In Russian history there are old and deep traditions of education and enlightenment. Both these directions of cultural life changed their aims, goals and forms. Their conductors were representatives of various strata of Russian society.

In the 20th century they experienced the most significant influence on the part of power structures, seeking to direct the whole system of education and enlightenment at the course of solving political, ideological and educational problems. However, the traditions of enlightenment in Russia were kept and consistently developed even in that situation. The whole system of enlightenment relied on constant requirement of society in accessing reliable information about the environment, achievements in various fields of knowledge.

On the first of May in 1947 “An appeal to all workers of science, literature and art, to scientific, public and other organizations and establishments of the Soviet Union”, signed by the President of the Academy of sciences of the U.S.S.R. S.I. Vavilov, by the presidents of republican academies of sciences, prominent scientists and the country’s public figures was published. Appeal’s authors called upon the intellectuals of the U.S.S.R. to create All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, “...that should be an agent and conductor of real, advanced scientific knowledge from specialists to the folk.”

On the 22th of May in 1947 a branch of All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge was founded in Leningrad. From that day the history of Inter-Regional public organization “Society “Znanie” of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region” originates. For a period of 60 years the Society “Znanie” developed as a mass public-enlightening organization, and was the attraction centre of the best scientific and creative personnel, the centre of all-Russian enlightenment, the source of modern knowledge.

Since the first days of the Society “Znanie” of St. Petersburg and Leningrad region theoretical and practical public activities have become the most important area of its activities. This work has allowed to raise the education in St. Petersburg as well as in regions of Russia to a qualitatively higher level.

Having a rich intellectual potential, the Society carry out many researches. Both fundamental and applied research are carried out in 13 scientific fields.

Only recently 75 research projects have been fulfilled, and 17 of them have been fulfilled under orders of the enterprises and organizations.

Scientific schools are formed on the theory and history of law and the state, history of legal doctrines, the civil law, business law, criminal law and criminology, economics and management of the economy (regional economy), Applied Computer Science.

The Society “Znanie” is not only a recognized authority in the field of education and enlightenment, but also an active participant of state social and economic reforms, the implementation of priority national projects, modernization of the country.

The most concentrated position is shown at the meetings and discussions in the intelligence club, which became one of the most effective ways for live informal communication between representatives of power structures with the scientific community.

The efforts of this organization in the framework of cooperation agreements with the administrations of St. Petersburg and Leningrad region, the legislatures of the city and region, the regional office of the party “the United Russia”, the Regional Electoral Commission intensified.

Mutual agreements on cooperation were signed with the North-West Department of Internal Affairs on transport of the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs, Investigation Committee, of the Prosecutor of the Russian Federation Leningrad region, with the St. Petersburg Association of Specialists in Public Relations.

The parties have joined their efforts in the development of education and educational activities, strengthened cooperation in the use of spiritual and intellectual values in developing a strategy to improve the economy, science, culture, education and social services.
Saint-Petersburg Institute for International Relations, Economics and Law was founded in 1994 by the Interregional Public Organization “The Society “Znanie” of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region. The authority of the Society “Znanie” became the social advantage for this institute of higher education immediately, and all previous years Saint-Petersburg Institute for International Relations, Economics and Law has been solving its main tasks intentionally and successfully – the constant improvement of the educational process, adoption of innovative forms in the sphere of education, the continuity of basic and extra education in line with requests of the country and its regions.

Nowadays Saint-Petersburg Institute for International Relations, Economics and Law is the biggest non-governmental educational institution in Russia. Training of the future specialists is based upon well developed system of getting common and special knowledge. The students are trained with the help of the most developed methods, that lay on the principles of fundamentality, systemic and interconnection between theory and practice. Not only leading scientists of Saint-Petersburg but the scientific elite of the country is also involved in the educational process. More than 80% of the professors of Saint-Petersburg Institute for International Relations, Economics and Law are Doctors of sciences and Candidates; this amount is higher than the level determined by the regulations of the Ministry of Higher Education.

