



**UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

# Information Bulletin

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Impressum

**UNGEEN**  
**Information**  
**Bulletin**

(formerly  
NEWSLETTER)

The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNGEGN Newsletter) is issued approximately twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group. The Secretariat is established within the Statistics Division (UNSD), Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Secretariat of the United Nations. It publishes contributions/reports from the Experts of the Group, its Linguistic/Geographical Divisions and its Working Groups. Contributions for the Information Bulletin can only be considered when they are made

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# Preface

## Message from the Chairperson

Dear UNGEGN Experts

Since the previous UNGEGN Bulletin was circulated in the summer of 2004, activities on the standardization of geographical names have been undertaken at the Working Group, Division, and national levels.

### Training courses

Two very successful UNGEGN toponymy training courses have been held in conjunction with the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy.

- In September, the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre (DINAGECA) in Maputo, Mozambique, hosted a course for students from the Africa South Division.
- In October, students from the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division participated in a course organized in Bathurst, Australia, by the Asia Pacific Institute for Toponymy (Macquarie University) and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board.

Both courses addressed practical issues of geographical names

standardization and the work of names authorities in this process. They provided students with the opportunity to work with geographical names data from field collection, through data base development, to the use and dissemination of the information. Not forgotten were the cultural aspects of toponymy and questions arising from the use of different languages and writing systems.

Reports of both courses can be found in this UNGEGN Bulletin.

### Some Working Group activities

- Members of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding were very active in promoting the work of UNGEGN in association with the Congress of the International Geographical Union in Glasgow in August. Interviews with major daily papers in the United Kingdom produced spin off for further publicity – in other newspaper articles around the world, and in radio and television interviews.

- The Working Group on Exonyms has developed a website (<http://www.zrc-sazu.si/wge/>) and is currently working towards a publication on exonyms, being coordinated in Austria for 2005.
- The Co-conveners of the working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names and the Chair of UNGEGN met in Australia in October to discuss the main aims of the Working Group, the outline of its work and the time frames it should try to follow to address Resolution VIII/1 before the Ninth Conference.

### Divisional meetings

Some Division meetings have been held during 2004. For example, the Baltic Division met in Vilnius, Lithuania in October, and the Arabic Division met in Tripoli, Libya in mid-December.

## National level notes

At the national level, various countries have held meetings of their names authorities and have discussed principles and procedures for naming, data base development, gazetteers and data transfer, etc. Please note that the Toponymic Guidelines for Finland have recently become available on the web at: <http://www.kotus.fi/inenglish/toponymicguidelines/toponymicguidelines.shtml>

## Forthcoming meetings

- “GeoNames 2005”, April 14-16, 2005 in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Netherlands.  
Open meeting of the Dutch- and German-speaking

Division and UNGEGN Working Groups (Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers, and Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names). Theme: Minority Names/Indigenous Names and Multilingual Areas. (for details see <http://geonames.geog.uu.nl/>)

Also known to be in the planning stages:

- Joint meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation, and the Working Group on Publicity and Funding, last quarter 2005
- Norden Division, October 2005

- Asia South-East and Pacific South-West, November 2005

I encourage all divisions and working groups to make the best use of 2005 to prepare for our next (23rd) UNGEGN Session to be held in Wien (Vienna) for six working days in the March to May period of 2006. If you have meetings being planned please forward your information to Mr. Laaribi ([laaribi@un.org](mailto:laaribi@un.org)) or myself.

With all good wishes for 2005,

Helen Kerfoot  
**Chairperson, UNGEGN**  
**Ottawa, Canada**  
[\*\*\*hkerfoot@nrcan.gc.ca\*\*\*](mailto:hkerfoot@nrcan.gc.ca)

## News from Headquarters

### From the Secretariat

Dear UNGEGN experts,

I would like to express to all of you my best wishes for a healthy, happy and successful year in 2005.

#### **The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN, Vienna, 2006**

As all of you know, at the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of UNGEGN, we took the decision to recommend to ECOSOC that the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of UNGEGN be held at the United Nations Office at Vienna for six working days, between March and May 2006. I am pleased to tell you that this was endorsed by ECOSOC in July 2004 (ECOSOC decision E/2004/303).

