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EGN

Methodology for the validation of existing exonyms

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¹ OJ L 79, 24.3.2005, p. 1.

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1 Introduction and objectives

At a long-term perspective EuroGeoNames (EGN) shall offer the possibility to everybody to search for geographical names in Europe by accessing one platform, the EGN web service. It shall be possible to search for standardized endonyms as well as non-standardized variant names or exonyms. For that purpose an "EGN Database of exonyms and other variants" will be developed within the EuroGeoNames project.

Variant names, however, include different types of toponyms, which have to be handled in a very sensitive way. Their use can be offending, restricted to certain situations only, or simply inappropriate. This has to be considered when designing and setting up the EGN Database of exonyms and other variants.

Aim of this report is to develop a catalogue of criteria for

- evaluating variant names or exonyms under the aspect of providing information for a sensitive and conscious use of toponyms and to
- classify the lists or files provided by national, international or other bodies.

This classification should indicate the quality of the data and in a further step enable the user for an appropriate decision when choosing the proper name form amongst a variety of possible names applicable to a geographical feature.

Change Summary

Version	Date	Author	Notes
0.1	22/05/2007	Stani-Fertl	Initial draft
1.0	31/05/2007	Sievers, Zaccheddu	Final version
1.0.1	01/06/07	Stani-Fertl	Final version (minor corrections)
1.1	24.10.2007	Ormeling, Sievers, Stani-Fertl	Amendments
1.2	02/01/2008	Ormeling, Stani-Fertl	Amendments
1.3	25/01/2008	Sievers	Minor amendments in fig. 1

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2 The meaning of toponyms

Geographical names are an essential part of our every day's communication. They are first of all used for locating and identifying geographical features in our environment. Secondly toponyms evoke specific associations depending on one's experience. Toponyms can activate

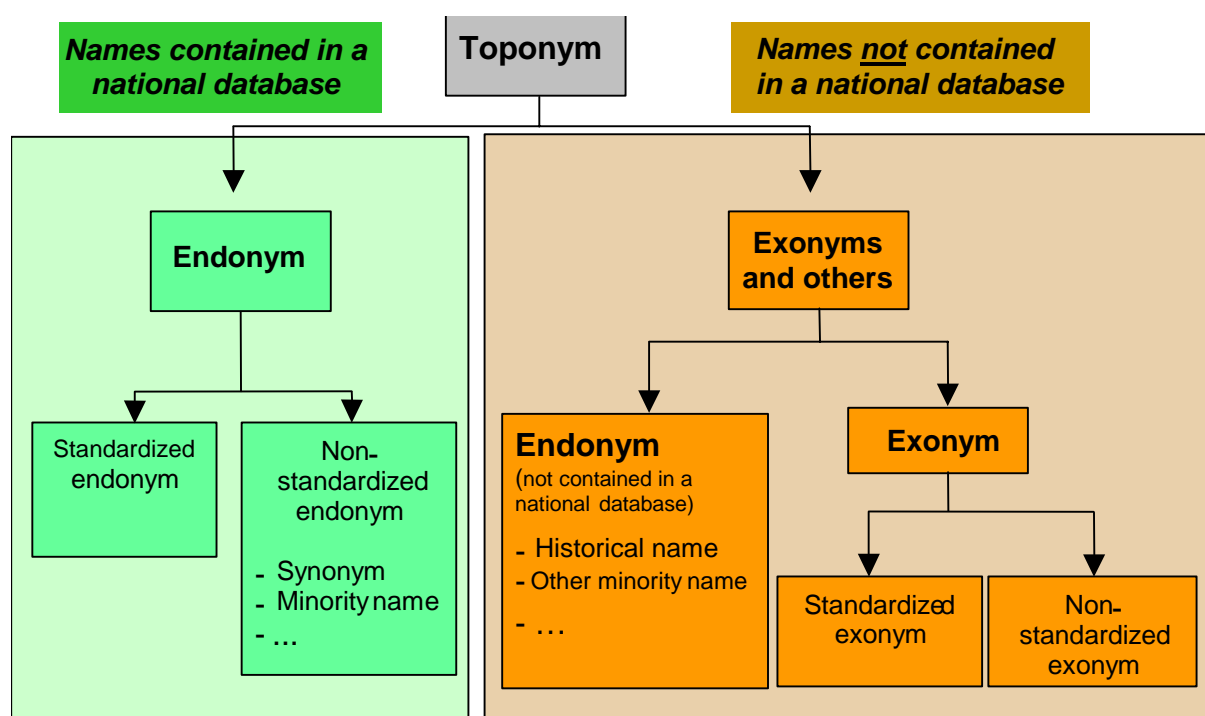
- political associations (e.g. Leningrad, Auschwitz)
- historical associations (e.g. Waterloo, Solferino)

