1. CHOICES AND CONSTRAINTS - *B) LANGUAGES*

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Some regions have more than one official language. Catalonia in Spain for instance has 3 official languages, Spanish (Castilian),Catalan and Aranese. From which of these languages then should one take the place names? Should one take Lerida (Spanish) or Lleida (Catalan), Gerona (Sp[anish) or Girona (Catalan)? In Frisia province in the Netherlands, there are two official languages, Dutch and Frisian. So should one use the name Leeuwarden (Dutch) or Ljouwert (Frisian) for its capital?

In most cases the local authorities are empowered to decide on the language version that should be applied.

In some countries the names used by linguistic minorities are converted into the official state language, and these converted versions are then considered as endonyms. In the time of the Soviet Union, for example, the Baltic languages were minority languages and the names from the Baltic republics, that used the Roman alphabet, were converted into Cyrillic for use within the Soviet Union - what language should be the starting point for rendering the names from the Baltic republics in an English reference atlas - one of the Baltic languages (Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian, all three of them written in the Roman alphabet) or Russian, written in the Cyrillic alphabet? Depending from this choice, different name versions would result.

For questions on this topic see issue 1 of exercise 01 "Some editorial issues to solve"