#### **Reports of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNGEGN**

The report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of UNGEGN (GEGN/22 & GEGN/22/INF/1) was edited and published during last summer. A copy of this report, attached to the Secretary-General report (GEGN/22/1), was mailed to each of you in October 2004. (Please contact us if you haven't received your copies.) In addition, an electronic

copy of the two reports is available on the UNGEGN website

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/>).

#### **Training Courses in Mozambique and Australia**

As mentioned by Ms Kerfoot in her statement, and recommended by the 8<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin in 2002 and the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of UNGEGN in New York in 2004, the UN supported two training courses in Mozambique (September 2004) and Australia (October 2004). Further details are included in the training course reports published in this current issue.

#### **UNGEGN Website**

The UNGEGN Secretariat is updating the UNGEGN website every six months. Material has been prepared for the next update to be undertaken by the end of January 2005. Therefore, we invite your updates, changes

and comments, as soon as possible.

#### **8th UN Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, New York, 27 June – 1 July 2005**

The 8<sup>th</sup> United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas will take place in New York, 27 June - 1 July 2005. In order to forge ties between UNGEGN and UN Regional Cartographic Conferences, we encourage your contribution and participation in this forthcoming Conference. Further details will be made available on our website (see News section).

I look forward to continue working with you and, hopefully, meeting with you in Vienna during the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of UNGEGN.

#### **Amor Laaribi**

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# From the Divisions

## Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)

### EuroGeoNames (EGN) – the vision of a distributed multi-lingual geographical names data network for Europe

#### Abstract

*The Dutch- and German-speaking Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) initiated the project EuroGeoNames (EGN), a vision of a distributed multi-lingual geographical names data network for Europe. It shall ultimately be an Internet service linking official geographical names sources across Europe. Names searches*

*will be possible for all official European languages including the officially recognized minority languages.*

*BKG together with other National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies (NMCAs), EuroGeographics Head Office (EGHO) and ESRI Germany have already started actions for conducting a Survey/Inventory on*

*European Geographical Names data (SI-EGN) as a prerequisite for setting up EuroGeoNames (EGN). SI-EGN shall investigate the availability, quality, accessibility and responsibility for national official geographical names databases and similar public data sources.*

#### Introduction

“The first access to geo information is via geographical names.”

Geographical names are fundamental elements of all spatially related topographic data sets. They are generally used for the search and overview on maps and in other spatially related products. They are considered to be the main search item/keyword within Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and search engines for spatially referenced information. Clear and consistent use of geographical names is important not only for cartographic/topographic

purposes, but furthermore for administrative tasks in EC itself and in all European countries, for economy, for postal services, telecommunication, health, risk management, safety and rescue services, transportation, tourism as well as for the purpose of popular education or for the use in the mass media.

In the context of the current INSPIRE<sup>1</sup> initiative of the European Commission resulting in a European Spatial Data Infrastructure (ESDI), geographical names are considered to be one of the three

most important data components (priority common basic data). EuroGeographics<sup>2</sup> will prepare, influence, and contribute to the implementation of INSPIRE. Through its programme EuroSpec, with its related projects, EuroGeographics is already addressing a number of the INSPIRE reference information priority components, such as roads, elevation, hydrography, direct referencing systems. However geographical names have not been given attentive focus yet.

<sup>1</sup> INSPIRE – Infrastructure for Spatial InfoRmation in Europe

<sup>2</sup> EuroGeographics – the Association of nearly all European National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies (NMCAs)

In the European countries the various feature categories of geographical names (e.g. hydrography, transportation, land cover, administrative units) are in general not yet accessible nationally through one stand-alone database. A major reason is due to distributed administrative responsibilities for specific names categories (e.g. statistical offices may be responsible for administrative units or hydrographic offices for hydrographic features). Another reason is that some geographical names databases have been created not only to satisfy cartographic purposes but also linguistic and other purposes as well as to preserve the cultural heritage.

