Ortnamn och namnvård

6

GOOD PLACE-NAME PRACTICE

The Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board´s Guide to the Standardisation and Preservation of Place-Names

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Preface

to the English translation of the second edition, 2019

In 2000, provisions on 'good place-name practice' were introduced into Swedish law. They are contained in the Historic Environment Act, underlining the aim of viewing and preserving place-names as part of the intangible cultural heritage. Briefly, good place-name practice means not changing place-names that are established by long usage unless there is good reason to do so, and spelling place-names in accordance with accepted rules of linguistic correctness. Since Sweden is a multilingual country, the national minority languages are also to be used as far as possible in parallel with Swedish on maps and road signs.

The Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board is a joint advisory body, linked to Lantmäteriet, that seeks to ensure that good place-name practice is observed in activities relating to place-names. This guide, previously published in two editions in Swedish, has been produced on the Board's initiative. In the first edition, the emphasis was on presenting and explaining the new legislation, describing the functions of place-names, and identifying the various bodies and organisations involved in efforts to standardise and preserve place-names. That edition also included detailed advice to local and central government name givers on the writing of place-names.

In 2016, the Place-Names Advisory Board published a second edition, enlarged to include several new chapters. Here, the responsibilities of central and local government relating to place-names were described at greater length. There was also a separate chapter giving a more in-depth account of the concept of good place-name practice, illustrated by case studies. And new chapters were added on the use of commercial names and international cooperation on place-names.

There has long been an interest, both within the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and among the international onomastic research community, in this publication on good place-name practice being made accessible to non-Swedish speakers. The Place-Names Advisory Board is now pleased to be able to publish an English translation of the 2016 edition, with minor updates. We hope that it will be a source of inspiration and support in the broad area of standardisation and preservation of names.

The changes and additions included in the 2016 edition are the work of Leif Nilsson, former Names Advisory Officer at the Institute for Language and Folklore, Professor Staffan Nyström, Uppsala University, and Annette C. Torensjö, Head of the Department of Onomastics at the Institute for Language and Folklore. Muriel Bjureberg, at the Place-Names Section of Lantmäteriet, has been responsible for editing and graphic design of this publication.

The Swedish text has been translated into English by Martin Naylor, MA (Cantab.), Uppsala.

Anders Sandin
Chair
Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board

Contents

1   Introduction and background

On 1 July 2000, new provisions requiring the observance of 'good place-name practice' were introduced as Chapter 1, Section 4 of what was then the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds (1988:950, as amended by Act 2000:265; as from 2014 renamed the Historic Environment Act). Briefly, good place-name practice means spelling place-names in accordance with the rules of the Swedish language unless established spellings justify otherwise, and not changing place-names that are established by long usage unless there is good reason to do so.

As part of a review of this section of the Act (*Ku2011/1195/KA*), the Institute for Language and Folklore was asked by the Swedish Government to propose possible amendments. The work was undertaken in consultation with the Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board and other bodies, and resulted in the addition of the words '*and Meänkieli*' (the national minority language formerly known as Tornedal Finnish) and of the provision '*Names that have been approved by Lantmäteriet shall be used in their approved form in the work of central and local government.*' The latter amendment was prompted by changes in the traditional publication of maps, with printed maps no longer as widely used or having the same status as when Section 4 was introduced. The change was also intended to enhance the preservation of the minority languages, in that place-names in those languages are recorded in the register of officially adopted place-names kept by Lantmäteriet (formerly the National Land Survey).

Chapter 1, Section 4, of the Historic Environment Act, on *Good place-name practice* (1988:950, as amended by Act 2013:548), now reads:

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Good place-name practice

In the work of central and local government, good place-name practice shall be observed. This means that

place-names established by long usage shall not be changed without good cause,

place-names in general shall be spelt in accordance with generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness, unless spelling forms established by long usage justify otherwise,

the impact on names established by long usage shall be taken into account in the formation of new place-names, and

names in Swedish, Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli shall, as far as possible, be used in parallel on maps and on road and other signs in multilingual areas.

Names that have been approved by Lantmäteriet shall be used in their approved form in the work of central and local government.

(Act 2013:548)

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The Act applies to central and local government activities relating to place-names, and makes clear that the names published as part of Lantmäteriet's basic geodata are to serve as a guide. These names have been scrutinised by place-names experts and have assumed the role of a standard. The wording used in the Act, 'that have been approved by Lantmäteriet', indicates that non-governmental name users, too, should follow the provisions of Section 4. These other users are not identified, but the intention is that the forms of place-names used in public contexts should be in accordance with good place-name practice. Adopting competing name forms for one and the same entity (for example, spelling the name of a modern-day ecclesiastical parish differently from the way the same name is spelt when it refers to a historical parish or a town) is not compatible with good place-name practice. The latter requires both cultural heritage and functional and linguistic considerations to be taken into account. By and large, it is a matter of striking a balance between these different aspects in each individual case. A basic concern, however, should be to take account of older place-names established by long usage in the area in question, and to allow those names to live on and serve as a source of knowledge and of inspiration for the creation of new ones.

1.1   The Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board

The Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board (*Ortnamnsrådet*) is an advisory body to Lantmäteriet, Sweden's national place-names authority, as provided in Section 18 of the Ordinance containing Instructions for Lantmäteriet (2009:946). As well as from Lantmäteriet itself, the members of the Board are drawn from the Institute for Language and Folklore, the Swedish National Heritage Board, the Sami Parliament, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the Swedish Transport Administration and the universities. Its main responsibilities are to work with Lantmäteriet to develop principles and formulate goals for sound policy relating to place-names and to disseminate information promoting good place-name practice in the country.

The Place-Names Advisory Board has no formal decision-making powers, but acts in an independent capacity, providing advice and promoting dialogue. In that role, it seeks to guide authorities and other name givers in their decision-making by expressing its views and submitting statements of opinion on applications and other matters involving important questions of principle. In many cases, it has been successful in these efforts.

In the report of the Cultural Heritage Inquiry (SOU 1996:128), it was proposed that the Place-Names Advisory Board, together with the then National Land Survey (Lantmäteriverket), should interpret and make known the concept of 'good place-name practice', disseminate knowledge and information about the principles involved, and give the greatest possible effect to Chapter 1, Section 4 of the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds (now the Historic Environment Act). In producing the present publication, the Place-Names Advisory Board is seeking to discharge that responsibility.

2 The roles and functions of place-names

Almost all the places around us are called something. In rural areas, every farm and village and most crofts, cottages and houses have a name. In our towns and cities, streets, neighbourhoods and districts have names, as do many bridges, parks, squares, thoroughfares, arenas, schools and other public buildings. They are located, in Sweden, in a parish, a municipality, a county and a province, which all have names, and within these areas there are countless hills and mountains, hollows and valleys, forests, bogs and fens, plains and heaths, bays, sounds and inlets, islands, islets and shallows, pastures, fields, meadows and so on. These, too, generally have names of their own. All such names of geographical localities – large and small, old and new – are known as *place-names*. 'Place-names', in other words, does not just refer to names of 'places' in the everyday sense of that word, i.e. towns and villages, but is an umbrella term for all geographical names. Where necessary, it is possible to be more specific and talk about village names, city names, river names, lake names, island names, meadow names, street names etc. Corresponding terms in other languages include Swedish *ortnamn*, German *Ortsname*, Danish *stednavne* and Norwegian *stadnamn* (Nynorsk) or *stedsnavn* (Bokmål). In some contexts, for instance in work on place-names within the United Nations, the term *geographical names* is used.

2.1 Name and place

'Surely it doesn't really matter what it's called. It's just a name!' is an attitude one can sometimes come across. No doubt there are people who sincerely believe that, but probably not very many. We may possibly be uninterested in and indifferent about place-names that exist somewhere else, far away, in places we have no relationship to, but when it comes to our own place-names we tend to care all the more. That is because names are more than just a practical label that people need to find their way about. They mean many other things to us. Names have many roles and functions.

First, a few words about 'place'. We can all have strong feelings for places, especially if they are associated in some way with our personal experiences. Most people would agree, for instance, that we need more homes, more rail services and better roads, and most of us want these things to be made available – but somewhere else, where they will not affect, change or damage my own place. Researchers now talk about the significance of landscape and place for our sense of belonging in life, and in that context the importance place-names have for us and for our perception of space is often emphasised. A real 'place', as opposed to a randomly chosen piece of the world, is a geographical locality that holds meaning and, moreover, has a name. These three components interact.

'Granny…'

2.2   Names are efficient

A place-name should identify and individualise a place, so that we can refer to it and find it as simply as possible. Place-names are the linguistic expressions we most readily and easily use to talk about individual locations and areas. We need place-names every day to refer to places in our vicinity, a need that has probably existed for as long as humans have had reasonably well-developed language, although of course the individual names have not always been the same. This is the core function of basically every name, and for some names it is by far the dominant or perhaps the only function, but it can be very important when it comes, for instance, to traffic announcements, emergency services, transport and so on. Here, place-names serve as an efficient means of communication, by distinguishing, identifying and locating places in physical space. It would be unrealistic, for instance, to imagine a postal worker having to sort and deliver a letter addressed to *18, The street that used to run along the shore, 621 56 The town on our biggest island*, or to envisage a distance sign announcing in a roundabout way: *The capital city of our western neighbour 202 km*. Such examples are perhaps far-fetched, but make a point. Place-names are efficient.

A place-name may also arise because the locality itself invites it. There may perhaps be no direct need to give a place a name, but it may have an unusual, striking appearance, or an unusual characteristic that makes it stand out from the crowd: names like *Tjäderfoten* 'Capercaillie's Foot', *Tröjärmen* 'Sweater Sleeve', *Mjälten* 'Spleen', *Storstekpannan* 'Great Frying Pan', *Glasögonen* 'The Spectacles' and *Bordsfötterna* 'Table Feet' are examples of this. Something remarkable may also have happened in the place, giving it an eye-catching name, like *Fläsklådan* 'The Pork Crate', *Knektfördärvet* 'Soldier's Ruin', *Dödsfallsbergen* 'Hills of Death', *Pigans plågsten* 'Maid's Stone of Torment', *Auktionskammaren* 'Auction Rooms' or *Munkens trappor* 'Monk's Stairs'.

2.3   Names convey feelings

Most names describe a place in a fairly neutral and objective way, such as *Mörtsjön* 'Roach Lake', *Järnvägsgatan* 'Railway Street', *Råggärdet* 'Rye Field', *Smedstorp* 'Smith's Croft' and *Aspudden* 'Aspen Point'. But many are also charged with feelings or values, hope or anger. Fishing places such as *Jämmerdalen* 'Vale of Tears' and *Eländet* 'Misery', along with *Guldtunnan* 'Barrel of Gold' and *Riksdalergrundet* 'Dollar Shallow', are examples of this. Many 'transfer names', such as *Amerika* 'America', *Ryssland* 'Russia' and *Sibirien* 'Siberia', also bear witness to dreams and longing, or to drudgery and hard labour. In cases such as these, place-names are an emotionally charged means of communication.

Nowadays we can see trends, for example, in the naming of new residential areas. There is a desire to replace older, supposedly 'tainted' names, to give the areas concerned greater potential and positive associations, which it is assumed will help them attract residents, businesses and trade. One company wanted to 'remove the old industrial label', as it put it, by replacing the old name *Gustavsberg* with *Värmdö Strand*. So certainly people want and feel able to evoke feelings using names. In the case mentioned, though, the break with what was familiar and established by long usage was too great. There were widespread protests, and the change of name never happened.

2.4 Names capture ideologies

Place-names can also serve as bearers of ideological, political or religious values. They take on symbolic value and come to stand for something: sometimes representing the power or right to determine the name, sometimes serving simply as a status marker. A fairly innocent example perhaps in this context is when someone in the parish of *Slæm* or *Slem* (south of Stockholm), as it was called in the 17th century (a name suggesting 'slime, phlegm'), quite deliberately added a letter to change the name to *Salem*, in all probability inspired by the poetic, biblical form of *Jerusalem*. *Slæm/ Slem* was the name that had developed quite naturally from the earliest form *Slaiwa-haimaʀ*, meaning 'the sloe (blackthorn) district'.

Other deliberate name changes in earlier times may be traced to a desire to *ennoble* an existing name. The owner of the manor house of *Nässelsta* in Södermanland, Carl Christian Stiernefelt, changed its name to *Stjärnhov* at the beginning of the 19th century. In the 17th century, Åke Axelsson Natt och Dag renamed his *Nockeby* estate *Åkeshov*, and in 1775 the estate name *Sundby*, by an old channel north of Stockholm, was similarly ennobled by its owner to *Sundbyberg*. The names *Stjärnhov*, *Åkeshov* and *Sundbyberg* were felt quite simply to be a little more distinguished than their predecessors and to express a little better the social standing of the individuals who coined them.

There is also something of an ideological dimension to efforts to use the final elements of new urban names in a more deliberate manner. In Stockholm, councillors have put pressure on the city's Name Drafting Committee to propose names ending in *-gatan*, not *-vägen* or *-gränd*, for new streets and roads in many areas. There is a political desire to express urbanity, which, it is argued, requires names containing the word *gata* 'street'. *Väg* 'road' and *gränd* 'alley, lane' send the wrong signals, suggesting rural areas, small towns or older settlements. Right or wrong – here the names become an expression of political will.

2.5 Names create a sense of community

In addition to the roles already mentioned, it may be noted that names are important in creating a sense of community in the groups, large or small, with which we share them. This is made particularly clear when names are threatened and people close ranks against the outside world. They demand to be allowed to keep their name, their own form of it or their own, often archaic, spelling. In small circles of name users, such as groups of children, teenage gangs, birdwatchers, hunting parties, orienteering clubs, one's immediate or wider family, second home owners in a particular area etc., 'unofficial' names and name forms often develop, in roughly the same way as slang words, jargon, set phrases or allusions which outsiders do not understand. The use of names within such groups becomes a social signal of participation and community.

2.6 Names are historical sources

Place-names are intimately associated with the cultural landscape in which they occur, that is, the landscape that has been used, affected and shaped by people over a very long period of time: farmland, hunting grounds, trapping and fishing places, hay meadows and pastures, peat workings and reedbeds, mines, sand and gravel pits, villages and towns, the industrialised urban areas of today, and so on. Many place-names are, to put it simply, a kind of linguistic ancient remains, bringing us more or less comprehensible messages from the people of the past.
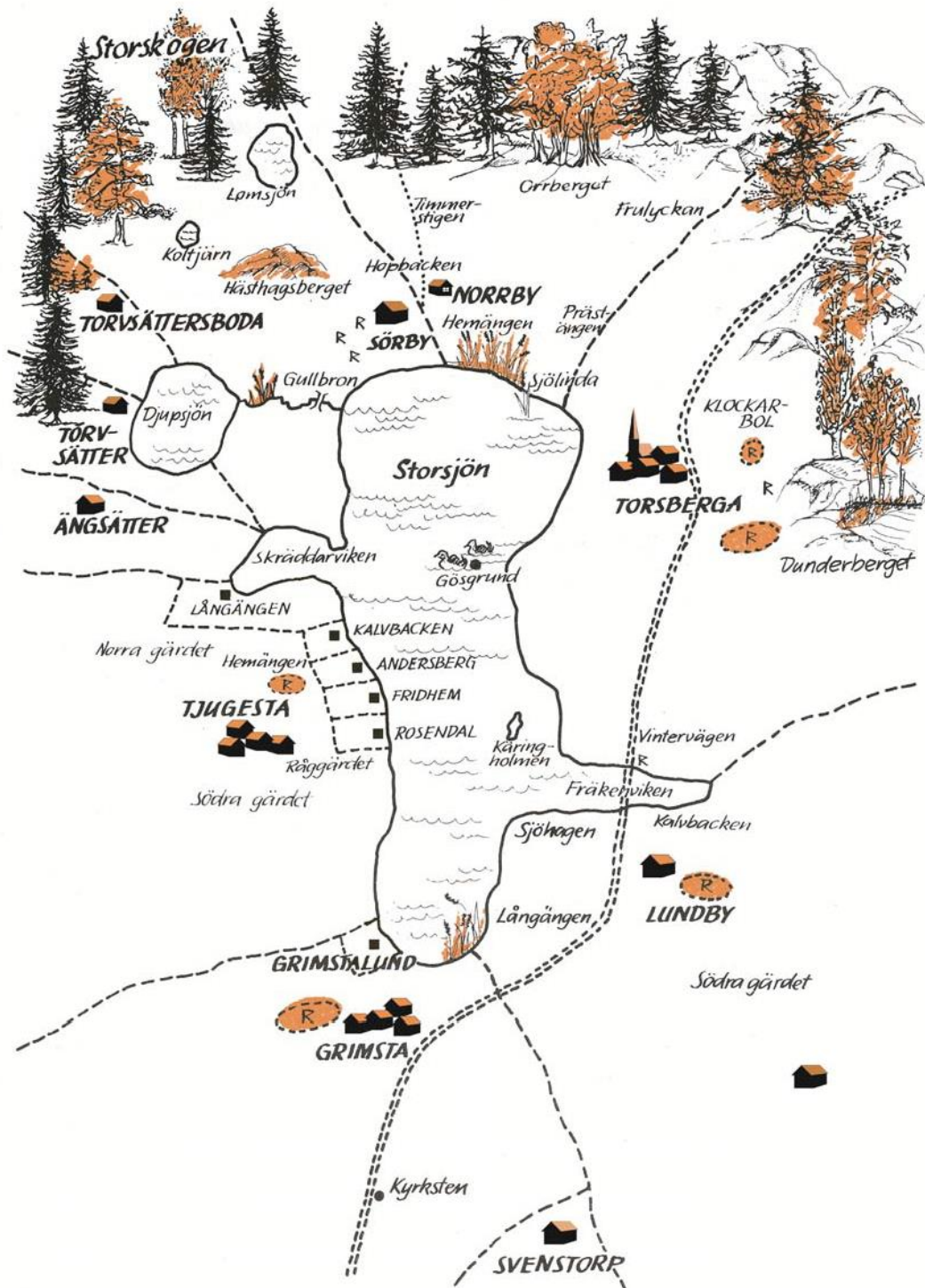
As an example (see map above), let us consider an imaginary cultural landscape in central Sweden and some of its place-names, which illustrate how places and their names can shed light on one another. A basic economic structure of the landscape can be made out in place-names that bear witness to hunting, fishing, arable farming, livestock husbandry and exploitation of natural resources, in other words, to people's primary needs in terms of food and other necessities. Names

