

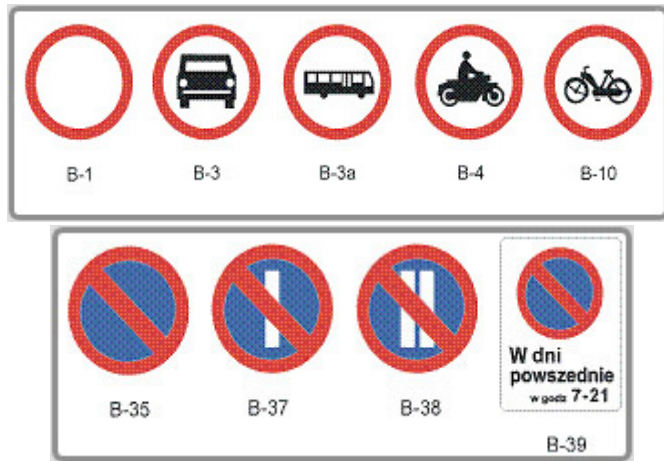
Privileges of persons with disabilities in public opinion

Poland has a three-step scale of disability. The decision is issued by the two teams that decide on disability issues, the first instance refers to a district team, for a second to provincial team that rule on disability [Dz. Ust. Dated on. 27.08.1997r. No. Pos.776 Article 123. 6; I. Kaczyńska-Wasiak, 2008].

There are people with light, moderate and severe disability. Graduated decisions on disability, resulted a differentiation of the privileges and incentives for different groups of disability (disability groups and the former group - a significant degree, group II - Moderate, III group - light) [H. Ochoczenko, 2005]. In the "Dziennik Ustaw" dated on 27 August 1997 number 123 pos. 776, Art. 4, is indicated that people with minor handicaps are people with such violation that prevents to work efficiently (as compared with other people with similar qualifications), and / or when performed social roles (eg, communication, movement) require using aid funds, technical or orthopedic items. Disability in moderate degree indicates that the efficiency of breach of such organism caused that the social roles are performed with the help of others. Ability to work is impossible or only possible to perform in the protected work place. Significant degree of disability is a violation of the efficiency of the organism in such a manner that such person is unable to work or is only capable in protected working conditions. This person may require a permanent or long-term care of other people to perform social roles and independent life (mobility, communication, self-service) [Source no.1].

Depending on the degree of disability, disabled persons have many privileges including procedural. Among other things, they have:

- Exemption from income tax
- Deduction from income tax
- Countdown on spending for Rehabilitation
- Reduced rates for calls and SMS messages used by some telephone networks in Poland
- Reduction or exemption from charges for journeys by train or bus
- Exemption from fees for subscription for television and radio
- Reduction in fees for entrance to museums [Source No.2].
- Use of the services out of sequence (the courts, offices, shops).
- Discounts on parking, a specially designated parking places
- Parking card for people with disabilities, allowing a mismatch of the following signs:



Source no.3

Parking spaces are well marked, despite that the unauthorized persons often occupy these places, thus disregarding the privileges and provisions aimed at people with disabilities and they are also ignoring the problems with their health [Source no.4]. There are incentives for the disabled people, who are advantageous also for able people, for example: work, so I would say that this is a reciprocal concession. Employers are encouraged to employ people with disabilities, and to achieve this purpose they have proposal of a salary compensation for the employment of people with disabilities. As the L. Mizera says - such a solution causes the „empowerment of people with disabilities in the system” [L. Mizera, 2006, p. 105]. Work is not only a form of labor, rehabilitation but also social inclusion [T. Żółkowska, 2004].

Objective of the research and hypotheses

The main target of this study was to determine how able people perceive and evaluate privileges and concessions are entitling people with disabilities. Therefore, I have formulated the following hypotheses.

H.1. Communication and concessions privileges for people with disabilities are perceived as inadequate by both women and men.

H.2 Basic allowances and privileges for persons with disabilities are well known to both women and men.

