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English

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

2023 session

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Item 4(a) of the provisional agenda *

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in
the standardization of geographical names**

Report of Slovenia

Submitted by Slovenia **

Summary:

After the 2021 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the Slovenian Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names continued with the standardization of geographical names within and outside the territory of Slovenia. The Commission met on 19 occasions: 3 hybrid meetings and 16 corresponding meetings. Information and activities related to the Commission are posted on the website of the Commission.¹

In 2021, the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names began to update its operations, including three main content sets: a forum for discussion among Commission members, digitalization of the Commission's archives and a website that will comprehensively address the issues of geographical names and their standardization.

The regular task of the Commission is to issue opinions on the correctness and suitability of new names for streets and settlements. This activity is covered under the law on defining territories and naming settlements, streets and buildings. Approval by the Commission is obligatory before municipalities can officially announce new or changed names. In the period under review, the Commission approved about 40 street names and one settlement name.

Slovenia has two national minorities, Hungarian and Italian. On ethnically mixed territories, Italian and Hungarian enjoy equal status with Slovenian, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. The preparation of

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** Prepared by the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names of the Republic of Slovenia

¹ See <https://www.gov.si/en/registries/working-bodies/commission-for-the-standardization-of-geographical-names/>.

a list of Italian geographical names at a scale of 1:5,000 is in progress. The list is being prepared by the Italian national community.

In September 2021, two important projects were launched: a three-year project for the standardization of hydronyms in Slovenia from the Register of Geographical Names at a scale of 1: 25,000; and a two-year project about microtoponyms in Rába Valley (Porabje).

There is regular cooperation with translators, lecturers, journalists and various public services about the correct use and spelling of geographical names, especially exonyms.

Slovenia actively participates in the East Central and South-East Europe Division of the Group of Experts, the Working Group on Exonyms and the Working Group on Geographical Names Data Management.

A joint meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms and the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology was organized in Ljubljana from 31 August to 3 September 2022. The meeting was attended by 23 delegates representing 14 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America.

The President of the Commission, Matjaž Geršič, spent three months (October 2022–January 2023) as a visiting researcher at King Saud University in Riyadh. He was hosted in Saudi Arabia by a member of the National Committee on Geographical Names, Ali Aldosari. Their common research was dedicated to the challenges associated with transliterating European geographical names into Arabic.