- social associations (e.g. Bautzen/Budyšin (- two ethnic groups live in this place))
- cultural associations (e.g. Cannes, Venézia)
- personal emotional associations etc.

3 Classification of toponyms

The most important criteria to evaluate the quality of a toponym are the status of a toponym and the status of the authority defining this status. Accordingly the following schema has been developed. It is the rationale for evaluating variant names considering the implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

Figure 1: Classification schema of toponyms for the requirements of the EGN database of exonyms and other variants



Boxes in green indicate categories of toponyms stored in a national names database as endonyms. They are shown in the diagram only for completeness and do not concern the EGN database of exonyms and other variants. Boxes in orange give a classification of the types of toponyms, which should be recorded in the EGN database of exonyms and other variants.

toponym: name for a geographical object. (UNGEGN 2002)

3.1 Types of toponyms maintained in national names databases

endonym: name of a geographical feature in an official or well-established language occurring in that area where the feature is situated. (UNGEGN 2002)

standardized endonym: endonym sanctioned by a names authority. (UNGEGN 2002)

non-standardized endonym: endonym, which is not sanctioned by a names authority.

Geographical names authorities, standardizing and/or approving names, might not have been established yet in some countries. In such cases the best available data would have to be used for connection with the EGN web service.

3.2 Types of toponyms as possible entries in the EGN database of exonyms and other variants

allonym: each of two or more toponyms employed in reference to a single topographic feature. (UNGEGN 2002)

variant name: In the context of the "EGN database of exonyms and other variants": name versions of standardized endonyms which have no entry in the national names database

exonym: name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where the language is spoken, and differing in its form from the name used in an official or well-established language of the area where the feature is situated. (UNGEGN 2002, amended by Working Group on Exonyms 2007)

standardized exonym: exonym sanctioned by a names authority

This definition is derived from the definition of the term "standardized endonym". According to the UNGEGN, the name authority mentioned has to be the institution responsible for compiling the lists of exonyms asked for in their resolutions. So this authority need not necessarily be a national institution but also can be a board representing a language community. One example for such a board is the "Nederlandse Taalunie" which is a supranational body in charge of the Dutch language in the Netherlands, Belgium and Suriname.

non-standardized exonym: an exonym, which is not sanctioned by a name authority.

3.3 Endonym variants not maintained by NMCAs eligible for entry into the EGN database of exonyms and other variants

This category is a very heterogeneous one and comprises all endonyms not being recorded in the national names databases of the NMCAs. The necessity for distinguishing such a category has arisen from the need of a collective name for all these types of toponyms, which are neither part of the national names databases (standardized endonyms, non-standardized endonyms) nor exonyms. It results from the different structure and content of the European national names databases. In some databases variants of endonyms are included regardless their status, others have only one entry for one feature and no additional name forms.

