

THE QUALITY OF LIFE. GENERAL OVERVIEW ON THE WORLD AND ROMANIAN LEVEL

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Abstract: *The concept of "quality of life" has emerged and developed as a critical reaction to the way of appreciation of human needs. The field of quality of life is defined by all the physical, economic, social, cultural, political, health, etc. elements that described the situation in which people live. The analysis model presented in this paper outlines four dimensions without exhausting the complex field of the quality of life indicators. The points of reference will be, first of all, the quality of personal life, the private sphere of the individual; secondly the society's quality is perceived by the people; the third the relationship of the individual with the society and the last satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life. Over the last 10 years a European system of indicators of quality of life has been developed. Thus, each country can be evaluated in relation to the other European countries, the most desirable seasons in the world being highlighted in the paper. In relation to these, as a general assessment, we can say that the quality of life in Romania is modest.*

Key words: *life quality, the most desirable cities, Romanians satisfaction of life*

INTRODUCTION

Through quality of, according to the OMS definition is meant the perception of individuals on their social situations in the context of the systems of cultural values in which they live and their own needs, standards and aspirations. In medicine through quality of life is meant physical, psychological and social welfare, as well as the ability of persons to perform their usual tasks in their day-to-day lives.

The concept of "quality of life" has emerged and developed as a critical reaction to the way of appreciation of human needs, only by the contribution of economic growth, while neglecting the complex impact it has on the natural and social environment. Thus, the first who used and imposed this concept in the industrial circuit were the ecologists and the researchers of the urban environment, pointing out the problem of ecological problems, which an uncontrolled economic development implies.

The quality of life includes all the goods and services, analyzed in quantitative and qualitative terms, of which benefit the members of a human community. [1]

These include four basic components:

- The quality of material life (housing, urban amenities, transport, working conditions, etc.);
- The quality of biological life (nutrition, stress, morbidity, etc.);
- The quality of spiritual life (education, culture, etc.);
- The quality of psychic life.

From this point of view, the quality of life includes all the elements referring to the situation in which people live, the activities, the social relationships and processes involved, the patterns of consumption adopted, the way and the lifestyle, the assessment of the circumstances and the results of the activities that correspond to the expectations of the population, etc. [3,4,5]

The urbanization process, with rising speeds over time, has generated problems with the organization of urban life, the achievement of a most favorable standard of living for urban communities. This is expressed both by macroeconomic indicators (Gross National Income, Gross Domestic Product, Gross National Product) as well as indicators of

the income of the population (net income, real income, etc.) and its consumption (costs of life, expressed through the services used, the daily basket or food consumption). [3]

In the last decades, the quality of life has emerged as a distinct and priority political objective at world level. The community has to stop to be a simple spectator of the economy, and to become a projector of its life, by using different resources in a coherent vision. In last years, the *quality of life* has become a concern at European Union's level. In European official documents, the quality of life concept appears in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) and also in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The authors of the paper were used as methods of work: data collection, processing, analysis, observation and their interpretation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis model presented in this paper outlines four dimensions without exhausting the complex field of the quality of life indicators. The points of reference will be, first of all, the quality of personal life, the private sphere of the individual; secondly the quality of the society as perceived by the people; the third the relationship of the individual with the society and the last satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life.

In order to characterize the sphere of people's personal lives, the following components were included in the analysis: health status, income, housing, family, relations with neighbors, workplace, and personal security.

In order to get a clear picture of society as it is filtered by people's perceptions, we have chosen to address the following problems: quality of education, quality of health care, quality of social assistance services, quality of management, evaluation of local government activity, perception of social conflicts, education and the possibility of getting a job.

The individual's relationship with the society he live in is a result of the conditions the experiencing at his personal level and those that he offer on a macro level to this society. This relationship refers to the trust in people, institutions, and participation in political and social life. Finally, the evolution of an indicator that is a result of all the conditions experienced by people in their lives, namely life satisfaction, will be considered.

Overall, the subjective assessments that people make on living conditions reflect the global, human performance of the socio-economic development process. Research data obtained through questioning individuals outlines a coherent image of the living conditions of human groups and communities and society as a whole.

In a global study, a number of criteria are taken in consideration and show which are, the most desirable cities, at the world level: [2,6,7,8,9,12,13, 15] Figure 1

- Political, social, natural, and economic environment (political stability, crime, law enforcement, climate, natural disasters, foreign exchange regulations, banking services);
- Cultural environment (mass media and censorship, limitations on personal freedom);
- Healthcare system (health goods and services, infectious diseases, waste disposal, air pollution);
- Education (standards and availability of international schools);
- Transport services (electricity, water, public transport, congestion);
- Recreation (restaurants, theaters, cinemas, sports and leisure);
- Consumer goods (availability of food/daily consumer goods, cars);
- Housing (rental of dwellings, equipment of furniture, furniture, maintenance services);



