

## **Different but equal**

*Under the vast roof of the sky, there is room for everybody.*

*Edward Stachura, Pieśń na wyjście*

In Poland, finding new people with a different skin colour, ethnicity, religion or beliefs is becoming commonplace; however, every now and then we still hear about bias incidents on the grounds of someone's nationality, race or other characteristics. The police should continuously improve the way they handle such situations. They have a duty to improve their investigation work which aims to identify perpetrators of the so-called hate crimes, and to provide assistance to the victims of such crimes.

Often, your common sense will tell you what to do. In this chapter, we want to enhance the professionalism of your actions. You will learn how to perform an inspection at a synagogue or mosque, how to check ID documents of a Muslim woman with her face covered so that you do not offend her religion, how to behave towards a transgender person, or what kind of words may harm your male and female colleagues. With this guide, you will find out how much you know about social diversity. When writing this chapter, its authors based mainly on materials and direct contacts with people from NGOs which operate in Poland, listed in Chapter Four of this guide.

### **Remember!**

**Above all, a police officer follows the law, but in doing so they can and should respect the dignity of other people.**

## **National, ethnic and religious minorities**

Legal definitions of a national minority and an ethnic minority can be found in the Act of 6 January 2005 on National and Ethnic Minorities and on Regional Language (Journal of Laws No 17, Item 141, as amended). Among the listed minorities, including native Poles, there are religious minorities. Unfortunately, national, ethnic and religious minorities, as well as other social groups, often have to deal with the so-called social exclusion.

**Social exclusion refers to a situation in which a person who is a member of society cannot take part in activities of the citizens of such society (the majority). Such a restriction does not result from that person's internal beliefs, but is beyond their control.**

### **National minorities**

A national minority, within the meaning of the Article 2 of the Act, is a group of Polish citizens (not foreigners) which meets all the following requirements:

- is less numerous than the rest of the population of the Republic of Poland;
- is significantly different from other citizens in terms of its language, culture or tradition;
- wishes to preserve its language, culture or tradition;
- is aware of its own historical national community and wants to express and protect it;
- its ancestors had lived the current territory of the Republic of Poland for at least 100 years;
- identifies with a nation organized in its own country.

The case below describes a bias crime (hate crime). Such a crime is prosecuted *ex officio*. Unfortunately, it happens that police officers do not know that and consider it property damage, which is prosecuted at the request of the victim. Such a mistake can lead to serious consequences. These include undermining trust for the police and harming not only that specific member of the Jewish community, but the entire community in itself.

The message sent by such slogans and symbols can be seriously detrimental to society, as they provoke negative emotions, which can lead to an escalation of mutual prejudice. This, in turn, can result in major offences like battery, assault and even murder.

## **My story...**

I came to a small town to see the grave of my grandfather. I was happy that the Jewish cemetery nearby had been renovated and cared for for three years. It is very important to me that the local Association of Enthusiasts of the Region looks after Jewish memorial sites in the town and around. So imagine my surprise when on the cemetery wall I saw a slogan "Jude raus!" and the Star of David on the gallows. This is really offensive! I went to the police station immediately. I talked to a police officer, although unfortunately it was a bit difficult to understand each other. I told him that it was reprehensible and something had to be done with that slogan. He replied that nothing had really happened and probably some kids had scribbled it out of boredom. If I was bothered by it, I could go to the City Hall and file for permission to paint the words over. And if I really wanted the police to look for the perpetrators, I had to file a formal crime report. However, he said, the police had no time to deal with such trifle matters.

## **Remember!**

**Failure to act on the part of the police means essentially the acceptance of such behaviour. If we do not send a clear message that the perpetrators break the law (by prosecuting them effectively), then both them and the rest of society will think that such actions are not offences and even if they are, the police will not react, anyway. Make sure to look up Article 256 and 257 of the Criminal Code in order to find out more about the specific nature of the so-called hate crimes.**

This is why we should never play down sayings, jokes motivated by hate and intolerance, offensive graffiti.

According to the Ministry of Administration and Digitalization, Poland hosts nine national minorities and four ethnic ones. National minorities in Poland are: Belarusians, Czechs, Lithuanians, Germans, Armenians, Russians, Slovaks, Ukrainians and Jews. Each of them fosters the history of their nation, traditions and customs through various forms of social and local activity. Not all of the above national minorities run the same risk of falling victims to hate crimes or incidents. The high-risk groups are mainly the Ukrainian and Jewish minority.

## **Ukrainians**

According to the official records, the Ukrainian minority in Poland exceeds 27 thousand people,

although the number probably reaches 200-300 thousand<sup>1</sup>. According to the national census of 2011, it is 232 thousand people<sup>2</sup>. This numerous community lives in the following provinces: Warminsko-Mazurskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Dolnoslaskie, Lubelskie, Podkarpacie, Malopolskie and Podlaskie. That the Ukrainian minority is scattered across Poland so much is a result of a massive post-war migration campaign 'Vistula', in the course of which Ukrainians were moved from South-East to North and West in 1947. However, not all of them were moved. Modern Ukrainians in Poland belong to the Catholic Church of the Byzantine-Ukrainian Rite and the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

Potential attacks and reported incidents are rare and have a historical context understood as unresolved disputes and grudges dating back to difficult war times. They are typically local neighbourhood conflicts, hatred, devastation of memorial sites and cemeteries. Joint organization of a sports event - the Football European Championship UEFA EURO 2012 probably significantly changed the attitudes, especially among the younger generation of the Poles.

### **Jews**

Members of this national minority are Judaism believers. This community is spread mainly among big cities.<sup>3</sup> First stories about Jews in the Polish land date back to the 10 c. Jews came to Poland due to the relatively best environment for safe life and growth of their culture, along with the autonomy of religious communes, guaranteed with royal edicts<sup>4</sup>. The growth of the Jewish social life in Poland was brutally ended by World War Two and Hitler's Final Solution of the Jewish Question. Out of 3.5 million Polish Jews, ca 300 thousand survived. In the Communist times, most Polish Jews left the country in several emigration waves. After 1989, the Jewish community in Poland was revived. New Jewish cultural organizations were established. An important part in the life of the Jewish community in Poland is played by the Association of Jewish Religious Communes in the Republic of Poland<sup>5</sup>, but numerous other organizations and associations operate, too.

Judaism, also called the religion of Moses, is the oldest religion based on worshipping one God (monotheism), founded some 2000 years BC in the Middle East. The Jewish religion is directly related to the history of the Jewish nation, and its main book is the Hebrew Bible (the so-called Old Testament). Each week, religious Jews observe a holy day, Sabbath, from Friday sunset to Saturday

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<sup>1</sup> J. Nikitorowicz, *Ethnic Groups in a Multicultural World*, ed. GWP, Sopot 2010, p. 307

<sup>2</sup> *National Census of People and Flats*, Warsaw 2012, p. 15

<sup>3</sup> J. Nikitorowicz, *Ethnic Groups* p. 317

<sup>4</sup> <http://www2.mswia.gov.pl/portal.php?serwis=pl&dzial=61&id=37#zydzi>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*

sunset. The Sabbath was established to commemorate the seventh day of the week, when God rested after creating the world. There is a number of prohibitions to be observed, including the general prohibition against work and travel, etc. Religious symbols of Judaism include the menorah, a seven-arm candle holder, and the Star of David.

### **How to properly talk and speak about the Jewish community in Poland?**

The noun 'Jew' and the adjective 'Jewish' are fine to use. If we use this term not in the context of the nation but the religion of Judaism, it is not an error not to capitalize the word 'Jew', as in Polish we do with other denominations.

### **What kind of words and behaviour are considered offensive?**

Unfortunately, to this day, there are many offensive terms used in everyday language. They are slurs and usually relate to the stereotyped attitudes towards the Jewish appearance or tradition, e.g. "Kike". Often, seemingly neutral terms are used for offensive purposes: "kosher" or "circumcised". However, every now and then much more offensive and punishable expressions are used, along the lines of: "Jews to gas chambers!", "Death to nickel noses", etc. In everyday language, we can sometimes hear sayings like "You're such a Jew".

This kind of language relates not to the Jews but to persons we want to accuse of being tight-fisted, for instance. This shows the vitality of the negative stereotype about the Jewish people.

*Information prepared by the NEVER AGAIN Association, which monitors domestic racism- and bigotry-motivated incidents, along with crimes committed by neo-fascists. Such incidents are reported by NEVER AGAIN in the so-called Brown Book, and some end up in court, although as seen below, court proceedings are usually long and very complex.*

BIAŁYSTOK. On 25 November, the local court started another trial of four men accused of propagating fascism and hatred on racial grounds. The court was to establish if the men were acting in an organised group. In 2007 members of the Fourth Edition (Czwarta Edycja) had desecrated the Jewish cemetery in Wschodnia Street, destroyed the monument of Ludwik Zamenhoff along with some memorial plaques, and committed other incidents of anti-Semitic nature. On 30 January 2009, the local District Court punished three perpetrators with respective sentences of twenty, eighteen and twelve months in prison, deeming them guilty of publicly propagating the fascist ideology and hatred on national and religious grounds. Their names were revealed. Two other people, a man and a woman, were acquitted. In addition, two of the defendants were ordered to pay PLN 600 and PLN 850 respectively to compensate for the damages they had caused. However, on 20 October 2009,

the Court of Appeal declined to execute the prison sentence and changed the previous sentences into suspended ones. On 12 October 2010, the Supreme Court considered the auxiliary prosecutor's cassation and decided that the group's case be re-examined to establish if it was a criminal organization. On 10 March 2011, the Court of Appeal ruled that the District Court in Białystok should once again assess if the individuals concerned, who had received valid punishments for propagating racism, could be charged with membership in organised criminal groups. The Court of Appeal set aside the sentences of several of the offenders and handed the case over to the District Court for review. On 17 May, two of the defendants did not appear in court. The District Court ruled that they be detained and escorted to the trial, which was adjourned until mid-July. In September 2011, the District Court ordered their temporary arrest. On 24 August 2012, in the District Court the prosecution demanded a one-year absolute prison sentence for two men, and a suspended one-year prison sentence for the other two men. The latter two would also be administered surveillance by a probation officer. The defence lawyers filed for acquittal. In his testimony during the investigation, one of the perpetrators pleaded guilty.

On 31 August, the District Court found the defendants guilty of the public propagation of the fascist political system and membership of the organised criminal group Fourth Edition. They were sentenced to absolute one year imprisonment - more than the prosecutor demanded. The time spent under arrest was included in the sentence. All of the accused already had criminal records, such as battery with deadly effect, taking part in "regular" beatings, fighting with the use of dangerous implement, an offence against family members and insult of national symbols. One man was also accused of ill-treatment of a fellow detainee when in custody. The sentence was not final and binding. In his testimony, which was read in court, one of the perpetrators said: "I've been a member of the skinhead subculture for four years, of the group Fourth Edition. At our meetings, we discuss Jagiellonia matches and plans to go into town, find left-wingers and fight them. I am an anti-Semite, a fascist, and I hate Jews". On 11 December 2012, the Court of Appeal stated that the four men acted in an organised criminal group and propagated fascism as well as incited hatred on the grounds of ethnic and religious background. It upheld penalties of one year in prison without suspension."

### **Remember!**

**It is not only such cases, but also improper jokes about Jews which cement prejudice towards them.**

### **How is the Jewish head cap referred to and what is its role?**

The Jewish head cap is called a 'yarmulke' or 'kippah'. It is commonly used by men who enter a synagogue or Jewish cemetery. Very religious people wear a yarmulke all day long.

### **What does the term 'Orthodox Jew' mean?**

An Orthodox Jew is a person who belongs to the oldest religious stream in Judaism. The Orthodoxy means strict adherence to tradition, i.e. observing all the Commandments and avoiding any modern changes to religion. Orthodox Jews wear characteristic clothing, men have long beards and often sidelocks - long hair close to ears. Nowadays, they are a small part of worldwide Jewish community (ca 10%), but more conspicuous due to their lifestyle, which make them stand out.

### **How to behave in a synagogue?**

The rules of behaviour when visiting a synagogue are not that different from those followed, for instance, in a Catholic church. Women need to wear 'modest' clothes - covered arms and knees. Men need to put on a yarmulke or some other cap (uniform hats are accepted). It is worth knowing that the most important place in a synagogue is Aron Kodesh (Torah Ark), an altar closet with Torah scrolls stored in it, somewhat similar to a church tabernacle. Due to the respect for Torah scrolls, which are a key element in a synagogue, you should handle them very carefully (formally speaking, unauthorized persons should not even touch them). Never put them on the ground; it is best to ask the synagogue personnel to move them.

**If you do not know what to do in a given situation, you can ask for help at the Jewish Centre in Oswiecim or other local organizations. It is very important in particular in planned and immediate police activities like on-site investigations, inspections, etc.**

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against Jewish community**

Most common is property damage, desecration of religious sites, Jewish cemeteries, anti-Semitic graffiti on walls and buildings. A widespread manifestation of anti-Semitism is content presented by hooligans and neo-Nazis on various banners, stickers, etc. Physical assaults are definitely less common. However, anti-Semitic comments on the Internet are commonplace.