It is particularly this existence of this category which is the reason for expanding the originally intended "Exonyms database" to the "EGN database of exonyms and other variants". The main types of endonym variants include:

synonym: Some geographical objects have more than one name even in one language (e.g. 's Gravenhage / Den Haag). But in many cases only one form is standardized. All the other forms are synonyms.

historical endonym: Places-names are subject to changes over time. Their old forms get out of use and new names arise. This can happen gradually or be an official (political) act. Many historical endonyms are in broad use and appear consistently in publications. (*Michajlovgrad* for *Montana* (bul.), *Karl-Marx-Stadt* for *Chemnitz* (ger.))

minority name: Toponyms in languages of ethnic groups living in regions where the group is indigenous but their language is not an official one, are often not integrated in national names databases. Strictly spoken these names are endonyms. For some of them – consent of the

respective country provided - it might be useful to maintain them in the EGN database of exonyms and other variants.

However, at the moment no geographical names data are available which can be classified in this category.

3.4 Relevant categories of toponyms

The categories described in the three above mentioned chapters 3.1 to 3.3 can be summarized and classified as follows:

category	description	database	code
standardized endonym	recommended endonym provided by the national names database holder; the use of standardized endonyms is in any case preferred.	NMCA	-
non-standardized endonym	the use of this type is restricted to very specific situations; unless the situation requires the variant, their use should be avoided	NMCA	-
standardized exonym	this type is standardized and approved by a names authority or an official body	EGN	ex_st
non-standardized exonym	according to international rules (UNGEGN) their use should be limited as much as possible	EGN	ex_ns
endonym variants not in NMCA's databases	the use of this type is restricted to very specific situations; unless the situation requires the variant, their use should be avoided	EGN	en_va

Annex 6.1 shows a table in which not the toponyms itself but the sources of the countries of the reference group are assigned to one of these categories.

4 Structure and quality of the data available

The span of sources for variant names ranks from officially approved lists of exonyms, published by governmental authorities to semi-official ones, and to private compilations of gazetteers. The following listing classifies the sources on the basis of the authorship taking account of the quality aspect. As the quality within one list or file may not be constant the assignment of a source to more than one category is possible.

Annex 6.2 provides a comprehensive list of all relevant names sources found, assigned on the basis of their status to one of the groups distinguished in the following classification:

- 1) Officially approved lists of exonyms issued by governmental bodies for use in official correspondence. (Code used in annex 6.2: **apr**)

Most of the participating countries publish lists of country names containing a full form (e.g. Russian Federation in Finnish: *Venäjäin federaatio*) and a short form (e.g. Russia in Finnish: *Venäjä*) as well as the name of the capital (e.g. *Moskova*). The official names of the countries are used in public documents and in official correspondence.

- 2) Lists of standardized exonyms issued by public or semi-public bodies but not officially approved. (Code used in annex 6.2: **sta**)

Many official bodies publish lists of exonyms for geographical features situated in their territory in internationally widely used languages (English, French...). This should be seen as a kind of recommendation for using this name form when publishing a text in the respective language (English, French...). This is the standardization of names following the "donor principle".

- 3) Lists of variant names / exonyms of a high scientific standard published by research institutes and experts on toponymy. (Code used in annex 6.2: **sci**)

This group comprises all publications on variant names or exonyms of experts and research institutes, which have no official character. The data collection was prepared following scientific standards.

- 4) Toponyms rendered in teaching materials (school atlases, school books). (Code used in annex 6.2: **edu**)

For languages of minorities, very often, systematic lists of toponyms in the specific language do not exist. As reliable sources for collecting such data, teaching materials like schoolbooks and atlases published in the minority language have in some cases proved useful.

- 5) Other collections of exonyms (Code used in annex 6.2: **oth**)

Many other sources in printed and digital form exist. They show a wide quality range. Wikipedia is an example where one can find lists of exonyms belonging to this category.

Review over the expected entries in the database under the aspect of the quality and quantity of the sources available.

quality of data	category of toponym ^{*)}	required data sources and quantity
apr	ex_st	completeness for the reference group in the languages of EU and Efta
apr	en_va	selected sources for the reference group in the languages of EU and Efta
sta	ex_st	almost completeness for the reference group in the languages of EU and Efta
sci	ex_ns, en_va	selected sources for the reference group in the languages of EU and Efta
edu	ex_ns	selected sources for languages not covered by the quality sources (apr, sta, sci)
oth	ex_ns, en_va	selected sources as supplement for the reference group for missing languages of the EU and Efta

*) the code used is described in chapter 3.4

5 Literature

UNGEEN (2002): Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names. United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, edited by Naftali KADMON. New York.

