

HOST SOCIETY

and integration challenges



Host society and integration challenges

Fundacja EkoRozwoju (EcoDevelopment Foundation)

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The views expressed in this brochure do not reflect the official position of UNICEF and the Municipality of Wrocław.

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Introduction

Integration with new residents, arriving mainly from Ukraine, but also from Belarus, Georgia, Russia, Brazil, India, South Korea and many other countries of the world, is a challenge that is faced on a daily basis by Wrocław schools, offices and organisations operating in a multicultural reality.

At the time of writing, **people with migration or refugee experience represent one third of the population of Wrocław***. In everyday interactions and at an accelerated pace, we often learn from our mistakes how to establish relationships with our new neighbours.

The city of meetings is not just a promotional slogan, but a real, **multicultural social space that we want to take care of**. Wrocław may become a city of escalating conflicts if we as a host society do not understand and do not respond in good time to the challenges of the integration process.

It must be remembered that in a situation of competition for limited resources and with a lack of or inadequate infrastructure (access to housing, work kindergartens and schools or health services), many conflicts can take the form of apparent intercultural conflicts.

For us at the EcoDevelopment Foundation, the integration of multicultural society is a particularly urgent challenge because of **concern for the common good** and the need to halt the escalation of the climate crisis requires bringing people together, regardless of their origin.

*Source: . *Miejska gościnność: wielki wzrost, wyzwania i szanse* [Urban hospitality: great growth, challenges and opportunities], Report of the Union of Polish Metropolises (IV 2022).

This brochure has been produced as part of the project We. You. Them. The host society and the challenges of Integration. The layout and issues contained in it reflect **the content of the workshops conducted as part of the project**. They aimed to strengthen the intercultural competencies of people working in school environments and public institutions.

The publication we are handing over to you was written, in the best of faith, from the perspective of years of studies and training, readings, experiences, views, values and the educational work of the team that created it. **The issues presented here necessarily contain numerous simplifications**. For a broader picture of the issues discussed here, we strongly encourage you to make use of the recommended literature, a list of which is provided at the end of this booklet.

We hope that the issues raised in class and the issues presented here will be a stimulus not only for your further research and personal study but also stimulate you in your work with children and young people.



Which map do you use?



Which of these contour maps of the world seems *normal*? Who on this map is in the middle and at the top? Which map is *upside down*? Who, when and why determined where the legs would be and where the head would be?

Maps, or cartographic representations, are not neutral. **They present the perspective of the cultures** within which they were created.



On the Australian map (green) it is Europe that shrinks to the antipodes. On the European map (red) the vast Pacific is becoming marginal and the Atlantic grows in importance. On the South Asian map (blue) the description of China as the Middle Kingdom makes sense.



Being in the middle and at the top of the map is a privileged and **relative position, which emphasises the relationship** with the rest of the world.

One of the most important competencies is **the ability to see that our maps are different** and that none of them can claim to be the only correct one (which, of course, does not exclude attachments to any of them).

Culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs and all other abilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Edward Tylor's classic definition of culture [after:] J. Ziolkowski, *Antropologia kulturowa i społeczna* [Cultural and social anthropology], „Przegląd Antropologiczny” [Anthropological Review], t. 52, Poznań 1988, p. 37.

Cultural patterns of ways of thinking, feeling and reactions and the values behind them can be imagined as **maps or signposts, which we are guided through** (to a greater or lesser extent) within one's own culture. This applies not only to national cultures but also to: group, environmental, organisational, regional and transnational cultures.

Culture and ethnocentrism

Culture, or framework, which defines what can be boiled down to the

3N normal
natural
necessary

Culture sets the framework for what is considered to be normal, natural and necessary (3N). These beliefs' strength depends on ethnocentrism's strength: the stronger the belief that our norms are the most important, the greater the reluctance to consider other perspectives.

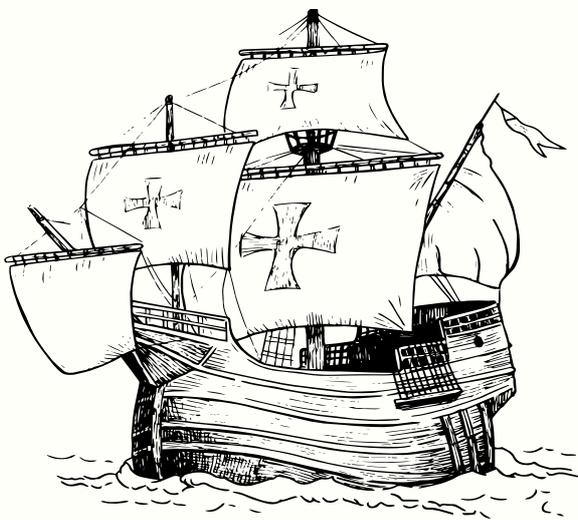


Illustration: a sailing ship from the era of the conquest of the so-called New World. European colonialism was a model example of militant ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is the belief in the special value of one's own culture, and in some cases even of its superiority over others.

- **weak**: my way of living (the way typical of my culture) is distinguished for me, but I do not consider other ways of life to be stupid / irrational / incompatible with nature, nor that my way of life should be imposed on others. My openness to other ways of life and other cultures is limited by cultural beliefs that I cannot renounce if I want to remain myself (recognition of other ways of life as long as they do not conflict with our own, a critical attitude to my way)
- **“benevolent”**: my way of life / the typical way for my culture is the best and someone who doesn't realise that is stupid (depreciation of other ways of life without universalising and violently imposing one's own perspective)
- **militant**: my way of life is the best, everyone should live this way, and it must be forced on others (depreciation of other ways of life and universalisation and imposition of one's own)

Source: D. Barnat, *Problems of multiculturalism and the politics of recognition* [in:] *Studies on Multiculturalism* [Problemy wielokulturowości i polityki uznania [w:] *Studia nad wielokulturowością*], ed. D. Pietrzyk-Reeves, M. Kułakowska, Krakow 2010.

The opposite of ethnocentrism is extreme cultural relativism (no cultural pattern is distinguished, and all norms are equally valid and cannot be judged). In the process of integrating a multicultural society, the ability to relativise one's perspective (i.e. to see and take into account other perspectives) does not, however, imply extreme relativism. A “weak” ethnocentrism creates space for fruitful cultural contacts without giving up the nurturing of one's values.

Dimensions of culture

Cultural differences are sometimes visible at first glance: it is the way people greet each other, the elements of their dress or even culinary customs, i.e. the variety of dishes, but also the range of what is edible and inedible. Some of the differences, in turn, **reveal themselves in attitudes or behaviours** that are less frequently associated with cultural origins, and we are even inclined to recognise them as individual differences.

