

# Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library: electronic resources on the Russian statehood.

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The Presidential Library is a new Russian institution in the area of culture, science, education and government. It opened in May 2009 in a historical building in the centre of St. Petersburg, next to the Constitutional court of the Russian Federation. The organization is not a memorial one (e.g. similar to the libraries of American presidents) and its functions differ from those of the traditional libraries.

The organization is subordinate to the Presidential Property Management Department of the Russian Federation; it is not under the authority of the Ministry of Culture or in possession of private persons. In particular, it ensures informational, organizational and

technological activities, supporting the Russian President's work (official events and other projects, e.g. websites) and the work of other government bodies of the Russian Federation. The collections of the Presidential Library are developed on the basis of electronic documents only. It does not contain paper editions (except for the granted collections). However, the electronic holdings allow the integration of documents that differ by their kind, form and type of holders, along with aggregation of resources from other agencies, regions and countries, and to develop, preserve and distribute audiovisual information, for example. At present, the majority of digitized documents come from libraries, but the rest of

Presidential  
Library building  
in Saint-Petersburg



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Presidential  
Library  
Conference Hall

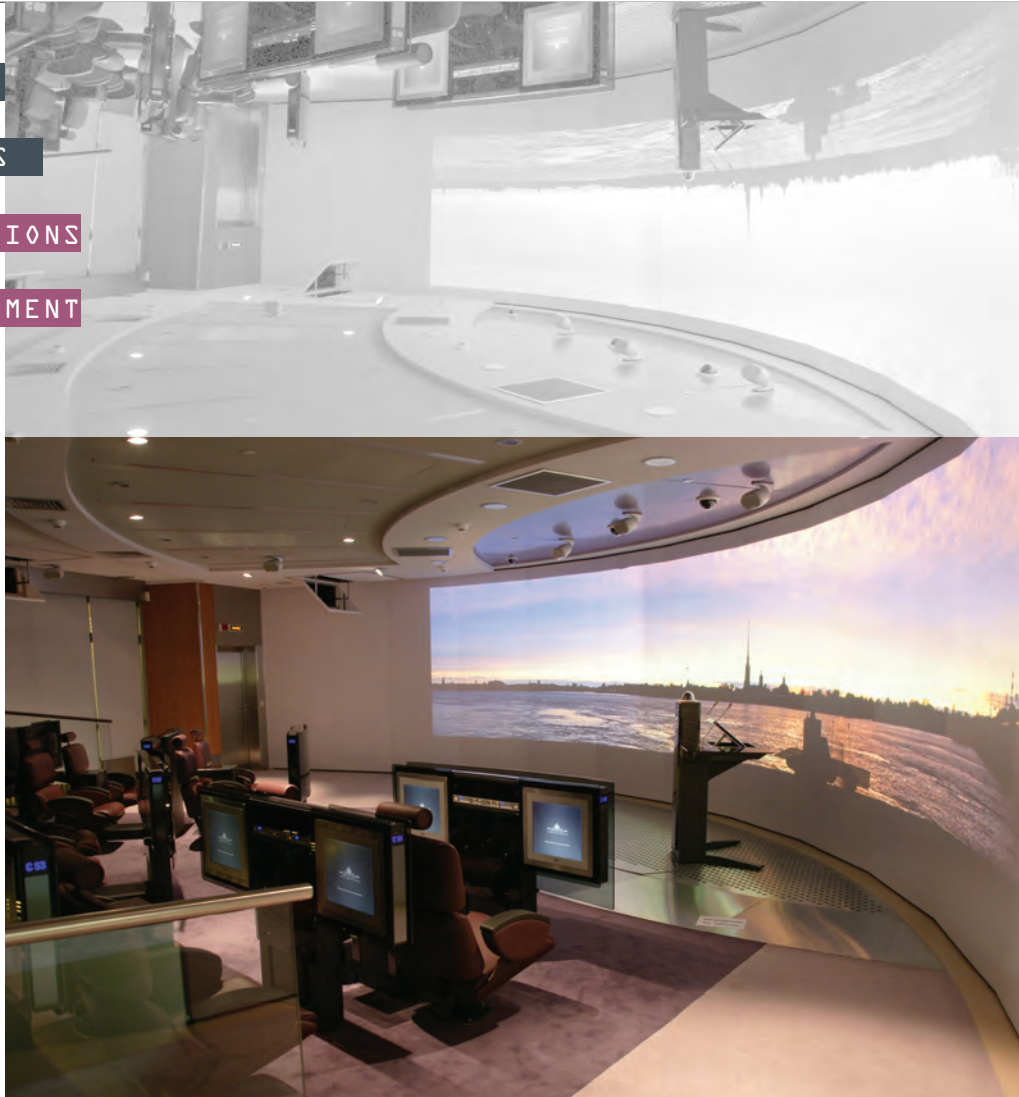
them, 30-40%, are provided by archives, official institutions and museums.

