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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names**
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Item 4 (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 Norway****Summary****

The full report provides an outline of the progress and developments of Norway on geographical names since the 2019 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

Item one of the report includes a review of the recent revision of the Norwegian Place-Name Act and its effects on the standardization of geographical names at the local government (municipal) level and within other areas. The Act gives local governments more authority in making it easier to standardize names according to local spoken and written usage, independently of linguistic recommendations. Item one also gives details on the effects of the reorganization of the geographical names consultancy service, which also resulted from the 2019 amendment. The consultancy service is now administered by the Norwegian Language Council.

Item two of the report concerns the effects of the administrative reform of 2020, which reduced the number of regions (counties) from 18 to 11 and the number of local governments (municipalities) from 422 to 356.

Item three of the report contains a review of the geographical names service under the responsibility of the Norwegian Mapping Authority. The Authority is in charge of hosting, maintaining and developing the central geographical names register. There are 1,050,000 named places in the register, some of which have several written forms, making a total of 1,075,000 geographical names. In addition, some of the names have variant spellings, bringing the total number of name forms to 1,264,000. In total, 119,000 of the register's geographical names have been given authorized spellings, and the remainder will be spelled according to the written norm until they are given special attention.

* [GEGN.2/2021/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Ingvil Nordland and Peder Gammeltoft (Norway). The report will be available, under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/10/CRP.10, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/.



Item four of the report is on other activities in Norway, including the preparations by the Norwegian Language Council for the launch of an e-learning course on the standardization of geographical names at the local government (municipal) level. In addition, the place-name archive under the Norwegian Language Collections is developing new services to help with the standardization of geographical names in accordance with recommendations B and C in resolution 4 of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (see [E/CONF.53/3](#)). Those items will be outlined in the report of Norway and elaborated on in detail in separate reports.

Item five of the report touches on the effects of the European Union General Data Protection Regulations on collecting, recording and managing geographical names for use in standardization, as viewed from a Norwegian perspective. It has been found that those regulations pose severe problems in delivering geographical names information to regulators and the general public.

Item six of the report pertains to the indigenous and minority languages of Norway, Sámi and Kven, including with respect to hearings on the official Sámi and Kven names for Norway and on guidelines for spelling rules.

Item seven of the report concerns the updated toponymic guidelines that Norway presented in 2020 in response to the administrative reform detailed under item two above. A further revision is envisaged for 2021.
