

Okrasa, Włodzimierz

Article

Quality of Life and Spatial Cohesion: Interaction of Development and Well-being in the Local Context (QLISC), 17-18 November, Warsaw, Poland

Statistics in Transition New Series

Provided in Cooperation with:

Polish Statistical Association

Suggested Citation: Okrasa, Włodzimierz (2016) : Quality of Life and Spatial Cohesion: Interaction of Development and Well-being in the Local Context (QLISC), 17-18 November, Warsaw, Poland, Statistics in Transition New Series, ISSN 2450-0291, Exeley, New York, NY, Vol. 17, Iss. 4, pp. 789-792,
<https://doi.org/10.21307/stattrans-2016-053>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/207843>

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STATISTICS IN TRANSITION new series, December 2016
Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 789—792

REPORT

Quality of Life and Spatial Cohesion: Interaction of Development and Well-being in the Local Context (QLiSC), 17-18 November, Warsaw, Poland

The conference organized by the Central Statistical Office of Poland (CSO) and the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (CSWU) was held on 17-18 November at the CSWU campus. The conference was sponsored by the European Union Cohesion Fund (as a part of the EU Technical Assistance Operational Programme 2014-2020).

It was opened by the CSWU Rector, **Rev. Prof. Dr. Stanisław Dziekoński**, whose welcome speech was followed by those from the members of the Honorary Committee: **Dr. Grazyna Marciniak** – Vice-President of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) of Poland, on behalf of the CSO President, **Dr. Dominik Rozkrut**; **Rev. Archbishop Henryk Hoser** SAC (Archdiocese of Warsaw-Praga); and **Rev. Prof. Dr. Sławomir Zareba** – Dean of the History and Social Science Faculty of the CSWU; and by **Prof. Dr. Włodzimierz Okrasa** – head of the conference Scientific Organizing Committee (and Moderator of the conference).

The conference was devoted to the review of the current research experience, along with the conceptual, measurement, and practical issues concerning relationships between the quality of life and well-being (of individuals, families and households) and the development of territorial units (municipalities or communes, like *gmina* in Poland, or regions, etc.), and to exchanging ideas for a possible future research agenda.

Two key note speakers, **Prof. Dr. Graham Kalton** (Westat and the University of Maryland, USA) and **Prof. Dr. Filomena Maggino** (University of Florence, Italy) overviewed some of the frontier issues from methodological and conceptual standpoints, respectively: G. Kalton talked about *Estimating Quality of Life and Wellbeing at the Local Level – The Role for Small Area Estimation*; F. Maggino about *Quality of Life and Social Cohesion: Defining and Measuring Subjective Aspects*.

As it was expected, a wide range of papers on substantive and methodological problems approached from the multidisciplinary perspective was presented at the conference, with reference often made to the ‘locality’ and space.

The first (plenary) session - *Spatial aspects of wellbeing and cohesion* - chaired by **Graham Kalton** was composed of the following presentations:

- Włodzimirz Okrasa: *Community Cohesion and Individual Wellbeing - multilevel spatial approach*;
- Jan Kordos: *Small Area Estimation for the Quality of Life and Spatial Cohesion Indicators*;
- Zhanjun Xing and Quan Zhang: *Spatial cohesion and subjective well-being of the elderly*;
- Krzysztof Zagórski: *Individual and regional relative income and 'life satisfaction'*.

As a session's satellite event, a workshop „What we do not know about statistics?” was organized by directors of departments at the CSO, **Dominika Rogalinska and Renata Bielak**. It was envisioned as a way to familiarize the CSWU students with modern tools and forms of using statistical information in social research - the workshop was well attended.

