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**Ninth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**
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Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda*
**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names since the Eighth Conference**

Report of Croatia

Submitted by Croatia **

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Introduction

The representatives of Croatia did not attend the Eighth United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin. In the meantime several important processes started in Croatia.

On behalf of the Croatian Ministry of Environment Protection, Physical Planning and Construction for producing physical maps, the Croatian State Geodetic Administration (SGA) is responsible for establishing a national spatial data infrastructure and producing official maps. SGA founded the Croatian Geodetic Institute (CGI) that, according to point (4) of Article 44. in the Law of State Survey and Real Estate Cadastre, within the scope of its activity, establishes and keeps the register of geographical names. The Croatian-Norwegian project CRONOGIP IIIB for establishing the Croatian Geographical Names Database (CGND), has the aim to create a database which will contain all Croatian geographical names in official use, as well as names from place name research. CGI will be able to maintain a geographic names database, and to distribute geographic names for relevant users, as well as give support to appropriate state administration bodies that are responsible for declaring official geographical names data and prepare draft regulations and standards for the approval and management of geographical names in line with international practice. The CGND project consortium is defined by:

- State Geodetic Administration (SGA),
- Croatian Geodetic Institute (CGI),
- Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics (IHJJ),
- Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority (NMCA),
- Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia (HHI).

The national mapping authority, i.e. the State Geodetic Administration (SGA), is treating geographical names in the course of map production. Standardizations of geographical names were mainly developed by SGA within the scope of the Topographic Information System of the Republic of Croatia (CROTIS).

The Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia (HHI) is responsible for creating nautical charts of the Adriatic coast and sea. They adapted national standards to be fully compatible with standards of the International Hydrographic Organization.

National standardization

In Croatia there is still no official committee authorized for standardization and authorization of geographical names. In accordance with the Law of State Survey and Real Estate Cadastre, the Croatian Geodetic Institute (CGI) shall establish and maintain a Croatian Geographical Names Database (CGND). It will be a database of official Croatian geographical names. The CGND project will be succeeded by the establishment of a geographic names standardization body and further legislative development.

Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors

So far only a first draft version of Toponymic Guidelines has been developed. One draft version has been prepared by mr. sc. Zvonko Štefan from the Croatian Geodetic Institute,

and another one by dr. sc. Dunja Brozovic Roncevic in the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics. Both of them will be combined in accordance to the CGND project guidelines.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

Croatia has several registers and databases in different organizations. Some of them are:

- SGA - Topographic database with toponyms (100.000 names),
- SGA - Register of Spatial Units (counties, municipalities and settlements) (50.000 names),
- CGI - Geographical names database based on a 1:300.000 map (9000 names, including names from Register of Spatial Units),
- SGA and University of Zagreb, Faculty of Geodesy - Project "Toponimika",
- HHI - Catalogue of lighthouses and other navigational items,
- HHI - Names of islands and small islands (islets), rocks, reefs, etc. (1.250 names),
- IHJJ - Database extracted from historical documents back to the 13th century (about 80.000 names),
- IHJJ - Database of 114.000 geographical names for Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (from the existing gazetteers),
- IHJJ - Names from field name collection,
- Road authorities - register of names of roads, bridges and tunnels, etc.,
- Water authorities - names of water bodies, channels, etc.,
- Center for Adriatic Onomastic Research at the University of Zadar - database of historical and modern place names,
- Lexicographical Institute "Miroslav Krleža" and "Školska knjiga" - various lists of geographical names for publication purposes (atlases, encyclopedias etc.).

The Croatian Geographical Names Database (CGND) should join all the names together in one database. The production of CGND covers nationwide requirement for Geographical Names. The project will be realized in four phases:

1. phase: Specification of the Database (finished),
2. phase: Development of the Database (started),
3. phase: Maintenance, Harvesting of Data, Distributional Functionalities,
4. phase: Legislation.

The CGND will contain names for the whole territory (continental and maritime) of the Republic of Croatia and Croatian exonyms. The feature matrix was developed according to the Croatian Topographic Information System (CROTIS). The CGND will give support to appropriate state administration bodies responsible for declaring geographical names data official. The CGND will be used by different spectra of users: map producers, linguists – research and education, governmental activity, publication activity, urban planning, environmental protection, tourism, economy, foreign affairs, location systems.

