SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS AND SOCIAL POLICY

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Title: **Social development of rural areas and social policy**

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Foreword

Dear students, dear working life colleagues!

We are directly affected by the social development of the territory where we live and work. Social policy is a matter for each of us. We can participate in its creation as citizens and members of the local community or within our working life as development actors coming from public, private or non-profit sector.

Social policy is a sensitive, but also a complex area of the country's life. Its main task is protection of inhabitants before adverse situations, but also intervention in case of an adverse situation.

In the textbook, we present principles of creation and application of social policy at local, regional and national levels. We return to the history of social policy, the tradition of solidarity and reciprocity in our territory, which gives a picture of the roots of the current social development.

Almost 90% of Slovak population lives in rural areas. The topic of rural development is therefore important for our country. We tried to summarize information and knowledge about factors and concepts of social development of the territory, rural social problems and approaches to their solution. We deal with selected instruments of social development of the territory and rural area. Case studies in the form of texts and videos connect theoretical knowledge with real social policy and rural development.

We want to contribute to the fact that you, as future or current mayors, regional actors of development in any position, or as active and participating residents, could creatively and innovatively think and synergistically act.

Authors

1 Factors and concepts of social development of a territory

1.1 Social resources of territorial development

Human factor is the most important component of territorial development. To indicate the component, spatial sociology uses the term **societal capital**. Societal capital is understood as human, cultural and social capital of a territory (Gajdoš, Pašiak, 2008), and hence as the endogenous social resources of local and regional development.

The concept of **human capital** dates back to 18th century (to the times of Scottish economist Adam Smith). However, the term itself has become increasingly used since 1950s. Then, it was used to underline the importance of education and expertise for economic growth. Human capital was perceived as the supply of knowledge, skills and abilities to be used in economic activities, generating return.

Today, human capital is defined as **the total of inherited talent and skills together with knowledge and abilities acquired through education and training.** It also encompasses social abilities (communication skills, teamwork skills, work in virtual environment, adaptability, flexibility, assertiveness etc.). A more specific definition used in economy emphasises the importance of workforce skills and abilities.

Besides economic benefits, human capital produces many non-economic social and societal effects. In territorial development, the non-economic effects are at least equally important to the economic ones.

The development of human capital is supported in all European countries, as it has been perceived as one of the most important endogenous sources of local and regional development. Rapid technological progress is also a reason for supporting the development of human capital. It has made some traditional occupations disappear, whereas some new have sprung up. In many jobs, employees need to change and replace their original skills and knowledge with new ones swiftly and utterly. Life-long education is becoming more and more important.

Social capital is another important social resource of territorial development. It is a **system of social networks and bonds created both in vertical and horizontal direction** (for more information, see Chapter 1.6.2).

The idea of **cultural capital** was devised by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in 1970. He defined it as "acquaintance of an individual with culture of a society" (especially through passing over the cultural capital in schools or families, when parents show music, theatre, literature or arts to their children etc.). More recent papers have added technical (IT skills), emotional (e.g. empathy), national and subcultural forms of cultural capital to the original definition.

Today, we define cultural capital as:

▸ **values and norms of individuals and families (through which they become parts of communities),**
▸ **cultural and civilizational level of individuals, families or households,**
▸ **symbols of achieved educational level** (Bourdieu, 1986).

Cultural consumption and its forms have changed. The term "cultural omnivore" (Peterson, Kern, 1996) was introduced for someone who blends interests with a wide scale of cultural forms. In this new sense, cultural capital is represented by an individual with knowledge of a wide cultural spectrum. He/she can make use of the knowledge (e.g. during a job interview).

Cultural capital transferred within families makes children better students. In adulthood, cultural capital helps in making contacts.

The cultural form of capital is still underrated in our conditions. Cultural capital of rural areas is significantly weakened by emigration of cultural elites to bigger municipalities (Buchta, 2009).

1.2 Social stratification

Each society has only limited resources and not all its members can access them equally. Furthermore, there are objective differences, e.g. geographical (territorial), biological (disabilities, gender-based differences), racial and ethnic, and labour-based (type and character of labour).

Each citizen and social group strives to fulfil its individual and collective needs and goals.

It results in emergence of social inequalities.

The basic types of social inequalities are:

▸ income inequality,
▸ wealth inequality,
▸ lifestyle inequality,
▸ inequality in standards of living.

The existence of the inequalities results in breaking society into social classes, leading to **social stratification** (strata from Latin means layer). Stratification is understood as **organization of society into groups according to their share on power, wealth and prestige.** Social stratification is a permanent feature of each organised social group. Society with no stratification and real equality of its members is a myth which has never existed throughout history of mankind. Stratification is aimed at stability and level of organization of a social group (family, church, sect, political party, trade unions) or society. There may occur movements between the social groups (from one social group to another) called **social mobility**.

In society, there are various stratification systems, conditioned by historical, cultural, political, and geographical factors. Generally, we distinguish two types of stratification systems:

▸ **closed** – e.g. slavery (extreme inequality, practically no mobility), caste system (hierarchically organised castes, regulated behaviour in relation to religion and social affairs within a caste,

no social mobility), status system (feudal society – nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, peasants, subjects and serfs, possibility of social mobility),

▶ **open** – class system (based predominantly on economic differences, modern society with market economy, civic and political equality, high level of social mobility in both directions).

There are several typologies of strata. The typology concerning **social status** or **occupational status** is the most frequently used one (see Table 1).

Table 1: Strata according to social status and occupational status (Source: Fáziková, 2017)

Social status	Occupational status
Upper upper class	highly qualified professionals
Lower upper class	professionals
Upper middle class	routine non-manual workers
Lower middle class	small land owners and entrepreneurs
Upper lower class	qualified workers
Lower lower class	unqualified workers
	unemployed

Stratification of economically active population due to different factors develops in time. In Slovakia, there is a trend of increasing the share of the middle and upper classes and, conversely, of decreasing the share of the lower classes (see Figure 1).
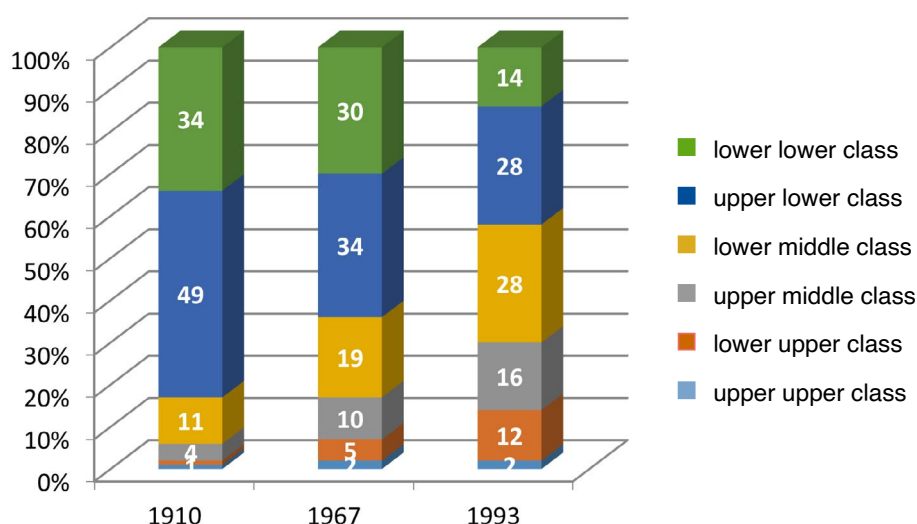
Figure 1: Stratification of economically active population in Slovakia according to social status in 1910, 1967 and 1993 (Source: Bunčák et al.)

The development of economically active population stratification over time relies on several factors. In Slovakia, it tends to develop in favour of middle and upper classes, while the share of lower classes has a decreasing tendency (see Figure 1).

1.3 Poverty

One of the most important reasons of social exclusion is poverty. Poverty is a complex problem, considered one of the gravest global problems of the modern world. It causes extreme inequality and distance from the rest of population, not only the wealthy. This phenomenon is present all around the world. It has various forms and contexts. Poverty never comes alone. Poor people face many disadvantages and problems directly related to poverty, such as deprivation, low education, lack of job opportunities, hunger, inadequate access to health care etc.

There is no universal definition of poverty, because next to its material aspect, there are also cultural and social contexts of poverty. Poverty in rich countries is different from poverty in poor countries.

The European Council adopted a definition of poverty (European Council, 1975), according to which **the poor are those individuals or households whose resources are so low to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the country where they live.**

Poverty is a social problem with no easy solution. If a person or a community fall below certain level of access to resources, a chain of consequences is started, tending to repeat itself. A closed cycle of causes and effects emerges (see Fig. 2), which is hard to escape without outside help (e.g. low level of education and skills leads to the lack of job opportunities, leading to criminal activities in order to survive, to broken families and deteriorating outlooks for future generations).

Figure 2: Closed cycle of poverty caused by material deprivation (Source: EzyEducation, https://www.ezyeducation.co.uk)

Factors of poverty are as follows:
- ▶ education of the head of a family,
- ▶ occupational status of the head of a family (his/her position on the labour market),
- ▶ household location (region),
- ▶ demographic composition of a household,
- ▶ ethnicity (especially Roma in Slovak conditions).

The current poverty paradigm is based on structural failures. Poverty shall not be understood as a one-dimensional category. Simple deficiencies, such as inadequate human capital, can explain who and where is/is not able to use potential opportunities, but what they do not explain is why there is lack of opportunities at the analyzed territory. In order to answer this question, the deficiencies of economic, political and social structures need to be dealt with.

First of all, poverty results from the lack of viable economic opportunities and social support for the whole population. Individuals more threatened by poverty are those least able to compete for a limited number of economic opportunities. To be more specific, these are the people with lower education, poor health, and low number of marketable skills to offer, single parents, minorities, and population of economically disadvantaged regions. The current approach to poverty can be summarised in the following premises:

1. **Poverty is a result of structural failures.**
2. **Poverty is a conditional state, into which and also out of which anyone can get.**
3. **Poverty causes deprivation.**
4. **Poverty is unjust.**
5. **Poverty affects all** (Brady, Burton, 2016).
6. **Poverty needs to be perceived in the context of its environment, consisting of social, economic and political institutions.**
7. **Poverty affects the environment.**

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (WHO, 2017) states it is necessary that municipalities support their quite varied citizens in strengthening social inclusion and utilization of their skills, knowledge and priorities by means of strong engagement of communities. Each member of a society shall play a role in poverty reduction. Long-term, well-designed activities at all levels can lead to a positive change.

Poverty is manifested in many forms and diverse contexts. We distinguish two different concepts of poverty: absolute and relative poverty, and subjective and objective poverty.

Absolute (extreme) poverty is a widely accepted concept. It stands for extreme deficiency of basic necessities of life, especially food, drinking water, health, hygiene, shelter, etc. It also encompasses no access to services such as health care, education, employment, information, and social participation. Extreme poverty is accompanied with malnutrition, illiteracy, incidence of diseases commonly treated in developed countries, high infant mortality, shorter life expectancy, and squalid living conditions. **Relative poverty** is a situation when a household income is insufficient to provide living standards considered common in the society concerned. Relative poverty takes into consideration aspects characteristic for the society. It respects perceptions of poverty as depending on the level of development of the country in question.

Subjective poverty reflects feelings and perceptions of men living in certain country, in view of their feeling of being poor or not.

Objective poverty means it is defined from above (state, parliament), not taking into consideration the perceptions of those considered poor. It is based on indicators measuring living standards, income and expenditures typical for the given country.

1.3.1 Geographic differentiation of poverty

Poverty is different in different continents and countries. Even in rich countries, there are wide differences in poverty rate. The spatial classification into **urban and rural poverty** is important, too. Urban and rural areas provide different opportunities, accessibility to services, infrastructure,

and also threats (e.g. high crime rate in poor urban neighbourhoods). Therefore, it is necessary to have a perspective on the environment people live in. Long-term unemployment or bad jobs (low security, low salary), and low level of education and training are the most important causes of poverty in EU regions. Family size and type are important determinants of poverty.
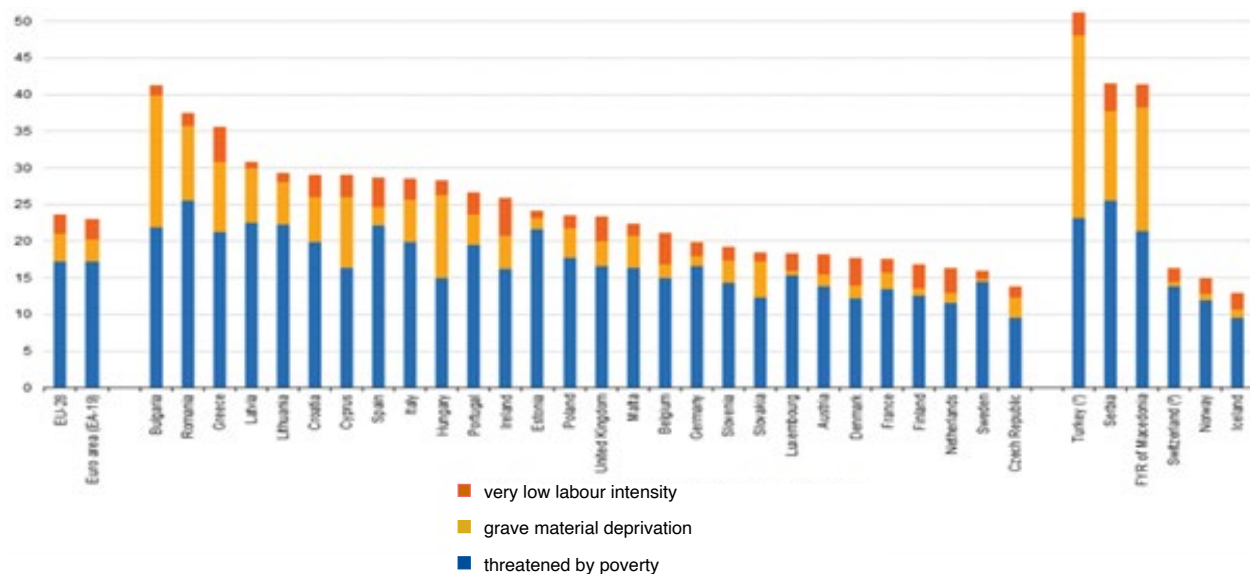
Figure 3: Share of population at risk of poverty in European countries in 2015 (Source: Eurostat, 2015)

To June 30, 2018, there were 650,000 people at risk of poverty in Slovakia (12.4% of the total population). Poverty is spatially concentrated in the southern and eastern districts of Slovakia. The reasons behind such concentration lie in historical, natural, political, economic, and social phenomena consistently occurring in these regions.
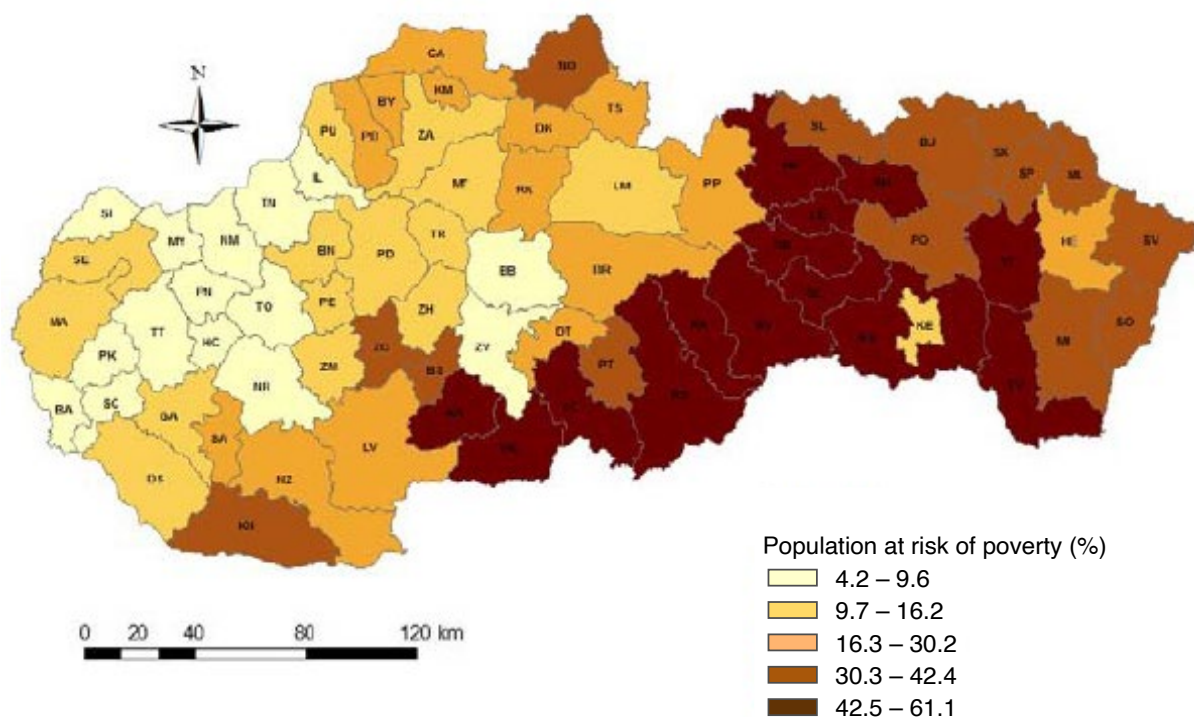
Figure 4: Level of poverty in districts of Slovakia in 2011 (Source: Michálek and Veselovská (2016))

The largest share of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion is in the Prešov Self-governing Region. The regions of Žilina, Košice, and Banská Bystrica are also above the national average. Conversely, the population of the Nitra Self-governing Region is less threatened by poverty. The regions least affected by the risk of poverty are Trnava, Bratislava, and Trenčín regions.

From the perspective of age, children are more at risk of poverty compared to adults or the elderly. People aged 0 – 17 represent the most vulnerable age group. Children are twice as threatened by poverty as people aged 50 – 64, and in comparison with people older than 65, the difference is threefold.

From the perspective of households with dependent children, the group of households most threatened by poverty are those with two adults and three and more dependent children. Another group at risk are households with a single parent and at least one dependent child, i. e. single-parent households. The higher number of dependent children in a household as well as the absence of another adult member of a household in case of single-parent households lead to the more probable risk of poverty. In Slovakia, households with dependent children are almost twice as threatened by the risk of poverty as households with no dependent children.

In light of economic activity, the unemployed are 2.5 times more threatened by poverty than the employed. Approximately 6.5% of population is poor even when employed. The most threatened group in general is represented by the unemployed (almost 50% of them).

1.3.2 Measurement of poverty

Poverty rate is relative, depending on economic and social development of a country as well as redistribution processes applied. The main goal of a social state is to eliminate significant disparities in living standards among social groups and to enable each household and each member of society to reach socially acceptable level of living standards. To make this viable, poverty needs to be identified, measured, and instruments to solve the problem need to be set up accordingly.

A set of indicators measuring poverty was adopted within the EU-SILC and adapted to the conditions of the Slovak Republic. When calculating the poverty indicator, we shall be based on the three basic indicators:

- ▶ **total gross household income** – income of all household members and income monitored at the level of the household. We shall count with: employee salary, income from the use of official cars, gross cash profits or losses from self-employment, property income, and profit from capital investments, current transfers received such as social benefits, education allowance, income received by people aged under 16, and regular monthly transfers received between households,
- ▶ **total disposable household income** is defined as gross household income net of regular property taxes, regularly paid transfers between households (e.g. alimony), regular financial assistance to other households, income tax, and social security payments,
- ▶ **equivalised disposable household income** is disposable household income divided by equivalised household scale. To calculate equivalised household scale according to the EU SILC, a so-called modified OECD scale is used, where each first adult household member is attributed value 1, each second and each subsequent adult and each person aged 14 and over is given value 0.5, and 0.3 to each younger member of household. The calculated equivalised disposable household income is subsequently attributed to each household member.

Poverty indicators:

- ▶ **poverty risk threshold:**
  - › it is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income of a household. The threshold value is expressed as purchasing power parity (PPP),

▶ **risk of poverty rate after social transfers:**
> ⟩ risk of poverty rate is the share of population (in%) in the total population, whose equivalised disposable income falls below the poverty risk threshold (60% of the national median equivalised disposable income of a household). This indicator is affected by many factors. The most important ones are regional context, age, sex, household type, status of economic activity, and ownership relationship to the dwelling.

1.4 Deprivation

Deprivation is expressed in several forms (material, financial, social, and mental). If an individual or a household has a limited access to resources and goods and, thus, cannot afford to consume goods typical for society they live in, the situation is called **material deprivation**. The materially deprived are those excluded from the least acceptable standard of living (and consumption) in society they live in due to the lack of resources. Material deprivation is relative with regard to a defined general living standard. The various forms of deprivation are closely related and interconnected. For example, financial deprivation may become a cause of material and subsequently social deprivation. In the end, an individual may face multiple deprivation. Deprivation may be objective and subjective.

The aim of social policy is to prevent material deprivation. Due to this, two dimensions of deprivation are taken into account: objective and subjective material deprivation.

Objective material deprivation means that an individual or a household cannot satisfy one of the four types of needs:

1. **Basic needs** (drinking water, food, clothes, shelter, warm dwelling, etc.), which are necessary for physical survival.
2. **Elementary leisure and social activities** (e.g. spending vacations away from home at least once a year, occasionally inviting and hosting relatives and friends at home), which are not inevitable for physical survival, but for adequate quality of life. (It is related to social deprivation – roles, memberships and relationships in society. Social deprivation is closely related to social exclusion, manifested in inability of an individual to participate in political, economic and social life of society he/she lives in).
3. **Durable goods** (everyday goods such as a telephone, or goods making household chores easier such as a washing machine).
4. **Housing conditions** closely associated with physical characteristics of a dwelling (access to energy, indoor toilet, technical conditions of a dwelling) and characteristics of a neighbourhood (noise, pollution etc.).

Subjective material deprivation means perception and evaluation of conditions by individuals or households in question:

1. **Financial situation** in satisfying basic needs, perception of one´s poverty and life satisfaction. (It is subjective financial deprivation, the situation when individuals feel worse off in comparison with their surroundings.)
2. **Social environment characteristics** and neighbourhood (crime rate, access to public services such as education or health care) as well as social relations (e.g. certainty one can rely on support from the neighbourhood in case of need).

Material deprivation gradually results into other forms of deprivation such as financial, social, mental etc. Deprivation corrupts mental status and development of a personality. It can lead to negative self-evaluation or even to socio-pathological phenomena such as drug addiction, gambling etc.

1.5 Social exclusion

Poverty resulting from low income and lack of other resources means that households do not reach living standards accepted by a given society. Due to poverty, they face various disadvantages, e.g. employment, low income, unsuitable housing conditions, insufficient health care, and barriers in access to life-long education, culture, sports, and recreation. Such people are often marginalised and expulsed from participation in societal activities (economic, social, and cultural), which are common for other people, and their access to elementary rights may also be limited.

In general, **the term social exclusion means a process, by which certain individuals are marginalised and prevented from full participation in society** (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 2004). When socially excluded, one has uneven access to the five basic resources of society:

- ▶ education,
- ▶ employment,
- ▶ housing,
- ▶ social security,
- ▶ and health care.

Social exclusion also means a more difficult access to main social institutions responsible for the distribution of life chances and, not least, withdrawal from important aspects of life, securing integration in a given community or society. Some individuals are marginalised and prevented from full participation in society due to their economic status, low education, race, sex, age, or lack of basic skills. Exclusion and segregation are illustrated in Figure 5.

| Exclusion | Inclusion | Segregation | Integration |
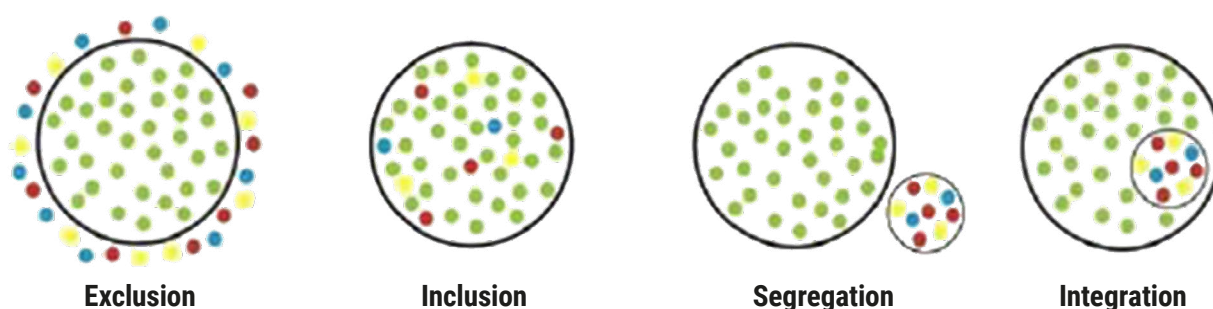
Figure 5: Types of social exclusion (Stránska, 2019)

Social exclusion is a major and growing problem in the EU member states. Besides traditional reasons for social stratification, such as class-related risks (associated with some social classes), life cycle risks, intergenerational risks (resulting in unequal distribution of life chances in consequence of reproduction of inequality from parent generations to children), new social risks emerge, covering larger population.

They include in particular:
- ► long-term unemployment,
- ► population ageing,
- ► increasing divorce rate,
- ► increase in single-member households,
- ► increase in life expectancy,
- ► prolonging of individual life cycle phases,
- ► and diversity and flexibility of family and partnership forms.

If entire communities with no ability of mutual support fall into social exclusion, a collective mental decline starts, leading to various mental deviations and understandable antipathy from their surroundings, thus resulting in negative feedback and even more significant decline. This phenomenon has nothing to do with racism of the surroundings, which may also suffer from similar problems that have led to the decline of the deviant community; however, thanks to mutual support, they have not failed and fallen to such a deep social exclusion.

Social exclusion and deprivation are logical consequences of some economic and social phenomena. Clientelism, corruption, absence of solidarity, domination and greed of elites, and absence of morality in society marginalise growing share of society and decrease social mobility, which leads to improved social status.

Thus, social policy shall address not only poverty of individuals, but also distribution, resources of the poor, their low social participation, insufficient integration, and powerlessness. Attention needs to be paid to resources of local communities (low access to health care, insufficient public transportation etc.), or, in other words, to solving the problem of how people become and stay poor.
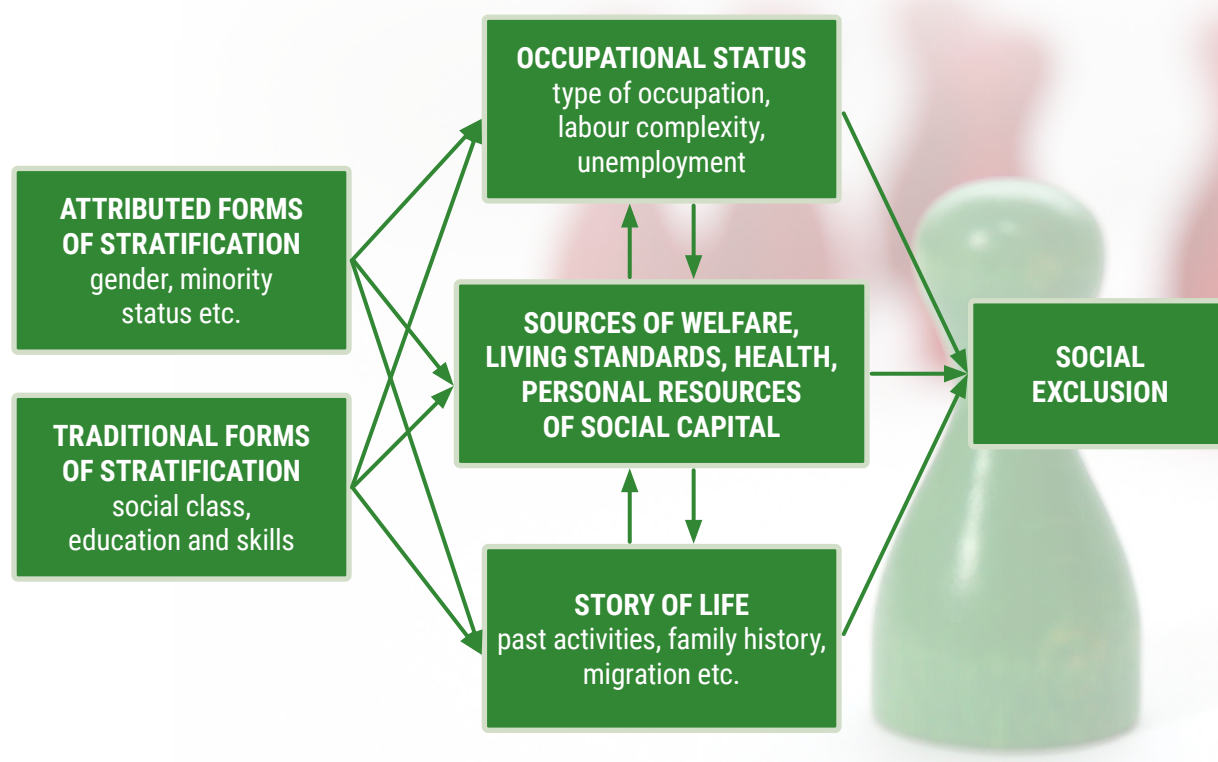
Figure 6: Framework of social exclusion in the EU (Source: UNECE, 2013)

1.6 Social cohesion

When the differences between classes or social groups deepen, **social tension** emerges, with possibility of leading to social revolution. Therefore, the foremost objective of each democratic state is its **social stability.** The way to reach social stability is **social cohesion.** The definition of social cohesion is not harmonised, as cohesion of population and social groups has specific, historically and culturally rooted basis in each nation and state. It is substance holding society together.

Cohesive society is one which:

seeks the well-being of all its members,

▶ fights exclusion and marginalization,

▶ creates a sense of belonging and solidarity,

▶ promotes trust,

▶ and offers its members the opportunity of upward mobility (from lower to upper social classes).

The basic elements of social cohesion are:

▶ **social inclusion** – development of living conditions for individuals and social groups which constitute society. The goal is to strengthen marginalised groups and the poor so that they could use the benefits coming from the increase of global opportunities,

▶ **social capital** – resources resulting from cooperation of people on common goals,

▶ **social mobility** – the ability of individuals or groups to change their social status (upwards or downwards), based on wealth, employment, education, or other social variables.

1.6.1 Social inclusion

The concept of social exclusion is closely related to the concept of social inclusion.

Table 2: Relation between social exclusion and inclusion and areas of social policy
(Source: Mareš, Sirovátka (2008))

Social exclusion		Social inclusion	
Areas	**Indication**	**Premises**	**Social policy**
Economic activities • consumption • labour market activities	• poverty and material deprivation • (un)employment • job quality	**Resources** • redistribution • income • other resources • housing **Flexibility** • principle of equal chances • skills (human potential)	• income support • social services • housing support • job motivation • anti-discrimination measures • positive discrimination • active labour market policy • life-long education • social services
• **Social activities**	• (non-)participation in human relationships • limited scope and quality of contacts	• social networks and contacts, their quality • trust in others	• social work prevention of isolation • empowerment support for participation
Political activities	• (non-)participation in political activities (election, political organization)	• trust in institutions • political system legitimacy	• support for access to execution of political and civil rights • recognition policy

Social inclusion is a process enabling those at risk of poverty and social exclusion to acquire opportunities and resources necessary for full participation in economic, social, political and cultural life of society. It provides them greater participation in decision making, thus affecting their lives and access to elementary rights (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 2004; Mareš, Sirovátka, 2011).

The goal is to remove barriers to integration and create opportunities enhancing execution of civic, political, and social rights.

Social inclusion is multidimensional. It shall reflect many social problems in diverse mutual combinations. Diverse social problems are addressed by diverse social policies and instruments, which therefore need to be in accordance so that synergy is reached. Table 2 illustrates several types of social policy interventions aimed at social inclusion.

