

# The minimum standard of living, a sensitive threshold towards vulnerability and poverty

## Abstract

The phenomenon of poverty is real in any society and produces lasting consequences in the sphere of human development. The Research Institute for Quality of Life (RIQL) uses the normative method as a method for determining poverty and its extent. The Romanian population has a caloric and nutritional factor consumption above the minimum of 2,700 considered the minimum necessary by nutritionists from the Institute of Hygiene and Public Health. Non-food products include clothing, footwear, household items, school supplies and other stationery, medicines. Services include transportation expenses, cultural services, personal hygiene, repair and maintenance of clothing and footwear for adults and children. For the calculation of the consumption needs of a family, a percentage of 10% of the final calculation of the consumer basket was also provided for a savings fund for unforeseen situations. The inability to secure the goods and services fundamental to existence should lead the authorities to these people in order to help them materially, financially or through any other social assistance services.

**Keywords:** consumer basket, social policies, education, housing, families with children, pensioners

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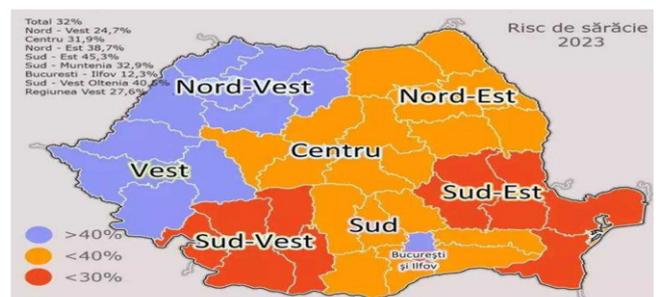
## Introduction

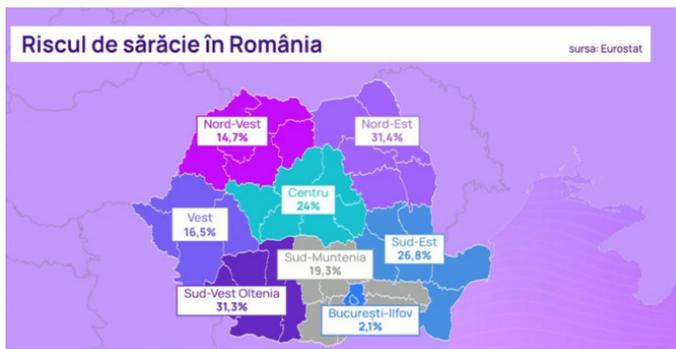
The minimum standard of living for decent consumption involves studying various human needs related to: biological, hygiene, education, health, and culture aspects of people. The complexity of this minimum standard of living stems from the multitude and variety of elements that intertwine to satisfy individual and family consumption needs, but also from the close relationship between these needs and the economic and social framework in which they manifest and develop. The relativity of the minimum standard of living stems from the fact that it is not given forever, but changes depending on several factors, among which the most important would be: the level of economic development achieved by the country, the social and professional environment, climatic and geographical conditions, the level of civilization and culture, the level of income, family size, traditions and customs, etc.

Individuals or families who cannot reach the minimum standard of living for decent living are considered poor. The inability to secure the goods and services fundamental to existence should lead the authorities to these people in order to help them materially, financially or through any other social assistance services. Absolute poverty implies that a person does not have access to meeting basic needs (the individual cannot feed himself or wear clean clothes, does not have access to housing, etc.). This situation leads the person and his family to a life of many deprivations. Relative poverty is assessed in relation to the evolution of the society in which the phenomenon is assessed. The new poor are people who could previously meet their basic needs, but who, for various reasons, are deprived of access to a socially acceptable way of life. These reasons why a person and his family can fall into poverty are: long-term unemployment, a serious illness, over-indebtedness, the death of a family member, divorce, are some of the causes that generate poverty. Romania continues to have the highest risk of poverty in the EU, although it has made significant progress between 2008 and 2023, according to Eurostat data. At the

national level, the at-risk-of-poverty rate has decreased from 44.2% to 32%, as can be seen in the image below.<sup>1</sup>

