

Introduction

This poster represents perceptions of youths' subjective wellbeing (SWB) mainly focusing on the evaluations of their happiness and satisfaction with life. Research about youth SWB is an underdeveloped field of research in Lithuania. It is even more obvious that science lacks research on the SWB of young people based on a territorial approach. The territorial point of view while evaluating youth SWB means that youth SWB and its tendencies are analyzed focusing on place of living (or place of residence). Youth SWB research are important because they not only reveal the aspects and problems of the current life of this social group, but also highlights the expectations, fears associated with the future. SWB includes comprehensive assessments of a person's (in this case – youth) own life (positive and negative), the need for cognition, reactions to experiences, and the influence of experience on the assessment of current life, it is the complete satisfaction of one's life, happiness. Following this concept, it should be emphasized the benefit of youth SWB research:

- the existing studies about youth wellbeing are fragmented, inconsistent in Lithuania;
- the elevation of an individual/social group (their demands, values, priorities) as the central object of the wellbeing research;
- the observation of the youth wellbeing serves for the social, place-based (local), regional and national policy;
- the disparities of regions enable to explore the priorities in improving SWB (specific social, vulnerable groups, passive communities, etc.);
- bring together different actors across sectors into shared and effective action;
- opportunities for scientists to exchange information on research issues specific to youth SWB;
- assists in observing the changes of SWB during a long time;
- it is not easy to collect official statistics on objective wellbeing (there are no clearly developed/distinguished indicators), so SWB research provides useful information on youth, etc.

The research object – subjective wellbeing of youth.

The aim of the research – is to reveal the attitudes and tendencies of youth SWB in Lithuania by emphasizing territorial peculiarities.

Key words: youth, subjective wellbeing, happiness, satisfaction with life, territorial disparities.



Acknowledgment. Preparation of the article and its publication was supported by the Research Council of Lithuania project No. VS-3 Implementation of membership in ESS.

Methodology

- Tendencies of youth SWB assessment for particular indicators were characterized comparing the data of ESS Round 9 in 2018 with ESS Round 4 in 2008.
- The target group – young people, whose age according to the ESS is 15-29 years group. Youth of 15-29 years old in ESS Round 9 accounted for 10.3 percent (188 young people) from all respondents, and the sample from ESS Round 4 (2008) – 545 respondents (28 percent from all respondents).
- Territorial units (considered as place of living) in ESS is divided in such groups: big city, suburbs or outskirts of a big city, a town or a small city, a country village, a farm or home in the countryside. Whether to make easier comparison by territories, it was decided to combine some groups: a big city + the suburbs or outskirts of a big city (understood as cities with suburbs); a country village + a farm or home in the countryside (understood as rural areas); a town or a small city - left as it is.
- The focus (following ESS questionnaire) was on issues related to the concept of a good life for young people: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? Mentioned questions were evaluated using 10-point Likert scale, where 0 means "Extremely dissatisfied" or "Extremely unhappy" and 10 means "Extremely satisfied" or "Extremely happy".
- There were used such research methods: comparative analysis, statistical analysis, graphical representation.

Results

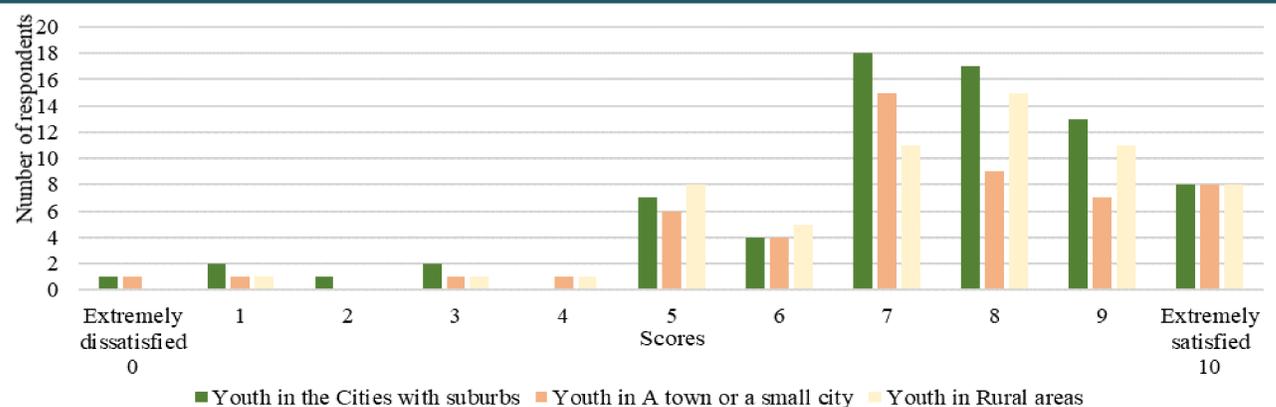


Figure 1. Youth opinion by living place on whether they are satisfied with their current life in ESS Round 8 (2018) (in scores)

