



Bergamo, September 28th 2022

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Programme Coordinator
Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
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Dear Mr Thiago,

we would like to express our great interest in adhering to the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

We share the network's mission and goals and we would like to support their implementation by providing and sharing our know-how in dealing with and providing for the elderly as a city.

The gradual ageing of the population, coupled with the rise in life expectancy are particularly evident in our territory. This has led (and constantly leads) the Social Policy Department in our Municipality to a deep commitment to keeping and enhancing the well-being of our elderly, also by means of pioneer services and projects.

Our goal is to support the most fragile elderly in order to allow them to maintain a good quality of life in their own environment, but we also aim at keeping the self-sufficient seniors active as long as possible by putting their skills to good use and by involving them within their community so as to avoid social isolation and the subsequent rapid decline. We firmly believe that it is a fundamental right of every human being to be supported towards an active ageing, where the elderly are involved in their community as key players and not just as receivers of care and people in need of services. This mindset has required further thinking, especially after the pandemic that struck our city so harshly highlighted the need for preventive and protective actions and for the development of a community-building-oriented welfare.

The challenge is to allow people to age gracefully within their own houses and within their social context, being and feeling an active part of their community and cultivating their interests. In order to achieve this, we need to develop active ageing policies and to limit the institutionalisation of fragile people by supporting caregivers within the family, by increasing social inclusion activities, by adopting up-to-the-minute instruments and assistive technologies, and finally by improving the proximity territorial services.

The WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities represents a virtuous place where it is possible to share and exchange best practices in order to develop innovative approaches to social policies for the elderly.

We are confident that participating in the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities will be a mutually enriching experience, thanks to the international professional contributions that will be circulated.

Trusting that our request will be accepted, we send our very best regards.

**L'assessora alle Politiche Sociali
Marcella Messina**

**Il Sindaco
Giorgio Gori**