

Address registration in context of preserving place names



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Objective

"We will be looking at the differences between Place names and access addresses and practical examples. What needs do users such as Place names committee and Road administration have? How do these entities interact with municipalities and landowners? Are the access addresses good enough?"

- Research question:
 - Is current setup of registering addresses and place names sufficient? - and if not what can we identify as strength or weakness?

Content

- Concepts and terms used in this presentation
- Historical background - Iceland
- International trends
- Icelandic law and regulations regarding geographical names and addresses
- Roles in address registration – data sharing
- Pros and cons – what can we do better
- Incompatible goals in the law?
- Thoughts

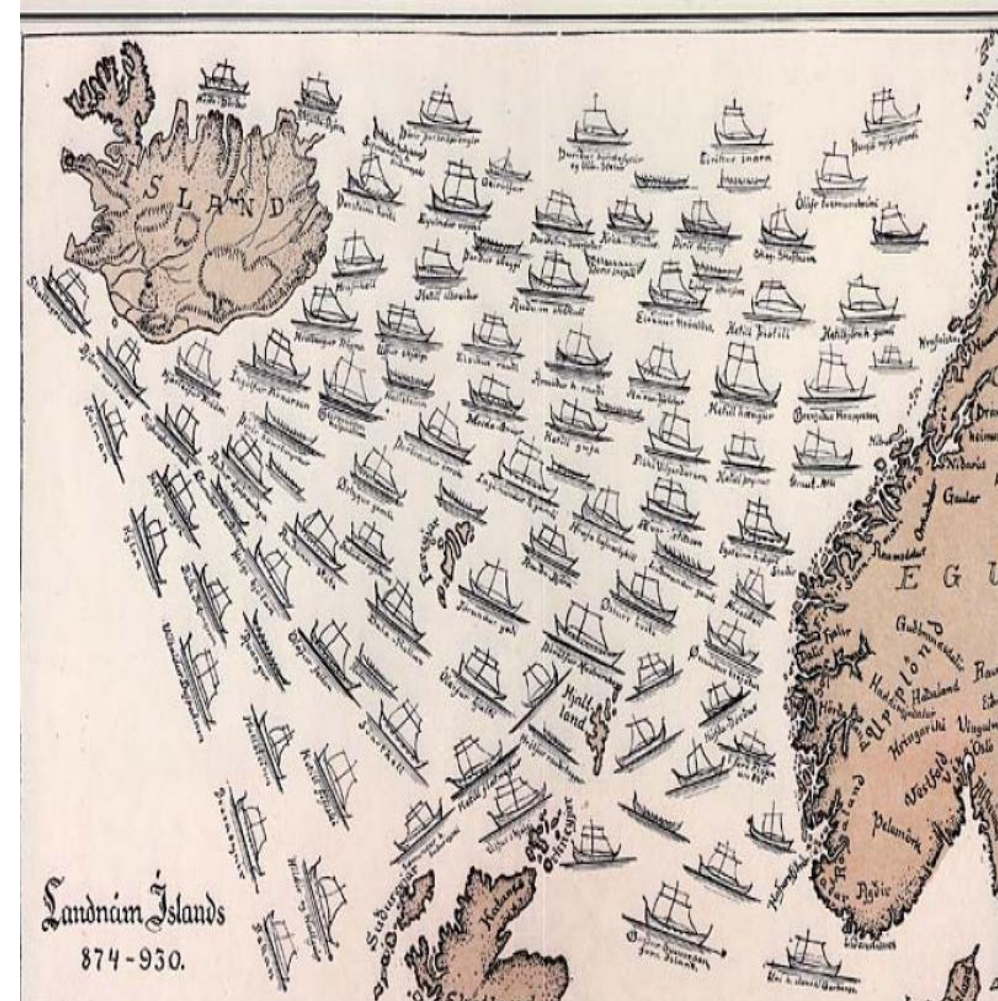
Concepts and terms as used in this lecture

- Geographical name and place name is regarded as the same
- Thoroughfare name: An address component which represents the name of a passage or way through from one location to another
 - Street name, farm name or place name
- An Icelandic address: is usually composed of thoroughfare name (could be a farm name), address locator (house number or given name) and a coordinate.

Lets start...

