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Social and Spatial Determinants of the Integration of Blind, Visually Impaired and Sighted People on the Example of the Sailing Cruise of the “See the Sea” Foundation

The subject of the analysis is the cooperation between blind and sighted people during a seagoing integration cruise. Integration is understood here as the result of joint sailing activities of people with different visual perception who participated in the cruise on the ship *Zawisza Czarny*. In the text, I put forward the thesis that integration is the result of the readiness of able-bodied and disabled people to create a “common world”. Therefore, I conducted qualitative research to verify this thesis. The aim of the research was to identify the factors and principles that favour the social integration of sighted, visually impaired and blind people during a ship cruise. I used primary data from in-depth interviews and secondary data from documentation to analyse social and spatial factors that determine the integration of able-bodied and disabled people during a sea voyage as part of the *See the Sea* project. In the theoretical dimension, the text is based on the assumptions of the integrative model of disability, an important component of which is the concept of the social integration of able-bodied and disabled people.

Keywords: visual impairment, integration of blind and sighted people, seagoing cruise

Introduction

In the natural aspect, the human environment is co-created by the biological and physical properties of the surroundings and the organism within them (Searle 2010; Pietrowiak 2019: 329). Space, which is the basic dimension of everyday life, is one of the fundamental properties of the natural human environment. A sighted person perceives the spatial dimension of life primarily visually (Friedman 2012).

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It results from the biological conditions of the human body and the importance of the sense of sight for the development of the individual, the group, and the man as a species. On the other hand, it is the effect of the socially developed order of perception, which determines the hierarchy of the senses and the rules for their use (Pietrowiak 2019: 205). The way a person perceives the environment is also an element of socialisation and is the basis of a specific *sensorium*, i.e., an embodied model of sensuality (Classen 1990: 722) or “a common, more or less shared pattern of perceiving the world” (Herzfeld 2004: 336). Therefore, the sense of sight has a privileged position in the perception of the environment and its components by modern man, especially a representative of Western culture (Howes 2003; Howes, Classen 2014; Porkertova 2022: 581). The thinking and concept of space and spatiality of a representative of Western civilization are therefore grounded in visual culture (Maseide, Grotland 2015: 594–595).

In the case of visually impaired people, space is not grounded in a visual sense, so they need to “domesticate” an abstract physical space. In the process of “domesticating” physical space, a visually impaired person uses body work and bodily practices as well as supporting devices (Maseide, Grotland 2015: 595). Therefore, in perceptual work (Friedman 2012) aimed at learning about space, bodily possibilities, senses, skills and abilities must be actively used, also taking into account externalised but dispersed cognition (Maseide, Grotland 2015: 595).

Due to visual impairment and limitations related to it, a visually impaired or blind person needs the social environment (Krause 2004: 43) in which the same rights are respected for everyone and appropriate conditions for development are created based on the joint use of social capital and mutual support networks. However, this requires the readiness of all subjects of such a living environment, able-bodied and disabled people alike, to integrate and create a “common world” (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996; Ostrowska 2015a: 83).

In the text, integration (van de Ven et al. 2005) is understood as the result of joint sailing activities of people with different visual perception who participated in the cruise on the *Zawisza Czarny*. The factors that determine integration understood in this way are as follows:

- a) implementation of sailing tasks as part of a mixed watch on the three-masted *Zawisza Czarny* vessel;
- b) cooperative division of tasks within the watch and between watches;
- c) participation in watchkeeping tasks understood as a component of the sum of work necessary to be performed on a sailing vessel during the voyage;
- d) vigilance of cruise participants and mutual consideration of each other's presence and needs during the cruise and port visits.

The subject of the analysis is the integration of blind, visually impaired and sighted people in the conditions of a seagoing cruise, which took place in 2022

as part of the *See the Sea* project. The aim of the paper is to present the social and spatial determinants of the integration of the participants of a seagoing cruise, people with different visual perception.

The presentation of integration factors serves to answer the question: what is the basis for the integration of people with diverse visual perception who make up the crew of the ship? In the theoretical context, I refer to the social model of disability, an important component of which is the concept of social integration of able-bodied and disabled people (Albrecht 1976; Barnes, Mercer 2006, 2008; Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996; Ostrowska 1994, 2009, 2015a; Reindal 2009; Pietrowiak 2019; Whitburn, Michalko 2019).

The concept and models of disability

Disability is associated with difficulty in functioning at the level of the body, in the personal or social sphere – in one or more domains of life (Leonardi et al. 2006: 1220). Difficulties in functioning due to disability force confrontation with everyday life problems and barriers. The basis of the disability experience may be as follows:

- a) impairments in the biomedical sense, which result in the dysfunction of some parts of the body (e.g., visual impairment);
- b) activity limitations that may hinder performing a given activity (e.g., mobility);
- c) participation restrictions in one or more domains of life, which may result in, for example, being excluded from the use of transportation (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996: 9; Ostrowska 2009: 147; *World Disability Report* 2011: 5; Ostrowska 2015a; Pietrowiak 2019: 326–327).

