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Queering Security: (in)Securitisation and Resistance of the LGBTQ  
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## *QUEERING SECURITY: (IN)SECURITISATION AND RESISTANCE OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY IN POLAND*

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores (in)security discourse of the LGBTQ community in Poland and their resistance to (in)securitisation. It engages with the narratives and experiences politically relevant in today's Poland, where the government not only refuses to acknowledge insecurities faced by the LGBTQ individuals, but itself tries to present homosexuality as a threat. Problematisation of invisible subjects of security who paradoxically are created by the very process of securitisation is the primary focus of this study. Considering that concepts of security and resistance are differently practised outside the heteronormative frameworks, the study queers both concepts to capture security problems experienced by LGBTQ individuals and focuses on emancipatory and empowering potential of resistance. By doing so, it attempts to address the ways how marginalised groups can have more voice and agency to be included in inclusive queer informed security agenda. The study applies a theoretical framework informed by PARIS School of security studies rooted in broader International Political Sociological (IPS) and poststructuralist feminist critique of securitisation theory and seeks to provide a reformulated queered approach to (in)securitisation. By interviewing fifteen LGBTQ individuals and activists from Kraków, the study directly engages with the subjects of the research and puts their perceptions and experiences at the centre of the inquiry.

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# 1. Introduction

The presented study explores (in)security discourse of the LGBTQ<sup>1</sup> community in Poland and their resistance to (in)securitisation. It engages with the narratives and experiences politically relevant in today's Poland, where the government not only refuses to acknowledge insecurities faced by the LGBTQ individuals, but itself tries to present homosexuality as a threat. By declaring the LGBTQ community as a threat to the Polish state, nation and identity, the Polish ruling Law and Justice Party controls the line between security and insecurity. As a result, the LGBTQ individuals' security is not only ignored but is also threatened.

The rising exclusionary far-right politics in Europe (Rooduijn et al. 2019) makes minorities face significant constraints to their freedom of expression and endangers them (Lazaridis et al. 2016). These trends also serve as a reminder that progress is not always linear, and that regression in human rights protection is possible. Considering that, it is particularly important to understand how marginal and vulnerable people can be affected by actors who claim authority over deciding whose security matters. It is even more critical to understand tools of an agency that marginal groups employ to make their voices heard and by that, to empower them to have a say in shaping an inclusive security agenda.

Problematisation of invisible subjects of security who paradoxically are created by the very process of securitisation is the primary focus of this thesis. The study departs from two starting points, acknowledging that the concepts of security and resistance are practised differently outside the heteronormative frameworks (see Jakobsen 1998; Weber 2014; McEvoy 2015; Baker 2017; Tyburczy 2017; Daniel and Berwick 2020) and formulates two main research questions: 1) Why queering security is important with the rise of exclusionary far-right politics? 2) Why focus on resistance as an expression of agency can benefit queered approach to security? Together with analytical discussion of the consequences of the exclusion of security of LGBTQ community from dominant security paradigm, the study aims to explore Polish LGBTQ community's (in)security discourse and their resistance to government's and other securitising actors' homophobic pressures. Thus, by focusing on the emancipatory and empowering potential of resistance, address the ways how marginalised groups can have more voice and agency to be included in inclusive queer informed security agenda. The paper takes the case of LGBTQ community in Kraków, Poland and applies a theoretical framework informed by PARIS School rooted in broader International Political Sociological (IPS) and

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<sup>1</sup> The initialism standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals



poststructuralist feminist critique of securitisation theory to provide a reformulated queered approach to (in)securitisation. By interviewing fifteen LGBTQ individuals and activists from Kraków, the study directly engages with the subjects of the study and puts their perceptions and experiences at the centre of the inquiry. Therefore, the key idea behind this thesis is first, an examination of the perlocutionary effect of (in)securitising practises on the security of LGBTQ community and second, to move beyond discursive practises and examine various non-discursive ways of security articulation and contestation. Thus, to contribute to a better understanding of dynamics surrounding securitisation of minorities and to address possibilities of marginal voices' inclusion in security agenda.

**Regarding the social relevance** of this study, Poland presents a compelling example of the government legitimising LGBTQ-phobia on an institutional level. Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party (PiS) has taken an openly homophobic stance, and several high-ranking officials, including the leader of the party (Kaczyński 2019a; 2019b) condemned homosexuality as a threat to Polish identity, nation and the Polish state. The incumbent president, Andrzej Duda, allied with the PiS party and centred his 2020 election campaign around homophobia, pledging to 'defend children from LGBT ideology' (Walker 2020). Almost 100 municipalities across one third of Poland adopted non-binding resolutions 'against LGBT propaganda' and declared themselves as so-called 'LGBT free zones' – free of 'LGBT ideology' (Koźmiński 2020). More than 80 municipalities have issued resolutions saying that they will not support any action encouraging tolerance to LGBTQ people, promising that they will not assist any NGOs working on LGBTQ issues (European Parliament 2019). The European Commission and the European Parliament have condemned anti-LGBT resolutions as a breach of fundamental values of the European Union (European Parliament 2019, Commissioner Dalli 2020). The right-wing media, the Polish Roman Catholic Church and the other anti-LGBT mobilisation groups back government's LGBTQ-phobia and also continue to marginalise LGBTQ community by presenting homosexuality as a threat to Polish values (O'Dwyer and Vermeersch 2016; Mikulak 2019; Połowska 2019). One of the Polish newspapers, *Gazeta Polska*, distributed 'LGBT free zone' stickers with a cross over a rainbow flag<sup>2</sup> and printed covers with titles that LGBTQ people posed a threat to children and wanted

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<sup>2</sup> Image of sticker available from Wiadomości (2019) at: <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/strefa-wolna-od-lgbt-bbc-news-o-kontrowersyjnych-naklejkach-gazety-polskiej-6404137253619329a>, consulted on 24 May 2020

to destroy polish values.<sup>34</sup> Archbishop of Kraków Marek Jędraszewski condemned ‘LGBTQ plague’ claiming it was a disease, saying that this movement for equality and ‘so-called progress’ was a great threat to freedom, comparing it to the totalitarianism of the twentieth century on a premise of ‘radical rejection of God’ (Do Rzeczy 2019).

Queering security in contemporary Europe for some may seem irrelevant, considering overall trend of greater acceptance of LGBTQ people in the majority of counties. Since 1990s homosexuality has been decriminalized in more than 40 countries worldwide and more than 30 states have adopted legislation protecting LGBTQ people against hate crimes (Smith et al. 2014). However, homophobic and transphobic violence across Europe is still widespread, and many EU member states still lack legislation that outlaws hate speech against people based on their sexual orientation (Carrol 2016: 175).

Institutionalised LGBT-phobia has real-life consequences for LGBTQ people living in Poland. After the Polish government’s open anti-gay stance, reports of homophobic violence have increased (Godzisz and Knut 2018). In 2016 the polish parliament rejected a bill that would include gender, gender identity, age, disability and sexual orientation as potential grounds for hate crime (Gazeta Prawna 2016). According to Amnesty International, there are serious gaps in Polish legislation that would address homophobic and transphobic violence (Amnesty International 2015). In the Polish Criminal Code, there are no explicit penalty enhancements for crimes motivated by homophobia or anti-LGBTQ bias (Rule of Law 2020). According to the data and evidence gathered by NGOs, laws, police, prosecution services, and the criminal justice system do not adequately address homophobia (Godzisz and Knut 2018 :2). Neither does any Polish legal framework recognise hate speech based on SOGIESC<sup>5</sup> (2018: 2). Besides, authorities do not systematically collect official data on crimes motivated by anti-LGBTQ bias (2018: 7). With regards to the freedom and expression and peaceful assembly, there are no special provisions that would secure these freedoms for minorities and groups at the potential risk of discrimination (2018 :3). Since 2015, there was no campaign in public media on LGBTQ rights and unbiased information regarding sexual orientation and gender

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<sup>3</sup> Newspaper Cover available from Gazeta Polska (2019) at: <https://www.gazetapolska.pl/uploads/styles/archiwum-okladka/public/okladka/5340189109406.jpg?itok=bCBERt0r>, consulted on 24 May 2020

<sup>4</sup> Newspaper Cover available from Gazeta Polska (2019) at: <https://www.gazetapolska.pl/uploads/styles/archiwum-okladka/public/okladka/9919292599227.jpg?itok=yhxlCzCb>, consulted on 24 May 2020

<sup>5</sup> SOGIESC stands for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) is a project regarding legal issues affecting sexual minorities in criminal law, human rights law, anti-discrimination law, and family law.

expression is only distributed by the LGBTQ community and NGOs, without any substantial support from the state (2018: 3).

Lack of awareness of queer (in)security is particularly widespread in several new Eastern European democracies (see IGLA Europe 2020), where under general trend of democratisation and overall human rights protection, queer issues remain silent. According to IGLA-Europe (2020) annual review on human rights of LGBTQ people, Poland ranks the lowest, making it the worst country in the EU for LGBTQ people. The same report (2020) indicated severe human rights violations of LGBTQ people in Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary ranking them the lowest in the list. Poland is a particularly compelling example where the juxtaposition of social context and politics actively (in) securitises LGBTQ individuals. With a lack of understanding of dangers faced by queer people, coupled with the Law and Justice Party's homophobic rhetoric, in Poland, the problem of recognising LGBTQ insecurities remains salient and silent. Institutionalised homophobia normalises brutal street violence, terror and the hate speech against LGBTQ people (IGLA-Europe Report on Poland 2020). Nationalist far-right groups violently attack Equality Pride Marches without facing significant consequences (2020 :2). Therefore, in the current context, the Polish LGBTQ community's security is severely undermined.

**The academic relevance** of the study stems from two main reasons: the limited presence of queer perspectives in security studies and the absence of studies on the LGBTQ community's responses to (in)securitisation. Various scholars (Ashley 1989; Tickner 1992; 2001; True 2005; Weber 2014; 2016; Richter-Montpetit 2017) have emphasised on International Relations (IR) scholarships' silence around sexuality and gender. While there are few major books (Weber 2016; Picq and Theil 2015) dealing with LGBTQ problematising within IR, important queer works in security studies are even more limited (Wilkinson 2017a). Few studies (see McEvoy 2015; Wilkinson 2017b; Kramer 2017; Levon 2019) problematise how being queer impacts on insecurity outside heteronormative conceptions of security. Heteronormativity – a hegemonic discursive and social system of norms that considers heterosexuality as natural and superior (Robinson 2016), determines not only how security is defined, but also how research is conducted, what questions are asked and who is seen and heard (see Kerpen and Marston 2020). Going beyond heteronormativity in security studies is crucial because it allows us to see security problems outside the existing systems of knowledge, not experienced by heterosexual, cisgender individuals. Therefore, it allows LGBTQ populations to have a voice (see Grzanka 2020). Keeping these starting points in mind, the thesis 'queers' the concepts of security and resistance to explore security threats that LGBTQ

individuals face, not captured with heteronormative security framework. It also pays particular attention to queer community's response to (in)securitisation and questions the tendency to view marginal communities as completely silenced. As a result, studying the resistance of the LGBTQ community against the (in)securitisation will help to understand the potential of agency better, that can be particularly useful in addressing the ways how marginalised groups can have their voice heard and included in the inclusive security framework.

The presented study is one of the few attempts that use intersectional framework to analyse (in)security from queer perspective by directly engaging with the subjects of the study. The study takes security and resistance as the key conceptual frameworks and builds on the intersection of securitisation theory(ies)<sup>6</sup> and resistance, guided by queer lens as an epistemological standpoint. Securitisation theory lays a foundation for a better understanding of the creation of insecurity discourse of the LGBTQ community. Resistance and queer theory are particularly useful starting points for two main reasons: First, they both take a 'bottom-up' approach to security and emphasise the empowerment of individuals. Second, queer theory enables to employ resistance as a tool of agency in security contestation. Besides, focusing on resistance directs attention to silenced subjects of security against the dominant paradigm, while at the same time, overcomes dichotomous understanding as marginal groups as entirely voiceless. Thus, presented paper attempts to overcome security studies' general tendency favouring top-down approaches focusing on actors with necessary symbolic and social capital vis á vis disempowered actors. Instead, it takes Foucauldian understanding of power and shifts epistemic focus from speech act to various strategies of resistance, arguing that marginal groups, even though with a little voice, may still have an impact on the (in)security discourse (Balzacq et al. 2015).

To provide queered analysis to (in)securitisation, the study engages with two alternative readings of securitisation scholarship most relevant for this study: International Political Sociological (IPS) approach to security and poststructural feminist critique. While both criticisms provide useful starting points, none of them problematise 'queerness' in security analysis. The scholars working on (in)securitisation (Bigo 2001; 2014; Huysmans 2004; 2006a; 2014; Epstein 2007; Muller 2009; Lyon 2014; Aradau 2004; Aradau and Blanke 2017) underline that pursuit of security can be the source of insecurity for others, but they do not engage how subjects cope with and overcome their structural marginalisation perpetrated by

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<sup>6</sup> Some scholars (Balzacq et al. 2014) argue that there is no single Securitisation Theory, but instead several securitisation theories.

active production of (in)security (Levon 2019). Neither do they problematise (in)security for whom, outside the experiences of heteronormative cisgender citizens. To the best of the author's knowledge, no prominent research addresses (in)securitisation of LGBTQ community and most of the IPS studies dealing with marginal groups in security discourse are occupied with migration (see Husymas 1995; 2000; 2006a; Noxolo and Huysmans 2009; Huysmans and Buonfino 2008; Bigo et al. 2013; Aradau and Tazzioli 2020). While Hansen's (2000) 'silence security dilemma' is one of the most cited contributions to gendered (and queered) security analysis, she does not further elaborate on how and in which circumstances this dilemma impacts (in)security and more importantly how, although lacking voice, 'silenced' subjects can make their voices heard. Overcoming shortcomings of securitisation theory with the mere application of its criticism without more in-depth reflection on an *agency* would lead to a dichotomic understanding of LGBTQ people as 'threats' or as 'vulnerable' subjects (see Huysmans 2006; Aradau 2004; Squire 2009). That is why the paper introduces resistance as a tool of agency in the queered analysis of (in)securitisation.

Regarding the methodological implications, to better understand everyday lived experiences of queer (in)security, it is crucial to take their perspectives through the interpretative approach. It is also crucial to understand how they articulate (in)security and how they resist, considering limited access to public discourse. The bottom-up approach to security can be particularly useful in addressing the consequences of institutionalised homophobia in Poland with a significant focus on silent subjects of security – LGBTQ people.

Thus, together with high academic relevance, the approach applied in this thesis has emancipatory potential and facilitates identification and response to security problems pertaining to LGBTQ people. This approach can bolster timely and appropriate response from the Polish government's more progressive forces and other stakeholders, including international organisations and human rights advocacy groups. Thus, the study has the potential for broader societal impact, particularly for LGBTQ people living in countries with homophobic governments. Considering that marginalised groups have limited voice to articulate their (in)security, it is essential to direct attention to alternative ways of security contestation. Even though, the study draws on material gathered from interviews with LGBTQ activists living in Kraków and cannot be seen as representative of different resistance versus securitisation processes, the respondents of this study come from different parts of Poland, bringing different perspectives and experiences. While institutionalised homophobia and government's securitising practises undermining the security of LGBTQ community in all parts of Poland, (in)securities experienced by LGBTQ people vary in more liberal-minded

Western and more conservative Eastern parts of Poland (Atlas of Hate<sup>7</sup> u.d.). Considering these limitations, the results should be viewed as a contribution to the body of empirical studies that can be used in the future development of the theoretical assumptions of queered approaches in security studies.

The thesis is divided into six main parts. In Chapter 1, the study examined social and academic relevance of the thesis with a focus on empirical and research gaps in the literature. After that, it also provides a brief context on securitisation and LGBTQ resistance in Poland. Chapter 2 constructs theoretical framework around queering the concepts of security and resistance for analysing the dynamics of (in)securitisation and resistance of the Polish LGBTQ community. Chapter 3 deals with research methodology and methods. Chapters 4 and 5 consist of empirical analysis of primary data which is divided into two separate but interrelated parts. In order to map the everyday experiences of (in)securitisation, Chapter 4 focuses on (in)security problems of the LGBTQ community by exploring current threats, challenges experienced and perceived by LGBTQ people in Poland. After mapping their security problems, based on their narratives, the paper explores key securitising actors in Polish queer (in)security discourse: the ruling Law and Justice Party, the Polish Roman Catholic Church and the Polish National Media. In order to show that the LGBTQ community is not a silenced object of discourses of (in)securitisation, but has voice/agency in the process, Chapter 5 analyses how the LGBTQ individuals resist the institutionalised homophobia and securitising actors' attempts to present the LGBTQ community as a threat. In this part, presented paper pays particular attention to practice (NGO memberships, attendance at Equality Pride Marches) and visual communicative ways (images, accessorising, memes, virals) as the non-discursive practices of resistance, used by the marginalised groups who have limited access to the public discourse. The study concludes in Chapter 6, which summarises the key findings and contributions of this thesis. It also engages in a broader theoretical debate on queer informed security framework and how it can be useful in addressing LGBTQ issues. In addition, the concluding chapter addresses the limitations and underlines the potential for further research.

