

**Press Release – Bonn, Germany 17.03.2020**

## **How the Covid-19 outbreak impacts us on different levels**

***The Board and team of ECA-EC are sending their best wishes to all those affected***

With the worldwide outbreak of Covid-19 our lives have drastically changed over the last weeks and the situation is changing on a daily basis for many of us.

Our thoughts are with all those who are infected or are dealing with infected family members or friends. We have been worrying for weeks about our Italian choral friends, now the virus is spreading so fast that it is becoming a concern for the health sector in many countries.

We are also receiving first reports from those who are and will be strongly affected by the consequences of the drastic measures our governments and local authorities have to take in order to slow down the spread of the virus. We fully understand these measures and we urge everybody to follow the instructions and recommendations and thus help reduce the impact of the virus. On the other hand, we are also aware of the fact that the cancellations of major and smaller events are starting to affect many freelance musicians as well as small and middle-sized organisations, venues, event organisers and ensembles including choirs. We support all initiatives that are asking governments across Europe to adopt emergency measures aimed at ensuring that they can continue contributing to the diverse and rich cultural scene in Europe.

Many of you will have seen announcements about upcoming events all over the world having to be cancelled. Our hearts go out to all those who have invested so much time, energy and heartblood into the preparations of these events. Some events can be postponed, others will have to be cancelled altogether, with considerable consequences. Our friends from [On the Move](#) have put together a [list of useful articles](#) on the legal and economic consequences of the Covid-19 related cancellations.

### **It is time to get creative ...**

With a heavy heart, we can only recommend to all choirs in countries affected to cancel all rehearsals for several weeks. You as singers or presidents of choirs can appeal to solidarity among the choir members so that freelancing conductors will not lose all their income due to this break. And you as conductors may be able to find creative online solutions to keep your singers occupied during these weeks. The online community is already distributing many ideas and proposals - here is one interesting website you can use to start looking for ideas, and we will share more in the coming days: [The Big Covid Survival Choral Doc](#) (by Lauren Peithmann).

### **... and to enjoy some online training.**

There is also a variety of online training opportunities for conductors, vocal leaders and singers that can be useful and can replace live workshops and courses. We had already planned to increase our digital training offers and will offer webinars on interesting topics in the coming months. Stay tuned!

#### **More information, not for publication:**

Stay healthy, don't stop singing (the Italians singing on their balconies at 6 p.m. every evening is a wonderful example starting to inspire others), be creative - and remember that social distancing will help other, more vulnerable members of society stay healthy too!

## 2020 activities under the label of ECA-EC

During the last days, the cancellation of a number of small and big events across Europe and beyond due to the Covid-19 outbreak is adding to the sense of rising insecurity among those who have applied for participation in an international (or national) choral event. As a consequence, we are also receiving first questions whether or not different activities under the label of ECA-EC in 2020 will be cancelled. Since the decision will always have to be taken by the local organisers, though we may be consulting and advising them, please contact them directly if you have any questions.

Concerning our own activities in 2020 (EuroChoir in July 2020, Europa Cantat junior in August 2020, Membership Weekend with General Assembly in November 2020), we are not cancelling anything at this point, since it is currently impossible to predict how the situation with the virus will develop in the coming months. We will remain in close contact with the local organisers who will in turn regularly consult with the local authorities and their funding bodies, and we will constantly evaluate the situation. All those who have registered for those events will be informed by the local organisers as soon as any concrete information will be available.

Be assured that the safety of our participants and of the vulnerable members of our society is our highest priority and we will do anything we can do to protect you and your health as well as that of others. On the other hand, we also want to try to avoid major economic consequences for our partners as long as an event may still be organised without any risk to safety and health. Thank you very much to all our partners, our members and all those attending our events for your ongoing trust and support. We look forward to singing together with all of you in the near future!

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### More information, not for publication:

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