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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Reports of the divisions

Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division [*]

Abstract

The paper reflects activities of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of UNGEGN since the 24th UNGEGN session and 9th UNCSGN (2007) under the headings of the various resolutions accepted mainly at the 8th and 9th UNCSGN, but also at earlier conferences.

Activities involving all or a larger number of DGSD member countries were
- the EC-funded **EuroGeoNames project (EGN)** setting up a Europe-wide geogra-phical names data infrastructure. The national databases of 9 countries (AT, DE, NL, LT, LV, SI, NO, CY, HU) were connected. 7 more countries (BE, CZ, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR) have agreed to be connected in 2009. The funded period ended in February 2009. It is the aim of the implementation phase (2009 to 2012) to connect at least the EU27 countries.
- an **updated list of country names** published by the Permanent Committee on Geogra-phical Names (StAGN) as a 10th edition in September 2008. The list is a synopsis of country names officially issued by the foreign ministries of Austria, Germany and Switzerland, supplemented with comments made by StAGN.
- **guidelines for the rendering of place names on road signposts**, elaborated by StAGN for Austria, Germany and Switzerland. These guidelines refer especially to names of destinations outside the German-speaking area, where they give precedence to national official forms, as well as to destinations in areas with minority languages, where they recommend the use of all locally official forms.
- a symposium on the topic **"Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heri-tage"**, held in Vienna, 19-21 May 2008, in persuing the Division's tradition of GeoNames symposia, as well as proceedings of this symposion, published in February 2009. Major topics of both these activities were (1) place names as keys to older cultural layers, (2) place names in minority languages and the role of place names for national/ethnic minorities, (3) place names as political symbols and their use for political purposes (place name changes for political reasons), (4) the role of place names in space-related identity building, (5) functions of toponymic data files in place name preservation. There is the opportunity to order the proceedings using the address indicated in this paper (see under Res. VIII-15).

In addition many more activities referring to individual member countries of the Division are listed in this paper.

Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division

The activities of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of UNGEGN since the 24th UNGEGN session and 9th UNCSGN (2007) are indicated below, under the headings of the various resolutions accepted mainly at the 8th and 9th UNCSGN, but also at earlier conferences.

Res. V-12: Collection of basic information on the national standardization of geographical names

Belgium:
An index based on the 2nd edition of the topographic map at the scale 1: 50,000 was included into the *Topografische Atlas België = Atlas topographique Belgique* published in 2008 in cooperation with Lannoo Editions. It contains about 20,000 names (of municipalities, municipal districts, hamlets and named places) classified in alphabetical order and given along with their XY-coordinates in the Belgian Lambert 2008 system.

Netherlands:
For the first time ever, place name collection has been part of a law passed in 2007 in the Netherlands. In the law on creating the *Topografisch basisbestand* (Basic topographical database of the Netherlands) the collection of geographical names was mentioned as the responsibility of the National Mapping Agency.
The new object-oriented version of the Basic topographical database of the Netherlands (TOP10NL) was completed in 2007. One of the object attribute categories is the geographical names, so that names are linked in the files to objects as well, instead of to coordinates only. Simultaneously, street addresses have to be registered by municipalities, and it is hoped that the spelling of the place names collected and standardised by the Topographical Survey will not be compromised by the street address spelling standardization efforts of these municipalities.

Switzerland:
The Federal Act on Geoinformation of 5 October 2007 is in force since 1 July 2008. This Act has the aim of ensuring that geodata relating to the territory of the Swiss Confederation is made available for general use in a sustainable, up-to-date and easy manner, in the required quality and at reasonable costs. Art. 7 of the Act refers to geographical names: The Federal Council shall issue regulations on the coordination of names of communes, settlements and streets. It shall regulate other geographical names, responsibilities and the procedure as well as the allocation of costs. In this regard the Ordinance for Geographical Names has been elaborated and is also in force since 1 July 2008. The geographical names of Switzerland belong to the catalogue of basic geodata being a part of federal law.

A workgroup is preparing an instruction for the spelling of geographical names in the German speaking part of Switzerland in the framework of the Ordinance for Geographical Names.

Res. V-13: Precedence of national official forms of geographical names

Austria, Germany, Switzerland:

The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN) in its function as the co-ordinative authority of national standardization in Austria, Germany and Switzerland has elaborated guidelines for the rendering of place names on road signposts. These guidelines refer especially to names of destinations outside the German-speaking area, where they give precedence to national official forms, as well as to destinations in areas with minority languages, where they recommend the use of all locally official forms. The guidelines will be submitted to authorities carrying responsibility in this field in all three countries.