Names of settlements (about 6.500 settlement names) are now under the authority of local municipalities. A proposal for the change of a settlement name can be initiated by the local municipality.

Names of parts of settlements and names within settlements are under the authority of local municipalities. They have authority over defining the names of parts of settlements and names of streets, squares, etc. Major Croatian cities usually have a local committee that decides upon various proposals for street name changes. Although among members of those committees there is usually a linguist expert, their comments are often disregarded.

Names of waters and channels are under the authority of the state institution called "Croatian Waters". Since many smaller water courses are disappearing, and new channels are being formed, the water authorities tend to assign only numbers to them and abandon the older names.

Microtoponyms or so called minor names are being collected mostly by onomastic and dialectological Institutes and University departments. They could also be found on the cadastral maps. Special problems represent names of many tourist locations that have been changed in order to be more widely recognizable.

Names of major highways, bridges and tunnels are under the authority of "Croatian Roads". Parts of their data will be included in the CGND.

Country names

The list of country names has been developed for various purposes. Most country names have traditional Croatian adapted forms, except some new states. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration compiled a list of country names that differs in some details from the traditional Croatian country name list: Cote d'Ivoire/Obala bjelokosti, Republika Moldova/Moldavija, Bjelorus/Bjelorusija, Latvija/Letoniija. However, those names are used officially only in diplomatic correspondence, and are not obligatory for public and educational use.

Exonyms

According to the Croatian Constitution (article 12) the Croatian language and the Latin alphabet are officially used. In Croatia most exonyms refer to the neighboring countries with which over centuries Croatia has been in various kinds of political unions. Therefore, in Croatian most numerous exonyms are those for place names in Italy, Austria and Hungary. There are also many exonyms recorded in older Croatian dictionaries and written texts that are not used anymore. Those are listed as historical exonyms, but they have to be recorded, otherwise many older Croatian texts could not be understood properly. According to the Croatian orthographic rules, except for existing exonyms, geographical names for languages written in Latin alphabet are spelled as in the original language. For languages that use other alphabets there are rules for transcription and transliteration. Special rules are developed for various kinds of Cyrillic alphabets, and they are in most cases properly applied. Those names are not considered exonyms in Croatia.

A provisional list of exonyms has been compiled. It still has to be compared to the list of exonyms used in the biggest Croatian publishing houses, since various forms of names are still used on maps.

Names in multilingual areas

The official language in Croatia is Croatian, written in Latin script. In some local administrative units, behind Croatian language and Latin script, languages of local minorities can be used. This is regulated by law. The national minorities are living dominantly in different parts of Croatia and their languages have local character. Their language is used in schools, public names, on official documents and so on.

Toponymic website

In the moment there is no official toponymic website in Croatia. One of the results of the CGND projects is going to be a official toponymic website. It is going to be developed for more levels of users (map production, research, public use etc.).

SGA is obliged to establish the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). It should fulfill national needs for efficient and rational use of spatial data produced by governmental bodies and the private sector. The establishment of the NSDI anticipates the development of national databases and their connection into a single information system that will allow the users to use the data effectively and expand it with their own data. To fulfill these requirements, SGA is establishing a Geoportal. The first release of SGA's geoportal includes: Central Registry of Spatial Units, Orthophoto Map 1:5000, Croatian Base Map 1:5000, Rasterized Cadastral Maps in raster form and the Database of Permanent Geodetic Control points. By setting up Croatia's Geoportal, SGA implicitly takes over the responsibility for establishing the initial building block of Croatia's National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI).

International activities

National standardization in Europe is not anymore possible without taking into consideration regional standards. The Croatian members are active in European organizations as EuroGeographics, European REference Frame (EUREF), European Spatial Data Research (EuroSDR), International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) and others. In particular the EuroGeographics - EuroGeoNames (EGN) project is important, which is defining regional geoname standards. It is part of the European Spatial Data Infrastructure (ESDI) that joins different types of geographical information. It has a legal background in the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) directive. The Law of State Survey and Real Estate Cadastre, passed beginning of this year, is defining the legislative background on the national level for the implementation of INSPIRE in Croatia.