1.6.2 Social capital

Social capital is a key dimension of social cohesion. Social capital is a system of social networks and bonds, based on shared norms, values, beliefs, knowledge, and understanding.

The basis for building strong social capital is a firm relation between state and society, based on trust in state and its institutions. The basis for the relation between state and society is the system of social protection.

OECD defines social capital as **"networks/bonding of people/groups of people with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups".**

We differentiate two forms of social capital:

▶ structural – defined in set roles, social networks and social structure,
▶ cognitive – norms, standards, beliefs, trust, attitudes, and values,

And three types of social capital:

▶ bonding – within groups,
▶ bridging – between groups,
▶ linking – hierarchical.

Strong social capital developed in a region or a municipality has potential to bring many benefits, resulting in development of a territory in question. The effects of well-developed social capital were articulated by the British Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2016 as follows:

▶ economic recovery,
▶ better provision of services,
▶ greater support for vulnerable groups,
▶ better health and living standards,
▶ lower crime rate and less frequent anti-social behaviour,
▶ better governance and civic engagement,
▶ better social cohesion and lower rate of social exclusion.

Execution of government programmes in social policy is less dependent on authority and control compared to motivation of policy stakeholders, including beneficiaries. Less developed social capital leads to a more difficult mobilization of the stakeholders. In a society with well-developed social capital, many issues are solved within social networks. In such a society, even government interventions are easier to implement, as they can use a wide variety of allies.

1.6.3 Social mobility

Social mobility is a **movement of individuals or social groups in a stratification system of society from one social position (socio-economic status) to another.**

In the class system (as opposed to other stratification systems), there are wide choices of social mobility (see also the Chapter 1.2 Social stratification). The Hindu society, characteristic for its caste system, was an example of society with no social mobility. Cases when one was allowed to leave his/her original caste were exceptional. Slave-owning societies served also as examples of low social mobility, as it was almost impossible for slaves.

In modern society, the most important, most frequently used type of mobility (enabling the majority of population to reach adequate social status or position) is occupational mobility. The decisive factor of social mobility is education.

The types of social mobility are as follows:

- ▶ **horizontal (lateral) mobility** is a movement from one social group to another, located at the same social level (e.g. mobility to other city quarters or towns),
- ▶ **vertical mobility** is a movement of an individual to another social class or level, i.e. downwards or upwards in the socio-economic ladder,
- ▶ **intragenerational mobility** is a career progression of an individual (upwards or downwards in the socio-economic ladder),
- ▶ **intergenerational mobility** is the extent to which children follow their parents in choosing occupation or in socio-economic position.

1.7 Quality of life

The term quality of life came into use in social sciences in the second half of the 20th century. It has been defined in the wide spectrum of social sciences. Quality of life has its objective and subjective dimension. The objective dimension is understood as conditions for good quality of life. The subjective quality of life is defined by Ondrejkovič (2003) as "the total satisfaction with life and overall perception of personal well-being, mental harmony, and life satisfaction". The subjective perception of life satisfaction reflects one's feeling about objective living conditions.

Quality of life is multi-dimensional. It has its biological, philosophical, psychological, economic, and political aspects. It is related to integrity and maturity of individuals, education and intelligence, health issues, and value systems of individuals and society (Liba, 2010).

Satisfaction of primary needs is not enough for modern men. Adults can influence many determinants by their own hands. This concerns individual psychological features of an individual, such as his/her personality, cognitive processes, abilities, self-realization, creativity, health, as well as economic and environmental sphere, i.e. all aspects and circumstances affecting one's life on a daily basis (Kováč et al., 2006).

According to Stiglitz, Sen and Fetoussi, when measuring quality of life, it is necessary to consider separately material conditions (income, consumption, property) and other factors. However, quantification of some components is problematic. Also, the relevance and weight of the components is crucial when designing the complex assessment.

Spatial perspective on quality of life presents differentiated conditions of quality of a given area. Local conditions represent a factor of individual or collective quality of life, and also one of the most

important causes of social differentiation. Quality of a given territory and community (local quality of life) and regional infrastructure poses one of the most important factors, responsible for differences in quality of life. Infrastructure is decisive for attractiveness of a territory. Transport infrastructure, technical infrastructure and social infrastructure produce employment. Deller et al. (1999) confirm that there is a relation between local infrastructure, quality of life, and local economic performance.

1.7.1 Quality of life assessment

There are many ways and methods (ranging from simple indicators to complex indices) to assess quality of life. A selected method shall always cope with the goal of assessment. Data availability is often a limiting factor.

Professor Jordan (2010) devised the Good society framework (GSF), which may be used to assess subjective and objective quality of life. GSF is a complex model of well-being, based on nine components. Each of the components has its own key areas, based on which specific indicators are defined to assess quality of life.

1 – Relationships

Good society consists of strong communities, where people know their neighbours, are friendly, and support each other. They are integrated and they interact. The key areas for assessment are as follows: communities, marriages, integration of other races (ethnicities), parenthood, friendships.

2 – Economy (economic benefits for people)

Good society prospers. It provides citizens with good living standards, covering necessary needs and ensuring high disposable income. Citizens have enough possibilities for their personal and career development. Economic conditions are one of main prerequisites of good life. Key areas: welfare, basic needs, luxury, work, personal development.

3 – Environment and infrastructure (physical conditions for life)

Good society is characteristic with pleasant and sustainable natural environment with no pollution. Its environment is adapted for life and work in an attractive and functional way. It is equipped with efficient infrastructure, good transportation and communication links, and cheap energy, accessible for everyone. Key areas: natural environment, sustainability, environmental infrastructure, transportation, energy, communications.

4 – Health (the extent to which good health is supported at various levels)

There is enough healthy food in good society, available to all. Health care is effective and there are conditions in which everyone can live in a healthy way. People feel safe at home and in public places and work under safe conditions. There is high life expectancy and people are physically and mentally healthy. Key areas: physical health, mental health, prevention of accidents, health and safety, longevity.

5 – Peace and security

In good society, people need to feel safe at home, at work and in public places. Crime rate is low and people and their property are not threatened. Good society has harmonious defence and lives in peace with other nations, its citizens do not live in a shadow of domestic or international conflicts or terrorism and they are not close to nations threatened by war or terrorism. Key areas: criminality, anti-social behaviour, terrorism, civil war, war.

6 – Culture and leisure (options for relax and cultural life)

Good society is a cultural society, with people having access to high-quality art, literature, music, cinema and games, TV programmes, sport events and other forms of high and popular culture. People have enough free time to use these options. Key areas: „high" culture, popular culture, entertainment, sports, leisure time.

7 – Spirituality, religion, and philosophy (access to learning about the sense of life)

In good society, people can access a wide variety of religious and spiritual ways and are able to practice any religion or belief. They also have access to philosophical teachings and different perspectives on life and can live in accordance with them. Key areas: spirituality, philosophy, religion.

8 – Education (quality of education)

People have access to good education in good society. Such education enables them to function and develop in society. Education is also intellectually rewarding, satisfying, and influences remuneration. Education strengthens individuals, enabling them to choose lives they wish to live, make reasonable decisions, and take full part in society. Key areas: education, intellectual development, strength of character, decision making.

9 – Governance

Good society is a democratic society, where full political and civil rights are applied. People have freedoms of expression, belief, movement, and action. People express sympathy and grant equal rights and obligations to all citizens, regardless of their race, faith, sexual orientation, or age (with exception of minors). They have a just, consistent, transparent, and proportional judicial system. They approach other nations in a just and peaceful way. Key areas: political liberty, civic freedoms, freedom of expression, freedom, judicial system, sympathy, equality.

GSF is not an index of quality of life, it has no ambition to evaluate nations according to individual components without attributing weights to them and ranking them based on their relevance (in Chreneková, Dubcová, 2017).

1.7.2   Rural development evaluation

The chapter 1.7.1 contains the quality of life evaluation framework. Rural environment has its specific features, requiring specific indicators to measure quality of life in rural areas and its evaluation. Isabel Picão de Abreu (2019) focused on the creation of a specific index to measure rural quality of life, continuing the work of Kageyama (2008).

RDI (Rural Development Index) Abreu consists of four dimensions – partial indices: population (population index – POP), economy (economic development index – ECO), social development (social development index – SOC), and environment (environmental index – ENV).

- ▶ **population (POP)** – takes into consideration the relation between total population and working population, includes population density, natural population change, net migration, and population dependency index,
- ▶ **economy (ECO)** – takes into consideration family businesses in agriculture, net household income in purchasing power parity, and employment rate,
- ▶ **social development (SOC)** – includes literacy, education level, number of physicians, and household equipment,

▶ **environment (ENV)** – is composed of variables such as environmental expenditures per capita, share of treated waste water, share of collected communal waste, and share of area under the Natura 2000 network.

The RDI$_{Abreu}$ provides a more balanced approach with more dimensions and variable with easily accessible data in comparison with the RDI$_{Kageyama}$ (which is a simple arithmetic mean of partial indices containing less indicators). The index uses geometrical mean in each dimension. The Rural Development Index Abreu is calculated as follows:

$$RDI_{Abreu} = \sqrt[4]{POP} \times \sqrt[4]{SOC} \times \sqrt[4]{ECO} \times \sqrt[4]{ENV}$$

The index values range from 0 to 1. Higher values mean better development of a given territory. The following Figure 7 depicts the RDI Index Abreu values in the 79 districts of the Slovak Republic in 2017.
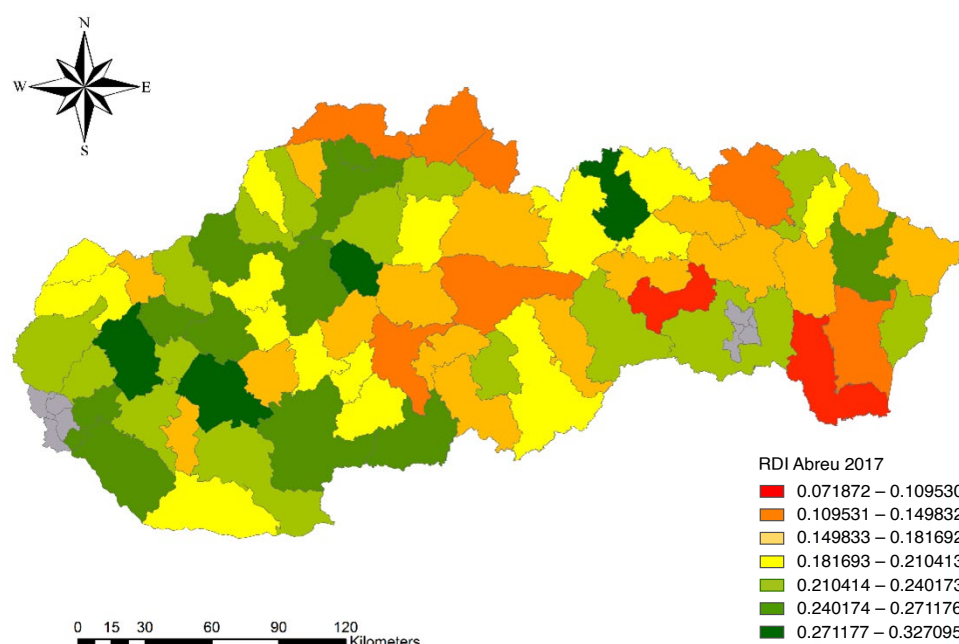
Figure 7: RDI Index by Abreu – values in 2017 (Source: author's own processing)

The RDI$_{Abreu}$ values were calculated between the years 1997 and 2007. Throughout the two decades, the district of Trebišov is the least developed one. In the monitored period, the index decreased by 57%. The most developed districts are Nitra and Trnava (county seats); however, they did not mark considerable positive change throughout the twenty years. The most developed districts with significant positive changes are Turčianske Teplice (+232%), Kežmarok (+206%), Kysucké Nové Mesto (+191%), Rožňava (+224%), and Medzilaborce (+208%). All of them are new districts, established in 1997.

Chapter 1 terminology

- ✔ **social stratification**
- ✔ **material deprivation**
- ✔ **social exclusion**
- ✔ **social inclusion**
- ✔ **social cohesion**
- ✔ **social mobility**
- ✔ **societal capital**
- ✔ **human capital**
- ✔ **social capital**
- ✔ **cultural capital**

Chapter 1 follow up questions

1. **What indicators would you use to assess human capital?**
2. **What indicators would you use to assess social capital?**
3. **What indicators would you use to assess societal capital?**
4. **What is the difference between poverty and material deprivation?**
5. **Define the factors of social mobility in Slovakia.**
6. **Describe the causes of social exclusion.**

2 Societal value and it's evaluation

2.1 Societal and social value

People create or destroy values every day. What we create is usually evaluated in monetary units. However, economic value is not the only one we destroy or create.

The concept of values is much wider. The term of value was introduced into philosophy by Rudolf Hermann Lotze in the 19th century. Axiology deals with the theory of value and evaluation. Each scientific discipline is concerned with and researches specific values. For example, humanities work with moral, aesthetic, cultural, social, and societal values.

Social values are defined as sets of moral principles and standards used by individuals and social groups to describe their personal goals. The standards shape the nature and form of social systems. They say what is acceptable and what is not, what shall be and what shall not be, what is desirable and what is not (Kluckhohn, 1951, Tsirogianni – Gaskell, 2011).

The term of **societal value** (encompassing also the social and environmental value) is used in the context of public benefit. What are the main results of the public sector or social business activities? Is it economic efficiency? No. The main results are represented for example by better health, cleaner environment, improved behaviour of citizens with lower adaptability, better equality. If a subject initiates or creates a positive change, it also creates a societal value. **On one hand, the societal value is a value of the change experienced by an individual, and on the other, a value acquired by society (state) by means of the change** (financial – e.g. savings, non-financial – e.g. decreased social stress). The Act no. 112/2018 on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship defines societal impact as pursuit of public or community-based interests.

There, confusion between social and societal value (social and societal impact or influence) is often caused, brought about mainly by different perception and translations from English language („social" in English is perceived and used in a more general context, also in the meaning of „societal"; to designate societal value, English sometimes uses also the terms „public value" or „social value"). Slovak language uses the following terms to describe societal value or benefit: "verejná prospešnosť", "všeobecná prospešnosť".

2.2 Public and community-based interest

In our lives, we come across the terms such as public interest, public benefit organizations or community service. Public benefit organizations provide goods and services in the public interest. These organizations are predominantly active in the following areas:

▶ development and protection of spiritual and cultural values,
▶ implementation and protection of human rights and other humanitarian objectives,
▶ environmental conservation, preservation of environmental values,
▶ health protection, development of physical education,
▶ protecting the rights of children and youth, and
▶ development of education and science.

The Act no. 112/2018 on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship defines public and community-based interest. The pursuit of **public interest is to provide socially useful services to society or an unlimited number of individuals or disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals. The pursuit of community-based interest is to provide socially useful services to a group of individuals which can be defined and identified according to territorial criteria, membership, interests, or other criteria.** Socially useful services are as follows:

▶ health care,
▶ social assistance,
▶ humanitarian aid,
▶ creation, development, protection, renewal, and presentation of spiritual and cultural values,
▶ protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms,
▶ education, training,
▶ development of physical education,
▶ research, development, scientific and technical services, information services,
▶ environmental protection, health protection,
▶ services supporting regional development and employment,
▶ housing – administration, maintenance, and renovation,
▶ providing finance to support socially useful services.

2.3 Evaluation and measurement of societal value

For a long time, philosophers and economists claimed that value is objective. Aristotle said that everything has its "just price". Karl Marx insisted that a value is created by work. However, societal value is not objective. It is based on interactions of supply and demand; therefore, it can change in time in relation to different target groups, places, and situations.

The attempts to map and measure societal value has lasted for almost 50 years. There are many ways to assess the existing physical results or outputs (a cycle track, greenery, reconstruction of a school). Intangible results, outputs and impacts are much more complicated to assess (decreased social stress, satisfaction, deprivation). The value is often invisible, as it is related to results or changes experienced by people with little or no decisive power. In some types of societal value, its

measurement is either partially possible or impossible. A story of changes experienced by people is the result of the societal value assessment. It encompasses qualitative, quantitative, and comparative information.

2.3.1 Evaluation of societal impact

Societal impact is perceived as an impact of human activities on social sphere, environment, and society. The following two instruments are used to assess the societal impact of the industrial activities, plans, and programmes:

- ▶ **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA),**
- ▶ **Social Impact Assessment (SIA).**

Both instruments represent processes of identification and impact management. They are aimed at predicting and mitigating negative impacts and identifying the opportunities to improve benefits for environment, local communities, and society, in general.

SIA was applied for the first time in the USA (The National Environmental Policy Act, 1969). The procedures of environmental and social impact assessment have changed in the course of time. EIA became a legal obligation in many countries. It is also recommended by international organizations (OECD, ILO). In Slovakia, it is enacted in the Act no. 24/2006 Coll. on Environmental Impact Assessment. SIA and EIA are often implemented in a form of an integrated assessment (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment – ESIA), or together with a health impact assessment (Environmental, Social and Health Impact Assessment – ESHIA).

2.3.2 Social return on investment

Currently, the most often used method to measure societal value is the **social return on investment** (SROI). In 2000, the SROI method was used for the first time in the context of social economy. It is a method to measure the non-financial societal value (e.g. environmental or social value, which have not been incorporated or considered in financial statements yet). It can be used by any subject to assess the impact on stakeholders and to identify ways to improve efficiency and increase investment effectiveness. The SROI method, in the way it was standardised by the Social Value UK, provides a consistent, qualitative approach to understanding and management of impacts of projects, enterprises, organizations, funds, or policies.

The SROI analysis can take different forms. It can contain societal values generated by whole organizations, or it can be focused on a single aspect of an organization.

There are two types of SROI:

- ▶ **assessing**, looking back at the real results, which have already been accomplished,
- ▶ **predictive**, trying to predict what societal value will be created, if a specific result is accomplished (Social Value UK).

The SROI takes into consideration social, environmental, and economic benefits, and explains them in financial terms. It calculates the benefits/costs ratio. E.g. the ratio 3:1 suggests the investment of 100 EUR brings the social value of 300 EUR.

The SROI analysis may also be used as an instrument of:

- ▶ strategic planning,
- ▶ decision-making regarding investments,
- ▶ informing about the effects or impacts of activities (e.g. attracting investments).

The SROI may help in improving services by facilitating strategic discussions, handling unexpected impacts (both positive and negative), and stressing the importance of cooperation with other

organizations and people able to contribute to results, thus maximising the societal value. The method is helpful in maintaining the sustainability of an organization creating societal values. If different organizations create similar types of values, the SROI enables the comparison of their performances. An organization can compare values created in different time periods. Besides financial returns, more and more investors consider also the societal values evoked by investments. The SROI method can be used in different types of organizations – NGOs, public institutions, private organizations.

2.3.3 Value assessment framework

There are proposals to assess societal values as **harmony between "efficient demand" and "efficient supply".** Efficient demand means that someone is willing to pay the price for a service or a result. It may be a public agency, foundation, or citizens. Efficient supply means that a service or a result works, is affordable and feasible. In some areas, the relations between the demand and supply of societal values are clear. For example, citizens are willing to pay police services (safety) or elementary schools (education) through taxes, while governments are able to provide the services. Likewise, many donors want to finance health care for children in developing countries, and many local charities and churches are able to provide such care. In such areas, it is not complicated to analyse the social values, as the relation between what is demanded and what can be supplied is quite clear. However, when it comes to certain social problems, there is no relation between supply and demand. Efficient demand is absent in some cases – donor, politicians or citizens do not consider the need in question as an urgent one. For example, some countries are not willing to finance sexual education or treatment of the drug addicts. In some cases, demand is efficient (for example, governments are willing to pay to reduce obesity), however, supply of the cost-effective interventions is limited. In some cases, both sides are vague or too complex.

Social policy requires comprehensive solutions. Nevertheless, it is problematic to articulate the demand in the holistic approach (each type of stakeholder may have his/her own perspective on what counts as a valuable solution and what does not). The supply side may also be fragmented (e.g. assistance to people without shelter may depend on various stakeholders focusing on therapy, employment, housing etc.). The societal value can only be explained by interactions – meetings and discussions (Mulgan et al., 2019).

Mulgan et al. (2016, 2019) created **the value assessment framework.** Similarly to other tools used to assess the societal value, it also requires a number of decisions falling into the four main categories:

  ▶ **strategy adaptation** (to what extent the proposed innovation responds to the needs),
  ▶ **potential results** (a probable effect on target groups),
  ▶ **saved costs and economic effects**,
  ▶ **risks related to implementation**.

In these categories, stakeholders express their opinions and preferences in the Likert scale (0 to 5). Stakeholders are free to comment on alternatives. The image of the societal value with comments and explanations is the result. Decision-makers may use the tool to control productivity and consistency of their decisions, and communicate with other subjects.

2.3.4 Principles of the societal value assessment

The assessment of societal values is currently conducted via the following principles:

  1. **Participation of all stakeholders.**
  2. **Understanding the creation of change** – use of proofs to differentiate between the positive and negative, and well-planned and unexpected changes.

3. **Consideration of values and preferences of stakeholders** (in decision-making on allocation of resources), as values are relative with regard to different results.
4. **Taking the relevant information and facts into account –** information and facts in books providing a perfect and truthful image of the impacts.
5. **Articulation of adequate claims –** not to apply excessive claims (only claims on values created by activities under the assessment).
6. **Transparency.**
7. **Verification of results –** independent authentication (Social Value UK).

2.3.5   Shortcomings of the societal value assessment

Despite long years of efforts aimed at articulating and measuring the societal value, a satisfactory methodology has still not been prepared. Mulgan et al. (2019) claim that the reason behind the situation and the main shortcoming is caused by the fact that such assessment combines accounting for external stakeholders, management of internal operations, and assessment of the societal impact. Furthermore, each sector uses different measurement methods. The discount rate of the societal value in relation to the needs of future generations is also a problem.

Several authors claim that the so-called „**impact washing**" or „**greenwashing**" is a consequence of the unsatisfactory measurement methods of the societal value – these are the situations when organizations claim more credit in creation of the societal values than there really is, and claim rewards in absence of justifiable positive social or environmental impact.

Chapter 2 terminology

- ✔ **societal value**
- ✔ **social value**
- ✔ **public interest**
- ✔ **community-based interest**
- ✔ **Social Return On Investment (SROI)**
- ✔ **„impact washing"**

Chapter 2 follow up questions

1. **What is the difference between a social and societal value?**
2. **Explain the participation of stakeholders in measuring a societal value.**
3. **Why cannot be a societal value expressed financially?**

3 Introduction to social policy

3.1 Definition of social policy

Social policy is not clearly defined, its definitions vary. It is also because of the fact, that the term "social" has several meanings itself. It means related to society, directly aimed at improving living standards, curative, or operating in unfavourable (emergency) social situations. On the other hand, the reason behind varying definitions is a cross-sectional and multidisciplinary character of social policy. This ambiguity is expressed in differing definitions of social policy.

According to Tomeš (2010), social policy is a systematic effort of individual social subjects to change social system, or to sustain it and let it function. Konopásek (1990) defines it as a societal activity aimed at improvement or maintenance of basic living standards, ensuring social sovereignty and social protection, and limiting social addiction and social risk. According to the London School of Economics (London School of Economics), it is an interdisciplinary applied science, focused on analyzing the needs and responses of society. In the textbooks of the Harvard University, it is characterised as public policy and practice in the areas of health care, services, criminal law, inequalities, education, and labour. In the Masaryk´s Encyclopaedia, it is defined as an effort aimed at organizing social order so that the needs of individuals in society are satisfied in a way beneficial for all.

In principle, the definition explains social policy in a wider context – as a sum of all policies (including housing, education, health care) **directly associated with the reality of society or with relations among social groups** (the advantage of this definition lies in its coherence – this is the way "social policy" is perceived in English-speaking countries). In our conditions, we often encounter a narrow definition of social policy – **as a part of public policy,** concerning predominantly helping people who face the consequences of disadvantages or family/market failure (Beblavý, 2012).

In Central and Eastern European countries, the two following definitions of social policy are accepted:

▶ **social policy as a specific behaviour of a state and other subjects,** affecting the social sphere of society. Social policy is perceived as a set of activities, directly related to the welfare of people. More specifically, these activities are understood as all systemic steps taken in order to select a type of social policy and create concrete social programmes, emphasizing long-term

thinking and conceptual ability. Hence, social policy in a wider sense is a system with internal ties and associations, and also ties to other public policy systems, especially economic policy;

▶ **social policy as a response to social risks and their potential consequences** (e.g. ageing, illnesses, disabilities), aimed at regulating social impacts – the side effects of market economy (such as unemployment, poverty). Such understanding reduces social policy to a set of measures focused on employment, family policy, and social security. The narrow understanding of social policy is almost identical to what the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family is responsible for.

Active social policy is oriented to prevention in general and prevention of social problems; passive social policy is aimed at solving the existing social problems.

The most important areas of social policy in its wider meaning are:

▶ employment policy,
▶ health policy,
▶ social security (including personal social services),
▶ education policy,
▶ housing policy,
▶ and family policy.

In different countries, the areas are specific and variously represented. The final shape of social policy depends on:

▶ historical evolution and traditions,
▶ reality of a given country,
▶ public opinion and expectation of citizens, and
▶ real capacities of a given country.

Creation and execution of social policy requires cooperation of experts from several fields: economy, sociology, psychology, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, etc.

3.2 Factors of social policy

Social policy of a country cannot be isolated from other public policies. It is created and applied in the context of all public policies of a given state. Its content is affected by many factors. Lubelcová (2017) proposes five factors (determinants) of social policy:

▶ demographic,
▶ economic,
▶ political,
▶ organizational,
▶ and socio-cultural.

3.2.1 Demographic factors

The demographic factors include especially population size and structure. The most important population characteristics are: birth rate, family structure, household structure, and population structure in the view of economic activity. When creating social policy instruments, development (e.g. population ageing) and changes in characteristics of population and society (e.g. changes in behaviour of households) are taken into consideration.

Birth rate data indicate trends in population size, age structure, and structure of families and households.

As resources for financing social policy come from economically active citizens, the data on productive and economically active population is quite important. The ratio of productive (economically active) population to pre-reproductive and post-reproductive population defines the potential of resources and the need for them with respect to social security benefits.

The population ageing trend in Slovakia and Europe is given by decreasing birth rates. However, there have also occurred changes in family behaviour, such as postponed first birth, increased divorce rate, and changed family structure. Social policy instruments shall respond to the phenomena, whether they cause or are caused by the changes.

3.2.2   Economic factors

The main economic determinant of social policy is the volume of public resources redistributed through social security benefits (social transfers) and social services. The resources are produced by economy and economically active population (taxes and social security contributions).

The relation between economy and social policy is mutual. On one hand, social policy depends on resources generated by economy, on the other, social policy is strategic for economy, as through employment policy, education and health care, it enhances human capital.

Indirect economic instruments, such as tax system and price policy, belong among key economic factors. Social policy is also indirectly affected by structure of economy and economic policy.

3.2.3   Political factors

State policy determines the way in which goods and opportunities are distributed. Thus, one of the political determinants of social policy is **socio-political doctrine** – philosophy applied in policy creation in a given country. Doctrines are rooted in philosophical approaches and concepts of society organization, including the position of individuals within. Throughout history, they have come through development, reassessment and mutual interactions.

In democratic institutional framework, three types of doctrine are acceptable – socialist, conservative, and liberal.

The main features of **socialism** are rejection of private ownership, universalism in providing goods and opportunities, and high level of solidarity. Social ownership is considered the one and only moral and just form of ownership. Social democratic and Christian social movements issue from socialism.

Christian social philosophy is based on Christian philosophy. It says not only individuals are responsible for social situations, but also, to certain extent, social systems, determining positions of individuals. It acknowledges personal freedom, provided moral obligations are kept. Individual freedom must be in subjection to general good. It also acknowledges inequalities, but not all of them are considered desirable and just. The main goal is to eradicate poverty with help of social transfers, philanthropy, and charitable activities.

Communism is a form of socialism defined in political science as a non-democratic structure based on centrally planned economy. Its ideal is common ownership of the means of production and classless society.

Currently, the followers of socialist doctrine do not stick to its traditional concept. Socialist and social democratic parties are present in governments of most EU countries and contribute to liberal reforms.

Conservatism is characteristic with sticking to traditional values such as family, religion, nation, and chances for individuals. It is based on personal freedom and individual responsibility. It strives for economic efficiency. It does not support solidarity and processes of redistribution. In conservatism, it is difficult to allow changes in social or political sphere. The preservation of traditional distribution of state authority and classic social differentiation of society is underlined. Conservatism as a socio-political doctrine wants to keep things the way they are – if they function well. Its new form – a response to market liberalization – neoconservatism is close to the ideas of liberalism (freedom, individualism, no state interventions etc.). The economic foundations of neoconservatism were laid by Milton Friedman (the monetarist theory).

Liberalism has undergone several phases of development (aristocratic, democratic, social liberalism). The utmost value of liberalism is freedom of a man. The role of state is to create proper conditions for human activities only. People shall put their interests into effect according to their own ideas and abilities. Neoliberalism minimises state intervention in favour of free market. Social relations are perceived as commercial and competitive. The main features of neoliberalism, influencing social policy, are:

- ▸ deregulation – reduction of state interventions in case it could pose risk to profits of private enterprises,
- ▸ reduction of public expenditures on social services, education, and health care,
- ▸ elimination of the terms "public benefit" and "communities" and replacing them by individual responsibility.

In different countries, liberalism takes specific shapes. A good example is Switzerland, where the principle of economic, political and social freedom is applied for everyone, with no difference, together with responsibility.

In Slovakia, we come across the classification of political spectrum to leftists and rightists. The two wings of the spectrum differ in their perception of social justice and social solidarity.
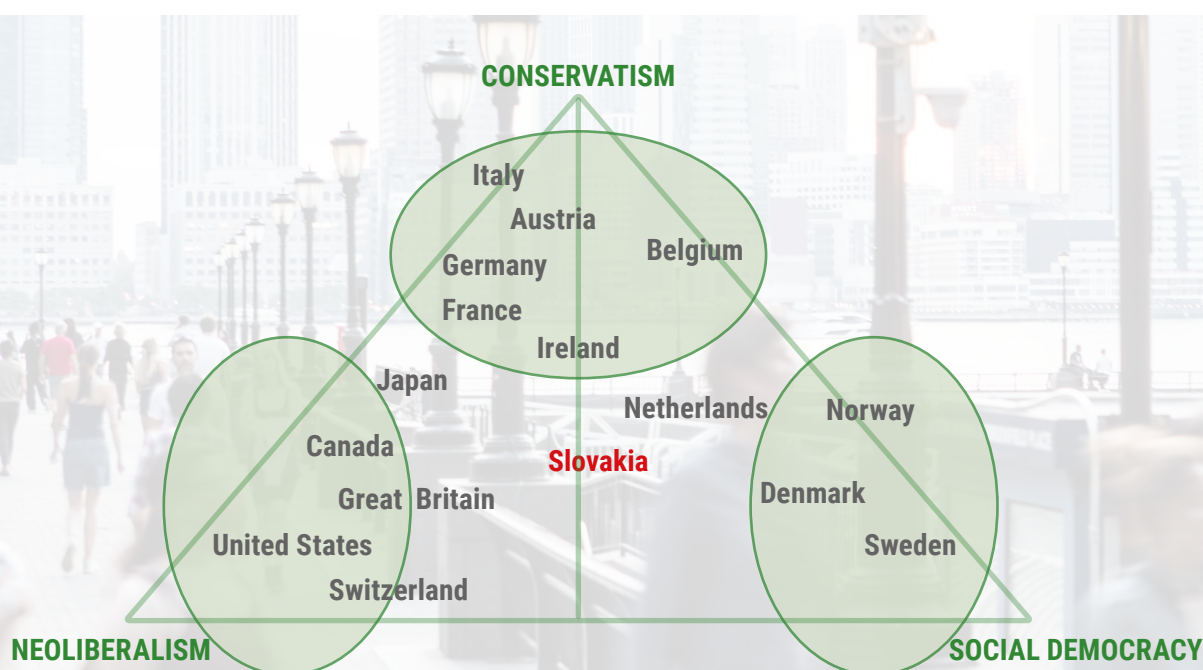
Figure 8: Depiction of political orientation of selected countries (Source: processed according to Hicks – Kenworthy (2003))

The **right wing approach** is based on the values of freedom and market. It prefers individual choice as a mean to individual self-determination. Social disparities are therefore understood as a fair price for the right to choose. The approach refuses correcting imbalances with help of public policies, as it perceives the differences in income and property as a result of effort and ability to succeed in the open market (Lubelcová, 2017). The right wing approach supports social policy based on individuals´ performance. States shall intervene through social policy only after all possibilities of free market are exhausted. Social assistance is oriented on those who cannot participate in labour market due to objective reasons. Social security benefits are low, so that they do not demotivate people and do not encourage social parasitism.