Res. V-15: Establishment of national geographical names authorities

Austria:
The Austrian national statistical agency *Statistik Austria* has ceased to publish the Gazetteer of Austria (*Österreichisches Ortsverzeichnis*) comprising all the settlement names down to the names of individual houses and farmsteads and having been the official source for all kinds of standardized and official settlement names. The last issues published were those after and based on the population census 2001. Standardized and official forms of settlement names can now only be found in the database GEONAM (http://www.austrianmap.at) as well as in the official Austrian topographical maps maintained and published by the Federal Office of Metrology and Surveying (http://www.bev.gv.at). In order to replace the former Gazetteer completely, GEONAM will gradually integrate also names of individual houses and farmsteads, which were so far only rendered in the Gazetteer.

Netherlands:
In the Netherlands the *Adviescommissie aardrijkskundige namen in Nederland* (Advisory commission on geographical names) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences was consulted regularly on behalf of new geographical names to be created, because of mergers of municipalities. This advisory commission is now building a website in order to better publicize the results of its advisory activities. The Working Group on foreign geographical names (*Werkgroep Buitenlandse aardrijkskundige namen*) of the *Nederlandse Taalunie* (Dutch Language Union, a supranational body in charge of language matters for Belgium, the Netherlands and Suriname), in charge of standardizing Dutch exonyms convened regularly in order to deal with new names. These are available at http://taaladvies.net/taal/aardrijkskundige_namen/ (in Dutch)
In 2007, the Netwerk Naamkunde (http://www.naamkunde.net/) was initiated. This Onomastical Network has a mailing list, shows what kind of onomastical research participants engage in, as well as their yearly results, and has an overview of the workshops held. It is organised from the Meertens Instituut (P.O.Box 94264, 1090 GG Amsterdam) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.
January 25, 2008 the Network organised a workshop on Onomastics and Geography, in which microtoponymy and the problems of studying toponyms through databases were discussed. Its papers (in Dutch) can be downloaded at http://www.naamkunde.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=110&Itemid=59#worksh04

Res. VI-7: Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors

Austria:
A revised version of the Toponymic Guidelines for Austria has been elaborated and is submitted to the 25th UNGEGN Session.

Belgium:
Simplified Toponymic Guidelines for all Belgium will be communicated at the session in May 2009.

Switzerland:
The Toponymic Guidelines of Switzerland are in progress. They will be completed by the end of 2009 and published in 2010.

Res. VIII-1: Promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names

Austria:
Under the title "Austria's multiethnic heritage as reflected by geographical names" Hubert Bergmann highlights the situation of minority group names in Austria. The article is part of the volume Jordan/Bergmann/Cheetham/Hausner (2009): Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage. = Wiener Schriften zur Geographie und Kartographie, vol. 18.

Germany:
In Germany four languages have been officially recognized as minority languages: Danish, Frisian, Sorbian/Sorabic and Romanes (the language of the Sinti and Roma). Two of them are claiming the naming of geographical names in their minority language: Frisian and Sorbian/Sorabic. Whilst Sorbian names have been rendered in official publications for many years, the rendering of Frisian names was only practised by several private cartographic publishing houses.
Since 2008 about 700 Sorbian and 20 Frisian names are presented in the webservice WFS GN-DE of the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG), in fact, not only as a variant or secondary name but, like the German name, as an equally entitled main entry.
For the first time the fifth edition of the map "Federal Republic of Germany at 1:1 million scale, geographical regions – their names and margins" (2008) shows names of geographical regions in Sorbian and Frisian languages in those regions where the minority language is spoken (see also contribution to Res. VIII/9).
German experts presented the paper "Representation and documentation of multilingual geographical names in Germany" at the Symposium GeoNames 2008 entitled "Geographical names as part of the cultural heritage" held in Vienna in May 2008 and reported on the situation of minority languages in Germany.

Netherlands:
In 2008 Arjen Versloot defended his PhD thesis on the Mechanisms of Language Change; Vowel Reduction in 15th Century West Frisian on the old site of Franeker University in Frisia.

South Africa:
On 8 February 2008 during the State of the Nation address a commitment was made with regard to geographical names and place names to start a synchronized process across all provinces so we

can create a base slate of changes we proposed. It was reported that the project will be guided by the South African Geographical Names Council and Provincial Geographical Names Committees. On 30 May 2008 in Cape Town the Minister of Arts and Culture and the South African Geographical Names Council (SAGNC) launched an implementation of special cohesion campaigns focusing on geographical names (where a plan to conduct national hearings on geographical names in all nine provinces was presented to the public and the media).

