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**Polish lists of geographical names of the World  
Vol. 12. Europe – part 2**

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## Polish lists of geographical names of the World: Vol. 12. Europe – part 2

In 1951, the Commission on Geographical Names (the name used until 1953, in the years 1953 to 1972 the Commission to Establish Geographical Names, 1973 to 1984 – the Commission on Standardization of World Geographical Names, 1984 to 2001 – the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland, since 2001 – the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland), established in 1951 and attached to the Polish Geographical Society, began their work aimed at standardization of the usage of geographical names in Poland and at preparing the list of names considered correct and recommended to be used. Until 1956 the Commission had established 19,720 names of features from across the world, a large part of which were exonyms. The lists of established names were published regularly in the years 1952 to 1956 in the form of 15 volumes. 1959 saw the publication of the overall list of the corrected and updated names contained in the volumes, with approximately 25,000 names in it. The names included in that list were recognized by the Language Culture Commission of the Linguistics Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences as the norm, and, consequently, they were widely used in many dictionaries, encyclopaedias and geographical studies.

In the later years, the Commission compiled and published only lists of the names of countries (1975 to 1977, 1986, 1997, 2003, 2006, 2007) and established Polish exonyms (1982 – Europe only, 1994 to 1996 – the whole world).

Nearly 50 years after the work on the first list was launched, in 2002, the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland (KSNG) started to work on *Nazewnictwo geograficzne świata (Geographical Names of the World)* developed by a large group of specialists: geographers, historians, linguists and cartographers. As work progresses, volumes with the names of separate regions of the world are published. Twelve volumes have been published: 1. *Ameryka, Australia i Oceania (Americas, Australia and Oceania)*; 2. *Bliski Wschód (Middle East)*; 3. *Afryka (Africa)*; 4. *Azja Południowa (South Asia)*; 5. *Azja Środkowa i Zakaukazie (Central Asia and Transcaucasia)*; 6. *Białoruś, Rosja, Ukraina (Belarus, Russia, Ukraine)*; 7. *Azja Południowo-Wschodnia (Southeast Asia)*; 8. *Antarktyka (The Antarctic)*; 9. *Azja Wschodnia (East Asia)*; 10. *Morza i oceany (Seas and oceans)*; 11. *Europa – część I (Europe – part 1)*; 12. *Europa – część II (Europe – part 2)*<sup>1</sup>. The lists are to include geographical names for a total of some 53,000 geographical features.

Over the last fifty years, the rules governing the establishment of the recommended names have changed. It is mainly about the correctness of the usage of exonyms. Initially, their broad usage or even translating the names which were not known in Poland into Polish were recommended. Later, with regard to UNGEGN's recommendations, more caution was exercised in this respect. However, the problem is complicated, it provokes controversy and disputes, and opinions and decisions made in this respect by the Commission were sometimes very disputable. Currently, the Commission's view is that one should not remove the names which are well-established in Polish and which, proving the relationships between Poland and sometimes distant countries, are part of Polish cultural heritage, which cannot be impoverished. It also refers to the territories historically associated with Poland and inhabited by a large Polish minority; for these areas it is particularly important to correctly establish names recommended to be used in Poland. At the same time, using original names facilitates contacts and enables usage of foreign sources, mainly the Internet. Hence, on one hand, it is necessary to protect those Polish names which deserve to be protected and, on the other hand, to eliminate names which were introduced rashly or those which are no longer used.

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<sup>1</sup> The electronic version of the lists in PDF format can be downloaded from the Commission's website: [http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/wydawnictwa\\_ngo.php](http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/wydawnictwa_ngo.php)

The solutions adopted by the Commission were the effect of heated discussions and are not devoid of subjectivity. It is because the criteria for establishing names cannot be unambiguous – even more because the language is living. Equally arguable is certainly the choice of names of geographical features included in individual volumes, although always special care was taken to include in them the biggest, the most significant, the most characteristic, the best known features or those referred to in literature.

The lists include two types of names – Polish exonyms and endonyms. The Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland standardizes exclusively Polish names without handling the standardization of endonyms, and the exonyms included in the lists are the only Polish names recommended by the Commission – the absence of an exonym for a feature is tantamount to stating that the Commission recommends no Polish name for it, even if that name can be found in some publications, and the only recommended form is the original name.

Efforts were made to include in the lists the official forms of endonyms originating from national names lists, topographical maps and other official sources. When it proved impossible, the most reliable international publications were used. Therefore sometimes the official name forms may be disputable because in spite of the fact that they were established with great care, there were sometimes obstacles which were difficult to overcome. They may have resulted from inaccurate source materials or even from differing, contradictory versions of names provided in official publications of governmental institutions or legislative authorities.