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<sup>7</sup> Atlas of Hate is a map that outlines regions of Poland that have adopted the 'anti-LGBT' resolutions. Available at: <https://atlasnienawisci.pl/>, consulted on 6 June 2020

## **1.1 Contextualising Queer (In)Security Under the PiS Party and Post-Soviet Syndrome in LGBTQ resistance in Poland**

While for far-rights parties' criteria of exclusion are usually ethnic, religious or cultural, in different contexts criteria for 'othering' varies (see Halikiopoulou et al. 2013; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013). Polish politicians when presenting LGBTQ community as a threat, label gender and queer theories as 'imported', 'not inherently Polish mechanisms' (Kaczyński 2019b), portraying LGBTQ citizens as 'others' (O'Dwyer and Vermeersch 2016). In the discursive field of security, in order to present something as a threat, it needs to be isolated from 'us' and presented as 'other', since conceptions of identity, of 'self' versus 'other', are always part of threat perceptions (Campbell 1998). Poland's ruling party leader Jarosław Kaczyński (2019b) on the conference in Włocławek declared:

We are dealing with a direct attack on the family, children, this sexualisation, LGBT movement [...]. This entire movement questions any sense of belonging. It has to do with a certain type of ideology, a philosophy that was born earlier in the West. All of this, we can say, is imported to Poland. Those are not inherently Polish mechanisms. Today, they actually threaten our identity; they threaten our nation, our survival and our Polish state. (36:54)<sup>8</sup>

The presented sentence is a clear example of a securitising speech act. Kaczyński underlined that referent objects – Polish identity, nation and Polish state, were under existential threat. One of the key referent objects here – something that needs to be protected is identity – an organising concept of societal security (Buzan et al. 1998). In societal security logic 'we' is threatened when its identity is threatened (1998 :123) since the understanding of national identity largely determines perceptions of threats and vulnerabilities.

Polish national identity is closely related to Christian identity and 'natural family values' – as opposed to homosexual couples (Szulc 2011). The authoritative voice of religion in production of LGBTQ insecurity discourse is linked to the complex role of religion in the politics (see Berger 1993; Grzymala-Busse 2012) and Nationalism (Hayes 2000; Ayoub 2014).

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<sup>8</sup> Author's translation from Polish. Original quote: 'Mamy do czynienia z bezpośrednim atakiem na rodzinę, dzieci, ta seksualizacja, ruch LGBT, wszystko to razem gender, cały ten ruch kwestionujący jakiegokolwiek przynależności. Oczywiście to ma związek z pewnego typu ideologią, filozofią, która zrodziła się na zachodzie wcześniej. To wszystko jest do Polski importowane. [...] One dzisiaj rzeczywiście zagrażają naszej tożsamości, naszemu narodowi, naszemu trwaniu i państwu polskiemu'.

Even though Poland is a secular state, the Catholic Church wields strong authority, and national identity is closely tied to religion (Ayoub 2014). Many studies have listed the Polish Roman Catholic Church as one of the major sources of homophobic pressures (Józko 2009; Krysz and Kłonkowska 2012). The privileged position of religion gives it an authoritative voice on issues regarding sexuality and societal security (2014: 339). Considering the strong moral authority of the Polish Catholic Church, politicians actively utilise ‘Catholic values’ to present homosexuality as a threat. As a consequence of active production of the ‘harmful other’ ruling party frames LGBTQ rights as external, ‘imported’ forces threatening Catholic, thus, Polish national values.

By presenting the Polish state as the referent object, PiS party’s securitising move also operates within the political security sector. In the political security sector, Buzan et al. (1998: 150) discuss threats and vulnerabilities concerning ideas that hold states together. Ideas that hold stability and political order of the state are nationalism and political ideology (1998:150). In Poland, notions of nationalism and political ideology overlap, both based on Polish Roman Catholic values (Ayoub 2014). Whatever threatens those values, is seen as a threat to the Polish state. Kaczyński’s words illustrate this point. He (2019b) presents LGBTQ movement as ‘certain type of ideology, philosophy’ that poses a direct threat to Polish identity, national values and state – thus, threatens the organisational stability of the state’s social order. Therefore, homosexuality is presented as a threat that calls ‘into question the position of the Catholic Church’ that, according to Kaczyński, is a ‘non-patriotic act’ (Niezależna 2019). As a result of securitisation of homosexuality and homophobic pressures, the LGBTQ community’s security is undermined and endangered.

Homophobic pressures largely shape and limit the Polish LGBTQ community’s resistance to (in)securitisation. However, queer resistance in Poland is influenced not only by the current political climate but is also profoundly rooted in strict censorship and systemic persecution of sexual minorities during the Soviet times that made LGBTQ self-organisation extremely difficult (see O’Dwyer 2012; O’Dwyer and Vermeersch 2016; Szulc 2018). As one LGBTQ activist (in Ayoub 2014: 339) observed, in Poland people have the Post-Soviet syndrome characterised in lack of trust in social partners and scepticism to NGOs, which also continues to influence LGBTQ resistance.

Szulc (2018) briefly summarises debate on the LGBTQ people in Poland: ‘gay men appeared in Poland for the first time in 1989, after the fall of Communism; lesbians always were – and still are – ‘just friends’; trans people are funny freaks in the entertainment business and queer...but who are they, anyway?’ (:159). He argues that these stereotypical views reflect



a general level of understanding of LGBTQ individuals in Polish society and even within the Polish LGBTQ community itself. Before the 1980s, during the communist times, LGBTQ individuals were invisible, with a couple of exceptions when lesbians or gay men were involved in ‘spicy criminal stories’ (2018 :160). In the Eastern bloc, Poland included, gays and lesbians were often presented as spies and traitors to the nation, as objects with immoral sexuality who collaborated with the West (2018 :160). Thus, not surprisingly, many LGBTQ individuals remained in the closet. Brutal state mechanisms forced LGBTQ individuals to remain invisible in order to protect themselves.

Emerging LGBTQ movement in the early 1980s had not transformed into an organised resistance. Later, an operation with code-name ‘Hyacinth’ against LGBTQ people launched by Polish communists from 1985 to 1987 served as ‘catalytic event’ which triggered the beginning of more organised Polish LGBT movement, and after 1985, a couple of gay and lesbian organisations were launched, and several LGBT magazines began to be published (Szulc 2018). They operated illegally and were able to officially register only after the collapse of the Polish People’s Republic.

In the newly established Democratic Republic of Poland, minorities, including LGBTQ people, became more visible in Polish society (Mucha 1997). Topics of sex and sexuality sparked serious political and social debates and polarised Polish society (Szulc 2011). Since the beginning of early 2000s, upon Poland’s EU accession talks, LGBT activists and few politicians launched several initiatives including the first ‘Equality Parade’ in Warsaw in 2001 and campaign ‘Let Them See Us’. The campaign was launched by the biggest Polish LGBTQ organisation Campaign Against Homophobia. It aimed to spread LGBTQ awareness by exhibiting posters of same-sex couples holding hands. With time, the visibility of the LGBTQ community increased, and so did the polarisation over the issue (Szulc 2018). Thus, today, the complex juxtaposition of the historical context and current politics, make Poland a compelling example to study (in)securitisation of the LGBTQ community and their resistance to (in)securitising narratives and practices.

## **2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework: Queering the Concepts**

As briefly discussed in the introduction, LGBTQ people have generally been rendered invisible in International Relations and particularly in Security Studies. This has been the case because of two main reasons. The first and more general explanation is that until the late 1980s security discourse maintained the focus on the state-centred level of analysis and individuals' security was disregarded. Second, even after growing emphasis on an individual level of analysis, LGBTQ security has been understood through the heteronormative framework, ignoring specific and unique security problems experienced by the LGBTQ populations. These communities who are often marginalised and limited in their ability to articulate their insecurity to a broader public are often excluded from security agenda.

Before proceeding to further analyses, key concepts should be defined. Central to this thesis are notions of security and resistance – LGBTQ community's resistance to government's securitising attempts. Prefix (in) is used not only to reflect on lack of security for queer individuals but also to underline, that security for some, may imply insecurity for others (see Bigo 2001; Bigo and Tsoukala 2006). To explore security problems of queer individuals in Poland, the study draws together literature from security studies and resistance guided through an emancipatory queer lens. Thus, the paper takes notions of gender and sexuality as analytical tools and empirical categories.

The literature on how being LGBTQ person impacts on experiences of security and insecurity is extremely limited. Security as one's feeling of being safe is not only about being protected from live threatening menaces on a local, national or international level (Wilkinson 2017a). According to the broad conceptualisation, security is one's freedom 'to live in dignity', protected from violence and hatred (UNDP 1994). It is also about having financial and labour protections against discrimination (1994). Since security can mean different things to different people, in different contexts (Gallie 1956; Booth ed. 2005; Collier et al. 2006), it is essential to allow those who are vulnerable, to put forward their understanding of security. Importance of the context also leads to an assumption that security, as a concept, has no 'essence' and 'the right question is not what security means, but what it does' (Balzacq et al. 2009 in Bigo: 124). That is why, instead of suggesting precise conceptualisation of security, this paper leaves it to emerge from the interview data. The hope is that giving voice to the subjects of this study can provide the most appropriate queered conceptualisation, focusing on the LGBTQ community's everyday experiences of (in)security.

The thesis acknowledges that definition and measurement of resistance in relation to LGBTQ populations is problematic, given their unique lived experiences and their limited access to the public discourse (Colpitts and Gahagan 2016). Therefore, tools of resistance available to LGBTQ communities is different from heteronormative models and requires further theorising. For this reason, the paper takes a broad understanding of resistance combining various individual and collective practises leaves the meaning, practices and forms of resistance to emerge from the data.

The paper uses ‘queer’ as an umbrella term to entail broad scope of identifications, sexual and gender practises that cannot be captured by categories of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) and other two-gender binary identities. The term ‘homosexual’ has clinical connotation and is used only in order to capture the negative framing of LGBTQ people – therefore, it is used in negative discursive framing referring to discriminatory practices. At the same time ‘queer’ refers to theoretical and analytical model – a ‘queer theory’ as a school of thought (Butler 1994: 21; Halperin 1995: 113). Therefore, the following paper uses ‘queer’ not only as an umbrella term of referring to gender and sexual identifiers, but also as an epistemological standpoint, lens through which security and resistance are examined.

To lay the foundation for queer informed analysis of LGBTQ individuals’ (in)security in Poland, the chapter proceeds as follows: the literature review starts with a brief discussion on the deepening and widening of the concept of security. Then, it moves to briefly examine main contours of epistemological and ontological assumptions of securitisation framework, and how its assumptions, although limited in their analytical usefulness, can benefit queer analyses of security. Then it moves to the problematisation of agency in security discourse and explores resistance as a tool of agency of the marginal voices.

## **2.1. Queering (in)Security**

Until the end of Cold War the concept of security maintained the focus on military threats (Charrett 2009) and security was inextricably knitted to the state and its sovereignty (Krause and Williams 1996). Since the late 1980s with post-positivist attacks on mainstream approaches (Buzan 1984; Haftendorn 1991; Tickner 1992; Smith et al. 1996), scholars started to criticise Traditionalists for the state-centred level of analyses. This period also coincided with a more robust emergence of human rights discourse. With the birth of critical approaches, scholars started to talk about the widening of the concept of security (referred as horizontal expansion) and how this also brings deepening of the concept – a re-evaluation of the referent

subjects of security (vertical expansion) (Williams 2011). The latter implied expansion of referent objects downward, from society to groups and ultimately individuals. As a result, driven and facilitated by these two processes, security agenda opened up to various non-military issues (Kakonen 1994; Buzan 1984; Price-Smith 2001).

Even though new approaches widened security agenda beyond the military realm and brought into focus individuals as referent objects of security, many insecurities experienced by a wide variety of groups remained on the fringes of academia. Even in countries with the most inclusive and tolerant societies with progressive legislation, the feeling of security is profoundly shaped by one's gender identity and sexual orientation (Wilkinson 2017a: 106).

Several authors (Kramer 2017; Hagen 2017; Baker 2017) attempted to deconstruct the understanding of security for the queer people. Kramer (2017) deconstructs new configurations of security – how queer experiences confound and complicate state-citizen relationships, focusing on the community's collective resistance to the state. Hagen (2017) focuses on queer security in post-conflict settings and calls for an inclusive perspective on security studies. Catherine Baker (2017: 109) draws attention to everyday insecurities of queer people amid 2016 American presidential elections and underlines how hegemonic masculine white power can threaten partial and limited security of LGBTQ people. Baker (:110) argues that straight, cisgender man and women under peacetime circumstances find it difficult to understand everyday insecurities of the LGBTQ people.

Considering the differences in experiences of security and insecurity by marginal populations, some scholars (Hudson 2009) started to ask the question 'how does the security framework help to bring attention to issues and groups of people that are normally marginalised?' (: 53). This question is especially relevant when discussing insecurities experienced by marginalised groups – particularly LGBTQ populations. Answering this question is further complicated when the government, generally considered as a provider of security who can apply and exercise the security framework, instead of protecting, is the source of insecurity. That is why, understanding of security should be broadened beyond the heteronormative framework, capturing everyday security problems of queer individuals.

### **2.1.1 Towards 'Queer Informed' Security Framework: Theor(ies) of Securitisation**

For the purpose of 'queering' securitisation, the paper engages with poststructuralist feminist critique (Hansen 2000) and so-called PARIS school's problematisation of (in)security informed by broader International Political Sociology (CASE Collective 2006; Bigo and

Walker 2007; Balzacq et al. 2010; Tugba et al. 2017). To better understand the dynamics surrounding (in)securitisation of homosexuality, first, the intersubjective discursive construction of threat should be examined. For this purpose, the section below briefly discusses Securitization Theory<sup>9</sup> in its original conception, engages in its shortcomings and brings in the critiques by so-called ‘second generation’ of securitisation scholarship.

Securitisation Theory (ST) developed by the so-called Copenhagen School (CS) is one of the most influential approaches in contemporary critical security studies. It provides a tool of analyses of security policies (Weaver 1995; Buzan et al., 1998) and constitutes a top-down approach that focuses on the discursive relationship between securitising actor and the audience (Ruggie 1998: 866). Securitisation is a so-called speech act – a rhetorical process that establishes what is to be considered as a security threat, by moving an issue to an extreme version of politicisation (Buzan et al. 1998:21). If the audience accepts the securitising move, an issue becomes securitised (Buzan et al. 1998). Acceptance of the audience enables policymakers to adopt whatever means they consider appropriate to deal with this threat in a particular context (Balzacq and Guzzini 2014: 4). Engaging in the discussion whether in Poland homosexuality is successfully securitised or not, is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, it focuses on examining consequences of the Polish government’s securitising move – presenting LGBTQ ‘ideology’ as the existential threat to a referent object (in this case, Polish nation, Polish values, traditional Polish family) – on the real life (in)security of LGBTQ community, without ‘an objective or quantifiable’ definition of successful securitisation.

Securitisation framework is relevant for this study because ‘classical Copenhagen version’ (Wæver 2014: 30) of securitisation theory overcomes materialist ontology of dominant rationalist theories of security studies by focusing on intersubjectivity of threat construction, questioning the assumption that securitising actors respond to ‘objective’ problems in the real world. In addition, ST’s conceptual toolkit on the creation of (in)security discourse is useful in analysing by whom (in)security is created and practised. To queer security, one needs to address who is ‘speaking’ security.

Buzan et al. (1998) distinguish between securitising actors and functional actors. Securitising actor is an individual or a group who can ‘securitise an issue, by declaring something – referent object – as existentially threatened’ (1998 :36). Identifying securitising actors is complicated since it involves level-of-analysis problem – any collective can be

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<sup>9</sup> With capital letters Securitisation Theory (ST) refers to Copenhagen School’s tradition, as conceived by Ole Weaver, while securitisation theory(ies) refer to various authors’ contributions and second generations of the securitisation scholarship

disaggregated to into subunits and individuals (1998 :40). Thus, designating the Polish government as the main securitising actor is arbitrary, since it includes various subunits, bureaucracies and individuals. One possible way to overcome this problem could have been to focus on security speech acts of individual politicians, for example, leader of the PiS party Jarosław Kaczyński and several other high-ranking officials, but this could have been even more problematic for two main reasons. First, it is not helpful to disaggregate collectives into individuals, because the social life is better understandable though methodological collectivism (Buzan et al. 1998 :40). Second, since the study focuses on perceptions of LGBTQ individuals, for them, it would have been easier to talk about how government as a collective is influencing their everyday security than concrete individuals. Since the most common securitising actors are governments and political leaders, for analytical convenience, when referring to the Polish government, the paper focuses on the ruling Law and Justice party.

Thus, despite its conceptual and analytical usefulness, ST is primarily concerned with discursive practices of actors in power positions, who can speak on behalf of whom or what they deem worthy of protection. Actors who are marginal or have limited voice are excluded from security analysis. As a result, the ST has been widely criticised for moral and political ambiguity (Aradau 2004; Floyd 2019), lack of sociological approach (Huysmans 2002; McSweeney 1996; Balzacq 2005; 2014; Bigo 2014) and absence of gender (Hansen 2000). To sum up, while Securitization Theory provides useful tools of analysis of discursive construction of threat, it is problematic from the point of capturing everyday insecurities and resistance of marginal communities. That is why, to queer securitisation, or more accurately – (in)securitisation, the thesis brings in the feminist critique of Copenhagen School's Securitization Theory and IPS problematisation of (in)security.

The feminist critique of CS is based on epistemological and theoretical grounds (see Hansen 2000). While CS does not exclude the possibility of security being spoken on behalf of vulnerable groups, only actors with power can decide whose security matters. Thus, with its epistemological reliance on speech act, ST's excludes threats faced by marginalised groups who are often invisible, lack access to official discourses and have limited ability to openly speak about their (in)security (Hansen 2000). Two aspects are important in this regard. When marginalised groups are deprived of their ability to voice their insecurity' security as silence' occurs (Hansen 2006: 287). When faced with 'silent security dilemma', speaking up can aggravate insecurity (2000). The second aspect relates to Hansen's critique of conceptualisation of the referent object in ST. The most relevant to gendered or queered insecurity is societal security sector, which according to Buzan et al. (1998) is about 'large,

self-sustaining identity groups' (cited in Hansen 2000:297). It is problematic to discuss LGBTQ community in these terms, which is neither 'large' nor 'self-sustaining'.

