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COUNTRY LIFE QUALITY IN THE OPINION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN RESPECT OF THEIR FIRST JOB LOCATION DECISION – SUBJECTIVE APPROACH

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Abstract. Despite advancement, numerous country regions have been observing adverse trends in terms of birth rates, society ageing, and negative migration balance. Such tendencies seem to affect particularly eastern (Podkarpacie, Podlasie) and western (Opolszczyzna) regions. Therefore, this article is aimed at investigating how young people assess rural life quality and identifying their preferences when choosing where to study, start their first job, or run their first business. The research sample consists of country-based farming school students and young country students of Opole colleges and universities. The level of country life has been presented through material and living conditions, while life quality has been presented through the respondents' subjective assessment of their satisfaction with basic conditions that country regions can offer to young high school students. Survey results prove that filling gaps in income structure and narrowing distance between social-economic groups in urban and rural environments is importantly related to income from non-agricultural activities and consequently a better way of material life conditions in the country. Therefore, in the future, more effective measures should be dedicated to creating attractive, well-paid (perceived subjectively) jobs. This element may determine rural populations' satisfaction with their life quality to a greater extent than infrastructure.

Keywords: life quality, rural areas, entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

The Polish countryside has experienced substantial technology shortages. Nevertheless, since the 1990's, changes in this field can be observed. Due to the empowerment of local authorities, infrastructure has been developing rapidly and thus improving the quality of country life. Expansion and advancement of infrastructure networks have always been a key priority in local authorities' operations. Within the last two decades, the length of water supply and sewage collection systems, as well as the number of supply connections, have increased several times. This has also been the case for the extension and number of wired and wireless telecom connections. Despite advancement, which translates directly into better life quality, numerous country regions have been observing adverse trends in terms of birth rates, society ageing, and negative migration balance. Such tendencies seem to affect particularly eastern (Podkarpacie, Podlasie) and western (Opolszczyzna) regions.

Therefore, this article is aimed at investigating how young people assess rural life quality and identifying their preferences when choosing where to study, start their first job, or run their first business. The research sample consists of country-based farming school students and young country students of Opole colleges and universities.

The level of country life has been presented through material and living conditions, while life quality has been presented through the respondents' subjective assessment of their satisfaction with basic conditions that country regions can offer to young high school students.

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LIFE QUALITY – THEORETICAL APPROACH

Angus Campbell is recognised as the pioneer of life quality research. Accompanied by Philip E. Converse and Willard L. Rodgers, he initiated the research programme aimed at measuring the level of American citizens' life satisfaction. Previous research projects in the area focused mainly on identifying the fundamentals of life satisfaction as well as their objective and universal determinants. Campbell strived to examine life satisfaction perceived subjectively, life quality of a structured society, not an individual, and wanted to assess changes people experience throughout their lifetime (Sompolska-Rzechuła, 2013a).

Polish literature discusses the idea of "life quality" in various ways. The concept is analysed from general or a specific perspective in terms of quantity or quality, depending on the researcher's objectives. According to C. Bywalec, the concept of "life quality" is broad and complex – from mere understanding of it as welfare or consumption level to personal satisfaction that cannot be quantified such as satisfaction or even happiness resulting from consumption, being a part of natural environment, good health, wellbeing, successful career, etc. According to the above, the author proposes the following definition: life quality is the level of satisfaction (contentment) of an individual (society) with the overall existential condition. Therefore, it is the total perception and, at the same time, assessment of individual or common life conditions" (Bywalec, 1991).

On the other hand, T. Słaby defined the concept of life quality as all the elements inherent in human existence, in being a certain individual, and in experiencing certain emotions related to being a family member, a colleague, or a friend. The author emphasises the fact that life quality should be reviewed mostly by subjective determinants that show how individuals and societies perceive or estimate it in terms of their expenses, consumption or income level, etc. (Słaby, 2007).

According to R. Kolman, life quality may be defined as:

- satisfaction level in terms of spiritual and material needs of a human being;
- meeting requirements regarding spiritual and material well-being of individuals and the entire society;
- maintaining the degree of agreed level of normality in everyday activities and situations for individuals and the entire society (Kolman, 2000).

Life quality, according to T. Borys, should be perceived as sustained appreciation and recognition of the treasure of global quality and co-existence in human's life – prosperity ('possessing' quality features) and welfare ('being' quality features) (Borys, 2008). Life quality concept is also related to other evaluating notions, i.e. objective and subjective perception of life quality or, as emphasised by T. Borys, the degree of objectivity or subjectivity in life quality evaluation (Borys, 2002).

Most researchers indicate a multi-faceted and multidimensional nature of life quality.

A solution to define life quality put forward by T. Borys supports the above. Life quality depends on how the following criteria are satisfied. According to the author, the criteria to be considered are (Borys, 2008):

- life quality evaluation (assessment) criterion,
- life quality scope and diversity criterion,
- life quality objective assessment criterion,
- life quality related objects (number) criterion,
- direct relation between research and real life quality criterion,
- proper life balance criterion,
- life quality compliance with value system criterion (axiological criterion).

Meeting all the criteria ensures a comprehensive picture of life quality concept.

All things considered, it is worth noticing that the evaluation of life level involves overall life conditions for a society, for an individual, or for a household; it is perceived first and foremost through the facilities designed to satisfy individual and common needs. On the other hand, life quality is defined as the level of satisfaction with life conditions.

