

2) I - NAME CHANGES CAN BE DUE TO - C) NEW ADMINISTRATIVE NAMES

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The advisory committee on geographical names in the Netherlands, that operated under the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, employs the following criteria in its judgement or selection of new (municipality) names (when existing municipalities are merged) in the Netherlands:

- New names should preferably be written according to the current orthographic rules
- New names should not have been entered in current lists or indexes of names or brands
- Constructions in which existing names are strung together (with or without hyphens) should be avoided
- New names should reflect the history or historical geography of the region
- Avoid sensibilities by selecting a completely new name instead of promoting existing names for a municipality
- Avoid as a new name for the joined municipalities constructions that link parts of existing names
- It is only feasible to opt for the name of the largest municipality when a number of smaller municipalities have been joined to one larger one
- A new name should not be too similar to an existing geographical name either in the Netherlands or in neighbouring areas
- New names should not bear negative connotations

For all new names it is important that there is a sufficient basis of support. It may be opportune to invite entries for the best name in a contest, as this may deliver suitable new names. Practice proves, however, that most names offered are unsuitable, and the basis for the acceptance of new names may be endangered if parties have identified too much with the names offered for the contest. When selecting and implementing new names it would be wise to test the alternatives by checking them for practical criteria, and subsequently by informing the public regarding the outcome of these tests. This also helps in the argumentation afterwards, if the proposed names are being subjected to a referendum.

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