At the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, Dutch sociologist **Geert Hofstede** began researching surveys of attitudes and values in a group of IBM employees from 70 countries around the world. These were later used to develop **dimensions of culture**, i.e. the characteristics or aspects of culture that allow it to be studied and compared with others.

The four basic dimensions (to which two more were added in later years) have become one of the most popular models of thinking about intercultural differences. And although due to the dynamics of cultural change research would require regular replication, the aspects distinguished by Hofstede are still a useful, **albeit imperfect tool for looking at cultural differences**.

Each of the dimensions highlighted is a **spectrum or scale** stretching between the extreme poles, which are not used to assess 'progress' or 'backwardness', but to note the difference in our cultural maps of values, norms and attitudes.

See:
<https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/>



POWER DISTANCE

Democracy or authoritarianism?
Hierarchy or relationships based on equality?
Parents as bosses or friends of the child?



INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM

Everyone playing for themselves
or all for the common good?
More important relationships or tasks?



FEMININITY-MASCULINITY

Rigid or fluid gender roles?
Rivalry or cooperation? Do men
rule and women take care of the family?



UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Other means: interesting or dangerous?
Procedures or improvisation?



LONG-TERM ORIENTATION

The here and now or future generations?
Pragmatism or fundamentalism?



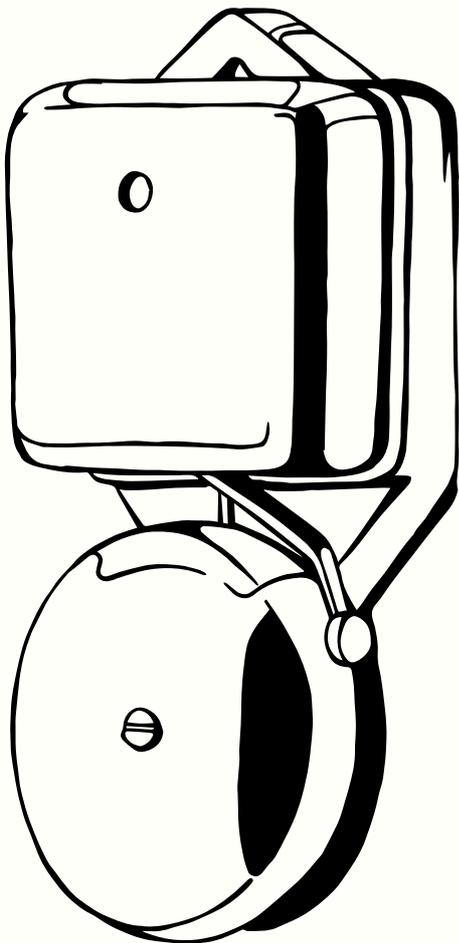
INDULGENCE - RESTRAINT

Is smiling normal or arouses suspicion?
Social norms regarding sexuality:
more or less restrictive?

Beware of

ecological fallacy

individualistic fallacy



Meeting a person from a “different map” who, from our perspective, behaves 'abnormally' or strangely, we may ask ourselves whether we are not dealing with a cultural difference. In doing so, we must be careful **not to draw far-reaching conclusions from this reflection**. In other words: the cultural difference does not become a stereotype.

When the conclusions drawn from research or observation of a group of people (community, nation, etc.) are simultaneously applied to all who are part of this group, we commit the so-called **ecological fallacy**. The observation that Japanese culture is high on the masculinity scale in Hofstede's model, does not follow that every Japanese man and woman we meet prefer a rigid gender role division.

The opposite of the ecological fallacy is the **individualistic fallacy**. We meet it when conclusions about the behaviour and attitudes of individual units of study are applied to the entire communities from which these individuals come. If even in contact with a resident or Brazilian resident, we notice that the person in question does not smile at all and avoids our gaze, this tells us nothing about Brazilian culture as a whole.

Different people behave differently in different situations. It is worth remembering this truism when thinking about cultural differences. Knowing about them can be helpful when trying to understand someone's behaviour, but the scope of application of this knowledge is quite limited.

Acculturation strategies

Is it worthwhile (should one) to include elements of another culture? Is it (should one) maintain one's own cultural identity? Is it worth (should one) participating in the host / foreign culture? **Acculturation strategies** can be derived from the answers to the above questions.

Acculturation is a term used in the social and management sciences to describe phenomena occurring at the cultural interface between people (individuals and groups). Both the host society and the new inhabitants may pursue different acculturation strategies.

Host society

- **exclusion:** our culture, customs, and norms are the most important, your culture has no place here
- **separation:** our culture, customs, and norms are most important, your place is in the “ghetto”
- **assimilation:** our culture, customs, and norms are the most important, accept them and adapt or leave
- **extreme multiculturalism*:** all cultures, norms, customs and values are equally important
- **multicultural integration:** not all norms are acceptable to us, but some can coexist with ours, or we can integrate them into our culture

New residents

- **assimilation:** I want to adapt as much as possible to the host society and culture, I abandon my language, customs and values
- **separation:** I lock myself within my culture of origin, where I cultivate my language and my customs, maintaining relations only with my group, limiting contacts with the host society to the necessary minimum
- **marginalisation:** I cut myself off from both my culture and the host culture (the reasons for such a decision may vary, but this is the most dangerous option for new residents, due to several negative psychological phenomena resulting from social alienation)
- **multicultural integration:** I want to maintain my customs and use my language, but at the same time integrate into the host culture

John Berry's theoretical model, source: P. Boski, *Kulturowe ramy zachowań społecznych* [Cultural framework of Social Behaviour], Warsaw 2020.

*Berry's list of acculturation strategies does not include the following category of extreme multiculturalism (i.e. extreme cultural relativism). There is no country in which such a variant would be implemented. In multicultural societies, there are, however, cases in which it comes to the fore (e.g. the legalisation of ritual slaughter in response to allegations of discrimination against religious communities) of discrimination against religious communities).

Why integration?

The preferences of individuals in terms of strategies of acculturation are limited by practices and policies for dealing with ethnic minorities and people with migration experience, as well as **national and international regulations laws**, including the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Human and Civil Rights.

Human history is replete with examples of extreme forms of elimination of otherness. The most shocking implementation of such a strategy is, of course, ethnic cleansing: The Holocaust, the genocides in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia or the contemporary issue of the Rohingyas in Burma. We are also well aware of examples and consequences of a segregationist approach (e.g: apartheid in South Africa).

Today, the real dispute over acculturation strategies is **between an approach closer to assimilation or an integration model** based on multiculturalism.

The notion of assimilation carries with it some disturbing phenomena and is burdened by a gloomy history (vide: the assimilation policy of the People's Republic of Poland towards Roma communities and its consequences). Elements of the assimilationist ideology are still implemented in some countries today, for example, the model of a secular public school in France (where there is a ban on manifesting religious and ethnic affiliation). This approach very often arouses strong social resistance, the consequence of which may in the long term become some form of exclusion of those who, for various reasons, do not wish to “conform” to the conditions laid down by the dominant group.

