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Media representation of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland

Framing of politicized issues as a representation of political parallelism in the Polish public service broadcaster TVP.

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Abstract

This Master's thesis analyzes the narratives that are used to portray the LGBTQ+ community and how they relate to the political parallelism of the Polish media system. The focus is on the online edition of *TVP Info* – the news channel of TVP, Poland's public service broadcaster. The research investigates the structural changes of the media system, which occurred after the Law & Justice Party (PiS) gained a parliamentary majority in the 2015 Polish elections. This research places itself in a larger context of Central and Eastern European (CEE) and post-communist countries, where further conclusions regarding these systems have been drawn. The study concluded its findings can be used as a methodological and theoretical anchor to investigate media systems in political flux.

The aim was to investigate news reports and seek repeating patterns of what narratives are used to refer to and discuss the LGBTQ+ community. For this study the timeframe plays a crucial role, therefore a period of the month of August 2020 has been selected. August 2020 marks the protests in Poland's capital Warsaw after the arrest of the transgender activist Margot earlier that year.

The main goal of the project is to identify ways in which the LGBTQ+ community is portrayed in the text of the public broadcaster TVP. This was done to get a better insight into narratives employed by the current Polish government and its ruling party. The argument supporting this approach is that structural changes in the media system have affected the public broadcasting service, and, in particular, how they represent the LGBTQ+ community. The research has revealed a clear parallel between the recent change to Act 21 "Broadcasting Act", which regulates the Polish public broadcasting service TVP, and employed tactics of the implicit cultural framing of the LGBTQ+ community. This commonality is equating the Catholic values to universal moral conduct.

The common denominator has been revealed to be the Catholic Church, which served as a universal moral code to discredit the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, a strong bond between the LGBTQ+ community and the political opposition has been observed. Arguably, this is evidence for discrediting the opposition, while simultaneously budling a strong image of the ruling party PiS by negatively framing the LGBTQ+ community. This research is placed within a larger context of other CEE countries, it serves as a contextual framework to further investigate media systems in that geopolitical region.

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Introduction

Polish politics has seen a wave of far-right ideological radicalization since the right-wing party Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*) achieved a governing majority in the Polish parliament after the 2015 elections. The party has weaponized themes such as abortion, queerness, and foreigners to strengthen the national identity (Yatsyk, 2020). The media has extensively scapegoated many groups of "others", which becomes especially evident when we look at the Polish public broadcaster TVP. The geopolitical context of Poland, as a young and fragile democracy, makes studying public service broadcasting an important case for research. This is especially true when we have a look at the obligations of public media, which are constituted by Polish law. On one hand, public broadcasters are obliged to protect the nation's minorities, while the broadcast proves otherwise. One of the groups relentlessly discriminated against since 2015 by the current ruling party, is the LGBTQ+ community, which has become the main subject of this study.

This research creates knowledge within the portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland in hopes of acknowledging systemic issues and recognizing patterns that contribute to the steady decline of the quality of life of the members of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland. Additionally, it also makes an argument about minority representation and a democratic media system. Media has an undeniable effect on its audiences, and the role of media in minority representation proves to be immense (Metykova, 2016). Therefore, the question imposed in this research does not begin with "if", but leaps directly into the "how" (Perse and Lambe, 2016). These arguments have also been anchored in legislative shifts in Poland since the election of the Law and Justice party (PiS) into the parliament in 2015. Exploring these tangible changes to the media system allows us to further answer the "how" question, by giving solid evidence of changes, which this study observes through the public broadcasting service. Subsequently, the goal is to make a connection between changes imposed by the current government on the media system and ways in which a politically significant issue is conveyed to reveal the potential political influence. The thesis' research questions are:

- 1) *How is the LGBTQ+ community portrayed in the Polish public broadcasting service TVP through the case study of Margot's arrest?*
- 2) *What does this portrayal tell us about the political parallelism of the Polish media system after the 2015 elections?*

The current government has largely criticized otherness in the form of a non-heteronormative sexual or gender expression. Such identity has been deemed deviant and

equated with pedophilia, like in a proposal submitted to the Polish Sejm unofficially known as “Stop Pedophilia”. The presented document has virtually removed all possibilities for comprehensive sex education, especially in the context of educating about non-heteronormativity. This form of discrimination has its origins in a period, when the current government’s majority came to power in 2015, as well as signing the LGBT card, protecting the rights of LGBT people by an oppositional mayor of Warsaw Rafal Trzaskowski. Additionally, since 2019 many municipalities in South-Eastern Poland have adopted the Family Value Protection Acts unofficially known as the “LGBT free zones” disallowing the propagation of “the LGBT agenda” on the municipal level (Yatsyk, 2020). In addition to that, many changes have been made within the structures regulating the Polish media system, which have made the current public broadcasting service especially vulnerable to political parallelism (Węglińska et al., 2021).

The context within which those media coverages exist proves to be crucial to understanding media portrayals of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland. To further understand and build a theoretical basis for this consideration, the work of Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska (2019a) has been considered. The scholar breaks down Hallin and Mancini’s (2004) typology of media systems and uses them to analyze the Polish media system, which is often understudied in comparative media research. The most interesting spectra included in their book utilized in this study prove to be political parallelism and journalistic professionalization. Looking at these allows this research to better anchor its findings in the context of a CEE country with a young, post-communist democracy. Subsequently, this allows using elements of the framework to investigate a system, which has not been yet studied in detail by scholars.

TVP’s portrayal since the election of the far right-wing party Law and Justice (pol. *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*) into the Polish government in 2015 is the main angle for investigating the media broadcast. The case of the LGBTQ+ community serves as an example of public service broadcasters’ minority representation in a Central and Eastern European developing democracy within the context of media politicization. (Węglińska et al., 2021) Dobek-Ostrowska’s approach to the media system dimensions is detailed and gives a diversified account of the Polish media system, serving as an example for other Central European systems affected by similar geopolitical events.

The research aims to find out what narratives have been established by the Polish public broadcaster TVP regarding the LGBTQ+ community. The aim is to investigate news reports and seek repeating patterns of what narratives are used to refer to and discuss the LGBTQ+ community, which reveals ways in which the topic is framed. For this research, the period plays

a crucial role. All articles published during a carefully selected time frame at the time of data collection on tvpinfo.pl has been analyzed. The data was collected in March 2022. The period in question is August 2020, when an arrest of a transgender LGBT activist as well as protests following it happened in Poland's capital – Warsaw. A detailed account of the events is presented in the introduction to the analysis section of this case study. The main goal of the project is to identify ways in which the LGBTQ+ community is portrayed in the text of public broadcaster TVP to get a better insight into employed frames. By understanding and identifying what talking points are most prevalent in those media articles, we can begin to decode who is to be considered the reader of these news articles. In turn, this gives us a better idea of the goals of such broadcast. The theoretical framework of framing analysis states the strong connection between the target audience and the analyzed broadcast, therefore the final receiver must not be forgotten in the analysis (Pan and Kosicki, 1993).

As this research is mainly interested in seeing how and in what ways the LGBTQ+ community is portrayed in news articles, this research employs the method of qualitative news frame analysis (Linström and Marais, 2012, Van Gorp, 2007). This method is built on Erving Goffman's Frame Analysis which seeks to find "schemata of interpretation" that allow people "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences or events (Goffman, 1986). This method was chosen as it is within the context of media research to define problems, diagnose courses, make value judgments, and suggest remedies (Entman and Entman, 2004). As the scope of this research is limited, all solutions are not expected to be the outcome of the study, but rather focus on recognizing reoccurring patterns within the narrative and creating a fundament of knowledge for potential future research within the media system studies.

What has become the focal point of this research is the cultural framing, which allows investigating the topic from a contextually broader perspective of media systems in flux in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). On one hand, the Polish media system is defined through democracy and regulatory systems, including the European Union and its standards for freedom of the press, while existing within a young democracy with a relative lack of long-standing democratic media traditions (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019b). This creates an interesting environment to explore, as observing media at the current time in Polish history can help to understand the directions of the systems and what defines those directions, which can potentially aid better insight into how a young CEE democratic system behaves, especially given the context of recent observable radicalizations. Choosing a specific event to investigate, which in this case are the events of August 2020, in this methodology has also its justification.

Episodic framing, which describes ways to frame events based on specific events as opposed to a broadly contextualized debate, has proven to create a larger effect on opinion-shaping, as well as moving the responsibility attached to the events from systemic to individual (Iyengar, 1990). This type of selectiveness allows to better diagnose a specific case study as unfavorable towards a certain community, just by looking at the representation of its members. Given the juridical context of the public broadcasting system in Poland, an assumption has been made, which states that forms of implicit framing have been employed, which is largely supported by Van Gorp's research (Van Gorp, 2007). The assumption here is based upon anti-discriminatory laws currently functioning in documents regulating Polish public broadcast, all while presenting a largely discriminatory image of a specific minority. This research digs into how such mechanisms can be allowed and under what pretense they function, by providing broad cultural contexts to see what indirect ways discriminatory messaging can be conveyed. Additionally, structural changes to the media systems serve as a support and proof the media broadcast is politically influenced. Data necessary to conduct this research has been collected from tvpinfo.pl – the official news website of the Polish public broadcaster TVP. A period of a month of August 2020 has been selected for the data sourcing, which falls right when the significant to this study events occurred – the protests after the arrest of the transgender LGBTQ+ activist Margot.

The main argument of this thesis is that media systems that are in flux are susceptible to political influence, both structurally and ideologically. This influence can be observed through the analysis of news coverage. As public broadcasting service has strong ties to the political system and is regulated by the constitution, choosing them as the focal point for this research gives an excellent chance to investigate the instrumentalization of media in accordance with the current regime's agenda. Structural fluxes and modifications in the juridical system regulating media provide solid theoretical background as well as forms of tangible documentation to prove political ties with public media, which would not be possible to an extent such as this with any other form of media. Deconstructing ties between the political regime and public broadcasting service gives this research a pragmatic basis on which the argument of political parallelism can function. By providing such analysis, arguments regarding the political agenda expressed through public media can be made. The framing analysis explores deeper cultural messaging, which is argued to be used as an indirect form of conveying themes of minority discrimination while exploring the potential political motives of PiS in doing so.

Literature review

When exploring the currently available literature regarding media systems, it is evident there is a research bias toward investigating and categorizing Western democracies, especially within Western Europe and Northern America. This appears especially when exploring the most influential work on media systems currently discussed among scholars – Hallin and Mancini's (2004) typography. There is an inseparable relationship between political and media systems, which, among others, Hallin and Mancini extensively explore in their work. However, most media systems they describe are embedded within relatively stable political systems, as compared to the Polish case explored in this study. The exceptions in Hallin and Mancini's (2004) focus on Europe are Spain and Italy. However, the political instability observed in these contexts cannot be paralleled with the one observed in CEE countries. Spain and Italy experienced tight, yet short-lasting dictatorships, while CEE countries have experienced decades-long political dependency on the Soviet Union.

This review explores what literature is available within media systems and what knowledge gaps this research is trying to fill. Additionally, this section is making an argument that the Polish media system is already a victim of political parallelism as described by Hallin and Mancini, as evidenced by legal changes to the regulatory bodies of the media system since 2015. The main argument emerging from this review is that the lack of research on media's political parallelism in developing democracies – more specifically, CEE democracies – and the case of Poland lacks the link between structural changes and the broadcast. Subsequently, it does not create an argument based on connecting media news analysis and legislative changes that occur within the system itself.

There is an evident bias towards stable systems, where stability refers to long-standing democratic traditions, leading to stable media systems, where those with a more tumultuous past seem to slip through the cracks. Here is where the argument lies. Exploring the connection between legislative arguments in stable democracies in connection to the media broadcast would likely not yield any results due to the stability of the democratic regulatory bodies established within the system. On the contrary, the Polish media system, and arguably other CEE systems as well, have gone through tangible legislative reforms, which reflection can be seen through the public broadcasting service. What is argued here is that in young democracies, systems are more susceptible to change which can be seen through described changes to the legislative documents regarding media regulation and that, in return, influences the

broadcasting. Subsequently, the broadcast is likely to reflect and favor the discourse presented by the same political influence that changed the regulatory system in the first place. It is essential to understand available theoretical considerations on explored media systems and see where the theoretical framework fails to understand and explore CEE media systems to lay out a foundation for the empirical work this paper provides. Arguably, it is the lack of connection between the systemic changes and the public broadcasting system that creates the knowledge gap, which this research is set out to fill.

Social science theories construct typologies, which are based on observable patterns in social interactions to further facilitate the theoretical considerations of why things occur and what are their consequences (Hallin, 2016). Generally said, interpersonal and interinstitutional communication is embedded within structures, which we can observe to arrive at relatively stable categorizations of “systems”. The system explored in this research is the media system, which can be seen as *a set of media institutions and practices understood as interacting with and shaping one another* (Hallin, 2016). By looking at the established frameworks of how a specific media system works, we can begin to dissect a phenomenon based on the established knowledge of the system within which it finds itself. This allows us to get an insight into why this phenomenon occurred in the first place and what systems are contributing to its shaping. In addition to that, in the case of the Polish system, it is especially important to look at the evidence found in legislative reforms to further argue for changes occurring in the spectra presented in the framework. Within Hallin’s media system typologies, the focus is put on three main theoretical dimensions: political parallelism, journalistic professionalism, and the role of the state.

To briefly summarize the three dimensions, political parallelism regards issues of the extent to which political advocacy is conceived as part of the journalistic mission. It is generally operationalized as the degree to which journalism is tied to party influence. What should be understood by that is the intervention of the state into the profession of journalism through implementing and transforming systemic regulatory bodies that occurred under selected governments, which in the case of this study is the parliamentary majority gained by PiS after 2015. Journalistic professionalism describes factors influencing the journalistic work itself, like journalists’ autonomy and a common ethical code of conduct, as well as any other circumstances that might limit the freedom of expression within the profession. The third and last dimension deals with the relationship between the national media system and its political regime. Here, the main factor of exploration is state interventionism, which strives to investigate the extent of influence the state has on the media system existing within it. This can

include changing currently enforced laws regulating public broadcasting services, as well as staff changes within the structures of regulatory bodies, which in the case of Poland is the National Broadcasting Council (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019b)

Hallin and Mancini's (2004) framework has become a cornerstone within comparative communication research and inspired follow-up empirical research that both validates and extends their typology (Brüggemann et al., 2014). Concepts found within the two works allow for a more comprehensive formation of theoretical frameworks and hypotheses, as well as case selection within the field. The criticism of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) work has been its limited scope, though its self-recognition of the limited nature has become its great asset. Subsequently, it has inspired further research and expansion of its initial theories. Again, most of this research is based on Western European and North American systems, which limits the application of directly applying it to the Polish context. Nevertheless, the core theoretical arguments and framework of media systems theory can be utilized and extended to the Polish case.

The media systems originally recognized by Hallin and Mancini (2004) are Mediterranean Polarized Pluralist, Northern European Democratic Corporatist, and North Atlantic Liberal (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). Brüggeman (2014) revised version recognizes an additional system and simplified the describing terminology to Central, Western, Northern, and Southern. Despite Brüggeman's (2014) focus on Central Europe, neither of these seminal texts on media systems theory includes Eastern European and Post-Communist states, which by 'Central' is meant a cluster of following countries: Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Great Britain, none of them sharing geopolitical similarities with CEE countries. Therefore, this study examines the dimensions used within these works but seeks further for a more case-specific framework elsewhere. A major addition to the evaluation within this research is diving into the legislative changes in the media system that occurred after 2015 in Poland. In addition to the structural understanding of the Polish media system, considerations encompassing the cultural circumstances of Poland are further articulated, which both influence and are influenced by the socioeconomic landscape. The argument of this case study is strongly embedded in understanding the Polish context, therefore without exploring important elements of Polish culture and history would make efforts of this research futile.

