ANALYSIS OF THE HUMANISM PRINCIPLE IN TODAY’S IN ECONOMIES OF FORMER SOVIET UNION COUNTRIES

This publication aims at analyzing of the dominant of the humanism principle in today’s in economies in the new European Union (EU) Member States, the Baltic States and Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine, with special emphasis on Human Development Index (HDI), and to compare them on the Europe and welt development level. This section is focused on Member States of the former Soviet Union countries on human development, in particular in HDI-index, life expectancy at birth, gross national income per capita, Gini-index, poverty and other indicators.

Scientific novelty is analysis of human development quality of between very high and high human development countries, of between the two very different groups the former Soviet Union countries and also short secular humanism analysis.

Keywords: secular humanism, Human Development Index, life expectancy, gross national income per capita, human development countries, former Soviet Union countries.

HUMANISM is the appreciation of a human being and humanity, which appeared in late medieval Italy and spread also to other parts of Europe in Early Modern times. Humanism is the philosophical and ethical position that emphasizes the individual and collective value and agency of human beings, and generally prefers critical thinking and evidence over the established doctrine or faith. The meaning of the term “humanism” has fluctuated correspondingly to the successive intellectual movements which have been identified with it. [1]

Humanism is addressed by the International Humanist and Ethical Union or the British Humanist Association. In modern times humanist movements are typically associated with secularism. Today humanism typically refers to the non-theistic way of life focused on human agency and looking at science instead of religious dogmas in order to understand the world. [2]

Typically humanism can be divided into three types: the renaissance, secular and religious. The philosophy of secular humanism embraces human reason, ethics and philosophical naturalism as the basis of morality and decision making, while specifically rejecting the religious dogma, supernaturalism, pseudoscience, and superstition. Secular humanism says that human beings are capable of being ethical and moral without any religion. It does not, however, assume that humans are either inherently evil or innately good, nor does it present humans as being superior to the nature. Rather, the humanist life position emphasizes the unique responsibility faced by the humanity and the ethical consequences of human decisions. Fundamental to the concept of secular humanism is the strongly believed idea that ideology - be it religious or political - must be thoroughly examined by each individual and not simply accepted or rejected on faith. [3-5] Today the problems of humanism are numerous. Economic shocks, health shocks, natural disasters, climate change, industrial hazards, conflict, civil unrest. The poor, informal workers, entire communities and regions socially excluded. Women, people with disabilities, migrants, minorities, children, the elderly, limited capabilities of youth, their position in the society, sensitive periods in the life cycle, low social cohesion, unresponsive institutions, poor governance. Who is vulnerable to what and why?

The relevance of the idea of humanism will appear in 2015, which is confirmed by the present publication. A new report by Oxfam Heralds demonstrates changes in attitudes towards inequality. [6]

States will be judged not only by economic indicators, but also more by social factors. The ultimate goal of economic policies of the Western democratic states is achieving the general welfare of the people. Their fundamental social values include freedom, justice and security. By word of mouth almost all modern economists and business leaders in the majority of international organizations, national constitutions and charters of political parties recognize the dominant principle of humanism. But in reality things are different. There are objective and subjective reasons for this.

How can one measure the wellbeing of the people? Generally, it is measured by income. But price levels and other direct and indirect factors are important as well. As a rule, countries are compared by GDP per capita, but GDP is not always the best method. [7]

HDI is a composite index measuring average achievements in three basic dimensions of human development - long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standards of living. HDI is a composite statistics of life expectancy, education, and income indices, used to rank countries into four tiers of human development. It was in the UN Development Programme. [8]

HDI classifications are based on HDI fixed cut-off points, which are derived from the quartiles of distribution of component indicators. The HDI cut-off points are less than 0.550 for low human development, 0.550-0.699 for medium human development, 0.700-0.799 for high human development and 0.800 or greater - very high human development. [9]

This analysis is based on the HDI-index, life expectancy at birth, Gini-index, poverty and other indicators. Methodology and basic concepts are in detail available in the sources [9 -14].

The lowest regional HDI values are registered for Sub-Saharan Africa (0.502) and South Asia (0.588), and the highest is for Latin America and the Caribbean (0.740), followed closely by Europe and Central Asia (0.738). The
Tab. 1

| Human development group | HDI value | Life expectancy at birth (years) | Mean years of schooling (years) | Gross national income per capita (2011 PPP $) |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|                         | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 |
| Very high               | 0.885 | 0.890 | 79.7 | 80.2 | 11.7 | 11.7 | 38,548 | 40,046 |
| High                    | 0.723 | 0.735 | 73.9 | 74.5 | 8.1  | 8.1  | 11,584 | 13,231 |
| Medium                  | 0.601 | 0.614 | 67.1 | 67.9 | 5.5  | 5.5  | 5,368  | 5,960  |
| Low                     | 0.479 | 0.493 | 58.2 | 59.4 | 4.1  | 4.2  | 2,631  | 2,904  |
| Sub-Saharan Africa      | 0.468 | 0.502 | 55.2 | 56.8 | 4.8  | 4.8  | 2,935  | 3,152  |
| South Asia              | 0.573 | 0.588 | 66.4 | 67.2 | 4.7  | 4.7  | 4,732  | 5,195  |
| World                   | 0.693 | 0.702 | 70.3 | 70.8 | 7.7  | 7.7  | 12,808 | 13,723 |

very high human development group - as measured by the HDI - has a value of 0.890, considerably higher than that of the medium and low human development groups. But lower human development groups continue to converge with the higher levels. While all regions are showing improvement, signs of a slowdown are emerging - as measured by the growth rate of HDI values.

