

Item 19 of the provisional agenda

Toponymic Guidelines for map editors and other editors

Toponymic Guidelines - Content Template *

Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors, for international use

Toponymic Guidelines, as originally proposed by Dr. Josef Breu in his Circular No. 2, 12 December 1977, with the additions, modifications and new numbering of 1981 (Circular Letter No. 20).¹

Content template

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Name of individual country

1. Languages

1.1 General remarks

1.2 National language(s)

1.2.1 Legal situation and practical application in administration and official cartography

1.2.2 Alphabet(s) and transcription(s)

1.2.3 General spelling rules for geographical names

1.2.4 Pronunciation

1.2.5 Grammatical peculiarities that are essential for the treatment and understanding of geographical names

1.2.6 Distribution of main dialects and their characteristics; how far are dialectal name forms adapted to the standard form of the language(s)? (In the case of many African countries with English, French, Portuguese or Spanish as official languages: distribution of main vernaculars and their characteristics; how far are vernacular name forms adapted to the spelling of the official language?); linguistic maps

1.3 Minority languages

1.3.1 – 1.3.6, as under 1.2

2. Names authorities and names standardization

2.1 National names authority. Aims, functions, rules, address

2.2 Provincial names authorities. Aims, functions, rules, addresses

2.3 Names standardization. Legal aspects, procedures, progress

3. Source material

3.1 Maps: map series containing standardized names. Which sheets of a series contain already standardized names?

3.2 Gazetteers containing standardized names

¹ The title reflects modifications emanating from the Eighth Session of UNGEGN, 1979; the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 1982; and the Twelfth Session of UNGEGN, 1986. Item 6 follows a resolution adopted by the Fifth United Nations Conference, 1987.

4. Glossary of appellatives, adjectives and other words necessary for the understanding of maps. (As such glossaries will serve the needs of foreign users they must contain also – and above all – words of the general vocabulary.)
5. Abbreviations used on official maps; the decoding and meanings
6. Methods of differentiating toponyms from other text on national maps

Annex: Administrative maps

The following additional suggestions have been made since the Ninth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (see WP 29 by Isolde Hausner, 25th Session of UNGEGN, 2009):

- With increased interest in correct pronunciation of geographical names, in the sections on Pronunciation, links should be included for pronunciation aids, be it books containing transcription of geographical names or audio files available from national databases.
- Creating *Guidelines*, in the language(s) of the country and in English, has proved to be very useful.

For a country that has not yet been able to compile *Toponymic Guidelines*, it is suggested that a possible start is to elaborate the principles and procedures for the standardization of geographical names in the country.