Together with the feminist critique, the second important theoretical ground for understanding the creation of insecurity for the LGBTQ community comes from International Political Sociology. PARIS school also problematises 'classical' ST and argues that securitisation – while aiming to create conditions of security for some – simultaneously creates conditions of insecurity for others (Bigo 2001). This realisation is important because by constructing the LGBTQ community as a threat, securitising actors create subjects of insecurity – LGBTQ community itself. Therefore, PARIS-IPS approach is relevant for queered security analysis for four main reasons:

First, IPS considers both security and insecurity as the products of (in)securitisation process (Bigo and McCluskey 2018). The (in)securitisation framework offers a fascinating insight for this study, focusing on how 'pursuing security' – protecting Polish state, nation and identity (see Kaczyński 2019a, 2019b) from homosexuality creates insecurity for LGBTQ people. Thus, security claims not only prioritise whose security is the most important and what needs to be protected, but also decide whose security is sacrificed or ignored (see Bigo and Walker 2007; Bigo 2014). IPS is particularly relevant for this study because it directs attention to everyday processes and practices of (in)securitisation and lived experiences of people affected by security practices (Bigo and McCluskey 2018). IPS focuses on 'what security does', putting the consequences of (in)securitisation in the spotlight. By doing so, this approach pays particular attention to lives considered marginal or unimportant to International Relations or political science (2018: 120).

Second, the IPS approach is useful for queering (in)securitisation because it problematises the difference (see Bigo and Tsoukala 2007; Huysmans 1995; 2006; Bigo and McCluskey 2018). Bigo (2001 :100) claims that any structural phenomenon can be transformed into an adversary and everything can be turned into the object of insecurity – any difference can be securitised that may undermine a homogenous societal identity as perceived and fantasised by those in power. He argues that 'securitisation does not affect survival but rather intolerance toward differences' (2001 :100). From this starting point, homosexuality is perceived as a threat not because it threatens the survival of society and its identity, but because everyday life is politicised and securitised through disciplining the body (Foucault 1979). Within this logic, insider becomes outsider and LGBTQ community is presented as an enemy within.

Third, from IPS perspective, concepts should be understood in relation to specific localised contexts within different configurations of the power (Bigo 2001 :120). In different contexts, LGBTQ individuals' (in)security discourse is radically different. Thus, a context-informed approach is particularly useful. Assuming that concepts are only significant only in relation to localised contexts, paper leaves the content of 'security' open to emerging from data as defined and experienced by the subjects of this study.

A fourth important aspect of PARIS problematisation for queer security analysis is that it claims to focus on experiences of marginal groups not determined by the elite discourses, but by the 'practices revealing resistances to or escape from the power' (Bigo and McCluskey 2018: 120). This element is particularly important for current analysis which engages in an understanding of power and resistance to securitisation in Foucauldian sense.

To summarise, both the poststructuralist feminist critique of securitisation theory and IPS provide useful starting points, but they do not further problematise the role of agency in security analysis. While theories of (in)securitisation underline that pursuit of security (here for heteronormative cisgender citizens) can be a source of insecurity for others, they do not engage how subjects cope with and overcome their structural marginalisation perpetrated by active production of (in)security (see Levon 2019). Besides, the key scholars working with IPS approach (for example Huysmans, Bigo, Tugba) almost exclusively focus on migration and to the best of the author's knowledge none of them ever focused on gendered or queered (in)security.

In addition, methodically, IPS is less concerned with (in)security as perceived and experienced by those who have no say in security discourse. The problem here is that despite these claims, PARIS approach refuses to undertake 'small ethnographic fieldwork projects in the name of methodological pluralism' (Bigo and McCluskey 2018 :121). Thus, IPS claims to speak about everyday lived (in)security on behalf of people who are not given a say in IPS's methodological rigour. If criticism of CS is based on its top-down approach on security, IPS follows the same tradition and can be criticised for giving security scholars too much authority to speak *on behalf* of those who are 'considered marginal or unimportant to IR' (2018 :121).

Even though IPS directs attention to security practices that render some people insecure, it ties security to autorotative actors arguing that 'security meanings depend on politics and the legitimisation strategies of dominant actors' (Bigo 2008:123). Following this logic, PARIS school's approach is concerned with mundane bureaucratic practices, Weberian politics of rationalisation and use of technologies in the process of (in)securitisation, focusing on discursive and non-discursive practices of 'professionals of security' (Bigo and McCluskey



2018). Thus, IPS remains a top-down approach without a particular interest in un-silencing the silenced subjects of security. Bigo (2008 :128) only superficially mentions resistance as a possibility to unmake (in)security that entails disruption of the 'regime of truth' created by various actors operating in the field of security. To overcome this gap, the study suggests introducing resistance as a tool of agency in the contestation of security as used and utilised by the subjects of this study.

While Hansen's 'silence security dilemma' is one of the most cited contributions to gendered (and queered) security analysis, she does not further elaborate on how and in which circumstances this dilemma impacts on insecurity and more importantly how although lacking voice, 'silenced' subjects can make their voices heard. In addition, Hansen's assumptions based on empirical cases of Bosnia and Pakistan cannot be applied to LGBTQ insecurity discourse in EU member states for one main reason: despite active production of 'silence' from authoritative speakers, civic society and international human rights organisations have a broader scope. Therefore, even marginal groups may be entitled to, even though limited, insecurity articulation.

Since the problematisation of invisible subjects of security who paradoxically are created by the very process of securitisation is the primary focus of this study, the concept of resistance is brought into an analysis, giving agency to otherwise 'silenced' subjects of security. Considering that both IPS and feminist critique of securitisation do not elaborate on the emancipatory aspect of resistance, the study brings in the concept to overcome understanding of marginal groups as wholly silenced. This move would enable facilitation of security problems outside the dominant paradigms and help to detect marginal voices, allowing them to have their voices heard in shaping inclusive security agenda.

### **2.1.2 Section Summary**

This section provided a brief discussion of securitisation scholarship and its criticisms that lay the foundation to queer security analysis. It also addressed how individual level of analysis was brought into the focus and how this move also enabled the inclusion of LGBTQ people as individual referent objects of security. Securitisation theories and (in)securitisation scholarship provide useful concepts for the presented study. However, major theories of securitisation downplay on the role of agency of securitised subjects and instead focus on top-down discursive practices that shape (in)security. Therefore, to include queer perspective, securitisation scholarship should address not only the process of (in)securitisation performed by authoritative actors, but also securitised subjects' understanding of the consequences of

securitising moves and the resistance strategies that can be seen as their voice in the security discourse. As a result, queering (in)securitisation can offer an insight into security dynamics and the role of agency, influencing security practices.

## **2.2 From Queering Security to Queering Resistance**

The previous chapter briefly discussed securitisation theory and its criticisms from two perspectives most relevant to this thesis. A meaningful relationship between resistance and securitisation can be observed in how they see agency in LGBTQ security discourse. Overcoming shortcomings of securitisation theory with the mere application of its criticism without more in-depth reflection on *the agency* would lead to the dichotomic understanding of LGBTQ people as ‘threats’ or ‘vulnerable’ subjects (see Huysmans 2006; Aradau 2004; Squire 2009). Approaching LGBTQ people as disempowered victims would further perpetuate systemic violence and mistreatment. That is why for queering security, it is particularly important to focus on resistance as a form of security contestation.

### **2.2.1 Conceptualising Resistance**

‘Where is the Power, there is Resistance.’

Michel Foucault (1966: 125)

The previous chapter highlighted the importance of lived experiences of marginal groups in security debates. Contesting (in)securitisation is the second important aspect of this paper. The presented study explores one particular type of resistance, the resistance of the marginalised group against oppressive practices and discourses. This element is particularly important for current analysis which engages in the understanding of power and resistance in Foucauldian sense.

From Plato to Luther and Calvin, from Locke to Marx, many scholars have been interested in practices of resistance (Balzacq 2015: 11). However, the study of resistance in academia was popularised only in the 1980s, as a result of so-called cultural turn (2015: 11). Initially, scholars emphasised on the strategies and goals of social movements as a form of resistance to mainstream politics. In securitisation scholarship, term resistance is only briefly or curiously mentioned and is neither systematically explicated nor theorised (Stritzel 2015). Only recently Balzacq’s (2015) edited book attempted to address this void exploring the place of resistance within securitisation studies. In this book, several authors (Balzacq 2015; Marx 2015; Vuori 2015; Piazza 2015; Blanc 2015) compare and assess how resistance as strategy

and as a practice relates to security's logic in different cultural, social and political settings. These studies also show that different issues have conflicting results depending on the practices of resistance and the context.

Conversely, resistance has been an academic buzzword in queer studies focusing on various practices as forms of queer resistance (see Cohen 2004; McDonald 2008; Croft et al. 2017; Rodríguez de Ruiz 2017). Queer theory is often defined precisely as resistance to norms and heteronormativity (Jakobsen 1988; Warner 1993; Halperin 1990, 1995). Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile (2010), in their book 'The Canadian War on Queers: National Security and Sexual Regulation', challenge Canadian historiography on the state-sanctioned war on queer people in the latter half of the twentieth century. They take the methodology of 'sociology from below' and based on narratives of people affected by national security agencies, explore how queer people were surveilled, blackmailed and marginalised under the pretext of National Security (2010: 30). Kinsman and Gentile also draw attention to how queer communities were trying to resist to state-sanctioned oppressive security practises.

However, the literature on queer resistance in security studies is extremely limited (see Daniel and Berwick 2020) due to the overall lack of queer perspectives in security studies and security scholars' tendency of favouring top-down approaches. In IR, resistance was regarded as a counter-politics against oppressive discourse (Balzacq 2015: 12). Even though defining resistance as the relationship between powerful and powerless may seem like the most convincing formulation, Balzacq (2015) tried to overcome this tendency and criticised Derridian (1976) approach to capturing power and resistance as the binary opposition between those who have power and dominate and those who resist. He claims, resistance should be conceptualised outside domination, and power should be seen neither in only destructive terms nor attributed to only dominating force (2015: 11), calling for the conception of resistance as non-binary practice.

Problematisation of Derridian approach to resistance is crucial for 'un-silencing' queer voices in security discourse. Because the shift towards Foucauldian conceptualisation of resistance emphasises its emancipatory potential. Foucault defines power as 'multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere where they operate' (1979: 92). He argues that power does not necessarily come top-down, from authoritative institutions, for example, the government or the state, but it is dispersed – 'comes from everywhere'. This theoretical assumption allows taking resistance as an expression of agency in the security discourse. Therefore, presented paper, holds a view that resistance is also a manifestation of the bottom-

up flow of power which can undermine, challenge and question the dominant discourse that (in) securitises LGBTQ individuals.

Counter-securitisation or desecuritisation may seem like the obvious links between securitisation and resistance. Stritzel (2015) had one of the first to attempt to theorise and conceptually specify counter-securitisation within securitisation theory, discussing it as a move of resistance against securitisation. However, he discusses counter-securitising moves in the same linguistic illocutionary logic as Copenhagen School does with a securitising move (see 2015 :552), reaching the same gridlock of silencing marginal groups. At the same time, it would be wrong to treat all practices of LGBTQ community's resistance as counter-securitisation, since it is hard to see the line between counter-securitisation, de-securitisation and resistance, which would require extensive theorising. Therefore, the presented paper uses resistance as a generic term that includes various practises of contesting the power, including counter-securitisation and de-securitisation through various symmetrical or asymmetrical means.

### **2.1.2 Analytical Model: Problematising Agency – Queer Security Dilemma and 'Hidden Transcripts' of Resistance**

Access to security discourse requires visibility and voice (see Hansen 2000). Since (in)security of invisible subjects is the primary focus of this study, the concept of resistance is brought into analysis, discussed as an expression of agency of otherwise 'silenced' subjects of security. However, while heteronormative understanding of resistance requires the ability to 'speak up' and to be visible, for many queer individuals security depends on one question – 'do you pass?' – meaning how well one can hide their queerness and act 'normal' (Wilkinson 2017b: 114). Passing is a form of 'stigma management', a sociological concept adopted by Erving Goffman (1963: 50) which deals with how individuals of a deviant social identity attempt to avoid marginalisation by not revealing their stigmatised identity. To be able to 'pass' means performing gender and sexuality in a way that falls into heteronormativity. While the ability to openly 'speak security' in many cases is a privilege, many LGBTQ people face a dilemma between speaking up and endangering themselves or remaining silent (Richardson 2017). Therefore, remaining closeted is a necessary strategy to be safe as individual bodies (Kramer 2017). Hence, there is a trade-off between silence and invisibility on the one hand and voice and visibility on the other. Even though 'acting straight' can protect queer individuals, 'closet is not a site of security' since only visibility can grant the queer community access to security discourse (Sedgwick 1991 in Kramer 2017: 121).

According to Wilkinson (2017a :115), the centrality of passing for queer security is a manifestation and result of security as both practise and experience privileging heteronormativity. This is also a manifestation that ST's epistemological reliance on speech act ignores the security problems of marginalised populations who often face a security dilemma. Therefore, the visibility/invisibility dilemma is particularly relevant in the criticism of securitisation theory. If securitisation theories favour authoritative speakers in 'speaking' security – discursively constructing what the threat is and who/what needs to be protected, for queer approach, one needs to focus on different non-discursive ways of (in)security articulation not found in official public and political discourses.

Security dilemma faced by queer individuals is one of the reasons why mapping LGBTQ insecurity discourse is difficult, because many queer people choose to remain closeted in order to protect themselves from structural violence and discrimination. Since 'speaking up' may endanger marginal groups, many of them use alternative ways of security articulation. That is why 'silence security dilemma' should be shifted to visibility/invisibility dilemma – questioning what it means to 'speak up' while resisting (in)securitisation. Expansion of the focus to more hidden ways of security contestation was dictated by acknowledging, what the author calls here, a '*queer security dilemma*', which is about the irreconcilable paradox between conditional security of invisibility and ability to have one's voice heard. Since 'security simultaneously requires both visibility and invisibility' (Richardson 2017: 119), this dilemma impacts not only conditions of security, but also the choices and strategies of resistance. Epistemologically this shift to visibility/invisibility can be significant in acknowledging various alternative ways of security articulation with the focus on practice, visuals and items-that by themselves do not 'speak' up but are used at increasing visibility. Resistance as a conceptual tool found in social movements and resistance literature may serve this goal.

In the 1990s, James C. Scott's (1990) in his book, 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance' introduced the concept of 'hidden transcripts' in opposite to public expression, to examine ideological resistance of the marginalised groups to the dominant power structures by using various aesthetics, their anonymity and ambiguity. Scott's analyses include various aesthetics such as folklore, songs, jokes, theatre, gossip as forms of resistance. Two aspects of hidden transcripts, as defined by Scott, can be useful in analyses of queer resistance. First, Scott argues that hidden transcripts are specific to particular actors and a given social site. The second and more critical aspect of hidden transcripts is that they do not contain only speech acts 'but

a whole range of practices' (1990: 14). Therefore, the concept of hidden transcripts opens up wide conceptual variety to explore queer resistance to (in)securitisation.

The epistemological shift from speech act to other forms of security articulation opens the question of what sources should the researcher use to find 'hidden transcripts', that are not easily found 'out there'. Most of the material studies on securitisation draw on textual documents: politicians' speeches, government documents and media sources. This means that in practice, in security discourse, only the agency of authoritative actors is considered. Digital age enables marginalised communities to use various alternative ways of security expression. In recent years there has been a visual turn in security studies, and a number of scholars (Williams 2003; Campbell 2004; Hansen 2008; 2011a; 2011b) started to focus on visual communication as a way of security articulation. Despite active production of silencing of LGBTQ populations under homophobic governments, silence is contested by visibility and not all marginal groups choose to remain invisible. Practises such as Equality Pride Marches, demonstrations and visibility campaigns also play the role in contesting (in)securitisation. Therefore, the study offers a novel approach to security articulation and pays particular focus to *practice* (protests, demonstrations, marches) and *visuals* (images, memes, virals) as the tools of agency used by marginalised groups who have limited access to the public discourse.

Another critical aspect of queering securitisation is that of methodological and relates to the overall lack of bottom-up approaches in securitisation framework. Many securitisation scholarships analyse insecurity of certain groups, without engaging with them (see Husymans 2006; Hansen 2006). The security scholars often refuse to engage with people's perceptions and their understandings of (in)security and consider ethnographic fieldwork as 'add-on to IR theorists in the name of methodological pluralism' (see Bigo and McCluskey 2018 :121). Thus, an important implication of queering security and resistance rests on the subjects own understanding of (in)securitisation and resistance. That is why paper puts forward the interpretative approach, putting subjects of the study at the centre of inquiry. Considering that marginalised groups can use multiple types of performativity, the presented paper takes broad conceptualisation of resistance and leaves it to emerge from the data.

### **2.2.3 Section Summary**

This section provided a summary of the literature on resistance and emphasised on several concepts that can be useful for queered analyses of security and resistance in Poland. It holds that Polish LGBTQ people resistance strategies to (in)securitisation should be studied outside the heteronormative framework taking into account the security dilemma that LGBTQ

individuals face in access to visibility in public discourses. It also argued that understanding of resistance in Foucauldian sense might empower silenced subjects of security to make their voices heard and be included in security agenda. To better understand everyday lived (in)security of queer community, it is crucial to take their own perspectives through the interpretative approach. That is why it is crucial to understand how they articulate security problems and how they resist, considering their limited access to public discourse. From these starting points, the next chapter elaborates on the methodological part.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Design Frame and Case Selection

The presented paper takes a case study as a design frame that incorporates interviewing as the primary method for data collection. It offers a case-oriented approach, providing ‘an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives’ (Thomas 2011 :443). Case study best fits the research agenda when it focuses on how specific phenomenon unfolds in a particular context (Thomas 2011). The subject of the presented study is Polish LGBTQ community, while the object of the study – theoretical frame of the social inquiry – is resistance under insecurity.