Integration as a model that is based on a **balance between diversity and social cohesion**, provides room for negotiation and for seeking solutions most acceptable to both parties to the process. Working on social inclusion does not guarantee that conflicts will be avoided, but it does help in their prevention and de-escalation.



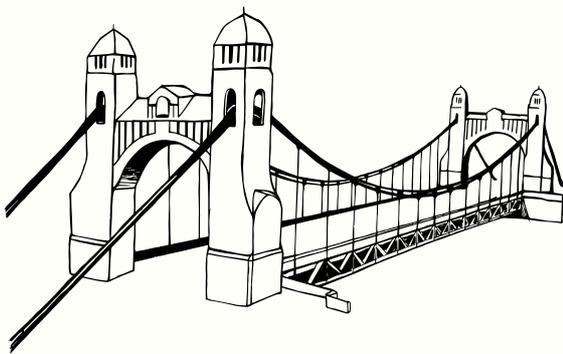
In this context, where does Poland stand as a host country and host society? Official documents, which comprise the Polish migration policy, indicate that the integration model is the preferred acculturation strategy.

Integration is a complex and dynamic two-way process, the success of which requires commitment on the part of both foreigners and the host society. For this reason, it is very important to work out solutions and integration solutions in the course of broad consultations, taking into account the role not only of government administration but also of local government and civil society.

Source: *Polityka migracyjna Polski – kierunki działań 2021-2022* [Migration policy of Poland - directions for action 2021-2022], Draft Resolution of the Council of Ministers (ID179).

What makes integration easier/harder?

Let them integrate – such a statement suggests that the responsibility for integration lies solely on one side of the process. Nothing could be further from the truth. Integration is a bridge that to function, needs both sides: the willingness and openness of both the new residents and the host society. The real dynamics of this process are more adequately captured by the statement: **let us integrate**.



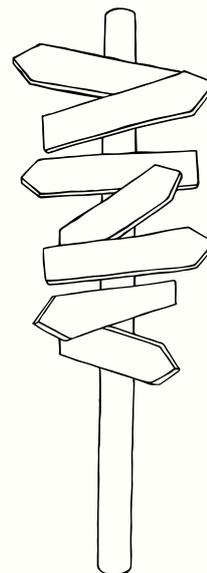
Integration is a **long-term process**. It is influenced by many different factors that help or hinder our integration. Both sides of this process will be favoured by: cultural proximity and visible similarities, openness to new experiences (as a cultural dimension and a personal characteristic), positive experiences of multiculturalism, positively verified strands of shared history, common interests and jointly performed tasks.

Relations between the host society and the new inhabitants will also be influenced by **the current economic situation**. The greater the level of social inequality, the more difficult the economic situation, with limited and increasingly shrinking resources (housing, jobs, access to schools etc.), the more often rivalries or conflicts dressed up as “culture wars” thrive. An additional difficulty for the host society may be further hampered by **phenomena associated with the feeling of being helped for a long time** (stress, exhaustion, frustration, anger, burnout, etc.).

New residents in the integration process are generally in a more difficult position than the host society (due to the asymmetry between the dominant group and the minority groups). A separate challenge may also be the **size of the group of new residents** (in the case of large groups, basic social needs associated with group membership can be met without seeking contact with the majority group).

It is worth remembering that in the case of refugees and refugee women, a particularly difficult factor can be **impaired psychological well-being**, loss of psychosocial support and the very fact of coming here not of their own free will, which is particularly the case for children, for whom the decision to leave is made by parents or legal guardians.

As a host society, as well as new residents, we, directly and indirectly, influence these factors, over the varying timeframe and to varying degrees. The direct influence certainly concerns our **stereotypes and prejudices** and **the expectations** associated with them.



Social identity

We have different identities and different identities are also sometimes (correctly or incorrectly) attributed to us. **Stereotypes are associated with identities.**

Individual (personal) identity concerns what is most characteristic of us as individuals, and what makes us different from other people. It is related to the SELF - OTHER divide.

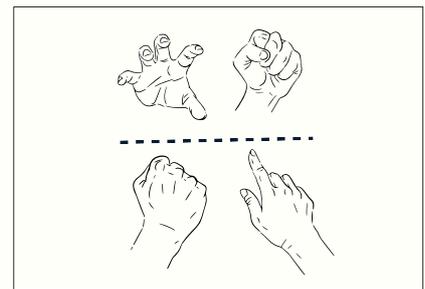
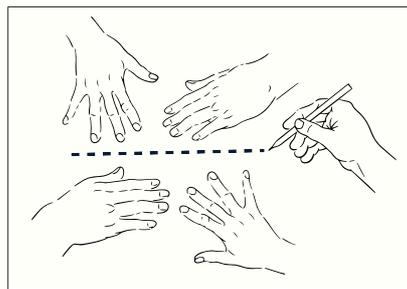
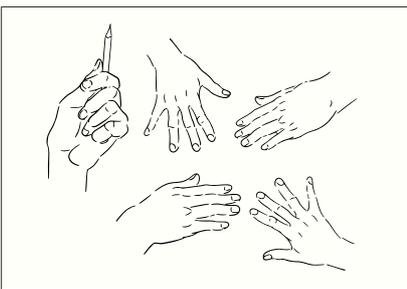
Social (group) identity is the part of the “I” based on belonging to a certain group social group or aspiring to belong to it. It is related to the WE - THEY divide. This identity is also situationally variable.

Intergroup rivalry is not even necessary for stereotyping or discrimination - the perceived belonging to separate groups is enough to trigger favouritism of one's group. Rivalry exacerbates this process.

The affiliation or attribution of individuals to a group can vary in nature

- **may result from birth** (species, gender, 'race', class*, nation, sexual orientation, religion/non-religion, age, etc.)
- **be derived from choice** (social role, occupation, religion/non-religion, etc.) limited by factors arising from birth
- **derived from stigma or oppression** (disability, obesity, mental disorders, illness, poverty, etc.)
- **be based on perceived similarities** (talents, likes, personality traits, etc.)

***Social class or economic status are sometimes secondarily recognised as identity.** However, they are derived from a social system in which some are 'above' and can more easily satisfy basic needs, while others find it difficult or even satisfaction of their needs, while others find it difficult or even impossible.



If people who do not know each other beforehand are arbitrarily assigned to two groups defined according to any criterion (e.g. lovers of tomato soup and lovers of cucumber soup), this division in itself gives rise to a clear preference for “their own” (members of “my” group), which is accompanied by stereotyping and a tendency to discriminate against “outsiders” (members of the opposite group, not mine). This is what **the minimal group paradigm** consists of, which can also appear when members of both groups do not like either soup.

