

BAPCO – Anne De Smet

Anne De Smet of Momentum, newly elected **BAPCO** President spoke mainly about an unexpected challenge that has reared its head with regard to the Flemish members who have been advised by Toerisme Vlaanderen that they are working in violation of the 2007 law on travel agencies.

In a nutshell: Toerisme Vlaanderen consider PCO's to be 'negotiators' of hotel rooms and therefore on par with a travel agent and so they should also have a travel agent status with all the financial and other implications this entails.

The long and short of this situation is that Anne and the BAPCO board will enter in negotiations with Toerisme Vlaanderen and hope to obtain a solution that will be favourable for all. An ideal situation would be a recognized and separate status for PCO's, a recognition of the specialist knowledge and know-how necessary to be a fully fledged PCO.

As President of BAPCO, Anne will also strive for a closer collaboration with the other associations, a sentiment that is clearly mirrored in the wishes and intentions of most Presidents we spoke to over the last couple of days.

BAPCO Members are of course very busy these coming 6 months, mainly due to the Belgian Presidency of the EU starting on July 1st. After a well earned holiday the President is also intending to work more on the communication around the profession "PCO".

BAPCO elected a new board on June 21st: Anne De Smet, Momentum is the new president. She will be assisted by Idoia Rodes, MCI as Vice-President, Isabelle Deniaud, MCI as Secretary and Nicolas Le Brun, Destree Organisation as Treasurer.

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