

**United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
East Central and South-East Europe Division
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National Report



**United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
National Report of Ukraine for the period 2023 – 2024**



The state of activities in the field of geographical names standardization in the intersessional period

The State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre carried out activities in the following key areas in the field of geographical names standardization during the intersessional period:

- improvement of the legislative and regulatory framework for activities related to geographical names;

- providing state and local authorities, institutions, organizations and citizens with standardized geographical names;

- creation and maintenance of the State Register of Geographical Names;

- conducting an examination of proposals and decisions of state authorities and local self-government bodies on naming and renaming of geographical objects;

- utilization and preservation of geographical names;

- international cooperation on geographical names.

In order to implement the amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Geographical Names" introduced in 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a resolution dated August 01, 2023:

- a new edition of the Provision on the State Register of Geographical Names was adopted, allowing to improve the procedure for creating and maintaining the State Register of Geographical Names, establishing, standardizing and utilizing geographical names, publishing and providing users with access to standardized geographical names;

- the procedure for conducting an examination of proposals and decisions of state authorities and local self-government bodies on naming and renaming of geographical objects was regulated, promoting informed decision-making on the naming or renaming of a geographical object.

The Order of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine dated July 07, 2023 approved the Procedure for Approval of the Contents of Catalogues, Reference Books, Dictionaries and Lists of Geographical Names prepared for publication and/or distribution on the Internet within the framework of their activities by scientific, research and other institutions, enterprises, organizations engaged in scientific (historical, geographical, toponymic, linguistic, etc.) research of geographical objects and their names, for the compliance of geographical names with the data of the State Register of Geographical Names.

In 2023–2024, the StateGeoCadastre performed activities on establishing and maintaining the State Register of Geographical Names, updating the State Register of Geographical Names with the names of geographical objects of Ukraine, taking into account significant changes in the administrative and territorial structure of Ukraine, and renaming geographical objects that had been made in accordance with the laws adopted in 2023.

The Law of Ukraine "On Condemnation and Prohibition of Propaganda of Russian Imperial Policy in Ukraine and Decolonisation of Place Names" dated March 21, 2023 sets out the requirements for renaming settlements and other geographical objects (streets, squares, plazas, railway stations, rocks, tracts, nature reserve objects, etc.) the names of which were associated with the Soviet Union, Russia or the Russian Empire.

The National Commission on State Language Standards recommended to change more than 1 400 names of Ukrainian cities, villages and towns that do not comply with the spelling, grammar and word-formation standards of the Ukrainian language or contain ideological elements related to Russian imperial policy in Ukraine. This also includes names conventionally formed from the Russian language (for example, Yuzhne, Yuzhnoukrainka, Sievierodonetsk, Octiabrsk, Pervomaisk, etc.).

At the same time, since the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, in 2022–2024, Ukraine has been undergoing a massive renaming of place names in settlements (mainly streets, boulevards, lanes, avenues, squares, plazas, embankments, bridges, subway stations, etc.).

The Law of Ukraine "On the Procedure for Resolving Certain Issues of the Administrative and Territorial Structure of Ukraine" dated July 28, 2023 cancelled the Soviet regulation of administrative and territorial structure, defined the procedure for the formation, liquidation, establishment and changing of the boundaries of administrative and territorial units, established the clear and transparent procedures for classifying settlements as cities, towns, villages, naming and renaming the settlements, simplified the procedure for determining the boundaries of settlements, etc. This Law classifies all urban-type settlements (there were 881) as settlements, and cities with the status of district, regional or republican significance in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea as cities.

The Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Some Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Certain Issues of the Administrative and Territorial Structure of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" dated August 23, 2023 cancelled the postponement of the resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted in 2016 and 2020, on renaming of certain settlements and districts of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, establishment and liquidation of districts of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

The updated information of the State Register of Geographical Names on the names of geographical objects of Ukraine is published on the official website of the StateGeoCadastre at the link <http://surl.li/srnmy>.

User access to data on the geographical names of Ukraine is also possible through the National Geoportal of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, operating in a trial mode (www.nsd.gov.ua), which is temporarily limited due to the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine for the period of martial law.

In 2023, an electronic database of standardized names of geographical objects of other states used in Ukraine was launched.

The StateGeoCadastre provided information from the State Register on Geographical Names and geographical objects in response to requests from public authorities, local governments, legal entities and individuals.

In 2023 the StateGeoCadastre completed 12 examinations of proposals and decisions of state and local authorities on naming and renaming of geographical objects: cities, railway stations, stopping platforms and a railway bridge, and provided conclusions on the compliance of the proposals with the provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On Geographical Names".

