

European Association of Professors Emeriti

1st International Congress (May 30-31 and June 1, 2019) in Athens.

The Association of Professors Emeriti of the University of Athena – Our forty year anniversary.

By prof. emeritus Elias Oikonomou, Vice president of SOKPA

Distinguished Colleagues!

I am happy to address you a piece of our experience.

My intension is to present you some significant points from the 40 year history and activities of our Association (SOKPA).

Point 1: Name. The full greek name of our Association sounds quite different from the word Association. Namely *Soma/body/corpus of Homotimon (i.e. equivalent honoured) Professors of the Athens University (established in year 1837).*

Point 2: Year of formation. In year 1979 a small group of Professors decided to create such an Association aimed to the continuation of their educational (the idea of mentoring) and towards a broader social service.

Point 2:History. The history of this initiative is now 40 years old, and it is easy to be separated in two unequal parts of time. The first one is extended from the year 1979 till the year 2014(?) and the other, from this year till today. First president was Prof Dem. Antonopoulos. He offered a sum of money for the restoration of the neoclassical building behind the Academy of Athens.

The inequality of time between the two periods was produced by sociopolitical reasons and that led to the catastrophe of our archives by fire as byproduct of the anti-government demonstrations during this time. (December 2008).

Point 3: By laws aims of our association were defined as follows:

- a. The study of matters pertaining to University Education especially inspiring to progress and reform.
- b. The expression of opinions and views to the Government and to University Principals, and provision of every type of aid towards the implementation of the goals of University Education.
- c. The contribution and the motivation of the members of the Association in regards to the matters of University Education and function. These were subsequently complemented by the following items:

cc. The participation to scientific and technological research of the University of Athens.

ccc. The communal, moral, scientific and health support of Emeriti and retired Professors of the University of Athens.

Point 4: Activities: Since then the Association, which counts 347 active members, was engaged in many activities pertinent to its founding aims.

Thus it has organized yearly lectures delivered by its members but also invited Professors from other Universities. In the Academic year 2018-2019, 15 such lectures were delivered.

Since 2014 the “Body” has organized 4 courses addressed to the general public with the title *“The University of the Citizens”*. The disciplines represented so far have been Medicine, Law, Literature, Religion/Theology. History will be represented in 2019.

From these courses, 3 books on, Literature and Theology have been produced. Also a book on Emperor Hadrian: Athens-Rome 117-2017 has been published in 2018.

In addition we publish, three times every year a Bulletin, with the title “Homotimon koinonia”, with information about our activities, programs e.t.c., and we have a webpage (www.somaomotimon.uoa.gr).

Point 5: Problems and needs of Emeriti. The “Body” has presented the problems and needs of the Emeriti and Retired Professors to the Ministry of Education on numerous occasions with satisfactory results, i.e. the improvement of pensions. But, after the economic crisis, pensions suffered unnecessary cuts.

Since 2017 SOKPA has organised the *welcoming Reception of Professors* finishing their Academical career in the University of Athens. Also, it is hoping to establish a welfare action under the auspices and with the collaboration of the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece.

Point 6: Expansion. *The initiative for the establishing* cooperation with the other universities in our country. On this issue our General Secretary Prof Siskos will inform you soon.

Point 7 (final): I choose to end my presentation as an epilogue with a question, asking ourselves. *Should it be acceptable in the 21st century that the capital/richness of knowledge of Emeriti’s and Retired Professors be ended in the same moment with the pension?*

The negative answer is very clear documented by the facts from the history of the humble initiative of our Association.

Dear Colleagues, Thank you for your attention.