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**New edition of the Polish list of official names of localities
and their parts**

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In December 2019 the third edition of the “List of official names of localities and their parts” [“Wykaz urzędowych nazw miejscowości i ich części”] was published in Poland¹. The previous edition of this list was published in 2015. The list was published on the basis of the “Act on official names of localities and physiographic objects” [“Ustawa o urzędowych nazwach miejscowości i obiektów fizjograficznych”], which entered into force in 2003.

1. History of the standardization of names of localities in Poland

Collection and standardization of geographical names have a long tradition in Poland. The process was initiated on a larger scale in the 18th century together with the development of maps and gazetteers covering the entire or nearly the entire Polish territory.

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hen Poland regained independence in 1918, it became necessary to standardize the geographical names of areas that throughout over a hundred years had been partitioned by Prussia, Austria-Hungary and Russia. During the 1921 census information on names of localities was collected, which resulted in the publication of the “Index of the localities of the Republic of Poland prepared based on the results of the First National Census of 30 September 1921 and other official sources” [“Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej opracowany na podstawie wyników pierwszego powszechnego spisu ludności z dn. 30 września 1921 r. i innych źródeł urzędowych”] by the Central Statistical Office in the years 1923 to 1926 in 14 volumes.

Bodies officially responsible for approving names of localities were not created in Poland until 1934. Autonomous Śląskie Voivodship was the exception, as the local authorities were in charge of establishing the administrative division and geographical names. As early as in 1922, in this voivodship 700 official names of cities, towns, villages and manor areas – all independent localities within the voivodship – were established.

The “Regulation of the President of the Republic of Poland of 24 October 1934 on establishing the names of localities and real estate numbering” [“Rozporządzenie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej z dnia 24 października 1934 r. o ustaleniu nazw miejscowości i o numeracji nieruchomości”] ultimately regulated the issues of establishing official names of localities. Pursuant to its provisions, the Commission on Establishing Names of Localities was created at the Minister of the Interior.

The period after World War II brought a necessity of further works on standardization of names, and on vast areas of the so-called Recovered Territories (i.e. territories transferred to Poland under the decision of the Potsdam Conference, 1945) Polish geographical names had to be created and established. These works were undertaken by the Commission on Establishing Names of Localities, reactivated in 1945. In 1948, the scope of establishing official names was extended to include also names of uninhabited localities and names of physiographic objects, and the Commission changed its name to the Commission on Establishing the Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects (known as the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects since 2003). At first, all the works were focused on establishing the names in the areas newly incorporated into Poland, and those established were published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland. As a result, nearly 32,000 names of localities were established. In the subsequent years, names from the remaining parts of the country were standardized. In 1980-82, the “List of official names of localities in Poland” [“Wykaz urzędowych nazw miejscowości w Polsce”] was published. This 3-volume gazetteer includes approximately 111,000 names of localities and their parts.

At the beginning of 2013, the “Regulation of the Minister of Administration and Digitization of 13 December 2012 on the list of official names of localities and their parts” [“Rozporządzenie Ministra

¹ The “List of official names of localities and their parts” is available on the website of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland: http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/official_names.php (in .pdf and .xlsx formats).

Administracji i Cyfryzacji z dnia 13 grudnia 2012 r. w sprawie wykazu urzędowych nazw miejscowości i ich części”] was published in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland (item 200). This first edition of the “List of official names of localities and their parts” contains 103,225 official names of localities and their parts from the entire territory of Poland.

In October 2015 the second, updated edition of this list was published as the “Announcement of the Minister of Administration and Digitization of 4 August 2015 on the list of official names of localities and their parts” [“Obwieszczenie Ministra Administracji i Cyfryzacji z dnia 4 sierpnia 2015 r. w sprawie wykazu urzędowych nazw miejscowości i ich części”] (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 1636). In this second edition, 103,086 official names of localities and their parts were listed.

2. Legal basis for establishing names of localities in Poland

Official names of localities are established based on the “Act of 19 August 2003 on official names of localities and physiographic objects” [“Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia 2003 r. o urzędowych nazwach miejscowości i obiektów fizjograficznych”]. The act sets out, among others, the rules and procedure of establishing, changing and abolishing official names of localities and their parts. It also specifies the types of localities, and the procedure for publishing lists of official names of localities and their parts.

