

The Speakers

of the Second International Congress of
the European Association of Professors Emeriti
April 28-30, Naples, Italy



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Guido Bellinghieri
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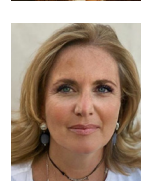
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Patrick Berche
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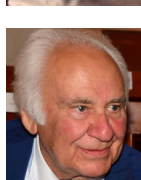
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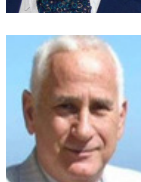
**Natale Gaspare De
Santo**
Emeritus Università della
Campania Luigi Vanvitelli
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Wolfgang Kaltenbacher
Italian Institute for
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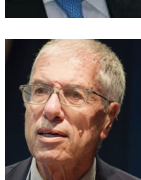
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**Athanasios
Diamandopoulos**
Medical School EKPA
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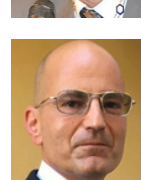
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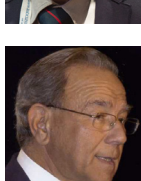
Luigi Campanella
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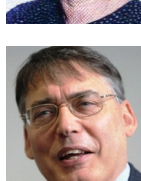
Rumyanka Dimitrova
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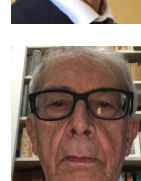
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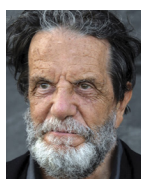
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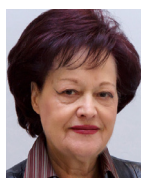
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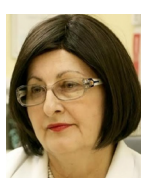
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New Scarlatti Orchestra
Naples



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The Lectures (abstracts)



Patrick Berche

COVID-19 SYNDEMIC A NEW CONCEPT IN PUBLIC HEALTH

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The pandemic of Covid-19 has emerged in 2019. Its lethality rate (deaths/ symptomatics) is estimated at ~ 0.5% in Western countries and up to 1-2% in several Southern countries. The rapid identification of the coronavirus SARS-Cov-2 allowed rapidly to develop diagnostic tests and to design very effective vaccines. In the 1990s, the anthropologist Meryll Singer introduced the innovative concept of syndemic, which opens new and global perspectives in the epidemiological approach to pandemics, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. A syndemic disease is characterized by the intertwining of biological, sociocultural and environmental factors that can aggravate the mortality rates of these diseases. A pandemic cannot be reduced to the interaction between a virus and a population. Its management must take into account the health status of populations, living conditions, cultural contexts, mentalities, behaviors, as well as the social, political and economic forces at play. The concept of syndemic applied to Covid-19. This pandemic is superimposed on other contagious diseases (AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis) and also to genuine non-infectious pandemics (diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, malnutrition...). These chronic diseases contribute to the mortality rate of Covid-19, which mainly affects the elderly people and high-risk patients. The concept of syndemic also includes sociocultural determinants that play a major role in the development of

Covid-19, which suddenly highlights the social disparities and the inequality of exposure, particularly the promiscuity linked to cramped housing and precariousness. Moreover, the emergence of this pandemic creates stress and fear leading to the stigmatization of patients and their contacts, denial of the pandemic, rejection of science, disinformation and fake news that create an irrational suspicion that can lead to violence. Fear is also related to social isolation induced by barrier measures and lockdown, with consequences for the mental health of individuals. Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic has a strong impact on mental illness, including children, and an increase in suicide rates. In addition, the robustness of the health and social assistance systems, which depends on long-term political decisions, plays also an important role on the consequences of Covid-19. This syndemic approach opens new perspectives in the management of major health crisis that must be considered globally, not only at the level of a country but at that of the whole world. It highlights the importance of socio-economic, behavioral and environmental factors, including climate changes and air pollution, on the evolution of the pandemic.

