



REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA
VARAŽDINSKA ŽUPANIJA
ŽUPAN

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Varaždin, 28. 04. 2025.

Varaždin County
County Prefect's Office
Franjevački trg 7
42000 Varaždin, the Republic of Croatia

To: World Health Organization
Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

Subject: Varaždin County Prefect's Letter of, as an integral part of Varaždin County's Application for the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

Date: 28th April 2025

I am pleased to submit this formal expression of interest to join the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities on behalf of the Varaždin County, Croatia. We recognise the increasing importance of creating inclusive, resilient and supportive environments for people of all ages, and we are committed to transforming Varaždin County into a model community for healthy and dignified ageing for the whole country and beyond.

As one of Croatia's most dynamic regions, Varaždin County is already experiencing the societal shifts associated with an ageing population. Rather than viewing this solely as a challenge, we see it as a call to action – an opportunity to improve the lives of our older citizens whilst creating an environment that benefits all generations.

Over the past year, Varaždin County has undertaken significant steps to prepare for membership in the WHO Global Network. In collaboration with our academic and healthcare partners, we have carried out detailed research into the quality of life of older adults in our region, including both mobile and immobile populations. The insights gathered have informed our evidence-based approach and helped shape our vision for an age-friendly future.

Moreover, we are proud to share that we have already developed a dedicated strategic plan, aligned with the WHO's guiding principles, which identifies key priorities and actionable goals for the coming years. Additionally, we have designed a distinctive age-friendly logo to visually represent our ongoing commitment to promoting health, participation and security in older age.

This initiative enjoys strong support from both local government and community stakeholders. We are fully committed to embedding the principles of age-friendliness across all policy areas, including health and social services, transportation, public spaces and lifelong learning, as well as inter-generational solidarity. Most importantly, we are committed to ensuring that older people are active participants in the development, implementation and evaluation of age-friendly policies. Their voices are viewed as essential elements in shaping a community where everyone can age with dignity and purpose.

We consider our envisioned participation in the WHO Global Network as an opportunity to grow together with other like-minded communities, to not only exchange knowledge and good practices but also benefit from the collective wisdom and resources of such an extensive international platform.

Please consider this letter our official expression of commitment to joining the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. In hope of a favourable response, we hereby reaffirm our strong commitment to the principles of the WHO. We look forward to collaborating with you and advancing our shared vision of healthier, more inclusive societies for all generations.

With sincere respect,

Andelko Stričak, M Econ
County Prefect
Varaždin County
The Republic of Croatia

