

15 March 2021

English

**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 Lithuania

Submitted by Lithuania **

* GEGN.2/2021/1

** Prepared by Ramūnė Žygaitė (Adviser of Geodesy and Real Property Cadastre Division, Department of Geodesy and Land Use Control, the National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania) using data provided by the National Land Service, the State Enterprise “GIS-Centras” and Vilnius University.

Summary**

The Report of Lithuania is prepared for the 2nd Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names which will be held from 3-7 May 2021. The report covers the activities performed in the field of standardization of geographical names in 2019-2020.

The report covers the main activities in Lithuania with respect to the standardization of geographical names: national institutions work, the legal framework, the state of normative and methodological documents while performing the geographical names standardization, the status of national geographical names data sets, catalogues, registry information, main cartographic works released during 2019-2020 and information about participation in international events related with standardization of geographical names.

REPORT OF LITHUANIA

The report of Lithuania is prepared for the 2nd Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names which will be held from 3-7 May 2021.

1. National institutions working in the field of standardization of geographical names

The State Lithuanian Language Commission is in charge of the standardization of place names on the national level, while the National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for official maps. In this respect nothing has changed.

Names, addresses and geographical location of administrative units, wards, residential areas, streets as well as names given to buildings, structures or other objects are stored in the Register of Address. The Register is administered by the State Enterprise Centre of Registers (SE Centre of Registers).

The representatives of the National Land Service and the State Enterprise National Centre of Remote Sensing and Geoinformatics "GIS-Centras" (SE "GIS-Centras") are involved in working group of Lithuanian Standards Board Technical Committee LST TC Geographic Information.

The expert group working on naming Lithuanian geographical objects was formed at the end of 2015 by the National Land Service. The group consists of nine representatives of the state institutions:

- the National Land Service,
- the State Lithuanian Language Commission,
- SE Centre of Registers,
- SE "GIS-Centras",
- the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania,
- the Institute of the Lithuanian Language,
- the Lithuanian Cartographic Society
- the Institute of Geosciences of Vilnius University.

2. The legal framework, the state of normative and methodological documents while performing the geographical names standardization

- The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania issued Resolution No XIII-1273 as of 14 June 2018, whereby the year 2019 was announced as the Year of the Place Names.

- The Spatial Data Set of Geographic Place Names for the Republic of Lithuania was added to the List of State spatial data sets and maps (adopted by the order by the minister of Agriculture, 2017-07-25 No. 3D-488 <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/0192de90713411e7827cd63159af616c/yUWmjtuPlP>)

3. The status of national geographical names data sets, catalogues, registry information

The main operations of developing national geographical names data sets, catalogues and registry information are as follows:

3.1. The spatial data set of (geo)reference base cadastre (GRPK) is the official state cadastre and the main topographic data set at scale up to 1:10 000. According to the laws the manager of GRPK is SE “GIS-Centras”.

The spatial objects of GRPK represent natural and anthropogenic features of terrene. The place names (such as names of the rivers, lakes, forests, landmarks and other significant objects) as an element of topographic maps are part of the GRPK since 2005 as well. Place names are collected as polygon, linear or point objects.

The data layer VIETOV_T of the Georeference Base Cadastre (GRPK) is the important source of geographical names in Lithuania. Over 64 thousand actual geographical names were maintained in the data layer VIETOV_T for the objects of the whole territory of Lithuania at the end of 2020. The layer VIETOV_T is the main source for the Spatial Data set of Geographic Place Names of the Republic of Lithuania (GV_DRLT). The Ministry of Agriculture is the data owner of GV_DRLT, and SE GIS-Centras is the manager. Data is distributed freely in spatial data information (SDI) portal geoportal.lt

3.2. The creation and updating of the spatial data set of Geographic Place Names of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – GV_DRLT) has started since 2014 and is maintained continuously until now. GV_DRLT was officially confirmed as the state geospatial data set in 2016. The National Land Service is the owner of the data set. Data is freely distributed in SDI portal as downloadable spatial data set, OGC WMS service, ArcGIS Mapping service, and API search service (www.geoportal.lt/geoportal/en/web/en/search#queryText=GV_DRLT). Furthermore, GV_DRLT as a network service is provided to the INSPIRE [geoportal](http://inspire-geoportal.ec.europa.eu/) since 2015 and is continued to maintain (<http://inspire-geoportal.ec.europa.eu/>). The geographical names from different data sources and data providers (for example, the Institute of Lithuanian Language) were additionally introduced to GV_DRLT in 2020. The historical toponyms are among them. Over 150 thousand geographical names are maintained in the GV_DRLT at the end of 2020.

