

# QUALITY OF LIFE

## Definition – dualism - definition



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

# Lacking definition – is this a problem?

- the result of our ability and interest to usefully and accurately interpret the contents of the selected concept is the exact definition (Andráško 2007)
- vague, unclear semantic interpretation - negativ phenomena
- Rogerson 1995 - the paradoxical position that contemporaneously QOL is perceived as a useful concept by political groups of different ideological persuasions, other than to note that in many respects this is a reflection of the variety of ways in which quality of life has been defined both academically and popularly

# Definitions of QOL (re-translated or paraphrased)

Liu (1976): output of a production function of two distinct, but often interdependent input categories - physical resources that are objectively measurable and psychological resources that are subjective ...(and) usually interpersonal incomparable

Szalai (1980): QOL refers to the level of the character of life, which could be characterized as excellent or sufficient. Human existence, well-being, life satisfaction are determined on the one hand by exogenous (objective) facts and factors of life and on the other hand, by endogenous (subjective) perception and evaluation of the facts and factors of life and of self.

# Definitions of QOL (re-translated or paraphrased)

Cutter (1985): individual's happiness or satisfaction with life and the environment, including their needs and desires, demands, lifestyle preferences and other tangible and intangible factors that determine the overall well-being. If the QOL of individuals is aggregated at the community level, the concept is linked to the existing social and environmental conditions such as economic activity, climate .... Encompasses both tangible and intangible criteria reflecting local consensus on social values and goals

Myers (1988): political term often used to describe the satisfaction of residents living in different locations

# Definitions of QOL (re-translated or paraphrased)

Felce and Perry (1995): general (human) welfare, which includes objective descriptors and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social and emotional well-being, along with the achieved level of personal development and purposeful activity, all weighted by personal values

Jacksonville Community Council (1996): sense of well-being, fulfillment and satisfaction as a result of the exposure to factors of the external environment

Cummins (1997): QOL is both objective and subjective, (and) each of these axes consists of seven areas: physical security, health, productivity, privacy and relationships, security, social status and emotional state

# Definitions of QOL (re-translated or paraphrased)

Ontario Social Development Council (1997): product of the interaction of social, health, economic and environmental conditions that affect the human (personal) and social development

Andráško (2006): QOL is a complex, elusive phenomenon. Roughly it can be defined as a qualitative evaluation of human life, in subjective level expressed as a sense of happiness or satisfaction, which is the result of the influence and relative interaction of the external (environmental, economic and social) and internal (psychological) factors

Andráško (2008): QOL can be seen as the degree to which the set of characteristics of one's life meets his/her individual needs



## **„Dualism“ of QOL**

# Dualism

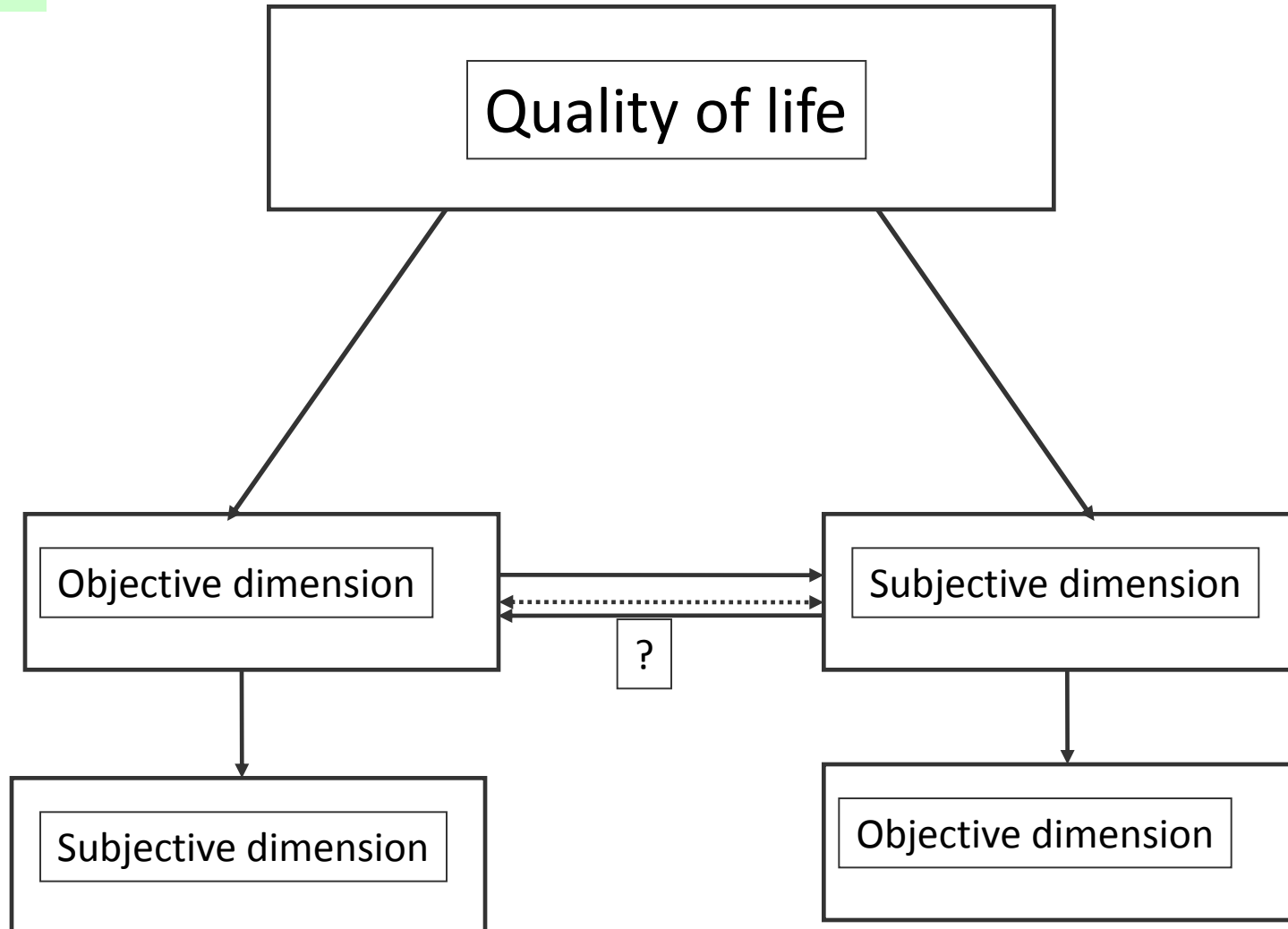
- (too) many definitions of QOL
- despite the plurality – some common aspects
- Pacione (2003) - The meaning of the phrase QOL differs a good deal as it is variously used but, in general, it is intended to refer to either the conditions of the environment in which people live, (air and water pollution, or poor housing, for example), or to some attribute of people themselves (such as health or educational achievement)



# Basic dimensions of QOL

- relatively wide consensus
- QOL as a two-component structure consisting of interconnected basic dimensions, mostly known in the literature as an objective and subjective dimension
- objective dimension - the impact of living conditions (usual conditions classification includes social, economic and environmental) on human life
- subjective dimension - has more focus on the subjective, individual human inputs, such as perception, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and so on.