Left wing approach emphasises social equality and equal opportunities for everyone. According to the approach, states shall grant opportunities (through public services) and, thus, eradicate unjustifiable imbalances between citizens via social policy.

Orientation of social policy is reflected in its models (models of social state). Social policy in a country is created on the basis of combined approaches and doctrines preferred by political representation in a given time period (see Fig. xx and Chapter 5.2). Main objectives of social policy are summarised in government programmes.

3.2.4 Organizational factors

Organizational factors affecting creation and execution of social policy include organization of public administration institutions in a given state, public administration and its competence in social area, and legal system (see Chapter 8.2).

3.2.5 Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors reflect historical evolution, shaping social values and traditions and models of solidarity and justice. The factors are expressed in sensitivity and responses of public opinion. They play roles in political struggles of parties (where they may become instruments of manipulation), designing the government programme, and in shaping social policy instruments. The particularities of socio-cultural determinants are illustrated by examples from individual countries, such as the long tradition of strikes in France, or sensitivity/indifference of population in relation to social issues and social policy configuration.

3.3 Approaches to creation and application of social policy

Three main approaches are applied in creation of social policy: economic, sociological, or political. The problem with political and sociological approach is mainly in lower level of normativity, preventing from concrete, measurable recommendations. If authors of social policy utilise and combine all these approaches, they are close to acquiring the best possible picture of society.

3.3.1 Economic approach

Economic approach in social policy takes into consideration predominantly two factors: **efficiency** and **motivation**. Social policy uses mainly limited public resources. Authors of social policy need to decide what is essential in their opinion. Hence, economists tend to look at social policy taking into consideration efficiency (achieving goals by as few resources as possible). When introducing

a specific instrument, the approach puts emphasis on **cost-benefit analysis. Such an analysis is mainly focused on impacts of new instruments on public finance or public budget.** Therefore, impact studies considering the consequences of social policy are often crucial in perspective of this approach.

Achievement of specific, identifiable targets is another aspect considered under this approach, which is somewhat difficult in some spheres of social policy. Measurability of specific targets requires not only sufficient collection of relevant and trustworthy data, but also the ability to assess the relation between a specific instrument and achieved results objectively (Beblavý, 2012).

Negative consequences of an instrument in other spheres of economy or society represent the third factor, often taken into account within the economic approach to social policy**.** One of the most often mentioned examples is increase in the minimum wage, when not only the income levels need to be considered, but also impacts on unemployment rate, which are often contradictory to the goals of the instruments (Quiggin, 1997).

A negative aspect of the economic approach to social policy is perspective of society in general when looking at enhancing well-being, which prevents from looking at imbalances between individuals in the same respect, and from considering the impacts of social policy measures on specific social groups. The economic approach often considers summary economic indicators such as GDP per capita, which do not reflect the actual distribution of welfare in society. Due to this, purely economic approaches to creation and application of social policy are not appropriate.

3.3.2   Sociological approach

Sociology looks upon a man as **an individual, active in various groups constituting society** (family, community, staff, etc.), and the groups affect him/her in diverse ways. From the sociological perspective, people can be motivated to work not only because they want to be wealthy, but also through their desire for recognition or improving the future outlooks. People are affected by their family values and environment, and often do not think rationally from the economic point of view. Therefore, social policy does not play a dominant role in motivating people to work.

Sociology perceives individuals through many perspectives and takes into consideration many factors, which makes it quite impractical for social policy. Nonetheless, sociology is important for social policy, as it **studies all components of society, which makes it possible to identify the consequences of social policy for specific social groups and, through this, provide objective information about policy efficiency.**

3.3.3   Political approach

It is based on the very character of political science, which mainly explores **power struggles among diverse groups** of interest and how the struggles contribute to occurrence of **joint results.** Social policy is a melting pot of several groups of interests and approaches to solving social problems, and this very conflict is at the centre of political science in social policy. **Political science has the power to identify benefits for individual political parties and groups of interests, acquired thanks to social policy** (Beblavý, 2012).

Groups of interest are organised around groups identified based on economic and social classification of society. One of the main classifications is the one according to sectors or positions – agriculture, industry, employers, trade unions, etc. Besides the groups organized based on sectors of economy, there are also movements or associations advocating specific social changes – women´s rights, environmental protection, animals´ rights, etc. The associations enhance their publicity

via public campaigns, striving to affect specific policy changes. All these groups are interested in social policy creation. However, contrary to political parties, they do not apply for a direct political struggle; they want to influence policy-makers.

3.4 Social policy actors

The main social policy actors are providers (subjects) and beneficiaries (objects) of social policy benefits.

All individuals or organizations providing social activities (provider) are **subjects** of social policy. The state (and its institutions) is the main subject. States shall make decisions and integrate. At lower levels of management and in individual territorial units, there are many other subjects: organizations, companies, municipalities, associations, church, charities, religious orders, trade unions, employers, etc. In the most general perception, the subjects are classified into governmental or non-governmental, and market or non-market ones. The subjects conceptualise, design and implement social policy within their competences.

All citizens, families, households, and other groups addressed by social policy instruments are **objects** of social policy. They are called social policy beneficiaries. Social policy objects are structured according to their character and necessity of individual social policy measures (e.g. according to economic activity, education, income, sex, age, etc.).

Social policy subjects may also become objects, if they benefit from some social policy instruments (for instance, if an organization providing social services is supported from public funds).

3.5 Welfare state

"Social aspect" was to be incorporated to organization and activities of state within the development of rule of law. It results in the emergence of **welfare state**, where the principle of **living standards being public** is reflected in the constitution, legal acts, and activities of public institutions.

Welfare state in a broader sense is a state striving to ensure **not only social security, but also social justice, social integration, and individual freedoms.**

Welfare state in a specific sense is a state striving to provide its citizens **protection against income risks caused by illnesses, disabilities, old age, or unemployment.**

From the sociological perspective, welfare state facilitates integration of all social groups and mitigates tensions and instability existing among them (Wamai, 2004).

The occurrence of welfare state is based on the primary target to yield to human desire for satisfaction of material needs (Eastby, 1985). Hence, welfare state functions as a system aimed at providing certain level of welfare to its citizens with help of institutionalised state responsibility and provision of services.

Modern welfare state is bound to accommodate the conditions of liberal economy, pluralistic democracy, and decentralization of government. Its goal is to create social networks through partial income redistribution, preventing middle class and lower class from falling into poverty. Thus, the number of people living at the subsistence level is substantially reduced.

In welfare state, democratic and organised government with help of social legislation and state administration guarantees:

▶ the minimum income of an individual and a household at the subsistence level

▶ social security benefits, enabling to avoid, mitigate, or overcome social risks, with the objective to ensure adequate, minimum level of social security and social sovereignty

▶ high-quality level of services for all citizens, regardless of their societal status (Večeřa, 1993).

According to the decommodification rate and other criteria (Esping-Andersen, 2009), there are four welfare state archetypes: liberal, conservative (corporatist), social-democratic, and rudimentary. None of them is better or worse. Each has its own starting points, advantages, and goals. Most modern social systems converge on one of them.

Liberal welfare state is characterised by:

▶ low level of labour force decommodification (immunization against market dependency),

▶ dominant role of family in providing social assistance,

▶ low social security benefits provided by the state,

▶ motivation to quick independence restoration,

▶ responsibility of employees (commercial insurance of individuals in the case of incapacity to work).

The USA, Canada or Australia converge on this type of welfare state.

Conservative welfare state is characterised by:

▶ solidarity within classes and preservation of status differences among citizens,

▶ provision of social security benefits from social insurance funds (those who had not contributed to the funds are supported from the state budget, however, their standard of living is substantially lower),

▶ the state willing to support, but not replace, the existing forms of solidarity (family, charity).

This type of welfare state is represented e.g. by Germany, France, Italy, and Austria.

Social-democratic welfare state:

▶ provides its citizens equality in relatively high living standards,

▶ is based on universal systems of social insurance and high employment rates,

▶ acquires stability through agreements among social partners.

Norway and Sweden converge on this type of welfare state.

Table 3: Welfare state typology (Esping-Andersen)

Welfare state models:	Liberal	Conservative	Social-democratic	Rudimentary
Principle	Individual responsibility	Social insurance	Moderate egalitarianism	Primary solidarity
Coverage of basic needs	Very low	Depending on previous contributions	Adequate	Very low
Degree of redistribution	Medium	Low	High	Low
Degree of labour force decommodification	Low	Medium	High	Depending on class
Example	Great Britain	Germany, Austria	Sweden	Italy

Rudimentary model of welfare state (later added to Esping-Andersen typology):

▶ it is typical for countries ruled by totalitarian regimes in the past with almost no traditions of social policy. Low social security benefits make it similar to the liberal model. However, there is also a widespread grey and informal economy. Some groups enjoy high labour force decommodification, while the others must rely on family and charity, which encourages corruption. This model is typical for the southern Europe countries.

Slovakia converges on the conservative social system. The share of social security expenditures on GDP (18.1%) is lower, compared to the OECD average (21.0%) and the Czech Republic (19.4%), although we had the same starting point with the latter. Social insurance benefits as well as unemployment benefits are considerably merit-based and linked to previous income. The minimum pension requires working through at least two thirds of an average career length. Conservation of social imbalances and low social mobility are thus the risks of such a system. However, the economic development of western Slovakia means that not only income, but also pensions, maternity benefits and unemployment benefits of citizens in more developed regions will grow, resulting in increasing the economic disparity between west and east and deepening bipolarity of Slovakia.

Source: https://dennikn.sk/blog/939397/aky-socialny-stat-je-slovensko/

Chapter 3 terminology

- ✔ **Socio-political doctrine**
- ✔ **Welfare state**
- ✔ **Socialism**
- ✔ **Communism**
- ✔ **Conservatism**
- ✔ **Liberalism/Neoliberalism**
- ✔ **Decommodification**
- ✔ **Social stratification**
- ✔ **Material deprivation**
- ✔ **Social exclusion**
- ✔ **Social inclusion**
- ✔ **Social cohesion**
- ✔ **Social mobility**
- ✔ **Human capital**
- ✔ **Social capital**
- ✔ **Cultural capital**
- ✔ **Economic activity rate**

Chapter 3 follow up questions

1. **What are the manifestations of socialist socio-political doctrine in practical social policy?**

2. **What are the manifestations of conservative socio-political doctrine in practical social policy?**

3. **What are the manifestations of liberal/neoliberal socio-political doctrine in practical social policy?**

4. **What are the basic factors of social policy creation?**

5. **When could a social policy subject become simultaneously a social policy object?**

4 Social policy objectives and functions

4.1 Social policy objectives

Social policy is specific in every country, and its objectives are configured in accordance with relevant needs and possibilities. In general, its goal is to:

▶ face social and economic threats,

▶ create favourable conditions for the development of individuals and social groups,

▶ provide prerequisites, conditions, impulses, and motivations for the development of each individual as well as for the society as a whole,

▶ activate citizens, encourage them to become interested in solving their own social situations, and lead them to participate in public affairs,

▶ solve the consequences of circumstances, which are not to be managed by individuals and their own resources,

▶ response to social risks and eliminate the consequences of market mechanisms and their functioning (unemployment, poverty).

Social policy of states is usually identified with social policy of governments. One of the social policy trends is to transfer some of its activities from governmental sphere to non-profit organizations, self-government, or private subjects (such as social insurance institutions, health insurance institutions, or companies managing pension funds).

Socially-oriented systems may declare and publish their ideas on social policy in **social programmes.** A social programme consists of objectives and purposes of social policy. Social policy of a state might not be in line with social policy of political parties. The degree of states´ interventions in social policy varies from minimum (USA) to substantial (Scandinavian countries with social policy covering 3/4 of governmental activities).

4.2 Social policy functions

Social policy affects its subjects and objects, and at the same time, social policy subjects influence the social policy objects in its framework and through its instruments. Under this arrangement, social policy carries out several functions. The elementary functions are: protection of social policy objects, distribution and redistribution of financial resources and opportunities, reducing disparities (homogenization), stimulation of individuals and groups to desirable behaviour, and prevention of social situations and phenomena.

4.2.1 Protective function

Protection of citizens against adverse life situations. is the oldest function of social policy and also its most traditional and firm element. It is based on humanitarian orientation of society and, secondarily, on the need to protect labour force. Social policy responds to emerging social situations, when individuals or families get into disadvantaged situations regarding others and try to solve it. The policy removes or mitigates the consequences of adverse social situations, such as: unemployment, old age, poverty, death, or income drops in families.

4.2.2 Distribution and redistribution function

It is one of the most complex and important functions. Most social policy measures are carried out through distribution and redistribution. It stands for distribution of income as well as life opportunities.

Social policy influences the distribution of welfare to individuals and social groups. It determines one´s position in society. Through tax collection and redistribution (social transfers), it mitigates the initial unequal income distribution.
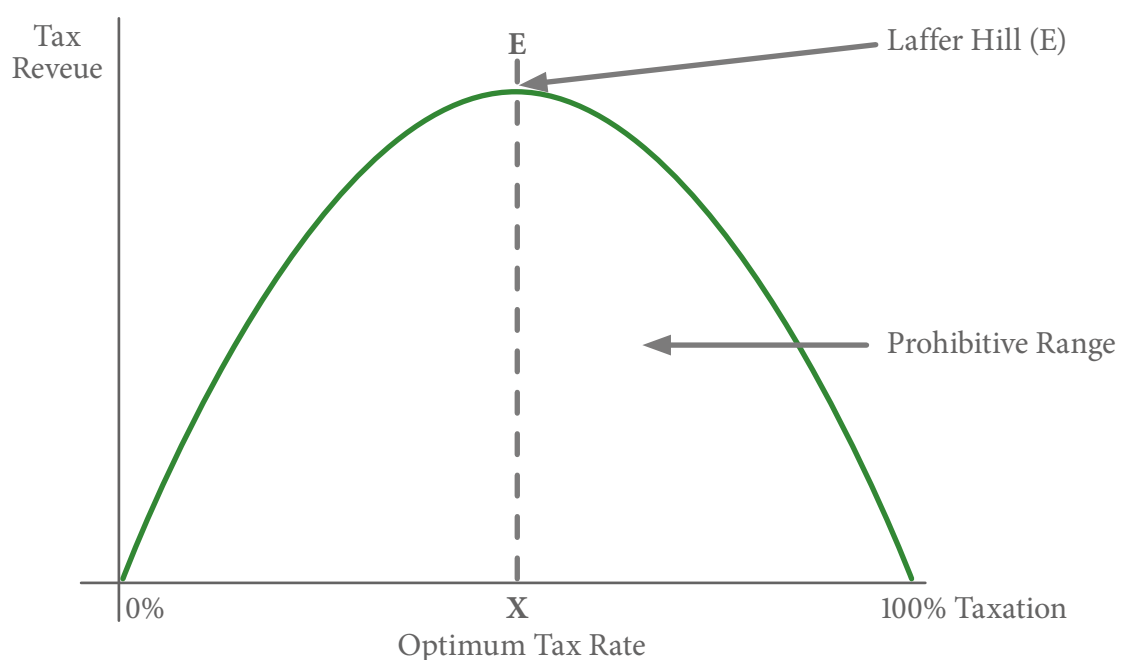
Figure 9: Laffer curve (Source: author's own illustration)

The degree of redistribution depends on needs and possibilities of a society. It shall be appropriate. Excessively high degrees of redistribution weaken motivations to economic activity. Crossing certain levels of tax rates suppresses economic activity. This fact is illustrated by the Laffer curve. The curve (see Fig. 9) depicts the relation between tax revenue and tax rate. If a tax rate crosses a tolerable degree (X), tax revenue drops from the maximum value (E) to the prohibitive range.

Excessively low degrees of redistribution lead to weakened stability and development potential of a society. This could lead to insufficient development of educational system, excessive poverty, etc.

There is a tolerable threshold of acceptable imbalance in all countries and times. In order to describe income distribution in society, economic theory makes use of the Gini index (coefficient), expressing the rate of household income distribution. It is illustrated in the Lorenz curve (see Fig. 10).
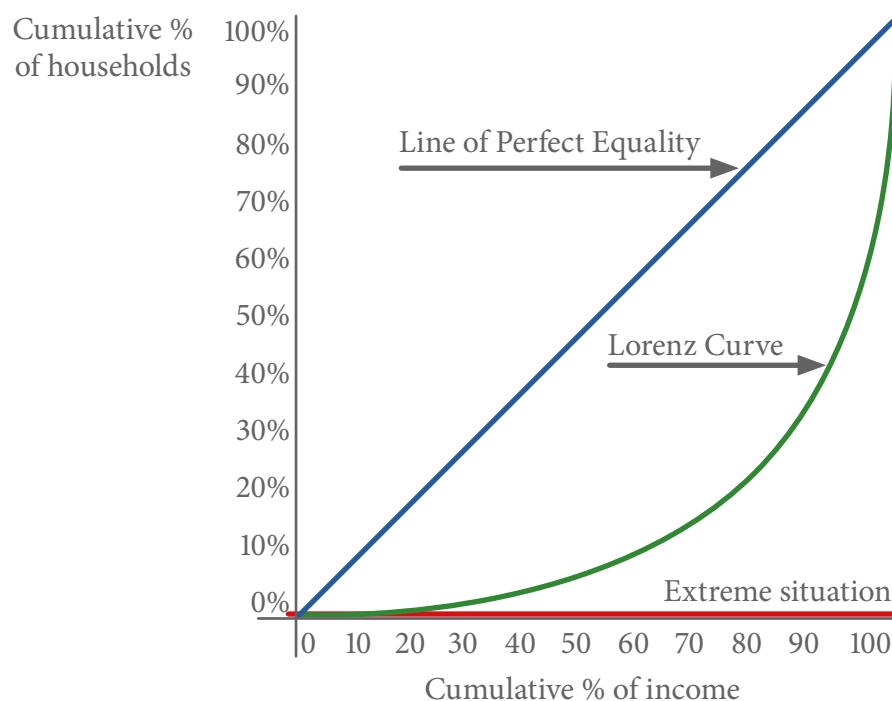
Figure 10: Lorenz curve (Source: author's own illustration)

The Lorenz curve is located between two extremes. The first one is represented by absolutely equal income distribution among all households, which is illustrated by the diagonal of the box (perfect equality line). The more the curve deviates from the perfect equality line towards x-axis, the greater the income imbalance in society. The other extreme is represented by the absolute inequality, when a household holds the whole income (perfect inequality line). Such a situation occurs when the line is identical with the x-axis. The reality converges to the concave curve – the Lorenz curve.

4.2.3 Homogenization function

Homogenization function is considered as a relatively new function of social policy, linked to redistribution function. The aim of the function is to mitigate imbalances in living standards of individuals and social groups, in particular through providing them with equal life opportunities (education, work, health care, etc.) and removing unjustifiable disparities between them. Homogenization function does not mean equalization of living standards; it is a process when society provides equal opportunities for education, work, and health care, based on individual abilities and

prerequisites (the justifiable, natural differences between people are based on the individual abilities and prerequisites). Homogenization function is applied e.g. in social assistance to low-income groups of citizens, whose income is increased to match the standards recognized by society.

4.2.4   Stimulation function

Stimulation function means that social policy encourages desirable social behaviour of individuals, families, households, and social groups. It supports economic efficiency, productivity, and by this also stability and prosperity of society. Hence, it is often called productivity function. It is manifested in social policy measures, directly affecting efficiency and productivity (e.g. educational policy measures) as well as those indirectly influencing prosperity of society (economic subjects benefiting from social policy measures, motivating it to activity). In addition, social policy fosters cultivation of human potential. It also affects economic and political stabilization (guarantees for the elementary social certainties suppress social unrests, which could destabilise economic and political situation). Social policy shall be configured so that it would not lead to demotivation and social parasitism of individuals and groups.

4.2.5   Preventive function

Social policy shall (completely or to the highest possible extent) prevent loss of life and health and also adverse social situation, and limit (exclude) factors hindering integration of individuals to society.

This function has evolved from the initial hygienic and safety function to extensive social prevention. Application of the function enables elimination of the causes of adverse social situations. This function may be applied by all fields of social policy. Education, outreach activities and advisory services play a crucial role in preventive function.

Chapter 4 terminology

- ✔ **Social transfers**
- ✔ **Redistribution**
- ✔ **Social programme**
- ✔ **Social parasitism**

Chapter 4 follow up questions

1. **Explain redistribution in social policy. Give examples.**
2. **What is depicted in the Laffer curve? Explain.**
3. **What is depicted in the Lorenz curve? Explain.**
4. **What is the essence of stimulation function in social policy? Give examples.**
5. **What is the essence of homogenization function in social policy? Give examples.**

5 Social policy principles and models

5.1 Social policy principles

Social policy objectives are reached by application of its principles. The process of creation, configuration and modification of social policy instruments is guided by the following principles: social justice, social solidarity, equivalence, subsidiarity, activation, and participation.

5.1.1 Social justice

The term justice was already present in the early days of economic and political thinking. **In legal sense, justice is a sum of norms and rules; in social sense, it stands for distribution of income, wealth and life opportunities (education, success in labour market, etc.) between citizens and groups.**

Social justice has no unified definition. This is possible due to the ambiguity of its meaning, and also the need to approach the term from several perspectives and the necessity to consider each social situation individually.

The principles for application of social justice differ according to instruments and concrete situations:

▶ classification **according to equal inputs and outputs,**
▶ classification based on performance – **according to merits,**
▶ classification according to equal opportunities – **treating everybody the same way,**
▶ classification according to social dependence – **according to needs.**

Obviously, some principles exclude other. Distribution based on merits and performance is contradictory to the distribution treating everybody the same way or the one based on needs. Social policy applies the principles in certain combinations. The combinations are always based on concrete social situations occurring in society. Nowadays, a socially just society is the one applying various distribution principles in different areas of social policy (e.g. equal opportunities in education policy, social dependence in regulating poverty).

Each social policy model (see Chapters 5.2 and 3.2.3) understands social justice differently. **Left-wing (social-democratic)** approach maintains that public policy shall create equal conditions to ensure equal life chances for everyone. Citizenship means that one has the possibility to participate

in life of society, uses its fruits, and meets one's ambitions and potential, which is preceded by the presumption that each individual shall be equally able to use the possibilities. The prerequisites of such social justice are:

- ▶ in order to have equal life chances, all citizens shall have equal approach to education, health care, and other social services, and
- ▶ nobody shall be a subject to discrimination (sexual, racial, group-related, etc.).

Right-wing (liberal) stance emphasises individual choice as a mean to self-determination. Inequality is perceived as a fair price for the free choice. Welfare policy shall enable the choice to the maximum extent, and create a safety net for those who cannot help themselves. The safety net can be just only when it efficiently catches those with no other options (Radičová et al., 1998).

5.1.2 Social solidarity

Solidarity is **a mutual support, a manifestation of human understanding, mutual coherence and responsibility.** It means becoming aware of our dependence on mutual coexistence in society, and of the importance of mutual relations and assistance. Social solidarity has various dimensions, forms, applications, extents, manifestations, and implications.

Vertical dimension of social solidarity:

- ▶ international – activities of global organizations such as the EU, WHO, the Council of Europe, ILO, the World Bank,
- ▶ national – nation-wide solidarity organised by states, e.g. participation of individuals and groups in collecting resources to finance important activities at national level, such as the development of education, culture, and assistance to families, socially disadvantaged and dependent citizens,
- ▶ local and regional (charity, church, associations, NGOs, etc.),
- ▶ individual – solidarity of individuals or families (also solidarity within families).

In social policy, there is a presumption of solidarity in families (or jointly managed households). It has its expression in law (maintenance obligations in two levels: parents to minor children, and adult children to dependent elderly people). It is also translated into social policy instruments, when the right to benefit from some contribution depends on the total income of a family (Lubelcová, 2017).

Horizontal dimension of social solidarity:

- ▶ intergenerational,
- ▶ the healthy to the sick,
- ▶ the employed to the unemployed,
- ▶ the childless to families with many children, etc.

Social solidarity may be voluntary – **spontaneous** (based on liberalism, with higher moral value, not increasing the pressure on redistribution rate, the basis for charitable and voluntary activities), and **involuntary** – forced (taxes, obligatory contributions and their redistribution through public transfers). In social policy, it is necessary to consider the extent of solidarity and optimise redistribution (see Chapter 4.2.2). The contradiction between efficiency and equality may lead to suppressed economic activity.

Social solidarity may induce positive (motivation) as well as negative (demotivation, dependence, social erosion and parasitism) consequences.

5.1.3 Equivalence

The principle is based on neoliberalism. It assumes that the distribution of income, goods, opportunities and options is equivalent to **performance** and work merits.

The application of the equivalence principle prevails in countries where social systems are constructed based on income generated from economic activity.

In economically developed and socially cohesive society, the combination of solidarity and equivalence is a must.

5.1.4 Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity in social policy connects personal responsibility and social solidarity. It is based on liberalism. The essence of the principle is in the approach to a man as an individual with unique qualities, will, abilities, and dispositions, which shall be deployed in favour of his/her social security and also for social security of his/her closest ones. According to the principle, **everybody shall help himself/herself, if it is not possible, family shall help, then community, and only then the state.** Education towards responsibility is the prerequisite of efficient subsidiarity.

5.1.5 Activation

The principle of activation is quite a new one in social policy. Activation might be defined as **the involvement of social transfer beneficiaries in solving their own social situation.** Its application is aimed at increasing the chances for full participation in the labour market as well as in other dimensions of life in society (Gerbery, 2007). Active policies are in opposition to so-called "passive" policies, which are focused on the distribution of social transfers and services, without any obligation related to one´s own activity.

The principle was applied for the first time in Scandinavian countries in the form of active labour market policy. The policy was used in times of economic restructuring, stimulating labour supply and demand. Later on, the principle was applied in other countries. Activation programmes can be found in diverse countries and diverse shapes.

Activation brings balance to social policy between rights and obligations. It motivates the beneficiaries to responsibility. The principle helps to reduce the dependence on social security benefits and measures as well as social parasitism. Programmes and measures conditioning the social benefits by certain activities (the so-called workface approach), measures supporting the transition from social benefits to the labour market (the so-called welfare-to-work approach), and also active labour market policies, are all the examples of the principle application.

5.1.6 Participation

In general, participation means engagement or involvement in public affairs. People, whose lives are influenced by measures and decisions, must have a real opportunity to take part in processes leading to adoption and implementation of the measures and decisions. Participation leads to identification of citizens with social policy. The essence of the process is in the transformation of a man – a social policy object (a passive beneficiary) – to a full-fledged, responsible and respectable social policy subject. The prerequisites of participation include:
- education and information,
- becoming aware of one´s rights and responsibilities,
- maturity in relation to social behaviour,
- support of state and maturity of society.

The consequences of citizens´ participation in public affairs include:
- direct access of citizens to political decisions,
- disruption of authoritarian governance,

▶ strengthening the bottom-up principle in decision-making,
▶ building the foundations for direct, participative democracy.

Overall philosophy and so-called **socio-political doctrine** (see Chapter 3.2) are crucial for the selection, interpretation and implementation of basic social policy principles; they are also fundamental for real-time politics. Different doctrines implement different combinations of principles.

5.2 Social policy models

Social policy models were defined for the first time by Titumuss (1973). In his publication, he defined the residual welfare model, the achievement-performance model, and the institutional-redistributive model. Esping-Andersen (1990) differentiated between three European welfare state models: social democratic Scandinavian model, corporative continental model, and liberal Anglo-Saxon model.

According to the presence of state and other subjects in practical social policy, social policy agents or subjects responsible for satisfaction of needs, social policy clients (beneficiaries, addressees of social policy, clients of social services), and extent and type of services, objectives and functions of social policy, we distinguish three elementary social policy models.

5.2.1 Redistributive model

The redistributive model is characterized by universalism of provided services, no taking into account the participation in labour market. The main agent is the state. Redistribution of income and life opportunities is the main function.

The target group is the whole population. The north-European states converge to the model, and it was also implemented in former Czechoslovakia until 1989. Contrary to the Scandinavian countries, the model implemented in former Czechoslovakia was specific by guaranteeing extensive social and economic rights in society, where the political and civic rights were not guaranteed.

5.2.2 Residual model

The opposite model is the so-called residual model. Its goal is to protect income in the situation of poverty, when an individual drops out of the labour market. Social services are not universal (for all), but targeted based on the needs. The agents include families, individuals, charity, and NGOs. Prevention is the main function. The model is built on state activities focused on prevention of the crisis situations´ emergence. The typical representatives of the model are the USA, the Great Britain, Chile, and Taiwan.

5.2.3 Performance (corporative) model

The logic of the performance model is based on employment – participation in the labour market. Contrarily to the redistributive model, an employer is the main agent, not the state. The model is built on the existence of pluralist public institutions, financed by employers and employees. The main function of the model is in the stimulation – it motivates towards the participation in economic activities and towards performance. At the same time, it puts pressure on the employment policy. The representatives are e.g. Austria or Germany (the German social policy model is sometimes called the welfare mix). The comparison of the main characteristics of the social policy models is given in the table below.

Table 4: Characteristics of the social policy models (Source: Radičová et al. 1998)

Social policy model/ welfare state model	Residual model	Performance model	Redistributive/ institutional model
Characteristics	liberal	conservative	social democratic
Analytical definition	paternalistic	corporatist	statist
Main agents	family, private insurance	employers	state
State responsibility for the satisfaction of needs	minimum	optimal	complete
Financial responsibility	state	employers and state	state
The share of national income assigned to financing the state-provided services	low	medium	high
Service coverage	residual	mixed	universal
Eligibility	based on needs	based on employment	based on citizenship
Principle of necessity	primary	secondary	marginal
Degree of compensation	low	dual	high
Objective	equality in poverty	social benefits in case of loss of income	income redistribution
Amount of contributions	low	medium	high
Clients´ status	low	medium	high

Social policy model in a country is created on the basis of combined approaches and doctrines preferred by political representation in a given time period (see Figure in the Chapter 3.2.3).

Chapter 5 terminology

- ✔ **social justice**
- ✔ **social solidarity**
- ✔ **equivalence**
- ✔ **subsidiarity**
- ✔ **participation**
- ✔ **workfare approach**
- ✔ **welfare-to-work approach**

Chapter 5 follow up questions

1. **Explain the essence of subsidiarity in social policy.**
2. **Compare the redistributive and the residual model of social policy.**
3. **Define the performance model of social policy. Give examples of instruments within the model.**
4. **What are the forms of citizens´ participation in the development of an area?**
5. **What are the consequences of citizens´ participation in public affairs?**

6 Social policy instruments

Social policy is implemented through various instruments. Social policy instruments may be de**fined as tools by which the social policy subjects affect the social policy objects or other social policy subjects.**

The system of instruments changes in time and improves in relation to concrete social policy intentions of a ruling coalition. The instruments shall be differentiated and targeted with respect to solving concrete social situations of individuals or groups. When creating the instruments and formulating their rules, their efficiency, capacity and the measures to avoid misuse need to be taken into consideration, (in relation to the financial resources of a state and other contributors).