See: D. Doliński, *Tożsamość społeczna jako generator stereotypowych sądów o innych* [w:] *Stereotypy i uprzedzenia. Uwarunkowania psychologiczne i kulturowe* [Social identity as a generator of stereotypical judgements about others [in:] Stereotypes and prejudices. Psychological and cultural conditions], ed. M. Kofta, A. J. Jasinska-Kania, Warsaw 2001.

Evaluation traps

Factors that influence perceptions and evaluation of other people and groups

- **frame:** the cultural framework of meanings, significances, norms, attitudes, values, etc.
- **self:** temperament, personality, emotions, internalised values (in line with the cultural frame cultural framework or not), social identity, membership of different groups, needs and interests, etc.
- **backpack:** the baggage of my experiences, habits, routines, competencies, etc.
- **glasses:** the categories through which I look, cognitive patterns and distortions, including also stereotypes and prejudices

Note that the factors listed are not static and condition each other.

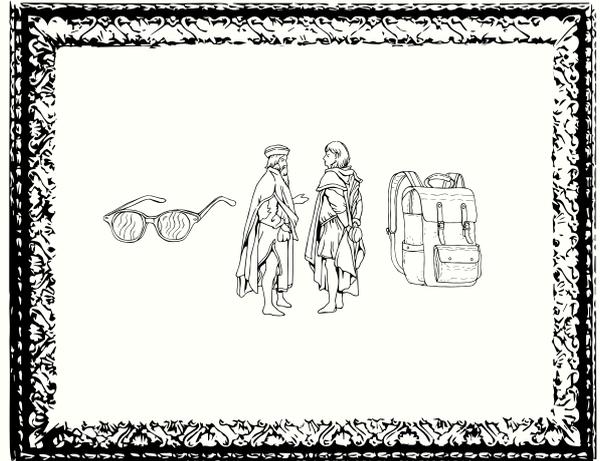


Illustration: the frame in which we fit (the self), together with the baggage of our experiences (backpack) and categories of perception (glasses)

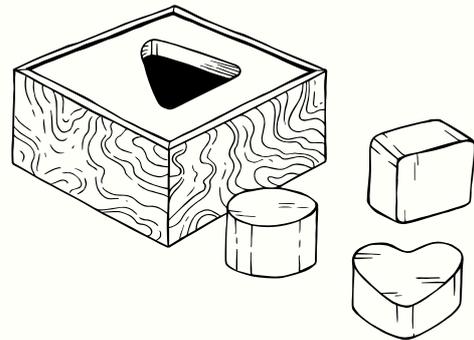
Cognitive fallacies and distortions

- **the fundamental attribution error** (correspondence bias) – the tendency to explain someone's behaviour by internal factors while underestimating the role of situational factors that have influenced these behaviours
- **ecological fallacy and individualistic fallacy** (see p. 6)
- **contrast effect** – evaluating a given situation or person in the context of events that occurred before or during the evaluation (e.g. a given behaviour will be assessed much better if it is judged after several have been judged as very bad)
- **halo effect** – the tendency to automatically attribute negative or positive personality traits based on first impression (e.g. people who are considered attractive are more likely to be judged as morally good) or the transfer of evaluations from one trait to another
- **primacy effect** – overestimation and better remembering of the first information appearing on a given topic; this effect explains why we sometimes make up our minds quickly about a new person and interpret their subsequent behaviour according to our first impressions
- **freshness effect** – overestimation of the last information we have received
- **emotions and mood** – in a good mood we are more likely to perceive and recall more positive qualities - in a bad mood more negative qualities

Evaluation traps cont'd

Cognitive fallacies and distortions

- **emotional attitudes** towards the people being evaluated and social groups - when we have a positive attitude towards someone we perceive more positive qualities in them and vice versa: when we have a negative attitude we perceive more negative traits; this effect can also be expressed by the opposition between curiosity and fear of what is new, different etc.
- **context** - the situation (what events precede the evaluation of an object) or person evaluator (whether a norm has been updated, e.g. participation in anti-discrimination activities may update a norm regarding equal treatment)
- **projection** – excessive sensitivity to seeing in other people's behaviour the characteristics that we do not accept in ourselves; this leads to an inadequate interpretation of these behaviours and makes it difficult to perceive e.g. the real motives of the person being evaluated
- **conformism** – change of attitude, evaluation or behaviour under group pressure, often implicit; may be related to fear of exclusion, the need for acceptance, the desire to be right, or the existence of sanctions (positive or negative) sanctions for compliance or non-compliance with group norms
- **omission bias** – the tendency to judge harmful actions as worse and more immoral than equally harmful inaction
- **confirmation bias** – seeking out or interpreting information that confirms our previous views and beliefs



- **heuristics** – simplified methods heuristics - simplified methods of inference (“shortcuts”), which, among other things help to make everyday decisions, but can lead to cognitive errors and false judgements. These include: **availability heuristics**, i.e. attributing the attribution of greater probability to events which are easier to recall and which are more emotionally charged (e.g. the belief that there is a high risk of airline crashes), **representativeness heuristics**, i.e. evaluation of the basis of partial similarity to a typical case (attributing to nationalities characteristics that are transferable to all representatives), and **anchoring heuristics**, that is, relying on some information (anchoring) and then modifying it (adapting to it) for evaluation (e.g. information about the privileges of others can influence our self-esteem)

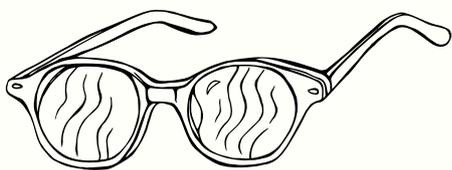
See:

- T. Tyszka, *Psychologiczne pułapki oceniania i podejmowania decyzji* [Psychological pitfalls of judging and decision-making], Gdańsk 1999.
- B. Wojciszke, *Psychologia społeczna* [Social psychology], Warszawa 2016.
- B. Wojciszke, *Człowiek wśród ludzi. Zarys psychologii społecznej* [Man among people. An outline of psychology Social psychology], Warszawa 2004.
- D. Kahnemann, *Pułapki myślenia. O myśleniu szybkim i wolnym*, Poznań 2012. | D. Kahneman, [Thinking traps. About fast and slow thinking], New York 2011.

Stereotypes

There are two complementary approaches to stereotypes. The first, in the field of psychology, assumes that humans, in the course of their life, acquire, or produce, a certain set of beliefs about certain social groups. These beliefs can influence behaviour towards representatives of these groups. Here we are dealing with **an individual stereotype**.

The second approach, more characteristic of sociology or anthropology (but not unfamiliar to social psychology), focuses on patterns prevalent in a given community pattern - shared knowledge - in the definition of the very clearly emphasising the importance of social sharing of the stereotype. What we are dealing with here is **a cultural stereotype**.



