

Place name policy, official use of Sámi toponymy and standardization

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SÁPMI

Dark green: Sámi area





“ The display of languages transmits symbolic messages as to the legitimacy, relevance, priority and standards of languages and the people and groups they present. The public space is therefore a most relevant arena to serve as a mechanism for creating de facto language policy.” (Shohamy 2006: 110.)

Places on the nation state border

In Finland: (Fi + Sá)



In Norway: Norw.



On
the
maps:



Names in Norwegian or in Norwegianized loan forms



Sámi place names in oral tradition

Deanušaldi

Leavvajohka

Leavdnja

Kárášjohka

Gásluokta

Language legislation

Finland

- Sámi Language Act of 1992 (revised in 2003)

Norway

- The language provisions of the Sámi Act (called often: Sámi language Act) of 1992

Sweden

- Minority-Language Act of 2010 (< 2000 Sámi Language Act)

➤ Sámi language administrative areas

Language legislation and place name legislation

Finland

- Sámi Language Act of 1992 (revised in 2003)



Norway

- The language provisions of the Sámi Act of 1992
- **Place Name Act**

Sweden

- Minority-Language Act of 2010 (< 2000 Sámi Language Act)
- **Historic Environment Act**



In Finnish & Skolt Sámi



In Finnish & Inari Sámi



In Finnish & North Sámi

Bilingual place names in Finnish and Swedish as a model





In Finnish & Skolt Sámi



In Finnish & Inari Sámi



In Finnish & North Sámi

Sámi names for villages and adresses



Bilingual

and multilingual name use




Bilingual street names in Norway



In Narvik



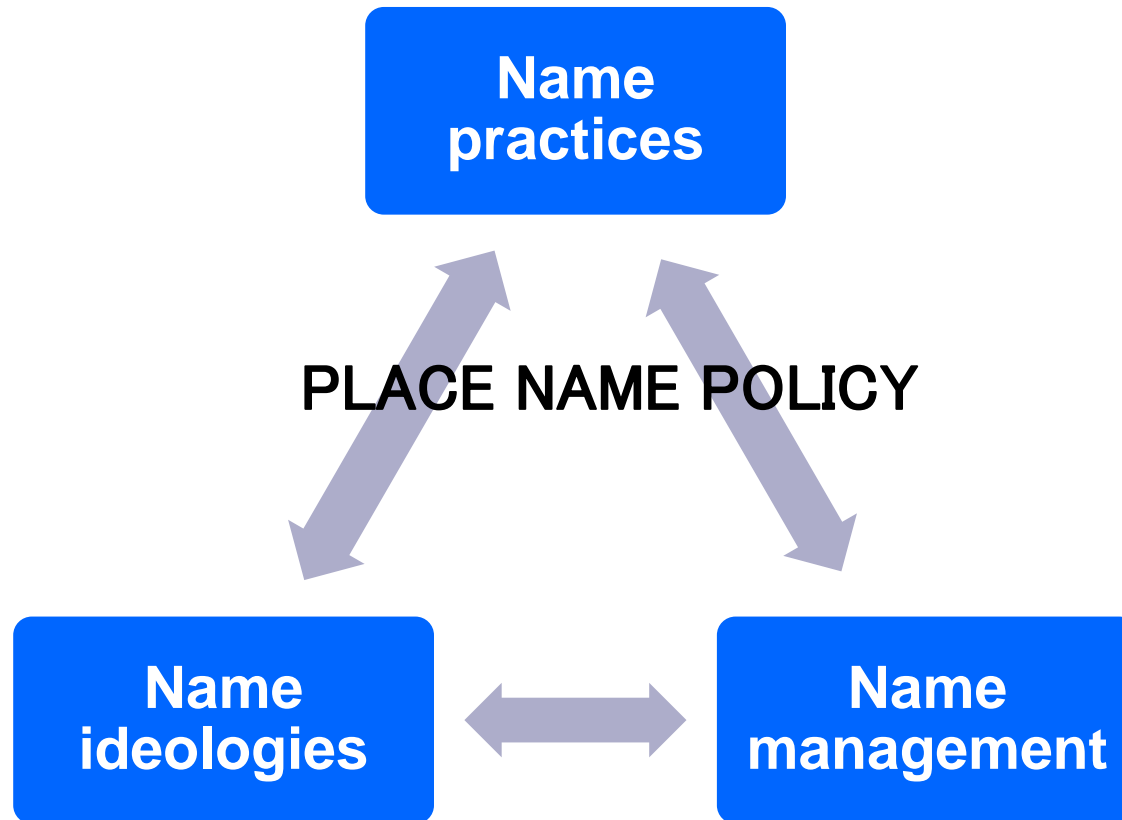
Not a Russian street name, but in cyrillic alphabet !!