The educational domain of Saint-Petersburg Institute for International Relations, Economics and Law includes the whole country and even goes beyond. 23 branches of the Institute and 2 representative offices work very successfully in Boxitogorsk, Volkhov, Vyborg, Gatchina, Kingisepp, Kirovsk, Smolensk, Tolyatti in Samara region, Udomlya in Tver region, Khabarovsky. More than 20 thousand of people are trained with the help of this system of branches. They get unified education, it provides high level of training consolidated by the uniform diploma.

**Baccalaureate**
- Psychology
- Jurisprudence
- Advertising and public relations
- Foreign affairs
- Foreign regions study
- Linguistics
- Economics
- Management
- Trade business
- Technology of transport process (logistics)
- Applied informatics

**Magistracy**
- Jurisprudence
- Economics
- Technology of transport processes

**Post-graduate school**
- Economics and control of national economy
- Criminal law and criminology, criminal law-executive

**Specialization**
- Finances and credit
- Management in organization
- Accounting, analysis and audit
- Global economics
- Applied informatics (in economics)
- Jurisprudence
- Foreign affairs
- Regions study
- Translation and interpretation
- Public relations
- Organization of road haulage and automotive control
- Psychology
At present education for adults is significant. In the past higher education was quite enough for people for a long period of time. Nowadays the knowledge is going out of date so fast that it needs regularly improving. Otherwise, there is a danger to lag behind the time. It concerns both professional and private life.

The Society “Znanie” of St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region follows the advanced theory in adult’s education such as continuity of learning for the whole life. This principle allows to be “on the top”, to orientate oneself quickly in changing conditions and events, to solve flexibly current problems. In other words, the learning at any age helps the person to make one’s life, moreover, at the highest level.

Educational courses and seminars of the Society “Znanie” seek to give to audience as much practical recommendations as possible. They are necessary for professional promotion and successful career.

The list of courses and seminars is substantial and various: the accounting courses for beginners, the courses of professional accountants, the courses of chief accountants and accounting consultations, the communication courses and courses «Human Resources», the budget courses, the seminars for accountants, the courses for entrepreneurs, etc.

The center “Human Study” is one of the youngest structures in the system of the Society “Znanie” of St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region. The center is developing fast and it’s getting more and more popular among the different age groups, including students, schoolboys and their parents.

The center always helps you to solve different problems and to find the best solution, to review life experience, to solve your own or family problems and problems of your personality as well, to establish harmonious relations with the world and oneself. The center creates relevant conditions and thereby improves the motivation of people, who want to study and develop.

A great experience and profound knowledge of the center specialists allow them to fathom emotional corners of one’s personality, to find basic causes of problems, which prevents a person from living and working properly. The aim of the center is to improve the life quality.

**Training and seminars:**
- Setting according to Bert Hellinger
- True woman
- Dreams changing our life
- Correction of emotional states by the method of colour fairy tale-therapy
- Realization of the dream and half-kingdom extra
- Successful professional choice
- Control of the stress before examination
- Free body
- Regular physical activity of the spine
- Disclosure of voice potential
- Christmas divinations
There is hardly a more fascinating the imagination of St. Petersburg scientific-educational institution, than the Planetarium. Only here you can see with your own eyes the firmament, hanging over the planet. Russia's largest Star hall with 25-meter dome comes alive in front of the audience and allows them to find themselves under the veil of heaven, to see the starry sky of every corner of the Earth. Special effects transform the story the lecturer into an artistic representation, which enriches our understanding of the Universe. Only here you can find yourself at the Laboratory of entertaining experience (exclusive project Planetarium), see the unic in the Northwest Foucault pendulum, visit the popular observatory and meteorological station. The youth Astronomical School, Center for Science Education for high school students, close cooperation with the Center for cosmonaut training in Star City work in the Planetarium. Popular science reading with the country's leading scientists, astronomers and geographers, travelers and astronauts, ecologists, physicists and mathematicians becomes traditional. Created in November 1959, the Planetarium, which became for thousands of people a real window into the endless world of knowledge, continues the active research and education work. Being an integral part of the interregional public organization the Society “Znanie” of St. Petersburg and Leningrad region uses his intellectual capacity and directs its scientific and educational activities to the biggest parts of the population. The largest in Russia, the Planetarium open to the people a new vision of the world. During its existence, the organization faithfully serves the people telling about the earth and sky, the far and near space, makes a person think about his mission.