Disability, as a social phenomenon, is analysed from two different perspectives, which are represented by two models of disability (Albrecht 1976).

The individual model assumes that the problems of people with disabilities are the result of damage or functional limitation of the body (Ostrowska 1996: 9). From this point of view, an individual should undertake actions optimising functioning in society and activities in various spheres of life in accordance with the applicable patterns and social norms. A disabled individual is therefore supposed to adapt to society (Scott 1969; Ostrowska 2009: 148; Goodley 2011: 7–8). Disabled people are treated as a separate social group whose members can meet their needs only within this group. For this reason, the individual model is a separation model, because it assumes that a separate social group of disabled people is a reference system for itself (Ostrowska 2015a: 82).

In the social model, the cause of disability is considered to be an unjust social organisation, emphasising the oppressive and relative nature of normality

(Reindal 2009: 157). From this point of view, it is important to sensitise able-bodied people to the problems of people with disabilities and to transform the awareness of both groups (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996: 7; Michalko 2002: 52; Barnes, Mercer 2006: 38; Gaćiarz 2014: 27; Gaćiarz 2015) in the direction of seeking opportunities for their mutual social integration.

The broadly understood concept of integration includes, e.g., the normative, the economic, and the social sphere. Social integration is understood as respecting the same rights for everyone and creating identical conditions for development. In small groups and local communities, it involves equal participation and joint use of social capital. Thus, social integration is based on living with other people and among other people (Ostrowska 2015a: 83).

Defining disability from the social perspective allows to focus on integration activities and social activation of people with disabilities (Niedbalski et al. 2017: 7). The social model is therefore an integrative model, because it promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities in the social systems through adaptation of the socio-material environment such that will allow them to function on an equal footing with other people. In this case, “healthy and fit” people are the reference group for people with disabilities (Ostrowska 1994).

Despite the different starting assumptions of the individual (separation) or social (integration) model of disability, the goal of both models is to improve the everyday life of people with disabilities (with the help of individual rehabilitation or social reforms) (Olivier 1996: 38; Pietrowiak 2019: 325). The models are not mutually exclusive. They are rather complementary theoretical and research perspectives, thanks to which various aspects of the concept of disability can be analysed (Reindal 2009: 156; Pietrowiak 2019: 328).

Due to the differences in the initial assumptions, both models define the ways of social integration of people with disabilities differently. In the individual model, the participation of people with disabilities in small groups or local communities is based on the development of individual capacity for integration. In the integration model, the social and material environment is adapted to the needs of people with disabilities (Ostrowska 2009: 150). A major obstacle in the implementation of the assumptions of the social model may be the awareness barriers (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996: 7) both of people with disabilities and those with whom these people meet in everyday life. In this context, the readiness of able-bodied people to function “in a common world” with people with disabilities is crucial (Ostrowska 2009: 150). At the same time, the creation of a “common world” by able-bodied and disabled people is a long-term process which requires the social education of both sides of social integration and mutual arrangements to the extent and within the limits integration solutions can serve able-bodied and disabled people (Ostrowska 2015a: 87; Ostrowska 2015b: 233).

Social perception of a disabled person

Representatives of various systems and institutions use different definitions and classifications of disability (e.g., in medicine, law, education). The concepts of disability and disabled person are therefore not unambiguous. What does the term disabled person mean? (Ostrowska 2015a: 59–60). On the one hand, the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Rada Ministrów [Council of Ministers] 2012), which Poland ratified in 2012, meant that people with disabilities have equal access to institutions, social activities and roles, just as doable-bodied people (Cotter 2007: 51). In the field of social policy, interpretation of the concept of disability in terms of normalisation is replaced by an interpretation in terms of diversity (Niedbalski et al. 2017: 7). On the other hand, data from panel studies on the perception of people with disabilities indicate that participants of these studies perceive people with disabilities according to four criteria:

- a) enumerating various causes, diagnoses and dysfunctions that result in disability (e.g., the blind);
- b) indication of functional limitations (blind people);
- c) based on legal qualification (persons who have a certificate of disability);
- d) from a visual point of view (e.g., persons with visible bodily damage).

Generally, however, the group of people with disabilities is perceived by the respondents of these studies primarily according to medical criteria through the prism of a defect, disease or damage. In public perception, a disabled person is typically a person in a wheelchair. A disabled person, who is socially integrated, is a person with relatively milder forms of limitations in functioning, and this image of a disabled person dominates the term “disability” (Ostrowska 2015a: 61–63).

The ambiguity of the concept of disability and the diverse perception of a disabled person, e.g. due to various physical and social limitations of disabled people, make disability appear as a relative concept. Therefore, fitness and disability can be considered as two poles of a continuum on which both able-bodied and disabled people can be situated. In practice, placing someone on such a continuum depends on a set of various factors: medical, socio-cultural, political and economic (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996: 8). Referring to the assumed context regarding the concept of fitness and disability, I will present:

- a) dimensions and conditions of integration between able-bodied and disabled people on the example of a cruise on the *Zawisza Czarny* as part of the *See the Sea* project;
- b) aspects of the readiness of people with diverse visual perception to implement the postulate of creating a “common world” during a seagoing voyage.

