



EuroGeographics Strategy

2020 - 2023



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EuroGeographics Strategy 2020-2023

Executive Summary

EuroGeographics is:

A unique network of public sector peer organisations active in geospatial information management from across Europe. We enable the sharing of experience, best practice and lessons learned. We provide a collaborative network in which our individual views are amplified as a collective voice into the international environment to improve understanding of the importance and potential of our members' authoritative data and our members' role.

Our Vision is for:

A society empowered by the use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and services, and we support the public good by:

- **Connecting members with their peers and partners**
EuroGeographics encourages the exchange of knowledge between members to build capacity and confidence in order to help them to deliver their public task.
- **Connecting members to International policy makers**
EuroGeographics provides its members with a global view on specific policy and legal issues related to geospatial information management.
- **Connecting users to our members' data**
EuroGeographics promotes the availability of members' data and services, and helps to integrate their National data into pan-European datasets for use by European and global institutions, demonstrating their commitment to international collaboration.

Our strategy for 2020-2023 aims to:

- Evolve our product-oriented approach by making current pan-European datasets accessible and open, and where funding is available, other fundamental data themes, integrating these data into sustainable European and international infrastructure for the public good.
- Develop partnerships to achieve what we believe is in the public interest, that is the widespread use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and infrastructure across the European and international system.
- Manage a sustainable budget to maintain a viable organisation, taking the necessary steps to achieve this.

Delivering our strategy relies on the continued commitment and participation of all our members and their desire to share and make their data usable and available for the benefit of all.

Vision			
A society empowered by the use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and services			
Strategic Activity	1. Knowledge Exchange	2. Representation	3. Data Access and Integration
Aim	To encourage the exchange of knowledge between our members and their stakeholders.	To represent our members collective interest and amplify their voice internationally.	To help our members' data and EuroGeographics' pan-European datasets to be used within the European and International systems.
Outcome	Widespread participation and attendance in knowledge exchange activities.	International (European & global) cooperation developed further	Pan-European open data.
To do this we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on our successful knowledge exchange network • Develop an extended annual programme of knowledge exchange and capacity building • Providing a balance of physical and virtual 'e-events' to encourage attendance and participation • Address specific regional needs and facilitate cross-border regional collaboration • Enable networking between members, and external organisations • Identify external funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with the European and international systems • Raise the visibility of our members amongst key stakeholders • Participate in a constructive way in the policy development process • Track, influence and respond to priority initiatives or policy issues • Support the need for an agreed geospatial policy across the EU Institutions, in particular the Commission • Provide the UN-GGIM: Europe secretariat • Provide active input to UN-GGIM, helping establish a European position on key issues and to formulate, communicate and implement policy, keeping members informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on our current data offering, moving the primary focus from revenue generating, to promoting the use of our member's data • Support the Directive on open data and re-use of public sector information, removing the commercial aspects of our current data offering • Demonstrate, signpost and promote members' high value national and pan-European datasets • Work with stakeholders to meet their geospatial data needs, through representation activity working with and not against policy objectives. • Deliver the Open Maps for Europe project.
Financial	Knowledge Exchange and Representation activity is funded through membership subscriptions		Licence & contractual income, grant Income Sustainable funding for pan-European open data
Underpinned by:	Our People: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Office team • Management Board • Members 	Information & Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications plan and activities 	Our Values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional and competent • collaborative and cooperative • multi-national, open, transparent and ethical.



EuroGeographics Strategy 2020-2023

Introduction

This document sets out our strategy for EuroGeographics. It describes our vision and mission, and strategic goals and objectives for the three-year period from 2020 to 2023 with the aim of:

- Evolving our product-oriented approach by making current pan-European datasets accessible and open, and where funding is available other fundamental data themes, integrating these data into sustainable European and international infrastructure for the public good.
- Working in partnership to achieve what we believe is in the public interest, which is the widespread use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and infrastructure across the European and international system.
- Managing a sustainable budget to maintain a viable organisation, taking the necessary steps to achieve this.

This document is aligned with our Articles of Association, which set out the legal framework within which we operate. Our strategy relies on the continued commitment and participation of our members and their desire to share and make their data usable for the benefit of all.

