

Legal Structure of Russia and Electronic Sources of Russian Law

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Introduction

Basic Documents

The Constitution of the Russian Federation

The Federative Treaty

State Structure of the Russian Federation

The President of the Russian Federation

Legislative Authorities

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

The Federation Council

The State Duma

Executive Authorities

The Government of the Russian Federation

State Committee of Statistics

The Security Council

Other Security Bodies

Judicial System of the Russian Federation

The Constitutional Court

The Supreme Court

The Supreme Arbitration Court

(Legal) Databases

Russian databases

Websites and databases of western organisations.

Russian Search engines

Russian Electronic News

Western Electronic Publications

Summary: Where to find what publication?

Some Criteria for the Selection of Databases

Introduction

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the RF became its largest successor state, inheriting its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, as well as the bulk of its foreign assets and debt.

The 1993 Constitution declares Russia a democratic and Federative State with a republican form of government. Federative relations were formed on the basis of the Constitution of the RF, the Federative Treaty and agreements between the Federal Centre and the Subjects of the Federation.

The RF consists of 89 federal subjects: 21 autonomous republics, 6 krais (provinces), 49 oblast (regions), two cities of federal status (Moscow and Saint-Petersburg), one autonomous oblast and 10 autonomous okrugs (districts), each endowed with equal rights. Each Republic has its own constitution and legislation. Each territory, region, federal city, autonomous region etc. has its own charter and legislation.

The Legislative, Executive and Judicial authorities are independent of each other.

Basic Documents

The Constitution of the Russian Federation

The present Constitution of the RF was adopted on 12 December 1993. No substantial amendments to the Constitution were introduced since then. Sub units of the RF have their own constituent documents.

The Constitution of the RF includes the following chapters:

- Fundamentals of the Constitutional System
- Rights and Freedoms of Man and Citizen
- Federal Structure
- The Presidency
- The Federal Assembly
- The Government
- Judicial Power
- Local Self-government
- Constitutional Amendments and Review of the Constitution

The Constitution of the RF 1993 (in Russian):

<http://www.nns.ru/sudy/konsti/konstirf.html>

The Constitution of the RF 1993 (in English)

http://www.democracy.ru/english/library/laws/constitution_eng/

All draft laws are sent to the Duma. After approval by the Duma, the law is passed to the Federation Council for review. After approval by the Federation Council the law goes to the President for signing and promulgation.

Federal laws take effect only after they are signed by the President and published in the governmental newspaper *Ðìññèéñêàÿ Æàçàðà* (Russian Gazette) (issued 5 times a week), to be found at: (<http://www.rg.ru/oficial/>).

All federal laws are binding on the entire territory of the RF.

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

The Federal Assembly is the permanently functioning representative and legislative organ of the RF. See: <http://www.gov.ru/main/page7.html>

Its official publication is: *Áâäîîñðè Òääàðäëüñäì Ñíáðàíèà ÐÓ* (Bulletin of the Federal Assembly of the RF). In addition the *Ïàðëàìèíòàëüíàÿ Æàçàðà* (Parliamentary Gazette) was introduced, in October 1999, issued five times a week, with news and drafts of laws.

Russian Federal Assembly. Powers and Procedures (in English)
<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/2568/gdsfpro0.html>

The Federal Assembly consists of two chambers:

- The Federation Council (<http://www.council.gov.ru/>) - the upper chamber;
- The State Duma (<http://www.duma.gov.ru/>) - the lower chamber.

The Federation Council

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the RF has an official website <http://www.council.gov.ru/> Also in English.

The council has 178 members from the 89 regions. The procedure for the formation of the Federation Council is established by the Federal Law of the RF “On the Formation of the Federal Council of the Federal Assembly of the RF (07.08.2000)” http://www.100mb.ru/~grankin/docs/ru_zak002.htm).

The State Duma

The State Duma <http://www.duma.gov.ru> is the lower house of the Federal Assembly. The Duma consists of 450 deputies, elected for a four-year term.