I argue that aspects included in the initial framework for media systems fail to encompass the political environment for media systems in Poland, and for that matter, other CEE countries. Additionally, there is a lack of arguments around media systems, which operate in a democracy that are no older than 30 years, marked by the lack of tradition regarding

democratic journalism and public service broadcasting. Subsequently, there is a lack of connecting arguments, which describe the political parallelism with evidence in structural changes within a political system and its immediate reflection on media, which in the case of this research is narrowed down to public broadcasting service and a single case study of minority representation. It is also important to mention these theoretical frameworks have been established prior to 2015 when PiS achieved a parliamentary majority, which further proves political shocks explored in this case study are not accounted for in extensions of Hallin and Mancini's framework. This argument also extends to the broadly used framework by Dobek-Ostrowska (2019), where I argue that despite encompassing the media system and describing its structures, there is a lack of connection between the broadcast regarding minority representation and structural changes, which is the major link attempted by this case study.

Polish media systems

The mere mention of lacking empirical data on Polish and other CEE media systems can only be partially justified when discussing theories on systemic issues. Both Hallin and Mancini (2004) and Dobek-Ostrowska (2019) include various dimensions in the systemic considerations. Ones that prove to be particularly important for this research are political parallelism and journalistic professionalism. Dobek-Ostrowska describes the Polish media systems as *“dynamically evolving [...], which is under the influence of institutions and external stakeholders. This system has found itself at a crossroads, and it is uncertain which way its development will go”* (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019:15). This proves to be the focal point of our interest – the crossroad and possible directions the system is headed. As a young, post-communist democracy, Polish politics together with the media system have experienced major shocks which reflection can be seen through the media system. These shocks include major changes to the Polish constitution securing democratic freedom of speech and media, but also making changes, which allude to the influence of the Catholic Church, like the ban on abortion in 1994. Shifting from the Polish People's Republic to the Republic of Poland in 1989 meant a complete change of the political regime from an authoritarian to a democratic one, which had to be built from the ground up. These changes matter in the context of this study as they establish a foundation upon which we begin to understand why the Polish media system is so susceptible to political capture as well as further explain the direction of those changes.

To better anchor this argument, it is important to recognize the dimensions through which this empirical research is shaped. The first dimension recognized by Dobek-Ostrowska

is journalistic professionalism. Here, the claim is nuanced, and the issue of journalists and how well they were prepared for the 1989 transition anchor the discussion in an interesting light. On one hand, journalism schools in Poland have been some of the most renowned before and through the Soviet period (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019:29), which can create an initial impression of a strong, professional environment. Here, it is important to look at the typological breakdown of the concept of journalistic professionalism presented by Hallin and Mancini also mentioned by Dobek-Ostrowska. It states three main factors - professional autonomy, professional norms, and public service orientation.

The context of the professional Polish journalist must be placed within the systemic context to fully understand the functionality of the system. On one hand, Polish journalism is a subject of high status and is protected in various ways:

“Polish journalists have developed separate professional norms, which include legal regulations and ethics codes, and founded institutions to guard them. These include also journalist associations, which should play an important part in the process of the implementation of these norms.” (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019:30).

On the flip side, those journalists represent media broadcasters within a system, which is subjected to the selectiveness dictated by the employed journalist’s political and social opinions. (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019b) This means the selection of actors within media institutions is not based on the highest professionalism, but rather on political affiliations. These regulatory systems, as well as their implications, become especially visible when we look at the systemic and structural changes to the media system that occurred after the PiS has gained the parliamentary majority in 2015. Therefore, no matter how professional a journalist is, in such a system, they are faced with two choices – to conform or to abandon a journalistic career, which is controlled politically both on the macro and micro levels. The micro-level represents the discussed staff changes and control of actors on the level of the institution of the tv station, while macro changes point to the structural and juridical changes within the nationwide media system. This means such regulations can be seen on the level of the company itself, in this case, TVP, as well as in the nationwide legislative structures.

Therefore, it proves to be more relevant to look at the other dimension considered by Dobek-Ostrowska as well – political parallelism. There, tangible evidence of structural changes can be found in the research of public media institutions as well as in changes to acts and regulatory bodies within the media system. By anchoring the theoretical consideration in

tangible structural changes, we can draw any possible conclusions with more confidence. As the research attempts to find patterns within the portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community through the events of August 2020 in Warsaw, there is a necessary theoretical aspect to be explored. That includes journalistic autonomy (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019:48), as well as aspects of political parallelism and the context of the elected Law and Justice party. Here, the important connection is that of the media system including its changes under the rule of PiS and how the public broadcast portrays a topic of political significance and minority representation, in this case, an arrest of a transgender LGBTQ+ activist. This allows placing this research within the context of the Polish media system and further facilitate the understanding of the impact of the media systems on the broadcast. Breaking down those elements and placing them within the Polish context allows us also to understand the flexibility of the system and its tolerance for political influences, which can potentially allow extending these findings to other CEE countries and their media systems.

This paper takes its anchor in analyzing texts coming from Polish public service broadcast TVP. This choice has been made based on Dobek-Ostrowska’s (2019) suggestion that public broadcasters are much more directly affected by political fluxes and the discourse presented by the majority party/coalition.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, employment there [TVP] has been determined by political factors, favor, or outright support of the governing party/coalition. This, in turn, resulted in varying degrees of instrumentalization of public media and domination of the ruling parties’ logic, which is clearly reflected in the media content and in types of politics coverage. (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019:203)

This context allows for a more direct understanding of the political changes and their reflection on the media system through the broadcast itself, since a deeper structural analysis of the flux within the media system itself, can be fetched and described.

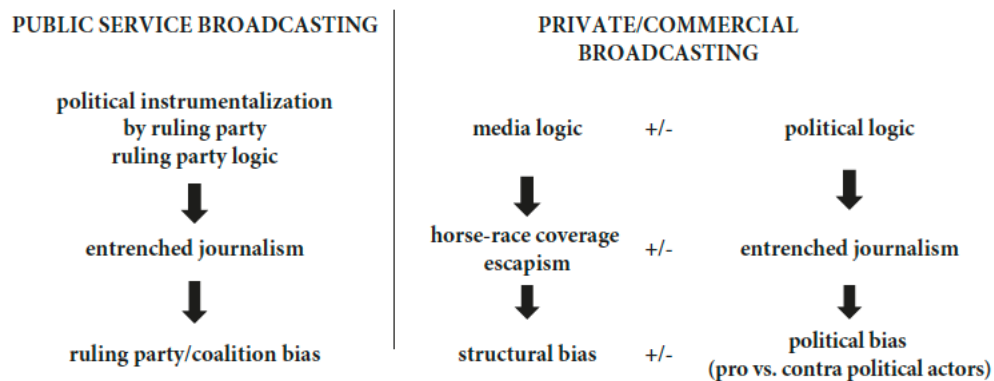


Fig. 1 Dominant models of news coverage in Poland

Source: *Polish Media Systems in Comparative Perspective*, B. Dobek-Ostrowska (2019: 204).

Additionally, public service broadcasts in Europe, as opposed to North America and other media regions, are ranked as still relevant, culturally significant, and have a strong position in the public discourse. In Poland, it is reflected through the availability of TVP as compared to other private channels, which have been secured through infrastructure secured by the Ministry of Digitalization (Węglińska, 2021). Unfortunately, there are no independent studies of viewership available after the year 2015, when the selection of the research company has been in the hands of the ruling party. This importance is further supported by arguing that, as opposed to media systems represented in North America, European public broadcasting service has not an economic, but a civic and political duty as a priority, as the profit incentive is not of importance for public service broadcasters (PBS) (Metykova, 2016). This proves to be true with the Polish public broadcaster as it is funded through a combination of license fees and established funds collected from taxes, as well as, to an extent, income from commercials. The significance of the public broadcasting service in Poland is further established and described both in the constitution and in other legislative regulations. It allows for further establishing TVP's mission, responsibilities, and duties, which implies its significance for the general political discourse. These documents, in detail, describe how and in what ways certain values and content is required from the public broadcaster. What is the case of TVP that becomes interesting is the legislative obligations it has toward the European Union and how they manifest themselves through the document "Broadcasting Act" from April 2021. A quote from the document states:

Broadcasts or other broadcasts may not promote activities contrary to the law, with the Polish *raison d'état* and attitudes and views contrary to morality and social good, in particular, they may not contain content inciting hatred or violence or discriminating on the basis of sex, race, color of the skin, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, nationality, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, or inciting a terrorist offense. ("Art. 21. - Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji," 2021)

This is especially interesting in the case explored in this paper as it uses the example of minority representation in public broadcasting service as a tool to investigate political parallelism in the media system, while the portrayal of minorities is legislatively protected. Although this might seem like a limitation, for this study it becomes especially valuable, as it argues for democracies in flux to use implicit framing. What it means is that if one wishes to misrepresent a minority, they need to do it through implicit means. The reason is that broadcasters cannot explicitly express discriminatory beliefs against minorities since that would be a violation of the law. This fits especially well with the concept of a media system being at a crossroads. The extent to which we observe those legislative promises being broken or implication of minorities being hidden behind the veil of culture and tradition to protect it from direct accusations of discrimination will give us a clear picture of where this current system stands in the described 'flux'. This, in return, allows us to answer the question of how dependent on the political agenda the public broadcasting service is by solely looking at the content it publishes. These dynamics are described by what Hallin and Mancini (2016), as well as Dobek-Ostrowska (2019) regard as political parallelism.

Political parallelism defines the spectrum of political influence on media. The Polish case points directly at one main legislative body in charge of regulating Polish media – the National Broadcasting Council (pol. KRRiTV). By looking at the changes occurring in its structures since the Law and Justice party gained majority in the Polish parliament, we can begin to understand the extent of political influence on the public broadcaster TVP. As of 2015, the Law and Justice party appointed a new body within the structures of the National Broadcasting Council called the National Media Council (pol. RMN). The RMN is/was largely comprised of PiS affiliates with a journalistic background. In addition to that, an eight-point resolution was introduced, which significantly restricted the possibility to appoint independent members of KRRiTV as well as RMN and gave a significant say in the ways those institutions work to the Ministry of Treasury (Węglińska et al., 2021).

The journalistic ethos, as well as individual independence of journalists at TVP, has been significantly affected since 2015. A study examining the workplace politics of TVP after 2015, where twenty TVP journalists were interviewed, reveals significant changes in staff and overlooking them directors of the station, which influenced journalistic freedoms. Interviewed journalists revealed that since 2015, whenever a new director was appointed, there were significant layoffs and staff changes. Some reported an influx of journalists from independent radical right-wing outlets, while journalists who have worked at the station long before 2015 were laid off (Węglińska et al., 2021). Other control tactics were employed, such as introducing

a blacklist of experts that cannot be invited to the station. The list largely included celebrities and other public figures with a connection to the political opposition, expressing opposing political views or being openly against the current government. These mechanisms were employed to aid the growing pressure on news selection and, in turn, significantly lower the freedom of individual workers at the TVP station in Warsaw.

The study also presents a comprehensive guide through the types of media coverages, where the author follows various ways commonly mediatized political issues are portrayed, by reaching for empirical research based on media content analysis. Subsequently, it provides the further context of the specific Polish media system and gives this research insight into how certain issues are “typically” portrayed, possibly providing a helpful framework on which this empirical research will base its findings. What proves to be necessary is to explore the context of understanding the intricacies of the various portrayals specific to the Polish media system. As Dobek-Ostrowska’s (2019) research only encompasses the portrayal of political actors and their framing, this empirical research regards itself as an extension of those typological considerations. It reaches for cultural and social topics and ways in which a specific system chooses to frame them. This is done to further analyze political parallelism through the framing of issues in ways that reflect the political agenda, such as the portrayal of political actors analyzed by Dobek-Ostrowska (2019).

Representations and framing

The following section explores notions of where the role of minorities comes into the picture. This research regards itself as an extension of Dobek-Ostrowska’s exploration of the portrayal of political actors in the context of political parallelism in the Polish media system allowing us to deeper explore the already established theoretical framework of the Polish media system and begin to understand the direction in which the system is headed on the systemic crossroad. Explored in this research case study reaches for already existing data, where similar research was conducted by Johannes Kaiser and Katharina Kleinen-von Königslöw (2019). The researchers have compared reports on politicized topics in addition to the exploration of ways political actors were described. “Political parallelism is not only tied to parties but also to broader political ideologies.” (Kaiser and Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2019:1). Here, the argument is that issues discussed by TVP regarding the LGBTQ+ community are a topic of political interest. This is based both on the evidence found in the Broadcasting Act protecting minorities, as well as establishing an argument around LGBTQ+ issues, which tightly relates to its

affiliation with the political opposition. Here, based on further theoretical considerations of this section, a core argument attempted to be conveyed through those broadcasts begins to crystalize - by discussing the minority in a concrete way, the cognitive opinion-shaping aligned with the current political majority of the political opposition can be achieved. The following findings serve as an empirical bridge between the findings of Dobek-Ostrowska and this paper's empirical research which bases its arguments on the importance of the framing of politicized topics to measure the political parallelism of a given system. This further justifies using the broadcast itself, in addition to theoretical considerations regarding systemic changes in media, to show evidence of political parallelism in the framing of issues, which bear political significance.

The context of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland is a highly politicized topic, which in the case of this paper serves as an example to explore the topic through means secondary to the framing of political actors. By reaching for this empirical material, we can further investigate the ways in which topics surrounding the LGBTQ+ community are framed through the lens of who is the political actor, who are their voters, and which cultural phenomena will most closely relate to this audience. It builds on an argument by Pan and Kosicki (1993), which states it is essential to not view the analyzed text as an entirety of empirical data, when performing framing analysis, but also to acquire the ability to perform the analysis while keeping the reader's perspective in mind. Here, the reader is a PiS voter of likely conservative and Catholic background.

The political context of the Polish LGBTQ+ community is almost entirely associated with the Polish political opposition to the currently in power far-right wing Law and Justice party and is often associated with neoliberal politics of the modern Polish left. Other similar studies, when investigating political discourses in media, use ethnic minorities as an example (Ungerleider, 1991). This case has been instead focused on gender and sexual minority not only due to the current political relevancy in Poland but also due to the immense ethnic homogeneity, according to the 2019 census, 96,9% of people residing in Poland are ethnically Polish ("Poland Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)," 2022).

The LGBTQ+ community is regarded as a minority and for the sake of this theoretical consideration, it will be treated as such. An argument for LGBTQ+ people being a minority is further supported through research, which shows only roughly 7% of the population is LGBTQ+ (NW et al., 2013). This study was done in the United States, but given there were no similar studies done in Europe or Poland, the argument can be roughly extended to the population of Poland as well. Making that assumption, the next step towards the establishment

of a theoretical framework for this research is dealing with issues of media representation of minorities. As discussed by Metykova (2016), European governments have a long-standing history of protecting the nation's integrity by preventing social parallelism, i.e., preventing the formation of communities outside of the main discourse favored by the majority government, which public service announcers aid to guard. While taking advantage of the excuse to protect the country's integrity, actions against minorities and their negative portrayal can be potentially used as an effective tool, which speaks to the national identity of the average Law and Justice voter.

This type of narrative also is apparent to preach so-called 'universal values,' where behind supposedly shared moral conduct hides an agenda that serves a specific group and a selected discourse, all in the name of integrity and national security.

