
United Nations Group of Experts On

Geographical Names

2019 session

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Item 14 of the provisional agenda*

Exonyms (Working Group on Exonyms)

Report of the Working Group on Exonyms

Submitted by the Working Group on Exonyms**

Summary:

The full report describes the activities of the Working Group on Exonyms since the thirtieth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, held in New York on 7 and 18 August 2017. The 20th meeting of the Working Group, a business meeting, was held in New York on 9 August 2017 as a side event of the thirtieth session. During the meeting, among other things, an election of the new Convenor of the Working Group took place. The 21st meeting, a workshop, was held in Riga from 24 to 26 September 2018, and was hosted by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in collaboration with the Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia. The main theme of the meeting was “Categorization of exonyms”. The meeting was attended by some 40 experts from 20 countries, and 18 papers were presented.

* GEGN.2/2019/1.

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Report of the Working Group on Exonyms

1. Organisational Aspects

The Working Group on Exonyms was established in 2002 by the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin. Resolution VIII/4 specifies its tasks with taking measures for “the categorization of exonym use, the publication of pronunciation guides for endonyms and the formulation of guidelines ensuring a politically sensitive use of exonyms”.

1.1 WG meetings held

1st Meeting: Berlin, 6 September 2002, in the framework of the 8th UN Conference

2nd Meeting: Prague [Praha], 24-26 September 2003, hosted by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre

3rd Meeting: New York, 2004, in the framework of the 22nd UNGEGN Session

4th Meeting: Ljubljana, 19-20 May 2005, hosted by the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts

5th Meeting: Vienna [Wien], 2006, in the framework of the 23rd UNGEGN Session

6th Meeting: Prague [Praha], 17-18 May 2007, hosted by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre.

7th Meeting: New York, 29 August 2007, in the framework of the 24th UNGEGN Session

8th Meeting: Timișoara, 9-11 September 2008, hosted by the West University of Timișoara, the Romanian Academy of Sciences, the Romanian Military Institute of Cartography and the Adam Mueller-Guttenbrunn House

9th Meeting: Nairobi, 11 May 2009, in the framework of the 25th UNGEGN Session

10th Meeting: Tainach (Austria), 28-30 April 2010, hosted by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names and the Catholic Educational Centre “Sodalitas”

11th Meeting: Vienna [Wien], 4 May 2011, in the framework of the 26th UNGEGN Session, but outside UN facilities, hosted by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names

12th Meeting: Gdańsk, 16-18 May 2012, hosted by the Polish Main Office of Geodesy and Cartography

13th Meeting: New York, 6 August 2012, in the framework of the 10th UN Conference

14th Meeting: Corfu [Kerkyra], 23-25 May 2013, hosted by the Greek UNGEGN delegation, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the City of Corfu

15th Meeting: New York, 29 April 2014, in the framework of the 28th UNGEGN Session

16th Meeting: Hermagor (Austria), 5-7 June 2014, hosted by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names

17th Meeting: Zagreb, 14-16 May 2015, hosted by the Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography, Zagreb

18th Meeting: Bangkok [Krung Thep], 26 April 2016, in the framework of the 29th UNGEGN Session

19th Meeting: Prague [Praha], 4-6 April 2017, hosted by the Czech Geodetical Office [Český úřad zeměměřický a katastrální] and Land Survey Office [Zeměměřický úřad]

20th Meeting: New York, 9 August 2017, in the framework of the 30th UNGEGN Session

21st Meeting: Riga, 24-26 September 2018, hosted by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in Collaboration with the Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia

1.2 WG proceedings published

JORDAN Peter, OROŽEN ADAMIĆ Milan, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2007), *Exonyms and the International Standardisation of Geographical Names. Approaches towards the Resolution of an Apparent Contradiction* (Wiener Osteuropa Studien, 24). Wien – Berlin: LIT Verlag, 240p., ISBN 978-3-8258-0035-2, ISSN 0946-7246.

JORDAN Peter, BERGMANN Hubert, BURGESS Caroline, CHEETHAM Catherine (eds.) (2011), *Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010* (Name & Place, 1). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 328p., ISBN 978-3-8300-5656-0.

WOODMAN Paul (ed.) (2012), *The Great Toponymic Divide. Reflections on the definition and usage of endonyms and exonyms*. Warszawa: Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography, 302p. ISBN 978-83-254-1967-7.