Membership

EuroGeographics is an International not-for-profit membership Association under Belgian Law. Membership of EuroGeographics is open to “any nationally recognized organisation within Europe that has an official responsibility within a European country for an activity which relates to the Association’s Purpose.”¹

Our members are National Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authorities (NMCAs) mandated by their governments to undertake geodetic surveying, topographic mapping, cadastral surveys and land registration mapping activities. Since our foundation in 2000, membership has grown steadily from 37 organisations to 61 from 46 countries. Today we estimate that our membership covers 90% of organisations responsible for these activities in Europe.

Strategic Context

EuroGeographics and its members operate in a changed global environment. This global environment embraces global platforms such as Google Maps; voluntary initiatives, particularly Open Street Map; an evolving regulatory framework, with for example INSPIRE, the Open Data PSI Directive and the emerging European Strategy for Data; and a changing international scene with emerging powerful players and the current United Nations initiative to create an Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF). Further to this, the ongoing rapid technological developments continue to drive innovation in our activities.

EuroGeographics and its members recognise the inescapable need to adapt to this changing environment which affects all our members and users of their geospatial data. It creates particular challenges for the membership of EuroGeographics, not least in finding common ground among so many different national approaches, but also securing sustainable funding.

¹ EuroGeographics Articles of Association define the purpose of the Association as: ‘to further the development of the European Spatial Data Infrastructure through collaboration in the area of geographic information, and the representation of EuroGeographics’ membership and its capabilities’



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There are opportunities to be grasped in this changing environment. European NMCAs are public organisations which exist for the public good. They are responsible for creating, maintaining and publishing authoritative geospatial data for their national territory, and they need to make those data accessible to contribute and add to the public good in a changing environment. The Open Data PSI Directive in particular offers a catalyst for improved accessibility, at least for EU Member States, and providing strengthened demand for NMCA data. The realisation of this opportunity is growing among NMCAs.

To realise opportunities and overcome the barriers requires constructive engagement among stakeholders and potential partners. The issues are both technical and institutional, and both aspects need to be tackled. The institutional issues often arise from the differing national policies and different legislative environments. Discussing these constructively provides the means to grasp the opportunities and share experiences in realising them.

EuroGeographics

EuroGeographics is a unique network of public sector peer organisations active in geospatial information management from across Europe. We enable the sharing of experience, best practice and lessons learned. We provide a collaborative network in which our individual views are amplified as a collective voice into the international environment to improve understanding of the importance and potential of our members' data and our members' role.

EuroGeographics provides a network that enables a constructive, collaborative dialogue between members, and between our members and interested international stakeholders, to overcome the technical and institutional obstacles that prevent the widespread use of national, authoritative geospatial data. This strategy sets out how we intend to help do this.

Vision and Mission

We believe in a society empowered by the use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and services, and we support the public good by encouraging the exchange of knowledge between our members and their stakeholders, by representing our members' collective interest and by facilitating access to their geospatial data and services.



Strategic Activity 1: Knowledge Exchange

Strategic Aim

Our aim is to encourage the exchange of knowledge between our members and their stakeholders, and to sustain and extend our knowledge exchange activity as effectively as we can, within available resources. To do this we will:

- Develop an extended programme of knowledge exchange and capacity building activity aligned with the representation activity and event strategy,
- Identify external funding programmes that support our capability and role in knowledge exchange for our members.

Knowledge Exchange

Knowledge exchange brings together practitioners and stakeholders for the purpose of sharing tacit knowledge, experiences and ideas. Sharing knowledge encourages innovation and helps overcome challenges. It helps identify savings in time and money and improvements in effectiveness, sharing experiences of success and failures. We will build on our successful knowledge exchange network by expanding the concept to a broader, holistic and coordinated knowledge exchange approach that delivers richer benefits to our members.

To do this, EuroGeographics will develop a broad programme of knowledge exchange events linked to membership engagement activities. The Association will also engage with a more directed form of knowledge exchange and capacity building aimed at addressing specific needs in particular regions, for example introducing potential donors to our members who have a need for assistance, and to facilitate cross-border regional collaboration.