The Duma has 28 Committees, of which one is for legislation (<http://www.duma.gov.ru/deputats/committe.htm>).

Laws, decrees and other acts of the Federation Council and the Duma have to be published in the governmental *Ðìññèéñêàÿ Æàçàðà* or in the *Ñíáðàíèà çàèííàðääëüñðàà ÐÓ* (Collection of legislation of the RF), published by the Administration of the President (weekly).

The *Áâäîîñðè Òääàðäëüñäì Ñíáðàíèà Ðìññèéñêèé Òääàðäàðèè* (Bulletin of the Federal Assembly of the RF), issued three times a month, contains a chronological collection of all laws etc. approved by both chambers of the Federation Assembly.

On the Internet site of the Library of the Duma: www.duma.ru/parlib/ the following materials are to be found:

- A current bibliographic index - starting in 1996- of Russian Federation laws published in the Official Gazettes:
 - *Ñíáðàíèà çàèííäàðäëüñòàà ÐÓ;*
 - *Áããííñòè Óããððàëüííáí Ñíáðàíèý Ðíññèéñéíé Óããððàðèè;*
 - *Ðíññèéñèàý Áàçàðà.*
- A current bibliographic index of publications of constitutions and charters of the Russian Federation constituent entities, published in their Official Gazettes.
- Chronicle of draft laws on the Federal Budget.
- An annotated list of Parliamentary Library publications available for subscription.

The Parliamentary Library's own electronic legal databases are for intern use. The library of the Duma does collect official documents of other CIS countries and Baltic States in paper form. The librarian is Irina Andreeva (<mailto:andreeva@duma.gov.ru>).

Statistics of the Legislative activity of the State Duma of the RF (in Russian)

<http://www.duma.gov.ru/lawstat/index.php>

This database on the official site of the State Duma covers the information about the legislative activity of the State Duma of the RF (1996 -->).

Press Services Reports on the DUMA (full text in English) published by the Ministry of Foreign Relations of the RF

<http://www.in.mid.ru/website/bl.nsf/goseng?OpenView&Start=1&Count=50&Expand=4#4>

An overview of daily updates of legislation etc. from the Duma, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, and the Central Bank can be found at:

http://www.bre.ru/new_laws.php4 and

<http://zakon.kuban.ru/sayt/index.htm> ðãèíáðè è çàèíí (Man and Law): Legislation of the RF- up-to-date.

Codes are comprehensive and systematic statements of major areas of law, such as civil law, civil procedure, criminal law, criminal procedure etc. Codes are to be found at the site: Ðíññèéñèàý çàèííäàðäëüñòààí (Legislation of Russia): <http://rus-code.virtualave.net/> and also at www.laws.ru situated in Nizhny Novgorod and <http://chuvashia.com.ru/law>. With full texts of laws.

Executive Authorities

The federal executive branch is represented by the President and the Government of the RF. The structure is given at: <http://www.gov.ru/main/ministry/isp-vlast47.html> (in Russian and English).

The Government of the Russian Federation

The Government of the is subdivided into

- Ministries,

- State Committees- such as the State Committee for Statistics,
- Federal Services, such as the Security Service (FSB)
- Russian Agencies,
- Federal Supervision Departments and
- Other Federal Organs of executive authority.

The website of the Government of the RF <http://www.government.gov.ru/> (in Russian and English) comprises three sections:

- Office of the Prime Minister
- Federal Government Departments (all Ministries etc)
- The Press Centre

The site reference sections provide biographies of the Prime Minister, Cabinet Members and federal executive leaders. The Ministries' pages contain statutes of federal executive bodies and give links to Web-sites of Ministries and Departments. Daily news updates under the headings of "Official Chronicle" and "Press Releases" are the most popular pages of the site. These pages offer exclusive news earlier than the media.