Duality: the existence (presence) of two basic QOL dimensions (the question of their hierarchy and how and to what degree they interact)

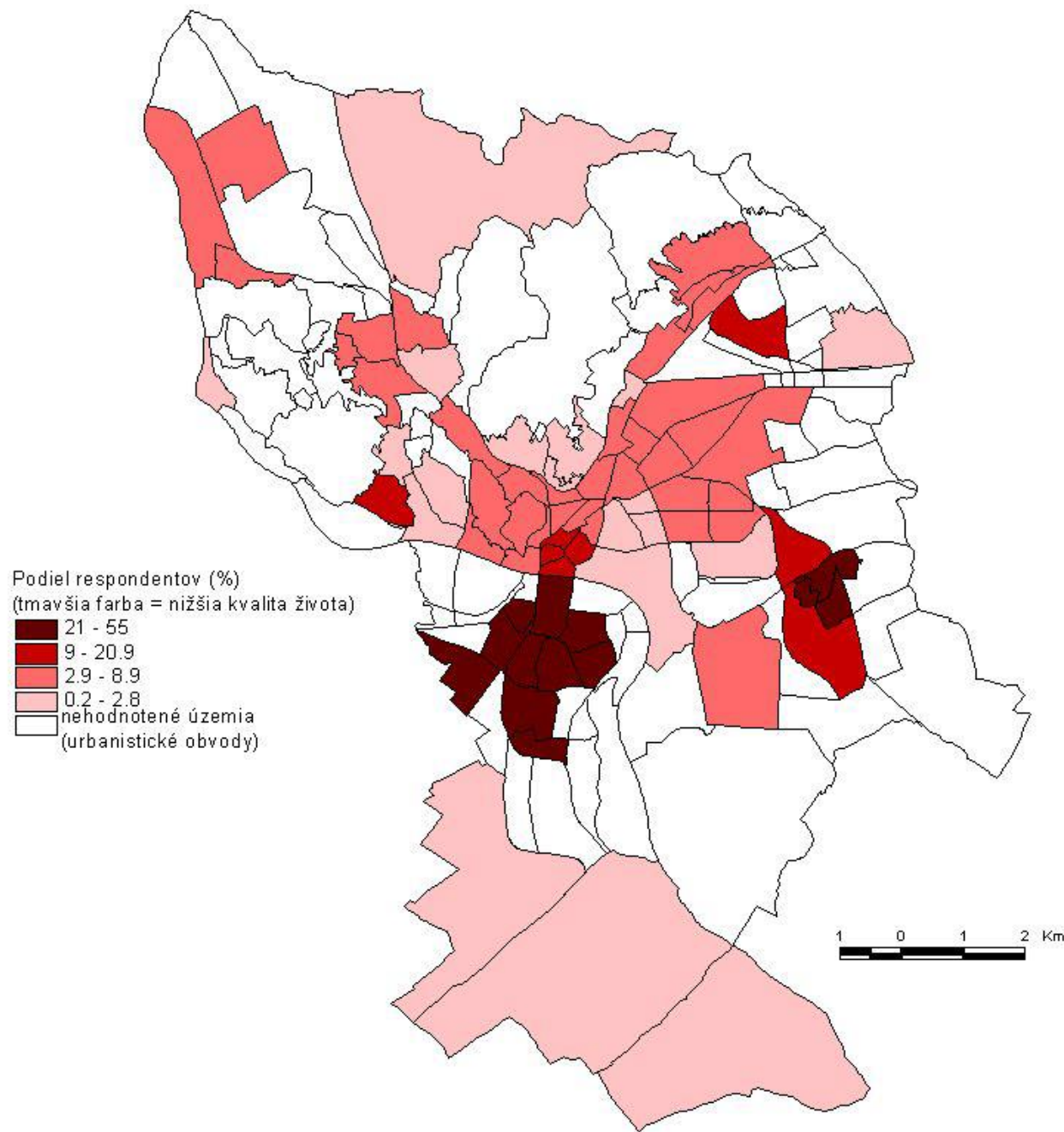


# **The question of the hierarchy and the interaction of basic dimensions**

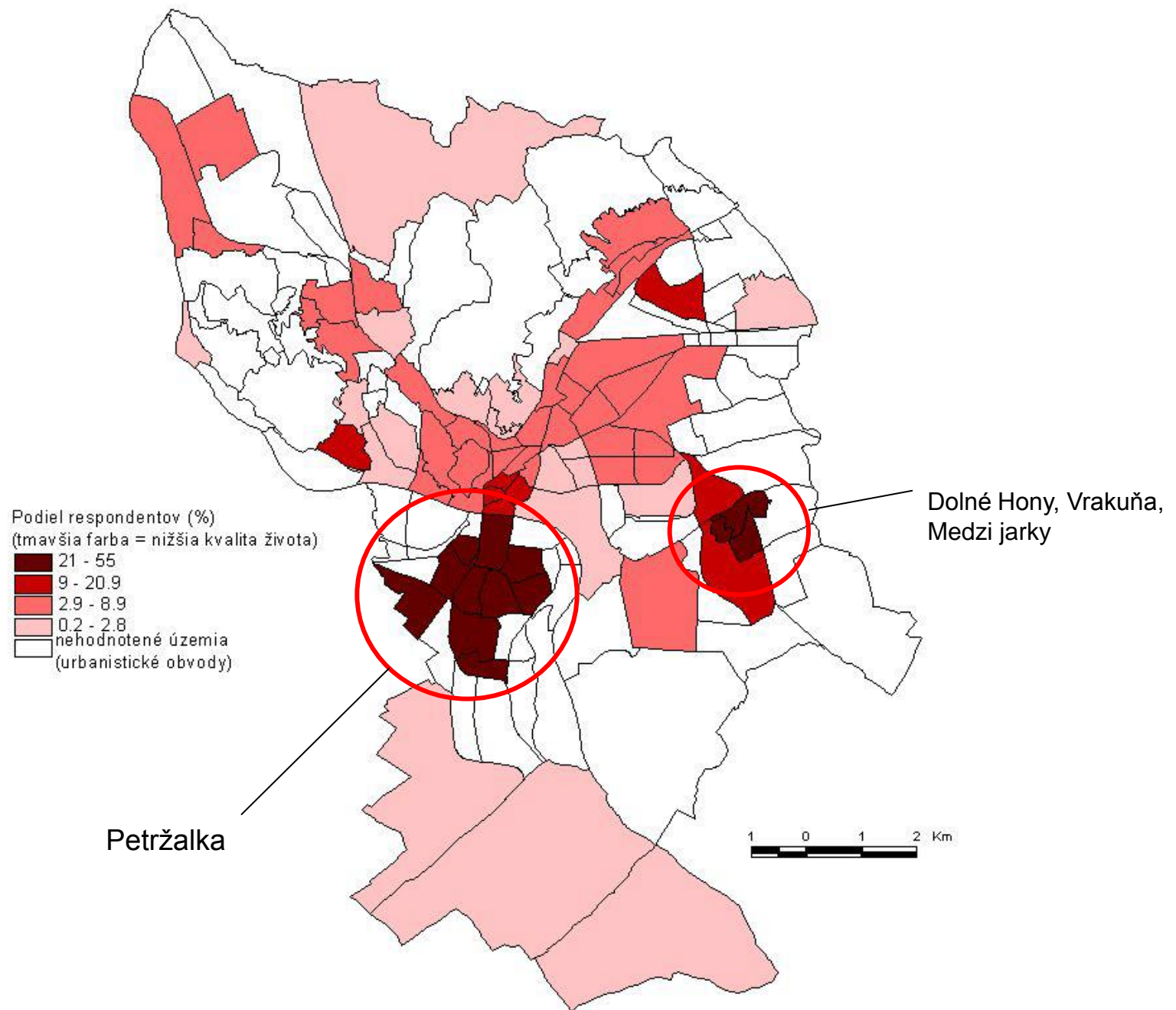
- Pacione (2003) regards subjective dimension to be superior objective dimension. The key to the QOL is considered an individual, personal experience
- Charnes et al. (1973) point to the relativity of the relationship of both dimensions - what makes someone to feel satisfied does not necessarily have to work by someone other
- some authors argue that both dimensions are virtually independent of each other. Allison et al. (1997) for example argue that residents of poorer areas are not less happy than residents of wealthy areas