The first Russian Public Orthodox University (POU) of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region was opened in Saint-Petersburg on November 15th in 2005 on the blessing of Holy Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexiis and Metropolitan of Saint-Petersburg and Ladoga Vladimir. Public Orthodox University was found to satisfy the increasing requirements of citizens in getting the religious education in the spirit of the orthodox Christian tradition. Such vacuum had appeared because the religious educational organizations of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) for general public are quite isolated. POU aimed to fill it. The main purpose of Public Orthodox University is to give all-round Christian education to everyone who wishes. And this system of knowledge must answer the requirements of modern society as much as possible, giving information about the challenges of that time. However, it is necessary to notice that getting the fundamental religious education is not the aim of the University. It consists in broadening of the students’ intellectual outlook in the right educational direction. The educational program of this University must give more comprehensive imagination about every subject which is studied; develop the students' desire and skill of general self-education. At the University the following subjects are taught: Bible history, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Catechism, History of Russian Orthodox Church, introduction in theology, religious study, liturgics, patrology, the study of sects, Christian cultural science, the course “Relics and history of Saint-Petersburg eparchy”. 
The popularization and confirmation of healthy life-style is one of priority directions in the work of Interregional Public Organization “The Knowledge” Society of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region. The foundation of Public University of health (the listeners are the residents of the region) was the new and effective form of participation of “The Knowledge” Society in the practical realization of the priority national project in the sphere of public health.

The educational program of the University includes lectures about the actual medical themes, trainings aimed at the prevention of different diseases. These lectures and trainings are taught by the scientists and doctors who are famous in our country. Among them are A. A. Skoromets the Doctor of Medicine, academician of RAMS, the leading neurologist of Saint-Petersburg; V. A. Yakovlev the Doctor of Medicine, professor, State Prize Laureate; the Doctor of Medicine, professor V. M. Gagarinova and others.

The listeners of Public University of health got the unique opportunity to enrich their medical knowledge and get to their questions the adequate answers of competent authorities in the sphere of public health.

The Central Lecture Hall is the first institution created in 1951 by The Society “Znanie” and opened for all who craves for broadening of their outlook and getting new knowledge. The Central Lecture Hall offers programs for students of all ages and different levels of education. Regularly lectures on architecture, painting, literature, history of Russia and St. Petersburg, including the series “Journey into the World of Culture” for younger pupils are held.

In the Central Lecture Hall runs a Book Club, meetings with Russian writers are held. Students receive answers from qualified lawyers on the issues of labour, civil, criminal and family law. Very popular lectures are also held on medical subjects.

Classes on practical psychology, etiquette, oratory are conducted as well. The series called “Social and political life in Russia and abroad” is realised. Speakers give a talk on gardening and horticulture.

This centre is more than 10 years. There are groups learning English, German, Spanish, Italian, Finnish and Russian as a foreign language and others. Training is conducted with the help of following educational programs: entry level (3 stages), intermediate level, advanced level. Training for the International exam to get the first certificate of Cambridge is also conducted. The guide-interpreters’ courses are open.
The oldest Saint-Petersburg centre of computing education trains pupils and adults to work on computers. Everybody who wishes can attend these training courses (with/without grounding).

Courses for pupils. Training is based on the multilevel modular principle. Every pupil can choose his own training program in line with his interests, talents, learning curve and skills. Three-level system of courses provides progressive specialization of students and their achievement of professional level in the sphere of computer technologies.

