

The Peculiarities of Geographical Names Standardization of the Republic of Belarus

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The State Committee on Property
of the Republic of Belarus

Process of Name Given

1 Preposition (government, local authority, organizations, citizens)



2 Local executive committee or authorized organization ↔ public opinion



Toponymic Commission under the jurisdiction of Council of Ministers
(exception – street names)



3 Decision making

Peculiarities

- 2 state languages: Belarusian and Russian;
- legislated process of present-day geographical names standardization based on scientific approach;
- the 1st form of new toponyms – in Belarusian, transliteration from Belarusian to Russian according to grammar norms of Russian;
- plenty of ideology-based toponyms of the Soviet period and directly translated toponyms (especially street names);
- step-by-step transformation to legal standardized geographical names: official renaming by authorized agencies and neighbourhood with incorrect toponyms.

Tendencies

- citizens consideration of the question of national toponymy and standardization activities;
- family names of new settlements appeared from the peasant farming;
- return to historical names (earlier existed at the certain territory toponyms).

Problems to be solved

- financial problem – an expansive procedure of total official renaming connected with documents changing;
- social problems:
 - reluctance, incompetence and indifference,
 - Russophiles and Belarus fobs;
- technical problem – variety of geographical names data bases created by different institutions (National Cadastre Agency, Ministry of National Affairs, State Committee for Standardization and etc.);
- interagency problem – difficulties in collaboration.