Satisfaction with current life differs by living place. Although the scores are high enough in all territorial units, youth living in cities with suburbs and in rural areas were more satisfied with current life than those living in a town or a small city. There are various assumptions here as to why such choices were made, but those living in big cities naturally have a greater access to a variety of services, leisure activities, etc., which are typical for young people. On the other hand, young people living in rural areas probably included more natural, healthier living environment factors in their assessments, which is less so in cities with suburbs. Comparing ESS Round 9 (2018) with Round 4 (2008) data, it was observed that assessment of satisfaction with current life in ESS Round 4 were more diverse and more young people reported 0-4 scores, with a significant number of respondents choosing 5 scores. There has been positive development over the years as seen in the ESS Round 9 assessments.

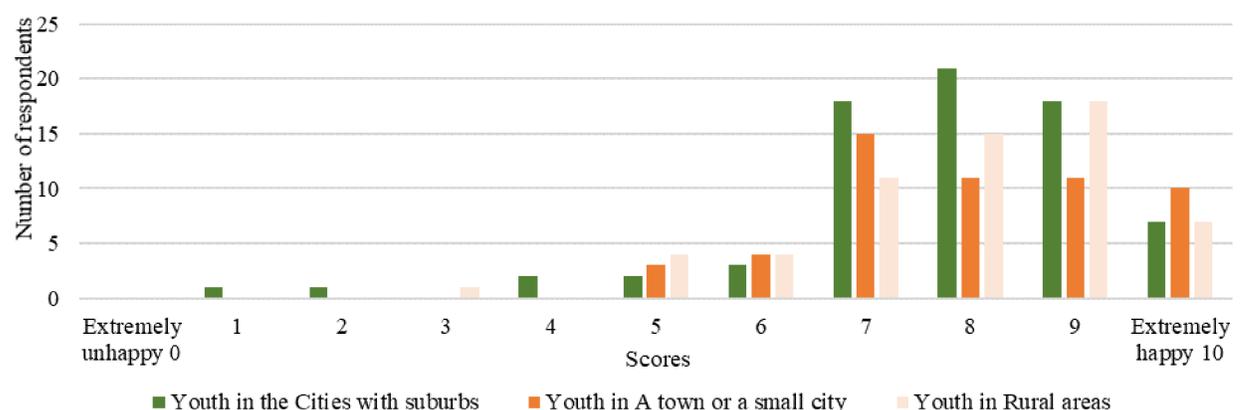


Figure 2. Youth opinion by living place on whether they are they are happy in ESS Round 8 (2018) (in scores)

Results suggest that young people are more happy than unhappy. Most rated their happiness with a scores of 7-9. Only a very small proportion were those who doubted whether they were happy or not, i. y. indicated 5 scores. In terms of living place, as in terms of satisfaction with current life, the happiest were those living in the cities with suburbs and in rural areas. However, young people living in a town or a small city indicated that their ratings of happiness are higher than satisfaction with their current life. In addition, it is important to emphasize that even by living place there were very few respondents who reported 0-4 scores, i.e., that they are unhappy. Comparing ESS Round 9 with Round 4 data, it was observed that assessments of happiness were very similar, as in both rounds' respondents indicated 6-10 scores, i.e., that they were more happy than unhappy.

Main conclusions

It can be assumed that different groups of young people by different territories perceive and value their wellbeing on the basis of a variety of factors. These results are supplemented by various mentioned authors, who are interested in this research field. The results of the study showed that: young people in Lithuania are quite satisfied with their lives, as well as happy enough, because relatively high evaluation scores dominate; it can be assumed that the satisfaction of life and happiness of different age groups of young people are determined by various factors specific to that particular group especially in separate territorial units; youth living in cities with suburbs and rural areas were more satisfied with their current life and happier compared to a town or a small city youth. Territorial differences of youth SWB, although little analyzed, are an important object of youth cognition as they provide information about how young people perceive their wellbeing.