

# KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC is one of the largest libraries in Central Asia. Its priceless book collections contain rich intellectual and cultural heritage of the world civilization.

The Library was established in August 1934. Seventy years have passed since. A huge massive of literature has been made during these years, and the Library became the biggest book-house of the country. Presently the library's fund consists of more than six million copies of printed and other media in 89 languages of the world. It is the most comprehensive collection of domestic and foreign scientifically significant documents on various media, designed for long-term saving and public use. There is a unique book collection as well as valuable and rare editions.

The Library serves all purposes related the modern National Library according to its status: establishing fund of domestic and foreign documents, providing their safety and access to them, bibliographical accounting of local documents, service, and development of the national library-information system.

During the seventy years of functioning, the Library is disseminating intellectual heritage of our country and created by the world community. It has brought priceless input in preserving and developing of the national culture, promoting of scientific and educational potential and spirituality of many generations of those living in the country, which encouraged of scientific, economical, and cultural development of Kyrgyzstan.

The National Library today is the biggest informational, educational and cultural center in Kyrgyzstan, satisfying universal demand of the society, and organizes library, bibliographical, and scientific and informational activities for the sake of all people of the country. It is a center of domestic and world culture, literacy and education as well as other vital necessities of the society.

The National Library service is based on the principle "access to all". The Library is one of the few where all categories of users have access to all information materials. The number of users, attendance and issue of books has a steady trend to increase. Fourteen reading halls distinguished by categories of users, fields of knowledge, types and languages and new information technologies, have one thousand seats. By 1.01.2004 the number of regular members in the National Library reached 44, 000, number of visits – 200, 000, number of issued documents – 1,5 million, reference materials – 11, 000, five hundred informational campaigns, including exhibitions, presentations, conferences, round tables, meetings, etc.

The National Library strives to work in accordance with new world trends of development of national libraries, and in spite of hardships of the transition period, is benchmarking high targets and makes everything possible to their achievements.

During the last decade, challenges of the information society have led to transformations of the National Library. The Library started providing transition from traditional institution to dynamic information center by active usage of information and communication technologies.

There were seventeen joint projects completed during the period of 2000-2004 with various international organizations. The outcome of these projects is flow of new literature to the library, technical equipment updates, automation of the library-information processes, and opening of new institutional departments, which have widened access to foreign literature, electronic information, world data bases of EBSCO and other Internet resources. All of the above has raised the level of library services and implemented new technologies of access to information.

There are two Public Internet Access Centers in the Library, providing free access to the Internet, e-mail and scientific resources. Internet resources of the Library are being developed as well. The web-site of the National Library of the Kyrgyz Republic is represented in three languages: Kyrgyz, Russian and English, which makes the Library a comprehensive member in Internet. The web-site contains general information about the Library, its history, leadership organizational structure, and most importantly – the site provides access to on-line catalogues of the library. Therefore, every user can conduct search of books, journals and other documents via the Internet. For convenient access to all informational resources of the library, including electronic journals that the library has subscription to, the electronic catalogue was uploaded with names of periodical issues from the EBSCO data base. As of today, the Library's web-site takes a respected place among Internet resources of Kyrgyzstan and among 100 most visited web-sites in the country.

The following modern infrastructure has been formed in the National Library: the united local area network, workbenches, library Integrated System IRBIS was implemented, and started active formation of electronic data base in accordance with the world standards of electronic cataloguing. A wide access to the information resources of the National Library through the Internet is established.

Wide-front activities are devoted to conversion of data from old catalogues, which were previously formed in the library on the bases Fox Pro system, MS Access and MS SQL Server. In order to unify access to all electronic catalogues of the library and its integration into uniform system, staff has developed unique software named "Converter". With the help of this converting program all previously existing catalogues and databases, including electronic catalogue of the national bibliography "Kyrgyzstan" and electronic systematic base of articles on juridical topics as well as readership data base, have been converted into IRBIS. The total number of the bibliographical records in electronic catalogues of the library is 130 thousand.

Has been started development of the first Kyrgyzstan digital library collection of thesis works – dissertations of scientists of the Kyrgyz Republic. The process of this work gives valuable experience on creation of the full-scale work towards the National digital library of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In order of the further development of information-communication technologies in the National Library, advancements within international information space, and improvement of information services quality in 2004-2005, the following is being planned: development of union national catalogue of libraries in Kyrgyzstan, digital collection of rare and valuable editions, interactive calendar of Kyrgyzstan significant dates. It is also planned to establish a data base of description of inventions and information portal about the great Kyrgyz epic "Manas". Another actual task is to accomplish retro conversion of archival and depository foundations and conversion to automated system of dissemination of the library production and implementation of documents' electronic delivery to clients, as well as automated control system at the entrance to the Library.

One of the significant achievements of this year has become the process of functioning of the Library as a center of corporate cataloguing. Has been accomplished a project titled "Integration of information resources of libraries in Kyrgyzstan towards development of the information space of the country". This project was implemented by the National Library in conjunction with major libraries of Bishkek within the framework of "Library-information consortium" Association. A union catalogue of the main libraries of Kyrgyzstan will be created under the auspices of the National Library. We are planning to provide access to these resources to the public in August 2004.

There are several projects going on this year: "Development and integration of information resources of law libraries of Kyrgyzstan", "Data base creation of acts of local administrations and development of information space of the Library Center of legal information", and "Literature Center on gender issues".

The National Library has won a cultural grant from the government of Japan, which is devoted to preservation of books collection of the library and includes receiving, setting up and full preparation of micro filming, fiching and office equipment for creation of the Center of microfilming in the National Library.

The National Library promotes development of the national library-information system of Kyrgyzstan by being a scientific and research center in the field of librarianship, book history and implementation of new information technologies to the libraries activities. The National Library participates in development of the state programs in the field of library work and chairs Association of Public Libraries. It also leads the Library Information Consortium, publishes national journal "Kyrgyz Kitepkanasy", library-bibliographical and methodological and consultation materials for libraries and readers of Kyrgyzstan.

During the several years of active work in ICT implementation significant experience has been gained, and now the National Library is in a leading position in this strategic direction, and disseminating its experience among other libraries.

The National Library provides systemic work on educating librarians to new library-information technologies, working with library electronic resources and new forms of information services by using ITK. In 2004 the following seminars and trainings were conducted in National Library: "Working with the IRBIS system: problems and solutions", "Electronic delivery of documents: organizational, technical and judicial aspects", "Corporate cataloguing", "Protocol Z39.50" and others.

The National Library is developing collaboration with national libraries of "close" and "far" foreign countries. Together with CIS national libraries it participates in efforts of preservation and development of informational and cultural space on the territory of the Commonwealth. An important role in this process is being played by the Library Assembly of Eurasia, one of the founders of which was National Library of Kyrgyzstan. Cooperation between the National Library and countries of "far" abroad is provided within IFLA framework.

An international scientific conference "National libraries in the era of globalization" is being planned in this year fall. It will be part of other activities devoted to the 70th anniversary of the National Library. Another gathering is a Summit of the directors of national libraries of CIS and Baltic States, and a national seminar "Public libraries of the Kyrgyz Republic in XX1 century: main trends of development".

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