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The Photo Fond of the State Archive of the Sverdlovsk Region: Issues of Acquisition, Systematization, Search, and Use of Photographic Documents

Abstract

The article analyzes the history of creation of the photo fond in the State Archive of Sverdlovsk Region (GASO), assesses its scientific reference apparatus, and evaluates the efficiency of search for photographic documents by their subject. There is a growing interest towards local

history and history of urban environment, which increases demand for photographic documents stored in the archive. However, the use of these documents is limited due to low efficiency and arduousness of search. The author suggests several ways to increase the efficiency of search using modern computer technology. To achieve this goal, the legal frameworks on photographic documents processing in state archives have been analyzed. The unique sources used in the research are detailed interviews with the GASO staff, as well as annual reports on the work of the archive during 1961–72. During this period, much effort was put to creation of the scientific reference apparatus: description, systematization, and cataloging of photographic documents were conducted. The photo fond (fond 1) counts 62265 storage items. Photographs and albums are also stored in other GASO fonds. The acquisition sources were departmental archives of institutions and organizations, the GASO itself, as well as individuals. Photo documents were widely used in the GASO's educational and popularization work and were available on request of organizations and citizens. The documents have research potential, and yet (according to archival staff and to research) the existing information retrieval systems do not provide complete and effective search due to their limitations. Relevance and fullness ratio of the information retrieval system have been calculated for publicly available electronic inventories of photographic documents. It has been established that search efficiency of highly specialized queries has precision score of 0,003, while noise ratio is 0,997.

Keywords

Photographic documents, state archives, acquisition, scientificreference apparatus, information retrieval systems, use, urban environment, State Archive of the Sverdlovsk Region, Sverdlovsk.

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