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REPORTS OF THE DIVISIONS

Report of the Nordic Division

submitted by Botolv Helleland, Chairman of the Nordic Division

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Since the Sixth United Nations Conference and the subsequent Sixteenth Session of the UNGEGN in New York in September 1992 each country within the Division has pursued its national place-name standardisation policy, mainly in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Conferences and UNGEGN. Generally it may be said that considerable progress has been made in the countries concerned.

National standardization; names authorities

Denmark. Since 1932 the Place-Name Committee in Denmark has drawn up lists of place-names for official use, authorised by the ministry responsible. This list, which is constantly updated, is to be found in a data base in the *Kort- og Matrikelstyrelsen* (National Survey and Cadastre), and it includes 25,000 names. State bodies are obliged to follow the spelling indicated in this list, while the municipalities use the authorised spelling on a voluntary basis. On maps published by the National Survey and Cadastre the authorised forms of names are used. Names that are not on the authorised list are written in accordance with the same principles.

Finland. Every governmental or municipal institution as well as any private organisation has the right to decide the names of things coming under them. But the officials who make decisions on names should request, in accordance with the declaration of Parliament (1957) and some specific Acts passed later (e.g. the Distribution of Local Government Areas Act), a statement from the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages.

Iceland. In Iceland place-names are standardised in conformity with current Icelandic spelling. The Place-Name Commission (Örnefnanefnd, established in 1935) or the Institute of Place-Name Research (Örnefnastofnun) may be consulted. As early as 1913 an Act was passed concerning new farm names and changes of farm names. A new Farms Names Act was passed in 1937, with amendments in 1953. The main principle is that such names shall be based on traditional Icelandic naming custom.

Norway. In Norway the Place-Names Act was passed on 18.5.1990. Regulations pursuant to the Act were issued on 5.7.1991, with amendments on 14.10.1993. The main content of the Act and Regulations is that placenames in public use shall be laid down on the basis of inherited, local pronunciation and in accordance with current spelling principles. The same principle applies to place-names in multilingual areas. The spelling is laid down by the public body which is responsible for the name of the thing concerned, e.g. the Public Roads Administration, Postal Administration, county, municipality. The vast majority of names on maps are laid down by the Norwegian Mapping Authority

through the 18 county mapping offices. To implement the provisions of the Act five regional names advisory services have been established together with an appeals board to decide appeals against the spelling of place-names.

Sweden. The National Land Survey of Sweden (NLS) has been the geographical names authority in Sweden since 1974. The Place-Names Advisory Board was created in 1985.

The Swedish government is now (Spring 1994) discussing the future organisation of the NLS. However, there is no reason to believe that there will be any changes relating to the standardisation of geographical names.

Departments of Place-Name Research have also been the subject of a White Paper. As a result a new authority has been established to include departments concerned with place-names, dialects and folklore. The new authority is called Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet (Swedish Institute for Language and Folklore Research).

Office treatment of place-names

All the onomastic departments within the Division have given a great many statements and answers concerning name standardization, name usage and etymology. In this respect the figures supplied by **Finland** may serve as an example:

About 20 % of the road names given in the rural municipalities have been checked by the Onomastic Division at the Finnish Research Centre in cooperation with the Swedish Language Division. New or altered names on 420 revised sheets of the Basic Map (1:20,000) have been checked. A revised list of Country names in Finnish, Swedish, Sami, English, French and German is in print. The Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division have provided 73 statements concerning geographical names in Finland and offered guidance on name usage as well as other information requested on Finnish, Swedish and Sami names, or names used in foreign countries, by phone and letter (2,380 answers), by radio (30 programmes in Finnish, 10 in Sami, 1 in Swedish) and through the press (10 articles in Finnish, 2 in Sami, 6 in Swedish).

Field collection of place-names and training courses

Denmark. In the **Faröes** the Faröese Academy and the Cadastre Office are in the process of collecting and recording approx. 80,000 place-names. Of these it is expected that 15,000 will be included on a new base map with a scale of 1:25,000 and recorded in a data base. This work is expected to be completed in 1996. The responsibility for maintaining the register lies with the Faröese.

Finland. The systematic field survey of place-names organized by the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages continued in 33 municipalities. The collection of names was completed in 10 municipalities. About 58,000 new records were added to the files of the Onomastic Division of the Research Centre. Four training courses on the collection of names in the field have been arranged by the Research Centre together with the Finnish departments of the universities. Two courses will take place in 1994.

Norway. To follow up the Place-Names Act the Ministry of Cultural Affairs has arranged a number of courses and conferences in which the names advisory services, the Norwegian Language Council and the Norwegian Mapping Authority have participated. The

Norwegian Mapping Authority and the names advisory services have for their part organised courses for municipalities and other public services to help them to tackle their tasks in a more satisfactory manner. Several local courses have also been arranged for the collecting and recording of place-names. Both types of courses will continue throughout the next couple of years.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

A Nordic toponymic data base. There are still plans for the production of a common Nordic toponymic data base. If all goes well, the work will start this autumn. The data base will contain approximately 20,000 geographical names and cover Denmark with the Farøe Islands and Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway with Jan Mayen and Svalbard, and lastly Sweden. A working group has been formed and its first meeting was held in Norway in March this year.

