

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda

Report of the Divisions

Report of the Baltic Division

Submitted by the Baltic Division*

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Report of the Baltic Division

Resume

The report provides information on the composition and activities of the Baltic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in the period from 28th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) since 2014, information about the cooperation of the Baltic Division member states with the other regional divisions.

The report includes information on activities in the field of national standardization of geographical names held in the member states of the Division: national bodies on the standardization of geographical names, the status of the legal framework for the work on the determination, normalization and use of geographical names, the creation of national databases of geographical names (catalogues, registries, lists), released or developed dictionaries and gazetteers, basic cartographic publications, national systems of romanization of geographical names and exonyms.

The composition of the Baltic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Baltic Division of UNGEGN was formed in 1992, comprising experts from five countries: Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Estonia. Experts from other regional divisions take part in Baltic Division meetings as observers.

The Russian Federation acts as coordinator of Baltic Division since 10th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (New York, 2012). Chair Ms. Morozova Marina (Russian Federation, Morozova_MN@rosreestr.ru), Vice-Chair Ms. Vita Strautniece (Latvia, Vita.Strautniece@lgia.gov.lv).

Website of Division is maintained by Estonian specialists (http://www.eki.ee/knn/ungegn/bd_ru.htm). It contains all the records of the meetings of the Baltic Division since 1992 (reports, pictures).

Meetings of the Baltic Division

17th meeting of the Baltic Division was held from 29 June to 01 July 2015 in Warsaw (Poland) at the invitation of the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography. The meeting was attended by 32 specialists and experts from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Estonia. Experts from Belarus and Ukraine participated in the meeting as observers.

The participants of the meeting exchanged information on the status of works on national standardization of geographical names held in the countries: national authorities and legislation in the field of names of geographical objects, the status and perspectives of national toponymic databases, inventories, registries, registers, standardization of names of natural features, names of urban objects, the rules of Latinization of geographical names, usage of geographical names on topographic maps, toponymic researches, geographical names as cultural heritage, about the work of the Commissions, Councils on the standardization of geographical names, about the problems associated with the standardization of names and use informal names (27 reports).

The presentation was made on published toponymic glossaries, dictionaries and other publications on geographical names and cartographic works, the National Atlas of Lithuania. According to the rotation principle, the decision was taken to hold the next meeting in the Russian Federation in the second half of 2016.

Cooperation between the UNGEGN Divisions

The experts of the Baltic Division member states took part in the 28th Session of UNGEGN (New York, USA, 2014), as well as actively participated in the activities of the UNGEGN working groups and other events: Working Group on Romanization Systems (New York, USA, 2014); Working Group on Exonyms (New York, USA, 2014; Hermagor, Austria, 2014; Zagreb, Croatia, 2015); Working Group on Toponymy of the International Geographic Council (Krakow, Poland, 2014; Moscow, Russia, 2015); Czech-Polish-Slovak meeting on terminology used in the standardization of geographical names (Warsaw, Poland, 2014; Bratislava, Slovakia, 2015); meeting of Eastern Europe, Central Europe and South-East Europe Divisions (Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2015); web forum of Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.

Baltic Division continues to participate in the project *EuroGeoNames* developing the European geographical names data infrastructure and services: <http://www.eurogeonames.com/refappl/>.

National standardization geographical names

The Republic of Latvia

National names authorities

The decision makers (having rights to adopt the official names) are: Parliament and Government; several ministries, the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency (LGIA) and all municipalities. Controlling and advisory body is the State Language Centre. Consulting and scientific bodies are: the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia, LGIA and the Latvian Language Agency. In 2014-2015 the State Language Centre has been working on a voluminous conclusion regarding the official names proposals (for more than 4.000 natural features) submitted by LGIA.

Legislation

The main legislative acts regarding the geographical names standardization in Latvia are: the State Language Law, the Geospatial Information Law and the Regulations on the Toponymic Information. The Law on Administrative Territories and Populated Areas (stating the administrative and territorial division of Latvia) and the Regulations on the Address System have also an impact on the geographical names standardization. The updated version of the Regulations on the Address System (namely Regulations on the Addresses) came into force at December 11, 2015.

