

Thirtieth session

New York, 7 and 18 August 2017

English

Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda*

Reports of the working groups

Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Submitted by the Working Group on Publicity and Funding**

*GEGN/30/1

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SUMMARY

The report presents the aims and activities of the working group and in its efforts with raising awareness of the need for geographical names standardization and the work of the Group of Experts, through presence on the web and social media and Media Kit. The report also highlights efforts to find financial support for training and for representatives from developing countries attending UNSCGN Conferences and UNGEGN Sessions.

Report of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Resolutions concerned: V/21, V/24, VI/5, VI/13, VII/9, VIII/15, IX/10

1. Aims of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Established following the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1992, the Working Group on Publicity and Funding aims to make the activities of the UNGEGN more visible and, where appropriate, to seek or help identify funds to support:

- publication and dissemination of material relevant to the advancement of geographical
- names standardization;
- provision of training for the development and management of geographical names
- administration;
- establishment of names authorities; and
- participation of delegates in UNGEGN events and activities.

2. Working Group Meetings

Meetings of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding have been held jointly with the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation for a number of years, and since the last report in 2016, we have had joint meeting of the Working Groups on *Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage, Evaluation and Implementation* and *Publicity and Funding* in Innsbruck, Austria, 9-12 April 2017. A total of 13 experts from Algeria, Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Tunisia and United Kingdom attended the Innsbruck meeting. There will be also be a joint meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation with the Working Group on Publicity and Funding at the 11th UNCSGN Conference/30th UNGEGN Session in New York 7th- 18th April 2017.

3. Press and Publicity

Press releases: A press release (Stat/457) for the opening of the 29th UNGEGN Session in Bangkok, Thailand, was published on April 21st 2016: *Expert Group to Convene in Bangkok for Session on Advancing Standardization of Geographical Names, 25-29 April* (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/stat457.doc.htm>), as was a press release (Stat/458) published on May 9th 2016 in connection with the conclusion of the Session: *Importance of Geographical Names Emphasized as Experts Conclude Twenty-ninth Session in Bangkok* (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/stat458.doc.htm>). Both press releases were prepared by the Convenor of this Working Group in cooperation with the Secretariat. The press releases highlighted the importance of accurate and reliable nationally approved geodata, as well highlighting its support for the geospatial dimension in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The press releases also emphasized how fundamental geographical names are to the creation of national data infrastructures, economic development and in aspects of everyday life, from coordination of emergency services to the creation of national coherence and unity, and allowing linguistic minorities a “spatial voice”.

Media Kit: Having been available since early 2011 (acting on UNCSGN Resolution IX/10). With the expected changes in the UNGEGN organizational structure, it is foreseen that the Media Kit will need updating in a number of areas – this work will be undertaken after the UNCSGN Conference/UNGEGN Session in August 2017.

The Working Group encourages countries/experts who would like to translate the Media Kit to do so, the Secretariat offer to make the translated material available on the UNGEGN webpage.

UNGEGN Information Bulletin: The Information Bulletin is being published biannually and informs UNGEGN Experts about current and coming items of interest to the organization. There are, according to the UNGEGN Secretariat, in excess of 770 persons and institutions on the mailing list.

Since the 47th issue (September 2014), the content of the Bulletin – News from the UNGEGN Secretariat, Divisions, Working Groups as well as individual countries – has been exploring themes relevant to geographical names standardization. In order to secure the quality and readability of the content of the Bulletin, the Secretariat and the Working Group submits the Bulletin to thorough proofreading. These changes to content and content treatment have resulted in a very attractive and readable bulletin.

UNGEGN website: The UNGEGN website is generally in good shape. With the current call for the UNCSGN Conference/UNGEGN Session in August 2017, there has also been a call for the Working Group Convenors and Division chairs to ensure the correctness of the subpages of the UNGEGN website of relevance to their work in the organization. However, all experts are encouraged to check if the information for their relevant national, divisional or working group affiliations is correct. The Secretariat will correct any outdated or wrong information as soon as it is reported and verified.

Wikipedia information: Working Group Rapporteur, Mr. Gerhard Rampl, kindly keep the Wikipedia entries for UNGEGN updated in several languages, including English, German and Russian.

Conference activities: UNGEGN material will be distributed at the 26th ICOS Congress in Debrecen, Hungary, 27 August - 1 September 2017, as will the Convenor be present with presentations on UNGEGN relevant material. In addition, UNGEGN Brochures have been distributed at the joint ICA Working Group and IGU Commission on Toponymy meetings since the last report in 2016.

4. Funding

Noting in particular the need for funding the Working Group has continued to assist in finding financial support for representatives of developing countries attending the 30th Session of UNGEGN in New York. Through the generous assistance of UNSD, it has been possible to help experts from Egypt, Laos and Uruguay to this Session. In addition, there has been a Toponymy Training Course, 15th – 19th May 2017 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, by the Portuguese-speaking Division and Latin America Division, also funded through the UNSD. It has not been possible to find external financial support for the 30th UNGEGN Session/ 11th UNCSGN Conference attention.