which today have forms such as *Gösgrund* 'Pikeperch Shallow', *Hemängen* 'Home Meadow', *Kalvbacken* 'Calf Rise', *Norra gärdet* 'North Field', *Prästängen* 'Priest's Meadow', *Råggärdet* 'Rye Field', *Sjölinda* 'Lake Ley' and *Skräddarviken* 'Tailor's Bay' are often difficult to date, but may be very old.

The names of human settlements of various types and ages reflect the historical processes and social conditions that have affected them. In this instance, large and very old inhabited places with names like *Torsberga*, *Tjugesta*, *Grimsta* and *Lundby* are located around Storsjön, each with its own share of the shoreline and water of the lake. Near their farms, there are Iron Age cemeteries. These permanent settlements subsequently grew, either by a partitioning of the older farms, as appears to be the case with *Norrby* 'North Farmstead' and *Sörby* 'South Farmstead' at the northern end of the lake, or by colonisation and new settlement on their outfield land: *Svenstorp* 'Sven's Croft' from Grimsta, *Ängsätter* and *Torvsätter* (-*sätter* meaning 'outlying or forest meadow') from Tjugesta, and so on. Even later, *Torvsättersboda* split off from Torvsätter. In recent centuries, finally, a number of smaller habitations have been established on the land belonging to the old farms: crofts, properties divided off from the older holdings, and second homes, with names such as *Kalvbacken*, *Andersberg*, *Fridhem*, *Rosendal* and *Grimstalund*.

The old village of *Torsberga* is the site of the church, and has given its name to the civil and ecclesiastical parish of *Torsberga*, which is in turn part of a

municipality, formerly a district known as a *härad*, in a particular county. The names of these areas can provide us with clues as to how, at different times, society has been organised into administrative units larger than the individual farm or village.

The name *Torsberga*, with its reference to the god Thor, is also evidence of the religious or ideological superstructure of society. Many names speak of sites of pagan worship, or of areas that can be linked to the activities of the Christian church, to folk belief or to other earlier notions, customs and practices. On the map we find, not far from the church, names such as *Klockarbol* 'Sexton's Abode' and *Prästängen* 'Priest's Meadow'. In the forest to the north is *Frulyckan* 'Lady's Field' – perhaps a vestigial reference to the 'lady of the woods', or forest spirit, of traditional belief. On Storsjön we find *Käringholmen*, perhaps the 'Islet of the Sorceresses'.

People have in addition used a variety of means to move around the landscape: between settlements, to the parish church, on lakes and rivers, out to meadows, pastures and fields, hunting grounds and fishing places. Roads, paths, waterways, bridges, boardwalks, harbours, stations and so on thus form a communication structure in the cultural landscape, early elements of which are reflected in names such as *Vintervägen* 'Winter Road', *Timmerstigen* 'Timber Path' and *Gullbron* 'Golden Bridge' that we find on the map.

Finally, there are quite a number of place-names that do not immediately appear to serve any of the specific functions outlined above, beyond distinguishing places and helping people to find their way. These include many nature names, such as *Djupsjön* 'Deep Lake', *Storsjön* 'Great Lake', *Orrberget* 'Black Grouse Hill' and *Storskogen* 'Great Forest'.
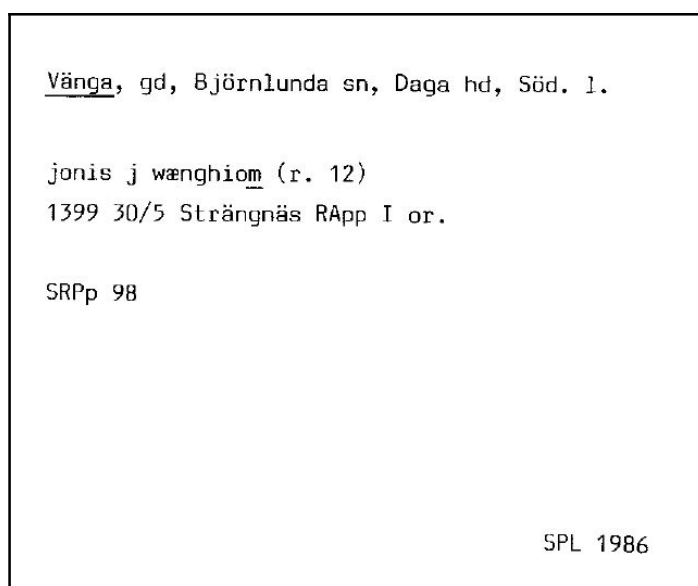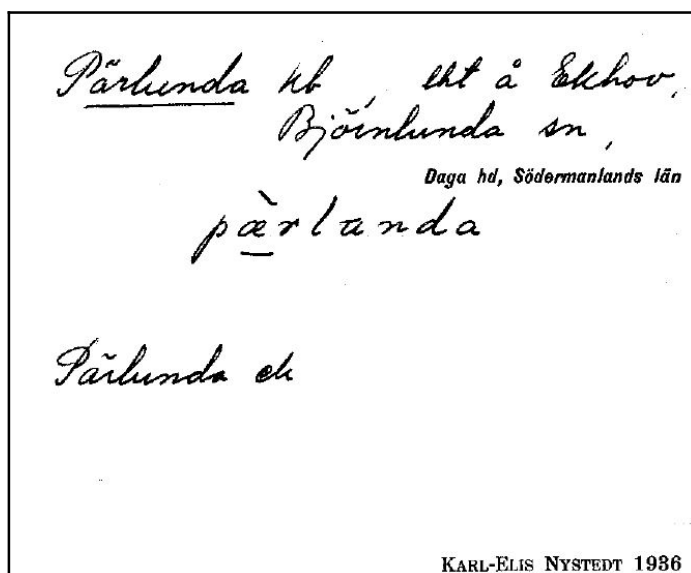
At the Institute for Language and Folklore's Department of Onomastics in Uppsala, which has one of the world's largest collections of place-names, it is possible to check, for instance, the earliest recorded occurrences and the pronunciations of names. The index card at the top tells us that Karl-Elis Nystedt, working in the field in 1936, recorded Pärlunda as the name of a small settlement in Björnlunda parish in Södermanland.

The lower card is from the collections of 'early name forms' from the same parish, and shows that the village name Vänga is attested as early as 1399 in a dated letter from Strängnäs. The letter refers to a certain 'Jonis i wænghiom' (Jöns in Vänga). Both these names are now included in Lantmäteriet's basic geodata.

3   What is good place-name practice?

The Swedish term god ortnamnssed – 'good place-name practice' – was coined in the late 20th century, when there was much discussion in Sweden about whether or not the country needed a law on place-names. The term captures the broad approach to the direction and aims of place-names policy and standardisation that became increasingly dominant during that century, according to which as much account needs to be taken of the function and content (reference, meaning) of names as of their external form (spelling, inflection). Then, as now, Lantmäteriet and the Institute for Language and Folklore were key players in the debate about and efforts to promote the standardisation and preservation of place-names in a cultural heritage context. The Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Local Heritage Federation also pressed for statutory protection for the intangible cultural heritage which place-names represent. A government inquiry into 'The Value and Preservation of Place-Names' (SOU 1982:45), despite its many merits, did not result in a Place-Names Act, although it did lead to the creation of the Place-Names Advisory Board (see 1.1), which was a success in itself. It would take another inquiry report, 'Protecting the Cultural Heritage' (SOU 1996:128), and a number of motions to the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament), to secure statutory support for the preservation of place-names, which was introduced in 2000. Despite their intangible character, place-names were put on a par with other forms of cultural heritage and given a section of their own in Chapter 1 of the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds, now the Historic Environment Act, under the heading *Good place-name practice* (see above).

The provisions of the Act restrict the scope of application of good place-name practice to the work of central and local government and identify 'names that have been approved by Lantmäteriet' as the names and name forms that should serve as a guide to others. These names have been scrutinised from a linguistic and ono-mastic point of view. While the Act does not expressly require name givers other than those working in central and local government (see Chapters 4 and 5 below) to observe good place-name practice, clearly it can scarcely be of benefit to anyone for several competing names or name forms to develop for one and the same entity. Deliberately persisting in something that goes against the letter and spirit of the law is not compatible with good place-name practice and should be avoided. If one person spells a place-name *Ön*, another *Öön*, a third *Öhn* and so on, it becomes difficult, for instance, to search for the place in a GPS system. The variation creates uncertainty and confusion. A name with a single spelling is practical and efficient.

The relevant section of the Act defines good place-name practice in four bullet points (see Chapter 1 for the entire text of the section). The last of these concerns the use of place-names in areas where minority languages are spoken (see Chapter 6), while the other three apply more generally. Below, each of these three bullet points will be illustrated by a concrete case study, but first a few words about what they have in common, namely the concept of 'established by long usage'. The

prominent position given to 'long usage' in the section is a clear reflection of the way the view of names as cultural heritage has been strengthened and the focus of place-names policy and standardisation in recent decades has shifted from regulating to preserving names.

3.1 What do 'long usage' and 'established by long usage' mean?

When place-names are questioned or threatened in terms of their form, spelling or very existence, they are often defended with reference to long usage or tradition, in Swedish *hävd*. 'The name has long been used in the area and should not …', 'The name is traditionally spelt…' and similar wordings can be used both by private individuals and by authorities responsible for place-names. As we have seen, the Historic Environment Act, too, makes frequent use of the expression 'established by long usage'. But when does a name become established by long usage, and what in fact constitutes 'long usage'? Swedish dictionaries define *hävd* as meaning 'old custom', 'long-established practice', 'confirmation provided by long-standing tradition', and clearly all these definitions are open to interpretation in several respects – not least as regards the timescale and extent of the usage concerned. How are we to understand 'old', 'long-established' and 'long-standing'? How many, and which, people must have shared the custom, practice or tradition? It is of course impossible to give exact figures, a specific number of years or people, but the older a name is and the more people who have used it, the more established by long usage it will be. A name should have been in reasonably general use for a couple of generations before it can be regarded as safely established by long usage.

In general, there is probably significant consensus, though it may be difficult to describe, about long usage. But 'long usage' is a relative concept, which in itself creates an evident risk of conflict. Two differing views can easily collide, two different perspectives on time and space, two competing interpretations of long usage. On the one hand, there is a local, individual interpretation, according to which 'old', 'long-established' and 'long-standing' tend to coincide with a person's own childhood, their own lifetime, or perhaps the generations immediately before them, and which links the practice, tradition and confirmation in question to the person's own immediate family or circle of friends, or perhaps the rest of the place or local area in which the person lives. On the other hand, there is a national, general interpretation, in which the perspective stretches far back in time, the last hundred years sometimes represent something short-lived and perhaps tem-

'So where're you from?'
'Like… Rännelanda'

WHAT FUTURE FOR OUR PLACE-NAMES…?

porary, and the relevant practice and confirmation are related to the known history of the entire region or country and, to be entirely legitimised, presuppose a wider circle of name users. From one standpoint, place-names can, with reference to long usage, be made into a local, almost a private, matter. From the other – also with reference to long usage – they become a matter more for the entire population of the country, with the aim of achieving an official, uniform form and spelling which, as far as possible, are both historically based and in line with general Swedish usage. It is chiefly with this latter perspective in mind that Sweden's place-names authorities have long operated, and that the concepts of 'long usage' and 'good place-name practice' are now interlinked.

It is important to remember that place-names are no one's private property. Whatever our relationship may be to a place-name, we do not own it. Names are part of language and belong to us all.

3.2   Some case studies

Let us look more closely, then, at the provisions of the Act and attempt to apply them to a few concrete cases. The examples are drawn (in a slightly reworked form) from the National Heritage Board's publication on 'Place-names and the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds: On the interpretation and application of the concept of good place-name practice', issued in 2001 when the original provisions on the subject had just been passed. That publication includes additional specific cases.

3.2.1   Skinnåkra

The owner of the property Skinnåkra 1:3 applied for permission to change the register-district name (see 4.1.2) *Skinnåkra* to *Åkra*, on the grounds, first, that *Skinnåkra* was a name that was difficult 'to understand and remember correctly', and second, that the name did not fit well with the business he eventually intended to run on the property. The application could be tested against the first bullet point of the Act:

- place-names established by long usage shall not be changed without good cause

The questions to be considered, then, were whether *Skinnåkra* was a name established by long usage and whether the applicant had good cause. *Skinnåkra* is one of a group of related names containing the element *åkra*. There is no record of a name consisting only of *Åkra*. Since the 18th century, *Stora Åkra* and *Lilla Åkra* have been recorded in land registers in a variety of forms (*Stora Åkrarna*, *Stora Åkran*, *Stora-Åkran* etc.). Regardless of the written forms, the local, authentic pronunciations of these names have long been (and remain) *Storåkra* and *Lillåkra*.

Belonging to the same group is a third settlement, the *Skinnåkra* we are concerned with here, previously *Skinn(ar)torp*, recorded in the latter form in land registers from the 1760s onwards. In records of names collected locally in 1936 and 1944, we can read 'Skinnåkra, see Skinntorp' and 'Skinntorp = Skinnåkra. Skinntorp not in common use'. The name *Skinntorp*, in other words, was not used in the area and was accordingly removed from the property register in 1928, whereas *Skinnåkra* had been introduced alongside *Stora Åkra* on the large-scale economic map as early as 1905. The property unit *Skinnåkra* 1:1 was formed in 1904 and *Skinnåkra* 1:3 in 1950. It would thus seem that *Skinnåkra* has been used for a hundred years as a register/register-district name and for even longer as a settle-

ment name generally. It can accordingly be said to be clearly established by long usage, whereas the proposed name *Åkra* is newly coined and not established by any usage at all. Nor is there any evidence that the name *Skinnåkra* is particularly difficult to understand and remember, i.e. more difficult, for example, than nearby *Skylsätter* and *Granboängen*. In brief, there was hardly 'good cause' to change the established name. The fact that the property owner *wished* to change it or had a firm view as to its suitability was not sufficient reason. His application therefore had to be refused.