Toponymic data files and gazetteers

The Geographical Names Database of Latvia is maintained by the Laboratory of Toponymy, LGIA. The database contains 153.285 names for 118.480 features (data on January 4, 2016). The concise public version of the Geographical Names Database (7th edition) is available at <http://vietvardi.lgia.gov.lv> (in Latvian). It contains 127.000 names for 99.000 geographical features.

National Address Register maintained by the State Land Service includes names of all administrative territories and territorial units of Latvia (110 counties, 497 civil parishes, 76 cities and towns), 6.445 officially recognized villages (number of official villages is decreasing), 17.216 streets, 509.890 houses and other buildings (data on January 1, 2016). Names search in the State Address Register is available on the data distribution portal of the State Land Service of Latvia at: <https://www.kadastrs.lv> (in Latvian and English). Data harmonization with other registers – Land Registry, Population Register, Register of Enterprises etc. has been continued.

Digitizing of the Latvian Place Names Card Index (~1 million domestic geographical names) maintained by Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia has been started.

Scanning of the place name cards is completed in 2015. The tools for displaying linguistic data have been elaborated.

A popular etymological dictionary «From Abava to Zilupe. The Origin of Latvian Geographical Names. A Short Dictionary» comprising names of the ~100 most significant settlements, natural features, etc. was compiled by Ojārs Bušs and Laimute Balode, researchers of the Latvian Language Institute, University of Latvia. The dictionary is a bilingual (Latvian/English) book. It was published by the Latvian Language Agency in 2015.

Geographical names in mapping projects

LGIA has continued the state mapping projects. The most significant of them regarding the geographical names:

- 1) the Topographic Map of Latvia, scale 1:50 000, the 3rd edition (5 of 135 sheets are completed until January 2016);
- 2) the Topographic Map of Latvia, scale 1:10 000, the 3rd edition, in digital format only (2351 of 2800 sheets covering 84 % of the territory of Latvia are completed until January 2016).

The Map Browser “LGIA Karšu pārskats” is maintained by LGIA. It offers geographical names search on the latest maps of Latvia prepared by LGIA in scales 1: 1 000 000 - 1:10 000. The toponymic layer from the Topographic map scale 1:10 000 along with the Geographical Names Database data can be used for the search. Geometries from the Geographical Names Database are also accessible there. The Map Browser is available at: <http://kartes.lgia.gov.lv/karte/> (in Latvian and English).

Exonyms

Lists of standardized Latvian Country Names (2006) and Names of the European Union Member States Regions (2012) are available at: <http://www.vvc.gov.lv/advantagecms/LV/valstuunvalodunosaukumi/valstuunvalodunosaukumi.html>. The largest in Latvia database of exonyms is maintained by the Map Publishing Company “Jāņa sēta Map Publishers”. It contains 218.000 geographical names in their original languages, as well as renderings: 91.000 – into Latvian, 34.000 – into Estonian, 14.000 – into Lithuanian, 10.000 – into Russian.

Concise rules for rendering place names from Portuguese into Latvian have been worked out by linguist Alla Placinska and were published by the Latvian Language Agency in 2015.

The Republic of Lithuania

National institutions working in the field of standardization of geographical names

The State Lithuanian Language Commission is in charge of the standardization of place names on the national level, while the National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for official maps. In this respect nothing has changed.

Names, addresses and geographical location of administrative units, wards, residential areas, streets as well as names given to buildings, structures or other objects are stored in the Register of Address. The Register is administered by the State Enterprise Centre of Registers (SE Centre of Registers). The representatives of the National Land Service and the State Enterprise National Centre of Remote Sensing and Geoinformatics “GIS-Centras” (SE “GIS-Centras”) are involved in working group of Lithuanian Standards Board Technical Committee LST TC Geographic Information.

