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EuroGeoNames - towards a European geographical names infrastructure and services

One of the most common ways to find a location on the Internet is by using geographical names, such as names of municipalities, cities or rivers, but, in which language can the user make his query? Does the user know the correct spelling of the name? How reliable is the location information that will be received?

The **EuroGeoNames** project will address these and many other issues.

We need names of locations to know where we are, to identify where we would like to go to, to talk with other people about our holiday experiences, to discuss environmental disasters like floods and earthquakes.

A **geographical name** is therefore a **key for linking information to a specific location**. Considering the multi-linguality and cultural richness in Europe, the people use **different spellings and languages** when talking about the same location and even within a country more than one spelling may be used.

Currently, a **European service**, providing the official national geographical names, maintained by the countries themselves, does not exist on the web. Of course, in many European countries there are **existing geographical names databases** but these are not yet compatible with each other, as they are based on different data models and mainly built to satisfy map production purposes.

"Would you be interested in an Internet service that provides you with geographical names in many different languages?"

The project EuroGeoNames (EGN) is creating a **European geographical names data infrastructure and associated web services**, to help you find the official spelling of a name, together with its spelling in other languages, its geographical location, its pronunciation, etc. In order to realise this European infrastructure, the EGN project incorporates **public bodies**, **academic institutions** and **private companies**. This will ensure the use of up-to-date intelligent search and selection tools.



The example of a delivery agent dispatching goods from Valencia (Spain) to Aachen (Germany) illustrates the possible difficulties: "Aachen" is German, but the same place is known as "Aguas Gran" in Spanish, "Aix la Chapelle" in French and English, "Aken" in Dutch, "Aquisgrana" in Italian, "Akwizgran" in Polish and "CÁCHY" in Czech.

