

Regulations Regarding Geographical Names Information

*Issued pursuant to
Section 18, Paragraph one of the Geospatial Information Law and
Section 18, Paragraph five of the Official Language Law*

I. General Provisions

1. This Regulation prescribes the procedures for the creation, assigning, approval, accumulation, publication, use, preservation and protection of geographical names (geographical names or toponyms).
2. The special procedures for the creation and assigning of names for objects of addressing, as well as the procedures for registration and circulation of the relevant information shall be determined by the provisions of the system of addressing.

II. Basic Principles for the Creation of Geographical Names

3. Geographical names in Latvia shall be created in the Latvian language according to the norms of the Latvian language.
4. A geographical name may have the following status:
 - 4.1. official geographical name – the name of a geographical feature, which has been assigned thereto in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations;
 - 4.2. official parallel name of the geographical name – another geographical name used in practice, which has been assigned to the geographical feature in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations and which may be used together with the official geographical name (hereinafter – official parallel name); or
 - 4.3. unofficial geographical name – the name of a geographical feature, which does not conform to Sub-paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of this Regulation, including regional and local forms of a geographical name.
5. Such names of geographical features shall be selected as official geographical names and official parallel names, which:
 - 5.1. fit in the Latvian cultural environment, promote the preservation and development of the values thereof;
 - 5.2. conform to the traditions of the Latvian language and history of Latvia; and
 - 5.3. conform to good morals.
6. In creating official geographical names and official parallel names, the local forms of geographical names characteristic to the relevant cultural and historical region shall be preserved, if:
 - 6.1. such forms are actually common;

6.2. they are not in contradiction with the norms of the modern Latvian language and the requirements of this Regulation.

7. Geographical names in the territories historically populated by Livs shall be created also in the Liv language according to the norms of the Liv language.

8. Private persons shall co-operate with the geographical names authorities referred to in Chapter III of this Regulation in the creation of official geographical names and official parallel names in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Law On Submissions. Private persons shall submit proposals on assigning of official geographical names and official parallel names, changing of the status and adjusting of the spelling form of geographical names for natural features to the relevant local government for evaluation. The local government shall take a decision on advancing or refusing of a proposal, providing a justified reply to the private person.

9. Number shall not be used in the creation of new geographical names, except:

9.1. street and square names;

9.2. building numbers on streets and in villages.

10. Letters not included in the word shall not be used in the creation of geographical names.

11. In documents and maps, which are in other languages using Roman script, geographical names of Latvia shall be written according to the spelling norms of the Latvian language. Exceptions shall be permitted:

11.1. in spelling of the names of geographical features beyond a single sovereignty;

11.2. if it is necessary to add a name, which is traditionally used in the relevant language and which differs from the name in the Latvian language, for more accurate identification of the feature.

12. In documents and maps prepared in Latvia, which are in non-Roman script, geographical names of Latvia shall be written in accordance with the provisions on rendering of proper nouns of the relevant language in transcribed or transliterated form.

13. Additional information on specificities of pronunciation of the relevant geographical name may be appended to maps, dictionaries of geographical names, gazetteers and geographical names information systems.

14. Official geographical names and official parallel names coinciding in pronunciation and spelling shall not be admissible for the following geographical features of the same type:

14.1. regions;

14.2. municipalities;

14.3. towns/cities;

14.4. airports;

14.5. ports;

14.6. in a municipality – for territorial units;

14.7. in a territorial unit – for objects of addressing and natural features of the same type.

15. Foreign geographical names shall be rendered in the Latvian language in conformity with the requirements of the Official Language Law and the provisions for rendering of proper nouns of other languages (instructions on rendering and literary pronunciation of proper

nouns of other languages in the Latvian literary language). A list of traditionally rendered foreign geographical names shall be drawn up by the State Language Centre.

16. Upon a written request of a person or institution an opinion on the conformity of a geographical name with the requirements of this Regulation shall be provided by the State Language Centre. The opinion shall be prepared by the Sub-commission of Geographical names of the Latvian Language Expert Commission of the State Language Centre. The opinion of the State Language Centre shall be binding to the geographical names authorities referred to in Chapter III of this Regulation.

