

Dear Madam/Sir,

Being one of the oldest settlements in the historical city of Istanbul, our district Beşiktaş hosts numerous precious buildings and artifacts from the Byzantine and Ottoman Era. The monumental tombs discovered at the recent excavation works are estimated to date back to between 1200-1500 BCE. It is believed that this new archeological discovery will take the history of Beşiktaş to a much earlier period.

Having witnessed to a huge part of the history of the humanity, Beşiktaş maintains its quality of being a prominent living space today as well. The cultural mosaic, formed with the addition of the millions of day-time visitors to the residents of the district, is an important part of Beşiktaş's cultural make up. Our elderly citizens, who carve out and carry forward this culture, are one of the leading determinants of the city.

We regard it as one of our highest priorities to ensure that our elderly residents have a say in any field regarding our city and that they actively participate in our modern and libertarian policy-making processes in the light of the principles of our great leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and also that they live in peace and easy circumstances. This is the very reason why we predicate direct participation and the well-being of the elderly on the studies and works we perform and the units we establish. Such works of ours are not only appreciated by the public but also awarded with various prizes as a result of the evaluations carried out by independent institutions. According to the "Human Development Index" performed by the INGEV (Human Development) Foundation in 2018, our district Beşiktaş took the first place among all the other cities throughout Turkey. Besides, the works we have put into practice for the benefit of the elderly have been awarded by many other domestic institutions.

Now it is one of our primary goals to be an elderly-friendly city by carrying further the steps we have already taken in this regard so far. I would like to state that we are ready for this as the whole organization. In accordance with our strategic plan, we have been working on programs aimed at the fields of "Productivity at Old Age" and "Active Ageing". Participating in the process of being an elderly-friendly city and becoming a part of this dynamic process will give us the opportunity to benefit from the experiences of other cities and sharing our own experience in this field. I would also like to express that we are really excited about this and process and it will make us happy beyond measure to see that all the efforts our units have been making for a long time in the field of elderly studies are crowned with the honor of becoming an elderly-friendly city.

Yours sincerely,

Mayor of Beşiktaş

Rıza Akpolat