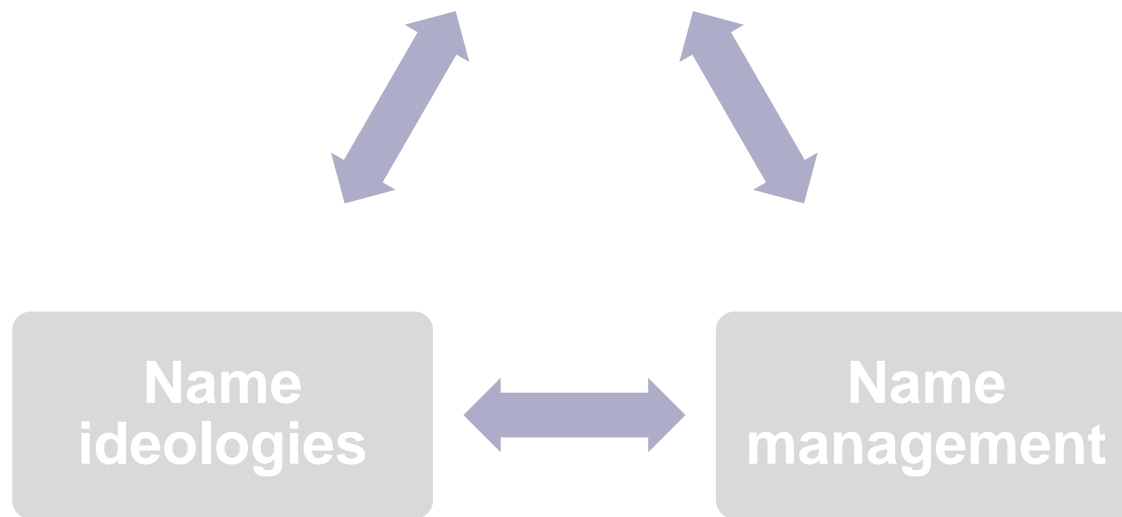
“Laws are especially powerful mechanisms for affecting language practices.” (Shohamy 2006, 59)

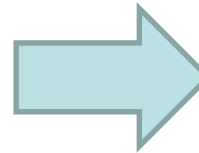
However, “as is often the case, the mere act of declaring certain languages as official does not carry with it much meaning in terms of actual practice in all domains and it does not guarantee that officiality will be practiced.” (Shohamy 2006, 61.)

Components of place name policy

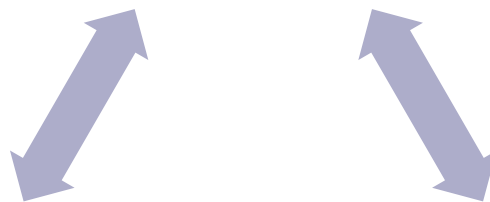


Name practices





Name practices

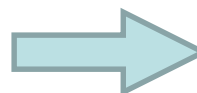


Name ideologies



Name management

Name ideological expressions against the Sámi place names



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graph TD; NP[Name practices] <--> NI[Name ideologies]; NP <--> NM[Name management]; NI <--> NM;
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Name practices

Name ideologies

Name management

Toponymic silencing

A provision of the Land Purchasing Act in the year 1902:

“surveyed landed property **is to be given**
a Norwegian name” (Ot.Prp:1901)

