
United Nations
Group of Experts on
Geographical Names

Working Paper
No. 49

Eighteenth Session
Geneva, 12-23 August 1996

Item 5
of the Provisional Agenda

REPORTS OF THE DIVISIONS

REPORT OF THE EAST CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE DIVISION

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Introduction

Hungary has been serving as Chairman of the Division since the 16th Session of UNGEGN (4 December, 1992, New York). In its function it convened the Division for its 12th session in September, 1993. Reporting on information received on that event was contained in WP No. 6. of the 17th Session of UNGEGN.

The 13th session of the Division was held in Budapest on 2-4 April, 1996. Six countries of the division, apart from the host country, were represented: Albania, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. This report contains information based first of all on those presented at this Division session. Bulgaria sent written information to the Chairman following the session. As a matter of course the word 'session' in itself thereafter always refers to this event.

1. Institutional News on Bodies of Standardization of Geographical Names in the Member Countries. Short Report of the Activities of These Bodies Since September, 1993.

Albania informed the session, that as yet no national body of standardization exists in that country, but recording of names is done at its Geographical Studies Centre.

Bulgaria informed the Chairman that the council responsible for orthography and transcription of geographical names is working with the Department of Cadastre and Geodesy of the Ministry of Territorial Development and Construction. The country also became a member of the East Europe, North and Central Asia Division in 1994.

The Czech Republic reported on new legal measures regulating this activity, especially its new act on surveying and mapping (1 January, 1995). Standardization of names of settlements is the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, while those of non-settlement features and names outside the country are carried out by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre.

The Hungarian Committee on Geographical Names continues to act, since 1989, as an interministerial decision-making and advisory body operating in the Ministry of Agriculture. It discussed several suggestions for new commune names in this period, as the Committee is also responsible for giving advice on administrative names.

Poland has no state onomastic offices, but there are two independent committees dealing with geographical onomastics:

- a) the Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects in the Council of Ministers Office, dealing with onomastics throughout the Republic of Poland;
- b) the Commission for Standardizing Geographical Names Outside

Poland affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. The works on standardization of geographical names is also conducted by the State Geodetic and Cartographic Survey represented by the Department of Cadastre, Geodesy and Cartography at the Ministry of Physical Planning and Construction, that publishes the onomastic materials.

In the Slovak Republic decision for names of settlements continues to be taken by the government following the advice of the Ministry of Interior. For non-residential features decisions are made by the state mapping authority. Standardization of names for the whole country in scale 1:10,000 were completed in 1994. The number of these names stand at 70,000. Work on the standardization of the names of the country's trigonometric points also started in 1995. Standardized geographical names are obligatory for publishers of cartographic works, for the use in the press and other media and in official activities of state administration and municipalities.

Slovenia reactivated its commission for geographical names in 1995 after a period of 4 years. Professionally it is affiliated with the Slovene Academy of Sciences and is financed by the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia. This body includes geographers, linguists, geodesists, cartographers and representatives from the ministries of internal and external affairs.

In Ukraine a national body for geographical names was set up in September 1993, comprising representatives of the ministries of defence, foreign affairs, education, culture, environment and of the national mapping agency. It is dealing with questions of standardizing geographical names in and outside of Ukraine. Ukrainian experts have been very active in international contacts during the past period partly due to the fact that the country is member of both this Division and that of Eastern Europe, North and Central Asia.

2. Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

No gazetteer in the proper sense exists as yet in Albania but an index of names of habitation centres has been put on computer in recent years. The rest of Albanian geographical names are on the agenda of 1996 and 1997 to be finished for putting them on computer.

Bulgaria does not as yet have such a computerized data file. The list of toponyms are being constantly updated along with changes in the names of populated places.

In the Czech Republic a gazetteer containing the basic geomorphological units in the country with several foreign name ver-

sions and with attached map at scale 1:500,000 was published in 1996. Besides, toponyms are also scheduled for inclusion in systematized form in the basic database of geographical data called 'ZABAGED'.

A gazetteer containing all types of administrative names was published by the statistical office of Hungary at the end of 1995. The geographical names database of the country (FNT) is being expanded to include names of the 1:10.000 topographic series of Hungary. Presently this part of the database holds some 20,000 records.

In Poland a data bank of names of localities and physiographic objects has been established at the Main Centre of Geodetic-Cartographic Documentaion within the Ministry of Physical Planning and Construction. The data bank is created on the basis of 1:10,000 topographic maps (full coverage of Poland), also using other sources: official registers of names, data from the Main Statistical Office and from other similar institutions, in order to obtain official, reliable and updated information.

In 1995 the creation of the geographical names database from the whole territory of the Slovak Republic on the basis of new PC GEOS program has been started. The geographical names database is made up of a set of the names for all residential and non-residential objects named on the Basic map of the Slovak Republic at a scale of 1:10,000. Software enables database browsing according to any chosen combination of the fields of input forms.