Therefore, the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) initiated the project EuroGeoNames (EGN), the vision of a distributed multi-lingual geographical names data network for Europe. EGN is required for Europe to cover the specific needs of the European economic area and of the European administration bodies for decision-making in planning, management, assessment, monitoring and reporting tasks. EGN will ultimately be a distributed multi-lingual Internet service linking geographical names official sources across Europe. Names searches in the EGN network will be possible for all official European

languages including the officially recognized minority languages.

A prerequisite to set up EGN is a detailed cross-border Survey/Inventory on European Geographical Names data (SI-EGN). It will be carried out investigating the availability, accessibility, quality and responsibility for national official geographical names data and similar public data sources in the countries concerned.

**SI-EGN objectives (for 2005):**

- To collect an accurate and extensive knowledge of the comparative availability of, accessibility of, quality of, and responsibility for geographical names data in Europe;
- To analyse the state of the art in order to assess the feasibility of a possible future EuroGeoNames project linking official geographical names sources across Europe.

**Objectives for the future EGN service (for 2006 onwards):**

- Increase of the availability and usability of standardized official national geographical names data as well as their value-adding by commercial enterprises;
- Development of common and/or interoperable specifications for the exchange of European geographical names data;

- Integration of geographical names data as a part of national spatial data infrastructures;
- Improvement of efficiency regarding the collection, handling, storing, maintenance and distribution of geographical names data;
- Development of an Internet service to access official national geographical names data, including also the officially recognized minority languages in the respective European countries.

**Implementation considerations for EGN:**

By implementing EGN, a European geographical names data network will be established under the umbrella of EuroGeographics. This network will be kept updated in a consistent way and maintained at the source level by the responsible organisations.

Generally, the set-up of EGN shall follow a step-wise approach. In a first stage, the density of acquisition for the geographical names concerned shall be focused on the representation of features contained in the European data currently available at scales 1:1.000.000 and 1:250.000 as well as to those names required within European regulations (e.g. Water Framework Directive – WFD, etc.). But, the nominal scales for the future EGN project shall be 1:25.000 or 1:50.000. This target

is in line with the INSPIRE EGN network and emphasizes principles.

Figure 1 shows the spiral engineering processes which are necessary to set-up the future European geographical names (SI-EGN):

EuroGeoNames – phase one, survey/inventory (SI-EGN)