It also meant that government projects to intervene in the cultural dynamics of Muslim life to try to shore up alternatives to Islamism would be legitimized as part of a counterterrorism strategy and it implies that multicultural tolerance of these new forms of identity, in which Muslims identify with co-religions around the world, was in itself a national security risk (Kundnani, 2015:39).

Despite this quite describing the political incentive of portraying a religious minority, the core concept speaks to what can be generalized to any minority. This allows us to speculate the forms of framing of gender and sexual minorities in Poland will reveal a form of threat to the integrity of Polish values. Portraying a community as a threat to what the political supposes as 'general moral conduct' can become an effective tool to normalize minority discrimination in media and public discourse. The evidence of what the current Polish political agenda assumes to be the general moral conduct can be found in the legislative document regulating the functioning of the National Broadcast Broadcasting Council, where it states the 'universal' values that ought to be protected are those of Christian origins ("Art. 21. - Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji," 2021).

Although, what can be argued for the case of TVP based on the discussed political parallelism, the broadcaster itself attempts to become that institution of trust or at least, become the voice to represent the governmental agenda. The growing distrust in official institutions of the Polish nation can be a contributor, but not the determining factor (Morreale and Shockley-Zalabak, 2015). Through the complicated political system, the Law and Justice party have, to

a large extent, assured compliance of TVP, which can be used as evidence of the slow process of turning TVP into a government-compliant institution.

By assuring a level of control over public media, the government has an easier way to perpetuate and promote what fits into their political agenda, especially since the funding does not come from being commercially competitive (a system of tv licenses and governmental subsidies). This means TVP does not necessarily need to worry about “selling what the crowd wants”, but rather focus on building their own narratives. Many mechanisms described in *Media, minorities, and misconceptions* (Ungerleider, 1991) can be paralleled with the Polish media system, including TVP, and the ways minorities are represented. One of the mechanisms is the episodic representation of minorities through negatively charged events.

In the example of the Canadian system, the research has described a tool to misrepresent minorities to be a narrative based around events, where minorities have been presented mainly as villains, by disproportionately attributing the gang activity to the Asian youth, mainly Asian teenage boys. These negative representations of the Asian minorities in Canada happen to correlate with the rising real estate prices and the general fall in the quality of life of Canadians (Ungerleider, 1991). Building a negative narrative around a specific community, which happens to parallel negative events within the Canadian society provided thus an easy explanation, or rather a scapegoat, to put the blame on, for what was currently happening.

“A narrative structure creates unity among events separated by time and space, implies intentionality to the actions of the participants involved in the events beyond that which they may have had, and creates the impression that the separate events share a common "meaning"--thus providing a single interpretation to the many events (Manoff, 1987)”

This episodic framing to represent a minority also proves to be a powerful tool in the opinion-shaping (Bas and Grabe, 2015). The way individual events are described in the context of a minority will inevitably have a significant effect on how this minority is portrayed within society. There is also another important factor that plays a role in the effectiveness of such representation through episodic framing – cultural context. This will ultimately determine the effectiveness of the media portrayal on the public opinion (Scheufele and Iyengar, 2012). The context most relevant within the Polish discussion regarding the representation of the LGBTQ+ community is traditional values. Arguably, what has constituted two main pillars of the Polish identity since partitions in the 19th century, were the Polish language and the Catholic Church (Herbert, 2019). The “Polishness” is heavily established on protecting these values and any threat posed to them are being interpreted as an immediate danger to the integrity of the nation.

With the knowledge of the potential effective news frame in the Polish context and the incoming empirical research of the news content, we can not only begin to understand what the desired image of the LGBTQ+ community is as presented by TVP, but we can also begin to make arguments for its effectiveness on opinion-shaping as well as the political motives behind them. In this case, the representation of minorities will be investigated through the lens of political actions. According to Yatsyk, this discourse presented by PiS *focuses on bodily issues, including family and gender policy, and sexual behavior*. (Yatsyk, 2020:1). This kind of narrative makes sense in the light of PiS' 2015 election campaign, which put as a focal point its social program '500+' promising 500zł, which is roughly equivalent to 130 euros per month in public financial aid for every child under the age of 18 except for the first-born, meaning only the second child grants you the ability to receive said benefits ("Myśląc Polska Konwencja Programowa," 2015).

The effects of these portrayals are also given a context of legislative changes in Poland that correlate with investigated events surrounding the LGBTQ+ community in TVP news broadcasts, taking the case of Canadian school reforms as presented in *Media, minorities, and misconceptions* (Ungerleider, 1991). The discussed points also consider legislative changes done by PiS, such as the ban on LGBTQ+ inclusive sex education and promoting conservative "Polish values" as part of the elementary school curriculum, which can further support arguments of why certain minorities are portrayed in a certain way and what political agenda stands behind that.

The deeper understanding of these events is that since PiS came to power in 2015, there has been a significant legislative and cultural shift towards representing the more conservative values, often embedded in Catholicism, originating mainly from smaller towns and villages, which literature often regards to as Poland B. This stands in opposition to what previous discourse has been catered to, which was that of Poland A – an often educated and more liberal population of large cities. By having a deeper understanding of these notions, we can now seek further to discover the cultural signifiers, which became relevant when analyzing the empirical material. Only understanding the important historical and cultural Polish contexts within the LGBTQ+ discourse will protect it from missing important data in the collected news articles.

Neoliberal contexts of queerness in contemporary Poland

Post-communist Polish politics have been in a constant tug of war between the neoliberal, associated with the intelligence and the population of large cities, often described

as Poland A, and the conservative, associated with small cities and villages known as Poland B. The two biggest political parties since 1990 in Poland have been the Civic Platform (pol. Platforma Obywatelska) and Law and Justice (pol. Prawo i Sprawiedliwość) and it is between them the parliamentary majority has been exchanging since the fall of the Soviet Union. The first has been known to represent the interest of Poland A, while the latter became a voice of Poland B. The early 2000s were marked by the rule of Civic Platform, which brought upon the rise in LGBTQ+ public representation through Euro Pride hosted by Warsaw in 2001 and a ‘Let Them See Us’ campaign organized by the LGBTQ+ right organization Campaign Against Homophobia (Kitliński and Leszkowicz, 2007). Simultaneously, Poland saw the rise of the radical-right populist Law and Justice party, which was a witness to banning equality marches in various Polish cities, and a violent attack on a Krakow equality march, which sparked a larger debate on LGBTQ+ rights in the EU, which Poland joined in that period (Binnie, 2014). It is also interesting to point out the urban demographic has been steadily declining since 2015 by roughly one percent each year (“Poland Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs),” 2022).

The rising homophobia, associated with the articulation of socially conservative views, is argued to be a result of the growing insecurities regarding the Polish identity in the context of joining the European Union (Graff, 2010), though there is little empirical research on the connection of socioeconomic transformation within the context of sexual politics. If we connect Polish queer politics with the rise of neoliberalism, we can begin to contextualize the ways in which the LGBTQ+ community is portrayed by Polish society through the inevitable lens of neoliberalism. Despite no clear opposition on the left-hand side of the political compass, the constructed argument by the current government paints the portrayal that

the former Solidarity opposition and state-socialist social forces have been co-opted into reproducing neoliberalism, while the neo-populists, although rhetorically radical, have instead contributed to the reinforcement of nonlinearization. (Shields, 2007:1)

As argued by Shields, the masculine, orthodox, xenophobic, and homophobic sentiments that the populist Law and Justice party represented, appealed to the ones, who felt at loss in the new, post-communist society, which in this context is residing predominantly in smaller cities working class (Shields, 2007). Ultimately, though, Shields argues that while this nationalist populism is an expression of the rejection of neoliberalism and its hegemony, it only further consolidates and propagates said neoliberalism (Shields, 2012).

A strong pillar holding this conservative narrative up is the Polish Catholic Church and its influence on Polish politics since 1989. Renegotiating the Polish identity and establishing the young democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union tied the Polish state and Church together in a relationship meant to establish the new, national identity of a post-communist Pole.

After 1989, Christian values have been increasingly used as moral tools to bind the nation and the newly created democratic state with state representatives claiming moral authority by explicitly referring to Catholic values (Keinz, 2009)

A strong example of establishing that relationship is the abortion ban in 1993. This is the point in Polish history, the ongoing negotiations between Solidarity and other political players, among which representatives of the Catholic Church were present, were bound to establish the new political system of Poland. This period supposedly solidified the current relationship of the Polish state with the Catholic Church laid the foundation for the two to form an informal, yet influential coalition. This period is significant through the dynamic of *politicians who tend to be passive to prevent political conflict and reduce tensions with the Catholic Church* (David and Titkow, 1994:1). This compliance was a result of an exceptionally difficult period for the Catholic Church and its member, who faced decades of repressions during the communism period.

This argument binds together aspects of LGBTQ+ portrayal in the public service announcer as a tool for building the national identity and strengthening the political position of the PiS party, by catering to the conservative Poland B. This gives us an interesting insight into the political dynamics of young democracies and how public broadcasters are used as a political tool within them.

Concluding thoughts

In summary, Poland and its public broadcast operate within a given media system, which dimensions have been described by Hallin and Mancini (2016) and later redefined to the specific case by Dobek-Ostrowska (2019). The most important dimensions explored through this theoretical argument have been political parallelism and journalistic professionalism. We have been able to find evidence of journalistic professionalism being put in jeopardy through means of institution-level control, where staff changes implemented by newly appointed tv station directors have been chosen and fired. Subsequently, it alludes to larger systemic changes, where a form of control over TVP has been established by PiS since 2015. The most

concrete evidence of this control can be traced back to Article 21 of the “Broadcasting Act,” where Catholic values have been added to the document as universal moral conduct, which must be protected. Such change has allowed for framing, which dictates that what is not Catholic is not moral, opening a gateway for framing explored in this analysis. This argument is tied to the historical and cultural contexts of Poland, where Polish identity, especially the conservative one, relies on Catholic values as well as fending against imagined enemies (Shields, 2012). Such conservative model is represented by a portion of Polish population referred to as Poland B, which opposes the liberal Poland A. This is further supported through more elaborate accounts of important cultural and historical contexts significant to this case study.

These imaginary enemies, such as German occupation, the communist era, or presumed embodiments of neoliberalism such as the LGBTQ+ community, are seen as a threat to traditional Polish values, which generally represent the conservative people in Poland. What ties these imaginary enemies together is either historical affiliation to Poland, such as Communism and German occupation, or new wave thinking represented by neoliberalism. This case study explores news framing of such an enemy which is the LGBTQ+ community. This group is used in this case study mainly as a minority of political significance to Poland’s political actors. Subsequently, by exploring the portrayal of this minority in politically influenced PBS, we can begin to search for evidence of that influence and the potential political and social goals of this minority representation.

The main argument attempts to point out the importance of investigating both the media broadcast and the structural media system changes. Only such a parallel will allow for an accurate assessment of a “system in flux” (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2019). This contextual link should be treated as an extension of Hallin and Mancini’s (2016) categorization of media systems and theoretical arguments supporting them. Subsequently, it is believed to be crucial to include the media broadcast itself in media system considerations as they truly embody the systemic structures, especially when talking about a system, which is in flux. These changes and their affiliation to the PiS party have been connected and explored through their implemented policies since coming into power in 2015. Arguably, this allows this case study to speak for the portrayal of the minority in analyzed material¹ as revealing a political agenda of the PiS party. Additionally, this allows us to make arguments tying these framings to the changes, which occurred after the 2015 PiS election. In turn, we can build a larger argument

¹ See appendix

about the political parallelism of media systems in young democracies, where politicians can expect easier access to changing structures of an established media system.

Methodology

This chapter describes the epistemological dimension of this research. To begin with, we will have a look at the literature within frame analysis. Following, the section will go into considerations regarding qualitative news framing analysis, which this study employs, and focus on the inductive approach. Later, it will move toward the data collection process – how the news articles were sources, what criteria were chosen for the selection, and other pragmatics regarding the accessibility of the content. Next up is the methodological descriptions, which were instruction on how the empirical data was analyzed and frames were identified.

News framing analysis

The methodology used in this research has been inspired by the work of sociologist Erving Goffman in his essay *Frame Analysis: An essay on the organization of experience* (Goffman, 1986). There, he describes frames as “schemata of interpretations”. Mass communication theory has built upon that concept by defining mass media frames as “images of reality... in a predictable and patterned way” (McQuail, 1994:331). Frame analysis is a younger daughter of agenda-setting, which as the premise adopts cognitive theories, which, in short, show the relationship between ways of conveying information and the effect of media. While agenda-setting only deals with the issue of why topics become more important than others, framing “provides a means of describing the power of communication to direct individual cognitions towards a prescribed interpretation of a situation or object” (Jasperson et al., 1998:206).

Scholars do not agree on a centralized definition of framing analysis, but many definitions communicate a similar notion of framing exploring the way in which events are turned into news, how the process is done and what are its potential effects (Linström and Marais, 2012). Using Gaye Tuchman’s (1980, p. 1) analogy:

“News is a window on the world, and through its frame. [...] The news aims to tell us what we want to know, need to know, and should know. But, like any frame that delineates a world, a news frame may be problematic. The view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or a backyard.” (Tuchman, 1980).

In summary, framing analysis aims to explore the discourse around a certain topic, how and why it became relevant, and what influences the way the public regards it. This approach not only explores the general discourse but gives us potential answers and solutions to the ways in which it is conducted. The metaphorical window can consist of many social and political constructs, from journalists' own cognitive biases to systemic influences on the media system. This methodology will focus on the latter end of the spectrum, where news frames will be explored through the lens of political parallelism and systemic influences on news framing. It aims to explore how the specific case of the Polish media system and its public service broadcaster can provide a deeper insight into systemic influences on media within a young, post-communist democracy, which remains to be an understudied geopolitical area. *Frame analysis serves the following purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose courses, to make value judgments, and to suggest remedies* (Entman, 1993). The notion of using framing as a tool to investigate political news in regard to public opinion and normative democratic theory is further supported by Robert M. Entman, who agrees that *"framing appears to be a central power in the democratic process, for political elites control the framing of issues"* (Entman, 1993).

Criticism of the qualitative news frame analysis

Qualitative framing analysis in this case study proves to be a perfect fit to explore the nuances of cultural influences and the signifiers, *which emphasizes the cultural and political content of news frames and "how they draw upon a shared store of social meanings"* (Reese, 2007). Despite these advantages, qualitative news framing analysis has been highlighted by researchers for having two major flaws – validity and reliability. The validity of this method has been criticized regarding the data collection, analysis, and final presentation of results. It has been critiqued for lacking the necessary evidence to showcase its results, where the issue centers around the lack of distinctions between news frames (Klandermans and Staggenborg, 2002). Reliability has been critiqued for not utilizing a codified way of conducting the analysis, where *no easy coding scheme into which textual units can be sorted is evident* (D'Angelo and Kuypers, 2010).

This research method is also highly susceptible to researcher bias. Although in the previous section, this has been described as an advantage, the position of the researcher in this methodology proves to be difficult. On one hand, their experiences and deep understanding of cultural biases are beneficial, it is evident they can also work to the research's disadvantage. It

is not impossible to follow one's preconceived notions of a situation and seek out frames, which fit the researcher's own biases and without having a codified methodology, this is more plausible.

To minimize the effects of the researcher's bias and maximize the advantages brought from the researcher's knowledge of the politics and culture of Poland, a relevant historical summary is provided in the literature review section of this paper to allow an insight into the very contexts the researcher is benefiting from. While conducting the research, every frame is justified with a relevant piece of text from an analyzed news report, which allows for cross-comparison with the original data, creating transparency and proof for why a specific frame was described the way it was.

