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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names
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Item 12 of the provisional agenda*

**Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity,
including indigenous, minority and regional languages and
multilingual issues****Place name politics in multilingual areas: a comparative
study of southern Carinthia, Austria, and the Těšín/Cieszyn
region, Czechia****Summary****

In the study, the politics of toponymy, identity and landscape in two multilingual areas is analysed: the Těšín/Cieszyn region in Czechia and southern Carinthia in Austria. In both areas, linguistic and ethnic composition is the result of population movements in Central Europe's vivid history and shares a lot of similar characteristics. For that reason, close cooperation between researchers from Austria and Czechia seemed highly desirable. Also, a comparative study allows for broader generalizations based on similarities and differences.

Both regions have gone through a series of conflicts over bilingual signs in recent decades. The authors of the study investigate what such conflicts reveal about the relationship between name, place and identity, what were the principal causes of those conflicts and what factors most influenced people's attitudes toward bilingual signs. They draw on anthropological and geographical approaches to place names to gain a complex understanding of the issues. In-depth presentations of the historical and political backgrounds supplement the toponymic analysis and make it a study in critical toponomastics.

* GEGN.2/2021/1.

** The full report was prepared by Peter JORDAN (Austria), Honorary Chair, Austrian Board on Geographical Names. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/, in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2021/75/CRP.75.

