

23 June 2017

Original: English

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**Eleventh United Nations Conference on the  
Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 8-17 August 2017

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the  
progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference  
(for distribution only).**

**Report of Slovenia**

Submitted by Slovenia \*\*

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\* E/CONF.105/1

\*\* Prepared by the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names of the Republic of Slovenia

## 1. NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

In the Republic of Slovenia is engaged in the standardization of geographical names the **Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names** (hereinafter: CSGN). The CSGN is represented by several institutions: the Anton Melik Geographical Institute and Fran Ramovš Institute of the Slovenian Language (both of the Scientific Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts), the Department of Geography and the Department of Slovene Languages and Literature (both of the Faculty of Arts), the Geodetic Institute of Slovenia, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Slovenian Language Service at the Ministry of Culture and the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia.

The basic tasks of the CSGN determined by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia of 2013 are the following:

- to perform tasks pursuant to the Act Designating Areas and Naming and Marking Settlements, Streets and Buildings (Uradni list RS (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia), no. 25/2008);
- to carry out international obligations of the Republic of Slovenia related to geographical names, i.e. representing Slovenia at UN meetings and within the UNGEGN;
- to perform other tasks related to UN resolutions and the recommendations of the UNGEGN, and to the preparation of standardization documents and the standardization of geographical names in the Republic of Slovenia;
- to perform other tasks determined by acts and other regulations.

After Tenth UN Conference the CSGN met on 39 occasions: 5 meetings and 34 corresponding meetings.

The main task of CSGN is preparing decisions of correctness and suitability of new names and renames of streets and settlements in Slovenia. The accepted opinion of CSGN is obligatory for municipalities that finally officially announce new or changed names.

In 2012 CSGN was deciding about 2 settlement names and 18 street names, in 2013 about 3 settlement names and 53 street names, in 2014 about 2 settlement names and 10 street names, in 2015 about 1 settlement name and 3 street names, in 2016 about 17 street names and finally in 2017 about 9 street names.

Information and activities related to the Commission are posted on the in 2014 completely renewed website:

[http://www.gu.gov.si/en/delovnapodrocja\\_gu/projekti\\_gu/slovene\\_governmental\\_commission\\_for\\_the\\_standardisation\\_of\\_geographical\\_names/#c17314](http://www.gu.gov.si/en/delovnapodrocja_gu/projekti_gu/slovene_governmental_commission_for_the_standardisation_of_geographical_names/#c17314) .

On the website are also published procedures and recommendations of the CSGN concerning the suitability of the names of settlements and streets.

## 2. MULTILINGUAL AREAS

The Republic of Slovenia has two traditional national minorities - the Italian and Hungarian National Communities. Both national minorities enjoy high legal protection, which extends from the international conventions ratified by Slovenia – which are constituent parts of the Slovenian legal order - to the highest state act, the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia and numerous legal and other acts.

On ethnically mixed territories it is declared the equality of the use of Italian and Hungarian language. Based on the Decree on the transcription of geographical names on national maps in ethnically mixed areas in the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette, no. 57/14) in these areas, geographical names on the maps are to be written in both languages, first Slovene and then either Italian or Hungarian.

Many of Hungarian and Italian geographical names within Slovenia are not yet standardized, so they cause considerable errors on various maps and in databases, as well as communication problems. So far, standardized are only names refer to the settlements – towns and some villages, that are recorded in Register of Spatial Units and Register of Geographical Names (hereinafter: RGN) of Surveying and Mapping Authority (hereinafter: SMA).

In 2014, the Italian and Hungarian National Communities were asked to prepare a lists of Italian and Hungarian geographical names for objects on ethnically mixed territories (firstly for the scale level 1:25,000) that are in the RGN actually recorded only in Slovenian language (hydronyms, oronyms, landscape areas).

Both lists were submitted by national communities in 2016. Then, according to available resources, both lists were checked by the SMA. The review found that for many topographic objects is registered more than one name in minority language. Identified were also some problems about the orthographically correct written form.