“Soap made out of Jews – 2 pieces”

## **Ethnic minorities**

As opposed to national minorities, an ethnic minority, within the meaning of Article 3 of the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and on Regional Language is a group of Polish citizens who together meet the same requirements as a national minority but do not identify themselves with any nation organized in its own country. Poland hosts several ethnic minorities, which include: Roma, Karaites, Lemkos and Tatars. The issue of Tatars in the context of their religion will be described further in this manual. Due to the fact that it is mainly Roma who are exposed to social exclusion and threats to their safety, they get more coverage in this section.

### **My story...**

I am Romni. I moved with my family to a flat in a new borough. Often I would hear mean or even vulgar comments about our family. Outside, kids from the neighbourhood would laugh and throw stones at my children. Last Saturday, a teacher passing by the school noticed a smashed window. She reported burglary. The police officers came to the borough, went straight to my flat and took my husband and eldest son without a word of explanation. When in desperation I called my brother-in-law, I was told that he had been detained by the police, too. I was waiting until the evening, not knowing what was going on. Nobody from the police wanted to tell me what would happen to my family. Next morning, my husband and son came back home; it turned out that the window was smashed by kids playing football and nothing was stolen. I do not understand why we were considered thieves?

In our society, negative stereotypes about Roma abound. The above story is a typical example that police officers are not free from prejudice. This can lead to unjustified actions and discrimination. Actions based on intolerance can result in even bigger isolation of Roma. Primitive Roma jokes can foster prejudice against this group, too.

**Try not to use the word 'gypsy' at all. The correct term is Roma or Romni (a Roma woman). In official documents, use only these terms. The word 'gypsy' invokes a lot of stereotypical connotations. A police officer should not make generalizations about any minority.**

The population of Roma is between 20 and 30 thousand people. However, in the National Census of



2011, close to 16 thousand people declared to belong to this ethnic group<sup>6</sup>. It is a relatively tight group, separate in their culture from their surroundings; tradition and language are very important to them. Roma are not a uniform ethnic group either as to community awareness or culture. In Poland, there are four main groups of Roma: Polska Roma, Kalderash, Lovari and Carpathian Roma (the so-called Bergitka Roma). These divisions have important practical meaning in their public activity<sup>7</sup>.

### **What kind of behaviour do Roma expect from police officers?**

In contacts with Roma, it is very important to observe the taboo, or the principle, of Roma codes of conduct (*Romanipen* and *Megreripen*). They cover behaviour, clothing and professional life. It is not welcome to comment on family relations at a Roma house or its financial situation, especially with criticism or irony. Moreover, it is recommended that both male and female police officers took part in contacts with people in Roma community. Roma women are wary towards people from outside, and men in particular. The main issue here are personal and intimate matters, those related to femininity. Therefore, women-related issues are shared with women, and conversely for men.

**If you want to know more about women in Roma world, read: *Woman in Roma World***  
[http://www.romowie.com/instytut/io2009\\_gierlinski\\_jakimik.pdf](http://www.romowie.com/instytut/io2009_gierlinski_jakimik.pdf).

### **What sort of questions should be avoided in order not to offend anyone?**

Never ask Roma about intimate issues, in particular in the presence of other people. You can ask about such things only in one-to-one conversations and only if required in the circumstances of official duties, i.e. witness examination. No less important for Roma are codes of conduct related to professions; for example, it is not acceptable in Roma tradition to be an undertaker or doctor (due to direct contact with human body), be employed at a waste treatment plant or waste disposal. In India, where Roma come from, such duties are carried out by people from the lowest social castes. Moreover, a Roma will never become a police officer or judge (in certain groups) as this would necessitate enforcing police regulations against own brothers and sisters.

### **What should you remember when carrying out your official duties towards Roma?**

It should be stressed that when dealing with cases which involve Roma, police officers should analyse each of such cases in great detail and consider them individually. Sometimes it can happen that Roma plead guilty to offences they have not committed, but they do so out of fear for the

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<sup>6</sup> *National Census of People and Flats*, Warsaw 2012, p. 18

<sup>7</sup> S. Łodziński, *Equality and Difference. National Minorities in Democratic Order in Poland after 1989*, Warsaw 2005, ed. Scholar, pp 104–105.

police, judiciary or for the sake of their group. Moreover, it is vital that police officers should speak to Roma, bilingual people often without formal education, in plain and comprehensible language.

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

Roma are often parties to neighbourhood conflicts, and some of such conflicts stem from anti-Roma sentiment shared among general public. Anti-Roma incidents include batteries, harassment, false criminal accusations, property damage. Feuds are usually long, complicated and often require the local authorities to intervene.

**If you do not know what to do in a given situation, you can ask for help at the Polish Roma Association or other local organizations. You can also go to the website [www.romowie.com](http://www.romowie.com).**

### **Cultural Differences and Certain Social Minorities in Poland**

People in our professional group differ among each other as to their favourite pastime, eating habits, plans and dreams, habits and customs. The further we go from our own backyard, the more differences we notice as to ethnicity, skin colour, religion, sexual orientation, social status etc.

How do we react to such differences when they concern features which we do not understand? Sometimes it is not that easy to accept them. Maybe it would be good to learn more about such differences and understand them. Especially since in our jobs we are obliged to take into account reasonable needs of such persons.

**Remember!**

**§ 8 *Rules of Professional Ethics of a Police Officer*<sup>8</sup>: When conducting professional duties, a police officer shall adapt their behaviour to situations and traits of people who take part in a given event, in particular to age, nationality and religion, and shall take into account reasonable needs of such people.**

**If you are a police officer, you cannot hold any prejudice!**

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation no 805 of the Chief of Police of 31 December 2003 on the *Rules of Professional Ethics of a Police Officer*, along with an attachment to the Regulation (Journal of Laws of the Chief of Police of 2004, no 1, item3)

As we want you to find out more about social diversity around us and mutual impact it has on everyone, please read below more about several various groups whose potential problems you may want to know more about.

**Remember!**

**You should consider diversity as social capital and challenge, not a problem!**

## Muslims

### My story...

I was at a briefing. It was attended by the current chief of the Criminal Department, who read aloud a telegram about the increased risk of a terrorist attack in Poland. Therefore, our everyday duties would from then on include checking ID of all dark-skinned, dark-haired people we met on a patrol. For starters, he told us to check and search people at a local refugee centre - "There are a lot of Arabs there, you're bound to find out something". As there is no centre in my region, the chief told me to check all the families in my area if at least one person in a household was Arabic. I asked why only Arabic families. The chief looked at me with surprise and said "Because every Arab is a terrorist".

Such behaviour of the chief is a classic example of ethnic profiling. In police work, it is common to profile people. In itself, it is a valuable tool, however there is a danger of making a mistake when linking certain traits with certain preferences or kinds of behaviour.

**If the police usually associate minorities in certain racial, ethnic or religious groups with criminal behaviour, then profiling can be discriminatory.**

In order for the police officer's work to be lawful, it must be based on profiling which does not concern only race, ethnic background or religious beliefs. This is not to say that such traits should be ignored. All citizens should be treated in the same manner, unless there is a specific reason to do otherwise. In this respect, the European Code of Police Ethics states that: "The police shall carry out their tasks in a fair manner, guided, in particular, by the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination."

**§ 6 *Rules of Professional Ethics of a Police Officer*: The police officer's conduct in contacts with people should be kind and impartial, without any prejudice related to race, nationality, religion, politics, opinions or any other traits."**

It is estimated that in Poland lives ca 15-20 thousand Muslims. These are mainly Tatars. The next group of Muslims in Poland are economic immigrants from Arabic countries - mostly Syrians, Tunisians and Egyptians<sup>9</sup>, but also Moroccans, Algerians and Libyans. Most of them are young men

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<sup>9</sup> Studies supervised by Radosław Stryjewski under his project *Economic and Social Integration of Immigrants of Muslim Denomination in the Republic of Poland*, carried out by the Preservation

working in small food joints all over Poland. Highest concentration areas for Arab immigrants are: Warszawa, Wrocław, Poznań, Łódź. Economic immigrants from Muslim countries (not all Muslim countries are Arabic) include also Turks, Pakistani and Bengalese (people from Bangladesh).

Further, Muslims include refugees, mainly from Norther Caucasus - Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia - but also Iraq, Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Muslim refugees live mainly in towns and cities with refugee centres: Warszawa, Lublin, Białystok, Łuków, okolice Pruszkowa – Dębak and Linin (near Góra Kalwaria), Czerwony Bór (near Łomża), Biała Podlaska and Grupa (near Grudziądz). Refugee centres are ran by the Office for Foreigners. Upon the completion of the procedure to grant refugee status, such people often tend to stay in places they already know, namely the above cities and towns. They perform odd jobs at construction sites and seasonal work at farms and orchards. A Muslim (Arabic: Muslim - servant to God) is a person who follows Islam. Currently, there are 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide. The biggest Muslim country is Indonesia. Islam is the youngest monotheist religion in the world. It dates back to the 7 c. Prophet Muhammad had a revelation of Allah (God) delivered by Angel Gabriel. Islam accepts all the prophets of Judaism and Christianity. Jesus is not considered the Son of God, but a prophet. An important part of devotion is given to Mary (Arabic: Miriam) as the mother of Jesus - prophet.

Islam is based on five pillars:

- creed of faith (Shahada) - every Muslim has to say the creed of faith: "I believe that there is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God."
- prayer (Salah) - every religious Muslim should pray 5 times per day; praying times vary and depend on the sun; first prayer should be said between the dawn and sunrise, second - at noon, third - in the afternoon, fourth - in the evening, shortly after sunset, and final - after dusk; times of prayers can be found on websites of religious groups; a praying person must stand facing Mecca (holy site for Muslims); Muslims worldwide, regardless of their origin, pray in Arabic;
- fasting (Sawm) – widely referred to as Ramadan; it is the name of the 9th month in the Muslim calendar (which is a Moon-based calendar); it is movable; during the fasting, Muslim must not eat, drink or swallow saliva from sunrise to sunset; further, they must not have sex during that time; fasting does not apply to the elderly, sick, traveling, pregnant women, breastfeeding women and women with period;
- alms (Zakat) - transferring aid to those in need; this may be in kind or financial;
- pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj) - once in a lifetime, each Muslim should go, for their own, honestly earned money, on a pilgrimage to Mecca - holy site of Islam; Mecca is in Saudi Arabia.

The most important holy book for the Muslim is the Quran. It consists of 114 suras (chapters) divided into verses. The Quran regulates the spiritual, social, financial and family life of each Muslim. It refers to Torah and Bible - and claims that the Word of God was distorted in them. The Quran was written in Arabic. Currently, you can buy the Quran translated into Polish. It is

recommended not to touch the Quran in its original, Arabic version, and show due respect to this holy book.

### **What is a mosque and minaret?**

A mosque is a place of Muslim cult, a shrine for Islam followers, place of common prayer, where Muslims meet for Friday service. It has separate areas for women and men. It is mandatory to take off shoes before entering a mosque and leave them in a designated place. Women, even if not Muslim, should show their respect and cover their hair (e.g. a scarf or shawl put loosely on the head). Everyone should be dressed modestly and decently. Women should not enter a mosque in short skirts or dresses, or too revealing clothes; men should avoid shorts. If you are not Muslim, before entering a mosque it is best to ask someone if you do not interfere in prayers or other rituals. Polish mosques ran by Tatars in the Podlasie area are a big tourist attraction. You can see them in the presence of a guide. A minaret is an integral part of a mosque. It is a tower (a high one in Muslim countries), from which muezzins call believers to prayer. A muezzin is always male. He should have a strong voice. Nowadays, microphones and speakers are used, so the muezzin does not need to go up the minaret anymore. Call to prayer sounds like a song. In Poland, public call to prayer is not customary. In Muslim countries, at times of prayer, you can hear a song-reminder that it is time to start prayer.

### **Who is an imam? How does the Muslim religious hierarchy look like?**

Islam, contrary to Christianity, does not have a religious hierarchy. Each mosque has its own imam - a person who lead prayers, knows the Quran and Islam very well. There is no celibacy in Islam, so the imam can have family.

### **Stereotypes about Muslims**

Here are a few negative stereotypes about Muslims: terrorist, extremist; Arabs: Pakis; Muslim woman: suicide bomber, "black widow"; jihad: holy war with heathens; each Muslim man beats up his wife.

Islam is clear that the Greater Jihad is above all a fight with your own flaws and sins; a defensive war is called the Lesser Jihad.

### **What kind of behaviour is expected from the police?**

During an intervention, a police officer can expect from a Muslim person some gestures and actions which originate from their country, different from the Polish ones. Men from Muslim countries

often raise their voices and make a lot of gestures. This is not an aggression, but only a manner of communication. Uniformed services in Muslim countries are tools of the government, so they are not widely respected. The police is associated with violence, tortures, corruption, human rights violations and unlimited power. In most Muslim countries, women in uniforms are very rare, so a female police officer can be met with surprise.