National report

B	<p>Member state report on the situation in their country</p> <p><i>The progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the last UNGEGN session (news in the field of geonames in the country, progress of ongoing projects, finished projects, issues and use cases for inspiration for other countries, changes in database of geonames).</i></p>	<p>The CSGN permanent task is deciding about names (new or rename) of streets and settlements. The CSGN prepared detailed directions with purpose to improve the practise of naming streets and settlements. There has recently been made a progress on naming proposals. However, relatively often we get proposals for naming several short streets (sometimes even longer) with only one name. The CSGN rejects these proposals and propose designating and naming of several streets.</p> <p>The Commission regularly cooperate with translators, proofreaders, journalists and various public and governmental services about the correct use and spelling of geographical names, especially exonyms. Slovenian translators at the Council of Europe always consult the CSGN in case of ambiguity regarding the correct spelling of foreign names, which is good practise for the proper use of geographical names.</p> <p>With the aim of later standardization, the review of the Italian geographical names in ethnically mixed areas for a scale 1: 5,000 continues.</p> <p>In September 2021, a three-year project for the standardization of hydronyms in the Republic of Slovenia from the Register of Geographical Names for a scale 1: 25,000, was started. After the first reviewing of the linguistic and geographical correctness of hydronyms, in the spring 2023 hydronyms will be send for review to all Slovenian municipalities and rivers supervisors of the Slovenian Water Agency. Later, a more detailed review of linguistic and geographical correctness will be done and solving individual problematic names. The aim of the project is to prepare a list of hydronyms for the subsequent standardization at the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names.</p> <p>On the topic of geographical names, two books were published in 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disputed names of settlements in Slovenia (series <i>Georitem</i>). There are more than 6,000 settlement names in Slovenia, a fifth of which are disputed for various reasons and should be corrected. The book describes methodology for determining disputed settlement names in Slovenia and proposes corrected names of disputed names, and finally presents standardized names on maps at scale of 1: 1,000,000 and 1: 250,000 and in the Register of Geographical Names. • Slovenian geographical names (series <i>Acta geographica Slovenica</i>). The publication discusses Slovenian geographical names (endonyms and exonyms), presents a historical overview of dealing with geographical names in Slovenia, macrotoponyms
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		<p>and microtoponyms, especially geographical names in Slovenian normative guides, names of countries, and foreign exonyms for Slovenian endonyms. The paper also presents the activities of the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names, the issue of standardization of geographical names in Slovenia, the Register of Geographical Names and Slovenian standardized geographical names.</p> <p>In 2021 we also started with the digitalization of the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names, which includes three main content sets. The first is a forum for discussions of Commission's members on individual naming issues, which is still now done by e-mail. The second set represents the digitalization of the CSGN archive, and the third, a website that will comprehensively address the issues of geographical names and their standardization, with which we will try to address laic and professional public. The digitalization process was successfully completed shortly. The online platform is accessed at: https://nodebb03.abak.si.</p>
C	<p>National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - date of the meeting - name of the meeting - place of the meeting - main theme - useful information from the meeting - in case of publications, guidelines: how often are they issued, what is the content of these publications - publicity: articles in international professional magazines, publication of own professional magazines. 	<p>International meetings – participation of the CSGN members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 June 2021, meeting of the Working Group for Geographical Names Data Management (WG GNDM), virtual, discussion about concrete proposals to tackle the ‘action items’ related to the WG issues arising from the Draft Strategic Plan & Programme of Work, • 1 and 8 October 2021 26 April 2022, meetings of WG GNDM “caring colleagues”, discussion about sub-tasks of WG Work Programme. • 9 November 2021, 25th meeting of the East Central and South-East Europe Division, virtual. • 18 May 2022, 26th meeting of the East Central and South-East Europe Division, Prague; Czechia. • 31 August – 3 September 2022, a joint meeting of the Working Groups on Exonyms and Toponymic Terminology, Ljubljana, Slovenia. <p>Publication of an article in an international professional magazine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardization of geographical names on land and sea in Slovenia (Drago Perko, Matjaž Geršič, Matija Zorn). In: O’Reilly, Gerry (ed.) Geography, naming and identities: critical perspectives in a globalizing and standardizing world, Springer Nature. • Slovenia (Matjaž Geršič, Drago Perko). In: Jordan, Peter (ed.): Minority place-name standardization. A comparison of regulations and approaches in Europe, Springer (in copy editing). • Slovenian endonyms in bilingual geographical names in Italy, Austria and Hungary (Matjaž Geršič, Drago Perko). In: Geografski vestnik 94-1. • Nursultan regains Astana after 3 years (Matjaž Geršič). In: Geografski obzornik 69, 3–4). • Carinthia – about name, borders and identity (Matjaž Geršič, Primož Gašperič, Drago Perko). In: Geršič, Matjaž (ed.): Carinthia: from the past to future prospects.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endonym and Exonym (Drago Perko, Matjaž Geršič, Matija Zorn). In: Richardson, Douglas et al. (eds.): The international Encyclopedia of Geography, John Wiley & Sons. • Geographical names and place identity in Slovenian Alps (Matjaž Geršič, Primož Gašperič, Matija Zorn). In: Zorn, M. et al. (eds.): Discourses on mountains of Montenegro and Slovenia, Springer (in copy editing).
D	Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits <i>Information, recommendations, guidelines in legislative, control management.</i>	The United Nations resolutions are implemented in the process of geographical names standardization. In Slovenia all proposals for new names or renames must be included in the standardization process.
E	National standardization	
<i>Ea</i>	Field collection of names	Field collection of names is carried out exceptionally when office treatment is not sufficient. There has been one such case in 2022 - renaming of pass and mountain border crossing between Slovenia and Austria. An online survey was also prepared with this purpose, which had very good feedback from the public. Based on the field work and the survey the CSGN in September 2022 standardized new name for the pass <i>Stari Ljubelj</i> . The wider area of the international road border crossing was named with the old name <i>Ljubelj</i> .
<i>Eb</i>	Office treatment of names	Decision making of all proposals for street and settlement names, the local community's proposals for naming of a yet unnamed stream and renaming of the mountain range and all other names for which different users contact the Commission.
<i>Ec</i>	Treatment of names in multilingual areas	<p>The Republic of Slovenia has two traditional national minorities - the Italian and Hungarian National Community.</p> <p>The preparation of a list of Italian geographical names for a scale level 1:5,000 and the subsequent standardization is in progress. The list is preparing by the Italian national community. The Italian national community received in 2021 a list of all names (Italian and Slovenian) that are registered in the Register of Geographical Names in the official bilingual area. They are now reviewing and supplementing the list with missing Italian names. However, when reviewing names, they have a lot of problems with locating and knowing individual names (especially smaller landscape areas). Therefore, raster images of geographical names and orthophotos were subsequently prepared in 2022, as well as old cadastral maps.</p> <p>Activities related to the preparation of the list and the standardization of Hungarian geographical names for the level of 1:25,000 scale has been inactive since January 2017. The initiative to complete the list is on the side of the national community.</p>

