



## **Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General

21 May 2012

Original: English

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### **Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

Item 8(e) of the provisional agenda

**National Standardization:**

**Toponymic Guidelines**

### **Toponymic Guidelines for map editors and other editors The Netherlands**

Submitted by The Netherlands\*\*

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\* E/CONF.101/1.

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda  
NATIONAL STANDARDISATION  
(e) TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES

Toponymic Guidelines for map editors and other editors  
The Netherlands

- First edition published as working paper no 5 submitted to Twelfth UNGEGN Session 1986
- Second edition submitted as Information paper 6, Fifth UNCSGN, 1987
- Third edition submitted as working paper 2 to Sixth UNCSGN, May 1992
- Fourth edition prepared by the Werkgroep Buitenlandse Aardrijkskundige Namen (BAN) of the Union for the Dutch Language (Nederlandse Taalunie), December 2011

## **Summary**

Updated toponymic guidelines for the Netherlands are presented, dealing with languages, the Dutch alphabet and spelling rules for geographical names such as capitalization and hyphenation. A pronunciation guide is provided both for Dutch and for the Frisian minority language.

Authorities for geographical names standardization are indicated. Users are referred to maps and gazetteers that show the correct spelling of place names in the Netherlands. Finally, to assist map interpretation, a glossary of appellatives, adjectives and other words necessary for the understanding of maps is provided as well as a list of abbreviations used on official topographic maps of the country.

TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES FOR MAP EDITORS AND OTHER EDITORS  
- THE NETHERLANDS

**A. Languages**

1. The Netherlands is a unilingual country, Dutch being the only nation-wide official language. The Frisian minority language has an official status in the province of Friesland only.

National language

2. The national language is Dutch in its standard form, written in the Roman script.

The Dutch alphabet

A a	H h	O o	V v
B b	I i	P p	W w
C c	J j	Q q	X x
D d	K k	R r	Y y
E e	L l	S s	Z z
F f	M m	T t	
G g	N n	U u	

3. In addition to the normal alphabetical sequence, some foreign or archaic influences on geographical names have led to the incorporation of non-standard letters such as vowels with diaereses and accents in some geographical names. Furthermore *ë*, *ï*, *ö* and *ü* may appear in vowel clusters in Dutch words and names for marking a separate pronunciation of the vowels.

In the Dutch alphabet the vowels with diacritical marks come under A, E, I, O and U respectively. Hyphens, points and blanks are disregarded in the alphabetical order.

The letters *i* and *j* that together form the Dutch digraph *ij* are not separated from each other in spaced-out lettering. This applies to both capitals and lower case. In indices and dictionaries it is often listed under the sequence i-j (between i-h and i-k), but incidentally before or after y.

Spelling rule for Dutch geographical names in the Netherlands

4. The rules given below have been in use by the three main surveying and mapping organizations: "Topographic Survey" (Topografische Dienst, now incorporated in the Cadastre), the "Hydrographic Office" (Dienst der Hydrografie) and Rijkswaterstaat since 1969. To improve international exchangeability, the Hydrographic Office follows the International Charts Specification of the International Hydrographic Organization.<sup>1</sup>

5. Geographical names are as yet not subject to the general spelling rules. They are, rather, spelled in the customary form approved by local government. However, in the following respects Dutch geographical names comply with the general spelling rules for the Dutch language, except for individual cases where deviating officially approved versions occur.

Capitalization

i. Articles and prepositions at the beginning of geographical names are capitalized, unless abbreviated.

Examples: Het Loo, Den Helder, Ter Aalst. But: 't Harde, 's Gravenmoer ('t = het; 's = des).

ii. The incipients of all other disconnected name parts, with the exception of articles, prepositions and conjunctions, are capitalized.

Examples: Nederhorst den Berg, Kanaal van Terneuzen naar Gent, Millingen aan de Rijn.

iii. When names written in one word are divided, because of lack of space, the incipients of the second and following parts are not capitalized.