### **Remember!**

- **If possible, duties which involve a Muslim woman should be carried out by a female police officer.**
- **Muslim women usually do not look straight into the eyes of a strange man and they cannot stay alone with him in a separate room (e.g. during an examination).**
- **It is best to avoid handshakes - this concerns both contacts with Muslim men and women. More religious Muslims will never shake hands with a stranger woman.**
- **A Muslim woman will never shake hands with a stranger man. Intimate issues in the Muslim culture are taboo and are never discussed in public.**
- **During a police intervention at a mosque, all the duties should be carried out in the presence of the imam or another person who looks after the mosque.**
- **Taking off shoes in a mosque during an official visit (e.g. during an on-site inspection) is not mandatory.**
- **Avoid touching the Quran.**
- **During the examination or casual conversation, the police officer may think that the Muslim has something to hide as they are nervous or do not look back straight into the eyes. This may result from the memories from their country of origin, as well as from the fear of police. People from Muslim countries avoid any contacts with the police and are not inclined to disclose any information related to their compatriots.**
- **A Muslim woman may find it offensive if she is ordered to take off her headgear by a male police officer. If necessary (in order to check ID or search the person), this action should be carried out by a female police officer in an isolated place.**

### **Remember!**

**Detained persons should be provided with conditions for religious practice - a place for ablutions before prayer (a bowl/sink) and a clean place for prayers - a Muslim cannot pray on the floor, they must use a small carpet, towel, blanket, a piece of cardboard. When providing food, remember that the Muslims do not eat pork. This includes pork gelatin, often added to yogurt.**

### **What sort of questions should be avoided in order not to offend anyone?**

Avoid intimate questions and do not start any religious arguments. Do not use the word "Islamist", as it is related to extremism, fundamentalism and threat. It is offensive for Muslims to follow stereotypes which state that each Muslim is a terrorist and Islam is a bad religion.

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

The incidents which take place usually are not related to religion. Usually, they are verbal assaults like "Pakis", "brownies", laughing at women with their heads covered, etc. Some attacks can be related to bias related to skin colour and the stereotypical association of physical traits with terrorist events across the world.



## **African community**

### **My story...**

I came to Poland many years ago from one of the African countries. Me and my family went through hell back there. I knew that we would be better off anywhere else, although that was still my home country. I knew only a little about Poland. I knew that there was a group here who left from my country. I was lucky, I'm good at football and I got enrolled to a football club. Today, I earn nice money, but each time I go out to the playing field I feel a lot of stress. Sometimes it happens that people whistle, spit, insult or make 'monkey chants'. I don't know why? Does my skin colour give anyone the right to treat me in a different way?

Poland becomes more and more attractive place for people from many countries, with different cultures, customs and traditions. This issue applies to the African community, too. Many Africans play in various football teams all over Poland.

**Africa consists of 54 countries which differ from each other as to culture, ethnicity, economy, language and religion. In Africa, people use close to a thousand of languages, or rather dialects. Many Africans are Muslim, but other religions are common, too.**

In Poland, we can meet people from countries like: Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Gambia, Togo, Somalia and Egypt. This is important in police work, as if there is direct contact, especially an intervention, cultural differences do matter.

### **Remember!**

- **A specific feature of certain cultures can be very emphatic expression of emotions by people with African background. Such behaviour is usually not aggressive, but can be mistaken as such by the police.**
- **In our culture, a sign of respect is a conversation without avoiding eye contact. In some African countries, it is precisely looking police officers in the eyes which can be considered disrespectful.**
- **In some African countries, it is customary to solve many issues related e.g. to physical assaults not through the police, but on your own, as revenge. In such cases, it should be remembered and explained to the perpetrators that the Polish law prohibits any kind of lynch.**

### **What kind of behaviour is expected from the police?**

It must be standard to stage intervention in a well-mannered way and use friendly vocabulary in conversations and police documents. If you know the name of the person, the problem is solved. If more details are needed, enter nationality, like Nigerian, Somalian, etc.

### **Remember!**

**Every man has a name. Never use words like "Negro". It is considered offensive to many people. Black US citizens prefer to be called "Afro-Americans". People from African countries prefer to be called "Africans". Words "dark-skinned" and "black" are not offensive. However, what matters most is the context and emotions in which you refer to such people.**

- When you catch a perpetrator with African origin, you should not state their background or skin colour in press releases. It is not necessary and can result in prejudice towards the entire community. What counts is the offence and only those elements of its description which can support effective actions.
- If a person is missing or wanted, stating their skin colour, nationality or background as their characteristic trait, expanded with a description of other important details like clothes or behavioural features is not abuse.
- Vulgar jokes about Africans foster prejudice towards this social group. You should avoid them.

### **Remember!**

**The main reason for not reporting bias crimes can be the lack of faith in the effectiveness of police work and language barrier. The African community expects more determination in pursuing crime perpetrators and more empathy towards the victims.**

### **What sort of questions should be avoided in order not to offend people with African background?**

As usual, apply good manners, tact and sensitivity. Do not mention personal topics without a reason or resort to stereotypes about people from African countries. Emotions expressed in a conversation do not have to indicate aggressive attitudes. If you do not know what kind of words about a given person should be used, just ask.

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

Attacks on people with African background are mainly racist in nature. Many of them are incidents at football stadiums, where racist slurs are chanted. One of the examples may be throwing bananas on the pitch. Sometimes, there is also physical violence used in public places, means of transport. Slurs related to skin colour are often used.

**If you do not know what to do in a given situation, you can ask for help at the Reimagine Africa Foundation and their website [www.afrykainaczej.pl](http://www.afrykainaczej.pl) or other local organizations.**

## **Certain sexual and gender minorities**

### **My story...**

I wanted to be a police officer and I sacrificed a lot to get there. After the school, I got a job, and I was appreciated both by colleagues and superiors. This all changed one day when I was changing clothes in the locker room and I noticed the word "Fag" on my locker and I heard laughter in the hall. Then I realized why recently there had been problems in setting up my schedule, and I understood all the smiles and sudden silence when I would have entered the locker room. Today, I am not a policeman anymore as I could not stand what my colleagues did to me. Last two years were a string of constant harassment, slurs, humiliation, innuendos. My superior said that he did not care about my personal matters and if I could not handle my colleagues, I could always get a transfer and he would help me with that.

There are homosexual and bisexual people working in the force, although this is not common knowledge. What the protagonist of the above story experienced is 'outing', i.e. revealing his sexual orientation without his consent. It is a violation of his dignity and privacy. This story shows that some people find it difficult to accept a person of homosexual orientation, and even more difficult to conduct official duties towards such a person.

Remember, when you are a police officer, you cannot be prejudiced or intolerant in your work. Your behaviour must be objective to everyone.

### **Remember!**

**Sexual and gender minorities belong to groups most prone to various crimes, incidents, harassment and discrimination. Such people express additional stress in their potential contacts with the police, when they have not only to relate a homophobic or transphobic assault but also disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity.**

To clear some issues about this topic, please read the introductory definitions below.

**Coming out (of the closet)** - the process of willing disclosure of one's own sexual orientation or gender identity towards other people (e.g. family, friends, peers, colleagues). This process covers the fact of realizing one's own sexual orientation, different than heterosexual, and learning the self-acceptance of own sexual orientation or gender identity. Coming out can also concern celebrities who reveal their sexual orientation through mass media. In Poland, coming out was done by people

like Professor Michal Glowinski, politician Anna Grodzka, editor Anna Laszuk or famous critic and editor Tomasz Raczek. Do not confuse coming out with outing.

**Gay** - a homosexual man. 'Gay' comes from the expression 'go gay' and at first it meant 'happy', 'merry', 'cheerful', 'joyful', 'colourful'. In Polish, the word 'gay' is used to describe male homosexuals. For female ones, the word 'lesbian' is used. In English, 'gay' refers both to male and female homosexuals, regardless of their sex. The antonym to 'gay' is '**straight**' - a **heterosexual person**.

**Homophobia** - an irrational fear towards homosexuality and homosexual people, strong dislike, distrust, hatred and enmity towards them, along with discrimination. The term 'homophobia' was introduced to the scientific discourse by a psychologist and gay activist George Weinberg in 1972 in his book *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*. According to Weinberg, homophobia is an irrational fear based on social and religious grounds.

In its Resolution of 2006, the European Parliament defined homophobia as "an irrational fear of and aversion to homosexuality and of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people based on prejudice, similar to racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and sexism".

**Lesbian** - a homosexual woman. The name is derived from the Greek island Lesbos, when a female poet called Sappho lived; she is said to admire girls. In Polish, the noun 'lesbian' has a neutral connotation and is accepted by lesbians themselves, contrary to the linguistically awkward and clinically sounding 'female homosexual'. Furthermore, in English-speaking countries too, the community of homosexual people prefer the terms 'lesbian' and 'gay', considering the word 'homosexual' to be improper or even offensive outside of scientific papers. LGBT - an acronym referring to lesbians (L), gay (G), bisexual people (B) and transgender (including transsexual) people (T). In the general definition, this term applies to people referred to as 'sexual minorities' (LGB) and people with their gender identity different than their biological sex (transgender people). This term was created in the 60s of the 20 c. in the US. It started to become widespread in the 90s. Sometimes, the acronym LGB is used when referring only to homo- and bisexual people.

**Outing** - disclosure of non-heterosexual orientation against the will or without the consent of the person in question. A reason behind it may be the will to humiliate such a person and expose them to homophobic behaviour.

Below and on the following pages we present questions which police officers might have about LGBT people.

### **Why are LGBT people afraid to report incidents related to the sexual orientation or identity?**

According to the studies<sup>10</sup> held in 2011 by the Campaign Against Homophobia, Lambda Warsaw

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<sup>10</sup> *Social Situation of LGBT People in Poland. Report for 2010 and 2011*, ed. M. Makuchowska and M. Pawłęga, Warsaw 2012.

Association and Trans-Fusion Foundation, the police are not notified on 90% cases of physical assault and 97% cases of mental harassment suffered by LGBT people due to their sexual orientation. In the above studies, the respondents were asked about their reasons for not filing a crime report. Most common reasons given were the lack of faith in the effectiveness of police work in such cases, the fear of handling the crime report in an improper manner and the fear of experiencing the so-called secondary victimization, i.e. taunts and jabs from the police, which would lead to additional suffering. This is why, on the one hand, it is so important to undertake actions to prepare the police to deal with LGBT people, and on the other hand - to raise the credibility of the police in this community.

### **Why such distrust to the police?**

According to the studies above, many LGBT people do not report the incidents and crimes related to their sexual orientation and identity for the fear that their report will be handled in an improper manner. As the respondents confirm, such situations continue to happen and shape the image of the police as ill-disposed to LGBT people. A solution to this problem is ensuring a professional and equal treatment of LGBT people in contacts with the police and eliminating any discriminatory behaviour towards them.

It is worth remembering that many LGBT people did not do their coming out and may fear, especially in smaller communities, to reveal their own sexual orientation to a police officer and the consequences which can take place (e.g. the police officer knows their friends or family members and may disclose their sexual orientation or identity). If an LGBT person discloses their sexual orientation, we recommend to thank for their trust and assure them that such information will not be provided to anyone. This will surely help build trust of LGBT people towards the police and allow the police and the person in question to work together.

### **Why are gay parades or marches held?**

Gay parades or marches organized by the LGBT community are supposed to present their postulates in public. Such events are attended by both LGBT people and those who support their cause, so it is not true to claim that parades are only gay and lesbian manifestations. By many people, parades and marches were considered a manifestation of sexuality of their participants, which is not true. Such events aim to present specific postulates, not sexual orientation. Currently, a lot of attention is given to the fact that the postulates of the LGBT community should be presented in a different manner. However, many groups which want to protect their rights or introduce specific legal solutions hold manifestations as the most effective form to present their postulates. The LGBT community decided that this form allows them to present their needs and show such needs to the public, too.

### **What role is played at parades by people dressed in a flamboyant manner (Latex clothing, heavy make-up)?**

Gay parades and marches are for many LGBT people the only (and for the first-timers - often the first in life) option to behave in accordance with their sexual orientation in public. Many LGBT people recalls that such an event was the first time they could e.g. hold hands with their partners in public. By the same token, attendants who dress in a provocative way, often against the social rules, want to be seen and stress their non-heterosexuality in the public space. Thanks to controversial clothing, they become more visible, as if they wanted to send a message: "I'm gay, lesbian and I have a right to be myself in the public space - look at me".

### **What are the symbols of the LGBT movement?**

The most recognizable symbol of LGBT is a rainbow flag with six stripes. It was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker as a symbol of pride and equality movement of the LGBT people. The flag was used for the first time at a San Francisco gay pride in 1978. In Poland, rainbow flags are seen on many parades and marches for the equality of LGBT people.



Source: <http://szczecin.kph.org.pl/index.php/wolontariat/>

The flags are also used to indicate clubs and other places friendly to LGBT people. Other symbols of the LGBT movement include the pink triangle (used at concentration camps to label gay people locked up there). The use of the pink triangle as a symbol was supposed to protect those Holocaust victims from being forgotten.

### **When examined, does a lesbian prefer to talk with a woman or man?**

This question cannot be answered that easily. We recommend to ask the person in question whom she prefers to give her testimony to - woman or man. Such a question will surely be considered a sign of care and will help build trust to the police, which in turn will make the examined person more interested in a quick and effective completion of the case.

