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English

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

**2021 session**

New York, 3 – 7 May 2021

**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 Bulgaria**

Submitted by Bulgaria \*\*

Summary:

The national report of Bulgaria contains information on activities related to the promotion of geographical names made since the 2019 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

In brief, the activities include a published list of country names, the upgraded database of the register of geographical names of Bulgaria and the provision of data on geographical names for the production of a specialized 1:10,000 scale map.

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## 1. Background Information

In the Republic of Bulgaria, according to the Geodesy and Cartography Act, a Council for Standardization of Geographical Names at the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works was established. The activity of the Council is organized and assisted by the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Agency (GCCA).

In the standardization process, a Register of geographical names in the Republic of Bulgaria was compiled. Its purpose is to ensure uniformity and invariability in the use of geographic objects' names, their storage, and related update, i.e. the tracking of the historical changes of the names of the same objects, as well as preservation of this information. The Register was created as an open database for the Bulgarian geographical names, containing not only the contemporary names and their transliteration using Latin letters, but also information about the old names of the settlement and other related historical geographical information of the area. The database has been duly supplemented and updated with new information on geographical names ever since.

The responsible institution for the maintenance of the geographical names database is GCCA.

## 2. Recent activities

### 2.1. List of country names

One of the recent activities of GCCA related to the promotion of geographical names following the first session 2019 of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names was to publish the second edition of a List of country names. The first edition of this catalogue was published in 2014.

The information for each country is given in Bulgarian as well as in English, and includes the following:

- the two-letter country code according to ISO 3166 standard;
- the commonly-used short country name;
- the formal country name used in diplomatic context;
- the capital;
- the official language.

The List of country names was published as a book for a regular distribution. It is available on the GCCA site for free download in PDF format (<http://www.cadastre.bg/news/katalog-s-imenata-na-drzhavite>).

### 2.2. Register of geographical names of Bulgaria database upgrade

In 2015, the GCCA published on its webpage the Register of geographical names of Bulgaria (<http://geonames.cadastre.bg/>). The Register allows users to consult and search geographical names according to different criteria and characteristics and offers an accurate and quick information on the geographical names to the state and municipal institutions, public authorities and organizations, mass media, map producers, citizens and other users.

The structure and the content of the Register are constructed according to the requirements of spatial data in the theme “Geographical Names” of the Directive 2007/2/EC (INSPIRE).

The Register was operated by a MySQL database and MKAD GN data processing software. Additional functionalities were data update and query/report generation. During the period 2018-2020, a number of improvements have been made; both in the content and structure of the spatial database, as well as in the system functionality. As a result, better services for geographical names in the country that meet the requirements of the INSPIRE Directive are now being provided.

### **2.3. Data provision on geographical names**

Geographical names are an important part of the overall capacity of the geospatial information. In this sense, it is important to achieve technological compatibility with other registers and databases in order to ensure uniformity and invariability in the use of geographical objects' names.

In this regard, in 2020 the GCCA provided an up-to-date geobase of geographical names for the territory of Sofia Municipality in ESRI (shape) file format. This geobase facilitates the generation of a digital model and the making of a specialized map at a scale of 1:10 000 for the area of Sofia Municipality, as well as the activities for spatial planning of the territory.

### **3. Conclusion**

As a responsible institution for the maintenance of the geographic names database, the Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Agency will continue to work on the dissemination and promotion of uniformity and invariability in the use of geographical names.