The Bucharest-Ilfov region has recorded a significant reduction in the at-risk-of-poverty rate, from 34% in 2008 to 12.3% in 2023, due to its accelerated development and its special economic status as the area with the highest standard of living. On the other hand, the North-East and South-East regions remain the most affected. In the North-East, the poverty rate has decreased substantially, from 55.5% to 38.7%, while in the South-East, progress has been minimal, from 46.7% to 45.3%. The South-West Oltenia, North-West, Center and South-Muntenia regions have recorded progress in reducing poverty between 2008 and 2023. South-West Oltenia has decreased from 56.6% to 40.5%, but it remains one of the most affected areas. The North-West (24.7% in 2023) and the Center (31.9% in 2023) had considerable decreases, supported by a diversified economy and European integration. South-Muntenia reduced the poverty rate to 32.9%, but at a slower pace than other regions. Romania recorded a poverty risk rate of 32% in 2023, compared to a European average of 21%. Moldova and Oltenia were the regions with the highest risk of poverty, according to data from the European Statistical Office (Eurostat), while at the opposite end, the lowest risk of poverty was in the Bucharest-Ilfov region, where only 2% of residents are in this situation (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>

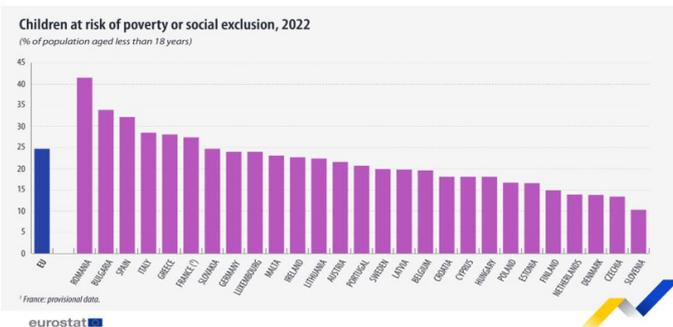




**Figure 1** Decline in the national at-risk-of-poverty rate (44.2% to 32%)

Source: Eurostat, 2024.<sup>1</sup>

In 2024, the percentage of children under 18 in the European Union at risk of poverty and social exclusion decreased to 24.2%, marking a reduction of 0.6% compared to the previous year (24.8%). This positive trend reflects the continuous efforts of EU Member States to combat poverty and improve social conditions for young citizens. In 2022 at the European Union level, 24.7% of children (around 20 million under 18) were at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Compared to 2021, this percentage increased slightly by 0.3%. In 2022, the highest value was reported in Romania (41.5%), Bulgaria (33.9%) and Spain (32.2%). At the opposite end, Slovenia (10.3%), the Czech Republic (13.4%) and Denmark (13.8%) recorded the lowest percentage (Graph 1).<sup>2</sup>



**Graph 1** Children at risk of poverty and social exclusion, 2022.<sup>2</sup>

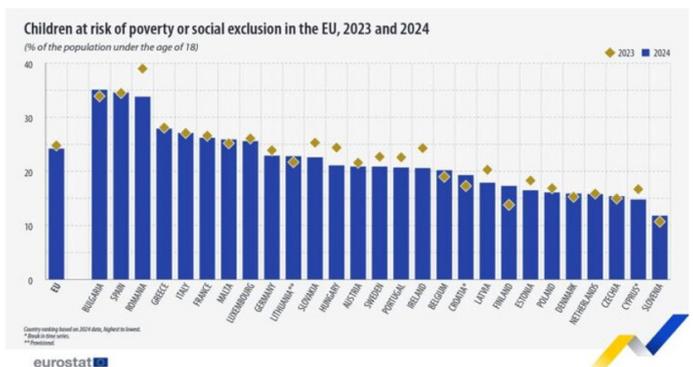
According to data provided by European Statistics on its official Facebook page,<sup>3</sup> the highest risk values were reported in Bulgaria (35.1%), Spain (34.6%) and Romania (33.8%). These figures indicate that there are still significant challenges, which require additional actions to protect vulnerable children in these countries. On the other hand, the lowest values were observed in Slovenia (11.8%), Cyprus (14.8%) and the Czech Republic (15.4%), demonstrating notable progress in these Member States. Slovenia had the lowest percentage of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion, of all EU countries included in the report.

