

REVIEW
of the monograph
"HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE, RELATED TO HEALTH"

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The monograph presented to the reader is the result of a study of health and quality of life in the context of social inequalities. It focuses on the fact that achieving good health for all and ensuring equal access to quality healthcare are among the most important tasks for solving social governance at all levels - local, national, global. At the same time, since good health is intrinsically linked to the concept of "good quality of life" and health-related quality of life.

The monograph is structured in three chapters and a conclusion.

The first chapter offers an overview of existing health concepts and their social determinants. Examining the existing definitions of "What is health?", The so-called "Social determinants" of the health. In discussion presented the issue of health as a public priority, attempting to clarify the role of public policies in the country - both nationally and comparatively.

The second chapter is devoted to the topic of quality of life related to health. The issue is mainly concerned with a methodological point of view, with the definitions of quality of life and health-related quality of life discussed alongside the factors affecting quality of life. Also, various instruments have been discussed to operationalize these concepts.

The third chapter presents results from Bulgaria, obtained by the method WHOQOL – Bref (WHO Quality of Life – Bref). The results were obtained as part of a national representative survey conducted in 2015 on the territory of Bulgaria. On this basis, the general state of the different dimensions of the quality of life is presented, and an attempt has been made to clarify the influence of certain factors relevant to them.

The conclusion draws some inference that could be of practical significance in the shaping of public policies in Bulgaria that have an impact on health and quality of life.

Some of the main points on which the authors focus are:

1. They define the public health as one of the most important factors for social development in the modern world. According to them, this determines its function as a phenomenon on which various socio-economic, demographic, cultural, behavioral and other factors of a material and non-material nature, such as civilization development, a system of values, and so on. The impact of these factors is realized through and is dependent on the biogenic nature of man. Throughout the whole monograph, the thread that health is a value in itself, is also a precondition for economic development. People's health penetrates and is an integral part of economic spending in the sense of productivity, working conditions,

human capital, public spending. Health in a given country suffers from the impact of civilization development. It, in turn, is determined by the influence of dominant ideologies, including religions.

2. Health stands high in the hierarchy of the values of each individual, and in this sense the achievement of lasting improvements in the health status of the population and the maintenance of good health of the nation is a constant goal in social development. There is, however, a doubt as to whether this goal is being taken up by decision-makers and, respectively, in government policy. For such a statement, the authors point to the following grounds:

- Irrational cost allocation;
- An adequate public health resource is not allocated;
- Due to budgetary considerations, access to publicly funded healthcare is limited.

3. To substantiate these statements, the authors make the following:

- There are conflicts in the distribution of public health resources. The system is highly bureaucratic. Corruption in healthcare is high. There is no real, equal access to quality health care for almost a third of Bulgarians;
- The limited public resource for health and the price for health of households - public funds for health increase, but in the eyes of citizens the quality of medical care is not getting better. Bulgaria is at the bottom of the ranking according to the separate public resource for health. The authors point out that Bulgaria is the state in which the so- "Health costs out of pocket" are highest among all countries of the European Union. This means that this model of healthcare transfers a huge financial burden on Bulgarian households. Bulgaria is the country with the lowest living standard, but it is also one of the countries in which citizens are forced to pay the highest cost of health out of their pockets.
- Policies to restrict access to public funding - there are a huge number of health-insured persons in Bulgaria. Policies are needed to restore the health insurance rights of about one million uninsured Bulgarians.

4. In the monograph, the determinants of the social environment and health are correctly stated. Health determinants, according to the World Health Organization and the Social Determinants of Health, are mentioned, according to Marmot and Chandola. They define the following social determinants of health: health behavior, material, economic and political, life cycle, social biology, environmental problems, social cohesion, work stress, etc. All of them are precisely reviewed by the authors in the monograph.

5. Self-assessment of health 2007 - 2015 according to EU-SILC is presented. According to the above results, positive health assessments have been made in Bulgaria for the indicated period. According to the authors, the high self-esteem for health comes in some contradiction with the relative shares of people with long-term illness or health problem and with people with a long-lasting restriction in daily activity because of a health problem.

6. Quality of life related to health. The authors of the monograph make an overview of the world-wide writing on the subject, emphasizing that "quality of life" and "health-related life" are not concepts with the same content, although to some extent overlapping.

7. In the monograph, the disability and quality of life related to health is considered in detail and reasonably; research models of health and quality of life are considered; tools for measuring the quality of life are justified.

8. Detailed research on the subject of the monograph is presented in detail:

- The general population subject to the survey are adults over 18 years of age;
- The selected sampling model is multistage nesting; a representative sample of the country with a volume of 800 households;
- Adapted questionnaire about the method WHOQOL - Bref;
- The domains at WHOQOL - Bref are highlighted as follows: Domain №1 - Physical Health; Domain №2 - Mental Health; Domain №3 - Social Relations; Domain №4 - Living Environment.

9. Results from WHOQOL – Bref:

- The population's average health and quality of life estimates are low, the population considers them not as good;
- The elements of the living environment, including financial resources, access to health and social care, environmental quality, etc., have proved particularly problematic for the overall assessment;
- There are groups that on average appreciate their health and quality of life a lot lower than others. These are: the oldest people; people living in villages; people with basic and lower education; people with reduced ability to work;
- The differences across all of the domains discussed are discussed in detail;
- Differences by gender, age, place of residence, and education are also considered.

The monograph is written in an accessible style, which makes it necessary reading for specialists in health care, social care, social activities and the numerous students trained in these areas.

But it is of particular importance to the political class in Bulgaria, which is called upon to ensure the quality of life of the population by producing life strategies, not dead sheets of paper, of which nothing follows. Only in this case will Bulgarian citizens understand that politicians have seriously considered the most important capital of each country - the population; that it is understood the importance of the problem on which the strengthening of the nation depends.