When the first level is finished (2 years), you get the certificate for the profession “Operator of PC”. (Windows, Word, Excel, Internet, archiving, antivirus software, Power Point, Linux, Open office). The pupils of 5-8 forms can attend the first level.

The second level: (2 years) designer professions in the computer sphere: WEB design, video-editing, creation of animation, 3D design.

The third level: (2 years) programming theory: Basic (Visual Basic), Access, Java Script, C+++, Java.

The humanitarian centre of the Society “Znanie” of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region holds active educational policy among population – from preschoolers to retirees. Preschool training is conducted in this centre. The school of grammatical writing, “developing games” (for children of younger age) are also open. Pupils of the centre study foreign languages. Their parents get individual consultation.

Since 1990 the members of Saint-Petersburg branch of International club of intellectual games “What? Where? When (it was founded by Interregional Public Organization the Society “Znanie” of Saint-Petersburg and Leningrad region) conduct their meeting on the basis of this Humanitarian centre. This is a club “Kolomna” that unites more than 200 people. Famous players of the team “Brain-ring” train experts (znatoki). The Club conducts general educational work among young people and pupils of the city and region.

Over a long period of time they have been conducting educational programs combined with educational centres and organizations from Finland in the Humanitarian centre; also on weekend there are family tours of monasteries and temples of Russian North, tours of North-West towns.
THE SCHOOL OF ORATORY ART

The School of oratory art is a lecture-practical study with elements of training, which are held in creative atmosphere, where participants comprehend the working process with vocal organs, and receive interesting practical exercises.

The following topics are included in the course:
• Rhetoric as the art of persuading
• Techniques of the sounding word
• Speech standards
• Language means of expression
• Prosodic and intonation expression
• Gesture and mimic means of communication
• Creative orator’s well-being
• Light entertainment of public speech

At the end of course the participants receive the individual recommendations for the further improvement of the work with a voice.

EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR TRAINING AND RETRAINING THE PERSONNEL FOR TRANSPORT COMPANIES

The center provides training under the following programs:
• The training and retraining the specialists, responsible for traffic safety on the motor transport;
• The qualifying training for transportation arrangements by motor transport within the Russian Federation;
• The advanced training the specialists for transportation arrangements by motor transport within the Russian Federation;
• The training and retraining the specialists, responsible for traffic safety and the qualifying training for transportation organization by motor transport within the Russian Federation;
• The drivers training according to 20-hour program of annual studies;
• The training of drivers working on transport means, equipped with special light and acoustical signal devices;
• The training of drivers, transporting dangerous cargos;
• The training and retraining the specialists, related to transportation of dangerous cargos.
The basic directions of the Center activity are:

- Rendering assistance to children experiencing difficulties in oral speech, in learning the Russian language
- Realization of individually oriented logopaedics, psychological and pedagogical help to children and adults.
- Rendering assistance to parents, teachers of the primary school, teachers of the Russian language, school psychologists concerning correction and training of children with logopaedics and psychological problems.

The following programs are realized in the center:

For children at the age of 3-7:
- Correction of sound pronunciation;
- Preparation for training at school, diagnostics of readiness for training at school;
- Work under the prevention of dysgraphia and dyslexia (prevention of mistakes in writing and reading);
- Reading training with the use of logopaedics methods.

For schoolchildren of 1-4 forms:
- Elimination of malfunction in sound pronunciation, development of oral speech;
- Support of the school course of the Russian language;
- Elimination of writing and reading malfunction (dysgraphia, dyslexia);
- Improvement of reading and oral speech techniques.

For students of 5-8, 9-11 forms:
- «I Write in Russian correctly»;
- Formation of skills of the literate writing (correction of disspelling);
- Preparation for Unified State Examination and creative works in Russian and literature.

