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Centre for Disability Studies Vilnius University and Disability Sociology Section Polish Sociological Association
organize a panel

The emancipatory nature of modern technologies for people with disabilities – challenges for social policy
within XVI National Conference of the Lithuanian Sociological Society “Global challenges and future societies”
(November 15-16, 2024 Vilnius University).

We invite you to submit presentations for the panel. Deadline for the submissions – 23rd of September.

PANEL: *The emancipatory nature of modern technologies for people with disabilities – challenges for social policy*

In the face of the dynamic development of technologies and their impact on social life, it is necessary to take a critical approach to assessing their impact on the functioning of people with disabilities and to diagnose the challenges this poses to social policy, changing families and people with disabilities themselves.

On the one hand, modern information and communication technologies (ICT) have emancipatory potential, enabling people with disabilities greater independence and fuller social integration. The widespread use of modern technological solutions in education and employment opens new opportunities for people with various types of disabilities, promoting their active participation in society. This creates a huge opportunity for people with disabilities, enabling them to participate more fully in the labor market and higher education. The use of modern tools can also eliminate the barriers these people face in everyday life, giving them the opportunity to participate more fully in society.

On the other, these technologies may lead to digital exclusion, deepening social inequalities. Lack of access to modern technologies or their incorrect implementation may marginalize social categories that are already in a difficult situation. Therefore, it is crucial that social policies take into account the needs of people with disabilities, providing them with appropriate educational support in terms of access to technologies and their skillful use.

This poses new challenges for social policy. Technologies provide an opportunity for independent living, but to use their potential it is necessary to implement changes in social policy, education and the model of support for people with disabilities. Assistance is crucial for people with disabilities to fully benefit from the opportunities offered by technology, which in turn supports their participation in education and the labor market.

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