WORKING GROUP ON EXONYMS (2007): <http://www.zrc-sazu.si/ungegn/exonyms.htm> (checked 2007-05-14)

6 Annexes

6.1 Annex 1 – Classification of sources by category of toponyms

Assignment of the lists / files of variant names / exonyms of the countries of the reference group to the toponym category - the code is described in the table in chapter 3.4.

last updated 15th May 2007

country	language	title	publisher	code
AT, DE	German	Ausgewählte Exonyme der deutschen Sprache	Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen	ex_st
AT, DE	German	Liste der Staatennamen und ihrer Ableitungen	Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen	ex_st
CY	Greek	List of Greek exonyms in preparation	Information by Permanent Committee on Geographical Names	n.a.
CZ	Czech	Index českých exonym	Czech Office of Survey, Mapping and Cadastre	ex_st
CZ	diverse	Major Geomorphological Units of the Czech	Czech Office of Survey, Mapping and Cadastre	ex_st
DE	diverse	Amtliche Bezeichnungen der Bundesländer	Auswärtiges Amt der Bundesrepublik Deutschland	ex_st
DE	Frisian	data inquired		n.a.
DE	Sorbian	Schoolbooks for Geography in Sorbian	div.	ex_ns
ES	Basque	data inquired		n.a.
ES	Catalan	data inquired		n.a.
ES	Galician	data inquired		n.a.
ES	Spanish	Países y capitales	Instituto Geográfico Nacional	ex_st
ES	Spanish	List of Spanish exonyms is in preparation	Instituto Geográfico Nacional	n.a.
FI	Finish	Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus	Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus	ex_st
FI	Finish	Maiden Nimet	Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy	ex_st
FI	Finish	Valitut Palat	Suuri maailman kartasto	ex_ns
FI	Northern Sami	Maiden Nimet	Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy	ex_st
FI	Swedish	Maiden Nimet	Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy	ex_st
FI	Swedish	Suomen läänien ja maakuntien nimet	Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus	ex_st
FR	Corse	data inquired		n.a.
FR	French	Toponyms du monde. Pays indépendants et capitales. Nomenclature des espaces maritimes	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Service Hydrogéographique et Océanographique de la Marine	ex_st
FR	French	Division francophone du Groupe d'experts. Base de données des exonymes de langue française	Division francophone du Groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour les noms géographiques (GENUNG)	ex_st
FR	French	Toponyms du monde. Pays indépendants et capitales Entités	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Commission de	ex_st

		géopolitiques dépendantes	Toponymie de l'IGN; Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques	
FR	French	Toponyms du monde. Pays indépendants et capitales	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Commission de Toponymie de l'IGN; Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques	ex_st
GB	English	English-language exonyms for the EuroGeoNames project	Paul Woodman (Permanent Committee on Geographical Names)	ex_ns
HU	Hungarian	Selected Hungarian Exonyms for European	Földrajzinév-bizottság (Béla Pokoly)	ex_st
LT	Lithuanian	data inquired		n.a.
LV	Latvian	Latvian Country Names of Europe	State Land Service of the Republic Latvia	ex_st
NL	Dutch	Buitenlandse Aardrijkskundige Namen	Nederlands Taalunie	ex_st
NO	Northern Sami	Sámi Atlas	Lundblad grafisk as. ISBN 82-90482-09-4	ex_ns
NO	Norwegian	Statsnavn, hovedsteder og nasjonaldager	Utenriksdepartementet	ex_st
NO	Norwegian	Geografiske namn	Språkrådet	ex_st
SI	Slovenian	Seznam tujih zemljepisnih imen v slovenskem	Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije	ex_st
SI	Slovenian	Slovenski eksonim	Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije	ex_st
SK	Slovak	Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov Slovenské vžitě názvy obcí Európskych krajín, v ktorých žijú Slováci ako národnostná menšina	Názvoslovná komisia	ex_st
SK	Slovak	Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov ležiacich mimo územia Slovenskej republiky	Názvoslovná komisia	ex_st
TR	Turkish	List of Turkish exonyms in preparation	Türkiye Coğrafi Adlar Uzmanlar Kurulu (A. Altıparmak))	n.a.

