

National presentation - Austria

2. Cultural aspects of geographical names standardization

d. Addressing and urban feature naming

Austria's major cities mandated local group of historical experts to work out reports on critical naming of streets in the respective cities. The research focused on naming after politically sensitive persons but also other charged individuals. The reports results in various categories of questionable naming. The major type comprises individuals with strong ties to the Nazi-Third Reich including war criminals. Other focus on naming after individuals with antisemitic, misogynic, racist, and anti-democratic attitudes and statements.

Each of the cities uses its own system to categorize the critical names, which roughly can be summarized as follows:

- Naming after heavily burdened individuals
- Naming after less exposed individuals
- Naming after individuals without lastingly incriminating statements, opportunists.

In Austria, the competence of street naming fall to the municipalities. These reports led to some renaming of streets, but how to deal with this issue overall is still vigorously debated. But there is no uniform solution. There are three approaches to solving this task:

1. Renaming of the street and replacing the old name with the focus on persons who were victims of the Nazis or of Antisemitism.
2. Leaving the street name unchanged but enhanced by an additional sign which shows further information and details and mentions the loaded curriculum vitae.
3. Leaving the street name as it is (for now).

All reports can be accessed online and can be downloaded. The links can be found on the national report of Austria in section 4(a) CRP 35.