Example: Westerwoldse A → Wester-woldse A

iv. The grapheme *IJ ij* is regarded as one letter, so when capitalized should be written *IJ* instead of *Ij*.

Examples: IJsselmeer, IJmuiden.

- v. Derivations of geographical names, such as adverbs or compound forms remain capitalized.

Examples: Rijnoevers; Noordzeekust; Nederlandse inzending.

#### Use of one or more words and hyphenization

Current Dutch orthographic practice separates the parts of compound geographical names with a hyphen, also in derived forms.

Examples: Frans-Vlaanderen, Belgisch-Limburg, Hollands-Diep, Wit-Rusland, Centraal-Azië, Amsterdam-Noord, Oost-Souburg, Latijns-Amerika, Latijns-Amerikaanse stranden

A hyphen is used when words are divided and when the meaning 'from-towards' (as for example in Amsterdam-Rijnkanaal) should be conveyed or: when a municipality name is a combination of two place names, e.g. Etten-Leur.

A hyphen is also used for separating the hagionymic prefix *Sint-* or its abbreviation *St.-* from a proper name.

Examples: Sint-Annaland, St.-Jozef.

Name parts are not joined by hyphen in the following cases:

- i When adjectives ending in *-e* or *-er* are followed by name elements beginning with a vowel.  
Examples: Kleine Es, Oude IJssel, Delftse Schie, Groenlose Slinge, Kieler Bocht.
- ii When one of the parts of a compound name is an article. Articles are *de*, *het* and *een*, but occur also in atrophied form *'t* or in their fossilized case endings *den*, *des*, *der*.  
*Des* can be abbreviated into *'s*, but as such will be joined by hyphen to the specifics.  
Examples: Den Helder, De Zilk, Het Loo, Nederhorst den Berg.  
But: *'s-Hertogenbosch*, *'s-Gravenhage*.
- iii With ordinals or superlatives.  
Examples: Eerste Valthermond, Achterste Diep.
- iv With conjunctions and prepositions that connect name parts.  
Examples: Bergen op Zoom, Val van Urk.
- v With proper names and numerals preceded by designations denoting the kind of geographical object.  
Examples: Ambt Delden, Boswachterij Schoorl, Fort Rammekens, Sluis Drie.
- vi With inflected compass directions ending in *-elijk* or *-elijke*. But uninflected compass directions remain linked by hyphen.  
Examples: Westelijk Kanaal. But: Oost-Vlaanderen, Amsterdam-Zuid.
- vii When the first part of a compound name is a personal name written in two words.  
Examples: Anna Jacobapolder,
- viii With weak past participles.  
Example: Verlengde Hoogeveensevaart.

At present this orthographic practice is not yet universally accepted throughout the Netherlands, and deviations occur frequently, sanctioned by official, customary use.

Examples of deviations of spelling rules are: Hollands Diep, Hoog Soeren, Oudemirdum, Roodeschool, Grootegast, Lutjebroek.

Ad i: Adjectives not ending in *-e* in most cases are joined by hyphen to the proper nouns in toponyms.

Examples: Nieuw-Buinen, Oud-Zuilen. But: Blauwe Sluis, Oude Rijn

#### Pronunciation of Dutch geographical names

6. Accents in Dutch geographical names fall on the first syllable, generally.

#### Pronunciation key

7. The pronunciation of consonants in Dutch does not differ markedly from that in English with a few exceptions. In the following tables, free pronunciation variants are separated by a period. Positional variants are

separated by ‘or’:

spelling	pronunciation IPA alphabet	other remarks
g	[ɣ]	before vowels
g	[x]	before consonants and at word end
ch	[x]	
sch	[sx]	at word end: [s]
p;t;k	[p];[t];[k]	unaspirated
r	[r], [R]	
w	[v]	
ng	[ŋ]	

The pronunciation of vowels differs considerably from that in English. A short outline of the pronunciation is given below. ‘+OS’ means: in open syllable, e.g. the *a* in ‘dagen’; ‘+CS’ means: in closed syllable, e.g. the *a* in ‘dag, bakken’.