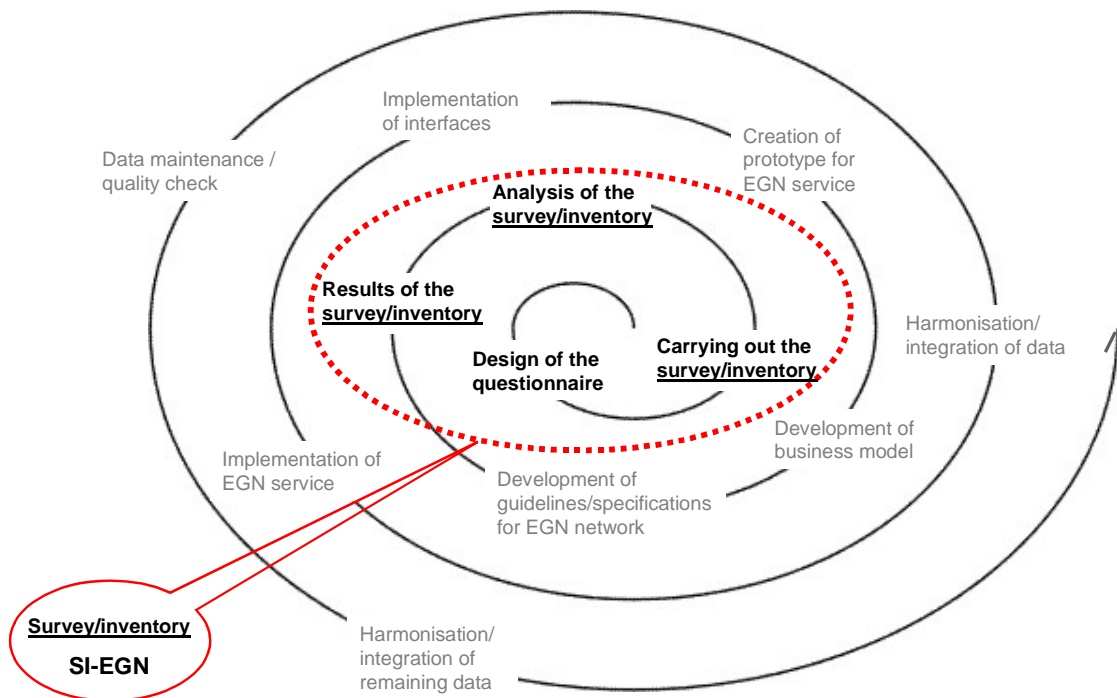


Figure 1 – Tasks of SI-EGN (bold type face), the first loops of the spiral model for the set-up of the future EGN project (rendered in grey).

**SI-EGN Consortium partners:**

- Utrecht (GIU), The Netherlands,
  - EuroGeographics Head Office (EGHO), France,
  - Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG), Germany
  - Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen (BEV), Austria,
  - ESRI Geoinformatik GmbH (Head Office), Germany.
  - Cartography Department, Faculty of Geographical Sciences, University of Slovenia (SMA), Slovenia,
- The Consortium partners represent a wide range of organizations combining the benefits of regional distribution



with the benefits of public private partnership:

The Consortium partners coming from organisations/institutions of Germany (BKG), the Netherlands (GIU) and Austria (BEV) provide long-term experience with regard to the standardization of geographical names. They are intensively collaborating within the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) of the United Nations Group of Experts on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNGEGN). The idea of the project was first discussed and developed in the DGSD.

The Accession Country Slovenia is through its mapping agency in this context representing the Slavic-speaking area and thus also serving as bridge between the orthographic diversity of Europe.

EuroGeographics is intensively working on the structuring of the reference data with view to a European spatial data infrastructure (ESDI) and the provision of reference data specifications and guidelines for the ESDI set-up.

ESRI is the world leader in GIS (geographic information system) software and system technology. With its expertise ESRI will be able to elaborate the market potential for the aspired multi-lingual European geographical names data network and will help

to set-up the technological architecture for it.

#### **Workplan:**

The collection of information will be carried out through a survey/inventory for all EU25, EFTA and candidate countries based on a detailed questionnaire. It shall be complemented by interviews in some countries when questionnaire replies may give reason to further inquiries.

The Consortium partners agreed on dividing the questionnaire into two parts, a “short questionnaire” and a “detailed questionnaire”. The “short questionnaire”, sent out in **October 2004**, was focused on responsibility items with regard to geographical names in the respective countries. The “detailed questionnaire” will cover all aspects of the national repositories of geographical names that may have an impact on the design of the envisaged EGN service and on the market potential. It is to be carefully reviewed and tested before, as its quality is a precondition for the success of SI-EGN. The “detailed questionnaire” will be disseminated in **mid January 2005**.

The SI-EGN project is expected to provide first results in **mid 2005**.

The exploitation of the results of SI-EGN will constitute the

foundations for the preparation, organization and co-ordination of the future EGN project. Main outcomes will include a description of the state of the art in terms of European geographical names repositories and the definition of the proposed content for the future EGN service content and functionalities.

All tasks concerning the development of common specifications and guidelines for data harmonization as well as a solution for a step-wise implementation of the EuroGeoNames (EGN) data network shall not be covered by the SI-EGN project, but shall be covered within the EuroGeoNames (EGN) project to be started in 2005/2006 onwards.

For EuroGeoNames (EGN), a project proposal shall be submitted to the European Commission in 2006, e.g. within the planned *eContent*<sup>+</sup> Programme.

#### **Jörn Sievers,**

*UNGEGN Vice-Chair,*

and **Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu**

*c/o Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy*

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## Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

### Training Course in Toponymy held in Australia

A UN-supported Training Course in Toponymy took place from 12 to 24 October 2004 at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst. It was organised jointly by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy at Macquarie University, Sydney and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board, and sponsored also by the Intergovernmental Committee for Surveying and Mapping, an Australian federal government body.

