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Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference

Report of Sweden

Submitted by Sweden**

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National standardization

The Heritage Conservation Act (Sw. *Kulturminneslagen, lagen 1988:950 om kulturminnen m.m.*) was revised in 2000. It now includes a paragraph dealing with "good place-name practice" in central and local governmental activities. The emphasis is put upon the importance of preserving the place-names as a part of the nation's cultural heritage. Place-names shall be spelt in accordance with adopted linguistic rules, but established names shall not be changed without strong grounds. Swedish, Saami and Finnish names shall as far as possible be used on maps, signposts and other marking in multilingual areas. Names that are approved for public map production shall also be used in other contexts in their approved form.

The supervision of the Act is the responsibility of the National Heritage Board (Sw. *Riksantikvarieämbetet, RAÄ*). However, the role as national place-name authority is performed by the National Land Survey (NLS, Sw. *Lantmäteriverket, LMV*). The third main part involved in Swedish place-name standardization is the Institute for Language and Folklore (Sw., formerly *Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet, SOFI*) In 2006 the institute was reorganized and its name was changed to *Institutet för språk och folkminnen*. The institute is the official language authority of Sweden, now including the Language Council (Sw. *Språkrådet*, formerly known as *Svenska språknämnden*).

Furthermore, the local governments of Sweden (290 in all) are responsible for urban and rural addresses containing a large amount of place-names.

The Place-Name Advisory Board of Sweden (PNAB, Sw. *Ortnamnsrådet*) has an overall consultative responsibility, and the authorities mentioned above are represented in the PNAB.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

Maps and databases

A particularly important responsibility of the Land Survey of Sweden is to make place-names on the national maps and in its place-names database available for other creators of place-names and other persons who are engaged in place-name care and preservation activities in Sweden. There are about 1,2 million place-names on the sheets of the Swedish national map series and it is planned to register all of them in the Land Survey's place-names database by the end of 2008. Currently, the place-names database contains a total amount of 940 500 place-names, including 626 500 settlement names and 314 000 names of natural and other features. The number of Swedish place-names is 934 100, of Saami 4 700 and of Finnish 1 700. The Land Survey's place-names database will function as a national place-names dictionary.

To meet the demand for easier access to place-name information the Land Survey has on its homepage an Internet service called Mapsearch and place-names (www.lantmateriet.se), which gives authorities, organisations and the general public access to officially approved place-names data. A map extract on which the position of the place-name is highlighted is displayed together with the results of the search. The place-names database will also contain place-names in the minority languages (Finnish and Saami) with their officially approved orthography. The Land Survey is further developing this place-name register, for instance by connecting every place-name to parish as well as to the administrative belonging (municipality). Another hope is to be able to link this register to the collections of the Institute for Language and Folklore in a not too distant future. In that way we would acquire basic geographical information about an established place-name supplemented with historical and linguistic material, which could then help us obtain deepened knowledge about the current place-name.

The place-name collections at the Institute for Language and Folklore now exist in a computer-based version containing almost four million records. Most of it is available on the Internet (www.sofi.se).

Addresses and place-names

Today's most important place-name project in Sweden is the reorganization of the address system in rural areas, a major task for the 290 municipalities. A large part of this process involves substituting the old letter-box addresses with addresses based on settlement names or road names. This will make it easier for rescue services, taxis and others to find dwellings quickly. It is also positive that this is a way of promoting the use of place-names, considering the great importance and impact of postal addresses. But the size and significance of the address project now under way is considerable, and it includes a large number of names that have never before been checked with regard to their linguistic correctness. The timetable for the reform is fairly tight, and the lack of sufficient resources within local authorities is a problem. The problems are related to current Swedish place-name legislation, which includes a code of good place-name practice and a law for a dwellings register. (See separate WP.)

Names in multilingual areas

As of July first 2000 there is a Good Practice paragraph in the Heritage Conservation Act concerning instructions in obtaining good place-name practice. Good place-name practice applied to minority languages means that Swedish, Finnish and Saami, as far as possible, are used simultaneously in maps and on sign posts and for other purposes in multilingual areas. Place-names that have been acknowledged for national map-production should also in other contexts be used in their acknowledged forms. Specialists, today in cooperation between the Saami parliament and the Institute for Language and Folklore, carefully check all place-names regarding language and etymology before the names are used in the national maps.

Following a decision by the National Land Survey of Sweden in July 2001, Saami place-names in the databases will be presented as follows:

- Saami place-names, including the varieties North Saami, Lule Saami, Ume Saami and South Saami, will be presented with their correct orthography in the Place-name register.
- The older Swedish « map orthography » will henceforth be stored parallel in the Place-name register.
- The Saami place-names will be presented in the national maps according to purpose and field of application and with consideration taken to cartographic principles.
- The linguistic examination of the Saami place-names will be executed in the same way as the place-name examination otherwise.
- In connection with this new decision concerning Saami orthography, the earlier decisions that regulated the presentation of the Saami place-names were invalidated.

The National Land Survey continuously makes improvements of the topographical information for the digital map databases and new printed maps. This work also includes a continuous correction of the spelling of Saami, Finnish and Meänkieli (Torne Valley Finnish) place-names. Concurrently with the publication of new editions of maps, the older map orthography will be discarded in advantage for the correct Saami and Meänkieli spelling of the place-names. The Finnish names and names in Meänkieli have been written in standard Finnish in the national Swedish maps. In fact, the local form of Finnish differs quite a lot from modern standard Finnish. Since Meänkieli now is an official minority language the place-names shall be written accordingly.

Toponymic education and practice

Within the NLS there are in-house training programmes to meet the need from its staff, both those concerned with cartography and those occupied by real estate information and registration. The NLS

and the two other central name authorities also – in various ways – support the local authorities in their work with the new addressing system.

Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography – Sweden

Sweden has now revised its Toponymic guidelines for Cartography. This is the third edition; previous editions were published in 1982 and 1998. This edition is written in both Swedish and English in order to spread knowledge of language and names standardization in Sweden. The third revised edition of 2007 is a co-operation between the Institute for Language and Folklore, the National Heritage Board and the National Land Survey of Sweden.

Evaluation

Since July 1st 2000 there is an additional paragraph included in the Heritage Conservation Act prescribing that in state and local government operations, “good place-name practice” shall be observed. The National Heritage Board of Sweden supervise the application of the Act on a national level, including the preservation and management of place-names. In an attempt to find out how the new place-name paragraph has been received by the local communities and perhaps affected their work, the Board distributed a questionnaire in 2006 to all the 290 Swedish municipalities. The results from this inquiry are presented and commented on in a printed report from the National Heritage Board (Rapport 2006:5), also available (in Swedish) on the Board’s website:
<http://www.raa.se/publicerat/9172094389.pdf>

As expected most municipalities are aware of the existence of the paragraph, and many are also familiar with the two booklets that have been produced in order to elaborate and explain the short sentences in the paragraph. But somewhat fewer actually use the booklets in their work even though they have daily access to them. One of these booklets, produced by the National Heritage Board, are distributed as a separate WP during this conference: as a complete, printed version in Swedish with a simple English translation of the text included. There is a strong wish from the municipalities that all relevant material be available on the Internet.

The answers from the municipalities also show that the addition of the place-name paragraph has not resulted in any significant changes in the way the work is done or organized when handling place-name issues. But many of them emphasize that – due to the new law – there is an obvious increase of interest, awareness and consideration: both concerning the preservation and management of place-names as parts of the intangible cultural heritage and concerning place-names as functional linguistic expressions (including morphology and spelling).

The place-name paragraph is considered clear and easy to apply by some municipalities, while others claim it is vague and difficult to interpret and use on a daily basis. The need for even more guidance and help from the national experts is often pointed out; more practical training, more onomastic education and more cooperation on a regional basis is on the list of desiderata. The support from the National Land Survey (Gävle), the National Heritage Board (Stockholm) and the Institute for Language and Folklore (Uppsala) is very much appreciated.

Publications

In the series on geographical names and the preservation of names published by the NLS (Sw. *Ortnamn och namnvård*) one new issue, Nr 7, has been published. Furthermore, Nr 6, written by the Place-Name Advisory Board and published in 2001, has been supplemented by a booklet dealing with

parish-names. For further details see the list, which accounts for the publications on Swedish place-name standardization during the period 2002-2007.

Brylla, Eva, 2005: 100 years of official Swedish place-name research. Eva Brylla & Mats Wahlberg in collaboration with Vibeke Dalberg & W.F.H. Nicolaisen (eds.), Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. Uppsala 19–24 August 2002. Vol. 1. pp. 1–6. Uppsala 2005.

Nilsson, Leif, 2002: Standardization of Swedish place-names in the 20th century. Actas do 20 congresso internacional de ciencias onomásticas. Santiago de Compostela, 20–25 setembro de 1999. Editadas por Ana Isabel Boullón Agrelo, Coruña 2002, pp. 521–526 (cd-rom).

Nilsson, Leif, 2004. Ortnamnrådet – ett myndigt organ? (The Swedish Place-Name Advisory Board – a body with authority?) Namn. Hyllningsskrift till Eva Brylla den 1 mars 2004, pp. 93–96. Svante Strandberg, Mats Wahlberg & Björn Heinrici (eds.), utgiven i samarbete med Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet. (Namn och samhälle 15.) Uppsala 2004.

Nilsson, Leif, 2005: Svensk ortnamnsvård före och efter beteckningsreformen. (Standardization of Swedish place-names before and after the designation reform.) Staffan Nyström (ed.), Namnens dynamik. Utvecklingstendenser och drivkrafter inom nordiskt namnskick. Handlingar från den trettonde nordiska namnforskarkongressen i Tällberg 15–18 augusti 2003, pp. 245–254. (NORNA-rapporter 80.) Uppsala 2005.

Nilsson, Leif, 2005: The Place-Name Advisory Board of Sweden. Namn och bygd 93, pp. 105–108.

Nilsson, Leif, 2006: God ortnamnsed i våra adresser? (Good place-name practice in rural addresses in Sweden?) Ortnamnssällskapet i Uppsala årsskrift, pp. 33–35.

Nilsson, Leif & Nyström, Staffan & Svenserud, Ragnar & Torensjö, Annette C., 2004: Vad skall församlingen heta? Bakgrund och goda råd vid val av nya församlingsnamn. (What shall we call the parish? Background and good advice when choosing new parish-names.) Ortnamn och namnvård. Gävle 2005.

Nyström, Staffan, 2003: Smånamn och andra ortnamn. (Micro toponyms and other place-names.) Stockholm 2003.

Ringstam, Hans, 2005: Standardisering av geografiska namn. Om FN:s ortnamnsarbete. (Standardization of geographical names. The UN's work on place-names.) (Ortnamn och namnvård 7). Gävle 2005.

Svenskt ortnamnslexikon (Swedish place-name dictionary.). Mats Wahlberg (ed.). Utarbetat inom Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet och Institutionen för nordiska språk vid Uppsala universitet. Uppsala 2003.

Torensjö, Annette C., 2002: The National Land Survey of Sweden and its role as the national geographical names' authority. Actas do 20 congresso internacional de ciencias onomásticas. Santiago de Compostela, 20–25 setembro de 1999. Editadas por Ana Isabel Boullón Agrelo, Coruña 2002, pp. 543–548 (cd-rom).