Slovenia has around 200,000 geographical names which appear in various sources. The register of geographical names (RGN) of the country in the form of a database was launched in 1992. It rests on two compatible and connectable data bases: a) a descriptive or relation data base elaborated using Oracle containing individual geographical names in their official form, b) a graphical-descriptive database elaborated using Arc/Info that contains individual geographical names in exactly the form they appear in the source. The creation of RGN runs parallel with the upgrading of the basic 1:5,000 and 1:10,000 scale topographic maps and the 1:25,000 scale national topographic series. The register is available to everyone. In 1996 the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names plans the partial publication of a gazetteer with standardized names of settlements.

Ukraine started preparatory works on a database of geographical names of the basis of the 1:100,000 topographical series. Names lists including vanished and changed names in Ukraine, as well as lists of country names are being prepared for publication.

3. Romanization Systems

Albania follows the principle of giving all foreign geographical names, even those in original Roman script, phonetically transcribed Albanian romanized versions. It referred to a high level 1972 legislation as basis for this practice. The session has reminded the Albanian colleagues that although the way of using geographical names in a country is primarily a right of that country, the present practice is clearly not in line with several of the recommendations of the United Nations.

The countries taking part in the session generally follow the UN-recommended transliteration systems.

In Poland UN-recommendations are usually applied at cartographic practice; in case of lack of such recommendations proposals of linguistic experts (or other proposals) are applied.

Ukraine is consequently recommending its romanization system first presented in 1993. In answer to an inquiry by Hungary it informed that names even originating from a minority language are transcribed in this system using Ukrainian Cyrillic as basis. Local administration may authorize the use of original (minority) forms in that given area.

Transcription of geographical names of many of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union using non-Roman scripts continue to pose difficulties.

In the case of Russian names the UN-approved GOST-83 system is consequently used by the Czech Republic and Slovakia. There seems to be a great deal of uncertainty however relating to the exceptional use of this system by the donor country, i.e. the Russian Federation. The Session agreed to request UNGEGN to draw the attention of the donor country to this problem.

In the case of the rest of the former republics of ex-Soviet Union using non-Roman scripts (except Ukraine) it is also strongly requested that UNGEGN ask these countries to elaborate their recommended romanization systems.

4. Country Names

In Bulgaria a ministerial order published in 1995 regulates the basic principles of transcribing foreign geographical names into Bulgarian. They are binding for all spheres of usage in Bulgaria. The list of country names for domestic use is also being prepared in collaboration with the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter practice is the general rule in other countries of the division.

The Czech Republic published its list of country names titled "The Names of the States and their Territorial Parts" in 1993.

A new edition is being considered for publication.

Hungary reported that it regularly updates its list of country names suggested for use in Hungary. The latest list was presented to this Session.

Poland informed the Session that the publication "Polish Geographical Onomastics of the World" also comprises geographical names of all countries in Polish and official versions, in full and abbreviated forms. Moreover, it plans to publish the list of names of countries with names of capitals and further information added.

The new edition of the list of conventional Slovak names of countries was finished in 1995 and is due to be published in 1996.

In Slovenia discussion has dragged on for about ten years on how to write the names of certain countries. Therefore the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names prepared a document on 195 names of countries. The basis for the preparation of this document was the ISO-3166 standard.

It was remarked by some members of the Division that the absence of official short forms of country names often forces cartographers to use non-official, but widely familiar short names on maps for practical reasons (e.g. lack of map space).

5. Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors

The Czech Republic is preparing to elaborate its new toponymic guidelines by 1997. The Czech part of the document published in 1987 for the former Czechoslovakia is still recommended for use for the country.

The updated Guidelines for Hungary were presented in preliminary form on the 12th Session of the Division. They were completed for the 17th Session of UNGEGN (June, 1994, New York) and this version was now presented to the members of the Division.

The Polish Toponymic Guidelines, prepared in 1993, includes parts on organizations dealing with standardization of geographical names, the toponymic situation in Poland after World War II, the most important sets and the principles applied at standardizing geographical names in Poland, geographical and settlement terms, the Polish alphabet, as well as a pronunciation guide.

Due to new legislation concerning geographical names expected soon to be enforced by the Slovak Republic the new edition of the Guidelines, last published in 1993, will be required. A

preliminary version was presented to the session.

The Toponymic Guidelines for Slovenia was elaborated in 1995 with the following main headings: population, official languages, the Slovene alphabet, dialects, rules of writing geographical names, bodies of nomenclature, toponymic sources, dictionary of general names, adjectives and descriptive marks on maps, abbreviations on maps and the administrative division of Slovenia.

Ukraine reported on the various efforts to furnish its map-makers with guides to produce maps of various territories of the world. A guidelines for foreign map and other editors is in the planning stage.

6. Exonyms

Apart from a few proper exonyms, Albania renders all foreign geographical names transcribed phonetically into its Roman alphabet (see 6.), making an infinite number of exonyms.

Bulgaria reported on the practice of consequent reduction in the usage of exonyms.

The Czech Republic uses a rather limited amount of exonyms especially on school maps. The UN recommendations to reduce the number of exonyms are given priority. Several historical exonyms often used in the past are now absent from Czech maps.

