



UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

# Information Bulletin

NUMBER 31

March 2006

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### No. 31, March 2006

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names Information Bulletin (formerly Newsletter) (ISSN 1014-798) is published by United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

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**UNGEGN website:**

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

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## Impressum

# UNGEEN Information Bulletin

(formerly  
NEWSLETTER)

The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNGEEN 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

available in digital form. They should be sent to the following address:

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## Preface

### Message from the Chairperson

Dear Colleagues

It is now only a few weeks until we shall be opening the 23rd Session of UNGEGN in Vienna! We are certainly hoping to see as many of you as possible on that occasion (March 28-April 4, 2006).

There has been considerable activity in some countries, UNGEGN Divisions and Working Groups, with progress being made towards our goals of national and international standardization of geographical names, and the dissemination of the results of our activities. We look forward to receiving the reports on this work, and being able to share your experiences, which we hope will also help others who are searching for suitable methods and approaches to common issues.

We are pleased to have had the support of the UNGEGN Secretariat (in the United Nations Statistics Division), which in particular has enabled the Group to maintain and build its website, to move forward on publication of manuals, and to start building an UNGEGN Geographical Names Database – to include country names and major city names of the world in a multilingual, multiscriptual and geo-referenced format. We will hear more about these projects at the Session in Vienna.

In this issue of the UNGEGN Information Bulletin, we are including the summary that we currently have about national names authorities in different countries. To maintain this accurately and to expand it to include countries

not yet listed, we need your help! The full listing of national names authorities with their contact information is available on our website

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geo/info/ungegn.htm>). Please provide new information and updates to the UNGEGN Secretariat, either at the UNGEGN Session in Vienna, or directly to New York.

With all good wishes for 2006, and looking forward to seeing you in Vienna.

**Helen Kerfoot**

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

## News from Headquarters

### From the Secretariat

Dear UNGEGN experts,

#### **23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN, Vienna, 28 March – 4 April 2006**

We are now a few weeks from our next meeting, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN, to be held in Vienna, Austria, from 28 March to 4 April 2006.

I would like to inform you that we still have not received credentials from many of you. We take this opportunity to remind you that time is running short and encourage you to contact either your Permanent Mission to the UN in New York (to which the Note Verbale was sent on 4 August 2005) or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of your country to send us your credentials at their earliest convenience.

I would like also to remind you that some information, useful for participants, is available under Information item and also posted on our

UNEGN website: (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geo/info/>). Technical papers received before the deadline of 15 February will also be posted in the next few days.

#### **Working Groups Joint Meeting**

UNEGN secretariat attended a joint meeting by the Working Group on Evaluation and the Working held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 28-30 November 2005. More details are available in the report in page 5.

#### **UNEGN website**

As you know, the UNGEGN website is kept updated every six months. We invite you to take a look at it; your comments are greatly appreciated.

#### **The Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (9<sup>th</sup> UNCSGN)**

The 9<sup>th</sup> UNCSGN is planned to be held in 2007. An announcement concerning the venue and the dates will be made during the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN in Vienna.

I would like to thank all who contributed to this Bulletin.

I look forward to meeting you in Vienna.

#### **Amor Laaribi**

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# From the Divisions

## Norden Division

### Meeting in Oslo, Norway, 20 and 22 October 2005

A two-day meeting of the Norden Division took place in Hønefoss (Statens kartverk, the Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority) and Oslo (the University of Oslo) on 20 and 22 October 2005, in connection with the conference “Place-names in Nordic and International Perspective”, arranged by the University of Oslo. The meeting was attended by 18 delegates representing Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and three guests, Ms. Helen Kerfoot, the Chair of UNGEGN, Ms. Zane Cekula, Baltic Division, as an observer, and Mr. Hans Ringstam, the previous Chair of the Norden Division. It is worth noticing that this was the first time that the representatives from Greenland, Mr. Carl Christian Olsen and Ms. Johanne B. Tobiassen, participated in a meeting of the Norden Division.

