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English

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

New York, 28 April – 2 May 2025

**Item 6 (c) of the provisional agenda \*****Relationships, links and connections: International organizations,  
including academia****Report of the Joint International Cartographic Association/  
International Geographical Union Commission on Toponymy**

## Summary \*\*

The report highlights the activities that the Joint International Cartographic Association (ICA)/International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Toponymy has pursued since the 2023 session of the “new” United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, held in United Nations Headquarters in New York, USA, from 1 to 5 May 2023, and contains its programme for 2025.

The Commission was established in 2011 under the patronage of the then Chair of the Group of Experts, Helen Kerfoot, the then President of ICA, Georg Gartner, and the then President of IGU, Ron Abler, to foster toponymic research in geography and cartography complementary to that of the Group of Experts, with its focus on standardization, and the International Council of Onomastic Sciences, with its focus on linguistics. That goal was to be pursued by organizing events as part of international conferences and by holding separate symposiums on specific topics, mostly in cooperation with local institutions.

In August 2023, Matjaž Geršič from Slovenia was elected Co-Chair by the ICA to replace Peter Jordan, and in August 2024 Elena Dai Prá from Italy was elected Co-Chair by the IGU to replace Cosimo Palagiano. New members of the Steering Committee were also elected in 2024.

The new Steering Committee has started publishing a newsletter (two have been published so far). The newsletters contain various news about the work of the Commission, but also about events related to geographical names that the Commission was not involved in organising. We would like the Commission's newsletters to become a central point of contact for all events in the field of geographical name research. We have also designed a new website, which can be accessed at: <https://toponymy.icaci.org/>

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\* GEGN.2/2025/1.

\*\* The full report was prepared by Matjaž Geršič, Slovenia, Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy, Liaison Officer for the International Cartographic Association. The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2025/150/CRP.150, in the language of submission only, at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/)

The Commission currently has 180 full and corresponding members from 51 countries on all continents. Before the 2021 session of the Group of Experts, the Commission hosted or co-hosted **twenty-three (23)** events as part of conferences and symposiums and nine (9) between the 2021 and 2023 sessions.

Between the 2023 and 2025 sessions, the following events, described in the full report, were held:

1. 31<sup>st</sup> International Cartographic Conference (ICC) Cape Town, South Africa, 13-18 August 2023
2. 9<sup>th</sup> EUGEO Congress, Barcelona, Spain, 4-9 September 2023
3. 7<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Place Names (ISPN), Bloemfontein, South Africa, 26-29 September 2023
4. Literary, Polar, and Extraterrestrial Place Names Rome, Italy, 23-24 November 2023
5. 35<sup>st</sup> International Geographical Congress 2024, Dublin, Ireland, 24-30 August 2024
6. EuroCarto 2024, Vienna, Austria, 9-11 September 2024

The Commission's short-term plans are to publish the proceedings of the conferences in Dublin 2024 and Bolefontaine 2023 and to actively participate in the International Cartographic Congress in Vancouver, Canada, the International Symposium on Place Names in Clarence, South Africa, and the Conference on the Toponymy of Linguistic Minorities in Trento, Italy.