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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 Slovakia

Submitted by Slovakia**

Summary:

The Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic has undertaken the following activities relating to the standardization of geographical names:

(a) Since 2015, the authority has gradually expanded the content of the database of geographical names in Slovakia through the addition of names from cadastral and forest maps in the districts planned for each year. Since June 2018 it has also begun to address another source of names relating to watercourses that are managed by various administrators. The authority compares, edits if necessary and standardizes names from cadastral and forest maps, as well as the names of managed watercourses, and integrates them into the database. The goal of standardization is to determine a single standardized name for each feature and provide approved names for national and international use. While undertaking the standardization of geographical names, the authority is gradually adding variant names, mainly from map sources, to the unfinished districts;

(b) The database is continuously updated;

(c) The authority allows the free downloading of data from the database in the following formats: Esri shapefile, Esri Microsoft database, Esri geodatabase and comma-separated values.¹

(d) ZBGIS Map client, an interactive web application for spatial ZBGIS data, currently allows, among other things, the analysis, viewing and searching of:

- Standardized geographical names
- Variant and historical names
- Standardized exonyms

(e) In 2018, the authority published an amendment to the directive on the standardization of geographical names. The amendment specified other types of names that should be edited or maintained in the proposed form in order to take into account the name forms used at the local level;

*GEGN.2/2019/1

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¹ For more details, see https://www.geoportal.sk/sk/zbgis_smd/na-stiahnutie/.

(f) Documentation on the activities and selected lists of geographical names are published and updated on the authority's website;²

(g) In 2017, the authority organized a one-day seminar on standardized geographical names to inform participants about activities related to this area;

(h) The authority is chairing the East Central and South-East Europe Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names from 2018 to 2022.

² <http://www.skgeodesy.sk/sk/ugkk/geodezia-kartografia/standardizacia-geografickeho-nazvoslovia/>.

Report

International meetings

Members of the Names Commission of the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic (Commission) participated in:

23.1.2018, 26.7.2017, Prague, Czechia, bilateral meetings aimed to cooperation on the harmonization of data and names on boundary features, experience exchange and inspiration by the work of Czech colleagues in the field of standardization of geographical names,

24.-26.9.2018, Riga, Latvia, 21st. meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms regarding categorization of exonyms,

11.4.2018, Warsaw, Poland, "Naming policy", participants dealt with the issues regarding standardization on geographical names. These meetings are regular; trilateral meeting of Slavic states - Czechia, Slovakia and Poland,

13.2.2019, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22nd meeting of East Central and South-East Europe Division of the UNGEGN. Slovakia as a chairing country of this division.

Publications

UGKK issues periodical publications

- **Magazine Geodetic and Cartographic Review.** Monthly released periodical fulfils the specialized, academic, educational and social function in the community of experts in geodesy, cartography and real estate cadastre working in the state administration, research, educational processes and in the commercial sphere. The Review is published in cooperation of Czech and Slovak geographical name authorities.

- **Newsletter of the UGKK.** In this newsletter the UGKK publishes in normative part decisions of standardization of geographical names and regulation on adjusting the geodetic and cartography activities and in informative part publishes other information related to geodesy, cartography and cadastre.

- **Geographical Names Information** is published by the UGKK twice a year. It provides information for the general public about international activities and international collaboration in the field of standardization of geographical names. This publication also provides information on informative technical papers, results of the UN conference proceedings, results of linguistic/geographical regional groups, findings of the Division of UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, decisions on geographical name standardization and gazetteers, as well as the changes of standardized names.

<http://www.skgeodesy.sk/sk/ugkk/rezortne-periodika/>

UGKK issues non periodical publications

- **Rules for Use of the Names of Geographical Features in Foreign Language Text of Publications Published in the Slovak Republic**, Bratislava, 2012. Main role of this publication is to show examples on how to use standardized feature names in foreign languages published in Slovakia. Standardized names have to be used in standardized forms and not create various forms of translation.

- **Directive on the Standardization of Geographical Names**, published in 2015. In 2018 we published an amendment of the Directive for the Standardization of Geographical Names. The amendment specifies other types of names that should be edited or maintained in the proposed form in order to take into account the name forms used at the local level.

<http://www.skgeodesy.sk/sk/ugkk/geodezia-kartografia/standardizacia-geografickeho-nazvoslovia/dokumenty-k-cinnosti/> .

Periodical and non-periodical publications are available on the UGKK website.

Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of UNGEGN (ongoing activity)

- **UNGEGN Brochure** was translated to Slovak language.

- **Translation of Resolutions**

All Resolutions adopted at the Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names were translated by the UGKK into Slovak language. Both Slovak and English forms of adopted resolutions are available on the UGKK website.

- **Informative seminar**

In 2017 the UGKK organized one-day seminar with the aim of informing the public interested in standardization of geographical names about activities related to this topic, such as

1. general information about names, UN regulations, law, information about names commission of the GN, selected list of documents, list of names published on the UGKK website,
2. history of the origin of geographical names, content of database and its use,
3. the focus of the control activities of the UGKK,
4. online searching through the ZBGIS Map client web application.