3.2.2   Wanäs or Vanäs?

A cemetery in Karlsborg in Västergötland was to be named. The local heritage society proposed the name *Wanäs kyrkogård* on account of the link with a fortress called *Vanäs fästning*, which was in fact the reason the cemetery came into existence. Quite regardless of the merits of the proposed name in any other respect, this case can serve to illustrate the second bullet point of the Act:

> • place-names in general shall be spelt in accordance with generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness, unless spelling forms established by long usage justify otherwise

We are concerned here with the name pair *Vanäs*/*Wanäs*, but the same arguments can, by and large, be applied to all similar cases: *Väsby*/*Wäsby*, *Vallby*/*Wallby*, *Vreta*/*Wreta*, *Väster-*/*Wäster-* etc. According to the Act, place-names are to follow generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness, i.e. in terms of orthography be in line with the Swedish language in general, as codified in the most recent edition of the Swedish Academy Glossary (*Svenska Akademiens ordlista*), unless long usage justifies otherwise. This is a principle and practice of Swedish name standardisation that has been followed for decades and which now finds further support in the Act.

The spelling of both ordinary words and names used to be far more arbitrary and unregulated than it is today. When the orthography of Swedish was reformed around the turn of the 20th century, a number of spelling variants, such as *quarn*, *hvilken*, *winter*, *räfven*, *begrafning* etc., were dropped altogether in favour of the present-day forms *kvarn*, *vilken*, *vinter*, *räven*, *begravning* etc. So there is no reason to spell the name *Vanäs* other than as *Vanäs* with a *V* (not a *W*, which is no longer used in Swedish other than in personal names). In general, there is no reason to fight for archaic spellings specifically in place-names. Their cultural and historical value and the memories and traditions etc. associated with them lie in the actual name and the place, and not at all in the spelling.

Are there any spelling forms established by long usage, then, that justify otherwise? No, hardly. *Vanäs* probably contains the Old Swedish word *vadhi* 'boundary'. The name has been known since the 16th century and, over the years, has been spelt with either a *W* or a *V*, in no systematic fashion (*Wænäs* 1540, *Vadenäs* 1544, *Wadenes* 1545 etc.).

Even if the older spelling *Wanäs* with a *W* has been retained by the local heritage society or in other local contexts, that is not enough to invoke 'spelling forms established by long usage' as a reason for continuing to spell the name with a *W*. To justify doing so, the divergent spelling would have to have wider support and be used more generally in society. The wording of the law is not entirely unequivocal on this point, but from the legislative history of the Act it is perfectly clear that the provision permitting exceptions for spelling forms established by

long usage does not cover old-fashioned spellings generally.

Applying the principles of good place-name practice, then, the spelling used for the cemetery should be *Vanäs.*

3.2.3 Lidköping (vid) Vänern

On several occasions in the 1980s and 1990s, the municipality of Lidköping sought approval to change the place-name *Lidköping* to *Lidköping Vänern*, and later to *Lidköping vid Vänern* (Lidköping-on-Vänern). The reason for the request was the frequent confusion of *Lidköping* with *Linköping* in the neighbouring province of Östergötland. Mix-ups most commonly occur with postal services, but deliveries of goods by road, rail and boat are also said to have sometimes ended up in the wrong town. This of course raises the principle illustrated in 3.2.1 above, namely that place-names established by long usage (the form *Lideköping* was recorded as early as 1446) should not be changed without good cause, but it also highlights the third bullet point of the section on good place-name practice:

 • the impact on names established by long usage shall be taken into account in the formation of new place-names

In the case of *Lidköping*, it is perhaps not so much a question of creating an entirely new place-name, as of making a significant change, but nonetheless it needs to be *taken into account* what impact it will have on the rest of the name stock – existing and future – if a name such as *Lidköping vid Vänern* is officially accepted. The Act does not say in concrete terms what should or should not be done when new place-names are formed, but its wording requires us to *take into account*, i.e. think about and have regard to, the consequences which a proposed name will have for individual names already in existence and for the naming system as a whole. Official name givers, in other words, have to try to view a proposed name in its context: in time, in space and in relation to existing name types.

The first time Lidköping applied for a change of name – on that occasion, just to *Lidköping Vänern* – its request was rejected. When the municipality reapplied with the variant *Lidköping vid Vänern*, that too was turned down. There were many reasons for these rejections – even though, at the time, there was no Act to fall back on – but the most important one was that both these name variants were unhistorical and completely at odds with Swedish place-name traditions. The name *Lidköping* (*vid*) *Vänern* would admittedly build on a type of name that exists in other countries, e.g. English *Stratford-upon-Avon* and German *Frankfurt am Main*, but it would be entirely on its own in the Swedish place-name stock and could set an undesirable precedent. Name givers in less regulated contexts could create a host of new names that would depart from the historically evolved nomenclature of Sweden and therefore risk being difficult to use. Linguistic constructions such as 'Lidköping vid Vänerns gator' ('Lidköping vid Vänern's streets'), 'Lidköping vid Vänerns kommun' ('Lidköping vid Vänern Municipality'), 'idrottsplatsen i Lidköping vid Vänern' ('the sportsground in Lidköping on [or by] Vänern') would be heavy and unwieldy, and could even be misunderstood.

Foreign patterns of various kinds should not of course be resisted because they are foreign, but rather – if this is the case – because they do not fit in well with the Swedish language more generally and therefore risk complicating the use of the names concerned. An officially adopted name *Lidköping vid Vänern*, moreover, would be different from the one that has been established and current in general

and local usage since time immemorial, namely *Lidköping* (with somewhat varying pronunciations). This would probably result in a longer, official name existing alongside a shorter, more unofficial one. When would one be used and when the other?

After taking into account in this way the impact which the proposed name would (or could) have on other names established by long usage, the country's place-names authorities came to the conclusion that the municipality's arguments for a change of name did not carry enough weight, and the request was therefore rejected. Today, it could be maintained with reference to the Act that introducing names like *Lidköping vid Vänern* would be incompatible with good place-name practice.

3.2.4 Rosengatan

Regarding the formation of new place-names, the text of the Act offers no direct guidance on what name givers are to think about. All it expressly requires is that 'the impact on names established by long usage shall be taken into account'. However, this must mean, for one thing, that care has to be taken to avoid creating place-names that could easily be confused with other place-names and hence have an unwelcome impact on existing names established by long usage and cause problems for the people who use them.

A group of property owners in the district of Solhem in west Stockholm applied for the present *Avestagatan* 'to have restored to it its original name of Rosengatan (Rosenvägen according to the land-register map for the municipal community of Solhem drawn up […] in 1932)'. The background to this was that Solhem, along with most of the old parish of Spånga, was incorporated in Stockholm in 1950 and in that connection underwent a review of its names, with a view to eliminating collisions of names at least within the same municipality. Until then, street names in Spånga and Stockholm (as in many other places) had been allowed to develop in a less regulated manner and fairly independently of those in neighbouring areas. The problem of identical names across Greater Stockholm is one that very much persists, however. In and around the capital there were, in 2001, 13 different instances of *Granitvägen*, 11 of *Gökvägen*, 7 of *Hasselstigen*, 10 of *Industrivägen*, 6 of *Koltrastvägen*, 14 of *Kyrkvägen*, 9 of *Kyrkogårdsvägen* and 13 of *Skördevägen*, to take just a few examples. *Rosenvägen* exists in four municipalities in Stockholm county, and *Rosengatan* exists both in Sundbyberg and adjacent to a block called *Rosenbusken* in Norrmalm in Stockholm. *Rosengatan* was already in common use for the latter street when the name was officially adopted in 1879.

Street names are the most widely used way of indicating location and directing traffic in towns and cities. Introducing yet another *Rosengatan* or *Rosenvägen* (newly coined or revived) in the existing situation would scarcely represent good place-name practice. Stockholm's Name Drafting Committee therefore recommended that the property owners' application be rejected. In addition, of course, a change from *Avestagatan* to *Rosengatan* (*Rosenvägen*) had to be considered in relation to the first bullet point of the Act, about place-names established by long usage not being changed without good cause. This, too, is an argument against changing the name, as there is no good reason to do so.

4 Place-names and central government

4.1 Lantmäteriet

The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, Lantmäteriet, also serves as Sweden's national place-names authority. Its responsibilities in that area are to officially adopt place-names, coordinate the place-name activities of central government, and provide advice and make recommendations relating to place-names. Lantmäteriet determines the names used in the Real Property Register (*fastighetsregistret*) and other place-names, unless this is the responsibility of some other authority. Another important role is to determine the names used in basic geodata, i.e. on maps and in databases. Lantmäteriet's work relating to the standardisation and preservation of place-names is designed to promote a system of place-names that is well managed and fit for purpose.

4.1.1 Place-names in the Real Property Register

A feature common to all the names appearing in the Real Property Register is that they are regulated by the Real Property Register Ordinance (2000:308). Under the provisions of this Ordinance, block names are decided by municipalities (see 5.1.1), and register-district names (see 4.1.2), 'special names' and Sami name forms (see 4.1.3) – both changed and newly created ones – by Lantmäteriet. Municipalities are required to consult Lantmäteriet before making decisions about block names.

'We need a bit of order here!'

LAND REGISTER 1524, completed c. 1540

Lantmäteriet consults extensively on register-district names, with the property owners concerned, the Institute for Language and Folklore, the National Heritage Board and normally also the municipality in question. Regarding special names and Sami name forms, it consults the Institute for Language and Folklore, but in these cases, too, the municipality may be consulted as well. Lantmäteriet can consider a register-district name on its own initiative, but it usually does so in response to an application from one or more property owners, who may wish to change or replace such a name. To be regarded as a concerned party with respect to a name in the Real Property Register, a person or legal entity must be a property owner within the register district in question. The decision reached by Lant-

mäteriet can be appealed to the Administrative Court in Falun. A concerned party unhappy with the Administrative Court's decision can seek permission to appeal to the Administrative Court of Appeal in Sundsvall.

4.1.2 Register-district names

Register-district names (traktnamn) is a technical term for the names used in the Real Property Register that form part of the designations for individual property units. The term was coined in 1966 as part of preparations for a new, computerised Real Property Register.

Details of all of Sweden's 3.2 million property units are entered in the Real Property Register. The computerised register now used was created over a 20-year period from the 1970s to 1995. It covers both rural and urban areas, unlike its predecessor, which consisted of separate rural and urban property registers. As part of a reform of property designations, municipalities were able to choose which system they wished to adopt, with the result that some, including Gävle and Uppsala, opted to use register-district names only, while others, such as Stockholm and Nässjö, chose to use both register-district and block names (*kvartersnamn*). For a property to be registered with a block name, block-name designations must already be in use in the place in question, and the property must be entirely or largely within an area constituting or resembling a block.

Each property unit has a unique designation in the Property Register, for instance *Sibo 1:30 in the municipality of Bollnäs*. In this example, the register-district name consists of the village name *Sibo*. As property units included in the register are identified with reference to their municipality, the name of the municipality also forms part of the register designation, in this case Bollnäs. The reference to the municipality gives the property an individual identity and makes every designation unique at a national level.

The Real Property Register contains around 80,000 register-district names and 20,000 block names that form part of designations for currently existing property units. Register-district names generally consist of village names, which means, conversely, that basically all of Sweden's village names are register-district names.

In rural areas, names of individual properties, formed around the turn of the 20th century when they were divided off from village land, may also serve as register-district names. One of Sweden's commonest place-names, *Fridhem*, is an example of such a name. In urban areas, names of districts of the town commonly serve as register-district names and form part of the designations used, for example, for areas of land consisting of streets or parks.

Most residential properties in urban areas have designations involving block names, e.g. *Rosen 2* in the municipality of Södertälje. In old town centres, block names may go back a long way, recalling crafts or other activities once carried on in the area, e.g. *Bryggeriet* 'The Brewery' and *Kopparslagaren* 'The Coppersmith'. Nowadays, it is common in the outer areas of towns to use 'group' or 'thematic' names, drawing the names in a given area from a single subject category, such as birds, authors or space travel (see 5.1.2).

The provisions on register-district names mean that the spelling of such names is determined on a statutory basis. The way names are spelt in the Real Property Register in turn guides the spelling of the corresponding settlement names in Lantmäteriet's basic geodata, place-names register and cartographic databases. By virtue of the provisions on good place-name practice, the register-district names in the Property Register thus serve as a standard and guide for the handling of place-names by central and local government, for example on road signs and in the determination of addresses.

4.1.3   Special names and Sami name forms

Alongside its register-district name, a property may have what is known as a *special name* (*särskilt namn*) recorded in the Property Register. This is not part of the property designation, but a name characterising the property or properties concerned. The same special name may be registered for several properties. An individual property, on the other hand, cannot have more than one special name, nor can it have the register-district name recorded as such a name. Special names must either be settlement names established by long usage, or names that were once, but no longer are, part of the property designation (cf. 3.1). For example, the farm names in the large villages of northern Västergötland, included in the earlier land register, now constitute special names of this kind: *Storegården* 'Great Farm', *Skattegården* 'Freehold Farm', *Länsmansgården* 'County Sheriff's Farm' etc. Special names are always scrutinised from a linguistic and a cultural heritage point of view by the Institute for Language and Folklore. Lantmäteriet decides on these names and records them in the Property Register, but they are not always shown on maps.

A *Sami name form* is a variant of a special name and may either be a settlement name established by long usage (see above), or a Sami form of the register-district name. At present there are still technical limitations when it comes to indicating certain diacritic signs used in Sami names in the Property Register. In such cases, the name is entered without the diacritics. This problem is expected to be overcome in due course, once new technical solutions are in place. The correct Sami forms of such names can, though, be given in geographical information, on maps and in databases.

4.2   The Institute for Language and Folklore

The remit of the Institute for Language and Folklore (*Institutet för språk och folk-minnen*) is to collect, preserve, research and publish material relating, inter alia, to place-names. Its place-name work is carried on at departments in Gothenburg and Uppsala, and its collections of place-names comprise, in all, some 10 million index cards. Computerisation is in progress, with the aim of making all this material available digitally. As an authority responsible for standardisation and preservation of place-names, the Institute comments on applications concerning the adoption of place-names and scrutinises proposed names for use in basic geodata. Most of this is done collaboratively with Lantmäteriet, a form of cooperation that has existed in various forms for over a century. The Institute's Department of Onomastics in Uppsala (*Namnarkivet i Uppsala*) employs a Names Advisory Officer, with overall responsibility for place-names standardisation within the Institute.

4.3   The Swedish National Heritage Board

The Swedish National Heritage Board (*Riksantikvarieämbetet, RAÄ*) oversees implementation of the Historic Environment Act, including the section on good place-name practice referred to above. This makes the Board an important agency in the handling of place-name issues. The National Heritage Board is one of the bodies consulted on register-district names in the Real Property Register.

The Board also records names of ancient monuments and other cultural remains in its cultural heritage information system, which is published digitally on its website. These names are supplied to Lantmäteriet for subsequent presentation in its basic geodata.

4.4   The Swedish Transport Administration

The Swedish Transport Administration (*Trafikverket*) primarily deals with place-names in connection with the provision of road signs, naming of road traffic infrastructure, and publication of maps providing detailed road information. At a practical level, for roads maintained by central government, names are handled by regional units of the Administration. Names of interchanges (junctions between roads with grade separation and linked by ramps) are presented every year in county administrative boards' summary reports on roads etc.

The credibility of direction signage is of great importance for road safety and navigation. Good place-name practice requires the place-names shown on road signs to agree with those decided by Lantmäteriet. The Transport Administration therefore regularly consults Lantmäteriet and municipalities on place-name matters. Every year, several hundred requests are made for changes or additions to existing signs incorporating place-names along roads maintained by central government. For place-names shown on road signs, the spelling rules presented in Chapter 10, *A practical guide to writing place-names*, are applied.

4.5   Other place-name stakeholders

Besides the central government agencies mentioned above, there are a number of authorities, organisations and other stakeholders with more limited or targeted, but nevertheless important, activities relating to place-names. They may be part of central government (such as the Swedish Transport Agency, *Transportstyrelsen*, which decides the names of railway stations, junctions etc.), formerly linked to the

state (the Church of Sweden; see below), or made up of representatives of various central government bodies and other organisations (the Geographical Names Network; see below). They may also be local government bodies or private entities, such as estate agencies, advertising agencies or construction companies, which have no formal right to determine names, but nevertheless seek and are in a position to launch and market place-names in various contexts.

For further information, see Chapter 5, on place-names and local government, and the examples of decision-making bodies in Appendix 1.