Of all Member States, Romania achieved the most significant reduction in the risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2024 (-5.2 pp), compared to the previous year 2023 (Graph 2).

In light of these considerations, the target group of the National Strategy for Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2022-2027 and of the Action Plan for the period 2022-2027 is represented by the group of poor people and people at risk of social exclusion, including people who, due to unforeseen circumstances, are facing

transitional situations of poverty or social exclusion.<sup>3</sup> The specific objectives and measures consider the following categories:

- i People at risk of poverty (AROP)/relative poverty – incomes that are below the threshold of 60% of the median income, expressed per equivalent adult. Thus, the objective is to achieve a reduction in the number of these people by at least 7% compared to the reference value for 2020 by 2027. Simultaneously with the reduction in the number of people in relative poverty, the objective of the Strategy is to reduce the level of income inequality, measured by the Gini index.
- ii People in severe material deprivation (SMD). In 2018, approximately 3.2 million people were in SMD, but given the downward trend (in 2007 approximately 8 million people were in SMD, and in 2016 approximately 4.7 million) the objective is to achieve a reduction of the number of these people by at least 20% compared to the 2020 baseline by 2027.
- iii People living in low work intensity households (LWIM). In 2018 approximately 1.1 million people lived in LWIM households, the objective for 2027 being to reduce the number of these people by at least 20% compared to the 2020 baseline.
- iv People who are considered to belong to vulnerable groups: children and young people in the preparation period for reintegration into society after a period of special protection (including those deprived of parental support); elderly people (alone or dependent and/or with long-term care needs); people with disabilities (children and adults); people with a low level of education; people living in marginalized urban or rural areas; long-term unemployed; Roma people who are direct or indirect victims of discrimination based on ethnic criteria; homeless people; people deprived of their liberty; released people, in the period of social reintegration; immigrants in a situation of vulnerability, including asylum seekers and foreigners who have acquired a form of international protection in Romania; people who are victims of human trafficking; people who use drugs, etc.



**Graph 2** Children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in UE, 2023 and 2024.<sup>3</sup>

From this point of view, this Strategy is complementary to sectoral strategies (regarding employment, etc.). People who due to unforeseen circumstances, face transient situations of monetary poverty (mainly generated by lack of income) or social exclusion. People may find themselves in several of these situations, as follows: some of the people mentioned above are also in relative poverty and severe material deprivation and may live in a household with low work intensity. They may also be part of the vulnerable groups listed. Oriented towards investments in people (vulnerable and

needy people, children, young people, adults, elderly people, etc.), education and training, social protection and also towards prevention, the Strategy proposes a framework that ensures opportunities and equal opportunities necessary for them to be able to maximize their potential for harmonious personal development, stable insertion in the labor market and active aging and, last but not least, social inclusion. Equally, the Strategy aims, through integrated measures, at results that reflect the reduction of the large gaps between the rural and urban areas, as well as social progress also at the level of poor areas and socio-economically marginalized communities.

## Research methodology: Normative method (RIQL)

The phenomenon of poverty is real in any society and produces lasting consequences in the sphere of human development. The Research Institute for Quality of Life (RIQL) uses the normative method as a method for determining poverty and its extent. It starts from the population's consumption and is based on norms appreciated by specialists regarding the development and manifestation of the person and his family. Within the RIQL, two minimums were calculated using this method: the decent minimum and the subsistence minimum. In order to compare the consumption needs of family members, the equivalence scale or consumption per equivalent adult

