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Abstract of the dissertation

"Education of visually impaired people in the information society".

Education of visually impaired people is currently seen as an opportunity to ensure the harmonious development of this social group, and at the same time an increasingly important instrument for the prevention of difficult social problems, in particular digital exclusion. For further application of associated opportunities and reduction of risks, the law should alter. To take advantage of the opportunities associated with it and reduce the risks, the law should change.

In recent years, a comprehensive regulation of the accessibility of education for visually impaired people has been advocated in Poland by both public bodies and non-governmental organizations, as well as the legal doctrine. The growing dangers associated with the phenomenon of social exclusion of visually impaired people have been recognized. The importance and timeliness of the problem of e-inclusion analyzed in the work is confirmed by Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies and its transposition by the Act of April 4, 2019 on digital accessibility of websites and mobile applications of public entities.

Amendments to the educational law aimed at improving the quality of inclusive education, understood as quality education for all learners, as well as the new legal regulation of higher education, have introduced changes in the education system for people with disabilities that required a comprehensive, in-depth analysis.

For this purpose, the adopted regulation of education for people with disabilities was reviewed first. Detailed research hypotheses were verified in subsequent chapters of the work.

The first chapter characterizes the concepts of "disabled person" and "person with disabilities" adopted in Polish law against the background of international solutions, as well as the concepts of "blind and visually impaired person" and "person with visual dysfunction". In connection with the replacement in legislation - influenced by theoretical findings - of the term "disabled persons" with the term "persons with disabilities", the possibility of replacing the term "blind and visually impaired persons" with the term "person with visual dysfunction" is considered.

The second chapter contains an analysis of the development of the information society made on the basis of legal acts, official documents and statistical materials. The evolution of the meaning of the term information society is shown. The EU and national legal regulation of information society development was characterized. It was pointed out that numerous elements of it are important for supporting the functioning of visually impaired people

The third chapter focuses on the phenomenon of digital exclusion of visually impaired people as a new form of social inequality. Various aspects of digital exclusion and related terminological problems are presented. The analysis of existing and proposed legal regulations of accessibility of public services was performed. The hypothesis indicating that the access to electronic public services is important for the fulfillment of the educational needs of visually impaired people was positively verified.

The fourth chapter characterizes the education system for people with disabilities in Poland, including the blind and visually impaired. A statistical analysis was carried out, as well as an analysis of employment opportunities for these people. It was demonstrated that guaranteeing equal opportunities for citizens in access to education requires taking into account the category of visually impaired people both in general legislation and in specific regulations concerning this group.

The fifth chapter analyzes the use of information technology in the education of visually impaired people. The achievements of scientific disciplines other than law were taken into consideration due to the interdisciplinary nature of the studied problem. In addition to the dogmatic-legal method, it was also necessary to use empirical research. Opinions of visually impaired people on the use of information technology in education and the possibility of employment in flexible forms of work were collected through surveys. This allowed for a more complete recognition of the functioning of the education system in the information society and the conclusion that ensuring full access of visually impaired people to education and employment requires increasing digital competence.

In the analysis of legislation closely related to the accessibility of education for visually impaired people, the main focus was on educational law and the legal regulation of digital accessibility. In order to present a wider picture, solutions arising from regulations on ensuring accessibility for people with special needs and the availability of both goods and services were also investigated. This made it possible to show comprehensive solutions for ensuring the accessibility of public services.

The dissertation ends with a summary and conclusions, which result from theoretical findings, studies of legal regulation and also empirical research. Comments are formulated on the law in force, concerning increasing its adequacy to the new needs and opportunities for the education of visually impaired people associated with the development of the information society. An analysis of laws on accessibility in the broadest sense and their application indicates the need for inventories and audits culminating in a report with recommendations for schools, including universities. The audit's scope should include not only verification of the implementation of statutory obligations, but above all obtaining information on the effectiveness of measures taken and solutions applied, which would avoid situations where costly measures are taken which, over time, turn out to be unnecessary and not useful for people with special needs. Minimum mandatory areas related to accessibility, such as architectural improvements, adaptation of websites and mobile applications, information and communication issues, and accessibility of public spaces should be included in the study. Consultation with visually impaired people is advisable at the planning and implementation stage.

The final section of the paper also presents *de lege ferenda* proposals for, among other things, eliminating the shortcomings of the conceptual grid.