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**United Nations Group of Experts on  
Geographical Names****2021 session**

Virtual, 3–7 May 2021

Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity,  
including indigenous, minority and regional languages and  
multilingual issues****Place names and migration****Summary\*\***

The book, *Place Names and Migration*, is based on a symposium that marked the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Austrian Board on Geographical Names, held from 6 to 8 November 2019. The topic of the symposium and the book, place names in the context of migration, could be approached in two ways: synchronically, i.e. with reference to modern migration situations, or diachronically, i.e. from a historical perspective, with regard to the multitude and variety of migrations throughout the course of history. As far as place names are concerned, migration can be directed to areas with few or no names, but also to areas with a dense and well-established toponymic landscape. In the latter case, it is interesting to see how migrants with other linguistic and cultural backgrounds deal with the names that they find. Their approach can differ depending on whether migration occurs individually or in groups, whether migration is backed by strong political power – as in the case of conquest and colonization – or whether migrants overlay or underlay the resident society in the social sense. The symposium thus offered, and the book still offers, insight into the relationship between migration and geographical names. While much of the diversity of the topic is explored, a clear need for further research is revealed.

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\* GEGN.2/2021/1.

\*\* The full report was prepared by Peter Jordan (Austria), Austrian Academy of Sciences, International Cartographic Association Chair, joint International Cartographic Association/International Geographical Union Commission on Toponymy. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/76/CRP.76, in the language of submission only, at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd\\_session\\_2021/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/).