The Government of the RF issues decrees and orders and ensures their implementation. The decrees and orders of the Government of the RF are binding throughout the RF. The official Governmental Gazette *Ðîññèéñêàÿ Æàçàðà* can be found at: <http://www.rg.ru/>

Äñÿ Äèàñðü íà WWW (The whole Government on WWW)
<http://gosorgan.amursk.ru/>

This site has links to the Russian government, Federal ministries, services and state committees, to the executive authorities of Federal subjects of the RF, to the parties, to political and non-governmental organizations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs publishes a Daily news bulletin in English on its website: <http://www.mid.ru/>. The site offers electronic publications of the periodicals: *Äèÿÿìàðð÷àñêèé Äàñðîìèê* (Diplomatic Bulletin) and *Ìàæüóíàððìüàÿ æèçíü* (International Life).

The Ministry of Justice publishes the general monthly gazette specializing in general departmental legislation: *Áðåäðàíü íðìàððèáíüð àèðíà Óääðàèüíüð ìðàííà èññèéèðàèüíé àèàñðè* (Bulletin of normative acts of the Federal Organs of the executive Powers) to be found at <http://www.systema.ru/>

The databases of the Ministry of Justice can be found at: http://www.scli.ru/dbs/o_dbs.asp

The site <http://www.scli.ru/dbs/ras1etal.asp> gives the structure of the section "legislation" of the database „Ýðàèí“, a full text database containing over 50.000 texts of normative acts.

The State Committee for Statistics, responsible for the official Statistics can be found at <http://www.gks.ru/>

(The official statistics of almost all countries can be found at the website of the Dutch Central Statistical Office: <http://www.cbs.nl/en/services/links/>)

The Security Council

The Security Council (<http://www.scrf.gov.ru/>) is a constitutional organ that prepares the RF president's decisions in the sphere of security.

Press Services Reports on the Security Council of the RF (in English)
<http://www.ln.mid.ru/website/bl.nsf/goseng?OpenView&Start=1&Count=50&Expand=2#2>

Security and Defence Councils (in English)
<http://www.fas.org/irp/world/russia/councils.htm>

On the RF Security Council (in English)
http://www.fas.org/irp/world/russia/docs/edict_1024.htm
Text of the Presidential Edict No. 1024 (10 July 1996)

Other Security Bodies

The heads of state organs responsible for security and defence directly subordinate to the President:

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the RF (in Russian) <http://www.mvd.ru/>
- The Ministry of Defence of the RF (in Russian) <http://www.mil.ru/>
- Federal Security Service (FSB) ("former KGB") (in Russian) <http://www.fsb.ru/>
- Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) (in Russian) <http://svr.gov.ru/>
- Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information (FAPSI) (the Russian counterpart to the US National Security Agency)
<http://www.government.ru/institutions/agencies/fapsi.html>

FSB: History, Legislative Authorities, Operations, Counterintelligence Cases, Organization, Budget and Personnel (in English)
<http://www.fas.org/irp/world/russia/fsb/index.html>

SVR: (in English)
<http://www.agentura.ru/english/dosie/svr/>
Information about the structure and history of Foreign Intelligence Service, its personnel and documents adjusting SVR activity.

FAPSI: History, Legislative Authorities, Operations, Organization, Budget and Personnel (in English). Fapsi has a very useful and up-to-date database of official documentation.
<http://www.fas.org/irp/world/russia/fapsi/index.html>

FAPSI History (in Russian & in English)
<http://www.agentura.ru/english/dosie/fapsi/story/>

National security (in Russian & in English)
<http://www.agentura.ru/english/>

Judicial System of the Russian Federation

The judicial system of the RF consists of:

- The Constitutional Court of the RF (<http://ks.rfnet.ru/>) and the constitutional courts of the republics and other subjects of the RF
- The Supreme Court of the RF (<http://www.supcourt.ru/>) and the supreme courts of the republics, krai and oblast courts, courts of cities of federal significance and the military and specialized courts.
- The Supreme Arbitration Court of the RF (<http://www.arbitr.ru/>) and the federal okrug courts and arbitration courts of federal subjects.

