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Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Culture, heritage and language recognition: geographical
names as culture, heritage and identity**

Report of the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage

Summary**

Since 2012, the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage has been the successor to the Working Group on the Promotion of the Recording and Use of Indigenous, Minority and Regional Language Group Geographical Names, which was established to address United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names resolutions VIII/1 (Berlin, 2002) and IX/5 (New York, 2007).

The Working Group now having a broader scope, it was decided, after discussions at Working Group meetings, that focus groups would be created, so as to divide up activities. The focus groups are set out in the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names strategic plan and programme of work 2021–2029 and are noted in the activities under strategies 2 and 4. Reports and meeting notes of the Working Group can be found on the website of the Group of Experts.¹

For various reasons, the Working Group and its focus groups, aside from the focus group on Indigenous and minority language geographical names, have become inactive, and actions on the items of the programme of work have yet to be taken. As a result, the Bureau of the Group of Experts has taken steps to revitalize the Working Group and its components to respond to the strategic plan and to assess the concerns of Member States with regard to geographical names as cultural heritage. A small incubator group is working on the revitalization of the Working Group and has been

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

** The full report was prepared by Ana Cristina Resende (Brazil), Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, for the incubator group for the revitalization of the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/, in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2025/31/CRP.31.

¹ See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/working_groups/wg9.cshtml.



meeting frequently. A questionnaire is being prepared to identify and address the needs of Member States on the subject. The Working Group has no convenor and is seeking new members to support its work. Members of the Group of Experts wishing to join the Working Group are invited to contact the Secretariat.
