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**Writing Systems and pronunciation: Romanization**

### Romanization System In Bulgaria

Submitted by Bulgaria\*\*

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\*\* Prepared by the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Agency

## **ROMANIZATION SYSTEM IN BULGARIA**

### **SUMMARY**

By Decree No. 59 of 9 March 2009, the President of the Republic of Bulgaria decreed the promulgation of the Transliteration Act in the *State Gazette* No. 19 of 13 March 2009. The Act endorsed the system and rules for Romanization of the Bulgarian alphabet.

The transliteration rules ensure a uniform rendition of Bulgarian geographical names, names of historical personalities, cultural reality, as well as terms of Bulgarian origin in the relevant scientific discipline, by means of Roman letters or a combination of Roman letters.

## ROMANIZATION SYSTEM IN BULGARIA

By Decree No. 59 of 9 March 2009, the President of the Republic of Bulgaria decreed the promulgation of the Transliteration Act in the *State Gazette* No. 19 of 13 March 2009. The Act endorsed the system and rules for transliteration of the Bulgarian Cyrillic alphabet by means of Roman letters or Roman letter combinations.

The transliteration system conforms to the principles of simplified conversion of alphabet systems for the purpose of making possible the international information exchange by electronic means.

The transliteration system and rules adopted in the Act standardize the Romanization of Bulgarian names:

- in the international correspondence of the Bulgarian administration and all documents related to international contacts;
- in the business correspondence with international partners;
- in official documents: identity cards, foreign-travel passports, driving licences etc.;
- in publishing activities: maps, advertising materials etc.;
- in the signs designating nucleated settlement names, signs designating street names, historical and architectural landmarks etc.;
- in the register of geographical names, where the names are entered in the transliterated form.

The present system for Romanization of the Bulgarian alphabet is based on Bulgarian State Standard BDS 1596:73, effective 1 January 1975 and entitled “Transliteration of Bulgarian Words with Latin Characters”.

On 2 April 1999, the Council of Ministers adopted Decree No. 61 on the promulgation in the *State Gazette* of Regulations for the Issuance of Bulgarian Identity Documents, to which a Table of Transliteration of the Bulgarian Alphabet into the English Alphabet was appended. The table used in the standard BDS 1596:73 was modified in the transliteration of the vowels “Й”, “ІО” and “Я”. “Й” is transliterated by “Y” instead of by “J”, “ІО” is transliterated by “YU” instead of by “JU”, and “Я” is transliterated by “YA” instead of by “JA”.

The project was submitted to a broad discussion with all state administration bodies concerned and the academic community in the Republic of Bulgaria and, as a result of this, the Transliteration Act was approved and promulgated.

The transliteration table in the Transliteration Act introduced a change concerning the Bulgarian letter “҆”, which until then was Romanized by “C” and from now on will be transliterated as “TS”.

A number of maps and atlases, city maps, tourist maps and advertising materials have been printed and published, in which the inscriptions are either in Roman characters only or in both Bulgarian and Roman characters, conforming to the transliteration under the law.

All signs showing the names of nucleated settlements, streets, squares, historical and architectural landmarks have been replaced in accordance with the new transliteration system.

## BASIC RULES FOR TRANSLITERATION

1. The transliteration rules ensure a uniform rendition of Bulgarian geographical names, names of historical personalities, cultural realia, as well as terms of Bulgarian origin in the relevant scientific discipline, by means of Roman letters or a combination of Roman letters.
2. The transliteration rules are applied by, and are mandatory for, the administration of the executive branch of government, as well as for all legal and natural persons which and who transliterate geographical names, names of historical personalities and cultural realia.
3. The following system is used to transliterate Bulgarian letters by Roman letters:

Bulgarian alphabet	Romanized version
А, а	A, a
Б, б	B, b
В, в	V, v
Г, г	G, g
Д, д	D, d
Е, е	E, e
Ж, ж	Zh, zh
З, з	Z, z
И, и	I, i
Й, ѝ	Y, y
К, к	K, k
Л, л	L, l
М, м	M, m
Н, н	N, n
О, о	O, o
П, п	P, p
Р, р	R, r
С, с	S, s
Т, т	T, t
У, у	U, u
Ф, ф	F, f
Х, х	H, h
Ц, ц	Ts, ts
Ч, ч	Ch, ch
Ш, ш	Sh, sh
Щ, щ	Sht, sht
Ђ, ъ	A, a
Ђ, ъ	Y, y
Ѡ, ю	Yu, yu
Ѣ, я	Ya, ya.

4. Bulgarian letter combinations are transliterated by Roman letter combinations in the following manner:
  - the letter combination “дж” is spelled and Romanized as “dzh”;
  - the letter combination “дз” is spelled and Romanized as “dz”;
  - the letter combination “ъо” is spelled and Romanized as “yo”;
  - the letter combination “йо” is spelled and Romanized as “yo”.
5. The letter combination “ия”, where in a word-final position, is spelled and Romanized as “ia”.
6. The name of the Bulgarian State is spelled and Romanized in accordance with the established tradition:

България

Bulgaria.

7. The following geographical terms: планина (mountain), равнина (valley), низина (lowland), плато (plateau), град (city), село (village), река (river), езеро (lake), залив (bay) and other such, where they are part of a geographical name, are transliterated:

Стара планина

Stara planina

Атанасовско езеро

Atanasovsko ezero.

8. The geographical terms which are not part of the geographical name are translated according to the rules of the chosen target language:

Хос Емине

Cape Emine.

9. The adjectives “северен” (northern), “южен” (southern), “източен” (eastern), “западен” (western), “централен” (central) and other such, when incorporated into a geographical name, are transliterated:

Централен Балкан

Tsentralen Balkan

София-юг

Sofia-yug

Перник-север

Pernik-sever.

10. The transliteration of compound names conforms to Bulgarian spelling rules:

Златни паяци

Zlatni pyasatsi

Горна Оряховица

Gorna Oryahovitsa.

11. The names of historical personalities and the geographical names derived from modern foreign standard languages which use a version of the Roman script are spelled in their original form.

12. The names of historical personalities and the geographical names derived from modern foreign standard languages which do not use a version of the Roman script are spelled according to the transliteration system of the relevant language.

The transliteration system has been introduced as a statutory instrument in the Republic of Bulgaria and is applied in all spheres of public life. We hope that this system will also be endorsed on the international level by the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.