Historical background

- First settlers of Iceland in 9th century created place names to navigate and describe the extent of their settlement as well as giving their territory (farm) a name
- We still speak the same language and the farms that the first settlers gave name still exists today
- Urbanization did not start until around 1900 when approx. 75% Icelanders lived in rural areas, 20% in 1950 and now only about 5%
- The first Icelandic legislation on place names came about because of concerns over frequent changes in farm names. In 1913, a law was passed in order to restrict such changes and regulate names for new farms and farms without a recognized name
- The emphasis on farm names and the connection to heritage has remained prominent in Icelandic laws. 'Law on Farm Names and related matters' passed in 1937.
- Place names were used as Real property identifiers until late 20th century when they were exchanged for a numeric identifier. Place names are still widely used to define extent of rural farm boundaries



Historical background

- In 1997 we first had law regarding addresses in urban areas
 - stipulate that streets and houses in urban areas have street names and an address identifier – planning law
- The current Place-Name Act was passed in 2015. According to the law addresses are defined as place names
- The regulation on registration of addresses, which has its origin in the place-name act, came into action 2017
- Guidelines on registration of addresses published 2018



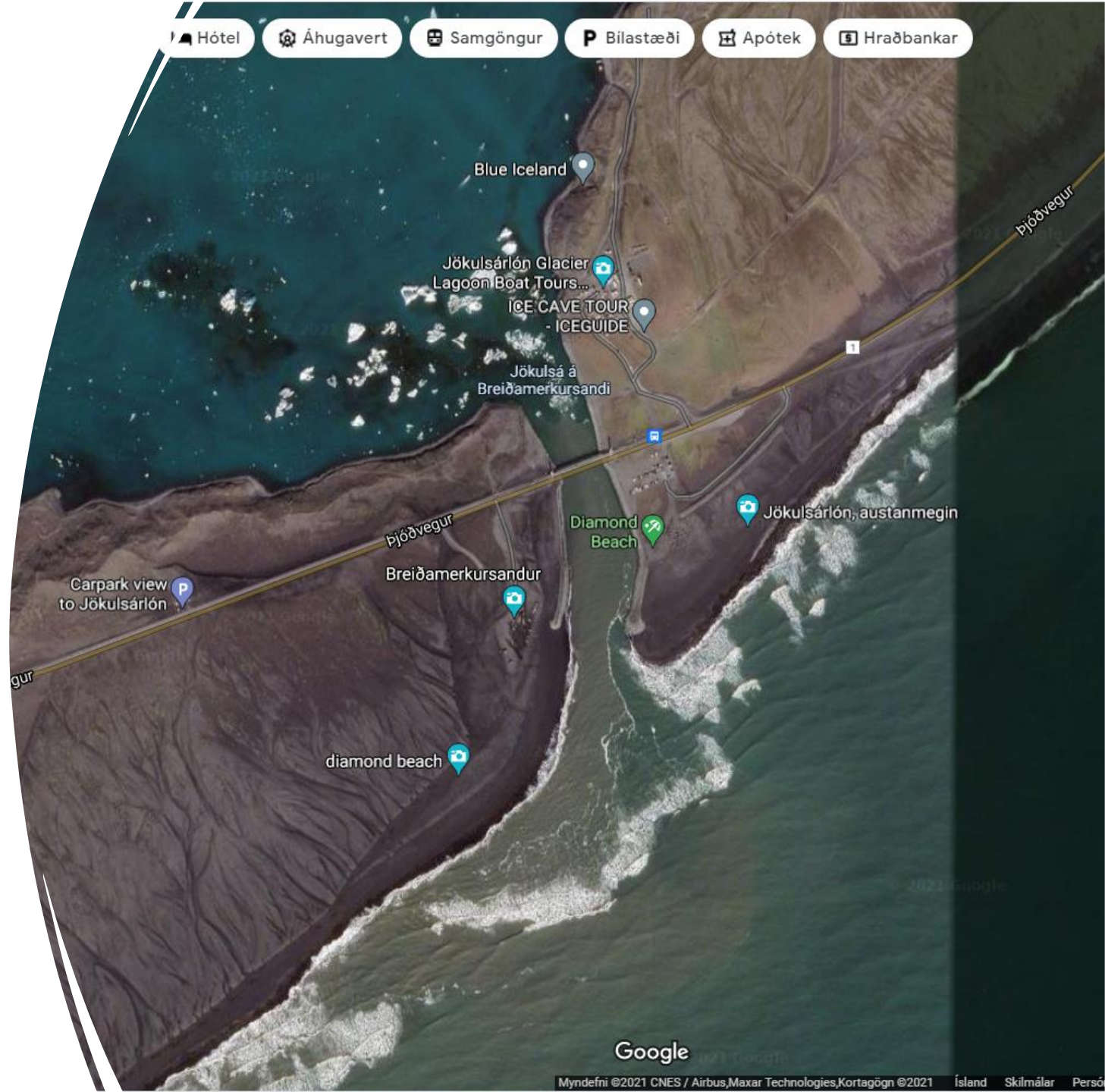
International trends

- UNESCO has concluded that maintenance of cultural heritage, such as geographical names is an important driving force of cultural diversity
- We have concerns about losing connection with the place names - cultural heritage may be at risk
- With the legislation in 2015 the Icelandic government was reacting to the threat of losing connection with the heritage.
 - We want the place names to be registered as addresses



International trends

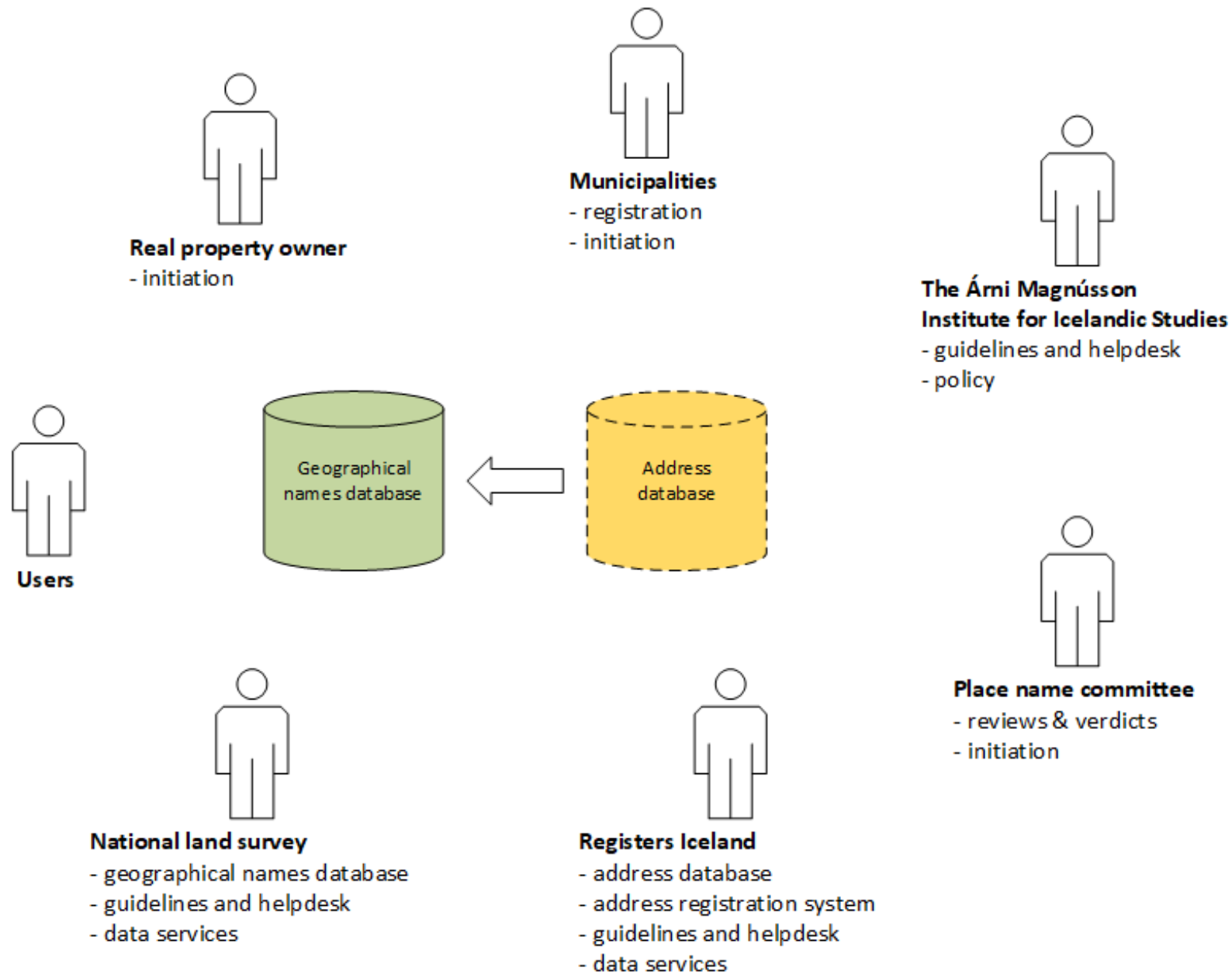
- Globalization and increased travel
- Crowd sourcing – maps are created by the mass - sometimes without proper source data
- Authentic place names/address databases are available but not used by big map companies
- Creation of unofficial place names in English, by tourists
- People have started picking up and using unofficial place names instead of the official ones



