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It's all hollow words or ,real change'? The impact of policies on the lives of young disabled people



# [ Agenda ]

- Background and aims
- Methodological approach: Combining Life story and Life Course
- Sample
- Results

# [ Background ]

- ESF-Eurocores program
- Duration 2010-2013
- Project partners:
  - Trinity College Dublin/Ireland
  - Vienna University/Austria
  - UC Madrid/Spain
  - Prague University/Czech Republic
  - Associated Partner: Leeds University

# [ Aims/research questions ]

- How are policies impacting on the lives of disabled people?
- To understand national policy regimes in relation to disability and welfare
- Explore potential of qualitative methods to research the implementation of the CRPD

# [ „Diverse Sample“ ]

20 young persons, born in the 1980ies

- Gender
- Region
- Federal States
- Migration-background
- Impairment
- Support
- Education

# [ Methods ]


- **Qualitative interviews in 3 waves**

- 2011: Life story interview
- 2012: Follow up
- 2013 Follow up

→ **Tracking Young Disabled people in European States**

# Combining Life Story and Life Course

- Life Story Research
- Life Course (Priestley 2001)
  - Trajectories
  - Pathways
  - Turning points
  - Ressources and barriers

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- Connecting individual experiences with wider macrostructural level
  - Stories as windows into empirical realities offering „potential to provide ‘traces’ of deeper social relations and macro-social change“ (Priestley & Shah 2011, 44)
  - Opportunity to take a look on individual and collective experiences of disability



# [ Results: Austria ]


## Education

- Integrative schools: mobbing by pupils and teachers
- Special schools: low academic learning
- „wild integration“: most positive experiences
- Universities: lack of personal assistance
- Strong efforts to push people into a segregated trajectory by directors and teachers
- Parents and personal resistance and resilience as resources

# Results: Czech Republic

## Education

- Early care and early education: support often not available – tendency to „institutionalize“ an individual
- Primary education: access to mainstream depends primarily on „will“ of an individual teacher or the school director
- Secondary education: lack of choices for pupils from special schools – traditional and old-fashion trainings, insufficient quality of the education to access the labour market
- Higher education: Access strongly focused on „employment carrier“ afterwards



Thanks for your attention!

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