

Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2019-016

Outcome: Rejected
Effective date: January 23, 2020



SIL International ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

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Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2019-016: to split the code element [rue] for Rusyn and create code elements [rse] for Eastern Rusyn and [rju] for South Rusyn.

The request to split the code [rue] for Rusyn and create new code elements [rse] for Eastern Rusyn and [rju] for South Rusyn is rejected. The Registrar notes in the change request that “There is enough intelligibility between Rusyn language from Preshov region and South Rusyn Language in Vojvodina, Serbia, to enable communication”. Therefore the main criterion for granting separate codes, namely, that the two speech varieties should be so different as not to be intelligible, is not met. One of the arguments given is that “the Preshov variant of the Rusyn language belongs to a group of East Slavic languages, while the Bacs'-Srem / Vojvodina variant of the Rusyn language (South Rusyn language) belongs to a group of West Slavic languages.” If the linguistic literature supported the claim that East Rusyn is descended from the East Slavic branch of languages while South Rusyn is descended from the West Slavic branch, then it would be solid grounds for arguing that they are separate languages. But the literature treats them both as dialects of an East Slavic language in which the South Rusyn dialect shows influence from neighboring West Slavic languages.

The criteria of the standard now state, “Where there is enough intelligibility between varieties to enable communication, the existence of long-standing distinctly named ethnolinguistic identities coupled with well-developed standardization and literature that are distinct can be treated as an indicator that they should nevertheless be considered to be different languages.” Thus, a successful request to create codes for these two varieties of Rusyn would need to describe the evidence for long-standing distinctly named ethnolinguistic identities that are coupled with well-developed standardization and a significant body of literature in each variety.