

**Twentieth Session
New York, 17 – 28 January 2000**

**Item 5
of the Provisional Agenda**

REPORTS OF THE DIVISIONS

Report of the Norden Division

Report of the Norden Division to the twentieth session of UNGEGN

New York 17 – 28 January 2000

Agenda item 5

Since the seventh conference on the standardization of geographical names in 1998 the countries within the Norden Division have continued their work concerning place-names standardization. The following report mainly reflects the progress made since that conference.

National standardization and names authorities

Denmark

The national geographical names authority in Denmark is the *Place-names Committee*, (*Stednavneudvalget*).

The Place-names Committee, the *National Survey and Cadastre (Kort- og Matrikelstyrelsen)* and the municipal authorities cooperate in checking the spelling of the authorized place-names list concurrently with the revision of the official maps. This list, which contains some 25,000 names, can be downloaded via the Internet from a server accessible at the homepages of the National Survey and Cadastre and the Place-names Committee.

Finland

The *Research Institute for the Languages of Finland* assumes the right and responsibility for providing normative recommendations for place-names. Furthermore it acts as an authoritative organ in matters relating to the standardization of place-names by providing guidance for administrative bodies and by checking the Finnish, Swedish and Saami names on the maps prepared by the *National Land Survey*. The recommendations are based i.a. on linguistics, cultural history and local tradition.

Various administrative bodies have the power of decision on names. The municipalities decide upon the names of streets, roads, parks etc. but also upon the names of the municipalities themselves. The National Land Survey decides on the names in the maps and of cadastral villages. Furthermore the *Finland Post Ltd* decides on the names of post offices, the *Finnish Railways* decides on the names of railway stations etc.

Norway

The *Norwegian Mapping Authority (Statens kartverk)* has the role as the main national geographical names authority. At the same time other administrative bodies on national and municipal levels have the authority to decide on names of features of which they are administrators. The *Norwegian Language Council* administers the place-names consultants, altogether 12 (8 for Norwegian place-names, 3 for Saami and 1 for Finnish place-names). All names which have been authorized according to the place-name act of 1990 by an official

body are entered into a digital central place-name register administered by the Norwegian Mapping Authority.

Sweden

In Sweden the *National Land Survey (NLS, Lantmäteriverket)* has the role of the national geographical names authority. This authority has the power to standardize names of natural features but also of settlement names. Those names, which occur in the real estate register, some 100,000 mainly settlement names, are standardized by the NLS by virtue of special ordinance.

In the standardization work the NLS cooperates very closely with the *Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research (Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet)*. To assist the NLS in questions of principles there is a place-names advisory board connected with the NLS.

As in Finland and Norway various administrative bodies like *Sweden Post*, the *Swedish State Railways*, the *National Maritime Administration* etc. have the responsibility to standardize names of features of which they are administrators.

Office treatment of place-names

Finland

Since 1998 new or altered Finnish, Swedish and Saami names on i. a. 344 revised sheets of the Basic Map in 1:20,000 have been checked by the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland. Furthermore, the institute has continued to provide statements concerning geographical names in Finland and to offer guidance and information requested on both indigenous names and names in foreign countries.

In 1996 a working group was established to make suggestions concerning the need of a place-names law. The report of the working group was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1997. However, the matter is still unsolved.

Norway

Since 1991, when the place-name act came into force, 10,000 names have been handled annually on an average. Thus some 80,000 names have been treated up to now. The land maps are continually being revised.

Sweden

A parliamentary resolution on the proposal on the revised act concerning ancient monuments and finds will be adopted in the year 2000. The act will then include a paragraph regarding place-names spelling and preservation.

Field collection of place-names and training courses

Denmark

In 1995 the *Faeroese Academy* and the *Cadastral Office* finished the collecting and recording of approx. 15 000 place-names in the Faeroes. About 13,800 of these names were included in a new base map at a scale of 1:20,000 and also recorded in a data base. This data base was completed in 1998.

Finland

Since 1998 the systematic field survey of place-names organized by the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland has continued in eight municipalities. The collecting of names was completed in one municipality. 9,193 new records were added to the collections of names of the research institute. The field survey will continue mainly in the Saami region.

Academic studies of the Finnish language include linguistic field-work which involves the collecting of toponyms. In June 1999 the research institute arranged a one-week long linguistic field course including onomastic studies. Training courses on field collection of names have been arranged for students by the institute together with the Finnish departments of the universities. In 1998 the institute arranged two onomastic training courses for workers at regional offices of the National Land Survey.

Norway

Onomastic scholars at the universities and colleges have continued to give courses in field collection of place-names around the country, both to students and people without academic background, though at a lower rate than before. Still there is much name material to be collected before it becomes obsolete.