6.2 Annex 2 - Table of sources of lists and files of variant names / exonyms

ordered by country and status; the status code is listed in chapter 4; not included in this array are websites; selected websites are listed in annex 6.3

last updated 15th May 2007

cou	status	lang	title	title_sub	editor / publisher
AT	sta	ger	Liste der Staatennamen und ihrer Ableitungen im Deutschen		Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen
AT	sta	ger	Ausgewählte Exonyme der deutschen Sprache	Deutsche Namen und ihre phonetische Umschriftung für geographische Objekte in Ländern oder Gebieten ohne deutsche Amtssprache	Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen
CY	n.a.	gre	Greek list of exonyms	in preparation	Permanent Committee on Geographical Names
CZ	apr	xyx	Major Geomorphological Units of the Czech Republic	UNO Gazetteers of Geographical Names	Czech Office of Survey, Mapping and Cadastre
CZ	sta	cze	Index českých exonym	UNO Gazetteers of Geographical Names	Czech Office of Survey, Mapping and Cadastre
CZ	sta	cze	Exonyms	A Concise List of the New Czech Exonyms Concerning the Former Soviet Union	Commission on Geographical Names
DE	apr	ger	Liste der Staatennamen und ihrer Ableitungen im Deutschen		Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen
DE	apr	xyx	Amtliche Bezeichnungen der Bundesländer		Auswärtiges Amt der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
DE	edu	wen	Schoolbooks for Geography in Sorbian Language		div.
DE	n.a.	fry	data inquired		
DE	sta	ger	Ausgewählte Exonyme der deutschen Sprache	Deutsche Namen und ihre phonetische Umschriftung für geographische Objekte in Ländern oder Gebieten ohne deutsche Amtssprache	Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen
ES	apr	spa	Países y capitales		Instituto Geográfico Nacional
ES	n.a.	baq	data inquired		
ES	n.a.	cat	data inquired		
ES	n.a.	glg	data inquired		
ES	n.a.	spa	List of Spanish exonyms	in preparation	Instituto Geográfico nacional
EU	sci	ger	Exonyme und Kartographie	Weltweites Register deutscher geographischer Namen, klassifiziert nach Gebräuchlichkeit, und ihrer ortsüblichen Entsprechung	Institut für Geographie und Regionalforschung der Universität Wien
EU	sci	xyx	Place-Name Changes in Europe between 1763-1995)		Teleki László Alapítvány
EU	sci	xyx	Place Name Changes		Adrian Room
FI	apr	fin	Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus Kielitoimisto Suomen kielten lautakunta	Maat, pääkaupungit ja kansalaisuudet	Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus
FI	edu	fin	Valitut Palat	Suuri maailman kartasto (Reader's Digest World Atlas)	?