The two parallel sessions were devoted to: *Objective and subjective dimensions of the spatial characteristics of quality of life and Welfare / wellbeing and local cohesion*

During the first one, chaired by **Czesław Domański**, the following papers were presented:

- Elżbieta Bojanowska: *The development of social services in the local environment from the perspective of the state social policy*;
- Tomasz Panek: *Dilemmas of measuring quality of life*;
- Przemysław Śleszyński, Jerzy Bański, Marek Degórski and Tomasz Komornicki: *Delimitation of the natural, social and economic problem areas in Poland*;
- Anna Szukielojć-Bieńkuńska, Tomasz Piasecki and Karol Sobestjański: *Territorial differentiation of subjective wellbeing in Poland*.

The second session, chaired by **Krzysztof Wielecki**, encompassed presentations:

- Artur Czech and Teresa Słaby: *Spatial cohesion of Polish households – meanders of taxonomic analysis*;
- Anna Barwińska-Małajowicz and Bogusław Ślusarczyk: *The functioning of the labor market and the quality of life at the local level*;
- Marcin Szymkowiak and Łukasz Wawrowski: *The measurement of poverty at the low levels of spatial aggregation*;
- Marek Degórski: *Quality of life and the provision of ecosystem*.

The second day of the conference started with a lecture of **Janusz Czapiński**, an invited speaker, who talked about *Subjective wellbeing – interpretations in theory and empirical research*.

The following two sessions focused on different aspects of inequalities. The session on *Spatial inequalities of quality of life* was chaired by **Filomena Maggino** – it included five presentations:

- Czesław Domański and Alina Jędrzejczak: *Measurement of income inequality at the sub-national level using the SAE techniques*;
- Semen Matkovskyy and Svitlana Zimovina: *Quality of life in transborder areas – health and material conditions of life*;
- Daniel Skobla: *Exploring the living conditions of the Roma population in Slovakia: the atlas of Roma communities*;
- Marek Cierpiał-Wolan: *The well-being paradox in transborder areas*;
- Second Bwanakare: *Cross-Entropy Econometrics and Income Redistribution Trough a Social Accounting Matrix: The Polish Case Study*.

Another session, *Factors of differentiations household – community – subregion*, chaired by **Marek Cierpiał-Wolan** included the following presentations:

- Edyta Mazurek: *The impact of tax-free amount on the financial situation of households and the state budget*;
- Rev. Wojciech Sadłoń: *Quality of life and religion*;
- Tomasz Kasprzak: *The influence of Euroregions on local development – the case of the Euroregion Cieszyn Silesia*;
- Andrzej Młodak and Tomasz Józefowski: *Taxonomic poverty measures for subregions*;
- Tomasz Komornicki: *The improvement of spatial accessibility and quality of life*.

The conference was concluded with Panel of experts, with the participation of Włodzimierz Okrasa as a moderator, and Graham Kalton, Filomena Maggino, Zhanjung Xing, Grazyna Marciniak, and with active involvement of the audience.

In addition to regular sessions, a poster session was also organized, with high quality poster presentations by:

- Grzegorz Gudaszewski, Dariusz Winkler: *The development characteristics of communes (gminas) and the spatial distribution of the beneficiaries of the program “500-plus”*;
- Marta Kusterka-Jefmańska: *Quality of life and sustainable urban development*;
- Anna Pluskota: *Empowerment and wellbeing of local communities – studies of dependency*;
- Krzysztof Błoński and Bartłomiej Jefmański: *The differentiations of the quality of life in the Wałecz county*;
- Cyprian Kozyra: *Application in Poland of convergence and divergence models of the local tax charges incurred by the residents of the local governance units*;

- Przemysław Śleszyński: *Uncontrolled urbanization and its socio-economic costs*;
- Piotr Zawada: *Wellbeing of the middle class in local community – the case of Strugu Valley*.

Out of several types of conference results – in terms of both substantive and methodological achievements - one that seems to be worthwhile mentioning is the confirmation of the underlying assumption that spatial aspects of quality of life and local development provide a convenient platform for multi- and interdisciplinary policy research, which is especially promising from the evidence-based program design and evaluation, and policy-making perspective.

Prepared by

Włodzimierz Okrasa