The European Union and its member countries have been conducting three projects directly related to the studies on life quality on a local level, i.e. European Quality of Life Studies under the Urban Audit programme and EU-SILC.

The first research projects based on the above methodology were carried out in Poland in the last decade of the 20th century. Polski Generalny Sondaż Jakości Życia (Comprehensive Polish Life Quality Survey), carried out between 1991and 1997 involved seven opinion polls on life quality. The next survey, carried out in 2002, investigated 3007 households. In 1997 and 2001 GUS (Central Statistical Office) conducted two research

projects in 18,000 households which focused on both their material status and on non-material aspects of life as well (Sompolska-Rzechuła, 2013b). The studies were aimed at determining how material conditions related to Polish citizens' wellbeing.

Life quality should be examined at every level of management in various areas. Differences in life quality are likely to result in migrations. They may also lead to new transfers between areas marked with different levels of life quality. Moreover, it is important to examine life quality in particular areas to assess the measures taken by all kinds of managers to improve life quality.

The advancement of country life quality is perfectly matched with fundamental directions of economic and social growth of farming businesses through the enforcement of their potential, restructuring, and modernisation. It also corresponds to good life conditions in terms of the environment and landscape standards as well as social and technological infrastructure standards (Murawska, 2012).

According to M. Schmidt, attractiveness of a residential area is determined by numerous factors of economic, environmental, and social nature including, first of all, access to employment as well as development and co-existence of various infrastructures, recreation facilities, access to social care, picturesque views, and also diversity of social relations (Schmidt, 2010).

In Europe the issue of life quality was first addressed on a larger scale upon setting up the EEC in August 1949 when the aims for future integration were formulated. Nevertheless, the concept appeared in union statistics only in the 1970's along with growing concern over social aspects of integration. Since then, the life quality, pursuit of improvement and reduction of differences at various levels has become a priority for every country's social policy (Kubicka, 2001).

The reinforcement of policies addressed for country regions has also become one of the major issues for the European Union. It was reflected in a new policy delivered under the Rural Development Programme implemented for the periods 2007–2013 and 2014–2020. Two things that it was designed for was to improve life quality in rural areas and to promote various business activities there.

LIFE QUALITY IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN STATISTICAL DATA – SELECTED ISSUES

The EU's major goals in the area of rural regions' advancement are a better life level and quality resulting

Table 1. Water consumption from water pipelines in households and sewage discharged through networks in urban and rural areas from 2007 to 2013

Tabela 1. Zużycie wody z sieci wodociągowej w gospodarstwach domowych oraz ilość ścieków odprowadzonych siecią kanalizacyjną w miastach i na obszarach wiejskich w latach 2007–2013

Specification Wyszczególnienie	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Urban areas – Miasta							
Water consumption from water pipelines in households within a year (m^3 per 1 inhabitant) Zużycie wody z wodociągów w gospodarstwach domowych w ciągu roku (m^3 na 1 mieszkańca)	36.0	36.1	35.3	35.2	34.8	34.5	34.0
Population using water from pipelines (% of the population in total) Ludność korzystająca z sieci wodociągowej (% ludności ogółem)	95.0	95.2	95.2	95.3	95.4	95.4	95.5
Population using sewage network (% of the population in total) Ludność korzystająca z sieci kanalizacyjnej (% ludności ogółem)	85.0	85.5	85.8	86.1	86.7	87.0	87.4
Sewage discharged from households through networks (hm^3) Ścieki odprowadzone siecią kanalizacyjną od gospodarstw domowych (hm^3)	827.1	822.8	812.2	813.1	818.9	814.3	807.5

Table 1 cont. – Tabela 1 cd.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rural areas – Obszary wiejskie							
Water consumption from water pipelines in households within a year (m^3 per 1 inhabitant) Zużycie wody z wodociągów w gospodarstwach domowych w ciągu roku (m^3 na 1 mieszkańca)	24.3	25.1	25.0	25.4	25.6	26.1	26.3
Population using water from pipelines (% of the population in total) Ludność korzystająca z sieci wodociągowej (% ludności ogółem)	73.3	74.2	74.7	75.2	75.7	76.2	76.6
Population using sewage network (% of the population in total) Ludność korzystająca z sieci kanalizacyjnej (% ludności ogółem)	21.3	22.6	23.5	24.8	27.8	29.4	30.9
Sewage discharged from households through networks (hm^3) Ścieki odprowadzone siecią kanalizacyjną od gospodarstw domowych (hm^3)	80.4	82.5	86.5	88.5	91.9	98.9	105.1

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

Table 2. Income and expenditure indicators (based on Household budgets data) in 2007 and 2013
Tabela 2. Wskaźniki dochodów i wydatków (na podstawie Budżetów gospodarstw domowych) w roku 2007 i 2013

Specification Wyszczególnienie	City/Town Miasto 2005	Country Wieś 2005	City/Town Miasto 2013	Country Wieś 2013
Income indicator (Poland = 100) Wskaźnik dochodów (Polska = 100)	113.8	77.9	111.8	81.6
Expenditure indicator (Poland = 100) Wskaźnik wydatków (Polska = 100)	112.7	79.6	111.4	82.2
Extreme poverty threat indicator (%) Wskaźnik zagrożenia ubóstwem skrajnym (%)	8.2%	18.7%	4.6%	11.6%
Percentage of food expenses (%) Odsetek wydatków na żywność (%)	25.7%	33.6%	23.3%	28.3%
Percentage of housing and power expenses (%) Odsetek wydatków na utrzymanie mieszkania i nośniki energii (%)	20.4%	17.9%	21.2%	19.9%
Percentage of transport expenses (%) Odsetek wydatków na transport (%)	8.7%	9.1%	9.3%	10.8%
Percentage of recreation and culture expenses (%) Odsetek wydatków na rekreację i kulturę (%)	7.7%	7.0%	4.9%	5.6%

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

from the reduction of differences between regions in all the countries, economic diversification, as well as developing economic and social infrastructure. Access to basic technological infrastructure has substantial impact on the life level.