The Library holdings are not universal. The Presidential Library information resources cover the issues of history, theory and practice of Russian statehood, and the Russian language as the national language of the Russian Federation. At the same time the significance of these resources by their content and form is so high that in accordance with current legislation the Presidential Library, along with two major Russian libraries, has the status of the *national library*.

The Library's Electronic Reading Rooms are open for public visits, and its Exhibition Halls

welcome group excursions by prior request (St. Petersburg, 3 Senatskaya square). On our portal ([www.prlib.ru](http://www.prlib.ru)) we seek to feature full-fledged electronic collections accompanied with bibliographic and source study information.

The Presidential Library electronic holdings consist of several thematic sections which reflect the concept of the "Russian statehood": "Authority", "Territory", "People", "Russian language". The Library holdings also comprise thematic electronic collections developed with regard for urgency of their content (about national dates, statesmen, events, regions, etc.).



Presidential  
Library

Eight thematic collections were developed in 2010, including over 11 000 electronic documents. Among them are:

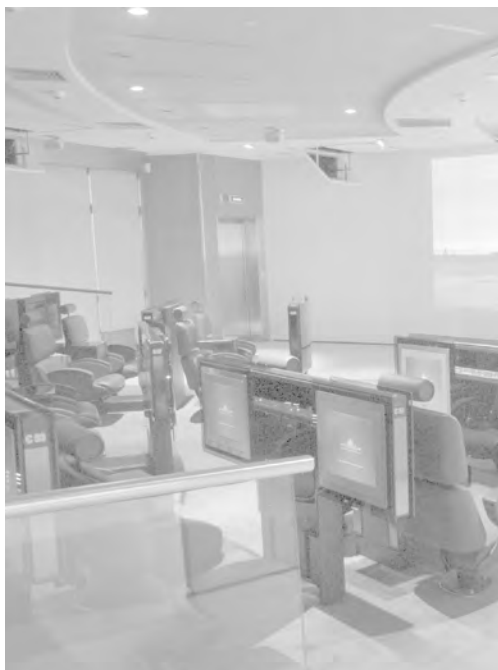
- Constitution basic law of the Russian Federation,
- Territory of Russia,
- Memory of the Great Victory,
- Russia China: On the Path to Co-operation,
- M. M. Speransky as a statesman,
- Russia-Korea: Bridges of Friendship,
- Belarus: from the history of a brotherly people,
- Volgograd Oblast: Pages of History,
- Vyatka Governorate: Materials from Holdings of the Presidential Library, etc.

The major thematic collection of the past year was the Territory of Russia collection timed for the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. It included scientific, popular science and educational editions, archival documents, maps, photo and newsreel, featuring a vast territory, its composition,

political division and borders of Russia. The collection comprises a lot of materials not only on the territory of modern Russia, but also on the territories of its neighbours with which it once formed a single state: the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. The total scope of the collection originally amounted to 4 000 documents. The core of the collection is represented by the documents of the pre-revolutionary period and the issues published before 1940. In the future it is planned to expand its chronological limits to include modern publications.

In the current year the Presidential Library is developing the existing collections and launching new ones. Thus, for instance, the collection covering the topic of *Authority* is due on September 1st, 2011. It will include documents on legislative principles and forms, supreme bodies and symbols of state power and





service. The documents will reflect historical periods of development and the reform of Russian state power, as well as the lives and work of statesmen who made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of Russian statehood. Accordingly, the *People* collection, featuring the development of freedoms, rights and duties of the Russian citizens, is due in September 2012. Along with the presentation of historical resources, the Presidential Library's events demonstrate the processes of informatization of the Russian society and state (from electronic legislation and electronic government to security of personal data and electronic passport).

Originally, the electronic holdings of electronic documents of the Presidential Library mainly comprised digitized documents of the Russian State Library (Moscow), the Russian State Historical Archive (St. Petersburg), and other institutions: the State Archive of the



Russian Federation, the National Library of Russia (St. Petersburg), Tyumen Regional library. By 2010, 35 national and foreign libraries, archives and museums had established partnership with the Presidential library in the field of integration of electronic resources and technologies. Cultural institutions from four CIS member-states and 16 regions of the Russian Federation have transferred their resources to the Presidential Library; 27 libraries, museums and archives contributed to exposition projects of the Library. The Library of Congress officially delivered 1900 electronic copies of photographs by the famous Russian photographer S. M. Prokudin-Gorsky with images of various regions of the Russian Empire in the period of 1909 to 1916.

We welcome our foreign colleagues to efficient and mutually beneficial information exchange and collaboration!