Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Jordan

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee

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1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of Jordan for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in US Government databases, publications, maps, and charts. The country policies are intended to satisfy, in part, the statutory requirements levied upon the BGN in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

According to the CIA World Factbook, as of September 2017, Jordan's population is estimated at ten million people. The ethnic composition of Jordanian nationals is 98% Arab, 1% Circassian, and 1% Armenian. Additionally, there are large populations of Palestinian, Syrian, and Iraqi refugees. The Jordanian population is predominantly Sunni Muslim, followed by approximately 2.2% Christian, 0.4% Buddhist, 0.1% Hindu[1], and less than 0.1% of Jewish, Druze, Shi'a Muslim, and Baha'i Faith.[2]

b. Languages

Arabic is the official language of Jordan, with the most spoken dialect being South Levantine Arabic (ajp).[3] English (eng) is widely understood among the middle and upper classes, and is used for government and commerce in addition to Arabic.[4] [5]

c. Geographic Names Standardization

Jordan participates in the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Their geographic names standardization authority is the National Committee on Geographic Names.[6] Additionally, Jordan utilizes the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre (RJGC) System for romanizing Arabic geographic names. This system is similar to the BGN/PCGN 1956 System for Arabic with minor differences regarding diacritics.

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[1] Jordan. CIA World Factbook Online. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html> Retrieved September 19, 2017.

[2] Jordan. U.S. Department of State. <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2005/51602.htm> Retrieved September 19, 2017.

[3] Jordan. Ethnologue: Languages of the World. <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/JO > Retrieved September 19, 2017.

[4] Jordan. CIA World Factbook Online. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html> Retrieved 19 Sep 2017.

[5] All language codes are from the ISO-639-3 standard.

[6] United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/>. Retrieved September 19, 2017.

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Script and Orthography

Toponyms are written in the script and orthography of Modern Standard Arabic.

b. Romanization

Arabic geographic names are to be romanized using the BGN/PCGN 1956 System for Arabic.

Source materials, particularly from the RJGC, containing romanized names may be consulted for short vowel romanization.

c. Diacritics

The table below lists the special characters and letter combinations used as part of the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic, along with their respective Unicode values.

Character	Unicode Value	Character	Unicode Value
‘	2018	’	2019
Ā	0100	ā	0101
Á	00C1	á	00E1
Ḍ	1E10	ḍ	1E11
Ḥ	1E28	ḥ	1E29
Ī	012A	ī	012B
Ş	015E	ş	015F
Ţ	0162	ţ	0163
Ū	016A	ū	016B
Ẓ	005A+0327	ẓ	007A+0327

d. Generics

A generic is a term that describes a feature. Examples include words such as 'river,' 'hill,' and 'lake.' A generic term associated with a specific feature designation is considered a true generic unless map symbology indicates otherwise, in which case the term would not be collected as a generic. Generics are not collected for populated places.

For a glossary of Arabic generic terms, see Appendix A.

e. Hyphenation and Capitalization

Hyphenation is rare in Jordanian geographic names. If a hyphen does occur, it is included in the approved romanized form of the name.

Romanized geographic names are written in upper- and lower-case letters, following the standards detailed in the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic (see Appendix A).

f. Long and Short Forms

Short forms of geographic names are collected for the country name and administrative divisions, whether in Roman script or Arabic script.

For railroad stations (RSTN), if short form names are present on authoritative source material, these names should be collected as Approved, in addition to their respective Approved long form names.

g. Numbers

Numerals are collected in their expanded forms. However, unexpanded forms may be collected as variants, whether in Arabic script (e.g., ١, ٢, ٣, etc.) or in Roman script (e.g., 1, 2, 3, etc.).

h. Abbreviations

Abbreviations can sometimes be found in the geographic names of Jordan. If present, they will be expanded to their full form and romanized accordingly.