The Norwegian Mapping Authority and the names advisory services have organized courses for municipalities and other public services to help them tackle their tasks in a more satisfactory manner. Most of the municipalities have by now attended the courses.

Several local courses have been arranged for the collecting and recording of place-names. Still there is a lot of collecting work to do, but gradually it gets more difficult to get hold of the material because the number of good informants diminishes every year.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

Denmark

The place-names register of the National Survey and Cadastre, established in 1976 to 1981, contains today approximately 120,000 place-names. The register is continually updated and will in the year 2000 be digitized to serve users of geographical information systems, particularly the topographic data base "top 10dk".

Finland

The topographic database (TDB) of the National Land Survey covers the whole country regarding digitized place-names. The National Geographic Names Register, a service database derived from the TDB, contains close to one million accepted place-names serving both the Land Survey and other users.

Finland co-ordinates the joint project of the Nordic mapping agencies called the *Nordic Place Names*. It is a web-service offering a sample of some 2,000 place-names from Denmark, the Faeroes, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. As the names are stored in UNICODE the most up to date operating systems and applications can handle even the most exotic Saami-language characters correctly. The address is WWW.NONDB.NLS.FI and by now the user interface should be both in English and in all the Nordic languages.

Norway

The toponymic data base of Norway now includes about 400,000 place-names, most of them found in the series of main maps 1:50,000. Names from other maps are increasingly added to the base.

Sweden

The toponymic data base of Sweden is in 1999 improved technically to serve the map production and the supply of place-name products in a better way. The data base will also be enlarged gradually to more than one million names.

Names in multilingual areas

Finland

The Swedish department of the research institute gives advice on the use of Swedish names. The native Saami expert of the research institute in Utsjoki, Finnish Lapland, handles questions concerning the Saami languages in Finland. They are North Saami, Inari Saami and Skolt Saami. The area covered by place-names in these three languages comprises some 30,000 square kilometers of northernmost Finland.

Norway

The *Norwegian Saami Language Council* has decided to use *Saami* as the English term for the former Lappish (leaving out *Sámi*, *Sami*), and this seems to be in agreement with the other Nordic countries.

In spite of the fact that the Place-Names Act has been in function for eight years there are still problems of a legal, practical and linguistic kind when it comes to real equality of status between majority and minority languages, which include North Saami, Lule Saami, South Saami and Finnish.

Meetings and conferences

In New York in 1998 in connection with the UN conference the division held an inaugural meeting due to new representatives and change of chairman. In August the 25th 1999 another meeting was held in Uppsala, Sweden, to discuss the activities in the different countries and the forthcoming UNGEGN-meeting.

Finland

The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland together with the universities of Helsinki and Turku arranged in Hämeenlinna the 12th Nordic congress of onomastics in June 1998. All Nordic countries took part in the congress and the topic was "Names in a Changing World".

In September 1998 the research institute arranged a nation-wide seminar. The papers dealt with name-planning in towns and rural areas and put the stress on a market economy influence on naming. In april 1999 the institute arranged a one-day workshop on municipal name planning.

In april 1999 the research institute and the *Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities* arranged a nation-wide meeting for municipality employees. The lectures dealt with the cultural values of place-names, name planning, correct spelling and the documentation of name decisions. Furthermore, the results of a recent national inquiry on name planning in municipalities were discussed.

Norway

The place-names advisory services in cooperation with the mapping authority have continued their annual meetings to discuss experiences and problems concerning the standardization of place-names.

A conference on the works of the Norwegian scholar Oluf Rygh was held in Verdal, Trøndelag, 14th –16th May 1999.

Publications

Dalberg, Vibeke & Jørgensen, Bent, 1997 (red.): Byens navne. Stednavne i urbaniserede områder. Rapport fra NORNAS 24. symposium i København 25 – 27. april 1996. (NORNA-rapporter 64.) (City names. Place-names in urbanised areas. Report from NORNA's 24th symposium, Copenhagen, April 25th – 27th 1996.) Uppsala 1997.

Helleland, Botolv og Nilsson, Leif, 1999 (red.): Utanlandske navn i Norden. Rapport frå NORNAS 26. symposium i Oslo 28.–30. mai 1997, i samarbeid med Den nordiske divisjonen av UNGEGN og Nordisk språkråd. (NORNA-rapporter 68, Uppsala) 1999. (Foreign Names in Norden. Proceedings of the 26th NORNA conference held in Oslo 28th – 30th May 1997, in cooperation with the Norden Division of UNGEGN). Uppsala 1999 (appears January 2000).

(A separate information paper on the contents of the proceedings will be distributed.)