III. Procedures for the Assigning and Approval of Geographical Names

17. Official geographical names and official parallel names for geographical features shall be assigned and approved by the geographical names authorities.

18. Official geographical names and official parallel names shall be assigned to the following geographical features:

- 18.1. administrative territories and units of territorial division thereof;
- 18.2. populated areas;
- 18.3. other objects of addressing, except groups of premises and such objects of addressing, for the identification of which only numbers are used;
- 18.4. State specially protected nature territories;
- 18.5. natural features, for unambiguous identification of which a geographical name with an official status is necessary;
- 18.6. State protected cultural monuments;
- 18.7. main, regional and local roads;
- 18.8. aerodromes and airports;
- 18.9. ports and lighthouses;
- 18.10. public transport stops;
- 18.11. other geographical features created by a human being (for example, parks, bridges, swimming places, cemeteries, forestries), if it is necessary for unambiguous identification of the relevant feature.

19. Official geographical names and official parallel names for geographical features not referred to in Paragraph 18 of this Regulation shall be assigned, if it is necessary for unambiguous identification of the relevant feature or for preservation of the name of cultural and historical significance of the feature.

20. Official geographical names and official parallel names for cities and regions, municipalities, municipality towns and municipality rural territories (or *pagasti*) shall be assigned, the status of geographical names shall be changed (another status shall be determined) and the spelling form shall be clarified in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Law On Administrative Territories and Populated Areas.

21. Official geographical names and official parallel names for villages and farmsteads shall be assigned, the status of geographical names shall be changed and the spelling form shall be clarified by the council of the relevant local government.

22. Official geographical names and official parallel names for the geographical features referred to in Sub-paragraphs 18.7 and 18.9 of this Regulation shall be assigned, the status of geographical names shall be changed and the spelling form shall be clarified by the responsible ministry on the basis of an opinion of the State Language Centre. In the cases

referred to in Sub-paragraphs 18.9 and 18.10 of this Regulation the responsible ministry shall co-ordinate a draft decision with the local government.

23. In co-ordinating a proposal with the local government in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations governing the relevant field, the responsible ministry shall assign the official geographical names and official parallel names, change the status and clarify the spelling form of geographical names for the following geographical features:

23.1. the Ministry of Culture – State protected cultural monuments;

23.2. the Ministry of Transport:

23.2.1. public transport features (main, regional and local motor roads, airports, aerodromes, ports and lighthouses);

23.2.2. natural features, which are of significance to maritime navigation and which are included in the official navigation issue “*Ugunis un zīmes Latvijas Republikas ūdeņos*” [Lights and Signs in the Waters of the Republic of Latvia]. The official geographical names and official parallel names of such features prior to assigning shall be co-ordinated with the State Agency “Latvian Geospatial Information Agency” (hereinafter – Latvian Geospatial Information Agency);

23.3. the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development – quarries for extraction of mineral resources;

23.4. the Ministry of Agriculture – forestries.

24. Local governments shall assign official geographical names and official parallel names, change the status and clarify the spelling form of geographical names for the following geographical features in the territory thereof:

24.1. objects of addressing (within the meaning of regulations on the system of addressing);

24.2. parts of towns, parts of villages, ponds, water bodies, small hydroelectric power stations, parks, cemeteries, immovable property;

24.3. other geographical features created by a human being, including natural, historical and cultural monuments of local significance.

25. Local governments of cities or planning regions shall assign official geographical names and official parallel names for stops in conformity with the competence laid down in the laws and regulations governing the sector of public transport services. Official geographical names and official parallel names of railway stations and stops shall be assigned in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations governing facilities of the public-use railway infrastructure.

26. Official geographical names and official parallel names for the geographical features referred to in Sub-paragraph 18.3 of this Regulation shall be assigned, the status of geographical names shall be changed and the spelling form shall be clarified by the relevant local government, in case of uncertainties on the basis of an opinion of the State Language Centre.

27. Official geographical names and official parallel names for the natural features referred to in Sub-paragraph 18.5 of this Regulation (except the features referred to in Sub-paragraph 23.3.3 of this Regulation) shall be assigned, the status of geographical names shall be changed and the spelling form shall be clarified by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, on the basis of an opinion of the State Language Centre.