On 16 – 17 October 2008 a first hearing was held in Mpumalanga Province at Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Board Auditorium. Eastern Cape Province had its hearing on 30 – 31 October 2008 in East London Christian Centre. Free State held its hearings on the 13 February 2009 and North West on the 24 February 2009.

During the hearings the South African Geographical Names Council was able to have discussions with stakeholders on processes to be followed when standardizing geographical names, public participation in terms of Promotion of Administrative Justice Act of 2000 which is very crucial if municipalities, provinces and national government want to encourage unity and co-operation amongst its own citizens. We see this as a step in the right direction to start dialog and realize an all inclusive process on standardization of geographical names in all official and recognized languages.

Res. VIII-4: Exonyms

Austria:
A working group of the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (AKO) has revised the "Proposals for the Rendering of Geographical Names in Austrian School Atlases" *(Vorschläge zur Schreibung geographischer Namen in österreichischen Schulatlanten)* published in 1994 and will soon publish a new version. The first issue of these proposals has completely been implemented in Austrian school atlases and it can be expected that also the revised version will have a similar effect. The focus of these proposals or guidelines is on the selection of exonyms suited for the use in school atlases and other educational media.

Germany:
Within the EuroGeoNames project the Database of Exonyms and Other Variant Names (EVN-DB) for European geographical names has been developed. For the present only variant names (incl. exonyms) are considered in the languages of countries being Reference Group members to the project. The Reference Group countries are: Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, The Netherlands and Turkey. In addition also variant names in English shall be integrated. At the moment the database contains 3,700 entries. After completion some 5,000 entries will be expected.

Res. VIII-5: Joint meetings of divisions and working groups

Austria:
On behalf of the Dutch and German Speaking Division (DGSD) – continuing its tradition of GeoNames symposia – the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (AKO) organised a scientific symposium on the topic of "Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage", which took place in Vienna, 19-21 May 2008. 83 experts from 24 countries and 4 continents accepted the

invitation and 31 papers from 21 countries were presented. Proceedings of this symposium have been published as Volume 18 of the *Wiener Schriften zur Geographie und Kartographie* (see VIII-15).

In conjunction with this symposion also the UNGEGN Working Groups on Toponymic Terminology and on Pronunciation held meetings.

Germany:
Joint meetings of the EuroGeoNames project and the UNGEGN WG on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers were arranged at the following occasions: (1) at the 9th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in New York in 2007; (2) at a workshop of the EGN project held in Freising, Bavaria (near München) in June 2008; (3) at the Closing Workshop of the EGN project held in Bruxelles/Brussel, Belgium in February 2009.

Res. VIII-6: Integration of national names into national and regional spatial data infrastructures

Austria:
The Federal Office of Metrology and Surveying *(Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungs-wesen)* is the Austrian partner in the EuroGeoNames project (EGN) and contributed to the collective work mainly by the Workpackage "Test environment harness".

Belgium:
EuroGeoNames: At the end of 2008, the National Geographic Institute officially announced it intended to become part of EuroGeonames. The set-up of a local EGN is planned for 2009.
INSPIRE: An expert from the National Geographic Institute took part in the TWG's work on geographic names within the INSPIRE-project.

Germany:
The EC-funded EuroGeoNames project (EGN) for setting up a Europe-wide geographical names data infrastructure and associated services was started in September 2006. The services will link and provide access to the official multilingual geographical names data held at the national level. The project consortium brings together partners from the public, academic and private sectors embracing the full 'value chain' from data providers, technology partners and value added service applications. The national databases of 9 countries (AT, DE, NL, LT, LV, SI, NO, CY, HU) were already connected to the distributed EGN Web Feature Service. Further 7 countries (BE, CZ, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR) have agreed to be connected in 2009. The funded period ended in February 2009. The aim of the EGN Implementation Phase (2009 to 2012) is to connect at least the EU27 countries.

Netherlands:
Since 2004 Utrecht University and the Topografische Dienst/Kadaster in the Netherlands participate in the EuroGeoNames project which aims at establishing a Europe-wide virtual geographical names database and service. A report resulting from a workshop organised in Utrecht University to define the User/business requirements of an EGN geographical names service, as well as an information model produced as the basis for further programming, was made available in 2007. Both the Dutch geographical names and the Dutch exonyms are now accessible through this EuroGeonames names service.