As the research attempts to approach the case inductively, typologies of frames have been selected. As described by De Vreese, there are two main typologies of news framing – generic and issue-specific. (de Vreese, 2005). As this research explores the portrayal of minorities in public broadcast service, only frames that are relevant to the case of minority portrayal (in this specific example the LGBTQ+ community in Poland) are explored. Given focus was chosen due to the constitutionally regulated mission of TVP in Poland. Like other public broadcast services in other countries, TVP's mission statement is inscribed into the constitution, which regulates what needs to be shown and represented through its broadcast. This bears significance in shaping or at least attempting to do so, the public opinion on certain issues. Act 21 “Tasks of public radio and television” from April 2022 states simultaneously TVP's mission is to “foster the free formation of citizens' views and the formation of public opinion” and “promote social integration, including counteracting social exclusion”, while stating to “respect the Christian system of values, taking as the basic universal principles of ethics” (*Zadania publicznej radiofonii i telewizji - Art. 21. - Radiofonia i telewizja. - Dz.U.2020.805 t.j., n.d.*). While describing inclusion, the same bill presents an exclusionary clause mentioning Christian values, which ties tightly to the Polish culture. As Poland is constitutionally secular, mentioning religion within a legal document regulating TVP's mission points to the significance of culture and its tie to Christianity in Poland, therefore such selection for data exploration has been made. It is also important to mention the nature of the investigated case and its influence on the methodology.

The approach taken in investigating the representation of minorities in a public service broadcast is episodic and this is justified through Iyengar's (1990) findings, where he describes the issue of poverty and its portrayal in media. *When poverty is defined as a general phenomenon, responsibility is assigned quite differently than when poverty is defined as a*

specific instance of a poor person, People hold the government responsible to a greater degree when the media frame is thematic rather than episodic. (Iyengar, 1990). Although we cannot equate the topic of sexual and gender minorities to poverty the same way the study draws a comparison with ethnic minorities, the core argument here suggests that while presenting a case episodically, it is more likely the perception of the issue and blaming will be put on the subject, rather than being treated as a systemic issue. Moreover, as suggested by Van Gorp, “frames are related to cultural phenomena, their use seems so normal and natural that the process of social construction remains invisible [...] frames often are unnoticed and implicit, their impact is by stealth.” (Van Gorp, 2007). The selected study chooses a sexual and gender minority to represent the issue over ethnic minorities, as Poland ranks low on cultural and ethnic diversity, and choosing an approach similar approach to Iyengar’s could prove to provide insufficient data (Davies, 2011). This provides a contextual basis for why cultural implications prove to be important for the study and justifies seeking out cultural devices as part of the framing analysis. Subsequently, it allows the creation of the theoretical basis for the argument that democracies in transition favor implicit framing of minorities.

Qualitative news analysis

Framing analysis is regarded as a methodological bridge between the qualitative and quantitative, psychological and sociological, macro and micro scale (Linström and Marais, 2012). This research will take the qualitative approach and focus on manual analysis, rather than computer-assisted one. As described by Joseph R. Dominick news frame analysis, as a form of qualitative text analysis can serve the following purposes: describing communication content, comparing media content to the “real world” and establishing a starting point for studies of media effects. (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006).

This methodology was therefore picked for this research as it allows to answer considerations regarding the portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland and further allows to establish the extent to which public broadcasting services are susceptible to political parallelism during political shifts in young democracies, such as CEE countries. A similar approach has been adapted in the 2019 comparative study, where framing analysis was used to compare political parallelism, as described by Hallin and Mancini, in Germany and Spain during the Euro crisis (Kaiser and Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2019). This study, similarly, to this research project, recognizes the importance of politically charged issues as a measure of political parallelism of media systems and selected outlets.

This study explores the issue in two dimensions. The foundation of the study is established by exploring how often politicians of specific political affiliation appear in studied online outlets and further, moves on to exploring topics of specific political affiliation and its representations in public service media. Although the study explores events tied to economics – the Euro crisis, whereas this paper explores notions of social and civic issues – protests of the LGBT community, it shows the significance of exploring politically inclined topics and their representations as a form of investigating the political parallelism of outlets and the media system. To further justify the importance of minority representation and the role of media in creating and sustaining an image, we can refer to the finding of a 1991 study, which explores ethnical minority representation and the role of media in creating discourses around them (Ungerleider, 1991). This study states that “governments are main purveyors of news” (Ungerleider, 1991:2), meaning governments and their activities stand in the spotlight. Therefore, governments communicate discourses that express issues of social and cultural significance. They are also argued to be the main producers of information that further gets codified as news.

The advantages of using a qualitative approach center around avoiding the *reductionistic urge to sort media texts and discourse into containers and count their size or frequency* (Reese, 2007). This quality shows us the exact advantages and methodological advancements between agenda-setting and frame analysis. Instead of allowing quantity and boxed discourses to rule the research, frame analysis allows room to explore meanings that are embedded within the analyzed text and their relationships with each other. This is particularly important in this research, as it explores the case study through the cultural frames. Without understanding the Polish context within which the case is placed, the empirical research risks the reductionist approach and constricts the material within coding traditionally associated with agenda-setting. The methodology utilizes the knowledge of cultural idioms and other languages- and culture-based nuances, while taking concepts from literary analysis such as metaphors and similes, which could not be explored through machine-powered analysis.

As previously stated, this methodology allows establishing a basis upon which further research regarding media effects can be conducted. This research expects that implicit cultural framing around the topic of minorities is aimed to serve a specific political agenda and, in turn, influence the public discourse around the topic, which in this case is in the LGBTQ+ community in Poland. Frame analysis, as opposed to other text analysis methods, allows for a wider variety of material to be included in the empirical research. As Pan and Kosicki list (Pan and Kosicki, 1993), these differences are key to describing qualitative framing news analysis

“instead of conceiving news texts as psychological stimuli with identifiable meanings”, it rather paints news as a collection of symbols selected to interact with the receiver's memory in the desired way. The framework of framing analysis is not constrained by the structuralist understanding of news discourse but rather, accepts both the idea a news text is built according to a given schema as well as contains multidimensional concepts, which allow for cognitive shortcuts on the receiver's end. What makes framing analysis valid is not the assumption the researcher is simply qualified to read the gathered empirical material, but rather establishing a context within which the reader is included, as it is him who finally decodes and absorbs this multidimensional message. (Pan and Kosicki, 1993)

The points are key to understanding the reason for choosing a qualitative approach while conducting frame analysis on this case study. The first point describes the cultural importance within the analysis, which proves to be a crucial understanding for this case, as the research supposes cultural frames to be the main devices in constructing meaning around the chosen discourse. Without understanding the contextual implication of cultural significance of what being a part of a sexual and gender minority culturally bears in Poland, the analysis brings little significant understanding of how and why news surrounding the topic is framed. Only the understanding of the Polish queer and other histories will allow for full decoding of cultural framing and assigning meaning to it.

Secondly, it accounts for notions of journalistic professionalism and journalists' own bias as an influential factor, which is an important point in understanding how the definition of the profession is shaped in a politicized workplace. This brings us to the importance of political changes and transformations within the Polish media system. We need to look at how it compares to not only its own timeline but also to other systems with a similar geopolitical background to allow for larger conclusions and cross-systematic comparisons elevating the research beyond the specificity of the Polish media system. It is also important to understand the historical implication of the profession of a journalist in Poland and how it affects currently existing systems.

The two last points encapsulate the important notions of researchers' participation and the utility of their own preconceived understanding of the investigated phenomenon. As a Polish LGBTQ+ person, my position as a researcher in exploring this case is important and useful as it allows me to explore the case through these exact cultural nuances that others do not understand and poses. Cultural knowledge is not easily obtained and understanding the historical and cultural implications of the topic in Poland will allow for an in-depth analysis of the text while assuring no important contexts within the data are missed.

Data collection method

Data for this research has been collected solely from one source – the TVP’s own news channel website tvpinfo.pl, which is to date the biggest readily available written news from the Polish public broadcaster. According to a 2021 report by Nielsen Audience Measurement, as cited by Notes from Poland, TVP is a currently the leading tv station among age groups between 4-16 and 50+, while the 16-49-year-olds choose TVN – the biggest private tv station in Poland owned by Discovery Group (Tilles, 2022). The report shows about 60% of TVP’s total audience is above 65 years old, meaning mostly retired. The process was initiated by looking through the most recent events surrounding the LGBTQ+ community in Poland and the amount of coverage it has received from the public broadcaster on its website. Once a case study with sufficient material has been established, which happen to be the arrest of a trans activist and following protests in Warsaw in August 2020, the material collection began. The efficiency of the material was established by choosing all articles, which regarded the investigated case within the selected period. August 2020 was the time frame within which the material was collected for two main reasons, the first one being the close time proximity to the event, which is a common quality of articles that frame events episodically (Ungerleider, 1991), secondly, the archive from which the material was obtained revealed only August 2020 was a month in which news regarding the analyzed event was published. The activist was arrested as a result of June 2020 events, where she, together with her “Stop Bzdurrom” collective, stopped an anti-LGBT truck in the city of Warsaw. The website was manually scraped for all news articles describing the case, which were all published in the month of August 2020. This means tvpinfo.pl’s archive for the month of August was browsed manually and all articles regarding the arrest of Margot were added to the data. Articles were manually saved, one by one in a form of a PDF document. The total amount of articles partaking in this research is 121.

Data analysis

For this research, the unit of analysis is defined as a singular article, as it is the most often used unit framing analysis (Linström and Marais, 2012). This can also be further justified by the structure and length of analyzed news articles, which are often no longer than three paragraphs and center around one event.

This research employs four framing functions as described by Entman, which are to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies (Entman, 1993), although each frame might not contain all of them and the presence of all functions should not be used as a definer of a frame. In addition to that, the reconstruction of a framing package, which according to Van Gorp (2007, p. 71) is “*the basis of the framing devices in texts with a cultural phenomenon as a central idea and, as the case may be, reasoning devices that are demonstrably part of media content and discourse*” (Van Gorp, 2007), is conducted through a selection of evidential sentences from each analyzed article. The selection is guided by this instruction provided by Van Gorp, where each article is manually browsed and sentences containing statements that evaluate the LGBTQ+ community are copied into a separate document, and based on that selection for each article, a frame is identified, described and justified. The framing analysis will be supported by reasoning devices, to further support and identify existing frames in the analyzing text. The devices include - topic definition, causal attribution, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. (Entman, 1993). In a case that regards the studied issue through a cultural lens, the recognition of literary tools such as metaphors, similes, or culture-specific proverbs is necessary and is used to further support the selection and definition of frames, but it is important to recognize finding these is not a sole construct of a frame (Van Gorp, 2007). This rather serves as a reminder of the important literary tools bring to news articles and frames build within its structure.

This means each article is dissected into sentences, which are recognized as part of the frame and later coded into a frame. The devices are used to find evidence in the text and look for the important sentences that will ultimately reconstruct the frame used in the analyzed text. What is considered important for this selection, are fragments of a news report that can be used to reconstruct the frame that is used within the text, which includes statements regarding the LGBTQ+ community, with any cultural evaluations significant to evaluating the status of the group and influencing the discourse around it.

Table 1: framing devices (Linström and Marais, 2012)

Category	Examples
Rhetorical and other written/grammatical devices	Word choice; Metaphors; Exemplars Key words (presence and/or absence) Stock phrases (presence and/or absence)

	Sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement
	Concluding statements and paragraphs
Technical devices (elements of news-writing, layout, visuals)	Headlines; Subheadings; Photo captions; Leads; Photographs; Layout (prominence of the article) Page placement (front page, etc.)
	All sources of information in article
	Who is quoted
	How are they identified
	Where is the quote placed in the story
	Quoting experts to claim empirical validity or facticity
	Quoting official sources to link certain points of view to authority
	Quoting a social deviant to marginalise certain points of view

Analysis

The analysis is based on empirical material collected on tvpinfo.pl's website surrounding the events of August 2020, when protests regarding the arrest of a transgender activist Margot happened. The protests have evoked broad media discussion about the LGBTQ+ community, both within the context of the event as well as in the broader context of the cultural and social implications of the community in Poland. TVP has across the material presented an unsupportive stance on the LGBTQ+ community, while commenting on the events, which occurred in Warsaw. Generally, the protests have been criticized by the opposition to have exhibited excessive police brutality. Subsequently, both episodic and general criticism of the ruling party and its discriminatory stance on the matter was voiced. The material shows the representation of the public broadcasting service TVP, which has been argued to largely represent a voice that aligns with the political agenda of the PiS party. Among the collected material we can find two major types of articles – those directly describing the arrest and following protests as well as general reflective commentaries on the cultural and social implications of the LGBTQ+ community.

Circumstances for August 2020 were as follows. The transgender activist Margot together with her collective “Stop Bzdurom”, a leftist activist organization, attempted to stop a

pro-life truck driving around Warsaw that proclaimed anti-LGBT and anti-abortion slogans. These trucks have been spotted across the whole country in various major cities for months prior to this event and the organizer of these truck rides has remained unknown. This incident led to Margot's detainment on the 14th of July 2020, when Margot was arrested in her own apartment and was not allowed to put on her shoes while being detained. For many days to follow, neither the police nor the court would release any information about the circumstances of the detainment. In turn, this built tension around the detainment and started discussions about its legitimacy. She was kept in a male jail in accordance with her legal gender marker, which further escalated tensions. This led to the ruling of the court which deemed Margot guilty of a hooligan act on the 7th of August 2020. The ruling sparked outrage among the public, especially the LGBTQ+ community, which sparked a series of protests in Poland's capital Warsaw. During these protests, reports of police brutality were recorded. Ultimately, Margot was released from jail on August 28th, 2020.

Protests started a nationwide debate regarding the rights of the LGBTQ+ people in Poland, which were represented by both sides of the political spectrum. The explored material contains articles that both give an account of the protests and comment on them, as well as start a broader debate regarding the rights and social implications of the LGBTQ+ community. Both types of material were recognized as valuable data in exploring how the LGBTQ+ community was framed by PBS.

This section of the thesis is devoted to describing and analyzing the empirical findings of the collected data. Articles included in the data are sourced from tvpinfo.pl's website and represent the total amount of texts, which have been produced surrounding the protests after the arrest of the activist Margot in August 2020. Framing analysis has been used as a method in this research, which results in data coded into frames. The current section dissects those frames, provides data evidence for the described frame, and categorizes them into broader categories to investigate larger themes evident throughout the empirical material. The data consists of short online articles sourced from tvpinfo.pl – public broadcasting service's official online news outlet. Data provided in this section have been translated from Polish to English by the author. The original data in Polish with English frames and raw analysis is provided in the appendices.

In accordance with the theoretical considerations of this paper, the data is broken down into overall themes, which are largely consistent throughout the material, and a form of categorization, which breaks the material up into sections depending on the cultural framing it contains. The analysis has categorized the findings into three main groups. First, "discrediting

LGBT and opposition”, which is the more general frame that largely encompasses findings from the entirety of analyzed data and is discussed as a supportive theme to the other ones found in the analysis. Next, “LGBT is a state enemy”. A frame, which encompasses instances and ways in which LGBT is portrayed as an anti-governmental organization, with relevant contexts. Lastly, “the ruling party as a protector of morality and Polish heritage” contains frames, which show the strengthening of the ruling party’s position by portraying actors of the states as ones protecting the Polish nation against a moral and cultural collapse.

