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REGULATION OF STREET NAMES

In 1994–2003, the names of streets, squares and other objects under the jurisdiction of local authorities were co-ordinated with and approved by the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language. In late 2003, Seimas passed a Law on the Amendment of Article 9 of the Law on the Administrative Units and their Boundaries of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 1994, No 60-1183), under which “names shall be given (and changed) to street, buildings and other facilities owned by local authorities and located within their territory by the decisions of the respective local councils in accordance with the criteria set by the Government”.

On the proposal of the Language Commission and other institutions, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has established the following criteria (see Point 2 of the Rules on Granting, Changing and Registering the Names of Streets, Buildings and Other Objects, *Official Gazette*, 2004, No 88-3225):

1. linguistic correctness;
2. official and standard nature of place names (in respect of extinct place names, only their standard nature);
3. merits of distinguished persons to the State of Lithuania, its history, science, arts, culture, policies and other areas of public life;
4. significance of the historic event to the State of Lithuania;
5. conformity of the name to the accepted moral norms in society;
6. a street name should not cause disturbance to public security and order, it should not instigate national, racial, religious or social hatred, coercion or discrimination.

Thus, local authorities are no longer obliged to co-ordinate street names with the Language Commission, they may approve them independently, while the Registry

Centre VĮ is obliged to register street names, linguistically correct or incorrect, within five working days. Under the existing procedure, objections and complaints about the incorrect street names may be submitted after the street names have been registered, designated on street name plates and even after persons and real property have been registered at the address concerned.

In its attempts to reduce the likelihood of the appearance of incorrect street names, the Sub-Commission of Names of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language, on the basis of its experience gained in the deliberation and co-ordination of street names (approximately 500 names are usually discussed and approved every year) produced the *Recommendation on the Formation and Spelling of Street Names*, which was approved on December 2, 2004.

The Recommendation on street names is, first of all, a guide for local councils and Name Committees set up at the local level. Such committees conduct successful activities within the local authorities of, for example, the cities of Vilnius and Kaunas and the District of Telšiai. The Language Commission has suggested that such committees should be composed of persons knowledgeable about the history and culture of the country, and a linguist.

Advice can always be obtained from the Language Commission.

Annexe 1

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE STATE COMMISSION OF THE LITHUANIAN
LANGUAGE**

CONCERNING THE FORMATION AND SPELLING OF STREET NAMES

2 December 2004, No 14 (R-2)

Vilnius

To ensure the use of linguistically correct and standard place names on the territory of the Republic of Lithuania and with due regard to the criteria set by Resolution No 1395 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 27 November 1996 “On the Approval of Procedures for Granting and Registering Numbers of Buildings and Apartments and Names of Streets, Buildings and Other Objects” (*Official Gazette*, 1996, No 116-2723; 2003, No 95-4292; 2004, No

88-3225) and to the traditions in the formation and spelling of street names, the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language recommends to observe the following rules on the formation and spelling of street names:

1. The designation of a street shall be composed of the name of the street and a reference to the type of the street.

1.1. The name of the street shall be written with a capital letter; where the name of the street consists of two or more notional words, both words shall be written with a capital letter, e. g. *Lauko g.*, *Mėtų g.*, *Tiesioji g.*; *Aušros Vartų g.*, *Duonos Kalno g.*, *Gerosios Vilties g.*

1.2. The reference to the type of the street shall be written with a small letter.

Most references to the type of the street should be used in the abbreviated form: *gatvė* ('street') – *g.*, *skersgatvis* ('lane') – *skg.*, *akligatvis* ('cul-de-sac') – *aklg.*, *alėja* ('alley') – *al.*, *prospektas* ('avenue') – *pr.*, *aikštė* ('square') – *a.*, *skveras* ('square') – *skv.* References that are relatively rare are usually used in their full form, but if necessary, they may be abbreviated in the following way: *takas* ('path') (*tak.*), *plentas* ('highway') (*pl.*), *kelias* ('road') (*kel.*, *kl.*), *aplinkkelis* ('bypass') (*aplinkl.*), *vieškelis* ('public road') (*vieškl.*), *krantinė* ('embankment') (*krant.*).

