

Summary

Improvements in living conditions and **quality of life** of all citizens, and particularly of those to whom belongs the future – the **children**, can be considered as a key indicator of every country's development. In the face of **demographic change**, it becomes increasingly important how countries care for particular needs and rights of the youngest citizens.

An important role of each country in shaping appropriate conditions for child growth and development was recognized by adopting in 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**. According to the Convention, every child has the right to life, to the best possible health, to an education and also to **say what they think** in all matters affecting them, and to have their **views taken seriously**.

Defining and acknowledging fundamental children's rights is important but often insufficient for successful child's development. Nevertheless, it is one thing to **acknowledge child's right** and another, very different thing to **create living conditions** that support fulfilling their **developmental potential**. In the hope for the youth quality of life and development perspectives improvement, it is also essential to **create mechanisms** to assess, prioritize, monitor and evaluate environmental improvements for children.

The **children's subjective well-being** research is a relatively **new** field. Currently intensive work is taking place on it, however significantly **limited** by a lack of internationally comparable data and statistics. Although monitoring different aspects of children's lives is recognized as being an important task particularly on national level, cross national comparisons – as underlined by UNICEF – are not less important. By revealing strengths and weaknesses of individual countries, they allow to evaluate what is possible to achieve in today's world.

While exploring the youngest's well-being, it is justified to base the research on **child-centred indicators**, and above all to recognize such domains as the quality of parenthood, symptoms of child neglect and exploitation, exposure to violence in home, and farther the quality and safety of the environment the children live in, their relations with peers and teachers, exposure to media influence, mental and emotional health, and lastly child's tendency to emulate patterns of behaviour. In addition, it is worthwhile to **confront** an adult view of childhood with evaluations made by the children themselves.

The **subject** of the proposed study is the **children's subjective well-being**, defined as the youngster's individual conviction about the level of achievements of his or her life needs, understood in terms of satisfaction, happiness and fears. In accordance with this concept, there is no more direct and more credible way of evaluating the children's well-being, than to turn to them through. Aspiring to the respect of the children's rights, we should **allow** them to **express** their **opinions** on the reality – the **child's voice matters**.

The **main aim** of the planned study is to **identify determinants** and **differentiation** of the **subjective well-being** of school-age **children in Poland** in comparison to their peers from other countries. The study will be conducted as a part of the third wave of an **international** project *Children's Worlds – International Study of Children's Well-being (ISCWeB)*.

The **crucial objective** of the ISCWeB project is to **acquire** an extensive **knowledge** about **children's lives**, their relations with parents and peers, everyday activities, the leisure time use, but first of all their perception of the different preselected domains of life. The achievement of this objective will contribute to **filling** the significant **gap** in the access to **up-to-date** and internationally **comparable data** on **children's subjective well-being**, which have so far constituted substantial limitation of the research of this field. The data gathered in the project can help the parents, communities, organizations as well as governments on all levels to take actions aimed at **ensuring** every child the **best possible start in life**.