

Dear EMPA-members!

I am sorry, that I have to inform you about the final decision of EMPA-Croatia, which from my point of view is the best decision that could have been taken in this situation.

I already had the vague feeling during my conversation with Vesna Pintaric, that a cancellation would probably be unavoidable, but I was so impressed by the so ambitious preparation, the impressive program and all the work and effort that have already been put into the conference preparation that it would have hurt my heart to suggest a cancellation. On the other hand, it would have been even worse if we had made more progress with the preparations and the magnificently prepared conference would not have been visible to the mass of EMPA members at all, or would have had to be cancelled at the last moment. I think that the ZADAR program has earned the participation of the largest possible number of EMPA members. In this sense, the best solution is to hope for an implementation in ZADAR in 2021 - the risk that the new departmental leadership does not support this, should be taken at the moment, and Vesna will surely know more in autumn. I think that all EMPA members still have very high hopes for this wonderful program and would be very happy to see it implemented in 2021.

Accordingly we pass on the information about the cancellation to all EMPA-members – combined with a big thank you to the EMPA-Team-Croatia for all the efforts they have already invested in the project!

On 22jul20 wrote Vesna Pintaric:

*“In reference to our conversation yesterday, when we discussed all the problems related to the Congress that was to be hosted by Croatia – the difficulties with the arrival, the regulations for the entry in Croatia, the limited number of attendees and other restrictions imposed by the current situation characterised by the pandemics, and the likelihood that it may worsen later in autumn, we have made a final decision, to our deep regret, to cancel the 2020 EMPA.*

*Regarding the possibility of organising the Congress in Croatia next year, we cannot confirm with certainty at the moment. The new Croatian defence minister is yet to be appointed, and we cannot conclude anything without his approval. We shall try contacting his office but we shall probably get the information in September.*

*We sincerely regret the situation, but we believe that the EMPA members will show understanding for the new situation and our wish to do anything it takes, but under the circumstances it is simply not possible to hold EMPA this year.*

*We would like to express appreciation for the effort and commitment to you and to all members who applied for the Congress notwithstanding the circumstances. We strongly believe we shall have more concrete information and an acceptable solution this autumn.*

*Please send this info to all members and thank you four your support*

*Respectfully,*

*Vesna and Željko*

With my best wishes for a relaxing holiday - stay healthy!

Yours sincerely

Wolfgang Peischel