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Governmental Information Resources of Russia: Problems of Effective Use



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In order to carry out a governmental policy in the field of creation and use of databases a special organization has been created: the Center for Scientific Research and Development "Informregister". The Center performs the registration of databases created in Russia, supplies free access to information resources, coordinates legal, linguistic and methodological problems of databanks and databases, conducts research in the field of standardization, certification and testing of information products, and maintains the Computer Directory of Russian Databases, using for this purpose a formal language for database description which pays special attention to the contents and thematics of information products. (Author)

Information resources present one of the most important kinds of resources, aiding as they do the economic, political, social, cultural, scientific and technological progress of society. Every government must support the creation and development of information resources and their effective use.

The most progressive form of information resources is a database. A large number of databases are now being created in various spheres of economics. Most of them are of social significance. It becomes necessary to form a system supporting the effective use of information resources, i.e. allowing free access to existing databases, providing users with high-quality and reliable information, and guaranteeing the rights of both information resources owners and users.

In order to carry out the governmental policy in these fields a special organization has been created: the Center for Research and Development "Informregister". The Center conducts the registration of databases created in Russia and maintains the Computer Directory of Russian Databases as well as information resource dictionaries of databases of definite thematics and locations.

For this purpose a formal language for database description has been developed. This language contains identifying parameters of databases (organization-owner, name of databank or information retrieval system), structure parameters (type of database structure, number of data fields), hardware, software and technological parameters. The most important and difficult part of database description is the description of its contents and thematics. The

main problem is presented by the fact that unlike a separate document a database is characterized by a set of subject parameters which use different classifications or facets. The thematic proper is described by the State Rubricator of Scientific and Technical Information, which is the most widespread one in the Russian language of this type. The important aspect in database description is its purpose or the kind of activity in which the database is used. The peculiarity of database classification consists in the fact that it must describe not only scientific, technological or popular information, like library classification systems, but also business, design, and other special kinds of data. Specific classification systems must be used for the description of the main objects in a database (for source databases), document types (for reference databases), geographic location (for databases on natural resources) and so on.

Thus the language for database description requires a synthesis of various ideas and methods used in the theory and practice of classification.