On top of that, frames and categories are provided with the analysis of the practical use of wording in articles – examples of it being cited outside opinions, which is argued to contribute to implicit cultural framing as it allows to express opinions and views through third parties. Here, alongside the analysis, relevant historical and cultural context is provided.

Discrediting LGBT identities

This section is dedicated to the overall theme observed in the collected material – discrediting LGBT identities, which is observed throughout the entirety of the text. As this empirical study is centered around the arrest of one specific activist, the identity, and examples of its infringements center around one person – the arrested transgender activist named Margot. This data focuses on forms of misgendering and other invalidations of the individual’s identity notable in the analyzed text.

Transgenderism as a form of impersonation

A major part of the text describes Margot as a man using her legal, male name Michal Sz. in all provided articles. The context within which this happens varies, one of them being Margot’s looks which do not attempt to be conventionally feminine.

"Honestly? Enough of this "- Gozdyra replied to their allegations. “A non-binary person has no specific gender. Margot, on the other hand, calls herself her, although otherwise, she does not resemble a woman in any way.

Another manifestation of that is framing the fact of transgenderism not as such, but rather as impersonating or playing a role of a woman, not actually being one.

She greeted the crowd from Michał Sz. The man - who identifies himself as a woman - has been arrested for two months in connection with an assault case.

Transgender identities are here contested against the traditional gender role, which allows it to be discredited as it does not fit the standard portrayal of a woman. In this case, such wording is used to initially discredit the legitimacy of such identity allowing to further question its validity and stripping it of the right to respect and protection. The implication here is that it allows journalists to connect the alleged illegitimacy of the activist's identity with the person herself, allowing for further delegitimization of their opinions, actions, and defenses against criticism. Another form of that delegitimization is often worded in a way implying the activist's female name is only a form in which she chooses to introduce herself, reducing the entirety of her identity into a name.

According to the prosecutor's office, Michał Sz. - introducing himself as Małgorzata Sz. "Margot" - is suspected of having committed a sexual act involving participation in a rally, a brutal attack on a pro-life activist, and the destruction of property belonging to the foundation.

This type of introduction is often worded in a harsher way, where the name is reduced to a pseudonym.

It was the inscriptions related to this topic that appeared on the van when it was attacked by an LGBT activist, including Michał Sz., ps. "Margot."

Framing the activist's identity as a pseudonym not only perpetuates the overall rejection of the legitimacy of their identity but also has a deeper cultural implication in the Polish context. The need for using a pseudonym comes in Poland with an implication of having the need to hide once activities from the main discourse and acting against the political majority.

This started during WWII campaigns of the National Army, where the organized anti-governmental group would organize underground sabotages aimed at the occupant. This tradition and implication have extended throughout the communist era when the anti-governmental underground would also protect their identities behind pseudonyms (Bloom, 2013). This essentially implies and allows to further build on the implicit cultural frame the members of the LGBT and their activist representatives are anti-governmental collaborators.

LGBT as violent perpetrators

What has become apparent through the material is also the notion of aggression and a consistent stressing of violence inflicted by LGBT protestors. They are often painted as aggressive, and unpredictable.

What do you want to do? Do you want to screw me up? The angry LGBT activist shouted to a young boy standing still on Friday in Krakowskie Przedmieście.

This is arguably another tool to overall discredit and builds a knowledge base for TVPs reader that members of the LGBT community are not to be trusted do you their aggressive nature and outbursts of violence. This is further supported by the notion of this aggression not being punished enough, which can implicitly excuse more disregarding and even aggressive acts towards LGBT protestors as they have “not been punished enough”.

This means that the suspect will be released from custody. "Margot" was arrested for two months for destroying property and attacking a pro-life activist. In the arrest of Sz. spent three weeks. The activist was also accused of having knocked Łukasz K. onto the pavement during the incident, which resulted in injuries to his back and left wrist. These offenses are punishable by up to five years in prison.

Stressing the extent of how punishable the crime committed by Margot and other activists during protests has also been a theme, which followed throughout the entirety of the material. This is another argument to solidify the righteousness of punishing the LGBT protestors and creating the overall image of the protestor as a criminal and one going against the righteous government and its players such as the police. The aggression towards the police has been stressed on many occasions and utilized alleged quotes from the protestors, which were aggressive, vulgar, and disrespectful towards the police. It utilized Polish pejorative slang for police, which is “dogs”, directly comparable to the British slang “pigs”.

The authors refer to the events that preceded the arrest of Michał Sz. ps. "Margot" - an LGBT activist who was supposed to beat the pro-life activist and demolish the Pro Foundation's truck - Right to Life. "You are whores", "fascists", "whores, not people", fucking dogs "- such words were shouted in the face of the policemen by participants of the demonstration recorded, among others, by the police.

Police have been overall portrayed in an exceptionally good light throughout the data, pointing at their bravery and the excellent service they provide by protecting the community from outrageous, violent protestors.

"Respecting the person of Mr. Chairman, I express my deep hope that you are able to stop the unjustified political attack on Polish policemen who, risking their own life and health every day, guard the safety of Poland and Poles and the observance of law and order in our homeland" – as written.

Apart from being described as brave, the police have also been framed within a narrative of doing what they needed to do, pointing at their responsibilities and duties associated with their profession.

There is no mention in the appeal that Michał Sz. "Margot", who calls himself, was arrested on suspicion of destroying property and assaulting a pro-life activist. The appeal is surprising because Michał Sz. "Margot" was detained not for his views, but in connection with the demolition of a pro-life foundation van and an attack on its activist. "Małgorzata Sz. Was not arrested, but Michał Sz., And the police were forced to react to the aggressive behavior of the hooligan companions"

By discrediting Margot's identity, while also rejecting the argument of a political arrest, the message here is clear – the police as rightfully detained a criminal, who makes outrageous claims about the occurred events, all while impersonating someone else, in this instance, a woman. Arguments of violence against policemen further strengthen that argument.

LGBT as an ideological threat from the West

The current regime often quotes the "West" as a source of these detrimental ideologies, such as LGBT, which not only further perpetuates the idea of so-called "LGBT ideology", but also creates another imaginary across the public discourse, which implies that by implanting LGBT in Poland, the West is trying to influence the national discourse, regarding LGBT this as a form of a foreign invasion of force.

"We call on the Polish authorities to immediately release Małgorzata Sz. and guarantee the rights of LGBT+ people "- we read in the appeal of over 200 scientists from various (mostly Western) countries, published by" Gazeta Wyborcza ". The text mentions the "brutality" of the police and the "homophobic campaign carried out by the Polish authorities". There is no mention in the appeal that Michał Sz.

"Margot", who calls himself "Margot", was arrested on suspicion of destroying property and assaulting a pro-life activist.

To further support the delegitimization of the LGBT community, tactics of dehumanization have been employed throughout the material, where it was difficult to find instances in which authors of the text would refer to any of the protestors as people, except for the main perpetrator Margot. Chosen narrative rather portrayed members of protests as an organized group, which exhibits signs of ideological, and even religiously collectivized radicalization.

When asked if such actions by Hartman and those around him were making LGBT ideology a religion, Ryba admitted that it was.

This portrayal extends even to members of the LGBT community, where the claim is that even homosexual people are victimized by it.

Today I cried for the first time in a long time. LGBT turned out to be mean, destructive, sick of hatred and wants nothing to do with it. Throughout my life, no one has caused me so much pain, has tried to humiliate and destroy me as much as people with a rainbow in their profiles today – just because I do not agree to the aggression of the activists," wrote Starczyk.

This quote, sourced directly from a homosexual person, clearly suggests gay people and the LGBT community are two very separate things. The first is just as much of a victim to the second as anybody else, allowing to create this fallacy that the LGBT community does not just consist of queer people, but is an organized, ideological sect. In addition to this, acts of vandalism committed by LGBT activists have been subjected to a form of delegitimization, where, as an example, the destroyed truck by activists with anti-LGBT slogans has been described as operating with legal slogans.

The slogans on the van demolished by "Margot" were legal. We remind you of the court's decision.

The presented material provides a general overview of the portrayal of the LGBT community during and surrounding the protests following the arrest of Margot. By opening the analysis with these general considerations, we can better contextualize themes and categories presented throughout the following analysis, as it allows us to understand the general aims of authors regarding the organization of the public discourse on this topic aka framing of the issue.

By stressing the legality of the government's actions against the LGBT activists, in combination with the delegitimization of the entirety of the community, we can better contextualize further findings. Descriptors present in the introductory material allow us to begin constructing ideas around the aims of such frames as well as their context within public broadcasting service and their mission. By seeing what frames and tools are used to define the LGBT community within the scope of the texts describing selected events, we can begin to understand the implicit communication through the body of the text regarding the analyzed topic.

LGBT as a state enemy

History proves to be an effective tool in concealing discriminatory statements against the LGBT community and serves as a fool-proof way to convey desired messaging by implying what is in the common discourse recognized by those events. It can be easily recognized as a translation tool to simplify opinion-making and shape the general discourse in desired ways, without explicitly stating such implications. History, especially that of oppression and geopolitical aggression, bears high significance to the Polish identity, and forms of disrespect towards any important events or cultural phenomena can be largely attributed as a sign of generally understood treason and abandonment of values, which unite Poland as a nation. This becomes evident when we look at collected data regarding the framing of the political opposition and broadly understood Left.

The video shows the group hanging a rainbow flag symbolizing the LGBT movement on the statue of St. John Paul II, standing in front of the Church of All Saints on Warsaw's Grzybowski Square. The figure that was profaned commemorates the Congress held in Poland in 1987 Eucharistic. It took place during the third pilgrimage of the Holy Father to Poland.

The narrative tends to steer towards implications and comparisons to either state enemies or other historical events, which carry undeniable connotations in the common discourse, especially among older generations. The USSR is not remembered fondly by many, therefore any parallels that are drawn between a group and USSR, or today's Russia are interpreted unfavorably by the common discourse.

Bartosz Węglarczyk from Onet [oppositional online news outlet] referred to the mechanism of Russian disinformation. He wrote that it consists of referring to an insignificant event, entering it into an appropriate narrative, sharing it on the web, and waiting for the results. However, Internet users pointed

out to Bartosz Węglarczyk that he had shared information about an insignificant event within a dozen or so hours. As it concerns LGBT communities, it is, however, part of the ongoing world-outlook dispute in Poland. Finally, even Onet admitted that they are not gays or lesbians, but simply LGBT activists.

By equating oppositional rhetoric to that of Russia, or at least giving it attributes of media narratives associated with a non-democratic state, the frame achieves two goals. First, it draws a parallel between opposition, the LGBT community, and Russia, implicitly comparing it to a “state enemy”, as well as deflecting any future allegations of using said manipulative tactics against the public broadcaster.

Comparisons to Russia and USSR are not uncommon among collected material. They vary in intensity, yet a similar goal seems to shine through all these examples – LGBT is as much of an enemy as the Soviets once were. By using this easily readable to the Polish public parallel, the framing proves to be effective at what it allegedly sets out to achieve – creating an enemy without explicitly calling a group one.

It would be nice to go out in two months in something that is not Poland, so either the Soviets or you fagots - says Michał Sz. In the recording published on the network, who describes himself as a woman named Margot. Michał Sz. is suspected of committing a hooligan act involving participation in a riot, a brutal attack on a pro-life activist, and the destruction of property belonging to the foundation.

The framing here creates clear parallels between LGBTs, Soviets, and hooligans – although not explicitly stated, the logical argument goes in the direction of “the one who sides with Soviets is LGBT and accused of violence against both against pro-government narratives but proactively protests the current regime”. Attributing and affirming committed crimes to members of the LGBT, especially to the activist Margot, is a strongly reinforced argument all through collected material. We can see that the statement is repeated in most articles that explicitly describe the case of Margot and this form of wording is utilized often.

Let us remind you - the case for which the LGBT activist hiding under the pseudonym "Margot" is to be arrested concerning the demolition of the anti-abortion van of the Pro-Right to Life Foundation at the end of June. LGBT activists, including "Margot", attacked a member of the foundation. The Internet circulated during the photo and recording of the event. You can see how pro-life activists are beaten, and one of the more aggressive strikers is "Margot". Later, the man boasted on Facebook photos with the license plate detached from the vehicle.

This form of reinforcement is likely the most prevalent across the material. Utilizing the law and its justifications for why this person is bad creates a safe frame justified by the current regime. This argument, though, has a circular nature, as the state narrative presented in the media is reinforced by the very regime itself. Although, this can be placed within the category of moral arguments, as it is difficult to dispute an argument established in what is portrayed as common sense.

The unstable Left and opposition

The first group of frames observed in the conducted analysis has been observed to revolve around discrediting the political opposition as well as the left-wing in its entirety. Examples of frames present in the following category present an array of cultural implications, which contribute to the implicit framing of the general outline opinion about political rivals. Through this category, it becomes apparent various themes are being conveyed and a plethora of implicit implications are presented through its portrayal. The first general category that presents itself through analyzed data is the notion of the left being violence apologists. The material operates heavily on the tight connection of the Left with the LGBT community, allowing it to potentially connect as similar structurally.

Meanwhile, numerous members of the Left gathered in front of one of the LGBT premises in solidarity with "Margot". They also write about being repressed for views.

Let us remind you - the case for which the LGBT activist hiding under the pseudonym "Margot" is to be arrested, concerns the demolition of the anti-abortion van of the Pro-Right to Life Foundation at the end of June.

Ways in which this portrayal is framed and justified include indirect comparisons and parallels. Although it is not explicitly said, the Left is portrayed as pro-violence. It is done by putting together these two arguments – the left supporting LGBT and the aggression of a member of the LGBT. It is easy to imagine the possible conclusion expected from the reader, as it is a culturally recognized fact that violence is not allowed, and not favored, which makes the purpose of such a parallel evident. It operates on an anticipated generalization, implying a more direct way to convey the message is either unfavorable or potentially not allowed.

While describing the left and their public expressions of opinions surrounding the events of August 2020 as well as its context within a larger discussion regarding the LGBT

community, the authors present quotes including historically significant events or contextualize them to achieve a narrative goal. What is mainly observed through collected data is references to the Soviet era, the German occupation of 1939-44, and selected events from the communist era in Poland. The significance and portrayal of these events in the public discourse are undoubted and it is easy to understand the implications brought by these parallels in the general interpretations of information put within the same context.

In defending the LGBT community, the director recognized that the situation of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people was similar to that of Polish Jews in 1968. Recalling the policy of combating Jews during Władysław Gomułka's time, Holland assessed that in the current situation of homosexuals, there are many similarities with those events. Agnieszka Holland did not hesitate to compare Poland to Putin's Russia.

By putting together contextually relevant historical events, it is rather simple to understand what implications are being made within the presented material, when the context of such events is decoded and understood. Both historical and geopolitical contexts presented in the text bear negative connotations for the Polish people. The year 1968 in Poland brought upon anti-Semitic propaganda, which is believed to have forced the remaining Jewish population after Second World War to emigrate from Poland.

This parallel can be understood as the government wanting to achieve similar goals, which can be seen as exaggerated in the light of the 1968 events. Similarly, Russia is seen and often used as an example not only as a former enemy and a threat to the Polish sovereignty but also as an Authoritarian state, allowing no freedoms to its citizens. Again, framing revolves around key indirect and implicit elements – knowledge of and the implications of key historical events as well as using the form of direct quoting to avoid the direct expression of potentially controversial stances and opinions.

Arguments of exaggeration through historical comparisons are rather prevalent in reports regarding August 2020 events. We can find evidence of claims, where the political opposition is framed as one, which is the main provocateur of the conflict with the ruling right-wing government, by using already resolved issues as fuel to the fire.