The expert group working on naming Lithuanian geographical objects was formed at the end of 2015 by the National Land Service. The group consists of nine representatives of the state

institutions: the National Land Service, the State Lithuanian Language Commission, the SE Centre of Registers, SE “GIS-Centras”, Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, JSC “Institute of Aerial Geodesy”, the Institute of the Lithuanian Language, Lithuanian Cartographic Society and Vilnius University Faculty of Natural Sciences Centre for Cartography.

Legislation

- The Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the revised Regulations of the Address Register of the Republic of Lithuania based on Resolution No 598 as of 9 June 2015.
- The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language had presented its findings to conclude about 100 toponyms of residential areas (mostly – names of restored villages) and provided information to the Address Register about the accentuation of these toponyms; about 500 street names have been verified according to the request of municipalities.

The state of national geographic name database

The main operations of developing national geographical names data sets, catalogues and registry information are as follows:

- Maintenance of the Georeferential spatial data set M 1:10 000 of the Republic of Lithuania (GDR10LT). The layer VIETOV_T included in the data set. The place names of natural and anthropogenic objects, as well as names of locations are stored in the layer VIETOV_T in GDR10LT. The place names have been collected in GDR10LT since 2005. The layer VIETOV_T was reorganized in the fourth quarter of 2015 and the names of the forests of Lithuania were moved to separate polygon layer VIETOV_P (the data set is administered by SE “GIS-Centras”).
- Address Register of the Republic of Lithuania. According to the data of 1 November 2015 there are: 10 counties, 60 municipalities, 548 wards, 21 171 residential areas (103 cities, 250 towns, 19 151 villages and 1667 steadings) and 53 392 street names registered. During 2014-2015, precise geographical boundaries of 4292 residential areas were approved and registered in the Address Register. (The Register is administered by the SE Centre of Registers.)
- Creation and upgrading of the spatial data set of Geographic Place Names of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – The Service of Place Names of Territory of Lithuania) carried out in 2014-2015. The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania was created and provided via Lithuanian Spatial Information portal www.geoportal.lt. Since The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania is complex, dynamic and dependent on changes in the original data sources, the technical solution was upgraded to insure proper maintenance of the service. The model was adapted to the situation as original data sources are dynamically changing. Now as a result it is possible to integrate automatically as many data sources to the model as needed. The place names data standardization procedure was automated in the places where manual work is not required. The environment for working (as well as standardization) with place names is created and is ready for use (the data set is administered by SE “GIS-Centras”).
- The provision of The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania to INSPIRE portal. The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania is provided to INSPIRE portal <http://inspire-geoportal.ec.europa.eu/> in 2015.
- From 2014 to 31 July 2015, the geo-information database of the Lithuanian place names was integrated into the general digital resource system of the Lithuanian Language Institute. The development of the geoinformation database built up by the Lithuanian Language Institute (<http://lvvgdb.lki.lt>) was carried out. Place names of Lithuanian lakes bigger than 50 ha and of rivers longer than 50 km with attributive data (analysis of place names) covering the following fields – place name, accented place name, gender, number, accentuation, origin, origin by origin source, explanation of origin, word formation,

explanation of word formation, accented forms of all cases, sound forms of all cases – were created.

Publishing the Dictionary of geographical names

The Onomastics division of the Lithuanian Language Institute published the second volume of the *Lithuanian Dictionary of Place Names (C–F)* in 2014. The second volume of the dictionary contains place names written down from the living Lithuanian language, starting with the letters C, Č, D, E, È, and F. Next to them are indicated the nominated objects and the prevalence of place names. Place names are set out in origin nests, i.e. the same origin place names compose one dictionary entry. After the forming of nests, the origin of place names provided in them is explained. This is rather a linguistic-type research publication.

