



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS EMERITI

ATHENS DECLARATION ON THE ETHICAL MISSION OF THE EUROPEAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

The motto of the three previous Congresses of the European Association of Professors Emeriti has been "The Capital of Knowledge," a concept in harmony with the desired role of Emeriti Professors as Mentors and Perpetuators of Knowledge. However, at a time of rapid technological advancement, facilitated and reinforced by artificial intelligence, the amount of acquired knowledge has become enormous. This essentially positive development conceals potential risks. In which direction will this knowledge be used? This is the crucial question to answer. Are decisions informed and guided by values (on a personal basis) and ethics (on a social basis)? This question, which has haunted scientists for many years, is by no means an intellectual exercise. It is realistic, threatening, and imminent. Will knowledge be used for the preservation of Peace or in the service of War? Will pseudo-knowledge be used to impose restrictions, or even the forced termination of academic freedom and autonomy?

We feel it is the obligation of the European Academic Community to provide clear answers to these and other questions pertaining to matters of Ethics.

Europe's academic tradition, shaped by the humanism of classical antiquity, by the revival of civilization achieved through the Enlightenment, and by its democratic commitment, has contributed decisively to the progress of humanity. It is time for Europe to take the lead again and resist aggression, the abolition of academic freedom, dehumanization, and other potentially catastrophic developments. Wisdom guided by values and ethics is our answer to these questions.

Given in Athens, 12th June 2026.