The spectrum of instruments is broad. In every country, the system of instruments is specific. Social policy instruments may be classified according to their level and character. According to the level, we know **elementary** and **application** instruments. Within the two groups, we differentiate the instruments of legal or economic character. The instruments are also classified based on concrete social situations (poverty, old age, unemployment, illness, disability, housing issues) or method of implementation (monetary, non-monetary).

6.1 Elementary instruments of social policy

The main instrument of social policy is the **socio-political doctrine**, the philosophy defining the long term orientation of social policy (10 or more years). The current lead socio-political doctrines are: liberalism and neoliberalism, conservatism and neoconservatism, social democratic movements, and Christian social democratic doctrine (see the Chapter 3.2.3).

A social programme is an instrument aimed at achieving the programme objectives. It specifies the doctrine for a short term. This is a result of consensual and participatory negotiations of political governmental and also non-governmental bodies (trade unions, employers, regional bodies, etc.). Formulation of objectives, intentions and directions to be implemented by a social system of a country in question is the essence of a social programme.

Legal instruments are normative, defining the conditions of activities and mutual relations of individuals and institutions. The elementary legal instruments of social policy are: **the constitution, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, legal acts** (social legislation – the state pension insurance act, the act on social services, etc.), **regulations, decrees** of ministries and other state governmental and self-governmental bodies, **collective agreements.**

The content of legal order, social legislation determining regulations, orders or bans, is that a state social policy subject asks other subjects to provide something (taxes), do something (provide canteen services), refrain from something, or tolerate certain activity of other subjects (e.g. annual leave of employees).

Economic instruments may be characterised as measures leading to collection and redistribution of disposable resources (financial, human, material) in order to achieve the social policy objectives. The economic instruments are divided into: **fiscal** instruments – tax system and transfer payments on one hand, and allowances focused on certain social groups (youth, students, the disabled, the elderly) on the other; **credit** instruments – soft loans for certain groups of citizens; **price policy and regulation** for selected goods and services. Most of these instruments are of an application character.

Besides the responsible ministries, social policy is provided also by other **institutions.** The subjects use the social policy **institutes** in their activities, such as social pension insurance, guardianship, social services, sanctuary, etc.

Social documents are other elementary instruments of social policy. There are planning or conceptual documents (concepts, plans, programmes, projects) devised at different levels (territorial or organisational), and focused on maintenance or improvement of social standards.

Foundations, charities and other charitable activities are instruments carried out predominantly by NGOs and religious institutions.

Media are also considered to be the social policy instruments, as through information, expressions and opinions, they publish and hence contribute to creation of opinions and attitudes of the public. Thus, they are involved in perception of social policy by experts and the general public, and in formulating the public orders and pressure for changes.

Education and consultancy may be considered instruments, too, as they aim at informing and increasing the awareness of opportunities provided by social policy.

Collective bargaining is a special social policy instrument. It is a continuous process, based on compromises between the social partners (the government, trade unions, and employers). Social dialogue is conducted at three levels – macro level (conclusion of general agreements), meso level (collective agreements of higher level), and micro level (collective agreements in individual companies).

Pressure actions influence the creation of social policy. Some social groups use them to assert their interests.

6.2 Application instruments of social policy

The basic application instrument of social policy is social income. It is an income related to social policy measures. Social income predominantly includes pension insurance benefits and health insurance benefits, state social support benefits, cash social support benefits, social pensions, and unemployment benefits. Determining the amount of social income is a complex and politically conflicting process. It reflects the main principles of social policy, especially the understanding of

social justice, redistributive role of state, interests and power of social policy stakeholders, and the ways to solve the contradiction between the economic efficiency and social equality. Income may be one-off, recurring, repayable, non-repayable, eligible, in a form of donation etc.

Benefits in kind – contributions in kind, mainly related to health protection – medicine, medical devices, and personal protective equipment. Benefits in kind are applied in cases of social assistance (clothes, food) in situations when it is not certain, whether the cash assistance would be used properly. In general, cash benefits are cheaper and more practical than the benefits in kind. However, if there is a doubt of potential misuse of funds, the benefits in kind are safer.

In order to influence a social situation or a life situation of people or subjects (e.g. social enterprises), social policy uses **special purpose loans.** It means to grant various soft loans. Their essence is to cushion the period between the immediate need for funds and the limited options related to some specific situations, such as marriage (newlywed loans), study, or provision of housing (housing loans). From the perspective of an individual or a family, they are favourable and accessible immediately. In case of economic subjects, the loans are aimed at supporting the start of an enterprise or at bridging some periods in specific situations.

Reliefs and **benefits** are provided to various groups of citizens (youth, students, the elderly) and they are focused on providing assistance in situations typical for the groups.

State price regulation is a limited instrument of social policy under the conditions of market economy. Examples: regulation of medicines´ prices, regulated rents etc.

Social services aid people in adverse social situations. Through the services, state supports social inclusion of citizens and satisfaction of social needs in favour of people in adverse social situations. Dušek and Terbr (2010) defined the social services criteria as follows:

- ▶ support for autonomy and independence of users,
- ▶ support for integration and inclusion of users,
- ▶ respecting the individual needs of beneficiaries,
- ▶ provision of services in partner-based cooperation of various subjects (from various sectors),
- ▶ and quality assurance.

In Slovakia, social services are regulated by the Act no. 448/2008 Coll. on social services (see the Chapter 8.2.1).

According to Matoušek (2003), **social activities** are equally important to social services in planning services at regional and local level. The services provide the support for leisure activities and other activities focused on interests, thus contributing to the development of communities. The services support participation, coherence and coexistence of citizens and contribute to improving the quality of life.

In the field of poverty and social exclusion reduction, social policy conventionally relies on two large pillars – cash benefits and social services. They are supplemented with measures in educational system and labour market, and focused on solving the current issues, as well as on preventive actions and removing the conditions creating risks of poverty in senior age (Gerbery, 2007). Nevertheless, in each country and each subsector of social system, there are specific combinations of conservative, liberal, and social democratic political instruments, resulting from historical development and varying successes of political parties and coalitions asserting their values.

Chapter 6 terminology

- ✔ **Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms**
- ✔ **Social protection**
- ✔ **Social assistance**
- ✔ **Social activities**

Chapter 6 follow up questions

1. **Explain why media are considered instruments of social policy.**
2. **Explain the essence and give examples of the benefits in kind.**
3. **What is collective bargaining? Please, briefly explain the process.**
4. **Compare social services and social activities.**

7 European social policy

7.1 History of the EU social policy and employment policy

Social elements are incorporated in the EU policies from their beginning. There are several milestones in the EU history, shaping its social policy:

- ▶ **1949** – signing the **European Convention on Human Rights** (after the establishment of the Council of Europe, the future EU member states proclaimed they would respect human rights and fundamental freedoms),
- ▶ **1957** – signing the **Treaty of Rome** – the Treaty contains 12 articles focused on social issues, such as employment, labour legislation and conditions, vocational training, social security rights, safety at work, or collective bargaining,
- ▶ **1961** – adoption of the **European Social Charter** (fundamental document on social rights). The Charter provides the right to work, fair working conditions, organised collective bargaining, social security, and the right to social, legal and economic protection of families.
- ▶ **1999** – creation of the **Social Protection Committee**,
- ▶ **2000** – adoption of the **European Social Agenda** (Nice). The programme speaks about the shift to knowledge-based economy. According to the Agenda, people are the most important asset, and should be put in the centre of attention. The Agenda proposals lead to the dynamic coherence among the economic policy, social policy and employment policy.
- ▶ **2000** – adoption of the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** (Nice).

The EU employment policy has also been at the centre of attention. Its history can be summarised in the following milestones:

- ▶ **1950s** – adaptation aid to employers threatened by industry restructuring in the field of coal mining and steel production,
- ▶ **early 1960s** – establishment of the European Social Fund,
- ▶ **1972** – establishment of the European System for the International Clearing of Vacancies and Applications for Employment (SEDOC),
- ▶ **1980s and early 1990s** – implementation of action programmes for employment of specific target groups,

▶ **1992** – transformation of SEDOC to EURES (European Employment Service), focused on the support of free movement of workers,

▶ **1993** – introduction of the Commission White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment, which started the debate on employment strategies,

▶ **1997** – signing the Treaty of Amsterdam, which initiated the European Employment Strategy and the Employment Committee, an advisory body for coordination of employment policies and labour markets in the member states,

▶ **1997 – 2004** – the Luxembourg Process – introduction of the European Employment Strategy,

▶ **2000 – 2010** – the Lisbon Strategy – formulation of target in the fields of employment and social policy for 2010,

▶ **2011** – Social Business Initiative,

▶ **2017** – the European Pillar of Social Rights – 20 principles and rules to support well-functioning and just labour markets and social security systems,

▶ **2019** – the call for addressing the youth unemployment (NEET),

▶ **2020** – reinforcement of assurance of the youth employment (Bridge to Jobs).

7.2 Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

The Charter was promulgated by the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union (i.e. all the EU member states' governments) and the European Commission in December, 2020, in Nice. It is focused on **demonstrating the spiritual and legal fundaments of the European Union.** The Charter enshrines and explains the fundamental rights of the EU citizens and fosters human dignity. It presents the intellectual and legal foundations of the European Union. It is the most current declaration of fundamental rights in the world, and the first one in the new millennium. It has become an important reference point and interpretive guidance in the European Court of Justice jurisprudence (an example from the member states: The Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, Germany, set aside the judgment of the highest Federal Administrative Court; the Spanish Constitutional Court set aside a part of Spanish legislation concerning the data protection).

The Charter enshrines the following fundamental rights:

dignity — **freedom** — **equality** — **solidarity** — **citizenhip** — **justice**

7.3 The current EU social policy and employment policy

The European social policy and social protection system have been affected by the following demographic, economic, and social changes in the recent 25 years:

▶ population ageing,

▶ increasing share of women in the labour market,

▶ increasing number of households in relation to the overall population (single member households, households with nobody employed),

▶ long-term unemployment (early retirement),

▶ globalization.

The EU social model has three fundamental elements:

▶ common market,

▶ certain institutional arrangement,

▶ and compensatory actions in social area.

In Europe, there are three basic social security models:

a) **Scandinavian** – social democratic model, typical for the most extensive social protection. It is a combination of the residual model of social policy and the insurance model.

b) **Continental** – the Bismarck model (formulated by the German chancellor and social reformist Otto von Bismarck), based on insurance for the cases of social events (it is applied e.g. in Germany, Austria, France, and Slovakia).

c) **British** – the Beveridge model (enforced by the British liberal economist Lord William Henry Beveridge), based on the residual model of social policy and private insurance.

The EU social policy is a so-called coordinated policy. It means the policy is not regulated at the central level; the EU institutions coordinate activities of the member states in this area. Each EU member state regulates its social policy to a certain extent; however, each must meet the fundamental criteria formulated in the European Social Charter, adopted by all the EU member states. Each EU member state shall apply a social security system (containing regulations in accordance with free movement of labour force within the EU) – the structure and organization of the systems at national level are not unified. The national social security systems are based on social pension insurance and social assistance (the former or the latter prevails in each country).

The trends in the European social policy are: targeting, conceptualization, and systematic approach to measures and instruments.

The responsibility for employment, social affairs and social inclusion, and related policies is shared between the EU and its member states. The European Commission competences are as follows:

▶ coordination and monitoring of the national policies;

▶ support to the exchange of best practices in the areas of employment, pensions, and fight against poverty and social exclusion;

▶ adoption of legislation and monitoring of its implementation in relation to rights at the workplace and coordination of social security systems.

One of the main objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy regarding employment is to provide more and better jobs. In 1997, the European Commission adopted the **European Employment Strategy** (EES). It is aimed at increasing the number of jobs, improving labour mobility, and improving social situation. The main intention is to increase employment via coordinating strategy and enhance the situation in abilities, practical training, and adaptability of the labour force and labour market to the economic changes. In order to meet the objective, the support programme **Employment and Social Innovation** (EaSI) was created.

7.4 Financing of the EU social policy

7.4.1 Programme Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)

EaSI is a European financial instrument supporting high-quality and sustainable jobs, ensuring acceptable and adequate social protection, fighting against social exclusion and poverty, and helping to

improve working conditions. The programme is supervised by the European Commission. It combines three programmes, which were independent in 2007 – 2013: PROGRESS, EURES, and micro-financing instrument Progress. Since 2014, the programmes have formed three axes of the EaSI programme. The total budget for 2014-2020 is over 919 million EUR.

The Programme supports:

- ▶ the modernization of employment policy and social policy via the PROGRESS axis (61% of the total budget),
- ▶ labour mobility via the EURES axis (18% of the total budget),
- ▶ access to micro-financing and social entrepreneurship via the micro-financing and social entrepreneurship axis (29% of the total budget).

7.4.2   European Social Fund

The European Social Fund is the lead European instrument supporting employment and social inclusion. Its goal is to:

- ▶ help in finding jobs (or better jobs),
- ▶ include the disadvantaged in society, and
- ▶ ensure more fair life chances for all.

The total budget for 2014 – 2020 was 80 billion EUR. Annually, it helps approximately 15 million people. Strategy and budget of the Fund are jointly prepared and approved by the EU member states, the European Parliament, and the European Commission. The operational programmes are prepared by governments and approved by the European Commission for 7-year periods. Financing is provided for a wide scale of organizations – public bodies, private companies, and NGOs.

7.4.3   European Globalisation Fund (EGF)

The Fund provides support to those who have lost jobs due to large restructuring in the world trade caused by globalisation (e.g. if a large company cancels production or moves it outside the EU, as a consequence of economic or financial crisis). The total budget for 2014 – 2020 was 150 million EUR. The projects focused on assistance in looking for jobs or starting new businesses are financed from the Fund, up to 60% of the total costs.

7.4.4   Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)

The goal of the Fund is to provide material aid to the most deprived. The aid is comprised of e.g. food, clothes, and other necessary personal effects, such as soap or shampoo. The material aid shall be linked to social inclusion measures, such as consulting and assistance aimed at lifting people out of poverty. National authorities may also support the non-material aid to the most deprived, focused on helping them to integrate into society.

Chapter 7 terminology

- ✔ **European Convention on Human Rights**
- ✔ **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**
- ✔ **Social Charter of the Council of Europe**
- ✔ **population ageing**
- ✔ **poverty threshold**
- ✔ **European Social Fund**
- ✔ **European Globalisation Fund**
- ✔ **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived**

Chapter 7 follow up questions

1. **Describe the fundamental rights enshrined in the EU documents.**
2. **Briefly characterise the European social policy and its trend.**
3. **What are the EU targets within the support of employment?**

8 Social policy in Slovakia
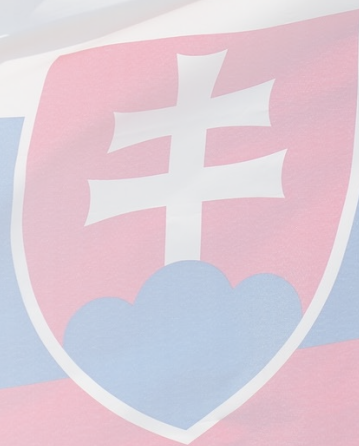
8.1 History of social policy in the territory of Slovakia

8.1.1 Theresian and Josephine period

The beginnings of social security at our territory date back to the reign of the Hungarian queen Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II. (18th century).

Vast economic, social, and educational reforms were performed:

▶ introduction of the first legal acts governing social security for several categories of employees (public servants), together with military service pay and annual leave,

▶ abolishment of servitude (previously direct dependence on authorities, later, the subjects did not need the consent to move, to marry out of the domain, to educate children), causing migration to towns, and boom in education and entrepreneurship,

▶ organization of the first population census, house numbering, and land registration,

▶ introduction of equal taxation, judicial reforms, new criminal and civil code with equality before the law and equal rights and obligations of citizens,

▶ prohibition of discrimination within guilds,

▶ prohibition of child labour (up to 8 years),

▶ establishment of hospitals and introduction of sign language.

8.1.2 Development of solidarity

Another important period from the perspective of social policy development was the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century:

▶ establishment of self-help associations and organization. The Association of Farmers established in 1845 (Spolok gazdovský) in the town of Sobotište was the first such association (the first self-help credit cooperative in continental Europe, established by Samuel Jurkovič),

▶ first steps in education of adults – first textbooks for Slovak rural schools,

▶ adoption of the industry law (1884), enabling the establishment of voluntary sickness funds in industrial plants; however, the self-help associations (e.g. sickness and disability funds for labourers) were the most widely used ones,

- ▶ introduction of compulsory sickness insurance for industrial workers (1891) – 2/3 paid by employers, 1/3 by employees,
- ▶ unification of compulsory, sickness, and accident insurance for industrial and trade workers (1907),
- ▶ introduction of compulsory accident insurance for agricultural workers (1900) – employers' obligation,
- ▶ after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic (1918), there was a diverse institutional basis of social security according to the categories of workers, while a significant part of population (e.g. small farmers) remained uncovered,
- ▶ social security reform (1924) – merging the systems of sickness, compulsory pension, and disability insurance of workers (in Slovakia, social security still covered only 1/5 of the population).

8.2 Social security during socialism

For the period of socialism (1948 – 1989), the dominant position of the state was typical. The state enforced and guaranteed full employment (the right and the obligation to work). The re-distribution rate was quite high. Some benefits were dependent on salaries (e.g. old-age pensions), but salary differentiation was low and independent on performance. The assistance was aimed at the support for families (including housing policy).

Before 1989, social needs of citizens were managed by the social security system. It was the system of complex state-funded care for the employed and their families. Among its most important components belonged:

- ▶ **pension scheme,**
- ▶ **sickness insurance,**
- ▶ **health security, and**
- ▶ **public housing policy.**

The system provided various types of universal monetary and indirect contributions, tax allowances, and services for families with children, and at the local level, it ensured social services in favour of socially disadvantaged citizens and households.

The system was governed by specialised bodies of state administration, while some of its functions were carried out by factories in favour of economically active population.

The whole social security was financed by taxes; i.e. by the state budget. Enterprises and cooperatives paid 50% of salaries and extras and levies on profits to the state budget.

Indirect economic instruments of social policy (tax policy, price regulation, subsidised prices of first necessities, social allowances etc.) were widely applied. High social employment in agriculture was preserved.

The strengths of the system were:

- ▶ that it covered practically all employed and their families, and together with the guaranteed full employment, it provided citizens with a relatively high level of social and economic security. Under the conditions of minimum income differentiation, universal family allowances used to depend on the number of children in families, mainly.
- ▶ the old-age pensioners were provided with affordable canteen services, recreation, and other social events through company funds (aimed at cultural and social needs), accumulated through deductions from company income.

▸ subsidised pre-school facilities, enabling women to decide between family and career, and supporting gender equality.

▸ increasing living standards and educational level (especially in Slovakia), improved housing situation, and longer life expectancy due to the complex social security system.

The greatest **weaknesses** of the social security system were:

▸ high costs,

▸ opaque financing,

▸ ineffective organization (multi-level state administration, starting from the local bodies, through district and regional offices and to the national and federal bodies, all with relevant competencies in the field of social policy),

▸ flat, untargeted benefits,

▸ the low income threshold was not officially set,

▸ weakened principle of merit,

▸ lack of specialised social services' facilities, equipment, and qualified staff (non-governmental organizations providing social services were obliterated, and the state monopoly remained),

▸ citizens had no chance to control or influence anything,

▸ there was no concept of social policy, which would be linked to a real economy. Social and political priorities were stipulated by politicians in accordance with the ideological objectives of the leading (and the sole) political power – the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

In the half of 1980s, Czechoslovakia belonged among the countries with the lowest income disparities. Social and economic policies were not partners; on the contrary, their mutual separation was more and more visible. It was obvious especially in the sphere of social policy financing, which became residual.

Such an extensive social security system proved to be unsustainable in emerging market environment. In the last years of socialism, there was the tendency to transfer the responsibility for the employed and old-age pensioners from the state government to enterprises. After the political change in 1989, the need for a vast reform of social policy arose (Kvapilová in Radičová et al. 1998).

The functions of the new social policy model were to:

▸ adapt society to the transfer to the market economy and democratic political order,

▸ introduce new principles in society – an emphasis on activation and individual responsibility,

▸ adjust the structure of social policy instruments to new social threats brought about by the market economy (unemployment, social exclusion and social stratification).

8.3 Social policy today

In Slovakia, social policy comes under the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. It is governed by the following legislation:

§ Social Security Act,

§ Employment Services Act (active and passive instruments),

§ Social Services Law,

§ Act on Cash Benefits for Compensation of Severe Disability,

§ Act on Old-age Pension Scheme,

§ Act on Social Economy and Social Enterprises.

Currently, social policy in Slovakia is focused mainly on:

▶ **employment policy,**
▶ **family policy,**
▶ **educational policy,**
▶ **health policy, and**
▶ **housing policy.**

Social policy is composed of the **social security system** and **labour market policy.** Social security serves as a tool to remove, prevent, and mitigate the consequences of social events.

It consists of the following three pillars:

▶ **social insurance** – protection of population against the risks posed by an old age, disabilities, illnesses, and unemployment. Its aim is to accumulate reserves in cases when social events emerge. There is a compulsory system as well as additional, voluntary insurances,
▶ **public social support system** focused on the precisely defined categories of population under specific life conditions. Through the system, state protects citizens in cases of social events. It is based on the principle of solidarity. The system is funded by the state budget,
▶ social assistance system – a residual system of assistance devoted to those below the subsistence level and/or in need; the so-called socially deprived and in need of social services (Radičová et al. 1998),

The public social support system is implemented through the following benefits:

▶ child allowance and the related supplementary allowance,
▶ parental allowance,
▶ childcare allowance and parental contribution,
▶ childbirth allowance and the related supplementary allowance,
▶ allowance for parents who have three or more children born at the same time or twins more than once in two years, and
▶ funeral allowance.

The public social support system responds to trends and situations induced by population ageing, low fertility rate, changes in families, etc.

In Slovakia, the old-age pensions system is highly **re-distributive** and **solidarity-based**. However, the sustainability of such system is questionable, as there is a new, more merit-based system applicable to the economically active population. A measure to secure sustainability in the pension system is a fully funded pillar.

Labour market policy is a sphere of social policy creating instruments to solve the employment issues – the consequences of a macroeconomic situation. Labour market policy responds to situations caused by imperfections of **employment policy** (which is a macroeconomic, fiscal policy, creating a demand for labour). Labour market policy is implemented in two forms: **passive policy,** providing unemployment benefits, and **active policy**, implemented through community service, retraining, contributions to job creation, etc. (Radičová et al. 1998).

Throughout the recent 20 years, the social system has undergone significant changes in the perspective of the share of public expenses on social security and the fight against poverty, and also from the viewpoint of philosophy and structure of social assistance. Especially in 2003 – 2005, the old-age pensions system, social assistance, and family policy were substantially transformed. Since then, the social assistance has been focused on the support for **active approach towards solving one's situation**. The support for those in material need, who are willing to take part in a community service or who are able to find a job could serve as an example (child benefits, employee bonuses).

A part of the support has been diverted to payments in kind or conditional benefits (school meals for children in need, need-based scholarships). Family policy has become more powerful due to larger volumes of assigned public funds and it has shifted towards the support for reconciliation of family and working life. Life-long education is one of the forms of coping with new social threats and new forms of families. In 2008, the assistance for the disabled and social services were reinforced.

8.3.1 Social services

Social services are partially mixed with the broader category of public services. Public services are the services provided in the public interest. According to the Transparency International Slovakia, **the public interest can be defined as the interest considered to be the most suitable from the perspective of the common good by those conscientiously exerting public power** (Sičáková-Beblavá, 2008).

More generally, social services are understood as **services provided by a community to its members because of their needs and belonging to the community.** It is a set of programmes ensuring the elementary provision of **health care, education and social care in order to increase the social level and active life of an individual.**

The system of social services is focused on **helping individuals, families, or communities.** Social services are provided in favour of socially disadvantaged people in order to improve their quality of life, include them in the society to the maximum possible extent, or protect them against the risks they bear. Thus, social services consider persons (users), their families, or interests of their communities (Matoušek et al. 2001).

Provision of social services in the Slovak Republic is governed by the Act no. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services as amended. The act defines social services as **professional activities, ancillary activities, other activities or sets of activities** focused on:

- ▶ **prevention, mitigation or dealing with adverse social situations of individuals, families or communities,**
- ▶ **preservation, restoration or development of individuals' ability to live independent lives, and support for their inclusion into society,**
- ▶ **provision of necessary conditions to fulfil basic life necessities of individuals,**
- ▶ **addressing social crises of individuals or families,**
- ▶ **prevention against social exclusion of individuals or families,**
- ▶ **reconciliation of family and working life.**

Adverse social situation is a situation where an individual is threatened by social exclusion or where his/her abilities for social inclusion and independent dealing with problems are limited because of:

- ▶ the absence of the necessary conditions to fulfil basic life necessities,
- ▶ the living habits, way of life, addiction to addictive substances or activities,
- ▶ the threat posed to his/her development by a disability, in case of children under seven years of age,
- ▶ a severe disability or medical condition,
- ▶ reaching the pensionable age,
- ▶ caring for an individual with a severe disability,
- ▶ a threat posed by other people's behaviour or when he/she becomes a victim of such a behaviour, or staying in a spatially segregated locality, with concentrated and generational poverty.

Provision of **necessary conditions** to fulfil basic life necessities of individuals in line with the act includes the provision of **housing, food, necessary clothing, shoes, and necessary personal hygiene.**

Social crisis is defined as a **threat to life or health of an individual or a family, requiring immediate addressing through a social service.**

Reconciliation of family and working life is perceived as **taking care of a child**, when a parent or an individual who is awarded custody of the child pursues secondary or higher studies, prepares for the labour market or performs activities related to entering/re-entering the labour market, or exercises an economic activity.

Social services are performed mainly through social work, by processes corresponding to the current status of social sciences, and with help of knowledge of the situation and development of the social services provision.

The list of social services in accordance with the act is given in the Table 5.

Table 5: Types of social services in the Slovak Republic (Source: Zákon NR SR o sociálnych službách)

CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES
1. Outreach crisis intervention services
2. Social services provided in social facilities
low-threshold day centre
integration centre
community centre
rest house
shelter
halfway house
emergency housing
3. Low-threshold services for children and families

SOCIAL SERVICES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN
1. Assistance in personal child care
2. Assistance in personal child care in a temporary childcare facility
3. Support for reconciliation of family and working life
4. Support for reconciliation of family and working life in childcare facilities for children under three years of age
5. Early intervention services

SOCIAL SERVICES TO ADDRESS ADVERSE SOCIAL SITUATIONS DUE TO SEVERE DISABILITY, MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR REACHING THE PENSIONABLE AGE
1. Provision of social services in facilities for natural persons dependent on assistance or for old-age pensioners
sheltered housing
nursing care facility
serviced residence
rehabilitation centre
social care facility

specialised centre
day centre
2. Home care
3. Transport service
4. Social companioning and reading service
5. Interpretation service
6. Arranging interpretation service
7. Personal assistance
8. Rental of care aids
SOCIAL SERVICES USING TELECOMMUNICATIONS
1. Monitoring and signalizing the need for assistance
2. Crisis assistance provided through telecommunications
SUPPORT SERVICES
1. Relief service
2. Assistance in providing custody rights and obligations
3. Social services provided in day centres
4. Support for independent housing
5. Social services provided in canteens
6. Social services provided in laundries
7. Social services provided in a personal hygiene centre

Social services can be usefully and suitably combined. The services are classified into those provided in residential facilities, outpatient services, and ho**me care services (outreach services).** From the perspective of time, services can be provided **temporarily** or **continuously**; from the perspective of providers' education, **professionally** or **non-professionally.** The scope of the services has recently been increased, and it is probable that it will be increased even more, due to population ageing and improved technologies. Further extension of the scope can be hindered by the lack of funds and human and material capacity. According to the nature, we differentiate between **economic** and **non-economic** social services, according to security, there are services **ensured by obligatory** and **additional social security systems,** and other elementary services **provided directly to a person in question** (individual assistance). According to the providing subject, there are three types of social services: **public, private,** and **non-profit.**

Examples of social services: various types of consulting, provisional or temporary housing (for single parents with children, home-shelters, rest houses for the homeless), day centres for the disabled, old-age pensioners or senior citizens' clubs, providing catering (canteens for old-age pensioners, food delivery for senior citizens and the disabled), home care services, crisis centres, socio-legal protection, institutional care (nursing facilities).

Financing, regulation, and provision of social services are all ensured directly by authorities at the levels of local self-administration, and national and regional authorities in the sphere of social services, social security, health care, education, housing, and employment.

8.3.2 The competence of the ministry and territorial self-government in providing social services

Each social issue is a problem for society in the first place. The **principle of subsidiarity** applies to the maximum extent (from family to the supreme authority – the state), and the provision of social assistance (with an exception of social benefits) and responsibility for social services is governed predominantly by local (and in some cases also regional) self-government. The provision of social services is either directly organized by self-government authorities, or carried out by non-governmental organizations. In both cases, the role of public sector in social assistance is irreplaceable (when the territorial self-government competences are decentralised), as it is crucial for financing the social services facilities.

The act no. 448/2008 Coll. as amended defines the relations in provision of social services, their financing, and oversight of social services' provision. It also stipulates competences in the area of social services, which can be classified into several levels:

- ▶ central government – the national level (ministry),
- ▶ regional territorial government (higher territorial units),
- ▶ local self-government (municipalities).

8.3.2.1 Competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

In the field of social services, the ministry, as the central body of government of the Slovak Republic (Law No. 448/2008 on social services):

- ▶ prepares and publishes **the national priorities of social services,**
- ▶ ensures international cooperation in provision of social services,
- ▶ defines the content and scope of the professional training for the selected activities and for the purpose of further education,
- ▶ performs oversight of the social services provision,
- ▶ evaluates the standards of quality of the social services provision,
- ▶ supervises the accredited educational programmes,
- ▶ decides on granting and suspending accreditation for professional activities and educational programmes in the sphere of social services,
- ▶ creates field offices to oversee the provision of social services and to evaluate their standards of quality,
- ▶ approves the claims to granting financial contributions and controls the management of the grants,
- ▶ manages the information system and publishes the **central register of social service providers.**

8.3.2.2 Powers of higher territorial units

A higher territorial unit is a regional self-governmental unit, positioned over municipalities. It is an independent unit of self-government as well as an administrative unit. Though it is a higher unit, it is not superior to municipalities. It has its legally defined competences (the act no. 302/2001 Coll.) and transferred power. The power was transferred on the basis of the Act no. 416/2001 Coll. on the transfer of certain competences from the state administration bodies to municipalities and higher territorial units. The act defines also the transfer of competences from the state administration bodies to territorial self-government. In the sphere of social services, within its original competences (the Act no. 448/2008 Coll. on social services), a higher territorial unit:

- ▶ is an administrative body in procedures on dependence on social services provided in sheltered housing, rehabilitation centre, social care facility, and specialised facility,

- ▶ prepares and approves **the concepts of social services development,**
- ▶ decides on the obligation of provided, adult children or parents to pay for a social service or its part, in the absence of agreement with a social service provider,
- ▶ decides on the prohibition of supplying social services,
- ▶ formulates opinions on the dependence on social services,
- ▶ assures the provision of social services in the following facilities or establishes and supervises the following facilities: **shelter, halfway house, emergency housing, temporary childcare facility, sheltered housing, rehabilitation centre, social care facility, specialised centre, and integration centre**,
- ▶ provides the **support for independent housing** and **interpretation services,**
- ▶ provides **basic social counselling** and **early intervention services.**

It can ensure, establish, constitute and oversee provision of social services and facilities of different types of social services according to the act on social services.

Besides, within the transferred competences, it coordinates the activities of municipalities and other persons carrying out social assistance, it is allowed to organize educational and recreational camps for children, and organize communal catering.