For adults (18 and over):
- Formation of the correct technique of speech and sound pronunciation;
- Courses «Speech Techniques. Rhetoric» for professionals (radio-, TV reporters, etc.)

The Psychological help for children:
- Development of informative and educational abilities (memory, attention, thinking);
- Development of creative abilities and communication skills. - the help to children with emotional and behavioural characteristics (fears, lack of self-confidence, hyperactivity, reticence, communication problems, low educational motivation);
- Children's art therapeutic studio.

Individual and family psychological consultation:
- Psychological consultation for parents in case of emotional and behaviour problems of the children and difficulties in training;
- Training the parents the effective methods of children's upbringing;
- Psychological consultation for adults with personal and family problems;
- Regular individual and family art therapy.
The center is aimed for training and development of children at the preschool age (2-7 years) and has a culturological direction.

Your children feel well and comfortable at our center. Qualified, young in spirit teachers work in the center. The individual approach, a smile, kindness will help your child to adapt with children's team. The serious approach to training and development of the children, the study of the best modern techniques, which are given in a complex, will help children not only to go up to prestigious grammar schools, but also to study with pleasure successfully, to communicate with people of the same age and adults, to perform the tasks creatively.

Step 1. School of early development (for children of 3-4 years).

Step 2. A grammar school for kids (for children of 5-6 years).

Step 3. The Academy of Preschool Sciences (for children of 6–7 years).

The first step is school of early development

Classes in «School of early development» are held 2 times a week: Tuesday, Thursday from 10 till 11.30 and from 12.30 till (individual choice).

Lessons take place in small groups of 6-7 persons. Usually we collect 2 groups. After each educational day individual talks are given with parents.

The second step is the grammar-school child sounds proud!!!

The second step of our Center is very informative, as children have enough grew up to learn and study, classes are in the morning 3 times a week. In the evening – 2 times a week. There are two directions in «Grammar school for small children»: ages 4-5 and 5-6.

The third step is academy of preschool sciences

The last step before school. Classes are in the morning 3 times a week, in the evening – 2 times a week.

The program covers an all-round development of intellectual abilities. It is ground by fifteen-year experience of preparation for school of the elder preschooleers.

These program libens not only congenital, but also creative abilities of the person: observation, ability to compare, analyze, classify and synthesize the material, ability to combine.

In classes children have sense of pleasure of opening, a victory over a problem and over self, pleasure of creativity. That favours the most successful development.
The center works according to the plan, agreed with the election commission of Leningrad Region. Majority of activities are realized together with the committee of the youth policy of Leningrad Region, the committee of the general and professional education of Leningrad region, the committee on interaction with bodies of local self-government of Leningrad region, the committee of the press and public relations of Leningrad region.

The activity of making the voters’ clubs in Leningrad region is being fulfilled over 3 years. The task of this work is the growth of legal culture of the voters and their voting activity. The organizational meetings with a participation of government bodies of Leningrad region, the Legislative Assembly deputies of Leningrad region, managers of municipalities, representatives of district offices of political parties and public organizations, small and larger business, workers of educational and cultural sphere, leading staff of the companies, youth organizations were conducted almost in all city districts, and other areas of Leningrad region. The managers of the regional level participated in the meetings as well. The interregional center of legal culture for the participants of the elections together with the Election Commission of Leningrad Region helps voters’ clubs supply the methodical materials concerning the voting rights and elective process.

The result of purposeful, regular work in the field of informational and explanatory activity in the period of preparation and holding of the elections on multiple levels is the increasing of voters’ trust to elective process and, as a result, the growth of election activity of the population, including young voters.
THE THIRD AGE

Significant and independent part of educational activity is veterans, people of so-called «the third age». Along with knowledge acquisition in the field of housing, pension aid and, as a whole, civil law the important place is given to general, cultural and historical and medical health-improving education, club interest work.