The presentations and discussions dealt with

- The activities and focus points of Statens kartverk;
- Recent changes in the Norwegian Place-Names Act;
- The Central Place-Names Register of Norway (SSR);

- Place names on maps and in registers in Norway;
- Different web services in Norway with the opportunity to conduct searches using place names;
- The project “Norway Digital”, Norwegian Government’s initiative to build a national geographical infrastructure;
- The updated version of the Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography – Norway, based on UN recommendations;
- The EuroGeoNames project; a Letter of Support to the European Commission;
- Greenland, its history, population, languages and their statuses, as well as administration and research with regard to place names;
- Swedish civil parish names;
- Addresses, place names and legislation in Sweden;
- The situation in the Nordic countries concerning the Unesco convention on immaterial cultural heritage;
- Commemorative naming practices in the Nordic countries;
- The UNGEGN Statute with regard to cultural heritage and identity aspects;
- The Nordic countries’ contribution to the UNGEGN Working Group on Indigenous and Minority Group Names with regard to Saami names;
- The UNGEGN Geographical Names Database;
- Concerns about the correctness of Finnish and other place names in certain global internet services;
- Preparations for the next UNGEGN meeting to be held in Vienna in spring 2006.

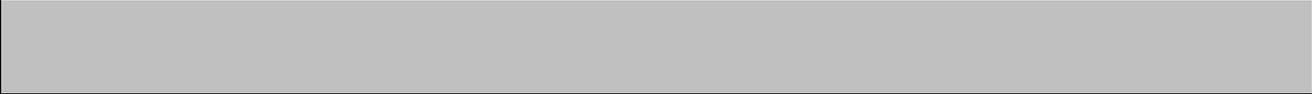
Zane Cekula expressed, on behalf of the Baltic Division, her gratitude for being able to participate in the meeting as an observer. She also warmly welcomed possible observers from the Norden Division to the future meetings of the Baltic Division.

**Sirkka Paikkala**

*Chairperson of the Norden Division*

**Teemu Leskinen**

*Rapporteur*



## Place-names in an Nordic and International Perspective

In connection with the meeting of the Norden Division in Oslo 20-22 October 2005 a conference entitled Place-names in Nordic and International Perspective was held at the University of Oslo. This venue was also a part of the celebration of the centennial of the solution of the union between Sweden and Norway. Nine papers on different aspects of the conference theme were read. From the point of view of UNGEGN the contributions of

Hans Ringstam (Sweden) and Vigeik Leira (Norway) were of special interest, the first one presenting an information booklet in Swedish on UN's work on geographical names, and the latter discussing problems and principles relating to the edition of a comprehensive list of names in different languages, taking Norwegian as a starting point. Johnny Andersen's (Norway) talk on EuroGeoNames as well as Staffan Nyström's on

commemorative naming practices should also be mentioned here.

**Botolv Helleland** (Norway)

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## From the Working Groups

### Working Group on Exonyms

#### Summary Report on Joint Meeting with Working Group on Evaluation held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 28-30 November 2005

In November 2005 David Munro and Ki-Suk Lee, Conveners of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding and Working Group on Evaluation, met at Seoul National University with UNGEGN Chair Helen Kerfoot, UNGEGN Vice Chair Brahim Atoui, Botolv Helleland (Rapporteur) and Amor Laaribi of the UNGEGN Secretariat.

It was agreed that UN fellowships for trainees and funds for toponymic training courses would be continued and that support for trainees from regions that have not participated in UNGEGN activities would be available for the training course in Vienna linked to the 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGEGN session.

The Working Group on Publicity and Funding would like to help identify alternative sources of funding for names projects. In this respect it was agreed that the Working Group would explore ways of developing an integrated approach with other disciplines such as cartography and geographical information

systems (GIS) and eventually be in a position to suggest funding sources that might include, for example, international charitable foundations or bilateral programmes. The Convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding would welcome suggestions.

The promotion of UNGEGN activities and geographical names issues was addressed by the joint meeting and it was agreed that UNGEGN Divisions should be encouraged to invite participants from neighbouring developing countries to meetings. In addition, experts are to be encouraged to publicize UNGEGN activities and aspects of names issues whenever possible.