Higher territorial units also reimburse the costs of certain social services to citizens in other higher territorial units' facilities, and they can provide other financial contributions, according to the legislation, too. They also perform other activities related to registration, oversight, and statistical reporting in the sphere of social services.

8.3.2.3 Comptenece of municipalities

Municipalities have original competences (providing the elementary functions by means of their own budgets) as well as transferred ones (reimbursed by the state budget), in the sphere of social affairs. The original competences in the social sphere (the Act no. 369/1990 Coll. on municipalities) consist of tasks related to social assistance, protection of healthy conditions for life and work of citizens, conditions to ensure health care, education, culture, outreach activities, artistic activities, physical culture and sports, and services in the public interest. The competence of a municipality in the sphere of social services is as follows:

- ▶ **preparation and approval of community-based plans of social services in its territory,**
- ▶ **providing conditions to support community-based development,**
- ▶ it is an administrative body in procedures on dependence on social services in nursing homes, serviced residences, day centres, in procedures on dependence and its termination (in relation to the mentioned services), on dependence in relation to the mentioned services after the altered degree of dependence, and on the obligation of provided, adult children or parents to pay for a social service or its part,
- ▶ formulation of opinions on the dependence on social services,
- ▶ provision or ensuring the provision of: **social services in a low-threshold day centre, rest house, nursing home, serviced residence, and a day centre; low-threshold social services for children and families, home care, transportation service, relief service, assistance in personal child care,** and **outreach crisis intervention services,**
- ▶ provision of basic **social counselling,**
- ▶ provision or ensuring the provision of **other types of social services,**
- ▶ **identification of individuals in need of social services,**

> ▶ **establishment, foundation and oversight of a rest house, low-threshold day centre, low-threshold social service for children and families together with outpatient social services, nursing care facility, serviced residence, day centre,** and other facilities.

A municipality is allowed to provide financial contributions to the operation of a social service to non-governmental suppliers and reimburse for health care services with a purpose to formulate opinions on dependence on social services. It also performs other activities related to registration, oversight, and statistical reporting in the sphere of social services.

A municipality may also provide other services above the law, if it is required by a situation and allowed by its budget. In the perspective of social development of a municipality, these may include social services (defined by the act on social services) or **social activities** Matouška (2003).

Chapter 8 terminology

- ✔ **principle of merit**
- ✔ **employment policy**
- ✔ **labour market policy**

Chapter 8 follow up questions

1. **Briefly describe threats and weaknesses of social security in the period of socialism.**
2. **What is perceived as an adverse social situation?**
3. **Explain the essence of passive and active labour market policy.**
4. **Describe the competences of municipalities in strategic planning of social development.**

9 Strategic planning of territorial development

9.1 Strategic management

In general, the strategy of development shall define the direction and scope of the organization's activities or activities to be implemented in the territory for a medium or long period. Ideally, it helps to adapt the resources to a changing environment (Johnson and Scholes, 1993) and demands.

Strategic planning is a process aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability of an organization or territorial development, where all stakeholders agree on the mission and objectives of the strategy, specific services and programmes, and the steps to be taken in order to meet the objectives (Šedivý a Medlíková, 2009). Strategic planning is a process, where an organization or territory aims at analysing its situation and planning the steps leading to long-term sustainability. The design of a plan is not the objective, rather the formulation of objectives.

Figure 11: Basic steps in the process of strategic management in public administration (Source: https://www.acsa.cz/verejnasprava/uzitecne/strategicke-planovani/)

The document containing the results of strategic planning is called a strategic plan (Bárta 1997). Within the strategic planning of territorial development, it is a medium-term document, which becomes a tool for development management after an approval in a local council. The whole process of strategic planning, design and implementation of a strategic plan, and its evaluation are anchored to the process of strategic management.

Besides other things, strategic planning develops team work, as there is always a group of people and stakeholders taking part in planning. Strategic planning of territorial development is specific as it is focused on well-defined territory – a municipality, region, or a country. The basic steps of the strategic management are illustrated in the Figure 11.

When designing a strategic plan of an organization or a region, it is necessary to analyse also the other strategic documents and programmes at international, national, regional, microregional, and local level, too. Coherence of the plan with the above mentioned documents minimises the deviations from the reality and the wider context.

9.2 Reasons behind preparing a strategic document

During socialism, economy in Slovakia (and the countries of the Eastern Bloc) was centrally planned and governed. Planning was also central ("top-down"), in five-year cycles. After the change of regime and economic transformation, the system was disrupted. Through the accession to the EU, Slovakia started taking part in seven-year programming periods in the sphere of regional development. Within the EU regional policy, the principle of subsidiarity and the combination of the "bottom-up" and "top-down" principles are applied.

Though approximately 20 years of the new strategic planning of the territorial development have passed, the reasons behind such planning still need to be recalled and explained. Why to develop a plan:

- ▶ it summarises crucial aspects of the current situation and the past and future development in all socio-economic sectors,
- ▶ it defines the development objectives for a given sector, problem, or region,
- ▶ through consensus, it helps with setting mutual priorities of all stakeholders of local life,
- ▶ on the basis of knowledge of internal and external influences, it enables the formulation of reasonable and realistic objectives (and elimination of ad hoc solutions),
- ▶ it defines the means (instruments, activities, projects) and resources (human, financial, material) aimed at meeting the objectives,
- ▶ it ensures the continuity of objectives and priorities (decreasing the probability of changes in the development priorities in case of new political representation),
- ▶ it motivates territorial self-government to cooperate with the public,
- ▶ it shows the public the outcomes of the territorial self-government,
- ▶ it ensures the legitimacy of objectives and partial transfer of responsibility, and supports the feeling of participation among the population,
- ▶ it defines the specific ways of solving the defined problems via specific projects.

9.3 Process of strategic and programme management

The process of strategic and programme management is not a single act; due to the ever changing environment at macro-level, regional level and local level, it needs to consider adaptations and cyclical processes of programming and changes.

We differentiate among the following phases of strategic management:

1. **Analysis of situation** and trends of development.
2. **Definition of the strategic vision** and strategic directions.
3. **Formulation of the development strategy.**
4. Transformation of the strategy into **measures, activities and key projects.**
5. Preparation of the **budget** necessary to implement the strategy.
6. **Implementation** of the strategy.
7. **Monitoring and evaluation of** the implementation.
8. Return to the phase of the process according to the evaluation results.
9. Repeating a part of the process or the process as a whole (cyclicality) (Institut komunitného rozvoje, 2009).

9.3.1 SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is a standardised method used to present analytical data on different research objects. It is a simple, concise, exhaustive, and objective characteristic of strengths and weaknesses of research objects, and its potential opportunities and threats.

If territory is a research object, opportunities usually include internal as well as external impulses for development. Threats can be rooted in an internal environment (local threats, e.g. persisting weaknesses), or in an external environment (regional, macro-regional, national, multinational, or global level).

Table 6: SWOT matrix (Source: Grasseová et al., 2012)

	WEAKNESSES	STRENGTHS
OPPORTUNITIES	**WO strategies** "Searching" Overcoming a weakness by taking advantage of the opportunity **MIN – MAX**	**SO strategies** "Taking advantage" Taking advantage of strength in favour of the opportunity **MAX – MAX**
THREATS	**WT strategies** "Avoiding" Minimization of weakness and avoidance of threat **MIN – MIN**	**ST strategies** "Confrontation" Taking advantage of strength to prevent threat **MAX – MIN**

As mentioned in the Table 6, when creating a SWOT matrix, it is necessary to write down the factors with strategic importance and to generate alternative strategies. In the first case, there are recorded strengths and weakness of high importance as well as threats and opportunities of high importance.

Concerning generating alternative strategies, there are combined weaknesses and strengths together with threats and opportunities. It results into four types of strategies given by the Table 7.

Table 7: Types of strategies formed in SWOT matrices (Source: Grasseová et al., 2012, p. 230)

WO strategy	A strategy focused on overcoming and elimination of weaknesses. On the contrary, it is necessary to take advantage of opportunities. New resources are to be acquired in order to use the opportunities.
SO strategy	This strategy is specific for using the strengths of organizations and full utilization of opportunities generated externally. The vision is defined.
WT strategy	It is a defence strategy, thanks to which an organization defends itself and strives to eliminate weaknesses and external threats.
ST strategy	It is used when an organization is strong enough to start a confrontation. The adherence to the principles of sustainability is required.

9.3.2 Vision of the territorial development and global objective

A well-formulated vision of the development together with an adequately defined global objective may significantly influence further processes within strategic planning and substantially affect its results. Vision articulates the image of the future. It describes the ideal situation we want to accomplish. It includes brief formulation of a desirable situation in a given area in the long-term period. Vision defines the sense and the direction of the further actions (Bernátová and Weisová, 2012). Vision shall provide a coherent perspective of the territory.

9.3.3 Relation between the strategic objectives and SWOT analysis

When formulating strategic objectives, the relation between them and SWOT analysis shall be examined:
- ▶ objectives shall utilise the identified strengths of the organization in question,
- ▶ objectives shall eliminate the identified weaknesses of the organization in question,
- ▶ objectives shall utilise the identified opportunities for the development of the organization in question,
- ▶ objectives shall respond to the identified threats to the development of the organization in question.

9.3.4 Proposing priorities, measures and development activities

This phase includes the culmination of the process of the strategic plan preparation. It is focused on meeting the formulated strategic objectives and looking for the ways to meet them.

A strategic objective represents the top objective of the territorial development. Properly designed strategic objectives are not focused on a single area; they need to be balanced (Filipová et al., 2018). When setting up the strategic objectives, the following four questions need to be answered (see Fig. 12).

The role of the **specific objectives** is to develop and specify the strategic objective. Specific objectives provide a clear, concise and brief characteristic of the future target. Specific objectives may be attributed to concrete people in an organization. When designing specific objectives, it is recommended to follow the **SMART** approach – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely.
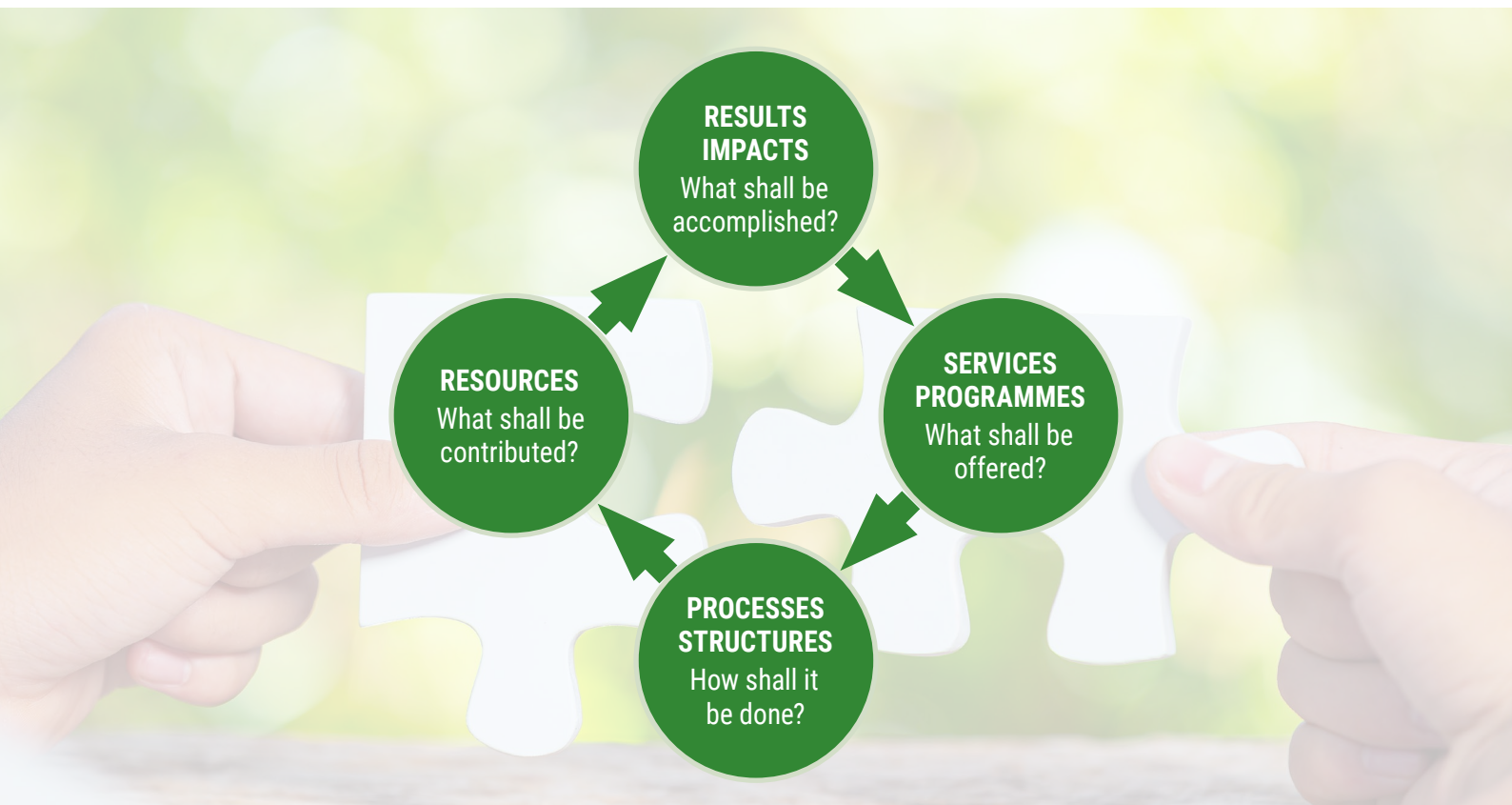
Figure 12: Setting up the strategic objectives (Source: Reichwein et al., 2011)

A **priority** is a preferable solution aimed at meeting the related strategic objective. As a rule, each strategic objective shall be linked with more than one priority. The time horizons might vary, but always within a time frame of the strategic plan.

A **measure** is a way to meet the priority. The measures represent the sum of activities helping to implement the priorities. As a rule, each priority shall be linked with more than one measure. Measures shall be realistic and achievable. For each measure, the following factors shall be considered:

▶ costs,
▶ personnel needs,
▶ institution/department responsible for the implementation,
▶ time frame,
▶ impact,
▶ and legal consequences.
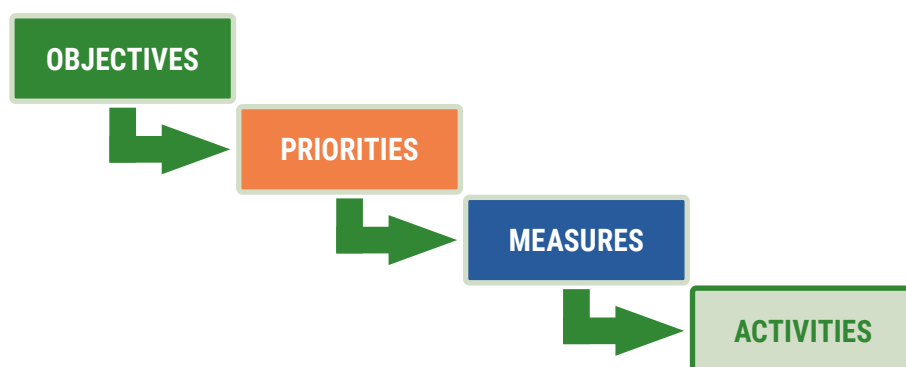
Figure 13: Programming structure (Source: Filipová et al., 2018)

When measures are approved, the time is right for the proposal of the development **activities** – concrete activities defining the ways to meet the measures. As a rule, each measure is linked with more than one development activity.

The so-called strategic documents, programmes and plans containing the basic orientation of the development of territory and the development strategy in a concrete sphere, including the concrete procedures, are the most important outcomes of the strategic planning.

9.4 Strategic planning of social development

Exogenous conditions, influences and circumstances of human lives are considered from various perspectives. The social and socio-economic perspective is one of the most important ones (Ira and Andráško, 2007; Chreneková and Dubcová, 2017).

Social development is incorporated into the strategic documents focused on the territorial development at all levels (national strategies and programmes of the regional or local development). The Strategy of active ageing, Concept of helping homeless people, etc. are the examples of the specific planning documents focused on the social development.

The **community-based plan** (see the Chapter 10.2), which is focused on the planning of social services in accordance with the Act on social services, is the specific strategic document aimed at social development at the local level. However, in order to provide complex solutions and cover the whole issue, it shall not be limited to social services only; instead, it shall address the social development from a broader perspective.

9.4.1   Strategic planning of social services in the Slovak Republic

Social services represent a dynamic sphere, which always evolves and moves forward; it is obvious when looking at the development of types, forms, scope, and systems of the quality assessment and evaluation (Leická et al., 2013).

The most important international and national programming, strategic, and legal documents related to social services are:

§ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (applicable for Slovakia since June 25, 2010),

§ Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of September 3, 1953 (The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic acceded to the Convention on February 21, 1991),

§ Convention on the Rights of the Child of November 20, 1989 (The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic signed it on September 30, 1990),

§ Constitution of the Slovak Republic,

§ Act no. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services,

§ National Priorities for the Development of Social Services 2015 – 2020,

§ National Child Protection Strategy,

§ National Employment Strategy 2020,

§ National Roma Integration Strategy 2020,

§ Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation of the Social Services System and Foster Care in the Slovak Republic,

§ Concepts of social services development for individual self-governing regions,

§ Local or regional development plans,

§ Community-based plans of social services.

The basic elements of the strategic planning of social services in Slovakia include strategic documents at all three levels of government.

- ▶ national – **National Priorities for the Development of Social Services**
- ▶ regions – **regional concepts of social services development**
- ▶ municipalities – **community-based plans of social services development**

Regional concepts and community-based plans shall take into account the local features and needs of the local populations.

9.4.1.1 National Priorities for the Development of Social Services

National Priorities for the Development of Social Services represent an instrument of public policy. They are prepared in line with the competences of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic – a central government body responsible for social services provision according to the Act no. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services as amended.

The National priorities respond to the current issues of social assistance, which contain predominantly the development of varied services at the community level, including the need to modernise social services. At the same time, they declare the main mission of social services – support for social inclusion, social cohesion, tendency to support services provided at the community level, and building up on their potential in the sphere of employment and employability.

The National priorities reflect the current situation in the provision of social services in the Slovak Republic, mainly the lack of social services capacities in the natural environment (at home, in communities), and the need to ensure the sustainable financing of social services and improvement of their quality. They are based on the needs identified in the national and the European context, with emphasis on availability and accessibility of social services and their long-term financial sustainability and efficiency.

The goal of the National priorities is to positively affect the development of social services in the Slovak Republic through formulating the basic priorities of the development, predispositions for achieving the priorities, and measurable indicators to assess the achievements.

The specific goals of the National priorities for 2020 were:

- ▶ **to ensure the citizens' rights to be provided with social services** (considering the human rights dimension and non-discrimination approach, emphasising the respect for human dignity),
- ▶ **to ensure the availability of social services in accordance with the needs of the target groups and communities,**
- ▶ **to ensure the development of social services available to people in segregated localities, with concentrated and generational poverty,**
- ▶ **to improve the availability of community-based social services** (emphasising the development of social services for families taking care of their members, dependent on assistance of other people),
- ▶ **to deinstitutionalise social services,**
- ▶ **to apply the principle of the integrated long-term health-and-social care,**
- ▶ **to introduce the system for ensuring and monitoring the quality standards in relation to the provided social services.**

The priorities for 2021 – 2030 are in progress, being linked with the content of the previous priorities (they have not been approved at the time of the textbook publication).

It is presumed that the national priorities will be further elaborated by regions and municipalities in their concepts and plans. Based on the analysis of the provided social services and needs and requests of their beneficiaries, the self-government authorities will set the objectives, priorities, tasks and measures related to the development of social services at their territories for the upcoming periods.

9.4.1.2   Concepts of the social services development for self-governing regions

Self-governing regions prepare and approve the concepts of the social services development on the basis of the national priorities and community-based plans of social services prepared by municipalities of their territories. Concepts of the social services development for self-governing regions are in line with the National Priorities for the Development of Social Services.

9.4.1.3   Community-based plans of social services for municipalities

Municipalities prepare community-based plans of social services (see Chapter 10.2) in cooperation with other stakeholders in the sphere of social services in their territories. Strategic part of community-based plans of social services shall be in line with the national priorities and regional concepts, while taking into consideration also the local characteristics and needs of citizens, necessary development of social services, and defining personal, financial, operational, and organizational conditions of their provision.

However, social services require a more general context, and thus, a community plan shall not be limited to social services only; instead, it shall address the social development from a broader perspective, too. It shall include the analysis and the development strategy of social infrastructure (beyond the infrastructure of social services), education (including life-long education), cultural and social needs and activities, etc. It shall be complementary to a local (or microregional) development plan, which covers all the areas of the territorial development. Moreover, a community plan shall be in accordance with the programme budget of a municipality.

Chapter 9 terminology

- ✔ **maximin method**
- ✔ **maximax method**
- ✔ **minimax method**
- ✔ **WO strategy**
- ✔ **SO strategy**
- ✔ **WT strategy**
- ✔ **ST strategy**

Chapter 9 follow up questions

1. **Why should a municipality plan its development strategically?**
2. **Describe the programming design of a strategic document.**
3. **How are the opportunities formulated in the process of strategic management?**
4. **How is the achievement of strategy monitored in practice?**

10 Community planning and community plans

10.1 Community planning

Community planning (or community-based planning) is a method to plan social development of a community and social services at the level of a municipality, association of municipalities, or a region, so that they cope with the national priorities as well as the local characteristics, and respect and respond to the needs of individual citizens of the given territory. It is an open process aimed at:

▶ meeting the needs of citizens with help of accessible and high-quality forms of social assistance,

▶ securing resources for individual kinds of social services,

▶ looking for optimal solutions in supply and efficiency of social services to respond to the local needs and conditions in the best possible way.

1 participation of all stakeholders

2 dialogue and negotiations based on equality and pluralism

3 reaching consensus

Figure 14: Main features of the community planning (Source: Kamanová, Markovič (eds.) 2011)

The goal of the community planning is to support the cohesion and solidarity of citizens by motivating their participation in the establishment of a community life. A lively community can act to prevent social exclusion of its weakest members. Integration of an excluded person or family back to a community is "more expensive" than the early intervention.

The partnership among public administration, public, private, and non-profit providers of services, and their clients, who are all capable of mapping the local social needs and compare them to the local resources, is the gist of the community planning of social services (Kamanová and Markovič).

Community planning of social services is a continuous process of searching for the needs in the sphere of social services, which are ever-changing or emerging in a community. It proposes priorities and compares the analysed needs with the available resources.

10.1.1   Phases of the community planning

There is no uniform procedure for the community planning; nevertheless, it is important to continuously inform all the participants about its current status from the first to the last phase, and organize regular public meetings. The process of the community planning can be structured into six successive phases (see Table 8).

Table 8: Phases of the community planning (Source: Matoušek et al., 2007)

Phase 1	**PREPARATION**	creation of a working group, defining the degree of stakeholders' participation in the community plan preparation, inviting further participants, plan to gain political support of the municipality in question
Phase 2	**SETTING UP THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**	engagement of all stakeholders in setting up the management structure, setting up the structure, determination of rules for the management structure
Phase 3	**DEFINING THE PROBLEMS AND NEEDS**	presentation of needs, interests and objectives, determination of procedures to motivate participation of the public, analysis of needs and assessment of the existing resources, evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the existing system of social services, formulation of opportunities and threats related to the development of social services
Phase 4	**PROPOSAL OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEVELOPMENT**	formulation of values – basis for the community plan formulation of goals and priorities, identification of possible barriers, writing down the overview of regional and supraregional resources, reaching approval by the majority of the community planning participants
Phase 5	**FORMULATION OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**	formulation of a plan and timing, preparation of the plan's final version, determination of the monitoring procedures related to the plan, presentation of the plan to the public and discussion, submitting the plan for an approval by a local council
Phase 6	**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN**	implementation of the plan, informing the public about the plan implementation, continuous identification and involvement of new partners, if needed – revision of the plan and formulation of the alternatives

In community planning, it is necessary to align these three programming documents of the self-government bodies in the sphere of objectives as well as measurable indicators:

- ▶ **a local development plan,**
- ▶ **a community-based plan of social services, and**
- ▶ **a programme budget.**

Only then it would be possible to conduct common monitoring of the documents.

10.1.2   Social groups in the community planning

The target group of a community plan covers the whole population of the given territory. The basic social groups for which the social development and services shall be planned are:

- ▶ children and youth,
- ▶ families,
- ▶ the elderly,
- ▶ the disabled and their families,
- ▶ people at risk of misuse and abuse,
- ▶ homeless people,
- ▶ foster families,
- ▶ individuals with problems to adapt,
- ▶ drug addicted citizens,
- ▶ former inmates,
- ▶ the unemployed,
- ▶ immigrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.

The process of the community planning shall engage representatives of all the above-mentioned groups. It shall be thoroughly considered how to classify the social groups and efficiently focus or combine the necessary services. The beneficiaries of social services contribute to the creation of the social services system by their participation in the community planning. The community planning shall be focused on the development of the community-based social services, supplied to citizens of a given rural/urban community so that they can stay in their natural environment. When preparing the plan, it is necessary to think about the relief services for families taking care of their members, receiving care allowances (kamanová and Markovič, 2011) and using social activities.

10.1.3   Methods of participation in the community planning

The public can be involved in the decision-making processes through various methods and techniques at various levels. It can be said for sure, which method is the most suitable for engagement of the public, as each of them has its pros and cons (financial, organizational, etc.) and they shall be used after the issue and the local conditions are taken into consideration. In small municipalities (up to 300 citizens), the most effective way of engaging the public is personal communication between the municipal representatives and citizens. In medium and bigger municipalities, the most often used method is the questionnaire method or the participation of the public in the public meetings or other specific meetings. The following techniques and methods are the most often used ones:

Distributed questionnaire

Citizens shall be informed about the questionnaire survey and its objective beforehand. When using this method of engaging the public, there is usually a low return rate, while the minimum rate of the representativeness is 5% of the local population. Questionnaires are usually distributed in a printed form (in local newspapers or as independent documents) or electronically (on the municipal website).

Personally conducted questionnaire

The personal interview with citizens is used in case it is necessary to acquire a representative overview of their opinions. This way, in randomly chosen places, it is possible to achieve a 50 – 60% response rate. However, this technique is more demanding from the financial or organizational perspective, as well-trained interviewers are required to ensure the questionnaires are properly filled in.

Round table

The round table technique is focused on researching the opinions related to a certain problem, consulting the problem and mutual decision-making related to the problem. It is a group discussion. Equality of participants, which shall be guaranteed by a moderator or a facilitator, and gaining opinions from various perspectives are the basic principles.

Focus group

The technique is based on a moderated group discussion. It uses group interaction to obtain opinions and data (related to a certain topic), which could not be obtained during interviews with individuals.

Working group

Working group is one of the basic techniques aimed at encouraging the participation of the public in the problem solving and creation of the conceptual documents. Working group shall consist of 5 – 15 people representing all stakeholders. The group meets several times and solves certain problems, issues or intentions. The task of a working group may include a continuous reviewing of a document or looking for alternative solutions to the problem.

Public discussion

Public discussion is suitable for presentation and discussion related to the crucial projects and intentions. The intentions are presented by authorised experts in the first place. A recorded discussion with comments collected from the audience is another point of the discussion. The target group consists of all citizens who can be somehow related to the intention. Hundreds of citizens may take part in such a discussion.

Mapping of the public places

The essence of the method is to acquire information about the given territory or a site, considering how it is perceived by citizens. The citizens map the site so that it could be described from different perspectives. This process may result in a map of the problematic spots or a map of popular sites etc. The method can reach tens and even hundreds of participants. The participants must be well aware of the site in question. The weakness of the method is that the ideas of participants may not be realistic.

The main argument for not engaging the public in the planning is the disinterest of citizens. However, their interest can be motivated or affected. Activities need to be prepared in a way that citizens would feel responsible and motivated to take part at least in one of the phases of the process. At local level, this is often hampered by lack of information instruments, poor organization, or lack of helpful and capable people (Vašat, 2014).

10.1.4 Process of the community planning – models and principles

The community planning is one of the elementary methods of the participative approach towards the territorial development. It is suitable mainly in the situations when the problems are long-standing and there is social tension between groups of citizens or a pressure between institutions and citizens.

Community planning is a long-term process. Its length depends on the complexity of an issue and the number of stakeholders. Such processes shall be facilitated (see the Chapter 11). In the process of the community planning, the stakeholders communicate in order to:

- ▶ identify problems,
- ▶ understand situations,

▶ consider the possible solutions,

▶ come to decisions,

▶ and plan the development activities for the future period together.

As the solutions are discussed and decisions on them are consensual, they are acceptable for all. Most probably, they will be also implemented mutually. The interest of the stakeholders in solving the mutual problem is an inevitable condition for a successful process. Moreover, the social cohesion becomes stronger due to the community planning process.

The common planning may be organized in several ways. The choice of the method depends on the local context and issue in question. Carpenter (1992) provided three basic models of the common planning: coordination group, conference model, and negotiating teams model. The models may be combined.

The coordination group (Figure 15) combines the work of a coordination group and working groups (see the scheme). The coordination group consists of the stakeholders' representatives. In other words, all parties related to the issue in question shall be represented in the coordination group by someone trusted and standing for their interests. Working groups present partial results to the coordination group. Member of the working groups may be added or replaced, if necessary.
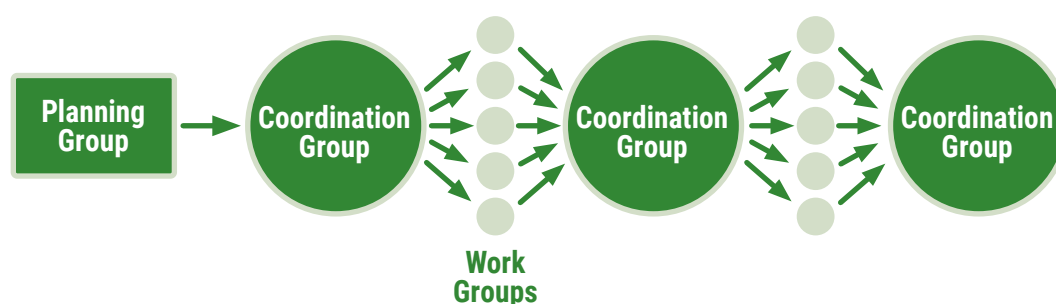
Figure 15: Model of the coordination group (Source: Ondrušek, Miková (eds.) 2009)
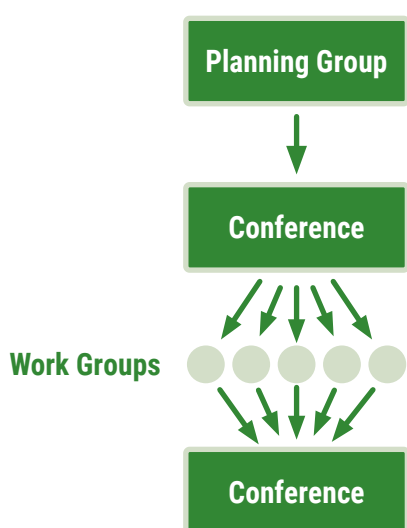
Figure 16: The conference model (Source: Ondrušek, Miková (eds.) 2009)

The conference model combines working groups and conferences for stakeholders. The model is suitable when there are too many stakeholders and short time available.

The model of the negotiating teams is preferable in issues where groups of stakeholders form naturally. Negotiating teams define their goals and interests and function as parts of the negotiations during common meetings. Negotiating teams inform the parties they represent about the partial results (after the conducted negotiations), and they get feedback and authorization for further negotiations. Negotiating teams can create working groups preparing documentation for negotiations.