National minorities are currently preparing the final version of the lists. To the National Communities it was recommended to cooperate with linguists and standardization bodies in mother countries.

In the final phase the standardization of geographical names in the languages of both national minorities will be accepted by CSGN.

## 3. TOPONYMIC DATA FILES

The national **Register of Geographical Names** is maintained by the SMA. The register contains geographical names that were captured from maps at scale 1 : 5000 (approximately 140,000 names), 1 : 25,000 (approximately 60,000 names), 1 : 250,000 (approximately 8,000 names), 1 : 1,000,000 (approximately 1,000 names). RGN of all four scales cover the entire territory of Slovenia and also the border areas of neighboring countries. The majority of geographical names in the register are endonyms.

The logical model of RGN is based on three entity types:

- geographical feature (topographic object),
- geographical name and,
- inscription (on the map).

Every geographical feature in the graphic database has at least one geographical name (it can have several - in a multilingual area or traditional names for geographical features).

Each geographical name in a relational database may have several inscriptions (if it appears on maps of different scales).

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In 2016 the GN database was incorporated into a new topographic database that is INSPIRE (Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe) compliant. Establishment of topographic database was implemented in the period 2014-2016. Topographic database uses an ArcGIS platform and provides maintenance of data as well as the preparation of various products for users.

Geographical names are an independent layer of topographic database, but linked with the topographic object by identifier. Due to the huge volume of work the link of geographical names with topographic objects will be performed gradually. First the hydrographic topographic objects were linked with associated hydronyms in 2016.

Geographical names in new database contain besides all mandatory and some voidable INSPIRE attributes, also attributes from RGN (more or less related to the cartographic use and standardization).

Attribute	Mandatory/ voidable
geometry	M
Inspire ID	M
name	M
type	V
localType	V
leastDetailedViewingScale	V
mostDetailedViewingScale	V
related Spatial object	V
lifeCycleInfo	V
script	V
language	V
nativeness	V
nameStatus	V
sourceOfName	V

Table 1: Slovenian INSPIRE data schema

The INSPIRE compliant Web Service for Geographical Names is also under construction and will be operational soon.

Slovenian geographical names data for the scale level 1:25,000 are implemented also at **European Location Framework** (ELF) service what is a single point of access for harmonized reference data from National Mapping, Cadastre and Land Registry Authorities. Global and regional level reference data is currently available along with a showcase application demonstrating search and selection options. The service is jointly funded by the European Commission's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and the Project Partners.

#### 4. EXONYMS

Slovenia actively participates in the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms and also otherwise is very active in the field of exonyms, especially researchers of the Anton Melik Geographical Institute. They regularly publish articles on exonyms in domestic and foreign publications.

After Tenth UN Conference were also issued two significant publications:

##### **A List of Slovenian Exonyms** / Drago Kladnik ... [et al.]

This volume is a contribution to fostering greater consistency in the use of Slovenian exonyms, or geographical names adapted to Slovenian. It provides material for their standardization and at the same time ensures that this important aspect of Slovenian will not sink into oblivion.

Based on a table containing somewhat more than 5,000 exonyms, we have prepared a list of the most frequently used names, which are presented in this research volume.

The volume has three parts. Part one contains theoretical and methodological reflections on exonyms, with an emphasis on explaining basic concepts, the use of exonyms, gathering and selecting them to design a collection of exonyms, and presentation of an analysis of their frequency. It concludes with two chapters that serve as links to the other two parts of the volume. The first presents the format of the table in detail. This table, with a list of the most frequently used exonyms (3,818), comprises the second part of the book and is supplemented by a table with a list of over 350 of the most established alternative exonyms. The third part of the volume contains color maps containing exonyms from the table in part two, arranged by part of the world and divided according to semantic type of exonym.

