

Public policy towards women with disabilities after 2012.

Dissertation Summary

Magdana Kocejko

The subject of the dissertation is policy towards women with disabilities in 2012-2020. There are more than two and a half million of them in Poland. They make up the majority of people with disabilities (according to the latest available data from the 2011 Census, they are 52% of all such people in Poland) and more than 15% of all women. As studies show, this group has specific problems (Wołowicz, Kocejko, 2022; Wołowicz, Kocejko & Ferenc; 2022; Wołowicz, 2021; Król, 2020; Król, 2018; Szarota, McRae, 2018). They differ from the problems of disabled men and women without disabilities. Predominant among these problems are issues related to very high exposure to the experience of violence and lack of protection from it (Wołowicz, Kocejko, 2022; Frohmader, Ortoleva, 2012; Braille, 2002), hindered access to reproductive rights (Wołowicz, 2021; Król 2018; Frohmader, Ortoleva i Lewis, 2012), as well as multiple exclusion and discrimination in various spheres of life (education, labor market, health care, public and political participation) (Perez Bueno, 2012; Pinto, 2011, Migalska, Król, 2012).

The dissertation puts forward a thesis indicating that the problems of women with disabilities, remain low on the agenda of public policy- both that of disability and that of equal treatment and anti-violence. This is due to the specific circumstances affecting the above group of women - the combination of two premises (dimensions of their lives) - gender and disability (cross discrimination and exclusion). As a result, policy actors are not producing adequate solutions to offset these problems.

For the analyses conducted in the dissertation, the concepts, and theories inherent in public policy science and the concept of intersectionality as a sectoral analytical tool used in the analysis of social policies and equal treatment were used (Hankivsky, Jordan- Zachery, 2019; Hankivsky, Grace, Hunting et al. 2014; Hankivsky, Cormier, 2011). The intersectional approach (Crenshaw, 1990) is based on the assumption that individual social categories (affiliations, group identities) such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation, class affiliation or fitness level intersect and interact (Salem, 2018; Davis, 2008; Nash, 2008; Crenshaw, 1990). In terms of conceptual categories directly related to the science of public policy, analytical models from complexity theory (Cairney, Heikkila, & Wood, 2019; Geyer, Cairney, 2015; Geyer, Rihani, 2010) were used, as well as concepts drawn from multiple stream theory known policy (Kingdon, 1995) as enriched by Howlett's version of the successive stages of the political process. (Howlett, 2019; Kubicki, Pawlak, Mica, i Horolets, 2019; Howlett, McConnel i Pearl, 2015). The theory takes as its starting point the assumption that there are a myriad of problems and solutions competing for attention/attention and resolution. The dissertation is also embedded in the stream of critical disability studies. It focuses on the mechanisms and consequences of excluding people with disabilities from society, as well as contesting the ableism of political, legal, educational and social systems (Goodley, 2017; Minich, 2016; Goodley, 2013; Meekosha, Shuttleworth 2009;). What is particularly important in this approach is the postulate that the research conducted in this stream should not just be an "academic exercise," but also an expression of political commitment (Goodley, 2016).

In order to prove the thesis, a study was conducted to reconstruct the mechanisms affecting the placement of women with disabilities' problems on the disability, anti-violence and equal treatment policy agenda. The research had two stages. They consisted of an analysis of the programmatic and strategic documents that make up this policy for the period 2012-2020, as well as conducting 22 interviews with actors in policy toward women with disabilities.

The research and analysis conducted clearly confirmed the thesis. Decision-makers do not generate and implement adequate solutions to the problems of this group, and the problems of women with disabilities are not the subject of their interest in a systematic way. As the analyses conducted in the thesis have shown, this interest can be described as fragmentary and even haphazard. Interest in the problems is not preceded by their analysis. It can be concluded that none of the problems of women with disabilities is properly recognized. It can also be seen that there is a great separation in the perception of women's problems and the problems of people with disabilities, as reflected in the provisions of program and strategic documents. The research and analysis carried out in this dissertation made it possible to show what are the mechanisms that keep the problems of women with disabilities low on the agenda of disability policy, as well as other policies that deal with issues related to the specific situation of women/their disadvantage- equal treatment policy and anti-violence policy. These are related to a number of factors more often stemming from the attitudes and strategies of the actors themselves, rather than actual substantive recognition of the nature of the problems/recognition of their complexity.