



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Estonian place names and the local government reform

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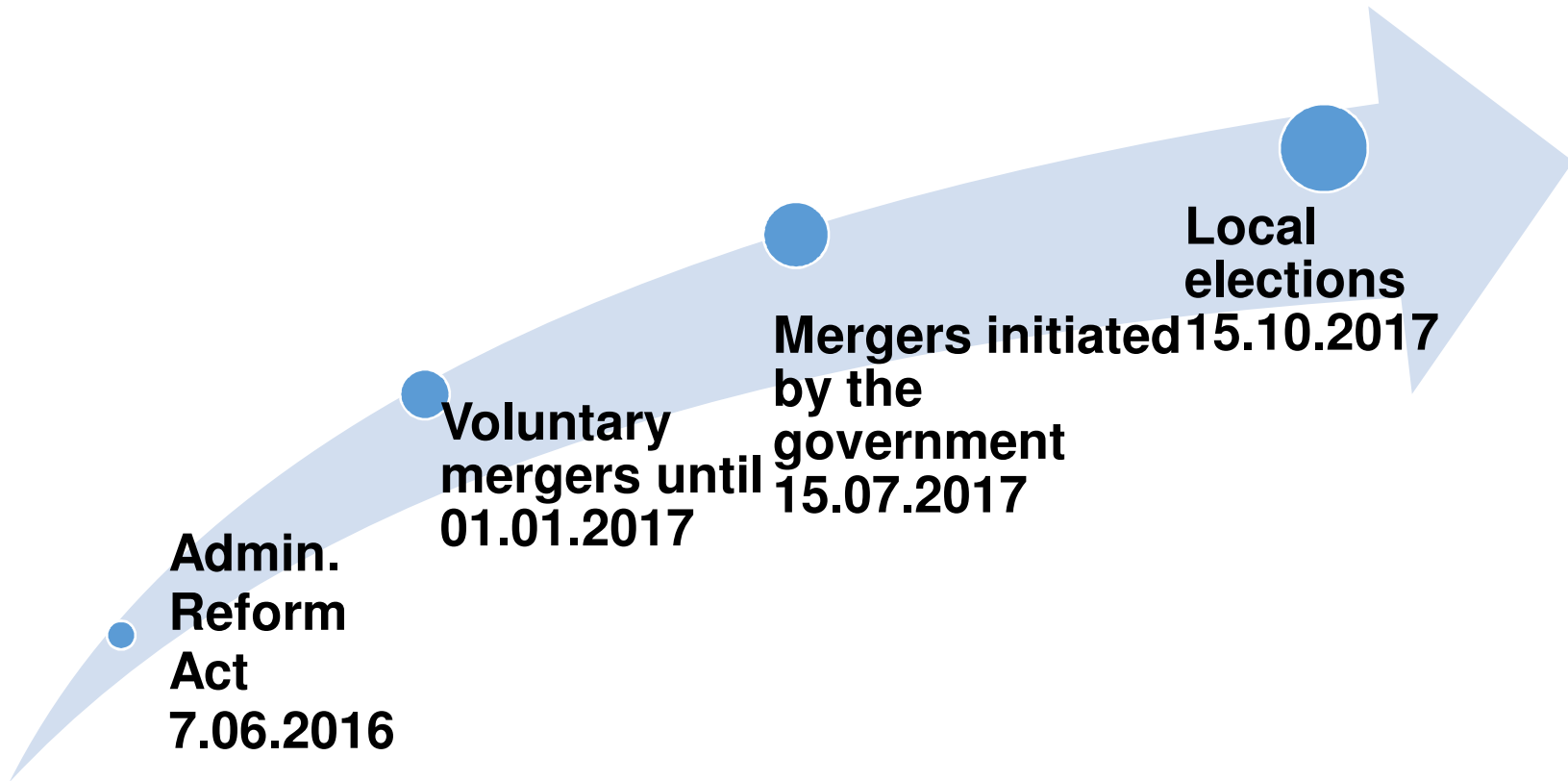
Estonian place names policy's main objectives

- Uniform application and use of Estonian place names
- Protection of historically and culturally valuable place names
- Place names <-> Registers and databases

Place names in Estonia: organisation

- Basis: [Place Names Act](#), Territory of Estonia Administrative Division Act
- [Place Names Board](#): advisory expert committee, formed by the Government Under the auspices of Ministry of Finance
- [Place Names Register](#) – Land Board

Local government reform 2015 - 2017



New names for new (merged) municipalities: process

- Negotiations between municipalities -> merger agreement
- Working group on municipalities' names -> recommendations
- Opinion of the Place Names Board -> Government

New names: principles

- **Historical names of longstanding administrative divisions (*kihelkonnad*, old municipalities)**
- **Location of local government seat**
- Important natural landmarks
- New name

Challenges in agreeing a new name

- Negotiation tactics: willingness to give up all „old“ names – „everybody´s equal“
- Lack of historical analogue: new territory bigger than any old administrative division
- Name-grabbing: lot of candidates to a wellknown, marketable name
- Loss of beautiful, historically valuable names
- Re-naming of village names in many places



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Thank you!

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