Res. VIII-7: Toponymic data exchange formats and standards

Germany:
EGN is providing a gazetteer service for Europe compliant to INSPIRE (Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community). The EGN infrastructure – from the technological point of view – provides the whole service architecture for a real service needed for Europe within the context of INSPIRE which is developing a European Spatial Data Infrastructure. For this developing process several UNGEGN documents were used as reference material.

Res. VIII-11: Pronunciation

Germany:
StAGN provided the UNGEGN database Geographical Names of the World with some 80 audio files of the names of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

Res. VIII-12: Standardization of names of countries

Austria, Germany, Switzerland:
An updated list of country names was published by StAGN as 10th edition as of September 2008. The list is a synopsis of country names officially issued by the Foreign Ministries of the three countries, supplemented with comments made by StAGN.

Res. VIII-15: Support for training and publications

Austria:
Proceedings of the GeoNames 2008 symposium (see VIII-5) titled "Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage" contain 27 contributions of authors from 20 countries and 4 continents. 22 of these contributions, however, focus on European, most of them on North, Central, East and Southeast European situations. The volume can be ordered at a price of € 25.- plus postage by e-mail (regina.schneider@univie.ac.at), by fax (+43-1-4277-9 531) or surface mail (Regina Schneider, University of Vienna, Institute of Geography and Regional Research, A-1010 Wien, Universitätsstraße 7).

An expert from the Austrian Academy of Sciences lectured at the toponymy training course organised in Timişoara in 2008.

Germany: Staff members of BKG contributed as lecturers to the training course held in Timişoara (RO) in 2008.

Netherlands:
In the 2007-2009, lecturers from the Netherlands participated in toponymy training course organised in Timişoara, Ouagadougou and Nairobi.

Together with the Institute of Cartography of the Eötvös Lorand University in Budapest, Hungary, the Netherlands extended the toponymy module for the International Cartographic Association (ICA) webcourse, accessible at the website of the ICA Commission on Education and Training, chaired by David Fraser (Australia) (http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/)

Res. IX-4: Geographical names as intangible cultural heritage

Austria:
The University of Innsbruck has started to conduct the special research program „HiMAT – History of Mining Activities in Tyrol and Adjacent Areas. Impact on Environment and Human Societies" (http://www.uibk.ac.at/himat/contact/). In the next ten years the project aims at an interdisciplinary approach by combining natural sciences and humanities. One of the project parts is „Onomastics in Mining", collecting and interpreting names such as microtoponyms, vulgo and family names on a synchronic and diachronic basis. This includes interviews with local informants, inspection of mining sites and photographic documentation as well as archival research.

The project "*Alpkultur* – Cultural Historical Documentation of Toponyms in the Alpine Space" (http://www.uibk.ac.at/sprachen-literaturen/sprawi/alpkultur.html), conducted by the Austrian Academy of Sciences in co-operation with the University of Innsbruck, the University of Vienna and the University of Klagenfurt has been completed. During the project mountain and pasture names in East Tyrol were collected and analysed using the technical means of geoinformatics. The investigations were carried out in an area earlier populated not only by German speakers, but also by speakers of Romance and Slavonic idioms. The project investigated in this way into the toponymic cultural heritage as it is characteristic for major parts of the alpine region.

A symposium (GeoNames 2008, see VIII-5) was held and proceedings have been published (see VIII-15) on the topic "Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage" Major issues of both these activities were (1) place names as keys to older cultural layers, (2) place names in minority languages and the role of place names for national/ethnic minorities, (3) place names as political symbols and their use for political purposes (place name changes for political reasons), (4) the role of place names in space-related identity building, (5) functions of toponymic data files in place name preservation.

Germany:
The fifth edition of the map "Federal Republic of Germany at 1:1 million scale, geographical regions – their names and margins" was published by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG) and the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN) in September 2008.

Res. IX-6: Geographical names database of UNGEGN

Austria:
Information on Austrian cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants has been provided.

Belgium:

Relevant information for the UNGEGN database has been provided.

Germany:
StAGN provided the UNGEGN database with some 80 audio files of names of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

Res. IX-7: Dissemination of information concerning the origin and meaning of geographical names

Germany:
Descriptions and meanings of some 750 names of German geographical regions (landscapes) are accessible through the gazetteer service WFS GN-DE maintained by the Geodata Centre of BKG.