Polish official names of localities and their parts may be established, changed or abolished upon request of:

- a commune council (the lowest administrative unit),
- the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects,
- the minister competent for public administration (since 2015: the Minister of the Interior and Administration).

Practically, names are established upon request of commune councils only. Any establishing, abolishing or changing of a name of locality comes into effect as of 1st January, pursuant to a regulation of the Minister published in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland.

Where the names of localities or their parts are established, abolished or changed upon request of commune councils, the legislation procedure is the following:

- a commune council adopts a resolution on establishing, changing or abolishing an official name;
- a commune council announces and conducts consultations with inhabitants of the locality (or its part) concerned;
- a commune council prepares a motion regarding a name, including information on consultations with inhabitants, an opinion of a county head (starosta), a topographic map with the locality (or its part) limits concerned, information about financial costs of the proposed change (e.g. costs of document or signboard replacement etc.). A motion is subsequently passed to a voivode for review, who passes it to the Minister by 31st March of the year before the changes are planned to come into effect;
- the Minister consults their advisory body, the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects. The Commission examines the completeness and correctness of a motion from the linguistic, historical and administrative points of view, and then issues an opinion through a resolution;
- the Minister decides whether to accept or reject the motion, which may also be returned for supplementation;
- a change is published in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland.

If a changing, abolishing or establishing of a name is requested by the Minister, then the Minister shall apply to concerned commune council, a county starosta, a voivode and the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects for their opinions to this respect, a commune council being

obliged to conduct consultations with the inhabitants prior to issuing an opinion. All these opinions are of a consultative nature, while the ultimate decision is made by the Minister. If a change of a name is requested by the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects, then the Commission shall communicate a motion to the Minister, who subsequently requests concerned commune council, a county starosta and a voivode their opinions to this respect, a commune council being obliged to conduct consultations with the inhabitants prior to issuing an opinion. Once these opinions are obtained, the Minister makes a decision as regards the Commission's motion.

3. Preparative works on the list of official names of localities and their parts

The preparative works on the first edition of the "List of official names of localities and their parts" were based on the "List of official names of localities in Poland" published in 1980-82, along with all its amendments introduced after its publication via regulations (orders) of the minister competent for public administration announced in the Journals of Laws of the Republic of Poland or Official Gazettes of Poland.

Amendments to the "List of official names of localities and their parts" are introduced each year on January 1 in pursuance of regulations of the Minister on establishing, changing and abolishing of official names of localities announced in the "Journals of Laws of the Republic of Poland". These modifications are the result of both changes in the names themselves and changes in types of a locality (changes of a type can be the result of changes of boundaries of cities and towns). Moreover, regulations of the Council of Ministers on boundaries change might bring changes of a type of locality.

The following regulations have been announced since publication the second edition of the "List of official names of localities and their parts" of 2015:

- "Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 28 July 2015 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Towns, Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities, and Establishing the Boundaries as well as Change Names and Seats of Authorities of Certain Communes" (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 1083), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 21 localities changed its type (4 for "town", and 17 for "part of town");
- "Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 17 December 2015 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Establishing the Name of a Physiographic Object" (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 2277), pursuant to which 13 new locality names have been established, 85 names have been changed (including 30 changes of the name, 5 changes of the name and the type of locality, and 50 changes of the type of locality only), and 42 names have been abolished;
- "Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 19 July 2016 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns, Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities, and Change a Name of a Commune" (Journal of Laws of 2016, item 1134), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 28 localities changed its type (4 for "town", and 24 for "part of town");
- "Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 23 December 2016 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Physiographic Objects" (Journal of Laws of 2016, item 2251), pursuant to which 4 new locality names have been established, 87 names have been changed (including 43 changes of the name, 11 changes of the name and the type of locality, and 33 changes of the type of locality only), and 85 names have been abolished;
- "Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 24 July 2017 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns, Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities, Change a Name

of a Commune, and Change Seats of Authorities of Certain Communes” (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 1427), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 19 localities changed its type (7 for “town”, and 12 for “part of town”);

