



**OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM AIUTA
(Association Internationale des Universités du Troisième Age)
et de la FIAPA (Fédération Internationale des Personnes Agées)**

The pandemic caused by Covid19 has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths in Europe and worldwide: more than 70% of these deaths are of people aged 65 or more.

AIUTA (International Association of Universities of the Third Age), has been at the centre of programmes and policies, for many years, all over the world in the service of education, health and well-being of the elderly. The university programs for lifelong education of the elderly constitute, in this period of confinement, a precious help for the elderly, faced with isolation and anxiety linked to uncertainty.

FIAPA (International Federation of Associations of Elderly People) is committed to defending the fundamental rights of older people to dignity, consent, citizenship, promoting an inclusive society and bringing about a paradigm shift allowing to recognize the driving role of seniors in our societies. Its global programmes to combat mistreatment and ageing, its commitments in the context of gerontological emergencies (climate disasters, pandemics, acts of war) make it a central partner in the fight against post-traumatic stress.

The AIUTA Governing Board, which is comprised of representatives of Universities of the Third Age not only from within the European Union but also from every other continent, along with FIAPA members and their representatives, empowered to present collective complaints under the European Social Charter and having participatory status with the Council of Europe and consultative status with the UN (ECOSOC):

- 1) **Affirm** the essential place of seniors in our society
- 2) **Demand** maximum protection of seniors in terms of public health
- 3) **Recognize** the essential role of seniors in inter-generational social networks
- 4) **Suggest** that everything should be done to guarantee the role of seniors as the depository of the memory of our societies
- 5) **Call** on European and international authorities to mobilize resources to ensure lifelong learning for seniors which are linked directly to their mental and physical health in particular for all the actions to be taken in the context of the pandemic and its medium and long-term effects



In particular, AIUTA and FIAPA **Request:**

- That the European Union and the governments of its constituent members show greater sensitivity towards the elderly, who represent an increasingly large proportion of the European population and who have made a fundamental contribution to the construction of Europe.
- That the European Union and the governments of its members pay more attention to the elderly who are the keepers of our history. European memories are part of the “at risk” universal heritage: if our seniors are not nurtured those memories are going to be lost forever. The current policies concerning the elderly are totally insufficient and lacking, both from social and educational viewpoints.
- That the European Union take the initiative to organize a Round Table as soon as possible. This initiative should make it possible to study and define concerted actions to help ensure the well-being, education and health of elderly people across the European Union. AIUTA (International Association of Universities of the Third Age) and FIAPA (Fédération Internationale des Associations de Personnes Agées) can play a leading role in the preparation and organization of this Round Table in cooperation with the national associations of the elderly and in particular FIAPA (International Federation of Elderly) in mobilizing the experiences accumulated in each of the countries of the European Union.

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