28. Official geographical names and official parallel names for geographical features shall be assigned, as well as the status of geographical names shall be changed and the spelling form

shall be clarified in accordance with laws and regulations and according to a decision of the geographical names authority:

28.1. upon the initiative of the relevant geographical names authority;

28.2. on the basis of a written submission of the State institution or local government.

29. The geographical names authority is not entitled to take a decision on assigning of an official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of a geographical name, if:

29.1. the proposal is in contradiction with the requirements of this Regulation in relation to the official geographical name or official parallel name;

29.2. it is not possible to unambiguously identify the feature, for which assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name is proposed;

29.3. the name of the feature conforms to the requirements of this Regulation;

29.4. the geographical name has been included in the list referred to in Sub-paragraph 81.2 of this Regulation and it has been granted official status;

29.5. in other objectively justified cases.

30. The following shall be included in a decision of the geographical names authority on assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name:

30.1. the official geographical name or official parallel name in full spelling form without abbreviations;

30.2. the previous name of the relevant geographical feature (if any);

30.3. other names of the relevant geographical feature (if any);

30.4. information on administrative territorial belonging of the geographical feature;

30.5. reference to the type of the geographical feature;

30.6. a short description of the place and (or) a map or scheme for unambiguous identification of the relevant geographical feature;

30.7. a justification for the change of the status or the adjusting of the spelling form of the official geographical name or official parallel name;

30.8. the changed preferred name, if the official geographical name is changed;

30.9. the clarified spelling form of the preferred name, if it is clarified;

30.10. other information on the relevant geographical feature and (or) geographical name.

31. Upon a proposal of the institutions referred to in Paragraph 28 of this Regulation the geographical names authority shall:

31.1. in the case referred to in Paragraphs 22, 26, 27 and 34 of this Regulation submit a draft decision to the State Language Centre on assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name for the receipt of an opinion;

31.2. take a decision on assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name and within five working days notify the referred to decision to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in accordance with Paragraph 61 of this Regulation.

32. If the geographical names authority detects the non-conformity of an official geographical name or official parallel name already granted or to be granted with the requirements of this Regulation, it shall within five working days according to the competence:

32.1. take a decision on changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name;

32.2. propose another institution to carry out the changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of such geographical name.

33. State institutions or local governments shall submit proposals regarding assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name to natural features, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in writing, indicating the following information:

33.1. a justified proposal on full spelling form of the official geographical name or official parallel name without abbreviations;

33.2. the previous name of the relevant natural feature (if any);

33.3. other names of the relevant natural feature (if any);

33.4. administrative territorial belonging of the natural feature;

33.5. type of the natural feature;

33.6. information on location of the natural feature for unambiguous identification thereof (a short description and (or) map or scheme for unambiguous identification of the relevant geographical feature).

34. If this Regulation does not provide for a mandatory opinion of the State Language Centre, in all cases of uncertainties the geographical names authority may submit a draft decision on assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name to the State Language Centre to obtain an opinion.

35. The State Language Centre shall provide an opinion on a proposal, which is related to assigning of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name within 20 working days, informing the submitter of the proposal, the relevant geographical names authority and the Geospatial Information Agency thereof in writing.

36. The geographical names authority are entitled to request that corrections are made within five working days, if the official geographical names or official parallel names assigned by them are not accurately presented in State information systems, State and local government laws and regulations, national maps or public access information.

37. In assigning the official geographical names and official parallel names, changing the status or clarifying the spelling form of the geographical name, the geographical names authority shall:

37.1. comply with the following principles:

37.1.1. geographical features of the same type shall not be assigned names with coinciding pronunciation and spelling (in conformity with Paragraph 14 of this Regulation);

37.1.2. names of objects of addressing shall include the given name and surname of a person only in exceptional case after co-ordination of the relevant draft decision with the State Language Centre;

37.2. give preference to:

37.2.1. a geographical name of Latvian or Liv origin;

37.2.2. a geographical name, which does not cause misunderstandings in unambiguous identification of the relevant geographical feature;

37.2.3. a geographical name corresponding to the traditions of the relevant cultural and historical region;

37.2.4. a more ancient name of the feature, which is still known and used by local inhabitants, if it conforms to the requirements referred to in Sub-paragraph 37.2.2 of this Regulation;

37.2.5. a geographical name, which characterises the specificities of the relevant geographical feature or the location thereof as accurately as possible;

37.2.6. a euphonic geographical name.