Wahlberg, Mats (red.), Den nordiska namnforskningen. I går, i dag, i morgon. Handlingar från NORNA:s 25:e symposium i Uppsala 7 – 9 februari 1997 (NORNA-rapporter 67, Uppsala). (Nordic onomastic research. Yesterday, today, tomorrow. Proceedings from NORNA's 25th symposium held in Uppsala, February 7th – 9th 1997.) Uppsala 1999.

Denmark

Det drejer sig om (it revolves round).

Folders published by the Institute of Name Research at the university of København.

With the series **det drejer sig om (it revolves round)** it is the aim of the Institute of Name Research to present in a comparatively unpretentious form various aspects of its activities and the research that is carried on there.

The publications are printed as folders, which don't appear at regular intervals. Since the first two numbers came out in 1992, a total of 11 folders has appeared. Of these 11 numbers two are presentations of the Institute of Name Research, one in Danish and the other in English. Of the other 9 folders, five deal with place-names and four with personal names. The folders about place-names treat of editions of the series **Danmarks Stednavne (The Place-names of Denmark)**, orthography, the recording of names, changes of name and names in urban areas. The folders are distributed free of charge to libraries and interested individuals. They can also be obtained on request from the Institute of Name Research.

Finland

Bulletins from The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

A bulletin in Finnish (**Kielikello**) and in Swedish (**Språkbruk**).

Paikannimet - paikan muisti. Euroopan rakennusperintöpäivät 11- 12 .9 1999.

Ortnamnen - minnen i miljön. Europeiska byggnadsarvsdagarna.

(Place-names - the memory of places. The European Heritage Days, September 11-12, 1999.)

Helsinki 1999.

Yhteinen nimiympäristömme. Nimistönsuunnittelun opas.

(Our common name milieu. Guide to name planning.)

1999

Suomen Standardisoimisliitto, Hebrealaisen kirjaimiston translitteraatio.

(Finnish Standards Association, Transliteration of Hebrew characters. SFS-5824)

An ISO-standard applied to Finnish.

1998

Suomen Standardisoimisliitto, Kyrillisten kirjainten translitterointi, slaavilaiset kielet.

(Finnish Standards Association, Transliteration of Cyrillic characters. SFS-4900)

1998

Maiden ja niiden osa-alueiden nimien tunnukset. OSA 1: maiden nimien tunnukset. (Finnish Standards Association, Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions. Part 1: Country codes. SFS-EN ISO 3166-1) 1998

Norway

Akselberg, Gunnstein, 1998: Street names: Norms and forms.

Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. Aberdeen, August 4-11, 1996. Ed. W.F.H. Nicolaisen. Vol. 2., Department of English, University of Aberdeen, pp. 3-8.

Bakken, Kristin (red.): Den 8. nasjonale konferansen i namnegransking. Blindern (Oslo) 22. november 1996.

Namnegransking som undervisningsfag (Names as a teaching subject). Universitetet i Oslo. 1997.

Birkeland, Gunhild, 1998: Nokre normeringsproblem i Tinn. (Some standardization problems in Tinn, Telemark).

Avdeling for namnegransking. Årsmelding 1997. Red. Botolv Helleland. Universitetet i Oslo, pp. 41-50.

Ellingsve, Eli Johanne, 1998: Naming the Unseen: Theoretical Problems and Pragmatic Solutions Concerning the Naming of Norwegian Oil and Gas Fields in the North Sea.

Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. Aberdeen, August 4-11, 1996. Ed. W.F.H. Nicolaisen. Vol. 2., Department of English, University of Aberdeen, pp. 90-96.

Hallaråker, Peter, 1998: Names and Ethnicity: The Triple Identity of the Norwegian Americans Indicated by their Choice of Spelling of Surnames and Place-Names.

Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. Aberdeen, August 4-11, 1996. Ed. W.F.H. Nicolaisen. Vol. 2., Department of English, University of Aberdeen, pp. 152-162.

Sweden

Löfyendahl, Eberhard, 1998: Post- och järnvägsstationers namn i Götaland 1860 – 1940. Namngivning i spänningsfältet mellan allmänna och enskilda intressen. (Names of sub-post offices and railway stations in Götaland 1860 – 1940. Name-giving and the tension between public and private interests.)

Dissertation. Uppsala 1998.

Strandberg, Svante, 1997: Schwedische Namenforschung 1990 – 1997. (Swedish

Onomastic Research 1990 – 1997.) Onoma. Journal of the Council of Onomastic Sciences. Vol. 33, 1996 – 1997. Leuven, pp. 39 – 52.

Wahlberg, Mats, 1998: Swedish Street-Names as a Historical Source and a Mirror of Contemporary Ideas. Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, August 4 – 11, 1996. Ed. W.F.H. Nicolaisen. Vol. 2., Department of English, University of Aberdeen, pp. 372 – 377.