National and international meetings, conferences, workshops

Representatives of the StateGeoCadastre attended the following events:

Geospatial World Forum 2023 (Rotterdam, The Netherlands, May 2–5, 2023);

General Assembly of the Council of European Surveyors (CLGE) (Oradea, Romania, May 11–13, 2023), during which the membership of the StateGeoCadastre in the CLGE was accepted;

Online workshop held with the UK Geospatial Commission (June 21, 2023) for representatives of executive authorities and other holders responsible for creating and updating geospatial datasets and metadata in Ukraine;

The 19th General Assembly of the International Cartographic Association and the 31st International Cartographic Conference (Cape Town, South Africa, August 13–18, 2023); Interactive map of Africa by the State Scientific and Production Enterprise "Kartographiia" was awarded the 3rd place at the International Cartographic Exhibition, and the Statute of the ICA was amended on the initiative of the StateGeoCadastre;

Joint UNECE, Eurostat, UN-GGIM: Europe Workshop on Integrating Statistical and Geospatial Data (Belgrade, Serbia, October 4–5, 2023);

The IX CLGE Conference of the European Surveyors and the CLGE General Assembly (Paris, France, November 9–11, 2023);

The 10th Joint UN-GGIM: Europe – Eurostat – UNECE Meeting on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (Luxembourg, March 12–13, 2024).

National standardization

National bodies for standardization of geographical names

The state administration in the field of activities related to geographical names in Ukraine is exercised by the following bodies:

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine:

ensures the implementation of the state policy in the relevant field;

approves the procedure for examination of proposals and decisions of state authorities and local self-government bodies on naming and renaming of geographical objects;

adopts regulations on the State Register of Geographical Names;

performs naming and renaming of geographical objects in accordance with the Law.

the central executive body that ensures the state policy making in the field of topographic, geodetic and cartographic activities is the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine (<http://minagro.gov.ua>);

the central executive body that implements the state policy in the field of topographic, geodetic and cartographic activities is the State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre (<http://land.gov.ua>).

The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine:

determines the state policy on the naming of geographical objects, as well as standardization, accounting, registration, utilization and preservation of geographical names;

develops and adopts regulatory and statutory acts on the establishment, standardization, recording, registration, utilization and preservation of geographical names.

The State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre as a specially authorized executive body on geographical names:

coordinates activities related to the establishment, standardization, accounting, registration, utilization and preservation of geographical names;

examines proposals and decisions of state authorities and local self-government bodies on naming and renaming of geographical objects and provides a relevant conclusion;

ensures the creation and maintenance of the State Register of Geographical Names;

controls the utilization and preservation of geographical names;

carries out international cooperation on the establishment, regulation, preservation, accounting and registration of geographical names.

The state of the legislative and regulatory framework in the field of geographical names

The Law of Ukraine "On Geographical Names" (2005) defines the legal framework for regulating relations and activities related to the establishment of names of geographical objects, as well as standardization, accounting, registration, utilization and preservation of geographical names.

The Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" (2019), in particular Article 41, defines the use of languages in geographical names and names of toponymics objects.

The Law of Ukraine "On the National Spatial Data Infrastructure" (2020) establishes the legal and organizational framework for the creation, operation and development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure in accordance with INSPIRE recommendations.

The Regulation on the State Register of Geographical Names, approved by a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2006, establishes the procedure for creating and maintaining the State Register of Geographical Names, carrying out work on the establishment, standardization, accounting, registration and utilization of geographical names – in the 2023 edition, the functions of the StateGeoCadastre and the administrator of the State Register of Geographical Names for the creation and maintenance of the State Register of Geographical Names are defined, sources for the establishment and standardization of geographical names are specified, the procedure for publishing standardized geographical names and providing users with information from the State Register of Geographical Names, etc. was established.

The Procedure for the Examination of Proposals and Decisions of State Authorities and Local Self-Government Bodies on Naming or Renaming of Geographical Objects, approved by a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in 2009, establishes the procedure for conducting the relevant examination of proposals and decisions of state authorities and local self-government bodies on naming and renaming of geographical objects of Ukraine, the continental shelf, the exclusive (maritime) economic zone, geographical objects of the Earth discovered by Ukrainian researchers and scientists – in 2023 the procedure for conducting the relevant examination takes into account the above-mentioned changes in legislation.

Rules for the translation into Ukrainian of geographical names and terms of foreign countries, which also include lists of basic geographical terms and exonyms (28 legal acts in total, 2001–2023).

Creation and maintenance of the State Register of Geographical Names

The State Register of Geographical Names is an information and communication system designed to record information on the names of geographical objects, maintain accounting and state registration of established and standardized geographical names, store, search for and access information.

