Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2009-050

Outcome: Adopted with modifications
Effective date: 2010-06-30

The request to change the scope of current code element [lit] “Lithuanian” to macrolanguage and create two new code elements [ltb] “Standard Lithuanian” and [sgs] “Samogitian” is adopted with modification: the ISO 639-3 standard adopts the new code element [sgs] “Samogitian” without changing the scope of the existing code element [lit] Lithuanian (and without creating a code element for Standard Lithuanian). On the surface, the situation of these speech varieties appears similar to that of Latvian and Latgalian (request 2009-048). However, it was deemed unnecessary to update the denotation of the current code element [lit] “Lithuanian” and create a code element for “Standard Lithuanian” because the proportion of existing applications of the code element [lit] actually intending a meaning of “Samogitian” is vanishingly small in comparison to its usage to represent Lithuanian, including both Standard Lithuanian and dialects that are much more closer and fully mutually intelligible with the developed, standard form.¹

¹ This statement is made based on an assessment of the records of the Library of Congress collection, which uses the MARC Code List of Languages to identify language content, comparing code element usage with evidence in each record that would indicate Samogitian content as opposed to Lithuanian content. Fewer than 10 records were found in a set of over 3700.