When in 1990, during that difficult perestroika period, many citizens of St. Petersburg, and, first of all, the older generation, had great difficulties, there were people who had reflected that the help and not only in the form of grocery sets and monetary support was especially necessary to such citizens. Then city Cultural-educational center “Hope” had been founded.

At its origins stood such authoritative persons in the city and the country, as D. S. Likhachev, M. K. Anikushin, D. A. Granin and other prominent representatives of science and culture. And Inter-regional public organization the Society “Znanie” of St. Petersburg and Leningrad region became the founder of the Cultural and educational center.

Organizers of the center aspired to that each of those who belongs to the older generation, always have a hope that person doesn’t remain lonely that an individual is necessary to the society, and the help will be always rendered to him. Association of older persons for benevolent communication, development of the general outlook and creative abilities, support in difficult life situations became a center task.

Today in the organization there are more than 2 thousand individual members, and they are also collective, for example, such societies, as «Young participants of defense of Leningrad», «Inmates of children’s homes of blockade Leningrad», «Juvenile prisoners of fascist concentration camps», «the Union of protection senior» and others.

Here programs of especially significant social orientation are realized for many years: «The Older generation», «Lonely elderly women», «Succession of generations». These projects are that consolidating factor which helps to unite people of different age groups at the common concrete basis. The center became that place where any can come: veterans of war and labour, people of average years, young people. Each of them can learn something new and interesting, and the most important is that here occurs a spiritual and moral unity of people of different age, the live and real word of the lecturer-educator sounds. The elderly people are taken care in reality, at the same time traditions of generation’s succession carefully remain.
From the first days of the existence the Society “Znanie” fulfills extensive publishing activities. Published popular scientific booklets, series of lectures, books and collections always attracted considerable interest both in lecturers and general audience; circulations of some editions have reached more than 100 thousand. It could be explained by freshness and originality of themes and high qualification of authors.

Active publishing continues nowadays. Only in 2009 the publishing house “Znanie” was released more than 600 monographies and scientific editions, textbooks and tutorials, the popular scientific and methodical literature, including in electronic form. The part of these books and booklets has been presented not only at book exhibitions in St. Petersburg and Russia, but also abroad – in Berlin and Helsinki. The publishing house publishes books on the current themes: problems of history and a current state of Russia, development of domestic economy and country modernization. Special care of the house is the release of issues connected with military-patriotic education of the young generation, books about the Great Patriotic War, a military and labour feat of residents of Leningrad in days of the Siege. Problems of development of a civil society, legal education of the population, culture and morals are raised in books of the publishing department. The significant part in the list of published books is occupied with the issues of ecology, sociology and philosophy. Textbooks and tutorials, monographies of scientists are published. The authors are prominent scientists, writers, journalists, employees of the Society “Znanie”.

Popularization of knowledge among the population by means of mass media always played an exclusive role. Since February, 2003 the Society “Znanie” has been publishing mass journal of a popular scientific and information-journalistic orientation.

After publication of the first issues not only the regional and city organizations of the Society “Znanie”, branches of Saint Petersburg University of Foreign Economic Relations, Economics and Law were had an inclination to the journal, but also educational organizations of Russian regions.

Articles and works from Krasnodar, Kurgan, Chelyabinsk, Novosibirsk, Kursk, Tolyatti, Inta, Vitebsk and other cities are published in the journal. The journal became the edition on a federal scale, a kind of the open tribune for communication, an exchange of experience between educational institutions, higher educational institutions, the academic organizations, cultural and creative associations and the unions.

Reportages from scientific and practical conferences, documentary sketches, journalistic articles, essays, memoirs of veterans of war and survivors of siege, materials about national traditions, about the present and the past of Russia – all these journalistic genres constantly present on the illustrated pages of the journal.

With the developed analytical, problem and production materials prominent scientists and experts have their word on the journal pages.

Today the journal «Znanie and the society» are distributed more than to 600 addresses. These are the educational organizations of Russia and the near abroad, libraries, higher educational institutions, scientific research institutes, state bodies and local authorities.