- “Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 14 December 2017 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Physiographic Objects” (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 2401), pursuant to which 19 new locality names have been established, 57 names have been changed (including 25 changes of the name, 7 changes of the name and the type of locality, and 25 changes of the type of locality only), and 93 names have been abolished.
- “Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 25 July 2018 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns and Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities” (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1456), and the “Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 20 December 2018 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns and Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities in Świętokrzyskie Voivodship and Establishing Its Boundaries” (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2478), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 53 localities changed its type (10 for “town”, and 43 for “part of town”);
- “Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 13 December 2018 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Physiographic Objects” (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2447), pursuant to which 4 new locality names have been established, 20 names have been changed (including 6 changes of the name, 2 changes of the name and the type of locality, and 12 changes of the type of locality only), and 32 names have been abolished.

Altogether, after the publication of the second edition of the “List of official names of localities and their parts” of 2015, 40 new locality names have been established, 370 names have been changed (including 104 changes of the name, 25 changes of the name and type of locality, and 241 changes of the type of locality only), and 252 names have been abolished.

All these changes have been incorporated into the new edition of the “List of official names of localities and their parts”, published in December 2019 in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland as the “Announcement of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 17th October 2019 on the List of Official Names of Localities and Their Parts” [“Obwieszczenie Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji z dnia 17 października 2019 r. w sprawie wykazu urzędowych nazw miejscowości i ich części”] (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 2360). The list contains 102,875 official names of localities and their parts.

4. Contents of the list

The “List of official names of localities and their parts” of 2019 has been arranged as a table with eight columns (fig.1). The first one provides the official name of a locality or a part thereof. All names in the list have been put in alphabetical order. In the case of homonym names, priority was established pursuant to the alphabetical order of the voivodships they belong to (or, if this resulted inconclusive, the alphabetical order of the respective counties and communes). Where identical names of localities occurred within a single commune, they were arranged according to the alphabetical order of the locality type. Where identical names of parts of villages occurred within a single commune, they were put in the alphabetical order of the names of localities they form part of. The same principles applied to colonies and hamlets.

In the second column, the official type of the locality is provided. 23 types of localities are distinguished in the list:

- city/town [Polish: miasto],
- part of a city/town [część miasta],
- village [wieś],
- part of a village [część wsi],
- housing estate [osiedle],
- housing estate of a village [osiedle wsi],
- colony [kolonia],
- part of a colony [część kolonii],
- colony of a village [kolonia wsi],
- colony of a colony [kolonia kolonii],
- colony of a settlement [kolonia osady],
- settlement [osada],
- part of a settlement [część osady],
- settlement of a village [osada wsi],
- settlement of a colony [osada kolonii],
- settlement of a settlement [osada osady],
- hamlet [przysiółek],
- hamlet of a village [przysiółek wsi],
- hamlet of a colony [przysiółek kolonii],
- hamlet of a settlement [przysiółek osady],
- forest settlement [osada leśna],
- forest settlement of a village [osada leśna wsi],
- tourist refuge [schronisko turystyczne].

Fig. 1. The arrangement of the “List of official names of localities and their parts”.