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name

Conventional Short Form	Jordan
Conventional Long Form	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Arabic Short Form – Native Script	الاردن
Arabic Short Form – Romanized	Al Urdun
Arabic Long Form – Native Script	المملكة الاردنية الهاشمية
Arabic Long Form – Romanized	Al Mamlakah al Urdunīyah al Hāshimīyah

b. Capital Name

Conventional Short Form	Amman
Arabic Short Form – Native Script	عمان
Arabic Short Form – Romanized	ʻAmmān

c. First-Order Administrative Divisions

Jordan is comprised of 12 governorates (muḩāfaẓah or muḩāfaẓāt).

Name	GEC	GENC	Seat
ʻAjlūn	JO20	JO-AJ	ʻAjlūn
عجلون			عجلون

Name	GEC	GENC	Seat
Al ʻAqabah العقبة	JO21	JO-AQ	Al ʻAqabah العقبة
Al ʻĀşimah العاصمة	JO16	JO-AM	ʻAmmān (Amman) عمان
Al Balqāʼ البلقاء	JO02	JO-BA	As Salţ السلط
Al Karak الكرك	JO09	JO-KA	Al Karak الكرك
Al Mafraq المفرق	JO15	JO-MA	Al Mafraq المفرق
Aţ Ţafīlah الطفيلة	JO12	JO-AT	Aţ Ţafīlah الطفيلة
Az Zarqāʼ الزرقاء	JO17	JO-AZ	Az Zarqāʼ الزرقاء
Irbid اربد	JO18	JO-IR	Irbid اربد
Jarash جرش	JO22	JO-JA	Jarash جرش
Maʻān معان	JO19	JO-MN	Maʻān معان
Mādabā مادبا	JO23	JO-MD	Mādabā مادبا

d. Conventional Names

Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
Allenby Bridge	-793111	-1144639	BDG
Amman	-970362	-1440594	PPLC
Dead Sea	-779554	-1118193	LK
East Ghor Canal	-971389	-1443536	CNL
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	-972016	-1444958	PCLI
Jordan	-972016	14063825	PCLI
Jordan River	-780293	-1120056	STM
Petra	-970055	-1440097	ANS
Syrian Desert	-2548117	-3509268	DSRT

e. Unique Geopolitical Situations

For the latest country-specific boundary dispute information, consult the US Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues.

5. Source Material

a. Preferred Sources

The preferred sources for Jordan map and geospatial products are those produced by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre, followed by older products released by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Department of Lands and Surveys. What follows is a list of authoritative maps and other geographic data sources released by these bodies as well as non-authoritative sources produced by third-parties. They are listed in order of preference based on their authoritativeness, presence of Arabic-script toponyms, scale, and utility.

Primary Sources

Administrative Maps

- Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre
  - 1:50,000–1:350,000, 2002-2007 – Twelve first-order administrative maps published by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

City Maps

- Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre
  - 1:4,000 – 1:10,000, 1989-2005 – Fifteen tourist Maps published by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre. They are bilingual (Arabic/English) maps for various cities and urban areas across Jordan.

Topographic Line Maps

- Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre (http://www.rjgc.gov.jo/default.aspx?lang=en)
  - 1:50,000, 1988 – Detailed Topographic Line Maps published by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre. This series consists of eight maps in Western Jordan and along the border with Syria. These maps are meant for general purpose use. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

Miscellaneous General Maps

- Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre
  - 1:650,000, 2005 – General Map of Jordan published by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre meant for general purpose use. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

- 1:500,000, 1995 – General Map of Jordan published by the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre. It is a small-scale general map used for guidance. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

Secondary Sources

Topographic Line Maps

- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Department of Lands and Surveys
  - 1:100,000, 1951-1954 – Detailed Topographic Line Maps published by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Department of Lands and Surveys. Maps consist of 11 sheets covering Western Jordan. Maps are meant for general purpose use. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

Tertiary Sources

Miscellaneous Maps

- 1:710,000 – The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan published by the Jordanian Ministry of Information, 1982.
- 1:730,000 – The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan published by GEO projects (Beirut) in association with Oxford University Press, 1984.