Methodological assumptions and description of the research sample

From 2006 to 2016, seagoing cruises with the participation of people with different visual perception (blind, visually impaired and sighted) were held as part of the *See the Sea* project. They were initiated by Roman Roczeń (a blind person who was a participant of standard cruises), Captain Janusz Zbierajewski (the first to decide to conduct a cruise with half the crew with visual impairment) and Robert Krzemiński (then a member of the management board of one of the corporations, a crew member of the first cruise in 2006 and later in the years 2007–2022 – the main organiser) responsible for the logistics of the cruise. Since 2016, a seagoing cruise has been organised by the Tomek Opoka *See the Sea* Foundation (Roman 2016).

The analysis of integration between blind, visually impaired and sighted people during a cruise is a result of my research conducted from November 2022 to January 2023. The participants of the cruise on the *Zawisza Czarna* of the two dates were invited to the study:

- a) first cruise: 27 August to 03 September 2022;
- b) second cruise: 03 – 10 September 2022.

On the first date, 35 crew members participated in the cruise.

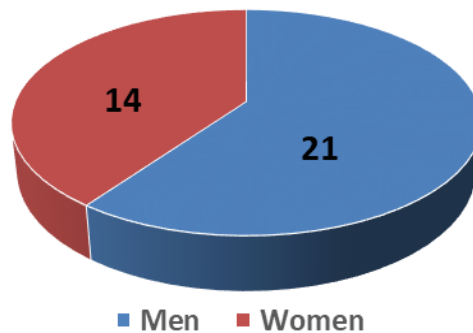


Figure 1. Division of the participants of the first cruise by gender

Source: author's resources based on own research.

On the second date, 32 crew members participated in the cruise.

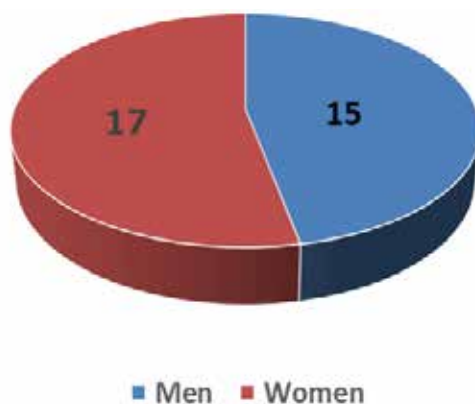


Figure 2. Division of the participants of the second cruise by gender

Source: author's resources based on own research.

The participation of a given person in the cruise in 2022 was the criterion for selecting subjects for the research sample. 12 people (5 F and 7 M), who participated in the cruise on the first date (27.08–03.09.2022) and 11 people (7 F and 4 M) who took part in the cruise on the second date (3.09–10.09.2022) accepted the invitation to be interviewed as part of the study; two people [1 F, 1 M] participated in both editions of the cruise.

Table 1. Characteristics of the respondents of qualitative interviews (IDI)

Respondent's number	Sex	Age	Education	Place of residence	Vision condition
1.	f	22	Secondary	Godzięka, Gniewkowo	Sighted person
2.	m	25	Secondary	Konradów	Blind person
3.	m	28	Higher	Cracow	Blind person
4.	f	28	Secondary (technical)	Warsaw	Blind person
5.	f	31	Secondary	Hamburg	Sighted person
6.	m	31	Higher	Cracow	Blind person
7.	f	36	Higher	Warsaw	Sighted person
8.	m	36	Vocational college	Gdynia	Severely visually impaired person
9.	f	37	Higher	Toruń	Sighted person

10.	f	38	Higher	Nysa	Sighted person
11.	f	40	Higher	Sosnowiec	Visually impaired person
12.	m	40	Secondary (general)	Gdynia	Visually impaired person
13.	f	42	Higher	Gdynia	Monocular person
14.	m	44	Higher	Grodzisk Mazowiecki	Sighted person
15.	m	46	Higher	Siemianowice Śląskie	Sighted person
16.	f	46	Higher	Gdańsk	Sighted person
17.	m	47	Secondary	Wilczyce	Sighted person
18.	f	47	Vocational college	Piekary Śląskie	Blind person
19.	m	47	Higher	Suwałki	Sighted person
20.	f	51	Vocational education	Drwęck	Monocular person
21.	m	54	Secondary (technical)	Pabianice	Sighted person
22.	m	64	Higher	Warsaw	Sighted person
23.	f	67	Incomplete higher (vocational college)	Warsaw	Blind person

Source: author's resources based on own research.

The work organisation of the *See the Sea* Foundation is oriented towards the implementation of the subjective and causative concept of social activities. In accordance with this concept, I assume that individuals are creative beings. The readiness to create a “common world” of able-bodied and disabled people (Ostrowska, Sikorska 1996; Ostrowska 2015a) may therefore inspire them to design and experiment with different variants of solutions that may foster integration (Lofland et al. 2006: 166). I assumed that conversations with the participants of a seagoing cruise would help me to identify the social and spatial factors of integration in the individual and collective dimension. Therefore, I asked the organisers of the cruise for help in reaching the participants and obtaining their consent to participate in the qualitative study. After obtaining the consent, I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews by telephone (Miller, Glassner 2004: 125–139; Lofland et al. 2006: 148–158). The conversations with the cruise participants provided the original empirical data on the participation in the voyage and the social world created under these circumstances (Holstein, Gubrium 2004: 140). The primary data was supplemented with the data available

on the website of the *See the Sea* Foundation and the visual data, i.e., photographs provided by the cruise organiser.