### **Is it a disease or disorder?**

Contrary to the popular belief, homosexuality was considered a disease for a relatively short period of time. This term appeared in medical literature at the end of the 19th century. In 1870, Carl Friedrich Otto Westphal, a German neurologist and psychiatrist, in his paper described homosexuality as a type of disorder. Some 100 years later, in 1973, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the list presented in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. This decision followed research which had lasted more than three decades.

**This is how this process was summed up by the American Psychiatric Association in a statement:**

**Psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals agree that homosexuality is not an illness, mental disorder or emotional problem. Much objective scientific research over the past 35 years shows us that homosexual orientation, in and of itself, is not associated with emotional or social problems. Homosexuality was thought to be a mental illness in the past because mental health professionals and society had biased information about homosexuality since most studies only involved lesbians and gay men in therapy.**

**The Polish Sexology Association gave the following statement on this issue: The Polish Sexology Association is concerned by the damaging impact of social prejudice on the mental and social functioning of homosexual and bisexual people and is aware of the shameful role which science used to play in supporting such prejudice, as for more than 100 years (until 1973 in the US and 1991 in Europe), scientists considered homosexuality as a mental disorder. That belief in pathological nature of homosexuality was not supported by scientific facts but rather was based on social prejudice which had existed in the Western culture for centuries. Therefore, homosexuality was removed from both most important classifications of mental disorders - DSM and ICD.**

### **What kind of words are offensive to LGBT people?**

According to the studies<sup>11</sup>, the most common slurs used to insult a person due to their sexual orientation are: fag, queer, sissy, homo, whore (both for men and women), perv (both for men and women), hooker (both for men and women).

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<sup>11</sup> *Homophobia-motivated violence*. Report 2011, ed. M. Makuchowska, KPH, Warsaw 2011, p. 70



## **Remember!**

**Neutral terms include 'gay' and 'lesbian'. Police officers should use the name of the person in question.**

## **What kind of behaviour is expected from the police?**

Gays and lesbians, in the same manner as straight people, above all expect from the police respect and serious approach to the case they report. In such cases, the devil is in the details. It is the details which make the person who has just left the police station say that "the police have helped me". It is crucial that a person who files a crime report to a police officer could feel that it is the police who are there to help. The famous slogan of the American police, 'to protect and serve', reflects well the expectations of citizens towards the police force. It should be remembered that a visit at the police station is often very stressful and it is very important to make it easier for a person who reports a problem so that they do not feel like a mere applicant or even potential suspect.

**If you do not know what to do in a given situation, you can ask for help at the Campaign Against Homophobia, Lambda Warsaw Association or other local organizations.**

## **What sort of questions should be avoided in order not to offend anyone?**

In Poland, gays and lesbians often hide their sexual orientation. They fear the reaction of other people and can deliberately hide information, e.g. by not answering questions about their partner or whom they live with or how they spend their free time. In conversations, they never mention their private lives. Therefore, it may happen that a police officer meets a gay or lesbian for the first time in life. As a result, the officer may be curious about many things. This can bring many questions; if it is the first meeting with such a person, curiosity is natural, however you need to remember that a person who reports to the police needs help, can be stressed out, has experienced something traumatic and their role is not to answer any questions which are not related to the incident but come from the police officer's curiosity. Such questions can lead to irritation and additional stress, as the reporting person can feel that the police care more about their sexual orientation than the issue at hand.

The rule about questions is very simple:

## **If during a contact:**

- **the person voluntarily discloses information that they are gay/lesbian (then you should thank for disclosing the sexual orientation and assure that this will remain confidential);**

- **you suspect that the crime was homophobic in nature (e.g. it was committed at an LGBT club or nearby, at an LGBT event like a pride parade or LGBT festival); then ask only questions directly related to the case.**

**Below there are some questions which you SHOULD NOT ask if they are not directly related to the case:**

- **Where are gay clubs in your city?**
- **Do they like some politician because he or she is gay?**
- **Do they have a partner?**
- **When did they discover that they were gay?**
- **Have they ever tried to be with a person of opposite sex?**

Not only you should not ask such questions, but you should also refrain from making your private comments about the case. Of course, you are entitled to have your opinion about any issue, but you must remember that at work you have a very important role which relies on social trust. This is not a place to express your private opinions. Citizens, including gays and lesbians, expect you not to judge them or comment on their lives.

This really happened...

### **My story...**

Tomek, age 23, student at the Warsaw University of Technology.

This took place when we were going home from a club. We had celebrated an exam session we'd passed. Our anniversary was coming soon, too. After several months of learning, we deserved to have a good party. We left the club at around 3 am. There were no night buses at that time and we had to walk the entire downtown to the next stop. We were in good mood, we felt braver after a few beers and we were holding hands. Usually, we don't do that. Not since a group of kids threw stones at us when they saw us hugging.

Now we knew it was dangerous, but we had a good time and there was that anniversary. We didn't care what people would think. We saw them looking at us, saying something. It didn't matter. We were happy and that was all that mattered. Near the Dominikański square, a young boy ran up to us. He blocked our way and with obvious disgust and aggression, he said:

"What's going here?! Are you fags?" We looked at each other with Andrzej, we said that this was not his business and we kept walking. He was gone. After a while, he was back. This time, with his friends. I think there were six of them. They started beating us immediately. Punches were landed

everywhere. At one moment, I felt excruciating pain in my stomach. I bent in half and fell to the ground. Andrzej was holding on a bit longer, but he fell to the ground, too. I covered and covered my head. "We will show you, disgusting fags! Fuck off to the Netherlands!" they shouted. We tried to defend, but there were too many of them. This went on for several minutes. Andrzej got it more than me. His lip and supraorbital ridge were broken. I wanted to call the police, but Andrzej would not let me do it. He was afraid that the cops would say it had been our fault due to hand holding. And we had been drinking, too. They could take us to the drunk tank. I didn't want to quarrel. We went to the hospital.

How did that event affect me and Andrzej?

A lot has changed. After that, we had problems with communication. We started to quarrel. Andrzej changed. He became nervous. Almost paranoid. When we were walking down the street and saw a bunch of guys, he'd move away a few steps. I know he was scared, but I was still angry that we hadn't gone to the police back then. Those guys should be held responsible for what they did. I don't want to fear and hide forever. I just want to be myself, while Andrzej seemed to give up. There was a lot of anger in him and he showed it when I expected it the least. What pisses me off the most is that they did manage to make us scared. All the scars and bruises are nothing compared to this.

### **Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

Gays and lesbians are often subject to verbal and physical assaults motivated by homophobia; every now and then in private flats, NGOs or gay clubs appear hateful slogans like: "Fags to gas chambers"; "No queers allowed"; "pervs", etc. Attacks and incidents take place more often during public gatherings and happenings.

The police should not play down the homophobia element usually present in such cases. If e.g. on the door of an NGO which helps LGBT people, somebody paints a message "Fags to gas chambers" or "No queers allowed", then it is not only property damage but also a homophobia-related crime. Currently, LGBT people are not protected in the same manner as national or ethnic minorities. They do not get the protection stipulated in Articles 256 and 257 of the Polish Criminal Code. In the case of battery with a suspected homophobia motivation, you should consider Article 157 or 158 of the Polish Criminal Code with the option for the court to apply Article 53 of the Criminal Code (sentencing directive). The homophobic element should be put in the report even if at the first stage of investigation duties, it seems to be a subjective feeling of the victim.

**Press corps should be aware that marches, assemblies or happenings organized by the LGBT community, no matter how they are seen by the public and how many controversies they raise, they are in fact peaceful and are not oriented to incite clashes on the streets.**

## **Transgender people**

### **My story...**

The other way, a police patrol knocked to my door. I was undergoing my sex adjustment surgery back then. Therefore, in my ID card I was still a man. I opened the door and the police officers, without even entering, asked me for my ID card as some witnesses indicated me as the person who had been driving a car and splashed water on some passer-by. I said I didn't even have a driver's licence or a car. The intervention was nice. Up until a certain moment. They took my ID card but there was a woman before them. Suddenly, the splashing was no longer important. One of them asked me who I was hiding from in those women's clothes. I asked them to come inside as this was important. I said I was trans and showed them my trans CARD. This didn't change much. From then on, they thought I was a dangerous fugitive Marek Z., I could see it in their emotions. What's worst, this all took place on the staircase and I could say goodbye to my anonymity. Onlookers got everything they needed. After that, the officers apologized but they had to visit me at another address. I had to leave that place.

Everyone deserves respects no matter how they are and how they look like. A person can be humiliated not only with gestures or behaviour, but also words.

### **What kind of behaviour is expected from the police?**

The main principle in contacts with transgender people is the slogan "Do not assume anything", as the transgender community is particularly diverse. The police officer needs to ensure safety to a transgender person by understanding their gender identity and expression.

This understanding is strongly related to the use of proper grammar forms. If you are not sure, you can use a neutral language or just ask the person in question how they wish to be referred to. Such a question can sound impolite, but for a transgender person it will be a confirmation that the police want to cooperate and hold no prejudice. Conversations should be held in a possibly least intrusive manner, e.g. in a separate room. A transgender person should be allowed to choose the gender of the examining officer, if possible. If the details on the ID card are not the same as the preferred name, you should use the form expected by the person in question. It is not against the law. In the report, write down official details and indicate the form preferred by that person. If they have a trans CARD, the preferred name should be on it.

### **Remember!**

**In police work, it may happen that some people cross-dress in order to throw off the scent. Such people have nothing to do with transgender people and what they do is just criminal tactics.**

The trans CARD is a non-official document (issued by the Trans-Fusion Foundation) for transgender people. It is supposed to help identify a person whose look is sometimes or always different than the one on the ID card. The trans CARD contains two face photos - one as used in the ID card and another one in the alternative form, notably different from the first one (e.g. with a wig, heavy make-up, etc.) Both photos are of the same person. Moreover, the trans CARD includes the name and ID card number of its holder, which allows to identify the official details. The trans CARD is supposed to help in various situations, e.g. when a transgender person must confirm their identity but their current look does not match the image in the ID card. The trans CARD can be very useful in contacts with the police. It is a good will of the police officer if the trans CARD is honoured.

The trans CARD is a two-sided card, with a colourful overprint on a plastic cR80 card (a standard credit card) and a hologram. Is it manufactured at a professional printing house.



Source: [transfuzja.org/pl/artykuly/ogloszenia\\_i\\_apele/trans\\_karta.htm](http://transfuzja.org/pl/artykuly/ogloszenia_i_apele/trans_karta.htm)

## **What sort of questions should be avoided in order not to offend anyone?**

When talking with transgender people, tact is of utmost importance. Questions related to body or gender can lead to discomfort and sense of threat, which will make cooperation of such a person with the police much more difficult.

Instead of asking: 'What is your real name?', better say: 'Please provide details from your ID card'. In the case of transgender people, their true name is the one which reflects their identity and not the one given in the documents.

'Mr or Ms?' Use the form used by the person in question. If they use the neutral form or have visible problems with choosing a grammatical gender, it is a duty of the police officer not to pick one. If necessary, you can ask about the preferred grammatical form.

'Are you transsexual/transgender?' If the person does not say it or use expressions which hint at that, you should not ask about their transgender status. It is extremely intrusive, unpleasant and disturbing. This applies also to any questions related to hormonal therapies or surgeries.

'Why do you dress up in women's/men's clothes?' The term 'to dress up' and any similar terms prove a complete lack of understanding of the transgender issues, in particular regarding transvestite people, who temporarily express themselves in a preferred gender. Do not pay any attention to clothes or comment them in any manner.

## **Why do we say 'sex reassignment surgery', not 'sex change surgery'?**

The term 'sex change' implies that the transsexual people do a total make-over, as if they changed their personality or gender identity. However, transsexual already have their gender identity, but it does not conform to their body. Their gender is not what they see in the mirror every day. From the perspective of a transsexual person, it is the body which is realigned to the gender; the person does not change, it is their body which changes. Which is why we say 'reassignment' - this process changes what does not reflect our internal feeling. Reassignment concerns not only body, but also legal gender, i.e. the specification of gender in the official records.

## **Does the Polish law protect transgender people in any way?**

The Polish law does not consider gender identity or gender expression as possible discrimination motives. Transgender people are not protected against physical or mental abuse like e.g. national minorities. The Polish law does not regulate *expressis verbis* (i.e. directly) the issue of hate crimes or hate speech against them. The only cases of discrimination when transgender people can claim their rights is discrimination related to gender in relation to sex reassignment. However, this case applies mostly to transsexuals and not all the people we refer to as 'transgender'.

**In which cell can you detain a transgender person?**

Just like with examination, even if a transgender person is detained, you should still respect their gender identity and expression. If possible, provide a separate room due to any potential risk coming from people put in the same cell.

**If you do not know what to do in a given situation, you can ask for help at the Trans-Fusion Foundation or other local organizations.**

**Types of potential attacks and incidents against this community**

Transphobia-related attacks are mainly insults, slurs, harassment and libel. Such hate speech proliferates mainly on the Internet.

## **People with disabilities**

Stories collected by Piotr Stanisławski, the Integration Foundation.