Nazwa miejscowości [Name of a locality]	Rodzaj [Type]	Gmina [Commune]	Powiat [County]	Województwo [Voivodship]	[TERYT id] Identyfikator miejscowości z krajowego rejstru urzędowego podziału terytorialnego kraju TERYT	Dopelniacz [Genitive]	Przymiotnik [Adjective]
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Abisynia	część wsi Turzyn	Kcynia	nakielski	kujawsko-pomorskie	1029454	-nii	
Abisynia	część wsi Dółsk	Drzycim	świecki	kujawsko-pomorskie	1030606	-nii	
Abisynia	kolonia wsi Droblin	Leśna Podlaska	białski	lubelskie	0014580	-nii	
Abisynia	część kolonii Dąbrowa	Hrubieszów	hrubieszowski	lubelskie	0889166	-nii	
Abisynia	część wsi Wiele	Karsin	kościerski	pomorskie	0162790	-nii	
Abisynia	osada	Karsin	kościerski	pomorskie	0162398	-nii	
Abisynia	część wsi Tymawa	Gniew	teczewski	pomorskie	1037608	-nii	
Abisynia	część miasta Starachowice	Starachowice	starachowicki	świętokrzyskie	0947946	-nii	
Abisynia	część wsi Drawsko	Drawsko	czarnkowsko- -trzcianecki	wielkopolskie	1005962	-nii	
Abisynia Górska	część wsi Górki	Karsin	kościerski	pomorskie	0162518	-nii -kiej	
Abram	część wsi Tychów	Czarnocin	piotrkowski	łódzkie	0537214	-ma	
Abramiki	część wsi Bujnowo	Wyszki	bielski	podlaskie	0043802	-ków	
Abramowice	część miasta Lublin	Lublin	Lublin	lubelskie	0954716	-wic	
Abramowice	przysiółek wsi Szczyrzyc	Jodłownik	limanowski	małopolskie	0430700	-wic	
Abramowice Kościelne	wieś	Głusk	lubelski	lubelskie	0954722	-wic -nych	abramowicki
Abramowice Prywatne	wieś	Głusk	lubelski	lubelskie	0380988	-wic -nych	abramowicki
Abramów	wieś	Goraj	biłgorajski	lubelskie	0887629	-mowa	abramowski
Abramów	wieś	Abramów	lubartowski	lubelskie	0378052	-mowa	abramowski
Abramów	część wsi Bychawka Druga- -Kolonia	Bychawa	lubelski	lubelskie	1020890	-mowa	
Abramówka	część wsi Wólka Cycowska	Cyców	łęczyński	lubelskie	0102255	-ki	
Abramówka	część wsi Ciszycza Górna	Tarłów	opatowski	świętokrzyskie	0808110	-ki	
Abramów-Kolonia	część wsi Abramów	Goraj	biłgorajski	lubelskie	0887635	-mowa-Kolonii	
Abramy	wieś	Kałużyn	miński	mazowieckie	0673733	-mów	abramski
Achrymowce	wieś	Kuźnica	sokólski	podlaskie	0033092	-wicc	achrymowiecki
Adama	część wsi Boczkowice	Książ Wielki	miechowski	małopolskie	0246340	-my	
Adamcowa	część wsi Skomielna Biała	Lubień	myślenicki	małopolskie	0441773	-wej	

The third, fourth and fifth columns provide the administrative affiliation of the locality to a commune (the third level administrative unit), county (the second level administrative unit), and voivodship (the first level administrative unit). A seven-digit identifier of locality from the National

Official Register of the Territorial Division of the Country (TERYT) is provided in the sixth column. The seventh column provides the genitive ending for names of all localities, while the last column features a derived adjective, however, only for cities, towns and villages.

The list includes 102,875 names, those of villages and parts of villages being the most numerous (see table 1). The number of independent localities (i.e. cities and towns, villages, colonies, hamlets, housing estates and settlements) amounts to 51,446, which corresponds to a half of the total number of names.

Table 1. Number of named localities according to their particular types

Type of locality	Number
city/town	940
part of a city/town	6,783
village	43,057
part of a village	36,044
housing estate	5
housing estate of a village	5
colony	2,174
part of a colony	195
colony of a village	974
colony of a colony	11
colony of a settlement	6
settlement	5,137
part of a settlement	10
settlement of a village	523
settlement of a colony	1
settlement of a settlement	3
hamlet	133
hamlet of a village	4,585
hamlet of a colony	40
hamlet of a settlement	56
forest settlement	1,949
forest settlement of a village	222
tourist refuge	22
TOTAL	102,875