23 people (12 women and 11 men) participated in the interviews, including 12 sighted people, 3 visually impaired people, 2 monocular people, and 6 blind people.

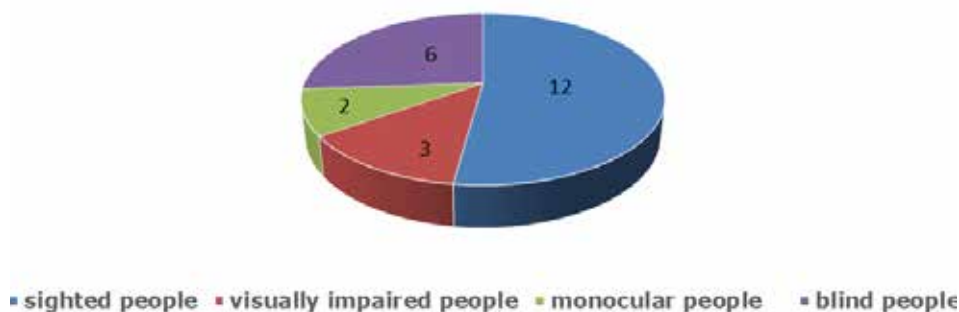


Figure 3. Division of the respondents participating in the cruise based on the degree of visual impairment

Source: author's resources based on own research.

The respondents included cruise participants (21 people) and permanent crew members (2 people). This allowed me to compare different perspectives of the participation in the cruise. The telephone calls lasted from 20 to 60 minutes.

The agenda of the interviews covered the following topics:

- a) motives and preparation for participation in the cruise;
- b) spatial determinants of integration (properties of ship architecture, weather conditions);
- c) course and organisation of work during watchkeeping tasks from the perspective of visually impaired and sighted people;
- d) course and organisation of the stays in port (e.g., the way of sightseeing);
- e) self-assessment of participation in the cruise.

The research problem was the search for an answer to the question: what social and spatial factors determine the process of integration of people with diverse visual perception during a seagoing cruise? The aim of the research was to identify the factors and principles that favour the social integration of sighted, visually impaired and blind people during a cruise. Empirical data from the interviews were analysed using the focused coding procedure (Lofland et al. 2006: 200–209), for which MS Office tools were used. In the analysis of the content of the interviews, the fragments that characterised and explained the concept of integration were marked and coded (van de Ven 2005: 316). The codes corresponding to the elements of the concept of integration were the basis for the analysis of the factors determining integration of

the crew on the *Zawisza Czarny*. The photographs were also taken into account in the focused coding procedure. They are a means of recording and presenting information, and therefore they were treated as a code sheet (Emmison 2004: 251).

Social determinants of integration of the crew members with differentiated visual perception

Aspects of interpersonal integration: planned and natural integration

The *See the Sea* Foundation organises seagoing cruises for people with diverse visual perception. In this way, the Foundation wants to integrate able-bodied and blind people as well as the surroundings of people with visual impairments (Powersport.pl [n.d.]).



Photo 1. Synthesis of the assumptions and effects of the *See the Sea* project

Source: private collection of the Captain A.B. Emche of the *Zawisza Czarny*.

In 2022, the integration cruises were held in two stages: 27.08–03.09 and 03.09–10.09. From the formal point of view, the process of integrating the participants of the seagoing cruise began with the creation of the list of people qualified for the voyage. From that moment, the participants could communicate in matters related to the preparation and participation in the cruise.

People were arranging who was travelling with whom (...). There was an option that if accommodation or transport from the train station was needed, we agreed to help so that no one would be left alone (Iwona, a sighted person). ... We all had telephone contact, we exchanged telephone numbers. The person called, we went out and took this person to the ship (Marcin, a sighted person).

The planned organisational activities (e.g., embarking) intertwined with the activities that the cruise participants had to undertake *ad hoc* in order to meet their basic existential needs (e.g., overnight stay before departure from the port, because the cruise participants arrived at the port of departure from different places in Poland and abroad) or due to unexpected events (e.g., out of order toilets on a ship).

During the first cruise (27.08–03.09.2022), several people reached Gdynia the day before departure. For this reason, they could earlier join the loading of provisions onto the ship. ... *We arrived a day earlier and (...) we slept on 'Zawisza' (...). First, we helped with boarding, because some water and juices were still unpacked (...), we helped unpack them (Karolina, a blind person).* Participation in the loading of provisions helped the participants of the cruise, who had arrived early, to begin integrating with each other and with the members of the permanent ship crew.