38. In choosing official geographical names and official parallel names for immovable property, the geographical names authority shall comply with the following principles:

38.1. in joining several immovable properties, the name of one part of the property shall be chosen as the official name of the new property. If official geographical names or official parallel names are also necessary for parts of the new property, the current name of such geographical features shall be preserved, adding a differentiating word to one or several of them;

38.2. in dividing immovable property:

38.2.1. the initial name shall be preserved for the part of immovable property, on which residential buildings are located;

38.2.2. the names of the parts of immovable property separated shall be derived from the initial name.

39. If the geographical names authority is of opinion that an feature should be assigned an official parallel name, a written co-ordination of the State Language Centre shall be required. The State Language Centre shall provide an opinion within 15 working days.

40. Only one official geographical name shall be assigned to a geographical feature. If the geographical names authority is assigning the official parallel name, it may be used in brackets after the official geographical name. Official parallel names shall be aggregated in the Geographical name Database, however, not registered in the State Address Register.

41. Official parallel names of geographical features in geospatial data may be graphically separated by a forward slash or indicated in a new row below the official geographical name.

42. Official parallel names shall not be permissible for objects of addressing, except villages and the cases provided for in Paragraph 43 of this Regulation.

43. Official parallel names shall be permissible if:

43.1. the parallel name is in the Liv language;

43.2. the second geographical name is of cultural and historical significance;

43.3. the parallel name is the local official form of the geographical name characteristic to the relevant cultural and historical region;

43.4. the parallel name ensures better recognition of the feature.

44. The official rendering of the names of foreign geographical features in the Latvian language shall be approved and their status shall be changed by the State Language Centre.

IV. Procedures for the Accumulation and Publication of Geographical names

45. Official geographical names and official parallel names shall be made public. Each geographical names authority has a duty to ensure the availability of official geographical names and official parallel names assigned thereby to users.

46. Geographical names information shall be made available to the public:

- 46.1. by accumulating and publishing it in gazetteers, dictionaries and maps;
- 46.2. at free access websites;
- 46.3. upon the request of a private person or an institution – ensuring it with access to data in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Chapter.

47. Gazetteers and dictionaries of official geographical names and official parallel names shall provide for geographical and linguistic regulation and explanation of the use of official geographical names and official parallel names. Such issues may also provide information on unofficial geographical names of the relevant geographical features.

48. Gazetteers corresponding to maps shall explain and supplement the geographical name information presented in maps and are prepared in conformity with specific map issues.

49. Gazetteers shall include at least the following data: geographical name and reference to the type and location of the relevant geographical feature. Gazetteers may also include the most important variants of the geographical name form and other names of the feature (if any).

50. Geographical name dictionaries shall include both the data referred to in Paragraph 49 of this Regulation and linguistic, geographical and historical information on the geographical name and the geographical feature corresponding thereto.

51. Information on geographical names shall be accumulated by:

- 51.1. the State Land Service – for accounting of the objects of addressing in the Information System of the State Address Register;

- 51.2. the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency – in the Geographical name Database for the performance of geodetic and cartographic activities and studies in the field of applied toponymy.

52. Geographical name information on the following geographical features shall be accumulated and compiled in the Geographical name Database:

- 52.1. administrative territories and territorial units;

- 52.2. populated areas (towns, villages, farmsteads), as well as parts of populated areas and groups of farmsteads without an officially assigned status;

- 52.3. buildings and structures, including production and public features, features of transport infrastructure (for example, airports, aerodromes, ports, stops, lighthouses), hydrotechnical and engineering structures, cemeteries, churches, memorial sites, the names of which are to be used for the performance of geodetic and cartographic activities;

- 52.4. cultural and historic features;

- 52.5. natural features;

- 52.6. other features, the names of which are necessary for the preparation of geodetic and cartographic information and studies in the field of applied toponymy.

