

U.N. Group of Experts
on Geographical Names

Working Paper No. 59

Ninth Session
New York, 17-27 February 1981
Agenda Item No. 8 (c)

Introduction of a new system for the Roman
transliteration of Geographical Names of the
USSR in cartographical publications for
international use

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**On Introduction of a New System for
the Roman Transliteration of Geographi-
cal Names of the USSR in Cartographi-
cal Publications for International
Use**

A system of romanization developed by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in 1951-1956 for our country was applied to the cartographical publications intended for international use since 1967.

A State standart adopted in 1971 was used for the same purpose in documentation system and automated data exchange.

The International Organization on Standardization was successively offering several versions for the romanization of the Russian and other Slavic Cyrillic alphabets.

All the systems differed from each other by the transliteration of the certain letters and without official and binding in any field status, for some reason or other could not become universal.

In 1978 the COMECON member-countries coordinated and approved a COMECON standart 1362-78 "Rules for Transliteration of the Cyrillic Alphabet Letters by the Roman Alphabet Letters" which should be introduced in our country as a state standart in 1981. The standart is comprised of two modifications, in which the following equivalents to the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet are used:

- basic letters of the roman alphabet (monographs), supplied in certain cases with diacritical signs (I version);

- based letters of the roman alphabet and its letter combinations (diagraphs), (II version).

Both versions are of strictly equal status and thus, provide with the only possible retransliteration.

An application in the II version (with diagraphs) of the "live" signs of the roman alphabet (j and h) as conventional elements - modifications, which do not have

their own meaning - makes undesirable its use in the publications or documents intended for the general public, but very convenient for automated information processing and transmission which is decoded into natural language at the output.

The first version of the COMECON standart (monographs with diacritical signs) due to its neutrality in respect to the roman script languages including simplicity and strict reversibility seems to be very convenient for international use in publications intended for the general public.

Since a choice of the transliteration form is made by the user, it should be underlined that it is advisable to apply only the main version of transliteration in table I of the COMECON standart.

In October of 1980 ISO distributed a new draft of its standart "Transliteration of Slavic Cyrillic Characters into latin characters" which is but the first and strictly monographical version of the COMECON standart.

Thus, the same system for the romanization of the Russian alphabet becomes a state standard of the USSR, COMECON and, subject to the approval by the ISO, an ISO standard.

Unity of the USSR, COMECON and ISO standards will contribute effectively to the transliteration unification of the Russian alphabet signs by the Roman alphabet signs.

A new system based as the Academy of Sciences system on the monographic principle, originates from the transliteration of the Russian graphs regardless of the different phonemic composition of the words which makes it easier, more consistent and economical.

Beginning from 1981 this system of transliteration will become operational in the Soviet cartographical publications for international use.

Annex: Comparative table of the new systems for the Russian alphabet signs transliteration by the Roman alphabet signs.

Comparative table of the systems for the Russian alphabet signs transliteration by the Roman alphabet signs

Russian alphabet	COMECON standard 1362-78 I version	ISO draft standard 1980	New system for introduction in the cartographical publications of the USSR in 1981	Academy of Sciences of the USSR system (used before 1981)
а	а	qa	а	а
б	б	b	б	б
в	в	v	в	в
г	г	g	г	г
д	д	d	д	д
е	е/je ¹	e	е	e/je ²
ё	ё	z	ё	'o/o/jo ²
з	з	z	з	з
и	и	i	и	i/ji ²
й	й	j	й	й
к	к	k	к	к
л	л	l	л	л
м	м	m	м	м
н	н	n	н	н
о	о	o	о	о
п	п	p	п	п
р	р	r	р	р
с	с	s	с	с
т	т	t	т	т
у	у	u	у	у
ф	ф	f	ф	ф
х	h/ch ¹	h	х	ch
ц	ц	c	ц	с
ч	с	c	ч	с
ш	š/ss ¹	š	ш	sc
щ	omitted	omitted	omitted	omitted
ъ	ъ	y	ъ	y
ь	ь	y	ь	omitted/и
э	э	e	э	е
ю	u/ju ¹	u	ю	'u/ju ²
я	š/ja	š	я	'a/ja ²

1. Permissible versions (at user's discretion)

2. Positional versions.