### **Since birth...**

Justyna Kozdryk is 31 years old but only 116cm tall, although everyone else in her family is of regular height. It did not stop her from education at a public school, then graduating from the High School of Special Pedagogy, getting a job at the local Job Centre and then at the police as a civil traffic IT employee. She has bench pressed for many years with many successes, among them the silver medal at the Special Olympics in Beijing and silver medal at the world championship in Pusan. She has accepted her disability. This is what she expects from others, too.

### **After diving head-first...**

Przemek Więckowski is 27 years old. For the past 10 years, he's used a wheelchair. He jumped head-first from a tree in a prohibited area and broke his spine. Serious rehabilitation took him four years, after which, thanks also to his parents' support, he could use the wheelchair. He graduated from a part-time IT high school and then started to work as an IT specialist. He does not like to receive special treatment, he likes to be independent and only accepts help when he needs to.

### **After a disease...**

Marta Andrych graduated from veterinary studies. She has always dreamt about working with animals. And this is what she started to do at a vet clinic. Four years after her marriage, she started to suffer from hand paresis, after a while - eyelid paresis. It took three doctors to diagnose multiple sclerosis. For a year, she has had problems with moving around and felt contractures and pain in various parts of her body. She receives a lot of support from her husband, who helps her exercise every day. For now, Marta has not resigned from her work, although more and more often, when going there, she asks for help of passers-by, sometimes the municipal guard or police officers.

### **After a car accident...**

A car coming from a side road smashed into the side of the car exactly where Tomek was sitting as a passenger. The door pressed into his leg so hard that the doctors at the hospital were not able to save it. He had his leg amputated right above the knee. It took him two years to come to terms with it. He completed an IT course, started to play wheelchair basketball at Start, a club for the disabled,



and then he rented a flat. Moreover, he started a job and sells press at a press salon. Thanks to support from a certain company, he has a state-of-the-art prosthesis which allows him to move around comfortably. And nobody looks back at him anymore.

### **With epilepsy...**

There are many scars on Krzysztof's head. They mark his numerous falls and the way he would hit his head against various items. Krzysztof has epilepsy and his attacks come often, including the worst ones, when he loses his consciousness. Due to his condition, he can't find a job and when he did, he was fired right after his first attack. Today, he's over fifty. He suffers most of his attacks at home, but he also needs to go out and then he goes through them on the street. Some people often think that he's drunk. This hurts him the most. He says he can't live always inside the house so he prefers to take his risk and feel that he's alive.

### **Without eye-sight...**

Anna is 39 years old, she is blind since she was born. Her parents did their best to teach her self-reliance, so that in her adult life she could lead a normal life. Thanks to her perseverance and learning how to move in the public space, she stopped being afraid to move around in a big city by herself. Today, she lives in Warsaw, a city which is not free from barriers. Most of such barriers are on the pavements, where various items are put - cars, ad boards, flowerbeds, badly placed bins, poles or even municipal information posts. She says that the best way to help a blind person on the street is asking how you can help them.

### **Everything you'd like to know about disability but are too ashamed to ask...**

Tomasz Przybyszewski, Integration.

### **What are various types of disability?**

You can be born with disability or gain it through sickness or accident. Facilities for the disabled are usually marked with a wheelchair, but wheelchair users are not the only kind of the disabled. This group includes blind and mute people, intellectually disabled or with mental conditions.

A disability can be hidden - if caused, for example, by heart or respiratory system diseases. This is why a strange behaviour does not have to indicate intoxication, but e.g. the Parkinson's diseases or stroke. By the same token, fainting does not have to come from alcohol consumption, but e.g.

diabetes.

## **Remember!**

**Each disabled person is different. Even with two persons on wheelchairs, each of them may have different needs or movement ranges.**

### **What is the difference between a disability and disease?**

A disease can be cured while a disability is usually permanent (eye-sight loss, the Down's syndrome). Rehabilitation coupled with proper equipment can help make the body work well despite disability. Of course, a disability can be caused by a disease. Many conditions result in temporary disability, too.

### **How to talk about disabilities?**

Avoid obsolete or negative terms like: "cripple", "handicapped", "idiot", "retard", etc. It is best to say: "a person with disability", "a disabled person", "a blind person", "intellectually disabled" or "person with a mental disorder".

### **In what manner the disabled move around the public space?**

People with physical disabilities can use manual or electric wheelchairs, mobility scooters, crutches or walkers. People without limbs can use prostheses, which get constantly more useful. Visually impaired people can use a white cane or a guide dogs.

### **How to help the disabled people?**

Do not decide for them.

That a person is disabled does not necessarily mean that they need help. You can offer your help when you believe it may come useful, e.g. at a street crossing or a bus stop. In such a situation, remember to ask if you can help and in what manner. It is no shame not to know how to do it. However, you should not help anyone against their will.

You can extend your arm for a blind person to hold it and walk half a step ahead of them, describing obstacles on their way. Such a person will not find much use of directions like: "Go

there" or "This way". You have to use terms they can picture, like "To the left", "First block to the right", etc. It is worth knowing that for people with crutches, a standing position can be very gruelling.

### **How to talk with a disable person?**

Just like you would with anyone else. Of course, talk directly to the disabled person, not to their companion or sign language interpreter. Some disabled people have problems with speaking. If you cannot understand what they say, ask them to repeat, or if necessary - to write it down. When establishing contact with deaf people, it is best to find out how they want to communicate. Some can read lips. Then you should speak at your natural pace, directly, do not cover your mouth and do not shout. Writing messages down can also be necessary. It can happen that a sign language interpreter will be necessary. Always use every-day words and terms; do not be afraid to say "See you" to a blind person or "Please go to the next room" to a wheelchair user.

### **How to behave in contacts with a disabled person?**

In the same manner as you would with anyone else. When greeting a person with her right hand amputated, do not be shy to shake their left one. When greeting a blind person, touch their arm gently and introduce yourself. If you want to shake their hand, tell them about it. Do not stand over the head of a wheelchair user - take two steps back or sit down. Be patient and understanding - some disabled people need more time to do certain things. Remember that a wheelchair, crutches or white cane belong to the personal zone of the disabled person. Never touch them if not allowed to by the owner.

### **Is a guide dog necessary to a disabled person?**

A guide dog helps a blind person. Such a dog can also help other disabled people, like wheelchair users. Those dogs are "on duty" and therefore you should not pet them or distract them in any manner. Of course, not all dogs are guide dogs. Such dogs undergo a special training and are marked, hence they are allowed with their owner to enter public buildings like offices, courts of law, clinics, schools, restaurants, shops, etc., along with buses, trams or planes. The exceptions include religious buildings.

How do the disabled drive a car? Their cars are adjusted to the type of disability of the driver. Sometimes, automatic transmission is enough, sometimes special devices are necessary. The disabled commit traffic infractions, too. If it happens, they should not go without a ticket. However, please remember that a disability may (but does not have to) make the person drive a bit slower or more chaotically.

Do not be surprised if you pull somebody over only to find out that the driver uses only hands or drives with their feet. Traffic laws apply to the disabled drivers in the same manner they do to the able ones. However, thanks to their parking cards, the disabled are allowed to do a bit more, both as drivers and as passengers. A parking card allows, with due diligence, to ignore certain traffic signs like no two-way traffic, no entry or no parking.

### **Why are designated parking spaces so important to the disabled?**

Remember, special parking spaces are designated for disabled people with parking cards. A car may be the only option for them to move around. Designated parking spaces are put close to facilities so that disabled people did not have to cover long distances. They are wider than regular parking spaces as the disabled may need more room when getting off their car and getting into it (e.g. they need to open the door wide open, take their wheelchair out and sit in it).

Designated spaces are crucial to the disabled so do not tolerate if such spaces are taken by someone unauthorized - even if only in part or only "for a moment". Remember also that parking on such spaces by unauthorized people results in big fines and a police officer is no exception here. A police officer's behaviour and fast reactions to any misdeeds should serve as an example.

### **Remember!**

**Disabled people, e.g. wheelchair users, can find it difficult to enter the police station in order to report a crime. If there is no wheelchair access or lift for the disabled, try calmly to explain what possible solutions for such a person are. You can for example send an emergency patrol to them or make an appointment with their local community police officer. Take basic details and necessary information related to the event.**

### **What kind of behaviour is expected from the police?**

Wheelchair users can have various degrees of disability and various mobility options. Some will use arms and hands, some can stand up from their wheelchair and walk a short distance.

Do not lean towards a wheelchair user to shake their hand and do not ask them to hold coats. Do not push and do not touch someone's wheelchair unless you are asked to, as it is a part of such a person's personal space. If you dart to help someone ride down a curb, such a person may fall out from the wheelchair. Pieces of the wheelchair can fall off if you raise it by the handles or footrest.

## **Remember!**

- **Wheelchair access areas and doors available for the disabled should be always open at your building and always free from any obstacles.**
- **Wheelchair users not always can reach everywhere.**
- **Remember to put as many items as you can within their reach, make sure that there are no obstacles to shelves and racks.**
- **Before you start talking with a wheelchair user, take a chair and sit down on their level. If it is not possible, find a small distance so that the person in question does not have to strain their neck in order to establish eye contact. If the meeting includes form filling or signing, have a writing pad ready.**
- **People who use canes or crutches will want to use the most convenient route, but sometimes stairs are easier for them than wheelchair access - make sure to show them the way.**

## **What should you remember about in contacts with intellectually disabled people?**

Intellectual disability, once called mental retardation is a condition, not disease. Such persons have, to a various degree, lower intellectual capabilities, which is not always visible during the first contact. Sometimes the problems they experience in various social situations are considered rude and stubborn behaviour.

Such difficulties may be expressed through:

- a tendency to stronger (sometimes inadequate) reactions to new situations, inability to control emotions;
- diminished abilities of critical thinking and predicting consequences of their actions, and therefore - lack of the skill of generalizing experience;
- excessive trustfulness and naivety in their actions;
- lack of the skill of defining and expressing their needs;
- underdeveloped skills of refusing and protecting their own rights;
- problems with distinguishing proper behaviour in the sexual area.

Do not patronize such people, do not treat them like small children or with contempt. Show them respect and be sensitive and helpful with barriers, e.g. pass them the document on a pad if such a person has any problems with reaching the desk. If you feel embarrassed and do not know what to do, just ask the disabled person about that - in this manner, you show that you are interested and kind, you facilitate mutual understanding and encourage openness. It is always better to ask than to pretend that there is no problem.

What matters is the form in which you talk to intellectually disabled people. They are very sensitive to that. Treat them according to their actual age, not like children!

### **Remember!**

**Adjust your message to the level and capabilities of the intellectually disabled person. Do not use the formal register (like 'optional obligations' or 'punitive equipment') as you may be not understood. Lack of understanding leads to fear or aggressive behaviour. It is recommended to use short sentences, several words long, along with simple vocabulary. Sometimes you need to repeat a sentence several times in different forms. It can happen that the person in question cannot talk or talks in an unclear manner. However, they know how to write their name (they are taught that at the beginning of their schooling), draw or point to their address (they recognize topography), or draw a thing they do not know the name of.**

A **mental disorder** results in either mild or serious troubles with thinking, perception, attitude or actions. If such troubles significantly affect the ability to handle every-day requirements and actions, it is necessary to see a specialist and undergo treatment.

### **What should you remember about in contacts with mentally people?**

Mental disorder is not the same as intellectual disability. Firstly, a mental disorder does not exclude intellectual ability, secondly - often it is cyclic in nature. The police usually have to deal with schizophrenia. To put it as simply as possible, schizophrenia is an illness in which the person hears, sees or feels things, phenomena or events which are not real. Such a person is very sensitive towards our emotions and requires respect and dignity.

Do not refute or confirm the persons' mental creations. Do not tease them. Ask them questions, try to get to know and understand their feelings. What can be weird or funny to you, for them is a source of mental anguish. So instead of saying: "What you're saying is absolute hogwash, figments of your sick imagination," better say: "I understand that you hear voices; unfortunately, I do not, but I know that this is important to you so please tell me more about it."

Do not try to cure the ill person, be calm, do not quarrel as you can provoke violence. Accept the fact that the ill person will be distrustful, will change their mood or behaviour often, may not react to your emotions or intentions as you would like them to. When the ill person talks about their sins or death - do not avoid this topic, although be careful. You can talk directly about suicide. Remember that the ill person is smart - do not try to cheer them up in a naive manner.

Schizophrenia usually affects a certain part of life, which means that you cannot just assume that everything which the ill person says is a figment of their imagination. One example can be a

schizophrenic man who kept reporting to the police that at night, strange things happened at his neighbour's garage and numerous cars often drove up. The police considered it to be a symptom of his illness and did not undertake any actions; after some time, it turned out that the garage indeed was a "chop shop", where licence plates of stolen cars were changed. Another ill person reported strange smells at night in the hall and that his neighbour always had his light on. It turned out that the neighbour made illicit drugs. Treat the ill person like you would like yourself or your family to be treated in a situation like this.

## **Senior people**

### **My story...**

I'm 80 years old, for several years I've had hearing problems. It is often a discomfort to me as my family and friends do not remember that and they talk with me like they always did. Sometimes, I don't even want to talk with anyone as I'm upset by the fact that I don't get much out of such a conversation.