53. The following information on a geographical name shall be included in the Geographical name Database:

- 53.1. the geographical name and the unique identifier of the geographical name (a string of characters, which allows unmistakable recognition of the information to be stored in the entry of the electronic data base);

- 53.2. information on geographical feature – the feature type and the unique identifier of the feature;

- 53.3. administrative and territorial belonging of the feature;

- 53.4. geographic coordinates or accurate description of the location of the feature;

53.5. other names of the same feature, including erroneous and outdated (with a relevant indication);

53.6. source of information;

53.7. information on assigning of the official geographical name and official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name:

53.7.1. an opinion of the State Language Centre (quote or reference and date) (if any);

53.7.2. information on the law and regulation or decision, by which the official geographical name or official parallel name has been assigned or approved, the status of the geographical name has been changed or the spelling form thereof has been clarified (the name of the relevant geographical names authority, date and publication).

54. The following additional information on a geographical name may be included in the Geographical name Database:

54.1. historical names of the geographical feature (with a relevant reference);

54.2. geographic, linguistic and historical information on the geographical name, also the pronunciation thereof;

54.3. information on the corresponding geographical feature, also numeric characteristics of the feature and the condition of the feature;

54.4. other information on the geographical name (for example, pictures, audio recordings), which may be used for identification of the relevant geographical feature, for the selection of the spelling form of the preferred name (preferred name is a geographical name recommended for official approval and (or) use, if the feature does not have an official geographical name) or geographical name.

55. In conformity with the available information a geographical name, which may be used as the preferred name for geographical feature, shall be indicated in the Geographical name Database.

56. The following shall be used for the maintenance of the Geographical name Database:

56.1. the laws and regulations, by which a geographic feature has been granted the official geographical name or official parallel name or the status of the geographical name has been changed;

56.2. decisions of the geographical names authority on assigning of the official geographical name and official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name;

56.3. cartographic and geodetic materials;

56.4. State information systems, which maintain information on geographical names;

56.5. decisions and opinions of the Latvian Language Expert Commission of the State Language Centre, the Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia or other competent authorities;

56.6. geographical, linguistic and historical studies in the field of geographical names;

56.7. field survey materials.

57. The following information of the Geographical name Database shall be accessible free of charge:

57.1. official geographical names and official parallel names, as well as other geographical names together with the information referred to in Paragraph 53 of this Regulation on them – with the possibility of selecting an individual geographical name, together with cartographic information and as a list in the browser form;

57.2. the information referred to in Paragraph 53 and Sub-paragraphs 54.1, 54.2 and 54.3 of this Regulation on the geographical name – with the possibility of selecting an individual geographical name, as a list in the browser form and together with cartographic information.

58. Information of the Geographical name Database, which is available for a fee in accordance with the price list of paid public services of the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, shall be as follows:

58.1. the information referred to in Paragraph 53 and Sub-paragraphs 54.1, 54.2 and 54.3 of this Regulation on the geographical name:

58.1.1. with the possibility of selecting an individual geographical name for online downloading in the form of a list or in the form of a data set;

58.1.2. together with cartographic information, using web services;

58.2. custom-made selection and arrangement of geographical names.

59. The Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall receive free of charge online access to the data of the Information System of State Address Register for the maintenance of information of the Geographical name Database.

60. In creating and maintaining State information systems, the geographical names authority shall ensure the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency with online access or access using web services.

61. If a geographical name cannot be approved by an external law and regulation or cannot be registered in another State information system, the relevant geographical names authority shall, within five working days after taking of a decision on assigning and approval of the geographical name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form thereof, submit a copy of or an extract from such decision to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency.

62. In conformity with the competence a local government shall publish the decisions taken on assigning and approval of the official geographical name or official parallel name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form of the geographical name within five working days after taking of the decision on the Internet home page of the local government, indicating at least the following information:

62.1. the official geographical name or official parallel name in full spelling form without abbreviations;

62.2. the previous name of the relevant feature (if any);

62.3. administrative and territorial belonging of the feature;

62.4. the feature type;

62.5. reference to the location of the feature for unambiguous identification thereof (a short description of the location and (or) map or scheme with attraction of geographic coordinates);

62.6. information on the decision-maker and the date of taking of the decision.