Course participants came both from nations throughout the Asia South-East & Pacific South-West Division of UNGEGN (Cambodia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu), and from the nomenclature authorities of several local jurisdictions (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia). The UN Statistics Division covered the travel expenses of the representatives from Least Developed Countries / Small Island Developing States so that they were able to attend without cost to their government..

Both technical and cultural aspects of toponymy were covered, with presentations,

exercises, and hands-on experience of data processing, plus a practical fieldwork exercise in nearby Perthville. Presenters included UNGEGN Chair Helen Kerfoot; Ferjan Ormeling, Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy; David Blair, Flavia Hodges and Jan Tent of the Asia-Pacific Institute of Toponymy; and Paul Harcombe, Greg Windsor and Glenn Jones of the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales.

Other presenters and contributors to panel discussions were drawn from the staff of several Australasian nomenclature authorities: Stuart Duncan, Secretary to the Place Names Committee of the Northern Territory; Brian Goodchild, Secretary to the Geographic Names Board of Western Australia and Chair of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia; John Parker, former Surveyor General and Registrar of Geographic Names for Victoria; Bill Watt, Secretary to the Geographical Names Advisory Committee of South Australia; and Rowland

Woods, former advisor to the New Zealand Geographic Board.

A centrepiece of the course was a regular meeting of the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales, which participants attended as observers after a full briefing on the work of the Board and the issues to be discussed. Participants also joined a meeting of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia -- the umbrella organisation for the naming authorities of Australia and New Zealand -- held in conjunction with the course.

At the end of a busy fortnight, the course graduates each received a certificate for the NSW Minister for Lands, the Hon. Tony Kelly. They all reported that, although intense, the experience had been very enjoyable, and that one of the most valuable aspects was the opportunity to share knowledge with counterparts in other jurisdictions having different backgrounds and expertise.

#### **Flavia Hodges**

*Macquarie University, Sydney  
fbodges@pip2.bmn.mq.edu.au*

## Africa South Division

### UNGEGN Training Course on Toponymy held in Mozambique

The Eighth UNGEGN Training Course on Geographical Names for the Africa South Division was held at the offices of the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre (DINAGECA) in Maputo, Mozambique, from 17 to 24 September 2004. It was hosted by DINAGECA and sponsored by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and by the Government of Mozambique. This training was in keeping with the revitalization and co-ordination of geographical name activities in Africa, an issue of special concern, and one that the UN Economic Commission for Africa had requested the assistance of UNGEGN in addressing.

#### Aims of the course

- To introduce participants to:
  - the importance of standardized geographical names for various applications,
  - concepts, and understanding of processes of standardization,

- the UNGEGN and UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and to resolutions,
- means of establishing names authorities,
- collecting, researching, treating, standardizing and disseminating names
- To promote co-operation and future training opportunities between divisions of UNGEGN, especially the member countries of the Africa South Division.

#### Attendance and lecturers

Twenty-six participants from Botswana, Egypt, Mozambique and South Africa participated; most already had some familiarity with geographical names work. The lecturers were Ms Helen Kerfoot (Canada), Chair of UNGEGN; Professor Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands), Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy; Dr Andreas Illert (Germany), Dr Peter E. Raper (South Africa) and Dr Lucie A. Möller (South Africa). Presentations were also

made by participants on the status of geographical names standardization in their countries.

The **programme** was divided into modules covering:

- Standardization and the UNGEGN; UN conferences on the standardization of geographical names; rationale for names committees; establishment of national names authorities, functions; practical standardization;
- Introduction to toponymic terminology and gazetteers;
- Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors;
- Office treatment and dissemination of geographical names, recording and storage, data base management, digital production of names lists and gazetteers;
- Research into geographical names, identifying primary and secondary sources and their applications;
- Multilingual situations; national considerations, orthographic rules, etc.;
- International issues, languages, scripts, transliteration and

transcription, endonyms, exonyms, transboundary features, etc.;