During the second edition (03.09–10.09.2022), the cruise was delayed by one day. For this reason, it was necessary to make things work until the ship departure and meet the basic needs: *We sailed a day later (on Sunday). (...) It turned out that some people came from far away and needed something to eat. Going out (...) was the first contact with the blind people. Everything had to be said (...). I felt needed. There were more blind people than sighted people. This event integrated us (Iwona, a sighted person).*

The delay of the ship's departure triggered spontaneous behaviours that allowed us to get to know each other. ... *We went for a walk and everything went off without a hitch. The walk made it easier to get to know each other. First, within a narrower group: 2–3 people (Agnieszka, a one-eyed person).*

In the phase of preparation for embarkation, subjective integration occurred in small social systems, and was a derivative of the integration assumed by the cruise organisers.

The process of integrating the cruise participants was shaped, on the one hand, by the organisational activities planned by the Foundation (social integration assumed by organisers), and on the other, by natural circumstances that inspired the cruise participants to build social relations (natural integration).

The toilets didn't work, so there was a problem, but the organisers arranged the toilets for us (...) a bit further. (...) It was natural that if someone said – I'm going to the toilet, who goes with me? – a number of people replied (...), and then we needed a sighted person to lead the group. While waiting for the ship to sail, it was also possible to integrate on land as part of the previously created watch. *The watch officer said that since we were not sailing we were going for a beer. The people immediately started to organise themselves: who is going with whom, who is leading whom so that it would be safe* (Iwona, a sighted person).

The participants of the cruise were divided into watches according to the principle: half of the blind or visually impaired and half of the able-bodied so that they could jointly perform seafaring tasks (Powersport.pl [n.d.]). The division of the participants based on differentiated visual perception implies the communication principle of adequate description of the static and dynamic properties of the environment in which sighted, visually impaired and blind people live together. The clock code is helpful in this context. Sighted people use it to help visually impaired people reach a specific point on the ship or to find out where utility items are located. Thanks to this, when blind people receive information from sighted people, e.g. *that the entrance to the toilets is at the exit of the forecandle at ten to one...* (Jacek, a sighted person), or *... when you are at the table, at 12.00 you have butter, at 01.00 you have bread, at 04.00 you have sausage* (Aleksandra, a sighted person). In this way, they can get from point A to point B or perform activities more efficiently.

In the relationship between the watch officer and a crew member, the officer must adequately convey instructions to the blind: *... The instructions must be such that the blind person gets clear information (...) where to go and what to do* (Andrzej, a sighted person). Sighted people had to take into account the requirements of the situation and correct their habits during communication with blind people. *... As a rule, at the beginning you feel embarrassed, you need to help the blind, but not to do for the blind, you don't know what to do* (Dariusz, a visually impaired person). *... Explaining the concept: pull – loosen, is a bit abstract for them [visually impaired people]. (...) It was instinctive to help, to do it, but we had to withdraw from it quickly in order to give them [people with visual impairments] a chance* (Iwona, a sighted person). As for communication, it is helpful to recognise mutual expectations. Therefore, one of the sighted people encouraged the visually impaired to inform them if they made a communication error: *... Tell me when I make a mistake, because I need to learn how to help you* (Jacek, a sighted person).

The conditions of a cruise allow participants with visual impairments to come into contact with the open sea and sailing. However, the organisers of the cruise offer an active form of contact with sailing, which requires the participants' full

involvement in on-board tasks, because ... *the point is for people to get acquainted with life on the ship* (Henryka, a blind person). Therefore, participation in a cruise is a full-fledged sailing. ... *I wasn't convinced that I would actually be a full-fledged sailor there. I found out about it already on the ship and during the cruise...* (Radosław, a blind person). ... *At first, it seemed that the crew would appear and someone would do everything for us. It turned out that everyone had to carry out their responsibilities...* (Paweł, a sighted person).

The crew's duties also include steering the ship. This is the task that most impresses those who have not experienced it.

It goes like this. There is a vertical steering wheel and you have to turn it. We have voice messages for the blind (...), what is the course, what is the degree of deviation and you have to direct the wheel (Henryka, a blind person). *The position of the rudder and compass is indicated by the so-called chatterbox, an electronic device that reads the position of the rudder and the compass and gives this information to the helmsman's ear, and the blind helmsman steers the ship, which is 46 metres long and has a crew of 40, and we are all in his or her hands* (Andrzej, a sighted person).

Task integration of crew members during the cruise

The purpose of the cruise was to integrate the crew in the subjective (interpersonal) and objective (task) dimension. However, the pace and scope of task integration depend on the sailing experience of cruise participants. Among the respondents, 18 people participated in a cruise for the first time. For 5 people it was at least the second time they took part in a cruise. 16 people had a greater or lesser amount of sailing experience whereas 7 people had never gone sailing before. The organisation of work on a three-masted sailing ship allows people without sailing experience to participate in a cruise. ... *the 'Zawisza Czarny' is a vessel that does not require climbing the masts or yards to raise or lower the sails* (Aleksandra, a sighted person). Therefore, the lack of sailing experience and visual impairment do not limit the cruise participant in the performance of tasks, providing that it does not interfere with the general principle of safety and smooth work on the ship.