63. After receipt of information on assigning and approval of the geographical name, changing of the status or adjusting of the spelling form thereof the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall, within 30 working days:

63.1. include the relevant information in the Geographical name Database;

63.2. if the geographical name does not conform to the requirements referred to in Sub-paragraph 37.1.1, Paragraphs 39 and 40 of this Regulation, it shall not be included in the Geographical name Database and the relevant geographical names authority and the State Language Centre shall be informed on non-conformity in writing;

63.3. if the geographical name does not conform to other requirements of this Regulation, it shall be included in the Geographical name Database and the relevant geographical names authority and the State Language Centre shall be informed on non-conformity in writing.

64. The Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall, within the scope of the funding from the State budget granted, ensure publication of gazetteers and geographical name dictionaries in electronic form and issuance thereof in printed form. Gazetteers shall include the information compiled in the Geographical name Database.

65. The Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall prepare and publish geographical name dictionaries and gazetteers also upon a commission according to the approved price list of public paid services.

66. The State Language Centre shall ensure registration of official and unofficial renderings of foreign geographical names in the database of the State Language Centre and the availability of such information to users.

V. Procedures for the Use of Geographical names

67. Official geographical names and official parallel names, in conformity with the laws and regulations governing the relevant field, shall be used in:

- 67.1. laws and regulations;
- 67.2. record-keeping documents and official information of institutions;
- 67.3. registers of State significance;
- 67.4. State information systems and classifiers;
- 67.5. mass media;
- 67.6. open information intended for informing of the public;
- 67.7. educational aids and tourist guides (except cases where geographical names differing from the official geographical names must be used in conformity with the specificity of the relevant educational aid or guide);
- 67.8. road signs;
- 67.9. geospatial basic data, except the cases referred to in Paragraph 69 of this Regulation.

68. If the feature has an official geographical name and official parallel name, both names shall be indicated in the open information intended for informing of the public, in maps and geospatial basic data in conformity with laws and regulations, as well as the gazetteers and dictionaries referred to in Paragraph 47 of this Regulation.

69. Unofficial geographical names may be used:

- 69.1. if the relevant geographical feature has not been assigned an official geographical name and official parallel name;
- 69.2. in special and thematic maps;
- 69.3. in all maps next to the official geographical name and official parallel name;
- 69.4. if thus preservation of a geographical name of cultural and historical value is promoted.

70. The use of unofficial geographical names in the open information intended for informing of the public shall not mislead the public.

71. If the spelling form of a geographical name is being clarified more accurately, the record of the geographical name in documents of ownership rights and personal identification documents shall not be changed, unless it is requested by the owner of the document or the holder of the personal identification document. The updated spelling form of the geographical name shall be used in all documents drawn up after adjusting.

72. Names of a geographical feature shall be legally identical if:

72.1. they have the same spelling;

72.2. their spelling contains differences:

72.2.1. which arise from the spelling norms and writing traditions of different time periods;

72.2.2. the origination of which is related to adjusting of the spelling form of names;

72.3. they are different names, which have changed after official renaming of the geographical feature.

73. Expert opinions on geospatial identity of geographical names (relation of the geographical name with the particular geographical feature and the location thereof) on the basis of a written submission shall be provided by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in the amount of information at the disposal thereof.

VI. Procedures for the Creation and Use of Abbreviated Forms of Geographical names

74. Official geographical names and official parallel names, if necessary, shall be written in abbreviated form (abbreviating or omitting any part of the name), if the abbreviated form of the name does not result in misunderstandings or does not hinder unambiguous identification of the relevant geographical feature:

74.1. in road signs and other references placed on public infrastructure features;

74.2. on name plates of streets and houses;

74.3. in addresses of postal consignments (according to regulations on the procedures by which the address of the addressee and sender shall be indicated on a postal consignment);

74.4. in geospatial data, including maps and plans.

