



## EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS EMERITI

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

September 2024

#### **Dear Friends and Colleagues,**

Autumn is considered as a melancholic season. It is associated with the painful return from the summer vacations, is often accompanied by rain fall, fallen leaves ("les feuilles mortes") reminiscences from the time we were students and were going back to school from the summer carefree happiness (for those of us who can still remember!) etc.

However, this summer was not a particularly happy period. With at least two major wars occurring with fierce violence and many victims, with the climate change producing catastrophic wildfires (e.g. Greece, Portugal), floods and other natural disasters as well as many tragic losses, we can hardly call it a happy period in the life of humanity and our own lives. Let us hope then that, in spite of being "melancholic", autumn will remedy some of the consequences of these human-made and natural disasters.

But, enough with this introduction!

Our EAPE (European Association of Professors Emeriti) is progressing well but "well" is not enough. It can be better than "well". How can we make it better? By listening to you, the members. That is why we gave such an emphasis to our EAPE survey. It is true that the response rate was much lower than the rate anticipated. Yet those who responded were the ones who had the greatest motivation, who believed in the mission of EAPE and who had something to offer. We are grateful to them for their cooperation and, as promised, I carefully read all responses, one by one. Useful ideas have been put forward. So, in this month's letter I will deal with just one topic, the findings from the EAPE SURVEY.

#### **THE EAPE SURVEY**

This was prepared in collaboration with Immediate Past President Sir Leslie Ebdon and Secretary-General Prof. Nikos Markatos.

During the summer I had the opportunity to review your responses in detail. Here they are:

- All of those who have responded, not surprisingly believe that there is indeed a point in having EAPE.

What is this point?

Most believe that it is a) being in contact with developments concerning Emeriti b) creating links with colleagues c) establishing research collaboration d) keeping up to date with scientific knowledge (e. g. via seminars) e) promoting the rights of Professors Emeriti.

Additionally, there have been complementary responses, as follows:

- Develop a policy to preserve the intellectual potential of older people.
- Consolidate the role of Silver Economy in Society.
- Strengthening EU and building bridges across borders.
- With one exception all respondents believe that being an EAPE member is beneficial for them.

In response to the question "What can be done to make EAPE more useful for you" we had many interesting responses, like the following:

- Creation of links with colleagues.
- Contact with scientific developments.

- Creation of Members' portal on website to find local members.
- Facilitation of relationship of Emeriti with researchers at national level.
- Aligning of EAPE activities with national policies.
- Expanding the awareness of EAPE beyond EAPE members (i.e. more visibility).
- Establishing closer links with other European societies.
- Closer links between EAPE Leadership and Membership.
- Safeguarding the rights to e-mail, copyright and digital use of Emeriti past publications.
- Participation of highly experienced members of EAPE in webinars/seminars of local Emeriti Associations, to promote solidarity and exchange experiences.
- Strengthening of the Bulletin, incorporating multi-disciplinary topics.
- Increasing the membership of EAPE.

## **The Website**

Most respondents are happy with the website and have visited it, most of them from once a week to once a month!

Some recommendations for its improvement:

- Continuous updating.
- Add contents.
- Larger diffusion.
- Make it available to more people and utilize it to attract new members.

## **The Sections**

More than half of the respondents are members of a Section and the majority of the remaining ones would like to become members.

Creation of two more Sections has been proposed, as follows:

- Section on auxology (growth) investigating the Evolution of needs, frustrations, differences and conflicts between generations.
- Section on Education Digitalization (distant learning, development of new digital educational tools.
- The Seminars/Webinars of the Sections seem to be enthusiastically approved by the respondents, the responses ranging from "interesting" and "good idea" to "excellent". The view has been expressed that it would be better if this activity was associated with some income for the EAPE.
- Most colleagues would like to participate in the webinars as speakers.

## **The Bulletin**

Most respondents have visited the Bulletin and most of them are happy with it and have contributed to it.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Raise the standard of articles.
- Increased awareness concerning the existence and character of the Bulletin.
- More emphasis on general themes (like health, environment etc).

## **The Newsletter**

Most respondents have visited the Newsletter and are happy with it but few have contributed to it.

- One respondent suggested making sure that there is no overlap with the Bulletin.

## **Congresses**

Although only half of the respondents have participated in at least one of our two original congresses (Athens and Napoli) yet those who have participated are very happy with them.

## **Finances**

With reference to the (difficult) financial situation of the Association most people feel that the annual subscription fee should stay as it is (50 euros per year) and, with one exception, all respondents can NOT secure a donation (from Bank, Pharma company, Publishing company) or a donation in kind.

## **Recruitment**

Most people have stated that they CAN recruit one new member (please let me know whether you have managed to do so).

## **Add something**

Responding to the question "Do you want to add something", people added the following:

- Improve visibility and communication.
- Promote EAPE in all Universities.
- Create more sections.
- "I am very new to the organization. It is a good initiative and I will no doubt participate in the future".
- "I offer to contribute to peer review of Bulletin submissions".

I am grateful to all colleagues who have cooperated with us in the context of the Survey.

With warmest regards to all and wishes for a happy and uneventful fall (autumn, to be on the safe side!)

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