In the period of 2014–2015 the dictionary *World Place Names* (5-volum set) was digitalized. Previously this dictionary had been published by Science and Encyclopaedias' Publishing Centre in Vilnius, in 2006–2014. The dictionary had been prepared in order to standardize the spelling and pronunciation of foreign geographical names in Lithuanian language. The data of two volumes “Europe” and “America”, that contains 7'000 geographical names, is available for a public use in the web site <http://pasaulio-vardai.vlkk.lt/>. The search options: by endonym (63 European languages, including Cyrillic, Greek alphabets and their Romanized forms, 13 American languages), by Lithuanized form as well as country, by type of object.

The experts of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language had also suggested concluding of Lithuanized toponyms in thesaurus EUROVOC.

Basic cartographic works released during 2014-2015

2014-2015 JSC „Institute of Aerial Geodesy” updated and published the 1: 300 000 scale wall map of the Republic of Lithuania. National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture released the 1st Volume of the National Atlas of Lithuania in 2014, which consists of two parts – “Lithuania in the World and in Europe” and “Nature and landscape”. The main scale of maps is 1: 1 000 000 which allows accurate mapping of the various maps for the whole territory of Lithuania. Maps of the 1st Volume can be found in the Lithuanian spatial information portal (www.geoportal.lt). In 2015, it was prepared and published the 2st Volume of the National Atlas of Lithuania dedicated to the history of Lithuania.

Interactive map of the Register objects REGIA (www.regia.lt) which has been created on the basis of the Address Register data is in operation. This map includes not only the objects of the Address Register but also social, cultural, economic data which is geographically related to the Register objects and intended for provision to the population.

The material published

The article published in the United Nations Journal of Geographical Names (UNGEGN Information Bulletin), No. 48, may 2015) http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN%20Bulletin%2048_FINAL.pdf

Republic of Poland

National names authorities

There are two commissions engaged in the standardization of geographical names in Poland:

- Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects, affiliated to the Minister of the Interior and Administration, establishes names used within Poland's boundaries. After receiving the opinion of the Commission the Minister publish names' changes in the *Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland*.

- Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland, affiliated at the Surveyor General of Poland, responsible for: standardizing Polish geographical names of the world, establishing the principles of romanization from languages which use non-Roman writing systems, representing Poland on UNGEGN forum, and participation in international conferences and meetings devoted to geographical names.

Legislation concerning geographical names

- The “Act of 29 August 2003 on official names of localities and physiographic objects” defines: principles and the mode of establishing, changing and abolishing official names of localities and their parts, as well as names of physiographic objects; principles of the activity of the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects; principles of publishing national gazetteer.
- The other acts, that are relevant for establishing names:
- “Act of 24 July 1998 on the implementation of a three-level territorial division of the country”; “Act of 5 June 1998 on the county self-government”; “Act of 8 March 1990 on the commune self-government”; “Act of 16 April 2004 on environment protection”; “Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and on the regional language”; Act of 17 May 1989 “Geodesy and cartography law”.

National gazetteer

The new edition of the national gazetteer entitled “List of official names of localities and their parts” was published in October 2015 http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/official_names.php. The list contains 103,086 official names of localities and their parts, of which: 915 names of towns and cities, 43,068 – villages, 6,710 – parts of towns/cities, 36,263 – parts of villages, 5,132 – settlements, 4,619 – hamlets of villages. The list is arranged in a table with eight columns: the name of locality is indicated in the 1st c., in the 2nd – officially established type of locality, in the 3rd, 4th and 5th c. – administrative unit: commune, county and voivodship, in the 6th c. – the identifier of locality from the National Official Register of the Territorial Division of the Country, in the 7th – genitive ending for names of localities, in the 8th c. – adjective (only for names of towns and villages).

Changes of the names given in the list are published each year in the *Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland*, and come into force on January 1 – these changes are effect of changes in the names, as well as changes in type of name (changes of type can be also result of changes of boundaries of cities and towns). Since 2014 the following changes were made: 18 new names of localities and its parts were established; 53 names of localities and its parts were changed as well as types of 120 localities and parts of localities were changed, and 101 names of localities and its parts were abolished.

