

## General rules on making use of book collections in the reading-rooms of the National Library

The book collections of the National Library are available for scientific and academic research, education, cultural activity, and professional pursuits to everyone above 18 years of age. In justified cases (on the basis of a reference letter from a school) use of the collections is also possible for pupils who have completed middle school (*gimnazjum*, in the Polish system), especially for pupils preparing for their high school graduation final exam (*matura* in Polish) and for participants of national contests.

With regard to the unique character of the Library's collections some categories – such as early prints, manuscripts, protected materials, and other particularly precious documents – are available primarily for scientific research purposes.

The book collections can be made use of only in the reading rooms. At the *Informatorium* (reference center) and in the main and central catalogues readers have access to information materials in the form of reference collections and information databases, along with traditional information resources created by the National Library.

There are 12 reading rooms operating within the National Library. The main building at al. Niepodległości 213 is home to:

- **the Main Reading Room**, in which books from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries are available.
- **the Periodicals Reading Room**, which makes available newspapers and magazines from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The recent years' issues of selected Polish, Polonian, and foreign periodicals are found in the reference collection.
- **the Humanities Reading Room**, which offers access to books, newspapers, and magazines from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, including protected publications and cimelia (the rarest of works), as well as materials borrowed within the framework of inter-library cooperation with both Polish and foreign libraries.
- **the Librarianship and Information Science Reading Room**, where you can make use of various kinds of documents from the fields of bibliography, library science, information studies, and archival science.
- **the Microform Reading Room**, which makes available microfilms and microfiches safeguarded at the National Library.
- **the Music Reading Room**, which makes available music manuscripts, early music prints from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and specialist music literature (books and magazines on music).
- **the Recorded Sound and Audiovisual Documents Reading Room**, in which sound and audiovisual documents are available for users.
- **the Ephemera Collection Reading Room**, which makes available documents concerning social life from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
- **the Cartographic Collection Reading Room**, where readers enjoy access to maps, plans, and atlases.
- **the Reference Centre**, where users have access to a vast collection of information sources (including data bases created by the National Library) on optical discs, in microfiche information collections, and so on.

- Away from the National Library's main building – at the Palace of the Commonwealth (pl. Krasińskich 3/5) – is the **Special Collection Reading Room**, which makes available manuscripts and early prints, as well as the **Iconographic Collection Reading Room**, which provides access to iconographic documents.

Use of both the main and central catalogues, as well as of materials at the *Informatorium*, does not require separate registration. However, the reader who wishes to make use of the National Library's collections in one of the reading rooms, or wishes to use online search facilities at the *Informatorium* is obliged to register at the Library's main building at al. Niepodległości 213. This is done at a special registration point where the reader receives a library card. For access to the Special Collections Reading Room or the Iconographic Reading Room, the same is done directly at pl. Krasińskich 3/5.

At the main building of the Library at al. Niepodległości 213 there are two kinds of library cards entitling use of reading room facilities. For the Cartographic Reading Room there is a separate procedure for registration (for details, see the Regulations of the Cartographic Reading Room of the National Library):

- **the Yellow library card** enables use of the collections of all reading rooms, except the Reading Room of the Humanities and the Cartographic Reading Room. It is valid for two years from the day of its issuance, or in the case of pupils and students registering themselves with a pupil ID card or student ID, until the day that document expires.
- **the Blue library card** entitles use of collections of all reading rooms located in the main building at al. Niepodległości 213, except the Cartographic Reading Room. The card is valid for three years from the day of its issuance. The card can be obtained by researchers from universities, colleges, and scientific institutes. In exceptional cases, and on the basis of a justified request, the director of the National Library may give his or her consent to provide the Blue card to other readers.

Each library card is issued on the basis of a personal ID card, passport, valid student ID or pupil ID card (together with a reference letter from the pupil's school), or driving license. Foreigners are registered on the basis of their passport, permanent residence card, or driving license. Registration comes into effect after signing a statement to follow the Library's Regulations. In order to take a seat in the reading room of your choice, you need to deposit your library card there with a photo. If your library card has no photo, then you must provide a photo ID.

Each library card is issued free of charge. It is not permitted to pass the card to any other person. In the event of loss, this should be reported to the librarian on duty at the registration desk. For the issue of a duplicate, the reader is charged a fee of 10 zloties.

In extraordinary circumstances, but no more than three times within a two-year period, the reader who possesses a library card may be given a one-time card.

After the expiration of your library card, you must again go through the registration procedure.