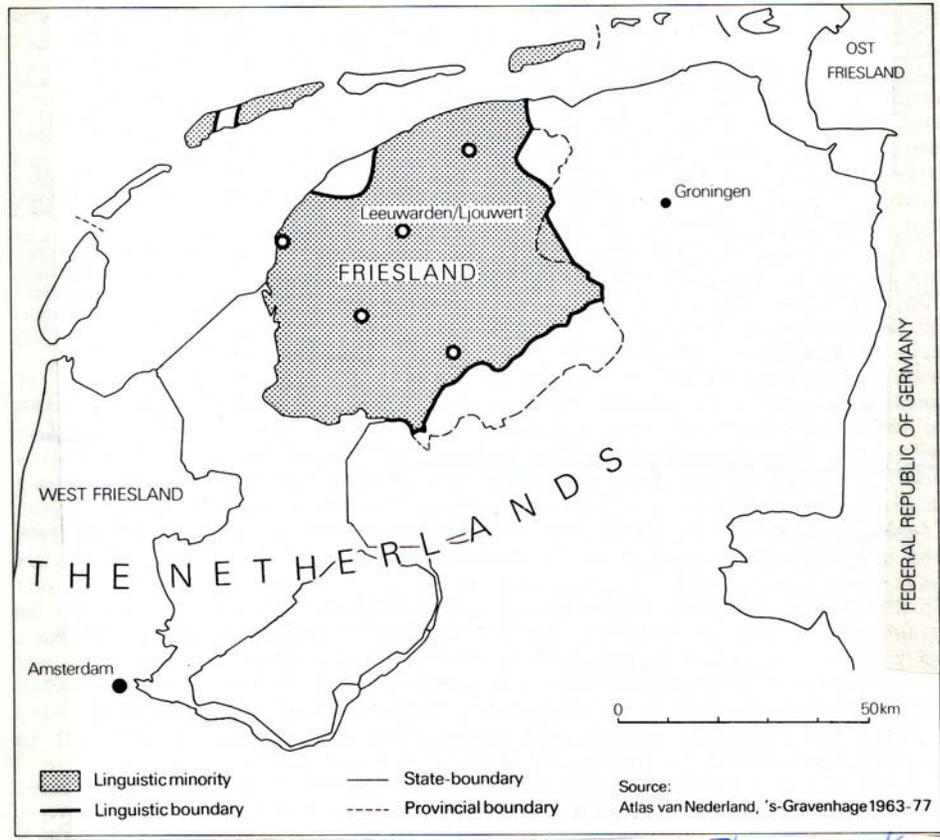
spelling	pronunciation IPA alphabet	example	IPA example
a+CS	[ɑ]	Halle	[halə]
aa, a+OS	[a]	Haarlem	[harlɛm]
e+CS	[ɛ] or [e]	Meppel	[mɛpəl]
ee ,e+OS	[e]	Heverlee	[hevərle]
i	[i]	Twisk	[twisk]
o+CS	[ɔ]	Botshol	[bɔtshɔl]
oo, o+OS	[o]	Hoge Noord	[hoɣənort]
u+CS	[ʊ]	Putten	[pʊtən]
uu, u+OS	[y] or [ỹ]	Ruurlo	[ryrlo]
au, ou	[au]	Gouda	[xauda]
ei, ij	[ɛi]	Rijn, Leie	[rɛin, lɛijə]
eu	[ø]	Eupen	[øpɛ]
ie, y	[i]	Tielt	[tilt]
oe	[u]	Oerbeke	[urbekə]
ui	[œy]	Luik	[lœyk]

### The use of dialect

8. Only dialect spellings codified before the general acceptance of the Dutch standard language are recognized. All other dialect names are converted into the standard language.