# The question of the hierarchy and the interaction of basic dimensions

- Cummins (2000) – O and S dimension exist relatively independent to each other – but only to certain extent. This „threshold“ („prah“) determines so called homeostatic system of QOL - an individual expression of each individual's ability to adapt. The moment there is a change of objective criteria to the extent that an individual is unable to adapt to them, (i.e. the "threshold,, is exceeded), the link between the O and S dimension gets greatly intensified

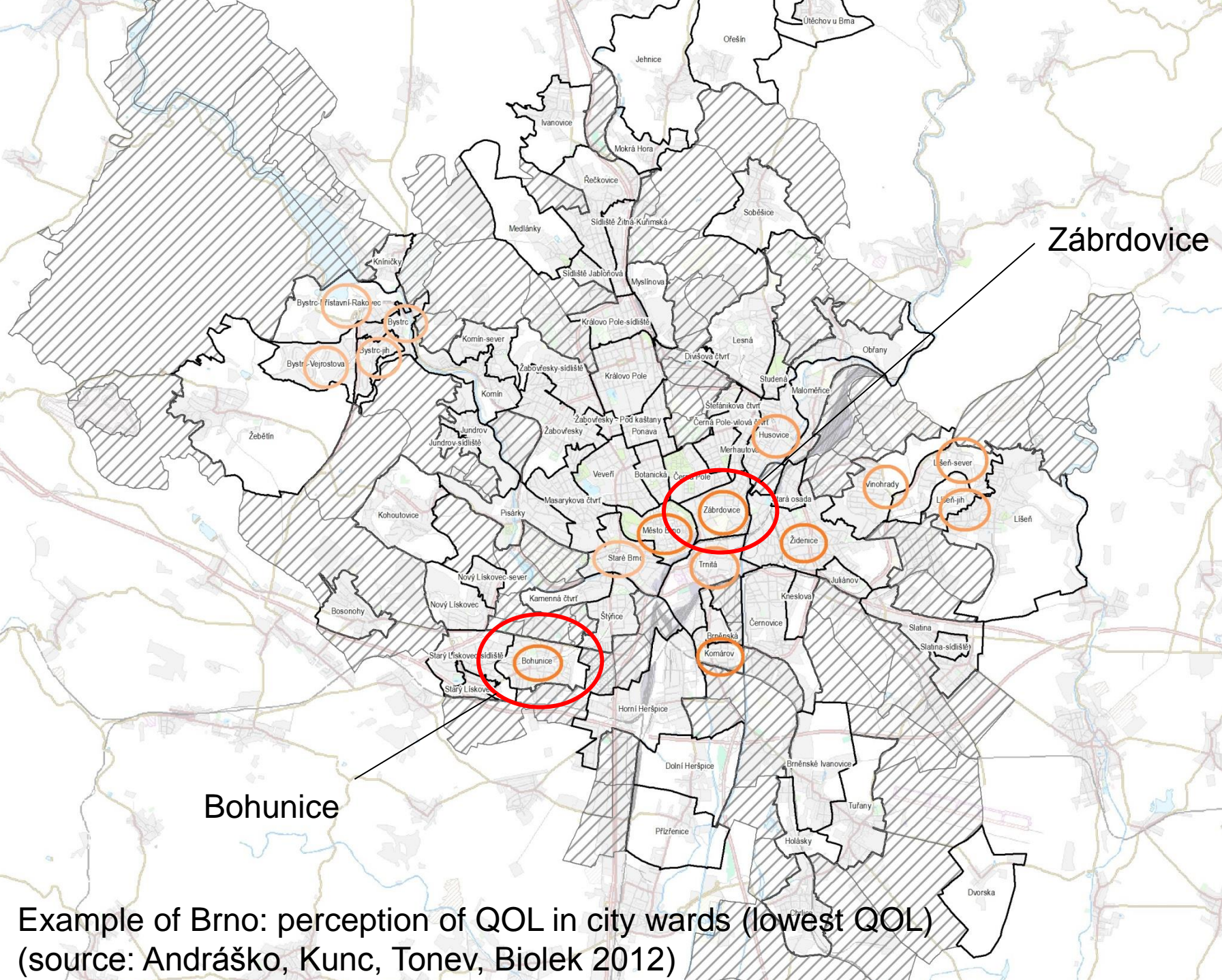


Example of Bratislava – perception of QOL in city wards (source: Andráško 2006)



Example of Bratislava – perception of QOL in city wards (source: Andráško 2006)