Denmark. The register of place-names of the National Survey and Cadastre, established in the years 1976 to 1981, contains today approx. 120,000 place-names, which are continually updated. At the end of 1994 the register will be transformed into a relational data base for the purpose of being able to serve users of geographical information systems.

Finland. The topographic data base of the National Land Survey now contains about 10% of the base map (3,750 sheets showing 10 x 10 km) with 120,000 toponyms. The digitalizing of the map will be completed by the end of this decade. The data files of the GT-Map (1:200,000) covering the entire country contain 68,000 toponyms. The computerization of the Real Estate Register will be completed by the end of this year. The Register contains 455 names of cities and municipalities, 13,900 names of villages and 3,460,000 records (names) of real estate units.

Iceland. During the last 3 years the earlier place-name register on card index files at the Iceland Geodetic Survey (Godætisk Institut) has been replaced by a digital system (partly as a result of the UNGEGN recommendations) comprising name, type of locality, ID-number (which refers to map sheet number), specifications of size and type of letters etc. Excel software has been used to make the information available in digital form. About half of the surface of Iceland has so far been covered by this system.

Norway. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has given the Norwegian Mapping Authority the responsibility for establishing and maintaining a central data base of all place-names that have been decided in pursuance of the Place-Names Act (the Central Register of Place-Names/SSR). The base is to be available to the public. In the first instance the base is to include the approx. 340,000 place-names to be found in the series of main maps 1:50,000. Since the Act came into operation the Norwegian Mapping Authority has made decisions on approx. 18,000 names.

The data base of names at the Norwegian Mapping Authority is to be gradually enlarged to include names from other public series of maps such as charts and economic maps. The number of names may then reach approx. 1.5 million.

The Norwegian Mapping Authority has gone through the different ISO standards to arrive at the character set that is as complete as possible for Sámi characters. In this connection it seems to be most natural to take as a basis ISO 8859-10 - Latin alphabet,

which was published for the first time in 1992. It has been adapted for the following languages: Danish, English, Estonian, Finnish, Færøese, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Farøese, Sami (North, Lule and South Sami), Swedish and German. This is an 8-bit character set in conformity with ISO 2022 or ISO/IEC 4873. The data are stored in a relational data base on a Unix machine and are accessed from client programmes on the users' PCs.

At the Norwegian universities as part of the labour market measures a documentation project has been set up with a view to transferring collections of name material on cards to a data base. The work is being conducted through cooperation with the universities and local registration centres.

Sweden. By the end of 1995 the computerisation of the new Swedish real estate register will have been completed. Thus a project that has been going on for more than 20 years will be brought to an end. This means that the old manual systems will be replaced by a computer-based system in which each of the 3.5 million units of real property will have a unique designation. The designation of a unit of real property will consist of the name of the municipality, the name of the area (farm, village, block, urban district etc.) and a registration number, e.g. Bollnäs Sibö 1:30.

When it is completed the register will contain nearly 120,000 area names, all of them having been linguistically examined before being stored in the base. The NLS is responsible for making the final decisions on real estate designations. The names in question are then used on the official national maps of Sweden.

Names in multilingual areas

Denmark. With respect to Greenland the full responsibility for naming and spelling has with effect from 1993 been transferred to the Greenlanders themselves. A collaborative agreement has been entered into by the National Survey and Cadastre and the Directorate for Culture, Education and Research which means that everything to do with Greenland place-names will be dealt with by a separate name committee (Grønlands Stednavnenævnet) including research linguists. From 1996 "European" names will disappear from the Greenland place-name register if there is a Greenlandic name from before. In the case of personal names in which a part of the name is an appellative, this element is to be replaced by the corresponding Greenlandic word. For the adoption of new "European" names the same guidelines will be followed. The National Survey and Cadastre functions in an advisory capacity and has a copy of the name data base, which contains 26,000 names.

Finland. The Official Use of the Sami Language Act, which came into effect in 1992 has improved and extended the official use of Sami place-names. As a consequence, the orthography of Sami place-names is becoming more stable. In the Sami areas in the three northernmost municipalities new farms and dwelling houses are given Sami names, and so are roads, parks and other objects in the towns. Yet some difficulties exist since three Sami languages with more or less different orthographies are in use.

Norway. The Place-Names Act 1990 and the Regulations issued in 1991 with amendments in 1993 have laid down the principle that place-names in multilingual areas

shall be used in conformity with inherited name usage, and the spelling of place-names in these areas is in the main in the process of becoming stabilised. Yet there are still problems of a legal, practical and linguistic kind when it comes to real equality of status between majority and minority languages, which include North Sami, Lule Sami, South Sami and Finnish.