- Reference and geographical coordinate systems;
- Preparation workshop for fieldwork: collection procedures, planning; materials and practical considerations; compiling lists for data capture; language issues; GPS use;
- Practical field work exercise in the area of Marracuene;
- Digital data capture, preparation of gazetteer,

populating the database with entries from the fieldwork exercise and other sources;

- Mock committee meeting, introducing policies and principles, agenda, minutes, decision making, linguistic and other considerations in the standardization process.
- Technical visit to DINAGECA, demonstration of equipment and techniques;
- Evaluation; graduation with presentation of certificates

### **Course facilities and materials**

For each participant, the training course included ongoing networked computer access. A manual was prepared especially for the course (Raper and Möller). As well, earlier manuals, powerpoint summaries, maps, forms, electronic data sets, etc. were available to all students.

### **Luis Abrahamo**

*Chairman, Africa South Division*

## From the Divisions: forthcoming meetings

### Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)

#### GeoNames 2005 - International Conference on Minority Names/Indigenous Names and Multilingual Areas

##### Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Frisia, the Netherlands, April 14-15 2005

Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, in the heart of the Frisian language minority area in the Netherlands, will be the venue of a short international conference on minority names, indigenous names and geographical names in multilingual areas, organized jointly by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of the UNGEGN and the Frisian Academy of Arts and Sciences. There will be a parallel programme organized by the UNGEGN Working Group on Gazetteers and Toponymic Data Files.

Authors wishing to present a paper in this international conference are requested to send in an abstract or full conference paper to (Gildemacher/Ormeling, see websites [f.ormeling@geog.uu.nl](mailto:f.ormeling@geog.uu.nl) or [kfgildemacher@fa.knaw.nl](mailto:kfgildemacher@fa.knaw.nl)) before January 31, 2005. They will be notified about acceptance of their paper before February 10, 2005, and will be asked to send in the final version of their paper before March 10, 2005, together with the formalization

of their registration. Registration forms are up on the Frisian Academy website (see addresses websites below).

Abstracts (max 400 words), submitted in English, must contain the title of the proposed paper, name of the authors, organisations they belong to and postal and e-mail addresses, as well as the text of the abstracts. The abstracts/papers will be reviewed by Dr Hausner, Dr Gildemacher and Prof. Ormeling.

Conference themes are:

- protection of geographical names as cultural heritage
- status of minority languages/indigenous languages
- status of minority names/indigenous names
- rendering of minority names/indigenous names on official maps
- incorporation of minority/indigenous names into toponymical databases, gazetteers and directories

- rendering of minority names/indigenous names in the terrain: signposts, name shields, street name signs, etc
- language planning for geographical names
- good placename practice regarding minority language geographical names
- gazetteers and toponymical data files

On April 14, the opening will be held, as well as sessions on

- The rendering and use of minority language geographical names in Frisia
- Collecting, processing and presenting minority names in order to safeguard our cultural heritage
- Repairing minority names: field experiences

On April 15, sessions will be held on:

- Developments in dealing with minority names
- Legal aspects of minority/indigenous names
- Bilingual mapping in multilingual areas

- Minority names outreach programmes

On April 16, a Toponymical/historical Excursion to the 'Terpen' area, artificial mounds erected against flooding in the Middle Ages).

will be held. There will be a reception by the Governor of Frisia province on Thursday night and a conference dinner on Friday night.

Registration costs will be € 120 including conference dinner and

excursion or € 65 for the conference alone.

**Ferjan Ormeling,**  
*Chair, Dutch- and German-speaking Division*

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## Norden Division

The next meeting in the Norden Division will take place in Oslo October 20-22, 2005. The meeting will be held in conjunction with a conference entitled *Norway, Norden and the World: Place-Names in a National and International Perspective*, hosted by the Section of Name Research at the University of Oslo and the Norwegian Mapping Authority.

The arrangement is one of many events which will be organized as parts of the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden. Key words for the conference are national standardization, including standardization of place-names in minority languages, similarities and dissimilarities in the field of

standardization in the Nordic countries, and Nordic place-names in international use.