cou	status	lang	title	title_sub	editor / publisher
FI	oth	eng	Toponymic Guidelines for Map Editors and Other Editors	Finland	Research Institute for the Languages of Finland
FI	oth	swe	Toponymic Guidelines for Map Editors and Other Editors	Finland	Research Institute for the Languages of Finland
FI	sta	swe	Suomen läänien ja maakuntien nimet		Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus
FI	sci	fin	Maiden Nimet		Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy
FI	sci	smi	Maiden Nimet		Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy
FI	sci	swe	Maiden Nimet		Maapallo Kuvapörssi Oy
FR	apr	fre	Toponyms du monde	Pays indépendants et capitales	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Commission de Toponymie de l'IGN; Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques
FR	apr	fre	Toponyms du monde	Pays indépendants et capitales. Entités géopolitiques dépendantes	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Commission de Toponymie de l'IGN; Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques
FR	apr	fre	Toponyms du monde	Pays indépendants et capitales. Nomenclature des espaces maritimes	Commission Nationale de Toponymie; Service Hydrogéographique et Océanographique de la Marine
FR	n.a.	cos	data inquired		
FR	sta	fre	Division francophone du Groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour les noms géographiques (GENUNG)	Base de données des exonymes de langue française	Division francophone du Groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour les noms géographiques (GENUNG)
GB	sci	eng	English-language exonyms for the EuroGeoNames project	A compilation of exonyms as used in the United Kingdom for features in the Czech Republic, Germany & Poland	
HR	sta	scr	List of Croatian country names		Institut za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje
HU	sci	hun	Selected Hungarian Exonyms for European Geographical Features		
IT	sci	ita	Gli Esonimi Italiani	Impostazione metodologica e primo contributo a una rassegna: gli esonimi delle città europee	Sandro Toniolo
IT	sci	ita	Italian main exonyms of European geographical elements		Sandro Toniolo
LT	n.a.	lit	data inquired		
LV	apr	lav	Latvian Country Names of Europa		State Land Service of the Republic Latvia
NL	sta	dut	Buitenlandse Aardrijkskundige Namen	Buitenlandse aardrijkskundige namen in het Nederlands	Nederlands Taalunie
NO	apr	nor	Statsnavn, hovedsteder og nasjonaldager		Utenriksdepartementet
NO	edu	smi	Sámi Atlas	Romssavárdu	Lundblad grafisk as. ISBN 82-90482-09-4
NO	sta	nor	Geografiske namn		Språkrådet

cou	status	lang	title	title_sub	editor / publisher
PL	sta	pol	Polskie Nazwy Geograficzne Świata	Część II Europa (Europa wschodnia i Azja)	Główny Geodata Kraju
PL	sta	pol	Polskie Nazwy Geograficzne Świata	Część I Europa (bez Europy wschodniej)	Główny Geodata Kraju
SI	apr	slv	Seznam tujih zemljepisnih imen v slovenskem jeziku		Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije
SK	sta	slo	Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov ležiacich mimo územia Slovenskej republiky	Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov ležiacich mimo územia Slovenskej republiky	Názvoslovná komisia Compiled and edited by Marta Hajčiková and Mária Kováčová
SK	sta	slo	Slovenské vžitě názvy geografických objektov ležiacich mimo územia Slovenskej republiky	Slovenské vžitě názvy obcí Európskych krajín, v ktorých žijú Slováci ako národnostná menšina	Názvoslovná komisia Compiled and edited by Marta Hajčiková and Mária Kováčová
SI	sta	slv	Slovenski eksonim		Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije
TR	n.a.	tur	List of Turkish exonyms	in preparation	Türkiye Coğrafi Adlar Uzmanlar Kurulu
UA	sci	ukr	List of selective exonyms in Ukrainian language		State Service of Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Ukrain

Description of the headline for Annex 2

coun	country
status	indication of the quality of the list / file as listed in chapter 4; for the codes refer also to chapter 4
lang	ISO 3-letter code for the language to which the document refers to
title	title of the source (list / file of variant names / exonyms)
title_sub	indicated subtitle of the list / file of exonyms as given by the editor / publisher
editor / publisher	body or institute who was compiling and publishing the list / file of variant names / exonyms

6.3 Annex 3 "Toponymic websites"

last updated 15th May 2007

Review of selected websites offering a comprehensive list of unclassified variant names / exonyms

http://bevoelkerungsstatistik.de/
http://www.brainyencyclopedia.com/encyclopedia/g/ge/geographical_renaming.html
http://www.geocities.com/Athens/9479/
http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_alternativer_Stadtenamen
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_exonyms
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_regions_with_alternative_names
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_city_name_changes
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Alternative_names_of_European_places
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Exonyms
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Lists_of_place_names
http://www.p.lodz.pl/135/personal/jw37/EUROPE/
http://www.geonames.org/