According to GUS (Central Statistical Office) data, the quality of public utilities in rural areas has improved substantially which is well exemplified by the length of water and sewage distribution networks, as well as the percentage of population using the networks. Income to

Table 3. Average useable area of an apartment per one household (based on Household budget data) in 2007 and 2013
Tabela 3. Przeciętna powierzchnia użytkowa mieszkania na 1 gospodarstwo domowe (na podstawie Budżetów gospodarstw domowych w latach 2005 i 2013)

Specification Wyszczególnienie	2005	2013
City/Town – Miasto	58 m^2	63 m^2
Country – Wieś	80 m^2	98 m^2
Difference (Rural – Urban) Różnica (Wieś – Miasto)	22 m^2	35 m^2

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

Table 4. Household equipment convergence – fittings, equipment (Household budget data – GUS data) in 2005 and 2013
Tabela 4. Konwergencja wyposażenia gospodarstw domowych – instalacje, sprzęt (dane GUS z Badania budżetów gospodarstw domowych) w roku 2005 i 2013

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Urban – Rural Difference in 2005 (pp) Różnica miasto – wieś w 2005 r. (p.proc.)	Urban – Rural Difference in 2013 (pp) Różnica miasto – wieś w 2013 r. (p.proc.)	Household percentage in the country in 2013 (%) Odsetek gosp. dom. na wsi 2013 (%)
Flush toilet Ustęp spłukiwany	14.3	4.9	93.0
Hot running water Ciepła woda bieżąca	14.2	5.1	91.8
Bathroom Łazienka	11.4	4.4	92.8
Central heating Centralne ogrzewanie	11.0	3.9	81.4
Water pipeline Wodociąg	5.8	1.3	98.5
Personal computer Komputer osobisty	14.7	7.0	66.8
Computer with internet access Komputer z dostępem do Internetu	17.5	9.1	62.7
Landline phone Telefon stacjonarny	8.8	–4.8	47.8
Mobile phone Telefon komórkowy	9.1	3.2	91.3
Passenger car Samochód osobowy	–11.1	–14.4	70.9

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

Table 5. Health condition (based on EU-SILC) in 2007 and 2013
Tabela 5. Stan zdrowia (na postawie EU-SILC) w roku 2007 i 2013

Specification Wyszczególnienie	2007	2013
Good health condition self-assessment indicator (%) Wskaźnik dobrej samooceny stanu zdrowia (%)		
City/Town – Miasto	57.9%	59.0%
Country – Wieś	55.4%	57.6%
Bad health condition self-assessment indicator (%) Wskaźnik złej samooceny stanu zdrowia (%)		
City/Town – Miasto	15.7%	14.2%
Country – Wieś	18.4%	14.3%

Source: EU-SILC.
Źródło: EU-SILC.

Table 6. Nursery children and population with higher education
Tabela 6. Udział dzieci uczęszczających do przedszkola oraz osób z wykształceniem wyższym

3–4 year old children in kindergardens Odsetek 3- i 4-latków w przedszkolach	2005 (GUS data) 2005 (dane GUS)	2013 (SIO (Education Information System) data) 2013 z Systemu Informacji Oświatowej
City/Town – Miasto	35.5%	45.0%
Country – Wieś	17.4%	35.9%
Higher education (%) Wykształcenie wyższe (%)	NSP (National Population and Housing Census) 2002 Narodowy Spis Powszechny 2002	NSP (National Population and Housing Census) 2011 Narodowy Spis Powszechny 2011
City/Town – Miasto	13%	21%
Country – Wieś	4%	10%

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

Table 7. Life satisfaction in general (based on the Study on Social Integrity by GUS, 2011)
Tabela 7. Ogólne zadowolenie z życia (na podstawie Badania spójności społecznej GUS 2011)

Specification Wyszczególnienie	City/Town – Miasto	Country – Wieś
Life satisfaction in general Ogólne zadowolenie z życia	74%	74%

Source: GUS (n.d.).
Źródło: GUS (b.d.).

expenditure ratio, housing conditions, education level, and health condition self-assessment have been increasingly improving.

Data presented in the tables above show a steady improvement in the share of the population using water and sewage networks. The share of rural people taking advantage of water pipelines increased from 73.3% in 2007 to 76.6% in 2013. Even more of the rural populations got connected to sewage discharge networks. The share rose from 21.3% in 2007 to 30.9% in 2013. However, despite all the positive trends, water and sewage network development in rural areas is still lower compared to Poland's average.

Last year, a convergence between material living conditions in urban and rural areas was observed. But still, substantial differences are noticeable in income indicators and in the share of population threatened with extreme poverty.

The gap in household fittings and equipment has been continuously decreasing. Mobile phones, passenger cars, and personal computers have become widely available.

Despite the shrinking gap between health and education indicators for rural and urban populations (more country children enjoy access to nursery schools, the number of young people attending colleges and universities has risen, and those with higher degree has risen), the education and skills related indicators are still much lower for country regions.

