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## United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

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Technical expertise: geographical names data management

### **New developments in geographical names management and standardization in Saudi Arabia: the geographical names portal**

#### **Summary\*\***

The geographical names portal is a pioneering project launched by the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information of Saudi Arabia. The portal is designed as a comprehensive national reference for geographical names, and standardizes, documents and manages them at the national level. The project is part of Saudi Vision 2030 and is aimed at enhancing urban planning, preserving cultural heritage and supporting sustainable development through the use of advanced geographical information technologies. While the portal is currently in the development stage, a prototype provides indications of its future potential.

The portal provides a standardized and convenient reference on geographical names for a wide range of users, such as government agencies, researchers and urban planners. Its main objectives include:

1. Preservation of the geographical identity of Saudi Arabia.
2. Compatibility with global geographic systems in line with international standards.
3. Enabling of data-sharing and effective cross-sector collaboration.

The portal is a vital tool for urban planning, policymaking, tourism, education and the preservation of cultural heritage.

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

\*\* The full report was prepared by Majdi Alharbi, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Survey and Geospatial Information. The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2025/27/CRP.51, 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/).



*Key features of the portal*

- Interactive digital map: the map functions as a user-friendly interface for exploring geographical names and features.
- Geographical data layers: data is organized into categories including urban areas, natural features, bodies of water and public facilities.
- Seamless integration with external applications and systems and application programming interfaces.

Geographical data is categorized by type, such as region, city, mountain, valley, historical landmark or public infrastructure. Each name is reinforced with extensive details including historical information, photographs and videos, pronunciation and romanization and cultural and linguistic perspectives. The prototype includes basic functions such as search and retrieval, interactive maps and geographical data integration.

Details on the portal's design, features, development process and strategic contributions are discussed in the full report.

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