



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 February 2025

Original: English

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 2025 session

New York, 28 April–2 May 2025

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda*

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names**

Report of Sweden

Summary**

The present report provides a summary of the major activities undertaken by Sweden since the 2023 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. In particular, it provides highlights of government initiatives aimed at increasing support for national minorities and minority languages in Sweden.

Since 2022, the Institute for Language and Folklore has hosted language centres for the national minority languages Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani čhib and Yiddish with the main purpose of promoting and fostering the increased use and knowledge of these minority languages. On 1 January 2025, the Institute was assigned a new, revised mandate to manage the language centres. Efforts targeting children and young people are to be given particular priority. The work of the language centres should be based on the needs of speakers of those languages for revitalization measures and be carried out in ongoing dialogue with the speakers. For the Sami languages, the Sami Parliament is responsible for the language centre activities related to those languages.

The Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authority of Sweden (Lantmäteriet) has initiated minor projects concerning place name presentation in minority languages in registers and on maps, including the possibility of using Sami alphabets in various systems, such as the real property register. Another of its projects is aimed at enabling equal font sizes for place names in Swedish and minority languages on national maps. In 2025, the possibility of registering Swedish addresses in minority languages will be explored.

The Lantmäteriet is preparing to set up a new place name database and thereby tackle questions related to managing, storing and presenting place names. A preliminary study was conducted in 2023 and 2024, and the project is now a top priority among the projects within the Lantmäteriet geographic department.

* GEGN.2/2025/1.

** The full report was prepared by Annette Torensjö and Leila Mattfolk (Institute of Language and Folklore) and Johanna Othén (Lantmäteriet). The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2025/91/CRP.91, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025.



Preparations will continue during 2025, and the real project and actual development of a database is planned to start in 2026.

Dialogues with counterparts of the Lantmäteriet in Estonia and the Faroe Islands have been initiated in order to investigate possibilities for cooperation and for sharing experiences regarding place name databases.

The Place Names Advisory Board of Sweden (Ortnamnsrådet) has noticed the need for clearer and more extensive advice for municipalities concerning certain issues related to place names. Two subjects discussed in recent years are the status and use of commemorative names and the application of the term *av hävd* (“by long usage”) in the regulations when considering good place name practice under the Historic Environment Act. The Board plans to publish new recommendations on these subjects in 2025.

The full report provides a short overview of the Swedish legislation and the main authorities involved in the standardization of geographical names.
