

## INTRODUCTION

&lt;previous - next&gt;

Standardization of geographical names is the process of choosing preferred name versions and linking them to specific geographical features. Full stability of the standardized names is only achieved when the names are granted official status. By this act geographical names would be protected by law and cannot be changed or tampered with anymore.

According to the Glossary of Toponymic Terminology an **official name** (#223) is a "toponym sanctioned by a legally constituted (e.g. national) names authority and applied within its jurisdiction".

In this definition one should note that a **names authority** (#232) is needed to approve official geographical names, and also that these names are applied within a certain jurisdiction. This would mean that only those names can be given official status that are under the sovereignty of the authority in question. A national names authority cannot assign and approve official names of places beyond the national sovereignty, although it can recommend on how to use these (foreign) names within its jurisdiction.

In reality, however, a national names authority sometimes just might not exist, or otherwise, even if it does, it could be difficult to determine what the official name of any given place is.



[Home](#)  
|  
[Self study](#)  
:  
[Legal status of names](#)  
|  
[Contents](#)  
|  
[Intro](#)  
|  
[1. Notions of officiality](#)  
|  
[2. Naming competence](#)  
|  
[3. Making names official](#)  
|  
[4. Legislation](#)  
|  
[5. Can official names be wrong?](#)  
|  
[6. Topics of discussion](#)

&lt;previous - next&gt;