Communication between stakeholders is crucial in the process of the community planning. We differentiate among several types of communication tools (Table 9). The choice of a communication tool depends on preferences and experience of the stakeholders, and technological possibilities of an organizing body.
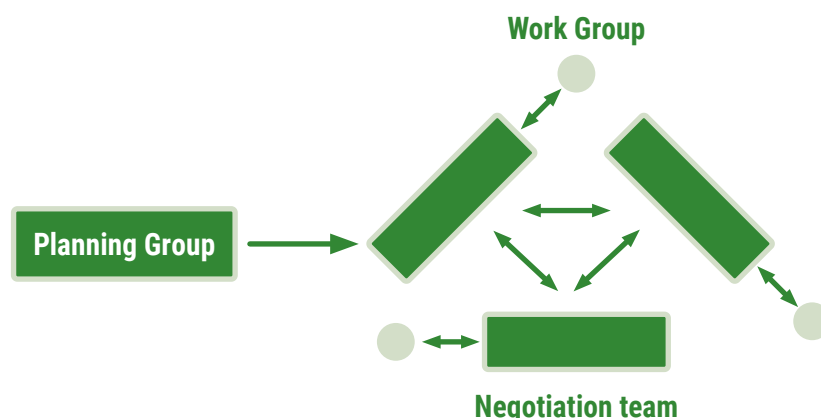
Figure 17: Model of the negotiating teams (Source: Ondrušek, Miková (eds.) 2009)

Table 9: Overview of the communication tools Source: Hrivnák et al. 2021

Propagation Channel	Advantages	Disadvantages
Leaflets	provision of information about websites, events, meetings	low level of memorization and a small number of readers
Local press	possibility of comprehensive information about the planning process, support for the beginning of participatory activities, public reaction to negative attitudes and responses	lacks full control over content, space for conflicts, expensiveness
Posters	a cheap way to promote proposals, schemes, and consultations	low response, especially in the younger age groups, vandalism
Telephone addressing	the possibility of individualizing the way of informing and motivating	the need to maintain a list of contacts, feasible only in small settlements or small groups involved, considerable time costs
Municipal SMS	wide reach of the population, low-cost option	maintaining contact lists of the population, difficult to implement in larger settlements, limited content
Local radio and television	possibility of relatively comprehensive information about the planning process, support for the start of the participatory activities, public motivation	gradually decreasing range of the impact, high level of costs
Own websites and partners' websites	a relatively cheap way of providing information, wider audience, possibility to provide a questionnaire	available only to the website users, must be constantly updated, requires promotion
Blogs, podcasts, webcasts	good impact on the younger generation, possibility to share more comprehensive information, low costs	low impact on the older generation
Social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	cheap way to provide information, target audiences, access to the younger age groups	only a part of the population has a social network account, the need to combine social networks, low access to the older generation
Integrated local communication platforms	associated with the open-source databases and public access, high reach and re-delivery of information can be achieved	requires more advanced ICT skills, high costs of development

Principles of the community planning are specific and different from other methods of planning. According to Skřičková (2007), Macurová (2008) and Pilát (2015), they are as follows:

Partnership and cooperation (triad) – the community planning is based on the cooperation of three parties – users (local community), providers (public, private, non-profit), and service sponsors.

Equality – the community planning is based on the citizens' right to participate in the public affairs and to express themselves. The principle is about no discrimination. Each participant's vote is equal.

Real needs – the provided services and their comparison to the requirements or mean values is complemented by an active survey of the real needs of the stakeholders.

Dialogue and negotiations – a consensus is applied in the community planning. Discussions and negotiations belong to the process. All the stakeholders shall reach an agreement. Voting is considered the last resort. The resulting document is based on the agreement and cooperation of the triad.

Information – the community planning is focused on the public interest. Information on the process and results of planning are available at usual, adequate places.

Feasibility – problems in question shall relate to the possibilities of the local community, and local conditions and needs.

Cyclicality – the process runs as in a spiral. While implementing the current community plan, the ideas for the future plan (future periods) spring up.

10.2 Community plan of social services

The mission of the community plan of social services is to ensure the accessibility of social services. It gives account of social services provided in the given territory, and also needs to be met. By comparing the two parameters and their aligning with resources and possibilities of municipalities, a **community plan** is born in the process of mutual consultations. The plan is a tool of the community planning. It is a result of discussions between all the process stakeholders; it reacts to the local social issues, and proposes next steps and solutions. **In the community planning, a community is perceived as a local society, linked directly to the given territory, with members linked between each other.**

There is no universal instruction on preparing a community plan of social services. A community plan shall answer the following four questions:

▶ **to what extent does the municipality in question satisfy the needs of its citizens related to social services?** Answer to the question shall be provided by the situational analysis and definition of a vision and a mission,

▶ **in what way is the municipality in question going to satisfy the needs – the vision and the mission – related to social services?** Answer to the question shall be provided by strategies of the social services development – setting the goals and priorities and respective allocation of the resources by the municipality – from its budget as well as other sources,

▶ **what shall the municipality in question reach in the future and in what time horizon shall it deliver the goals?** Answer to the question shall be provided by a development strategy in the form of medium objectives, focused on the results and time of delivery,

▶ **how is the achieved progress or development related to social services going to be evaluated?** Answer to the question shall be provided as a proposed method and frequency of the monitoring of the measurable indicators for the medium objectives (Filipová et al., 2018).

10.2.1 Contents of the community plan

The community plan of social services is a result of the agreement among users, providers and sponsors. It is an outcome of the community planning, consisting of the objectivised subjective needs at the local level, provided by the individual experts. In accordance with the Social Services Law, the community plan is composed mainly of:

1. The analysis of the demographic and social data.
2. The analysis of social services provided in the territory in question, assessment of material and technological equipment of social services and educational structure of social service provider's employees.
3. The analysis of needs raised by clients of social services and other citizens according to the kinds of social services and target groups.
4. The definition of goals and priorities of the social services development.
5. The time plan of the community plan of the social services implementation.
6. The evaluation method of the community plan of social services.

10.2.2 Formulating goals and priorities of the community plan

Definition of a development strategy consists of a demanding team activity, implemented by partners taking part in the process of the community plan creation. It is linked to the results of the complex analyses mentioned among the social and economic baselines as well as SWOT analysis. The main goal of defining a development strategy is to define a programming structure for a programming period. The programming structure is composed of: goals, priorities, measures, activities, and measurable indicators (see Figure 13). The goals of the community plan constitute a hierarchical structure, with global goals of the programmes on the top. The top spot of the hierarchy is the strategic goal.

The strategic goal is the top objective of an organization or an individual. The role of the specific goals is to develop and specify the strategic objective. The specific objectives provide a clear, concise and brief characteristic of the future target. When designing the specific objectives, it is recommended to follow the SMART approach (see the Chapter 9.3.4).

10.3 Implementation, monitoring, and updating of the community plan

Approving the community plan is necessary, but it does not mean that the community plan is going to be successful. After the approval, the proposed activities, measures, and goals are implemented, monitored, and assessed. Working groups as well as the public shall be informed about the further processes. Working groups shall hold meetings at least once a year, when following-up the measures for the previous year and updating the action plan.

Implementation of the community plan – the success of the implementation depends not only on the finances attributed to the field of social services, but also on cooperation of all subjects. Partnerships started during the processing or even after the approval of the plan are not formalised,

they may not function or survive. Rules focused on management, financing, distribution of roles and responsibilities, monitoring, and evaluation of the plan need to be established to ensure the implementation of the community plan intentions.

Monitoring and evaluation – these phases result into a report, providing comprehensive information on implementation of measures proposed in the community plan, and whether the measures lead to the desirable priorities. The report shall tell us what the effects of the measures are and what needs to change. This is when the measurable indicators come to the spotlight.

A measurable indicator – is a tool aimed at monitoring and evaluation of meeting the goals or a tool used to measure progress in meeting the goals. There are three categories of the measurable indicators:

- ▶ **output** indicators,
- ▶ **result** indicators,
- ▶ and **impact** indicators.

Differences between the output and the result indicators may not be very clear in certain cases. It needs to be taken into consideration that the output indicators inform in numbers, in general. On the contrary, the result indicators present changes (results).

Monitoring ensures continuous control of the community plan indicators; it shall be performed continually – quarterly or biannually – to June 30 and December 31 of a given year.

Monitoring of the community plan shall be conducted together with the monitoring of the programme budget, and by the same indicators.

Assessment of the community plan is an activity based on monitoring, which articulates the effects of the individual parts of the community plan on the development of social services and satisfaction of citizens' needs. The assessment is carried out once a year, to December 31. The assessment is followed by suggestions to update the action/community plan.

Updating the community plan – community plans are subject to changes induced by an external environment (new legislation, adverse economic situation, increased unemployment rate, etc.). However, the reality changes. Therefore, no plan can be sustained for long without changes. Thus, a community plan shall be flexible and quickly responding to changing needs.

Assessment and updating (if necessary) needs to be performed annually. Members of the working groups can have their say regarding the assessment of the effects, causes of failures, and changes in the activities/priorities for the year to come.

Community planning is a cyclical process. It never really ends. A new community plan shall be connected to the previous one, to the updated action plan, and all the data, work, and experience of the managing team as well as the working groups.

10.3.1   Benefits of the community planning for municipalities

In accordance with the Social Services Act, a municipality creates conditions to support the community-based development in the sphere of social services provision, creates conditions for community work and community rehabilitation in order to prevent the occurrence or deterioration of adverse social situations, and for solving the local social problems. The above-mentioned obligations are fulfilled through the community planning, which is beneficial as it:

- ▶ engages all stakeholders of the social services system (users, providers, sponsors) in preparation and implementation of the plan, thus increases the participation of citizens in the decision-making processes and ways of their application; legitimises the decision-making processes of the managing and representative bodies, and increases involvement of citizens in local affairs,

▶ supports the dialogue and cooperation among citizens, improves their identification with the community, and helps in finding new human and material resources,

▶ enables municipalities to pool the existing resources, and increases the efficiency of their use,

▶ increases the accessibility and quality of social services, enlarges their supply, and makes sure they are relevant to local needs and respond to local specificities,

▶ increases the efficiency of investments, as they are directed at services which are really necessary (Filipová et al., 2018).

In the community planning of social services, the process of planning is equally important as its result. The process of planning community-based social services may be even more dynamic, when it is supported by the majority of stakeholders. The mobilization of all existing resources in a municipality/region in favour of meeting the commonly agreed intentions induces a great synergic effect.

Local politicians play a great role in the whole process of the community planning of social services. They are expected to support the process, monitor it continually, and evaluate the proposed community plan together with the related budgetary issues.

10.4 Approaches of the self-government representatives towards the community planning

The approach of the self-governments towards the community planning is often formal. The participation of clients and providers of social services through questionnaires is often not carried out as a purposefully organized and effective complex of activities, focused on analysing the social reality. There is lack of systematic approach, sophistication, formulation of conclusions based on research etc. Community plans as strategic documents are often not linked to the programme budgets. They do not contain meaningful data, they often do not have a more significant added value. At the same time, it shall be noted that there is also lack of experts and proper guidance documents, which could support the quality of the community planning. A great deal of attention needs to be paid to the planning of social services. We are the witnesses of the trends caused by population ageing and changes in family patterns. The supply of social services shall respond to the changes in social and demographic structure of population.

Besides being a provider of social services, a municipality is a subject responsible for creating conditions for favourable social development and community life. **Thus, the community plan shall cover not only social services, but also other social and cultural activities.** A municipality can process its community plan. Also, another subject (external) can be asked to process it. However, it is necessary the external subject sticks to all the principles of the process.

10.5 Cooperation, partnership, networking

Cooperation is a basic prerequisite for the community development. The basic conditions for cooperation are:

▶ trust and understanding (open-mindedness, listening to and respecting other views),

▶ shared values,

▶ shared priorities and objectives (an agreement on shared objectives),

▶ a proactive approach (an active, constructive approach),

▶ platform (the place for learning about each other, mutual meetings, cooperation) (Košturiak, 2018).

The partnership principle ensures close cooperation between the subjects directly related to the social development and development of social services – the process stakeholders. It is voluntary cooperation between public and private subjects (NGOs), aimed at coordinating and pooling the personal, technological, and financial resources in order to develop social services in the territory.

The partnership means the development of a trialogue among public administration, responsible for service facilities, private and public providers of social services, responsible for adequate quality of services, and active citizens, who are applicants or beneficiaries of the concrete services (Filipová et al., 2018).No good standard of mutual cooperation can be achieved without purposeful and systematic strengthening of the partnership at the local level. General principles of the intersectoral partnerships include: trust, common decision-making, raising awareness and communication, and complementarity.

The whole process of the community planning is accompanied by the cooperation of self-governments, organizations, and citizens, which shall result in a partnership. **The partnership** is perceived as a higher form of cooperation, with division of tasks, responsibilities, and finance. The partnership means participation of private and public sector in the development of social services, and networking with other subjects, offering and affecting services. More specifically, the partnership is understood as an **institutionalised form of multilateral cooperation.**

In the community planning, the partnership occurs in the process of defining problems, formulating strategic goals, assigning activities, and cooperating on projects. In all phases of the community planning, networks of relations are formed among subjects, which are able to affect the development of social services. The cooperation may result in emergence of an official formalised partnership. The partnership can be a long-term one, or a short-term one, established for a single use. In any case, the agreement among the partners is necessary. All aspects shall be clearly defined: the division of competencies, the plan of financial income and costs, and control mechanisms.

The competences and positions of all stakeholders are clearly set. Their effective coordination and management shall lead to democratic cooperation, constructive negotiating, and concluding agreements. The level and quality of a final (community) plan depends on the quality of the preparation process.

Collective intelligence is used in the process of the community planning – it is based on collective thinking and cognitive enrichment of a smaller or a larger group of people. Collective intelligence enables us to come to solutions not achievable by an individual approach.

Chapter 10 terminology

- ✔ **round table**
- ✔ **focus group**
- ✔ **collective intelligence**

Chapter 10 follow up questions

1. **What is the significance of the community planning for citizens?**
2. **Characterise the target groups in the community planning of social services.**
3. **What are the principles of the community planning?**

11 Facilitation in the territorial development

11.1 Definition and goal of facilitation

Facilitation is a structured and mostly non-directive style of communication in a group (coordination is a structured, but directive conduct of a discussion). More generally, it is an **activity of an individual (or an institution) aimed at facilitating communication in a group or a community and participation of its members in order to reach consensus on common decisions and plans.** The term is used in various spheres and contexts. In the development of communities and regional development, it is used to label **non-partisan assistance of a third person (a facilitator) in identification and analysis of problems, and formulation and achievement of the development objectives.** Facilitation may also be represented by short-term assistance in communication and decision-making (basic facilitation), or a long-term, regular activity, oriented to development, affecting lives of groups or communities (development-oriented facilitation) – Schwartz and Howard, 1984. Facilitation of a higher level (when long-term processes affecting the social development or crucial changes in communities or organizations are at stake) is called **facilitation of change.**

The facilitation is suitable when:

▶ the defined problem is complex,
▶ the solution of the problem is not obvious (a thorough analysis of the problem and the situation is necessary),
▶ it is necessary to reach support or change approach (behaviour) of the community members (team members).

The aim of the facilitation is to maximise the participation of stakeholders, leading to the problem solution. The goal needs to be considered in all steps of the strategic planning and management and in all phases of communication (planning, preparation, conduct, and regulation of communication).

11.2 Facilitator

A facilitator is a person leading the group dynamics in order to deliver the objectives. He/she shall provide enough space for wide participation of stakeholders. The facilitator does not interfere in the merit of communication (or only to a very limited extent).

He/she structures communication of stakeholders. Facilitators use the principles, procedures, and specific facilitation behaviour actively, supporting an effective discussion, identification of the problem, searching for and considering solutions, efficient decision-making and planning in a group. He/she accepts all stakeholders. His/her role is to come to agreements without conflicts. During the preparation of the development documents, facilitators are concerned with the following activities:

- ▶ planning,
- ▶ moderating,
- ▶ managing group dynamics,
- ▶ involving all stakeholders in discussions and decision-making,
- ▶ encouraging discussions,
- ▶ and formulating the conclusions.

The character of a meeting decides whether there shall be applied facilitation or coordination through moderators. In creation of development documents (such as a community plan or a development programme), facilitation prevails. In case of ad hoc informal groups (sessions, seminar, conferences), coordination prevails.

Changing facilitation styles maintains group dynamism and increases efficiency of meetings.

Contrary to a coordinator, a facilitator leads and directs the discussion process-wise, not taking responsibility for its content. The role of a facilitator in long-term planning processes is to lead the individual sessions, maintain their overall design, and successively adapt the process (Ondrušek, Miková, 2009).

Facilitator should be:

- ▶ **communicative** – good command of basic communication (verbal, non-verbal), good ability to express him/herself (verbally, in written form), ability to lead communication in a relaxed, light way (personal preconditions), and proper social perception,
- ▶ **assertive** – able to express needs, demands, or feelings clearly and convincingly, while not violating rights of others,
- ▶ **sensitive and empathetic** in relation to individuals, groups and their processes, and objective reality,
- ▶ **able to anticipate** – to be one step ahead,
- ▶ **able to activate and motivate others,**
- ▶ **innovative and creative,**
- ▶ **professional and methodical.**

There is an ongoing discussion whether a facilitator shall be an expert in the field the facilitated meeting is about. He/she does not have to; nevertheless, in some cases, it might be an advantage. Professional progress of a facilitator, theoretical background, practice in pilot schemes, and his/her growing experience are of importance.

11.2.1 Facilitator's tasks

Each active facilitator builds his/her own style, while functioning in different roles. The typology of the roles is as follows:

Facilitator – therapist

This type of a facilitator is focused on the present atmosphere, tensions, conflicts, emotions, moods, relations, and individual issues in a community. Facilitator – therapist enters the tensions, problematic spheres, and helps the community to deal with its emotional states. More specifically, a therapist is trained to work with communication, interpersonal dynamics, boundaries, abuse, symptoms, and changed and extreme states of consciousness. Therapy in facilitation identifies the roles in polarization or tension in the community and strives to harmonise the situations or use them in favour of a common goal.

Facilitator – consultant

The consulting is orientated towards structure and organization. Such facilitator is familiar with the organizations, their history, structures, procedures, and policy. He/she may offer the group practical ideas immediately. Ideally, he/she is experienced in finance and business. He/she can propose structural changes and procedures, making the organization more efficient. According to the paradigm orientated towards processes, consultants do more than just offering ideas. They insert organic ideas and structures into the organization. The main task of facilitators – consultants is to accentuate organic, natural rhythms, methods and procedures within the community, as these elements make it more prosperous. Consultants focused on processes monitor the mythical, historical, and political dimension of the group. They ask: what are its directions? Where was it? What are the stories of the group? Which historical parallels can help in clarifying the journey of the community? A consultant helps the group (or the community) to find its future directions.

Facilitator – activist

An activist is focused on human rights and global change. He/she opens space for the not represented ones. He/she knows which past or present voices have been/are suppressed. He/she willingly supports these voices. He/she is aware of history and privileges, and is able to identify when the privileges turn up in the present interactions.

An activist encourages support for the ideas of the weaker community members. He/she is aware that the changes come from minority groups. His/her general objectives include support for education and social development. He/she is active in encouraging the community to become aware of social issues and democracy at all levels (Mindell, 1995).

Facilitator – networker

A networker is a host and an ambassador simultaneously. He/she induces the home-like atmosphere. He/she underlines the manifested needs and ideas. He/she knows that the change comes from the community basis. No idea, regardless of its good effects, can be successful, if not supported by a broader community. Such support may be built on relations, spirit of the community, and quality of ideas. A great deal of the networker's activities is performed in breaks, or when out of duty. Networkers become familiar with people not only on the work basis – they naturally like being with people. They know that communities are built on natural friendships and trust, and the vision itself is not enough to get people together.

Facilitator – elder

The elder is a "protector of the spirit". He/she takes care of the whole. The elder supports and appreciates diversity. He/she does not blame the group or the individuals for conflicts; he/she opens space for solving them. He/she strives to find the way to return the leadership back to the group. He/she is a background player, supporting the natural wisdom (collective intelligence) of the group. He/she offers many years of experience and wisdom. He/she is like a grandparent, telling stories by fire, helping people in understanding their roles in groups and their share in the whole (Mindell, 1995).

Thus, the therapist works with tensions and conflicts, the consultant is focused on organization, structure and myths, the activist educates, the networker gets the group members together, and the elder helps them in understanding their tasks (see Figure 18).

TASK	FIELD OF IMPACT	ACTIVITY
THERAPIST →	tension and conflicts	← "heals"
ACTIVIST →	human rights	← educates
NETWORKER →	relations	← connects
ELDER →	collective intelligence	← helps in understanding the role of an individual within the whole

Figure 18: Summarisation of the facilitator's tasks

The tasks merge and interconnect with one another according to a situation. For instance, in case of a consultant, who helps a group in introducing the structural changes, it is also knowledge that the changes have certain emotional impact which needs to be processed. Actually, even before introducing the changes, he/she needs to relate to various sub-groups, relevant to the changes.

Different levels of groups require different aspects of facilitators. Each moment may require a different set of skills from a facilitator or a team of facilitators. A conflict in relations within a group may require a therapist, while a process of a large group may demand an elder. A social activist may help in conflicts of the sub-groups dealing with social discrepancies within a large group. Administrative and financial issues may be solved better with help of a structural consultant.

The facilitation methodology depends on what the objective of the process is, who the outcome is for, and what purpose it shall serve.

11.3 Social facilitation and social idleness

When talking about social interactions, we often come across social facilitation. The basic principle of the phenomenon is **the impact of the other group members' presence on the performance of an individual. The presence of other individuals affects the increase of another individual's activity** (Hewston, Stroebe, 2006). The issue of social facilitation is closely connected with a **social impact**. It is either an impact of an individual on other people (or another individual), or an impact of a group on an individual or another group. The impact might be either positive or negative (Žitniaková-Gurgová, Priatková, 2014). Positive competitiveness in delivering the set tasks may be an example of the positive impact. An activity may also be motivated by exhibitionism, by a desire to be presented

in a positive way. The presence of other individuals may also induce decreased activity. It happens when students are less active while working in a group compared to their individual activity. This is called **social idleness.** The motivation behind the social idleness may be connected with anonymity and "hiding" in a group, effort to minimise one's activity, fear from being judged by other people or with the feeling of shame induced by one's activity. Social idleness is manifested especially in some types of team activities when the contribution of the team members to the overall results cannot be precisely identified and assessed; the phenomenon is strengthened with an increasing number of team members.

Social idleness of several team members may cause negative effects on the team. For example, when proposing measures in the process of the community planning, idleness of some team members may lead to a biased result, based mainly on the interests of the active team members. Social idleness may also lead to demotivation of the active team members.

There are ways to eliminate social idleness. They are articulated by Ondrušek, Miková (eds.) 2009 as follows:

- ▶ defining the importance of contribution and activity of each team member,
- ▶ supporting individual responsibility (e.g. by assigning individual partial tasks controllable by clear measurable outputs),
- ▶ division into smaller sub-groups,
- ▶ adequate complexity of tasks (if a group deals with a task which would be more effectively handled by a smaller group, a part of the team will probably slack off),
- ▶ engagement in solving a problem (if some team members consider a problem irrelevant, it is probable their motivation will decrease),
- ▶ increased social cohesion (in case of good relations and strong ties between the team members, nobody will tend to bail on the others).

Chapter 11 terminology

- ✔ **facilitation**
- ✔ **anticipation**
- ✔ **social facilitation**
- ✔ **social interactions**
- ✔ **social impact**
- ✔ **social idleness**
- ✔ **brainstorming**
- ✔ **brainwriting**
- ✔ **learning communities (regions)**

Chapter 11 follow up questions

1. **What is the importance of facilitation for regional development?**
2. **What could result from social idleness in the community planning? Give examples of social idleness from your experience.**
3. **How would you eliminate social idleness?**

12 Rural areas and rurality

The perception of what is rural may be quite subjective. If taking into account the regions of Horná Orava or northern Kysuce, it is clear why they are rural. However, when moving closer to urban settlements, the differentiation is more problematic. When town boundaries used to be defined by fortifications, it was clear what was rural and what was urban. When settlements started developing in hinterland of towns, it became more difficult. Since the 2nd half of the 20th century, urban and rural areas started mixing, and what used to be a sharp boundary once, became quite blurred. Gradually, more complex social and economic relations between towns and rural settlements emerged. Increasing complexity of relations in society practically prevents from having a clear and universal classification of territory as urban or rural (Perlín et al., 2010).

When we want to deal with rural areas in education or research, we need to define what to understand by the term. "Rural" cannot be precisely defined. In defining "rural", various geographic, economic, cultural, and social determinants need to be considered (Bitušíková, 2019). Rural areas are most often defined according to the territorial, geographic or demographic approach. In general, rural areas are defined as countryside and rural settlements. It is continuously delimited space with no clear borders between urban and rural. Brown, Schucksmith (2016) even claim that the border between urban and rural is currently artificially sustained and shall be abandoned (in the USA, the Index of Relative Rurality is used to measure rurality, taking into consideration population and its density, urbanized area, and distance to the closest metropolitan area).

There are several types of definitions of rural areas. There are positive and negative definitions, saying what is and what is not rural. Cloke (2006) differentiates between functionalist, political and economic, and social definitions.

Functionalist definitions claim that rural areas are those with:

1. Prevailing extensive land use (agriculture, forestry),
2. Small settlements with low-rise buildings,
3. Prevailing lifestyle characteristics with a cohesive identity based on respect towards environmental values.

Political and economic definitions of rural areas sprang up in 1980s (mainly motivated by the British rural geographers and sociologists). The definitions are based on the idea that rural

areas were constituted by action of specific (or specifically effective) social, economic, and political processes.

The third type of definitions is based on **social** characteristics and representations of rural areas. The definitions emphasise social, cultural, and moral values of the areas.

None of the three types of definitions, nor their combination, offers a generally accepted definition of rural areas. The definitions differ in different countries, scientific disciplines and approaches, and according to scientists (Novotný et al. 2015). Definitions always reflect specific features of a settlement structure, population density, urbanization rate, distribution of economic activities etc., typical for individual countries or regions.

According to Perlín et al. (2010), rural areas are characteristic with a lower intensity of social and economic contacts, and lower density of connections between subjects located in such areas. Social anthropologists perceive rural areas as heterogeneous, multifunctional places of production and consumption, where different communities and identities exist, and where different individuals and groups live and reflect rurality in different ways (Horáková, 2018). Rural areas are "rather places of traditions than modernity, rather agriculture than industry, rather nature than culture, and rather steadfastness than dynamism and innovations" (Ward, Brown, 2009).

The most widely used methodology classifying municipalities and regions according to rurality is the one by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat). It is based on population density and projection of population distribution into a grid or a raster format (see Figure 19). Urban cluster is an aggregate of continuous cells of a grid with the area of 1 km², population density of at least 300/km², and population of at least 5,000. In the methodology, rural areas are those out of urban clusters (which means **"rural is what is not urban"**).

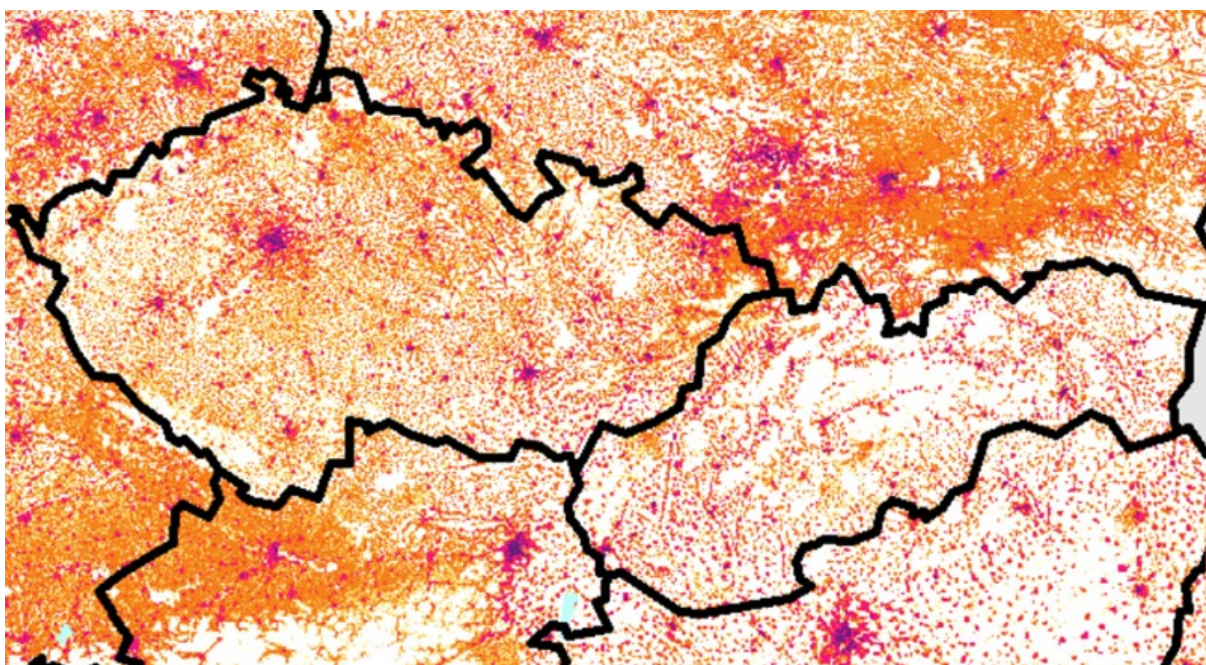**Figure 19:** Population raster – Slovakia and adjacent regions (Source: Eurostat, 2011)

Rural municipality – local level (LAU 2) is a municipality with population density below 300/km². At **regional level,** we differentiate between three types of regions according to their rurality:

- ▶ **predominantly urban regions**, with less than 15% of population living in rural municipalities (the Bratislava region),

- ▶ **intermediate regions,** with 15 – 50% of population living in rural municipalities (the regions of Košice, Trnava, Žilina, and Trenčín),
- ▶ **predominantly rural regions,** with over 50% of population living in rural municipalities (the regions of Nitra, Banská Bystrica, and Prešov).

According to the EUROSTAT (2010), **predominantly rural** regions are classified as **intermediate**, if they include an urban centre with population of over 200,000, which is at least 25% of the whole region's population; **intermediate** regions are classified as **predominantly urban**, if they include an urban centre with population of over 500,000, which is at least 25% of the whole region's population.

Fáziková (2017) gives the comparison of rural and urban space according to the basic economic, social, infrastructural, and environmental characteristics (see Table 10).

Table 10: Basic differences between rural and urbanised space (Source: Fáziková, 2017)

CHARACTERISTIC	RURAL AREAS	URBANISED AREAS
Economy	primary sector and auxiliary activities	secondary and tertiary sector
Educational level	lower than the national average	higher than the national average
Accessibility of services	low	high
Accessibility of information	low	high
Sense of community	high	low
Political attitudes	conservative	liberal
Demography	higher fertility rate	lower fertility rate
Migration	high emigration rate	high immigration rate
Physical accessibility	low quality of transport infrastructure and services, high travel costs	well-developed transport infrastructure, high quality of services
Environmental risks	related to production processes and exploitation of natural resources	related to production and population density (waste, water pollution, air pollution)

In Slovakia, 12.6% of population live in urban regions, 39.4% in predominantly rural, and 48% in intermediate rural regions (as of 2019). Dispersed and dense rural settlement structure prevails. The highest share of small rural municipalities is in the regions of Banská Bystrica and Prešov.

12.1 Functions of rural areas

Rural areas carry out several functions in the spheres of economy, services, ecosystem services, environment, and recreation in favour of both rural and urban population.