### Regional language<sup>ii</sup>

9. Frisian is a Germanic language akin to Dutch and English. It is spoken by about 400,000 inhabitants of the province of Fryslân, used and taught officially in educational and religious institutions and in local and provincial government. It is written in the Roman script. Figure 1 shows the area with a majority of Frisian-speaking inhabitants.



The Frisian alphabet

10.	A a	G g	M m	T t
	B b	H h	N n	U u
	(C)c	I i, Y y	O o	(V) v
	D d	J j	P p	W w
	E e	K k	R r	(Z) z
	F f	L l	S s	

11. In addition to the normal alphabetical sequence in the Frisian alphabet, the letters A â, E ê, O ô and U û occur. In the Frisian alphabet they come under A, E, O and U respectively. Y y is a positional variant of I i and comes under I i in the alphabet. C only appears in the combination *ch* and as such never at the beginning of a word. C, v and z may at the beginning of a word only occur in proper names that are part of a toponym, e.g. Vosseloane.

Spelling rules for the Frisian geographical names in the Netherlands

12. The non-phonological spelling rules are the same as for Dutch. The phonological spelling rules of geographical names comply with the general spelling rules for Frisian. However, due to the spelling change of 1980, a lot of deviating spellings occur.

Pronunciation of the Frisian alphabet

13. The pronunciation of consonants in Frisian does not differ markedly from that in English and Dutch with a few exceptions:

spelling	pronunciation IPA alphabet	other remarks
g	[g]	at word begin
g	[ɣ]	between vowels
ch	[X]	
p;t;k	[p];[t];[k]	unaspirated
r	[r]	mute before d,t,s,n,l
w	[u] or [v]	

The pronunciation of vowels is quite different from both the English and Dutch pronunciation:

('+OS' means: in open syllable, e.g. the a in 'dagen' '+CS' means: in closed syllable, e.g. the a in 'dag', 'bakken').

spelling	pronunciation IPA alphabet	spelling	pronunciation IPA alphabet
a+CS	[a] or [ò] before d,t,s,n,l	û	[u] or [u:]
aa, a+OS	[a:]	au, ou	[òo]
e+CS	[ɛ]	ea	[ɛə] or [jɛ]
ee, e+OS	[e <sup>i</sup> ]	ei	[ɛɛ],[aɛ],[òɛ]
i+CS	[e]	eo	[øɛ]
ii, i+OS	[i] or [i:]	eu	[œo]
o+CS	[o] or [ò]	ie	[iə] or [jɛ]
oo, o+OS	[o <sup>u</sup> ]	ij	[ɛɛ]
u+CS	[Y]	oa	[oɛ] or [wa]
ù, u+OS	[y] or [y:]	oe	[uɛ]
y	[i]	ue	[yɛ] or [jɣ]
â, ô	[ò:]	ui	[əo]
ê	[ɛ:]	uo	[wo]

#### Frisian geographical names

14. The present situation can be considered as a transitional stage in respect to the use of Frisian toponyms on official documents. This leads to a somewhat fuzzy situation. In many municipalities in Fryslân, street names

are, completely or partially, officially spelled in Frisian. Some municipalities bear Frisian names. The province officially has a monolingual (Frisian) name (Fryslân), but a lot of villages and towns have bilingual names. Two municipalities have officially spelled the names of their villages and towns unilingually in Frisian. This local usage is also reflected on the sign posts and road maps.

Street names and names of (farm)houses and other buildings are rendered in the way they appear on the object, hence Frisian if the name is given in that language. Major objects, like field names, municipalities, water bodies, may be in Frisian, unless an official document gives a Dutch version. In practice, this may lead to strange mixtures on the map. The unilingual Frisian place names are given in Frisian, with the Dutch version added in brackets. In 2005 Fryslân province officially determined a monolingual Frisian spelling for almost 1000 water bodies (see K.F.Gildemacher and A.P.Versloot – *Waternamen*. Leeuwarden: Penn Communicatie 2005).

