

Opole, 20 April 2018

**Biuro Światowej Organizacji Zdrowia w Polsce
Al. Jerozolimskie 155
02-326 Warszawa**

**Application letter for the admission of the City of Opole into the Global Network of Age-friendly
Cities and Communities established by the World Health Organization**

Dear Sirs/Madams,

Forming partnerships is one of the best ways to achieve success, practically in all aspects. In Opole, the capital city of Opolskie voivodship lying in south-west Poland, we came to this conclusion on many occasions while preparing and implementing numerous ventures and development projects. The lesson we learnt from them is that a conscious and voluntary cooperation based on common values and convergent objects may be an excellent instrument to develop our city and significantly improve the quality of citizens' lives.

Opole is still a city populated by relatively young people whom we can see in the streets, squares and cafes, at concerts and on buses. However, this ratio is about to reverse and the character of the city will be set by senior citizens and elderly people. It is already today that we think about their future looking to make our city age-friendly. We know there are people waiting for us to make changes every day and month - of course for the better. At present, every one in four citizens is aged over 60. Demographic forecasts clearly show that the share of senior citizens will grow bigger and bigger with time. Our potential, built on the foundations of experience and knowledge of the maturing society, is going to grow. This is our capital - now and in the future. We hereby undertake to raise its value.

Senior citizens in Opole are important partners for local authorities. They actively participate in formulating and realising Opole development policy, including senior citizen policy. Therefore, the idea to join the Network is a bottom-up initiative, originating in the needs of senior citizens themselves. This endeavour transcends divisions by integrating not only the senior community but also its dedicated supporters. The proposed partnership was approved by Opole City Council and the Senior Citizens' City Council of Opole whose assessment you can find hereto attached. This initiative is enthusiastically embraced by the citizens of Opole, including the younger generation of residents.



Prezydent Miasta Opola

The future of our cities and communes is of paramount importance to us. Therefore, in the capacity of the Mayor of Opole, I declare our willingness to access the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities established by the World Health Organization. The members of the Global Network may benefit from our experience resulting from the realisation of both infrastructure enterprises as well as soft activities. We have a lot to share and we welcome the experience that our partners could share with us.

Opole has grown to be a more age-friendly place to live but there is still plenty of room for further actions. The strategy of a friendly city begins with the youngest generation. We are carrying out an active policy for nursery and kindergarten care, the projects and actions we implement are targeted not only at children but their parents as well. Additionally, we are the regional education centre with numerous educational institutions, and the city itself is a young but aspiring academic centre. We also care for the local labour market.

Opole aspires to be an age-friendly city, a centre worth living in regardless of age. Active membership in the Global Network, based on the union of interests - our residents - can vitally help with this undertaking. Knowledge has always been in high demand, so it is worth sharing.

Hoping for a positive consideration of our application to become a Member of the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities and declaring active membership of Opole within the Network, I remain at your service.

Arkadiusz Wiśniewski

The Mayor of the City of Opole