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Toponymic data files: national gazetteers

A new geographical names database of Germany (GN-DE)

Submitted by Germany**

In autumn 2006, a new (Gazetteer-) web service was developed by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG) in cooperation with the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN). This (Gazetteer-) web service is based on a web feature service (WFS) and is thus compliant with respect to the relevant Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) specification.

In order to fulfil the requirement of unambiguous data maintenance at BKG, all geographical names information of several (topographic) vector data products — among others, the Digital Landscape Model 1:250,000/1:1,000,000 (DLM 250/1000), Administrative Units 1:250,000 (VG250) and Geographical Names 1:250,000/1:1,000,000 (GN250/1000) — were amalgamated. According to a new data model developed for geographical names information, the respective data were converted to a single database called Geographical Names of Germany (GN-DE). Through unique identifiers, the names entries of GN-DE are linked unambiguously to all databases and products mentioned above. In that way, GN-DE provides the unique geographical names source for all BKG products and naturally for the (Gazetteer-) web service. The administration and maintenance tasks of GN-DE are conducted in Frankfurt am Main, whereas the (Gazetteer-) web service is facilitated through the National Geodata Centre at BKG in Leipzig.

The following comparison demonstrates the valuable addition in terms of data content:

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** Prepared by Jürgen Spradau, Bernd E. Beinstein, Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu and Jörn Sievers, Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, Germany.



GN250 (version 31.12.2005)

55 700 populated places
1 300 hydrographic features
1 600 landscapes, mountains
58 600 data set entries

GN-DE (version 21.03.2007)

58 100 populated places
19 200 hydrographic features
6 700 landscapes, mountains
84 000 data set entries

The (Gazetteer-) web service based on GN-DE also allows direct access to officially approved geographical names of the minority languages, Sorbian (481 entries) and Frisian (77 entries).

The (Gazetteer-) web service is accessible from www.geodatenzentrum.de.
Path: Suche geographischer Namen
