

12 February 2019

Original: English

**United Nations Group of Experts
on Geographical Names
2019 session**

New York, 29 April–3 May 2019

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their
countries and on the progress made in the
standardization of geographical names****Report of Denmark****Summary****

Since the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Denmark has seen a strengthening of the cooperation between the Name Research Section at the University of Copenhagen and the Place Name Section at the national mapping and surveying authority, the Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency. The University of Copenhagen Name Research Section is the permanent chair of the Danish Place Name Committee and its secretariat. The objective of the cooperation is to ensure authorized spelling and standardization of place names in registers maintained by the Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency.

The cooperation entails:

- Defining a normative set of rules for the correct spelling of Danish place names.
- Developing a method for both spellchecking of currently registered Danish place names and registration of new place names (including commercial names and names of privately owned localities).
- Spellchecking of 120,000 Danish place names that are included in the Agency's register of Danish place names but have not been formally authorized. The register also contains approximately 25,000 standardized place names formally authorized by the Danish Place Name Committee (the limited selection is due to a statutory declaration that contains a vague reference to the importance of standardization on the basis of "practical need" and explicitly excludes the names of privately owned (residential) localities).
- Preparing geographical names legislation with the aim of strengthening the administrative uses of geographical names.

* GEGN.2/2019/1.

** The full report was prepared by Rikke Steenholt Olesen, University of Copenhagen and Morten Winkler, Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEKN/1st_session_UNGEKN.html, in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2019/60/CRP.60.



The report also contains:

- A brief account of the current state of the former Name Research Section at the University of Copenhagen
- An outline of expectations for the provision of expert knowledge in the registration and standardization of geographical names in expected geographical names legislation or in future statutory declarations.
- Information on a presentation of the Danish place names register and its potential as a part of the Danish Common Public Basic Data Program. (Data from the register are now easily accessible through a shared distribution platform, the Data Distributor. The data are standardized and can therefore be combined and used coherently by different systems.)
- A description of a project undertaken by the Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency to digitize analogue topographical names records for mapmaking. The records have been collected over several hundred years. An estimated 120,000 paper slips have been scanned and are currently being sorted and indexed for an intended publication.
- Information on the agreement between the Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency and the Danish Bureau of Statistics for an annual exchange of data. The Bureau receives a dataset of named cities, towns and villages with updated geographical extents, and it then calculates the number of inhabitants. Subsequently, the Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency publishes this data, including the named places. In order to update these extents, the Agency uses address data to indicate where new built-up areas have appeared.
