Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

Work with geographical names in Latvia 2013-2015

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(The information from other institutions submitted by Sanda Rapa,
J nis Karro, Agris Timuška, J nis Turlajs is included)

The Main Directions

1. Legislation and names authorities → policy and procedures

2. Geographical names collection, maintenance and data distribution → data bases, registers and other repositories

3. Geographical names treatment → geo-names in cartography (is reported by Dace Kavace, see the presentation «Geographical Name Processing for the Topographical Maps at the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency»)

4. Endonyms and exonyms

The Legal Basis
(no changes since 2013)

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

- **The State Language Law** → States the language for the domestic geographical names (Latvian and – in the particular cultural-historical area – Livonian, too)
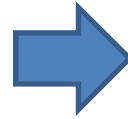
- **The Geospatial Information Law** → States the main principles for geographical names treatment and toponymic data maintenance regarding the state cartography and geospatial data production (both official and unofficial names should be used; toponymic data for state cartography and geospatial data should be maintained by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in the electronic Latvian Geographical Names Database)

Latvian Geospatial
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Legislation
(no changes since 2013)

- **Regulations on Toponymic Information** ➡ Prescribes authorities, principles and procedures for the standardization of domestic and foreign geographical names, including principles and procedures for protection names of cultural-historical value (endonyms as well as traditional Latvian exonyms); focuses on preservation of local and regional peculiarities of domestic geographical names and naming traditions

An English unofficial translation of the Regulations is available now!

Legislation
(no changes since 2013)

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

- Law on Administrative Territories and Populated Areas

and

States authorities, procedures and some main principles for establishing official names of administrative and territorial units and populated places, the creation and maintenance of addresses

- Regulations on System of Addresssing

Some other regulations on different branches of public administration etc.

include several rules regarding official naming of specfic groups of geographical features

Names Authorities
(no changes since 2013)

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Decision makers:

Parliament, Government → names of cities and upper level administrative units

ministries and state institutions → names of features they are responsible for (e.g. Ministry of Transportation is responsible for roads and road names)

all local (or self-) governments → names of villages, homesteads, farms, factories, cemeteries, parks, ponds, reservoirs and other man–made features

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency → names of natural features, excluding those important for maritime navigation

Names Authorities

Controlling, Advisory, Consulting and Scientific Bodies:

State Language Centre

Supervisor of geographical names standardization; gives conclusions binding for authorities approving official names; the Geographical Names Sub-commision (linguists, geographers, cartographers) evaluates official names proposals and complaints, drafts conclusions etc.)

Since the 2014 the State Language Centre is working actively on a huge conclusion regarding the official names proposals submitted by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Names Authorities

Controlling, Advisory, Consulting and Scientific Bodies:

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency
(LGIA)

→ Advisory and scientific body in some particular directions of geographical names standardization

Latvian University
(Institute of Latvian
Language)

→ advisory, scientific and consulting body

State Language
Agency

→ consulting body

Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Names collection ➡️ is going mainly as excerption from literature, maps, unpublished materials and previous field work materials now

Data maintenance ➡️ almost only electronic systems are in use

Geographical Names Data Maintenance and Distribution

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

Latvian Geograpical Names Database → maintained by Latvian Geospatial Information Agency (151 000 names for 118 000 features) – for more detailed information see the presentation of M ra Šterna «Geographical Names Database of Latvia»

State Register of Addresses → maintained by the State Land Service, the address data contains:

    names of all administrative and territorial units -110 counties, 497 civil parishes, 76 cities and towns;

    6.467 villages (number of official villages is decreasing);

    17.107 streets;

    508.073 houses and other buildings

(data on June 1, 2015)

State Register of Addresses

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

- State Address Register data are available on the Web (user interfaces in Latvian and English) at the data distribution portal of the State Land Service of Latvia –

  https://www.kadastrs.lv

- State Land Service continues to work actively on the data harmonization with other registers – Land Registry, Population Register, Register of Enterprises etc. Address data maintenance system still is under the serious improvement aimed to automate and shorten the process of address registration in the Register

