

1. CHOICES AND CONSTRAINTS - A) EXONYMS

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The UN calls for a reduction of exonyms, as their continued use hinders international communication. The use of **endonyms** (#076) only is propagated ("Local names Policy"). Advocates of the use of exonyms claim that names are easier to learn or remember when adapted to one's own language, and that it will be easier to connect objects outside one's country to one's history if the relevant exonyms are used.

Nevertheless it should always be clear which names are exonyms and which names are official local names (endonyms). That can be ascertained for instance by always presenting the endonym first. If there is no exonym, than the only name presented must be an endonym.

For which names should we use exonyms?

For most language areas lists have been produced that show the exonyms that are still current for that language. Below an example of a list of exonyms, provided by the [Dutch Language Union \(Nederlandse Taalunie\)](#) / look under "Buitenlandse aardrijkskundige namen" in the central column under "Taal") can be found. These exonyms are in use wherever the Dutch language has official status: Aruba, Belgium (Flanders), Curacao, the Netherlands, St Maarten and Suriname. The column "Dutch" has the Dutch exonyms, the column "Local name" has the endonyms.

	Dutch	Local name
Country name	Rusland	Rossija
Official name	Russische Federatie	Rossijskaja Federacija
Capital	Moskou	Moskva
Entities	Amoer	Amur
	Baai van Peter de Grote	zaliv Petra Velikogo
	Barentszee	Barencevo more
	Basjkirostan	Baškortostan
	Beringstraat	Beringov proliv
	Beringzee	Beringovo more
	Boerjatië	Burjatskaja respublika
	Chakassië	Hakasskaja respublika
	Ciskaukasië	Predkavkaz'e
	Elbroes	El'brus
	Finse Golf	Finskij zaliv
	Frans Jozefland	zemlja Franca Josifa
	Golf van Anadyr	Anadyrskij zaliv
	Gumbinnen	Gusev
	Ingoesjetië	Ingušskaja respublika
	Insterburg	Černjahovsk
	Irkoetsk	Irkutsk
	Jakoetië zie ook Republiek Sacha	Jakutskaja Respublika / Respublika Saha
	Janabaai	Janskij zaliv
	Jekaterinenburg	Ekaterinburg
	Kabardië-Balkarië	Kabardino-Balkarskaja respublika
	Kalmukkië	Kalmyckaja respublika
	Kamtsjatka	poluostrov Kamčatka

Guidelines can be given for the use of exonyms, depending on the name category; for an English school atlas, such guidelines entail the following (examples of the resulting name versions in blue):

- Country names: *exonyms only* (Hungary)
- Names of continents or parts of continents: *exonyms only* (Asia)
- Town or city names: *endonyms (exonyms)* Roma (Rome)
- Rivers: *endonyms (exonyms)* Rhein (Rhine)
- Mountain names: *endonyms (exonyms)* Matterhorn
- Names of (physical) regions and islands: *endonyms (exonyms)* Sicilia (Sicily)
- Sea names: *exonyms only*: Mediterranean

But: keep the number of exonyms added in brackets to the endonyms as small as possible.

How does Noordhoff deal with exonyms?

Concerning the reduction of exonyms, as recommended by the United Nations, Noordhoff has to find a compromise with their market, consisting of conservative

geography teachers. To the Noordhoff editors, a UN recommendation is not regarded as a sufficiently strong argument to convince their clients: they have to find additional arguments to 'sell' the policy to their market.

Exonyms are often quite popular, because they are part of the language, and thus the cultural heritage, of a country's inhabitants. They are emotion. The arguments the editors bring forward to exchange them for endonyms will only be acceptable if exonyms make an appeal to emotion too. Noordhoff claims, for instance, that our children (the primary consumers of our atlases) need to be prepared for a globalized, internationalised world. As international travel increases, so do the chances that one will actually be confronted with place names one had to learn: if one actually visits Tuscany in Italy, and wishes to go there by car, it becomes important that one knows Firenze (endonym) instead of (just) Florence (exonym).

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