

**Twenty-sixth session  
Vienna, 2-6 May 2011**

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**Item 14 of the provisional agenda**

**Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms**

## **Report of the Working Group on Exonyms**

Submitted by the Working Group on Exonyms\*

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\* Prepared by Peter Jordan (Austria), Co-convenor (Convenor in charge), Working Group on Exonyms

## 1 Organizational 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”.

### WG meetings held:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting: **Berlin**, September 6, 2002, in the framework of the 8th UN Conference
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting: **Prague** [Praha], September 24-26, 2003, hosted by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting: **New York**, 2004, in the framework of the 22<sup>nd</sup> UNGEGN Session
- 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Ljubljana**, May 19-20, 2005, hosted by the Anton Melik Geographical Institute of the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Vienna** [Wien], 2006, in the framework of the 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGEGN Session
- 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Prague** [Praha], May 17-18, 2007, hosted by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **New York**, August 29, 2007, in the framework of the 24<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session
- 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Timișoara**, September 9-11, 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
- 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Nairobi**, May 11, 2009, in the framework of the 25<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session
- 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting: **Tainach** (Austria), April 28-30, 2010, hosted by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names and the Catholic Educational Centre “Sodalitas”

Currently the Working Group comprises 72 official members and associated experts from 33 countries (see Appendix).

Elected co-convenors are Peter JORDAN (Austria, [peter.Jordan@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:peter.Jordan@oeaw.ac.at)) and Milan OROŽEN ADAMIČ (Slovenia, [milan@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:milan@zrc-sazu.si)). After Milan OROŽEN ADAMIČ had been appointed Slovenian ambassador in Croatia in 2006, Peter JORDAN acted as the convenor in charge and was confirmed in this function by voting at the 9<sup>th</sup> WGE Meeting in Nairobi, 11 May 2009.

The WG maintains a website accessible under <http://www.zrc-sazu.si/wge>. The webmaster is Mimi URBANC (Slovenia).

## 2 Activities

Since its last report to the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, Nairobi, 5-12 May 2009 (W.P. 6), the Working Group held two meetings as well as a workshop and published the book “Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010”.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Nairobi, 11 May, 2009

In the framework of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, Nairobi, 5-12 May 2009, the Working Group on Exonyms had a short business meeting. It was attended by 18 experts from 14 countries. It was agreed to take another effort

to elaborate guidelines for the use of exonyms, however, not to aim at a comprehensive and detailed resolution, but at a concise resolution text with reference to an extended and comprehensive list of criteria for the use of exonyms – the latter just as a paper of the Working Group. It was also agreed to continue the discussion on the nature of the endonym with a focus on the name/language/feature relation as well as to encourage comparative investigations into current practice, trends and policies of exonym use in several countries and to provide thus for an empirical basis for the elaboration of guidelines for the use of exonyms. Peter JORDAN was re-elected in his function as a co-convenor (and convenor in charge) after having been active four and three years, respectively. Finally it was decided to convene the next meeting in Tainach, Carinthia, Austria, 28-30 April 2010.

### **Workshop on the Nature of the Endonym, 6 May 2009**

The workshop continued an e-mail discussion evolving from a paper of Paul WOODMAN on the application of the terminological endonym/exonym divide on names of seas. The two principal views (a name has the status of an endonym only in this portion of a transboundary feature, where its language is spoken *versus* a name has this status also in all other portions of the same feature) could be clarified, but not reconciled.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Tainach, Austria, 28-30 April 2010**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms (WGE) was devoted to the general topic “Practice, Policies and Trends of Exonym Use”. It was organised in conjunction with a meeting of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen, StAGN), the co-ordinative body on geographical names for German-speaking countries (26-28 April), and parallel meetings of the UNGEGN Dutch and German-speaking Division (DGSD) and the East Central and South-East Europe Division (28<sup>th</sup> April evening). Thus, a whole week from Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, to Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> April, was spent on discussing geographical names in Tainach (in Slovene: Tinje) in the bilingual (German/Slovene) area of Carinthia [Kärnten], the southernmost province of Austria close to Slovenia and Italy facing the Karawanken/Karavanke mountain range. The Catholic Educational Centre “Sodalitas” provided for accommodation, catering as well as all the meeting facilities and services and contributed with its kind staff largely to a nice atmosphere. The whole sequence of meetings was attended by 60 experts, of whom 42 from 23 countries and all six continents took part in the WGE Meeting.