Multilingual areas

According to the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and on regional languages traditional names in a minority language may be used as “additional names”. 143 new names of localities were established since 2014 – 17 German names in 3 communes, and 126 Kashubian names in 8 communes.

Since 2005 additional names in minority languages were introduced for 1211 localities. This number consists of 359 German names in 31 communes, 786 Kashubian names in 23 communes, 30 Lithuanian names in one commune, 27 Belarusian names in one commune and 9 Lemko names in 2 communes. Full, consistently updated, list of the additional names in minority languages is available on the website: http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/files/list_of_minority_names.pdf

Exonyms

The list of Polish exonyms, entitled “Official list of Polish geographical names of the world”, was prepared by the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland and published in the end of 2013 http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/wpngs_en.php. It lists Polish names for 13,359 geographical objects that lie outside the boundaries of Poland. The list has been published in Polish only, but the inset in English, that includes translation of introductory part of the publication, has been also prepared. Information on the updates (in Polish only) is available on the website: <http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/wpngs.php>.

Toponymic data files

The National Register of Geographical Names (PRNG) is maintained by the Main Geodetic and Cartographic Documentation Centre subordinated to the Surveyor General of Poland. Currently the Register holds approximately 239,600 names of which app. 124,800 are names of localities and its parts, app. 114,800 physiographical objects (app. 21,200 are names of water objects, app. 34,000 are names of land shaping objects, and app. 59,500 are names of other objects). In the Register the following types of names are collected: official names (i.e. names published by ordinance of the Minister, app. 122,300 names), standardized names (i.e. names adopted by the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects but not yet published by ordinance of the Minister, app. 15,000 names), unstandardized names (i.e. other names listed on topographic maps or other sources, app. 102,200 names), and minority names (app. 1,200 names).

Since 17 July 2014 on the basis of the Geodetic and Cartographic Law of May 17, 1989 all data from PRNG are available free of charge on the Main Geodetic and Cartographic Documentation Centre website <http://www.codgik.gov.pl/index.php/darmowe-dane/prng.html>. The data are published in the following formats: .shp, .xls and .gml, separately for names of localities and names of physiographic objects and updated every 3 months. Additionally, through a national access point <http://www.geoportal.gov.pl>, it is possible to searching, browsing, and viewing names with attributes according to accepted criteria. PRNG is available in OGC (*Open Geospatial Consortium*) standard WMS (*Web Map Service*). Updating data occurs 1 time per week.

Country names

In consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Council for the Polish Language the third edition of the “Official list of names of countries and non-self-governing territories” was published in the end of 2015 <http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/wykaz.php>. The list contains 195 countries recognized by the Republic of Poland and 69 non-self-governing territories. Attached to the register is a list of ten territories with undetermined or disputed international status and others. The names of countries, territories, and their capitals included in the list have obtained approval of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Other information

The new Polish translation of the UNGEGN “Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names” was prepared by the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland and published at the end of 2014 http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/pliki/glossary_of_terms_PL.pdf. This is a new translation of the English version of “Glossary” from 2002. No significant changes and additions were introduced to this edition in relation to the English version, as it had been done in the case of the first Polish translation of 1998 – the original wording of the definitions and descriptions of introduction notes were retained. The translation of “Addendum”, adopted by the UNGEGN in 2007, is also enclosed as an attachment.

The Russian Federation

National institutions working in the field of standardization of geographical names

The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation is authorized to develop state policy and legal framework in the field of geodesy and cartography. Federal Service of State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography (Rosreestr) is responsible for implementation of works on creation and maintenance of State Catalogue of Geographical Names (hereinafter – the Catalogue), normalization of geographic feature names in Russian language, preparing expertise on proposals for assignment of names to geographical objects and renaming of geographical objects, identification of the existing geographic feature names.

Taking into account expert opinion of Rosreestr for the period of 2014 – 2015, 40 legal acts of the Government of the Russian Federation were adopted (on assignment of 72 names and renaming of 23 geographical objects). In December 2015, it was adopted the Federal law on the assignment of name to the city of Ciolkovsij, situated in the Amur region.