A **stereotype** can be defined as an oversimplified and generalised cognitive schema representing a group or type of objects (human and non-human) distinguished due to a certain characteristic, as well as a picture of reality functioning in social consciousness.

The mechanism of stereotyping may be related to other phenomena that accompany the activation of “pigeonholes” in the mind. The most important of these are:

HOMOGENEITY EFFECT

In a stereotype, we do not perceive the diversity of the stereotyped group. We see it as uniform and homogeneous. We are not able to notice that many of the representatives of the stereotyped group may be closer to us than to people from our group.

LABELLING

We will label a person's behaviour differently depending on whether they are one of us (from our group, which we value and like) or belongs to a stereotyped group. Who is intelligent and who is smug? These labels can appear, even if there is no significant difference in the behaviour in question, apart from the person's belonging to our or an “alien” group.

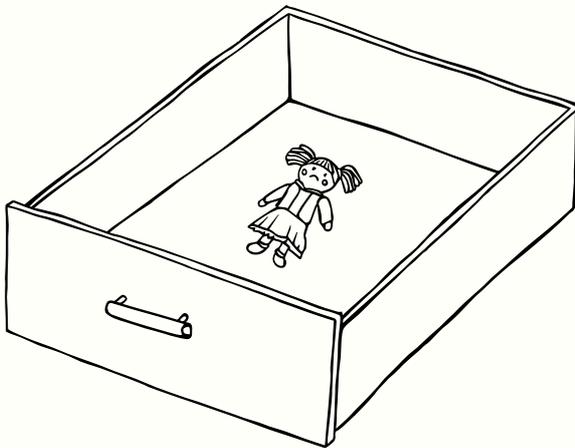
ATTRIBUTION ASYMMETRY

In the stereotype mode, we can justify biased behaviour. If WE do something well, it's because we are. If THEY do something well, they probably have a vested interest. If WE have done something wrong, there must have been good reasons or circumstances justifying it. If THEY do something wrong, it is because they are.



Stereotype, prejudice and discrimination

Prejudice is a negative (less often positive) attitude towards members of some group held because they are members of that group (prejudice and stereotype are distinguished by their emotional component. However, this distinction is analytical, as stereotypes and prejudices most often occur together).



Discrimination is hostile or unfair behaviour towards people or persons belonging to a stereotyped group (based on mere belonging and not individual characteristics of the person in question).

In the case of discrimination, the characteristic or characteristics (actual or perceived, fictitious or real) which are the basis for unequal treatment are **not justified on the merits in a given context, and the unequal treatment itself results from a prejudice** against the category to which the person / group in question is assigned or the existence of a persistent social structure of inequality in which the unequally treated person/group is in a dominated or marginalised position.

Because of the last distinction, we speak of a discriminatory situation or a discriminatory structure.

A discriminatory situation is a single or repeated act of discrimination in which a person experiencing discrimination and a person or institution that is (consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally) the perpetrator(s) of the discrimination.

A discriminatory structure is a relatively permanent arrangement in social space in which individuals/groups belonging to or assigned to a particular category experience disadvantages due to regular practices, established patterns of behaviour or failure to address inequalities.

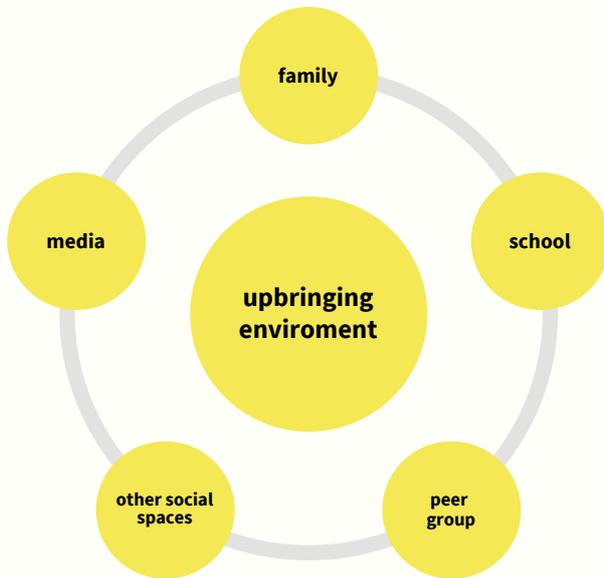
Three levels of discrimination

- overt dislike or hostility
- assumption of superiority of some people over others
- disregard for the existence of a group of people different from the dominant group

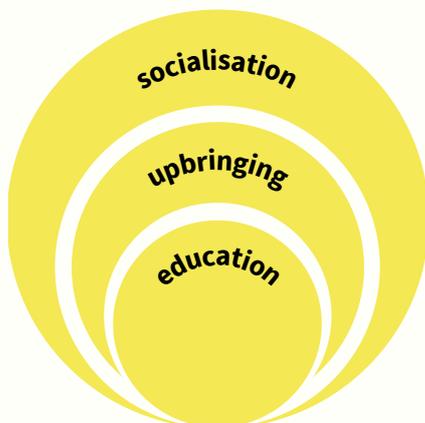
See:

- K. Bojarska, *Psychologiczne i społeczne uwarunkowania stereotypów, uprzedzeń i dyskryminacji* [w:] *Przeciwdziałanie dyskryminacji. Pakiet edukacyjny* [Psychological and social determinants stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination [in:] Counteracting Discrimination. Educational package], Warsaw 2005.
- *Dyskryminacja w szkole – obecność nieusprawiedliwiona. O budowaniu edukacji antydyskryminacyjnej w systemie edukacji formalnej w Polsce* [Discrimination at school - unjustified presence. On building anti-discrimination education in the formal education system in Poland, ed. Formal education in Poland], ed. by K. Gawlicz, P. Rudnicki and M. Starnawski, Warsaw 2015.

Sources of stereotypes



We can talk about stereotypes in terms of their **content** and their more **formal characteristics**. We acquire the content of stereotypes in the course of education, upbringing and socialisation. This process takes place in the educational environment, which consists of the family, school, peer group, media and other social spaces.



Graphic source: lecture by Marcin Starnawski entitled *Upředzenia, dyskryminacja, edukacja antydyskryminacyjna* [Prejudice, discrimination, anti-discrimination education], delivered at the Muslim Cultural and Educational Centre in Wrocław, 17.11.2017; compiled from: M. Karkowska, *Socjologia wychowania. Wybrane elementy*, [Sociology of upbringing. Selected elements], Lodz 2011.