# The question of the hierarchy and the interaction of basic dimensions

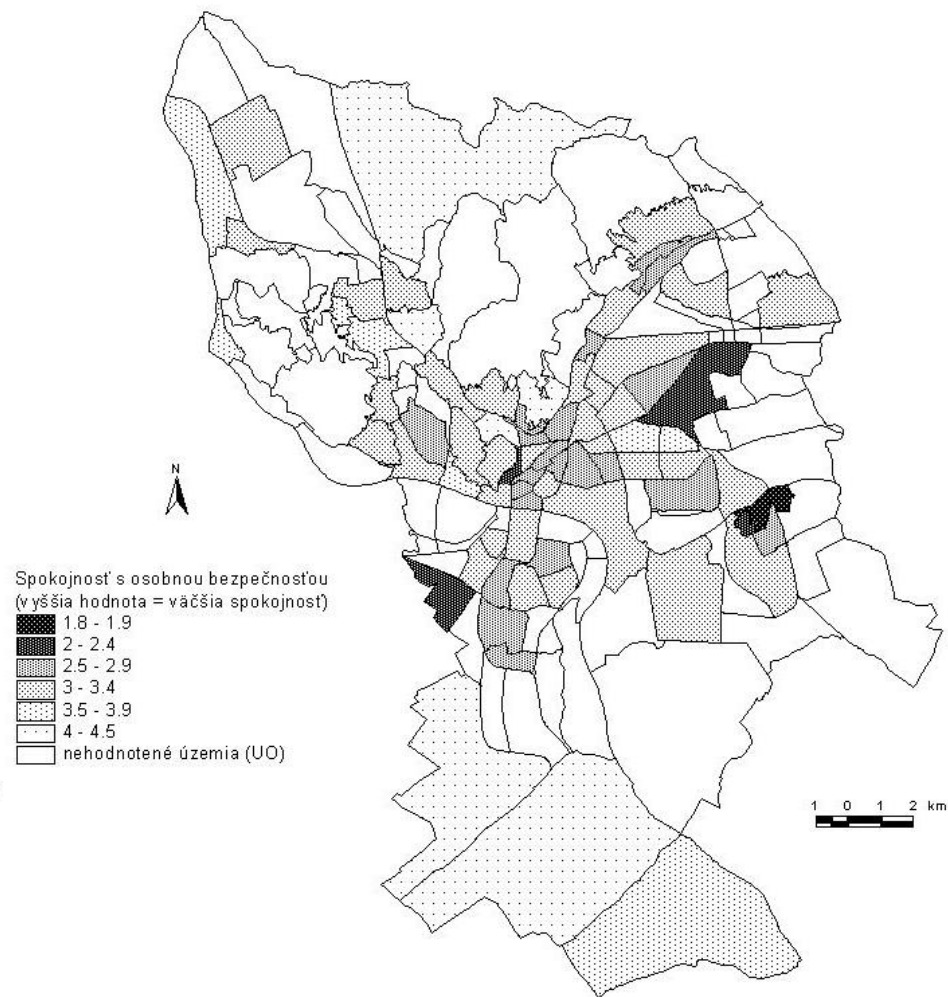
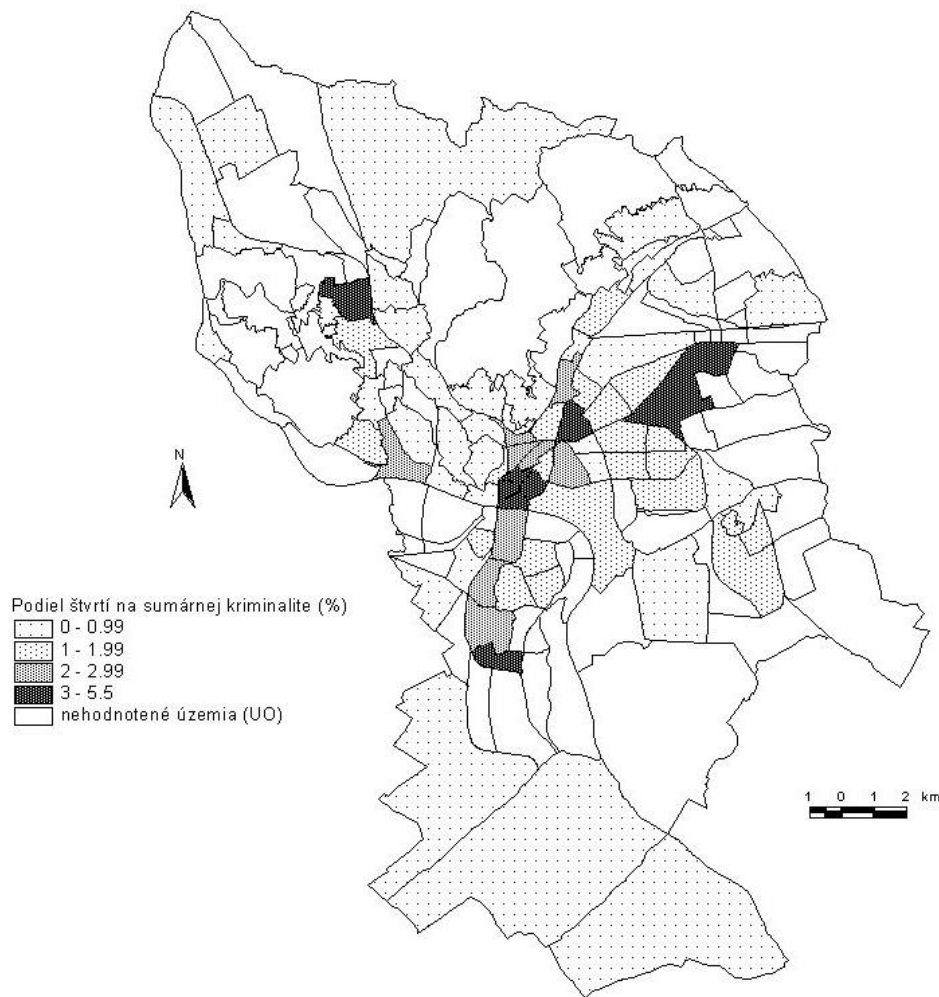
- from the geographer's point of view – understanding the interaction (of the basic dimensions) is important but not „necessary“ 😊
- what? why?
- interaction between human and environment – one of basic questions of geographical enquiry



# The question of the hierarchy and the interaction of basic dimensions

but („pros and cons“):

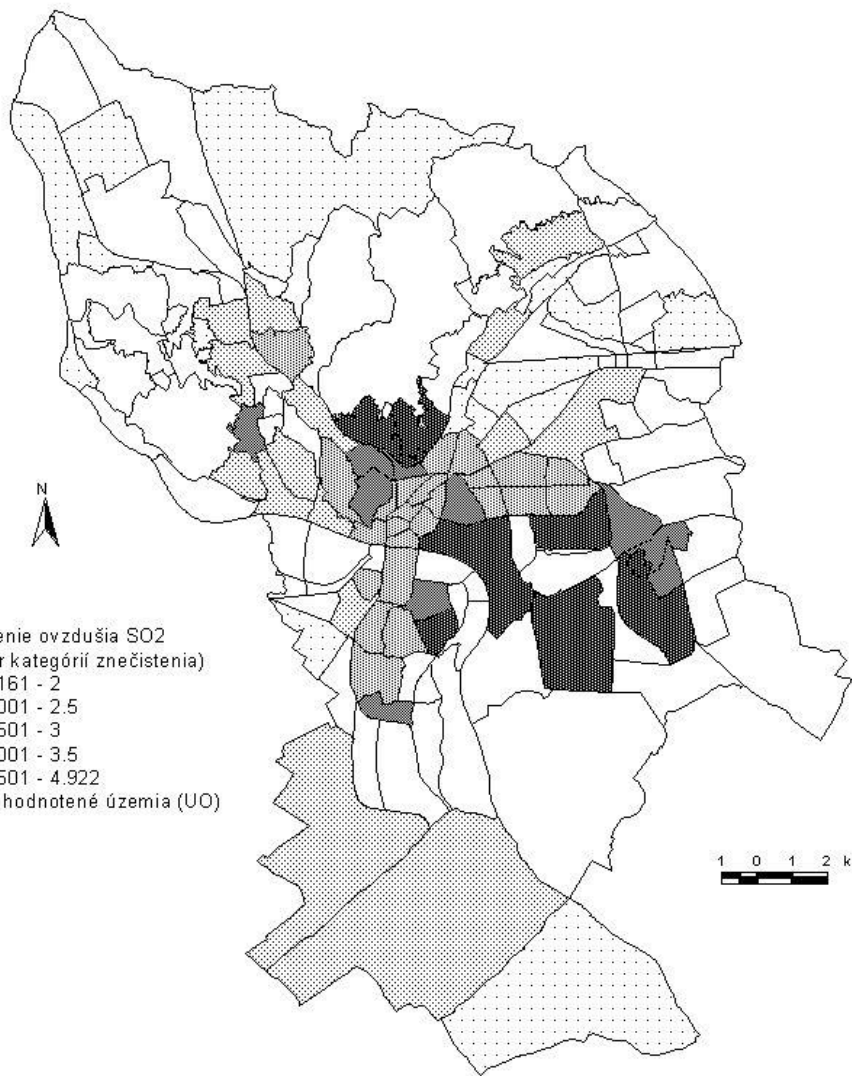
- does geography ever fully understood this interaction?
- research of the spatial distribution aspects and relevant processes can be oriented towards (only) one of two basic components (whether objective or subjective)
- proper, comprehensive geographical research of QOL can contribute to or improve understanding the interaction!
- such research needs to be based upon knowledge about both dimensions



Example: Measuring criminality level in Bratislava city wards (source: Andráško 2007)