## **B. Names authorities and names standardization**

15. In 1947 the Netherlands government delegated the task to compile a standardized list of geographical names to the joint Netherlands-Belgian Orthographic Committee (Nederlands-Belgische Woordenlijst Commissie). The Netherlands delegation in this committee started work in 1962 and finished its endeavor in 1973 when a list with proposed standardized spellings for about 40,000 toponyms was presented to the Minister for Education for official endorsement, which has not been authorized yet. The Netherlands delegation to the joint Netherlands-Belgian Orthographic Committee has in itself no official authority to implement the orthography for geographical names. The committee is not active at the moment. The list can be obtained at the P.J. Meertens Institute, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, [info@meertens.knaw.nl](mailto:info@meertens.knaw.nl)

16. In its list the committee also covered the Dutch versions of geographical names in the province of Fryslân - Frisian versions of geographical names in Friesland have been standardized at the request of the Frisian provincial government by the Toponymic Working Group of the Frisian Academy.<sup>iii</sup> A list with all toponyms in the province of Fryslân, that occur on the map at the scale of 1:100 000, in their correct Frisian spelling was published in 1982.

17. Until the Minister for Education sees fit to officially endorse these name lists, the Topographic Survey and the Hydrographic Office will continue to present on their maps the customary spellings used in local government and official acts.

## **C. Source material**

### Maps

18. Topographic maps at the scale of 1 :25 000, published every four years by the Topographic Survey of the Cadastre (Kadaster)<sup>iv</sup>. See figure 2 for index sheet of this map series.

Netherlands Small Crafts charts, published annually at scales between 1:20 000 and 1:150 000 by the Hydrographic Office<sup>v</sup>.

### Gazetteers

19. The Topographic Survey offers two databases of geographical names, which can be purchased in digital form. Databases are available based on the 1:250 000 maps:

*Lijst van geografische namen voorkomend op de overzichtskaarten van Nederland 1 :250 000*, Emmen, 1990.

and on the 1:50000 maps:

*Lijst van geografische namen voorkomend op de topografische kaart 1:50 000*. Emmen, 1988.

The most extensive overview of topographic names are the indexes of the provincial topographic atlases, that are

composed of the 1:25 000 maps of the Topographic Survey:  
*Grote Provincie Atlas 1:25 000* Wolters-Noordhoff, Groningen (11 volumes), 1987-1991.

For every province but 'Flevoland', volumes have been issued.

## **D. Glossary of appellatives, adjectives and other words necessary for the understanding of maps**

### Dutch language words

20.(based on glossaries on the pre 1980 and post 1980 editions of the military topographic maps 1:50 000, and appellatives/designations of the post 1980 1:25 000 series)

Aardgasstation	natural gas pumping station
Aardgaswinning	natural gas field
Automobielfabriek	motor car factory
Baan	way, road
Beek	brook
Bejaardencentrum	old people's home
Berg	hill
Bootsdienst	ferry to....
Brouwerij	brewery
Chemische fabriek	chemical works
Conservenfabriek	cannery
Eendenkooi	duck decoy
Elektriciteitscentrale	power station
Fabriek	factory
Gasbedrijf	gas works
Gemaal	pumping-station
Gevangenis	prison
Goederenspoorweg	freight train track
Golfbaan	golf course
Graansilo	(grain) elevator
Hangar	hangar
Haven	port, harbour
Heide	heath
Helihaven	heliport
Helling	slipway
Hoeve	farm
Hoogovens en Staalfabrieken	blast-furnace and steel-works
Hoogspanningsleiding	power line
Houtzagerij	saw-mill
Hulpsecretarie	town clerk's branch office
In aanleg	under construction
Industrieterrein	industrial area
Jachthaven	marina
Jeugdherberg	youth hostel
Kabelfabriek	cable-works
Kalkovens	lime-kiln
Kanaal	canal
Kapel	chapel