Some factors influencing the emergence of stereotypes (including their strength and frequency)

- **social identity** (see page 10)
- **authoritarianism** – the belief of the need to subordinate to authority, justification of aggression (if sanctioned by authority), conventionality (high acceptance of restrictive social norms and rules)
- **social dominance orientation** – the belief that social relations should be hierarchical rather than equalitarian
- **essentialism** – the idea that there is an essence of the group and that all individuals in the group possess it, and that the group is natural (like species in the biological sciences)
- **entitativity (reification of groups)** – the belief that groups exist and function as real entities, just like their constituent individuals (who are similar to one another by belonging to a group)
- **need for cognitive closure** – the need to have a clear, true vision of the world, low tolerance or aversion towards uncertainty and ambiguity
- **favouritism of one's group** - reinforced by unfavourable stereotypes of foreign groups (if they are worse, we are better)

Sources of stereotypes cont'd

Threats influencing the emergence of stereotypes (including their strength and frequency)

Intergroup threats

- **realistic** – concerns the interests and condition and well-being of the own group, especially concerning limited resources
- **symbolic** – stemming from a sense of conflicting values and cultural norms; the belief that strangers threaten our group identity
- **intergroup anxiety** – feeling awkwardness and embarrassment in the presence of members of foreign groups, resulting from uncertainty about behaviour; it is also the fear of aggression from strangers
- **stereotype threat** – fear of being the object of stereotypical beliefs arising from social expectations built on stereotypical beliefs, behaviour in line with the stereotype (self-fulfilling prophecy).

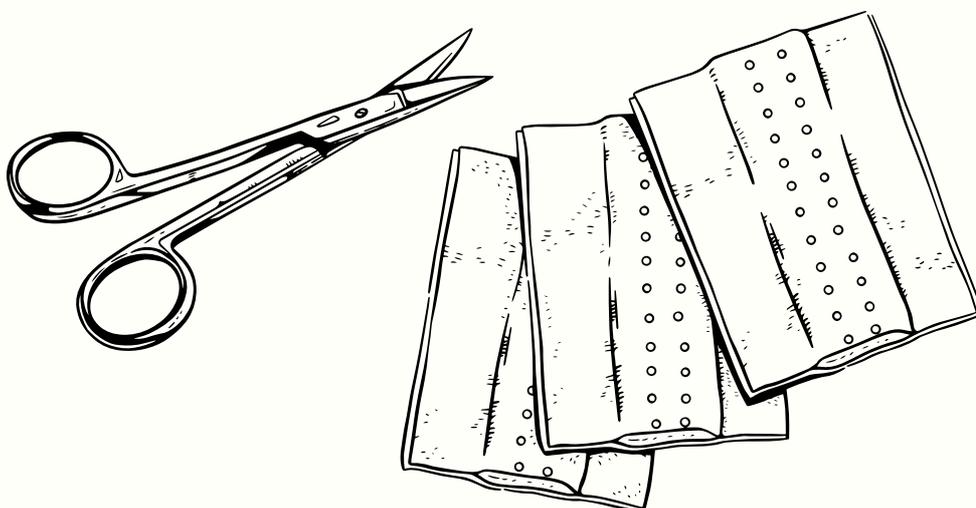
Threats to the self

concern emotional experiences related to the “I” as a whole person

- **threats to the worthiness of the “self”** – fear of being inferior
- **threat of mortality** - fear of death: identification with one's group as something greater than the self can reduce
- **threats of agency** - loss of control: this can be linked to membership of a stigmatised group, a low social status or the experience of personal failures.

See:

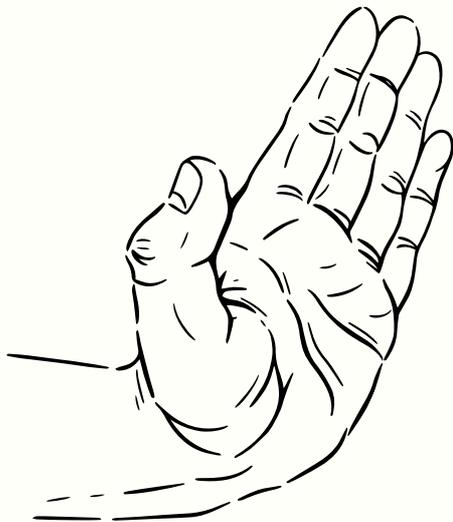
- T. Besta, N. Kosakowska-Berezecka, *Między grupami* [Between groups], Sopot 2017.
- M. Kofta, M. Bilewicz (eds), *Wobec obcych* [In the face of strangers], Warsaw 2011.



Functions and consequences of stereotypes

Some functions of stereotypes

- **organising information about the world** and simplifying explanation of the world
- **saving cognitive resources**
- **building a common social understanding of reality**
- **building a positive image of oneself**, by emphasising the superiority of one's group
- **regulation of behaviour** (through awareness of social expectations)
- **construction, justification, stabilising social hierarchies** (including domination of some groups over others)
- **creating social divisions** for gaining, maintaining and consolidating power (“divide and rule” principle)
- **justifying discrimination**



Some consequences of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination

How do stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination affect the person being stereotyped?

- **(minority) stress** – additional stress to which people from minority (or majority but powerless or stigmatised) groups are exposed
- **reduced self-esteem**
- **depression, anxiety, shame, aggression**
- **feelings of powerlessness, helplessness, lack of control**
- **decreased motivation**
- **reduced effectiveness of the performed tasks**
- **negative beliefs about the world**
- **being stuck in a role and unable to develop**



Methods for reducing stereotypes

We all have stereotypes. They are one of the tools that our brain uses to help us cope in a world of complex and complicated phenomena. In some situations, **the ability to automatically trigger generalisations serves our survival.** When in a dark alley we are followed by a figure with an object in his hand, the stereotype tells us to run. Perhaps this may be a person who is lost and needs our help, but the risk of it being otherwise prompted us to listen to the stereotypical cue.

Unfortunately, stereotypes are not only triggered in situations of immediate danger. **The mental clichés also work when we have a lot of time** and can afford to analyse the situation. If an institution that is looking for a preschool teacher gets an application for a job from a man and only based on his gender decides to reject it, it is blatant discrimination. There is nothing to prevent an interview for a person qualified for the job.

Stereotypes exist in every social group (although they are stereotypically attributed to less educated people). **Awareness of one's stereotypes** and their accompanying mechanisms is important to avoid automatically succumbing to them. This vigilance can be trained through anti-discrimination training.

Stereotypes cannot be completely removed from the software of our minds. They also tend to be quite resistant to change. However, there are various methods of reducing them.