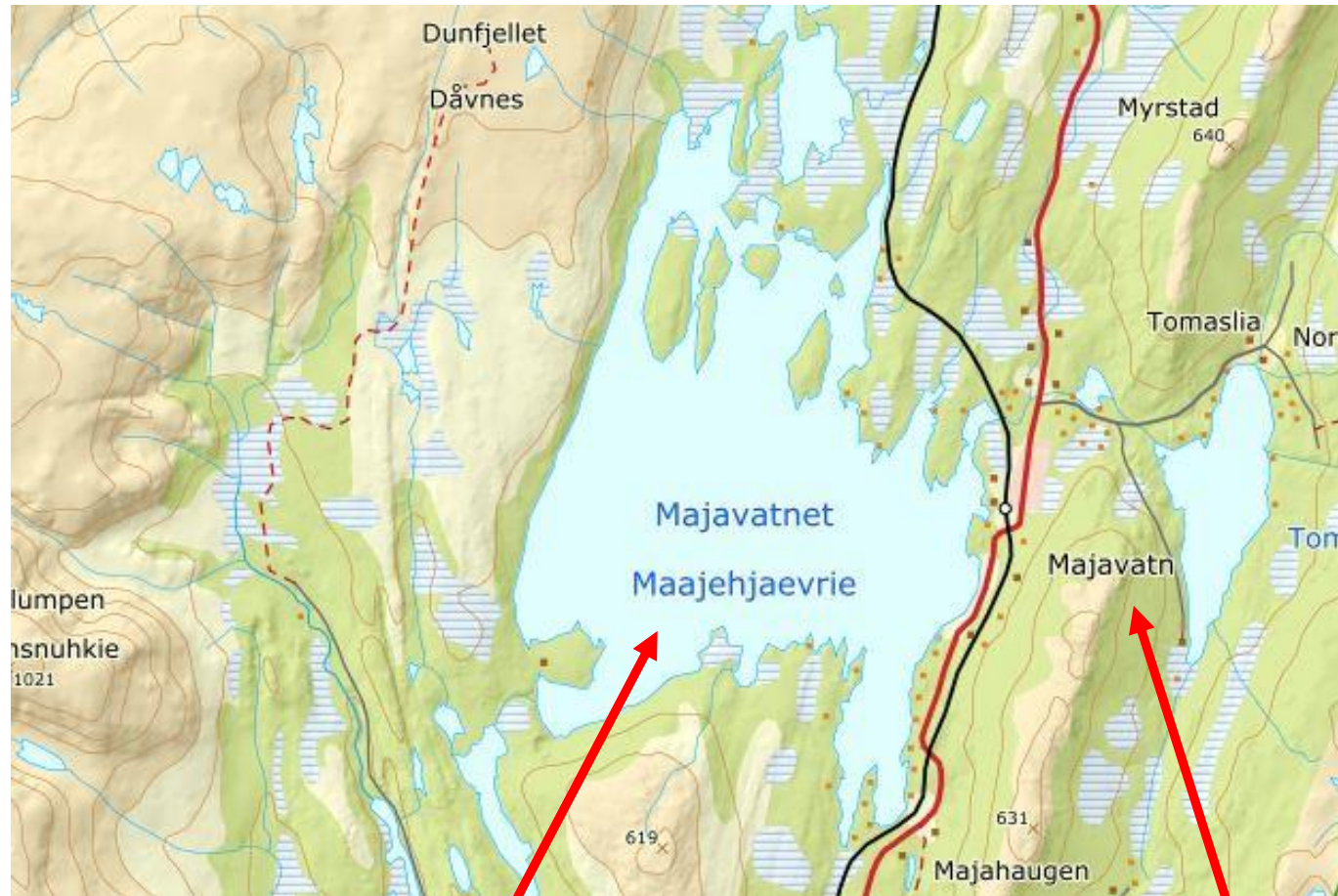
> Consequence: **toponymic silence**

Toponymic subjugation in mapping

The National Land Survey of Norway 1886:

Instead of alien place names, a Norwegian name should be used where it exists; if there is no Norwegian name or it has not been established, a Norwegian translation will be registered as an original name of the location and the alien name will be written in brackets.

Consequences of toponymic silencing and subjugation



Toponymic **subjugation** of the Sámi name for the lake

Toponymic **silence** of the Sámi settlement (village) name

The history of using only Norwegian place names



Silenced Sámi names:

Rávttošnjárga



Snihkkárnjárga



Stuorruvuonna

Place Name Act (1990)

§ 9:

Sámi and Kven place names which are used among people who are permanently settled in a place, or who have occupational connections to a place, will normally be used by public authorities e.g. on maps, signs, and in registers, together with any existing Norwegian name.

(Lov om stadnamn: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1990-05->

[18-11](#))

Austertana-nei til samiske navn

Nærmere 90 prosent av befolkningen i Austertana går i mot samiske stedsnavn og stedsnavneskilt på bygda og de mindre bygdene rundt. En underskriftskampanje mot samiske stedsnavn i forbindelse med

en høringsrunde i kommunal regi, taler sitt tydelige språk. 157 beboere i området Austertana-Birkestrand har skrevet seg på lista, bare 20 er for samiske stedsnavn på skiltene.

Austertana – no to Sámi names

FM
12.5.1993

- Samisk? Nei takk!

Vil beholde Luftjok og Seida



Sámi (names)? No thanks!
Will retain *Luftjok* and *Seida*

FM 18.5.1995

Name practices <> name ideologies <> name management

“Have the Sámi people not learnt to read Norwegian, and are they not Norwegian citizens? – In Norway, it is the Norwegian language that must be spoken and written. What languages a person might know, has nothing to do with the matter. Every country has its own language. Everything else is ridiculous.”

(Translated from Norwegian)

Sámi name *Ájluokta*

recognised as an official parallel name in **1995** by the municipality.

First after 22 years, in **2017** the Sámi name erected on the road sign by the Public Road Administration.

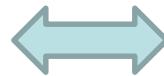


Since the Place Name Act (1991):

Bilingual village names recognized on the official maps



Signs of villages
can be bilingual



Signs of distance
and direction only in
Norwegian

Standardization



Obsolete spelling

Current North Sámi spelling





Uncorrect Sámi spelling

Current North Sámi spelling

In Norway



Álletnjárga

Skaidi

Skáidi

Stallogargo

Stállogárgu

Standardization

Is it usual to keep an obsolete orthography as an official name?

Is it usual to keep an obsolete orthography as a parallel name in official use?

Storfjellet

Storfjeldet - as «a Sámi name»?

In Friesland – is one of these names an obsolete orthography?



Invitation to the 49th NORNA-symposium

Minority Names in Oral and Written Contexts in a Multi-Cultural World

- 24.–25.4.2019 in Guovdageaidnu (Kautokeino), Norway
- > proposals for 20-minute paper presentations or for posters, by **31. October 2018** at the latest.

Giitu
Thank you