4.5.1   The Church of Sweden

The Church of Sweden (*Svenska kyrkan*) decides the names of ecclesiastical entities, such as parishes, benefices, deaneries and federations of parishes. Procedures for reaching such decisions are set out in the Church Ordinance, which provides that it is normally the diocesan council (*stiftsstyrelsen*) of each diocese that determines the names of parishes. Before the name of a territorial parish or a benefice is determined, however, the Institute for Language and Folklore and Lantmäteriet have to be given the opportunity to state their views. As from 2016, the district (*distrikt*) has replaced the ecclesiastical parish as the area used for population registration purposes. (See 8.4 and 8.5 for further details.)

4.5.2   The Geographical Names Network

To increase awareness and understanding of how foreign names of countries and other important geographical areas and places in the world should be used, a Geographical Names Network (*Namnvårdsgruppen*) has been established. It brings together a range of organisations involved in various ways with names and their standardisation. The network includes representatives of Lantmäteriet, the Institute for Language and Folklore (both the Department of Onomastics in Uppsala and the Language Council of Sweden), Uppsala University, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Centre for Terminology (TNC, since 2018 part of the Institute for Language and Folklore), Sveriges Radio, the Swedish Standards Institute (SIS), the EU institutions and the Institute for the Languages of Finland. These bodies form a core group, which is supported by a wider network to ensure that its work reflects a broad consensus.

The Geographical Names Network is concerned with geographical names of all kinds. Its main focus is on how foreign names should be handled in Sweden and how Swedish place-names should be used in international contexts. The network is consulted on certain name questions, including those relating to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' publication *Utrikes namnbok* (a list of translations of names of Swedish authorities and organisations, official titles etc., together with names of countries and designations for their nationals).

In addition, the network's activities encompass a wider range of name issues, including, for example, foreign personal names, names of organisations and authorities, and official titles in the public sector.

'Aa bella Napoli!'
        'Oh, he means Naples'

The Geographical Names Network also seeks to develop Swedish terminology in the area of names. Its recommendations are of use in many different professional fields, from teaching and journalism to travel, media and public administration.

The Fältöversten shopping centre (popularly known as Fältan) in the Fältöversten block in Östermalm, Stockholm – an example of a block name being given a secondary use (cf. 5.1.1).

5 Place-names and local government

In practice, Sweden's municipalities have extensive responsibilities for naming and name standardisation, although these are not regulated by statute (with the exceptions of block names in the Real Property Register and location addresses; see 5.1.1 and 5.2 below). It seems natural that municipal authorities should name entities linked to their own services, such as schools, day nurseries and sports facilities. And also that they should give names to various administrative entities that are established, such as social services districts and school management areas. Names of streets, roads, squares, parks and other public places are also by convention a municipal responsibility. As a result, the country's municipalities are responsible for the great majority of the new names given on an official basis today, and these names often have a major impact on society.

Municipal decision-making powers relating to place-names are vested in the municipal council, although the council can delegate these powers to its executive committee or some other municipal committee. In many cases this is what happens, but which committee is given responsibility for such questions varies from one municipality to another. Most commonly, decisions are taken by the planning and building, environmental services or equivalent committee. This is the case in roughly half the country's municipalities. In around a quarter, the full municipal council takes the decisions, and another quarter of municipalities have delegated name questions to their executive committee or cultural affairs committee. Finally, a number of municipalities have a special names committee or the like with decision-making powers. This may consist entirely of elected councillors, but it may also include various specialists.

5.1 Creating new names

The most extensive area of activity in Sweden today regarding place-names is the naming by municipalities of new urban blocks (see 5.1.1) and of streets, roads and public places. It is all the more important, therefore, that municipal authorities comply with good place-name practice in their work.

We see street names on signs on a daily basis, we use them to find our way and to tell others where we live, and they form part of the addresses on the letters we write and receive. Under the Historic Environment Act, municipalities have a responsibility to pursue a sound place-names policy, both by preserving existing street names and creating new ones based on the principles of good place-name practice. As we have seen, the Act states among other things that:

- place-names established by long usage shall not be changed without good cause

- place-names in general shall be spelt in accordance with generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness, unless spelling forms established by long usage justify otherwise

- the impact on names established by long usage shall be taken into account in the formation of new place-names

In concrete terms, this means that municipalities should not change or replace existing street names without good cause (for example, merely because some person or organisation 'no longer likes the name', 'finds it ugly' or 'wants a more modern-sounding name'). It also means that new names should be spelt in accordance with current orthographic rules – and not, for example, with an archaic or decorative spelling, such as the invented examples *Qvarnvägen* (rather than *Kvarnvägen)*, *Dufveholmsgatan* (rather than *Duveholmsgatan*) or *ArenaTorget* (rather than *Arenatorget*). New names should not be too similar to other names already existing locally (see 5.1.2 below) – this could, at worst, result in undesirable, even disastrous, misunderstandings and confusion (e.g. deliveries, taxis or emergency services ending up at the wrong address) – but equally they should not diverge too much from the existing name stock of the place (e.g. names in a foreign language or that are hard to pronounce or spell). Such names can easily prove difficult to handle and may also set unfortunate precedents. To be most effective, new names should be designed to work well with the existing name stock. It should not be forgotten that the primary and most important function of names is to meet people's and wider society's need to be able to find and identify places. All other functions are secondary (see Chapter 2).

For official street names to work effectively in everyday language, they need to be easy to understand, pronounce and spell. This should be taken into account as far as possible in all place-names standardisation and planning. This means, for example, that municipalities should be wary of using personal names in street names, as personal names tend to be long and unwieldy, at the same time as many normal linguistic rules do not apply to them. On the contrary, it is precisely in such names that outlandish, old-fashioned and individual spellings flourish; we could take a common surname like *Löv, Löf, Lööf, Leuf, Leuv* etc. as an example (see also 5.1.4). Street names should in addition provide a model for name giving in other contexts, such as business names, commercial signage, advertising, and naming of stations, bus stops and public buildings. Municipalities therefore need to be very careful both in their actual choices of names and with the outer form, structure and spelling of the names.

In passing, it may be noted here that in Stockholm, Gothenburg and certain other towns there has long been a practice of using a capital letter for each individual word in multiple-word names. This is not correct in Swedish, nor is it compatible with good place-name practice. The main reason for not changing this is the cost involved: there are thousands of signs, for example. But a gradual shift to the practice applied in the rest of the country and laid down in the Historic Environment Act is still to be recommended.

Detailed advice on the spelling of place-names is given in Chapter 10, *A practical guide to writing place-names.*

5.1.1   Block names

One aspect of the official nomenclature of many urban areas, and one of the responsibilities of municipalities, is the block names (*kvartersnamn*) recorded in the Real Property Register. This is a typically Swedish and, to some extent, Finnish phenomenon. There are no models for it in other countries. In earlier times, many Swedish towns were divided into *fjärdingar*, that is, fourths or quarters, but following the major town and street planning initiatives of the 17th century, the rectangular blocks of buildings bounded by straight streets began to be named, first in Stockholm in the 1630s, then in Uppsala a little later that century, and subsequently in other towns as well. The names of these blocks were admittedly not very familiar to the general public, nor are they as a rule today, but they play an important part in town planning and in property registration, and are now often used secondarily in various contexts: as names of residential areas, shopping centres, tenant-owner associations, preschools, residential homes for the elderly, and so on. It is therefore important to apply good place-name practice to block names as well.

Block names can vary somewhat, but the great majority of them consist of a single word with a suffixed definite article, e.g. *Kristallkronan* 'The Chandelier', *Lampetten* 'The Bracket Lamp' and *Läslampan* 'The Reading Lamp' in one area of Stockholm, and *Böljan* 'The Wave', *Svallvågen* 'The Wash' and *Vågskvalpet* 'The Lapping of the Waves' in another. In these examples, the names are semantically related to one another in groups or categories (see 5.1.2 below concerning thematic names), but this need not be the case. Entirely independent block names – often based on something that exists or used to exist in the block in question – are also common.

Part of the Rinkeby district of west Stockholm, with street and block names. Most of the block names reflect the theme of 'milling', chosen because, until 1989, there were two old windmills on a small hill in the area.

As urban areas expand, the block system and the block names of the Real Property Register could encroach on the more traditional system of register-district names of the surrounding countryside. In such cases, municipal authorities should exercise a degree of caution and carefully consider the value of newly coined block names, compared with the older register districts and district names. In some cases, switching designations may obscure our understanding of the settlement history of the area, and also complicate certain types of legal inquiries relating to property.

5.1.2   Thematic names

As we have seen, many block names today form thematic groups or categories. This, too, is a fashion that gradually spread across the country, via Stockholm, in the 17th century, and street names were also affected. As far as streets were concerned, the inspiration came from abroad. Thematic naming was used in Amsterdam already in the late 16th century, and also, somewhat later, in Copenhagen. It was probably from those cities that Sweden derived this method of naming streets and blocks. *Kungsgatan* 'King Street', *Drottninggatan* 'Queen Street' and *Regeringsgatan* 'Government Street' are an early example from Stockholm.

In general, the natural starting point for all naming in municipalities should be to try to link new names to something that exists or used to exist in the neighbourhood, preferably something known to many name users, as this will help people find their way. The phenomenon in question may for example be an earlier settlement or activity, or perhaps a well-known and characteristic natural feature. Not uncommonly, though, so many new entities, situated close together, need to be named at the same time that the topographical and cultural historical background is not sufficient as a source of inspiration and ideas for names, however much we may wish to make use of it. Often both street and block names are needed at the same time. In such a situation, many name givers have recourse to thematic names, that is, to names that belong together logically and in terms of subject matter, but not necessarily with any natural connection with the area where they are to be used. *Falkvägen* 'Falcon Road', *Gökvägen* 'Cuckoo Road' and *Trastvägen* 'Thrush Road', for example, are street names on the theme of 'birds'; *Grekfararvägen* 'Varangian Road', *Miklagårdsvägen* 'Miklagard Road' and *Rökstensvägen* 'Rök Stone Road' (referring to a famous rune stone) are street names on the theme of 'Scandinavian ancient history and archaeology'; and *Grundet* 'The Shallow', *Holmen* 'The Islet' and *Kobben* 'The Rock' are block names on the theme of 'features surrounded by water'.

There are both pros and cons to thematic names. One advantage is that a clear and well-defined theme helps to place names in the right part of a municipality, making it somewhat easier for people to find their way. Name users learn that 'birds' belong in one area, 'Scandinavian ancient history and archaeology' in another and 'features surrounded by water' in a third. The more names there are in a thematic group, the easier it should be to recognise and remember. If, moreover, both block and street names are linked to the same theme, things should be made even clearer.

The aim when creating new thematic names should be to find simple, tangible and yet distinctive themes that do not too readily merge into one another (which can be quite difficult in large municipalities, where there are already many names and themes). The themes 'mushrooms' and 'wild plants', for example, have a good deal in common, as do 'artists' and 'writers', whereas 'mushrooms' and 'artists' are of course more distinct. It is unlikely to be common knowledge that the individual, say, behind the street name *Gustaf Lundbergs väg* was an artist and not a writer. It will on the other hand be obvious that *Gustaf Lundberg* is the name of a person and not a mushroom. This tells us something about how themes should, if possible, be chosen.

One drawback with thematic names is that the link between the names and the area named may be contrived, giving the names a highly artificial character. Another is that names inspired by a given theme – with no direct link to the real

world – lack individuality and distinctiveness, that is, people will easily find their way *to* the area concerned, but not as easily *within* the area. This is particularly true if the names are very similar in pronunciation or spelling. A 'bird' theme involving *Gökvägen*, *Hökvägen*, *Kråkvägen*, *Råkvägen*, *Vråkvägen* etc. would not be an example of good place-name practice. The names are too similar (cf. a corresponding group of English names such as *Pigeon Road*, *Wigeon Road*, *Bustard Road* and *Buzzard Road*). Names such as *Beckasinvägen*, *Blåmesvägen*, *Bofinksvägen*, *Gökvägen*, *Trastvägen* etc. would be a better choice, being more distinct from one another. If the names can also be linked to the local bird life, of course, then so much the better.

By and large, when creating a thematic group of names, it is a good idea to work on the basis of something that is, or once was, characteristic of the place. In the Liljeholmen/Årstadal area of south Stockholm, for instance, the alcohol monopoly Vin & Spritcentralen once had a large wine warehouse. Wine was delivered to it in bottles, but above all by tanker from every corner of the world, the wine then being stored in tanks and casks in underground cavities and subsequently bottled. These operations have now moved elsewhere, but they are remembered in modern block names such as *Druvklasen* 'The Bunch of Grapes', *Ekfatet* 'The Oak Cask', *Lagringen* 'The Ageing', *Vingården* 'The Vineyard', *Vinodlaren* 'The Vine Grower' and *Årgången* 'The Vintage', as well as in related street names such as *Ekfatsgatan*, *Vinodlargatan* and *Årgångsgatan*.

5.1.3   Choosing the final elements of names

One way of avoiding the uniformity of thematic names to some extent is to seek to systematically vary the final elements of street names (*-gatan* 'street', *-vägen* 'road', *-backen* 'hill', *-kroken* 'bend', *-slingan* 'loop' etc.). That is true, incidentally, of all naming in urban areas, not just when thematic names are used. If a consistent effort is made to use words signalling the character and function of the feature named, e.g. *gränd* '(blind) alley' to denote a cul-de-sac, *led* 'link' for a through route, *stig* 'path' for a footpath, *plan* 'square, open space' for an open space for vehicular traffic and parking, *torg* 'square, marketplace' for an open pedestrianised area etc., this will in time also be of some help to road users, and not least to emergency services. There are a great many conceivable final elements to choose from. At the same time, it should be remembered that there is no magic in the actual names. In Sweden, names ending in *-gatan* and *-vägen* are by far the most frequent, normal and familiar. There are thousands of them all over the country. And then there are a smaller number of street names containing Romance loanwords such as *aveny*, *boulevard*, *chaussé*, *esplanad* etc. Such names can of course also be used, but it should be done with care. Whether a given street is seen as elegant, charming, beautiful, sought after, grand or whatever it may be depends entirely on what it actually looks like, what there is there, what happens there and so on, not on its name. Indeed, there is a risk that a street with a fancy, up-market name may not quite live up to it, and then its use may easily invite ridicule, and who stands to gain from that?

5.1.4   Commemorative names

Among the more difficult matters that municipal naming bodies have to handle are proposals to honour a person by naming a street or public place after them. Why is this type of naming beset with such problems? Well, clearly it can be difficult to choose among the various candidates, possible or suggested. There are many deserving individuals, but only a few can be honoured in this way. It can be said that, to justify a commemorative name, the person concerned must deserve to

have a street named after them. But who decides that? Whose view carries most weight? This obviously has to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and it is hardly possible to lay down binding principles. Subjective values cannot be excluded. *Fadimes plats* in Uppsala, *Olof Palmes Gata* in Stockholm and *Tomas Tranströmers plats* in Västerås can serve to illustrate this. Fadime was the victim of an 'honour killing', Olof Palme a very combative politician, and Tomas Tranströmer a widely acclaimed, Nobel Prize-winning poet.

Other general requirements that can be laid down are that the person to be commemorated is dead, that at the time the name is given he or she is so well known that the public do not immediately need an explanation for the choice of name, and that the person in question has some connection with the place where the name is to be used. Many proposals to name something after a successful entertainer or sports personality have foundered on the fact that the individual concerned was still alive at the time. During his or her lifetime, an individual will be involved in a wide range of activities and contexts. Some give rise to enduring popularity and gratitude. But honour and renown can also be short-lived. It is wise to let the passage of time bring perspective to a person's life and achievements.

The writer Astrid Lindgren died in 2002 and there is now an *Astrid Lindgrens Terrass* in Vasa Park in Stockholm, opposite the building where for many, many years she had her home. But what connection does Martin Luther King have with Uppsala, apart from the fact that he would have attended a meeting there had he not tragically lost his life? Yet in the city centre there is now a *Martin Luther Kings plan*.

The fundamental problem with commemorative names, however, is that, as a rule, the whole naming situation is the wrong way round. In the natural way of things, all giving and coining of names involves the existence of a feature (a street, square, park etc.) that needs a name. With commemorative names, the reverse is true: there is a suggestion (or idea) for a name that needs a feature, and preferably a spectacular or at least a worthy one. No other names work in this way.

