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Geographical Names****2021 session**

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Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

Exonyms**Decline in the number of Danish exonyms in use for
European cities****Summary****

The Danish language has exonyms for a number of European cities. Over the past two centuries, that number has gradually declined as more and more endonyms have replaced them in Danish usage. The first attempts to standardize and regulate the use of foreign place names in Danish were introduced in the late nineteenth century. However, the practice was never formalized in the same way as was done for domestic place names, which since 1910 were strictly standardized and administered by the Danish place names committee. The committee has generally abstained from anything more than offering advice on foreign place names and orthography. Since the formation of the Danish language council in 1955, the question has been handled by that body alone, but still mainly in the form of recommendations.

The full report is based on Danish school atlases and encyclopaedias, as well as more recent lists of recommended forms provided by the Danish language council. It will contain a list of all Danish exonyms for cities in Europe recorded in those sources from the early nineteenth century to the present. The following questions will be explored:

- (a) For which cities have Danish exonyms been coined, e.g., cities with particularly close contacts to Denmark or cities with difficult names for Danes to pronounce or spell?
- (b) What forms have been chosen for Danish exonyms, e.g., “danicized” forms or forms adopted from other languages?
- (c) Which Danish exonyms have been abandoned in favour of endonyms, and when were they abandoned?
- (d) Which Danish exonyms are still in use and what are their prospects?

* GEGN.2/2021/1.

** The full report was prepared by Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen, University of Copenhagen. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/54/CRP.54, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/.



Particular attention will be devoted to the use of Danish exonyms for cities beyond the country's present-day borders, in regions that were formerly part of Denmark, and to whether Swedish or Finnish names are chosen for cities in bilingual Finland.