JORDAN Peter, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2014), *The Quest for Definitions. Proceedings of the 14th*

- UNGE GN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Corfu, 23-25 May 2013 (Name & Place, 3). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 295p., ISBN 978-3-8300-7747-3.
- JORDAN Peter, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2015), Confirmation of the Definitions. Proceedings of the 16th UNGE GN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Hermagor, 5-7 June 2014 (Name & Place, 4). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 244p., ISBN 978-3-8300-8422-8.
- JORDAN Peter, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2016), Criteria for the Use of Exonyms. Proceedings of the 17th UNGE GN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Zagreb, 14-16 May 2015 (Name & Place, 6). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 170p., ISBN 978-3-8300-8946-9.
- JORDAN Peter, ŠVEHLOVÁ Irena, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2018), A Survey of Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 19th UNGE GN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Prague, 6-8 April 2017 (Name & Place, 7). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 191p., ISBN 978-3-8300-9997-0.

1.3 Members, Convenors

The Working Group is open to all those who are interested in the topic. The group keeps contacts with ca.100 experts from more than 30 countries. Meetings are usually attended by more than 30 experts. Those who wish to attend or be informed about the activities of the Working Group should please contact the Working Group Convenor.

Convenors:

2002-2004: Milan OROŽEN ADAMIČ (Slovenia)

2004-2006: co-convenors Peter JORDAN (Austria), Milan OROŽEN ADAMIČ

2006-2012: convenor in charge Peter JORDAN, co-convenor Milan OROŽEN ADAMIČ

2012-2017: Peter JORDAN

2017-: Kohei WATANABE

1.4 WG website

The WG maintains a website accessible under <http://ungegn.zrc-sazu.si>. It is hosted by the Institute of Geography of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and updated by Matjaž Geršič. It contains a.o. detailed reports of all WG meetings as well as links to all publications of the WG. The full e-book version of: Abdel Halim SABBAR (2018): The Toponymy of an Endangered Nubian Language. Oxford: Nubian Languages and Culture ISBN: 978-1-9998425-1-2, is a recent addition to the website.

2 Activities since the last UNCSGN /UNGE GN session in 2017

Since the 11th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) in New York, 8-17 August 2017, the Working Group held one business meeting, one workshop and published one book of proceedings.

2.1 Meetings

20th Meeting: New York, 9 August 2017

The Working Group met on 9 August 2017 during 11th UNCSGN, in the UN headquarters in New York. Then Working Group convenor, Peter Jordan chaired the meeting, which lasted for about 45 minutes.

First, the convenor gave an overview on activities of the Working Group since the 18th Meeting in Bangkok in 2016. He reported on the 19th Meeting of the WG in Prague Czech Republic, 4-6 April 2017, where discussions took place on the use of exonyms. Then he expressed his intention to resign as convenor of the Working Group, and suggested Kohei Watanabe as successor. Voting took place among those present, and his suggestion was accepted. Peter Jordan will continue to participate in the Working Group as an active member.

The convenor-elect made a brief comment praising the outgoing convenor on his leadership and achievements during his 13 years of service, and expressed gratitude to his immense contribution. He announced that the next workshop meeting (21st) will be held in 2018, and pleaded current members for continued participation in the Working Group and support on his convenorship.

21st Meeting: Riga, 24-26 September 2018

The 21st meeting (workshop) was held on 24-26 September 2018 in Riga, hosted by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency in Collaboration with the Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia. The venue for the first day was at the Latvian Academy of Science, and that for the second day was

at the Latvian War Museum. The main theme of the meeting was "Categorisation and Classification of Exonyms". The meeting was attended by about 40 experts from 20 countries, and 18 papers were presented. On the last day of the meeting, an excursion took place, investigating Āraiši Archeological site, the town of Cēsis with the old church and castle at Riekstukalns, and Ungurmuiža manor house. This meeting was only possible with the generous support and hard work of the staff of host institutes headed by Colonel Mārtiņš Liberts (director, Latvian Geospatial Information Agency), Vita Strautniece, Zane Cekula, et al.

In the meeting, after the welcome speech by Col. Liberts and opening remarks by Watanabe, the following papers were presented and discussed (listed in order of presentation). Kohei Watanabe, Sungjae Choo, Nicholas Padfield, Maria del Mar Battle, and Herman Bell acted as chairpersons for the sessions. The proceedings of the workshop will be published in the toponymic book series Name & Place (Vol. 8).