Apart from lower income, more widespread poverty, worse access to transportation and to the labour market as well as lower education level in the country, both rural and urban people report the same level of life satisfaction, i.e. 74% in the research on social integrity.

Country infrastructure is a fundamental factor for any business activity – it determines its scope, structure, and location. Infrastructure directly influences investment attractiveness of the particular region. It also has a direct impact on rural population life conditions and provides the basis for social life organisation.

Rural economy recovery involves setting up new business entities that will create new jobs outside agriculture. That, in turn, facilitates infrastructure development and further advancement of life conditions in the country. Close interrelation between the level of infrastructure and life conditions may be observed with infrastructure being the primary incentive (Jasiulewicz, 2002).

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AS A DETERMINANT OF MODERN RURAL REGIONS' ADVANCEMENT

Working on its Common Agricultural Policy, the European Union is more willing to support rural areas' advancement rather than farming production itself. An active approach to taking up business activities in non-agricultural sectors is supposed to enhance rural population economic situations, mitigate the effects of overt and concealed unemployment, and facilitate the improvement of agricultural structures (Otłowska et al., 2006).

Thanks to several measures taken to fill in the gap between the "new" and "old" EU members and due to scientific research work conducted in that area, two fundamental determinants of modern rural areas' development occurred in the last several years. K. Heffner defines them as the economic differentiation of rural areas resulting from structural transformations and, no less important, the activation of local communities aimed to reinforce human resources and first of all social capital in rural areas (Heffner, 2007). According to U. Kobylińska, other authors call it a demand for collaboration between internal support (financial resources dedicated to "hard" investment projects, know-how transfer) and the activities of local communities able to create stable institutions to manage transformation strategy (for local government, non-government organisations, etc.) (Kobylińska, 2010).

M.S. Wortman suggests that rural entrepreneurship should be perceived as creating new employment opportunities through encouraging new undertakings. The author defined rural entrepreneurship as building new organisations that introduce new products, provide services to new markets or creates such markets, and also uses new technologies in rural environment (Wortman, 1990).

As a result, new jobs should be created by entrepreneurs in agricultural production services, technological and commercial rural services, agriculture and food processing, infrastructure related investment projects, environment protection, tourism, craftsmanship, and industry development.

The share of agriculture in the national economy (GDP) has been shrinking whereas its potential to support expected livelihood for many individuals, non-agricultural functions, and jobs available for country dwellers have been growing in importance. Except

agriculture and forestry, these include non-agricultural manufacturing, construction, trading, and other market services, i.e. recreational, tourist, social, migration, and ecological activities. Activities may differ in terms of their organisational and legal status with small and medium enterprises prevailing. Their development is facilitated by many factors of both endogenous and exogenous character. Endogenous determinants that influence local environment for the development of non-agricultural business activity vary, however, according to many authors (Chojnicki and Czyż, 2005; Hryniewicz, 2000) human resources are to be ranked the highest. They are defined by both the level of human capital development (knowledge, competence, diligence, ability to take risk, and broadly understood entrepreneurial approach and skills) and the social capital (norms, values, co-operating skills as well as more or less friendly approach and support for the entrepreneurial activities). Hence, it is of the utmost importance for maintaining the proper level of human resources to keep young, well educated people in rural areas.

SURVEY RESULTS

The research was conducted in May of 2016. It included 96 students in their last year of secondary school who fit the farming profile of living and learning in a rural area, and 94 full-time students of economics and environmental protection at the University of Opole living in rural areas. The research sample has been chosen by using a non-random selection of typical units (all respondents were residents of rural areas). There were mostly men (75), and women (21), which corresponds to the structure of learners in the recent classes of the school. Among the students, the structure is different, most of the respondents were women (57), and men (37), which corresponds to the structure of students of the first year of economics and environmental protection at the University of Opole.

In the study, a questionnaire consisting of metrics was used (1 closed question – the question of gender) and 28 closed questions. Questions concerned the level and sources of life satisfaction, quality of infrastructure, sense of security, previous experience and career plans, and the evaluation of the labour market, situation and future life choices[1].

[1] Due to the limits on the article size, results and answers to the selected most relevant questions were presented.

Life satisfaction of respondents was diagnosed by two types of declarations, the first concerned the level of satisfaction, and the second – its individual components.

Survey results presented in the paper show that high school student respondents grade the life quality in their places of residence relatively high. 25% of respondents declare their life quality as very high, 27.1% as rather high, and 42.7% as average. Consequently, only 5.2% respondents perceive it to be rather poor or poor.

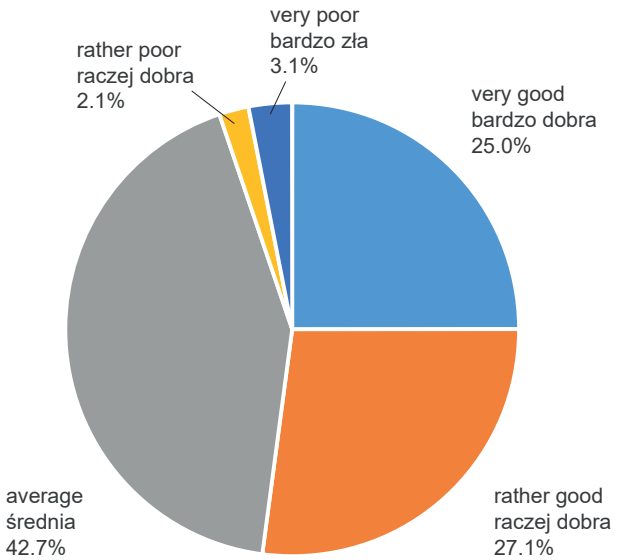

Fig. 1. How do you assess the life quality at your place of residence? (high school students)
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 1. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o ocenę jakości życia w miejscowości zamieszkania (uczniowie szkół średnich)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

College and university students responded in a similar way. 16% of respondents declare their life quality as very high, 31.9 % as rather high, 48,9% as average and only 3.2% find their life quality definitely poor.

