

## Queer people with disabilities in Poland

The presented project is a part of the qualitative research trend, located on the borderline of disability studies and studies on non-heteronormative sexuality (queer studies). It is exploratory in nature and concerns an area unknown in Poland related to the intersectionality<sup>1</sup> of the identity experiences of people with disabilities who identify themselves as queer. We use the term “queer” to describe the following groups of people: homosexual people (lesbian and gay), as well as bisexual and transgender people (LGBT). **The scientific goal of the project is to make a theoretical, empirical, multi-aspect analysis of the phenomenon of shaping the identity of people with disabilities who identify themselves as LGBT and to understand the challenges they face in everyday life.**

The answers to these questions will stem from the analysis of data from two sources:

(1) **a critical discourse analysis**, aimed at showing the socio-legal situation of queer people with disabilities in Poland; consisting of three stages during which the following analyses will be taken: (a) a problem analysis of issues that form a part of international scientific debates on the situation of queer people with disabilities, (b) the analysis of the legal status of LGBT persons with disabilities in the light of international and national law, (c) the analysis of legal proceedings (civil, criminal, administrative, employment relations, family), in which LGBT persons with disabilities participate; (2) **individual interviews** with 50 people with disabilities identifying themselves as queer, which will make it possible to learn about the internal perspective and subjective ways of constructing the meanings of the group's own experiences. A deliberate selection of the sample will be used. The people who meet the following criteria will be invited to take part in the study: (1) adult, (2) with disabilities: sensory (sight and hearing), motor disability, developmental disability (from the autism spectrum), with mental disorders and with multiple disabilities, (3) not incapacitated, (4) who identify themselves as LGBT people. The interview scenario will be inspired by the method of interpretation and narrative biographical interview, in which the researcher, after preparing the respondent to an interview and listening to a continuous narrative about what it is like to be a LGBT person with disability in Poland, in the further part of the interview asks orientating questions generating in-depth narratives in areas of interest from the point of view of the study.

Data interpretation will take place in the specific thematic areas designated by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The obtained data will be interpreted using two analytical approaches: **grounded theory** and **analytical induction**. The first one will allow for the description of experiences and their interpretations that will emerge from the data, the second - for the analysis of topics that are part of international scientific debates and from the specificity of the research area. The study will have a participatory character.

The study will be the first comprehensive attempt in Poland to give the testimony of identity formation and the first description of the challenges that LGBT people with disabilities face in the situation of intersection of disability and sexual orientation in the context of the socio-legal situation in Poland. The project's goal to explore the experience of queer people with disabilities was previously unnoticed in Poland neither from the point of view of disability studies nor in the queer research. There is a lack of description of testimony about identity formation and the description of the challenges that LGBT people with disabilities in the context of the lack of institutional, social and legal support in Poland. The results of the study complement Polish and European empirical studies on the diversity and ambiguity of identities of people from marginalized groups with the intersectional perspective of people with disabilities who identify themselves as queer. The issues raised in the core of the proposed study will involve crossing the borders established by existing discourses in Poland on disability and queer theory. The research will, therefore, enrich knowledge about people with disabilities with new, cognitively valuable threads that allow to solve difficult to grasp problems within theoretical and empirical perspectives that are limited to one dimension of identity.

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<sup>1</sup> The intersectional approach inspires us to look at particular social phenomena not from the perspective of the general public, but from the perspective of different social groups as belonging to them can shape various types of experiences; the overlapping of different “parameters of identity” (including disability and its type, sexual orientation) reinforces discrimination of this group and its individual members.