Some methods of reducing stereotypes

- **adopting the perspective of the other** (decentration, empathy) – actively considering another's point of view and the situation the person is in. Adopting the perspective of a person from a stereotyped group allows the subsequent perception of that group as one which has similar characteristics to one's group
- **pointing out the diversity of the group of “strangers”** - emphasising that “they” within their group are different, just as “we” are different within “our” group
- **pointing out intergroup similarities** - noting that we often have more in common with members of a “foreign” group than “our” group (e.g. I may be closer to someone of a different nationality than to someone of my nationality because of common interests, work, etc.)
- **intergroup contact and exposure effect** (contact with difference) - personal contact with members of the stereotyped group; Conditions: equal status of participants (no domination), convergent goals, cooperation, and support of the law (in the case of discriminated groups)
- **creating a common team** (i.e. overarching, inclusive categories) – indicating that WE and THEY belong to a common, overarching category (people, sentient beings, etc.), we are similar, we share certain important goals and values, etc.
- **modelling** – a basic mechanism of learning: how we behave and what we say influences other people's thoughts, attitudes and behaviour of other people

Hate speech

When stereotypes and prejudices are used to express overt dislike or hostility, we are dealing with hate speech.

Hate speech is speech that is advocating, promoting or inciting (in any form), slander or hatred of a person or group of persons, as well as any harassing, insulting, negative stereotyping, stigmatising or threatening concerning such a person or group of persons and justifying all previous types of statements, based on “race”, colour, origin, nation or ethnicity, age, language, religion or belief, disability, gender identity, sex, gender, socio-cultural background, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics or status

Source: Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, definition modified and updated in 2015 by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which is a monitoring body of the Council of Europe.

A form of hate speech according to the ECRI* are also:

- statements having the character of public denying, trivialising, praising or justifying crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes that have been established by courts, and glorifying persons convicted of the commission of such crimes
- statements that reflect or promote the unwarranted assumption that the speaker is in some way superior to the person or group to whom he or she directs statements

*Cited [after:] P. Knut (ed.), *Metodyka pracy adwokata i radcy prawnego w sprawach o przestępstwa z nienawiści* [Methodology for advocates and legal advisers in hate crime cases], Warszawa 2020.

Counteracting hate speech should serve to protect individuals and groups of individuals, not this or that ideology, religion or view.

Hate speech will not be a criticism of religious doctrine or ideology, or even (!) an insult to religious feelings - it will be an insult to religious beliefs. It will be an insult to believers or an incitement to hatred against them. The fact that a statement expressing someone's views (within the framework of freedom of speech) is controversial or shocking, does not automatically mean that it meets the criteria for hate speech.



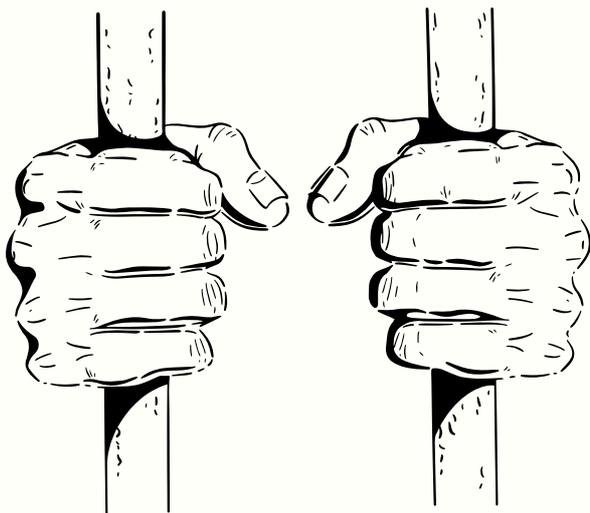
Hate crime

Hate speech in Poland is punishable when we are dealing with a so-called hate crime (or in other words: a crime motivated by prejudice). This is regulated by the provisions of the Criminal Code concerning:

- insult or threat (Articles 119 and 257 CC)
- incitement to hatred (Art. 256 CC)

In the quoted provisions of the Penal Code violence, unlawful threat, insult, violation of bodily integrity or incitement to hate becomes a hate crime, if it concerns identities such as: **“race”, nationality, ethnicity, religion or irreligiousness**. In the case of the use of violence or unlawful threat, the following are also protected: political affiliation (art. 119 CC).

Such offences are prosecuted in Poland “ex officio” (from public prosecution).



Article 119 CC: **Whoever uses violence or an unlawful threat** against a group of persons or a person because of his/her national, ethnic, racial, political, confessional or because of their irreligiousness, shall be subject to the penalty of 3 months to 5 years of imprisonment.



Article 257 CC: **Whoever publicly insults a group of the population or an individual** because of their national, ethnic, racial, religious or because of his/her irreligiousness or for such reasons violates the physical integrity of another person, is punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to 3 years



Article 256 CC:

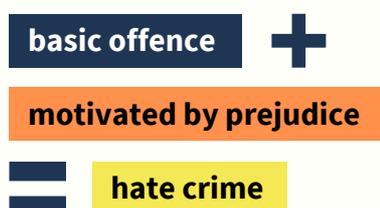
§ 1. **Whoever publicly propagates a fascist or other totalitarian systems of the state** or incites hatred based on differences national, ethnic, racial, religious or because of irreligiousness shall be subject to a fine, the penalty of restriction of freedom or deprivation of up to 2 years of imprisonment.

§ 2. **The same punishment shall be imposed on anyone who, for the above disseminates, produces, perpetuates or imports acquires, stores, possesses, presents transports or transmits a print, recording or other objects** containing the content specified in § 1 or carries fascist, communist or other totalitarian systems. (lost, in so far as including the words or which bears fascist, communist or other totalitarian symbolism).

§ 3. The perpetrator of the offence shall not commit an offence of the offence specified in § 2, if he/she has committed the act in the course of an activity artistic, educational, collecting or scientific activity.

Hate crime cont'd

The basic offence is any act prohibited in criminal law (misdemeanour as well as a felony), including: praise of crime and incitement to it, murder, rape, threat of deprivation of life, beating, hitting, spitting, blackmail, robbery, theft, destruction of property.



A hate crime involves individuals or groups (and their property) who are singled out because of characteristics known as discriminatory characteristics, which include 'race', ethnicity, nationality, religion or irreligion (in many countries it is also gender and sexual identity, disability, age etc).

For a person to be considered a victim of such an offence, he or she does not have to possess such characteristics or identity: it is sufficient that a person is identified by mistake (he or she has attributed a characteristic or identity that he or she does not possess) or by association (he is insulted not for the characteristics he possesses but for actual or implied associations with persons who possess them).

