

INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIVITY ON STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN UKRAINE IN 2012 – 2015

National authorities on standardization of geographical names

State Service of Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre (*Ukrgeodescartographia*), that was responsible for the coordination of the activity in regard to standardization of geographical names was abolished in February 2012, its functions were moved to the State Agency of Land Resources of Ukraine (Hoszemahenstvo of Ukraine), the government body in composition of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine.

In September 2014 the State Agency of Land Resources of Ukraine was reorganized into State Service of Ukraine on Questions of Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre (Hosheokadastr), and today it conducts the coordination of the activity in regard to determination, standardization, accounting, registration, use and preservation of geographical names, provides creation and management of State Register of Geographical Names, organizes carrying out of suggestions and decisions of the state bodies in regard to naming and renaming of geographical objects.

In November 2014 functions of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine in regard to national policy in the sphere of standardization of geographical names were moved to the Ministry of Regional Development, Building and Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine.

The State of Legal and Normative Basis in the Sphere of Geographical Names

The Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names” (2005) establishes the legal foundations regulating the activity with respect to naming and renaming of geographical objects, as well as standardization, use, registration and preservation of geographical names. According to the Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names” the central body of the executive power implementing national policy in the sphere of topographic, geodetic and cartographic activity is a specially authorized body of the executive power in issues of geographical names.

In 2012 some amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names” have been made.

Taking into account the Law of Ukraine “About Foundations of Government Language Policy” adopted in June 2012 the article 6 of the Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names” was amended regarding writing of toponyms in state, regional and minority languages

Because of changes in the system of bodies of state administration of Ukraine some amendments specifying responsibility of central bodies of the executive power in the sphere of geographical names, excluding extrinsic powers of the President of Ukraine, determining fundamental legal principles of the activity of the Interdepartmental Scientific and Methodological Council in the Issues of Geographical Names were made to the Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names”.

Related amendments were made to the Provision on the State Register of Geographical Names (2006) and the Order of Carrying out of the Expertise of Suggestions and Decisions of the State Bodies in regard to Naming and Renaming of Geographical Objects (2009).

In March 2015 the Interdepartmental Scientific and Methodological Council in the Issues of Geographical names was abolished by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (since 1993 until 2006 it was called National Council on Geographical Names).

Because of changes in the system of bodies of state administration of Ukraine the regulatory framework in the sphere of topographic, geodetic and cartographic activity including activity in the sphere of geographical names was being a subject to review.

In 2013–2014 regulatory documents on approval of Rules of Rendering of Geographical Names and Terms of Albania, Belgium, Belarus, Bulgaria, Greece, Netherlands, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia, Estonia as well normative documents on approval of accounting-and-registration forms of the State Register of Geographical Names and Rules of Spelling of Ukrainian Geographical Names on Maps and in Other Editions were registered in the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine.

Rules of Spelling of Ukrainian Geographical Names on maps and in other editions are a new version of Toponymic Guidelines (for map and other editors) for Ukrainian users.

Regulatory documents are available on official website of Hosheokadastr <http://land.gov.ua/>

In May 2015 the Law of Ukraine “On Disapproval of Communist and National Socialism (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes in Ukraine and Ban on Propaganda of their Symbols” was adopted, through this Law the articles 5 and 8 of the Law of Ukraine “On Geographical Names” were amended: it is prohibited to name geographical features after names and pseudonyms of persons who were leaders in Communist party, higher bodies of state authority of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian SSR, other Soviet Republics, as well to give names to geographical features connected with the activity of the Communist Party, establishment of the Soviet power. It does not apply to using names connected with development of Ukrainian science and culture or expulsion of Nazi invaders from Ukraine.

Bodies of state authority and self-governing authorities have in six months period to hold public consultations and give proposals to Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine concerning renaming of settlements, raions (districts) and oblasts (regions), streets, squares, boulevards, embankments, bridges and other toponymic features of settlements, names of which are connected with symbols of communist and Nazi totalitarian regimes.

Beginning with 2015 the reform of local governance and administrative and territorial division is being conducted in Ukraine. On 5 February 2015, Verkhovna Rada adopted the Law of Ukraine «On Voluntary Amalgamation of Local Communities». According to this Law neighbouring town and village councils may

amalgamate into one community that will have one common local government body. The name of amalgamated territorial community derives as a rule from a place name (village town, city) that is a capital of community. Names of territorial communities need to be standardized.

In 2012 and 2014 All-Ukrainian Conferences “National mapping: condition, problems and prospects for further development” took place in Kyiv where problems of national toponymy were considered.

The State of Activities Aimed at Creation of State Register of Geographical Names

State Register of geographical names is being formed as electronic base of standardized geographical names of the territory of Ukraine and outside of Ukraine with using automated data retrieval system according to Provision on the State Register of Geographical names approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2006.

Database of geographical names of the territory of Ukraine has been being formed since 2011 according to administrative and territorial units (AR of Crimea, oblasts/regions, raions/districts, cities, village and town councils) on the base of topographic map of Ukraine at scale 1:100 000.

At this stage of creation of the State Register of geographical names as of 01.01.2015 the 58,759 accounting-and-registration forms of names of administrative- and territorial units, physiographic and socioeconomic features of Ukraine were filled out.

Whereas it is necessary to settle laws of function of the administrator of the State Register of Geographical Names a draft of government decree on introduction of amendments to the Provision on the State Register of geographical names has been prepared.

National Romanization System for Geographical Names

Tenth United Nations Conference on standardization of geographical names adopted the resolution X/9 “Romanization of Ukrainian Geographical Names” (E/CONF.101/84), that recommends Ukrainian Romanization system be adopted as the international system for the Romanization of Ukrainian geographical names. Table of Transliteration of the Ukrainian alphabet by means of the Latin Alphabet was officially approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2010 and has been well implemented in official documents, in maps and on public signs and in other spheres of life.

International Cooperation in the Sphere of Geographical Names

Ukraine is a member of two divisions of United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names: Eastern Europe, North and Central Asia Division and East Central and South-East Europe Division. Ukraine also takes part in the meetings of Baltic Division as an observer.

Representatives of Ukraine took part:

In the Tenth United Nations Conference on standardization of geographical names and the 27th Session of UNGEGN (New York, 2012);

In the meeting of East Central and South-East Europe Division of UNGEGN (New York, 2012);

In the meeting of Baltic Division of UNGEGN (New York, 2012; Warsaw, 2015);

In the meetings of Working Groups of UNGEGN on Romanization system, Exonyms, Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (New York, 2012);

In the Tenth Session of Eastern Europe, North and Central Asia Division (Baku, November 2012).

In Ukraine in Koreiz, AR of Crimea, on 22-26 April 2013, the 11th Session of Eastern Europe, North and Central Asia Division of UNGEGN took place. As observers representatives from Baltic Division of UNGEGEN from Latvia and Lithuania took part.