12.1.1 Economic function

Agriculture used to be the most important and often the only employer in rural municipalities in Slovakia. Its importance in generating profits and employment has been decreasing (see Figure 20). In late 1980s, more than 12% of economically active population worked in agriculture, while the share

dropped to merely 2.99% in 2019. Nevertheless, rural areas are often associated with agriculture, being often its synonym. The main factor of production for agriculture, forestry, and water management is located in rural areas.
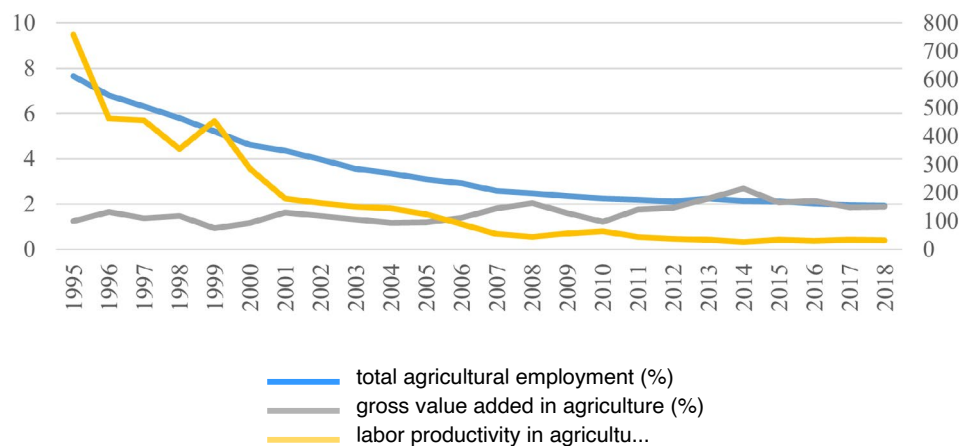

Figure 20: Dynamics of employment, gross value added, and labour productivity in Slovak agriculture (Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (SO SR))

Energetics is another sector localised in rural areas. Especially the means to generate energy, using renewable resources – water, wind, solar, geothermal energy and biomass – are becoming more and more important.

Economic function of rural areas is also represented by localities prospering from the perspective of tourism. Experiential travel is trendy; it is based on experience connected with nature (fishing, birdwatching, night stay in forest, tree house) or creation of an attraction (which can be created anywhere). Predominantly, microenterprises and small and medium economic subjects are located in rural areas.

12.1.2 Social function

Housing is the main social function of rural areas. Countryside provides suitable localization conditions for housing of many people. Rural housing is typical for bigger premises, larger surrounding areas, and lower property prices.

Rural areas are also attractive for their social features such as close neighbourly relations, community life, hospitality, activities in nature, interest in traditions, and peaceful life in clean environment.

Rural areas are where traditions and cultural heritage are preserved. Throughout the last decade, there has been observed the trend of coming back to folklore. Preservation of national identity has become more important alongside integration into the international structures and globalisation.

12.1.3 Environmental function

Rural areas create and provide lots of ecosystem services. From the perspective of utility for people, ecosystem services may be defined as benefits coming from the existence of ecosystems. We differentiate between four categories of ecosystem services, people benefit from:

▶ **direct benefits** (provisioning services) – food, materials, medicinal herbs, freshwater, clean air, genetic resources (biodiversity of plants and animals),

▶ **regulating services** – water purification, maintenance of soil fertility, biological control (maintenance of biological balance in nature), carbon sequestration, flood prevention (plant cover, forest),

▶ **cultural services** (intangible benefits) – recreation, mental health, aesthetic appreciation,

▶ **Supporting services** – services necessary for production of all the above-mentioned services (habitat for species, genetic diversity, etc.).

12.2 Rural population

Many people live in rural areas, in general. The total of 87.4% inhabitants of Slovakia lives in predominantly rural or intermediate regions. Research studies show that urban and rural population differ in several characteristics. The differing conditions of rural and urban space affect the differing situation of population, namely:

▶ **structure and focus of economic** (production and especially non-production) **activities** of population and subsequent differences in occupational structure,

▶ **social structure of population** (more homogenous population in rural settlements),

▶ **space requirements and problems** related to population density (Mládek a Čupeľová, 2008), including housing,

▶ **demographic and reproductive behaviour,**

▶ **and way of life and lifestyle.**

12.2.1 Demographic structure

Predominantly rural and intermediate regions of Slovakia are typical for (in comparison with predominantly urban regions):

▶ **higher share of pre-reproductive population.** Decrease of this population is faster than in urban regions (in 2001 – 2011, the share of pre-reproductive population in rural regions of Slovakia dropped from 19.2 to 15.6%),

▶ **lower share of productive population,**

▶ **higher share of post-productive population** (the share of post-productive population has been increasing in a long-term period, but the growth dynamics is lower, compared to urban regions),

▶ **slightly higher average age.**

Approximately 58% of marriages are held in urban regions. Gross marriage rate grows with the increasing population of municipalities (Novotný, 2020). However, in rural areas, there is a higher marriage rate concerning the unmarried. Postponing marriage to older age is more frequent in urban regions (Infostat, 2008). The difference between marriage rates of the unmarried has decreased in the comparison between urban and rural areas.

Birth rate and fertility rate are higher in rural areas. Average age of mother is lower in rural areas (Novotný, 2020). Also, mortality rate is higher in rural areas. The highest rates are reached by municipalities of 500 – 5,000 citizens, the lowest ones by towns of over 50,000 citizens.

Rural municipalities mark migratory gains to the detriment of urban settlements, which is contradictory to the processes, run in 1950s – 1980s. The municipalities of up to 5,000 citizens reached the gains (with the exception of those of up to 200 citizens). The largest gains are reached by the municipalities of 1,000 – 20,000 citizens. Nonetheless, their geographic situation is crucial;

the gains are reached predominantly by those located close to urban settlements. Migratory gains of small municipalities are (to a certain extent) related to relative complications in acquiring new housing, making moving out of them more difficult (Mládek and Čupeľová, 2008).

Ethnic structure is also different in rural areas. There is a higher share of ethnic minorities, Hungarian and Roma in particular.

Generally speaking, religiosity is also higher in rural areas. However, greater shares of Roman Catholics and Protestants (Augsburg Confession) live in urban municipalities (Mládek and Čupeľová, 2008).

12.2.2 Educational structure

The share of population with lower qualification is significantly higher in rural areas. The share of population with basic education has been decreasing in the Slovak Republic. However, the decrease rate is substantially slower in rural areas compared to the urban ones. **There is still a significantly higher share of population with basic education in rural areas** compared to urban regions (one in seven in rural areas compared to one in ten in urban regions, in 2011).

Table 11: The highest attained education in urban and rural areas in 1991 and 2011 in Slovakia (Source: Rakytová, 2019)

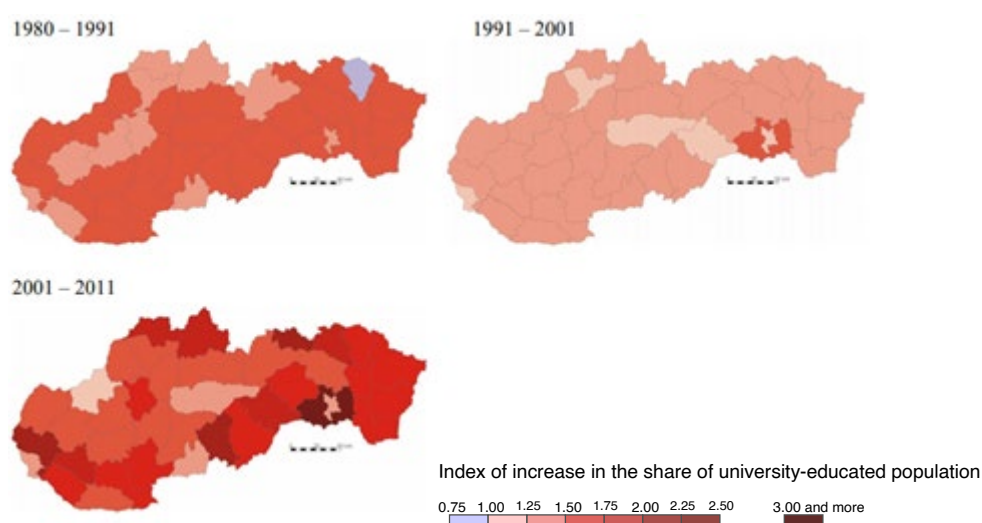| Education/ area	Mean value/ year	Elementary	Secondary without GCSE	Secondary with GCSE	University	No education
Urban	1991	34.6	29.7	27.4	7.6	0.6
	2011	15.8	26.4	37.0	16.7	0.1
Rural	1991	38.2	22.9	13.1	2.1	0.9
	2011	19.3	26.5	25.7	8.6	0.6
Total	1991	36.4	26.3	20.3	4.9	0.7
	2011	17.6	26.5	31.4	12.6	0.4

Figure 21: Average index of increase in the share of university-educated population in regions of Slovakia (Source: Lauko et al., 2012)

The share of population with secondary vocational education has been decreasing, but the decrease has slowed down (the decrease rate is significantly lower in rural areas). One in four citizens has undergone vocational training in rural areas compared to one in six in urban areas. **The share of population with secondary education is slightly lower in rural areas. However, the distribution of university-educated population is distinctively uneven** (see Table 11).

In rural areas, one in eight citizens is university-educated, while in urban regions, it is one in four. There were 3.8 citizens per one university-educated citizen in urban regions in 2011 (5.9 in 2001), whereas in rural regions, the value was 8.1 (14.9 in 2001).

The concentration of educational potential is still high in urban regions compared to the rural ones, resulting in spatial asymmetry in educational distribution of population, which is associated with the economic performance of the regions.

12.2.3 Employment and wages

Rural regions are typical for **higher unemployment rate.** Employment in primary and secondary sector has been decreasing in general, while **in tertiary sector, it has been growing.** In rural areas, the decrease in employment rate in secondary sector has been higher, and the increase in employment rate in tertiary sector has been lower than in the national numbers. However, it can be said that the decrease in employment rate in secondary and tertiary sector in rural areas is higher than in Slovakia in general. Employment in tertiary sector in rural areas has considerable potential of growth.

Rural regions reach **lower wages** in comparison to urban regions and average wages in national economy. In 2011, rural wages reached only up to 66% of urban wages, and 89.3% of wages at the national level.

In 2019, the average monthly gross equivalent income of households in Slovakia was 892.74 EUR. This average value was exceeded by the Bratislava region (1,102.55 EUR), followed by the regions of Trnava, Trenčín, and Nitra. The other regions were below the average, the region of Prešov marking the lowest value (785.02 EUR).

12.3 Rural communities

Relations inside a society represent one of the dimensions of the quality of life. Good society consists of strong communities, where people know their neighbours, are friendly, and support each other. They are integrated and they interact. Jordan (2010). Social complementarity and cooperation are one of the most important components in assessing the quality of life in municipalities. Milotová (2008).

A group of people living in the same territory (the same municipality or the same neighbourhood) is not automatically a community. **A community is an organized group of people with shared interests, norms, values, and goals.** A community has attributes which help in creating common identity. It provides formal and informal resources. It can be perceived as an **environment or a group of people willing to cooperate and communicate openly and efficiently to achieve mutual goals, regardless of their mutual differences.**

Rural communities possess specific social features:

- ▶ **conservatism,**
- ▶ **traditionalism,**
- ▶ **closer neighbourly relations and bonds,**

▶ **participation and cooperation,**

▶ **sharing mutual history and cultural values.**

Rural communities are typical for stronger influence of traditions and habits (often due to higher religiosity) and lower anonymity (Mládek and Čupeľová, 2008).

Neo-endogenous approach to the territorial development is characterised by the development focused on community and building social capital (see the Chapter 1.6.2). In many localities, social capital is underdeveloped or weakened by internal conflicts or economic depression. Gajdoš and Pašiak (2009) claim that in economically underdeveloped regions of Slovakia with high unemployment rate, neighbourly relations, coexistence, hospitality, activity, and interest in traditions disappear. Social trust fades. Social isolation and disinterest in public affairs result in closed families.

12.3.1 Solidarity, diligence, participation

In the complicated situations in history, such as the economic crisis in 1920s, mobilization, or the Slovak National Uprising, there was full solidarity among citizens (and even to immigrants) in our territory present. After the World War II, intensive mutual reciprocal help became a natural phenomenon in construction and reconstruction of houses and economic recovery.

Philanthropy and solidarity of large and medium-size farmers and middle class was an effect of their social status as a customary standard in rural areas (Gajdoš and Pašiak, 2009).

During socialism, solidarity survived in rural areas, even though it was contradictory to the ideology of social equality. However, after 1990, it started to disappear with the onset of market economy and individualism.

Today, the main role in prevention of social situations, in correcting imbalances, and social assistance is played by social policy through re-distribution of income and life opportunities. At the same time, solidarity acquires new shapes and forms in civic society (volunteering, charity, NGOs) as well as in business sphere (philanthropy, CSR). Socially responsible entrepreneurship and philanthropy of private subjects become trendy and prestigious. The development of social economy and entrepreneurship is also an expression of social solidarity (see the Chapters 14.1.1. and 14.1.3). The non-governmental organizations (see the Chapter 14.1.2) become equalizers of market failures. Proofs of solidarity emerging at all levels are visible also in the pandemic era.

Views on labour and its place in lives of people have changed in rural areas. Diligence or relation to labour as a central point of daily lives, a characteristic feature of rural citizens, fades away. The situation negatively influences civic participation in solving the problems of municipalities as well as in creation of the civic society (Gajdoš and Pašiak 2009).

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Chapter 12 terminology

- ✔ **population grid**
- ✔ **traditionalism**
- ✔ **philanthropy**

Chapter 12 follow up questions

1. **Briefly compare rural and urban areas.**
2. **Describe economic functions of rural areas.**
3. **Describe social functions of rural areas.**
4. **Describe environmental functions of rural areas.**
5. **What do solidarity of citizens and their participation in public affairs have in common?**

13 Social problems

Most public debates are related to social problems. We analyse, argue, and think about what problems are the gravest ones and how to solve them.

If we ask students about the most important social problems of their countries, we are given diverse answers. A student from the Republic of South Africa would say it is the spread of AIDS, a student from a war-ravaged country would say it is war and consequent poverty. What are the social problems of Slovakia? Which of them are the most important ones? Is it income inequality, unemployment, social exclusion, quality of education, or quality of health care?

Explanations of social problems in public debates are often based on opinions and experiences. However, a thorough analysis is required to understand them.

13.1 What is a social problem?

Social constructivists say that nothing is a social problem unless people find it as one. They claim that a problem becomes a problem when politicians, the public, or another segment of a society find it a problem. According to this approach, a social problem can be defined as **a condition or a behaviour negatively affecting lives of many people, which is generally considered to be a situation that needs to be dealt with and solved.** According to other authors, a problem is a problem even when it is paid little or no attention.

A social problem is a negative consequence of day-to-day effects, if dominant values and interests anchored in mechanisms of society function. Hence, it is not a social deviation, but an undesirable accompanying effect of its functioning (Lubelcová, 2017).

A social problem has its objective and subjective components. Objective reality may be imagined as current existence of a certain condition. Objective components need to be proved by empirical proofs or experiences. Subjective components may be defined through individual or public perceptions (see Figure 22).
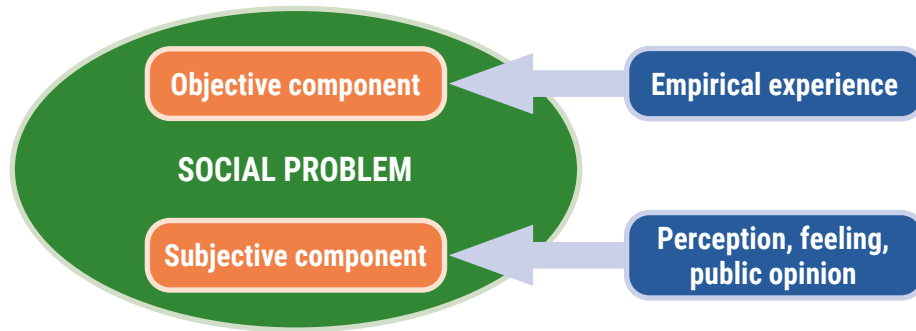
Figure 22: Social problems and how to define them (Source: own processing)

Throughout all scientific disciplines, sociology is the one most contributing to an explanation of social problems. Sociology of social problems evolved between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century in the USA. Sociology systematically studies individuals, groups, and social structures. It analyses the relationship between an individual and society, providing a systematic and objective approach to understanding social problems. Sociology leads us to acknowledging the fact that our personal experience is often affected by structural or social factors. From the sociological perspective, problems and their solutions do not depend on individuals only, but also on social structures of society. This perspective was mentioned for the first time by C. Wright Mills in the essay „The Promise", from 1959. In his opinion, sociological imagination helps in differentiation between personal and public problems.

Sociological imagination is the ability to connect our personal life and experience with the social world. Thus, it is about the use of imaginative thinking to understand the relation between personal problems of an individual and global processes. Sociological imagination disputes the argument that a problem is either "natural", or a consequence of a personal failure (Irwin, 2001). It emphasises the structural basis of social problems and turns our attention to economic, political and social structures, which govern the trends related to employment, unemployment, or accessibility.

A personal problem is a problem caused by activities or states of an individual, affecting the life of an individual, and by no means affecting also other members of the society (eating disorders, divorce, unemployment of an individual).

Public issues (problems) are based on social structure and culture of the society, and effect many people (Mills, 1959). We are able to reveal the structural basis of individual problems with help of sociological imagination. Many problems perceived as personal can be explained by social influences. Eating disorders of the American women can serve as an example. If the standards of female beauty and slim body were not so accentuated in the American culture, much less American women would suffer from eating disorders (Boyd et al., 2011). Also, high unemployment rate may be explained by structural or political failures.

13.2 Analysis of social problems

Social sciences and especially sociology use the following methods to analyse social problems:
- comparative historical research,
- content analysis of documents and media,

▶ analysis of statistics and registers, and

▶ empirical research or analysis of the conducted research (Lubelcová, 2017).

Perception of associations between phenomena and processes at different levels is the basis of the problem analysis.

There are many methods and techniques used to analyse problems in various scientific disciplines. Regional sciences use the **problem tree analysis**, which is a part of a project cycle. This method enables us to understand the causality and relations between individual phenomena and problems, and to formulate priorities, goals and measures (**goal tree**) for a future intervention. **The pair-wise comparison matrix** is used to identify the relevance of problems and preferences of target groups in concrete areas and situations.

13.3 Sources of social problems

Social pathology is one of the first approaches (turn of the 19th and 20th century) explaining social problems. According to this approach, social problems are caused by disturbed individuals or pathological forms of organizations' operations.

Theories of **social disorganization** also provide explanations of social problems – absence of rules or conflicting rules, and weakening or failure of standards when sticking to rules do not lead to expected results.

Since the half of the 20th century, social problems were justified by **deviant behaviour** – deviance (not necessarily pathologic) from socially perceptible and acceptable norms. The Lemert theory of primary and secondary deviance claims that the primary deviance is followed by a reaction from the surroundings, which may induce other deviance of an individual or a group (**secondary deviance**), and may even lead to **labelling** and **social exclusion** of people or groups violating norms (in Lubelcová, 2017).

According to several theories, inequality or oppression based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, social class, sexual orientation, or disability are the sources of social inequality, conflicts between groups, and social problems (Tong, 1989).

Interactionist theories claim that social reality is not forced to individuals or groups as something constant, but individuals or groups shape and adapt it continually. They prefer monographic works based on *in situ* observations. **Constructivism** and **functionalism** deal with the issue differently, emphasising the co-dependency of institutions and social phenomena and their interactions in preserving social and cultural unity. There are movements and schools of thought addressing the sources of social problems. For example, **feminism** considers patriarchal society to be a source of social problems.

13.4 Social problems in rural areas

Social problems issue from the historical and current context, and social architecture of a country or a region. They may be different in rural areas, compared to urban ones.

The transformation of the Slovak economy (1993 – 2002) resulted in increased regional disparities. It was caused by an insufficient system and cross-cutting nature of regional policy. The principle

of decentralization of powers and responsibilities in the regional development was not respected, hampering the application of policy based on endogenous factors of development.

Breaking down the long-term connections between labour force and jobs (existing during the era of socialism) and the pressure on efficiency of businesses deepened the gap between the rich and those just above/below the poverty threshold, leading to individualisation of needs, claims, attitudes, and values of individual population groups. Problematic groups of citizens were crystallised, often perceived as a burden for society. Logically, social and economic differences were projected in the spatial differentiation. The problems were concentrated in certain regions. This also caused differentiated investment activity, adaptability to development trends, and the ability to activate and effectively use endogenous potential. Altogether, it resulted in social mobility of individuals or households, social exclusion, and diverse forms of families and households (Morvay et al. 2005).

Social and economic problems of rural areas were identified by politicians, and reflected in the goals of the National Development Plan 2004-2006. One of its goals is represented by the increase of agricultural production and quality of life of rural population.

The transformation era brought several tendencies to rural areas in Slovakia:

- ▶ **decrease in employment in agriculture** (due to restructuring),
- ▶ **depopulation** (emigration of young people, population ageing),
- ▶ **weakening human capital,**
- ▶ **stagnant cultural capital,**
- ▶ **weakening and deformation of social capital,**
- ▶ **declining civic participation** in solving problems of municipalities,
- ▶ **problems of small municipalities** – economic, personal, infrastructural problems, problems caused by the transfer of powers (Falťan and Pašiak, 2004, Gajdoš and Pašiak, 2009).

Lower educational level, unfavourable educational structure, insufficient provision and stabilisation of educated labour force in rural areas result all in the decreased economic development and decline in innovation. This is related to insufficient economic infrastructure and low business density.

Currently, the available labour force in agriculture is a problem, especially in larger rural municipalities (growing population provides more attractive job opportunities).

Generally, rural areas are typical for higher share of physically disadvantaged social groups and ethnic minorities (poor integration in the labour market).

Lower labour productivity and level of public services are also the negative aspects.

Chapter 13 terminology

- ✔ **sociological imagination**
- ✔ **social pathology**
- ✔ **social disorganization**
- ✔ **deviance**
- ✔ **labelling**

Chapter 13 follow up questions

1. **Explain the role of sociological imagination.**
2. **What are the reasons behind the decreasing employment in agriculture?**
3. **Why is the civic participation crumbled in rural areas?**
4. **Explain the issue of the weakening human capital in rural areas.**
5. **Explain deformation of social capital in rural areas.**

14 Social development of rural areas

Rural development is the development of existing activities aimed at preserving social and economic dynamics as well as public policy interventions at different levels and non-governmental sector activities (focused on rural areas). Hence, rural development is territorial development focused on rural areas.

14.1 Neo-endogenous approaches to the territorial development

Approaches to the territorial (rural) development have evolved over time. Today, the basic idea is represented by the so-called **neo-endogenous development.** Endogeneity concerns development based on local resources and mechanisms, i.e. the "bottom-up" development. Novelty of the neo-endogenous development is in the opinion that the development may be motivated or influenced by exogenous impulses without losing the "bottom-up" dynamics. The neo-endogenous approach is based on decentralized and multisectoral (multidisciplinary) social and economic development. Local problems can be solved and changes can happen with help of endogenous resources. Neo-endogenous rural development has two important features:

1. Development-oriented activities shall maximise the effect of benefits for the territory in question by recovery and utilization of the local physical and human resources.
2. Development-oriented activities shall be carried out in the context of needs, capacities, and perspectives of the local people (Ray, 2006).

Thus, a municipality shall possess (or create) capacities to take over a part of responsibility for social and economic development of its territory.

There are many concept based on the idea of neo-endogenous development. The attention of theorists is focused mainly on the following four approaches: social economy, economic coordination, multi-level management, and endogenous capital (the Chapter 1.1 is concerned with societal capital, consisting of human, social, and cultural capital). Participation is the principle of the endogenous development.

14.1.1 Social economy

Various forms of social economy date back to the 19th century. Sayer and Walker (1992) came up with the idea of social aspects in modern economy. According to them, **social economy shall be the standard in rural development**, as an alternative to the individualistic perception of economy.

Social economy motivates participation of local stakeholders in the territorial development as well as in the local collective economic activities in order to increase the quality of life of the local population. Hence, the rural development is based on an economic activity, which is, at least partially, localised at the rural territory.

14.1.1.1 Definition of social economy

Theoretical definition of social economy is problematic, as its basic terms are defined in many different ways. Social economy has interdisciplinary inputs of a socio-economic character. Also, there are different interpretations and approaches to the public policy, economic policy, social policy, and systems of the public resources re-distribution. There are diverse views on the role of state from the perspective of theorists (especially economists) and voters. Permanent gaps in public finance (at global, European, or national level) represent an economic problem. Moreover, social economics (and social economy) has not been accepted as an interdisciplinary socio-economic discipline, which is a methodological problem. Social economy overlaps with social and economic policy.

Social economy is an interdisciplinary scientific discipline which:

▶ analyses behaviour of social subjects (social organizations – businesses and institutions, municipalities, state),
▶ predicts socio-economic conditions for alternative execution of the public interests (especially public services and employment) in order to enable social inclusion of the disadvantaged or excluded groups for a long-term period.

The more specific definition of social economy emphasises the three major features:

▶ social context,
▶ local context (in terms of territory),
▶ form based on voluntary association (cooperatives, associations entering the market, associations not entering the market).

Social economics can be defined as **creation of businesses active in the market, whose legal and organizational form (cooperatives, associations of mutual or public interest) guarantee solidarity due to limited generation of profits or re-distribution of profits in order to fulfil social goals of the organizations** (Laville 2007).

Thus, social economy becomes the third pillar of economy, complementary to the market economy and public economy. Democratization of economy, based on economic participation (labour) and social inclusion (especially in case of those with more complicated access to the labour market), is essential (Korimová 2007).

Subjects of social economy behave in accordance with the principles of:

▶ solidarity,
▶ participation,
▶ usefulness/utility for citizens,
▶ non-profitability or profits in favour of local societal or social needs.

14.1.1.2 Objectives of social economy

The main objective of social economy is to prevent people from falling into the sphere of passive social dependence, which primarily indicates risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Overlapping economic and social objectives is typical for social economy. It represents a new dimension of unconventional business dynamics, which encourages social innovation and social development and, at the same time, brings the impulse to economic growth **at the borderline between the public and private, profit and non-profit, and formal and informal social space.**

The main goals of the modern social economy include:

▶ fighting unemployment,
▶ social inclusion,
▶ sustainable local development and increase in the quality of life,
▶ reduction of social inequalities between developed and under-developed areas (in national and supranational context).

Social economy is justified, though its effects are not quite well known. Activities of the social economy subjects in the COVID-19 situation are an example of such effects (see Figure 23).

Figure 23: Website of the social economy activities database during the COVID-19 pandemic

14.1.1.3 Basic conditions of the social economy emergence

The historical evolution of social economy is mainly linked with **freedom of association,** emerging due to the effects of bourgeois revolutions in the 18th and 19th century (see the Chapter 8.1.2). **Scarcity, absence of products and services,** which people strived to replace by their own, common economic activities were ones of the original reasons behind its emergence.

Social identity is necessary for its existence, or, in other words, certain level of social cohesion of a community is inevitable for emergence of joint activities. The basic historical resource of social economy is anchoring the economic activities in the associative potential of social organization of society.

The industrial period of modern society evolution pushed back the concept of social economy. However, in the end of the 20th century, the concept re-emerged thanks to new impulses: **unbearable growth of global social stratification – increasing poverty rates, modern slavery, and social exclusion.** The issue of social economy entered the EU discussions in 1990s, and, subsequently, became a part of its strategic documents.

The common interest of stakeholders and common **economic activity** are the main features of social economy. Developed **civic society** is the determinant of its development.

14.1.1.4 Legal forms in social economy

Legal forms in social economy generally depend on the context and legislation of the country in question. There are different legal forms in different countries – either those dedicated to social entrepreneurship, or those gradually adapted to use in the conditions of social economy (associations, cooperatives, conventional businesses, foundations, etc.). In the EU countries, there are specific legal forms in social economy, such as chitalishte in Bulgaria, zavod in Slovenia, or specific orientation within some legal forms (such as female cooperative in Greece or municipal social businesses in Slovakia).

In some countries, non-profit organizations are traditionally allowed to run business activities (France), in other, it is a problem (Italy).

With no dependence on legal forms, social economy subjects in the EU countries can possess the following legal statuses:

- ▶ **public benefit organizations**, or
- ▶ **work integration social enterprises** (WISE).

Public benefit organizations must follow the public interests (see the Chapter 2), and may be given e.g. tax advantages. In the EU countries, such organizations are more thoroughly monitored and controlled. Organizations focused on labour integration must fulfil the condition of employing at least 30% of disadvantaged or vulnerable people (social integration businesses, sheltered jobs).

In Slovakia, social economy is legally defined by the **Act no 112/2018 on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship**. According to the law, social economy subjects are as follows:

- ▶ civic associations,
- ▶ foundations,
- ▶ non-investment funds,
- ▶ non-profit organizations,
- ▶ dedicated facilities of churches,
- ▶ enterprises,
- ▶ cooperatives, or
- ▶ physical persons – entrepreneurs, who are employers.

These subjects:

- ▶ are not owned in majority by public bodies or financed mostly by them,
- ▶ perform economic or non-economic activities within the activities of social economy, and
- ▶ perform non-profit activities, or use at least 50% of their profits to achieve positive social impacts.

14.1.1.5 Third sector organizations

The main factor of the social economy development at the local level is the development of the third sector – the non-profit sector. Traditionally, the third sector represents civil society activities, and it has taken also some new functions on, especially in the field of public interest and related activities (see the Chapter 2.2), and social services (see the Chapter 8.3.1). Third sector organizations belong to stakeholders of rural development as perceived by the neo-endogenous approach.

Legal forms of the third sector in Slovakia are as follows:

Civic associations

Civic association is the most frequently used legal form in the third sector in Slovakia; a legal entity. This legal form may cover associations, societies, movements, clubs, and even trade unions. Associations may associate physical as well as legal persons.

Foundations

Foundation is a special-purpose fund supporting objectives in the public interest. In our legal order, foundations represent funds which are considered as banks of the third sector. Their main goal is to cumulate funds and re-distribute them to support objectives in the public interest. In Slovak legal order, we recognize private foundations only. With evolution of legislation, the question of family foundations or corporate foundations comes to attention. Foundations may be established by physical or legal entities. They also may be combined.

Non-investment funds

Fund is a non-profit legal entity cumulating funds dedicated to an objective in the public interest or to humanitarian aid in favour of an individual or a group of individuals in life-threatening situations or in need of help in consequence of a natural disaster. Contrary to foundations, non-investment funds may cumulate financial resources only. Funds may be established by physical or legal persons.

Non-profit organizations

Non-profit organizations are public entities providing services in the public interest under pre-defined, equal conditions, whose profits cannot be used in favour of their founders, members of boards or employers. Instead, it must be fully used to provide services in the public interest. Non-profit organizations may be established by physical persons, legal entities, or state.

14.1.1.6 Cooperative and cooperative movement

Cooperative is, according to the Commercial Code, a legal entity, a community of an unlimited number of persons (legal or natural) founded for the purpose of doing business or ensuring the economic, social or other needs of its members. This legal form is the most frequently used legal form in the social economy of European countries. With its rules, it comes closest to the principles and definition of the social economy and the nature of its activities:

- openness,
- equal status of shareholders,
- democratic management,
- social goals,
- connection to the community.

Slovak Act on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship 112/2018 Coll. defines cooperative as one of the legal forms of a social economy subject. However, this form is rarely used in the social economy in Slovakia. Out of 294 registered social enterprises, only 6 entities have it.

The tradition of cooperatives in our territory is long and rich. First cooperatives arose out of the need to protect farmers and tradesmen, especially in rural areas. The first self-help credit cooperative here, but also in continental Europe, was the Gazdovský spolok. It was founded in Sobotište by the teacher and scholar Samuel Jurkovič, in 1845. Credit banks were established in Slovak cities, which mainly met the needs of the urban population, at that time. Jurkovič therefore decided to help the poorer countryside. Following the example of Samuel Jurkovič, a number of cooperatives of various types were established in Slovakia: mutual aid societies, school savings banks, food cooperatives. Cooperatives developed in several stages. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a network of production cooperatives began to be built in the Slovak countryside. In 1948, there were almost a thousand credit cooperatives, 1,150 food cooperatives, almost 400 production and operating cooperatives, and more than 50 purchasing and sales cooperatives in Slovakia – a total of 3,051 cooperatives (Martuliak, 1995). Cooperatives had various functions and really improved the quality of life, especially in rural areas.