3.3. The interactive service for the review, search, provision and statistical analysis of the spatial data of the GV_DRLT is provided in the SDI portal since 2014 at www.geoportal.lt/vietovardziai. The data search functionality of the GV_DRLT is implemented using Elasticsearch technology. The interactive service was significantly improved in 2019 and the new functionality was added. As a result of the improvement, the GV_DRLT search service was integrated with the most popular mapping APIs, including OpenLayers, Leaflet, and ESRI JS. More information about the functionality can be found at the page www.geoportal.lt/vietovardziai/Home/PageIntegrate in the GV_DRLT home site and in the GitHub system www.github.com/gis-centras/Vietovardziai-API-Maps. The geoportal.lt web map browser is integrated in the interactive service of the GV_DRLT (www.geoportal.lt/vietovardziai/map) where the geographical names are displayed in the map and the main functionality for usage of the map content is offered to the users. As well as the usual functionality, additional functionality is offered to the users, such as possibility to make the data search by

defining graphical search criteria in the map and perform the statistical analysis of the content of the GV_DRLT as to get a unique URL address of the object for sharing in the social network or Wikipedia type resources. The registered users have a possibility to add missing place names to the GV_DRLT data set, inform about the GV_DRLT issues.

4. Main cartographic works released during 2019-2020

On 16 January 2019, Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted a plan for commemoration of place names. The plan included:

- Cultural, educational and immortalization activities;
- Scientific conferences and seminars;
- Publicity and publishing activities;
- Systematization and compilation of data.

The cultural, educational events and activities, scientific conferences and seminars, data collection and systematization, publicity and publishing provided in the plan emphasize the importance of historical place names and the meaning of place names. This emphasizes the ethnological, linguistic, historical, cultural and other important information contained in the old names of villages and homesteads, which should be protected as a part of Lithuanian and world cultural heritage.

As part of the Place Names Commemoration Plan, maps of extinct place names were created, extinct villages were immortalized by signage, expeditions for the collection of place names and local history, involving pupils and youth, were held. Series of events, documentary and photo exhibitions were dedicated for the Year of the Names.

The Lithuanian Radio and Television website hosted the election of the most beautiful Lithuanian place name that year. The initiative aimed to collect the most beautiful place names in the country aims to emphasize the ethnological, linguistic, historical and cultural value inherent in the old names of villages and homesteads, to acknowledge them as part of the cultural heritage of Lithuania and the world. The Center for Registries has selected the 15 most interesting place names in the country and submitted them to the internet for voting. The Center of Registers has also prepared virtual maps of historical place names.

Moreover, historical place names of the Königsberg region were collected and a map was created by private initiative. The map contains the place names of Baltic languages dating back to the 13th century. Each place name is evidenced in historical sources. The map is available through the Lithuanian Spatial Information Portal.

5. Information about participation in international events related with standardization of geographical names

The representatives of the National Land Service, SE "GIS-Centras", SE Centre of Registers participated with presentations in the 20th meeting of the UNGEGN Baltic division that was organized by the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency and the Latvian Language Institute of Latvian University and held in Riga (Latvia) from 24 to 26 September 2019.

Year 2019 was announced by the Lithuanian Parliament as the Year of Geographical Names in Lithuania.

In 2019, SE "GIS-Centras" as the national spatial data portal administrator and GV_DRLT interactive service provider together with the National Land Service and Vilnius University organized a public discussion on geographical names "Toponyms:

Data, Access, Benefits". The event aimed to bring together place-name data providers, coordinating authorities and data users for discussion. The purpose of this discussion was to promote sharing, opening up and wider use of place-name data. The attendees from public, academic, municipal and business sectors took part in the conference. The participants focused their attention on how the data providers make data accessible and what are the main difficulties for users in order to get data. The link to the event record - www.geoportal.lt/geoportal/renginiai/-/asset_publisher/ckPGZnnRM5QE/content/viesa-diskusija-vietovardziai-duomenys-prieiga-nauda-?

In 2020, SE "GIS-Centras" organized the virtual event on geographical names. The librarians, language experts, GIS experts, related service providers participated in the event. The main intent was to demonstrate to the participants the possibilities of how to use the GV_DRLT interactive service. The main scenarios of system usage were demonstrated. The link to the event record www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RdMPsngBIM, photos of the event www.facebook.com/geoportal.lt/posts/2199575883413311?tn=-R

Report prepared by:

National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania
Mrs. Ramūnė Žygaitė,
Adviser of Geodesy and Real Property Cadastre Division;
Mrs. Jovita Sinkevičiūtė,
Chief officer of Geodesy and Real Property Cadastre Division
Gedimino pr. 19,
LT-08105, Vilnius
Lithuania
Fax: INT +370 7068 6949
Tel.: INT +370 7068 5179; +370 7068 5178
E-mail: Ramune.Zygaitė@nzt.lt ; Jovita.Sinkeviciute@nzt.lt
<http://www.nzt.lt>

The State Enterprise „GIS-Centras“
Mrs. Rita Viliuvienė,
Products analyst
Sėlių g. 66
LT-08109, Vilnius
Lithuania
Tel: INT +370 5272 4741
E-mail: R.Viliuviene@gis-centras.lt,
<http://www.gis-centras.lt>

Vilnius University
Department for Cartography and Geoinformatics of the Institute of Geosciences
Mrs. Giedrė Beconytė, PhD
M. K. Čiurlionio g. 21,
LT-03101 Vilnius
Lithuania
E-mail: giedre.beconyte@gf.vu.lt
Tel: +370 5239 8298