Events

We will offer a wide range of events in support of our purpose and this strategy. Events encompass general assemblies, knowledge exchange activities and other meetings organised by EuroGeographics, others, or in partnership with others. We will develop a programme of events that provide opportunities to engage in visible Association organised activity, on topics of relevance and interest to members, and to give networking opportunities for members, between members, between the EGHO and members, and where appropriate with external parties. These events will ensure geographic spread by organising and delivering regional events wherever possible, but also providing a balance of physical and virtual 'e-events' to encourage attendance and participation. Events will give EGHO the opportunity to brief members on the activities we carry out on their behalf including operational and work plans for the coming year, and enable EGHO to engage with members to ensure that our activities continue to meet their needs.

Each year an events programme will be compiled by the membership and communications team. It will include EuroGeographics run events, partnership events and will identify external events that we believe our members and head office team should be present at, at what level and why.

Funding and Support

Funding for the knowledge exchange activities is covered by EuroGeographics membership subscriptions. Other means of support will be explored, including:

- Shared costs, when organising joint events with other stakeholders
- Sponsorship, if commercial third parties are involved
- External funding, if the knowledge exchange activity is packaged work as a capacity development programme
- Explore and facilitate funding for members from international donors

Strategic Outcome

Rescoped and refocused Knowledge Exchange in-line with the agreed strategy, with widespread participation and attendance in knowledge exchange activities.





Strategic Activity 2: Representation

Strategic Aim

Our aim is to represent our members' collective interest and amplify their voice. We work in partnership with the European and international systems and with others to achieve what we believe is in the public interest, which is the widespread use of our members' authoritative geospatial data and infrastructure.

Representation

Effective representation seeks to ensure visibility, relevance and to have a positive impact:

- **Visibility:** To raise the visibility of our members, the National Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registry Authorities (NMCAs) of Europe, amongst key stakeholders, representing their capabilities and role in delivering geospatial reference data in support of global, European and national policies, and the contribution that the Association can make in facilitating this.
- **Relevance:** To ensure that the messages delivered on behalf of our members are relevant and effective at global, European and national levels, while developing EuroGeographics position as a trusted, proactive and responsible player.
- **Impact.** To participate in a constructive way in the policy development process. We aim to make appropriate and positive contributions to those areas of policy development where we, and our members, have a track record, significant expertise and legitimate interest, in support of the public good.

In addition to representing the importance of our members' data to international stakeholders, we will focus on tracking and influencing a selected number of priority initiatives or policy issues, informed by the Policy Knowledge Exchange Network (POLKEN), our internal policy tracking and research, reviewing EU and UN work programmes and from suggestions made by our members.

Coordination

The role of the Policy Knowledge Exchange Network (POLKEN) is critical to this representation strategy. POLKEN is open to all members of EuroGeographics and it considers all policies relevant to the membership. It enables the EuroGeographics position to be developed and shared on priority issues and is the primary conduit through which such positions are developed, communicated, coordinated and delivered. The Secretary General chairs it, supported by the Head Office representation and policy team, the research and policy officer and the UN-GGIM secretariat lead. POLKEN membership consists of senior Managers or Directors from our membership organisations to ensure its visibility, relevance and effective impact. Our priority areas of interest are focussed at the global level and within the European domain.

Europe

EuroGeographics is an Association of members that cover the whole of geographic Europe, including members of the European Union (EU). The EU and its related institutions are a significant core stakeholder, and one which influences policy across a wider geographic Europe. It has significant political and financial leverage over the many areas of interest to our members. Therefore, the role

and interest of our members in helping deliver on the EU policy agenda must be clear, both to our members and to European stakeholders.

Policy and legislative areas of particular interest include:

- The European Strategy for Data and European digital economy;
- The Open Data PSI Directive and the reuse of high value geospatial data;
- The European Green Deal, and the future evolution of the INSPIRE Directive, on which we must clarify our collective views and position;
- Plans to combine Copernicus and Galileo under the proposed Space Programme regulation, and in particular the means by our members can improve cooperation;
- European cooperation and support for the sustainable development goals and the integration of statistics and geospatial information;
- Energy performance, environmental, and the international trade of properties in the common market.