In 2015 the Toponymic Commission of the Russian Geographical Society held the 50th National Student Conference on Toponymy.

Legal framework on geographical names

Legal framework of activity in the field of geographical feature names is established by the Federal law as of 18.12.1997 № 152-FZ "On geographic feature names". In 2014 – 2015 there were adopted several legal acts:

- *Federal law as of 30.12.2015 No. 431-FZ "On geodesy, cartography and spatial data and amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation".*
- *Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation as of 19.11.2014 No. 1221 "On adoption of Rules of assignment, change and cancellation of addresses"; as of 22.05.2015 No. 492 "On the composition of the information about the addresses contained in the public address registry, the order of interdepartmental information interaction at maintaining of the state address register, amendments to and annulment of certain acts of the Government of the Russian Federation".*
- *Orders of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation: as of 27.03.2014 No. 171 "On approval of the Procedure for examination of proposals for assignment of names to geographical objects and renaming of geographical objects, as well as issuing conclusions on the proposals"; as of 27.03.2014 No. 172 "On approval of the Procedure of registration and accounting of geographic feature names, the publication of dictionaries and gazetteers, as well as implementation of works on creation of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names and its maintenance"; as of 29.05.2015 No. 322 "On approval of the Procedure of detecting the existing names of geographical objects".*

In connection with the organization of the All-Russian agricultural census in 2016 public authorities of subjects of the Russian Federation were recommended not to exercise in 2016 administrative and territorial reorganization and renaming of geographical features. Legal acts in the field of names of geographical objects placed on the official internet site of Rosreestr: <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/zakonodatelstvo-rf-o-naimenovaniyakh-geograficheskikh-obektov/>

Works on creation of national data bases of geographical names

Works are continued on the creation of the Catalogue and its maintenance. In the Catalogue database that is maintained by FSBI "Centre of Geodesy, Cartography and SDI" there was included information on more than 780 000 geographic feature names of the Russian Federation, identified in accordance with the regulation, about topographic maps in scale of 1:100 000, dictionaries and

gazetteers, and other sources. To maintain accurate and up to date information on names it is conducted the coordination of the registered names with local authorities of subjects of the Russian Federation.

The Catalogue data is published on the official Internet site of Rosreestr: <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/gosudarstvennyy-katalog-geograficheskikh-nazvaniy/>.

Works are continued on the maintenance of informational bulletins about the official changes of geographical names on the territory of Russia for the period of 1997 – 2015 and changes of geographic feature names of the CIS countries for the period of 1998 – 2015. Bulletins posted on the official Internet site of Rosreestr: https://rosreestr.ru/wps/portal/p/cc_ib_other_lines_activity/cc_ib_cartographical_activity/cc_ib_names_geographical_objects/cc_ib_works_names_geographical_objects.

Dictionaries and gazetteers of geographical names

It is being updated the Rosreestr's Guide "States and territories of the world", which contains brief information about names of all states and territories of the world (property and territories with special status).

Cartographic publications

The National Atlas of Russia and the Public cadastral map are also made available by Rosreestr: <https://rosreestr.ru/site>.

National system of romanization of geographical names, exonyms

In cartographic publications it is continued to be applied the system of transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet by the Latin alphabet GOST-83 adopted at the 5th UN Conference on the standardization of geographical names (Montreal, 1987): <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/zakonodatelstvo-rf-o-naimenovaniyakh-geograficheskikh-obektov/>.

Current Instructions on transferring Russian geographical names of the peoples of the Russian Federation and foreign countries contain provisions on traditional names – exonyms. Draft rules were prepared on transmission of Russian language names of geographical features from Tatar, Ossetic, Nogay, Buryat and Mansi languages.