Kindertehuis	children's home
Klooster	monastery
Koelhuis	cold storage building
Kunstijsbaan	skating rink
Laan	avenue
Loop	watercourse
Machinefabriek	engineering-works
Meer	lake
Metro	underground station
Meubelfabriek	furniture factory
Molen	mill (windmill, watermill)
Natuureservaat	nature reserve
Olieraffinaderij	oil refinery
Papierfabriek	paper-mill
Peil	water level
Plas	lake
Pompstation	pumping-station
Pontveer	ferry
Recreatiegebied	recreation-area
Recreatieoord	recreation-site
Reddingsboot	life boat
Remise	tramway depot
Renbaan	racecourse
Reservaat	nature reserve
Ruïne	ruins
Schouwburg	theater
Slikken	mud-flats
Sodafabriek	soda-works
Sportterrein	sports park
Sportvelden	sports field
Spuisluis	sluice
Stadion	stadium
Steenfabriek	brick-works
Suikerfabriek	sugar-mill
Straat	street
Stuw	weir
Toren	tower
Uitzichttoren	observation-tower
Vaart	canal
Veen	peat
Veerhuis	ferry-house
Verpleeghuis	nursing-home
Vliegveld	aerodrome
Vloevelden	sewage-farm
Voorm. Fort	former fortification
Vuilverbrandingsinstallatie	refuse incinerator
Waterleidingbedrijf	waterworks
Watertoren	water-tower
Weg	street
Werf	shipyard
Wetering	watercourse
Winkelcentrum	shopping-centre
Winterpeil	winter level

Woonwagencentrum	caravan-camp
IJsbaan	skating rink
IJsstadion	skating stadium
Ziekenhuis	hospital
Zomerpeil	summer level
Zuivelfabriek	dairy factory
Zuiveringsinstallatie	purification plant
Zweefvliegtuigen	glider air field
Zwembad	swimming pool

## E. Abbreviations used in the official topographic maps of the Netherlands

21.(based on lists on pre 1980 and post 1980 military editions of topographic maps 1 : 50 000)

Br	brug	bridge
Bask br	baskuulbrug	bascule bridge
Begr pl	begraafplaats	cemetery
Dr br	draaibrug	swing-bridge
Fabr	fabriek	factory
Gd	grondduiker	culvert, siphon
Gem	gemeente	municipality
Gem huis	gemeentehuis	town hall, municipality hall
Gp	grenspaal	boundary post
Hp	hoekpuntpaal	triangulation point
Inr	inrichting	institution
Km	korenmolen	corn mill
Oph br	ophaalbrug	draw bridge
P	Parkeerplaats	Parking site
PK	Protestantse kerk	Protestant church
Pl	paal	pole
RD	Rijksdriehoeksmeting	state survey
RK	Rooms-katholieke kerk	Roman Catholic church
Sch sl	schutsluis	lock
Trafo	Transformator	transformer
Statn	station	station
Vbr	voetbrug	footbridge
Wm	watermolen	water-mill
Wt	watertoren	water-tower

Note: Designations and abbreviations are indicated in a different type face on the Netherlands topographic map series at the scale of 1 : 25 000 and 1 : 5

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<sup>i</sup> Chart Specifications of the I.H.O., section 500 – Geographic Names: Lettering, Numerals. International Hydrographic Bureau, Monaco.

<sup>ii</sup> For sections 9-14 the help of Dr K.F.Glidemacher and Prof.dr A.P.Versloot is gratefully acknowledged.

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<sup>iv</sup> Kadaster, P.O. Box 9046, 7300 GH Apeldoorn.

<sup>v</sup> Hydrografische Dienst. P.O. Box 90704, 2509 LS Den Haag.