

## Tigrinya

No romanization system for Tigrinya has been approved at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names. No information has been received on whether there exist any national systems of romanization in Eritrea.

Tigrinya, like Amharic, uses the Ethiopic syllabic script whereby each syllable denotes a combination of a consonant and a vowel. It has 35 basic characters, each character having several different forms, usually called orders, according to the vowel with which the basic symbol is combined.

### System of romanization

A **BGN/PCGN 1994 Agreement** employs the BGN/PCGN 1967 System for Amharic also in the romanization of Tigrinya. Note, however, that there is one additional basic character in Tigrinya (row 10 below), and some combinations with W are romanized differently (see note E).<sup>1</sup>

							Combinations with W <sup>C</sup> :					
1(D)	2	3	4	5	6(A)	7	(1,E)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
1	ሀ	ሁ	ሂ	ሃ	ሄ	ህ						
	hā	hu	hī	ha	hē	h, hi	ho					
2	ለ	ሉ	ሊ	ላ	ሌ	ል			ሊ			
	le	lu	lī	la	lē	l, li	lo		lwa			
3 <sup>B</sup>	ሐ	ሑ	ሒ	ሓ	ሔ	ሕ						
	hā	hu	hī	ha	hē	h, hi	ho					
4	መ	ሙ	ሚ	ማ	ሚ	ም			ሚ			
	me	mu	mī	ma	mē	m, mi	mo		mwa			
5 <sup>B</sup>	ሠ	ሡ	ሢ	ሣ	ሤ	ሥ						
	se	su	sī	sa	sē	s, si	so					
6	ረ	ሩ	ሪ	ራ	ራ	ር			ራ			
	re	ru	rī	ra	rē	r, ri	ro		rwa			
7	ሰ	ሱ	ሲ	ሳ	ሴ	ሰ			ሲ			
	se	su	sī	sa	sē	s, si	so		swa			
8	ሸ	ሹ	ሺ	ሻ	ሼ	ሽ			ሺ			
	she	shu	shī	sha	shē	sh, shi	sho		shwa			
9	ቀ	ቁ	ቂ	ቃ	ቄ	ቅ		ቁ	ቁ	ቁ	ቁ	
	k'e	k'u	k'ī	k'a	k'ē	k', k'i	k'o	k'we <sup>E</sup>	k'wī	k'wa	k'wē	k'wi
10 <sup>B</sup>	ቆ	ቇ	ቈ	቉	ቊ	ቋ		ቆ	ቆ	ቆ	ቆ	
	k'e	k'u	k'ī	k'a	k'ē	k', k'i	k'o	k'we <sup>E</sup>	k'wī	k'wa	k'wē	k'wī
11	በ	ቡ	ቢ	ባ	ቤ	ብ			ቢ			
	be	bu	bī	ba	bē	b, bi	bo		bwa			

<sup>1</sup> The syllabary for Tigrinya is adapted from *Tigrinya Grammar*, edited by John Mason, published by The Red Sea Press, Inc., Lawrenceville, New Jersey, 1996.

12	ተ	ቲ	ቲ	ታ	ቲ	ተ	ቶ			ቲ		
	te	tu	tī	ta	tē	t, ti	to			twa		
13	ቸ	ቸ	ቸ	ቸ	ቸ	ቸ	ቸ			ቸ		
	che	chu	chī	cha	chē	ch, chi	cho			chwa		
14 <sup>B</sup>	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ
	hā	hu	hī	ha	hē	h, hi	ho	hwe <sup>E</sup>	hwī	hwa	hwē	hwi
15	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ			ነ		
	ne	nu	nī	na	nē	n, ni	no			nwa		
16	ን	ን	ን	ን	ን	ን	ን			ን		
	nye	nyu	nyī	nya	nyē	ny, nyi	nyo			nywa		
17 <sup>C</sup>	አ	አ	አ	አ	አ	አ	አ			አ		
	ā, 'ā	u, 'u	ī, 'ī	a, 'a	ē, 'ē	i, 'i, (-)	o			'wa		
18	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ
	ke	ku	kī	ka	kē	k, ki	ko	kwe <sup>E</sup>	kwī	kwa	kwē	kwi
19 <sup>B</sup>	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ
	he	hu	hī	ha	hē	h, hi	ho	hwe <sup>E</sup>	hwī	hwa	hwē	hwi
20	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ					
	we	wu	wī	wa	wē	w, wi	wo					
21	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ					
	'ā	'u	'ī	'a	'ē	'i	'o					
22	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ			ዘ		
	ze	zu	zī	za	zē	z, zi	zo			zwa		
23	ዝ	ዝ	ዝ	ዝ	ዝ	ዝ	ዝ					
	zhe	zhu	zhī	zha	zhē	zh, zhi	zho					
24	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ					
	ye	yu	yī	ya	yē	y, yi	yo					
25	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ			ደ		
	de	du	dī	da	dē	d, di	do			dwa		
26	ጆ	ጆ	ጆ	ጆ	ጆ	ጆ	ጆ					
	je	ju	jī	ja	jē	j, ji	jo					
27	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ
	ge	gu	gī	ga	gē	g, gi	go	gwe <sup>E</sup>	gwī	gwa	gwē	gwi
28	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ			ጠ		
	t'e	t'u	t'ī	t'a	t'ē	t', t'i	t'o			t'wa		
29	ጮ	ጮ	ጮ	ጮ	ጮ	ጮ	ጮ			ጮ		
	ch'e	ch'u	ch'ī	ch'a	ch'ē	ch', ch'i	ch'o			ch'wa		
30	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ					
	p'e	p'u	p'ī	p'a	p'ē	p', p'i	p'o					
31	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ	ጸ			ጸ		
	ts'e	ts'u	ts'ī	ts'a	ts'ē	ts', ts'i	ts'o			ts'wa		
32 <sup>B</sup>	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ					
	ts'e	ts'u	ts'ī	ts'a	ts'ē	ts', ts'i	ts'o					
33	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ			ፈ		
	fe	fu	fī	fa	fē	f, fi	fo			fwa		
34	ፑ	ፑ	ፑ	ፑ	ፑ	ፑ	ፑ					
	pe	pu	pī	pa	pē	p, pi	po					

35 ሸ ሸ፡ ሸ፡ ሸ፡ ሸ፡ ሸ፡ ሸ፡ ሸ፡  
 ve vu vī va vē v, vi vo

- <sup>A</sup> The sixth-order characters should be romanized with or without the letter *i*, depending on pronunciation.
- <sup>B</sup> For documentation purposes the following consonants may be romanized with diacritical marks: ሸ (row 3), ሸ፡ (row 5), ሸ፡ (row 10, specific to Tigrinya), ሸ፡ (row 14), ሸ፡ (row 19), ሸ፡ (row 32).
- <sup>C</sup> The vowel characters in row 17 should be romanized *ā, u, ī, a, ē, i*, and *o* initially and *'ā, 'u, 'ī, 'a, 'ē, 'i*, and *'o* in all other positions.
- <sup>D</sup> According to *Tigrinya Grammar* (1996) the alphabet has recently been written in a more consistent way, so that e.g. in the first order the exceptional pronunciation of some vowels (*hā, 'ā*, etc.) has been abolished and the characters are given the same vowel *e* as for others. This means that the character ሸ is being replaced by the 4th-order syllable in many words, e.g. the old spelling ሸ፡ *ālo*, the preferred new spelling ሸ፡ *alo*.
- <sup>E</sup> Romanization equivalents of combinations with W in column 1 are presented according to the pronunciation indicated in *Tigrinya Grammar* (1996). They are different from those of the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Amharic.