On the Court System in the RF (in English)

http://nadzor.vvsu.ru/English/legislation/show_law.asp?id=6

Russia's Judiciary (in English)

<http://www.supcourt.ru/EN/rj.htm>

Judicial System of the RF and the Supreme Court of the RF (in English)

<http://www.supcourt.ru/EN/frames.htm>

The Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation

The Constitutional Court of the RF consists of 19 judges appointed by the Federation Council upon nomination made by the President of the RF.

The Constitutional Court of the RF is the judicial body of constitutional review. Its official website is: <http://ks.rfnet.ru/>

The rulings (решения) and decisions (определения) of the Constitutional court are to be found here. A selection is also in English, or has an English summary. Several decisions are only known from the Website. Decisions of the Constitutional Court are published in the *Дневник Российской Федерации* (Russian Gazette) or in the official gazettes *Ассамблея Российской Федерации* (Bulletin of the Federal Assembly of the RF) and *Сборник законодательства Российской Федерации* (Collection of legislation of the RF).

Selected Decisions of the Constitutional Court of the RF (in English)

<http://ks.rfnet.ru/english/codicese.htm>

Constitutional Court: Development and activity (in English)

<http://ks.rfnet.ru/english/booklet.htm>

Federal Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Court of the RF (12.07.1994) (in English)

<http://ks.rfnet.ru/english/ksengl.htm>

The Supreme Court of the Russian Federation

The Supreme Court of the RF (<http://www.supcourt.ru/>) is the supreme judicial body. Its official publication: *Ассамблея Российской Федерации* (Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the RF) can be found on this site (full text).

The Supreme Court of the RF has the following structure

<http://www.supcourt.ru/1/structure/index.htm>:

- The Plenum of the Supreme Court
- The Presidium of the Supreme Court
- Judicial chambers: Chamber on Civil Cases, Chamber on Criminal Cases and Military Chamber.

The Supreme Court has the right of the legislative initiative. The Supreme Court acts as a court of first instance for cases of special importance or special public interest.

Judgments of the general courts: on www.supcourt.ru, with legislation on the Supreme Court, decisions of the Supreme Court, the Civil Court, Criminal Court and Military Court

The Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation

The Supreme Arbitration (Commercial) Court is the highest judiciary body resolving economic disputes and other cases considered by arbitration courts. Besides information on the System of Arbitrage in de RF and legislation on commercial courts, the main website: www.arbitr.ru gives very useful links to other official institutions and several Legal databases.

The activity of the Supreme Arbitration Court of the RF is regulated by the Federal Constitutional Law “On the Arbitration Courts in the RF” (05.04.1995) (<http://www.arbitr.ru/as/doc/fkzn1/part1.htm>) and the Arbitration Procedural Code (05.04.1995) (<http://www.arbitr.ru/as/doc/apk/index.htm>), as well as the Federal constitutional law «On the judicial system of the RF».

The monthly *Áññòíèê Áûñøáãî Àðáéòðàæíîãî Ñóää ÐÔ* (Bulletin of the Supreme Arbitration Court of the RF) is the official publication of the Supreme Arbitration Court of the RF, available at <http://www.vestnik-vas.ru/> since 1998.

Historical Background (in English)

<http://www.arbitr.ru/eng/sysac.htm>

The history of the commercial and arbitration courts in Russia.

Database of the Arbitration practice (in Russian)

<http://frame.arbitr.ru:8080/law?d&nd=980405161>

This database of the Kodeks Legal Information system contains the texts of the documents of the arbitration practice from 1992 onwards.

(Legal) Databases

Russian legal systems and databases

Although the greater part of the Russian legal databases are fee based, an ordinary Russian citizen can get access to commercial databases free of charge through a chain of so-called legal centers, currently being established in public libraries.

