

President's Message, Rome, 30 July 2020

Dear Friends,

At the end of June, for the first time in 12 years, we held our Annual General Assembly (AGA) online.

We were all still haunted by the COVID 19 and the safety rules of many countries did not allow us to travel and to meet, as usual, in Brussels.

In June it was possible to go through some of the problems that the pandemic has created to the economic structure of almost all the countries in the world with more realistic data. The shutdown of companies and commercial activities has created unexpected economic problems to employers, who risk not to open their activity again and to workers who, in a large majority, have lost or might lose their jobs. The tourism sector has thus been hit with a tremendous force.

This fact, combined with a general feeling of fear of possible additional outbreaks of COVID infection and the strict rules for social distancing, will discourage tourists from starting to travel again soon.

Consequently, in consideration of the difficulties that our Members are facing due to the pandemic influence on tourism activities, we presented the AGA with the proposal to waive some of the membership fees for the current year. This facility will be available for small and medium-sized private companies, self-employed and individual members only.

I am proud to say that the proposal was unanimously approved and the procedures to take advantage of this provision are clearly described in our website.

We hope to have contributed to encourage our members in continuing to design and develop new tourism opportunities for all.

We hope that this opportunity will also attract new members who might then approach our network for the first time and feel confident to be part of our initiatives in the future.

To better serve our members and potential new members, we decided to set up an Online Community Website, which is currently under development by EWORX S.A. our Greek Founding Member. The ENAT Community website will allow all members to interact in a dynamic way, establishing, for example, regional groups or thematic groups to support regional member activities, foster new projects and share new ideas and insights.

We will be informing all our members and stakeholders about this new development this autumn and hope that this Community will help to take ENAT to the global level we aspire to.

Fostering Tourism for All is also a goal in our Strategic Plan 2020-2024, which outlines the priorities that the Network has to address in the next five years.

The Plan is a major challenge for all of us. Through different initiatives we will shape our future to be increasingly responsive to the requirements of our network and adaptive to the sudden modifications in our external operating conditions.

The full text of our Strategic Plan will be published soon on the ENAT website.

We still have challenges in front of us due to the social and health situation. I am however confident that we will be able to face the near future with an open mind and to identify the most promising opportunities to start working together again with confidence and reciprocal trust.

Anna Grazia Laura.