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**MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON  
TOPONYMIC DATA FILES AND GAZETTEERS**

**Concise Gazetteer of Germany**

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**Submitted by: Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN)  
(Permanent committee on geographical names)**

**Prepared by: Jörn Sievers, Chairman, StAGN, Frankfurt am Main and  
Bernd Edwin Beinstein, Secretary, StAGN, Frankfurt am Main**

## Concise Gazetteer of Germany

The "Institut für Angewandte Geodäsie" (IfAG), now "Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie" (BKG), had published in 1981 the Gazetteer Federal Republic of Germany, which was compiled in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations (5<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Resolution 16, Montreal 1987). It contained the names of populated places, rivers, lakes, canals, mountains and regions as far as they were shown on the official General Map of Germany at 1:500 000 scale. This included a stock of approximately 15 000 names with a larger number of attributes such as coordinates, geographical feature descriptions, administrative classification, statistical and other data. This Gazetteer was published in printed as well as in digital form. After the German reunification the data stock was extended by incorporating the geographical names of the five eastern Länder ('federal states') and East Berlin as well as extending it to the map scale at 1:200 000. This data set is available only in digital form.

For international use the United Nations recommended a concise version of national gazetteers (2<sup>nd</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Resolution 35, London 1972) which should include a selection of the most important geographical names of a country.

A preliminary version of a Concise Gazetteer Germany was presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in New York in 1998. The gazetteer was completed in 1999 and is now available as a hardcopy version from the StAGN Secretariat. A publication on the Internet is intended.

The gazetteer contains about 1600 entries. As selection criterion for populated places a population of more than 10 000 was determined, for rivers and canals a length of more than 100 km. Other features like geographic regions, islands, hydrographic features, mountains, and places of cultural and touristic significance were included according to their regional importance.

The geographical names in their present official spelling have been entered as main entries. Variant names appear in reduced lettering; they include, e.g. Sorbian names in regions of the cultural and linguistic community of the Sorbs. Variant names have also been entered as cross references.

An entry comprises of: the officially approved spelling of a name, its gender (where not obvious), the feature category, the geographical centre coordinates, and the German state ('Land') to which the feature belongs.

If the official form of a name contains an adjunct in abbreviation (see example below: **Altenkirchen (Ww.)**), for the purpose of explanation, the expanded form is also indicated but typed in smaller size italics (e.g. *Altenkirchen (Westerwald)*). Also a short form without the adjunct is added in smaller size italics (e.g. *Altenkirchen*). This short form of the name could appropriately be used on cartographic products when necessary due to lack of space. In addition, acceptable procedures of word division are shown for longer names (e.g. *Alten-kirchen*).

**Examples of entries:**

(The abbreviations used for the feature category are: STA = city, town; MTS = mountain range; STRM = stream):

**Altenkirchen (Ww.)** *Altenkirchen (Westerwald), Altenkirchen, Alten-kirchen*

STA 7°38.7' E 50°41.2' N Rheinland-Pfalz

**Kaiserslautern**

STA 7° 46.2' E 49° 26.7' N Rheinland-Pfalz

**Schwarzwald**

MTS 8° 15.4' E 48° 29.0' N Baden-Württemberg

**Spree** Sprijewja

STRM 13° 12.7' E 52° 32.2' N Sachsen, Brandenburg, Berlin

It is intended to make the Concise Gazetteer Germany available on the Internet. Single hardcopies also can be obtained from:

StAGN Secretariat

Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie

Richard-Strauss-Allee 11

D-60598 Frankfurt am Main

Fax: +49-69-6333-441

email: [beinstein@ifag.de](mailto:beinstein@ifag.de)