Geographical Names Data Maintenance and Distribution

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Map Browser of the Latvian Geospatial information Agency

offers geographical names search on latest maps of Latvia prepared by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in various scales (1: 1 000 000 - 1:10 000). The toponymic layer from the Topographic map scale 1:10 000 along with the Geographical Nemes Dfatabase data is used for the search. Geometries from the Geographical Names Database also are available there

The Map Browser is available on: http://kartes.lgia.gov.lv/karte/

(user interface in Latvian and English)

Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Toponymic data maintenance - news from the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia

Latvia always has reported on huge paper Card File (or Card Index) comprising ~1 million Latvian domestic geographical names maintained by the Institute of Latvian Language (since the very beginning of 19th century). Progress has took place there, too. Creation of electronic database is at the beginning now

The first step – scanning of place name card index – is almost done. Using Cannon scanner ImageFormula DR-G1100 (processing at least 50 cards per minute), more than 800.000 units of place name card index of the Latvian Language Institute have been scanned

Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

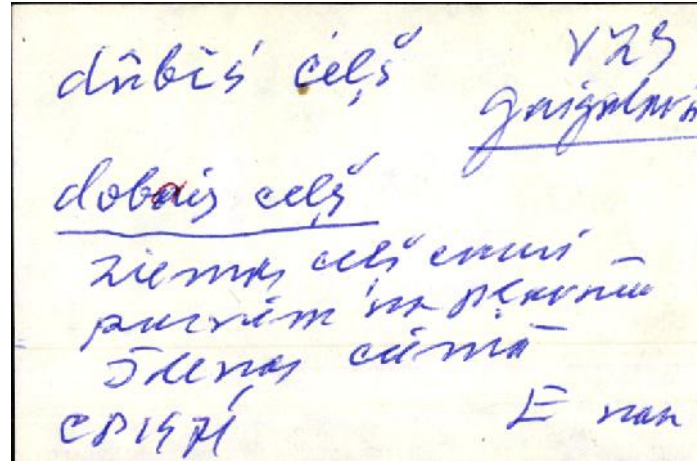**Toponymic data maintenance - news from the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia**

Examples of the scanned Index cards. Both sides of each card are registered, even the opposite side of paper is blank, because sometimes information on the place name can follow
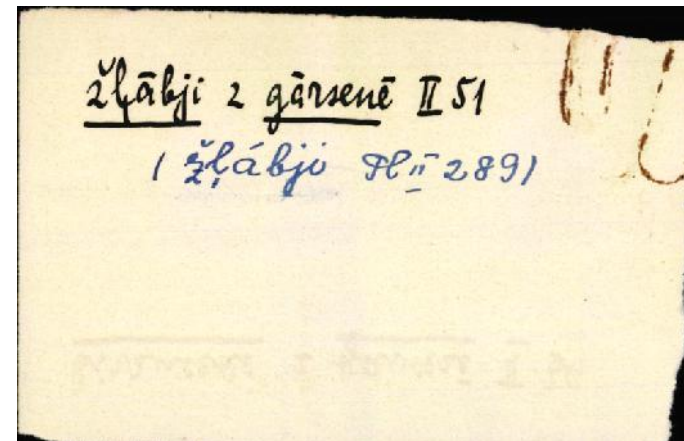
Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

Toponymic data maintenance - news from the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia

The scanning has taken almost a year of one man work – the cards have had to be undusted, classified and the paper clips have had to be removed from almost the half of cards

However, the time and paper clips as well the unclear handwriting have left their marks and may create difficulties for reading the cards in future

Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

Toponymic data maintenance - news from the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia

Due to the traditions of collecting and historical events, names in the Latvian Language Institute Card Index are structured into six basic units:

- parish card index - comprises place names collected after the publication of Latvian Place Names Dictionary (for now, until letter R)
- alphabetical card index - consists of place names that have been or will be published
- students' card index - collected by students
- pupils' card index - collected by pupils
- hydronym card index - only names of water features (also bogs)
- different unsystematized collections