Last weekend's insignificant event became a reviving, strong current of "water to the mill" of the current opposition - mainly the Civic Coalition and its favorable media.

Last Friday, a nationalist demonstration took place in Katowice to express opposition to LGBT people. The police, observing the demonstration for possible violations of the law, registered that a man was

showing a sign promoting fascism. Although the man was arrested by the police, who announced that they would bring him to the prosecutor's office, the president of Katowice condemned such behavior by a participant in the Friday demonstration and expressed the hope that "the perpetrators of this disgusting gesture will be quickly and severely punished," the case was immediately used against the present power.

The events described in this article refer to a nationalist, anti-LGBT march that happened in Katowice following Margot's arrest and protests against it. Notions of fascism are treated seriously, which the author proves by pointing at the reaction of the police, proving the current system has no tolerance for such behavior. Showing the opposition still uses it against the government allows attributing it to spite and unfair judgment of the occurred events and their implications, points at their incompetence, and can be viewed as generally detrimental to the image of the integrity of opposition all while building up the effectiveness and grandness of political majority.

A more intricate way to frame events surrounding the arrest of Margot includes references to World War II and what was known during the occupation as "roundups" or "raids". The untranslatable word essentially means unlawful arrests performed on the Polish and Jewish people during the occupation. These events are often referenced when discussing mass arrests or any events, where police must intervene in a large crowd of people. Usually, that form of comparison means overstepping competencies by the police, but in this case, it is used to frame the opposition as exaggerating what happened during the Warsaw protests in August 2020.

Reporting on the actions of the police during the protest of LGBT communities in Warsaw, the parliamentarians spoke of a "round-up". - This is the eradication of the legal actions of the current services against the terror of the German occupier in 1939–1944 - warns Świrski in an interview with the tvp.info portal and emphasizes that thousands of citizens of the capital were losing their lives then. The point is to make people aware of the actions of the police, which guard law and order, with the actions of the German occupier. In an interview with the tvp.info portal, the president of Reduta Dobrego Imienia emphasizes that the word "round-up" in Polish consciousness has no associations other than a tool of German terror against the defenseless inhabitants of the capital.

The article essentially quotes the oppositional arguments against police brutality and justifies them through ridiculing used war similes. This paints an image of the LGBT community as one that, not only tries to exaggerate alleged violence committed against them but also disrespects the violence experienced by Polish people during the German occupation.

Indirectly, the message it conveys is that of disrespect towards Polish history and culture, by putting unjust and disrespectful criminals in the position of a victim.

LGBT as an anti-Catholic ideology

On the note of invalidating Polish history and culture, Poland has a strong bond to the Catholic Church with over 90% of the population officially subscribed to Roman Catholicism (GUS, 2016). Associating with any other religion is therefore not only unlikely but also viewed as a form of moral betrayal of Polish values. Many people, even those who do not follow Catholicism, still engage in many Catholic holidays as a form of interacting with their family, so despite the declining population practicing the religion, the cultural implication of the Catholic Church in the society is still very strong. Exactly that environment equates in the public discourse religiosity with morality, therefore any implications of believing in a different religion, or worse, importing a new religion from abroad are viewed as an infringement on the Polish moral conduct.

Just as the priesthood was a source of social capital in the past, it can be a homosexual, trans person today. An expert in "Dziennik Gazeta Prawna" calls LGBT a "new religion" and points out that Margot may be its "totem" in Poland. According to Łuczewski, this letter expresses "a specific point of view of the liberal intelligentsia - not only Polish but also worldwide - which dramatizes reality and sees it in terms of the apocalyptic clash between good and evil." Michał Łuczewski points out that this liberal revolution attacks its own children and remembers Rafał Trzaskowski (for not showing up in Warsaw at the protests) or TVN (for the fact that its journalists called the activist Michał).

TVP often makes parallels to religiosity and LGBT's threatening behavior towards established Poland Catholicism, but this might be the strongest form for the manifestation of that. Here, the central argument within this article is equating the status of a homosexual person to that of a priest. What this argument does, is essentially operate on this fallacy that being gay is beneficial to one's life, just like being a priest used to do in terms of social status. By operating within that fallacy, while additionally drawing parallels with the liberal intellectuals, the framing here becomes evident, where the liberal intelligence tries to gain status by associating with this new so-called religion and does not hesitate to do whatever it takes to achieve that, even if it means sacrificing its own "casualties" in the process. This argument not only allows to discredit the opposition as one incapable of protecting its electorate but one who will not tend to the needs it openly voices.

Going against Catholicism does not always mean creating a new religion, but it can also manifest itself by attacking the one the majority believes to be the one and only moral choice. On the grounds of that established morality, where Catholicism is the one and only code of conduct, acting against its values can be then framed as universally immoral. As the violence in the previous section was framed as universally wrong, since the law prohibits it, this parallel shows us a frame, were acting against Catholicism, even if it is promoting anti-LGBT slogans, is against commonly established morality. This excerpt comes from an article, which argues against the destruction of quoted billboards and implies, that they are the voice of the majority in the town.

"We are fed up with rainbow indoctrination, lack of respect for our holiness and aggression against people with the views of others rainbow" - this is how the "Silent Majority", a group of people who oppose "rainbow flag lobbyists", presents itself on social media. "Deviations will not pass", "Overcome evil with good", "Faith heals frustration" or "Białystok against scandals". These are just some of the slogans on banners in the capital of Podlasie. Some of them refer to quotations from the Holy Scriptures.

Although slogans may come off as outrageous and discriminatory, they are quoted from the Bible, which morally excuses them. This form for framing provides a kind of two-way verification – one, which embeds its content in what is established as the one and only moral code of conduct, and two, takes the responsibility for these quotes away from everyone involved, including propagating it TVP and leaves it in the hands of ones who dare to question the moral superiority of the Bible and Catholicism.

Justification of discrimination through religion proves to be a common theme persistently appearing in analyzed articles. This frame exists in the fallacy that whatever is associated with Catholicism is inheritably moral and justified. By employing that argument, even the most outrageous statements can pass as justified, as well as their judgment will be limited, and ostracized as it indirectly critiques the religion itself. This argument fits also into the newest correction to the bill regulating the Polish media system, where it explicitly states that media needs to *“respect the Christian system of values, taking as the basic universal principles of ethics”* (“Art. 21. - Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji,” 2021).

In this case, drawing a conclusion that LGBT is inheritably anti-Catholic, allows them to surpass the anti-discrimination article, that states no minorities can be discriminated against in public media, by overruling it by arguing for the protection of general values, which coincide with what is believed to be as vaguely described “Catholic moral conduct”. This leaves room

for a plethora of discriminatory statements and claims aimed at the LGBT community, as the vague concept of “Catholic morality” can be extended to essentially any stakeholder with a Catholic association, including pro-life organizations, right-wing NGOs, priests, and many others. By quoting or inviting to interview favorable actors associated with the institution of the Church, any messaging can be conveyed with virtually no repercussions.

Together with the argument of violence, TVP has used the comparisons of protests to riots, which need to not only be tamed and pacified but also as ones born out of an anti-establishment ideology. The word “revolution” in the Polish culture has a generally negative connotation, as it is often used to refer to the idea of a communist revolution, which also does not carry positive implications. By implying something is an “ideological revolution” not only does the correlation of a systemic collapse associated with communism pop into an average Pole’s head, but also speaks to the idea a new system of values is being insisted upon by a certain party, which in this case is the LGBT community with an association to the Left and opposition.

“So far, LGBT + people have fought for their rights in a peaceful manner - and it has had no effect. (...) Rebellion is a weapon of the powerless. Rebellion and revolution are never polite and aesthetic, said Anna Maria Żukowska in an interview with Super Express. And every revolution is inspired by ideology,” comments journalist Wojciech Wybranowski.

Arguments presented in this frame further solidify the presented by TVP fallacy that the LGBT community is an organization, which follows a tangible and constructed ideology. While it adds to the dehumanization of members of the LGBT community, it also serves as a justification for the police brutality as their actions can be justified through the argument of protecting communities against riots. In connection with the juridical framing, where actions are justified through the existing law, this provides a solid basis on which many grey zone arguments regarding the LGBT community can be made and still be justifiable in the light of present regulations.

Ruling party as a protector of morality and Polish heritage

As the framing regarding the portrayal of the LGBT community establishes strong portrayals that revolve around narratives of violence and being a state enemy, it is only logical that arguments on the ruling party’s side will in some form be a response to how and why should we fend for the integrity of the nation against these presumed threats. Analyzed data

shows just that and similarly to the previously discussed section, notions of history and culture are visible through the news framing. In addition to arguments in favor of religion, the framing of arguments presented by the ruling majority or any actors representing the right-wing is presented as the voice of undisputable rationale. What is important to preface is that often, while arguing for or against the government or the general discourse in the analyzed material, Catholic Church, right-wing commentators, and other players associated with the two are considered part of the favorable to the parliamentary majority government discourse.

I never refer to ideological, but common-sense arguments. In recent years, marginalized minorities have been subject to increased pressure and attacks in Poland, and there has been an escalation in the last few months, "he writes. The author quickly begins to analyze the activities of Rafał Ziemkiewicz, a writer and publicist, known, among others for a performance in the TV program "In those days" on TVP Info. GPAHE directly calls him a "Holocaust denier" and a "homophobe." "I am not a Holocaust denier by any means. This is pure slander disseminated in the foreign-language Jewish media "

Commonly associated with the right-wing, commentator and publicist Rafał Ziemkiewicz is referring in this quote to his arguments against the left claiming that the repressions of the LGBT community in Poland being compared to the Holocaust is an exaggeration, supporting the argument of the hysterical left. Ziemkiewicz's argument paints the framing of the commented issue as one of utmost ridicule and as being conducted by foreign media of Jewish origin. Not only does his argument tie back into the framing, which paints non-Catholic religions as a source of foreign influence and a danger to the integrity of the Polish values, but also plays into the discrediting of the LGBT issues as exaggerated and overblown at his expense. This is further rationalized by his self-proclamation of being the spokesperson for common-sense arguments.

This framing of common-sense arguments is further advocated for through notions of Catholicism and its fundamentals establishing what is broadly recognized as a general moral code of conduct. Representatives of pro-government and right-wing discourse including priests and members of the Catholic Church are often invited to comment on the LGBT discussion when a risky argument is being conveyed.

We have a full range of freedom and tolerance for everyone in Poland, but when the freedom of another person is violated or provoked unnecessarily, we say "enough". The bishops emphasize that the obligation to respect people associated with the LGBT + movement does not mean accepting their views uncritically. Generally, it must be said that in Poland we have a full range of freedoms, tolerance, and

freedom for everyone who does not infringe the freedom of another human being, stressed the Prime Minister. But when one violates the freedom and dignity of another person, on the one hand, or provokes unnecessarily - and we also had to deal with such actions - we say, and I say: enough.

By allowing flexibility into what extent something can or cannot be accepted, forms of discrimination can slip through the crack and are still eligible to be justified through the Catholic morality, especially in this case, where a member of the church is being directly quoted. Not only counterarguing the extent to which the LGBT is allowed to be accepted can be viewed as an attack on Catholic values, but also can be debated against the “common-sense” argument presented in the previous example.

Such flexibility of argumentation is seen to be extended towards framing, where the existence and public manifestation of the LGBT community are portrayed as an infringement on established Catholic values.

"The obligation to respect people associated with the LGBT+ movement does not mean accepting their views uncritically". They show the attitude of Pope Francis, who talks to people from LGBT environments, and at the same time clearly communicates the teaching of the Church on the gender ideology. “The rejection of traditional morality has led to profound changes in the understanding of human sexuality. A special expression of these changes is the gender ideology and attitudes characteristic of LGBT +”.

Argumentation in the news article excerpt like in the previous example uses the authority of a Church representative, where this example reaches all the way to the Vatican and the Pope, who rationalizes rejecting parts of the so-called “LGBT ideology”. It extends the argument towards moral changes within the society, which symptom is the LGBT community, and a negative one at best. Tying into the morality frame, Catholicism is again used as a synonym for the universal code of conduct and the LGBT, by infringing it, is automatically against morality and thus acceptable to reject.

The material also argues for rationality in another form which is also associated with the argumentation of rationality, where it showcases certain members of the opposition as rational, which is manifested through them rejecting the irrational narrative of their political counterparts.

I have a bad opinion of the Friday LGBT protests in the capital - said former Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski in an interview with "Wprost". On the other hand, some of the measures that are taken by

these circles give the argument that, on the other hand, there is such aggression and intolerance with which we are dealing " As he emphasized, "radicalisms have this to themselves that they feed each other".

Subsequently, what the alleged rationality presented by this frame presents is that of a balanced and “meet me in the middle” argument, where full discrimination and full acceptance of the LGBT community are both viewed as radical. Again, what creates space for questionable arguments against the LGBT community is this lukewarm approach, where allowing some forms of limitations to the acceptance is the rationale.

After that, we also observe frames, which argue for forms of the lack of acceptance through previously presented arguments of violent and irrational LGBT. Frames presenting the current government as saviors against the erratic LGBT and their ideology utilize this built narrative of violence, where the government organs are saviors, protecting the vulnerable community against said violence.

"Hooligan, who jumped on a police car on Friday, attacked the car of the Pro-Law to Life Foundation today," wrote Deputy Minister of Justice Sebastian Kaleta on Twitter. A video published on the web showed how people claiming to be activists from lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender circles attacked pro-lifers. "It was just such hooligans that the opposition ran around police stations during the weekend sparking a sense of impunity. There is no consent to violence! " - added the deputy minister of justice.

The ”zero-tolerance” framing creates a narrative, where the government and its actors are not only the rationale but also the ultimate saviors against the cruel and boundary-crossing LGBT narrative. Subsequently, PiS can establish itself as a strong patriarchal protector of the people, thus strengthening its position among its electorate.

Yet another form of rationale presented within TVP’s news framing is that of “respectable LGBTs”, where the whole article essentially argues for why it is allowed to dismiss chosen LGBTQ+ identities. Essentially, it presents certain members of the LGBT community as understanding and respecting the discourse of the parliamentary majority, which constitutes someone who is “rational”. In return for that rationale, said LGBTs are granted respect, which the less rational majority of the community does not deserve.

"Honestly? Enough of this, "Gozdyra replied to their allegations. "A non-binary person has no specific gender. Margot, on the other hand, calls himself her, although otherwise, she does not resemble a woman in any way. And whoever calls it otherwise, this fascist and boorish. Or they're all screwed up right now, I don't know. Please kindly consider yourself, ”she appealed.

Then the journalist entered into a long discussion with left-wing Internet users. The journalist judged that she tried to be correct, but today she sees that "Margot has no respect for others, and his allies are ready to muck anyone who thinks differently." "Including a very large part of the LGBT community. And this is just a hit "- she assessed.

To protect the so-called "freedom of speech" subsequently allowing heavy criticism towards the LGBT community, the ruling party's argument is given space through this media framing that merely expressing your disapproval of the movement and community is not a reason to lose your governmental position.

To my knowledge, it appears that due to the organizational matters related to the functioning of the education there, announced the head of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Michał Dworczyk. He noted that the decision to dismiss was made even before his words about LGBT. The head of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Michał Dworczyk, referred to the case on TVN24. - The Lodz education superintendent was, contrary to what some politicians claim, dismissed in accordance with the applicable regulations, to my knowledge due to the issues of organizing the functioning of the education system in the Lodz province - admitted Dworczyk.

Arguably, this builds upon the arguments of rationality, where open criticism, as this excerpt calls it, of the LGBT community should be allowed and should not be associated with losing one's place in the governmental structure. Freedom of speech is subsequently to be protected and not treated as a form of discrimination, where disagreements with that statement will result in accusations of restricting the freedom of speech.

