



ParticipAge!



Doing things together. Images and People in a Delhi retirement home. Photo by Paolo S. H. Favero

Exploring Participatory Approaches in Ageing Studies

Agenet Seminar - September 11-12 2025, Bratislava

Thursday, 11. 9. 2025

8:30 – 9:00 Presentation

9:00 – 9:30 Opening words, Who is who? Ľubica Voľanská, [Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology, Slovak Academy of Sciences](#)

9:30 – 10:00 Anna Urbaniak, [Institute of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University of Krakow](#): *Intro to the Topic*

10:00 – 10:15 Coffee break

10:15 – 13:00 Anna Urbaniak: *Ethics of Participation: Respecting Voices, Power Dynamics, and Consent in Participatory Research*

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 16:00 Lucia Cangárová, [Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Care and Social Work, University in Trnava](#), Social Work Advisory Board: *"We are co-researchers." Co-production together with people with intellectual disability in action*

16:00 – 16:15 Coffee break

16:15 – 18:00 Zora Paulínyová, Metropolitan Institute of Bratislava, [Faculty of Architecture and Design at STU](#) *Urban Walk. On our own feet and with our own eyes*

Friday, 12. 9. 2025

8:30 – 11:30 Paolo Favero, [Department of Communication Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Visual and Digital Cultures Research Center \(ViDi\)](#), University of Antwerp

On photo portraiture as a creative method

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch

12:30 – 15:30 Katarína Lesayová, Barbora Bachratá, komkom. <https://en.komkom.sk/>: *Needs and Motivations of Older Adults in Research and Public Life*

15:00 - 15:30 Break

15:30 - 17:00 Francesco Diodati, Ľubica Voľanská, Christine Verbruggen

Final discussion: Closing of the seminar

About the facilitators:

Anna Urbaniak, [Institute of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University of Krakow](#): *Ethics of Participation: Respecting Voices, Power Dynamics, and Consent in Participatory Research*

Bio: Dr hab. Anna Urbaniak is a sociologist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Jagiellonian University. Anna has extensive experience in ageing research and public policy, conducting interdisciplinary studies in social gerontology. Additionally, Anna is Chair of the PAAR-Net COST Action (CA22167) on participatory approaches with older adults, which connects over 300 members from 40 different countries.

Abstract: This interactive workshop explores the ethical dimensions of participatory work across disciplines. Building on the introductory session on participatory approaches, we will explore key ethical principles, including respect, transparency, informed consent, and awareness of power dynamics. Through real-world case studies and small group discussions, participants will critically examine how to navigate complex situations—such as handling sensitive information or avoiding extractive practices—while working with communities.

Participants will leave with a co-developed ethical toolkit—“golden rules” to guide their own participatory practices with care, accountability, and integrity.

Lucia Cangárová, [Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Care and Social Work, University in Trnava](#), Social Work Advisory Board: *"We are co-researchers." Co-production together with people with intellectual disability in action*

Bio: Lucia studied mass media communication at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (B.Sc.) and journalism at Comenius University in Bratislava (Mgr.). She has worked in the social field since 2006, and currently serves as a director of the Social Work Advisory Board. She is professionally engaged in creating plain language for people with disabilities. She is the author of publications in an easy-to-read format. She actively works to promote the transition process from institutional to community-based care in the Slovak Republic and to promote the human rights of people with disabilities. She is a doctoral student in social work at the University of Trnava, where she explores methods of inclusive participatory research.

Abstract: This interactive workshop explores how research can be done with people with intellectual disability as equal partners. We will focus on inclusive and participatory approaches that make research more accessible, fair, and meaningful. Participants will engage in practical exercises that demonstrate what co-production looks like in action and reflect on issues of power, roles, and accessibility.

As a real-life example, the workshop draws on a project where co-researchers with intellectual disability helped to create an easy-to-read version of the quality standard on individual planning in social services. This case illustrates how inclusive methods can strengthen both the process and the outcomes of research.

A special part of this workshop is the involvement of co-researchers – **Tomáš, Martin, and Mária** – who have been actively engaged in our inclusive research project. They are clients of a community-based day service, yet they also lead active and meaningful lives beyond the scope of social services. As co-researchers, they contributed to the easy-to-read translation of the quality standard on individual planning, and they may also join me in co-facilitating this workshop.

Zora Pauliniová, Metropolitan Institute of Bratislava, [Faculty of Architecture and Design at STU](#): *Urban Walk. On our own feet and with our own eyes*

Bio: Ing. arch. Zora Pauliniová worked for five years with the City of Bratislava (in the Chief Architect's team and at the Metropolitan Institute of Bratislava), where she led multiple participatory processes. She is currently pursuing a PhD research at the Faculty of Architecture and Design, Slovak University of Technology, focusing on the topic The Impact of Participatory Planning of Public Spaces in Bratislava on Local Government.