According to Gary Thomas (2011), the subject should be selected because it offers ‘an interesting or unusual or revealing example’ that explicates the object of the study (:514). Presented study takes Polish LGBTQ community as a subject because it provides a unique and interesting phenomenon of resistance under insecurity – securitisation of homosexuality by the government in a developed, liberal country – in the country, that is a member of the European Union. Polish LGBTQ community has been chosen as the subject of this study following three routes, as suggested by Thomas (2011). The first route is researcher’s familiarity with the subject. Thomas (2011: 514) calls it a *local knowledge case*. Second, the subject can be chosen because of the inherent interest in the case – meaning it may be a *key case*. Third, the subject may be *outlier case* – it may explicate the object by being different and unique. The subject of this study – Polish LGBTQ community was selected because of a partial combination of all three routes. One of the reasons, however, not the most important, was the author’s specialisation in the region and future academic interests. Second and third routes of selection are discussed in greater detail.

Even though Polish LGBTQ community may not represent a *key case* of resistance under insecurity, it does provide a fascinating insight into queer community’s historical struggle and resistance against oppressive governments, starting from Polish People’s Republic (PRL) under the communist regime to present-day democratic Poland, with the right-wing ruling Law and Justice party in power. In this regard, the choice was dictated by two main reasons: by Polish historical context and actuality of the current debates on LGBTQ rights in Poland. Poland has a relatively short history of the LGBTQ movement, which means tolerance to gender minorities is not yet a finished project (Warkocki 2014). Upon EU accession talks, issues around LGBT rights were included in public and political discussions that created a backlash between liberal and conservative-minded forces in Poland (Szulc 2018). With time,



the Polish LGBT movement has become better organised and started to engage with the wider public. At the same time, right-wing political parties, the National Media, the Catholic Church and anti-gay mobilisation groups continue to marginalise LGBTQ people by presenting them as threats to Polish identity and values (Kubica 2009; Kościańska 2012). To summarise, the Polish case presents an interesting example of securitisation of homosexuality, from securitising move – explicitly articulated by ruling party representatives, to LGBTQ community's resistance.

Third and most importantly Polish LGBTQ community's resistance under insecurity is an outlier case. The government of Poland is openly homophobic in a liberal democratic state, a member of the European Union, adhering to human rights protection. Therefore, the presented case represents a compelling example of the resistance of the LGBTQ community under various homophobic pressures and their fight for security in a country that otherwise would have been considered 'secure'. With the emergence of far-right parties across Europe and discriminatory discourses gaining prominence, it is important to examine how the security of marginal groups can be undermined by (in)securitising practises and how they can have their voices heard and their rights upheld.

The fieldwork was conducted in a Polish city Kraków for several reasons. It is the second-largest city in Poland, with around ten universities. Since Kraków is considered as a 'student city', it attracts the students from entire Poland, guarantying diverse opinions and more representativity of the sample. Besides, Kraków is a place of growing LGBTQ grassroots activism and resistance. Even though authorities of Lesser Poland province, where Kraków is located adopted resolutions declaring the province as 'LGBT-free zone', and despite the efforts from local PiS party representatives and anti-LGBTQ lobbying groups, Kraków city Council rejected these resolutions. Thus, while Kraków is located in the province which has been declared as 'LGBT-free zone', it is also the place of an increasing number of LGBTQ organisations and queer-friendly public spaces, fostering queer resistance under open (in)securitisation.

### **3.2. Research Questions and Aims**

The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of dynamics surrounding (in)securitisation of LGBTQ community and explore possibilities of inclusion of queer voices in security agenda by focusing on the emancipatory and empowering potential of resistance. Thus, to address the ways how marginalised groups can have more voice and agency to be

included in an inclusive queer informed conception of security. To serve this goal, the study formulates two main research questions 1) Why queering security is important with the rise of exclusionary far-right politics? 2) How and why focus on queer informed resistance as an expression of agency can benefit queered approach to security?

Considering that LGBTQ individuals may be facing security problems not experienced by heteronormative cisgender citizens, the first set of measuring questions examine current security threats perceived by the LGBTQ community in Poland. Thus, this part puts primary emphasis on insecurity discourse and the main securitising actors as perceived by LGBTQ people. The analysis is based on the interviews from LGBTQ individuals and activists from Kraków. Face to face semi-structured interviews provided context-sensitive data on everyday experiences of (in)security of the interviewees.

**1) Why queering security is important with the rise of exclusionary far-right politics?**

- What are the main security threats perceived by the LGBTQ community in Poland?
- Who are the key securitising actors?
- How subjects of this study experience the narratives of the key securitising actors?

Perceptions determine practices. Thus, the second part focuses on the strategies and mechanisms through which LGBTQ communities resist the (in)securitisation and try to make their voices heard. The thesis pays particular attention to the alternative ways of security articulation and rejects epistemological reliance on speech act as explicated in securitisation theory. It examines how LGBTQ people use practice (for example, demonstrations, protests) and visuals (images, memes, posters) to resist to institutionalised homophobia and make their voices heard.

**2) How and why focus on queer informed resistance as an expression of agency can benefit queered approach to security?**

- How LGBTQ persons resist to (in)securitisation?
- What strategies and mechanisms do LGBTQ persons use to articulate their insecurities?
- How non-heteronormative conception of resistance can help LGBTQ community's voices be included in the security agenda?

By answering these questions, the thesis will be able to address the importance of queer informed conception of security, taking into account unique lived experiences of LGBTQ individuals under oppressive politics. This can be accomplished by focusing on the emancipatory and empowering potential of resistance, allowing marginal groups to have a say in inclusive security agenda. The study engages with experiences of (in)security and presupposes if LGBTQ community perceives (in)securitisation, more likely they will use alternative strategies of (in)security contestation, involving various configurations of visibility and invisibility.

### **3.3 Methods**

The study draws on material gathered from fifteen semi-structured interviews with LGBTQ individuals who are also involved in some form of activism. The analysis is guided through the critical emancipatory lens. To complement the analysis, contextualise the situation and better understand the legal, political and social context, the study draws on publicly available information, including parliamentary debates, reports and other public documents related to LGBTQ people. The main emphasis is put on data from 2015-2020 (after far-right PiS party came to power), but a legal framework and social context is traced back from Poland's EU accession talks from the late 90s. The analysis includes sources available in English as well as Polish. Secondary literature was used to crosscheck the data from various sources, which is particularly important when studying perceptions of marginal groups who may perceive evidence differently or have a bias to specific institutions.

#### **3.2.1 Primary Data Collection**

To understand the challenges faced by the LGBTQ community and inductively generate new insights into their ways of expression, fifteen semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with activists and representatives of the LGBTQ community. The study critically analyses how the interaction of participants and their ways of articulation of (in)security is situated in broader social and political discourse and power inequalities.

The data was collected using flexible semi-structured interviews. This method gives power to respondents (Elliott and Timulak 2005) – who become co-researchers by interpreting phenomenon as they see it. Presented paper greatly benefited by a flexible approach, since many themes were brought into discussion by the participants. Face-to-face semi-structured

interviews maximise the quality of data collected and are widely used to solicit information on sensitive topics or with vulnerable groups. Presence of interviewer made it easier to build trust between the interviewer and researcher. In addition, respondents could clarify the answers or ask for clarification of questions. Semi-structured question list allowed the researcher to focus on key themes, but also to discuss topics introduced by the respondents. Usually, the main disadvantage of this method is concern over the privacy of the respondents. Confidentiality was ensured by removing all identifiers of the person and replacing the names with pseudonyms.

Interviews were audio-recorded to make sure no important piece of information was missed. Interviews were conducted upon the respondent's consent.

### **3.2.2 Sampling Method**

Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants. Snowball sampling targets the hidden populations and is one of the best methods for recruiting hard-to-reach groups, ones who are less represented in the general population and for which the list of members is not available. Another advantage of this sampling method is that it may be faster and less expensive, mainly because the researcher was working in a foreign country.

To recruit a respondent-driven sample, based on initial formative research, five key participants were recruited from the target population – LGBTQ activists in Kraków. These five initial participants – ‘seeds’ further helped to recruit ten more participants from their networks. Key participants are members or co-founders of LGBTQ NGOs in Kraków. They were given information regarding the research and contact details of the researcher to distribute within their networks. Some respondents were recruited through online LGBTQ community networks with the help of NGOs and LGBTQ friendly spaces (Tęczuj, DOM EQ – Krakowskie Centrum Równości, LGBTQ choir Krakofonia) based in Kraków. This method had several limitations: data can be biased towards socially better connected and may leave out socially isolated LGBTQ people.

Overall, fifteen LGBTQ people were recruited who are also involved in some form of activism. Their age ranged between 19-31. Fourteen of them are Polish students or young people currently working or studying in Kraków. The fieldwork research was conducted in a

timeframe between February-March 2020<sup>10</sup>, in Kraków, at safe locations, mainly in a room booked at the Jagiellonian University. One interview was conducted via skype.

### **3.2.3 Data Analysis**

The data was analysed using qualitative content analysis combining conventional and directed approaches. Key themes ((in)security and resistance) were preconceived and derived from the theoretical framework (see Figure 1). Deductive use of theory helped focus on research questions (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein 1999). Two main themes relating to the main concepts of this study: security and resistance helped to determine initial themes based on semi-structured interview questions. However, when deriving codes and categories, the study mainly took the interpretive inductive approach to data analysis and no preconceived categories within these themes were identified before coding. The research allowed the codes and new insights to emerge from the data. The thesis aimed to get direct information from the study participants, putting their perspectives at the centre of inquiry. Therefore, deductive application of central concepts of the study combined with inductive code generation from the data allowed the study to avoid shortcomings of conventional content analysis and contributed towards analysis more grounded into theory.

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<sup>10</sup> Initially twenty interviews were planned, but the fieldwork was disrupted by unravelling COVID–19 and imposed lockdown in Poland

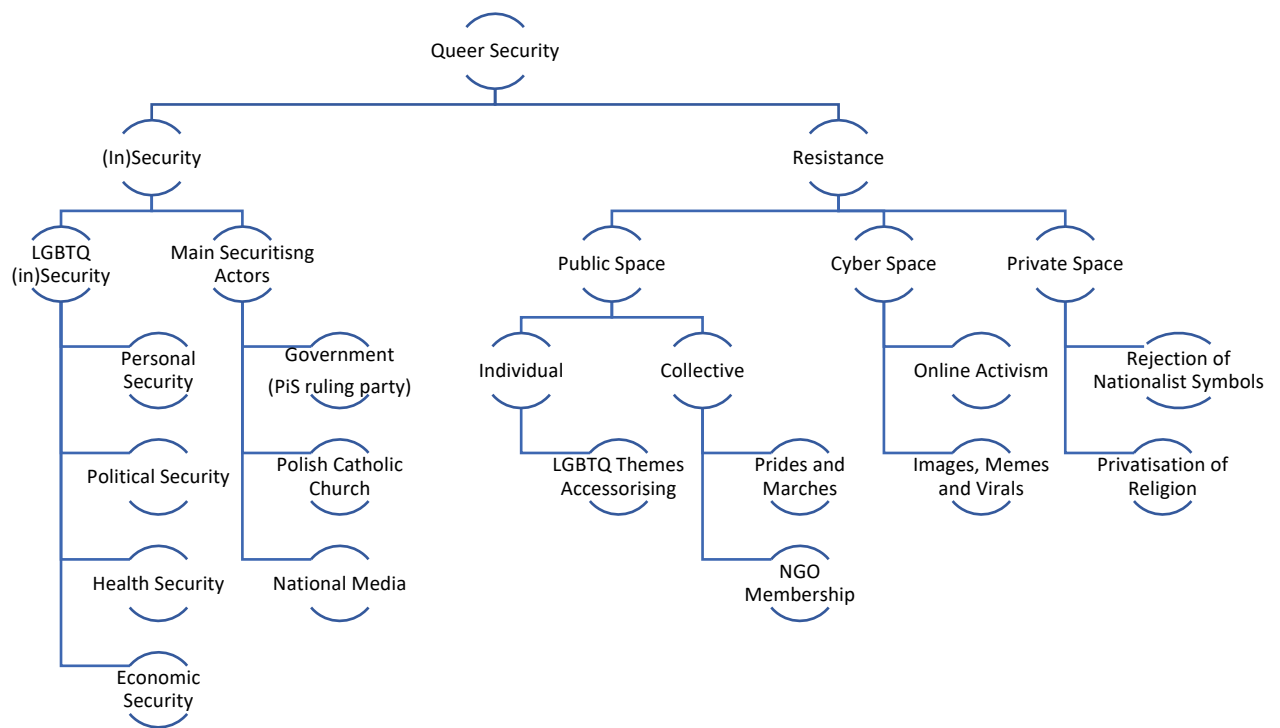


Figure 1: Data Analysis: Themes and Sub-Themes

### 3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations including safety, rights of the research participants and data protection are priorities in this research. The research received approval from Glasgow University Ethics Commission. No pressing safety issues corresponded the research, apart from emotional distress that could have been caused by talking on sensitive issues for the participants. To minimise the distress, the researcher ensured that she was familiar with the full spectrum of gender identities and issues affecting this group. Particular attention was paid to the body language of the researcher. The relatively informal tone of the interview was used to make respondents feel comfortable. Interviewer ensured that she spoke clearly, used proper grammar, gender pronouns and not overly formal language.

Before the interview, all participants received Plain Language Statement (Appendix B) explaining why the research was done and what it would involve. The form also included information that participant was free to withdraw at any time. After getting familiar with research aims and goals, participants provided written consent (Appendix C) to take part in the research.

To ensure the confidentiality of the participants, all possible identifiers were removed from the data and were replaced by a pseudonym. In the paper, they are referred to by the pseudonyms. At the end of the research project, all personal data will be destroyed, including audio recordings and transcripts. Witten summary of results as well as the final paper has been available for all participants upon request.

## **4. Security Under Insecurity: Exploring LGBTQ (in)Security Discourse in Poland**

Due to the research rationale, the study did not provide a fixed conceptualisation of security and left its meaning to emerge from the interview data. This being the case, before moving to further analysis, the thesis examines how security is perceived and experienced by the subjects of this study – LGBTQ individuals living in Poland. Various security problems that the respondents discussed stand very close to the human security framework. Consequently, instead of providing new conceptualisation for the queered security analysis, based on the data gathered from the interviews focusing on respondents' feelings of every day (in)securities, the study draws on the concept of security from human security framework (UNDP 1994).

The concept of human security broadens the scope of security analysis and puts forward the security of people (UNDP 1994). Thus, it is a people-centred approach 'concerned with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities (1994: 23). One of the ways to conceptualise queer security under the human security framework is to name the threats that it must address (Alkire 2003 :24). UNDP 1994 report established seven dimensions of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, political. At least five of those dimensions: economic, health, personal, community and political are relevant for queering (in)security.

### **4.1 Queered (in)Security in Poland**

The idea to take human security as an analytical framework emerged after preliminary data analysis and was used for categorisation of the codes on the second stage. The table below represents the relationship and categorisation of seven dimensions of human security within three key components of the human security concept: freedom from fear, freedom from want and life in dignity (UNDP 1994). Here, it is suggested to include Life in Dignity as a critical component comprised of different types of security. The table further shows how queer approach fits into human security as an analytical framework.



Type of Security			Mainstream Approach	Queered Approach
			Main Threats	Main Threats
Life with Dignity	Freedom from Want	Economic Security	Unemployment, poverty	Discrimination at the workplace, lack of legal protections
		Food Security	Hunger, famine, malnutrition	
		Health Security	Lack of access to healthcare, Infectious diseases	Barriers to healthcare, adverse effects of disclosure, the unfamiliarity of doctors to LGB and especially transgender health needs
		Environmental Security	Pollution, climate change, resource depletion	
	Freedom from Fear	Personal Security	Crime, physical violence, abuse	Physical and verbal violence, hate crimes, abuse
		Community Security	Identity-based discrimination (religious, ethnic and gender)	Gender identity-based discrimination
		Political Security	Violations of human rights and civil liberties, political repression, unlawful treatment	Violations of human rights and civil liberties, political repression, unlawful treatment

Figure 2: Author's elaboration based on the UNDP Human Development Report of 1994

The table illustrates that the human security framework relates to LGBTQ peoples' security problems in at least five aspects. First, human security relates to the protection of an individuals' personal safety. This means freedom from direct and indirect threats of violence (personal security). Equal rights and political protection are included under political security. Many respondents (eleven out of fifteen) interviewed in this study, expressed concern that they feel like second-rate citizens due to their limited rights. LGBTQ people's political security is also undermined by a violation of fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Third, LGBTQ people often face discrimination at the workplace (economic security). Legal protection at the workplace is not always translated into practical actions of enforcement. Fourth, regarding health security, LGBTQ people face barriers to access to healthcare (Meyer and Northridge 2007). Many doctors are not familiar with lesbian,

gay, and bisexual individuals' health needs, especially with transgender health needs (Shukla et al. 2014). Before moving to further analysis, it has to be mentioned, that community security – defined as identity-based discrimination, is not discussed in separate subchapter, because all discriminations in political, economic, health and personal security domain faced by LGBTQ community, by definition, are discussed on the grounds of their sexual and gender identity. Thus, they already refer to community security as defined by UNDP. Human security serves as an analytical frame derived from the data and is used to categorise LGBTQ (in)security into four subchapters. Next sections analyse narratives of the respondents focusing on political, personal, economic and health (in)security.

#### **4.1.1 Political (in)Security of Queer Individuals in Poland**

Political insecurity that includes violations of human rights and civil liberties, political repression and unlawful treatment is prevalent for LGBTQ individuals living in Poland (see Godzisz and Knut 2019; IGLA 2020). Political security is closely related to community, economic, health and personal insecurities. Some authors (Buzan et al. 1998) even argue that all security is political. Thus, it is one of the broadest sectors. Keeping that in mind, for analytical convenience, under this sector paper addresses only lack of protections and legal rights on the grounds of sexual or gender identity.

Majority of the respondents believe that they do not enjoy the same rights as heterosexual, cisgender citizens and that they are invisible to the government. Basia underlines invisibility of LGBTQ people as individuals worthy of protection: 'we are not seen as the people; we are just an ideology'. 'The government is made of people who are very vocal about protecting the traditional family from the deprivation of the, you know, immoral LGBTQ people' – commented Elena and repeated the same line – 'am not a person, I'm an ideology'. The majority of respondents (Basia, Augusta, Jakub, Ania, Filip, Zofia, Kuba, Andrzej) believe that the government does not see them as individuals who need protection, they are dehumanised as 'imported' ideologies who threaten Polish values. As a result, they are excluded from the security agenda.