Main concepts of place name law 2015 and address regulation 2017

- Emphasis is put on place names as subjective cultural heritage that are worthy of preservation for future generations.
- Coordination of place name registration and address registration (as used within property registration)
- Clear rules on registration processes with emphasis on security considerations.
- Municipalities are responsible for registering new or altered thoroughfare names and addresses
- Registers Iceland should maintain and operate the address database
- Advisory role of the Árni Magnússon Institute in Icelandic Studies regarding the collection, registration and preservation of place names
- New general rules of procedure for the Place Names Committee.
 - Older law stated that the committee should review and confirm new place names in rural areas before they were registered.
 - The new law states that the committee can review placename on its own initiative along with resolving disputes
- The National Land Survey of Iceland operates and maintains the place name database
- Addresses should be considered as a place name and distributed along the place name database.
- All land objects (real property) must have a registered address and coordinate.
- The content of the address and placename database should be made accessible, free of charge with no restriction of use.

- Emergency services
- Postal services
- Road administration
- Real life users
- Map makers
- Map users



Does this work? What is the
experience?

Pros

- The registration interface for municipalities is better than before
- There are good guidelines for both registering addresses and place names
- Large and common interest in registering and locating place names in rural areas in Iceland. Place names database available for all to use
- Address database available for all to use and is widely used in Iceland

Cons

- Public and governmental administration is not working properly. Responsibility widely distributed (3 different ministries)
- Municipalities are not giving address registration the attention it needs and are not using the guidelines
- Municipalities do not seek advice from the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic studies
- Road administration does not use the address database when creating road signs - don't follow the decisions of municipalities
- The Place Names Committee is not receiving the information it needs to fulfill its role
- Update of place name database not consistent with the address database
- Most big map companies are not using the address database, only a few are.
- Postcodes are not defined as part of the address system by law. This needs to be changed

Incompatible goals in the law?



Place name

Place names should be preserved for future generation as a cultural heritage

New place names should be in accordance with Icelandic grammar

New place names should be in accordance with heritage and circumstances in each area



both

ensure transparent, open and efficient administration when registering place names and addresses



Address

unify the registration of urban and rural addresses

unify the registration of districts, thoroughfare names and addresses in order to facilitate the gathering of information about destinations, location of land objects and access to structures

ensure that emergency and civil services have access to unified information on specific settlements or areas

secure single registry and unified format of spatial information for navigation devices and digital map services

Thoughts

- To much trust put in to the notion of "*we have law therefor everybody will abide by it*", registrants and users
- The system and data is not sufficiently promoted among key users
- Overall responsibility for place names and addresses must be better coordinated with more cooperation(3 different ministries)
- We are putting all our address data into linear network when some of the data are polygons and points



Thoughts

- Need to increase the knowledge of registrants
- Need to increase understanding of the implementation of land registration and the connection to addresses
- Need to increase the knowledge of key stakeholders
- Too few workers / more automation



Questions to start the debate

- What is the focus in your country regarding the preservation of place names / addresses?
- Roles or processes different from in Iceland?
- Are the address system and the place name system entwined?