Some of the words, which are usually used as references to the type of the street, may be part of the name of the street, e. g. *Krantinės* ('Embankment') *g.*, *Saulės Tako* ('Sun Path') *g.*, *Pietinio Kelio* ('Southern Road') *g.*

2. Selection of a street name:

2.1. Street names may be:

2.1.1. Abstract nouns, usually in the Singular, e. g. *Vilties* ('Hope') *g.*, *Atgimimo* ('Rebirth') *g.*, *Jaunystės* ('Youth') *g.*; *Pasimatymų* ('Dating') *skg.*

2.1.2. Names of natural phenomena or objects (often after some building or another object currently or formerly located in the street or in its direction) usually in the Singular, e. g. *Lietaus* ('Rain') *g.*, *Saulės* ('Sun') *g.*, *Upės* ('River') *g.*, *Dvaro* ('Estate') *g.*, *Mokyklos* ('School') *g.*, *Bažnyčios* ('Church') *g.*, *Teatro* ('Theatre') *g.*, *Sanatorijos* ('Sanatorium') *g.*

According to their meaning, some names may be used in the Singular or in the Plural, e. g. *Žiburio* ('Light') *g.* or *Žiburių* ('Lights') *g.*, *Lankos* ('Meadow') *g.* or *Lankų* ('Meadows') *g.*, *Ganyklos* ('Pasture') *g.* or *Ganyklų* ('Pastures') *g.*

2.1.3. Names of plants, animals, persons, usually in the Plural, e. g.: *Rūtų* ('Rue') *g.*, *Varnų* ('Crows') *g.*, *Elnių* ('Deer') *g.*, *Brolių* ('Brethren') *g.*, *Sėlių* ('Selians') *g.*, *Bernardinų* ('Bernardines') *g.*, *Visų Šventųjų* ('All Saints') *g.* The Singular form is appropriate where the name is associated with a specific object, for example, the street name *Ažuolo* ('The Oak') *g.* is associated with the old oak in Stelmužė, *Senosios Obels* ('The Old Apple Tree') *g.*, etc.

2.1.4. Names of deities, mythological beings, e. g. *Šventosios Dvasios* ('Holy Spirit') *g.*, *Perkūno* *g.*, *Žemynos* *g.*, *Laumių* ('Fairies') *g.*

2.1.5. Descriptive words – adjectives and adjectival words, e. g. *Tylioji* ('Quiet') *al.*, *Žemutinė* ('Lower') *g.*, *Lenktoji* ('Bent') *g.*, *Vakarinis aplinkkelis* ('Western Bypass'). In such cases, the Nominative Singular form of definite adjectives should be used, e. g., *Ramioji g.* – but not *Rami g.* In a text, declination of adjectival names is preferable (i. e. the endings of the adjective and the noun should be co-ordinated), e. g. *Gyvena Ramiojoje gatvėje* ('(He) lives in the Quiet Street'); *Gyvena Ramiojoje g. 2, Utenoje*; but the following forms are also correct: *Gyvena Utenoje, Ramioji g. 2; Gyvena adresu: Ramioji g. 2, LT-28033 Utena.*

Adjectives may also be used in a street name to designate an additional feature of the street, e. g. *Uosto* ('Port') *g.* and *Naujoji Uosto* ('the New Port') *g.*, *Smiltelės g.* and *Senoji Smiltelės* ('the Old Smiltelės') *g.*, *Vandens* ('Water') *g.* and *Didžioji Vandens* ('the Great Water') *g.*, *Plukiu* ('Anemone') *g.* and *Mažoji Plukiu* ('the Small Anemone') *g.* An additional feature of the name may also be designated by the Genitive case of a noun, e. g. *Ribiškių Didžioji* ('the Great Ribiškių') *g.*, *Vydūno Mažoji* ('the Small Vydūno') *g.*

2.1.6. Place names, e. g. *Kauno g.*, *Danės g.*, *Rąžės g.* Authentic standard forms of place names should be used.

Local place names, especially those that are no longer used or forgotten, are recommended as good choices for street names.

