

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation entitled:
"Attitudes towards retirement and the type of reflexivity as
determinants of positive, active aging".

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The doctoral thesis titled "Attitudes towards retirement and reflective reflexivity as determinants of positive, active aging" aims to approach the issue of positive aging in the context of the aging of societies, using the example of people who remain professionally active despite having the right to retire. The research described in the thesis falls within the realm of active aging research, but in the development of the research strategy and analysis of data, other approaches used in aging research were also taken into account. At the ontological-epistemological level, the vision of agency within the social structure proposed by Margaret Archer is adopted. Archer's concept of reflexivity, mediating structure-agency relationship (Archer 2013b), is an important element of the dissertation. The theory of attitudes by Stefan Nowak (1973) and selected typologies of attitudes of older people were also used. During the research process, the sociological practice of Derek Layder (1998) and the assumptions of his Adaptive Theory Approach were followed. These guidelines were used from the beginning of the creation of the thesis, including the stage of concretizing the research issues. The interest in the group of working retirees is motivated by the belief that it can be perceived as a positive example of active aging as well as successful aging in work. However, people working in retirement are poorly exposed in most social research — both in the field of aging and in the field of work. This doctoral thesis presents a portrait of "young old" — aged

60-74 — who, despite being entitled to retirement or receiving this benefit, have decided to continue working in Poland.

The aim of the research was to understand the motivation for working in retirement and to verify the usefulness of Margaret Archer's concept of reflexivity in explaining the attitudes of people over 60.

The presented research was conducted in the spirit of mixed methods approach triangulating both qualitative and quantitative methods.

1. The desk research was focused on reviewing statistics, documents, previous research, projects and implementations related to issues that are significant considering the subject of the dissertation.
2. Individual in-depth interviews (IDIs) with 40 key informants provided a glimpse into the social reality of older people in Poland through the prism of the life histories and personal considerations of active seniors. The selection of the interviewees was determined by the following criteria:
 - a. age — people aged 60-74 (young old) with the right to retire in Poland (women over 60, men over 65 years of age),
 - b. activity — people who are professionally active,
 - c. place of residence — Poland.
3. Before the interviews, the respondents were asked to fill out the ICONI questionnaire, created by Margaret Archer, in the Polish adaptation by Izabela Grabowska (2019), to determine their leading type of reflexivity. The ICONI questionnaire was used again in the online survey (CAWI) conducted on a larger sample — 264 Poles aged 60-74, regardless of their activity. The questionnaire was supplemented with a metric and questions about activity and life-satisfaction.

The main elements of the work are analyses within three thematic groups determined by the detailed objectives and main hypotheses of the dissertation:

- I. In order to understand the motivation to continue professional activity in retirement age, seven main issues influencing the decision to both continue work and deactivate professionally were characterized. The analysis showed that the final decision on working in retirement depends mostly on individual interpretations of those issues. Economic considerations have been found to be one of the most important motivators for longer working lives. This goes against the initial assumption that financial considerations are not the main motivation for working in retirement [H2].
- II. An investigation of the importance of the leading type of reflexivity in the context of the decision to be economically active at retirement age did not confirm any of the hypotheses. Neither the positive influence of autonomous reflexivity [H3] nor the negative influence of communicative reflexivity [H4] on the decision to work in retirement were shown. There was also no statistically significant difference in the participation of people with fractional reflexivity in the groups of working and inactive retirees [H5]. The results of the research indicate that reflexivity should not be treated as an explanatory variable of professional activity in retirement.
- III. The analysis of the attitudes presented by the surveyed working retirees indicated two (not one, as initially assumed [H6]) dominant attitudes towards old age in this group — constructive and defensive. This conclusion was combined with the results of ICONI working retirees, specifically the two leading types of reflexivity that occurred most frequently in this group — autonomous and fractional. Looking at the types of attitudes and reflexivity presented by active seniors through the lens of selected theories of positive aging led to a conclusion that contradicts the main hypothesis of the dissertation

[H1]: although working in retirement age undoubtedly indicates active aging, it should not be considered a determinant of positive aging.

The results of the research showed that continuing employment after the age of 60 cannot be treated as a remedy against negative aging strategies of seniors, however, such activity of people in retirement age provides them with many tangible benefits, and in the era of aging of the Polish society it is also highly desirable from an economic and economic perspective.