The FAPSI database of Russian Legislation “**Systema**” is the official database of Russia. All text of laws are official and have been published in the following Official Publications:

- *Ńíáðàíèà çàèííüàðàèüñòàà ĐÓ* (Collection of Legislation of the RF). (1994→)
- *Áþèèðàáíü ííðíàðèáíúõ àèðíá Óáüáðàèüíèõ íðááíá èñííèíèðàèüííé áèñòè* (Bulletin of normative acts of the Federal Organs of the executive authorities).
- *Íáæäóíàðíáíúá äíáíáíðú* (International Treaties).
- *Ááäííñòè Óáüáðàèüííáí Ńíáðàíèà ĐÓ* (Bulletin of the Federal Assembly of the RF).
- *Ńíáðàíèà àèðíá Íðáñèäáíòà è Íðáèèðàèüñòàà ĐÓ* (Collection of documents of the President and the RF Government)(1992-1994).

Online search free of charge but fee based for users outside the RF.

<http://www.systema.ru/>

Legal System “Ăàðáíò/Garant“ (in Russian and English) <http://www.garant.ru/> partially free of charge. This database has a section “hot documents” (ăîðÿ÷èă äíêóíáíòú) in which fresh legal materials of Russia, Moscow and SPB can be found, free of charge.

Legislation of Russia in English <http://garant.park.ru/eng/default.asp?page=internet> This database includes codes, laws, decrees of the President, decisions and other normative acts of the Government of the RF, documents of the higher juridical bodies of the RF, normative legal acts of the bodies of executive authority, international agreements and conventions. It is the worlds only sufficiently complete bank of Russian legal information translated into English. Mainly fee based.

Information Legal System “Ĕíăăñ/Kodeks“ (in Russian and English) . Partially free of Charge <http://www2.kodeks.net/free/free.html> see also: www2.kodeks.net/eng/

Database “Business Law of Russia”(in English) <http://www2.kodeks.net/n-zakeng>

Kodeks Legal Information Consortium (in English) <http://www.fort-ross.ru/kodex.html>

Russian Network “Consultant Plus“ (in Russian) <http://www.consultant.ru/> ConsultantPlus is the largest service network operating in the Russian market of information and legal services. The customers have access to databases on Federal, Regional (Subjects of the Federation) and International legislation; a collection of advisory materials on financial issues, court practice etc; thousands of transactional forms, including business forms, real estate forms, trust deeds, wills and many more. Fee based, but some sites are free of charge.

Legal System “Pñèñ/Iusis“ (in Russian & in English)

<http://www.intralex.ru/>

On-line law database Iusis offers access not only to the legislation of the RF but to judiciary and arbitration laws, Moscow statutory acts, and to the comments to the economic laws based on the data from *Ýèíííèèà è æèçíü* Daily updates via Internet. Fee based.

The **Ăááíòñòáí éííñóèüðàöèé è ääèíáíé èíóíðíàöèè «Ýèíííèèà è æèçíü»** (Agency for consultancy and business information “economics and life), founded in 1991 has a very useful website www.akdi.ru . To be found are the sections: News from the

Parliament, with drafts of laws; Commentaries on draft Codes, Actual legal issues, Activities of the Supreme Court and the Court of Arbitrage, Legislation, etc. Besides that, AKDI publishes the following periodicals:

- *Ýêííìèèà è æèçíü* (Economics and Life) (monthly).
- *Áãñðíèè ôääððàèüíé ñëóááú Ðíññèè ïí òèíàíñíâíò íçäíðíâëáííþ è áàíèðíðñðâó* (Bulletin of the Russian Federal Service on financial fitness and bankruptcy).
- *Ýêííìèèêí-íðââíâíé áþëëððâíü* (Economic-legal bulletin) (since 1992).
- *Íðèèèèèüíüâ äíéóíáíòú è ðàçúýñíáíèý* Official documents and interpretations) (weekly).
- *Íàèíâíâú èçáãñðèý Ìñêíâñêíâí ðããèíà* (Tax news from the Moscow region) (monthly).

Legal System “Ðãóððãíò/Referent” (in Russian) <http://www.referent.ru/>
Online legal system of the Russian and Moscow legislations. Free of charge access to the unregistered users from 19 till 23.