The following aspects were rated the lowest:

- public transport:
  - above 58.4% respondents assessed public transport as poor or very poor while only 5.2% as good with only 1 respondent giving it a "very good" note
  - college and university students responded as follows: 77.6% – poor and very poor, 16% – average, and only 6.4% – high

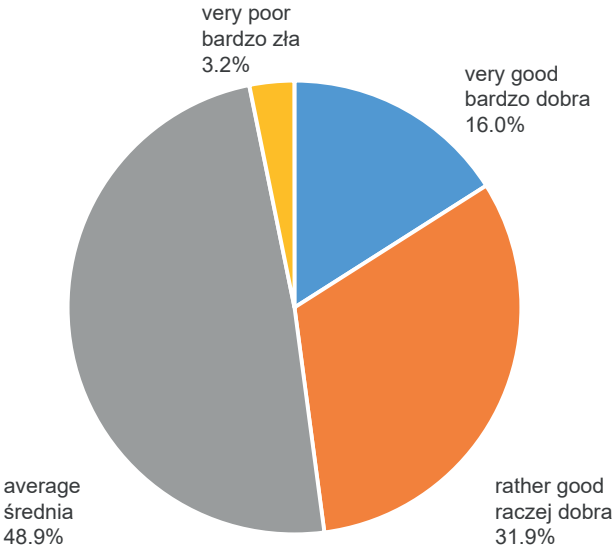

Fig. 2. How do you assess the life quality at your place of residence? (college and university students)
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 2. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o ocenę jakości życia w miejscowości zamieszkania (studenci szkół i uczelni wyższych)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

- pavement condition:
  - 43.8% high school students find it poor or very poor, and only 26.1% good or very good
  - 38.3% college and university students find it poor or very poor, and only 31.9% good or very good
- tourist offer:
  - slightly above 20% respondents (high school students) consider the tourist offer to be high or very high
  - in the group of college and university students only 12.8% declared that tourist offer was good; nobody gave "very good" answer, while as many as 61.7% assessed it as poor or very poor
- education:
  - only 26% high school students consider the level of education as good or very good
  - college and university students responded alike, only 28.7% consider the level of education as good or very good.

Internet access was ranked the highest. 58% high school students and 58.5% college and university students declare it is good or very good. Asked about the access to sports facilities, they respond correspondingly – 52% high school students and 38.3% high school

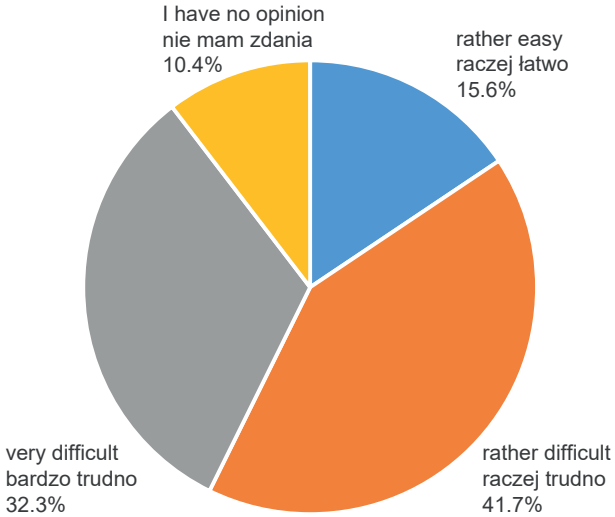

Fig. 3. How difficult is it to find a job at your place of residence (high school students)?
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 3. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o poziom trudności w znalezieni pracy w miejscowości zamieszkania (uczniowie szkół średnich)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

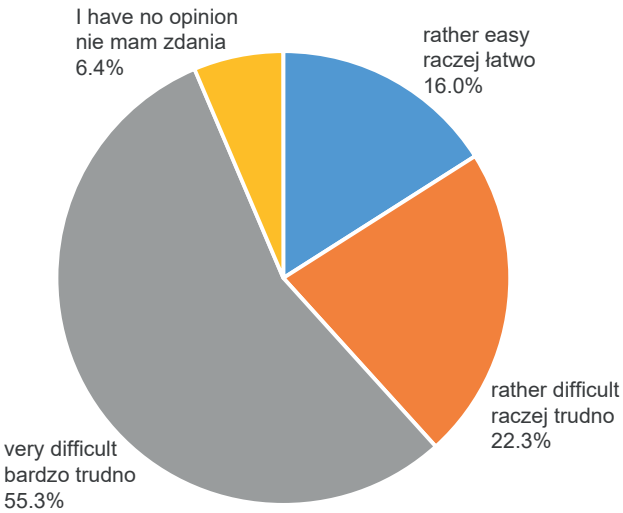

Fig. 4. How difficult is it to find a job at your place of residence? (college and university students)
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 4. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o poziom trudności w znalezieniu pracy w miejscowości zamieszkania? (studenci szkół i uczelni wyższych)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

students. Respondents are also satisfied with the access to green areas, playgrounds, and kindergardens.