##### **Dictionary of Slovenian exonyms** / Drago Kladnik, Drago Perko

A Dictionary includes 5,044 of the most frequently used exonyms that were collected from more than 50,000 documented various forms of these types of geographical names. Every exonym is determined by thirty-four categories, sorted in seven groups. In addition to the basic properties of Slovenian exonyms (nominative and genitive forms, adjectival forms, their original form, language of original form), also their forms in the majority of major world languages (English, French, German, Spanish, and Russian) and neighboring languages (Italian, Croatian, and Hungarian), essential geographical information (semantic type, location, and coordinates), other attributes (adaptation type, standardization status, recommended usage, and their alternative forms) and their forms used in the nine most important Slovenian reference atlases (Cigale's *Atlant* (Atlas, 1869–1877), Orožen's *Šolski atlas* (School Atlas, 1902), De Agostini *Šolski atlas* (School Atlas, 1941), Medved's *Veliki atlas sveta* (Great World Atlas, 1972), *Veliki družinski atlas sveta* (Great Family World Atlas, 1992, 1996), *Atlas 2000* (1997), *Monde Neuf* (2003), *Atlas sveta za osnovne in srednje šole* (Primary and Secondary School World Atlas, 2005), *Veliki atlas sveta* (Great World Atlas, 2005) and other sources are also provided. In the next-to-last field, an etymological explanation of their origin and meaning is added to the majority of exonyms, and the last column also contains various note of interest connected with them.

Online version and explanatory notes are published on the website: <http://giam2.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/slovenian-exonyms#v>.

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## 5. COUNTRY NAMES

Country names are among the rare foreign geographical names that are standardized in Slovenian. The CSGN had standardized Slovenian names of 198 independent and 51 non-self-governing territories a few years ago. In 2013 two members of the CSGN issued a volume on this topic:

### **Slovenian Country Names** / Drago Kladnik, Drago Perko

This volume offers a detailed analysis of naming all independent countries and non-self-governing territories. Alongside the Slovenian short and full names of individual political territorial units, the genitive, locative, and adjectival forms of the short names, native short and full forms transliterated into the Roman alphabet (if applicable) or English and French official short and full names of individual territorial political communities, it also contains coded labels, an etymological explanation of the names, notes if needed, any alternative names, archaic names, or nicknames, and demonyms.

The volume is organized into three sections. The first is a theoretical and methodological discussion of exonyms, and it also presents the reasons for selected name forms for independent countries and dependent territories. Certain names whose usage is not uniform are presented in greater detail. The second part, in tabular format, is a detailed presentation of the names of 198 independent countries and fifty-one major non-self-governing territories with a high degree of autonomy for which corresponding political decisions could lead to their independence at any time. The third section is cartographic and presents territorial political units on colored maps with borders. The volume will contribute to more correct and more uniform use of country names, and it will be a useful aid for both individuals and institutions dealing with this issue.

The volume is published on the website:

<http://giam2.zrc-sazu.si/sites/default/files/9789612544546.pdf> .

## 6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### 6.1 Visit of the Serbian delegation

In December 2014 CSGN and SMA hosted representatives of the Serbian Geodetic Administration, who arrived in Slovenia in order to be better acquainted with the functioning and tasks of the commission and also to acquire useful information relating to the Register of Geographical Names, which was in Serbia at that time at the stage of establishment.

### 6.2 Visit of the Korean delegation

The delegation of the Republic of Korea twice visited the CSGN (2015 and 2016) with intention to acquaint themselves with the functioning of the commission.

### 6.3 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the East Central and South-East Europe Division (ECSEED) of UNGEGN

Slovenia as chairing country of the ECSEED in period 2012-2017 organized 21<sup>st</sup> Session of ECSEED in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 26 November 2015.

The Session was attended by 21 participants from 8 ECSEE Division countries: Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

At the Session were presented national reports of participating countries and several special papers of various topics: national standardization, names authorities, databases and gazetteers, geographical names in multilingual areas, exonyms, Romanization, country names and microtoponyms as a part of cultural heritage. All national reports and special presentations are published on the ECSEED web site: <http://ecseed.zrc-sazu.si/Sessions.aspx> .

6.4 Slovenia is actively involved in several international projects, in which geographical names are included among other content:

- European Location Framework (ELF), 2013-2016;
- Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE), since 2007.