When selecting crew members, cruise organisers try to balance the composition of the watch in various respects. Therefore, they take into account the following factors: the number of people who sail again, the number of participants with visual impairments, mobility limitations, gender distribution, and sailing experience. There is always a person on watch who has been to sea before (in the community slang – the so-called recidivist) ... *they know the ship and have sailing experience.*

(...) If we have more such people, we put them on watch so we have a leader among the blind who will facilitate the work of other blind people (Andrzej, a sighted person).

People who are sailing again help participants who sail for the first time get to know the ship and the tasks to be performed, they share their knowledge. *... I helped some people to take their first steps. When I sailed for the first time on 'Zawisza', I used my eyesight a bit. I have a very good memory and not much has changed over the years, so now it was much easier for me (Tomasz, a blind person).* This is one of the aspects of assumed integration because people who sail for the first time are to varying degrees socially rehabilitated. People who sail again are a kind of determinant of how individual or social barriers can be overcome ... *our example allows them to overcome their barriers, because they see that if we manage, they can too...* (Tomasz, a blind person).

Sailing tasks were implemented within a mixed watch on the basis of a co-operative division of tasks. There was a rotational division of tasks (e.g., work in the kitchen, cleaning the deck, navigation), which all participants had to perform on their watches. 42 people (cruise participants and permanent crew members) took part in the sailing cruise: Gdynia – Kalmar – Hel – Gdynia. This required cooperation throughout the entire voyage. Therefore, e.g., a watch consisting of a blind person, 95% visually impaired, a person with combined visual impairment and mobility limitation, the division of work and implementation of tasks were proposed by able-bodied people: *... we had to take care of each other and that was the goal of this project. We tried to engage them in absolutely everything we did, i.e., cleaning, washing dishes, cooking, yacht steering. It turned out that it was possible (...). If we divided: a visually impaired person or a blind person plus a sighted person, then (...) we were able to efficiently work in pairs, teams (...). It was not an obstacle for us to go from point A to point B, peeling potatoes, preparing meals (...), steering. We were so dependent on each other that we managed to work together (Kinga, a sighted person).*

The example of the watch illustrates the approach of sighted people and confirms the readiness of people with different visual perception and mobility to create a "common world" during a seagoing voyage. In this context, able-bodied people adopted the perspective of a different ability (Krause 2004: 41) of disabled people and agreed with them on the manner and type of tasks to be performed. On this basis, people with sight or mobility disabilities participated in the jointly defined on-board work.

During the voyage, the implementation of sailing tasks on the mixed watches was based on the principle of symmetry, which favoured subjective and objective integration. This is illustrated by the following statements of sighted and blind people and the photo below:

Table 2. The division of work during the voyage according to sighted and blind people

The sighted person's perspective	The perspective of a blind person
<i>Every action required cooperation. A handful of sighted people would not be able to cope alone (Barbara).</i>	<i>All tasks on the ship require the cooperation of blind and sighted people. The blind would not be able to cope alone (Henryka).</i>
<i>They supported each other in every situation. No one was singled out (...). Everyone was assigned tasks and performed them very well (Paweł).</i>	<i>It was necessary to cooperate in order to perform tasks well, efficiently and quickly (Radosław).</i>

Source: summary based on own research.



Photo 2. The principle of symmetry in the implementation of sailing tasks

Source: private collection of Captain A.B. Emche of the *Zawisza Czarny*.

During more difficult weather conditions, due to safety reasons, onboard tasks were performed mainly by sighted people. In a situation where, for example, a larger number of people were unwell due to seasickness, crew members from other watches helped. Inter-watch cooperation was an opportunity for inter-watch integration. This integration accelerated the performance of tasks such as: lifting booms, loosening and pulling the sails, clearing the sails, tying the sails with sail

stops. *This work would take an hour, not half an hour, if we only did it as part of the watch* (Radosław, visually impaired person).

The cruise also allows participants with visual impairments to come into contact with maritime culture. Therefore, during the port call (Kalmar/Karlskrona), cruise participants go ashore to, for example, visit a shipping museum or historic places related to the sea (Powersport.pl [n.d.]). Sightseeing is an opportunity for social integration on land. Blind, visually impaired and sighted people must work together to reach the destination and communicate intensively during the visit. ... *We went to the maritime museum. I guided a blind girl, she held my arm and I told her what I saw, along with the story of this place. I have never visited any museum so thoroughly before. You have to tell what is going on so that the person can build the picture in their imagination...* (Jacek, a sighted person).

Spatial determinants of integration of cruise participants with differentiated visual perception

The physical space of the ship

Zawisza Czarny is the successor to the yacht of the same name, on which Polish scouts were taken to sea in the years 1935–1939. In 1960/61, it was converted from a type B-11 fishing lugrotrawler named *Cietrzew*. After its reconfiguration, *Zawisza Czarny* had a lowerdeckhouse, a ballast ledge and three masts. Living quarters were created in the former hold. In the years 1979–1980, the deckhouse was replaced with upper works. Training cruises for scouts, people with disabilities and socially excluded youth as well as integration cruises were or have been held on the ship as part of the *See the Sea* project (Maracewicz 2013: 6, 8–9). In the years 2016–2018, onco-cruises for people with oncological disease were held on *Zawisza Czarny* (Onkorejs.pl [n.d.]).