Consideration of a commemorative name usually begins with an organisation, a politician or an individual citizen wishing to honour a person's memory by having a street or place named after them. The arguments advanced are often wide-ranging and persuasive, describing the person's merits with great passion. The name givers are tasked with finding a suitable place to bear the desired name. In today's increasingly densely built communities, however, the great majority of places needing a name already have one. This means that – apart from simply rejecting the proposal – there are basically three options: (1) to wait patiently until a suitable feature (possibly) turns up as a result of new development, (2) to search for an unnamed feature and give it a commemorative name, and (3) to replace an older name with the new commemorative one proposed. All of these options involve drawbacks and difficulties.

With the first option – waiting – the timescale is unclear: no one knows when a suitable place will become available, causing impatience and disappointment on the part of those advocating the name. If a place needing a name does eventually come into existence, for instance in a newly developed area, the connection between the person waiting to be commemorated and the place will be entirely random. This is never a particularly happy outcome, and is in fact even more inappropriate with an individual commemorative name than with a thematic group of names celebrating several people. Best of all, of course, is if the person to be commemorated has a direct link with the place in question from having lived or worked there. The most typical and most easily justified commemorative names are of this kind. As a rule this is probably also how most of us view such names. If we come across a street or park name containing a personal name, we assume that there is a connection of some kind and ask ourselves what it is. We look for logic in the choice of name.

With the second option – finding an unnamed feature – we easily end up in places that are either peripheral or of such limited significance that they have not previously been considered to need a name at all: small open spaces, footpaths, areas of parks, green spaces or other locations which, many would say, are not on a par with the individual to be honoured. A name that was intended to honour someone may end up doing the very opposite.

With the third option – substituting the new name for an older one – there is a danger of coming into conflict with people and companies living or operating at the established address, and with the Historic Environment Act's provision that 'place-names established by long usage shall not be changed without good cause'. What is more, proposed commemorative names are sometimes difficult to reconcile with another provision of the Act, namely that place-names should be spelt in accordance with generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness. The problem, as noted earlier, is that personal names do not obey those rules. With street names containing such names, in other words, it can be particularly difficult to live up to the basic requirement that names should be easy to understand, pronounce and spell.

PETER'S ALLEY

'Well, isn't that nice!'

Naming streets and squares after individuals, then, is both sensitive and complicated. Many have asked themselves whether prolific use of commemorative names really does benefit the naming system as a whole or the people and society using the names. There are, after all, other ways of honouring a person's memory: a plaque, a work of art or something else – why not some form of decoration or memorial set in the ground? This would be a relatively easy but highly visible way of remembering deserving individuals. Good examples can be found in many places, like Vienna, where the names of a long succession of great composers are seen by thousands of passers-by every day in the central pedestrian precinct.

To conclude this section, we would refer to the United Nations resolution on commemorative naming practices adopted in 2002 by the almost one hundred member states – among them Sweden – that are actively involved in the UN's work on geographical names (see 9.1). A fundamental aim of the resolution is to reduce the use of commemorative names in general, with a particular focus on certain

aspects of the practice: it seeks to prevent political and commercial exploitation of – or by – famous people, and to avoid name decisions that are too emotionally based, opportunist or generally overhasty. The resolution therefore recommends states both to discourage commemorative names being given during the lifetime of the person in question, and to seek to establish a national 'waiting period', that is, a period of time that must elapse before the name of a deceased person can be used to designate a geographical feature. In Sweden, based on the UN resolution, the Place-Names Advisory Board addressed a written recommendation to all the country's municipalities in 2004 to introduce such a waiting period of 3–5 years. The recommendation read as follows:

Recommendation of the Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board
On the use of commemorative names

The Place-Names Advisory Board is an advisory body to the National Land Survey [now Lantmäteriet], the national place-names authority in Sweden. As well as from the National Land Survey itself, its members are drawn from Posten Sverige AB, the Swedish National Heritage Board, the Sami Parliament, the Institute for Language and Folklore, the Swedish Language Committee, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, the Church of Sweden, the Swedish Local Heritage Federation, the universities and the National Road Administration. The main responsibilities of the Advisory Board are to work with the National Land Survey to develop principles and formulate goals for sound policy relating to place-names and to disseminate information promoting good place-name practice in the country.

A commemorative name is a type of place-name used throughout the world to honour (commemorate) an individual: *Dag Hammarskjölds väg*, *Evert Taubes terrass*, *Raoul Wallenbergs torg* etc. Commemorative naming can be used successfully, on a basis of broad consensus, but it can also be misused and/or give rise to political and emotional unrest.

In line with United Nations Resolution VIII/2 (see below), adopted at the Eighth UN Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names (Berlin 2002), the Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board recommends the municipalities of Sweden and other name givers

- not to create new commemorative names based on the names of persons still living, and
- to practise commemorative naming within the municipality in such a way that a reasonable time, determined by the municipality itself, must have elapsed before the name of a deceased person may be used in place-names (e.g. in names of streets, squares and public places). As a reasonable time, a period of 3–5 years is recommended.

5.2   Location addresses

Traditionally, municipalities are responsible for determining addresses in built-up areas, where the address normally consists of a street or road name and a number. This has not been a problem, apart from the fact that administrative changes, such as the municipal reforms of the 1950s and 1970s, have given rise to name collisions. Many of the names in question, however, have been replaced. It proved more problematic when the old system of numbered letter boxes in rural areas began to be replaced with road names and numbers. These new addresses had no historical basis and upset a lot of people. Strong reactions also came, in particular, from local heritage organisations, but also from the Place-Names Advisory Board. Municipalities are now responsible for addresses in rural areas as well, and the background is as follows.

In future, national censuses in Sweden are to be based entirely on data from various registers. For that to be possible, there needs to be a nationwide register of dwellings, which Lantmäteriet has developed. Everyone residing in a multi-dwelling building is recorded in the population register under the apartment in which they live. Municipalities have assisted by determining addresses for all residential buildings. The aim is that all dwellings should have a unique address, which means among other things that the old letter-box addresses are being replaced by what are known as 'location addresses' (*belägenhetsadresser*). A location address always indicates where a place is located and identifies a phenomenon in that place. To serve its intended purpose, such an address has to be unique, that is, each location address can only occur once. It must unambiguously identify a single place. It follows from this that location addresses have to be assigned, determined and registered in a uniform manner and that some organisation has to be responsible for doing this in each geographical area. This task has been entrusted to municipalities: since 1 July 2006, they have been required under the Dwellings Register Act to determine addresses for all entrances to residential buildings. Under Section 25 of that Act, decisions on location addresses for dwellings are not subject to appeal.

'I'd have preferred Champs-Elysées…'

ROAD NAMES IN RURAL AREAS…

The Swedish Standards Institute (SIS) published its first standard in this area in 1998 (introducing the concept of location address), a revised standard in 2007, and a third edition in 2015 (SS 63 70 03:2015 *Geographic information – Location addresses – Concepts and principles*). A handbook accompanying this standard was published in 2010 (SIS-TR 33:2010), with a new edition appearing in 2016. The standard covers location addresses in Sweden and – together with the handbook – is intended to support both the work of municipalities in the area of addressing and determination of location addresses, and exchanges of data on such addresses.

Location addresses always contain place-names. It is these that make the address unique and unambiguous. At the same time, place-names are an important bearer of the country's cultural heritage, a fact reflected in the provisions on good place-name practice in the Historic Environment Act. Within the framework of good place-name practice, the standard also supports local traditions in addressing, and by incorporating existing names of villages, farms and houses in addresses it promotes the conservation of cultural heritage and safeguards the interests of the local heritage movement and others. In addition, the standard specifies which parts of location addresses are to be used in postal addresses, and the relationship between location address and other address concepts.

The standard states that location addresses are a way of indicating a place without the use of coordinates. Other indirect reference systems of this kind include statistical areas, electoral districts and property designations. Unlike many other reference systems, location addresses are familiar to the people living and working in the places concerned.

A location address always indicates *where* a place is, and is designed in such a way that it can be distinguished from other types of addresses. It must include what is called an *address area*, which can be linked to the place to which the location address refers. Address areas can either be roads, streets or the like, or groups of settlements, farms, development sites, industrial facilities or individual houses. *A location address indicates where a geographical place is located.* Since many places along a street or in a group of settlements are described by the same place-name, each place that is to be given a location address, the *address place*, has to be identified with a unique address place designation.

The main purpose of the advice given in the location addresses standard is to ensure that addresses have a suitable structure and composition. Considerations that are emphasised are that they should conform to Swedish addressing traditions and that they should help visitors to find the place in question. It is also desirable that addresses should be easy to display on signs.

The use of village, farm and house names in location addresses is one way (of several) in which our linguistic cultural heritage can be preserved. Introducing newly constructed names into these addresses, unconnected with the naming and linguistic practices of the place, would be a violation of that heritage.

In towns and other built-up areas, the location address is traditionally formed from a street name and a number. This system can also be used, for example, in planned second-home developments. A *street address area* is based on a road, street or other thoroughfare that has been given a name of its own (see Figure 1).
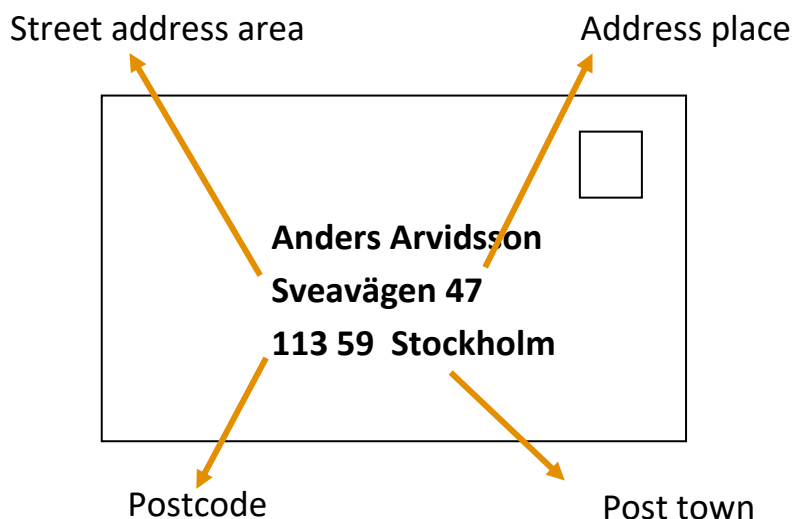
Street address area   Address place

Anders Arvidsson
Sveavägen 47
113 59 Stockholm

Postcode   Post town

Figure 1. Postal address using parts of a location address that includes a street address area.

For addressing in rural areas, the standard offers a choice of two systems: either village and house names (advocated by the Place-Names Advisory Board), or road names. The choice should be guided by established naming practices, and it should be borne in mind that the use of road names calls to mind urban addresses. Their introduction could change rural naming practices. A *village address area* serves to identify one or more address places using a name, such as a village name, which, within a given district of a municipality, uniquely identifies the location. When a village name is used in the address, the officially adopted spelling should be employed, as found both in the Real Property Register and on official maps (see Figure 2).
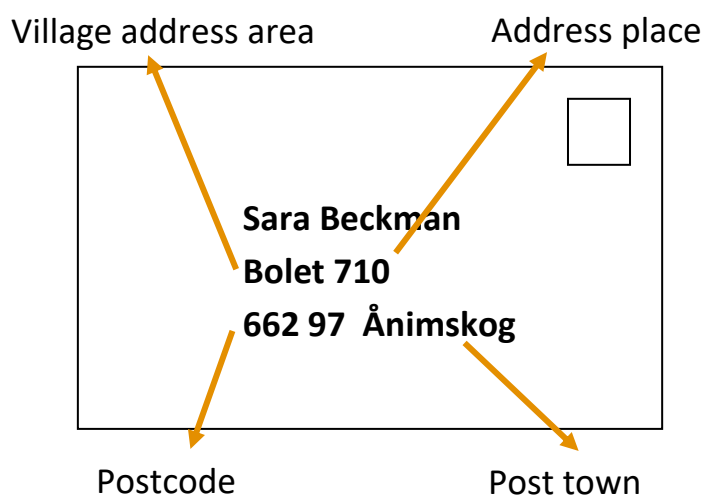
Village address area   Address place

Sara Beckman
Bolet 710
662 97 Ånimskog

Postcode   Post town

Figure 2. Postal address using parts of a location address that includes a village address area.

If, within a village address area, there is a need to use additional existing names to indicate the location more precisely or to preserve long-established names of individual or small groups of settlements (address places) within the address area,

then *house address areas* can be given. These are indicated by the use of farm, house and other settlement names established by long usage (see Figure 3).
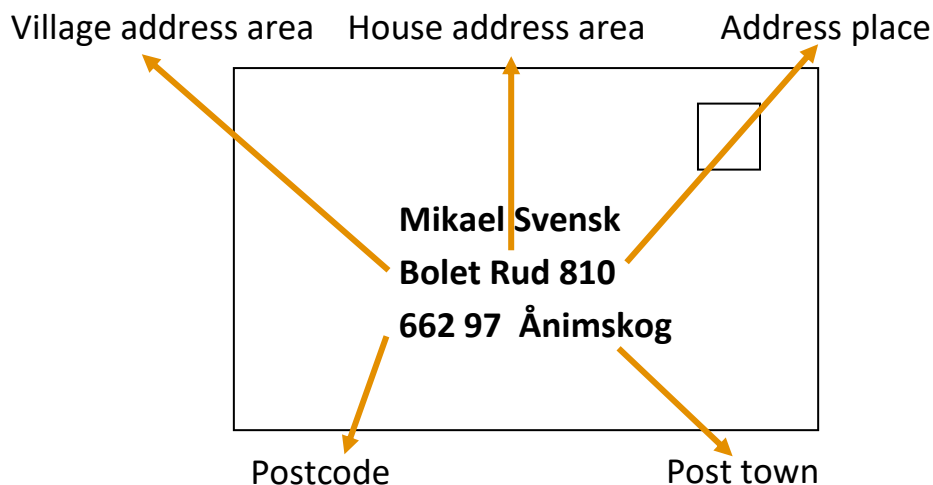

Village address area   House address area   Address place

Mikael Svensk
Bolet Rud 810
662 97 Ånimskog

Postcode   Post town

Figure 3. Postal address using parts of a location address that includes a house address area.

In addition, what are known as *popular names* can be used to refer to individual buildings (see Figure 4).

Village address area   Popular name   Address place

Eva Bohlin
Boadalen
Bolet 715
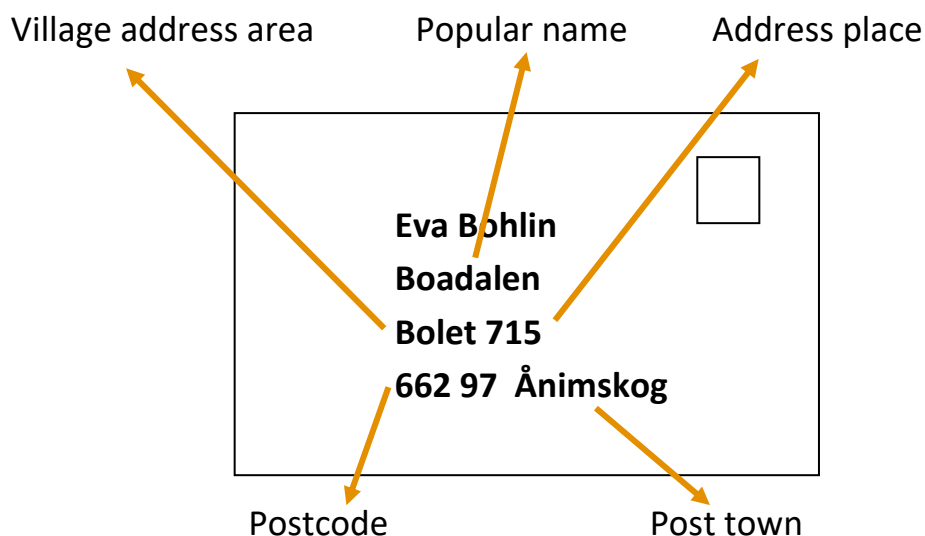**662 97 Ånimskog**

Postcode   Post town

Figure 4. Postal address using parts of a location address and a popular name.

Popular names are not part of the location address, but are included in the national address register kept by Lantmäteriet. Thus, a popular name is not used to distinguish addresses or make them unique, but should be seen as providing additional information, enabling individual address places to be given names of their own.