We will analyze two very different groups of member states of the former Soviet Union.

There were 49 very high human development countries. Since 2001, the first was Norway. In 2014 HDI of Norway was 0.944. It was followed by Australia (0.933). United States (0.914) were the 5th and Germany (0.911) – the 6th. All the Nordic countries and the new EU Member States can still fit in this group. 25 - Slovenia (HDI = 0.874), 28 - Czech Republic (0.861), and all three Baltic countries: 33 - Estonia (0.840), 35 - Lithuania (0.834), 48 - Latvia (0.810).

There were 53 high human development countries. There were, among others: 53 - Belarus (HDI = 0.786), 57 - Russia (0.778), 70 - Kazakhstan (0.757), 83 - Ukraine (0.734) and 91 - China (0.719).

The list of medium human development countries included India – 135th, HDI = 0.586.

The list of low human development countries was closed by Niger – the last 187th rank and HDI = 0.337.

This data contains the average number of years to be lived by a group of people born in the same year, if mortality at each age remains constant in the future. Life expectancy at birth is also a measure of overall quality of life in a country. It summarizes the mortality at all ages. It can also be thought of as indicating the potential return on investment in human capital. It is necessary for the calculation of various actuarial measures.

From 1980 to 2013 life expectancy at birth has increased from 6.9 (Very high) to 11.0 (Medium) times. Difference between very high human development and low human development countries has decreased strongly, but it is still 20.8 years or one generation.

In 2013 the life expectancy at birth was: in Norway - 81.5, in United States - 78.9 and in Germany - 80.7 years. From

Tab. 2

| Countries of the Human Development Index and its components [9] |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Human Development Index | Life expectancy at birth | Mean years of schooling | Expected years of schooling | Gross national income per capita (2011 PPP $) | Change in rank of HDI |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| HDI rank                | 2013 | 2012 | 2012 | 2013 | 2012–13 |                                     |
| VERY HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT                                      |
| 33 Estonia              | 0.840 | 74.4 | 12.0 | 16.5 | 23,387 | 0                                     |
| 35 Lithuania            | 0.834 | 72.1 | 12.4 | 16.7 | 23,740 | 1                                     |
| 48 Latvia               | 0.810 | 72.2 | 11.5 b | 15.5 | 22,186 | 0                                     |
| HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT                                          |
| 53 Belarus              | 0.786 | 69.9 | 11.5 | 15.7 | 16,403 | 1                                     |
| 57 Russia               | 0.778 | 68.0 | 11.7 | 14.0 | 22,617 | 0                                     |
| 83 Ukraine              | 0.734 | 68.5 | 11.3 | 15.1 | 8,215  | 0                                     |
| World                   | 0.702 | 70.8 | 7.7  | 12.2 | 13,723 | —                                     |
1980 to 2013 it has increased by 5.9, 5.1 and 7.7 years.

In 2008 the life expectancy at birth in Macau was 84.33 and in Swaziland - 31.99 years. Difference was 2.6 times (!). Life expectancy at birth was in Sierra Leone in 1990 37.4 and in 1991 - 38.1; in Zimbabwe in 2000 and in 2005 - 44.0; in Angola in 1980 - 40.2 and in 1985 - 40.2; in the Central African Republic in 2000 it was 43.7 and in 2005 - 38.1 years. The difference between countries with the highest life expectancy was over two times. [9]

In 1980-1990 the differences were relatively small, life expectancy in Russia was only a few years lower. The difference has increased greatly since 2005, when the Baltic countries had acceded to the EU. However, the life expectancy of Russian people is more than one generation higher than that of the poor African countries. The figure shows strong difference between the successful Western economies and the former Soviet Union countries. There is also a clear difference between the Baltic States and Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

Life expectancy at birth in Japan in 2014 was 84.46 and in the European Union - 80.02 years. Two of the world’s most populated countries in 2014: 100th China (75.15) and 163rd India (67.80) years. The last three countries in 2014 were: 221st Guinea-Bissau (49.87), 222nd South Africa (49.56) and 223rd Chad (49.44 years).

The difference between life expectancy of women and men in states with higher levels of the national economy is considerably lower than in the former Soviet Union countries. If the life expectancy of Russian women is 7 years lower than the EU average, for men this difference is 13 years (!). Life
expectancy of Russian people is more than one generation higher than that of the poor African countries.

Figures show that the life expectancy at birth of the people of the Baltic countries is significantly higher than in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

**Discussion & conclusions**

- States will be judged not only by economic indicators, but also more by social factors.
- While all regions are showing improvement, signs of a slowdown are emerging - as measured by the growth rate of HDI values.
- By word of mouth almost all modern economists and business leaders in the majority of international organizations, national constitutions and charters of political parties recognize the dominant principle of humanism. But in reality things are different.
- Human development differs greatly from country to country, and does not provide good basis for the inter-country comparison.
- There is strong difference between the successful Western economies and the former Soviet Union countries in life expectancy.
- The life expectancy at birth of the people of the Baltic countries is significantly higher than in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.
- For more details one should also study the Gender Inequality Index, Gender Development Index and Multidimensional Poverty Index, as well as many other indicators.

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