

Twenty-ninth session

Bangkok, Thailand, 25 – 29 April 2016

Item 13 of the Provisional Agenda

Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Submitted by the Working Group on Publicity and Funding*

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Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Resolutions concerned:

V/21, V/24, VI/5, VI/13,

VII/9, VIII/15, IX/10

Aims of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Established following the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1992, the Working Group on Publicity and Funding aims to make the activities of the UNGEGN more visible and, where appropriate, to seek or help identify funds to support:

- publication and dissemination of material relevant to the advancement of geographical
- names standardization;
- provision of training for the development and management of geographical names
- administration;
- establishment of names authorities; and
- participation of delegates in UNGEGN events and activities.

Working Group Meetings

Meetings of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding have been held jointly with the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation in New York on 30 April 2014, in conjunction with the 28th UNGEGN Session, and in connection with the joint meeting of the Working Groups for on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage, Evaluation and Implementation, Publicity and Funding and the Norden Division in Copenhagen, 9-12 September 2015. A total of 13 delegates attended the 2014 meeting in New York, whereas 24 Working Group members and 7 observers participated in the joint Working Group Meeting attended the 2015 meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark.

There will be no joint meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation the Working Group on Publicity and Funding at the 29th UNGEGN Session in Bangkok, Thailand 25th- 29th April 2016, owing to pressing personal reasons of the Convenor. A meeting of the two Working Groups is being planned for spring 2017.

Press and Publicity

Press releases: A press release for the opening of the 28th UNGEGN Session in New York was published on April 28th 2014: *Benefits of standardizing geographical names to be discussed as expert group opens Twenty-Eighth Session at Headquarter* (<http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/stat450.doc.htm>), as was a press release published on May 5th in connection with the conclusion of the Session: *Importance of Standardizing Geographical Names Stressed as Experts Conclude Twenty-Eighth Session at Headquarters* (<http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/stat451.doc.htm>). Both press releases were prepared by the Convenor of this Working Group. The press releases highlighted both the importance of the availability of accurate nationally approved geographical names as being essential to national and international communication, as well as the safe storage and updating of authoritative standardized digital geographical names and how best to disseminate such data for the benefit of a broad spectrum of users, from citizens, to Government and non-governmental organizations.

Media Kit: Having been available since early 2011 (and acting on UNCSGN Resolution IX/10), the Media Kit was been continuously updated since August 2013. Former UNGEGN President, Ms. Helen Kerfoot, has kindly undertaken this. In addition, the Working Group encourages countries/experts who would like to translate the Media Kit to do so. However, owing to financial constraints the UNGEGN Secretariat does not print translated versions but are willing to make them available online.

UNGEKN Information Bulletin: The Information Bulletin is being published biannually and informs UNGEGN Experts about current and coming items of interest to the organization. There are, according to the UNGEGN Secretariat, in excess of 700 persons and institutions on the mailing list.

A major update with the intention to modernize the style of the Bulletin was effectuated with the 47th issue (September 2014). In addition to the current content of the Bulletin – News from the UNGEGN Secretariat, Divisions, Working Groups as well as individual countries – the Bulletin now also explores a theme relevant to the work of UNGEGN. This has been ongoing for the last two issues, the 48th and 49th. In order to secure the quality and readability of the content of the Bulletin, the Secretariat and the Working Group now also submits the Bulletin to thorough proof-reading .

UNGEKN website: The UNGEGN website is generally in good shape. Since the last report, sections of the website have been updated such as the Working Groups section. Experts are encouraged to check if the information for their relevant national, divisional or working group affiliations is correct.

Wikipedia information: Former Working Group Rapporteur, Mr Bergmann, kindly updated the Wikipedia entries for UNGEGN in English, German and Russian in 2013 and have made minor revisions since then.

Conference activities: UNGEGN material was distributed at the 25th ICOS Congress in Glasgow, United Kingdom, 25–29 August 2014, as was the Convenor present as Key Note Speaker.

In addition, UNGEGN Brochures have been distributed at the joint ICA Working Group and IGU Commission on Toponymy meetings in: Rome, Italy November 17th-18th 2014: Symposium on Place-Names Changes; the International scientific symposium on Place names as intangible cultural heritage, 26th-27th March 2015, Florence, Italy, as well as at the 2015 International Symposium on Place Names Place names, diversity and heritage, 17th–18th September 2015, Clarens, Free State Province, South Africa

Funding

Noting in particular the need for funding the Working Group has continued to assist in finding financial support for representatives of developing countries attending the 29th Session of UNGEGN in Bangkok, Thailand. Through the generous assistance of several funding bodies, it has been possible to help experts from Tunisia and Burkina Faso to this Session. In addition, there has been a workshop on geographical names held in Tunis, January 12th-16th, 2015, organised by CNCT and UNGEGN, for further information please see W.P.33/8.

New Rapporteur of Working Group

Since Mr Hubert Bergmann, Austria, had to stand down as Rapporteur of this Working Group as well as of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation, two working groups were without a Rapporteur in 2014. Fortunately, Mr. Gerhard Rampl, Austria, has kindly accepted to be the rapporteur for the two working groups. We warmly welcome Mr. Rampl to our midst.

11th UN Conference 2017

In preparation for the 11th Conference in 2017, the Working Group reminds the Group of Experts that any new proposals for major publications or training events should be presented to the Conference through a resolution prepared in consultation with the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.

Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Summary

The report highlights the aims and activities of the working group in raising awareness of the need for geographical names standardization and the work of the Group of Experts, particularly in advancing the digital presence of UNGEGN, through presence on the web and social media and an updated Media Kit. The report also highlights efforts to find financial support for training and for representatives from developing countries attending UNGEGN Sessions.