Road condition, safety, culture life, access to healthcare, access to shopping centres, bicycle routes as well as cleanliness and aesthetics of the environment were assessed as average.

In the next question, respondents were asked how difficult it was to find a job or to operate a business (own a business). Here, the answers were quite pessimistic. Around 74% of respondents (high school students) maintain that it is a rather or a very challenging task, while 15.6% find the task rather easy. None of the respondents declared that it is very easy to get a job. Respondents also find it difficult, though still a bit easier, to run a business activity.

Again, the answers were similar: for 77.6% respondents it is rather or very difficult, while for 16% it is rather easy.

Respondents' assessment of the need to take up activities under local development programmes supporting the co-operation between neighbouring towns and villages are aimed at the life quality advancement and confirms their poor evaluation of new job and business opportunities (the respondents had the choice of three answers). Most of the survey participants, 69% of high school students and 55.6% of college and university students, marked better access to jobs for the unemployed and professionally passive, including the permanently unemployed, or separated from the labour market – also through local employment initiatives and through providing support for employees' mobility.

Almost 47% high school respondents and 48.9% of college and university students believe that in order to improve life quality it is very important to provide available, cheap, sustainable high quality services in the public's best interests such as health care and social services". The respondents (36–37% of high school respondents and 42.6% of college and university students) also believe that supporting physical, economic, and social revitalization programmes dedicated to the poorest groups of society in urban and rural areas, as well as facilitating business differentiation, establishment, and growth of small enterprises that create new jobs is vital for improving life quality. The following activities failed to win wide acceptance of the respondents:

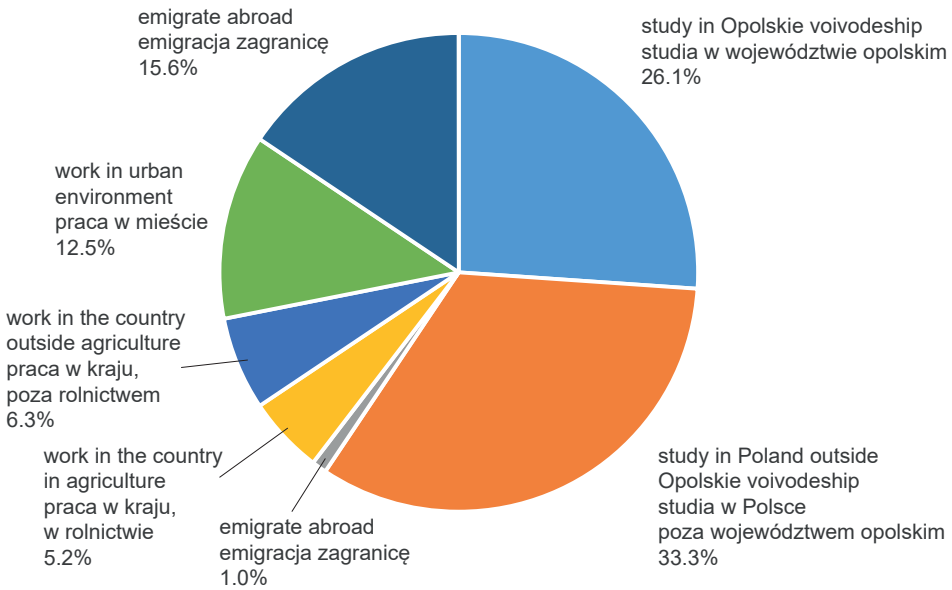

Fig. 5. What are your after-graduation plans? (high school students)
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 5. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o zamierzenia po ukończeniu szkoły średniej (uczniowie)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

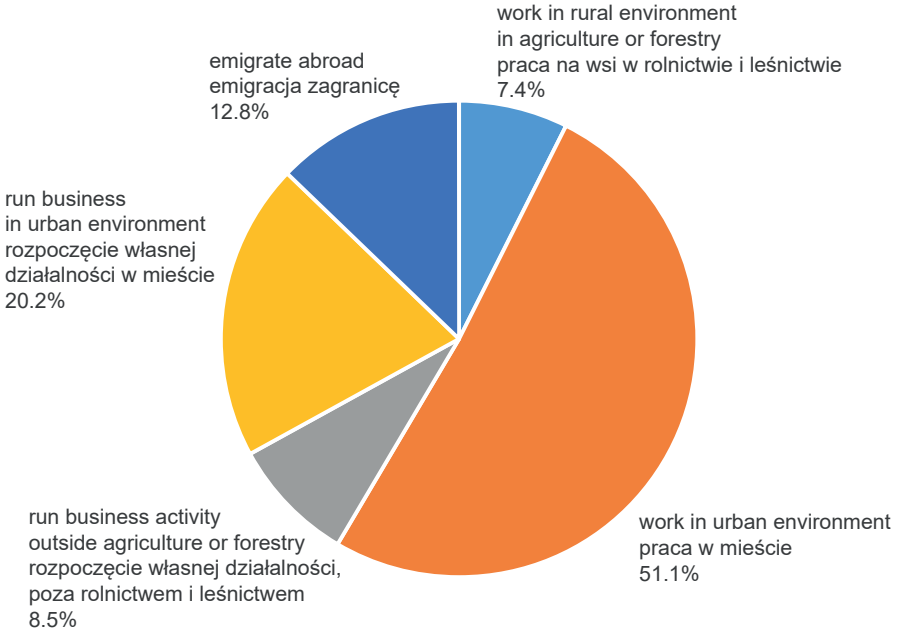

Fig. 6. What are your after-graduation plans? (college and university students)
Source: own elaboration.
Rys. 6. Udział odpowiedzi na pytanie o zamierzenia po ukończeniu studiów (studenci)
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

- supporting social entrepreneurship and professional integration in social enterprises as well as the social economy based on solidarity in order to make employment more accessible, and
- improving competitive advantage of major farming manufacturers by means of better integration with the agri-food chain through quality assurance systems, adding value to farming products, local market promotions and short supply cycles, groups and organization's manufacturers, as well as interbranch organisations.