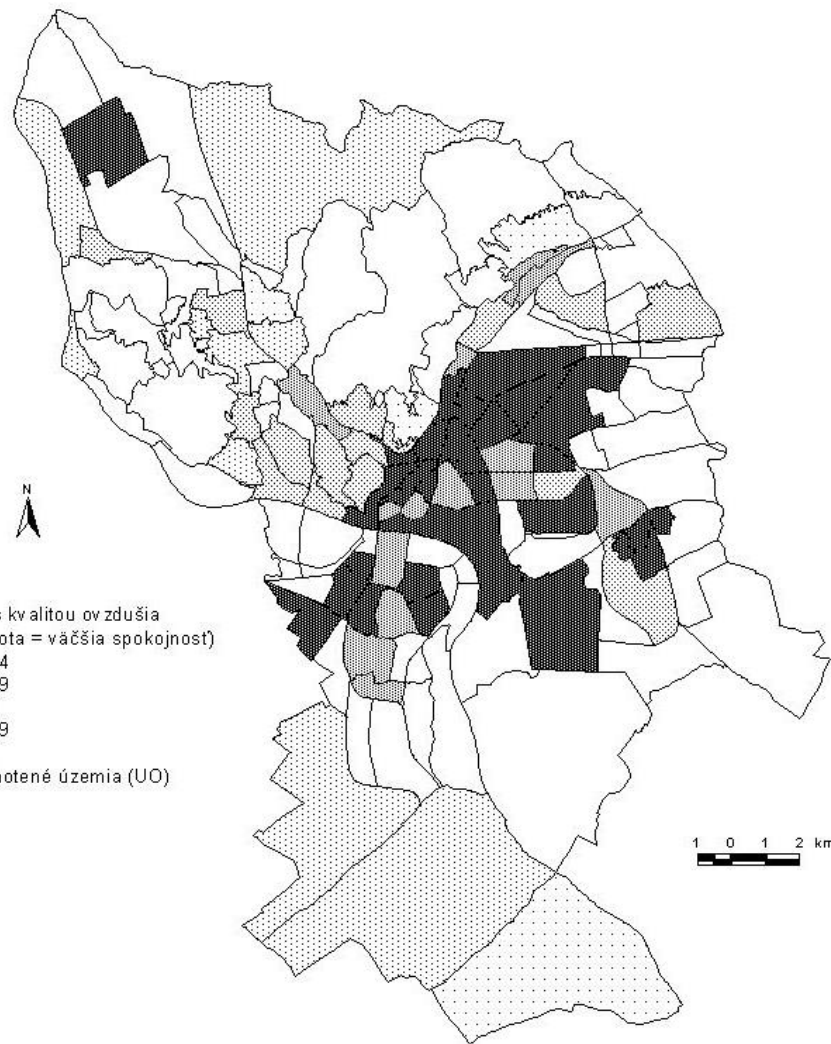
Znečistenie ovzdušia SO<sub>2</sub>  
(priemer kategórií znečistenia)

- 1.161 - 2
- 2.001 - 2.5
- 2.501 - 3
- 3.001 - 3.5
- 3.501 - 4.922
- nehodnotené územia (UO)



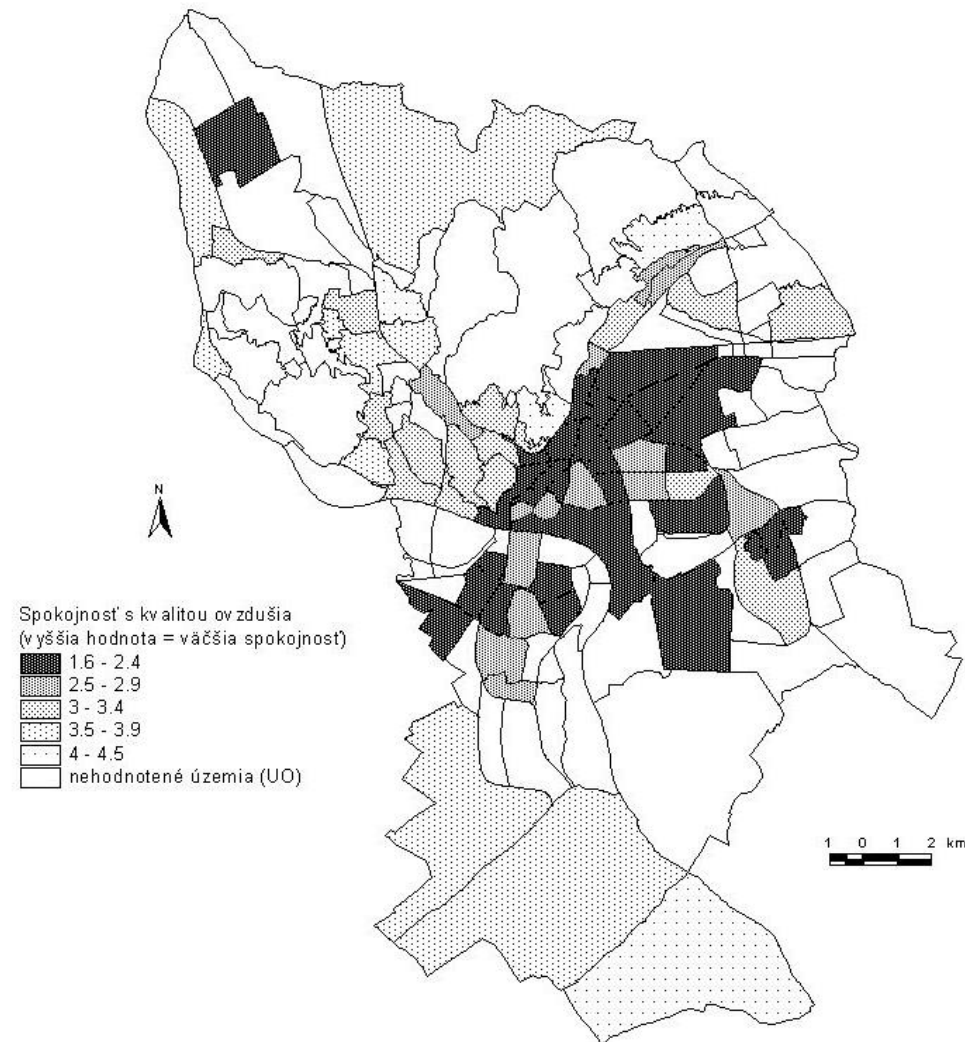
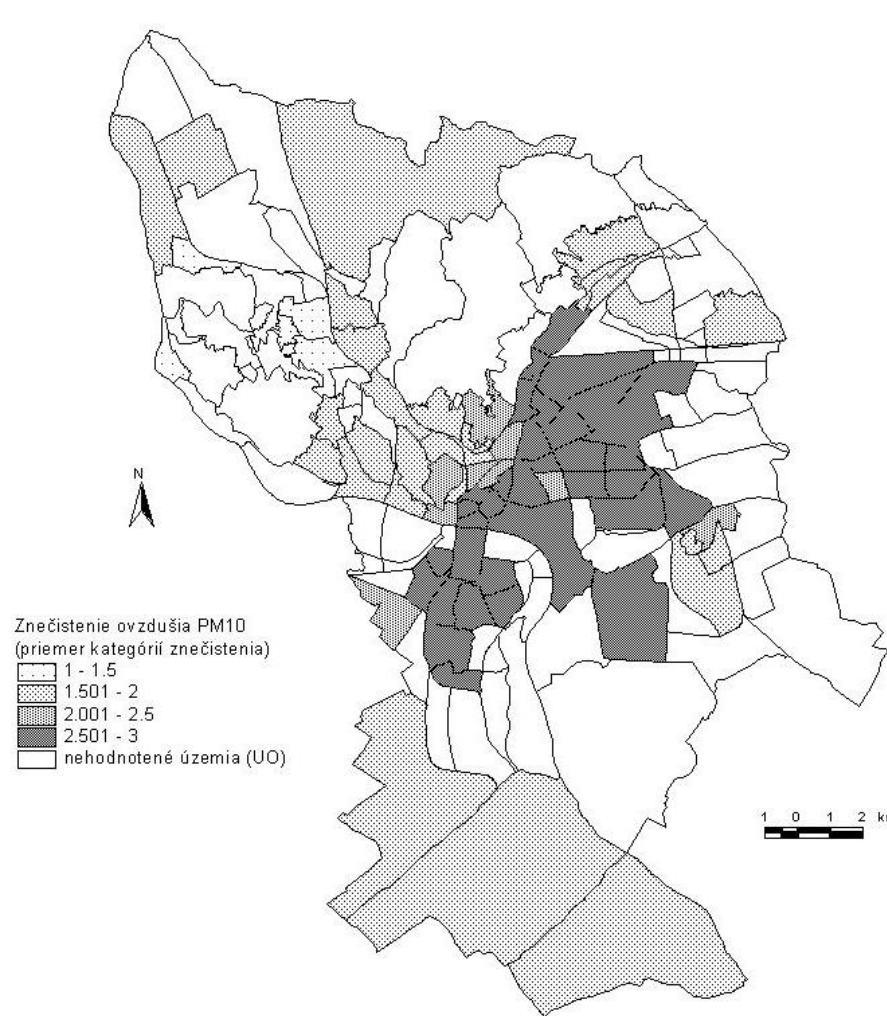
Spokojnosť s kvalitou ovzdušia  
(vyššia hodnota = väčšia spokojnosť)