5.2.1 Postal addresses

A postal address is an address which postal operators need to deliver post to the place where it can reach the intended addressee. Rules on how postal addresses should be structured and written on postal items are set out in a standard (SS 61 34 01:2011 *Postal Services – Swedish postal address*). The postal address indicates a delivery point for post. It may be either geographical, stating the place where the addressee is to be found, or administrative. If it is administrative, the addressee has to collect post from the operator, e.g. where a box number or poste restante service is used, or have a postcode of their own. A geographical postal address is usually also associated with a letter box, erected either at an entrance, at the boundary of a property or together with a number of others. Letter boxes have to be marked with the name of the thoroughfare, village or house, the street or plot number, and the names of individuals. A geographical postal address always includes the thoroughfare, village or house name and the street or plot number from the location address. All postal addresses include a postcode (zip code) and post town. A postal address must be unambiguous. In the postal addresses standard, a delivery point location is defined as a 'postal address construct which describes a delivery point by means of a location address'. A postal address construct may consist of several postal address elements. Elements that can form part of a delivery point location include street or road name, village and/or house name, and street, road or plot number.

5.2.2 Location address = postal address?

Addresses need to be of practical use. It should be possible to use parts of a location address in a postal address. Normally, the name of the thoroughfare, village or house and the address place designation are to be used in what is referred to in the postal address standard as a delivery point specification. A person living in a house with the location address *Byvägen 3* in a place should use *Byvägen 3* as their postal address, together with the relevant postcode and post town name.

Location addresses form the basis for postal addresses. To create a postal address (delivery point specification), names and designations from the levels of street or village address area, house address area and address place are used, together with the postcode and post town. The location address and any apartment number have to fit on a maximum of two address lines of no more than 35 characters each. The examples above show what this can look like when written or printed out.

Names of post towns are decided by the Postcodes Council (*Postnummerrådet*). The post town name is the place-name that is written after the postcode. Before these names are decided, the Institute for Language and Folklore has to be given the opportunity to comment.

5.3 Unofficial names

In a municipality, as we have seen, numerous official place-names exist, including names of streets, squares, parks, blocks and districts of towns. As a rule, these names have been created, or at least scrutinised and approved, by a special group or committee set up for the purpose – the designations vary – with a certain level of expertise, a broad outlook, and experience of name planning and naming.

Alongside these official names, however, there are also a host of unofficial ones, both names that have arisen spontaneously and are used in natural contexts and day-to-day conversation, and names that have been more deliberately devised, shaped and launched by someone with a special interest of some kind, with a view to creating a certain impression, achieving a certain effect and evoking particular feelings or moods in the people using them. In this section we will also look a little closer at these unofficial names.

5.3.1 Names for 'nameless' places

In towns in particular (but also in the countryside), there are quite a number of place-names that have never been adopted by any official body, but which are nevertheless used by larger or smaller groups of name users. They may refer, for example, to small green or open spaces, hill stretches of roads, footpaths, street corners, meeting places or other locations that have simply never been named by the authorities, usually because no name has been considered necessary. Officially, these places are nameless. But *Busstorget* ('Bus Square', because the buses stopped there), *Korvtorget* ('Hot-Dog Square', because it had a hot-dog stand), *Mellanskogen* ('Middle Wood', a small grove where children played and climbed trees) and *Himlabacken* ('Hill to Heaven', because it was felt to be extremely long and steep) are a few authentic examples from different parts of Sweden of what such nameless places have been called in popular parlance.

An old view of Stora torget in Östersund, formerly known as Busstorget 'The Bus Square'. Today, the buses have been moved to Gustav III:s torg, a short distance away, and here too Busstorget is becoming increasingly common as an alternative to the official name.

Sometimes, unofficial names like these – if they are known – can serve as a starting point and a resource when a new official name is to be given to a street or block. Occasionally, an unofficial name may be 'elevated' to official status, rather than an entirely new and different name being created. Alternatively, the unofficial name may be included as part of a new official name, for example *Mellanskogen* in *Mellanskogsvägen*. It is never wrong, therefore, to carefully document these spon-

taneously arising popular names and the locations to which they refer. Every un-official name must of course be assessed and evaluated, like any proposal for a name, to ensure that it fits into the existing name stock and meets the law's requirements of good place-name practice.

5.3.2 Alternative names

Alongside these names for 'nameless' places, there are many officially named features that also have alternative, unofficial names: often shorter, such as *Kungsan* (< *Kungsträdgården*) and *Medis* (< *Medborgarplatsen*) in Stockholm, sometimes slang-like, such as *Plattan* 'The (Concrete) Slab' (Sergels Torg) in Stockholm and *Brottsunda* in Uppsala (< *Gottsunda*, *brott* 'crime' referring to the area's reputation for criminal activity), and often with an element of humour to them. Alternative names of this type, too, can be useful to know about and record as a complement to a municipality's official maps and stock of names. A denser, up-to-date network of names is useful to the police, taxi drivers, rescue services and other public services that need to find their way quickly and accurately, even in hard-pressed situations. Even if these names never attain official status and are never disseminated through official channels, there is much to be gained from collecting them and making them available for specific purposes and in relevant contexts.

5.3.3 Working names

The pace of change in society is rapid. Towns grow, new developments emerge in the form of residential, business and service areas, leisure and entertainment facilities and much more besides. Infrastructure changes. Physical planning progresses from the idea stage to detailed development plans, design and construction, and in a very short space of time the landscape takes on a new appearance and new functions, creating a need for new names. A basic rule is that efforts to ensure that careful thought is given to those names should begin as early as possible, and preferably continue and be followed up throughout the process.

It is not at all unusual for provisional names to arise spontaneously at the planning stage, on the drawing board or on the actual construction site. This is understandable, because working names of this kind are needed for a variety of reasons. But unfortunately, it means that such names may be more or less random and are not always appropriate. The people who coin them generally do not have the necessary overview of the existing name stock, experience of naming, or knowledge of linguistic principles or the historical context. Does the new name fit into the naming system of the municipality? Is it sufficiently easy to understand, pronounce and spell? Sometimes, though, these provisional working names become so well established that in practice it is impossible to replace them later with names decided on by the municipality. One way of avoiding such tendencies (and instead securing names that reflect good place-name practice) is to ensure that names receive attention as a natural part of the municipality's planning from the outset. Contact should be established from the word go between plan authors, planning officials, architects, contractors, and municipal bodies or officials responsible for names. Names should then be adopted in the plan at the same time as other elements of it are decided on.

5.3.4   'Estate agent names'

The approach described above can also, to some extent, counteract the tendency all too frequently shown by estate agents, architectural practices, housing companies and advertising agencies – and sometimes by municipalities' own planners and councillors – to create trendy and marketable names, taking little account of their linguistic suitability or of cultural heritage considerations. Such names, referred to here as 'estate agent names', are used to highlight the positive aspects of, say, a residential area and make it attractive on the market. *Place branding* is a well-known concept in modern marketing and physical planning, and includes the use of linguistic means, among them names that sell.

Selling names, of course, are not inappropriate in themselves, as long as they are not downright misleading, manifestly contrary to good place-name practice, or so patently 'selling' as to have the opposite effect. Among the tricks of the trade in this context, mention may be made of archaic spellings, excessive use of trendy name elements, including (in Sweden) elements drawn from English, and manipulative (mis)use of existing names. A few examples can serve to illustrate these various phenomena.

Area names such as **Edebyqvarn*, **Slottsengen*, **Leufstaskoog* and **Walla* (all invented) might be expected to impart a certain style and allure to the areas concerned, but would be quite unsuitable, as they are not spelt in accordance with accepted rules of linguistic correctness and conflict with good place-name practice in other respects. The fact that such names may once have been spelt this way is not a valid argument today. Archaic spelling has no place in modern-day naming practices. The areas in question would be no worse or better to live in if their names were (correctly) spelt **Edebykvarn*, **Slottsängen*, **Lövstaskog* and **Valla*. It is worth reiterating that the cultural heritage value of a place-name lies in the name itself, its existence and what it can tell us, not in an obsolete spelling.

Many area names in Swedish towns are unofficial, i.e. they are not formally adopted by the municipality or anyone else. If an area coincides geographically with the register-district boundaries of the Real Property Register, its name is indirectly, but nonetheless officially, determined by the municipality (see 5.1.1 above), and the same applies if it coincides with block boundaries. But new residential areas, for example, often spread over several parts of a town and many blocks, with an irregular shape and no fixed boundaries. None of the existing names of districts of the town, register districts or blocks is then quite right. A completely different name is needed for the area concerned, common to and uniting all its constituent parts. This practical need results in the emergence of a new, unofficial name.

What municipalities sometimes try to achieve when adopting new area names is to create a new town within a town and to highlight this more limited area as one with unique qualities of its own. In Stockholm, the final element *-staden* ('town, city', sometimes abbreviated in speech to *-stan*) has long been used in both official and unofficial area names (*Birkastaden*, *Diplomatstaden*, *Lärkstaden*, *Vasastaden*), and more and more names in *-staden* are now seeing the light of day, at an accelerating pace, both there and in other cities. *Hammarby Sjöstad* 'Hammarby Lake City', or just *Sjöstaden*, is a well-known name. *Norra Djurgårdsstaden*, literally 'Northern Djurgården City', is beginning to become established, and the area has also been referred to as 'sjöstaden på Östermalm' ('waterfront city on Östermalm', drawing on the latter area's exclusive reputation) to further enhance its status.

Other selling name elements that figure prominently in today's property advertisements are *strand* 'shore', *höjd* 'height', *platå* 'plateau', *terrass* 'terrace', *glänta* 'glade' and *park* 'park'. Such names signal elevation, space, light, nature and green open spaces, or simply a good and pleasant life in some sense. And their use is quite understandable in marketing that seeks to evoke positive associations in the minds of the people reading the adverts and looking for somewhere to live. Problems only arise when the place does not live up to the promise, when the meanings of words are stretched a bit too far: when a *strand* is not in fact a shore, when a *höjd* does not offer a view or a sense of elevation, or when a *park* is not a park in the normal sense. This generally does not become clear until a prospective buyer sees the place in reality.

The name *Norra Djurgårdsstaden*, mentioned above, has also been given an English equivalent by some municipal body (but not by the city's Name Drafting Committee), so that it can be referred to more easily by people who do not speak Swedish, namely *Stockholm Royal Seaport*. Here the Historic Environment Act's requirement of 'good place-name practice' is really put to the test.

The manipulative aspects of 'estate agent names' include overuse of names that are considered to have a positive ring and avoidance of poorer-sounding names with lower status. In this way, popular districts and areas are made geographically larger than they really are, while areas supposedly looked down upon, and their names, are hidden away. Instead of stating that an apartment is on *A*-gatan, the advertiser informs potential buyers that it is 'a stone's throw from *B*-gatan'. *Östermalm* and *Kista* are district names in Stockholm that often 'swallow up' the names of surrounding areas. The body or official responsible for names in a municipality has no direct influence over such unofficial use of names, nor is it directly covered by the provisions on good place-name practice, but it is necessary to be aware that trends and fashions are short-lived, passing phenomena that need to be approached and managed with moderation and judgement.

6 Place-names in minority language areas

6.1 Legislation

Since 1 July 2009, Sweden has had a law, the Language Act (2009:600), consolidating the language policy adopted by the Riksdag in 2005. It contains provisions on the Swedish language, the national minority languages and Swedish sign language. Since 1 April 2000 there has also been an Act on National Minorities and National Minority Languages. A new Act on the same subject (2009:724), strengthening the provisions of the earlier one, came into force on 1 January 2010. Under the language policy and the legislation adopted, Swedish is the principal language of Sweden. Five languages are recognised as national minority languages: Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli (Tornedal Finnish), Romany Chib and Sami. Their status as minority languages means that Sweden has assumed a political responsibility to protect and promote them.

6.2 National minority languages

In general usage, *minority language* often means a 'language spoken by a minority group in a country'. But it is also used in the narrower sense of an 'officially recognised language traditionally spoken in a given country'. That definition can be traced to criteria formulated in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which Sweden has ratified. By doing so, it has undertaken to promote and protect its national minority languages.

In large areas of Sweden, place-names of non-Swedish origin are to be found. These are names which the indigenous minorities – Swedish Finns, Tornedalers (Meänkieli speakers) and Sami – have created for their local environment. In a Government Bill entitled 'From Recognition to Empowerment', it is stressed that minority-language place-names are a valuable part of the cultural heritage, and as such should be actively safeguarded by public agencies. The Historic Environment Act's provisions on good place-name practice also call for the protection of these names. In their work, therefore, central and local government authorities should safeguard minority-language place-names and highlight the presence of the minority languages by showing these names on maps and on road and other signs.

Illustration Marie Olsson

6.3   UN resolutions on place-names and minority languages

A UN resolution from 1972 (see below) recommends that countries with a minority population should use the orthography of the minority language for geographical names in that language. At its conferences, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) – see 9.1 – has adopted four resolutions, from 1972 to 2007, dealing with the place-names of minority languages. The first (1972) was tabled as a Nordic initiative, with Sami as an example. It notes that in some areas, such as the Sami-speaking part of northern Europe, a minority language is spoken inside the territory of more than one country. In such cases, geographical names in the minority language are sometimes spelt differently in different countries. Uniform treatment of geographical names is desirable, and the resolution (see Appendix 2) therefore concludes by recommending countries with minority languages that extend over national borders to

> a. adopt a common orthography for the minority language, regardless of national borders,
>
> b. use that orthography for the standardisation of place-names,
>
> c. publish the standardised names in their official maps and national gazetteers.

6.4   Sami place-names

Sami has traditionally been spoken across large parts of the mountain and forest regions of northern Sweden. Within this area, however, significant differences in pronunciation, inflection and vocabulary can be observed, and spoken forms of Sami are therefore divided into Northern Sami, Lule Sami, Arjeplog Sami (Pite Sami), Ume Sami and Southern Sami.

For the same reason, Sami place-names are not spelt in a uniform manner throughout the Sami-speaking area. Their spelling has varied over time, but nowadays they are written according to Sami orthographic rules, in line with the UN resolution of 1972. The current orthographies of Northern, Lule and Southern Sami were officially adopted in the 1970s and 1980s. Now there is also an Ume Sami orthography for place-names, and a general Ume Sami orthography was officially adopted in 2016. Beginning in the 1980s, Lantmäteriet has introduced Sami orthography for Sami place-names on its maps and in its basic geodata. The

'How far is it to Sälka?'
'Sealggá – nine kilometres...'

following example can serve to illustrate the differences between the different varieties of Sami. The Sami word for 'mountain' is written as *várri* in Northern Sami, *várre* in Lule Sami, *várrie* in Ume Sami and *vaerie* in Southern Sami (*á* is pronounced as a long *a*-sound). The word occurs in many names that have been assimilated into Swedish, in its older written form *vare*, e.g. *Gällivare*.

Sami names reflect the traditional livelihoods of the Sami: hunting, fishing and reindeer herding. They are often descriptive of landscape and terrain. They talk about ease of passage (e.g. *Suohpajohka* 'Stream with a Ford'), snow conditions (*Ridovárre* 'Avalanche Mountain') and opportunities for reindeer grazing (*Sidno-ajvve* 'Grass Hill'). Names associated with reindeer herding also include those referring to features, such as mountain peaks, that are important in finding one's way in the landscape on seasonal migrations. These migrations have also given rise to many names, such as the Sami name for Vilhelmina, *Vualtjere*, which is a contraction of the verb *vuelkedh* 'travel, depart' and *jaevrie* 'lake'.

6.5   Finnish and Meänkieli place-names

The oldest preserved stratum of Finnish names in Sweden is to be found in Torne-dalen and the iron-ore fields of Lapland, where there have been Finnish-speaking populations for at least a thousand years. In an area of southern Lapland known as *finnbygden*, the names found can be linked to colonisation that began in the 17th century, although some lake names arose in connection with early fishing expeditions. Further south, between 1570 and 1700, Finnish-speaking immigrants also colonised parts of central Sweden, giving rise to Finnish place-names where they cultivated new land, often in untouched countryside around Swedish farming areas or in areas used for pasture by the Sami. These Finnish names denote settlements and small natural features, such as mires, hills and small forest lakes. In the north, many larger natural features also have Finnish names.

In central Sweden, Finnish speakers have been assimilated into the Swedish population, and the old Finnish place-names are now used by Swedish speakers. The pronunciation of these names has been adapted to Swedish, as has their spelling on official maps, which show locally used forms such as *Paskalamm*, *Rimäck*, *Vattao* etc. Many Finnish names, though, have fallen into disuse or been translated, the original forms disappearing in the process.