Republic of Estonia

National names authorities and legislation on geographical names

The Place Names Board of Estonia has held usually two meetings per year, but it also makes decisions voted by e-mail. Much of the work is being done in working groups dealing with specific questions. During 2014–2015, 18 new populated places have been reconstituted, 5 populated places renamed and 2 populated places merged into others. Some of the changes were due to administrative rearrangements as according to the Place Names Act there can be no identical names for populated places within one municipality. So after three municipalities, Kaarma, Kärla and Lümända on the island of Saaremaa merged into one (*Lääne-Saare vald*) in 2014 there were four pairs of identical names in the new municipality. Most names were retained by adding a differentiating adjective to the name, e.g. of the two places called Kulli one was named Kärla-Kulli and the other Lümända-Kulli.

An important organizational change in the standardization of geographical names was due to the new structure of the Government formed after elections in 2015. As the Department of Regional Administration was reassigned to the Minister of Public Administration who was working in the framework of the Ministry of Finances, the department was transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Finances starting 1 September, 2015. So the whole responsibility over the national standardization of geographical names rests now with that Ministry and the Place Names Board works under its auspices. It is expected that in 2016–2017 the issues of naming will come under public attention once more, as there are plans for a radical administrative reform of local governments which includes the merger of several municipalities before the next local elections in 2017. It was seen already in 2014 that the names of new municipalities might become a sensitive issue for the parties involved.

Important for the understanding of the principles of geographical names standardization is training and providing assistance to names authorities. The Estonian Land Board is continuously updating an online handbook for the management of Address Data. This includes 259 pages of instructions, one third of which concern directly geographical names. As a body responsible for the maintenance of the National Place Names Register, the Land Board is checking the validity and conformance to the Law of all names entered into the register. There are sometimes problems related to the spelling and choice of new place names, in which case advice is sought from the appointed Office of Onomastic Expertise, the Institute of the Estonian Language.

The annual Place Names Days have become a traditional public event of the Board since 2003. In 2014 it was organized in Pärnu and in 2015 in Tallinn, the last coincided with celebrating the 50th anniversary of the formation of the city's name committee. The Place Names Days are attended by local officials and researchers of local history and folklore. Papers delivered at seminars deal with the implementation of the Place Names Act, principles of names standardization, information on the Place Names Register and with the place names of the local region.

Toponymic data files and gazetteers

The National Place Names Register is maintained since July 2008 by the Estonian Land Board that has integrated the register with its other spatial data, especially the Address Data Register. The register has the status of national supporting register. By the end of 2015 the register contained 150,272 records, incl. traffic features (streets and squares, etc.) – 16,489; land roads – 8453; minor address units (areas) – 628; lakes – 4465; islands – 2138; rivers, etc. – 2237. In 2014–2015 the register has been increased with 108,850 new records, the biggest part of which (103,241) were the names of cadastral units, the rest has been entered from the printed version of the Basic Map of Estonia (1 : 20,000). The spatial extension of the named features is constantly under review. In 2014–2015 several categories of place names were linguistically checked and recommendations given prior to their official entry into the register. These include 14,073 names of public transportation stops, 16,226 names of heritage sites and objects, 1291 names of springs, 985 names of bridges and 2295 names of various isolated objects. One of the aims of this work was to identify which of the source data constituted proper place names and which were either descriptions or contained no names at all. The lists were extracted from various registers held by other departments.

The National Place Names Register is available at <http://xgis.maaamet.ee/knravalik/knr/> in Estonian and English.

The project of compiling a one-volume dictionary of Estonian places names (2009–2015) undertaken by the Institute of the Estonian Language in collaboration with the Võru Institute, as well as several organizations, including other onomasticians, historians, geographers, etc, was successfully completed. By the end of 2015 all of the articles were compiled and edited and the

publication of the dictionary is expected in 2016. The collections of geographical names held at the Institute of the Estonian Language were completely scanned by 2013, currently the work is going on to manually enter the headword names to the database, so that the 652,198 cards can be queried online.

Exonyms and romanization

The Language Committee at the Mother Tongue Society gives recommendations on the correct usage of foreign names in Estonian. There have been no significant developments during 2014–2015, as just in 2013 the new edition of the Dictionary of Standard Estonian had been published.