Respondents feelings (Basia, Jakub, Andrzej, Elena, Dagmara) that they are treated as second-rate citizens is supported by the evidence. ILGA Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People (2020) marks Poland as the worst state in the European Union in regard to LGBTQ rights. One of the most explicit violations of the rights of LGBTQ individuals is a declaration of 'LGBT-free zones' by more

than 80 municipalities across Poland. Even though anti-LGBTQ resolutions are not binding, they make LGBTQ populations feel unwelcome and threatened in their own country.

Majority of the respondents (thirteen out of fifteen) also emphasised the lack of legal protections. Reflecting on their predicament, most of them mentioned that institutionalised homophobia forces LGBTQ people to move out of Poland. As Iwona said, it forces them – ‘just to go somewhere where the law can protect you’. All respondents observed that the Polish government completely ignores their problems. According to Piotr: ‘they don’t see the problem, and when you don’t see the problem, there is no problem’. Indeed, there are no special protections for LGBTQ individuals in the Polish constitution. Only Polish Labour Code (Art. 113) contains sexual orientation as the ground of discrimination and outside the employment there are no special legal protections in access to social protection, goods and services, including housing, healthcare and education (Bojarski 2016: 6).

Apart from the legal protection from hate crimes and discrimination, the legal partnership was one of the most desired rights mentioned by the respondents. Poland is one of six EU countries – alongside Slovakia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Romania — which does not recognise any form of legalised same-sex relationship, neither marriage nor minimal Civic Partnership (IGLA 2020, Equaldex.com 2020). Same-sex parents have no right to joint adoption or second-parent adoption (Equaldex.com 2020). Defending her right to legal partnership and marriage, Elena said:

I am not abnormal. I love whom I love, and there is nothing more natural than love. I want to have legal, you know, legally recognised wedding [...]. We’re citizens like the other people; we pay the same taxes, we have to abide by the same laws, we have the same duties, we should have the same rights as you.

Ada also thinks that legal partnership would make their life ‘so much easier’. Another desired right was a right to child adoption for same-sex partners. According to Ada, if the government was tolerant and granted her the right, she would have a child: ‘a lot of worst people on the earth have kids, so why not me? Because I am homosexual? It is not a problem’.

Overall, all of the respondents mentioned that for achieving political rights and legal protections, visibility of the problem was crucial. According to them, the lack of access to the articulation of their problems poses significant constraints to LGBTQ activists’ fighting for security. Among the members of the LGBTQ community, there is the perception that they are not seen as people worthy of protection. Thus, their political security is severely undermined

by the declaration of LGBT-Free zones, unequal treatment from the government, lack of legal protections and rights. While protection from hate crimes and discrimination relate to ‘freedom from fear’, legal partnerships and child adoption rights can be included under ‘freedom from want’ component of the human security framework.

#### **4.1.2 Personal (in)security: ‘Passing’ and Acting Straight**

Institutionalised homophobia has real-life consequences on the safety and security of LGBTQ people. Personal security was one of the biggest concerns mentioned by the respondents. According to the majority of them (ten out of fifteen), the most significant consequence of the government’s hostile rhetoric is the normalisation of violence towards them. All fifteen respondents mentioned that they had experienced physical or verbal violence on the grounds of their sexual or gender identity at some point in their lives. One respondent observed that they do not experience immediate physical threat, but ‘you still feel uncomfortable...like not in danger, but not safe’ (Adam). Thus, security, understood as one’s feeling of safety, is severely undermined despite the absence of immediate physical threat.

All respondents asserted that the ruling Law and Justice party normalises and facilitates hate speech, discrimination and violence against LGBTQ people. Augusta, an online activist, believes that the government is not holding accountable the individuals and groups who threaten LGBTQ people. According to Jakub: – ‘Białystok March is the biggest consequence, the terrorists from Lublin March, the whole increase of violence towards LGBT+ people, it is thanks to them.’

Most of the respondents mentioned Białystok March (ten out of fourteen) as a milestone event for Polish LGBTQ community, where dozens of LGBTQ marchers got physically assaulted by counter-protesters. According to them, this event was one of the most evident reminders that LGBTQ people were not safe in Poland. ‘It was like a gay hunting...people were beaten in the street, and they were scared, crying’– recalled Dagmara. ‘Białystok March showed us that if we won’t help ourselves, we won’t get any help from the government’– observed Jakub.

In a climate of insecurity, hiding one’s queerness is a price for physical security. Some respondents prefer to avoid ‘too much visibility’. Member of LGBTQ choir said that they try not to be very visible for security reasons: ‘we intentionally keep it low profile, don’t advertise in spaces that would get us potentially bullied or harmed or anything’ (Elena). Holding hands in public or displaying affection is also considered as a brave move. Elena said that she is especially scared when she sees queer people displaying affection in public: – ‘my heart skips

a bit, on my god, do they feel safe enough, is it safe? And I stay to be a witness if something happens'. Narratives of the respondents reinforce Lene Hansen's argument that security is profoundly gendered and is contingent on conformity with gendered social norms (Hansen 2000). That is why many LGBTQ individuals are forced to remain in the closet.

Personal security and resistance via visibility are directly connected. Some LGBTQ individuals refuse to 'discipline their bodies' and sometimes for them, visibility comes as a personal sacrifice. Two respondents said that they are ready to sacrifice their physical security for the long-term benefits for the community. Piotr asserted, that if he encounters someone being openly homophobic, he would not mind getting abused physically, so that the person who uses violence against him, faces the consequences: – 'Okay, I will go to the hospital for few days, but they will go to prison for few months'. Jakub, a transgender man, also made the same point: – 'whatever, I will get beaten up in the street, and that's all. If it is the price of a better future, why not?'.

Not surprisingly, not everyone is ready to sacrifice their physical safety for visibility. Everyday concerns about physical security push many LGBTQ people into the closet and significantly limit their ability to counter (in)securitisation openly. As, Elena, a member of the LGBTQ choir, observed, their activism is only limited to 'just performing' for security reasons. Choices between immediate physical security and resistance to (in)securitisation are profoundly shaped by the current political climate that poses a security dilemma for LGBTQ individuals: either to be invisible and safe as a physical body or openly resist and face the consequences.

#### **4.1.3 Economic (in)security**

Even though there are legal protections for LGBTQ people in the Polish Labour Code (mainly because of the EU law transposed into Polish law or directly applied), several respondents (Ada, Jakub, Andrzej) expressed concern that they do not feel job security, because the government is not on their side. For Ada, the only way to keep her job is to remain in a closet:

In my workplace, everyone talks about their private lives, but I don't talk about my private life, because I am worried that I can be fired... Even though there are legal protections that they cannot fire you based on your sexuality, they can just come up with whatever [...]. And with this kind of government, I couldn't do anything with this.

Another respondent, Jan, also made the same point, that sometimes it is just the pressure that makes queer people quit the job. He said that it is not as simple as your boss just firing you because you are gay, but:

There are many different social mechanisms which may result in quitting the job. So, it is more like the fear of what other people would think, than losing that job per se [...] Your colleagues may turn your job into a nightmare, and you can do nothing about it.

Ada also mentioned that for her and her partner taking a bank credit and buying a house together would be very difficult and in the case of a break-up, only one partner would get the ownership. According to her, legal partnerships could solve this problem and give LGBTQ couples better access to services and economic well-being.

The interviewees' perceptions of economic (in)security are also supported by the research data. Even though in Poland employment is the only area where LGBTQ individuals are legally protected against discrimination, according to the research conducted by NGOs (Godzisz and Knut 2018) employees rarely take legal action against their employer on the grounds of discrimination. There can be several factors for that, including the fear, lack of trust in law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. Consequently, the only legal protection 'guaranteed' for LGBTQ individuals is not always translated into practice, severely undermining their economic and job security.

#### **4.1.4 Health (in)security**

Health Security is another crucial aspect of structural violence against the LGBTQ community. Structural violence understood as avoidable impairment of human life and fundamental human needs (Galtung 1969), can not only deprive LGBTQ people of their basic needs but also lead to premature death and disability (Farmer et al. 2006). LGBTQ issues are absent in Poland's national health plans, suicide prevention programs and health surveys (Godzisz and Knut 2018 :5).

In the presented study, health insecurity was mainly emphasised by transgender individuals (Jakub, Filip, Alix, Kuba), who underlined that their specific problems are almost entirely ignored not only by the government and health sector but also by mainstream LGBTQ movement, mainly advocating gay and to a lesser extent, lesbian rights. Jakub underlined that in general, transgender population is the most invisible part of the LGBTQ community and that

double indivisibility creates more problems for trans people in access to services (see also Zucker and Lawrence 2009; Fassinger and Arseneau 2007; Worthen 2013).

Filip, who is undergoing hormonal therapy, said that he feels the most discriminated and humiliated when he needs to get medical care. Kuba talked about the difficulties of the sexual transition process in Poland. To undergo a full transition process, including hysterectomy, first, the person needs to change their legal gender that in Poland sometimes can take years. He mentioned that a person who wants to improve their legal gender needs to pursue a lawsuit against their parents, ‘accusing’ them of wrongly assigning gender to their child. Kuba, who has foster parents, finds it extremely difficult to get a favourable ruling in the court. Consequently, he is not able to complete the transition. He said that taking testosterone for a long time without full transition, can cause cancer in different parts of his body, but he still has to wait for the court’s ruling.

The scientific literature and statistical data also back up Kuba’s and Filip’s concerns that the transgender population is significantly underserved in mental health and medical services in Poland (see Brabski and Dora 2019; Świder and Winiewski 2017). In Poland no gender-dedicated clinics exist, few sexual medicine specialists work in this field, and only a few psychiatrists, psychologists and endocrinologists are familiar with the treatment and assessment (Brabski and Dora 2019). State health insurance does not cover the individual needs of LGBTQ people, there is a lack of services and expertise on trans issues, and LGBTQ people are discriminated in access to healthcare (Godzisz and Knut 2019). In Poland, changing legal gender is a very complicated procedure, and there are no comprehensive legal regulations concerning legal transition. In one research (Świder and Winiewski 2017) when asked about their experiences 28 per cent of transgender individuals declared that they experienced discrimination from the healthcare professionals and about 72 per cent of them admitted considering suicide during the last year.

Other respondents also mentioned prejudice and lack of awareness of LGBTQ issues in Polish medical sector (Basia, Ania, Andrzej). Another most frequently voiced problem was lack of mental health services for LGBTQ people. Basia thinks that one of the biggest problems for queer individuals is the negative consequences of homophobia on their mental health. She also mentioned that mental health is not a priority of the government in general: – ‘our country does not provide proper care for mental illnesses not only for LGBT people but for anyone’. She recalled her own experience when her therapist from the state-sponsored program was homophobic, so now, she has to pay much more for her mental health therapies at the private clinic.

Interview data indicate that invisibility and lack of awareness of the unique needs of LGBTQ populations result in discriminatory access to healthcare and undermines their health security, perpetuating structural violence against them. The transgender population seems to be the most vulnerable in this regard. To summarise, the LGBTQ individuals interviewed in this study emphasise on lack of access to healthcare services based on their special needs, absence of gender-specific clinics and mental health programs, discriminatory practices of health professionals and in general, absence of LGBTQ issues from the Polish healthcare sector and government-funded health plans.

### **5.1.5 Instead of the Subchapter summary: Provenance and (In)security**

The previous chapter examined various security problems of queer individuals. It used human security as an analytical frame to discuss political, personal, economic and health security problems that LGBTQ populations face in Poland. It found that subjects of this study are facing violations of human rights and civil liberties, repression, physical and verbal violence, hate crime, job insecurity and barriers to access to healthcare.

Interestingly, the data gathered through the interviewees' narratives indicate that the place of residence influences the perceptions of (in)security. On the question, what it was like to be an LGBTQ person in Poland, all fifteen respondents observed that it largely depends on where one lives. Ada, who comes from a small town in Lesser Poland (Małopolska) and now lives in Kraków, said that 'it is two different worlds.' She feels safer in Kraków because the big city gives her a feeling of anonymity and she can hold hands with her partner, something that would have been impossible in her hometown. Iwona made the same point:

I think it just depends from place to place. Personally, I moved from a small town around Kraków. Because, I'm not sure there are any gay people in my hometown and if there are, they probably hide it, or they don't enter in same-sex relationships. [after moving to Kraków] I acknowledged that, at least, I have the chance to be myself more, than I would have had this chance in my hometown.

Atlas of Hate ([atlasnienawisci.pl](http://atlasnienawisci.pl)) created by Polish activists that delineates 'LGBT-free' zones, shows that municipal and local governments declaring themselves free of 'LGBT ideology' are mainly located in the South-Eastern part of Poland. This region is one of the less economically advanced voivodship in Poland, with the high unemployment rate (European Commission-Regional Innovation Monitor Plus) and high support for the PiS party (Bublewicz



2020). Several respondents underlined the widespread anti-LGBT sentiments in this part of Poland. Some of them explain this by the fact that this region is ‘more Catholic’ (Augusta, Maja, Andrzej). ‘It’s even worse [in the Eastern part of Poland] because the Church is even stronger there and people have more traditional mindset’ – observed Maja.

The interviewees’ narratives show that security and insecurity, subjective or objective varies from place to place. Therefore, all four aspects of security discussed earlier also depend on the locations. The study found that many LGBTQ individuals experience problems in access to quality healthcare; they experience the lack of economic security, political rights and protection, as well as threats to their physical safety. At the same time, these insecurities are unequally distributed across different parts of Poland, municipalities, cities and even villages, underlining an important limitation of this study.

The research data is also in line with Lene Hansen’s (2000: 285) argument that security as a practice is profoundly gendered, and those who are constrained in their ability to access the dominant discourse are prevented from becoming subjects of security worthy of consideration and protection. Marginalised status, institutionalised homophobia and refusal of the state to protect LGBTQ individuals, endanger them and limits their ability to fight for security. Thus, the LGBTQ community’s invisibility in political, personal, economic and health security sectors, undermine their right to live in dignity, free from fear and free from want. Keeping these important implications in mind, it is crucial to address who creates and shapes LGBTQ (in)security discourse. The next section focuses on key (in)securitising actors and their narratives based on perceptions of the subjects of this study.

## **4.2 Key Actors in LGBTQ (in)Security Discourse**

The previous chapter addressed the main security concerns of the LGBTQ community. To better understand how (in)security is created and exercised, it is important to name the main actors are who shape and influence queer (in)security and in turn, against whom and what narratives LGBTQ individuals resist. This section analyses the narratives of the actors operating in LGBTQ security discourse as perceived by the subjects of this study.

The interview data indicate that main securitising actors in LGBTQ discourse are the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), Polish Roman Catholic Church and Public Service Media (PSM), from 2016 also referred to as National Media.<sup>11</sup> All respondents had negative

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<sup>11</sup> As a result of legislative changes introduced with the Law of 22 June 2016 on the National Media Council, ruling Law and Justice party has changed the same the name into ‘National Media’. For more information visit: <https://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/Poland-Independence-of-Public-Service-Media>

perceptions of these three actors. Majority of the respondents' (thirteen out of fifteen) opinions are in line with Augusta, agreeing that the lack of acceptance of LGBTQ community is 'a mutual fault of the church and the current ruling party'. Categorising media as a securitising actor or a functional actor is challenging since it mainly reflects the ruling party's homophobic narratives. Thus, considering media as the securitising or functional actor is arbitrary and is based entirely on the respondents' perceptions.

Functional actors can affect the dynamics of the security sector by enforcing or facilitating (in)securitisation, but they are not the ones who make the securitising move – they do not declare what needs to be seen as a threat (Buzan et al. 1998 :36). Based on the respondents' narratives, three main functional actors were identified: opposition parties, police and judiciary.

Securitising Actors	Government (PiS party)	
	Polish Roman Catholic Church	
	Media	National media
Commercial media		
Functional Actors	Opposition	Left
	Parties	Centre right
	Police	
	Judiciary	

*Figure 3: Categorisation of actors in the Polish LGBTQ security discourse perceived by the respondents*

Opinions on commercial media, opposition, police and judiciary were somewhat mixed. If the absolute majority of the interviewed say that the current government is doing nothing to protect LGBTQ individuals, they have a somewhat neutral view on the police and judiciary as their protectors. However, none of them said they would go to the police or to the court in the case of verbal abuse and that they would only do so in the case of physical violence. One respondent, Piotr, thinks that on the lower level, police and individual judges, may be willing to help, but when it goes to the Prosecutor's office, it may get complicated since the government controls it. Regarding protection at the equality Pride Marches, majority of the respondents (except for Ada and Jan) noted that police's presence is the main guarantee of their safety.

Regarding opposition parties, interviewees noted that they do not feel much support from them. However, all respondents mentioned the party called Spring (Wiosna) led by the openly gay former mayor of Słupsk, Robert Biedroń. One of the core issues of the party ideology revolves around gender equality (Program of the Party – [wiosnabiedronia.pl](http://wiosnabiedronia.pl)). As Augusta observed, even though Spring in coalition with two other leftist parties won seats in 2019 parliamentary elections, it does not make much difference for LGBTQ community because ‘it is always the two conservative parties that fight against each other, and this is PiS and PO’. Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska, PO) is the most prominent opposition centre-right party; but as Jakub and Jan observed, LGBTQ issues are usually ignored in their programs. However, Jakub said, presidential elections of 2020 could have been a chance for a change since openly gay candidate Robert Biedroń was running for a president and a candidate from Civic Platform also tackled possibility of civil partnership for LGBTQ people. Although, as Dagmara notes, the opposition is either not fully committed, or even if it was, ‘they do not have anything to say, because the government, the ruling party [PiS] is in a big majority’.