The State Register of Geographical Names is developed and maintained in Ukrainian and consists of two parts:

information on names of geographical objects located on the territory of Ukraine;

information on the names of geographical objects of other states, as well as geographical objects of the Earth that are not subject to the sovereignty and jurisdiction of any state, which are used in Ukraine.

The State Register of Geographical Names is maintained by the StateGeoCadastr.

As of April 1, 2024 the State Register of Geographical Names contains 105 400 geographical names, of which:

48 115 – names of settlements, units of administrative and territorial organization;

46 150 – names of physical and geographical objects (hydrographic, orographic and landscape objects);

5 359 – names of socio-economic objects (airports, railway stations, stopping points, sea and river ports, marinas);

5 776 – names of objects of the nature reserve fund.

The data of the State Register of Geographical Names on the names of geographical objects of Ukraine contain 46 indicators, including: registration number, standardized name of the geographical object in Ukrainian and Latin, type of geographical object, category and status of settlements, geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude), sources of information, etc.

In September 2023 the State Scientific and Production Enterprise "Kartographiia" was appointed as the administrator of the State Register of Geographical Names, which is responsible for technical and technological support and administration of the State Register, recording of relevant and reliable geographical names, their accounting and state registration, preservation and protection of the State Register data, ensuring access to the State Register's data and information interaction with the National Geoportal of Spatial Data, other registers and cadastres.

Since September 2023 work on creating the second part of the State Register of Geographical Names on the names of geographical objects of other states which are used in Ukraine has begun.

The State Register contains 37 indicators of information on the names of geographical objects of other states, standardized and translated into Ukrainian from the official language of the original according to the relevant rules established by the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, in particular:

name of the geographical object in Ukrainian, its registration number;

name of the geographical object in the official language(s);

type of geographical object;

name of the country (location of the geographical object) where the geographical object is located;

information on the official language(s);

geographical coordinates of the geographical object (latitude and longitude);

sources of information.

As of April 1, 2024 the State Register of Geographical Names contains over 28 000 names of administrative and territorial units of foreign countries.

Data management and interoperability

The StateGeoCadastrе ensures the creation and development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, in particular the National Geoportal.

In 2023 the software development of the National Geoportal (<https://nsdi.gov.ua>) was completed and put into trial operation.

During 2023 over 36 000 metadata were entered into the register of metadata and verified on the National Geoportal by central executive authorities, regional military administrations and territorial communities.

In 2023 works on the display on the National Geoportal of the main sets of basic geospatial data, created on the basis of a topographic data base on a scale of 1:50 000, and other information resources, the holder of which is the StateGeoCadastrе, was completed.

The State Register of Geographical Names is an integral part of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure; its information is available to users through the services of the National Geoportal.

From February 24, 2022 until the end of the martial law, access to the public part of the NSDI Geoportal is restricted. For official use of the National Geoportal, producers and data holders must go through the registration and verification procedure.

In March 2024 methodological recommendations on the activities of local self-government bodies in the field of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, prepared with the support of USAID AGRO, were published, which provide local self-government bodies with clear actions regarding the organization of creation and updating of spatial data and metadata for the needs of territorial communities, creation and use geoinformation system of the territorial community, its single digital topographic base, geoportals, as well as ensuring electronic interaction with state and other information resources.

Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors

The Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (2012) approved the Toponymic Guidelines for Map Editors and Other Editors for International Use. Ukraine (<http://surl.li/srn hj>).

The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine approved the Rules for Writing Ukrainian Geographical Names on Maps and Other Publications (2014), which establishes the basic principles and rules of standardization and writing of Ukrainian geographical names in official documents, mass media, cartographic,

reference, encyclopedic, educational and other editions and their transmission in letters of the Latin alphabet.

Country Names

The Dictionary of Geographical Names "Countries and Territories of the World" (by the State Scientific and Production Enterprise "Kartographiia") contains information about the official names of states, dependent territories, capitals of states and centers of possessions in the Ukrainian language and in national writing, as well as adjectives, names of residents formed from names of countries and capitals.

In the preparation of this dictionary materials and recommendations of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names were used.

National system of Romanization of geographical names

For the transfer of Ukrainian proper names (surnames, first names and geographical names) with letters of the Latin alphabet in official documents, when publishing cartographic works, on tablets and road signs, as well as in other areas, the Table of Transliteration of the Ukrainian Alphabet into Latin, officially established by the Government in 2010, and which is recommended by the resolution of the Tenth United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names X/9 "Romanization of Ukrainian Geographical Names" is used.