

International Interdisciplinary Conference on Work, Age, Health and Employment (WAHE2016),  
19-21.9.2016, Wuppertal, Germany

Welcome address by ICOH, Aging and work Chair Professor Clas-Håkan Nygård

On behalf of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and its Scientific Committee on *Aging and Work*, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Interdisciplinary Conference on Work, Age, Health and Employment (WAHE2016). ICOH is the oldest scientific association in its field, founded in 1906 and has more than 2000 members in 93 countries. One goal of ICOH is to gather people in conferences. ICOH has a world congress every third year (last time in Seoul, South-Korea) and next time in Dublin, Ireland in 2018). ICOH has in all 38 technical committees on specific topics. (see slide 1) One of them is the TC on Aging and work. This TC was founded in 1989 and has organized or co-organized conferences and symposia since 1990. Mostly in Europe but also in Asia. The conferences has mostly been organized under the general name of Aging and work but also under more specific topics like Work ability, Work after 45?, Productive aging and Age management. The Aging and work TC has also contributed to bridge the gap between aging researcher in gerontology and work life under the discipline of Occupational Gerontology (or Industrial Gerontology). Occupational Gerontology is about work-related aging, with a focus on adaption of middle-aged and older workers to employment and their transition to retirement and beyond.

The conference of today addresses a topic – *work and retirement* - that already attracts much societal attention and will gain even more in the coming decades. In current times of a continuously aging work force, the issues of organizing, designing and (re-) distributing work become more and more important. Here, high quality research is needed to inform and shape policy and practice. The world of work is changing – if this change is a *threat* or a *challenge* can mostly not be seen in advance. So it is of outmost relevance that research monitors these developments closely and intervenes where needed and possible, to provide politicians and managers with new valid knowledge for developing of the practice. During the last years, the growing evidence from longitudinal studies has contributed significantly to our knowledge about the relationship between human aging and work life. Thus, also our research tools are changing: over the last years, there have been exciting innovative research developments.

I, along with the ICOH Scientific Committee Aging and Work, want to thank the Department of Occupational Health Science, University of Wuppertal and the Institute for Employment Research, IAB (Nuremberg) for organizing this important meeting. Finally, I wish all of you that you will have a stimulating conference and that you will leave with useful new ideas and tools when investigating current and future challenges of *work, age, health and employment*.



### Aging and work conferences

- 1989 TC Starts
- 1990 The Hague (The Netherlands) Aging and work
- 1992 Haikko (Finland) Aging and work
- 1994 Wijk an Zee (The Netherlands) Aging and work
- 1994 Kitakyushu (Japan) Paths to productive aging
- 1996 Stockholm (Sweden) Work after 45?
- 1998 Helsingör (Denmark) Aging and work
- 1999 The Hague (The Netherlands) Aging and work
- 2001 Tampere (Finland) Age management
- 2001 Kitakyushu (Japan) Aging and work
- 2002 Krakow (Poland) Aging and work
- 2004 Verona (Italy) Work ability
- 2007 Hanoi (Vietnam) Work ability
- 2010 Tampere (Finland) Age Management
- 2013 Helsinki (Finland) Work, Well-being and Wealth: Active aging at work
- 2016 Brussels (Belgium) Sustainable Employability
- 2016 Wuppertal (Germany) Work, Age and Employment- Evidence from Longitudinal Studies