

Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2017-023

Outcome: Accepted
Effective date: January 23, 2018



SIL International ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

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Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2017-023: to create the code element [hyw] for Western Armenian.

The request to create the new code element [hyw] for Western Armenian is accepted. When a similar request was submitted six years ago (2011-176), the request was rejected on the grounds that the linguistic differences between Western Armenian and standard Armenian were not great enough to meet the criteria of the standard. However, in the intervening years, cases like Elfdalian (2015-046) and the recent decision by the ISO 639 JAC to accept a new code request for Montenegrin have set the precedent for establishing a new code on the basis of extensive language development, even when the linguistic distance is not great. The current requester submitted information on both grammatical and vocabulary changes that have occurred during the hundred years since the two languages have separated. What swayed the RA, however, was the strong evidence of separate development of the two languages. In addition, there was evidence that the two user populations do not read and use the literature of the other group. The evidence of separate language development over four generations, along with the separate literatures in separate locations, is now accepted as justification for granting a new code for the language. The RA also notes that there is a code [hyx] for the Armenian family, which can be used as a code for all Armenian when necessary. Therefore, the request to create the code [hyw] for Western Armenian is accepted.