"Every citizen has the constitution guaranteed the right to freely, even forcefully expressing an objection against the sexual education of children according to such standards" - the Ořęgowy Court in Gdańsk decided in October last year in the proceedings of the Association for LGBT People "Toledo" against the Pro - Law Foundation to Life.

Overall, the government is framed as a protector of freedoms and of the integrity of the nation both socially, morally, and juristically, all while justifying any possible criticism with accusations of breaking the law, infringing on the freedom to express one's opinions as well as bending and disrespecting culture and history to one's own liking to prove unfavorable to the government point.

Summary of analysis

The analysis has revealed three main forms of framing, where controversial opinions were expressed through third-party actors, often associated with the right-wing, justifying state-imposed violence with protecting the law and nation's integrity as well as extensive use of history to facilitate implicitly opinionating stated facts. All categories reveal a form of implicit framing, where an indirect parallel has been employed to convey messages. Otherwise, such messaging would be incompatible with current media system regulations in Poland. This framing has been observed to operate based on cultural and historical referencing as well as implications, which, when decoded, reveal the true meaning behind the report. Such ways of framing is what is arguably implicit cultural framing (Van Gorp, 2007).

When we look back at the statements, which could be directly linked to discriminatory opinions, all of them reveal to be quotes by invited experts or other actors associated with the right-wing, which were either publicists of PiS affiliation or representatives of the Catholic Church. Subsequently, linking these experts back to PiS and the political views they present proved to not be an issue. From the analyzed material, it is evident that what is portrayed as opinion-making statements are those spoken by right-wing actors such as representatives of the Catholic Church, right-wing commentators, or lower-ranking politicians of the PiS party. Out of the analyzed data, this has proved to be the most broadly utilized tool to convey messaging going against or bordering on breaking rules established in the Article 21 "Broadcasting Act". How the article frames the responsibilities of TVP is by speaking to the broadcaster itself. IT regards it as an actor who is not allowed to discriminate against minorities. The presumption here is that since plenty of discriminatory statements were conveyed as quotes, this allows surpassing that regulation and exploits this juridical precedence.

Historical references feature prominently in the framing, where it was mainly used as a comparative tool with the present. The main historical events, which were observed in the analyzed material were the German occupation of Poland in 1939-44, the USSR era and its representatives, the 1968 anti-Semitic campaign of a communist Leader Wladyslaw Gomulka in Poland, and the connotations of the Socialist Revolution, which as the only one was not named explicitly. Subsequently, this allowed to use of cultural implications of these events to convey messaging containing themes of violence, police brutality, and minority discrimination, without explicitly stating the obvious. The themes at large explored in the material that connotes historical events were direct quotes from the opposition and were used to undermine

or ridicule arguments regarding the LGBT community. By connotating these events, which are recognized as being historically significant in the common discourse, a range of contexts can be communicated through them, which aligns with the concepts of cultural implicit framing presented by Van Gorp (2007).

What helps to further establish the implicit framing argument in this research is the cultural frames surrounding the Catholic Church. As explored in this paper, the Catholic Church plays an important role in the identity-building of the Polish society and many values, which are regarded as universal come directly from the doctrines of Catholicism. The main frame, which became apparent across the collected data is equating the universal moral code to the one established by Catholicism. From there, minor frames were established, revolving around the opposing values of the LGBT community to those presented by the Church. Cultural implications of the Church in Poland implicitly contribute to them being deemed immoral. This largely constitutes that universal national morality allowed many forms of discriminatory statements, including describing the LGBT community members as anti-Catholic. Overall, the material shows strong ties between criticizing the LGBT community in frames revolving around the Church and established by its principles.

Catholicism on the ruling party's end was largely used to demonstrate the work the government does to protect the religious freedoms of its citizens. By establishing this strong position of a protector of greater values, many instances of criticism towards events of August 2020 were diffused. The argument operated almost entirely on a fallacy that the Church is what is moral, therefore by protecting the Church and its values, the government is moral as well. Through this framing, any discriminatory behavior was able to be deflected, by using the narrative, where the government will do what it takes to protect the integrity of the Polish morality, even if it comes with a cost, which in this case would be sacrificing rights and freedoms of the LGBT community.

Lastly, implicit framing regarding the law and rule-breaking has been strongly established across the analysis. The case talks largely about the arrest of Margot, and plenty of arguments regarding that arrest, as well as protests that followed were framed by what the Polish law says about such incidents and what is the punishment for breaking the described rules. What became especially evident was a frame, where accusations of police brutality were counteracted by the necessity of violence against criminals and rioters. This form of implicit framing allowed to a large extent excuse critiqued actions of the police, all while presenting the work of the apparatus as admirable and serving the greater good of the community. Subsequently, what could have been used as evidence of misconduct could be easily eliminated

as part of protecting the law. It has been shown through the analyzed data, that those who opposed, were preaching rule-breaking and disobeying the government, which has been presented in a negative light.

Overall, all explored frames used a form of implicit framing, whether it utilized law, morality, religion, or a combination of all three. Argumentations for the government's actions against the LGBTQ+ community relied on the equivocation fallacy, whereas if A means B, and B means C, then A must equal C. In addition to this argument, we can see the strong correlation of conservative arguments framing analyzed news, which alludes to the connection of the framing to the previously explored concept of Poland B. Poland A, is often referred to as the part of the Polish population, which lives in larger cities and has, on average, more liberal views. On the contrary, Poland B refers to inhabitants of predominantly small towns and villages, who tend to hold more conservative views. In turn, we can again stress the importance of framing analysis by looking at the holistic view of the broadcast, which includes the viewer as an equally important factor in the broadcast itself. (Pan and Kosicki, 1993) Subsequently, this allowed for constructing these intricate pro-governmental fallacies and allowing forms of minority discrimination to be cleverly concealed from criticism. In doing so, the LGBTQ+ community has difficulty defending itself against these arguments, creating a situation, where the community and its representatives become a symbol of anti-government behavior, allowing the ruling party to use them as a scapegoat when talking to its voters.

Conclusion

The motivation behind this thesis was to understand ways in which political parallelism can be investigated in the case of CEE countries with young, post-communistic democracies. Theoretical considerations of this study have anchored this research in considerations of how a media system in flux can be investigated. To give the analysis more precision, this case study has investigated news framing to uncover how structural and political changes within a media system will impact its broadcast. To further contextualize the findings, a short account of historical and cultural phenomena was presented to give a justification for why certain frames have been called out and formulated the way they did. Subsequently, a link between a media broadcast and structural changes was established to create a suitable methodology for investigating the Polish system, given within the context of CEE, young democratic, post-communist countries.

The research answered the following research questions:

- 1) *How is the LGBTQ+ community portrayed in the Polish public broadcasting service TVP through the case study of Margot's arrest?*
- 2) *What does this portrayal tell us about the political parallelism of the Polish media system after the 2015 elections?*

The research conducted on collected empirical material revealed that the investigated event was portrayed by the Polish public broadcasting service TVP through news published on their website tvpinfo.pl in tight proximity to the political opposition. A great portion of the material used in the analysis almost equated the LGBTQ+ community to the opposition. Furthermore, the LGBTQ+ community has been framed in a largely negative context including portrayals of a violent coup, anti-Catholic and blasphemous, which reflect poorly on the state of the current opposition. Additionally, the interest of this study was to reveal cultural phenomena, which contributed to these frames as a form of implicit cultural framing. The material revealed many implications and parallels have been drawn between historical events of cultural significance, as well as Catholicism.

Strengths and limitations of qualitative analysis

Qualitative research can receive criticism on the grounds of objectivity and verifiability. When researching a case study, especially when a researcher is personally connected to the investigated case, the issue of bias can arise. By knowing the case and its circumstances well enough, the researcher can reach conclusions where they should not be made. Verifiability is also a concern when discussing qualitative methods. Since the findings are centered around a specific case study, it is difficult to verify them against similar findings as such most likely do not exist. A broader perspective is also difficult to reach with comparable sample size and a narrowed down context. What it means for this case study, is that when discussing minority representation through the lens of one chosen minority, the context of others can be lost, therefore not fully representative.

Although, a small sample size allowed us to achieve what would not otherwise be viable with a quantitative one. The qualitative method has made it possible to look at the material through a cultural lens and closely consider every article within the data set. The machine-powered quantitative analysis would not allow for such precise and context-based analysis, which can only be made possible with a researcher who possesses the right contextual knowledge to reveal the true meaning behind implicit frames of analyzed articles. Only a person, who understand the cultural implication of being a sexual and gender minority in

Poland, together with the right historical knowledge, could reveal what procedures stand behind those implicit cultural frames. Without the knowledge of the Polish cultural context, it would be impossible to decode and further interpret the collected empirical material.

Interpretation of findings

By interpreting TVP's media framing through this context-specific knowledge, the analysis outlines how the use of implicit cultural frames allows for the discriminatory portrayal of the LGBT minority, in particular, by using indirect parallels to historical and cultural phenomena. In addition to the utility of the qualitative method in this case study, the methodology selected for this research has proven to anchor the analytical argument in solid evidence. By connecting both media broadcast and the analysis of systemic changes in the media system, we can give a more precise angle as to why and through what mechanisms implicit cultural framing was utilized in the dataset. This case study reveals the importance of the Catholic Church in Polish society as a cultural anchor, among other arguments, which helped to build the analytical conclusion.

Such interpretation has allowed the framing of news regarding minorities without breaking conventions included in the most recently updated Act 21 regulating the public broadcasting service in Poland. Additionally, structural changes show how these implicit frames have been allowed by implementing those subtle changes. What reveals to be the most influential in the most recent correction to Act 21, is the addition of "Catholic values" as those of universal application. By doing so, the public broadcasting service has secured a gateway through which any counterarguments can be discredited – an attack on the Church, even an alleged one. Using this cultural phenomenon, which is the Catholic Church in Poland, the broadcast could equate any alleged attacks on the Church as attacks on the sole fabric of Polish morality, which consequently turned into employing the equivocation fallacy as the main tool for discussion. This has proven to be the biggest finding of this analysis, which connected the analysis of the broadcast together with the structural run-through of the changes to the media system happening after 2015. This allows us to draw a direct parallel between systemic changes, political parallelism, and public broadcasting service, which this research set out to do. Subsequently, we are able to justify the interpretation of implicit cultural framing with the political influence of the PiS party.

The context within which it places the political parallelism of the public broadcasting service, as well as the media system in its entirety, can also be further discussed through the

findings. As the theoretical considerations revealed major changes to the Polish media system since the 2015 elections, we can observe changes that tangibly influence the system. It has become apparent that since 2015 the PiS party has secured a significant position within the structures of the National Broadcasting Council as well as influenced the staff shifts within Warsaw's headquarters of TVP, by appointing new directors with political affiliations to the party. By looking at the broadcast and analyzing its implicit framing, it has been revealed the main goal of portraying the LGBTQ+ community in such a way is to discredit the opposition and equate it with what is portrayed as a violent coup with a dangerous, anti-systemic ideology. While painting that image of the LGBTQ+ community and subsequently the opposition, the public broadcasting service TVP has facilitated the strengthening of the position of the ruling party, by putting them in the position of power, as well as the protectors against the frantic opposition that is set out to harm the Polish society and the moral fundament it is built upon.

Future research

As for the bigger picture, this study gives us insight into how processes of political parallelism in media systems can progress and exist within other young democracies and CEE countries with a communistic past. The portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community in Poland, which has been explored in this study through the case of Margot's arrest, should serve as a breakdown of how political influence on media can manifest itself and how undemocratic processes can manifest themselves in a democratic nation. Pluralism is the cornerstone of democracy, and by undermining the inclusion of sexual minorities, the stability of the Polish democratic system begins to crack. This study should serve as a reminder of the importance of independent media as watchdogs, as well as how political influences can manifest themselves in the early stages of undermining the democratic process. The goal is to shine a light on the phenomenon, which hopefully will gather more attention in the world of academia. Scholars could, for example, use the study's findings to further investigate democratic processes in other CEE countries, reinvent methodology regarding media systems in flux, as well as expand on media and communication studies as a field to further explore political processes.

As this research places itself in the context of understudied CEE countries, its findings hope to become the conversation starter within academia about the need for further investigation of that geopolitical area. CEE countries have over the years become major players in the European political arena, where their membership in European Union plays a crucial role. Having that perspective and knowing the egalitarian mission of the Union, it is important

to investigate the democratic processes in member countries to possibly diagnose and prevent early onset signs of reversing democracy, as it is not only in the interest of the country in question but the whole European collective.

The study also serves as a link between media content analysis, the importance of culture and history in such analysis, and the significance of an in-depth investigation of structural changes to bodies that govern involved institutions. Future research on this topic could include broader dive into media analysis within minority representation and how it reflects structural changes in the media system, including investigating cases of political parallelism. This case study provides only an insight into larger structural changes through a specific and limited scope of one event but is believed to lay the groundwork for similar future studies including the cross-comparative work in media content analysis and political parallelism.

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Appendix

Section A: Excerpt of the analysis including identified frames

The editor-in-chief of Onet shared the photo "Duda = fascist". Internet users noticed something else

Framing sentences :

Bartosz Węglarczyk from Onet referred to the mechanism of Russian disinformation. He wrote that it consists of referring to an insignificant event, entering it into an appropriate narrative, sharing it on the web and waiting for the results.

However, Internet users pointed out to Bartosz Węglarczyk that he had shared information about an insignificant event within a dozen or so hours. As it concerns LGBT communities, it is, however, part of the ongoing world-outlook dispute in Poland.

Finally, even Onet admitted that they are not gays or lesbians, but simply LGBT activists

Thick description:

Mechanisms of Russian disinformation are used by left-wing media to overblow conflicts with LGBT activists in Poland, who are not just regular gays or lesbians.

A false fallacy that tries to prove a left-wing publication journalist uses methods of misinformation used by a rival nation to 'fool' the public about the extent of the conflict, which is caused by an inflammatory organized LGBT group, which calls the president a fascist.

Frame: Russian disinformation tactic used by an organized inflammatory LGBT group and left-wing media

Either the Soviets or you fagots. Margot about the Poland she wants after she is arrested

It would be nice to go out in two months in something that is not Poland, so either the Soviets or you fagots - says MichałSz . In the recording published on the network , who describes himself as a woman named Margot.

Michał Sz. he is suspected of committing a hooligan act involving participation in a crowd, a brutal attack on a pro-life activist and the destruction of property belonging to the foundation.

The court's decision to arrest Sz. sparked protests from LGBT circles. In several places in demonstrators opposed the current government, sometimes vulgarly attacking politicians and policemen .

For the prosecutor's office and the court, it was also important that - as wpolityce.pl writes - Michał Sz. he struggled with the policemen as early as 2018.

Thick description

A violent man posing as a woman wants the Soviets back in Poland.

Frame: A member of the LGBT sides with the Soviets

"I value Margot more than Karol Wojtyła." The Warsaw councilor liked the entry

Framing sentences :

Warsaw councilor Agata Diduszko-Zyglewska "liked" the controversial post on Twitter . "I appreciate Margot more than Karol Wojtyła" - wrote one of the Internet users , and the councilor marked his comment with a heart.

"Agata Martyna Diduszko-Zyglewska from 2018, a Warsaw councilor and chairman of the culture and promotion committee at the Warsaw Council. Civic Coalition. Wife of the most famous victim of the PiS regime, "noted the Anti-Polonism Monitoring Center in social media, which recorded the councilor's reaction to the entry.