Most of the high school respondents plan to continue their education at college. One third of them intend to take up studies in Poland, yet outside Opolskie voivodeship (there are many students from the region studying in nearby Wrocław). More than 25% look for schools based in Opolskie voivodeship, whereas more than 15% intend to emigrate mostly to Germany, but also to England, the Netherlands, or Austria. 12.5% of respondents declare that after graduation they will look for a job in urban environment, while only 6.3% of them plan to stay in the country but find a job outside agriculture. Slightly more than 5% of graduates want to work in agriculture in a rural environment. None of the respondents (future high school graduates) plan to start their own business activity after school. According to the respondents, the trends are likely to change once they graduate from college or university. After school, more than 41% of them plan to start their professional career in a city and more than 27% intend to emigrate. Around 15% of future graduates would like to start their own business activity (with more than 10% in the country). Similarly, around 15% respondents declared their plans to work in a rural environment, with 9% in the farming sector and 6% outside agriculture.

51.1% college and university respondents consider starting their first job in the city, 20.2% plan to set up their business in urban environment, 12.8% would like to emigrate abroad, while only 8.5% want to run a business activity in the country but outside agriculture or forestry, 7.4% declared their intention to work in agriculture in the country.

The analysis of secondary school students' responses regarding the relation between life quality at their place

of residence declarations and post-graduation plans declarations shows that:

- most of the respondents who find their life quality very high plan to continue education after graduating from secondary school (79.2%). None of them declared their intention to start work or business activity;
- most of the respondents who find their life quality rather high plan to continue education after graduating from secondary school (69.22%) while the rest declared their intention to start work (30.75%);
- half of those who find their life quality average plan to continue education after graduating from secondary school, 25% plan to start work and around 25% want to emigrate;
- majority of respondents reporting their life quality rather poor or very poor declare their plans to start work.

Detailed data on secondary school students' responses regarding the relation between life quality at their place of residence declarations and post-graduation plans declarations is presented in Table 8.

The analysis of college and university students' responses regarding the relation between life quality at their place of residence declarations and post-graduation plans declarations shows that:

- most of the respondents who find their life quality very high or rather high plan to work or run business activity in urban environment;
- half (47.8%) of those who find their life quality average plan to start work, 26.1% plan to start their own business activity and exactly the same number of graduates want to emigrate;
- respondents reporting their life quality as very poor declare their plans to start work in the city.

Table 8. Secondary students' life quality evaluation in relation to their post-graduation plans
Tabela 8. Ocena jakości życia uczniów szkół średnich w odniesieniu do ich planów po ukończeniu studiów

Life quality declaration Deklaracja dotycząca jakości życia	Number of life quality declarations Liczba deklaracji dotyczących jakości życia	Number and share (%) of post-graduation plans declarations Liczba i udział (%) deklaracji dotyczących planów po ukończeniu studiów	Post-graduation plans declarations Deklaracje dotyczące planów po ukończeniu szkoły
1	2	3	4
Very high Bardzo wysoka	24	9 (37.5%)	study in Opolskie voivodeship studia w województwie opolskim
		10 (41.7%)	study in Poland outside Opolskie voivodeship studia w Polsce poza województwem opolskim
		5 (20.8%)	emigrate abroad emigracja zagranicę
Rather high Raczej wysoka	26	11 (42.3%)	study in Opolskie voivodeship studia w województwie opolskim
		6 (23.1%)	study in Poland outside Opolskie voivodeship studia w Polsce poza województwem opolskim
		1 (3.85%)	study abroad – studia zagranicą
		5 (19.2%)	work in the country in agriculture praca w kraju, w rolnictwie
		1 (3.85%)	work in the country outside agriculture praca w kraju, poza rolnictwem
		2 (7.7%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście

Table 8 cont. – Tabela 8 cd.

1	2	3	4
Average Średnia	41	5 (12.2%)	study in Opolskie voivideship studia w województwie opolskim
		16 (39.0%)	study in Poland outside Opolskie voivodeship studia w Polsce poza województwem opolskim
		5 (12.2%)	work in the country outside agriculture praca w kraju, poza rolnictwem
		5 (12.2%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście
		10 (24.4%)	emigrate abroad emigracja zagranicę
Rather poor Raczej niska	2	1 (50.0%)	study in Poland outside Opolskie voivodeship studia w Polsce poza województwem opolskim
		1 (50.0%)	work in the country outside agriculture praca w kraju, poza rolnictwem
Very poor Bardzo niska	3	3 (100.0%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście

Source: own elaboration.
Źródło: opracowanie własne.