Recently, when I went shopping to a hypermarket, at the checkout I realized that my wallet with all my documents and money was stolen. I went to the police station, worrying how I will communicate. I decided to immediately tell the officer that I'm hearing impaired so that he wouldn't get angry when he needs to repeat himself. The police officer invited me to a room. He showed me to a chair which was put in such a way that the light did not shine directly in my eyes and I could clearly see him. He sat down close enough for me to lip-read. Moreover, he gave me a paper and pen as it was easier for me to write than speak. When he talked to me, he was loud, clear and slow enough so that syllables would not mash up. He made sure if I understood what he had been saying. When he stood up to reach some files on the shelf and turned his back on me, he would stop talking as he knew that I might not understand everything clearly. At the end, he asked me if there was anything else he could help me with and he left me his phone number and e-mail address. I was uplifted, even moved.

The example above shows how little is needed for the contact between a police officer and a senior person to be satisfying and effective - smooth, fast and conflict-free.

### **Remember!**

**In contacts with senior people, bear in mind that they may need more time to read a document or that some things may require additional explanations. Be empathic and sensitive.**

### **What should you remember about in contacts with senior people?**

It happens that some senior people require more patience and simple sentence construction. Sometimes the way they see the world came to a halt many years ago and they do not understand the language of modern technologies. Look for clues of any age-related condition - hearing or visual impairment. Offer to read the document aloud, make sure that the person in question understood everything, if necessary repeat what you have said and do not show any irritation.



Senior people can have hearing problems, sometimes even when not realizing it or being too ashamed to admit that. Therefore, speak slowly, make sure that you are understood, see if the person lip-reads. Show them a place when you can easily communicate. Moreover, when talking to such a person, always stand in front of her. Stop talking when you move, e.g. when taking files out of a closet.

If a senior person talks off-topic for a long time, use a polite form: "I understand that this is important to you, but let's try to focus on the most important thing..." or "Let's try to go back to the topic...". Never be arrogant and never express superiority. You will be an elderly person, too.

## **Other examples of groups prone to social exclusion**

### **My story...**

I grew up in a wealthy and the so-called traditional family. I had everything, I was happy. My whole world fell apart in one day, when my parents died in an accident; I was left without any means of support and unpaid loan for a house, which was quickly sold by the bailiff. I went into my adult life with no money, no roof over my head nor any support. Soon, I was in a bad company. After some time, I started to make a living by becoming a prostitute, a so-called 'mall girl'. The police knew what I was doing. I never hid it during inspections. One day, after "work", I was assaulted - beaten and raped. I was close to death when I got to the nearest police station. I said to the officer that I want to report battery and rape. Instead of showing support, he told me: "It's your own fault, now you have to wait; if anyone finds time, they will see you; just think if you really want to report this. Probably he just didn't pay you." After three hours of waiting and no interest, I left without a word.

**'Mall girls'** are girls who loiter around shopping malls and ask men, usually rich ones, to buy them cosmetics, clothes or jewellery in return for their company and sex; sometimes it is a lifestyle, sometimes a lack of other options to earn money.

We learnt that intolerance, discrimination or humiliation concerns people who belong to certain social minorities on the grounds on their race, national or ethnic background, religion or sexual orientation. However, the above example, as many others, shows that discrimination or exclusion can affect people due to other features or different lifestyle.

### **From jokes to social exclusion**

Social minorities in Poland are subject to various jokes or vulgar, verbal or physical, assaults. Making jokes about people or situations is a part of the social order and a natural feature of each nation. Everything would be all right if the main goal of jokes would be to have good mood and make fun of the absurdities of social life. However, jokes can often be distasteful and aggressive towards anyone with different traits.

**Social exclusion may concern not only the above groups, but also alcoholics, drug addicts, the homeless, permanently unemployed, the poor, prostitutes.**

Social exclusion is a multi-faceted issue and in practice it means inability to participate in economic, political or cultural life due to the lack of access to resources, goods and institutions, limitation of social rights or deprivation of needs. Often, social exclusion is mistakenly identified with poverty. Those terms are related, however 'social exclusion' is much broader. The factors covered by social exclusion lead to the separation of certain people from the social life. The relation between poverty and social exclusion may be feedback-based, i.e. poverty may lead to exclusion but also may result from it. Along with social and political changes, more and more people do not deal well with the job market, which leads to unemployment and numerous conflicts related to emotions and family. Long periods of unemployment result in learnt helplessness, i.e. losing the ability to make any attempts to cope with a difficult situation. This helplessness comes from the lack of faith in own skills, discouragement with failures, and often depression. This is related to a massive, long-term mental strain. Stress leads to alcohol and drug consumption, which in turns result in bigger poverty and in the end - homelessness. Desperation and helplessness may bring about prostitution, too.

### **Remember!**

**Prostitution is socially condemned, but it is not against the law. Alcohol and drug addiction are chronic diseases which require treatment.**

During an intervention towards such people, remember not to judge them by their looks, do not comment on the reasons of their behaviour, do not humiliate them. When performing your duties, focus on proper handling of your intervention, show interest in the person in question and their problem. Point them to proper support institutions. Bear in mind that behind each situation, there is a tragedy of not only one man but also their family. Do not judge the reasons which lead e.g. to the person in question being homeless. Statements like "It's his own fault", "It's a choice he made", "She deserved that" are unprofessional, do not bring anything good to the conversation but also prove your lack of respect and fuel negative emotions, which hampers communication. When conducting your duties towards a prostitute, remember to treat her with dignity and respect, calling her by her name. Judging her life choices is not a part of your duties. Completely unacceptable and reprehensible are disrespectful terms like "whore", "hooker", "working girl", etc. Always remember about your professional ethics and about the fact that an officer on duty should be impartial and objective.

## **Sexism as an example of sex-based discrimination**

### **My story...**

Monika

I'm a police officer. I work mainly with men. Despite my high qualifications and experience, for many years I've had to deal on duty with comments from colleagues about my looks, like:

"If I was younger...", or "Your legs are pretty". This makes me usually feel like I'm first and foremost a woman and not an equal fellow worker. Every now and often, my ideas about how to improve certain processes are not treated seriously. When I offered to correct an inaccurate report and outdated legal status, my boss ignored it and when I reminded him about this issue, he said and I quote here: "Monika, take it easy, why do you insist, do you have a period or something?!". I gave up and the report was sent as prepared by a colleague of mine. After a month, I spotted an error in a letter written by the boss himself; I didn't tell him, fearing another ridicule. However, the error was noticed by his own superiors...

### **My story...**

Grzegorz

It is my fifth year in the patrol and intervention department. I'm told that I'm a good cop. I admit, I get praises and bonuses. Many times I asked to be transferred to the investigation department. Every time I get shot down, although three of my female co-workers after their maternity leaves have already been transferred to the juvenile team and to the investigation department. I talked to my manager and head officer. Both women said the same: "I prefer women in the investigation, as they keep order in the documentation and they're more meticulous than men". To this day, nothing has changed.

**Sexism** is a belief in a biological, intellectual and/or moral - either natural or cultural - superiority of one sex over the other. This is followed by the justification to treat people of different sex in non-equal ways, with sex-related prejudice and/or discrimination.

**Remember!**

**At work, everyone wants to be perceived first and foremost through the lenses of professional competence and would like to be treated professionally.**

### **Why is this chapter about sexism?**

Sexism is a significant problem and considered as such in many societies; it can take on forms which are dangerous to the health and even life of women and men. Being a police officer means doing a job which requires particular social trust and obliges to uphold the law and carry out duties without prejudice or stereotypes. Therefore, it is crucial to be aware of issues related to violations of women's and men's rights on duty, in particular mental and sexual harassment at work, but also social issues like domestic violence.

The issue of sexism concerns mainly women. It is present in the public space but affects work relations, too. Sexism is harmful, leads to unequal treatment and exclusion of a given sex. It should be remembered that biological differences between women and men have not changed. What have changed, however, are their respective roles in society.

Women started to enter male-dominated communities and prove themselves worthy in jobs so far considered "male". The idea that the job of a police officer is for men only excludes women and constitutes discrimination due to sex.

Different treatment of people may be justified by different skills, qualifications, even physical strength. Recruitment to certain special tasks may be the same for each sex. In such a situation, it is not unequal treatment.

### **Remember!**

**There is no better or worse sex!**

**We are all equal. Every person, regardless of their sex, have their own traits and skills which should be put to good use. Prejudice and discrimination of one sex only due to biological differences may bring only harm and waste of human potential.**

### **Manifestations of sexism**

- Jokes. Think about your reaction and inserting innuendos into your jokes. Remember that sexism is so commonplace that many people do not realize it and do not think about their behaviour. Take a look at your "hidden agenda" and spot the discrimination. Expect resistance and explanations along the lines of "Come on, it's only a joke". You can reply that jokes foster stereotypes harmful to women, keep them widespread and "normal" in the public space. You can be accused that you have no sense of humour, you are oversensitive,

this is the police not kindergarten, etc. In such cases, you can say that everyone has to choose what to laugh at and that you should not have fun at someone's expense<sup>12</sup>. Studies conducted by psychologists<sup>13</sup> proved that jokes about blond girls and female drivers (popular in Poland) are not only harmful but can result in tolerance of the hostility towards and discrimination of women. Scientists claim that people should be aware of disrespectful kind of humour in the popular culture and the explanation "that's only a joke" lends potential and strength to jokes which can justify prejudice and unequal treatment of women in our society.

- Sexual (verbal and physical) harassment, abuse of professional relations and dependence to make a person participate in sexual activities (crime under Article 199 of the Polish Criminal Code).
- Blaming crime victims for what happened (e.g. asking a rape victim: "Why did you go there? What were you doing there? Why were you dressed like that?"), presenting your own judgments and opinions like: "Probably you provoked it", etc. Such behaviour of the police leads to burdening the victim with blame for the incident. The same goes for domestic violence.
- Refusal to conduct professional duties together with a woman or man due to certain sex-related stereotypes and not due to individual traits and dispositions.
- Hanging and tolerating posters with naked women or men.
- Ridiculing a man who wants to go on paternal leave or child care leave.

One of the manifestations of sexist language can be ignoring women by refusing to use feminine suffixes in names of professions or job positions of high social status, and treating the masculine form as neutral and universal.

### **What is it so important to respond to sexist behaviour, even seemingly trifle or insignificant?**

- Remember that you yourself sometimes give in to pressure of a group which exhibits sexist behaviour. Sexism can lead to the worst crimes against women and the lack of proper response to such crimes. You can prevent that!
- In professional relations, sexism can make women withdraw from their jobs or reduce their commitment; sexism can also lead to harassment, discrimination, mobbing or failure to carry out one's duties.
- Sexism violates the dignity of the other person, objectifies them, reduces sensitivity to the harm of people of a given sex.
- Sexism can justify criminal behaviour towards women or men.
- Sexism can also lead to improper response to a crime against a woman or man, or abetting in such a crime, if only through tacit acceptance.

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<sup>12</sup> M. Branka, D. Cieślakowska, *Anti-discriminatory Education. Coaching Manual*, published Willa Decius, Cracow 2010, p. 177.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/11/071106083038.htm>

- Remember that sexism can manifest in inhumane and humiliating behaviour and always violates human rights.

### **Improper or prohibited behaviour**

- Belittling the potential of women in the police force due to issues related to traditional roles held by women (maternity, housekeeping, cooking, etc.). Saying private or public opinions like the interview given a police officer: "The number of women should be reduced as after a year or two, they become, how to put it, wind-pollinated, they just become pregnant and their duty is over. After a year (after their maternity leave - ed.) they are less effective. Less effective and less venturesome".<sup>14</sup>
- Women's Day - stressing visual values of women in the police force, describing women through their sex and looks instead of competence, pressing women into meetings on the Women's Day and accepting flowers (often after earlier belittling comments made by men about the necessity to organize such a holiday).
- Exaggerated customs like insistent hand kissing.
- Undermining competence due to sex (e.g. "Woman, it's too much for you"; "Well done for a woman - you've gone quite far", "You earn a lot for a woman", and in the case of men: "You're acting like a woman").
- Raising doubts as to competence of women due to their sex only, spreading rumours with sexual innuendos which belittle women's professional achievements.
- Depreciating a woman's value by forcing her to do jobs which can violate her personal dignity, giving tasks below qualifications like making coffee or copying files when men with the same job position are treated differently.
- Judging someone's commitment on the basis of sex, like "You're so committed because you're single. If you were married with children, you'd know what to focus on", "You work too much because you have no family" etc.
- Using sexist language - criticizing, humiliating, ridiculing in the presence of co-workers, resorting to non-professional reasons related to sex and stereotypes.
- Saying jokes which belittle women (like the so-called blond jokes). Improper jokes, malicious, mean comments with erotic innuendos or related to the biological aspects of sex and genitalia (e.g. "You must go through the PMS today"; "she needs a man", "women in the police are a mistake - they'd better play with children"), but also commenting the physique or physical traits of women or men (e.g. "you're softie like a woman").
- Using body language which indicates disrespect or rudeness towards women or men (e.g. the way of standing, making faces or "checking someone out" - - looking at a woman or man as at a sexual object, patting butts, rubbing, etc.).
- Commenting on private clothes or uniform (e.g. "Why pants, you have such pretty legs..."), violating woman's personal zone under the pretence of checking her uniform (like looking under her blouse).

