

### **New Roman-script alphabet for Kazakh**

At the UNGEGN Working Group Romanization Systems (WG) held on 20th March 2018, the WG reported on the current status of the introduction of a Roman-script alphabet for the Kazakh language.

This proposed alphabet had seen some significant change since the previous meeting of the WG which had been held in the course of the 11th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in August 2017. It was recalled that at that meeting the expert from Kazakhstan, Mr Aimenov, had reported on the planned introduction of the Roman script.

Since the UNCSGN meeting, however, in October 2017, an alternative alphabet had been decreed. This alphabet had inspired significant negative response with the result that in February 2018 the proposed alphabet had been changed again.

In the course of the WG meeting, the Convenors agreed to circulate information on the latest proposed alphabet, and accordingly this follows below. It should be noted, however, that the WG has agreed that it is too early to implement the newly decreed alphabet. There appear to be a number of areas of linguistic anomaly in the latest alphabet and the WG has noted the possibility that the alphabet may again be subject to alteration.

By way of brief summary, the originally proposed alphabet introduced 'Turkic' letters, the October 2017 system instead used an apostrophe for modified letters (the Roman-script result therefore being heavily laden with apostrophes) and the February 2018 alphabet removed the apostrophes, in most cases replacing them with acute accents, while an undotted /i/ would be used instead of /i'/ and /sh/ and /ch/ used instead of /s'/ and /c'/ (this latest alphabet is reproduced on page 3)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The decree is available here: [http://www.akorda.kz/kz/legal\\_acts/decrees/kazak-tili-alipbiin-kirillicadan-latyn-grafikasyna-koshiru-turaly-kazakstan-respublikasy-prezidentinin-2017-zhylgy-26-kazandagy-569-zharlygy](http://www.akorda.kz/kz/legal_acts/decrees/kazak-tili-alipbiin-kirillicadan-latyn-grafikasyna-koshiru-turaly-kazakstan-respublikasy-prezidentinin-2017-zhylgy-26-kazandagy-569-zharlygy) recording the amendment to decree 569 of 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

Table indicating differences between the Turkic-style alphabet utilised until 2017, that approved by President Nazarbayev, October 2017, and the amended version of February 2018

Kazakh		Kazakh Latin former	Kazakh Latin October 2017	Kazakh Latin February 2018
Ә	ә	ä	a'	á
Ғ	ғ	ğ	g'	ǵ
И	и	ï	i'	ı
Й	й	y	i'	ı
Ң	ң	ñ	n'	ń
Ө	ө	ö	o'	ó
У	у	w	y'	ý
Ү	ү	ü	u'	ú
Х	х	x	h	h
Ч	ч	ç	c'	ch
Ш	ш	ş	s'	sh
Ы	ы	ı	y	y

Additionally, the previous version included Roman script forms for the Cyrillic characters **џ** (**şş**); **э** (**e**) and **ц** (**c**). These do not appear in the new tabulation.

A screenshot from the newspaper [Arqalyq Habary](#)<sup>2</sup> reporting on the story of the release of the new alphabet on 21st February, with the amendments reflecting the altered form made impressively quickly, looks like this:

Elbasy «Qazaq tili álipbiin kirillisadan latyn grafikasyna kóshirý týraly» Qazaqstan Respýblikasy Prezidentiniń 2017 jylǵy 26 qazandaǵy №569 Jarlyǵyna ózgeris engizdi. Bul týraly [Qamshy.kz](#) aqparat agenttigi Aqordanyń baspasóz qyzmetine silteme jasap habarlaidy.

«Qazaq tili álipbiin kirillisadan latyn grafikasyna kóshirý týraly» Qazaqstan Respýblikasy Prezidentiniń 2017 jylǵy 26 qazandaǵy №569 Jarlyǵyna ózgeris engizý týraly

**QAÝLY ETEMIN:**

1. «Qazaq tili álipbiin kirillisadan latyn grafikasyna kóshirý týraly» Qazaqstan Respýblikasy Prezidentiniń 2017 jylǵy 26 qazandaǵy №569 Jarlyǵyna (Qazaqstan Respýblikasy PÚAJ-y, № 50-51-52, 326-qujat) mynadai ózgeris engizilsin:

atalǵan Jarlyqpen bekitilgen latyn grafikasyna negizdelgen qazaq tili álipbi osy Jarlyqqa qosymshaga saıkes jańa redaksiada jazylsyn.

2. Osy Jarlyq jarıalangan kúنینen bastap qoldanysqa engiziledi.

**Qazaqstan Respýblikasynyn**

**Prezidenti**

**N.Nazarbaev**

<sup>2</sup> <http://latyn.qamshy.kz/>

The new alphabet of 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018:

Қазақстан Республикасы Президентінің 2018 жылғы 19 ақпандағы № 637 Жарлығымен өзгерген Латын графикасына негізделген  
ҚАЗАҚ ТЛІІ ӘЛІПБИ

№	Жазылуы	Дыбысталуы	№	Жазылуы	Дыбысталуы
1	A a	[a]	17	Ń ń	[ɲ]
2	Á á	[ə]	18	O o	[o]
3	B b	[b]	19	Ó ó	[o]
4	D d	[d]	20	P p	[p]
5	E e	[e]	21	Q q	[k]
6	F f	[f]	22	R r	[p]
7	G g	[g]	23	S s	[c]
8	Ĝ ĝ	[ɣ]	24	T t	[t]
9	H h	[x], [h]	25	U u	[ʏ]
10	I i	[i]	26	Ú ú	[y]
11	I ı	[ɯ], [ï]	27	V v	[b]
12	J j	[ʒ]	28	Y y	[ɣ]
13	K k	[k]	29	Ý ý	[y]
14	L l	[l]	30	Z z	[z]
15	M m	[m]	31	Sh sh	[ʃ]
16	N n	[n]	32	Ch ch	[tʃ]

<http://latyn.qamshy.kz/article/prezydent-latin-grafykasina-koshw-twrali-zharliqqa-ozgeris-engizdi.html>