Sweden. In 1988 the National Land Survey decided to introduce the Lule-Sami orthography for official maps in accordance with the UN recommendations of 1972. The decision from 1983 relating to North Sami orthography has been implemented in the Mountain Map, as it is called, and other official maps.

The decision from 1988 relating to Lule-Sami orthography has caused certain problems. As the Swedish map authority, the NLS, produces both military and civil maps. As the national defence authorities are dependent on the same content in maps on different scales, there has been some discussion about the introduction of new orthographies. The result seems to be that the old orthography will still appear on printed maps for some years to come and in the meantime the new Lule-Sami orthography will be recorded in the data bases. When the whole area has been covered in the toponymic data base, the old orthography will be replaced on the maps of all scales.

Exonyms

Norway. In 1991 the Norwegian Language Council published a list of foreign names (Geografilista), in which the principle of using the individual country's spelling as a basis (endonym) was followed to a great extent. For a new edition consideration is being given to a certain reduction of diacritics, among other things for the sake of electronic data processing, even though this may mean increased use of exonyms.

Sweden. The different views on the reduction of exonyms among teachers of geography, toponymists and linguists have resulted in discussions in the various media.

A Nordic meeting to discuss (mainly) new names of states (nations) was held in Stockholm in October 1992. The participants from the different Nordic Language Committees held traditional views and showed little understanding of the UN resolutions relating to exonyms, diacritics and terminology. However, the work on Romanization systems was approved.

Meetings and conferences

During the seventeenth session of UNGEGN the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) is meeting in Oslo (18.6.1994). One item on the agenda is a proposal for closer cooperation between ICOS and UNGEGN.

Finland. In addition to several national meetings where Finnish, Swedish or Sami names and planning of names were discussed, a Finnish expert was invited to the symposium arranged by An Coimisiún Logainmneacha, Bord na Gaeilge, and An tSuirbhéireacht Ordanáis in Dublin to lecture on Language Legislation and Language Planning in Bilingual Finland (23.11.1993) and on Bilingual Naming: Policy and Practice

(25.11.1993).

Norway. On 4.5.1993 the municipality of Bergen arranged a conference on municipal place-name culture. On 19.11.1993 the 7th national conference on name research was held in Oslo, with "Place-names and the cultural landscape" as its theme. The 11th Nordic name research congress will be held at Sundvollen near Oslo from 19 to 23 June 1994. The theme of the congress is dual: 1) Onomastics in the light of the history of the subject and the theory of science 2) Name patterns in regional and chronological variation.

Sweden. In May 1993 a meeting on the need for a place-names Act was held in Stockholm, arranged by the Central Office of National Antiquities. All the Nordic countries were invited, and the papers presented took up several topics relating to the idea of the new Act.

In April this year there was another meeting in Uppsala on the same theme. The reason for this is that the Swedish government has decided to appoint a committee to work on the question of a future Swedish Act on the preservation of inherited place-names in official use. There is a feeling in the Swedish Parliament, or to be more precise in the Committee on Cultural Affairs, that old place-names should be statutorily preserved.

Publications

Denmark. Jørgen Schack (ed.): Names of States and Words for Nationalities (Statsnavne og nationalitetsord). Dansk Sprognævns skrifter nr. 21. Nordisk språksekretariats skrifter nr. 17. Oslo 1994. -Jørgen Schack: Foreign Place-names in Linguistic Advice (Udenlandske stednavne i den sproglige rådgivning. Språk i Norden 1993. Nordisk språksekretariats skrifter nr. 15. Oslo 1993, p. 80-87.

Finland. -Eeva Maria Närhi: Official Treatment of Geographical Names. Språk i Norden 1993. Nordisk språksekretariats skrifter 15. Oslo 1993, p. 88-94. In Swedish. -Eeva Maria Närhi: Name Legislation and Implementation in Finland. Keel ja Kirjandus 1993. Tallinn, p. 335-343. In Estonian.

Norway. -Botolv Helleland: Addresses and Place-Names. Place-Names in Official and Private Use (Adresser og stadnamn. Stadnamn i offentlig og privat bruk). Oslo 1993. In Norwegian.

Sweden. -In 1992 the NLS published the first issue of a series dealing with geographical names and the preservation of names (Ortnamn och namnvård). It is intended to address various questions relating to the standardization of names. A further two issues in the series have been published. Number 2, "Recording geographical names" (Sw. *Att uppteckna ortnamn*) written by Staffan Nyström came out in late 1992, and Number 3, "Sami geographical names on mountain maps" (Sw. *Samiska ortnamn på fjällkartorna*) by Ann-Christin Mattisson came out in 1993, both in Swedish.

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