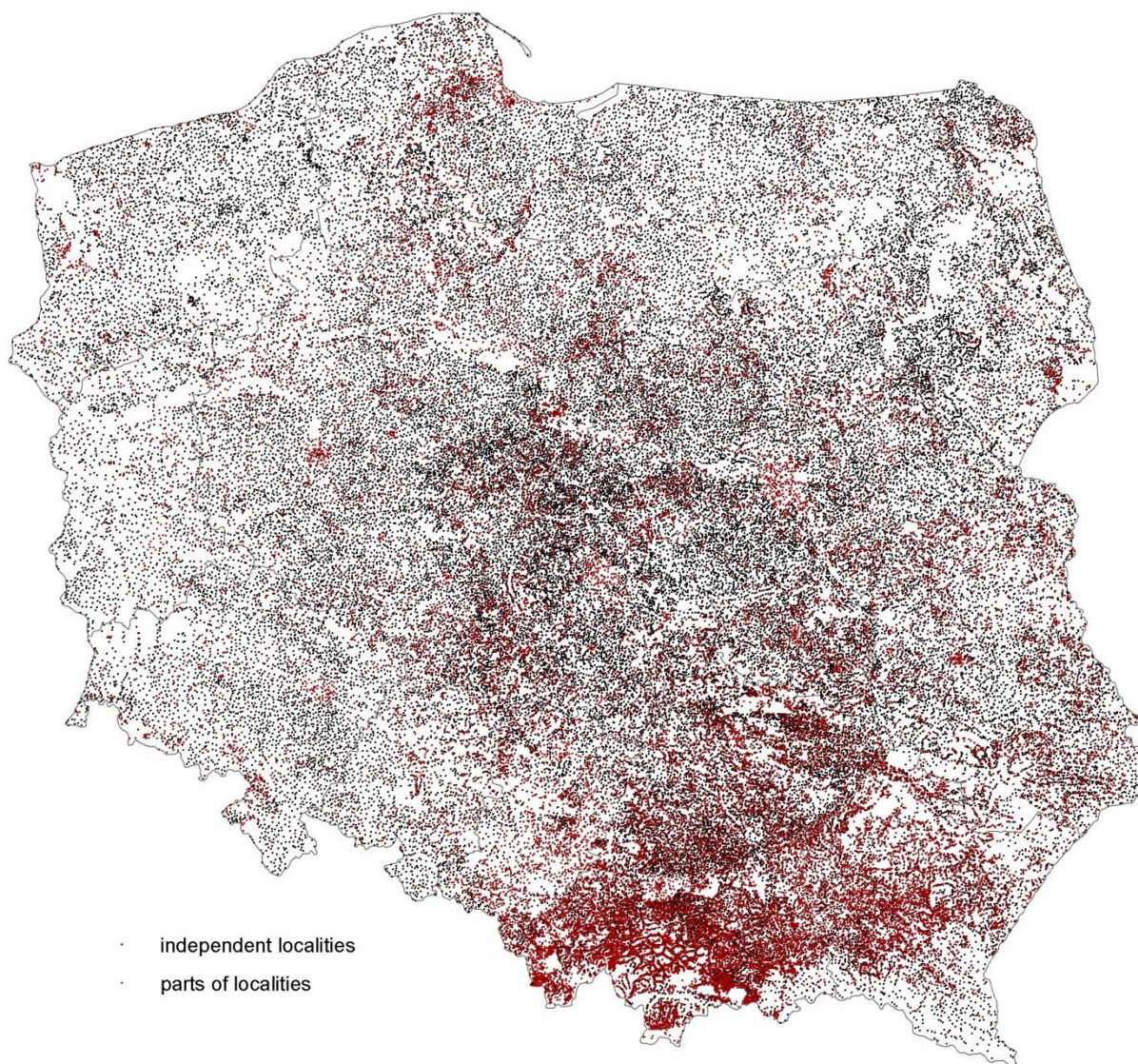
Table 2. Number of named localities by voivodships

Voivodship	Number of named localities		
	total	of which independent localities	% of independent localities
Dolnośląskie	3,565	2,592	72.7
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	5,699	3,439	60.3
Lubelskie	7,937	3,991	50.3
Lubuskie	1,665	1,275	76.6
Łódzkie	8,316	4,961	59.7
Małopolskie	14,973	1,986	13.3
Mazowieckie	13,088	8,270	63.2
Opolskie	1,958	1,165	59.5
Podkarpackie	7,754	1,693	21.8

Podlaskie	5,143	3,657	71.1
Pomorskie	4,204	2,784	66.2
Śląskie	5,103	1,253	24.6
Świętokrzyskie	7,239	2,447	33.8
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	4,710	3,743	79.5
Wielkopolskie	7,853	5,215	66.4
Zachodniopomorskie	3,668	2,975	81.1

