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To all Members, Heads and Permanent Correspondents

09 March 2020

Our Ref: **2020-0015.LT**

Dear Member, dear Colleagues

COVID-19 Virus,

Cancellation of EuroGeographics Extraordinary General Assembly

The scale of the COVID-19 virus problem varies from country to country, and advice in some countries remains unclear, but what is clear is that it is a developing and escalating problem. Unnecessary travel is being discouraged by many commercial and government organisations, and I am aware that some European institutions are cancelling their meetings and conferences: for example, EUROSTAT GISCO meeting that was to happen in Luxembourg on 26-27 March, and all subsequent Eurostat meeting until the end of April, have been cancelled. A number of other European Institutions are cancelling unnecessary travel, and gatherings of large numbers of people, such as at conferences, are also being cancelled.

It is easy to over-react, but it clear that there is an increasing issue in Europe, and we must take careful account of our duty of care to staff, and the wider membership, and balance this against the urgency and importance of physical meetings to our business, as well as alternatives ways of conducting our business and the cost. In conclusion, and after careful consideration with the President and Management Board, we have decided to cancel EuroGeographics meetings that involve physical travel until the end of April and to make arrangements for conducting these online via webinar, Skype or other means. Unfortunately, the gathering of 60 people from across Europe at our Extraordinary General Assembly in the

Rue du Nord conference room is something that must be considered a high risk, and so we must also cancel the Extraordinary General Assembly at the end of April.

We will now examine how we might conduct our formal business and take any important decisions remotely, by email or online, via webinar or in some other online manner, focusing on essential agenda items only, and conducting essential business. We will be in touch with the alternative arrangements to allow us to do this effectively and as soon as we can arrange it. For now, please do not plan to travel to Brussels before the end of April for EuroGeographics meetings.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M J Cory', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

M J Cory
Secretary General and Executive Director
EuroGeographics