- 1.6 - 2.4
- 2.5 - 2.9
- 3 - 3.4
- 3.5 - 3.9
- 4 - 4.5
- nehodnotené územia (UO)

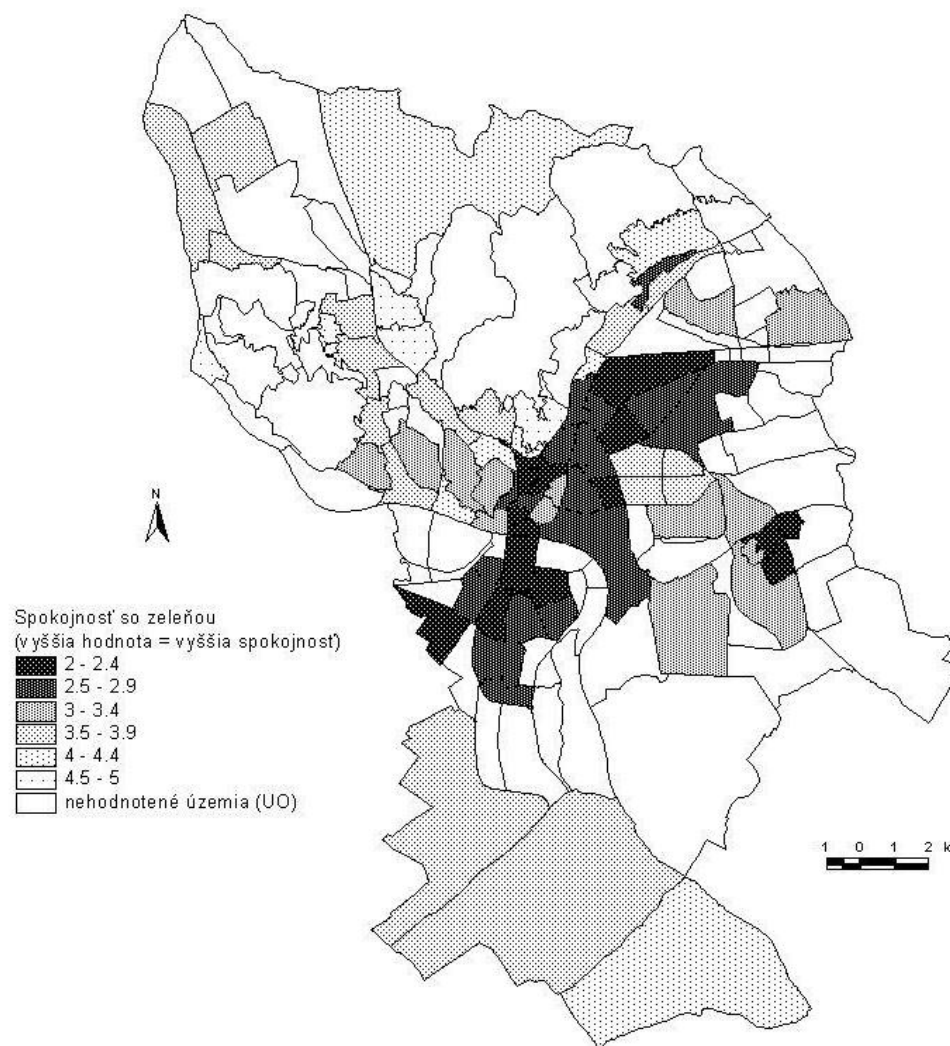
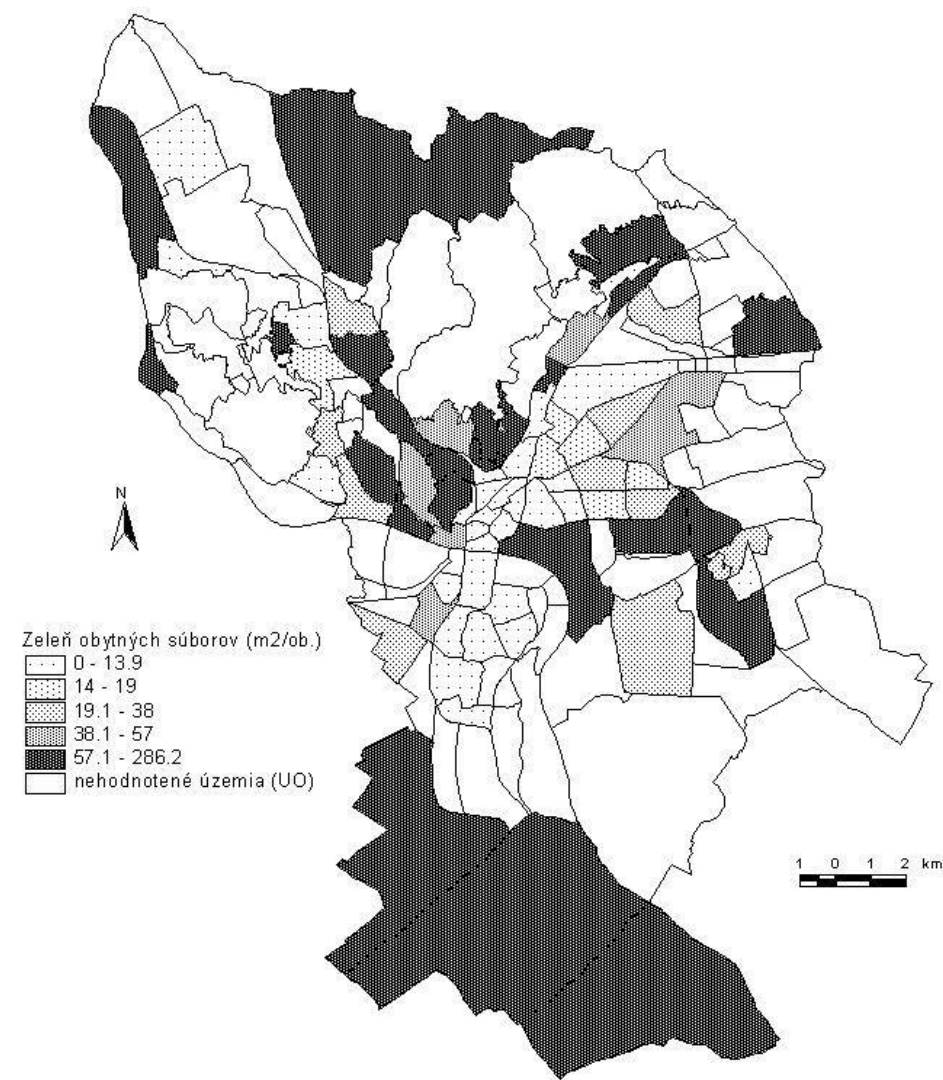