These require us to pay particular attention to developing EU policy and legislation agenda. The importance and role of our members and their authoritative geospatial data in helping deliver on the EU policy agenda, and in help meet its operational needs, will be asserted and visible wherever possible.

Looking forward, we note that there is no clear political or policy 'home' for geospatial information within Europe and the European Union. We believe that the lack of an integrated geospatial policy backed up by core reference data from authoritative data providers will severely hamper the European digital economy and effective public administration. We note that elements of geospatial policy are dealt with by different parts of the European Commission, Council and Parliament, with different policy or operational priorities. As a consequence, it does not always appear 'joined-up' and the use of authoritative geospatial and cadastral information is inconsistent. We believe an agreed geospatial policy should be implemented horizontally across the EU Institutions, in particular the Commission, and not dealt with in silos; so that when policies are developed and proposed, they must take into account their geospatial policy and our members' role in providing authoritative geospatial data. We will continue to make this case wherever the opportunity arises.

Global

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts as an intergovernmental mechanism for making joint decisions and setting directions with regard to the production, availability and use of geospatial information within national, regional and global policy frameworks.

European NMCAs have an important role to play in this global initiative and therefore it is important that our members' distinctive voice and interests are heard in the development of global policy. EuroGeographics will help formulate, communicate and implement UN-GGIM policy. We will represent our members' interest and support this important global initiative. EuroGeographics as an Association will express our own clear view and be assertive in stating our own position.

We will continue to provide active input to the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts – directly as an organisation that participates as an invited observer and by providing the secretariat to UN-GGIM European regional group through which we help many of our member organisations fulfil their national representative role in a regionally consistent manner. Furthermore, we will support our members within the UN-GGIM Expert Group, ensuring that those members who participate in the Committee of



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experts are fully briefed on the key topics of interest, helping to establish the European positions on these topics, and aim to influence and represent our wider membership in UN meetings. EuroGeographics also plays a role in communicating these important International activities and developments to those members who are not part of the various UN expert groups, and we will play an active role in providing a communication channel for various international stakeholders to all of our members.

There is also interest in the United Nations system for our members geospatial data and related activities, in support of UN operational activities and for other work. Projects such as the Second Administrative Boundaries project (SALB) require authoritative data from national providers, and Europe is an example of best practice globally in the compilation of such data. We will continue to encourage and facilitate access to our members' data to the UN system. The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on 26 February 2015, encouraging Member States to increase their cooperation on the Global geodetic reference frame (GGRF), seeking to improve and maintain national geodetic infrastructures. This is an area of responsibility for many of our members. We will therefore monitor and support this cooperation wherever possible.

Informing and engaging

Our representation activity will be supported by relevant information, position and briefing papers. The monitoring of international policy will identify public consultations requiring the timely production of consultation responses. Papers will be prepared and distributed to best reflect our positive role as a source of authoritative information and the constructive participation in policy discussions. We produce and circulate papers where we and our members have a legitimate interest and a constructive contribution to be made to the debate. All papers are publicly available on our website.

We will maintain recommended messages and a narrative appropriate to the stakeholder audience that explains our interest, the issues of concern and the position of our members. These messages will be maintained and updated to make sure they are current, and relevant for the given target audience, based on their profile and our understanding of their agenda and motivations. Following the preparation of top line messages, work will be required to determine the precise channels to be used to deliver the messages.

Representation is a one of three principal strategic pillars of activity in EuroGeographics overarching strategy. The President has a formal role in representing the Association particularly at a "diplomatic" and senior level, supported by the Association's Management Board. The Secretary General & Executive Director, has a principal role in representation and participation, including a special role in formal situations.

Strategic Outcome

Cooperation with the European Union is further developed; Sustained engagement with UN-GGIM, and support of UN-GGIM: Europe, through provision of the secretariat.

Strategic Activity 3: Data Access and Integration

Strategic Aim

Our strategic aim is to help our members' data and EuroGeographic's pan-European datasets to be used within the European and International systems by:

- Building on our current data offering, moving the primary focus from revenue generating, to promoting the use of our member's data;
- Supporting the Directive on open data and re-use of public sector information, removing the commercial aspects of our current data offering;
- Demonstrating, signposting and promoting members' national data as well as our pan-European datasets;
- Working with stakeholders to meet their needs, through the representation activity, where we would like to work with and not against policy objectives.