The Working Group will develop brief notes/guidelines to assist those wishing to promote geographical names issues through the creation of their own geographical names website. An information sheet will be created outlining the steps involved. In association with the Secretariat, efforts will be made to improve the visibility of the UNGEGN

website and continue the distribution of the brochure the *Consistent Use of Place Names*.

During the year ahead, the Working Group plans to publish (1) a new promotional leaflet aimed at GIS and mapping organizations and (2) a press kit aimed at the media and available to experts dealing with the media. The press kit will include material of topical appeal and general interest, drawing on specific examples that demonstrate in a very practical way the significance of geographical names. The Convenor of the Working Group would welcome ideas and material for both of these publications.

The joint Working Group meeting reviewed progress towards the publication of the basic and technical manuals. It is hoped that the English language version of the UN-edited basic manual will be available in time for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN. The translated versions of this manual should be ready for the 2007 Conference, together with the technical manual which is to

be published in English only. It was agreed that, after publication, the basic manual should be made available on the UNGEGN website, with later development as a web-based learning resource. Experts are reminded that new publications need to be supported by a resolution at the 2007 Conference. Suggestions for publications in 2008-09 should, therefore, be notified to the Convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding. The next meeting of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding will be held in March 2006 during the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN.

**David Munro**

*Convenor, Working Group on Publicity and Funding*

*Contact:*

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## Information (also available on the website)

### A. 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN, Vienna, 28 March – 4 April, 2006

#### INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

##### Time and place of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN

1. The twenty-third session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will be held in the Vienna International Centre (VIC), Wagramer Strasse 5, 1220 Vienna. The session will take place from Tuesday March 28 to Tuesday April 4, 2006 in the UN/UNIDO Board room on the 4th floor of C-building.

The hours of meetings will be from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 15:00 to 18:00. On the first day, however, the meeting will commence at 10:30.

##### Registration of Experts

2. All participating experts require *credentials* from their government. These should be submitted ahead of the session through the Permanent Mission or the Department of Foreign Affairs to the UNGEGN Secretariat in New York. In this way a preliminary list of participants can be prepared to facilitate registration.
3. Security regulations at the VIC require that all participants be registered in order to enter the premises. Registration, and the issuing of a *photo identity pass*, will take place at the Pass Office at Gate 1. This process can be completed on the afternoon of Monday March 27 (from 13:00 to 16:00) or after 08:00 on Tuesday March 28.

##### Use of mobile phones and laptops

4. Experts are kindly requested to keep their *cellular telephones* switched off inside the conference room, as they cause radio frequency interference in the sound system, adversely affecting the quality of interpretation and the recording of proceedings.

The use of *laptops* in the conference room causes similar problems. Experts are kindly requested not to use laptops next to open microphones.

##### Facilities available

4. *Documents* will be available at the documents distribution counter, immediately outside the Board Room.
5. A *coffee bar* for meeting participants is available on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, just outside the Board Room. In the 4<sup>th</sup> floor coffee lounge of C-building experts will find a limited number of computers where e-mail can be accessed.
6. A *cafeteria*, a *restaurant* and a *coffee counter* are located in Building F, on the entrance level.
  - Cafeteria hours: 07:30 to 10:00 and 11:30 to 14:30
  - Restaurant hours: (table reservation recommended, ext. 4877) 11:30 to 14:30
  - Coffee counter hours (in the cafeteria): 08:00 to 10:00 and 11:30 to 15:30
7. *Computers* with printing facility are available on the 7<sup>th</sup> Floor of C building (Room C0709).

8. **Photocopying.** Coin-operated machines are available on the 7<sup>th</sup> Floor of C-building (opposite Conference Room III). Cost: 8 cents/page.
9. A **post office** and **Bank Austria-Creditanstalt** are located on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of C-building.
  - Post office hours: Monday-Friday 08:00 –10:00 (cash transactions until 17:00)
  - Bank hours: Monday-Friday 09:00-15:00. Thursday: extended hours until 17:30
10. **Medical services.**

Medical attention is available from the clinic operated by the joint Medical Services located at the VIC, Building F, seventh floor (extension 22224 and, for emergencies 22222). The clinic is open from 08:30 – 12:00 and from 14:00-16:30, except on Thursday when it closes at 15:00. For emergency assistance at other times, please contact the Central Security Office, F0E21, ext. 3903.