Method and results

In June 2009 I have made briefly surveys on a group of students (30 women and 30 men) from the pedagogical direction in University of Szczecin. Subject aroused interest among students, and questionnaires were filled with enthusiasm and provoked

many questions. Below I present in the form of tables and I discuss the answers given by students. One of the differentiating variables was gender.

Table 1. Is the number of seats designated for disabled people in buses and streetcars is:

Response category	Women	Men
Too much	0%	0%
Sufficient	27%	53%
Too little	73%	47%
There shouldn't be such places	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Own research

Women have found that the number of seats designated for the disabled people is too small (73% women), and sufficient for 27% of women, while most men (53%), unlike the women's felt that there is a sufficient number of seats while (47%) felt that there are too few.

Table 2. Do you think that discounts for traveling for people with disabilities are sufficient?

Response category	Women	Men
Yes	40%	53%
No	60%	47%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Own research

Most women (60%) considered that the proposed discounts for the disabled people are "too small", the ground of response was in a such way: *they have higher expenses than able people, their pensions are ridiculously small, should be free for all degrees of disability, are not sufficient because the biggest discount has the group called III grade of disability.* 43% of men felt that they were too small, and „sufficient” (57% men and 40% of women) told the following statements: *it should not burden the country budget, you cannot exaggerate.*

Tab.3. Do you think that the N+ card should be granted to all persons with a disability decision?

Response category	Women	Men
Yes	33%	23%
No	0%	30%
I do not know what N+ card is used for	67%	47%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Own research

Both women (67%) and men (47%) did not know what N+ card is used for, only a small group of women (33%) and men (23%) had heard of the card for free parking in the pay zone. By contrast, 30% of men indicated that the N+ card should not be given

to all, because: not everyone has problems with parking and reaching a bit further into the facility.

Table 4. Do you think that the designated envelopes (parking places) for people with disabilities are too less?

Response category	Women	Men
Definitely yes	30%	27%
Rather yes	36%	50%
Rather no	14%	0%
Definitely no	0%	0%
Difficult to say	20%	23%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Own research

Women and men acknowledged that amount of parking places is not enough “definitely yes” (30% women and 27% men) and “rather yes” (36% women and 50% of men). Women (30%) and slightly more men (23%) felt that “it is difficult to say” whether the number of parking places is sufficient or not.

Tab.5. Do you know other privileges and incentives operating in Poland, which may benefit people with disabilities?

Response category	Women	Men
Yes	20%	17%
No	80%	83%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Own research

Respondents (80% women and 83% of men) does not know privileges and concessions other than traveling, but only a small group of students (20% women and 17% men) knew such privileges as the: *passage in lines, reducing fees or school, connected with employment.*

In response to open-ended question, the assessment of people parking in places designed for the disabled people are as follows: *rudeness, lack of understanding, it is unacceptable and should be severely punished, they would have lesson if the tickets were raised and penalty points raised to 10 points, impolite behavior – these parking places is so few, that disregard and discrimination against people with disabilities, preventing the operation, show the lack of culture and education.*

Summary

Conducted studies partially confirmed the hypothesis that relief and privileges for disabled persons are sufficient. It turned out that the vast majority of surveyed women think that they are insufficient, while slightly more men believe that the right incentives and privileges (designated parking places, to seating places or discounted

traveling) are sufficient. Differences may occur due to the socially ascribed to women's greater sensitivity than men.

The hypothesis that the fundamental privileges and concessions are well known to both women and men was not confirmed. It turned out that almost everyone surveyed (80%), had no idea at the discounts and privileges available to persons with disabilities. Few surveyed people (20%) knew about other discounts and privileges than those in the survey, although they were a little or no information. This may provide the fact that students have a small degree of interest in the *plight* of the disabled people.

Interest of study respondents in the topic, and many questions after it, points on that the students are curious about a *distant problem for them*, broadening the scope of information in mutual concessions and privileges. Making frequent topics of disabilities could affect the dynamics of integration, which leads scientists to cooperate, cooperation, acceptance, respect, respect for the principles and norms of others [U. Bartnikowska, 2007].

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