75. If due to technical reasons it is not possible to place a full compound name in geographical name references in geospatial data or documents and the abbreviated name does not result in misunderstandings, abbreviated forms of geographical names shall be created in conformity with the generally accepted principles for the creation of abbreviations (for example, *Lielais Baltezers* – *L. Baltezers*; *Lielā Jugla* – *L. Jugla*; *Lielie Sīmaņi* – *L. Sīmaņi*; *Mazais Baltezers* – *M. Baltezers*; *Mazā Jugla* – *M. Jugla*; *Mazie Andžāni* – *M. Andžāni*).

76. Abbreviated forms of geographical names shall be created, using traditional abbreviations (Annex).

77. In creating abbreviated forms of geographical names, the abbreviation and the geographical name shall be separated by a space and shall not be joined by a hyphen (for example, the abbreviated form of the compound name *Kalna Rēzēni* is *K. Rēzēni*, not *K.-Rēzēni*).

78. If a geographical name contains a given name (given names) and surname of a person, it shall be permissible to abbreviate the given name (given names) of the person, indicating only initial (initials) before the surname (for example, the abbreviated form of the compound name *Zigfrīda Annas Meierovica bulvāris* is *Z. A. Meierovica bulvāris*).

VII. Procedures for the Preservation and Protection of Geographical names

79. Latvian geographical names and traditional Latvian renderings of foreign geographical names shall be considered as cultural heritage of Latvia. The State shall preserve and protect the heritage of geographical names of Latvia in all the diversity thereof, preventing unjustified changing of geographical names or levelling of differences between cultural and historical municipalities.

80. Geographical names of cultural and historical significance (names of geographical features, which are of cultural and historical significance), including Latvian renderings of foreign geographical names of cultural and historical significance, shall be protected by the State.

81. To ensure the use and preservation of the regional, local and traditional form of a geographical name as cultural and historical value, the State Language Centre shall:

81.1. evaluate the status of names of natural features existing in the Geographical name Database and provide opinions to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in conformity with Paragraph 27 of this Regulation;

81.2. approve and regularly update the list of traditional renderings and renderings of cultural and historical significance of foreign geographical names.

82. The following basic principles shall be complied with in the protection of geographical names:

82.1. to preserve the historical, regional and local forms of geographical names;

82.2. to prevent changing of geographical names of cultural and historical significance and geographical names to be protected by the State;

82.3. to ensure standardisation of geographical names in conformity with the traditional cultural environment of Latvia.

83. Private persons and institutions have a duty to preserve the names of cultural and historical significance of geographical features owned or possessed thereby.

84. Private persons and institutions may submit written proposals to the State Language Centre for inclusion of a specific name (names) in the State list of geographical names of cultural and historical significance in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations. A decision on inclusion of a geographical name in the list shall be taken by the State Language Centre.

85. Local governments may create lists of geographical names to be protected of local significance, co-ordinating it with the State Language Centre.

86. Traditional Latvian renderings of foreign geographical names shall be changed only on the basis of an opinion of the Latvian Language Expert Commission of the State Language Centre.

87. The compliance with this Regulation shall be monitored by the State Language Centre.

VIII. Closing Provisions

88. The Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall, within a year after coming into force of this Regulation, evaluate the status of geographical names of natural features existing in the

Geographical name Database and submit, in the form of an electronic list, proposals to the State Language Centre on assigning of official names and official parallel names (if such are provided for) to natural features in conformity with Paragraph 27 of this Regulation, indicating the type, administrative territorial belonging and unique identified of natural features.

89. The State Language Centre shall provide the opinion referred to in Paragraph 27 of this Regulation within six months after receipt of the proposals referred to in Paragraph 88 of this Regulation.

90. The Latvian Geospatial Information Agency shall commence the provision of the service referred to in Sub-paragraph 58.1.1 of this Regulation not later than until 1 January 2013.