Law.ru www.laws.ru situated in Nizhny Novgorod, gives legislation of the RF, Moscow, SPB and Nizhny Novgorod. With full texts of laws. Gives all the Codes. Has some materials in English. Fee based.

Bre.ru http://www.bre.ru/new_laws.php4 Database with new legislation.

Optima [Law.optima.ru](http://www.law.optima.ru) After registration, free of charge. Not quite up-to-date, but nevertheless useful.

Database ARBT <http://www.arbt.ru/> gives legal and business information, updated several times a week. Full text of current issues of *Áãñðíèèè Ìðââà* (Law Bulletin).

Legislature <http://www.legislature.ru/>, maintained by the Foundation of Parliamentism in Russia.

This site provides information about the legislative authorities of the RF, about the history of Russian Parliamentarism, it has links to the Russian legal databases, to the regional Parliaments of the RF and to the electronic versions of new books on Russian legislation. Gives an overview of draft laws.

Websites and databases of some western organisations.

SOSIG Portal <http://www.sosig.ac.uk/Law>. The British SOSIG Law Gateway provides guidance and access to global legal information resources on the Internet. The service aims to identify and evaluate legal recourse sites offering primary and secondary materials and other items of legal interest.

Project DIAL: Development of the Internet for Asian Law, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) <http://www.austlii.edu.au/links/2159.html>. DIAL is a free accessible catalogue and search facility of legal materials on the Internet from all countries worldwide. DIAL does not add new legal materials to the Internet it provides better access to what is already there.

GLIN: Guide to Law Online: Russia (in English)

<http://www.loc.gov/law/guide/russia.html>

The Guide to Law Online is an annotated compendium of hypertext links and descriptions of certain server sites which is created by the Library of Congress.

The Slavic Research Centre at the Hokkaido University in Japan gives an up-to-date overview of Internet Resources of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe at:

<http://src-home.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/index-e.html>. The information covers the whole area of legal, political, economic, statistical and other data, including those of the Central Bank of Russia.

Findlaw: <http://www.findlaw.com/12international/index.html> LawCrawler with Individual Country Pages, International Law sources, Constitutions of the World and Treaties & International Conventions.

LawRunner is an Internet Legal Resource Guide, maintained by *Alta Vista*. Russia can be found at: <http://www.ilrg.com/nations/ru>

The databases of **Lexis-Nexis** don't need introduction

Russian Search engines

An overview of several Russian search engines is given at:

<http://www.zhurnal.ru/search/engines.shtml>

To be mentioned are:

- “Àïïðð/Aport” <http://www.aport.ru/>
- “Ðýìáääð/Rambler” <http://www.rambler.ru/>
- “ßíääê/Yandex” <http://www.yandex.ru/>

www.zodchiy.ru is useful for USSR materials.

The section “Government” in the global **Yahoo** search engine www.yahoo.com has a section “Law” → “International Law” (= law of other countries).

Altavista www.altavista.com gives the possibility to search in 28 countries in 23 languages, including Russian.

Russian Electronic News

Daily newspapers

www.izvestia.ru *Èçâãñðèÿ* – daily newspaper, with a rubric on legal matters.

www.pravda.ru *Ïðàâäà* – formal communist daily newspaper.

www.kp.ru *Èíîñèèññèÿ Ïðàâäà* - one of the leading Russian daily newspapers, founded in 1925.

www.mk.ru *Ïñèòàíêèé Èíîñèèññèÿ* - favourite daily newspaper for the younger generation, founded in 1919.

www.sr.park.ru *Ñèàððñèÿ Ñèññèÿ* – favourite (pro communist) daily newspaper for the elder generation.

www.russ.ru *Ðóññèé Æóðíàë* - a daily publication.

<http://vesti.ru> *Vesti.Ru* – a daily internet journal.