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/policjantki-sa-wiatropylnie-zachodza-w-ciaze-i-posluzbie,202989.html>.

- Unequal treatment of a woman as a police officer, e.g. by considering her potential for the riot department only through the lens of physical strength, disregarding any other useful traits, dispositions or competence.
- Not considering a woman as a proper candidate to a high-level job by claiming that as a mother or future mother, she is going to be less flexible for work, or by referring to the so-called stereotypical sex traits which claim that women are too emotional, or less adamant than men, etc.
- Tolerating insults towards women or improper response to crimes committed against women.
- Ignoring violence against women, failing to undertake proper actions, sympathizing with the perpetrator.

### **The Judgment by the European Court of Human Rights on the passiveness of the justice system towards domestic violence**

In the case *Opuz*<sup>15</sup> against Turkey, the European Court of Human Rights included domestic violence in the term "inhumane treatment". In this case, despite numerous procedures followed by the police and prosecutors, no specific effective criminal action was undertaken and victims of long-term domestic violence were not given sufficient protection. As a result, the mother of the woman who were subject to violence was killed when protecting her daughter. The Court stated that the general passiveness of the justice system towards perpetrators of domestic violence as a crime directed against women constitutes a violation of Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of discrimination).

It should be remembered that domestic violence is not neutral due to gender, as the significant majority of perpetrators are men, and the victims - women and children. The problem of ineffective actions against perpetrators of domestic violence stems from cultural context (some even use the term 'gender-based violence'). Social acceptance for domestic violence by saying that those are private matters of a given family and nobody should interfere with that means that the police and prosecutors are less committed to prosecute the perpetrators and provide less protection for women - victims of violence. Therefore, it is mainly social issues which determine that the interventions are ineffective, which results in violations of the right to life and the prohibition of discrimination. Domestic violence concerns mainly women and children and therefore they deserve special protection from the state against assaults directed at their personal integrity. Proper authorities should respond to first alarming signals before the prosecutor's office steps in, while any crime report, due to the dynamic nature of domestic violence, should oblige to mutual collaboration between the authorities concerned, including NGOs. This is necessary not only due to the

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<sup>15</sup> The Decision of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg of 9 June 2009, file number 33401/02



effectiveness of the law, but also to public interest<sup>16</sup>.

**Paraphrasing famous words by Jane Elliott, which originally concerned racism, we can say: "We learn to be sexist, therefore we can learn not to be racist. Sexism is not genetic. It has everything to do with power."**

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/wydarzenia/przegląd/teksty/ps98.pdf>.

## **Start with yourself**

*Not everyone has to do great things. It is enough to be consistent and perseverant in small things in order to leave behind a permanent trace of one's existence.*

*Krzysztof Łaszkiewicz*

We hope that the previous several chapters of the manual enhanced your knowledge about broadly-defined discrimination and simple ways to avoid actions based on bias and intolerance. In this chapter, we focus on several good practices which can be adopted in everyday work at a police unit - both in executive and supervision - in order to make it more open to social issues and provide a safe place to any person, regardless of their traits.

### **1**

## **Good practice for Executives**

### **Practice 1. Adopting a fair treatment policy at your police unit**

Each executive of an organizational unit should know as much as possible about professional situations which may take place at their unit. In order to avoid situations which involve discrimination, bias or just simple awkwardness, it is best to start with defining your own attitude as the head of your unit.

A good method to spread your own management style is to adopt a management policy for your unit, which would include a fair treatment policy.

The fair treatment policy is a formally adopted by a company (or a police unit) and publicly known document which states that the company aims to respect social diversity and counter discrimination on the grounds of national or ethnic background, skin colour, religion and religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, disability status or age. The fair treatment policy usually sets forth specific measures and actions undertaken by the company to ensure fair treatment and counter discrimination. Therefore, such a policy confirms that the company follows the fair treatment law applicable both in Poland and the European Union.

In the studies by the European Commission, conducted among small and medium enterprises in the

entire European Union, significant majority of officials at studied companies - as much as 83% - claimed that actions adopted at their company to ensure fair treatment and diversity were beneficial.

Most companies which decide to adopt a fair treatment policy does so in order to:

- increase their market competitiveness. The body of customers on the modern market is more and more diverse. This results from the bigger share of women, ethnic minorities, the elderly, the disabled, etc. A company which can effectively identify prospective clients and can prepare an attractive selection of products for diverse groups of consumers will have a better ability to respond to ever-changing needs, preferences and interests in society, which ensures competitive edge. A fair treatment policy is considered by companies as a tool useful in preparing better services and products for various groups of consumers. Hence, it helps create a positive image of the company.

When asked about benefits related to the adoption of fair treatment policies at their companies, entrepreneurs indicate the following:

- Positive image and good reputation of the company.
  - Innovation and creativity in the company's operations.
  - Ensuring compliance and avoiding potential fines and sanctions.
  - Competitive edge and economic effectiveness.
  - Higher satisfaction of clients.
- 
- Ethical conduct. A fair treatment policy allows companies to openly and publicly say that they adopt such values and principles like: equal opportunities, human rights, fair trade, environment protection and local community. It is vital when taking into account that consumers expect companies not only to be consumer-friendly, but to undertake deliberate decisions and actions to ensure that social or natural environment is not adversely affected by their business. Moreover, consumers expect companies to comply with legal regulations on fair treatment and non-discrimination, both as service providers and as employers. Therefore, when provided as a public document which presents the company's attitudes, a fair treatment policy allows the consumers to verify that the company meets their expectations as a friendly, responsible and non-discriminatory business partner.

Before you read the information below, consider the following question: Your job is very demanding. You are a head of a team which is supposed to meet certain social expectations. It is a very difficult task. Would it not be easier if at the unit you head, there were clear rules and a fair treatment policy which could be referred to?

Preparing a fair treatment policy does not consume a lot of work or money. It can be a document or a collection of certain types of behaviour or responses to situations which may have a discrimination- or bias-related element. The policy should apply both to people you handle and to the personnel. Caring about human rights protection is an obligation, not just a good suggestion.

Below you will find basic guidelines necessary to build a fair treatment policy at a police unit. Sometimes they may look naive, but in fact they are very important and all too often ignored in practice. Before you read them, answer the following questions:

- Have you ever told discriminatory or other improper jokes among co-workers?
- Have you ever failed to react to discriminatory or other improper jokes told by others?
- Have you ever used words like "fag", "queer", "nigger", "kike", "whore", "bum", "druggie", "stupid doll", etc.?
- How would you react if one of your subordinates turned out to be a female police officer after sex reassignment?
- How would you react if one of your subordinates, a gay man, was harassed by his colleagues due to his sexual orientation?
- How would you feel if somebody was telling vulgar jokes about the police in your presence?
- What is your attitude towards vulgar vocabulary used by your subordinates? Do you react to it? If so, in what manner?
- Is your unit personnel well prepared to treat every person objectively and professionally, regardless of their traits (e.g. homo- and transsexual people, with non-white skin colour, different national or ethnic background)?
- Do you often organize trainings, briefings or other kind of meetings with your personnel which allow to counter stereotypes and bias, foster tolerant attitudes and behaviour, shape and nurture good manners?
- When thinking about refurbishment of your unit, have you thought about amenities for the disabled?
- What have you done for your personnel not to forget that each person has personal dignity - an alcoholic, drug addict, homeless, beggar or prostitute?
- How often do you talk to your personnel by using their names without their express consent?
- Have you ever treated personnel of the opposite sex in a worse or biased way, mainly due to their sex?
- How would you feel if for unknown or dubious reasons you would be removed from your duties?
- Have you ever smoked cigarettes at your office and at the same time have been strict about various prohibitions towards your personnel?
- How often do you talk with your personnel?
- Do you prefer objective criticism or 'sucking up' by your personnel?
- Are the requirements for financial and non-financial bonuses at your unit clear and objective?

**No matter what your answers were, read the following guidelines.**

1. Any changes must start with you. You have to command authority from your personnel. Then your actions will be imitated or understood and accepted to a greater extent. If you often care about the protection of human rights, professional ethics, tolerant attitudes and behaviour, you will soon notice that it is easier and smoother to run your unit.
2. Remember that the police officers, male and female police employees have their own rights. Duty and supervision do not mean that you can abuse your power towards your subordinates. You must respect the rights of the employees.
3. When following the policy, do not generalize. Each case is different. It is better to examine a problem before reaching final conclusions.
4. React even to petty manifestations of intolerance, discrimination and bias. As you already know, such things include a subjective treatment of another person, ridicule, harassment, telling discriminatory jokes. The entire personnel must know that any bias expressed will meet immediate response from the superiors.
5. At your everyday work, remember that people are exposed to serious stress, mental strain, burning out and therefore - routine and depersonalization. Then, a disrespectful approach to alcoholics, drug addicts, homeless people, beggars or prostitutes may become a standard. When establishing a management policy, you should take that into account and keep talking about it with your personnel so that someone's dignity is not harmed.
6. Organize trainings and workshops about combating bad stereotypes and prejudice. Several hours at such meetings will allow to save a lot of time on explaining improper behaviour to your police officers, media disputes, public criticism and even changes in the unit management personnel. Do not be afraid to invite people who suffered discrimination or bias-related behaviour. Let them tell their story.
7. At the executive briefing, make sure to discuss each, even the smallest case of violations of human rights and professional ethics. Such knowledge should come from e.g. disciplinary proceedings and results of inspections. Objectively examined cases should be always discussed with your subordinates. First, even so far unexamined, signals should be mentioned at professional meetings as well.
8. If there are any prohibitions specified for your unit, make sure that they apply to everyone equally, with no exceptions.
9. If a police officer behaves in a professional manner towards a person from a social minority, demonstrates vast knowledge or experience, thank them that they handled such an unusual and extraordinary situation. Present them as a good example for others to follow.
10. When planning a refurbishment of your unit, do not forget about the infrastructure for the disabled. One parking space, wheelchair access, lift and sanitary amenities will be surely welcome

and found useful by such people.

11. In all conversations with adults we should use polite grammatical forms. Your being boss does not make you an exception. In this way, you will avoid favouring some people and insulting others. Your subordinates will not tell you about their feelings, but they surely will have their own opinions about that.

## **Examples of a fair treatment policy at a police unit**

**Przykładów, 8 March 2013**

### **FAIR TREATMENT POLICY AT THE DISTRICT POLICE STATION IN PRZYKŁADÓW**

The District Police Station in Przykładów is a unit where the principles of equal opportunities and respect of the rights and liberties of each person is the supreme goal for the entire management and personnel.

We are committed to serve citizens and protect them against crime and other dangers. It is a mission which aims to build safety in our region together, without any prejudice.

Polite and objective treatment of every person, regardless of their skin colour, national or ethnic background, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or any other reasons is not only our legal duty but also an obligation which results from moral and ethical principles followed by our entire management and personnel.

Human dignity is for us the most important virtue and it is respected in everyone, regardless of their status in our police proceedings.

Any example of actions by the unit management and personnel which involves discrimination or any other disrespect to human rights and liberties may be described in a written complaint and filed at the reception desk or sent to: ul. Dobrej Woli 12, 02-300 Przykładów. Any wrongdoings by the personnel can be also notified to the Regional Police Representative for the Protection of Human Rights, Robert Miły, tel. 99 50 12349.

The District Police Station in Przykładów

Chief Officer Zenon Przyjazny

CHECKLIST

FOR PREPARING YOUR FAIR TREATMENT POLICY

If you say "Yes" to all the questions below, then the fair treatment policy at your unit is likely to have been prepared properly. If you say "no" to any question, you should think about not considering a given element in your policy.

No	Question	Answer
1	Does your fair treatment policy presents a clear declaration of support of key decision-makers at your unit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2	Are the goals of your fair treatment policy clearly defined in relation to the mission and values adopted by your unit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3	Do you clearly define the benefits of the fair treatment policy for your unit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4	Does your fair treatment policy cover information about the way it is disseminated and promoted (among the personnel, clients, social partners)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does your fair treatment policy define how you will monitor its implementation (stating	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes



5	who, when, how and how often)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6	Does your fair treatment policy include information on the consequences of its violation by your personnel?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## **Practice 2. A conversation with a subordinate if there is a suspicion of a discrimination-related incident**

Disciplinary procedures, complaints or prosecution - these are canon when it comes to charges towards police officers. No mature democracies have developed any procedures which aim to establish the true story about a given event if the only people involved are the intervening police officer and the person who claims to be a victim of unprofessional treatment.

Let's picture a hypothetical situation, described below, which for the purposes of this manual has been deliberately exaggerated.