Geographical Names Collection, Maintenance and Data Distribution

Toponymic data maintenance - news from the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia

While the hydronym and unsystematized collections remain to be scanned, the basement of linguistic place name database is being prepared

Since the database will comprise linguistic data, the principles of processing diacritical marks should be elaborated

The four groups of diacritical marks have been found:

- marks on the letter
- marks in superscript beside the letter
- marks above the letter
- specific symbols
- These groups will be used to create four commands for the inserting diacritical marks

Toponymic Dictionaries –

another way of toponymic data distribution

A new volume « R» (comprising toponyms beginning with " R ") of the linguistic dictionary «Latvijas vietv rdu v rdn ca» (Latvian Place Names Dictionary, in Latvian), is compiled and published by the Institute of Latvian Language, University of Latvia in 2013. This is the 6th book of the Dictionary

A popular ethymologic Latvian place names dictionary «From Abava to Zilupe. Short Dictionary of the Origin of Latvian Geographical names» comprising names of the ~100 most significant natural features, populated places etc. is compiled. The dictionary is going to be translated in English now and will be issued by the Latvian Language Agency as a bilingual book

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Endonyms and Exonyms

Latvian Geospatial
Information Agency

Since Latvian is a flexive language,
there is one more serious reason not to follow wery
strictly UN resolutions recommending reduction of
exonyms

To use a foreign geographical name in Latvian it is
necessary to add a Latvian flexible ending to it:
Grojec   Grojeca
Krakow   Krakova etc.

(Is the result a real exonym?)

Endonyms and Exonyms

Our practice:

On maps prepared by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, foreign names only in original languages, in original script (if Latin) or translitered (if Cyrillic) are used

On school maps and cartographic products created only for domestic use, all foreign geographical names are rendered into Latvian. Exonyms or at least, Latvian renderings is vitally necessary for all Latvain mass media and for educational institutions

Renderings keep (as far as it is possible), the sounding of the original name:

Warszawa   Varšava

Cz stochowa   enstohova

The largest in Latvia repository of exonyms - Latvian and foreign geographical names database is maintained by private cartographic enterprise «J   a s ta Map Publishers». It contains 218 000 geographical names in their original languages with renderings: 91 000 - into Latvian, 34 000 – into Estonian, 14 000 into Lithuanian, 10 000 into Russian (not available for public)

SOME USEFUL LINKS

1. Official Language Law (unofficial translation), actual version in Latvian
2. Geospatial Information Law (unofficial translation), actual version in Latvian

3. Regulations of the Toponymic Information (unofficial translation), actual version in Latvian

4. Regulations of the Address System („Adres cijas sist mas noteikumi", actual version, in Latvian only):

5. Data on administrative and territorial division of Latvia: Law on Administrative Territories and Populated Areas, actual version in Latvian with Annex 1 (list of cities). Annex 2 (list of municipalities and the territorial divisional units thereof), Annex 3 (schematic map of cities and municipalities 2010 - 2011) and unofficial translation of the previous version of the law)

5. Geographical Names Database of Latvia, public version (in Latvian only), description in English

6. Country Names List in Latvian (1997)

7. LGIA Map Browser (in English), description in English

8. Soviet topographic of Latvia and a national map scale 1:75 000, made in1930-s

Latvian Geospatial
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Further and/or more detailed information could be obtained from:

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Sanda Rapa - Deputy Director of the Institute of Latvian Language, University of Latvia, (e-mail: sanda.rapa@inbox.lv)

J nis Karro - Head of the Adress Register Division, State Land Service (e-mail: Janis.Karro@vzd.gov.lv)

Agris Timuška - Deputy Director of the State Language Centre (e-mail: info@vvc.gov.lv)

J nis Turlajs - J   a s ta Map Publishers (e-mail: kartes@kartes.lv)

Thank you!