Example: Measuring air pollution and its perception in Bratislava city wards (source: Andráško 2007)





Example: Measuring air pollution and its perception in Bratislava city wards (source: Andráško 2007)



**Example: Measuring extent of greenery and its perception in Bratislava city wards (source: Andráško 2007)**

# **The question of the hierarchy and the interaction of basic dimensions**

- objective measurement and subjective evaluation does not have to spatially „overlap“
- the importance of indicators and available data(!)
- lacking or insufficient information = growing importance of secondary, „mediational“ indicators
- ...

## **Everything wrong...?! Just questioning the cliché.**

- „dualism“ - „basic dimensions“ – „objective and subjective“ – is it so simple?
- maybe we just don't think enough and things become cliché
- variety of „dualisms“ in QOL topic

### **3 „basic“ dualisms**

- objective vs. subjective
- external vs. internal
- individual vs. society



# Objective vs. subjective

- the question of evaluating, measuring (QOL and its aspects)
- „objective“ – exactly measurable, related to some norm, standard (e.g. extent of greenery in m<sup>2</sup>)
- „subjective“ – evaluation of individual(s) (e.g. satisfaction with greenery)

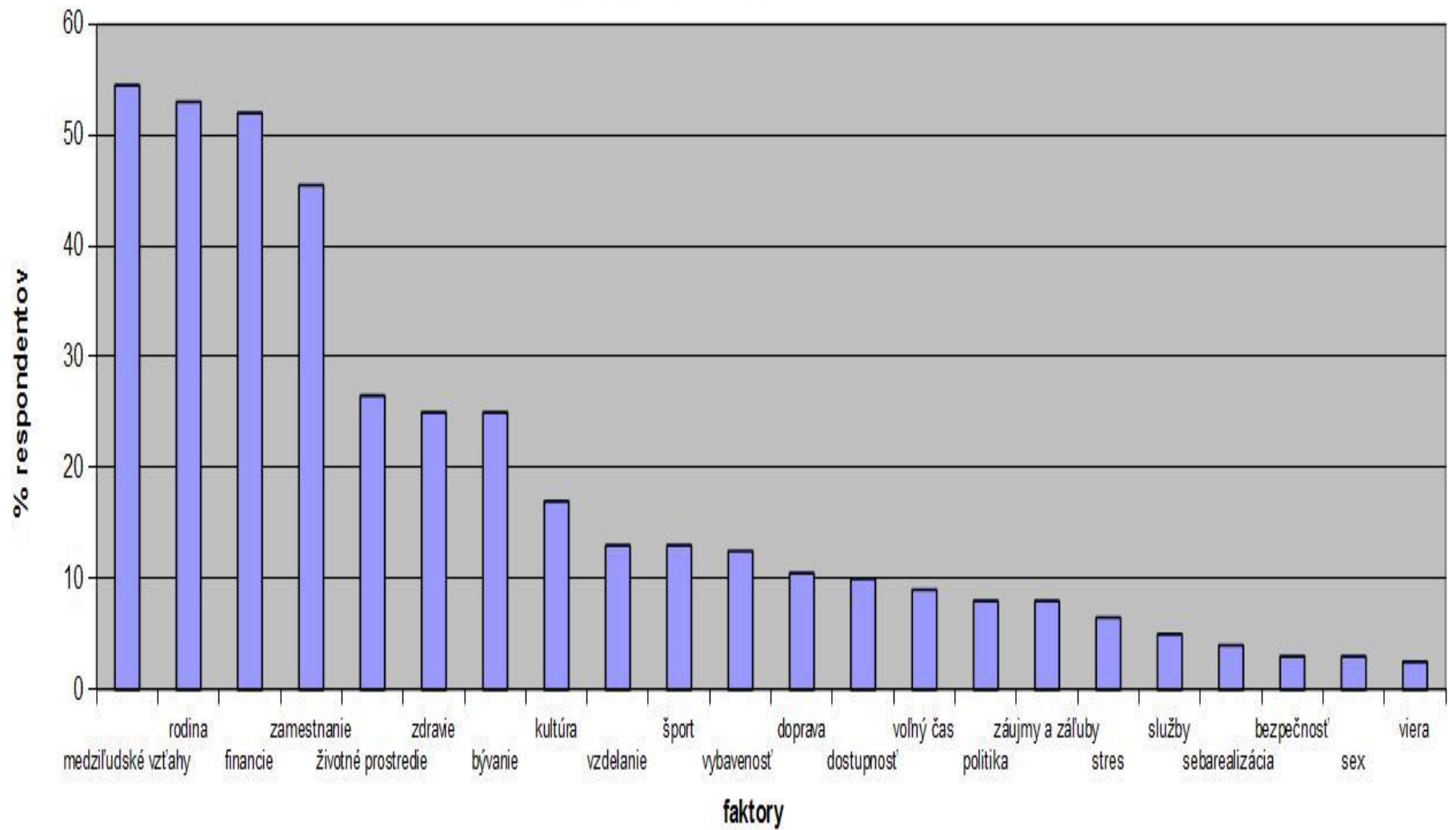
## **External vs. internal**

- dualism often equated to previous, but this is NOT TRUE
- „external“ – all exogenous aspects of the living environment of individual(s) influencing his/her life (physical environment, society, economics, etc.)
- „internal“- all endogenous aspects of individual (human nature, value system, intelligence)