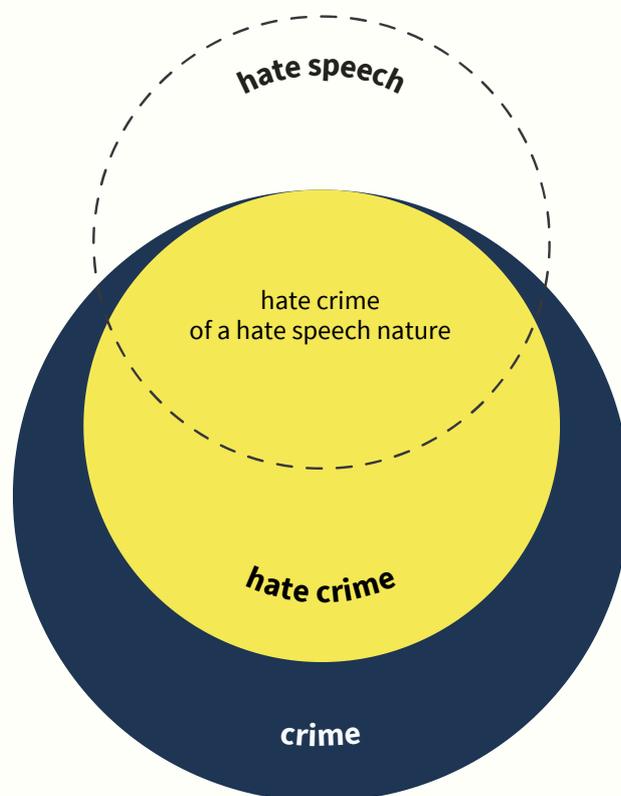
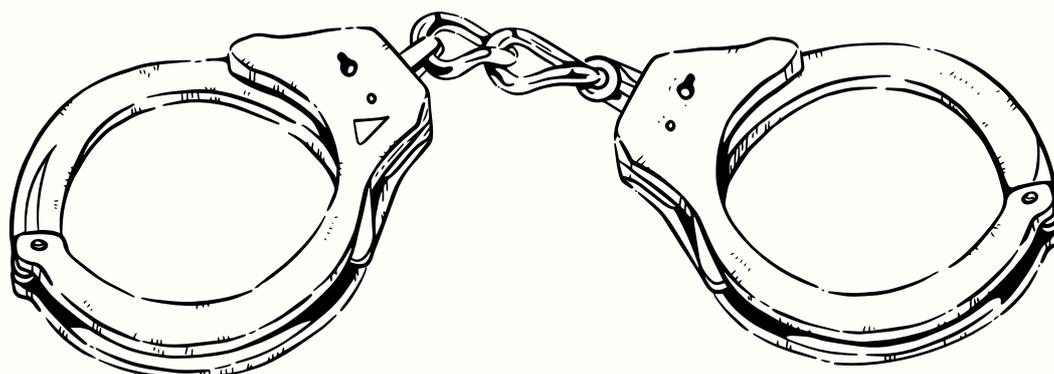


Illustration: illustrative and simplified model indicating the scopes of hate speech and hate crime to crimes as such.

Not every act of hate speech (as defined by the Council of Europe) will be prosecuted under Polish law (due to the limited list of protected characteristics). Not every hate crime is hate speech, because this category also includes other types of crimes: from blackmail to destruction of property to genocide (Article 118 CC).

See: P. Knut (ed.), *Metodyka pracy adwokata i radcy prawnego w sprawach o przestępstwa z nienawiści* [Methodology of the work of advocates and legal advisers], Warszawa 2020.



Dehumanisation

The best people are capable of the greatest cruelty to people who have been dehumanised. This is how dehumanisation works. Dehumanisation occurs both when **we deny human characteristics** (treating people as machines or inanimate beings), and also when **we treat them like animals**, especially those who in a given culture have an inferior status.

People who are subjected to a process of dehumanisation are said to lack the capacity to experience higher feelings, mental states or other competencies considered human.

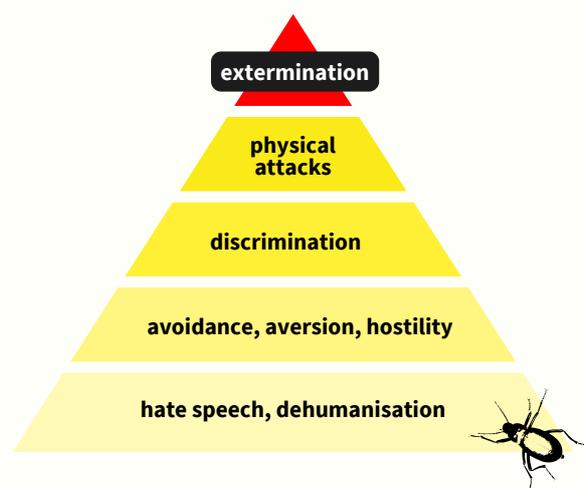
Dehumanisation makes it possible to maintain and justify the domination of some groups over others: groups of higher status over groups of lower status (poor members of an alien group are more often dehumanised than wealthy people).

Dehumanisation can also serve to shift responsibility from in-group members if they have committed violence against members of the “foreign” group or members of the 'foreign' group have been subjected to oppression. Guilt will not be so incriminating if harm has been done to creatures that cannot quite be considered human.

In 1954, the American social psychologist Gordon Allport, reflecting on how the Holocaust occurred in a society at the heart of Europe, described a multi-stage social process that prepared the ground for the subsequent extermination. **A pyramid of hatred that he drew out begins with stereotypes, hate speech and dehumanisation expressed in language.**

This process passes through increasing resentment towards the stigmatised group and contributes to individual (and later institutional) acts of discrimination as well as physical attacks and institutional violence. It culminates in genocide.

The transitions between successive stages are often difficult to grasp. **Each successive level of this process is reinforced by a growing sense of threat from the “other”**, facilitated by the worsening economic situation and social inequalities. When violence enters the scene, part of society becomes actively involved in the “final solution” to protect their loved ones and the group with which they feel a strong bond. This describes not only the history of the Holocaust but also all historical and current cases of crimes of genocide.



Not every story that begins with dehumanisation must end in genocide. Herein lies the opportunity for every society to turn back from this path in time.

Recommended literature (PL)

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- J. M. Brzeziński (red.), *Obcy i swoi. Psychologiczna natura stosunków międzyludzkich*, Poznań 2017.
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As the **Fundacja EkoRozwoju** (EcoDevelopment Foundation), we are convinced that the concern for our fragile and limited earth resources and the need to meet the greatest challenge in the history of civilisation – the climate crisis – requires people from different fields of social activity.

One tool in achieving our mission is **cross-cutting education**, bringing together the disparate disciplines of knowledge, from education, from nature and environmental education to global and citizenship education and anti-discrimination and intercultural education. These areas are linked by the desire to involve citizens and residents in caring for the common good and the urgent need for peaceful intergroup cooperation.



The activities we run (including training courses and anti-discrimination workshops) are available at: www.fer.org.pl



Passage of Dialogue is an urban space for meetings and social activities in the heart of Wrocław, at Swidnicka 19, run by the **Wrocław Social Development Centre**.

Every month, the citizens and residents of Wrocław can enjoy a wide range of cultural and educational events at the Passage of Dialogue. In addition, the Passage is also an information point and a venue for events for people new to Wrocław.



The current programme of events and detailed information: przejsciedialogu.wcrs.wroclaw.pl



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