It's 9 PM and a patrol of two police officers sees a person with looks characteristic for a Roma. The man comes out of the local pub and carries a small hand bag. He's tidy. He doesn't look drunk. The officers check his ID, tell him to open his bag, take off his jacket, empty his pocket. They do not find anything suspicious. There is no wanted man who looks like him. After asking why he was stopped, he hears "Those are the rules for you, gypsy" and wild laughter. What follows is an unpleasant and opinionated monologue from the officers. After they're done, the man asks for the registration numbers as he wants to file a complaint. They become nervous and tell him to go in the police car. They do it in an insistent and aggressive manner. One of them says: "We'll take you for a ride around the town, that'll teach you to keep quiet, gypsy!". The man says that he will not get in. There is a short scuffle and the man is put inside the detention section. For more than ten minutes, the officers drive around the town. During the ride, the man is being insulted with anti-Roma slurs. After a while, they ask: "Feeling better now? You'll be good now, gypsy?" The man is scared and asks to be let go. He's intimidated, he says that nothing happened and he's sorry. A moment later he's let out in another part of the town, far from where he was picked up. Two days later, the man files a complaint to the regional police station.

Both police officers present their version, in which they checked the man's ID and that was that.

Both claim that there was no frisking, no insults and no unjustified ride around the town. There were no other witnesses. CCTV is not installed at that area.

The complainant presented and maintained his own story, adding that he was targeted by the officers due to his Roma look. In response to the complaint, the control department stated that the information in the complaint was not supported by any evidence. The prosecutor's investigation was dismissed.

**Is it true that there's no case here? How many situations like that could happen with the complainant unable to prove their true story?**

There are many options of reaction. You can just examine the case and give a reply to the complainant. Due to formal reasons, there are no grounds to launch any disciplinary actions against the officers, so the case can be closed.

However, you can do something different, namely talk with the officers without bringing any charges of unjustified actions. You need to prepare to such a conversation, thoroughly examine the case files and go through the personal files of the officers, recall the assessments of both of them, their manner of behaviour on duty towards citizens and colleagues. Check if there were complaints filed against them before.

A possible script of a conversation with the subordinates.

— Sergeant Jan Kowalski and Sergeant Marek Jankowski, reporting.

— Good morning, gentlemen. Please, have a seat. I'd like to talk to you about Mr Marian Wiśniowski's complaint, who claims that when you were checking his ID, he was treated by you in an inhumane way due to his being a Roma. We both know the case, so let's not go into details. The complaint has not been confirmed so you don't have to expect any official action. As far as formalities are concerned, this case is closed. But would you like to tell me a little bit more, just casually, with no reports or tricks on my part? We've known each other for years and you know me. I'm a man of my word. We are a team and I believe it's obvious.

— Sir, you have the right to call us here in any case and at any moment. This case is closed for us. This is simple slander. We can't allow any gypsy from the street accuse us of inhumane treatment. We've told the complaints department and the prosecutor all about it so we think it's time to close this file. We're innocent and any further suspicions in this case are far from pleasant.

— First of all, it's 'Roma' not 'gypsy' and let's keep it like that. The subject of suspicions is closed for sure. The complaint has not been confirmed, however I want this conversation to teach you something. You're both experienced officers, in fact you're among my patrolmen with the longest service. I have no reservations about either of you. You work well, your performance is good. Without going back to that closed story, I want you to remember that our society is changing. Our town is a good example - the Roma and people from other social minorities choose our town to be their home. We have no problems with local minorities. I want your interventions to be as effective as they are, but remember that after some years of service, it is natural to feel burnt out. You've been in the force for 15 and 17 years, respectively. What you do hasn't changed for years. Frustration and routine can sometimes get to a man. I just want to be the first to know if you're tired. I can talk to those at the top about a trip for you to unwind. We'll think of something.

— Sir, we're fine, really. But it's true that we've been in the patrol unit for a long time, I divorced, I have debts and other problems...

— That's what I'm talking about. Our job's not easy and there are other stressful things like family

or financial issues. And you know that nowadays, people can record our conversations, phones can do a lot right now. CCTV is almost everywhere. I don't want to lose my men and have the media all over my unit because somebody here can't show some respect to another man. We're professionals here. We can't let our emotions take over. That's what we agreed to a long time ago.

— Sir, I think we're clear. If you were a bad boss, I'd keep asking what your point is. But we know what you mean. We promise that there will be no more complaints.

— Great to hear that, gentlemen. Dismissed.

— Yes, sir.

Such a conversation is always difficult as you never know if the behaviour of the officers was reprehensible or not. Formally speaking, you need to always take into account the results of investigation. Before you decide to have such a conversation with your subordinates, remember those rules:

- the conversation must be formal in nature; this should not be a casual dialogue in the hall or some other place like that;
- if the internal or prosecutor's investigation does not confirm the charges, you should be very careful about bringing up that particular case;
- choose such an example to influence the attitudes and actions of the police officers so that it reminded them of an event which was formally not confirmed;
- the conversation can be held with several officers at a time;
- for the conversation, you don't need any additional people like the HR official, psychologist, etc.;
- the conversation should be calm and without emotions;
- you do not need to keep minutes of such a conversation.

**Remember!**

**In case of slander, do not refrain from filing a crime report. You have the same rights as any other citizen. If you are not guilty, do not let your reputation be tarnished.**

### **Practice 3. Religious holidays and other traditional holidays at your unit**

In the Polish tradition and culture, it is often important to celebrate together some religious holidays or other events like 8 March - Women's Day. Our society keeps changing dynamically and therefore it may be useful to take a look at certain inherited issues and values from various perspectives.

This is not about giving up joint celebrations or giving best wishes, it's just that such situations should not become mandatory meetings.

In your personnel, there may be people of different religions or without religion at all. Remember not to segregate people by religion or create any unfair treatment situations. Bear in mind that all of this takes place in public administration buildings and often in business hours, which in itself is a violation of the law. As said before, giving out flowers on the Women's Day should not feel awkward or uncomfortable. It is possible that at your unit, not all women want to celebrate this day in such a formal fashion. Poems or quotes used in greeting cards should be chosen carefully. These are delicate issues and require reasonable approach, but above all - fair treatment regardless of religion, gender or other traits. Not everyone wants to participate in the traditional blessing of new police cars or facilities by a priest.

If you organize a farewell party for a police officer (which should take place regardless of the rank, title, etc.) who is retiring, apply the same principle to civil employees. Similar rules should be followed with awards. The Police Day and other integration events should not be mandatory and even at such events you should pay attention if anyone crosses the line of what is acceptable. There are many more examples like that.

What this example of good practice is about is that the conduct of the head of the unit should be reasonable and objective, mindful of everyone's emotions. It is worth doing an anonymous survey about the will of participation in such meetings.

#### **Practice 4. A person for contacts with local social minorities**

Like we mentioned many times, Poland is a diverse country. It would be very hard to find a medium-sized town without people from national, ethnic or religious minorities. Disabled people are everywhere. Alongside us there are people of different sexual orientation, who want to feel safe where they live. For various reasons, not all needs of social minorities are clearly articulated. As we have seen, sometimes it comes from stereotypes about the police, language barriers, fear of vendetta, etc. It is worth remembering that actions by the Parliament and government can solve many systemic issues, but individual situations and immediate assistance can be handled by the local police. When local needs are diagnosed, then at the level of your unit, in the department responsible for crime prevention, you can designate a person responsible for contacts with social minorities.

The role of such a person should be to establish permanent contacts with people from social minorities and NGOs which deal with problems of minorities, to hold meetings or debates, to listen to their needs and to provide assistance in solving problems which are in the competence of the police.

## **Practice 5 Maintaining social sensitivity among the unit's personnel**

Always on the run with our official duties, often we do not realize how great the potential of pro-social attitudes is hidden within people who work at our unit. Sometimes, only a handful of motivating or organizational measures is necessary to, on the one hand, support some place or institution, and on the other hand - work with the sensitivity of your subordinates, which, especially when it comes to police officers, tends to erode. Maybe it would be good to inspire people to some specific action.

It should be remembered that such an action should be permanent and help build the unit's tradition.

In many cities and towns, there are social welfare centres, hospices, orphanages, homeless hostels, retirement homes or old and neglected graves or graveyards. You can in a natural way, not officially enforced, appeal to internal values of the personnel, selected one such place and visit it or support it in various situations. This is not about financial donations but rather establishing relations with persons or places, which should encourage proper social reflections.

## **Practice 6. Architectural audit and trainings about disabilities**

The architectural audit means a comprehensive assessment of compliance of the structure of given facilities and its adaption to needs of disabled people. This service is for companies and institutions which care about social activities or want to target their activities to certain types of clients, regardless of their physical abilities, including the huge group of 4.5 million disabled people in Poland. During the audit, a report is prepared which describes the current situation and areas for improvement, while accessible facilities are awarded with a certificate. The more accessible facility, the better it serves its social purposes! The issue of Internet access for the disabled is, unfortunately, still not as recognized as it should be.

In response to this problem and following the Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 12 April 2012 on the National Interoperability Framework, minimum requirements for public registers and sharing information in the electronic form, as well as minimum requirements for ICT systems (Polish Journal of Laws of 2012, Item 526), public institutions are obliged to adapt their websites for the needs of disabled people. Accessibility is meant as the know-how and set of standards which describe the methods and guidelines for creating websites, in a manner which allows for convenient access to all people, including visually and hearing impaired. The Integration Foundation is the leader in adapting websites and holding availability audits for people with various kinds of disability.

The ultimate goal of trainings held by qualified and experienced coaches is to share information about disabled people, generate proper attitudes and behaviour both at work and when providing service to disabled clients. Trainings for employers who want to hire disabled people allow to present such recruitment as a benefit to the company or the institution and show certain duties which come from this fact. The trainings indicate systemic and legal solutions which allow to use, in the best possible way, state funds when creating new jobs for the disabled. They foster employees' sensitivity about disability and related issues. They motivate to overcome barriers and fear against contacts with disabled people. When hiring a disabled person, the employer gains not only a reliable person to their team, but an able employee, as well.



## **Guidelines for management**

In this manual, you received many tips regarding how to act in certain situations during contacts with various social minorities. You read about good practice which are aimed at your subordinates, but the results will make your job easier, too.

Below, you can find a few tips which, on the one hand, can prevent inhumane or humiliating treatment of other people, and on the other hand - protect you against moral, professional or criminal responsibility. Some can sound naive to you, but go ahead and read them, you can find them useful later on.

### **My story...**

My name is Arek. Up until recently, I was a staff warrant officer in a very small town. Today I'm unemployed, without any chance for a new job. With no respect in my home town. Divorced. The other night, elements of railway tracks were stolen. I was handling that case. Preliminary investigation indicated that the theft was done by Jan R., intellectually disabled. I went to conduct search at his place. I found nothing. I don't know what got into me. I took Jan R. behind the house and I beat him up so much that he confessed. The problem was, I just coerced him into doing this. The whole event was secretly recorded with a phone by his sister. I was suspended and put on trial; I tried naively to explain myself, I got sentence. I had been on the force for 9 years, so had no right for pension. My world came to an end two times. First time, when I applied for the job in the police; there were many candidates and I was this close to fail my tests. Second time, when I ruined my life in three minutes. What I miss the most is my daughter Ania, she's 6. Her mother took her to the UK. They're not planning to come back.

1. In your free time, read the *Rules of Professional Ethics of a Police Officer* once more.

It is a vital document which describes expected behaviour. Read it as often as you can.

2. When you see a police officer behave unlawfully, possibly due to bias - react immediately, stop this kind of behaviour and notify the officer's superior.

3. Violence and torture is not the way to extract explanations for a suspect.

When such practice is found out, criminal proceedings will be started and you may be expelled from the force. Recall how hard it was to get into the police. Is it easy, from a person who enforces the law, to become an inmate? With a criminal sentence, is it easy to find a new job?

4. When other police officers on duty tell vulgar, racist, anti-Semitic or other obscene jokes about social minorities, the disabled or socially excluded - don't be indifferent, react. You can surely do that in such a way that you fight this kind of behaviour without losing friends.

5. A police officer may not use vulgar words. Remove all of them from official vocabulary. The Polish language is rich in beautiful words.

6. Every man has a first and last name. It is not polite to use just the first name or nickname to people we refer to. Terms which are offensive to certain people are even worse. We described them in previous chapters.

7. Treat all people in the same manner. When on intervention, never follow any stereotypes. As you already know, they are harmful and can lead to biased behaviour.

8. If you treat another person in an improper or unprofessional way when on duty, do not get into naive explanations and untrue stories. Simple and sincere apologies can prevent a lot of unnecessary consequences.

9. If you notice in yourself a burn-out syndrome and you start to treat other people in an unpleasant, subjective way, talk with your superior or psychologist. If you find a solution, you will avoid a lot of potential trouble in your professional and private relations.

10. Never take part in pacts of silence or hiding any unlawful acts of your colleagues. If you know that any person around you exhibits sexist behaviour, is prejudiced, may commit domestic violence, abuses alcohol or commits crimes - react. Stop thinking that this makes you a "snitch". You can report a problem in an anonymous way, too. It is your duty to react.

We hope that the good practice you read about will help you maintain professionalism and personal distance to many issues. If you have any negative attitudes towards the social minorities and other groups presented in this manual, please try to change it. Professional knowledge always helps with that. Conducting your duties will be simpler and more pleasant. If this is too difficult for you, remember that it is your duty to leave your prejudice at home, while on duty you must be objective. When you took your oath, you pledged to serve equally to everyone, even at risk to your own life or health.