The highest number of named localities has been observed in Małopolskie Voivodship (14,973), 86.7% of which are names of parts of localities. The smallest number of localities has been recorded in Lubuskie Voivodship (1,665) where 76.6% of all names are names of independent localities (see table 2). The highest number of names of independent localities has been recorded in Mazowieckie Voivodship (8,270), which corresponds to 63.2% of all names, and the highest proportion of independent localities has been recorded in Zachodniopomorskie Voivodship – 81.1%. The lowest number of names of independent localities has been recorded in Opolskie Voivodship (1,165), which corresponds to 59.5% of all names, and the lowest proportion of independent localities has been recorded in Małopolskie Voivodship – 13.3%.

Fig. 2. Map of localities with official names.



5. Further works

Geographical names constantly evolve, for example due to certain hamlets being abandoned by their residents, creation of new parts of localities, incorporation a locality to another locality etc. Furthermore, the type of a locality may change as a result of amendments to the administrative division introduced through a regulation of the Council of Ministers. Such changes usually are a consequence of extension of city/town limits when rural localities (villages, parts of villages, settlements etc.) become part of cities/towns. Amendments to the list of official names of localities and their parts are introduced in pursuance of regulations of the Minister of the Interior and Administration on establishing, changing and abolishing of official names of localities announced in the Journals of Laws of the Republic of Poland. Moreover, regulations of the Council of Ministers on boundaries change might bring changes of a type of locality.

The following regulations have been announced since the publication of the “List of official names of localities and their parts” of 2019:

- “Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 26 July 2019 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns and Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities” (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1416), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town

and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 17 localities changed its type (4 for “town”, and 13 for “part of town”);

- “Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 13 December 2019 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Physiographic Objects” (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 2435), pursuant to which 4 new locality names have been established, 21 names have been changed (including 13 changes of the name only and 8 changes of the type of locality only), and 3 names have been abolished.
- “Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 31 July 2020 on Establishing the Boundaries of Certain Communes and Towns, Grant the Status of Town for Certain Localities, Change a Name of a Commune, and Change a Seat of Authorities of a Commune” (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1332), pursuant to which, as a result of granting localities the status of town and enlargement of boundaries of towns, 37 localities changed its type (10 for “town”, and 27 for “part of town”);
- “Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 30 December 2020 on Establishing, Changing and Abolishing Official Names of Certain Localities and Physiographic Objects” (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 2426), pursuant to which 1 new locality names has been established, 7 names have been changed (including 5 changes of the name, 1 change of the name and the type of locality, and 1 change of the type of locality only), and 37 names have been abolished.

Altogether, after the publication of the “List of official names of localities and their parts” of 2019, 5 new locality names have been established, 82 names have been changed (including 18 changes of the name, 1 change of the name and type of locality, and 63 changes of the type of locality only), and 40 names have been abolished.

Pursuant to the Act on official names of localities and physiographic objects, the “List of official names of localities and their parts” provides the situation of localities within the administrative division only (commune, county, and voivodship). Furthermore, pursuant to the “Regulation of the Minister of Administration and Digitization of 14 February 2012 on the National Register of Geographical Names” [“Rozporządzenie Ministra Administracji i Cyfryzacji z dnia 14 lutego 2012 r. w sprawie państwowego rejestru nazw geograficznych”] (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 309) and replacing it the “Regulation of the Minister of Economic Development, Labour and Technology of 29 January 2021 on the National Register of Geographical Names” [“Rozporządzenie Ministra Rozwoju, Pracy i Technologii z dnia 29 stycznia 2021 r. w sprawie państwowego rejestru nazw geograficznych”] (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 273), the Surveyor General of Poland maintains the database of the National Register of Geographical Names (PRNG). The PRNG database gathers the official names introduced pursuant to the applicable legal acts on establishing, changing or abolishing of the official names of localities and physiographic objects. Each name in the register must be accompanied by the geographical coordinates of a given feature. Therefore, the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography has been independently obtaining the coordinates for localities and their parts whose names are included in the register. Hence, geographical coordinates can be found in the PRNG register for localities mentioned in the “List of official names of localities and their parts” (fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Official names of localities from the National Register of Geographical Names as seen on the Polish national geoportal (geoportal.gov.pl).