6.5 In the last five years the members of the CSGN participated in many international meetings:

- International Slavic Committee: meeting of etymological commission. Yekaterinburg, Russia, 10 September 2012.

- 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of UNGEEN Working Group on Exonyms and meeting of the Working Group on Romanization Systems. Gdańsk, Poland, 16-18. May 2012.
- 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of UNGEEN Working Group on Exonyms and meeting of the Working group on Toponymic Terminology. Corfu, Greece, 22-24. May 2013.
- Joint Commission seminar on Historical maps, atlases and toponymy. Leipzig, Germany, 21-24. August 2013.
- International Slavic Committee: meeting of etymological commission. Minsk, Belarus, 24 September 2013.
- 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of UNGEEN Working Group on Exonyms. Hermagor, Austria, 5-7 June 2014.
- Etymological Research of Old Church Slavonic: from the Slavonic, Indo-European and General Linguistic Perspective), Brno, Czech Republic, 9 September 2014.
- Symposium on placed-names changes. Rome, Italy, 17-18 November 2014.
- 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of UNGEEN Working Group on Exonyms. Zagreb, Croatia, 14-16 May 2015.
- International Symposium on Place Names: “Place names, diversity and heritage”. Clarens, South Africa, 16-17 September 2015.
- Symposium on minority toponyms in Slovenia, adjacent bilingual areas and the German-speaking countries. Graz, Austria, 4 March 2016.
- 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of UNGEEN Working Group on Exonyms and meeting of the Working Group on Romanization Systems. Prague, Czech Republic, 6-8 April 2017.

## 7. OTHER ACTIVITIES

Some projects in which participate researchers of the Anton Melik Geographical Institute and Fran Ramovš Institute of the Scientific Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts:

### 7.1 What's your house called? *Nomen vulgare*, since 2009

The main purpose of the project is to collect and preserve traditional house names that are part of the intangible cultural heritage. In 2009 the Regional development agency for Upper Gorenjska RAGOR started with the collection, documentation and publication of old local house names in Gorenjska region. In the project are so far involved 16 municipalities in which area were collected more than 9000 house names. Great interest in the municipalities for this project shows that the old house names are an important part of the rural area, which is due to the modern way of life doomed to oblivion, such projects could take care of the preservation of important intangible cultural heritage of Slovenian territory.

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### **7.2 International project FLU-LED Cultural Portal of house names and field names, 2011–2013**

The subjects of the project are house names and field names in the border area of southern Carinthia (Austria) and Gorenjska (Slovenia). The project is a kind of continuation of the project “What's your house called?”, with added research of the field names. The methodology of data collection and documentation of the names (phonetic, simplified phonological transcription and standardized transcription) was prepared as part of the project. In the project were involved 7 municipalities. Finally for each municipality has been made a map with collected field and house names and all names were also added in web-online database, which provides an overview of the names and listening to dialect pronunciation.

### **7.3 A Comparative Analysis of Croatian and Slovenian Exonyms, 2014-2015**

In the Croatian-Slovenian bilateral project has been improved the typology of exonymization (according to the intensity and variety of name adaptation) and on that basis the new classification of exonyms shown in the table with more than 5000 adapted foreign geographical names.

### **7.4 Slovenian choronyms as a factor of identity, 2016**

Whereas the doctoral thesis in the field of geographical names are very rare in Slovenia, cited doctorate one from last year. The doctoral thesis examines the names of Slovenian regions. The introduction also contains a review of the different approaches to studying geographical names in Slovenia. In the second part, sources of region names are discussed chronologically, starting with archival records. This is followed by a review of modern maps and records held by the SMA. Finally, different types of geographical regionalization are presented as sources of region names. The results of collecting region names by means of a survey are presented in the third part.

It can be concluded that region names reflect a region's identity. In addition, they are an important element in the inhabitants' consciousness and are not perceived in a hierarchical way. In part, it can be confirmed that most of them are deeply rooted, some are about to disappear and an insignificant number of them have become established only recently. Region names have a denotatum or referent in people's consciousness that is not clearly defined. They are subject to change in the course of time, like other linguistic elements.