

QUALITY OF LIFE

INTRADUCTORY LECTURE



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Quality of life – introduction

- **growing popularity of the topic (lay and scientific community)**
- **discrepance: economic indicators, material wellbeing vs. sense of happiness, life satisfaction**
- **the need of complex, deeper interest about the human life**

Quality of life – introduction

- **The conception of the QOL can be seen as a reaction to the problems the moder society has to deal with (Andráško 2007)**
- **the aim is not only to identify the problems, but also (or especially) point out possibilities of their solution and to indicate the direction the human society should move in terms of ensuring satisfactory level of the QOL for all people (Andráško 2007)**

QOL – introduction

- QOL – basic basic characteristics:
- (growing) popularity
- social relevance
- complexity (comprehensive and complicated character)
- plurality (ideas, opinions, approaches, theory, methodology...)
- subjectivity (individuality)
- multidisplinary (interdisciplinarity)
- duality a multidimensionality (partial consensus)
- temporal and spatial variability (geography!?)

„What is quality of life“

- there is no general consensus about the meaning or definition of the term

Liu (1976) – theoretically there can be as many definitions as there are people in the world

- composite concept - „quality“ and „life“

„The extent to which a set of characteristics of an individual's life meets his/her individual requirements“ (Andráško 2008)

- metaconcepts – sustainability, satisfaction (with life), health, standard of living, livability etc.

Duality and multidimensionality

- two basic composite parts (basic dimensions) – objective and subjective
- multidimensionality of human life – we can focus on one component or the „whole“ complex of components (areas, dimensions of human life), e.g. housing

Quality of life measurement

independent, 'latent' phenomenon, it is difficult to grasp it

measurement is only a kind of „approximation“ (more or less successful :)

- the question of appropriate indicators and database
- several ways of measuring
- classification of the approaches
- structural models of QOL

Quality of life and geography

- **the role and importance of geography in the QOL research**
- **the importance of such research for geography**
- **the question of scale**
- **the question of applying the knowledge in practical way**
- **the link between QOL and actual (geographical) topics, e.g. regional development**



QOL conception – a brief look at the emergence

QOL – development of the concept

- phenomenon as old as mankind itself
- it exists „independently“ (whether we observe it or not) – partially latent character
- origins of the interest – Greeks – Plato - „what makes a good life?“
- later - the importance of faith, religion - "life after life"
- long (and continuing) interest in the quantity (length) of life - depends on the cultural, political, social maturity
- later – the emphasis on quality of life

QOL - development

- **professional interest - multiple views on the origins**
- **generally - the development of econ. (financial) indicators**
- **failed due to the ambition to describe and interpretate the human happiness, satisfaction, the complexity of life**
- **onset and development of sociological and psychological variables (indicators)**

QOL - development

origins of professional interest – 2 basic groups of opinions

- **30th years of 20th century - Commission for social trends – William Ogburn – Recent social trends in USA (1933)**
- **60th years of 20th century – so called „social indicators movement“**
- **looking for the answer for question, whether the people are wealthier, more happy and satisfied than before**
- **so called social change general welfare research**

QOL - development

- **80th years of 20th century - development of environmental indicators and their inclusion in the QOL conception (interconnection with the sustainability ideas)**
- **the development of QOL conception is significant for the beginning of the 21 century**
- **Hancock (2000) – it is important, that DEVELOPMENT does not mean only economical development, but also (sustainable) social, human and enviromental development**
- **quality of life becomes relatively more important than its quantity**



Thanks for your attention!