

## NORWAY

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### 1. Summary of regulations, acts, etc.

Until 1990 the standardization of geographical names was authorized through a governmental regulation giving detailed rules for the spelling. In 1990 a geographical names act was passed by the Norwegian Parliament. The Act came into force in July 1991 and was revised in 2005.

### 2. Responsible bodies

- The Norwegian Mapping Authority is responsible for authorizing most geographical names in public use, such as names of natural features, tunnels, bridges, light houses, churches, inherited farms (in practice most geographical names on official maps). The authorization is carried out by five regional Mapping Authority officials, each being responsible for one of five regions. A Geographical Names Council of five members within the Mapping Authority monitors the authorization process. The Council meets three times a year.
- The government or the responsible Ministry decides upon names and the spelling of administrative divisions.
- The local administration/municipality decides upon names of settlement and habitation names, street names and names of other local entities such as schools, squares etc.

### 3. Process of authorization

*Before authorizing a geographical name:*

- All parties concerned (official bodies organizations, owners) should be heard before the spelling of a geographical name is authorized.
- The geographical names consultancies should give their advice to the authorization body before a name is authorized.

*Geographical names consultancies:*

- According to the Act, positions for two place name consultants and one secretary were created for each of the four university regions in the country, in addition to consultants and secretaries for Saami and Kven (Finnish) place names in Norway. This advisory service is organized by the Norwegian Language Council and financed by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. The consultants and the secretaries should have linguistic competence.

*Spelling regulations:*

- In addition to the Act itself, a set of spelling regulations has been established; the written form of a geographical name should be based on the traditional, local pronunciation, while at the same time complying with current spelling rules (with acceptance of some regional variations).

### *Appeal Committee:*

- An Appeal Committee, under the chairmanship of a High Court judge, was set up to handle complaints about the standardized forms of place names.

#### **4. Storage and availability of authorized geographical names**

- All names recognized under the Act must be reported to a central computerized register administered by the Norwegian Mapping Authority.

#### **5. Use of authorized geographical names**

- Geographical names authorized in accordance with the Geographical Names Act are to be used by all official Norwegian bodies.
- Where a locality has a Saami name and/or a Kven name in addition to a Norwegian name, both/all should be used according to the authorized spelling.

#### **6. Availability of toponymic guidelines**

<http://www.statkart.no/Toponymic+Guidelines.9UFRrM5Y.jpg>

#### **7. Relevant websites**

Survey of some available items:

<http://www.statkart.no/nor/Land/Fagomrader/Stedsnavn/Internasjonalt/>

See the files:

- Organisation of the Place-Name work in the Land Mapping Division
- The Geographical Names Act
- The Central Place-Names Register (SSR)

#### **8. Email contacts:**

Geographical Names Consultancies (the Norwegian Language Council):

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