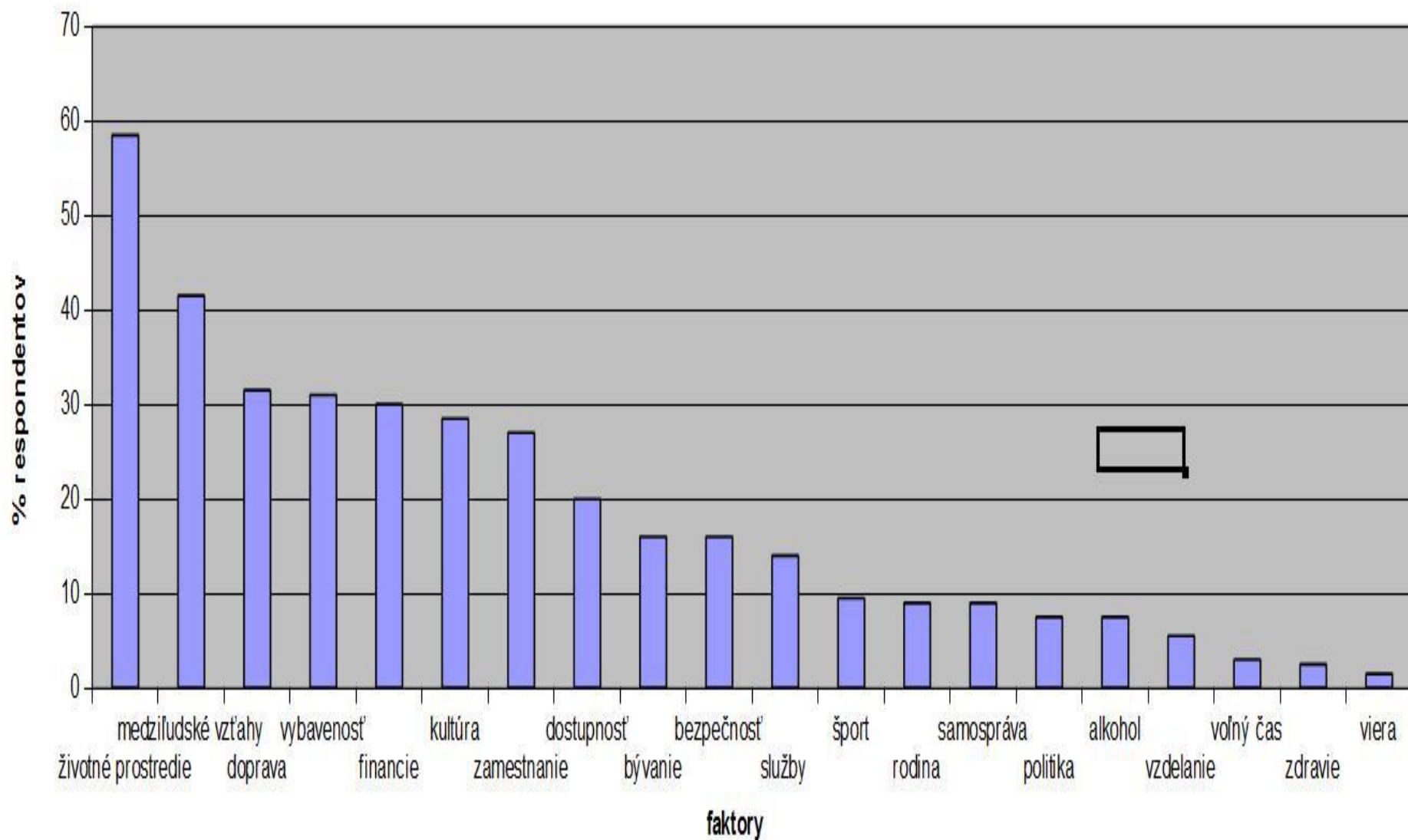
# Individual vs. societal

- individual QOL
- societal QOL
- two „marginal“ positions: extrem self-seeker vs. life ruled by society
- dictatorship – individual forms „social“ standards applied on other individuals
- anarchy (?) – nor society nor individual really determine the standards
- searching for the reasonable compromise (community?)

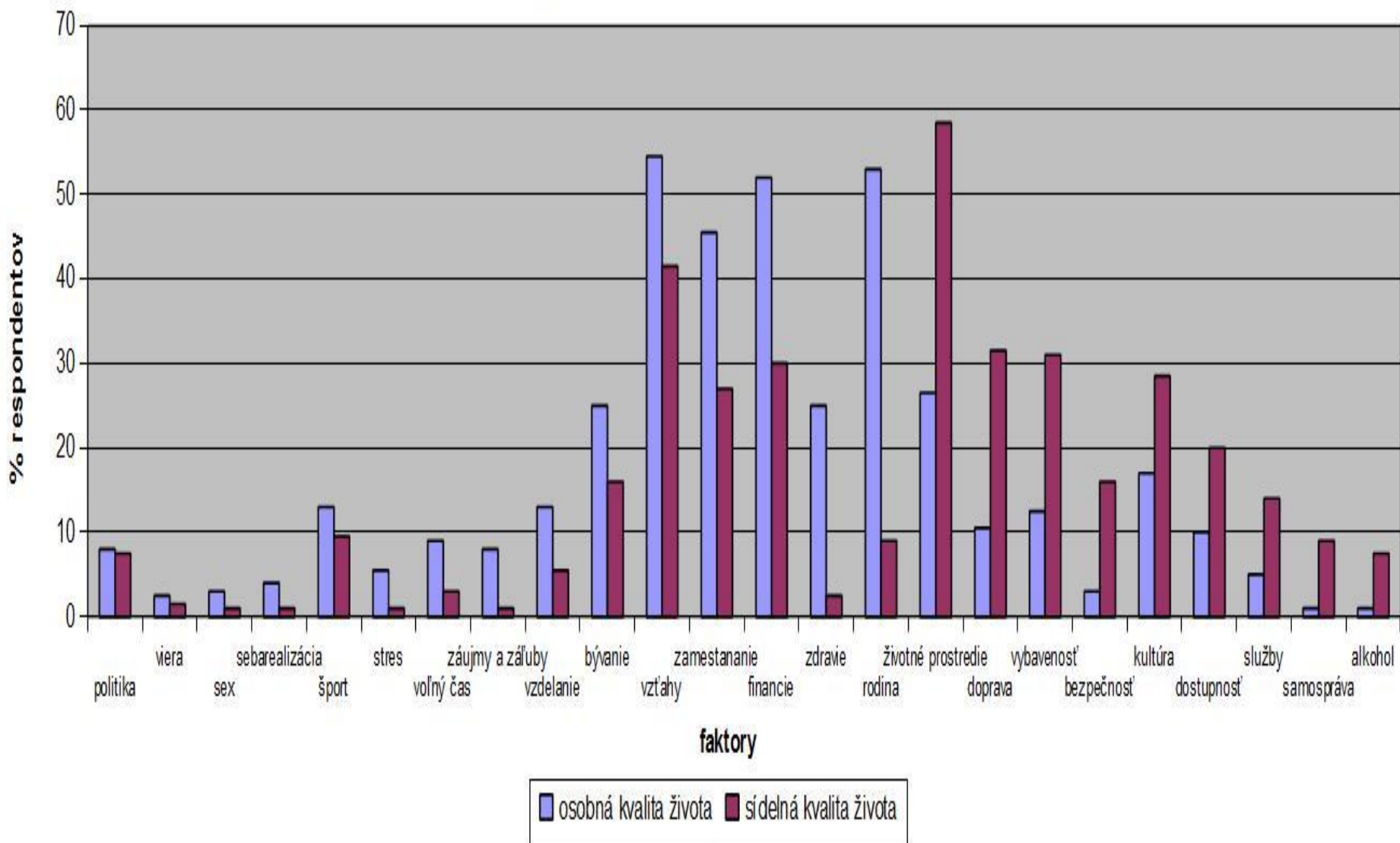
## Faktory ovplyvňujúce osobnú kvalitu života



## Faktory ovplyvňujúce sídelnú kvalitu života



## Faktory ovplyvňujúce kvalitu života: porovnanie



# Individual vs. societal

- QOL of individual or some (e.g. social) group of people
- QOL of some locality, region etc.
- they intersect – QOL relating to some place, area IS QOL of the people living here
- important is the person – environment relationship and its „formal“ specification (e.g you live here, you work here etc.)
- also restrictions resulting from that
- a wider conceptual framework and its intersection with other conceptions (e.g. time geography)



**Thank you for your attention (and think about that)!**