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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names
2021 session**

Virtual, 3–7 May 2021

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names****Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland****Summary****

There is no single national names authority in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, but there are thorough practices ensuring the accuracy and currency of geographical names. There are authorities overseeing names in both Scotland and Wales. For the island of Great Britain (but not Northern Ireland, which also forms part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), the geographical names as portrayed on products of the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain are recognized as being authoritative. Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, administered within Land and Property Services, performs a similar function in Northern Ireland. The full report provides an outline of the function of Ordnance Survey as the national mapping agency and its role with regard to toponymy, indicating developments since the 2019 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. It contains information on names policy, database management and geographical names products.

The report also describes the status of the Government's country register and territory register, which are maintained by its Foreign and Commonwealth Office and its Government Digital Service.

Geographical names for places and features outside the United Kingdom are the responsibility of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, whose objectives are described in the report. The Permanent Committee gathers information on names standardized by national authorities to inform the Government of appropriate names for use on its products.

* [GEGN.2/2021/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names and the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/43/CRP.43, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/.



A revised edition of the “Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland” was presented at the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The Guidelines are kept up to date, for example when administrative changes are made. The full report includes information on such changes and how to find the information.