In the case of the *See the Sea* integration cruise, crew members, who are physically and perceptually diverse, learn about the ship structure through personal mapping and with the help of the watch officer.



Photo 3. Ship exploration by touch

Source: private collection of Captain A.B. Emche of the *Zawisza Czarny*.

Before the voyage, the officer familiarises the watchmen with the ship and the tasks they will perform. ... *Each officer takes his/her watch, they must be trained in raising and lowering the sails, there is also a tour of the ship* (Aleksandra, a sighted person). ... *The first thing they did was to show us around the ship, they show you your bunk so that you know where to go, where the toilet is, where the shower is, as well as the galley or kitchen* (Marcin, a sighted person). ... *We got to know the topography of the ship being on the ship (...). We could get to know it on our own or with the officer, we were shown our mast, ropes, because there are a lot of them, so we learnt the nomenclature...* (Dariusz, visually impaired person). ... *Everyone, at their own pace, brailles the sailing ship, in their own way* (Aleksandra, a sighted person).

The ship existential space

We can consider the space of the ship from the physical and existential point of view. As soon as the crew members appear on the ship, the physical space of the ship becomes the space of their existence (Maseide, Grottlund 2015: 596). Therefore, in order for visually impaired people to be able to safely move around in the closed space of the ship during their one-week stay there, a security system made up of ropes and railings is needed.



Photo 4. The physical and existential space of the *Zawisza Czarna* ship

Source: private collection of Captain A.B. Emche of the *Zawisza Czarna*.

The efficient mobility of a visually impaired crew member in a space managed by sighted people (Maseide, Grottlund 2015: 595) also depends on how their sense of orientation is shaped. The safe movement of a person with visual impairment or mobility limitation on the *Zawisza* is therefore determined by objective factors (e.g., life-saving ropes and railings), but also subjective elements, e.g., sailing experience and the sense of orientation. A more well-developed ability to orientate helps to navigate more efficiently in the confined space of the ship.

I knew I had to get to the railing (to grab something) and then I go ahead... this way I will always get somewhere. The limited space helps a lot. Limited by something to which I can attach myself and go ahead, or go on a track I know (Radosław, a blind person). In the case of a visually impaired person, navigating the ship existential space is based on embodied memory. Such memory is inherent in a person's body as it recreates the past (Casey 1987: 148). It allows the blind to practice spatial habits (Maseide, Grottlund 2015: 596).

A less well-developed sense of orientation may hinder the mobility of a blind person on a ship. ... *Some have good orientation, others a little worse. Ropes show the way on board. There are no more ropes below deck. There were tables, steps. The step was on one side and on the other. If I made a mistake, I hit the step, but I didn't hit my bed...* (Henryka, a blind person). Difficulties with orientation meant that the ropes and railings, as components of the existential space, were not enough to reach the destination flawlessly, which resulted in getting lost. Then the presence of other people, who could lead to the goal, was important. ... *I happened to get lost, but there was always someone who guided me. There was no fear that I would hurt myself...* (Henryka, a blind person).

Sighted people build their vision of the ship based on what they see, because the sense of sight allows them to scan any space. At one moment, they can take in the field of view or exchange glances with other people to coordinate spatial interactions (Maseide, Grottlund 2015: 598). Blind and visually impaired people, on the other hand, map the ship differently, that is, they explore the physical space of the ship and become familiar with its architecture more through touch, which allows them to perceive the ship space tangibly on a real scale, or they get to know the ship on a smaller scale based on a model of the ship, which is available aboard *Zawisza*. ... *We had a model of the 'Zawisza' ship, with relatively movable elements of the sails* (Marcin, a sighted person). The use of touch in spatial perception causes the perceptual horizon of a visually impaired person to be shorter than that of a sighted person. Tactile perception is also more laborious, time-consuming and energy-intensive than visual perception (Maseide, Grottlund 2015: 598).

From the perspective of a sighted person, the architecture of the *Zawisza Czarny* is not easy for people with visual impairments or mobility limitations. In the deck part, from the forecastle to the stern, the surface is even, but ... *from the forecastle to the bow it goes slightly up* (Jacek, a sighted person). The deck of the middle superstructure (quarterdeck) and the descent to the galley may cause difficulties for a person with reduced mobility and visual impairment, because ... *if you want to get to the toilet, you have to climb steep stairs. Then you have to come down. If you go to watch, you have to go up the quarterdeck, then you have to get off it* (Iwona, a sighted person).

