies and public organizations is the main goal of the Board of Management.

The functions of the Board of Management shall include:

- ◆ program coordination with government agencies and public organizations, whose participation is necessary for program implementation;
- ◆ program specification and correction in the respect of the plan of events, responsible executors and finance;
- ◆ regular analyses and evaluation of the first steps of program implementation;
- ◆ attracting funds for the first steps of program implementation;
- ◆ popularizing the Program.

Board of Management membership shall be approved by the extended-attendance Board of the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Media and the Russian Book Union Board.

The Board of Management shall be guided by the following principles:

- ◆ consistency; regularity of meetings and decision-making;
- ◆ openness and transparency (consideration for the opinions of the parties and the expert community, and collective decision-making);
- ◆ flexibility (coming at complicated decisions in uncertain situations).

The Board of Management holds meetings twice a month, as a rule. Meeting days can be changed when necessary, and extraordinary meetings can be convened. In either instance, Board members shall be notified no later than 3 (three) days before the appointed day.



SECTION 6

EVALUATION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAM EFFECT

The social effect of the Program shall be evaluated on the following basic indices:

- social necessity of program events, which gauges their role in reading development, to support the available organization structures and establish new ones;
- social utility of program events, which indicates their quality, results and consequences promoting reading development, enhancing public cultural competence and quality of life, reducing social tensions, and establishing society-state partnership;
- social attraction of program events—mass interest, popularity, extension of the scope of cultural communication in the entire Russian community, and rallying people for organized teamwork.

Social effect is not subject to traditional economic analyses, and so demands the elaboration of specific criteria and evaluation methods.

Social necessity/significance of program events shall be evaluated on the following basic indices:

- qualitative improvement of the socio-cultural reading environment; determined as agency quality/quantity correspondence to normative meanings set within the Program;
- improvement of the social status of the personnel of reading-related institutions; determined as enhancing the public prestige of related professions, and rational implementation of the available professional potential to develop reading countrywide;
- overcoming the trend of shrinking public interest in reading; determined proceeding from the increase of readerships, longer time spent on reading, qualitative improvement of printed

matter in demand, and increased library attendance (including remote and online access).

Social utility of program events shall be evaluated on the following basic indices:

- enhanced public cultural competence; determined proceeding from improved orientation in communication channels, and understanding of information (printed matter and media texts);
- improved specialist qualifications; determined by the periodicity of re-education and curricula correspondence to world standards;
- contribution of a program event/agency to reading development within a socio-cultural environment under study (a social stratum within a region or settlement).

Social attraction of program events shall be evaluated on the following basic indices:

- users' satisfaction with the quality of an event (quality and quantity of an agency's services);
- personnel satisfaction with the job;
- increasing interest of particular social groups in reading.

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Generalized Indices of the Social Effect of Reading-Related Program Events (Agency Functioning)

Parameter	Criterion	Indices
Social necessity/importance	Influence of institutional services on reading development	Correspondence of the quality and quantity of services to the program goals of reading development and enhancing readers' cultural competence. Correspondence of personnel strength and qualifications to users' interests/problems.

Parameter	Criterion	Indices
Social utility		<p>—socialization: the extent of everyday use of knowledge and habits received in an institution;</p> <p>—social communication: the impact of contacts with an institution on the extension of the range of reading-related social contacts and involvement;</p> <p>—recreation: the impact of contacts with an institution on the compensation of fatigue from routine situations.</p>
Social attraction		<p>—users' satisfaction with institutional services;</p> <p>—users' satisfaction with everyday contacts with an institution.</p>
Social attraction	Influence of institutional functioning or project implementation on the outer socio-cultural environment	<p>In everyday life: maintenance of the program level of reading development and readers' cultural competence outside the institution.</p> <p>In public opinion: personnel involvement in the promotion of reading and the need to enhance cultural competence.</p>
Social utility		<p>In everyday life: involvement in the local cultural policy of reading development.</p> <p>In public opinion: consistent inclusion of reading problems in the sphere of permanent public attention.</p>

Parameter	Criterion	Indices
Social attraction		In everyday life: enhancing potential users' interest in reading and related social activity. In public opinion: participation in the formation of the educated reader's attractive image.
Social value	Social demand	Correlation between the increase of the number of users and rationalizing institution performance.
	Social evaluation	Correlation between the public opinion of reading, users' satisfaction with institution performance, and personnel satisfaction with its work.

Construction and gauging/evaluation of indices of the social effect of a reading-related agency or project presupposes collecting information containing quantitative, qualitative and ratable data.

Data Characteristics for Construction and Gauging/Evaluation of the Social Effect of a Reading-Related Project (Agency Functioning)

Quantitative data	Qualitative data	Ratable data
<p>Number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – services on the normative/program list; – personnel (including distribution according to qualification); – users (including distribution according to social strata); – personnel involved in social efforts; – readers involved in social efforts; – related institutions in the settlement; – potential users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – combination of services on the normative/program list; – personnel qualification; – users’ interests; – users’ social contacts; – labor organization in the institution; – objective information about users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – service quality; – users’ cultural competence; – personnel cultural/professional competence; – extent of use of book knowledge in readers’ everyday routine; – users’ satisfaction with: – institutional services; – everyday results of using services – personnel satisfaction with: – job content and rank; – social climate and managerial staff; – public opinion of the profession and institution; – own qualifications – equipment as correlated to normative/program standards; – personnel involvement in management; – personnel involvement in attracting readers and organizing

Quantitative data are obtained with the following methods:

- document analyses;
- opinion polls connected with objective information about respondents.

Qualitative data are obtained with the following methods:

- document analyses;
- opinion polls among the agency personnel and users;
- public opinion polls.

Ratable data are obtained with the following methods:

- expert polls;
- opinion polls among the agency personnel and users;
- public opinion polls.





The Interregional Library Cooperation Centre (ILCC), established in 1995, is a non-government organization.

Its main activities are:

- ◆ Participation in the goals-setting and the implementation of Russian reading promotion and development policy
- ◆ Participation in implementing national library policy
- ◆ Preparation of analytical reports
- ◆ Organisation of conferences, seminars and roundtables
- ◆ Training Russian and foreign librarians
- ◆ Establishment of education and information mediacentres based on Russian children's and youth public libraries
- ◆ Publication and dissemination of professional literature on the progress of librarianship, as well as cultural and information policies
- ◆ Replenishment of libraries on a charity arrangement

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The Interregional Library Cooperation Centre is a working agency of the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Program.

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