A Changed Emphasis

The policy landscape has shifted substantially with the Open Data PSI Directive. It is increasingly likely that small-scale (or low-resolution) topographic data will become available for free and as open data from our members. Making our pan-European data open is the correct strategic decision in this environment; in parallel, there is a requirement to fundamentally reassess whether and how EuroGeographics can sustain (maintain and fund) this data in the future.

Our members create high value, core reference geospatial datasets. There is plenty of evidence that it is these data that users want access to, but see current licencing and changing policies as an obstacle. Work undertaken under the UN-GGIM working group on global geospatial fundamental data themes, High Value Datasets under the Open Data PSI Directive and the Open ELS project engagement with GISCO all suggest common priority areas.

EuroGeographics has clarified and re-framed its role in this regard. European users, such as Eurostat wish to harvest and compile such data to solve their business problem. We must explore how best to help them obtain the data they need, and work with our members to help them meet this need.

Open Maps for Europe

EuroGeographics has developed plans to deliver this strategy. The Open Maps for Europe project forms part of these plans and will help to deliver this strategy, alongside proactive engagement with our members and through our representation activity to address the challenge of sustainability.

The Open Maps for Europe project will:

- Extend the availability of open data under open data licenses for the EuroRegionalMap (ERM) and European digital elevation model (EuroDEM) datasets, introduce new open datasets to include Imagery from the Copernicus Earth Observation Program and the Cadastral Index Map (CIM), and improve the quality of the existing EuroGlobalMap and Regional Gazetteer datasets;
- Compile and integrate national datasets into harmonised pan European datasets, ensuring these are sustained and updated, and that quality and coverage is improved;



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- Enhance the user interface developed under Open ELS to enable the visualisation of open datasets via a map viewer and search functionalities. In addition, the user interface will be promoted by developing case studies and by linking it to the EDP and EuroGeographics web sites, as well as to national data portals of EuroGeographics members.

The Open Maps for Europe project will support the Directive on Open Data and the re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI) Directive by helping to boost the development of information products and services based on the re-use and combination of geospatial data, a High Value Datasets category as defined in Annex I to the Directive, to the benefit of our members and third parties.

Sustainability

Our members have a particular responsibility within their national systems for provision of data to meet national requirements. We believe it is essential that members also meet international requirements for their data. We will seek to secure the supply of data from our members to enhance and sustain our pan-European data offerings to meet user needs.

If EuroGeographics is to continue to maintain and update medium- to small-scale datasets as open data, some means of funding this activity must be found beyond the end of this strategic period, taking account of the data provider costs and the costs of centralised coordination and production. A number of options will be explored in order to do this: it may be necessary to make further cost reductions (to reduce costs to EuroGeographics); to seek increased financial support from our members; or to seek alternative funding. It may require a mixture of these options. It will also be important to explore with Eurostat how to support them in meeting the needs of the European Commission, and if necessary, help manage the transition from EuroGeographics to Eurostat of the data integration work required to meet these needs, whilst continuing to develop a supporting EuroGeographics association network with knowledge exchange activities, general assemblies and representation.

Strategic Outcome

Make ERM available as open data.

Identification of long-term sustainable solution for the Data Access and Integration Strategy.

People, Communication and Culture

Our strategy is underpinned by our people, communication and culture. A Brussels based head office team is supported by an active and engaged community of over 60 member organisations in 46 countries across geographic Europe, requiring proactive two-way communication and engagement with our members and stakeholders. Our professional and collaborative culture is maintained across multi-national boundaries, regardless of politics, ethnicity, religion, gender, culture or language.