In the crew part of *Zawisza Czarny* there is a room (forecastle) where the entire crew sleep. The crew sleep in layers (on three or four bunk levels), ... *they always eat and work together* (Andrzej, a sighted person). ... *There is no division into cabins* (Aleksandra, a sighted person). Such a structural solution favours subjective integration, although it may be surprising at first for a person who is not used to tight spaces. ... *I boarded the ship and we went to the cabin which is the place where you sleep. We were shown our bunks and I took my things there, I had this first moment: Oh my God! I don't want it, it will be terrible, it is so cramped there and there is so little space (...) and so many people will sleep in one room* (Karolina, a blind person). Crewmen must therefore take into account the specificity of such a solution, because ... *in a situation where everyone is in one room and sleep in layers... in the forecandle, everyone participates in the whole life of the crew. (...) This has its disadvantages, of course, but here it is an advantage. (...) Like it or not, everyone participates in the whole life of the crew* (Andrzej, a sighted person). *Basically, the specificity of the 'Zawisza' forecandle promotes... integration, making friends...* (Henryka, a blind person).

The crew members use the security system during the cruise (ropes, railings), which supports people with visual impairment against losing control or getting lost while moving around the ship. Life-saving ropes are stretched between strategic points, e.g., from the forecandle to the bathroom or from the forecandle to the kitchen. The ropes protect against loss of control, especially when weather conditions are bad. The ropes are also run along the sides, on the gunwales. All the ropes help visually impaired people find their way around the ship more easily. Protection for the crewmen included harnesses, shoulder and chest braces with a metal buckle to which the noseband with snap-links are attached so they can be attached to the steel life-saving rope or other permanent elements of the ship. For safety reasons, the crewman must remain fastened to life-saving ropes during the day when there are bad weather conditions and after the sun sets. The exception is working in the kitchen, because the space in the galley is narrow and braces can make it difficult to work there. The permanent crew of the ship repeats that people with visual impairments should help themselves with their hands according to the rule: *one hand is for you and the other – for the ship, which means that we always use one hand to secure ourselves and hold something stable...* (Karolina, a blind person) or at the entrance into the room, *one... hand protects the head, the other hand holds a life-saving line or handrail...* (Jacek, a sighted person).

Summary

Integration, which in the text is understood as the result of the readiness of able-bodied and disabled people to create a “common world”, implies identification of social and spatial factors determining this process during the sea voyage under the auspices of the *See the Sea* project. The results of the qualitative research indicate that in the spatial dimension, the integration of sea voyage participants was determined by the characteristics of the ship architecture (e.g., a specific area of the forecabin, or an enclosed space of the ship), security system (ropes and railings) that allowed all participants to move safely in the enclosed spaces of the ship, and by weather conditions (e.g., the sea state, wind velocity).

In the social dimension, the integration of sighted, partially sighted and blind people was shaped by the principle of dividing the participants into mixed watches, which were proportionally made up of blind, visually impaired, and sighted people. Such a division was a kind of challenge that the participants of the cruise had to take to build social integration based on sailing activities. For most of the cruise participants, it was the first time they had met one another. Because they were not yet acquainted with other members of the watch, it was difficult to predict how their cooperative activities would work out. Sailing tasks, however, require cooperation, therefore the crew must work together in order for the ship to sail. Social integration of the cruise participants was determined, on the one hand, by organisational activities planned by the Foundation (assumed social integration), and on the other, by natural circumstances that inspired the cruise participants to build social relations (natural integration).

The division of the participants based on differentiated visual perception implied the communication principle of the adequate description of static and dynamic properties of the environment in which sighted, visually impaired and blind people lived together. Individual people in four watches had a sum of work to do, which they divided depending on their capabilities and weather conditions. Each person in the watch had a chance to contribute to the total amount of work necessary to be done on the ship. Joint work in the watch, as a practice used in the maritime culture, integrated the *Zawisza* crew in the task aspect.

This corresponds, for example, with the results of the study conducted by Dutch researchers, whose aim was to determine the factors that, according to people with disabilities and their relatives, favour integration. From their perspective, integration is the result of joint functioning in mixed social systems of people who are not indifferent to each other and contribute to social life using available opportunities (van de Ven 2005: 316).

However, the diversity of watch members in terms of their visual perception and mobility made it necessary to define the rules for the implementation of watch tasks. Therefore, task integration of the cruise participants was the result of work organisation based on the following principles:

- a) considering each other's presence and needs as appropriate;
- b) symmetrisation of task cooperation in the watch and, if necessary, cooperation with persons from another watch.

All crew members cooperated during the integration cruise. Therefore, people without sailing experience learned all the sailing tasks on an ongoing basis. The *See the Sea* project combines the theory and practice of sailing. The efficient combination of theory and practice results from the fact that the cruise organisers try to balance the composition of the watch when selecting crew members. For this reason, the watch also includes a person who has been to sea before. Such a person helps participants who are going to sea for the first time to familiarise themselves with the ship and with the tasks that are to be performed, and who freely shares his/her knowledge. Visual impairment and lack of sailing experience do not limit the cruise participant in the performance of his or her tasks, as long as there is no threat to the safety of the crew and the smooth carrying-out of the work aboard ship. A person with disability and a non-disabled person may equally and jointly take part in any sailing task. This allows them to take into account their own diverse perspectives and, on this basis, discover why they need each other. As a result, this integration solution is beneficial for both sides of the process (Ostrowska 2015a: 87; Ostrowska 2015b: 233).

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