The high street in a rural settlement could be given the name of that locality, e. g. *Paskynų g.* (in the Paskynų Village). In case the village is included in another urban settlement, the street name could retain the former name of the village, e. g. *Justiniškių g.* (in Vilnius).

Street names may be formed from the place names of other countries by using the Lithuanian traditional or adapted forms of those place names, e. g. *Islandijos* ('Iceland') *g.*, *Karaliaučiaus* ('Königsberg') *skg.*, *Europos* ('Europe') *a.*, *Reinės a.* (in a town that has close relations with the German town *Rheine*).

2.1.7. Personal names, i. e. the first or last names or aliases of prominent persons of merit for the particular locality or Lithuania, e. g. *Barboros Radvilaitės g.*, *Jono Basanavičiaus g.*, *Vinco Mykoliaičio-Putino g.*, *Žemaitės g.* The street name shall include the full form of the first and last name of the person (an exception is the traditional street name *Darius ir Girėno g.*). Where a street is given the name of a group of persons, the Plural form shall be used, e. g. *Radvilų g.*

Titles, ranks, degrees, etc. shall not be indicated in the street name, e. g. not *Vysk.* ('Bishop') *Merkelio Giedraičio*, but *Merkelio Giedraičio g.*, not *Knygnešio* ('Book Carrier') *Bataičio g.*, but *Antano Bataičio g.* An exception is street names composed of the names of saints, which include the abbreviation *šv.* ('St'), e. g., *Šv. Ignoto g.*, *Šv. Gertrūdos g.*

The personal names of other languages are used in an adapted form, e. g. *Tomo Mano* ('Thomas Mann') *g.*

Streets should not be named after persons who are still alive.

2.1.8. Names of historic, cultural places or events (dates) or objects, e. g. *Žalgirio g.*, *Vasario 16-osios* ('February 16th') *pr.*, *9-ojo Forto* ('9th Fort') *g.* Numerals in the street names are designated by Arabic numbers with a hyphenated case ending (without space).

2.2. Short and neutral street names are preferable, therefore, the best choices are from among the options indicated in Points 2.1.1–2.1.6.

2.3. In case there are several lexical variants, the one that is recommended for general use should be selected, e. g. *Topolių* ('Poplar') *g.* – preferable *Tuopų g.*; *Veršvą* is a secondary variant of the river name *Veršvas*, therefore it is preferable to use *Veršvo g.*

2.4. Street names should not be associated with short-lived symbolic names of institutions, companies, etc. The only exception is street names given to alleys in the gardens of gardening communities.

2.5. Street names should not be formed from dialectal words, barbarisms, jargon, words of incorrect or artificial derivation, non-declinable words, or from numerals written in Arabic figures such as *5-oji* ('5th') *g.*, *10-asis* ('10th') *skg.*, etc.

2.6. A numerical component may be used if it is necessary to number the streets bearing the same name within the same residential area, mostly those are the alleys on the former or present territories of gardening partnerships.

Such a sequential number is expressed by Arabic figures with a hyphenated case ending (without a space). The abbreviation *Nr.* ('No') shall not be used in street names. The street number shall be indicated after the main name, e. g. *Baltijos 1-oji* ('Baltic 1st') *g.*, *Baltijos 2-oji* ('Baltic 2nd') *g.*, etc., *Dukstynėlės 1-oji g.*, *Dukstynėlės 2-oji g.*, etc., *Raudondvario takas* ('Raudondvario Path'), *Raudondvario 2-asis takas* ('Raudondvario 2nd Path'), etc.

The component *sodų* ('of gardens') should be avoided in composite street names, e. g. *Pagubės Sodų 1-oji g.* ('1st Street of Pagubė Gardens') – preferable *Pagubės 1-oji g.* or *Sodų 1-oji g.*

3. Street names as components of an address should not be translated into other languages. In a text, if necessary, the reference to the type of the street or its abbreviation may be translated into other languages.

Note. The address of a building on the corner of a street is composed of two street names and two numbers separated by a forward slash, e. g. *Gedimino pr. 39 / Ankštoji g. 1.*