### **Airport to the City**

11.
  - **Airport bus** from the Vienna International Airport to Schwedenplatz (metro U1/U4) at a cost of 6 Euro, including luggage. Journey time: approximately 20 minutes. Buses from the airport run every 30 minutes from 06:20 to 00:20 (and from Schwedenplatz to the airport every 30 minutes from 05:00 to 23:30.
  - There is a daily **bus service** between the Vienna International Airport and the Vienna International Centre (Gate 1/U1) for 6 Euro (one-way ticket) or 11 Euro (round-trip ticket). Buses from the airport run at 07:30, 09:00, 10:30, 12:00, 13:30, 15:00, 16:30, 18:00 and 19:30 and from the Vienna International Centre at 06:35, 08:05, 09:35, 11:05, 12:35, 14:05, 15:35, 17:05 and 18:35. Journey time is approximately 30 minutes.
  - The **City Airport Train (CAT)** runs non-stop between the Vienna International Airport and the City Air Terminal (Wien Mitte). Daily service runs from the Airport every 30 minutes from 06:05 to 23:35 and from Wien Mitte every 30 minutes from 05:38 to 23:08. Cost: one-way 8 Euro and round-trip 15 Euro. Journey time: approximately 16 minutes.

### **Access to the VIC**

12.
  - **U-Bahn.** Participants coming by the U-Bahn on Line U1 should get off at the station “Kaisermühlen-Vienna International Centre”, leave the station by the exit closest to the front of the train (if coming from the city centre), and enter VIC premises at Gate 1.
  - **Taxi.** Participants coming by taxi are advised to leave the vehicle in the side lane (Nebenfahrbahn) of the Wagramer Strasse and enter by Gate 1.
  - **Car.** After having been issued a parking permit at the Pass Office, access for participants coming by car is through Gate 3.

### **Hotels**

13. All participants are responsible for their own hotel reservations (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/listhotelsvienna2005.pdf> or <http://info.wien.at> for hotel information). Any participants arriving in Vienna without a hotel reservation can arrange accommodation at the Vienna International Airport at the travel desk located next to the information desk in the arrivals area. The travel desk is open from 08:30 to 21:00 daily.

### **United Nations Office at Vienna**

14. More information about the United Nations in Vienna is available on the web at: <http://www.unvienna.org/unov/index.html>

## B. Summary List of National Names Authorities

<b><i>Which countries have a national authority for geographical names? Information from the 8th UN Conference, 2002, with later additions</i></b>				
<b>Country (8th Conf.)</b>	<b>Authority?</b>	<b>Yr of Auth.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact, if no Nat. Auth.</b>
Algeria	Y	1998	Commission Permanente Specialisée de Toponymie	
Argentina	Y	1983	Instituto Geográfico Militar de la Republica Argentina	
		1972	Servicio de Hidrografia Naval	
Australia	Y	1985	Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia	
Austria	Y	1968	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde (AKO)	
Bangladesh	?			
Bhutan	N			Department of Survey & Land Records
Botswana	Y	1967	Botswana Place Names Commission	
Brunei Darussalam	Y	1976	Geographical Names Committee Brunei Darussalam	
Bulgaria	Y	1951	Council of Orthography and Transcription of Geographical Names	
Cambodia	?			
Cameroon	N			Institut National de Cartographie
Canada	Y	1897	Geographical Names Board of Canada / Commission de toponymie du Canada	
Chile	N			Instituto Geográfico Militar
China	Y	1977	Administrative Areas and Geographical Names Division, Civil Affairs Ministry / China Institute of Toponymy	
Cote d'Ivoire	N			Département de l'aménagement urbain et du développement local/BNETD
Cyprus	Y	1977	Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names	

