



UNEGN Scientific Symposium and Joint Divisions and Working Group Meetings

10-13 October 2018, Brussels, Belgium

UNEGN Working Groups and Divisions invite you to join them in Brussels, Belgium from 10 to 13 October 2018 to share knowledge, experiences and thoughts on the role and importance of expert knowledge in the standardization of geographical names. The audience targeted are experts in geographical names as well as all others interested in the symposium theme “*Role and importance of expert knowledge in the standardization of geographical names*”. The main venue for the meeting will be the Prins Albert Club, Karmelietenstraat 20 / Rue des Petits Carmes 20, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

Concept Note

The approach to geographical names standardization varies from one country to another in terms of organization, principles, policies and procedures. According to the [Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names](#) (UNEGN 2006), no method is better than another, provided each achieves the goal of establishing consistently written names that are *nationally accepted and agree with the local and written usages*. Where the standardization of geographical names used to be a top-down activity, an increasing number of political, social, economic and commercial actors seek power and influence in the standardization process. In a world where the concept of ‘one language, one people, one state’ is no longer valid, it is not always obvious which name forms are ‘nationally accepted’ and ‘agree with the local and written usages’. Changes in standardization processes present serious challenges which need to be addressed, regarding the use of geographical names within national, regional and global geospatial information frameworks.

This symposium seeks to share knowledge, experiences and thoughts on the role and importance of expert knowledge in all steps towards a standardized name, including the establishment of a national framework for standardization, the selection of name varieties for a given geographical feature, the determination of a written form, and the implementation, promotion and evaluation of authorized name forms to their implementation and integration in geospatial information management systems.

Acknowledging that the study of geographical names inevitably touches upon the fields of both onomastics and geography, and may include elements of social and other sciences, the theme of the symposium invites participants to critically explore and broaden the understanding of expert knowledge in the context of geographical names standardization. An important aim of the symposium is to enlighten conflicting views and interests in the standardization process today and to discuss how these can be managed and balanced. Presentations scrutinizing the relationship between expert knowledge and local community knowledge are especially welcomed.

The theme of the symposium raises questions such as:

What is considered ‘expert knowledge’ in the context of geographical names standardization? How can expert knowledge be gathered and facilitated? How are the experts identified and selected? How can expert knowledge be secured, developed and adjusted in the future?

Topics that may be discussed are:

- Crowdsourcing and local participation in the standardization process
- Quality assurance and securement of toponymic data collection
- Access to and utilization of expert knowledge in the production of maps and atlases
- Experiences and reflections on the standardization of indigenous and minority group geographical names
- The influence of private and commercial companies on geographical name usage; how can we facilitate collaboration?
- Increased commodification of geographical names; the use of geographical names in different branding and promotional strategies
- The importance of pronunciation and vocal names registration for speech technology

Preliminary Schedule

Wednesday, 10 October

- 12.00-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-17.30 Joint Dutch and German Speaking Division and Norden Division Meetings
- 19.00- Dinner

Thursday, 11 October

- 09.30-12.30 Symposium
- 12.30-14.00 Lunch
- 14.00-17.30 Symposium
- 19.00- Dinner

Friday, 12 October

- 09.30-12.00 Working Group Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers
- 12.00-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-15.30 Working Group Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage
- 15.45-17.45 Working Group Evaluation and Implementation & Working Group Publicity and Funding

Saturday, 13 October

- [TBD] Excursion (optional)
- 13.30-17.45 Working Group Evaluation and Implementation & Working Group Publicity and Funding

(The program is still being organized and the full program will be provided to all registered participants)

Registration

To participate in this event and wish to register please contact [Jasper Hogerwerf](mailto:Jasper.Hogerwerf@kadaster.nl) at Jasper.Hogerwerf@kadaster.nl. Please note that registration closes on **5th September 2018**.

For any further enquiry, please feel free to contact one of the members of the organizing committee: - Ingvil Nordland – ingvil.nordland@nmbu.no , Peder Gammeltoft – peder.gammeltoft@uib.no , Tjeerd Tichelaar – t.tichelaar@noordhoff.nl, Jean-Yves Pirlot – jean-yves.pirlot@ngi.be or [Jasper Hogerwerf](mailto:Jasper.Hogerwerf@kadaster.nl) - Jasper.Hogerwerf@kadaster.nl