In the far north of Sweden – in the municipalities of Gällivare, Haparanda, Kiruna, Pajala and Övertorneå – Meänkieli and Finnish are regional languages. These municipalities, and now also Kalix, belong to the Meänkieli administrative area, where more stringent legislation applies in a number of different sectors. In this area, place-names in both Finnish and Meänkieli are used. A clear distinction between names in the two languages is difficult to make, as the forms often coincide. According to the Swedish Tornedalian Association, it is desirable for all names previously classed as Finnish to be regarded as Meänkieli, and to be coded as such in Lantmäteriet's geodata. In multilingual areas, under the place-name provisions of the Historic Environment Act, the place-names of minorities are to be used in parallel with their Swedish counterparts on maps and road signs. Accordingly, the name *Junosuando* for example, which is used by Swedish speakers, has been supplemented on new maps with names in Meänkieli (*Junosuanto*) and Northern Sami (*Čunusavvon*).

7   Commercial names

The use of place-names for commercial purposes and the buying and selling of names have become common, especially in urban areas. The places and names in question thus become commodities, encouraging the replacement of place-names with long-standing local usage. Place-names are an important part of our historical and cultural heritage – an intangible cultural heritage. UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in 2003 and ratified by Sweden in 2011. One of the guiding principles for its implementation is that commercial forces should not be allowed to threaten the viability of this heritage. It is particularly important that commercial use does not distort the meaning of the intangible cultural heritage for the community.

> In accordance with United Nations resolution X/4 (see Appendix 2), adopted at the 10th UN Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names (New York 2012), the Swedish Place-Names Advisory Board recommends that central and local government bodies should
>
> - discourage the use of commercial names and
> - adopt standards that address these issues.

The following is one of many examples of how names have been used for commercial purposes. Gavlerinken (Gavle Rink) – the home arena of ice hockey team Brynäs IF – was opened in 1967 as a replacement for Gävle isstadion (Gävle Ice Stadium), and has since undergone a number of redevelopments. In conjunction with work carried out in 2006, the name rights were bought by the international confectionery company Leaf and the name of the facility was changed to the *Läkerol Arena*. The company subsequently closed down its operation in Gävle, and in 2014 the municipality of Gävle became Brynäs IF's main partner under a five-year agreement. As part of this partnership, the municipality acquired the name rights to the arena and changed the name to the *Gavlerinken Arena.* (Cf. 5.3.4.)

Gavlerinken 1967 > Läkerol Arena 2006 > Gavlerinken Arena 2014.

8 Names of administrative areas

The territorial divisions of Sweden have changed very considerably over the past century. Medieval structures have been eroded, old boundaries have been erased, new administrative entities have emerged and older ones have been abolished. In this context, place-names – as carriers of history, tradition and emotions, and with their significant symbolic value – have an extremely important part to play. For a long time, *socknar* (parishes) and *härad* (districts) were fundamental to the administrative organisation of Sweden. This remained the case until 1952, when far-reaching changes were introduced. Until 1952, the parish was the primary unit of both ecclesiastical and civil government. Subsequently, the historical parishes initially lived on as ecclesiastical parishes (*församlingar*), but this has changed increasingly rapidly as a result of mergers of these areas, especially after the separation of Church and State in 2000.

8.1 Counties and provinces

Sweden has 25 provinces (*landskap*) and 21 counties (*län*). The provinces largely have their roots in cultural and political conditions prevailing during the Iron Age. The present-day counties, by contrast, are of much more recent date, going back to a division of the country that was fixed in 1634, when Sweden was divided into a number of large administrative areas. Whereas the old provinces have remained largely unchanged over the period known to us today, the present counties have undergone several changes over the almost 400 years of their existence, the most recent being in the late 1990s. In 1997, the counties of Kristianstad and Malmöhus were merged, assuming the name *Skåne län*, which was quite a natural and uncontroversial choice. In 1998, the three counties of Göteborg and Bohus, Skaraborg, and Älvsborg were combined. Here the name question was not as straightforward.

Following extensive discussion, the whole question of the new county was debated in the Riksdag, which decided that it should be called *Västra Götalands län*. Several inquiries have been conducted in recent decades with the aim of proposing larger and more efficient counties or regions throughout the country.

8.2   Municipalities

The country's municipalities *(kommuner)* are perhaps the administrative divisions that best reflect the changes Swedish society has undergone. The large municipalities we see today are a far cry from the parishes of medieval times. An important step towards the modern municipality was taken in the municipal reform of 1862, when the term *kommun* was introduced in Swedish legislation and the roles and responsibilities of the historical parish (*socken*) were divided between an ecclesiastical parish (*församling*) and a civil rural municipality *(borgerlig landskommun)*. The name question was not yet a problem, as every ecclesiastical parish was to constitute a municipality of its own, making a total of some 2,500 such areas (including cities and towns). The boundaries of the ecclesiastical parishes thus determined those of the civil municipalities, and the old names were accordingly carried over to the new entities as a matter of course. After that, it would be 90 years before the next change came along, but this time the name question was more complicated. The aim now was to reduce the number of municipalities, by combining numerous small ones into larger, more practical areas. A suitable name thus had to be found for each new municipality, at the same time as a large number of existing municipality names had to be dropped. There were, in other words, two sides to the problem.

As many as 18 municipalities could be merged into one, and an example from Uppsala county can serve to illustrate how the problem could be tackled. In 1952, the ten municipalities of Långtora, Nysätra, Biskopskulla, Fröslunda, Giresta, Hjälsta, Kulla, Holm, Fittja and Gryta were together to form a new municipality. With *Lagunda härad* as a starting point, which included all these areas except Gryta, the new municipality was given the name *Lagunda kommun. Härad* names in fact saw something of a renaissance in this context, and were sometimes used with distinguishing prefixes, as in the case of Lagunda's neighbouring municipalities, which were named *Norra* ('North') *Hagunda kommun* and *Södra* ('South') *Hagunda kommun.*

Across the country as a whole, the result was a small number of double names with a hyphen (e.g. *Färila-Kårböle*) and several two-word names with distinguishing elements, usually without but sometimes with a hyphen (e.g. *Västra* ('West') *Kinda* and *Kållands-Råda* ('Råda in Kålland')). The great majority, however, were given a single name, usually that of one of the municipalities involved. Completely new names were only created in exceptional cases.

In numerical terms, the reform of 1952 reduced the number of rural municipalities from 2,281 to 821. Rapid structural changes in society, however, meant that these new administrative divisions also soon became obsolete, and as early as 1961 another municipal reorganisation was proposed. Municipalities were now to form even larger blocks around a significant central place, where their administrative centre would be located. This was gradually implemented up to 1974, when the number of these 'large municipalities' (*storkommuner*) was 278. After a few divisions in more recent times, Sweden now has 290 municipalities.

This latest reform was relatively simple as far as names were concerned, as the idea of a central place normally determined the choice of name for each municipality. In some cases, other solutions were found, such as creating new or reviving historical names. Thus, for example, the names *Nordanstig* in Gävleborg county and *Håbo* in Uppsala county were chosen instead of the names of the central places concerned, *Bergsjö* and *Bålsta.*

8.3 Statistical localities

According to a common Nordic definition, a *statistical locality* (*statistisk tätort*) is a built-up area with at least 200 inhabitants and a maximum distance of 200 metres between its buildings. The division of the country into such areas is calculated by Statistics Sweden (SCB) strictly in accordance with that definition – as from 2016, this will be done every three years – and is independent of existing administrative boundaries. A statistical locality may therefore cut across several municipalities. In 2016, Statistics Sweden introduced an automatic method of demarcating localities. Places with fewer than 200 inhabitants and no more than 150 metres between their buildings are referred to by the same agency as *smaller localities* (*småorter*). For both these categories, the name issue can be complicated, as statistical facts do not always reflect the topographical and historical realities. When, for example, two places that have developed naturally, each with an authentic name of its own, merge to become a single statistical locality, that locality also has to be called something. This state of affairs has to be handled by Lantmäteriet, which is responsible for determining the name, following consultation with, among others, the municipality and county administrative board concerned, the Institute for Language and Folklore and the National Heritage Board. A solution that is gaining growing support is to regard the names of statistical localities as temporary designations – locality designations – rather than as real names, precisely to underline their different background. To distinguish the different entities in its basic geographical database, moreover, Lantmäteriet has introduced a new concept, *topographical locality* (*topografisk tätort*). An example of this is shown below.

Extract from Lantmäteriet's basic geodata. Here we see the relationship between the various named entities. The old ironmaking community of Svaneholm is a topographical locality and part of the statistical locality of Svanskog, whose name also refers to the historical parish, the present ecclesiastical parish and the post town.

8.4   Parishes old and new

The majority of Sweden's historical parishes (*socknar*) can be traced back to early medieval times. Most of their names did not start out as parish names, but pre-dated the creation of parishes, chiefly as the names of villages and farms. These names were then transferred to the parishes and are therefore usually referred to as secondary parish names. Primary parish names are ones that were coined when the parish was created, e.g. names in *-kyrka* 'church' (such as *Stenkyrka*).

Parishes have had largely the same territorial extent from the Middle Ages to our own day, although terms such as cadastral parish (*jordeboks-/jordregistersocken*) and ecclesiastical parish (*kyrklig församling/socken*) have sometimes created uncertainty about the demarcation of these areas and the meaning of the concept. In popular understanding, however, *socken* probably remained a well-established, unambiguous concept with important social functions well into modern times. Its position was strongest from the 17th century to 1862, when the first municipal reform was introduced and the modern concept of municipality (*kommun*) emerged. This made the parish the primary unit of both ecclesiastical and civil government. However, the actual boundaries were largely unchanged, as were the names, which were still basically the old parish names. With the local government reform of 1952, this administrative structure was dismantled and the term *församling* (ecclesiastical parish) assumed stronger legal status.

The land register was still arranged by historical parish, so that was the area within which all the names in the register were unique. With the reform of real property data, beginning in the 1970s and completed in 1995, this administrative function of the parish was also abandoned. Now 'register areas' consist of municipalities, and since the reform historical parish names have only had a living function when property names – register-district names – need to be distinguished from identical names in the same municipality. In the municipality of Uppsala, for instance, *Ekeby* occurs in some ten historical parishes, and in the Real Property Register unique names are created by combining *Ekeby* with the parish name concerned, e.g. *Lena-Ekeby, Rasbo-Ekeby* and *Vänge-Ekeby.* Apart from this, historical parishes and their names no longer serve any purpose in this context either.

Detail from a land survey map of Dagsberg 1–10 in Dagsberg parish, Östergötland, from 1690. It shows the church village of Dagsberg. A great many old maps and the documents associated with them can be viewed on Lantmäteriet's website under the heading 'Historiska kartor' (Historical maps).

Following these developments, the historical system of parishes has for a long time only been reflected, in official contexts, in the parishes of the Church of Sweden.

Unfortunately, in recent years the existence of these ecclesiastical parishes has also been under threat, in that many of them have been amalgamated, chiefly for financial reasons, with the name problems that that entails. This process has accelerated since ecclesiastical parish boundaries ceased to be a matter of state regulation at the turn of the present century. As a result, many smaller parishes and their names have been in danger of disappearing for good. Parishes and their names are now an internal concern of the Church of Sweden.

In the long term, this has the potential to demolish the entire hierarchical structure of Sweden's system of place-names, built up with the historical parish as the unifying concept at the level above the individual farm and village. The parish used to be the area within which names were always naturally unique. A way of ensuring the survival of the old parishes therefore needed to be found. The new structure of districts (*distrikt*, see below), linked to the population registration

system, offers a possibility of doing that, as it largely corresponds to the earlier parish organisation.

Since 2016, moreover, Lantmäteriet has included information in the Real Property Register about the historical parish to which each individual property belongs. Parishes and parish names, which have survived as popular concepts, can thus be guaranteed a continued existence and a cultural heritage of major significance can be preserved.

8.5   Districts

On 1 January 2016, a new system of administrative divisions was introduced in Sweden (*Districts Ordinance 2015:493)*, replacing ecclesiastical parishes with districts (*distrikt*) as register entities for the population registration system. The new district boundaries correspond to the ecclesiastical parish boundaries existing at the end of 1999/beginning of 2000, when the Church of Sweden was disestablished. These districts are linked to population registration, which is now carried out on the basis of the municipality, combined with property and address. The names of the districts were determined by the Riksdag in 2015, based on proposals from Lantmäteriet and following broad consultation.

9 International cooperation

Swedish name scholars belong to a number of international name organisations and participate in various forms of international cooperation. Here, a brief presentation will be given of three of these organisations: UNGEGN, ICOS and NORNA.
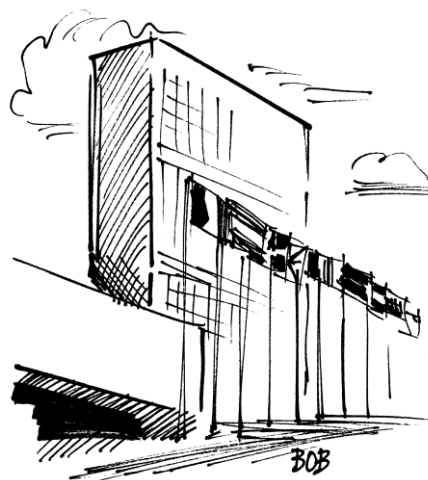
9.1 The UN/UNGEGN

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) is one of seven expert bodies of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established in the 1960s to promote the 'standardisation of geographical names', which is the term used in this context. The expression, which covers place-names in a very broad sense, means that written forms of such names are to be officially determined. The aim is a clear and unambiguous international system of names, and it was concluded early on that work in this area had to begin at the national level. The efforts made in Sweden to preserve and standardise place-names are one example of this.

The First United Nations Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names was held in Geneva in 1967. Since then, such conferences have been arranged basically every five years. UNGEGN normally meets every two years and in connection with the conferences. Important concrete products of this work are the resolutions adopted at the conferences. These can be compared to international standards, and it is of course reasonable to expect that countries involved in adopting a resolution will themselves seek to comply with its recommendations. See Appendix 2 for examples.

According to UNGEGN's Statute, the aims of the Group include facilitating the supply of scientific and technical help, in particular to developing countries. It is also to promote liaison and coordination between member states and international organisations on work associated with the standardisation of geographical names. In addition, the Group is to seek to implement the resolutions adopted at the conferences.

In that context, participating countries are divided into 'divisions', on the basis of linguistic and/or geographical criteria, and on certain conditions a country may belong to more than one division. Today there are 24 of these, with the Nordic countries forming the Norden Division.

9.2 ICOS

The International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) is an international organisation for individuals undertaking research into or with some other professional interest in names. According to its website, www.icosweb.net, its aim is the advancement, representation and coordination of name research on an international level and in an interdisciplinary context.

The actual foundation of ICOS in 1949 was preceded by two important events. The first international congresses on place-names and personal names, presided over by the Frenchman Albert Dauzat, were held in Paris in 1938 and 1947. Only

during the third congress, in Brussels in 1949, was it possible to form a permanent organisation, which was originally called the International Committee of Onomastic Sciences. Since then ICOS has been led by a board of directors, which is elected at each congress. Congresses have generally been held every three years, the most recent one (the 26th) taking place in Debrecen, Hungary, in 2017.

ICOS publishes a newsletter and other information on its website. Some of the results of the work of two special groups, a Bibliography Group and a Terminology Group, are also to be found there, including a list of key onomastic terms with definitions, in English, French and German. These are the three official languages of ICOS, but at its congresses the use of other languages is permitted if the local organisers so wish.

In addition, ICOS publishes a journal, *Onoma*, of which 48 volumes have appeared to date. *Onoma* was initially a bulletin, primarily containing bibliographical and other brief information. Today, volumes are built around particular themes, such as name theory (vol. 41), urban toponymy (42), commercial names (43), African onomastics (44) and the history and significance of onomastics (45). The most recent volume (48) was on the theme of *Names and Religion*.

9.3   NORNA

The Nordic Cooperative Committee for Onomastic Research (NORNA) is an association of name scholars in the Nordic region. It was founded in 1971 and consists of seven members (with deputies), representing each of the following countries: Denmark, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The posts of chair and secretary rotate between the countries. The Committee's aims are to promote onomastic research in the Nordic countries and to encourage cooperation among Nordic scholars.

Under the auspices of the Committee, name research congresses are organised, usually at five-yearly intervals. The most recent one was in Norway in 2016. Between congresses, the Committee coordinates a wide range of locally arranged symposia, usually one or two per year. To date (2018), 48 symposia have been held at various venues in and around the Nordic region.