- **UGKK Brochure** about standardization of geographical names within the competence of the UGKK was published in Slovak and English languages in 2019.

National standardization

Field collection of names

In 2015 the UGKK started gradually densifying the content of the database of standardized geographical names from the territory of the Slovak Republic by names from cadastral and forestry maps according to the districts planned for each year. The total number of districts is 72.

Since 2018 we have been working with the database of names provided by their administrators (managed watercourses names). Densifying the content of the database of standardized geographical names means comparing names from cadastral maps, forestry maps and managed watercourses names with the standardized names, editing these new names to the necessary extent, standardizing correct forms of these names and integrating them into the database. Also the knowledge of local residents has been used for this work.

The goal of standardization is to unify the names of each named feature, standardize one name for one feature and provide approved names for national and international use.

In addition to densifying the content of database, we are gradually adding variant names to the standardized names, mainly from available map sources. Variant names have different form from standardized names and serve only for the purpose of searching by any forms of the filled in names.

Office treatment of names (without changes)

In order to provide a specialized function of standardization, a Commission was set up as an advisory board of the UGKK in 1970. There are two working bodies of the Commission:

1.) 1st section deals with standardization of non-settlement geographical feature names from the territory of Slovakia such as

- hydrography
- protected areas
- special site features
- historical features
- features of vertical division
- other features

2.) 2nd section deals with geographical feature names outside the territory of Slovakia such as:

- countries, dependencies
- seas, oceans
- lakes, towns, extra-terrestrial features, islands
- mountains, deserts, rivers, waterfalls, bays and so on

Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures (without changes)

Within the Slovak Republic the authorities that deal with geographical names are as follows: the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Government of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic. Competence of the authorities for geographical names is implied in the Acts of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors (without changes)

The fourth edition of Slovak Toponymic guidelines was published in 2010. Because there were no legislative changes in Slovakia the edition from 2010 is still valid. It contains parallel Slovak and English versions. The edition of Toponymic guidelines is available on the UGKK website.

<http://www.skgeodesy.sk/files/slovensky/ugkk/geodezia-kartografia/standardizacia-geografickeho-nazvoslovia/dokumenty-k-cinnosti/TNdotlaAe.pdf>

Exonyms

The UGKK standardizes exonyms of states, independent territories, extra-terrestrial features and other exonyms e. g. lakes, towns, rivers, mountains and so on. The UGKK respects UN recommendation to reduce the quantity of exonyms, so we also recommend using official names (endonyms).

List of the exonyms is published on the UGKK website.

Toponymic data files and gazetteers

Data management and interoperability

Database of standardized geographical names

- was created between 1995-2003,
- consists of the names of Basic maps in 1:10 000 and 1:50 000 scales and the names of Water management map in 1:50 000 scale. The mentioned maps formed the foundations of the database,
- was incorporated into the Basic database for the geographic information system (ZBGIS) in 2013,
- its administrator is Geodetic and Cartographic Institute Bratislava,
- the updating is performed on a continuous basis,
- variant names are added gradually to the standardized names of the database,
- since 2015 the content of the database is gradually densified by names from cadastral and forestry maps,
- since 2018 the content of the database is also gradually densified by names from the managed watercourses.

Toponymic websites

Information related to geographical names together with selected lists of standardized geographical names are published on the UGKK website.

On the UGKK website are also published lists of these features:

- names of mountains, valleys, passes and saddles, names of hydrography;
- names of cadastral districts, protected areas, Slovak exonyms of geographical features lying outside the Slovak territory, country names.

Lists of selected geographical names have also been published on the UGKK website.

<http://www.skgeodesy.sk/sk/ugkk/geodezia-kartografia/standardizacia-geografickeho-nazvoslovia/>

Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services)

ZBGIS Map client is interactive web application of spatial ZBGIS data which now allows, among other things, analysing, viewing and searching through:

- standardized geographical names,
- variant and historical names,
- standardized exonyms.

The UGKK provides free download of data from the database in the following formats: Esri SHP, Esri MDB, Esri GDB and CSV.

https://www.geoportal.sk/sk/zbgis_smd/na-stiahnutie/

Country names

The UGKK standardizes short and long forms of country names. The list of country names contains also other additional information e. g. the capital, name in the official language, official

language, name in English and coordinates of the capital. This list has been continuously updated. The official UNGEGN website is used for updating of changes of the list of country names.

The list of country names is published on the UGKK website.

Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation

Features common to two or more nations

Slovakia neighbours with five countries. Features common to two or more nations at the state border are not harmonized in many cases. Work progress and problem solution in this area are at different stage of development. On the Czech border we exchanged data, compared features and names, harmonized data and the solving of problems is in progress. On the Polish border we exchanged data, compared features and names. Feature data on the Austrian's state border were exchanged. Cooperation with Hungary and Ukraine is planned to start in the next period.