



MAYOR OF THE TOWN

Town Hall

al. Powstańców Wielkopolskich 18
63-400 Ostrów Wielkopolski, Poland
phone: +48 62 582 24 00
www.umostrow.pl

WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities

Dear Sirs,

on behalf of the authorities of the Town and Commune of Ostrów Wielkopolski, I would like to submit candidacy of Ostrów Wielkopolski for the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Joining the Network would be for us a sign of appreciation of a development of the Town and Commune of Ostrów Wielkopolski in the field of senior policy. It would be also a driving force for further work for benefits of older inhabitants of the town.

The authorities of Ostrów Wielkopolski, aware of the challenges associated with an aging population and the increasing role that seniors play in a social life, have taken a number of system policy initiatives related to older citizens. The aim of these actions is mainly to engage and activate senior inhabitants in the society, to create conditions for active ageing and to ensure a dignified and fulfilling life for older people. It is worth noting that, in this field, the Town and Commune of Ostrów Wielkopolski had been noticed at national level. In 2016 we received a prestigious award for actions directed to seniors from "Coalition for Senior – friendly Municipalities".

Ostrów Wielkopolski (POLAND) is one of the biggest towns in the south part of Greater Poland – it counts close to 72 thousands inhabitants. 23 % of its, close to 17 000 inhabitants, are over 60 years old. The framework for the functioning of seniors were defined in the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Town 2015-2020, which contains a separate chapter entitled "Human Capital: age – friendly town".

Among initiatives undertaken in Ostrów Wielkopolski are the Program "Senior's Card" that offers a system of discounts for senior citizens. Currently, program consists of 6 755 people and 135 program partners. In Ostrów Wielkopolski, as one of the first towns in Greater Poland, was established the Town Council of Seniors - an advisory body of the authorities of the town in the field of the senior policy. Also in Ostrów Wielkopolski, as one of the first cities in Poland, was opened Day Care Centre "Senior – WIGOR" dedicated to inhabitants over 60 years old. A very important role in the senior policy has also the University of the Third Age. Its aim is, among other, to deepen the knowledge of older citizens, and to offer a rich program of activities for them.

The authorities of the town do not forget about public health programs. As example of such action may serve free influenza vaccination program, dedicated to seniors. The program is financed from the town budget. It is worth highlighting that the "Tele – Care Program" allows seniors to call for medical help by using "bracelet of life". Outside gyms (founded from

budged), located in different parts of the town, contribute to improvement of senior's health too.

An interesting project that is going to be implemented in Ostrów Wielkopolski is "Senior Time Bank". It consists in mutual, free provision of services by senior. We believe that the project will contribute to even greater activation of older citizens in our town. Noteworthy is also the approach of the authorities of the town to local transport. According to the philosophy of the authorities of Ostrów Wielkopolski, available and cheap transport is a key factor in aging of the society. In Ostrów Wielkopolski public transport is free for people 70 +; the routes are operated mainly by low-floor buses. In addition, bus stops are located at key locations for seniors and are equipped with benches and shelters to protect against bad weather conditions.

I want to emphasize that the priority task of the authorities is to make Ostrów Wielkopolski the friendly and open city for various social groups, regardless of age and life - position, including seniors. All our initiatives aim to activate and encourage people 60 plus to lead more active life and to enjoy the cultural and sports offer of the town. All the assumptions developed by the town – in our opinion – have been achieved. This is reflected above all in a high number of participants of programs and in their strong interest.

Being part of WHO Global Network of Age – friendly Cities and Communities gives us chances and possibilities to exchange experience and good practice, to create an even better environment for seniors, deepen knowledge and create age – friendly cities. We would like to belong to this prestigious group and together with you to create age – friendly cities, and thus to develop a network of cooperation.

Beata Klimek



Mayor of the Town
of Ostrów Wielkopolski