This section briefly summarised respondents’ perceptions of key securitising and functional actors in Polish queer (in)security discourse. The next two sub-sections draw on perceptions of LGBTQ people and activists to analyse how key securitising actors: the government (PiS Party), Polish Catholic Church and the National Media shape and construct queer insecurity discourse.

#### **4.2.1 The Law and Justice Party’s Discourse – ‘Not quite Pole’: Sense of Belonging In The Narratives of The LGBTQ People.**

All of the respondents referred to the ruling PiS party as one of the key actors shaping their insecurity discourse. The feeling of isolation, marginalisation and ‘otherness’ as a consequence of politicians’ anti-LGBTQ narratives vividly emerged from the data. The interviewees (Jakub, Piotr, Iwona) think that even though the ruling party is limited in passing and implementing openly anti-LGBTQ policies because of membership in the EU, the most damage is done by their homophobic rhetoric and letting ‘slide fascist ideology’ (Adam). Adam observed that they are the most worried about the emergence of violent ideologies and groups that the government allows and normalises; ‘That is a real threat, in my opinion’– they concluded. Exclusion of LGBTQ individuals from nationalist discourses has real-life consequences on their everyday security. Marginalisation and discrimination of LGBTQ population not only strengthen their feeling of alienation from the nation but also undermine their political, economic, health and personal security.

In the interview, vice-president of the LGBTQ organisation (Iwona), observed that many LGBTQ people question their national identity as a consequence of government's homophobic rhetoric. She thinks that one of the immense consequences of institutionalised homophobia is that LGBTQ people feel that they are not welcome in their own country, – 'that we are not treated as hundred per cent citizens, or Poles'. She observed, that LGBTQ people in Poland were bombarded by homophobia and lack of acceptance from so many sites, that it made them scared for their friends, their partners and themselves.

Transgender man, Jakub, also underlined that the basic rhetoric of the Polish government is that 'we are a threat to Poland, sin from West and we didn't exist until the 90s'. 'They consider us to be foreign agents, we're not real Poles, we are spies or agents, paid by foreign entities, so we are traitors', said Elena, a member of an LGBTQ Choir from Kraków.

The social and political construction of (in)security constructs winners and losers of security practices (Bigo 2014). While allegedly protecting the Polish nation, state and identity from 'LGBT ideology', the ruling party (in)securitises the LGBTQ community. According to several respondents (Elena, Augusta, Andrzej) in Polish conservative society, the PiS party presents the LGBTQ community as a threat in order to make appealing populist claims for conservative and religious voters. They also noted, that during previous elections the ruling party presented refugees as public enemies and now it was the LGBTQ community; – 'They have a history of basically dog-whistling every minority towards during the election times [...] it has always been their strategy' – said Adam. 'In the election campaign in 2015, the scapegoat, the black sheep, to be blamed for just about everything, where the refugees, and after that LGBTQ community took that position' – Elena repeated the same line.

To sum up, data indicates that the ruling Law and Justice party is seen as one of the main actors shaping LGBTQ individuals' insecurity. Exclusion from nationalist project and state's refusal to accept LGBTQ populations undermines their security in various fields as discussed previously. Next chapter examines how LGBTQ individuals perceive the role of the Church in their experiences of homophobia and feeling of insecurity.

#### **4.2.2 The Catholic Church as Securitising Actor**

All respondents consider the Polish Catholic Church as one of the primary sources (in)securitisation, together with the ruling PiS party. They underlined that the Church plays a negative role in shaping homophobic attitudes to the LGBTQ community, that in turn, has severe real-life consequences on their safety and security.

Some respondents (Jan, Kuba, Dagmara) believe that the Church plays a more important role in presenting the LGBTQ community as a threat than the government. ‘They [the Church] have so much power in Poland; they have more power than politicians and politicians listen to them because they think that Polish people listen to them’ – said Basia. Maja also illustrated this point:

There is a lot of influence of the Catholic Church here, but it’s not a good influence like we should expect from the Christians. It’s very hateful influence. The only model of the family is man, cis man and cis woman having babies and everything outside in this model should not be tolerated [...] including women who are not in a relationship, any kind or LGBTQ community or people who do not want to have kids. It’s one and the only model available.

Maja also asked a rhetorical question regarding the role of religion in Polish national identity: – ‘I wonder where is Polishness so linked with Catholicism? Or it’s just a fake link. When we separate Catholicism from Polishness what would stay? I mean, I’m not even sure’. Elena also underlined, that the main problem the Church being above the law and facing no consequences for their hateful rhetoric.

Several respondents (Kuba, Elena, Ada, Piotr) observed that the Church’s homophobia has a significant role in marginalising and deteriorating well-being and of LGBTQ individuals because many of them are raised in Catholic families, following Catholic traditions. They mentioned the quote by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Kraków, who called LGBTQ movement a ‘rainbow plague’ (Chadwick 2019). Basia thinks one of the most severe results of the homophobia from the Church is mental-health problems experienced by many of them. Jakub sadly noted, that there is ‘narration from politics, narration from the Church, narration from your parents, from your family, from television, from media that you’re living a sin, you are sick, you have to go to the doctor, to get help and stop being sick’. He even recalled an extreme case when a transgender individual was ‘exorcised’ for being transgender ‘because a demon supposedly possessed them according to some priests and very religious parents’. Kuba mentioned a quite comic moment when one priest during the religious mass, preached that Coronavirus was brought by ‘homosexuals and people who accept homosexual people and LGBTQ community.’

Augusta thinks that for Polish Catholic Church homophobia is a way to keep power. She thinks that the LGBTQ community is regarded as enemies, in order to focus masses

attention on something terrible and threatening that requires united action: – ‘this is such powerful rhetoric for everybody who wants to keep power. Like to point to something bad, and you have to defend yourself against it’.

To summarise, the data indicates, that since many Polish LGBTQ people are raised in Catholic families, and some of them identify themselves as followers of Catholicism, homophobic narratives coming from religious figures have serious negative consequences of their feelings of belonging, faith and mental well-being. Moreover, as Basia believes, if the Church was not playing so much role in the negative portrayal of LGBTQ community, ‘polish people would have been so much liberal to the LGBT’. The respondents also believe that the Church’s open homophobia in tandem with the ruling party facilitates violence towards them. According to the interviewees, the ruling Law and Justice party and the Polish Roman Catholic Church are not the only actors who (in)securitise them. Next section explores perceptions of LGBTQ individuals on the role of National Media as another securitising actor.

#### **4.2.3 Media and (in)Securitizing Discourse**

The absolute majority of the respondents (fourteen out of fifteen) underlined that the Public Service Media (National Media) also plays a significant role in (in)securitisation of LGBTQ people, portraying them as threats to the Polish society and children. All respondents of the study expressed sharp criticism of Polish public broadcaster – Telewizja Polska (TVP). Majority of the respondents when discussing media referred to the National TV, therefore analysis mainly includes respondents’ opinions to television channels.

Transgender man, Filip, spoke about lack of unbiased information on the LGBTQ community as a result of their selective visibility in media. He said that the primary way for most of the people to get information about LGBTQ people is through the National Media, which is hugely biased. Filip thinks that people like him are misunderstood or not seen at all. He ironically observed, the name of the public broadcaster should change its name to ‘TV of PiS’: – ‘because it’s really very visible that they’re speaking on their side all the time’. Many respondents mentioned how TVP tends to twist information and spreads disinformation to increase homophobic sentiments. Iwona noted that once TVP took material from Pride March in Germany and claimed it was happening in Poland: – ‘so it’s not like teenagers in Poland celebrating being gay and being open, but it was people in fetish gear or something’. Reporters Without Borders (RSF 2020) report has also emphasised governmental bias and significant decline in the press freedom in Poland. According to the report (RSF 2020), in Poland, state-

owned media has been transformed into government propaganda outlets where hate speech and partisan discourse are the rules.

The majority of the respondents' (Basia, Jakub, Iwona, Filip, Jan, Dagmara, Maja, Elena, Piotr, Andrzej) opinions were in line with online activist Augusta, who said that the National TV stations were tools of propaganda under current ruling Law and Justice Party. Then she recalled a documentary on one of the national TV channels about the LGBTQ community called 'rainbow plague', 'rainbow disease'. Another respondent, Jan, summarised media narrative on LGBTQ community, saying that Polish National Media is very openly homophobic: '[they] openly say that LGBT people are bad, they're monsters, they're a disease, they're heading to kidnap your kids, we will rape their kids'.

Apart from biased anti-LGBTQ documentaries and information, according to the interviewees, national TV also gives a platform to people who spread hateful propaganda. Maja recalled the case when a bishop who called LGBTQ community a plague was invited in a TV show to address society openly. She also thinks, since the Church is very visible in media, they have more significant leverage in shaping people's homophobic attitudes.

Several respondents (Jakub, Piotr, Iwona, Andrzej) expressed concern that many people in Poland get information primarily from the TV and in many parts of Poland, only national TV channels are translated. Jakub noted, that people who do not have access to the internet or those who just do not check the news on the internet, are solely influenced by the Polish National TV. Many respondents believe, more positive media coverage would help them a lot to counter homophobia. According to Piotr, the problem is not only anti-LGBTQ propaganda on national TV, but also people's unwillingness to use alternative sources. In the end, even though there are alternatives, Andrzej and Piotr are confident, that for a large segment of society anti-LGBTQ biased Public Service Media remain the main sources of information.

#### **4.2.4 Chapter Summary**

The previous sections examined perceptions and experiences of political, personal, health and economic (in)securities of the LGBTQ community in Poland and emphasised on security problems of individuals who do not fit into state-sanctioned notions of identity. After mapping queer (in)security discourse, the paper analysed key securitising actors as perceived by the respondents of this study – the ruling Law and Justice Party, Polish Roman Catholic Church and the National Service Media, also referred as the National Media. The chapter showed the importance of queering security because the dominant security paradigm in Poland is queer-blind and does not acknowledge security problems that LGBTQ individuals

experience in their everyday lives. The crucial aspect in developing inclusive security agenda, that would shield securitised subjects from oppressive politics, is to empower their agency. Underpinning the emancipatory potential of resistance, next chapter analyses how under the climate of insecurity the LGBTQ community employs various tactics and practises of resistance that the paper discusses as an expression of agency in contesting (in)security.



## **5. Queer Security Dilemma: Resistance and Politics of (in)Visibility**

Resistance is the second key concept in this study. The presented paper adopts a broad understanding of resistance and examines individual and collective practices used by queer individuals to contest their (in)security and resist to the securitising actors' homophobia. The most important finding regarding the role and possibilities of resistance in queer (in)security discourse that emerged from the data was a clear need to extend understanding of resistance from open, visible and collective strategies to more hidden, personalised and invisible forms of resistance. Expansion of the focus to more hidden ways of security contestation was dictated by acknowledging what the author calls here a 'queer security dilemma' – a condition when a choice of visibility aimed at getting more security, can threaten one's physical safety. This dilemma also impacts the choices and strategies of resistance. For that reason, in the presented study, understanding of resistance is informed by James Scott's insights on the multifaced nature of the struggle of marginal groups against the dominant paradigm, focusing on various public and private acts of resistance.

The major issue that arises with shifting the focus to hidden, personalised and invisible resistance(s) is the difficulty in measuring the outcome/effect. However, the very epistemological standpoint that the study takes is not directed towards easily observed outcomes 'out there' found in broader public, political and social discourses. Instead, the thesis calls for a genuine bottom-up approach to find missing queer voices and resistance(s) that impact the consequences of (in)securitisation through their limited agency.

As mentioned earlier, 'security as silence' – occurs when making a problem visible by marginal groups may be impossible or even aggravate the threat (Hansen 2000 :287). The following extract from the interview illustrates this point: – 'for a very long time I tried not to be visible because I didn't want to get a blue eye' (Dagmara). Apart from the concerns on immediate physical security, visibility versus invisibility is widely debated within the community in terms of potential long-term benefits for queer rights. Dagmara spoke about the split within the community on the issue of visibility. She said, one side believes that too much visibility, for example, the Pride Marches 'with rainbows sticking everywhere' damages the image of LGBTQ people, while the others think that it is important to show that they are normal people, but also are the part of the community.

Elena thinks, to be visible as a member of the community and advocate LGBTQ rights is very hard, because, in Poland, ‘the narrative is if you’re out and proud, they will find ways to tell you to go back in the closet’. She said, if you remain closeted, you may probably be safer, but ‘if you’re trying to, display affection to your same-sex partner, if you try to demand your equal rights, then yeah you are pervert, you deserve whatever is coming after you’.

The respondents’ narratives indicate that many of them have been scared to present themselves as who they are (Basia, Ada, Kuba, Andrzej, Maja, Elena). Several respondents mentioned ‘Passing’ – acting straight to avoid threats to physical safety. Some of them observed that LGBTQ individuals who ‘look’ ‘gay’ are more vulnerable to physical and verbal violence. ‘I don’t look like a typical lesbian, so I don’t have problems like that. Because for Polish people, a gay woman looks different’ – observed Ada. As a result, as their narratives show, LGBTQ individuals face the dilemma between visibility and invisibility. Keeping that in mind, here, resistance is understood as a broad concept that should also include various ‘hidden transcripts’ of security contestation.

Data indicated that individual invisible choices of resistance directed against securitising actors should also be understood as resistance, together with active fight directed towards structural homophobia. Resistance from the ‘closet’ should not be understood as an act of submission, since the agency can be exercised and expressed from different sites, including from the closet – the private space, where physical security is guaranteed. Based on the data, strategies and forms of resistance can be categorised into three *sites* of resistance: *public space*, *cyberspace* and *private space* (the closet). Here, cyberspace functions interchangeably between public and private spaces, combining ‘connected sociality of public space with the anonymity of the closet’ (Woodland 2000:418). At the same time, public and private spaces are also closely connected: for example, although the Pride Marches are performed in the public space and thus are part of the public transcript, at the same time, for some, this can be seen as a hidden form of resistance – many queer individuals try to hide their faces and identity while attending the Pride Marches.

Acknowledging that queer resistance is different from the heteronormative mode of security contestation, based on the data, the paper focuses on several forms of resistance and categorises them under three sites of contestation (Figure 4). These forms of resistance are not mutually exclusive and can be found in different configurations of practices of resistance in all three spaces.

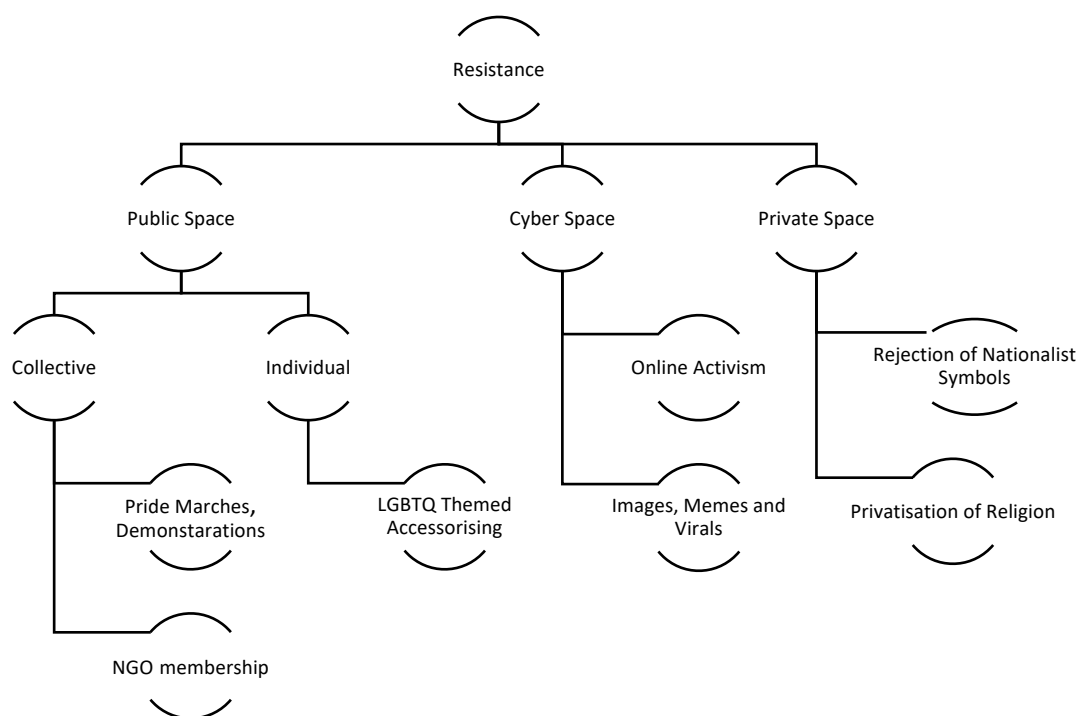


Figure 4: Sites of contestation and forms of resistance based on the interview data.

## 5.1 Too Queer to Fear: Resistance in Public Spaces

Within the public space, resistance was categorised into collective and individual forms. To counter homophobia, raise awareness and tolerance by increasing visibility of LGBTQ issues is one of the main goals of resistance performed in the public spaces. If collective resistance takes more recourses and time, individual forms of resistance are available for many LGBTQ individuals. Besides, apart from the time and recourses, the LGBTQ community's resistance tools are limited, considering their limited access to broader political and public discourses. By exploring resistance of Kraków's LGBTQ community, this sub-chapter analyses alternative ways of individual and collective resistance(s) found in the public space: something as small as wearing rainbow pins and other LGBTQ themed accessories to participating and organising Equality Pride Marches.

According to Andrzej, in Poland, an essential obstacle to better-organised community resistance is a fear to be identified. Dagmara observed, refereeing to Stonewall Riots<sup>12</sup> in order for LGBTQ movement to enter the mainstream, 'it should just go to this very high-tension moment when the hell breaks loose, and then maybe there will be some change'. As Iwona notes, despite open homophobia 'from so many sites in our own country', many LGBTQ

<sup>12</sup> Stonewall riots (1969) were a series of demonstrations by members of LGBTQ community in response to a police raids in New York City, considered as one of the most important events in LGBTQ liberation movement

individuals face the dilemma between visibility and invisibility, that forces them back to the closet and limits possibilities of resistance.

