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REPORTS OF THE DIVISIONS

REPORT OF THE NETHERLANDS 1994-1996

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National Reports: Report of the Netherlands

List of Exonyms

Since the seventeenth session, toponymic work in the Netherlands has consisted mainly of the elaboration and production of a list of standardized exonyms in current use in the Dutch language area (with the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium and the Netherlands as its major constituents), in conjunction with resolution no 28 of the second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

Work on this list has been performed by an ad-hoc commission on foreign geographical names, installed by the Nederlandse Taalunie (Netherlands-Belgian Dutch Language Union) in 1994. This list will be published in Summer 1996, and will be officially recommended for use in Administration and education by the Governments of Belgium and the Netherlands.

The List of Exonyms contains, on a country by country basis, standardized Dutch exonyms and their corresponding endonyms, with an index of all names (exonyms and endonyms alike). It has been attempted to render all endonyms from non-Roman writing systems into Roman script according to UN-recommended transformation rules.

As the List of Exonyms was intended primarily for official use, for use in education and in the media, this intention was reflected in the composition of the ad-hoc commission, which, apart from onomastic and cartographic experts was composed of representatives of news agencies and foreign affairs ministries from both Belgium and the Netherlands, and of the interpreter's department of the European Union.

The List of Exonyms, written in the Dutch language, is titled "Buitenlandse Aardrijkskundige Namen in het Nederlands". It has been published in 1996 as no 50 in the series "Voorzetten" (Nederlandse Taalunie, 's Gravenhage 1996). It can be obtained from SDU Servicecentrum, P.O.Box 20014, 2500EA Den Haag, the Netherlands or from Uitgeverij UGA, Stijn Streuvelsstraat 73, 8501 Kortrijk-Heule in Belgium. The list is meant to be updated at regular intervals.

Toponymical Guidelines for Flanders

As no expert from Belgium will be able to attend this UNGEGN session, the expert from the Netherlands would like to draw attention to the production of "Toponymical guidelines for Belgium: Dutch-speaking part" in 1995. Within the framework of the said ad-hoc commission of the Nederlandse Taalunie, the toponymic guidelines of the Netherlands

(3rd edition distributed at the seventeenth session of UNGEGN) were discussed and approved and it was decided to add a counterpart for the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. These "Toponymical Guidelines for Belgium: Dutch-speaking part" were produced by Prof.dr.Magda Devos of Ghent University and accepted by the said commission.

As the standard language in Flanders is the same as in the Netherlands (Dutch), part of the Toponymic Guidelines of the Netherlands (TGN) also applies to Flanders. However, in Flanders geographical names are spelled according to the rules of present-day standard Dutch, contrary to the situation in the Netherlands (where many archaic forms are still used). Therefore, orthographic practice in Flanders does not entirely comply with the spelling conventions outlined in TGN. There are some slight deviations in pronunciation, and hyphenation practice is more predictable.

Other matters

In the period 1994-1996 there was a marked increase in the number of requests for information regarding standardized exonyms in European languages from firms producing car navigation systems.