Prime Minister

V. Dombrovskis

Minister for Justice

G. Bērziņš

Traditional Abbreviations for the Creation of Abbreviated Forms of Geographical names

No.	Component of the geographical name	Abbreviation
1.	<i>Apriņķis</i> [region]	apr.
2.	<i>Austrumi, Austrumu</i> [east, eastern]	A
3.	<i>Baseins</i> [basin]	bas.
4.	<i>Bulvāris</i> [boulevard]	bulv.
5.	<i>Ciems</i> [village]	c.
6.	<i>Ceļš</i> [road]	ce (<i>in gazetteers and dictionaries</i>)
7.	<i>Dambis</i> [dam]	db.
8.	<i>Dienvidi, Dienvidu</i> [south, southern]	D
9.	<i>Dienvidastrumi, Dienvidastrumu</i> [southeast, southeastern]	DA
10.	<i>Dienvidrētumi, Dienvidrētumu</i> [southwest, southwestern]	DR
11.	<i>Dīķis</i> [pond]	d.; <i>in gazetteers and dictionaries also dī</i>
12.	<i>Dzelzceļa stacija</i> [railway station]	dzc.st.
13.	<i>Dzelzceļš</i> [railway]	dzc.
14.	<i>Dzirnavas</i> [mill]	dzirn.
15.	<i>Ezers</i> [lake]	ez.
16.	<i>Garais, Garā, Garie, Garās</i> [long]	G.
17.	<i>Gatve</i> [avenue]	g.
18.	<i>Iela</i> [street]	ie.
19.	<i>Īsais, Īsā, Īsie, Īsās</i> [short]	Ī.
20.	<i>Jaunais, Jaunā, Jaunie, Jaunās</i> [new]	J.
21.	<i>Jūra</i> [sea]	j.
22.	<i>Jūras līcis, jūraslīcis</i> [gulf]	j.l.
23.	<i>Kalna</i> [of hill] (<i>in compound names</i>)	K.
24.	<i>Kalns</i> [hill]	k.
25.	<i>Laukums</i> [square]	lauk.
26.	<i>Lejas</i> [of valley] (<i>in compound names</i>)	Lj.
27.	<i>Līcis</i> [bay]	l.
28.	<i>Lielais, Lielā, Lielie, Lielās</i> [great]	L.
29.	<i>Līnija</i> [line]	līn.
30.	<i>Mazais, Mazā, Mazie, Mazās</i> [little]	M.
31.	<i>Mežs</i> [forest]	m.; <i>in gazetteers and dictionaries also me</i>
32.	<i>Muiža</i> [manor]	mž.; <i>in gazetteers and dictionaries also mu</i>

33.	<i>Novads</i> [municipality]	nov.
34.	<i>Pagasts</i> [rural territory (or <i>pagasts</i>)]	pag.
35.	<i>Pietura</i> [stop]	pt.
36.	<i>Pilsēta</i> [town/city]	pils.
37.	<i>Pļava</i> [meadow]	pļ.
38.	<i>Prospekts</i> [boulevard/avenue]	prosp.
39.	<i>Purvs</i> [wetlands]	p.; <i>in gazetteers and dictionaries also pu</i>
40.	<i>Pusmuiža</i> [half a manor]	pmž.
41.	<i>Pussala</i> [peninsula]	pss.
42.	<i>Rags (zemesrags)</i> [cape]	r.
43.	<i>Rajons</i> [district]	raj.
44.	<i>Rietumi, Rietumu</i> [west, western]	R
45.	<i>Sala</i> [island]	s.
46.	<i>Skola</i> [school]	sk.
47.	<i>Strauts</i> [brook]	str.
48.	<i>Svētais, Svētā, Svētie, Svētās</i> [saint]	Sv.
49.	<i>Šķērslīnija</i> [cross line]	šķ.līn.
50.	<i>Šoseja</i> [highway]	šos.
51.	<i>Upe</i> [river]	u.
52.	<i>Ūdenskrātuve</i> [water reservoir]	ūd.krāt.
53.	<i>Vecais, Vecā, Vecie, Vecās</i> [old]	V.
54.	<i>Ziemeļaustrumi, Ziemeļaustrumu</i> [northeast, northeastern]	ZA
55.	<i>Ziemeļi, Ziemeļu</i> [north, northern]	Z
56.	<i>Ziemeļrietumi, Ziemeļrietumu</i> [northwest, northwestern]	ZR

Minister for Justice

G. Bērziņš