Abstract: Urban Walk

On our own feet and with our own eyes, we will explore the streets and squares of Bratislava's Old Town this September. Why? To discover how different generations perceive public space – and to turn our observations, insights, and questions into a shared outcome.

Guiding us on this journey will be architect, cyclist, and facilitator **Ing. arch. Zora Pauliniová**, who brings rich experience from participatory planning processes and has led several similar urban discovery walks. Together, we will learn to observe public spaces more attentively and understand how collaboration among people can transform them.

Participants will take away:

- hands-on experience with spatial mapping,
- practical knowledge of where and how such activities can be carried out,
- a shared experience of discovery, where diversity and variety become a new quality of urban life.

Paolo Favero, [Department of Communication Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Visual and Digital Cultures Research Center \(ViDi\)](#), University of Antwerp

On photo portraiture as a creative method

Bio: Paolo Favero is Professor of Visual Cultures and Anthropology at the University of Antwerp and Head of the Department of Communication Studies. He explores the nexus between visual culture and existential matters both theoretically and through the practice of image-making. He currently researches death, care and aesthetics in India and Italy. He is the author of "Image-Making-India" (Routledge, 2020), "The Present Image" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), and recently of "Visual Studies: A Social Scientific Perspective" (Routledge, 2025), a transcultural and generative guide to the field of visual studies.

Abstract: In this workshop, we will look at possible uses of photographic portraits as a creative method. Suggesting a shift towards photography as ritual and towards an attention to all that surrounds the photographic act itself (instead that its outcome), I will try to offer some insights into possible playful techniques that can be employed for learning more about our research interlocutors and for ethically involving them in our research.

Barbora Bachratá, Katarína Lesayová, <https://en.komkom.sk/>

Needs and Motivations of Older Adults in Research and Public Life

Bio: Barbora Bachratá and Katarína Lesayová are psychologists, coaches, consultants and communication skills trainers who work with individuals and groups. Their theoretical background is eclectic, primarily based on a person-centred approach, nonviolent communication, needs-based communication, process-oriented work, elements of the neurolinguistic programming approach, and transactional analysis.

Abstract: How do older adults decide whether or not to take part in participatory research and public life? This workshop examines the factors that influence these decisions and the motivations that drive them. Using a needs-based approach, we will reflect on what older adults seek in participation (such as recognition, influence, learning, or connection), as well as the barriers they may face (such as accessibility, mistrust, or lack of relevance).

Through short inputs, group discussions, and interactive exercises, participants will:

- Gain insights into psychological, social, and practical needs that influence participation.
- Map typical motivations and barriers for older adults in participatory research.
- Reflect on how to overcome barriers to participation to gain more diverse samples of older respondents
- Work together to design research practices that are more inclusive and empowering.

The workshop provides a space to share experiences, learn from case examples, and generate practical ideas for creating participatory research that genuinely responds to the needs of older adults.

Scientific and organisational committee:

L'ubica Vol'anská (Slovak Academy of Sciences)

Christine Verbruggen (KU Leuven)

Francesco Diodati (Politecnico University of Milan)

Martina Laganà (University of Bayreuth)

Barbara Pieta (University of Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Contact: ageneteasa@gmail.com

List of participants:

Carla Bravo - University of Granada;
Colas Sophie - University of Lille and KU Leuven;
Katja Jungo - University of Basel;
Maria Varlamova - Jagiellonian University;
Otto Gerdina - University of Ljubljana;
Katherine Wyndham Vasquez - Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso;
Lizzy Pruijssers - Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing;
Mar Gil Álvarez - KU Leuven;
Zsofia Leleszi - Central European University;
Yue Zhang - The University of Manchester;
Barbara Pieta - Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology;
Dangeni - Anglia Ruskin University;
Nora Peduzzi - Institute of Nursing Science and University of Basel;
Katri Keskinen - Tampere University;
Ute Karl - The Protestant University of Applied Sciences;
Julia Demirdizen - Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg;
Elburg van Boetzelaer - Medecins sans Frontieres (NGO) and University Medical Center Utrecht;
Erhan DAĞ - Kütahya Health Sciences University;
Chloe Ng - University of Vienna;
Neetu Batra - Giri Institute of Development Studies;
L'ubica Vol'anská - Slovak Academy of Sciences;
Christine Verbruggen - KU Leuven;
Francesco Diodati - Politecnico University of Milan.