Appendix A. Glossary of Generic Terms

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Feature Designation Code
Ābār	water well(s)	WLL
ʻAqabah(t)	spur(s)	SPUR
ʻArāqīb	escarpment, spur(s)	SCRP, SPUR
Arḍ	area	AREA
Aswāq	market	MKT
ʻAyn	spring(s), water well(s)	SPNG, WLL
Āthār	ancient site	ANS
Bādiyah(t)	desert	DSRT
Baḥr	lake	LK
Baladīyah(t)	administrative facility	ADMF
Bank	financial institution	FIN
Barīd	post office	PO
Barqah(t)	hills	HLLS
Baṭn	ridge(s)	RDGE
Bawwābah(t)	ruin(s)	RUIN
Bayt	house(s)	HSE
Biʼār	water well(s)	WLL
Biʼr	spring(s), water well(s)	SPNG, WLL
Birkah(t)	pool(s), reservoir(s)	POOL, RSV
Biṯāḥ	ravine(s)	RVN
Biyār	water well(s)	WLL
Burq	hills	HLLS
Dāʼirah(t)	administrative facility	ADMF
Ḍāḥiyah(t)	section of populated place	PPLX
Ḍahrah(t)	hill	HLL
Ḍarīḥ	tomb(s)	TMB
Dawwār	traffic circle	RDCR
Dīwān	administrative facility	ADMF
Dumaythah(t)	wadi(s)	WAD
Duwaykhilah(t)	wadi(s)	WAD
Fajj	valley	VAL
Farʻ	distributary(-ies), wadi(s), section of wadi	STMD, WAD, WADX
Farʻat	hill	HLL
Fayḍah(t)	mud flat(s), wadi(s), depressions(s)	FLTM, WAD, DPR
Funduq	hotel	HTL
Ghābah(t)	forest(s)	FRST
Ghadīr	waterhole(s)	WTRH
Gharāmīl	hills	HLLS
Ghawr	area, fan(s), plain(s), slope(s), terrace	AREA, FAN, PLN, SLP, TRR
Ḥadabah(t)	mountain	MT
Ḥaḍbah(t)	hill, mountain	HLL, MT
Ḥadīqah(t)	garden(s), park	GDN, PRK

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Feature Designation Code
Ḥājib	escarpment	SCRP
Ḥammāmāt	spa, spring(s)	SPA, SPNG
Ḥārah(t)	section of populated place	PPLX
Ḥarāj	forest(s)	FRST
Ḥarrah	lava area	LAVA
Ḥawḍ	drainage basin, ravine(s)	BSND, RVN
Ḥawṭah(t)	orchard(s)	OCH
Ḥayy	ancient site, industrial area, populated locality, section of populated place	ANS, INDS, PPLL, PPLX
Ḥazm	hill	HLL
Ḥizam	hills	HLLS
Ḥuḍaybāt	hills, plateau	HLLS, PLAT
Ḥulayāt	hills	HLLS
Idārah	administrative facility	ADMF
ʻIrāq	spur(s)	SPUR
Iskān	housing development, section of populated place	DEVH, PPLX
Istirāḥah(t)	resthouse, resort	RHSE, RSRT
Iṭfāʼīyah(t)	fire station	FIRE
ʻIyādah(t)	clinic	HSPC
Jabal	mountain, mountains, hill, hills, peak, populated locality, ridge(s), escarpment, slope(s), spur(s), upland	MT, MTS, HLL, HLLS, PK, PPLL, RDGE, SCRP, SLP, SPUR, UPLD
Jāl	cliff(s)	CLF
Jamʻīyah	agricultural facility, community center, facility	AGRF, CTRCM, FCL
Jāmiʻ	mosque	MSQE
Jāmiʻah(t)	college	SCHC
Jibāl	hill, hills, mountain, mountains, ridge(s), spur(s)	HLL, HLLS, MT, MTS, RDGE, SPUR
Jisr	bridge, ruined bridge	BDG, BDGQ
Jumruk	customs checkpoint	CSTM
Kanīsah(t)	church	CH
Khabārī	mud flat(s)	FLTM
Khabrah(t)	mud flat(s), sabkha(s), waterhole(s)	FLTM, SBKH, WTRH
Khallah(t)	valley, wadi(s)	VAL, WAD
Khashm	mountain, promontory(-ies)	MT, PROM
Khaṭṭ	wall	WALL
Khaṭṭ Ḥadīdī	abandoned railroad	RRQ
Khawr	wadi(s)	WAD
Khillah	wadi(s)	WAD
Khirbah(t)	ancient site, populated locality, ruin(s)	ANS, PPLL, RUIN
Khubayrāt	mud flat(s)	FLTM
Khushʻah(t)	hill	HLL
Khushaybah(t)	forest(s)	FRST
Kullīyah(t)	college	SCHC
Liwā	second-order administrative division	ADM2
Maʻbar	customs checkpoint, bridge	CSTM, BDG