Organised resistance usually takes its culmination when two factors meet. First, when a watershed event happens, and second, as a result of oppression, minority groups unite based on shared identity, community and/or oppression (Szulc 2011). Arguably, two watershed events in contemporary Poland could trigger more organised resistance. First, declaration of LGBT-free zones by more than 80 municipalities in Poland, and second, brutal violence at the Equality Pride March in Białystok. March in Białystok received relatively wide media coverage and declaration of LGBT-free zones, undeniably shook not only Polish but international LGBTQ community, more precisely those, who got information about that. All respondents of this study mentioned declaration of LGBT-free zones and March in Białystok as a somehow important moments for the Polish LGBTQ community triggering different forms of resistance. Even though it is too early to talk about the culmination of Polish LGBTQ resistance and it is beyond the scope of this thesis, in contemporary Polish LGBTQ resistance, both factors were present in 2019.

### **5.1.1 ‘Your silence will not protect you’<sup>13</sup>: Equality Pride Marches and Collective Resistance(s)**

According to the narratives of the respondents, one of the most common forms of collective resistance is to join Equality Pride Marches and/or to organise under NGOs. Majority of the interviewees are members of student LGBTQ organisation Tęczuj and Kraków Equality Centre (Krakowskie Centrum Równości DOM EQ). Some of them are members of other LGBTQ NGOs, participate in various information campaigns and take part in organising Kraków Pride.

Jan believes that grassroots activism, particularly organising under NGOs, is one of the best, if not the only mean to make their insecurities heard. On the question from whom they believed the LGBTQ community was receiving the most support, he said:

I think, from each other. That’s the scary part, even though with all the things happening right, now my question is, where is European Union? Where is a firm, strong reaction

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Your Silence Will Not Protect You’ is a quote by Audre Lorde and a title of her collection of essays, poems and speeches.

to what's going on? It's all politically correct; it's all in the middle, it's all kind of playing it's safe. So, all we have is each other.

Augusta believes that Polish LGBTQ community is pretty well organised. She says that they are used to the government targeting minorities in the past, so 'we are pretty used to it, we can organise, come together and fight'. She recalled the case when ordinary citizens came together and wrote letters to sister cities in several EU member states from Polish towns which local governments declared as LGBT Free-zones. In response, some countries broke cooperation with those towns, condemning LGBTQ rights violations. Based on Augusta's narrative, despite the fear, Polish LGBTQ community got used to their everyday condition of insecurity and continues to resist with all the means available: from individual to collective, from personal to community-based responses to the institutionalised homophobia.

According to the respondents the Pride Marches in Poland are not only aimed to increase visibility and acceptance of LGBTQ individuals but to show that queer people are not a threat, are not a danger and that they are ordinary people. For Augusta, the Pride March is 'a way to say. We are here, we are like you, we are people, look at us'; For Iwona, it is about showing that 'we are not making any demands, we just want to be equal with the rest of society'.

Iwona spoke about the increasing number of Equality Pride Marches held each year in Poland. She said if in the majority of countries this happens once or twice per year, there are around twenty-thirty Pride Marches in different cities of Poland. She underlined the aim and importance of these marches:

Even if only a few hundred people were walking in that March, it still sends a message, I think, that we want to be seen and we want to be heard, and we want our rights to be respected. Because it's not really about making demands, it is about these rights to be protected, to be able to be treated humanely.

She also recalled when near the main square in Kraków, not far from the church where the archbishop of Kraków, who made homophobic comments was conducting a mass, people protested interestingly:

People weren't standing there with some kind of signs, but they were dancing. So, they were kind of, you know, showing that they are happy and they are free, and they're

young and that they don't care about what the archbishop said. But still showing him that it's not okay, showing that we are stronger than that...that we will fight with that, we will not agree with that, but we will also still remain strong.

The interview data indicate that attendance at the Pride marches is seen as one of the most common strategies of resistance. Pride in Poland has a radically different aim and purpose compared to a carnivalesque celebration with increasing consumerist tendencies observed, for example, in the United States, Australia, Canada and the Western Europe where sexual freedom, liberation and acceptance are celebrated (see Kates and Belk 2001). One can argue, that Marches in Poland have more in common with the early period of LGBTQ movement starting with Stonewall riots that changed the queer epistemology of closet into empowered political discourse. In Poland, at Prides defiance and visibility are performed, not liberation and acceptance.

It is yet early to talk about concrete outcomes of the LGBTQ community's resistance to (in)securitisation. However, Poland's presidential elections held in July 2020 shows, that socially conservative and openly homophobic president Andrzej Duda did not enjoy as much support as the PiS party expected (BBC News 2020; pinknews 2020). Duda won 51.2%, the slimmest presidential victory in independent Poland's history since 1989. Amid various controversial policies, homophobic rhetoric has been central in his presidential campaign (Maurice 2020, Easton 2020). Even though it is hard to measure the role of LGBTQ resistance in this historically narrow margin victory, it can be argued, increasing visibility and awareness of LGBTQ issues could have played a role.

### **5.1.2 Pins and Bricolage**

Rainbow-coloured flags, bracelets, T-shirts with slogans are considered to be symbols of LGBTQ movement (Kates and Belk 2001). Usage of accessories by subculture groups as a form of consumer resistance has been explored by numerous authors (Hebdige 1979; MacAloon 1984; Fiske 1989; Murray and Ozanne 1991; Willis 2014). The usage of LGBTQ themed accessories at the Pride Marches may be interpreted as a collective form of resistance (Kates and Belk 2001).

Exploration of the meaning of LGBTQ themed accessorising as an everyday choice of resistance, brings into focus the queer security dilemma: choice between visibility versus invisibility. Several respondents (Dagmara, Andrzej, Elena, Jan) mentioned that it is more likely to be physically or verbally abused if you are wearing or carrying LGBTQ related

accessories and/or clothes. Dagmara notes, ‘in general, it’s just not very safe to have too many rainbow or LGBT related accessories.’ She says, for a long time, she was avoiding being visible as a queer person, because she was scared. But now, she wears pins and bracelets to show that she is not afraid. However, she thinks it would be still scary to wear something ‘very, very visible’. Dagmara said, she is feeling anxious when wearing a rainbow pin on her backpack. She recalled that one girl was beaten in the street for carrying rainbow bag near the National Museum in Kraków, during a daytime. She also remembered how she got verbally abused in the streets for wearing a Stonewall T-shirt, ‘there would be less of that if there were actual laws against the hate speech’ – she added.

For Iwona, LGBTQ themed accessorising is associated with a victory over homophobia. She recalled a court case against a person who had a flag of Polish herb with a rainbow background at one of the Pride Marches. She proudly mentioned, because of the LGBTQ community’s mobilisation and support, the judge declared that it did not violate the national symbols and that that it should be seen as an arty expression. She believed that events like that could set a precedent for LGBTQ individuals’ future fight for their rights.

Accessorising as a form of resistance against (in)securitisation is another interesting aspect that is usually absent in masculinised security studies. Even though it may not be explicitly directed against securitisation, in the climate of (in)security, all deviant choices and signs of queer solidarity should be understood as resistance against dominant (in)securitising paradigms not captured by queer-blind mainstream security discourse.

## **5.2 Cyber Space and ‘Platformisation’ of LGBTQ Community:**

### **Virals as ‘Hidden Transcripts’ of Resistance**

Another aspect that emerged from the data is increasing platformisation of LGBTQ resistance in Poland. This happens in two directions: first, increasing use of digital platforms as the sites of resistance. Second, as a result of protest to the National Media, LGBTQ individuals’ increasing use of digital media in getting and sharing information. According to the data, the absolute majority of the respondents engage in at least one form of resistance within the cyberspace. Posting, tweeting, sharing LGBTQ related news and opinions also comprise a form of resistance. These micro strategies of resistance are aimed at resisting dominant ‘regime of truth’ advertised in media and rooted in homophobia.

Elena underlined that they do not have official platforms to make their voices heard; that is why the internet plays a crucial role. For them, getting visibility is very difficult because

there is not much space for LGBTQ issues in Polish mainstream media discourse. While some LGBTQ individuals refuse to watch National Media, others engage in a different strategy of resistance – by writing for LGBTQ online platforms such as queer.pl and by creating various Facebook groups where they share and spread information. Social networks are used not only for getting information but also for launching various LGBTQ visibility campaigns. In these campaigns, images, memes and so-called virals play an important role in contesting and challenging dominant paradigms, including the Government, the Church and the National Media that openly (in) securitise LGBTQ individuals as threats to Polish national identity and values.

The Subjective perception and understanding of resistance largely influence individuals' resistance strategies. Augusta, an online activist, believes, for her, resistance is 'a way of being activist, go against this hateful rhetoric' by informing the international community. She said that after brutality on the Białystok March, she went on twitter and started writing. Now she has several hundred followers and believes, she is doing her small part. She said, her good command of English enables her to reach the international LGBTQ community better and hopes to be heard by the European Union.

Data showed that memes, images and so-called 'virals' play an important role in Polish LGBTQ resistance to securitising actors' (in)securitising attempts. Several respondents (Augusta, Jakub, Filip, Maja, Adam, Andrzej) mentioned that visual messaging with LGBTQ symbols are commonly used by the queer community. Jakub and Iwona recalled the case about sixteen years old Polish teenager from city of Jordanów, who was reported to the police by the city mayor Andrzej Malczewski after he posted an image of the city's coat of arms with rainbow colours on a social network. By that, sixteen years old Janek was protesting the declaration of LGBT-free zones by the local government (Gazeta Krakowska 2020). Jordanów 'adopted' 'LGBT-free' resolution in May 2019, and sixteen years old teenager was forced to make an official apology for 'improper behaviour' (Kośmiński 2020). In solidarity with Janek, the campaign went viral with hashtag JestemzJankiem (I am with Janek) and dozens of coats of arms in rainbow colours appeared on Twitter.<sup>14</sup> The initiative was supported and shared by LGBTQ supporters, activists, celebrities and politicians from the opposition parties.

Cyberspace not only enables LGBTQ individuals to communicate and lobby more effectively but also allows them to get unbiased information. All fifteen respondents observed

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<sup>14</sup> See on Twitter [https://twitter.com/search?q=jestemzjankiem&src=typeahead\\_click](https://twitter.com/search?q=jestemzjankiem&src=typeahead_click), consulted on 6 July 2020



that Polish National Media is very biased against LGBTQ community and many of them explicitly underlined that they do not watch TV because it serves as a tool of propaganda in the hands of the ruling PiS party. As one respondent observed: – ‘national media is not national anymore, it’s is kind of government media where is no place for plurality’ (Elena). As a way of protest, they refuse to watch National TV channels. ‘I am super against the public television, all of my family, we don’t watch, and we don’t pay taxes for it’– observed Piotr. The protest to National Media for some respondents is translated into a protest to all TV channels, most of which, either completely ignore LGBTQ issues, or use inappropriate language and lack awareness of their problems (Jakub). As a result, digital platforms have become the primary sources of information.

To sum up, the cyberspace functions as a place where many LGBTQ individuals may feel what Anne-Marie Fortier calls ‘ontological security’– a sense of belonging at the welcoming place, continuity and confidence (2002: 190). A place where a feeling of security is mediated with ‘complicated games of anonymity and intimacy, privacy and disclosure’ (Kunstman 2004). At the same time, it serves as a site of resistance where various LGBTQ initiatives and visibility campaigns are launched both at national and international level (Gruszczynska 2007). With growing digitalisation of everyday lives, queer resistance is also getting digitalised. Therefore, it is particularly important to address the cyberspace as an alternative site of resistance where marginalised queer voices resist and counter securitisation and structural violence, perpetrated by securitising actors who are dominantly present in the mainstream media discourses.

### **5.3. Resistance(s) from the Private Spaces**

#### **5.3.1 Resistance from the Closet: Rejection of the Nationalist Symbols and Construction of ‘Gay Polish Patriot’**

Keeping in mind the importance of ontological security for queer individuals invisible and private strategies of resistance performed from the closet should also be taken into account. Since hegemonic nationalist discourse leaves no space for LGBTQ individuals, to mediate this feeling of alienation from the nation, some of them constructed their understanding of being a proud Pole and a patriot:

I am a patriot, meaning that I am a person who pays taxes, uses public transport and pays for it, who takes care of the environment... I am proud Polish, and I do not want

to change it. I am just sad that when I see the Polish flag, it reminds me of (far-right) Nationalism. And I wish to have a T-shirt with the Polish flag, but when I see the person like that on the street, I'm already scared, and I move the distance (Piotr).

For Piotr to be a 'patriot in a good way' means to be 'a person who is a proud Polish, with an open mind, who is not afraid of LGBTQ people or refugees [...] It is about being a good person and add an extra part that you are proud of your country'. According to him in the current political context patriotism is associated with radical-right, that is why he refuses to embrace nationalist symbols like the Polish flag and National Independence Day celebrated on 11th of November.

Elena, who is a member of Krakofonia, one of Poland's two LGBTQ choirs, also talked about the dissonance between her Polish identity and her sexual and gender identities. She thinks that many LGBTQ people are not comfortable with Polish national symbols because they associate it with homophobia and extremism. She recalled the case when several members of her choir opposed celebration of Polish Independence Day, thinking that 'if this country rejects them as a person, why would they want to celebrate it?'. The choir was also polarised when someone suggested singing the Polish National Anthem. She said some of the members of the choir defended the idea by saying, 'we are Polish, this is our country, this is our anthem, we have every right to be singing it!'. Elena also expressed her take on the issue:

We are citizens, fellow countrymen. We speak the same language, we attended the same school. We share the same culture, the same history, it's our country as well as yours, we have a right to the anthem, we should sing it.

Piotr's and Elena's narratives illustrate how LGBTQ people lose their feeling of belonging to the nation as a result of far-right homophobic discourses' monopolisation of national symbols, national identity and ideas of patriotism. Elena's quote well summarises the consequence of the current government's institutionalised homophobia on LGBTQ individuals' sense of belonging to the nation in a broader timeframe:

People had problems with the governments, but not with a nation and not, you know, not with an identity. They were Polish people who felt second-class citizens, and they fought for the equal price, but they didn't feel rejected, they just feel dismissed. The

recent events, the recent years, make me feel like I don't belong in this country, in this nation anymore, and I think, that's the saddest part.

Both strategies of resistance to the PiS nationalist discourse: resistance by constructing a different understanding of patriotism and refusal to embrace nationalist symbols should be understood as resistance – individual defiant choices directed against the dominant securitising paradigm of the key securitising actor – the Polish government.

### **5.3.2 Privatisation of Religion: Resisting the Church – ‘Christian, but not Catholic in this Government’s way’**

Majority of the respondents were born and raised in Catholic families. Even though in Poland religion plays an important role in many Polish families, experiences of Polish Christian LGBTQ individuals are overlooked and understudied (Mikulak 2019), following the flawed logic of considering being queer and being religious as mutually exclusive. Assertions like that exclude the experiences of Christian LGBTQ individuals, who may suffer from lack of acceptance from both the Church as an institution and the LGBTQ community.

The absolute majority of the respondents (fourteen out of fifteen) said they were born and raised in Catholic families. Several respondents identified themselves as Christians (Andrzej, Kuba, Piotr, Ada), but, as Ada observed, ‘not Catholic in this government’s way’. Piotr also underlined that he considers himself as Christian but does not trust the Church as a religious institution. However, Dagmara thinks, it is impossible to be Catholic and queer at the same time. ‘I don’t know anyone who is gay and stayed in the Catholic Church’ – she observed. ‘For me, it’s the organisation for now, and I’m close to signing out’, noted Piotr.

Filip, a transgender man, also talked about the role of religion in his life while accepting and realising his sexual and gender identity. Even though he was religious as a child, with time, he started to lose faith because he was ‘starting to feel different’. ‘So, more and more I started to see that the Church is not for me, not because of the religion itself or the philosophy of the religion, but because of the institution that church is’ – said Filip. Several other respondents (Andrzej, Piotr, Kuba, Elena) also talked about the change of their attitudes with the realisation of their gender and sexual identities. Based on the interview data, protest to the Church sometimes is translated into the production of alternative configurations of Christian LGBTQ identity.

The literature focusing on queer individuals’ choices to exit from the public sphere of religion, by separating belief and practice is extremely limited, only a few authors addressing

the issue (Stychin 2009; Gill and Waite 2012; Nynäs 2016). Because religion is an integral part of Polish national identity, LGBTQ individuals try to construct their own understanding of Christianity. This turn can be explained with the growing trend of privatisation of religion by queer individuals. Stephen Hart (1987) discussed several phenomena that can be indicative of what he called ‘privatisation’ of religion. The first is ‘religion without Churches’ – ‘people experiencing worship, enjoying a vital spiritual life, and sometimes even supporting religious causes, without the benefit of normal churches and without having to deal directly with other people’ (1987: 320).

According to Ada in contemporary Poland, to be a Christian and to be a Catholic is different, because she believes, Christianity means to be a tolerant and a good person, while to be Catholic ‘it is like institutional’. She does not go to the Church, but she goes to meetings organised by Christian LGBT organisation Faith and Rainbow (Wiara i Tęcza). This Christian LGBTQ organisation operates in public space, but it also offers LGBTQ individuals a private space for religious discussions. Some LGBTQ people, including Ada, go to their meetings not in a hope to seek acceptance from the Church, but only to talk about religion and their faith: – ‘I am going to the meetings of Faith and Rainbow because I am also a Christian person. I believe in God, but I don’t go to the Church’ – noted Ada.

To sum up, as a result of the Church’s open homophobia and portrayal of LGBTQ people as threats, the Church stops to be a place where LGBTQ individuals feel secure. Thus, refuse to accept the Church as a place of worship. Privatisation of religion by the Christian LGBTQ individuals can be understood as another form of resistance to the Polish Roman Catholic Church. The presented study opens a gap to study privatisation of religion in Poland, where the Church plays an important role not only in the narratives on national identity but also in everyday experiences of (in)security of LGBTQ individuals.