Thick description:

An opposition politician, who is a wife to a 'PiS victim' prefers an LGBT activist over a former Polish pope.

Frame: Opposition politicians are disrespectful toward Polish tradition out of spite of the current party

Scientists call for the release of "Margot". About his violence - not a word

Framing sentences :

There is no mention in the appeal that Michał Sz. "Margot", who calls himself, was arrested on suspicion of destroying property and assaulting a pro-life activist.

The appeal is surprising because Michał Sz. "Margot" was detained not for his views, but in connection with the demolition of a pro-life foundation van and an attack on its activist.

"Małgorzata Sz. Was not arrested, but Michał Sz., And the police were forced to react to the aggressive behavior of the hooligan companions "

Thick description:

Western scientists defend a violent man who impersonates a woman and are wrong about the cause of arrest which was not due to ideological reasons but because the person was violent

Frame: West in favor of anti-government violence

The crowd chanted: "Where is Raphael ?!". LGBT activists disappointed with Trzaskowski

Framing sentences :

Where is President Trzaskowski when we are dragged along the sidewalks?

Let us remind you that earlier on Saturday, the president of the capital also spoke on social media, where he offered legal support to participants in the incidents with the police.

Thick description:

Opposition mayor of Warsaw did not help LGBT protestors when they were attacked by the police

Frame: Opposition is weak and does not protect its peers

deputies talked about a "roundup" of the police. There is a motion to punish them

Framing sentences :

Reporting on the actions of the police during the protest of LGBT communities in Warsaw, the parliamentarians spoke of a "round-up". - This is the eradication of the legal actions of the current services against the terror of the German occupier in 1939–1944 - warns Świrski in an interview with the tvp.info portal and emphasizes that thousands of citizens of the capital were losing their lives then .

The point is to make people aware of the actions of the police, which guard law and order, with the actions of the German occupier.

In an interview with the tvp.info portal, the president of Reduta Dobrego Imienia emphasizes that the word "round-up" in Polish consciousness has no associations other than a tool of German terror against the defenseless inhabitants of the capital.

Thick description:

Opposition describes arrests of LGBT protestors as those happening during the German occupation between 1939-1944, which is disrespectful towards the victims of Second World War.

Frame: German occupation used as a metaphor to describe unrighteous victimization of LGBT protestors

"LGBT is the new religion." A sociologist of Margot's importance to the liberal elite

Framing sentences :

Just as priesthood was a source of social capital in the past, it can be a homosexual, trans person today.

An expert in "Dziennik Gazeta Prawna" calls LGBT a "new religion" and points out that Margot may be its "totem" in Poland.

According to Łuczewski, this letter expresses "a specific point of view of the liberal intelligentsia - not only Polish, but also world - which dramatizes reality and sees it in terms of an apocalyptic clash between good and evil."

Łuczewski points out that this liberal revolution attacks his own children and reminds that, for example, Rafał Trzaskowski (for the fact that he did not appear in Warsaw at the protests) or TVN television (for the fact that its journalists called the activist Michał).

Thick description:

Being LGBT is a title of status in neoliberal politics, which can be equated to one of a priest . This is used to argue the arrested protestor Margot is the new LGBT 'cult' leader

Frame: LGBT is a formalized religion

Section B: Example of an article from the collected material

Kierowca furgonetki pro-life do Trzaskowskiego: Mamy dokumenty. Idziemy na policję

PATRYK OSOWSKI 11.08.2020, 18:19 / aktualizacja: 21:38

Udostępnij:   



■ To z tego miejsca przed ratuszem odholowano furgonetkę Fundacji Pro-Prawo do Życia (fot. www.stronazycia.pl)

Jan Bienias jeździ furgonetką Fundacji Pro-Prawo do Życia od niemal 2 lat. W rozmowie z portalem tvp.info przyznaje, że widział już wiele, ale głośny atak działaczy LGBT w Warszawie był najbrutalniejszym, jakiego doświadczył. – To Michał Sz. nas zatrzymał i nakręcał wszystkich zebranych przeciwko mnie i koledze – mówi. Przedstawia także swoją wersję ostatnich wydarzeń sprzed warszawskiego ratusza, gdy straż miejska usunęła zaparkowane przez pro-liferów auto. – Byliśmy popychani i naruszano naszą nietykalność cielesną. Trzaskowski rozbił naszą pikietę – mówi Bienias.

W ostatnich dniach Fundacja Pro-Prawo do Życia zorganizowała pikietę przed ratuszem w Warszawie. Podkreślano, że tylko w ciągu 2 lat prezydentury



NAJNOWSZE

- zbrodniarzami
- 10:45 Ogromne straty rosyjskich wojsk. Najnowsze dane
 - 10:38 Seryjny morderca bierze ślub za kratami. „Jest potworem”, zabił 3 kobiety
 - 10:36 „Jesteśmy przedmiotem szantażu”. Ziobro: Pieniądze z KPO należą się Polsce jak kość psu
 - 10:15 Operacja specjalna ukraińskich wojsk. Nagranie z drona
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„Jesteśmy przedmiotem szantażu”. Ziobro: Pieniądze z KPO należą się Polsce jak kość psu



Nowy sondaż. Duża zmiana poparcia dla PiS



Prognoza długoterminowa na wakacje. Jeden miesiąc znacznie chłodniejszy



Aktorka Barbara K.-Sz. usłyszała zarzuty

Rafał Trzaskowski przeznaczył na dofinansowanie organizacji LGBT około 7 mln złotych. – Trzaskowski rozbił naszą pikietę, a straż miejska miała polecenie odholowania naszego auta. Byliśmy popychani i naruszano naszą nietykalność cielesną. Mamy już przygotowane dokumenty w tej sprawie. Idziemy na policję – mówi nam Jan Bienias.

Przekonuje, że prezydent Warszawy „ktamie, bo codziennie mówi co innego”. – Jednego dnia rozbił naszą pikietę, a następnego nagrał wideo, w którym przekonywał, że wolność obywateli nie może być ograniczana. Na naszej pikiecie nagłaśnialiśmy, że jako prezydent Warszawy wspiera środowiska LGBT. Sam doskonale wie, że to robi, ale teraz nagle nie podoba mu się, że publicznie o tym mówimy – ocenia nasz rozmówca.



Wagina jako Najświętszy Sakrament. „Michał Sz. tak promował treści antykatolickie”

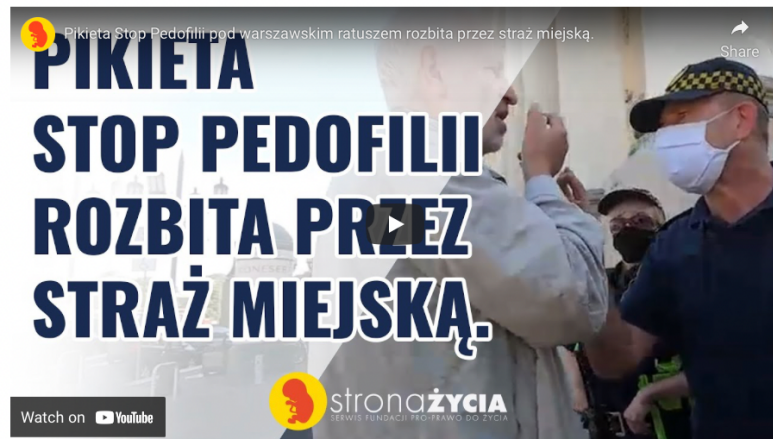
Z „szacunkiem” i „tolerancją” na ustach Michał Sz. od dawna miał angażować się w niszczenie pojazdów pro-life czy atakowanie świętych dla katolików...

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Pro-lajfer zdradza, czego najbardziej boją się napastnicy

W rozmowie z portalem tvp.info kierownca furgonetki pro-life mówi także o ataku, jakiego aktywiści LGBT dopuścili się w czerwcu na ulicy Wilczej w Warszawie. Podkreśla, że on siedział wówczas za kierownicą, a miejsce pasażera zajmował jego kolega – Łukasz. To ten drugi mężczyzna miał wysiąść, żeby zwrócić się do rozgniewanej grupy z apelem, by pozwolili im



Posłanki mówiły o „łapance” policji. Jest wniosek o ich



„Jesteśmy przedmiotem szantażu”. Ziobro: Pieniądze z KPO należą się Polsce jak kość psu



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Aktorka Barbara K.-Sz. usłyszała zarzuty

spokojnie przejechać. Wtedy – jak mówi nasz rozmówca – został zaatakowany.

– Najpierw wyzywali nas słownie, potem rozcinali plandeki, przecinali opony i zamalowywali szyby sprejami. Jeden człowiek wyłamał lusterko. Jednak wszystko zaczęło się od Michała Sz., bo to on nas zatrzymał i nakręcał wszystkich zebranych przeciwko mnie i koledze – mówi Jan Bienias. Ocenia, że aktywista znany jako „Margot” był prowodyrem.

Gdy jeden z działaczy zaatakował pana Łukasza, Michał Sz. miał podbiec i wspólnie z napastnikiem szarpać poszkodowanego, dusić, a ostatecznie rzucić na ziemię.

– Długo nie wiedziałem, o co chodziło, że gdy przewrócili Łukasza i zaczął do nich podchodzić jakiś postronny chłopak, oni nagle wszyscy odskoczyli. To było dziwne i nie wiedziałem, z czego wynika. Ale ostatnio słuchałem nagrania Michała Sz. w sieci. Raportując swoim mocodawcom, jak wyglądał napad na furgonetkę wspominał, czego się obawiali. Chodzi o to, że oni faktycznie zawsze boją się, że ktoś ze świadków włączy się w bójkę i ich zaatakuje – mówi nasz rozmówca.

#wieszwiecej

Polub nas

Ocenia, że napastnicy są odważni, bo wiedzą, że działacze pro-life nie mogą ich tknąć. Bienias uważa, że gdyby nawet w obronie własnej użył siły, działacze LGBT z pewnością wyrwaliby to z kontekstu, nagrali i opowiedzieli całemu światu jako historię o ataku na mniejszość seksualną.

– Potem na nagraniach wygląda to wręcz głupio, ale my nie możemy się nawet bronić i oni na tym bazują. Boją się z kolei osób postronnych – słyszymy.

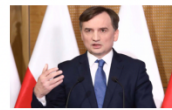
ukaranie

Maciej Świrski z Reduty Dobrego Imienia domaga się ukarania Joanny Scheuring-Wielgus oraz Urszuli Zielińskiej. Relacjonując działania policji...

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Aktorka Barbara K.-Sz. usłyszała zarzuty

Polska Policja @PolskaPolicja

Michał Sz. (uznający siebie za Margot) został postanowieniem Sądu aresztowany m. in. za czyny uwiecznione na załączonym nagraniu. Zatrzymanie przez Policję związane jest tylko i wyłącznie z decyzją Sądu, bezprawnym i agresywnym zachowaniem ww.

#Fakty

Obejrzyj na Twitterze



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1,7 tys. · Odpowiedz · Udostępnij

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„Janek, ktoś mógł mi nagle wpakować nóż”

W rozmowie z portalem tvp.info kierowca furgonetki mówi, że ataki na auto fundacji mają miejsce regularnie. Nawet w ostatnich dniach – opowiada – gdy jechał furgonetką, nagle ktoś rzucił w nią kamieniem. Inna z osób zagroziła mu drogę, twierdząc, że publiczne pokazywanie napisów na pojeździe fundacji jest zabronione. Ustąpiła dopiero, gdy mężczyzna stanowczo zapewnił, że jeśli wezwie policję, to ona będzie miała kłopoty i zapłaci mandat, bo jako jedyna narusza prawo w tej sytuacji.

W ostatnim czasie – wg naszego rozmówcy – działacze LGBT pozwalają sobie niestety na coraz więcej. – Gdy po ataku na ulicy Wilczej Łukasz się podniósł, powiedział do mnie: „Janek przecież jak tam leżałem ktoś mógł mi nagle wpakować nóż”. Osobiście uważam, że Łukasz powinien wtedy użyć gazu. To nie tylko środek obezwładniający. Ma też w sobie farbę, więc policja szybciej mogłaby potem namierzyć tych delikwentów. Gdy są w grupie, czują się mocni, ale są też niebezpieczni. Nagrania z kamer pokazały, że mieli ze sobą nóż. To nie żarty – podkreśla.

Jan Bienias uważa, że działacze LGBT nie rozumieją, jaki jest cel działalności Fundacji Pro-Prawo do Życia. W jego ocenie aktywiści uważają, że kampania pro-lajferów jest skierowana do grup skrajnie lewicowych. Przekonuje jednak, że jest wręcz przeciwnie.

– Nasza kampania ma trafić do normalnych Polaków. My wiemy, że tamtych osób już nie zmienimy. Oni są ideologicznie opracowani i musiałby się stać cud, żeby zmienili swoje życie. My zwracamy się więc do zwykłych obywateli – komentuje.

Jak mówi, na furgonetce, którą jeździ obecnie, są informacje o edukacji seksualnej,



Dziennikarz wyrzucony za poglądy ws. LGBT? Komentarz szefa Rady Mediów Narodowych

– W sposób oczywisty jest to naruszenie wielu wartości, które przyświecają niezależnemu dziennikarstwu. Mnie jednak w wydaniu tego środowiska...

[zobacz więcej >](#)

NAJNOWSZE

zbrodniarzami

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Prokuratura o statystykach



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Nowy sondaż. Duża zmiana poparcia dla PiS



Prognoza długoterminowa na wakacje. Jeden miesiąc znacznie chłodniejszy



Aktorka Barbara K.-Sz. usłyszała zarzuty

Jak mówi, na furgonetce, którą jeździ obecnie, są informacje o edukacji seksualnej, której wprowadzenia chce ONZ. Jest w nich mowa o masturbacji 4-latków czy rozmowach z 6-latkami na temat wyrażania zgody na seks.

– Gdy pokazaliśmy takie przekazy przed warszawskim ratuszem oskarżono nas o kłamstwo. A kłamią ci, którzy uważają, że Marcin Sz. to kobieta. Nam zależy jedynie na rozmowach z osobami, które widzą nasze auto po raz pierwszy i pytają: „O co chodzi”. Wtedy bierzemy nasz informator, tłumaczymy, a większość spokojnie słucha. „Aha, nie wiedziałem. Muszę się nad tym zastanowić” – odpowiadają i odchodzą. Wszystko odbywa się kulturalnie, spokojnie i taki jest nasz cel. Zależy nam, by każdy miał wiedzę i mógł decydować we własnym sumieniu – zapewnia Bienias.

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źródło: PORTAL TVP.INFO

#michał.sz. #margot #pro-prawo.do.życia #warszawa #lgbt #rafał.trzaskowski

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- 09:47 **Władze Ukrainy są gotowe odesłać ciała rosyjskich żołnierzy**
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Aktorka Barbara K-Sz. usłyszała zarzuty

Wybrane dla Ciebie



PiS ruszy w Polskę. W czerwcu konwencja i spotkania w każdym powiecie

Rozważany jest też wariant zwołania kongresu PiS. [więcej](#)



Ambasador RP w Moskwie przekazał, co usłyszał w rosyjskim MSZ [WIDEO]

Chodzi o incydent, do którego doszło 9 maja w Warszawie z udziałem rosyjskiego ambasadora Siergieja Andriejewa. [więcej](#)



Afera w Warszawie. Mariusz G. skazany

Przelewał wypłaty fikcyjnych pracowników na swoje konto. [więcej](#)



Lawina komentarzy. Adam Michnik broni Rosjan

„Do przyjaciół Moskali”. [więcej](#)