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

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Item 9 (e) of the provisional agenda*

**National standardization: toponymic guidelines
for map editors and other editors**

**Toponymic guidelines for map editors and
other editors: Finland**

Submitted by Finland**

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Summary

Finland is a bilingual country. According to the Constitution, Finnish and Swedish are the national and official State languages. The use of the national languages is regulated by the language law. A new language law is expected to become effective on 1 January 2004. The new language law covers only the national languages, Finnish and Swedish. A third language, Saami, will continue to be regulated by a separate law. Statements issued on the draft law have also called for a law on place names in connection with the reform of the language law.

Since September 1997, the State has been divided into six provinces. With the exception of Åland, all provinces are either unilingual Finnish or bilingual with a Finnish majority, but they all have two official names.