**Sirkka Paikkala**  
*Chair, Norden Division*

**Botolv Helleland**  
*Host, Norden Division meeting*

## From the Working Groups

### Working Group on the Promotion of Minority Group and Indigenous Geographical Names

#### Progress Report

A resolution was passed at the Eighth United Nations Conference of the Standardization of Geographical Names (Resolution VIII/I) aimed at promoting the work being undertaken throughout the world to retain and revitalise indigenous or minority group heritage through use of appropriate place names.

We all know from anecdotal evidence that work of this nature is being carried out in many countries throughout the world, but this vast effort is not being recognised outside of those of us who work in this area. It is time to acquaint the general community with the results of this endeavour.

At the 22nd Session of UNGEGN in New York, April 2004, a working group was established to bring this resolution to reality. This group will be known as the **Working Group for the Promotion of**

**Minority Group and Indigenous Geographical Names**, and will be convened at this stage by Brian Goodchild and Bill Watt from Australia.

An initial meeting of this working group was held during the 22nd Session of UNGEGN where an initial draft concept was presented to those attending. This concept comprised a database containing the information deemed to be relevant as per the resolution and a presentation method using a web based mapping output.

Suggestions were made by the participants at this meeting as to improvements to the database to include additional fields of information. These changes have been undertaken, and an input form devised using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

The next stage will be to test the input form with some real

information from various sources. This will not be for the public release of information, but as a means of checking the structure of the input spreadsheet and the database itself, and to ensure that the method of input is sound. Copies of the database containing the test information can be provided if desired. Any party interested in participating in this test can contact Bill Watt by email at the following address "watt.william@saugov.sa.gov.au".

Further investigation will also be undertaken to determine the best method of public release of the data. Details of this investigation will be forwarded when available.

#### **Bill Watt**

*Co-convenor*

*Working Group for the Promotion of Minority Group and Indigenous Geographical Names*

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## Working Group on Publicity and Funding

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names was well represented at the 30th International Geographical Congress (IGC) which was held in Glasgow in the United Kingdom from 15th to 20th August 2004. Nearly 1,800 delegates from 84 countries attended this event and on Monday 16th August the British Cartographic Society hosted a session entitled *Toponymy: Current Issues with Geographic Names*. Chaired by Dr David Munro, Convener of the UNGEGN Working Group on Publicity and Funding, this session offered an opportunity for nearly 50 delegates to discuss aspects of name standardization. David Munro set the scene in a paper entitled *The Standardization of Geographical Names: Achieving the Impossible?* Helen Kerfoot, Chair of UNGEGN, focussed on the work of the UNGEGN in a paper on *Geographical Names: Some Current Issues in the Context of the United Nations*. Two additional papers by Professor Naftali Kadmon and Yaives Ferland highlighted *Toponymy and Geopolitics: The Political use – and*

*misuse – of Geographical Names and Toponymy for the Military*.

The UNGEGN brochure, *Consistent use of Place Names*, was made available both at the session and at the exhibition stand along with CD-ROMs of the posters and digital presentations of the Topical Exhibition presented at the 8th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in Berlin in 2002.

The media took a considerable interest in the session on toponymy held at the 30<sup>th</sup> IGC. Those giving papers talked with representatives of the UK press and newspaper articles appeared in a wide range of papers in the UK and overseas including the *Guardian*, the *Times* and the *Asian Times*. David Munro subsequently took part in seven radio broadcasts, one of these being with the BBC World Service. The heightened awareness of place name issues arising from the Congress prompted continued media interest, Dr Munro recently being interviewed for an article in the *International Herald Tribune*. A

further outcome of the Congress was a suggestion that the International Geographical Union (IGU) establish a Toponymy Commission in addition to the 33 other IGU Commissions already in existence. The Convener of the UNGEGN Working Group on Publicity and Funding will explore this possibility with the IGU Executive but would welcome comments and expressions of interest.

During the International Geographical Congress an informal joint meeting of the Working Groups on Publicity and Funding and Evaluation was held. Progress with respect to the publication of the two proposed UN manuals was raised and the preparation of a further promotional brochure was discussed. It was suggested that a joint meeting of the two working groups be held in Korea in the autumn of 2005.

### **David Munro**

*Convener, Working Group on Publicity and Funding*