People

We need the right team, with the right competences, capability and capacity to deliver this strategy. Our team consists of the EuroGeographics Head Office Team and our members. The EuroGeographics Head Office team is a small, professional, multi-lingual and highly competent team, made up of dedicated and committed individuals willing to go the 'extra-mile' for the organisation and its members. There is a strong team ethos, and it is geographically and culturally diverse reflecting the



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diversity and complexity of our members. The level and capacity of the team must be linked to achieving the activities outlined in this strategy, and it is important that the staffing and resourcing of the organisation is appropriate to deliver the strategy. We will apply best practice human resource policies, whilst complying with relevant laws, regulations and requirements of a modern employer. It is also important that we seek to develop, motivate and reward our staff appropriately. We will remain sensitive to unrealistic expectations from such a small team, given the variety of activities, actions and issues required to be dealt with. The EuroGeographics Head Office Team cannot deliver this strategy alone: we require the agreement and commitment of all our members, and we shall, wherever necessary and appropriate, seek to supplement our team with secondments from our members.

Communication

To deliver on our vision and carry out the work we do it is essential that we collect, manage and utilise appropriate data, and deploy information and communications technology and systems. In order to assure ourselves that we are delivering value to our members we will undertake regular membership surveys, reporting our findings to the General Assembly, and use these to inform the future development of our strategy and work plans. We will also seek to obtain both formal and informal feedback from users of our data (both current and prospective), supplemented by analysis and review, in order to fully inform our data strategy. It will also be important that we obtain both formal and informal views from our stakeholders and have carried out an analysis of our key stakeholders. We will sustain a stakeholder engagement plan in order to implement and monitor our representation role.

Underpinning our strategy must be a clear, concise and effective communications strategy. This will set out the core strategic messages that we will deliver to our key stakeholders, describing what we will say to whom along with the tactics and tools to be deployed. The tools and methods that we will use include face-to-face meetings, presentations at conferences and workshops, exhibitions, and the use of our website, press notices, the use of social media as well as of branding and other ways of supporting our core messages through targeted marketing and communications. We will update our communications strategy and plan to support the implementation of our strategy.

Culture

EuroGeographics is a 'not-for-profit' membership Association. It has strong traditional values with a collaborative and federated relationship with our members. It is rightly a member-driven organisational culture. Our activities rely on voluntary effort and partnership working to achieve our core purpose, which includes delivering benefits and value to our members, and we can rely on significant discretionary effort beyond 'the day job'. These values are strong and powerful, and have significantly contributed to the success of the Association.

We will continue to maintain this culture, and promote a professional and competent atmosphere in which we encourage a collaborative and cooperative environment with and between our members across multi-national boundaries, regardless of politics, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender or language. We will do this in an open, transparent and ethical way, maintaining a helpful and supportive network for our members in order to support them in their role. We will seek to sustain these values in all that we do.



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Financial Strategy

EuroGeographics has a simple business model in which the costs of our core membership activities are covered by membership fees, and the costs associated with creating pan-European data are covered by sales and contract income. Project work receives some support from European Union funding, which usually requires a contribution from EuroGeographics resources.

EuroGeographics relies on the continued support from our members. In order to deliver on our vision and undertake the work we have set out in this strategy it is essential that we sustain our membership income, and that members continue to support our work and pay their subscriptions in a timely way. Therefore, we will continue to proactively manage the payment of membership subscriptions, and ensure that non-payment is dealt with fairly and professionally.

Our strategic aim for Data Access and Integration seeks to remove the commercial aspects of our current pan-European data offering, supporting the Directive on open data and re-use of public sector information. This requires a sustainable funding model. To achieve this, we will assess the elements (and their costs) that require ongoing support, in-cash, or in-kind and Identify and evaluate a range of options for providing continued financial support to sustain and expand this activity. We will seek to manage our financial constraints and review our actions to sustain the production of pan-European datasets.

Strategic Outcome

A sustainable Association within a balanced budget.

Monitoring and Review

This strategy sets out our strategic goals and objectives for the next three years. The more detailed operational plan, which is approved by the General Assembly, will present the actions to be taken in the first of these three years, with specific measures of success and targets, as well as how our financial resources will be deployed to deliver the planned actions. This strategy is owned by the Management Board, on behalf of members, which delegates responsibility for its delivery to the Secretary General & Executive Director. This strategy will be reviewed and updated annually, and changes reflected in the operating plan. The operating plan will be monitored by the EuroGeographics Management Board on a regular basis. Overall progress against the strategy will be reported to the General Assembly each year by the Management Board.

6 August 2020