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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names****2023 session**

New York, 1–5 May 2023

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 Norway****Summary****

The full report provides an outline of the progress and developments of Norway on geographical names since the 2021 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

Item A is a brief report on the revision of the secondary legislation on place names, following the revision of the Norwegian Place Name Act in 2019. The revised regulations include preconditions for choosing non-standard spellings of place names if they have a long tradition.

Item B pertains to news and updates from the Norwegian Language Council on its work during the intersessional period.

Item C is a report from the Kven place name service, which is a subdivision of the Norwegian Language Council that works on Kven place names in the core Kven areas in northern Norway. It has handled numerous place name cases since 2021. Notably, Norway was given an official Kven name in May 2021, as well as official names in three Sami languages. The Kven name for Norway is *Norja*, and the full name for the Kingdom of Norway is *Norjan kuninkhaanvaltakunta*.

Item D features the Sami place name service, which is subordinate to the Sami parliament and works continuously with a variety of place name cases. In 2021 and 2022, the service, among other things, prioritized the south Sami place name collection by providing additional grants. The place name service was recently strengthened with more employees.

Item E is a review of the geographical names service under the responsibility of the Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket). The Authority hosts, maintains and

* [GEGN.2/2023/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Peder Gammeltoft (Norway). The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2023/18/CRP.18, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/.



develops the central geographical names register of more than 1 million names, 110,000 of which are road or street names, and maintains and updates the toponymic guidelines for international use. Between 2020 and 2022, the Authority and Peder Gammeltoft cooperated with the Republic of Moldova to establish its geographical names database, as well as a legal framework for its geographical names infrastructure. The Republic of Moldova will report to the Group of Experts at its 2023 session on the outcome of the project.

Item F is a report of the Norwegian Language Collections, which in 2021 celebrated the centenary of the Norwegian place names archive with a two-day conference attended by national and international participants. The printed proceedings of the conference are currently being prepared for publication.

Although much of the work of the Norwegian Language Collections has recently centred around complying with the enforcement of the new General Data Protection Regulation and universal accessibility regulations, work has continued in developing new services to help with the standardization of geographical names. The service reported on at the last session of the Group of Experts, the place names archive service Norske Stedsnavn, is still being refined and work is continuing in terms of both adding more historical sources and updating the linked open data framework to improve queries and displays. In addition, an editing module is being modelled.

Item G provides a report on extended cooperation between the three national institutions involved in the standardization of geographical names. The Norwegian Language Council and the Sami parliament provide linguistic advice, and the Norwegian Mapping Authority makes decisions on standardization. In 2021 and 2022, regular digital meetings were held to discuss matters of common interest. A seminar day focusing on the transmission of competences was convened in Oslo. Nestors shared their experience on the Norwegian Place Name Act, and the final presentation highlighted the suppression of Sami geographical names in the twentieth century.