Detailed data on college and university students' responses regarding the relations between life quality at their place of residence declarations and post-graduation plans declarations is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. College and university students' life quality evaluation in relation to their post-graduation plans
Tabela 9. Ocena jakości życia studentów szkół wyższych i uczelni wyższych w odniesieniu do ich planów po ukończeniu studiów

Life quality declaration Deklaracja dotycząca jakości życia	Number of life quality declarations Liczba deklaracji dotyczących jakości życia	Number and share (%) of post-graduation plans declarations Liczba i udział (%) deklaracji dotyczących planów po ukończeniu studiów	Post-graduation plans declarations Deklaracje dotyczące planów po ukończeniu studiów
1	2	3	4
Very high Bardzo wysoka	15	9 (60%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście
		6 (40%)	start own business in the city rozpoczęcie własnej działalności w mieście
Rather high Raczej wysoka	30	5 (16.7%)	work in the country in agriculture praca w kraju, w rolnictwie
		16 (53.3%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście
		9 (30.0%)	start own business in the city rozpoczęcie własnej działalności w mieście

Table 9 cont. – Tabela 9 cd.

1	2	3	4
Average Średnia	46	2 (4.3%)	work in the country in agriculture praca w kraju, w rolnictwie
		20 (43.5%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście
		8 (17.4%)	run own business activity in the country outside agriculture or forestry rozpoczęcie własnej działalności w kraju, poza rolnictwem i leśnictwem
		4 (8.7%)	start own business in the city rozpoczęcie własnej działalności w mieście
		12 (26.1%)	emigrate abroad emigracja zagranicę
Very poor Bardzo niska	3	3 (100.0%)	work in urban environment praca w mieście

Source: own elaboration.
Źródła: opracowanie własne.

CONCLUSIONS

High life quality in sustainable development requires balancing basic social, economic, and natural aspects of life. The pursuit of life quality in local communities involves reaching the benchmark in fundamental areas of social order, industrial cohesion, and environmental and spatial order. Nevertheless, the subjective sense and experience of well -being is a complex issue that involves individual experience, ambitions, relations, desires and one's cultural, economic, and natural development. Survey results indicate that respondents' high satisfaction is associated with good infrastructure widely available in rural and with areas that have access to the Internet, green areas, playgrounds and kindergardens.

The respondents declared that finding a new job or starting own business activity is hard or very hard.

Accordingly, the young people that recognise the unemployment and poverty in rural areas find it necessary to take up local development initiatives, especially in co-operation with neighbouring towns and villages. The initiatives should be aimed first and foremost at improving rural population's life quality. Most of the survey participants marked "better access to a job for the unemployed and professionally passive, including permanently unemployed or separated from the labour market – also through local employment initiatives and through providing support for employees' mobility".

Survey results prove that filling gaps in income structure and narrowing distance between social-economic groups in urban and rural environments involve growing importance of income from non-agricultural activities and consequently better material life conditions in the country. In this respect, new jobs in local market, accessibility of rural regions (both physical and virtual), and better circular mobility in terms of work and access to services have been gaining in importance. Therefore, in the future, more effective measures should be taken to create attractive and well-paid (perceived subjectively) jobs. That element may determine rural population's satisfaction with their life quality to a greater extent than infrastructure.

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JAKOŚĆ ŻYCIA NA OBSZARACH WIEJSKICH WEDŁUG MŁODZIEŻY (UCZNIÓW SZKÓŁ ŚREDNICH I STUDENTÓW) W KONTEKŚCIE PODEJMOWANIA DECYZJI O MIEJSCU ROZPOCZĘCIA AKTYWNOŚCI ZAWODOWEJ

Streszczenie. Mimo poprawy infrastruktury w wielu obszarach wiejskich można zauważyć niekorzystne tendencje związane zarówno z przyrostem naturalnym, starzeniem się społeczeństwa, jak i ujemnym saldem migracyjnym. W kraju takie tendencje są najbardziej widoczne na obszarach wschodnich (Podkarpacie, Podlasie) oraz zachodnich (Opolszczyzna). W artykule podjęto próbę oceny jakości życia na obszarze wiejskim przez ludzi młodych i poznania ich preferencji co do miejsca studiowania i podjęcia pracy czy też prowadzenia działalności gospodarczej w okresie rozpoczynania aktywności zawodowej. Jako próbę badawczą wybrano uczniów szkoły średniej mieszkających i uczących się na obszarze wiejskim w szkole oferującej kierunki rolnicze oraz młodzież mieszkającą na obszarach wiejskich i studiującą w Opolu. Poziom życia na obszarach wiejskich został przedstawiony przez pryzmat warunków materialnych i bytowych, a jakość życia przez subiektywną ocenę poziomu satysfakcji z podstawowych warunków egzystencji młodych ludzi mieszkających i uczących się (na poziomie szkoły średniej) na obszarze wiejskim. Wyniki badań potwierdzają, że zmniejszanie różnic w strukturze dochodów i grup społeczno-ekonomicznych pomiędzy miastem a wsią oznacza coraz większą wagę dochodów z pracy poza rolnictwem dla materialnych warunków życia na wsi. Oznacza to, że w przyszłości należałoby podjąć więcej działań i ponieść więcej nakładów na stworzenie atrakcyjnych i zapewniających godziwe wynagrodzenie miejsc pracy i ten element może w większym stopniu decydować o ocenie jakości życia na obszarach wiejskich niż poziom infrastruktury.

Słowa kluczowe: jakość życia, obszary wiejskie, przedsiębiorczość

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