Ed	Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures	Without changes.
Ee	Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors	Without changes.
F.	Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity <i>Including indigenous, minority and regional language names.</i>	In September 2021, a two-year research project about microtoponyms in Rába Valley (Porabje) was started. As part of this project, we will examine the available archival sources containing such names in the Rába Valley and we will prepare the working material for field studies. In cooperation with locals that still speak the dialect, we will check the names collected, transcribe them in their dialect form, and collect other related attributes.
G.	Exonyms <i>New exonyms, extinct exonyms, projects regarding exonyms.</i>	Active participation in the Working Group on Exonyms. In the period the Commission for the Standardization of Geographical Names decided about Slovenian exonyms of Ukrainian geographical names. The Anton Melik Geographical Institute organized a joint meeting of the Working Groups on Exonyms and Toponymic Terminology in Ljubljana, 31 August – 3 September 2022. The meeting was attended by 23 delegates from 14 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. In addition to the discussion on the definition of the exonym and its use, the meeting also discussed the Turkish change of the official name of the country in English and French, in which the name of the country is now written in the Turkish endonymic form. The Turkish request for the use of the Turkish endonymic form even in the official Slovenian name of the country is not acceptable to us and we insist on the established Slovenian name and on observing the Slovenian spelling. An additional argument is that Turkey has not changed the name of the country in its original language, nor is it a new country, so the UNGEGN resolution about not using exonyms for new and renamed countries, cannot be considered.
H.	Geographical names data management	
Ha	Content requirements and standards	In addition to national specificities, the Register of Geographical Names is compliant with the INSPIRE directive. In the Register the UTF-8 (Unicode Standard for variable-width character encoding) is used. Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia is actively involved in the Working Group on Geographical Names Data Management of the UNGEGN and in the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM).

Hb	Data management and interoperability	<p>In the terms of interoperability, progress has been made over the last years – several stakeholders have agreed to link hydrographic data and the Register's hydronyms. The plan is in about two years.</p> <p>The Surveying and Mapping Authority continues with the corrections of errors in Register of Geographical Names, which are the result of the initially cartographically oriented database, and the resulting mismatch of geographical names between different scales.</p>
Hc	Data services, applications and products <i>Including gazetteers and web services.</i>	<p>Geographical names (with all code lists and attribute's descriptions) of the official Register of Geographical Names are free of charge and easy-accessible via Surveying and Mapping Authority's website.</p> <p>The Register's geographical names are also included in many web services of both Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia and other state bodies.</p>
I	Terminology in the standardization of geographical names <i>New or changed definitions and terms.</i>	Without changes.
J	Writing systems and pronunciation	
Ja	Romanization	
Jb	Conversion into non-Roman writing systems	President of the CSGN dr. Matjaž Geršič spent 3 months (from October 2022 till January 2023) as a visiting researcher at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He was hosted by dr. Ali Aldosary, member of the National Committee on Geographical Names in KSA. Their common research was dedicated to the challenges in the transformation of European geographical names into Arabic.
Jc	Writing of names in unwritten languages	Unsolved.
Jd	Pronunciation	
K	Country names <i>New or changed country names from the UNGEGN List of Country Names that were imported to the list of geonames in this country (in language of this country).</i>	In February 2023, the list of Slovenian country names (according to ISO 3166) was updated, because Iceland discontinued its official full name.
L	Toponymic education <i>Toponymical courses, works in organisation, issues and solution of problems.</i>	Regular cooperation with translators, lecturers, journalists and various public services about the correct use and spelling of geographical names, especially exonyms.
M	Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation	
Ma	Features common to two or more nations	Geographical names in official multilingual in Slovenia – task Ec.

Mb	Bilateral and multilateral agreements	Unsolved.
Mc	Coastal seas	Without changes.
Md	Geonames of international waters and marine features in international waters	Without changes.
Me	Geonames in Antarctica	Unsolved.
Mf	International cooperation <i>Cooperation with institutions, countries – specific project.</i>	<p>Slovenia is actively involved in several international projects (cartographic, geographic and linguistic) and cooperation about geographical names.</p> <p>Cross-border data harmonization between Slovenia and Austria – without changes. A list of all official border crossings was prepared. The Slovenian names from the list were confirmed and standardized by the Slovenian Commission in November 2020. The German names are expected to be adopted by the Austrian Commission soon. In the following phase, the Commissions will harmonize a list of all geographical names at the border.</p>
N.	Arrangements for the UNGEGN <i>Creating national and other reports, creating articles for Bulletin, communication, cooperation and fulfilment of tasks from the UNGEGN.</i>	<p>National reports for the ECSEED meetings.</p> <p>Marija Brnot, Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia, actively participates in the task <i>Monitor the availability of free and easy-accessible authorized digital geographical names data</i> (action 1-iii-8 of the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029). She also so-authored the article in that theme in the Bulletin no. 64.</p>
O	Supporting sustainable development <i>Activities related to geonames that support sustainable development.</i>	Unsolved.
P	Other <i>If the country has worked on something special, that is not mentioned in this model.</i>	<p>Activities on the project “What's your house called? Nomen vulgare”, whose main purpose is to collect and preserve traditional house names that are part of the intangible cultural heritage, continues.</p> <p>In the project are so far involved 24 municipalities (more than 400 settlements) in which area were collected more than 13.000 house names. Great interest in the municipalities for this project shows that the old house names are an important part of the rural area, which is due to the modern way of life doomed to oblivion, such projects could take care of the preservation of important intangible cultural heritage of Slovenian territory.</p>