In the era of socialism, cooperatives acquired a negative connotation related, in many cases, to involuntary cooperatives. Based on the Act on unified peasant cooperatives (JRD) from 1949, a JRD was to be established in every village and replace all types of cooperatives up to that time, with the exception of consumer, craft, trade and housing cooperatives. Until then, free peasants were deprived of their land and machinery. In this way, 2,683 JRDs were created, by 1960. They managed 70% of arable land (Martuliak, 1995).

During the transformation of the economy between 1990 and 2002 and subsequently in the process of EU integration, JRDs were transformed into agricultural cooperatives or trading companies (Lindbloom, 2019). Currently, almost 600 agricultural cooperatives, several dozen housing cooperatives and several production cooperatives are registered in the commercial register.

14.1.2 Participation and partnership

Endogenous development is closely related to **participation.** Participation may be defined as a situation when an individual or a group is involved in some doings or an activity. Participation of all development stakeholders is crucial in territorial development. Territorial development shall be well designed and implemented in partnership with all stakeholders. Generally, partnerships require:

- ▶ recognition of relative importance of other people, stakeholders, and organizations,
- ▶ cooperation and looking for solutions on the basis of mutual agreement,
- ▶ relations,
- ▶ respecting certain rules and guidelines.

Partnerships deal with issues and projects which cannot be executed or solved by individuals.

We differentiate between **vertical partnership** – the partnership between international, national, regional, and local institutions (the partnership principle in the EU cohesion policy and its programmes, projects, and activities), and **horizontal partnership** (the cooperation between various stakeholders at the same level, e.g. local or regional).

Chapter 14 terminology

- ✔ **endogenous development**
- ✔ **social identity**
- ✔ **labour integration**

Chapter 14 follow up questions

1. **Explain the neo-endogenous territorial development.**
2. **Explain modern slavery.**
3. **Why are the social economy subjects disadvantaged in the market environment?**
4. **Why is the third sector the pillar of social economy?**

15 Social entrepreneurhip in the EU and in Slovakia

Social economy is created by social enterprises and organizations not depending on public administration, which prioritise the following social objectives, while producing goods and services:

- ▶ **labour more than capital,**
- ▶ **public interest more than profit,**
- ▶ **democratic participation of its members and employers in decision-making, regardless of the held equity interests,**
- ▶ **re-investment of potential profits to social and development-oriented purposes.**

Thus, social economy responds to various negative externalities of private and political market, caused by human factors.

Social entrepreneurship is a specific type of entrepreneurship, primarily based on the non-profit principle of the non-market or semi-market relations of pluralistic providers active in the sphere of public interest (Korimová, 2007).

Social businesses are perceived as subjects contributing to the growth of employment and to the integration of marginal social groups and those threatened by social exclusion. They enable individuals and communities to work together on recovery of their living conditions and show the ways to ensure and reform the public and social services. The European Commission specified the promising areas of social entrepreneurship as follows:

- ▶ household services,
- ▶ care for children,
- ▶ new information and communication technologies,
- ▶ work with the disadvantaged,
- ▶ renovation of buildings and public places,
- ▶ maintaining security,
- ▶ local public transport,
- ▶ local trade,
- ▶ tourism,
- ▶ audiovisual sector,
- ▶ cultural heritage and local cultural development,
- ▶ waste management,
- ▶ water management,
- ▶ nature protection and maintenance,
- ▶ regulation and monitoring of air pollution,
- ▶ agriculture (food sovereignty).

The development of social economy is specific in the post-socialist countries (Central and Eastern Europe), which have undergone the transformation of economy. The barriers of social economy development in such countries are as follows:

- ▶ insufficient legal, economic, and organizational prerequisites for the development of pluralistic ownership in the system of social services providers,
- ▶ distrust in cooperatives and associations, as these types of organizations are negatively perceived due to their connection with ideas of communism during the past regime,
- ▶ dependence on external donations,
- ▶ insufficient trust in solidarity – solidarity is understood as assistance in favour of family or friends, not as help in favour of the whole society,
- ▶ insufficient mobilization of resources.

The real **effects of social entrepreneurship** in such countries can be defined as follows:

- ▶ growing employment of the unemployed for a long-term period,
- ▶ intermediate labour market,
- ▶ development of services and public social services,
- ▶ growth of economy,
- ▶ decreased social protection transfers,
- ▶ stronger social inclusion,
- ▶ stronger social assistance in favour of the dependants.

15.1 Driving forces of social entrepreneurship

In 2014, 2016 and 2019, the European Commission carried out the overview of social entrepreneurship in the EU countries and its ecosystem. According to the survey, the European policies and its funds substantially contributed to the development of social entrepreneurship. The strategic framework of the **Social business initiative** (SBI) is the main instrument supporting social entrepreneurship in the EU. It is also assisted by many programmes and initiatives from the field of social policy, employment, regional development, and social inclusion and education (EaSI – see the Chapter 7.4.1, Interreg, Erasmus+ etc.).

Some of the lead external factors for the development of social economy contain **new social movements** reacting to:

- ▶ migration and immigration,
- ▶ climate change,
- ▶ the need to fulfil the sustainable development goals (SDG),
- ▶ the need for greater social responsibility in economic activities,
- ▶ social issues (ESELA, 2015; The European Commission, 2020).

Political will and support (creation of legislation, institutional arrangement etc.) is the driving force at the level of countries. Understanding the effects of social entrepreneurship, their projections in the specific areas, and support articulated by regional or local authorities are important factors at local and regional level. In Slovakia, the regions of Banská Bystrica, Žilina, and Košice present good examples at regional level, and municipalities – the founders of municipal social enterprises, at local level.
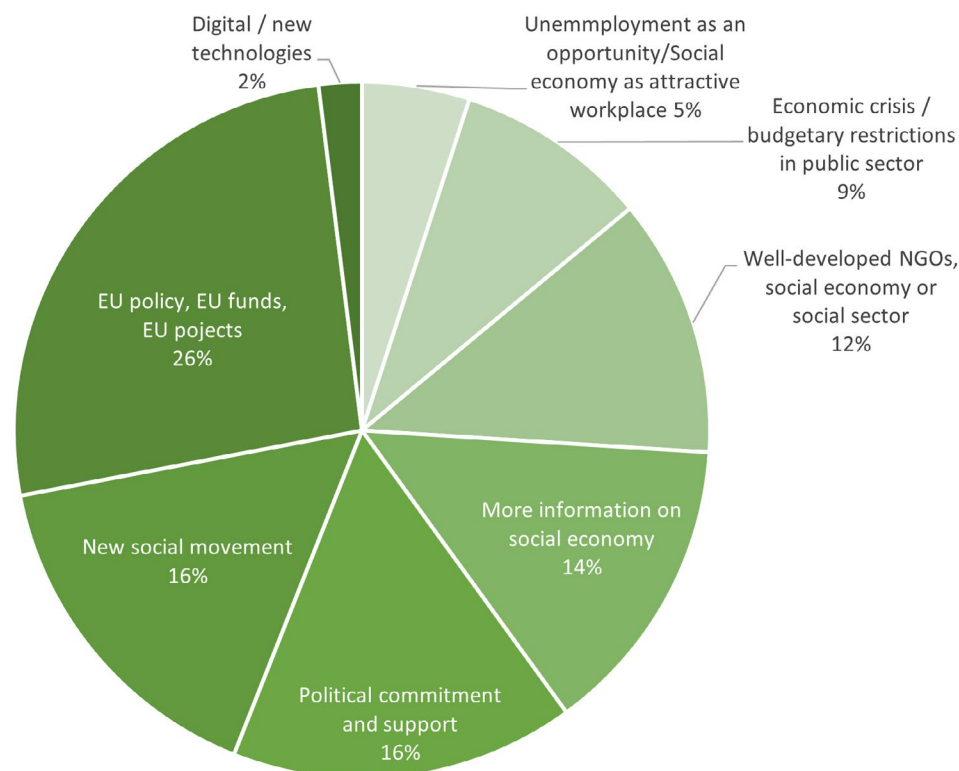
Figure 24: Key driving forces for the development of social entrepreneurship in the EU (2010 – 2020) (Source: The European Commission, 2020)

Another factor of the social economy development is connected with **raising awareness** of the existence and effects of social economy and social entrepreneurship (see Fig. 23).

As it was mentioned earlier (in the Chapter 14.1.1.5), the **development of the third sector – the non-profit sector** is one of the key factors of the social economy development. The capacity of the third sector is crucial (The European Commission, 2020). It is associated with cutting the public expenditures after the economic crisis (and the same is predicted for the post-pandemic era).

Digital innovations are also the driving forces of social entrepreneurship (The European Commission, 2020).

15.2   Barriers to social entrepreneurship

There are many factors hindering social economy. In general, they include insufficient **legal framework** and **definitions of basic terms** in the national context as well as **absence of support instruments** (ESELA, 2015; The European Commission, 2020).

Social entrepreneurs claim there is **unfair competition** with conventional businesses in the market (The European Commission, 2020). Social enterprises have insufficient capacities, resources, and knowledge. The resources of social enterprises are used mainly for social benefits, and not for making profits. It is related to the **public procurement settings** and its criteria. Social businesses cannot compete with conventional enterprises, if the lowest price is the criterion. Social (green) public procurement is a solution, with a social impact as a criterion. In principle, social economy

subjects do not perform business thinking and **lack business skills.** In some EU countries, the support system is quite well defined (tax allowances, wage compensation, motivation via quality labels and competitions). Modern social economy is still relatively young and **less visible.**
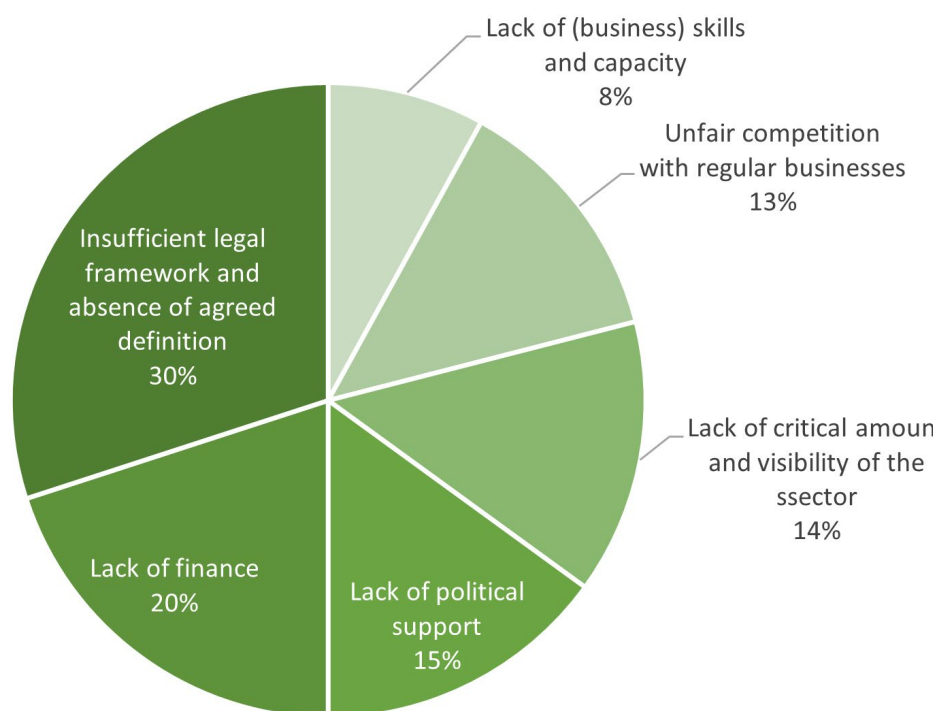

Figure 25: Key barriers to the development of social entrepreneurship ecosystem in the EU (2010 – 2020) (Source: The European Commission, 2020)

Some surveys claim there is **insufficient consulting, education** and **lack of experts** in the field (The European Commission, 2020). The European Social Enterprise Law Association (ESELA, 2015) recommends networking experts and sharing information and templates.

15.3 Benefits and effects of social entrepreneurship

By its very nature, social entrepreneurship provides economic utility, but also social and societal value (see the Chapter 2). Those who benefit are employees (especially those in job integration), consumers and clients of products and services, and also the community of those residing in the territory of the social business' operations. **The effects are local, regional, and supraregional. They may be direct or indirect. Societal and social values are of a diverse character, based on the character of the business in question.**

The main effect of the municipal social businesses (Slovak case) lies in the execution of:

▶ original powers (e.g. maintenance and management of local roads, public spaces, and municipal facilities, and provision of public services),

▶ transferred powers (e.g. provision of social services), and

▶ strategic planning (anchored in the strategic documents of municipalities – development plans, community plans, tourism development plans etc.).

The Table 12 contains the list of direct and indirect economic, social and environmental effects of the municipal social businesses, presented on the example of such business in the municipality of Spišský Hrhov.

Table 12: Direct and indirect local effects of social entrepreneurship in Spišský Hrhov municipality

Effects	Direct	Indirect
Economic	• employment rate increase • creation of jobs	• creation of conditions for the development of tourism
	• completion of technical infrastructure • reduction of the cost of running and managing water supply and sewerage • improvement of municipal amenities	• creation of conditions for building the economic base of the municipality • creation of business opportunities • support for spin-off and spill-over processes
	• increase in the skills and acquiring of new skills • increase in the market value of land and public buildings	
	• acquisition and efficient use of external resources (national and European support schemes)	
	• synergy in using funds and resources • creation new social enterprises within the same community	
	• improvement of the social status of households • social inclusion of individuals and groups threatened by exclusion • improvement of the quality of human capital • construction of lower-cost rental flats • an increase in the number of sports and cultural activities • improving the supply and quality of social services	• increase in the school attendance of Roma children • reduction of social tensions and improving personal relations between citizens • increase in the quality of social capital • increase in the participation of citizens in public activities • community social work
Environmental	• construction of the waste water treatment plant and completion of sewerage system • completion of public water supply • forest cleaning • recovery of waste wood • planting and maintenance of public greenery and landscaping • cleaning of public spaces • revitalization of the historic park • waste separation • collection of secondary raw materials	• efficient use of natural resources • increase in environmental awareness of the population • education of children and youth in the field of environmental protection

Dissemination of information on social economy and social entrepreneurship effects is an important factor of the social economy development.

Chapter 15 terminology

- ✔ **digital innovations**
- ✔ **social public procurement**

Chapter 15 follow up questions

1. **How do social businesses usually deal with profits?**
2. **Why are people in Slovakia usually biased against cooperatives?**
3. **What are the main effects of social entrepreneurship in Slovakia and the neighbouring countries?**
4. **What are the benefits and effects of municipal social entrepreneurship?**

16 Social agriculture in the EU and in Slovakia

Modern agricultural policy emphasises non-production functions of agriculture. After 1990, the concept of multifunctional agriculture has started to gain a foothold as a tool for sustainable development of rural areas in the EU. In addition to food production, agriculture fulfils social, ecological, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural functions (Gozora, 2000).

Social agriculture is an emerging sector in the European rural context. The European Economic and Social Committee (2013) stressed that the development of social agriculture shall be planned and implemented within the new rural development policy. The concept of social agriculture is linked with agriculture as a multifunctional activity, giving agricultural activities new sense and functions (Di Iacovo, O´Connor, 2009).

Social agriculture is defined as a complex of activities using agricultural resources (plant- and animal-based) to create an adequate environment for diverse disadvantaged individuals and the public, aiming at providing them job opportunities, thus helping their integration into society, or contributing to their relationship towards nature and rural areas through education and leisure activities (Chovanec, Hudcová, Moudrý, 2015).

It consists of:
- ▶ labour integration,
- ▶ social services,
- ▶ rehabilitation, and
- ▶ support for those vulnerable or excluded from the labour market due to diverse reasons.

The target groups of social agriculture may include:
- ▶ the elderly,
- ▶ ethnic minorities,
- ▶ physically or mentally disadvantaged individuals,
- ▶ people with mental disorders or addictions,
- ▶ former inmates, etc.

In this context, agricultural activities, horticultural activities, and outcomes of initial processing of primary production are understood as means supporting employment and social integration. These are mainly the activities related to utilization of endogenous resources of the territory. Capacities of the existing products are used in the process, or new enterprises emerge. As a result,

innovative activities of social agriculture contribute to the development of social economy, rural areas, and the region in question, and support new agri-social paradigm.

Until now, social agriculture has not been known as the application of multifunctional agriculture. However, it could help in solving several urgent societal and social problems of rural areas (ARSIA, SOFAR, 2015).

Social agriculture initiatives in Europe vary. Countries have diverse experience and phases and trajectories of development. This heterogeneity is visible in the regulatory and legal framework of social agriculture at different levels of management (ARSIA, SOFAR, 2015). Support tools are present at various levels (local, regional, national, international) and forms (financial, non-financial). Good intersectoral communication and flexible responses of support policy to the needs of social agriculture representatives are necessary to strengthen social agriculture (Dohnalová et al., 2018).

In some EU countries, the measures of the Rural development programme for 2000-2006 within the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU were focused on the development of social agriculture.

Municipalities, non-profit organizations, and also farms carry out social agriculture and horticulture in Slovakia. The issue is not mapped thoroughly. Support mechanisms are not developed sufficiently.

Chapter 16 terminology

- ✔ **multifunctional agriculture**
- ✔ **social agriculture**
- ✔ **social horticulture**
- ✔ **labour therapy**

Chapter 16 follow up questions

1. **How could social agriculture contribute to the social development of a community?**
2. **Why is agriculture suitable for labour therapy?**
3. **Describe the target groups of social agriculture and horticulture.**

17 Social policy and rural development

The main task of social policy is focused on prevention and addressing social problems. The approach to the problems consists of the following phases:

1. **Identification** (the public, civil society, media, politicians, scientists),
2. **Analysis and description** (analysts, scientists – a structure of problems, causal relations, etc.)
3. **Looking for suitable solutions and procedures** (scientists, politicians, civil society),
4. **Intervention** (politicians – solutions in a form of social policy tools),
5. **Assessment of results and impacts of the intervention** (analysts, scientists, politicians, a target group – change indicators, response from the target group etc.).

Social problems in general are examined in the Chapter 13, social problem analysis is dealt with in the Chapter 13.2.

17.1 Social intervention

An intervention can be defined as interference in the problem solving. Social intervention is a collective, **bottom-up** response by social stakeholders, concerning an adverse life circumstance (see the Chapter 14.2), or a **top-down** response by public institutions as an official response to social problems recognized by a society (Lubelcová, 2017). Local action groups (LAGs), citizens' initiatives, self-help and participatory activities etc. are the examples of the bottom-up approach.

Interventions are often perceived as interference from the outside, from institutions, i.e. top-down reactions. However, some criticise such approach and suggest that social interventions shall maintain the principle of subsidiarity to the greatest possible extent, and stick to the bottom-up principle whenever it is possible. According to Henshel (1990), top-down social interventions often produce errors or negative externalities, and, thus, also decreased effects of made effort and exploited resources. Hence, social state shall turn into social society:

▶ as many stakeholders as possible shall take part in an analysis and problem solving (principle of participation, see the Chapter 5.1.6),
▶ targeting of interventions shall be increased,

▶ target groups shall be involved in addressing their own situations (principle of activation, see the Chapter 5.1.5),

▶ services shall be carried out in the natural environment of clients whenever possible (community services).

Based on the **theory of change**, logic of any intervention can be illustrated through its goals, inputs, and effects (see the intervention logic, Fig. 26).

Intervention logic starts with a problem to be addressed. Global goal and specific goal are measurable goals of the planned intervention. Specific goal – project goals are delivered through specific measures and activities. Material, human, and financial inputs are necessary to ensure the intervention. Direct consequences of the conducted measures or activities (following the use of inputs) are the outcomes. Immediate effects of fulfilling the intervention goals are the results. After a certain time, the results have impact on the problem in question.
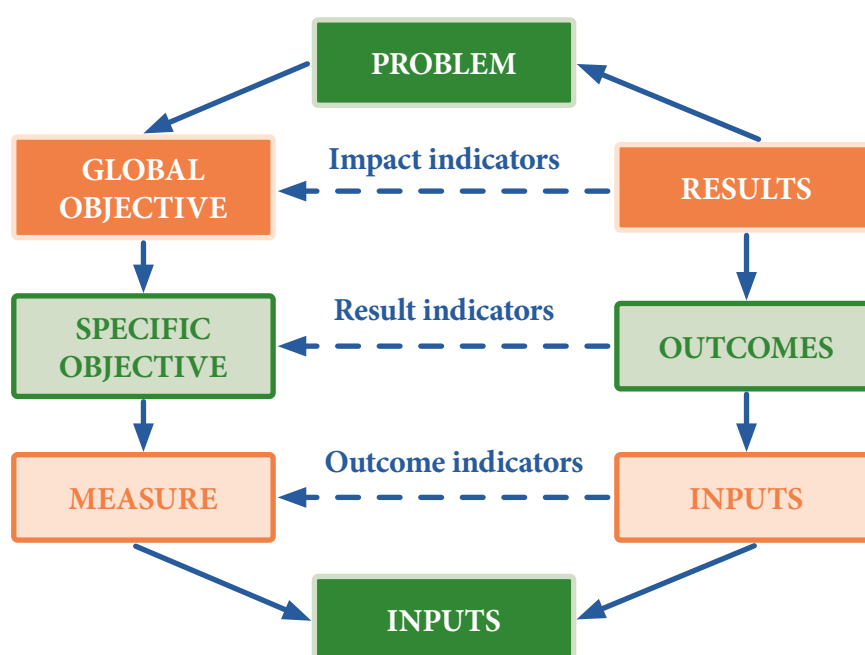

Figure 26: The Intervention logic (Source: own processing)

In practical social policy, there are direct and indirect interventions. Direct interventions (legislation, institutions and institutes, economic stimuli, **social work**) directly affect human behaviour, whereas indirect interventions influence environment, public opinion, and building human, social, and cultural capital (media, education, **social marketing**).

There are three levels of interventions in social policy:

1. **Political** level represents the interaction between the public and the government, the process transforming social values and interests into legal acts and tools for allocation of resources.

2. **Administrative** level transforms political decisions into intervention methods at the level of providing services.

3. **Operational** level includes application of tools in the field in the specific situations and persons, and direct communication with a client – consulting and direct assistance (Jamrozik and Nocella, 2000, in Lubelcová, 2017).

17.2 Evaluation of intervention effects

Each political intervention shall be followed by a reflection. Social policy is always under the public microscope. Almost immediate critical feedback follows each intervention at any level. However, the feedback may be influenced by the mood in society or media. It may grow, if the intervention in question relates to a very sensitive problem. Objective evaluation of interventions is carried out with help of output, result, and impact indicators (see Figure 26). Change indicators shall be set up already in the phase of an intervention proposal.

Effects of intervention, both immediate (outputs and results) and delayed (impacts) can be evaluated in the course of the intervention or after its conclusion. Output, result, and impact indicators serve to evaluate them. The indicators measure implementation of measures of activities (output indicators) and meeting the intervention goals (result indicators immediately, impact indicators later).

Examples of indicators in case of re-training the unemployed, aiming at employment of the unemployed for a long-term period include: number of training participants (output indicator), number of successful participants, if succeeded in a final exam, they were given a certificate and thus, acquired skills or knowledge (result indicator), and number of employed participants of the training (impact indicator).

17.3 Solutions to social problems in rural areas

Scientists and politicians have been dealing with regional disparities for the last 30 years. Solutions to the current problems of rural areas such as depopulation, weakening of their economic base, and deterioration of cultural and social values belong to the fundamental priorities of the EU policies (Buchta, 2007). This chapter is focused on approaches to addressing social problems in rural areas from the perspective of economic and social policy on the basis of neo-endogenous principles (see the Chapter 14.1).

17.3.1 Building the local societal capital

Social capital and trust are the fundaments of local economic and social development.

Re-birth of social networks may be even more important, as it is a prerequisite for reconstruction of physical infrastructure. Thus, the process of local economic development shall start with activities focusing on capacity building and renewal of relations in a community, and not with economic activities (Cloke et al., 2006).

Societal capital (Chapter 1.1) is a social source of development. Therefore, it is necessary to build and strengthen the **human and cultural capital and build cooperation, partnership, and social capital** in social development.

The principles of **activation** and **participation** are based on the neo-endogenous approach to the territorial development. Participatory development based on democratic management is currently widely applied (not only) in the regional development.

Social capital is built on **shared values** which need to be protected. **Building local and regional patriotism and identity** can be helpful in this respect.

Social innovations have been trendy in many spheres during the last 10 years. **Social marketing**, aimed at influencing human behaviour in order to improve their quality of life, is also an instrument of the regional development.

17.3.2   Tasks of social policy

In our territory, social policy is perceived as a set of systematic steps (public policies) aimed at (see the Chapter 3.1):

▶ creating proper conditions for human life, and

▶ responding to social risks and their possible consequences.

With respect to characteristics of rural areas, rural communities, and social problems attributed to them, social policy shall at all levels use the instruments focused on:

▶ **building and strengthening human capital** (high-quality, accessible education, including life-long education, support for acquiring skills – dual education, informal education, support for distance learning modules),

▶ **labour force stabilisation** (creation of job opportunities – small and family businesses, start-ups, shared premises for economic activities, business incubators, retro-innovations – return to traditional production in new ways, social economy and social agriculture),

▶ **social inclusion** (strengthening communication between self-government authorities and citizens, communication within and between groups, social inclusion of excluded groups and individuals in the labour market and society – social economy and social agriculture, removing barriers hindering inclusion),

▶ **activation and support for participation** (ensuring volunteering and contribution of individuals and groups to solving their own problems, community-based development),

▶ **development of social services** (innovative forms of providing social services, cumulation and combined and shared forms of social services, electronic services, community-based services),

▶ **social marketing and consulting** (simple and well-planned means of informing, information systems friendly to all target groups, development of innovative consulting services).

The design of social policy measures at all levels of management and their coordination shall respect the existing needs (e.g. introduction of specific social policy instruments in sparsely populated regions – field services, electronic services, community-base services, cumulation of social and care services, information system).

Social policy at regional and local level shall take into consideration economic and social specificities of territories and communities. Great deal of attention shall be paid to the design of the social policy instruments so that their misuse, parasitism, and social erosion could be prevented.

17.3.3   Rural economy

The development of rural economy is directly related to the social development of rural areas. Building and development of economic base of rural areas shall stand on **re-localization** and **building of a local economy**. Local economy shall strive to **stabilise the well-educated labour force** in rural areas.

Diversification of economic activities and renewal of local systems in rural areas, including agriculture (**multifunctional agriculture**), are of importance. Local agriculture is the base for production of local and regional food products (globalization is replaced by localization – re-localization, "glocalization"). Regional food production and **community-supported agriculture** can support the regional self-sufficiency, and, ultimately, food security.

Košturiak (2018) and others talk about **shared economy and shared services** (shared logistics, clouds, etc.) in rural areas.

As it has been already mentioned in the Chapter 14.1.1, Sayer and Walker (1992) claim that **social economy** shall become a standard in rural development. Social entrepreneurship has positive effects on target groups and the whole community. A municipality which is starting with entrepreneurship or social entrepreneurship (**community-based entrepreneurship**) can run its activities with help of such entrepreneurship more cheaply and efficiently. **Social agriculture** (see the Chapter 16) is also a form of social economy.

Economic and non-economic activities in rural areas shall be all connected into a sustainable system based on the ideas of **circular economy** and self-sufficiency with regard to raw materials and energy (regional energetics).

It is necessary to **coordinate the sectoral policies in the fields related to the environmental protection, preservation of cultural heritage, land restoration, development of public infrastructure, computerisation, development of tourism** etc. in rural areas.
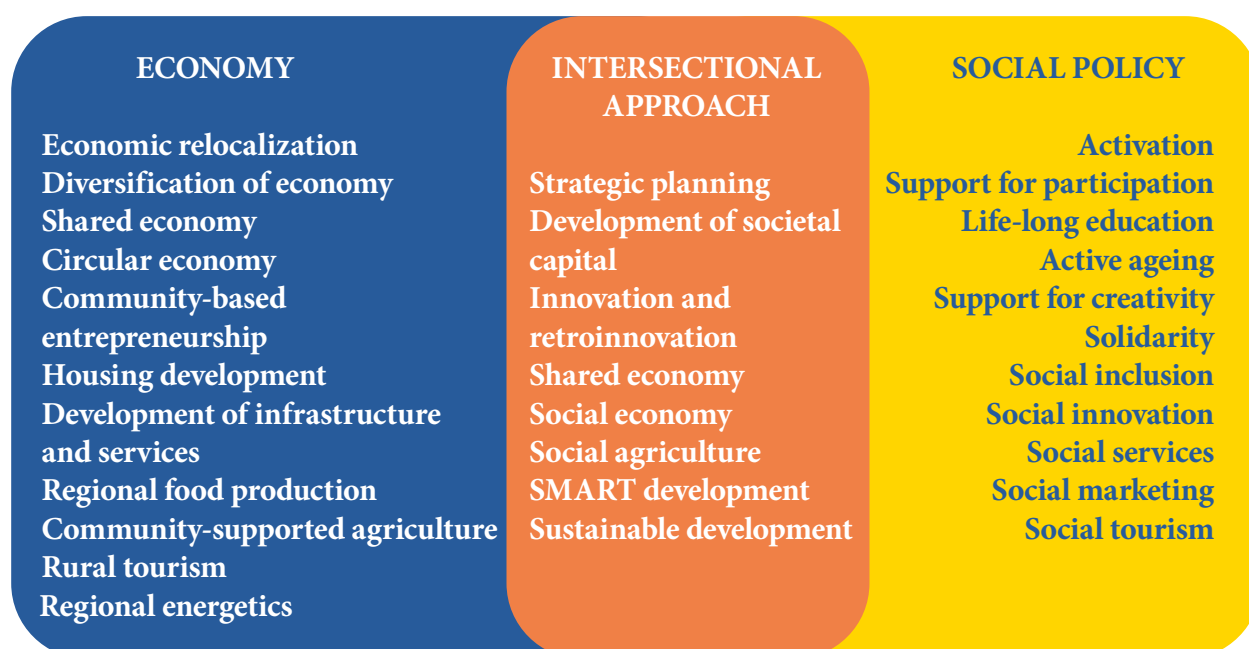
ECONOMY	INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH	SOCIAL POLICY
Economic relocalization		Activation
Diversification of economy	Strategic planning	Support for participation
Shared economy	Development of societal capital	Life-long education
Circular economy		Active ageing
Community-based entrepreneurship	Innovation and retroinnovation	Support for creativity
Housing development	Shared economy	Solidarity
Development of infrastructure and services	Social economy	Social inclusion
Regional food production	Social agriculture	Social innovation
Community-supported agriculture	SMART development	Social services
Rural tourism	Sustainable development	Social marketing
Regional energetics		Social tourism

Figure 27: Approaches and instruments of social and economic development of rural areas (Source: Authors' own processing)

The so-called **SMART development** is trendy (SMART city, SMART rural region, SMART community); it is based on well-planned activities, leading to synergic development and support through information technologies.

The Figure 27 shows summarization of approaches and instruments of social and economic development of rural areas.

Chapter 17 terminology

- ✔ **social intervention**
- ✔ **social marketing**
- ✔ **circular economy**
- ✔ **SMART development**
- ✔ **retro-innovations**
- ✔ **community-based entrepreneurship**

Chapter 17 follow up questions

1. **Explain the principle of community-supported agriculture.**
2. **Explain the principle of shared services.**
3. **What is the essence of the re-localization of an economy?**

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