## **5.4 Chapter Summary**

The chapter provided an empirical picture of resistance derived from the interview data. It presented three sites of resistance: public, cyber and private spaces where LGBTQ individuals seek to counter homophobia and make their (in)securities heard. By doing so, they use various configurations of collective and individual, visible and invisible resistance(s). Data shows that visibility is precisely one of the critical goals of LGBTQ activists in Poland. However, marginal LGBTQ voices face severe constraints in access to public and political discourse, that is why their fight for visibility is even more difficult. For that reason, it is

particularly important to focus on various invisible and visible forms of resistance by directly engaging with LGBTQ individuals, taking a bottom-up approach to understanding their insecurities and their fight for security. It is also essential to make better use of various online platforms and visual messaging, widely employed by marginal groups as tools of resistance. Considering those important implications, the chapter showed, that it is crucial to overcome the flawed logic of security as a discursive construction, both practise and experience privileging heteronormativity, authority and privilege. Because epistemological reliance only on the public articulation of (in)security excludes resistance of marginalised populations who often face visibility/invisibility dilemma. That is why the thesis calls for a genuine bottom-up approach directly engaging with the subjects of (in)securitisation and giving them a voice to articulate security problems and their understanding of resistance. Only then it would be possible to identify and acknowledge queer voices outside the mainstream discourses.

Public, cyber and private spaces are the sites of resistance where insecurity and homophobia are contested. With various degrees of success, resistance is a non-discursive field of contestation between words, images and practices employed and used by the silenced subjects of security to be heard and their security to be acknowledged. Resistance as a bottom-up approach provides the most contextual understanding of how insecurity is articulated, and homophobia is challenged.

## 6. Discussion

This study sought to contribute to the knowledge bases of studies of security and resistance. By queering the central concepts – security and resistance, the thesis problematised heteronormative conceptions of the key concepts in this study and answered two key research questions. First, it managed to capture the security problems of LGBTQ individuals not experienced by heteronormative cisgender citizens. Thus, underlined importance of queering security in order to capture security problems absent from dominant security paradigms, especially under exclusionary far-right politics, when the government's exclusionary politics (in) securitise the marginal populations. Second, by queering resistance, it became possible to see queer agency and sites of queer resistance, that challenges existing security literature which tends to portray LGBTQ people as disempowered objects and victims. By that thesis emphasised on the emancipatory potential of resistance that can give LGBTQ individuals a voice in shaping security agenda. As a result, thesis contributed to a better understanding of the security dynamics surrounding the (in)securitisation of homosexuality in Poland, because it showed that securitisation is not only a top-down process by which the LGBTQ community is (in)securitised, but it also enabled to note the queer voices and resistance(s) against this move. By considering and showing the agency and resistance of the queer community and by acknowledging possibilities of success of resistance, the study opened up the potential for including their voices in inclusive queer-informed security framework, that can shield marginal communities from oppressive politics and empower them to 'speak' security in a modern political project in Poland.

Based on the interview data and crosschecking from secondary sources, the study found, in Poland, LGBTQ individuals experience identity-based discrimination:

- violations of human rights and political repression
- physical and verbal violence
- discrimination at the workplace
- lack of legal protections and barriers to access to healthcare

Thus, their political, personal, economic and health security is undermined. The study also explored the narratives of the key securitising actors as perceived by the subjects of this study. According to the interviewees, the ruling Law and Justice Party, Polish Roman Catholic Church and the National Media are the primary sources of their (in)securitisation. Together with mapping LGBTQ (in)security, the thesis explored various non-discursive strategies of (in)security contestation including practice (NGO membership, Equality Pride Marches),

visuals (images, memes, virals) and resistance(s) from the closet: the rejection of nationalist symbolism and privatisation of religion. Focus on these forms of resistance are usually left out from masculinised approaches to security contestation. Therefore, to include LGBTQ voices in security agenda and make their voices heard it is crucial to put forward non-heteronormative conception of resistance, taking into account marginal populations' lack of access to public and political discourses.

The substantive research gap that motivated this study was the lack of queer approaches in security studies, especially the absence of studies on threats and everyday security problems experienced by LGBTQ communities, especially in the context of the current rise of exclusionary far-right politics across Europe. It was mainly motivated by increasing anti-LGBTQ sentiments in several European democracies and lack of empirical studies on queer security under peacetime in developed countries. The thesis employed queer epistemological standpoint and engaged with poststructuralist feminist critique (Hansen 2000) and PARIS school's problematisation of (in)security informed by International Political Sociology (Bigo, Huysmans). The study emphasised that even though both approaches problematise the lack of voice and pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, they speak about these people, but not with them, generally rendering them 'silent' and invisible. The thesis problematised this complete silence and introduced resistance as a tool of agency of marginal groups in security discourse. The concept of resistance was used as a conceptual and analytical frame to get a better insight into queer (in)security and resistance. In addition, the most importantly, the study analysed each concept and framework through a queer lens.

Thus, theoretically, the thesis pointed to the importance of reflecting on the role of agency in the security agenda. It also showed that LGBTQ people resistance strategies to (in)securitisation should be studied outside the heteronormative framework taking into account the security dilemma that LGBTQ individuals face in access to public discourses. The epistemological shift to visibility/invisibility problematised what it means to 'speak up' in resistance to (in)securitisation. Expansion of the focus to visuals and more hidden ways of contestation was dictated by acknowledging 'queer security dilemma' which is about the irreconcilable paradox between conditional security that comes with invisibility and the desire to be heard. Considering the importance of 'queer security dilemma', the study challenged the flawed logic of security as both to practise and experience privileging heteronormativity, authority and power, because epistemological reliance only on the public articulation of (in)security excludes resistance strategies of marginalised populations who often face visibility/invisibility dilemma. The thesis argued that in order to include queer voices in

inclusive conception of security, the focus should be directed towards the LGBTQ community's resistance found in various ways of security contestation outside the mainstream discourses.

Besides the theoretical implication, the study documents the practice of LGBTQ individuals and activists who are directly involved in contesting (in)securitisation perpetrated by the Law and Justice ruling party, Polish Roman Catholic Church and the Polish National Media. Discussion of the empirical data generated through fieldwork interviews provided deep insight into the complex dynamics of queer (in)security and resistance in Poland. It is a hope that the evidence and analysis of this thesis will be helpful for future LGBTQ activism and broadening of the scope of security analysis in contemporary Poland.

Finally, many of the stories analysed in this paper are not a part of history. As this thesis is being written, the LGBTQ community's struggle for their rights, safety and security continues. Recent presidential elections, won by right-wing openly homophobic Andrzej Duda (BBC.com 2020) may indicate that Polish LGBTQ community's (in)securitisation will continue. It is still uncertain how the Polish LGBTQ community's security issues will be addressed under socially and politically conservative ruling party supported by the current openly homophobic president. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to direct attention to everyday insecurities and struggle of LGBTQ community against dominant paradigm, focusing on resistance(s) not easily found and observed in official public and political discourses.

### **6.1. Why and How Focus on Resistance as a Tool of Agency can Benefit Queered Approach to Security?**

The study showed that focus on resistance as an expression of agency could benefit queered approach to security because it allows to hear and note marginal voices that are ignored by mainstream security discourse. Consequently, the acknowledgement of queer voices, empowers them to have a say in shaping inclusive security agenda, that would shield them from oppression. Employing resistance as a form of security articulation and contestation overcomes dichotomic understanding of LGBTQ people as 'threats' and 'vulnerable' subjects – disempowered victims with no agency. Focusing on resistance as a bottom-up flow of security contestation and (in)security articulation may have important methodological implications. Direct engagement with the voices marginalised by mainstream politics and discourses, not only provides the most accurate, people-based understanding of security but also empowers LGBTQ individuals to make their voices heard.



At the same time, making these marginal voices visible would only be possible by queering the concept of resistance, acknowledging queer security dilemma associated with the danger of visibility. Queering resistance would mean to understand it as a broad practice of various forms of resistance(s) to the precarious condition of (in)security. While demonstrations, Equality Pride Marches and visibility campaigns play an important role in increasing queer visibility, one should keep in mind the existence of queer security dilemma and acknowledge, that not all LGBTQ individuals have a privilege to be seen. That is why it is particularly important to direct attention to different forms of resistance performed in public, cyber and private spaces, that includes different collective and individual resisting practises. Consideration of Cyberspace as an important site of security contestation in queer resistance unveils different practices of resistance where support to queer community can be channelled. Resistance from the closet can only be captured by directly engaging with the community. That is why the thesis calls for genuine bottom-up approach directly engaging with the subjects of (in)securitisation and giving them a voice to articulate (in)securities and their understanding of resistance.

Besides, acknowledging marginalised voices contesting the Polish government's, the Church's and the National Media's attempt to present the LGBTQ community as a threat may bring about the possibility of progressive change in how LGBTQ security is conceived. Therefore, identifying and empowering these marginal voices is that of the key importance to ensure not only everyday security of the queer community but also to bring about more normative understanding into the concept of security. That is why it is particularly important to understand how marginal and vulnerable people can be affected by actors who claim authority over deciding whose security matters. To empower and support these communities, it is even more important to understand better the tools of the agency that they may employ to make their voices heard. Using security framework to address these problems can be useful for considering LGBTQ security issues as urgent and politicised, ensuring timely and appropriate response of the governments' more pro-human rights forces and other stakeholders, including international organisations and human rights advocacy groups. While measuring immediate progress and success of queer community's resistance may be hard, acknowledging their voices is essential. Since security is an inter-subjective construction, having more voices included in the security project is crucial for a move towards an alternative conception of security that would include security for all, not just for some.

## 6.2 Limitations and Further Research

The empirical work took the case study of Poland and was based on fieldwork material gathered from interviews with LGBTQ individuals and activists based in Kraków. Even though the fieldwork was conducted only in Kraków, the respondents come from different regions of Poland, bringing different/various perspectives and experiences that make the study more representative. Observations and interpretations of the data are important and meaningful in addressing LGBTQ community's problems, however, cannot be generalised to all (in)securitising and resistance practices in different contexts. More generalisable findings would have required a much more extended period of fieldwork in different Polish cities, towns and villages.

Another possible limitation comes from the subjectivity of the author of this thesis, who tried to be a voice of the subjects of this study. The very epistemological standpoint that the study took made the critical distance from the interviewees' narratives extremely difficult. Even though it was a conscious decision to empathise with the subjects of this study, while interpreting and analysing the data the codes were generated with a maximum effort to avoid any biases.

Another limitation of this study comes from its inability to capture different forms of security contestation, including desecuritisation and emancipation and how they relate to the concept of resistance in a queered approach. Exploration of various dynamic of (in)security contestation and how they related to queered security analysis can be a topic for future studies.

The thesis also reveals gaps in the literature on queer security and queer resistance. It opens two broad theoretical and empirical gaps. First, how (in)security is experienced by marginal groups under far-right homophobic governments and second, how (in)security is resisted under active (in)securitisation. Regarding empirical research gaps, there are virtually no studies on queer (in)security and resistance using security framework taking cases of European democracies with homophobic governments.

As mentioned previously, in several European democracies, the LGBTQ community continues to be marginalised. The rise of exclusionary far-right populism across Europe not only makes sexual minorities face significant constraints to their freedom of expression but also endangers them. Serious human rights violations of LGBTQ people are observed in several Eastern European countries: Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary (IGLA Europe 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to expand the empirical analysis to

different cases, that would also contribute to the development of a solid theoretical foundation for Queer Security Theory.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A. List of Interviewees

Code	Pseudonym	Preferred Gender Pronoun	Description	Place
1	Ada	She	LGBTQ Individual/Member at Faith and Rainbow	Kraków
2	Augusta	She/They	Online Activist	Kraków
3	Jakub	He/They	Vice President of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków
4	Iwona	She/They	Vice President of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków
5	Maja	She	Member of LGBTQ Organisation/Drag Queen	Kraków
6	Filip	He/They	Member of LGBTQ organisation	Kraków
7	Basia	She	Member of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków
8	Alix	They	LGBTQ Individual	Kraków
9	Jan	He	YouTuber, Activist	Kraków
10	Kuba	He/They	Member of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków
11	Adam	They	Member of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków
12	Piotr	He	LGBTQ Individual	Kraków
13	Elena	She	Member of LGBTQ Organisation/LGBTQ Choir	Kraków
14	Andrzej	He	Member of LGBTQ organisation	Kraków
15	Dagmara	She	Member of LGBTQ Organisation	Kraków

**Appendix B: Plain Language Statement****Title: Security as Silence. Securitisation of LGBTQ community in Poland**

Researcher: Eva Modebadze

Email: [2407542M@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:2407542M@student.gla.ac.uk)Supervisors: Dr Ammon Cheskin ([Ammon.cheskin@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Ammon.cheskin@glasgow.ac.uk))Dr Maciej Stepka ([maciek.stepka@uj.edu.pl](mailto:maciek.stepka@uj.edu.pl))

*'You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.'*

*Thank you for reading this'.*

**What is the purpose of the study?**

The study aims to study **how** LGBTQ community in Poland is trying to make their problems heard to the wider public and the government. The study focuses on threats perceived and problems faced by LGBTQ community in Poland. Purpose here is to provide evidence and recommendations that can be used by LGBT advocacy groups, NGOs and other interested actors in the dialogue with the stakeholders including more liberal minded forces in Polish government. The study will last from 01.02.2020 till 06.06.2020.

- You have been chosen because your opinion will help the research better understand problems faced by LGBTQ community in Poland. Overall 20 representatives of LGBTQ community and activists will be interviewed.
- Taking part in this research is purely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason
- The interview will last approximately 45-50 minutes. If you will agree, interview will be audio recorded.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

Confidentiality will be ensured by removing all identifiers and replacing the data with codes. Your name will be replaced by a pseudonym, unless you explicitly ask to be named. Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.

- The data will be destroyed after research. The information collected will be used for dissertation, journal articles and conference papers. Upon request, researcher will provide you with the online publication or print copy.
- The project has been reviewed by the School of Education Ethics Forum at the University of Glasgow.
- **If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of this research project, you can contact the School of Social and Political Sciences, Ethics Officer: Aidan Simpson email: [socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk)**



## Appendix C: Consent Form

Title of Project: Security as Silence. Securitisation of LGBTQ community in Poland

Name of Researcher: Eva Modebadze

I confirm that I have read and understood the Plain Language Statement/Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

(Please tick)

	No	Yes
I agree to take part in this research study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I consent to interviews being audio-recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give consent that apart from researcher mentioned above, her supervisors and examiners will also have access to the interview recordings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Confidentiality

I ask to be referred to by pseudonym only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give consent be identified by name in any publications arising from the research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give consent my direct quotes to be used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant ..... Signature .....

Date .....

Name of Researcher ..... Signature .....

Date .....

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**Application Details**Undergraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☐ Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☒

Application Number: PGT/SPS/2020/002/IMCEERES

Applicant's Name: Eva Modebadze

Project Title: Security as Silence – Securitisation of Homosexuality in Poland

**Application Status: Fully Approved**

Date of Review: 07/02/2020

Start Date of Approval

15/02/2020

End Date of Approval

05/08/2020

**NB: Only if the applicant has been given approval can they proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval.**

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**Fully Approved**

Means that the applicant can proceed with data collection with effect from the date of approval.

**Amendments Required**

Where changes are required by reviewers, applicants must respond in the relevant boxes below to the recommendations of the Committee and provide this as an 'Amendments Response' document to explain the changes made to the application as well as amending the documents, as relevant. Changes to the application form or supporting documents should be highlighted either in **block highlight** or **in red coloured text** to assist the reviewers. All amended application documents should then be sent to the ethics administrator for the approval of SEF before data collection can proceed.

**If your application is Rejected**

a new application must be submitted to the School Ethics Forum. The reviewer feedback below will indicate whether a similar future project is likely to be supported. Where recommendations are provided, they should be responded to and this document provided as part of the new application. A new reference number will be generated. The new application forms should be signed off and submitted to the ethics administrator by the Supervisor.

## REVIEWER MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

## APPLICANT RESPONSE

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## REVIEWER MINOR RECOMMENDATIONS

## APPLICANT RESPONSE

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## ADDITIONAL REVIEWER COMMENTS

## APPLICANT RESPONSE

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Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any enquiries,  
please email [socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk)

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University of Glasgow  
College of Social Sciences  
Glasgow G12 8QQ  
The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

E-mail: [socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socpol-pgt-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk)

**Request for Amendments to an Approved Ethics Application**

(please complete this document and forward it with any supporting documentation to [socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk))

**Application Details**Staff Research Ethics Application ☐Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application ☒

Student id. Number if applicable: 2407542

Application Number: PGT/SPS/2020/002/IMCEERES

Applicant's Name: Eva Modebadze

Project Title: Security as Silence – Securitisation of Homosexuality in Poland

Original **Start** Date of Application Approval: 15/02/2020Original **End** Date of Application Approval: 05/08/2020**Amendments Requested**

Extension to Approval Period:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Documents to be amended:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant Group, change or addition:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Sheet/Plain Language Statement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Methodology:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consent Form:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Addition/Change to Researcher team:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment Document:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Justification for Amendments proposed:**

1. Some interviews will be conducted via Skype. Two respondents (activists) prefer to have Skype call instead of face-to-face interviews. If participants will explicitly suggest having Skype interview, in few cases (only well-known and particularly active LGBTQ activists) the applicant will agree to have interviews via Skype. In this case, the applicant will send them the list of organisations that provide emotional and psychological support for LGBTQ persons.

2. Public figures, such as well-known LGBTQ activists will be directly contacted via email. Their emails and contact information is normally publicly available.

Click here to enter text.

**List of Supporting Documents attached:**



Click here to enter text.

**Declaration:**

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information given above, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct.

**Signature(s)**

Applicant: Eva Modebadze

Supervisor (if student project): Ammon Cheskin

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Approved by Reviewer 27-02-20