Czech Republic	Y	2001	Commission on Geographical Names	
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	?			
Denmark	Y	1910	Stednavneudvalget/The Place-Name Commission	
Djibouti	?			
Estonia	Y	1994	Place Names Board of Estonia	
Finland	Y	1975	The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland	
France	Y	?	La Commission de Toponymie de la France	
Germany	Y	1959	Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN)	
Greece	N			Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service
				Hellenic Military Geographic Service
Guinea	N			Institut Géographique National
Hungary	Y	1989	Hungarian Committee on Geographical Names (Földrjzinévbizottság)	
Iceland	Y	1935	Örnefnanefnd	
India	?			
Indonesia °	Y	2001	National Permanent Committee on Geographical Names	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Y	2000	Iranian Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names	
Ireland	Y	1946	The Placenames Commission	
Israel	Y	1951	Government Names Commission	
Italy	N			Istituto Geografico Militare
Jamaica	?			
Japan	N			Geographical Survey Institute
Jordan	Y	1984	National Committee on Geographical Names	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	N*			National Geographic Department
Latvia	N			State Land Service
Lebanon	Y	1962	Direction des Affaires Géographiques (DAG)	
Lesotho	N			?
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Y	2000	National Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names	
Lithuania	Y	1990	The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language	

Madagascar	Y	1973	Komitim-Pirenena Miandraikitra Ny Anaran-Tany (K.P.M.A.)	
Malaysia	Y	2002 °	National Committee for Geographical Names	
Mexico	N			Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geográfica e Informática (INEGI)
Mongolia	N			State Administration of Geodesy & Cartography
Morocco	N*	?	Commission Nationale de Normalisation des Noms Géographiques (ACFCC)	
Mozambique	N*			National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre (DINAGECA)
Myanmar	Y	?	National Geographical Names Authority	
Namibia	N*			Directorate of Survey & Mapping
Nepal	N*			Survey Department
Netherlands	N			Topografische Dienst Nederland
New Zealand	Y	1946	New Zealand Geographic Board	
Nigeria	Y		?	
Norway	Y	1879	Norwegian Mapping Authority	
		?	Norwegian State Consultancy on Place-Names	
Oman	Y	1983	National Survey Authority	
Paraguay	?			
Peru	?			
Poland	N			Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography
Qatar	N			Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Republic of Korea	Y	1958	National Geography Institute	
Romania	?			
Russian Federation	Y	1994	Commission of Geographical Names	
Samoa °	N*			National Mapping Section Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment
Sao Tome and Principe	N*			Direcção de Serviços Geográficos e Cadastrais
Saudi Arabia	N			Saudi Geological Survey
Serbia and Montenegro	N*			Republički Geodetski Zavod Srbije

Slovenia	Y	1986	Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names	
South Africa	Y	1998	South African Geographical Names Council	
Spain	N			Instituto Geográfico Nacional
Sri Lanka <sup>°</sup>	N			Survey Department
Sudan	Y	1996	Geographical Names Committee	
Sweden	Y	1974	National Land Survey	
Switzerland	N*			Federal Office of Topography
Syrian Arab Republic	Y	1996	Committee for Geographical Names	
Thailand	Y	1992	National Committee on Geographical Names	
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Y	2000	Commission nationale pour la normalisation des noms géographiques	
Togo <sup>°</sup>	N			
Tunisia	?			
Turkey	Y	?	The Ministry of Interior	
		?	General Command of Mapping	
Uganda	Y	1995	Lands & Surveys Department	
Ukraine	Y	1994	National Council on Geographical Names	
United Arab Emirates	N*			Military Survey Department
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	N			Ordnance Survey
United Republic of Tanzania	Y	?	Surveying and Mapping	
United States of America	Y	1890	U.S. Board on Geographic Names (USBGN)	
Uzbekistan	?			
Vanuatu	N*			Department of Land Surveys
Venezuela	Y	1989	Instituto Geográfico de Venezuela Simón Bolívar	
Viet Nam	Y	2002	General Department of Land Administration Vietnam	
Zambia	N			Zambia Survey Department
<i>Holy See</i>	<i>N*</i>			<i>Secretariat of State - 2nd Section</i>
° New Information since the 8th UN Conference				
N* = hopefully soon				