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Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams
since the Ninth Conference

Report of the Norden Division (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden)

Submitted by Denmark**

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** Prepared by Peder Gammeltoft (Denmark), Chair, Norden Division

Report of the Norden Division (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden)¹

I. Norden Division meetings 2011-2012

One Norden Division Meetings has been held since the last Report of the Norden Division in 2011. This meeting was held on May 2nd in conjunction with the 26th UNGEGN Session in Vienna 2011. A number of topics were discussed, including the Norden Division homepage and developments in the EuroGeoNames and INSPIRE projects. More information about the 2011 Norden Division Meeting can be found at: <http://nordendivision.nfi.ku.dk/about/programme/wien110503/>. The division meeting was attended by nine participants from the Norden Division area.

A Norden Division Meeting is also planned for June 10th 2012 at the Name Research Section in Copenhagen.

II. Norden Division homepage

The Norden Division has had its own homepage since 2008, namely: <http://nordendivision.nfi.ku.dk/>. There has been no major revision of the homepage since last report, apart from one or two textual updates and additions since 2011. It is the impression of the Norden Division chairmanship that the homepage fulfils its aim to present concise information about UNGEGN and the Norden Division.

III. Cooperation with other Divisions and Working Groups

The Norden Division cooperates with other UNGEGN Divisions and Working Group, and several division members partake in working groups, such as the *Working Group on Toponymic Terminology* (Staffan Nyström, chair of WG), and the *Working Group of Implementation and Evaluation/Publication and Funding* (Botolv Helleland). Additionally, the *Working Group on Toponymic Terminology* featured among the presentations at the 24th ICOS Conference (The International Council of Onomastic Sciences). Here a meeting between this Working Group and the 'Terminology Group' of ICOS took place, as was a revision of *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* discussed.

IV. Improved online geographical names facilities

An update of the Swedish geographical names homepage KartSökochOrtnamn (MapSearch and Place-Names) by the national Swedish Mapping Authority, Lantmäteriet, was launched in 2011, please see: <http://kso.lantmateriet.se/kartsok/kos/index.html>. This update features, among other things, a purpose-made keyboard for Saami characters, a language code for every geographical name, as well as a new seamless map, the Topographic web map.

APPENDIX.

Statement made by the Nordic Objectives Forum 2007 on Name Planning and Language Policy (Summary)

On 7-9 September 2007 some 70 language planners, experts in law and on mastics, and onomastics researchers from the Nordic countries gathered in Uppsala to discuss the topic "Names, Name Planning and Language Policy in the Multilingual Nordic Region of Today". The forum was organized by the Nordic Language Council, the advisory committee on language policy issues appointed by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

At the forum, the participants discussed place-names, personal names and the tasks facing Nordic name planners. In the wake of globalization and internationalization, many Nordic countries are developing new language policies. The Nordic Ministers of Education also adopted a Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy in the autumn of 2006.

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Language planning focusing on personal names and place-names is an integral part of this language policy. Names form our identity and create cohesion, and give us a deeper understanding of our history and of contemporary society. Current naming practices must reflect our long historical heritage, but must also allow space for the many languages and cultures that reside in the people living in the Nordic region today.

There are unique characteristic features in the naming practices of all Nordic countries, and their name planning efforts are organized according to slightly varying principles. Naming practices are part of the national cultural heritage and do not need to be called in question. Nevertheless, name planners in all Nordic countries face substantial challenges regarding language policies. For instance, it is no easy task to keep naming practices clearly rooted in the national cultural heritage while taking into account the personal name traditions from outside the Nordic region, and still safeguard the freedom of the individual and promote coordinated naming practices in the Nordic region.

For these reasons, Nordic cooperation in many fields is called for. At the Nordic Objectives Forum in Uppsala, many participants agreed on the following starting points for future cooperation:

- Name planning efforts must respect naming practices as an integral part of our cultural heritage
- Naming practices must take into account the linguistic minorities and the *defacto* multilingualism in the Nordic countries
- Authorities that decide on naming issues must cooperate closely with name planning experts as well as with the corresponding institutions in other Nordic countries.