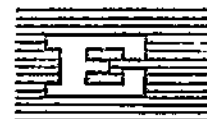


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STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES  
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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN FINLAND 1967-72

Paper submitted by the Government of Finland

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Field collection and standardization

Finnish names. The field collection and standardization of Finnish-language geographical names in Finland is undertaken by the Finnish Name Archives (Suomen nimiarkisto), which has a staff of 15 persons (12 linguists and 3 historians).

The main functions of the archives are to collect, store, study and standardize Finnish geographical names. At the end of 1971, there were in the archives' files about 1.7 million cards. Each card contains the name (or names) and name forms of one geographical feature. The estimated total number of named geographical features in Finland is 2.2 million.

During 1967-72, about 400,000 new cards were added to the collection. More than 80% of the field work has been done by trained people, mainly students of Finnish language, who have received scholarships for this purpose. The task is made urgent by rural depopulation.

The archives also collects Finnish and Carelian names of places situated outside the Finnish territory. The main sources are historical Russian documents.

The principal users of the standardized names are various central offices of the State such as the National Board of Survey (Maanmittaushallitus). Other users are book publishers, planning authorities of communes, etc.

Swedish names. Geographical names in the Swedish-speaking parts of Finland (representing 6.5% of the country's population) are collected and studied by the Name Archives (Namnarkivet) of the Swedish Society of Literature in Finland. The work is supervised by the linguistic committee of the Society. The committee, assisted by the archive personnel, functions as an advisory board on matter of name standardization and is consulted by State and local authorities.

The total number of geographical names in the Swedish-speaking communes has been estimated at some 230,000. By January 1972, about three-quarters of these names had been collected. It is hoped that the collecting of names will be completed in a few years' time.

Lappish names. In the 1960s, the Finnish Name Archives started a systematic collection of Lappish geographical names in Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki, the three northernmost communes of Finland (with a Lapp population of about 3,000 persons). The work has been almost completed in Enontekiö (2,100 cards of Lappish and 1,900 cards of Finnish names). Some work is still needed in Inari where 4,100 cards of Lappish and 2,100 cards of Finnish names have been collected.

The principles of standardization of Lappish names unfortunately differ in Finland from those applied in Norway and Sweden. Scandinavian notations, such as the letter *š*, have been considered as disturbing, for example, for Finnish map-users.

Exonyms. A practical result of the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was an attempt to inventory and standardize Finnish exonyms, i.e. conventional Finnish names of foreign geographical features. The names treated were derived from geographical books, encyclopedias and other sources, both old and recent.

A standardized form for all these names was then decided by representatives of the Finnish Name Archives, the Language Board of the Finnish Academy of Sciences and the Geographical Society of Finland. The recommended names, together with variant forms, were published 1/ as a practical guide for editors of Finnish atlases, school books, etc.

Of a total of 1065 standardized names, there were

- (a) 263 single exonyms, e.g. Lontoo (London);
- (b) 333 compound exonyms in which both generic and specific term are conventional, e.g. Iso Orjajärvi (Great Slave Lake);
- (c) 380 compound exonyms in which only the generic term is conventional, e.g. Khybersola (Khyber Pass); and
- (d) 89 exonyms previously used but not recommended, and now standardized in the original form, e.g. Chile.

Names on maps

The Basic Map compiled and published by the National Board of Survey in the scale of 1 : 20 000, which will cover the whole country by 1975, is the most extensive printed source of information on geographical names in Finland. The orthography of the names has been checked by the Finnish and Swedish Name Archives.

At the end of 1971, geographical names had been collected by the National Board of Survey for the Basic Map from 92% of Finland. The mean density of names on this map is about 2.3/km<sup>2</sup>. The estimated density of named geographical features in Finland is about 7/km<sup>2</sup>.

When maps are updated, their names are again examined. It is then possible to add new names and change former ones if research or other factors render this necessary. Mapping thus also assists the constant updating of information about geographical names.

The 1 : 200 000 or 1 : 400 000 road map, the largest-scale map covering the whole of Finland at present, also constitutes a reliable source of information about geographical names. As new sheets of this map appear every 2 to 4 years, it provides up-to-date information about new names and name changes.

Names and terms in gazetteers

Between 1967 and 1972, four gazetteers of geographical names were published in Finland, i.e. a gazetteer attached to the 1 : 1 million Post and Railway Map of Finland with some 3 000 names 2/, a gazetteer of the Finland Handbook with some 16 000 names 3/, the Post and Telegraph Administration address list with some 60 000 names 4/, and a gazetteer containing names of villages and parishes in the Finnish-language area 5/. A gazetteer of 4 500 Swedish-language geographical names in Finland was published previously 6/.

A gazetteer inspired by the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names is at present being produced in the National Board of Survey. It will contain about 12 000 names. The grid reference and designation of each named feature will be given. The planned main classes of designation are:

- (a) administrative unit,
- (b) populated place,

- (c) establishment (farm, mine, railway station, post-office, etc.),
- (d) land feature, and
- (e) water feature.

Tourist attractions are also included. Each class will be indicated by a graphic symbol.

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