# NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION: FIELD COLLECTION OF NAMES

## Report presented by France*

In 1971, the National Geographical Institute revised the model form for the surveyor's list of names which is used in France for the collection of all place-name data. The earlier forms had already been revised in 1961 and 1965 to provide for the preparation of punched cards and for some automatic processing of the data so recorded. The new model form, illustrated here, is mainly intended to facilitate the task of field staff, while retaining the advantages of the earlier forms.

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* The original text of this report, submitted in French, was contained in document E/CONF.61/ L.65.

# A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE POSITION IN IRELAND

## Report presented by Ireland*

There are two official languages in Ireland, Irish and English, so that, generally speaking, each place will have an Irish-form and an English-form name. The Irish language was, from its introduction in prehistoric times until very recently, the language of the majority, if not the entirety, of the population; so the great majority of the place names have an Irish-language origin, and the difference between the Irish-form and the English-form names is basically one of orthography in most cases. Although the orthography of the English-form names is based on that of the English language, some additional guidance to the pronunciation would be needed by the English speaker. The two forms of name will be discussed separately here: it may be more convenient to consider the English-form names first.

### ENGLISH-FORM NAMES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS.

The smallest, and the basic, administrative area is the townland (there are some 60,000 of these covering the whole of Ireland, varying considerably in area but averaging approximately 140 hectares); other administrative areas include counties, baronies, parishes (now largely obsolete for administrative purposes), electoral divisions and urban districts. The English-form names of all these units have a definite official form, generally that decided on in connexion with the first large-scale (1:10560) survey of the country, made about 1830. Apart from a very small number of exceptions, where the most widely used form differs from the official one, the official forms are accepted as being the correct ones.

The boundaries of these administrative areas are clearly defined and unambiguous. In many cases, however, the same name may have a number of different applications: it may happen, for instance, that a village (which does not have a defined boundary), a townland, a parish and an electoral division all bear the same name. In practice this is rarely a cause of confusion, as the context normally indicates which is being referred to; if necessary, however, the particlar unit or territorial division referred to must be specified.

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* The original text of this report was contained in document E/CONF.61/L.70.

### ENGLISH-FORM NAMES FOR NON-ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS (EXCLUDING STREETS)

There is no designated authority for settling the English-form names of features such as villages, undefined districts, valleys, mountains, rivers or lakes. The forms given on the large-scale Ordnance Survey maps are generally, but not always, taken to be correct. It would seem that less care was taken with names of this type in the first large-scale surveys in the last century than with names of administrative areas, and some revision of the names appearing on the maps would be desirable; this would, of course, involve research.

From the nature of the features listed in the previous paragraph, it will be clear that their boundaries are, generally speaking, undefined. It does not seem practical, or necessary in most cases, to attempt definition. There may possibly be an exception in the case of small rivers which may have different names at different points in their course, but it is doubtful whether there would really be much benefit in specifying, probably arbitrarily, a point where the river changed its name from one to another. If rationalization were to be attempted in these cases, it would probably be better to aim at using only one name throughout the course of the river.

### ENGLISH-FORM NAMES FOR STREETS

The authority in the case of street names is the local authority (generally the county or city council), but the staffs of these authorities have no training in place-name work and moreover deal with the naming of new streets only on an *ad hoc* basis and generally in a rather superficial way. There is room for improvement here. Some tidying of already existing street names might also be desirable, although changes in existing street names are rather difficult under present legislation (see below "Change of names").

### THE IRISH-FORM NAMES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND NON-ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS

Both classes of name may be taken together. The Placenames Branch of the Ordnance Survey, with the