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Feature Designation Code
Madrasah(t)	school	SCH
Maghārah(t)	cave(s)	CAVE
Maḥaṭṭah(t)	communication center, facility, power station, railroad station, abandoned railroad station	COMC, FCL, PS, RSTN, RSTNQ
Maḥfūr	mud flat(s)	FLTM
Maḥkamah(t)	courthouse	CTHSE
Maḥmīyah(t)	nature reserve, wildlife reserve	RESN, RESW
Majlis Qarawī	administrative facility	ADMF
Makātib	administrative facility	ADMF
Makhāḍah(t)	ford	FORD
Makhfar	police post, abandoned police post	PP, PPQ
Maktab	administrative facility, office building, facility	ADMF, BLDO, FCL
Maktab Barīd	post office	PO
Mal'ab	stadium	STDM
Mamāliḥ	pan	PAN
Mamlakah(t)	independent political entity	PCLI
Manājim	mine(s)	MN
Maqām	shrine, tomb(s)	SHRN, TMB
Maqbarah(t)	cemetery	CMTY
Marabb	depression(s), mud flat(s), intermittent salt lake(s)	DPR, FLTM, LKNI
Marj	cultivated area, plain(s)	CULT, PLN
Mashtal	nursery(-ies)	NSY
Masjid	mosque	MSQE
Maṣlaḥah(t)	administrative facility	ADMF
Maṣrif	financial institution	FIN
Maṭabb	mud flat(s)	FLTM
Maṭār	airport	AIRP
Matḥaf	museum	MUS
Maṭla'	hill	HLL
Maydān	traffic circle, square	RDCR, SQR
Mazār	shrine	SHRN
Mazra'ah	farm(s)	FRM
Mīnā'	port	PRT
Minṭaqah	section of populated place	PPLX
Minṭaqah(t) Ṣinā'īyah	industrial area	INDS
Miqla'	quarry(-ies)	MNQR
Miṣfāt Bitrūl	oil refinery	OILR
Mughr	cave(s)	CAVE
Muḥāfaẓat	first-order administrative division	ADM1
Mujamma'	administrative facility, business center	ADMF, CTRB
Mukhayyam	camp(s), abandoned camp, refugee camp	CMP, CMPQ, CMPRF
Mukhtabar Bayṭarī	veterinary facility	VETF
Munṭār	mountain	MT
Muntazah	park	PRK