[http://www.vedomosti.ru/](http://www.vedomosti.ru) *Áâîèññèÿ* – a „Wallstreet Journal“ with business news, Financial Times.

<http://www.akm.ru> *AK&M*, with economic/financial news, information of/on State Bodies. An Internet journal, founded in 1990. Also in English.

[http://www.redstar.ru/](http://www.redstar.ru) *Èðàíèÿ çàçüà*. Daily electronic version of the military journal of the same name, founded in 1924.

[http://www.rg.ru/](http://www.rg.ru) *Ðèññèññèÿ äçàðà*. (Governmental Journal) Since 1990 in paper edition, since 1993 in electronic format too.

http://www.pnp.ru/pg_win/ *Ïàðëàìèíòñèÿ Äçàðà* (Parliamentary Gazette).

<http://www.utro.ru/> *Óòðè.ðó* Newspaper on Politics, economics, sport etc.

<http://www.vremyamn.ru/> *Áðàÿÿí (Áðàÿ è Ïñèòàíêèé Íàèññèÿ)* a daily publication, issued since May 1998.

<http://www.smi.ru/> *Ñðàññèÿ àññèèé èíîðìàöèé à èíîðìàöèé*. A daily news bulletin, also in English.

Weeklies

www.aif.ru *Áðàóíàíó è Óàèó*- a popular Russian weekly.

www.mn.ru *Ïñèòàíêèé Íàèññèÿ* – *Moscow News* – a well known serious weekly.

www.sobesednik.ru *Ñèàññèÿ* – attached to the illustrated weekly of the same name.

www.fr.ru *Óèíàíèÿ Ñèññèÿ* – economic and financial edition.

www.inostranec.ru *Èíñððàíá* – Russian weekly with news from aboard.

www.itogi.ru *Èòèèè.ru* - general non political issues.

Monthlies

www.s-info.ru *Speed-info* – very popular monthly on daily life issues.

www.mistral.ru *Ñâôîâîé Mistral: Êíèæíèé Ìàãàçèí* – with juridical section.

Irregular (or not known)

<http://www.gazeta.ru/> *Ãàçàðà.RU* – politics, business, international news

<http://www.gazeta.ru/english.shtml> *Gazeta.RU*, English edition

<http://www.nep.ru/> *Í.Ý.Ï. Ííâîñðè Ýèííèèèè è Ïèèèèèèè*

<http://www.polit.ru/> *Ïèèèè.ðó* Russian Political/ Economic periodical. Text also in English. Since Feb. 1998

An overview of all kinds of Russian electronic periodicals is to be found at:

<http://www.smi.ru/publications/> *Ñðããñðãã ìãññíâîé èíîíðèàöèè â èíðãðíãðã.*

All these newspapers/periodicals are free of charge.

Through the commercial firm *Eastview* it is possible to subscribe to the official publications of the RF, to several dailies, weeklies and monthlies. They offer special facilities, such as back issues and archive and a nice search engine. See for yourself: www.eastview.com

Western Electronic Publications

General information on Russia and the other former Soviet states can be found at:

<http://www.russiatoday.com>

<http://www.rferl.org> Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, gives news from Central Europe and the countries of the fSU and.

<http://www.omri.cz> Transitions online (TOL), an internet magazine, covering Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the fSU, issued in Prague. It is not entirely free of charge. You can ask for a two months free trial subscription for full text access.

Summary: Where to find what publication?

The governmental newspaper *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* (Russian Gazette), to be found at: (<http://www.rg.ru/oficial/>).

Current editions of the Official Gazettes:

- *Ñíáðàíèá çàèííäàðäëüñðàà ÐÓ* (Collection of legislation of the RF)
- *Áþëëàðáíü íðìàðèáíüñ àèðíá Óäüäðäëüíüñ íðãáííá èñííèèèðäëüíé àëàñðè* (Bulletin of normative acts of the Federal Organs of the executive authorities) both are to be found at: <http://www.systema.ru/>

(The *Áãáííñðè Óäüäðäëüííá Ñíáðàíèá ÐÓ* (Bulletin of the Federal Assembly of the RF) is only available in paper form)

The *Ïàðëàìèííèé Äàçàðà* (Parliamentary Gazette) can be found at: http://www.pnp.ru/pg_win/

Codes are to be found at the site: *Ðíññèéñèé çàèííäàðäëüñðàâ* (Legislation of Russia): <http://rus-code.virtualave.net/> and also at www.laws.ru situated in Nizhny Novgorod. With full texts of laws.

