

ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code” form

Date: 2015-6-23

Name of Primary Requester: Mats Blakstad

E-mail address: mats (A) globalbility.org

Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:

Bentzen, Kristine: kristine.bentzen (A) uit.no

University of Tromsø

Garbacz, Piotr: piotr.garbacz (A) hbv.no

Buskerud and Vestfold University College

Hansen, Bjarne Simmelkjær Sandgaard: bssh (A) hum.ku.dk

University of Copenhagen

Johannessen, Janne Bondi: jannebj (A) iln.uio.no

University of Oslo

Kroonen, Guus: guus (A) hum.ku.dk

University of Copenhagen

Rosenkvist, Henrik: henrik.rosenkvist (A) svenska.gu.se

University of Gothenburg

Sapir, Yair: yair.sapir (A) hkr.se

Kristianstad University

Steenland, Lars: lars.steenland (A) telia.com

Professor emeritus, Lund University

Svenonius, Peter Arne: peter.svenonius (A) uit.no

University of Tromsø

Vangsnes, Øystein A: oystein.vangsnes (A) uit.no

University of Tromsø

Associated Change request number : 2015-046

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : ovd

(completed by Registration Authority)

PLEASE NOTE: This completed form will become part of the public record of this change request and the history of the ISO 639-3 code set. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

- a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:

Övdalian or Elfdalian

- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:

Övdalska, Övkallmåleð (alternative spelling: Övkallmøleð), Dalska

- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:

Älvdalska (in Swedish)

- d) Reason for preferred name:

Both Elfdalian and Övdalian are used in English. I've tried to sum up the most important arguments I've heard:

“Övdalian” refers to the autonym, but Övdalian is according to others an un-english name.

Elfdalian is used in official correspondence from Ulum Dalska (the local language association) and in correspondance between the Council of Europe and the Swedish Government, however some would say that this is more a matter of coincidences and preferences of people involved in these processes. The first international references to the area (Älvdalen) used the latinization of the surname “Elfdalius” so this is probably the origin

of the prefix “Elf”. We don't know for sure if the letter “f” in the prefix originally were pronounced more as a “v”, which would make the name sound more like “Elvdalian”, more similar to “Älvdalen”. Some people then ask why something that don't actually corresponded to the autonym or originated from Älvdalen should be used as the English name. Elfdalian can also give unfortunate associations to J.R.R. Tolkien “Riverdale” by referring to “elves” and the name “Älvdalen” in fact literally mean “Riverdale”, but the name was used a long time before Tolkien.

The naming of the language is a contested topic. I've not managed to get comment from Ulum Dalska about their preferred English name and as far as I know they don't have an official preference on the choice of English name.

- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):

2 000

- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: “alv” or ”

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifier is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

- a) Is this a
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Living language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Recently extinct language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Historical language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ancient language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Artificially constructed language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Macrolanguage |

(Select one. See explanations of these types at <http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp>)

For individual languages, also complete:

- b) Countries where used:

Sweden

- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:

Älvdalen Municipality in Dalarna County (N61 14.0 E14 02.0)

- d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user's death

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is: Signed Spoken Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:

Germanic, North Germanic,

Traditionally “East Scandinavian”, but some will say Övdalian (and even other North Germanic languages) is not easily sorted in “east” and “west” Scandinavian language branches.

c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:

Mostly Swedish [swe], but some of the phonology, grammar and vocabulary is more in common with Norwegian [nor] (traditionally regarded as the West Nordic language branch).

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:

The association working to maintain the language, Ulum Dalska, gives out a newsletter named Dalskum with some content written in the language.

- Children’s books like Mumunes Masse, Mier um Masse, Lisslprinsn (The Little Prince). Ulum dalska have a web shop with some books: <http://www.ulumdalska.se/butik/>
- A musical in Elfdalian was held in 2004 (Ođerwais)
- Translations, e. g. Gospel of John
- A long text piece from 1622 (Älvdalsmålet by Prytz), Inscription in Elfdalian runes since the 16th century, Wedding poems from the 17th century
- a lot of lyrics from the 20th c.

b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:

No, the Swedish government has so far refused to acknowledge it as a language, and consider it a dialect of Swedish. Council of Europe have asked the Swedish government to review the status of Elfdalian 5 times:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/minlang/Report/default_en.asp#Sweden

At the moment there is a dialogue between Ulum Dalska, Älvdalen Municipality and the Swedish Government about giving Elfdalian status as minority language.

Most linguists consider it a language and mention it as such in publications, conferences etc. It is used in schools, although it’s not a part of the permanent curriculum. In 2016 a preschool in Elfdalian is planned to be opened:

<http://www.thelocal.se/20150504/viking-forest-language-set-for-nordic-preschool>

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:

The people of Älvdalen do not claim to have a different ethnicity than Swedish people, but to speak another language.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code”

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:

The supporters of this applications have all studied the language.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

Ulum Dalska helped translate our Globalbility project into Övdalian.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):

For more comprehensive literature lists, check the lists in these books:

Piotr Garbacz: Word Order in Övdalian. 2010.

<http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=1567392&fileId=1567413>

Studies in Övdalian Morphology and Syntax, Edited by: Bentzen, Kristine & Rosenkvist, Henrik & Johannessen, Janne Bondi, 2015.

<http://www.jbe-platform.com/content/books/9789027269133>

Steenland, Lars. Material till en äldvolsk ordbok, svenska-äldvolska, äldvolska-svenska. Äldvols 2010.

(dictionary)

Steenland, Lars. Liten äldvolsk-svensk och svensk-äldvolsk ordbok. 2:a utökade uppl. Äldvols 2006.

(dictionary)

Åkerberg, Bengt: Grammatik 2004.

(grammar)

Åkerberg, Bengt: Äldvolsk grammatik. 2012.

(grammar)

More online source:

Lars Steenland have a website with literature and discussions about spelling in Övdalian:

<http://www.larssteenland.se/>

Proceedings of the First Conference about Elfdalian (2005):

<http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:431173/FULLTEXT03.pdf>

Proceedings of the Second Conference about Elfdalian (2011):

<http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:431171/FULLTEXT02>

BBC Report about Elfdalian (2015):
<https://audioboom.com/boos/3169656-rescue-elfdalian-sweden-help-revive-a-once-banned-language>

Article in Danish Politiken (2015):
<http://politiken.dk/kultur/ECE2650274/sprogforskerne-fandt-en-skat-i-skoven/>

Article in Swedish Svenska Dagbladet (2010):
http://www.svd.se/hoppet-finns-kvar-for-nordens-minsta-sprak_4588231

The Conversation:
<https://theconversation.com/fight-on-to-preserve-elfdalian-swedens-lost-forest-language-41642>

Article in Norwegian – Forskning.no (2015) :
<http://forskning.no/blogg/oystein-vangsnes-blogg/framtid-elvdalsk>

Please return this form to:

ISO 639-3 Registrar
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA
ISO 639-3/RA web site: <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/default.asp>
Email: iso639-3@sil.org

An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:

If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>