Papers from congresses and symposia usually appear in the series *NORNA-rapporter*, of which 96 issues have so far been published by the Committee's own publishing house, NORNA-förlaget. The journal *Namn och bygd* includes, under the heading 'Nordic onomastics', an annual review of NORNA's activities and a survey of a selection of Nordic onomastic research literature appearing during the year.

NORNA's website, www.norna.org, presents a Nordic onomastic bibliography, providing information on name-related literature written by Nordic scholars from 2003 onwards. The bibliography is updated every year. Also to be found on the website is NORNA's newsletter, which every autumn and spring reports on current events in onomastics in the Nordic countries, as well as a register of name scholars in the region, at present encompassing over 260 individuals. In addition to contact details, the register includes current research topics and interests.

10 A practical guide to writing place-names

The way public authorities write place-names often sets the pattern for other language users. That is why it is important that place-names on official signs, in documents and in information to the public in Sweden are written in accordance with good Swedish usage. If there is the slightest doubt about such matters, the Institute for Language and Folklore may be contacted for advice and assistance.

The Swedish version of this publication includes a nine-page chapter of practical advice on writing place-names, with numerous examples. It would not, we felt, have been relevant to retain this chapter intact in an English translation, as it would have been too detailed and language-specific. Instead, an outline summary is provided here, including a few examples, to show broadly what sort of information the chapter contains.

Chapter 10 consists of two main sections. The first deals in more general terms with spelling, style and the use of certain characters – questions such as hyphenation, use of accents and use of abbreviations in names. Under the Historic Environment Act, place-names are to be spelt in accordance with generally accepted rules of linguistic correctness. In practice, this means that the spelling of names is to follow the rules applied in the most recent edition of the Swedish Academy Glossary (*Svenska Akademiens ordlista*). In other words, archaic spellings, abolished by the Swedish spelling reform of 1906, are not to be used (e.g. *Elfnäs*, *Qvarnböle* or *Westerwik*, instead of the correct forms *Älvnäs*, *Kvarnböle* and *Västervik*). Nor is use to be made of 'decorative' spellings, with unnecessary extra letters or duplication of vowels (e.g. *Öhn*, *Ohs*, *Moo* or *Vii*, rather than the correct spellings *Ön*, *Os*, *Mo* and *Vi*).

The second main section of the chapter deals with compound and multiple-word names. With few exceptions, newly formed place-names in Sweden are of one or other of these types. Compound names, which are the commoner of the two, consist of two name elements joined together, e.g. *Häggvägen* (*hägg* 'bird cherry' + *vägen* 'the road') or *Stortorget* (*stor* 'great, large' + *torget* 'the square'), while multiple-word names are made up of several separate words or names, placed one after the other, together forming a new name: e.g. *Olof Palmes gata* ('Olof Palme Street'), *Gamla landsvägen* ('The Old Country Road'), *Skärholmens centrum* ('Skärholmen Centre'). The rest of the chapter is then devoted largely to how the two elements of compound names should be joined together. Should there be an -*s*- between the two or not (*Åkervägen* or *Åkersvägen*, *Skogbacken* or *Skogsbacken*)? When should the first word of the compound be inflected (*Sömmerskevägen* < *sömmerska* 'dressmaker' + *vägen* 'the road', *Liljestigen* < *lilja* 'lily' + *stigen* 'the path')? The choice of linking element or inflection is usually determined – although there are many exceptions – by the type of initial element involved, that is to say, whether it ends in a vowel or a consonant, and whether the first element as such consists of a single word (**Sol**gatan), a single name (**Eriks**berg, **Oslo**gatan), a compound word or name (**Istapps**gränd, **Halmstads**vägen), or a multiple-word name (**Gustav Adolfs**parken, **Grev Ture**gatan). Numerous examples are given.

As a general rule, the forms of compound place-names should as far as possible follow the inflections and linking elements of comparable compound words in general usage.

The chapter concludes with a section on the use of upper- or lower-case letters in multiple-word names. Should it be *Göta kanal* or *Göta Kanal*, *Lilla torget* or *Lilla Torget*, *Olof Palmes gata* or *Olof Palmes Gata*? In general, a lower-case letter should be used, as long as the word in question is indeed an ordinary word, and not a name in its own right. In the names *Stora Väsby* and *Gamla Ullevi*, for example, *Väsby* and *Ullevi* are names and not ordinary words. They are therefore correctly written with initial capitals.

Appendix 1

Examples of decision-making bodies

Feature / Entity	Bodies consulted / Advisory bodies	Decision made by	Statutory support
Counties	Lantmäteriet and Institute for Language and Folklore	Drafted by Government, made by Parliament (the Riksdag)	Ordinance on the Names of Counties (1973:105)
Municipalities and county council areas	Lantmäteriet and Institute for Language and Folklore, according to established practice	Drafted by Swedish Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency, made by Government	Act on Changes in the Division of Sweden into Municipalities and County Council Areas (1979: 411), Chapter 1, Section 1.
Historical parishes		Information on historical parishes is included in Real Property Register	
Districts (for population registration purposes)		Government	Districts Ordinance (2015:493)
Register districts (in Real Property Register)	Institute for Language and Folklore, Swedish National Heritage Board, property owners and munici-pality in question.	Lantmäteriet	Real Property Register Ordinance (2000:308), Section 19
Blocks (in Real Property Register)	Lantmäteriet	Municipalities	Real Property Register Ordinance (2000:308), Section 20
Settlements Natural features	Institute for Language and Folklore	Lantmäteriet	Ordinance containing Instructions for Lantmäteriet (2009: 946), Section 5, point 7
Streets, roads, public places in detailed development plan areas	Lantmäteriet, with support from Institute for Language and Folklore	Municipalities	No statutory provision
Location addresses		Municipalities	Dwellings Register Act (2006:378)

Appendix 2

UN resolutions and UNGEGN

National standardization
1967: I/4

The Conference,

Recognizing that the national standardization of geographical names provides economic and practical benefits to individual nations,

Further recognizing that national standardization of geographical names by all nations is an essential preliminary to international standardization,

1. *Requests* that the following recommendations on the national standardization of geographical names be reviewed by the proper United Nations authorities;

2. *Urges* that these recommendations be conveyed to all Member States and interested international organizations for favourable consideration.

RECOMMENDATION A.
NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITIES

It is recommended that, as a first step in international standardization of geographical names, each country should have a national geographical names authority:

(a) Consisting of a continuing body, or co-ordinated group of bodies, having clearly stated authority and instructions for the standardization of geographical names and the determination of names standardization policy within the country;

(b) Having such status, composition, function and procedures as will:

(i) Be consistent with the governmental structure of the country;

(ii) Give the greatest chance of success in the national names standardization programme;

(iii) As appropriate, provide within its framework for the establishment of regional or local committees according to area or language;

(iv) Provide for consideration of the effects of its actions on government agencies, private organizations and other groups and for the reconciliation of these interests, as far as possible, with the long-range interests of the country as a whole;

(v) Make full use of the services of surveyors, cartographers, geographers, linguists and any other experts who may help the authority to carry out its operations efficiently;

(vi) Permit record keeping and publication procedures that will facilitate the prompt and wide distribution of information on its standardized names, both nationally and internationally.

It is recommended that those countries which have not yet begun to exercise their prerogative of standardizing their geographical names on a national basis should now proceed to do so.

It is further recommended that the appropriate United Nations office be kept informed by each national names authority of its composition and functions, and of the address of its secretary.

RECOMMENDATION B.
COLLECTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

For each geographical name which is to be standardized, it is recommended that:

(a) The field and office research be as complete as possible in order to provide information on the following points:

    (i) Written and spoken form of the name and its meaning according to local inhabitants;

    (ii) Spelling in cadastral documents and land registers;

    (iii) Spelling on modern and old maps and in other historical sources;

    (iv) Spelling in census reports, gazetteers and other relevant documents of value;

    (v) Spelling used by other local administrative and technical services;

(b) The local spoken form of the name be recorded on tape and written in the phonetic notation approved by the national names authority;

(c) The character, extent and position of the feature named be determined -- in this regard it should be noted that aerial photographs can provide useful supplementary information -- and recorded as accurately as possible, and that the meaning of the generic terms used locally be clearly defined;

(d) If possible, at least two local independent sources be consulted for each inquiry.

It is further recommended that personnel responsible for the collection of names should have training adequate to recognize and deal with the linguistic problems (phonetic system, grammatical structure and orthography), geographic phenomena and terminology that they are likely to encounter.

RECOMMENDATION C.
PRINCIPLES OF OFFICE TREATMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

It is recommended that each names authority formulate, adopt and define the guiding principles and practices that it will normally apply in the course of operation.

These principles and practices should cover:

(a) Formal procedures to be followed in the submission to the authority of proposals for new names or changes in names;

(b) Factors that the authority will take into account when considering name proposals, such as:

    (i) Current usage;

    (ii) Historical background;

    (iii) Treatment in multilingual areas and in unwritten languages;

(iv) The extent to which hybrid names should be avoided;

(v) Avoidance of repetition of names;

(vi) Avoidance of more than one name for one feature;

(vii) Clarification of the precise extent of application of each individual geographical name, including the naming of the whole and the parts of major features;

(viii) Elimination of objectionable names;

(c) Rules of writing names applied by the authority;

(d) Procedures whereby all interested parties may express their views on a name proposal prior to decision by the authority;

(e) Formal procedures for promulgation of the authority's decisions and for ensuring that standardized names shall appear on the national maps.

In the elaboration of these principles it is recommended that:

(1) Unnecessary changing of names be avoided;

(2) The spelling of geographical names be as much as possible in accordance with the current orthographic practice of the country concerned, with due regard to dialect forms;

(3) Systematic treatment of names should not operate to suppress significant elements;

(4) Where some names occur in varying or grammatical forms, the national names authority should consider making one of these forms the standard name (for nouns that can be declined, it will normally be the nominative case);

(5) In all countries in whose languages the definite article can enter into geographical names, the national names authority should determine which names contain the definite article and standardize them accordingly. For languages in which both definite and indefinite forms exist for all or most names, it is recommended that standardization be based on one or the other form;

(6) All countries set up standards for the use of abbreviations of elements in their geographical names;

(7) A system be devised in each country for the treatment of compound names.

It is further recommended that the names authority give adequate publicity to these principles and practices.

RECOMMENDATION D.
MULTILINGUAL AREAS

It is recommended that, in countries in which there exist more than one language, the national authority as appropriate:

(a) Determine the geographical names in each of the official languages, and other languages as appropriate;

(b) Give a clear indication of equality or precedence of officially acknowledged names;

(c) Publish these officially acknowledged names in maps and gazetteers.

RECOMMENDATION E.
NATIONAL GAZETTEERS

It is recommended that each names authority produce, and continually revise, appropriate gazetteers of all its standardized geographical names.

It is further recommended that, in addition to the standardized names, each gazetteer include, as a minimum, such information as is necessary for the proper location and identification of the named features.

In particular, it is recommended that the following be included:

   (a)   The kind of feature to which the name applies;

   (b)   Precise description of the location and the extent, including a point position reference if possible, of each named feature;

   (c)   Provision for the parts of natural features to be additionally defined by reference to the whole and for the names of extended features to be defined as necessary by reference to their constituent parts;

   (d)   Such information on administrative or regional areas as is considered necessary and, if possible, reference to a map or chart within which the features lie;

   (e)   All officially standardized names for a feature, if there are more than one; and provision for cross-reference to be made to names previously used for the same feature.

When national authorities determine it possible, both technically and economically, they may include such information on geographical names as gender, number, definite and indefinite forms, position of stress, tone and pronunciation in the system of the International Phonetic Association and such other linguistic information as may lead to the better understanding and use of names both nationally and internationally.

Problems of minority languages
1972: II/36

The Conference,

Noting that in some areas, e.g., the Lappish-speaking part of northern Europe, a minority language is spoken inside the territory of more than one country,

Noting further that geographical names in the minority language are sometimes spelt according to different principles in the different countries where the minority language is spoken,

Recognizing the desirability of a uniform treatment of the names in the minority language in such areas,

Recommends that, where possible, the countries in question, in consultation with native speakers of the minority language:

   (a)   Adopt a common orthography for all geographical names of the minority language;

   (b)   Use that orthography for the standardization of the place names in the minority language in their territory;

   (c)   Publish the standardized names in their official maps and national gazetteers.

Commemorative naming practices for geographical features
2002:VIII/2

The Conference,

Noting that the use of names of persons or events to designate features for commemorative purposes or as geographical reminders constitutes an active practice,

Recognizing that the attribution of a personal name to a geographical feature during the lifetime or shortly after the death of a person is a widespread practice,

Recalling that, during a meeting of 1960, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names acknowledged that naming or renaming of a geographical feature to include the name of a living person could be a source of problems,

Recognizing that this practice is generally disadvantageous, as this type of designation is subject to subsequent changes not recommended by the Conference,

Noting that little guidance exists on the practice of adopting a personal name during the lifetime or shortly after the death of a person,

   1)   *Recommends* that the appropriate national authorities discourage the use of personal names to designate a geographical feature during the lifetime of the person in question;

   2)   *Also recommends* that the appropriate national authorities include in their guidelines clear statements on the length of the waiting period they wish to establish before using a commemorative name.

Geographical names as cultural heritage
2002:VIII/9

The Conference,

Recognizing the emphasis placed by delegates to the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names on the importance of geographical names as part of a nation's historical and cultural heritage,

Noting that the collection of geographical names in many countries of the world is made increasingly difficult as a result of the rapid pace of socio-economic change impacting on society and landscape,

Recalling the recommendation made by the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in its resolution 27, as well as the recommendations made by the Seventh Conference in its resolution VII/5, that measures be taken nationally to ensure that names that are yet to be collected are recorded through fieldwork according to local usage of name forms,

Urges countries that have not already done so, to undertake both the systematic collection of geographical names and the promotion of a greater understanding among the wider public of the significance of inherited geographical names with respect to local, regional and national heritage and identity.

Geographical names as intangible cultural heritage
2007:IX/4

The Conference,

Recalling its resolutions II/27, II/36, V122, VII/5, VIII/1 and VIII/9,

Considering the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 October 2003,

Recognizing that toponyms are indeed part of the intangible cultural heritage,

Noting that the use of certain toponyms which provide a sense of identity and of continuity is under a variety of threats,

1. *Encourages* the official bodies responsible for toponymy to:

   (a) Identify toponyms that meet the criteria for application of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;

   (b) Submit them to the Committee set up by the Convention, for approval;

   (c) Prepare a programme to safeguard and develop that heritage in accordance with article 2, paragraph 3, and article 18 of the Convention;

   (d) Start implementing it.

2. *Calls upon* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to give sympathetic consideration to requests for support that the High Contracting Parties submit to it for such activities.

Discouraging the commercialization of geographical names 2012:X/4

The Conference,

Recognizing that the use of geographical names that seek a commercial purpose and the buying and selling of geographical names are practices that exist, especially in urban areas,

Considering that these practices transform the places and names they affect into commodities that will likely promote the replacement of geographical names with long-standing local usage and threaten the integrity of geographical nomenclatures of nations,

Recalling its resolution VIII/9, in which it recognized the importance of geographical names as part of a nation's historical and cultural heritage, and its resolution IX/4, in which it recognized that geographical names were part of the intangible cultural heritage, within the meaning of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 October 2003, *Noting* that, in the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, it is stated that commercial activities should not threaten the viability of the intangible cultural heritage and that particular attention should be paid to avoiding commercial misappropriation and to ensuring that the commercial use does not distort the meaning and purpose of the intangible cultural heritage for the community concerned,

Considering that the use of geographical names that seek a commercial purpose and the buying and selling of geographical names are practices that harm the stability of geographical names with long-standing local usage and threaten the quality of the names as useful geographical references, *Noting* that, on the one hand, a number of geographical names generated from commercial practices also have a long-standing local usage and serve as effective reference points and that, on the other hand, a number of geographical names with long-standing local usage were named spontaneously by users of the territory owing to a company's presence in the area,

Noting also that some toponymic authorities around the world have already adopted standards to limit or prohibit such commercial toponymic practices,

Recommends that national toponymic authorities discourage the designation of geographical names that seek a commercial purpose, as well as various practices involving the commercialization of geographical names, by adopting standards that address these issues.

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LANTMÄTERIET