<http://zakon.kuban.ru/sayt/index.htm> ðãèáâ è çàèíí (Man and Law): Legislation of the RF- up-to-date.

Treaties & International Covenants. Findlaw: <http://www.findlaw.com/12international/index.html>.

The rulings (*íññðáííêáíè*) and decisions (*ðãðáíè*) of the Constitutional court are to be found at: <http://ks.rfnet.ru/>

The official publication of the Supreme Court of the RF: *Áþëëàðáíü Áãððíáííá Ñóà Ð.Ó. (ÁÁÑ)* (Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the RF) can be found on (<http://www.supcourt.ru/>)

The activities of the Supreme Arbitration Court could be found at: www.arbitr.ru .

The monthly *Áñðèèê Áññðáíí Áðáèðäáííá Ñóà ÐÓ* (Bulletin of the Supreme Arbitration Court of the RF), the official publication of the Supreme Arbitration Court is available at <http://www.vestnik-vas.ru/> .

Official Statistics can be found at <http://www.gks.ru/>

Periodicals: *Äèííàðè ðãèéê Áãñðèèê* (Diplomatic Bulletin) and *Ïàäóíàðííá äèçíü* (International Life) are published on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mid.ru/> .

Current issues of *Áñðèèê Ïðáâ* (Law Bulletin) are to be found at <http://www.arbt.ru/> .

Some Criteria for Selection of Databases

Reliability of data

- Is the text of the document complete, with all appendixes and amendments?
- Is the translation reliable?

Security of the data

- Is the data backed up, how often, what kind of safety provisions do vendors/publishers have in place?
- Is the database owner prepared to reformat the database to keep up with technological advances?
- What will happen to the database and your patrons' ability to access it if the owner declares bankruptcy or decides to liquidate?

Access vs. ownership

- When a library purchases access to information, it does not own it. If your library discontinues subscription, does the vendor provide your institution access to the data, available when your library had an active subscription, or will the vendor block access to the information after the subscription be dropped? What will the cost of such access be?
- Some vendors offer back-up data on CD-ROMs. If the information is stored on many CD-ROMs, the global searching capabilities of the database (one of the most attractive features of electronic databases) are lost.

Searching

- What kind of searching mechanism is used? This is particularly important when texts are in languages that require use of cases, declension, suffixes and prefixes. In this case it is important to understand whether searching is set up to retrieve exactly the set of characters user has typed or it will also retrieve all the words with the same root. How many hits do you have with various searching strategies? Are there options available to limit or expand searching?
- Transliteration. Sometimes texts in databases are in both Roman and Cyrillic scripts. A librarian needs to know what transliteration system is used in articles written in English or any other West European languages for personal, geographic, administrative unit and corporate bodies' names originating in languages that do not use Roman script. There is a big difference between Yeltsin and El'tsin or Eltsin in the outcome of the search.
- Diacritic marks. Some languages use diacritics. You need to check if diacritic marks affect the outcome of searching.

Evaluation of electronic materials - Trial access

- During a trial period the librarian should solicit opinions from faculty and graduate students on this database: what they think about its intellectual content, the titles included in the database, whether or not they find it easy to use and useful for teaching and research.
- Test the searching, navigation, printing and downloading capabilities.

Price negotiations.

- Usually bargaining is possible if your institution participates in consortial acquisition. Ask the vendor how to bring the price down.

License Agreement

- If you as a librarian decide to purchase a specific database, request a license agreement, outlining terms and conditions of database use.