Figure 1. The most desirable cities at world level-by the number of criteria taken in consideration

Source: <https://mobilityexchange.mercer.com>

As a general assessment, we can say that the quality of life in Romania is modest, as more being valuable this claim for living conditions indicators, starting with the economic standard, from the macroeconomic indicators of the living standard (GDP per inhabitant, the household consumption fund), household incomes and up to life expectancy indicators at birth. In fact, if we consider GDP/inhabitant and life expectancy at birth, for example, two indicators included in the Human Development Index (UNDP), which has become, since 1990, one of the main tools for comparing countries in the world, the situation for Romania is not favorable. [10,11]

In rapport with other European countries, the long-term satisfaction of life of the Romanians is on long distance, even with the other countries in transition (EU 8), with the exception of Bulgaria, Figure 2.

The distribution of satisfaction with the life of the Eurobarometer provides a picture close to a "normal" state of satisfaction distribution: European Consolidated Countries (EU 15) offer a degree of satisfaction with a life characterized by a subjective balance: 83% satisfaction; formerly communist countries that seem to have achieved a relatively good transition (EU 8), show satisfaction with life close to steady state: 76%.

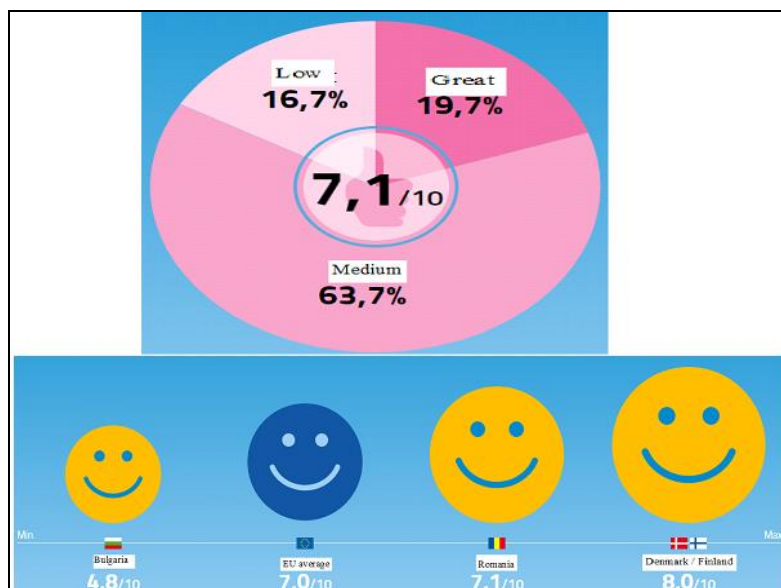


Figure 2. The long-term satisfaction of life of the Romanians

Source: Eurostat, <http://www.insse.ro>

After 27 years, Romania ranks last, along with Bulgaria, at a distance from European standards, but also from other former EU socialist countries. An underdeveloped, country, with a low industrialized economy, a disorganized agriculture, an economy unable to provide jobs for the entire population, a demoralized community. Romania's social status, severely ignored, must be a priority. It has a high degree of underdevelopment and disorganization. "Restoring" the country's social status must be put as a priority strategic objective. It is vital that the country's social status and quality of life to be priority strategic objectives that guide the design of the future. Together with the objective of liquidating underdevelopment, we must also take into account the resolving of the serious problems generated by a long history, but also by the recent past, impoverishment, excessive migration, social inequality, critical socio-economic situation of the Roma population and correction of the errors of transition. [10]

Romania's socio-economic development strategies must take into account the context of Europe in which we are part. We have integrated into a Europe that proves to be different from what we naively imagined. Also Europe is facing with crises, the component countries are also in competition. It is vital to define our European position more realistically and responsibly. [10]

CONCLUSIONS

There are 3 major dimensions of the quality of life: the existence, the belonging and the human actions. Improving quality of life can be achieved by working in the following four directions:

1. nutrition through: healthier food, improved food quality and safety, new manufacturing processes, etc.
2. health by: preventing and treating illnesses, living environment and healthy working conditions, reducing the cost of medical services, etc.
3. occupation by: creating new jobs, training, professional development and mobility, regional development, etc.
4. environment through: the use of renewable and non-polluting resources, clean environment.

The solution of Romania's economic and social problems is the creation of its own development program, in which some actions must be:

- Promoting some moral values in social life, responsibility and social cohesion.
- Priority approach the extreme social situations: population impoverishment, which has tended to become chronic in 40% of the population; the liquidation of "poverty pockets", most of them still in growth; the emergence of new sources of poverty, such as dismantling from public heating and electricity, homelessness, crises resulting from hopeless financial debt.
- Promoting a lifestyle, adapted to the context of the modern society, but also to the existing economic stage.
- Introducing a national system for monitoring and evaluating policies, social programs/projects, of Romania's degree of progress.

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