For names in the languages using a non-Roman alphabet the romanized form has been provided in accordance with the rules recommended by the Commission, to be applied in Poland for geographical names from a specific language. In the case of the majority of such languages, both Polish transcription form and transliteration form have been provided. It must be stressed that the Polish transcription form does not mean that we have to deal with the Polish name – despite the fact that Polish letters were used, the name remains an endonym.

The above remarks refer also to volume 12 *Nazewnictwo geograficzne świata. Europa – część II (Geographical Names of the World. Europe – part 2)*, dedicated to 30 countries and territories of Western, Southern and Northern Europe (the volume includes the names of geographical features situated in Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Guernsey, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Jan Mayen, Jersey, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Svalbard, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Vatican City). It is the area for which many name materials exist and the detailed maps of individual countries are quite easily available. However, despite such an availability of materials, some naming issues are complicated as in most of the countries in question there are names in the national minority languages – in some countries national minority languages are official languages in the part of their territories, in other countries, although those languages are not official, names in those languages are used. Consequently, all due care was taken to provide official names in the languages of minorities, everywhere they occur, using mainly suitable legal acts and lists of names and maps. The efforts were also made to provide full names for multilingual countries. In some cases it meant to reach the forms of names only seldom listed in publications available in Poland (e.g. Irish name in Ireland, Maltese names in Malta, Luxembourgish names in Luxembourg or names in the Manx language in Isle of Man).

The list includes the names of geographical features which, solely from the linguistic point of view, were considered by the Commission to be correct and in line with the knowledge gathered so far. In no case do these recommendations have anything in common with the Commission taking any stand on political matters or those relating to administrative

status of each territory. Any stands on political issues, if they have to be taken, are always consulted with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The volume opens with the list of recommended names of oceans and large physico-geographical or regional units, which in their size are bigger than the area of several countries. To follow are the names according to countries, for which an abbreviated Polish name and the name in their official languages have been provided. Then the names of individual geographical features have been listed, with a division into 55 categories (see Attachment 1). The occurrence of individual categories of geographical features depends on the specific character of a country. This is why in certain countries some categories do not occur. Within each category, the names have been listed alphabetically.

The entries relating to individual geographical features contain a Polish language name (exonym), if it is recommended (written in bold italics), and next the original name in the official language (endonym) – or original names, if there are more than one official languages, or if a feature has official names in several languages. In the case, when for one object names in several languages are given, the symbol of the language (like [fr.] for French) is always given after the geographical name.

In reference to the countries in which two or three languages have the status of the official languages of the whole country (Guernsey, Ireland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Luxembourg), the names were usually listed in an alphabetical order, according to the Polish names of those languages (with exception for Malta, for which Maltese names are listed as the first, Faroe Islands, for which Faroese names are listed as the first and Vatican City, for which generally only Italian names are listed). For the three countries, that are formally multilingual (Belgium, Finland, Switzerland), in which the actual use of languages depends on the region, the name in the official language of the area is given at the first place. The names in the other official languages of the state are listed further and kept in italics (if in the area two official languages are used, the names in both languages are given in an alphabetical order, according to Polish names of those languages). In the case when a given country has regional official languages or individual features have official names also in minority languages, the names in those languages have been provided after the names in the national language (there is an exception, used in cases when the geographical names are officially established only in a regional language – in such situations the names in nationwide language, as a non-official, are listed in the second place and recorded in italics).

Examples of entry arrangement:

***Bruksela***; Bruxelles; Ville de Bruxelles [fr.]; Brussel; Stad Brussel [nid.]; *Brüssel*; *Stadt Brüssel* [niem.]  
Tarxien; Hal-Tarxien [malt.]; Tarxien [ang.]  
Santa Coloma de Gramenet [kat.]; *Santa Coloma de Gramanet* [hiszp.]  
***Jezioro Nezyderskie***; Neusiedler See  
***Alpy Retyckie***; Rätische Alpen [niem.]; Alpi Retiche [wł.]; *Alpes rhétiques* [fr.]

If two or more Polish names are given for one object (e.g. Kordoba; Kordowa), the first name is the one which the Commission considers as preferable, while the second name is considered as an acceptable. Sometimes only an exonym is provided; it means that a given geographical feature is not named in the country it is situated or no correct local name of any such feature was found. For some features also historical names have been given, including the recently changed names.

Also glossaries of geographical terms have been provided for each language. The glossaries comprise geographical terms which appear in the listed names as well as other major terms. The most extensive glossary is the one for terms used in English.