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Feature Designation Code
Mushāsh	waterhole(s)	WTRH
Mustashfá	hospital	HSP
Mustawda'āt	storehouse	SHSE
Mutanazzah	park	PRK
Mutaşarrifīyah(t)	administrative facility	ADMF
Nab'	spring(s)	SPNG
Nādī	facility	FCL
Nahr	stream(s)	STM
Naqb	spur(s)	SPUR
Nuşb	monument	MNMT
Qā'	mud flat(s), depression(s), plain(s), sabkha(s), wadi junction	FLTM, DPR, PLN, SBKH, WADJ
Qabr	tomb(s)	TMB
Qaḍā'	third-order administrative division	ADM3
Qalb	hill	HLL
Qanāh(t)	canal	CNL
Qarn	peak	PK
Qī'ān	mud flat(s), sabkha(s)	FLTM, SBKH
Qimmah(t)	plateau	PLAT
Qubūr	tomb(s)	TMB
Quffayfāt	hills	HLLS
Qulayb	hills, mountain	HLLS, MT
Qulaylāt	hills, mountain	HLLS, MT
Qullah(t)	mountain, peak	MT, PK
Qūr	hills	HLLS
Qurnah(t)	mountain	MT
Quwayrah(t)	hill	HLL
Ra's	hill, cliff(s), mountain, peak, promontory(-ies), point(s), escarpment, spur(s)	HLL, CLF, MT, PK, PROM, PT, SCRP, SPUR
Raqabah(t)	mountain	MT
Rawḍ	meadow, wadi(s)	MDW, WAD
Rawḍah(t)	wadi(s)	WAD
Rijal	wadi(s)	WAD
Rijlah(t)	wadi(s)	WAD
Rujm	cairn, hill, mountain, ruin(s), slope(s), spur(s)	CARN, HLL, MT, RUIN, SLP, SPUR
Rujūm	hill	HLL
Ruq'ah	cultivated area	CULT
Ruways	spur(s)	SPUR
Sabkhah(t)	sabkha(s)	SBKH
Sadd	dam, weir(s)	DAM, WEIR
Sāḩah	square	SQR
Sahl	mud flat(s), plain(s), headwaters	FLTM, PLN, STMH
Sahlah(t)	plain(s)	PLN
Sawḩ	wadi(s)	WAD
Sayḩ	fan(s), wadi(s)	FAN, WAD

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Feature Designation Code
Sayl	stream(s), wadi(s), section of wadi	STM, WAD, WADX
Sha'īb	wadi(s)	WAD
Shālayhāt	resort	RSRT
Shallāl	waterfall(s)	FLLS
Shallālāt	waterfall(s)	FLLS
Shāri'	road, street	RD, ST
Shi'āb	wadi(s)	WAD
Shi'b	wadi(s)	WAD
Shi'bān	wadi(s)	WAD
Shu'ayb	wadi(s)	WAD
Shu'fāt	mountain	MT
Shurţah(t)	police post	PP
Sifārah(t)	diplomatic facility	DIP
Sīḥān	mud flat(s)	FLTM
Sīq	valley, wadi(s)	VAL, WAD
Şīrah(t)	ruin(s)	RUIN
Siyāḥ	wadi(s)	WAD
Sulţah(t)	administrative facility	ADMF
Sūq	administrative facility, market	ADMF, MKT
Ţāḥūnah(t)	mill(s)	ML
Tal'ah(t)	hill, hills, mountain, wadi(s)	HLL, HLLS, MT, WAD
Tall	mountains, hill, hills, locality, mound(s), mountain, peak, ridge(s), slope(s), spur(s)	MTS, HLL, HLLS, LCTY, MND, MT, PK, RDGE, SLP, SPUR
Tallah(t)	hill	HLL
Ţār	hill	HLL
Ţārah(t)	escarpment	SCRP
Thughrah(t)	pass	PASS
Tilā'	hills, mountain, escarpment	HLLS, MT, SCRP
Tilāl	hill, hills, mound(s), mountains, peaks	HLL, HLLS, MND, MTS, PKS
Tulayl	hill, mound(s)	HLL, MND
Tulaylāt	hills	HLLS
Tulūl	hill, hills, mountains, spur(s)	HLL, HLLS, MTS, SPUR
Ţūr	hill, mountain	HLL, MT
'Urqūb	hill, hills, mountain, ridge(s), escarpment, slope(s), spur(s)	HLL, HLLS, MT, RDGE, SCRP, SLP, SPUR
Wādī	wadi(s), valley, section of wadi, canal, steam(s)	WAD, VAL, WADX, CNL, STM
Widyān	wadi(s)	WAD
Ẕahrah(t)	hill, hills, mound(s), mountain, spur(s)	HLL, HLLS, MND, MT, SPUR
Zawr	terrace	TRR
Zumal	hill, hills	HLL, HLLS
Zumaylāt	hills	HLLS
Zumlah(t)	hill, mound(s)	HLL, MND