Sanda RAPA and Vita STRAUTNIECE "Place names in Latvia"
Paul WOODMAN "The categorisation and classification of exonyms"
Peeter PÄLL "Possible categorization of Estonian exonyms"
Matjaž GERŠIČ "Categorization Schemes for Slovenian Exonyms"
Iryna DROHUSHEVSKA and Oleh NEZHIVYI "The Use of Exonyms in National Standardization of Geographical Names of Ukraine"
Andrea BÖLCSKEI and Gábor MIKESY "Hungarian exonyms in the past and in the present"
Ivana CRLJENKO "Croatian Exonyms Depending on the Frequency of Use over Time"
Bogusław ZAGÓRSKI "Arabic toponyms for the Baltic states - exonyms versus endonyms"
Ré PHILLIPS "Historic Exonyms in Nubia from an African-American Perspective"
Herman BELL "Exonyms Perceived by a Scholar Who Spoke an Unofficial Language"
Sungjae CHOO "Exonym use in the Korean language: Implication for a categorization of exonyms"
Kohei WATANABE "Classification of exonyms and exonymoids in Japan"
Sirikka PAIKKALA and Kerkko HAKULINEN "Online Service for Finnish exonyms"
Roman STANI - FERTL "Exonyms and EuroRegionalMap (ERM)"
Maciej ZYCH "Exonyms for country names as local toponyms"
Irena ŠVEHLOVÁ and Klára STEINEROVÁ "Czech names in Antarctica"
Zane CEKULA "Place names of Abrene on the map scale 1:50,000"
Paul WOODMAN "A toponymic proposal on the occasion of Latvia's centenary"

In the concluding discussion session, it was pointed out that categorisation or classification of exonyms should lead to better understanding of the nature of exonym, even though we may not be able to identify certain categories that should be prioritised for reduced use. Concern on Googlemap's names management was raised, that it shows an influence of names driven by commercial interest, and a weak regard of standardisation by the names board.

As business meeting agenda, the process and final outcome regarding the rules of procedure for the new format of UNGEGN was explained to the working group members (most significantly, the 5-year cycle will be changed to a 2-year cycle). Some items on the running of the working group was also discussed, such as policy on the maintenance of the membership list on the website (e.g. providing opt-out opportunities and not listing all e-mail addresses). Arrangement for the publication of proceedings was also discussed, which will probably be the last in the "Name and Place" book series that is related to WG activities, due to lack of funding and editing hands (the series itself will hopefully continue with other topics). It was decided that the next workshop meeting will be held in 2020 unless someone comes up with a concrete proposal to hold one in 2019. This is due to the year 2019 having many major events on toponymy, with the UNGEGN in New York in Apr-May 2019, and many other international conferences (a.o. International Cartographic Congress (Tokyo JP, 15-20 July 2019), International Conference on Onomastics (Baia Mare RO, 3-5 Sep.), International Symposium on Place Names (Clarens ZA, 18-20 Sep.), and "Place Names and Migration" Symposium (Vienna AT, 6-8 Nov.)). It was noted that a joint arrangement together with meetings of other Working groups or Divisions may attract more participants and also is easier for those who are involved in other WGs / Divisions.

2.2 WG proceedings

In the period of 2017-19, we have published a book containing 16 papers from the Prague WG meeting in

2017. This book is the 7th volume in the toponymic book series "Name and Place", edited by Peter Jordan and Paul Woodman and have the full title as indicated below. The book can be ordered from publisher Dr. Kovač, Hamburg (email: info@verlagdrkovac.de, website: <http://www.verlagdrkovac.de>).

JORDAN Peter, ŠVEHLOVÁ Irena, WOODMAN Paul (eds.) (2018), A Survey of Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 19th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Prague, 6-8 April 2017 (Name & Place, 7). Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 191p., ISBN 978-3-8300-9997-0

3 Future activities and directions

3.1 Next meeting

The WG will convene for a next business meeting (22nd meeting) on 2 May 2019 in the framework of the 2019 UNGEGN meeting. Next WG Workshop meeting (23rd meeting) is planned in the first half of 2020. The venue and date of the 23rd meeting will be announced, and the focus of the meeting will be discussed at the abovementioned 22nd meeting.

3.2 Upcoming WG proceedings

Currently we are editing the 8th volume of the series "Name and Place" (series editors, Peter Jordan and Paul Woodman), containing the papers from the Riga meeting in September 2018. The volume title will be "The Classification of Exonyms" and the volume editors are Allison Dollimore and Kohei Watanabe. It is expected that the book will be available from Verlag Dr Kovac, shortly after the UNGEGN meeting in 2019, if not before.

3.3 Future directions

As Peter Jordan described in the paper prepared for the 11th Conference (E/CONF.105/17/CRP.17 "The endonym /exonym divide – Questions resolved and still open at the 15th anniversary of the Working Group on Exonyms"), there are still wide-ranging issues regarding this topic. It could also be pointed out, that with increased recognition of cultural and heritage values of toponyms, as well as the need of promoting indigenous and minority geographical names, the situation regarding exonyms has become increasingly complex. We will continue to seek pathways for a sensible interpretation and implementation of past UNCSGN resolutions relating to exonyms.