



UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally-informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development

2025 Session | 28 April – 2 May 2025 | @UNSD_GEGN, #2025UNGEKN



2025 UNGEGN SESSION Side Event

Meeting of the Working Group on Funding and Training Courses in Toponymy

1815 – 1930 - 1 May 2025 – Two UN Plaza 16th Floor Room 1684

Background

The Working Group on Funding and Training Courses in Toponymy (WGFTC) provides strategic direction and leadership to ensure effective development and implementation of toponymic training worldwide. A key aspect of the Working Group's purpose is to secure and administer funding to enable experts from developing countries to participate in UNGEGN activities and to establish sustainable financial mechanisms for toponymic initiatives. The Working Group coordinates information on toponymy training courses and, where required, assists in the planning and delivery of international courses organized by a host country, UNGEGN Division or affiliated organization.

Toponymic standardization represents a critical component of national and international spatial data infrastructures, requiring coordinated educational approaches to ensure consistency. The preservation and proper documentation of geographical names serve as vital cultural heritage assets that connect communities to their histories and identities. Through facilitating knowledge transfer and capacity building, this Working Group supports the United Nations' broader goals of international cooperation and sustainable development.

The Working Group has made significant progress over the years in developing training resources, coordinating international courses, and exploring funding mechanisms to support experts from developing countries, although more is needed in the years to come. The Working Group's efforts align with the UNGEGN Strategic Plan, emphasizing the importance of capacity building and sustainable financing for toponymic initiatives globally. As we move forward, there is a need to evaluate past activities and establish goals for the 2025-2029 period that address evolving challenges in toponymic education and funding.

Objective

To promote open, inclusive and participatory discussion on:

- The Working Group's activities and achievements during the 2023-2025 period in the areas of toponymic training and funding initiatives;
- Goals and priorities for the 2025-2029 period, with a focus on enhancing toponymic training methodologies and establishing sustainable funding mechanisms;
- Approaches to improve oversight of funds allocation and the potential establishment of a dedicated UNGEGN trust fund; and
- Opportunities for collaboration with other UNGEGN working groups and international organizations to maximize impact and resource efficiency.

This is an open side event and all are invited



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Provisional Agenda

18:15 - 18:20

Welcome (5 mins)

Mr. Peder Gammeltoft, Convenor of the WG on Funding and Training Courses in Toponymy

18:20 - 18:45: Overview of WG activities 2023-25 (15 mins)

- Working group general
 - Terms of Reference document
- Toponymic Training
 - In-person training
 - Webinars
 - Survey
- Funding

18:45 - 19:20: Goals for 2025-29 (45 mins)

- Toponymic Training
 - In-person Training
 - Webinars
 - Online Course Material
 - Hybrid approaches?
- Funding
 - Improved oversight of funds allocations
 - Trust fund

19:20 - 19:30: Any other business (10 mins)

Organizers

This meeting is organized by the Working Group Funding and Training Courses in Toponymy.

Points of Contact:

- Mr Peder Gammeltoft (Norway) Peder.Gammeltoft@uib.no
- Mr Mark Iliffe (UNGEGN Secretariat) mark.iliffe@un.org

Registration

This side event is organised outside the main United Nations compound. It is organised at the offices of the United Nations Statistics Division at Two United Nations Plaza on 44th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenue.

Registration for this side event before Sunday 27 April is **required** to ensure you are able to access the building, as this is taking place outside normal working hours.

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/hqN8sUDXv8>



The UN Compound is "1" and Two UN Plaza is "2"

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