The question of exonyms of cities and towns in the neighbouring countries of Hungary have often been on the agenda of the Hungarian Committee on Geographical Names. No decision has yet been made on the map use of these names. A solution seems to come out of the discussions, according to which the names contained in the 1913 Gazetteer of Hungary (the last one before the 1st World War) can be used as exonyms only with certain limitations. A part of these names should be considered as historical exonyms not suggested for map use, while the remaining names, having a long and strong tradition in the language of the present or past Hungarian population, should be categorized as exonyms. In establishing the two categories, the opinion of the Hungarian minority population in each of the neighbouring countries should be taken as a basis.

The Chairman of the Division, expressed at this point his opinion that he does not consider names outside of a country but with substantial local inhabitants of the ethnicity of that country as exonyms, even if their language does not have official status there. He believes that the present definitions on exonym and endonym (Dictionary of Toponymic Terms, version February, 1993) supports his view. It was noted that names standardized in a given country in a

minority language for special purposes (e.g. road signs) can be regarded by another country as endonyms. Slovakia argued that they can only be regarded as endonyms for these special purposes.

The Slovak Republic informed the session that there were at least three definitions of the term 'exonym' in various versions in the history of activities of UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names with different content and that the present definitions of exonym and endonym do not give clear distinctions between both terms (the use of present definitions could be infinitely wide because of the lack of specific words like "substantial" used by the Chairman).

Polish exonyms are generally used in the press, book publications, at schools and at domestic cartography (often with official names at first/second place). In 1994 the State Geodetic and Cartographic Service published three volumes of "Polish Geographical Names of the World", prepared by the Committee for Standardizing Geographical Names outside Poland. They contain over 3,000 exonyms. The fourth volume (titled "Part II"), that include names with large Polish minorities, will contain about the same number of exonyms as the three other volumes.

In principle the usage of endonyms is preferred in Slovak cartographic production. In maps and atlases intended for national usage, the Slovak exonyms are also given in parenthesis along with the endonyms though only in inevitable cases. The Committee for Geographical Names at ÚGKK SR prepared a catalogue of Slovak exonyms, which is to be published in 1996. Part of the material contain Slovak names of municipalities in various European countries with Slovak minority population.

In Slovenia internationally recognized standards are observed in professional literature (e.g. world atlases) where original geographical names are used as a rule and they may be accompanied by the Slovene version of that name. The latter form must be in brackets or written in smaller, different typography. The same practice is being introduced on school maps. A Slovene gazetteer of foreign names is also considered for preparation.

In Ukraine no list of exonyms exists as yet, but editorial instructions for map editors in that country regularly work with lists of names of foreign territories for proper use on Ukrainian cartographic publications. Several exonyms are also included in the list of 'Country Names and Territories of the World' including capital cities.

7. Standardization in Multilingual Areas

Names in areas of Greek and Macedonian minority in Albania are

written in Albanian orthography.

In the Czech Republic the geographical names are standardized in the Czech language only because the national minorities are not represented at a significant percentage of the local population.

In Hungary the practice is that the Commission on Geographical Names gives advice on nationality town and settlement names for local use (e.g. road signposts) on request. The government decree 71/1989 states that minority language names of certain geographic features can be established parallel with the Hungarian name.

In Poland the obligatory rule determines the application of official geographical names only in Polish language, also for areas where national minorities appear.

In the territory of the Slovak Republic Hungarian, German, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Romany languages, which are of regional character, are used as the languages for ethnic minorities. In cartographic works published in the SR the names are given basically in the official Slovak language in its standardized form.

In Slovenia in cases where the map covers officially bilingual territory as in Slovene Istria and Prekmurje, the Slovene and foreign variations of the name is divided by a slash (/), e.g. Koper/Capodistria, Lendava/Lendva. A large part of these territories is autochthonously inhabited by Slovene populations. Its delegation voiced its belief that it would be ideal in future for individual countries to exchange information on nomenclature in border regions.

In Ukraine an act is expected soon on geographical names that will deal also with names in other than Ukrainian names. At present the Act on Languages dating from 1989 states that toponyms are given in Ukrainian, but may also be used in other languages where non-Ukrainian residents form the majority.

8. Implementation of Resolutions and the Aims and Functions of UNGEGN

The members of the countries gave brief information on the major aspects of implementations of UN resolutions they believe are most significant and where the greatest advances have been made in recent years. The Chairman drew attention to the popular leaflet that was included in Newsletter No. 16. It is recommended that all members translate - and expand, if needed - this material, include it in their professional (and possibly other) journals with the aim of publicizing the activity of standardization of geographical names.

The session appreciates the efforts Albania has made during recent years since entering the activity of standardization. The meeting realizes the difficulties that arise from the very beginning of this activity, and draws the attention of the Albanian colleagues to United Nations resolutions on using Roman script geographical names without altering the standardized forms, to transcription systems recommended by UN resolutions, to the possible reduction of the use of exonyms, etc.