Due to the fact that Wednesday was the temporal link between the three meetings, the WGE Meeting started with a common excursion to nearby Klagenfurt and Maria Saal on the theme “Carinthia – a bilingual region”. Thursday and Friday were then devoted to the WGE Meeting proper comprising 29 paper presentations and an intensive discussion on guidelines for the use of exonyms

After some words of welcome by a representative of the Educational Centre, by Helen KERFOOT, UNGEGN chair, and Peter JORDAN, WGE co-convenor and convenor in charge, who combined them with a cultural-geographical introduction into the host region of Carinthia, the sequence of papers on geographical names started with a paper of Paul WOODMAN (United Kingdom) presenting a balanced view from the outside on bilingual toponymy in Carinthia. Unfortunately the paper could only be read in absence of the author, who had been – due to ash cloud problems – prevented from coming. Pierre JAILLARD (France) and Henri DORION (Canada) continued with raising basic questions on the relation

between exonyms and international standardisation and bilinguality, resp. Béla POKOLY (Hungary) referred to country names as exonyms. The sequence of general and principal observations on exonym versus endonym use was continued by Rainer DORMELS (Austria), who spoke about practice and policies of endonym use in the naming of sea bodies, Sungjae CHOO (Republic of Korea), who contributed on names of seas as transboundary features, by Hubert BERGMANN (Austria) highlighting the use of exonyms in dictionaries, Peeter PÄLL (Estonia) on exonyms in the context of script conversion, Bogusław ZAGÓRSKI (Poland) referring to the endonym/exonym divide by the example of names of Arab countries and their major cities, Peter JORDAN (Austria) continuing the discussion on the nature of the endonym, to which also Drago KLADNIK and Mimi URBANC (Slovenia) contributed from a Slovenian perspective. Concluding this general section Pavel BOHÁČ (Czech Republic) raised the question why transboundary features caused a problem in exonymy focusing on the relation between feature and name.



During the Tainach Meeting

Two papers were then devoted to the EuroGeoNames (EGN) database: While Ferjan ORMELING (The Netherlands) highlighted the collection and rendering of exonyms, Roman STANI-FERTL (Austria) was focusing on the handling of border crossing features within EGN. The remaining majority of papers were right to the point of the Meeting's general topic, i.e. practice, policies and trends of exonym/endonym use in various countries. Margarita AZCÁRATE LUXÁN (Spain) contributed on the situation in Spain, Maria del Mar BATLLE (Spain) to Catalan specifics. Herman BELL (United Kingdom) spoke on Nubian geographical names, Eman ORIEBY (Egypt) on practice of exonym use in Egypt. Phil MATTHEWS (New Zealand) referred in this context to New Zealand, Sirkka PAIKKALA (Finland) to the situation in Finland. Maciej ZYCH (Poland) presented in two papers at first Polish geographical names of undersea and Antarctic features and then the Polish list of geographical names of Europe. Elka JAČEVA-ULČAR (FYR of Macedonia) referred specifically to the toponymic implications of the Law on Territorial Organization of the Republic of Macedonia as of 2004 and Remus CREȚAN (Romania) highlighted origins of Romanian toponyms on an ethnic background. Gábor GERCSÁK (Hungary) spoke on English exonyms of geographical names of Hungary,

Imrich HORŇANSKÝ (Slovakia) on exonym standardization and use in Slovakia. Nina SYVAK (Ukraine) concluded this section by presenting a paper on names of orographic features in the Ukrainian Carpathians.

The last two hours of the Meeting were devoted to a general discussion on guidelines for the use of exonyms. According to the terms of reference of the WGE, developing such guidelines is one of the Working Group's major tasks. It has indeed very actively been pursued in the last three years (6<sup>th</sup> WGE Meeting in Prague 2007). Also UNGEGN experts not involved into the business of WGE will remember that already several draft versions have been presented and discussed in UNGEGN sessions as well as during the Ninth UN Conference in New York 2007, not to speak of WGE meetings. Based on these earlier drafts and discussions Peter JORDAN presented a revised version of guidelines and conducted the discussion on it item per item. The discussion developed – as usual – lively and controversial. As at earlier occasions no consent could be achieved on a more substantial number of criteria, which would really serve as a hint for somebody looking for advice. So it was decided not to pursue anymore the goal of a UN recommendation, but just to elaborate a Working Paper in the sense of a partial opinion. This paper is to integrate as many suggestions from the discussion as possible, but should not get inconsistent and insubstantial by doing so. It may in this way preserve its potential to serve as a handout for people looking for advice.

### **Book “Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010”**

As the first volume of the new toponymic book series “Name and Place” edited by Peter JORDAN and Paul WOODMAN (publisher Dr. Kovač, Hamburg) the book “Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010”, edited by Peter JORDAN, Hubert BERGMANN, Caroline BURGESS and Catherine CHEETHAM has recently been published and can be ordered on the publisher's website ([www.verlagdrkovac.de](http://www.verlagdrkovac.de)). The book reflects more or less the papers presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> WGE Meeting in Tainach and is composed of 30 contributions on four major topics: (1) The edonym/exonym divide, (2) Practice, policies and trends of exonym use in various countries and regions, (3) Exonym use in various fields, (4) Place name, environment and culture. For a more detailed list of contents see the specific W.P.

### **3 Future directions**

Further activities of the WG are still a matter of discussion for which the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Vienna, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2011, will offer the appropriate forum, but will certainly – based on the terms of reference – be selected from the following four fields:

- (1) Further clarification of the concepts *edonym* and *exonym*
- (2) Categorisation of exonym use
- (3) Publication of pronunciation guides for edonyms
- (4) Formulation of guidelines ensuring a politically sensitive use of exonyms

## Appendix

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