<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of geographic terms</b>
Catalan	96
Danish	93
Dutch	126
English	258
Faroese	33
Finnish	106
French	203
German	216
Icelandic	111
Irish	86
Italian	131
Luxembourgish	51
Maltese	60
Manx	69
Norwegian	152
Portuguese	142
Romansh	58
Spanish	197
Swedish	137

Tab. 1. Number of terms included in glossaries for individual languages

The publication *Nazewnictwo geograficzne świata. Zeszyt 12. Europa – część II* (*Geographical Names of the World. Vol. 12. Europe – part 2*) comprises names for a total of 8,241 geographical features. 1,471 out of those features have Polish exonyms and because of the fact that there are two exonyms for some of the features, the list comprises a total of 1,411 Polish names (Tab. 2).

	<b>Number of features</b>	<b>Number of features with exonyms</b>	<b>Number of exonyms</b>
Great regions	11	11	12
Andorra	52	4	4
Austria	358	89	91
Belgium	263	40	41
Denmark	270	36	38
Faroe Islands	104	4	5
Finland	369	38	40
France	721	207	211
Germany	531	246	259
Gibraltar	15	5	5
Guernsey	73	5	5
Iceland	303	8	9

Ireland	307	29	30
Isle of Man	84	5	5
Italy	599	200	208
Jan Mayen	18	2	2
Jersey	55	4	4
Liechtenstein	53	4	4
Luxembourg	68	7	7
Malta	101	11	11
Monaco	26	10	11
Netherlands	299	49	50
Norway	549	18	19
Portugal	343	24	29
San Marino	35	5	5
Spain	626	100	109
Svalbard	193	68	68
Sweden	545	32	35
Switzerland	444	57	57
United Kingdom	804	72	76
Vatican City	22	21	21
<b>total</b>	<b>8241</b>	<b>1411</b>	<b>1471</b>

Tab. 2. Number of features and exonyms included in the volume

The list *Nazewnictwo geograficzne świata. Zeszyt 12. Europa – Część II* (*Geographical Names of the World. Vol. 12. Europe – part 2*) is available in electronic version in PDF format, at the website of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland, but in Polish only: [http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/pliki/zeszyty/zeszyt\\_12.pdf](http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/pliki/zeszyty/zeszyt_12.pdf).

## **Attachment 1**

### **List and order of geographical names categories**

- jednostki administracyjne (administrative units)
- miejscowości (localities)
- części miejscowości (parts of localities)
- stacje badawcze (research stations)
- krainy, regiony (lands, regions)
- oceany (oceans)
- morza (seas)
- inne akweny morskie (other sea water bodies)
- zatoki (bays)
- cieśniny (straits)
- jeziora (lakes)
- grupy jezior (group of lakes)
- zatoki na jeziorze (bays on lakes)
- rzeki (rivers)
- kanały (canals)
- wodospady (waterfalls)
- lodowce (glaciers)
- bagna (swamps)
- wyspy (islands)
- grupy wysp, archipelagi (group of islands, archipelagos)
- wyspy na jeziorze lub rzece (islands on lakes or rivers)
- grupy wysp, archipelagi na jeziorze (group of islands or archipelagos on lakes)
- półwyspy (peninsulas)
- przylądki (capes)
- wybrzeża (coasts)
- delty (river deltas)
- pojezierza (lake districts)
- niziny, równiny (lowlands, plains)
- doliny (valleys)
- kotliny (basins)
- wyżyny, płaskowyże (highlands, plateaus)
- góry (mountains, ranges)
- szczyty (mounts, peaks)
- przełęcze (passes)
- lasy, puszcze (forests, woods)
- jaskinie (caves)
- inne obiekty naturalne (other natural objects)
- obszary ochrony środowiska (areas of environment protection)
- rejony przemysłowe (industrial regions)
- miejsca wydobywania lub występowania surowców mineralnych (places of mineral resources extraction or occurrence)
- zapory (dams)
- drogi (roads)
- koleje (railroads)
- ulice (streets)
- place (squares)
- mosty (bridges)
- tunele (tunnels)
- inne obiekty komunikacyjne (other transport infrastructure)
- świątynie, klasztory, miejsca kultu (temples, monasteries, places of worship)
- forty, twierdze, zamki (forts, fortresses, castles)
- cmentarze, nekropole (cemeteries, necropolises)
- mauzolea (mausoleums)
- ruiny osiedli (ruins of settlements)
- inne zabytki (other historic monuments or sites)
- inne obiekty antropogeniczne (other anthropogenic objects)