

Twenty-eighth session
New York, 28 April - 2 May 2014

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda

Reports of the divisions

Report of the Romano-Hellenic Division*

REPORT OF THE ROMANO-HELLENIC DIVISION

Main common activities

In Romano-Hellenic Division (RHD) area the most significant event of last two years has been the “14th Meeting of Working Group on Exonyms” that took place in Corfu, Greece, from 23 to 25 May 2013, in Saint Michael & Saint George Palace Pinacotheca.

The meeting was structured in three subsequent working sessions:

- The great divide – comprehensive approaches (Chair: Peter JORDAN, Austria);
- The great divide – specific aspects (Chair: Paul WOODMAN, United Kingdom);
- Exonyms – documentation and use (Chair: Sungjae CHOO, Republic of Korea).

Twenty-one relations of experts from different countries animated the event. It was followed by a rich discussion on new definitions of endonym and exonym (Chair: Peter JORDAN, Austria).

After that it was held the meeting of the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology (Chair: Staffan NYSTRÖM, Sweden) in the same venue.

National activities

Canada *(by Heather Ross)*

In Canada Geographical Names Board is working to develop policy for:

- Terminology issues, including generic terms related to Aboriginal languages, and terms describing feature types not currently classified in the national database;
- Dual names for the same feature, where there are official names in both of Canada’s official languages (English and French);
- Multiple names for the same feature, with names in one or more Aboriginal languages;
- Alternate or equivalent names, which are official but have lesser status than the official form, which are approved to preserve a name for cultural and historical purposes.

Cyprus *(by Andreas Hadjiraftis)*

In Cyprus the existing national gazetteers (*Concise Gazetteer of Cyprus* and *Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus*) are in progress to be revised. The toponyms of these gazetteers were derived from the official large-scale cadastral map series, recently digitized. They will be soon available on the website of Cyprus Permanent Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names (CPCSGN).

Beside, during the last three years, more than 2000 odonyms have been examined and processed by CPCSGN, offering services to government, and local authorities, for the standardization and transcription from the Greek Alphabet to the Roman script according to ELOT 743.

Italy

In Italy it was held a national workshop on “Toponymy: common good, history, knowledge and valorisation”, that took place in Rome on 10 September 2013, at the headquarters of the Order of Architects of the Province of Rome and it was animated by three sessions:

- Toponymy and linguistic stratifications (Chair: Giovanni CARBONARA, “Sapienza”, University of Roma);
- Toponymy for archaeology and history (Chair: Andrea CANTILE, President of Commission for the Italian Official Toponymy - IGMI);
- Toponymy for the enhancement of the territory (Chair: Alessandro GUIDI, University of “Roma Tre”).

The final discussion of this workshop was centred on geographical names as cultural heritage in a multidisciplinary perspective between landscape and history.

In addition to the above, it is besides to highlight that the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) has started the revision of the Italian Official Toponymic Database and the achievements of two new toponymic databases from the Italian official maps at 1:50,000 and 1:250,000 scale (respectively named: DBTopo50K and DBTopo250K).

Romania *(by Marin Alnitei)*

In Romania it was been constituted the Working Group for establishment of the National Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names. The draft law for establishing of the National Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names is compiled as part of the draft Government Decision to implement the EU INSPIRE Directive, to be approved by August 2014.

Pending approval of the establishment of the National Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names, national responsibility is fulfilled by the Ministry of National Defence, through the Military Topographic Directorate, that has produced the database of geographical names in Romania collected from military topographical maps at 1:25.000 scale and containing 88.598 toponyms. This database is being completed/updated by integrating unified geographical names databases of the National Agency for Cadastre and Land Registration, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy and the National Institute of Heritage of the Ministry of Culture and through database achieving conformity with EC Regulations for the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive.

After publishing, by the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy, of the two volumes (vol. I, 2008 and vol. II, 2009) of Romania’s “Gazetteer” comprising in 1.400 pages over 40.000 geographical names, academic research in the field of toponymy continued by publishing by experts from

specialized institutions of the Romanian Academy of *toponymic dictionaries of linguistic perspectives*, on historical provinces (Wallachia reached the fifth volume, Moldova, to be published), on hydrographic basins (Transylvania) or counties (Tulcea).

Looking ahead

At the end of this short information note it is to underline that Romano-Hellenic Division has suffered in recent years a slowdown in activity due to various factors.

To reactive its works, RHD will discuss a renewal program of its activities in the next divisional meeting, which will take place during the 28th Session of UNGEGN in New York.