



# Economic and Social Council

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## United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 2025 session

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Item 7 (d) of the provisional agenda\*

**Effective work programmes: toponymic guidelines  
for international use by map and other editors**

### Updated toponymic guidelines: Norway, 2025

#### Summary\*\*

The updated Norwegian toponymic guidelines for 2025 reflect significant administrative and linguistic revisions since the 2020 edition. The country has restructured some of its administrative divisions. The former merged counties – Viken, Vestfold og Telemark, and Troms og Finnmark – are now again split into their original constituent counties, in addition to the municipality division of Ålesund into Ålesund and Haram. That reorganization necessitated updates to county codes and county names, as well as to municipality codes, with Norway now comprising 15 counties and 357 municipalities, alongside 1,146 geographical parishes. Technical updates include revised application programming interface addresses for geographical name retrieval and an updated county map reflecting the current administrative structure.

The guidelines incorporate recent legal developments, including the Place Name Act amendments of 2019 and 2022, which strengthen provisions for preserving Sami and Kven toponyms and enhance local community involvement in names standardization processes. New supplementary spelling rules for Norwegian and Kven were implemented in 2024. The handling of multilingual toponyms has been enhanced, with clearer protocols for managing parallel names in Norwegian, Sami and Kven. That includes updated formatting rules for municipalities with multiple official names and revised hyphenation guidelines for multilingual geographical names. Some precisions have also been made to the language status classification of majority Indigenous and minority languages of Norway, in accordance with their legal status. Technical aspects of names standardization have been expanded, with more exceptions acknowledged for the use of the letters “c”, “q”, “z” and “aa” in standardized geographical names.

\* [GEGN.2/2025/1](#).

\*\* The full report was prepared by Peder Gammeltoft (Norway) on behalf of the Norwegian Mapping Authority. The report will be available at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/), in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2025/12/CRP.12.



The revisions maintain the guidelines' fundamental purpose of preserving Norwegian geographical names as cultural monuments, while ensuring practical standardization for international use, with particular emphasis on protecting Indigenous and minority language toponyms.

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