is used. The calculation of consumption per equivalent adult starts from the needs of the first active adult in the household, which is given the value 1; continuing with the second adult in the household, it is assumed that the wife of the head of the household has a consumption of 0.9 of the needs of the first adult, that is, the husband. The expenses for the first child represent 0.7 of the expenses of the first adult in the household, i.e. the child's father. The second child consumes 0.5 of the consumption of his father, the first adult in the household. In total, the equivalence scale for a family of two active adults with two dependent children is 3.1 (1+0.9+0.7+0.5).<sup>4</sup> The consumption of Romanian population has above the minimum of 2,700 considered the minimum necessary by nutritionists from the Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, placing itself at the upper limit of caloric consumption, i.e. over 3,200 calories/day. For the rural area, self-consumption is also taken into account, which includes: dairy products (milk, telemea, yogurt, and butter), pork, beef and chicken, lard and eggs, vegetables, root vegetables, fruits obtained from peasant households. Non-food products include clothing, footwear, household items, school supplies and other stationery, medicines. Services include transportation expenses, cultural services, personal hygiene, repair and maintenance of clothing and footwear for adults and children. For the calculation of the consumption needs of a family, a percentage of 10% of the final calculation of the consumer basket was also provided for a savings fund for unforeseen situations (Tables 1 and 2).

## Urban area

**Table 1** Structure of the consumer basket corresponding to the minimum decent living and subsistence for the family of two employees with two dependent children, in October 2025

Crt. no.	Specification	Decent minimum	Subsistence minimum
		For a family of two employees with two children	For a family of two employees with two children
		% and value in lei	% and value in lei
1	Food	47.0 - 1 967.9	52.7 - 1 777.0
2	Clothing	6.6 - 276.3	5.5 - 185.5
3	Housing equipment	3.4 - 142.4	3.1 - 104.5
4	Transportation	7.7 - 322.4	9.4 - 317.0
5	Cultural services	2.6 - 108.9	3.1 - 104.5
6	Personal hygiene	3.1 - 129.8	3.8 - 128.1
7	Clothing/shoe repair and maintenance services	0.7 - 29.3	0.9 - 30.4
8	Housing expenses*	17.5 - 732.7	19.8 - 667.7
9	Medical expenses	1.4 - 58.6	1.7 - 57.3
10	Safety fund	10.0 - 418.7	0
Total		100.0 - 4 187 lei	100.0 - 3 372 lei

\*The housing expenses chapter also included postal and telecommunications expenses, respectively expenses for stationery items.

Total in lei for a family of two adults with two dependent children in urban area	Equivalence Scale	4 187 lei	Equivalence Scale	3 372 lei
Cost of the first active adult	1	1 351 lei	1	1 088 lei
Cost of the second active adult	0.9	1 215 lei	0.9	979 lei
Cost of the first child	0.7	946 lei	0.7	761 lei
Cost of the second child	0.5	675 lei	0.5	544 lei

## Rural area

**Table 2** Structure of the consumer basket corresponding to the minimum decent living and subsistence for a farming family with two dependent children, from the rural area, in October 2025

Crt. no.	Specification	Decent minimum	Subsistence minimum
		For a family of two employees with two children	For a family of two employees with two children
		% and value in lei	% and value in lei
1	Total food consumption, of which:	47.0 - 1 544.9	65.8 - 1 978.6
	- purchased food	16.6 - 545.6	19.1 - 574.3
	- self-consumption food	30.4 - 999.3	46.7 - 1 404.3
2	Clothing	6.6 - 216.9	2.1 - 63.1
3	Housing equipment	3.4 - 111.8	2.1 - 63.1
4	Transportation	7.7 - 253.1	9.4 - 282.7
5	Cultural services	2.6 - 85.5	1.9 - 57.1
6	Personal hygiene	3.1 - 101.9	3.8 - 114.3
7	Clothing/shoe repair and maintenance services	0.7 - 23.0	0.9 - 27.1
8	Housing expenses*	17.5 - 575.2	12.3 - 369.9
9	Medical expenses	1.4 - 46.0	1.7 - 51.1
10	Safety fund	10.0 - 328.7	0
Total		100.0 - 3 287 lei	100.0 - 3 007 lei

\*The housing expenses chapter also included postal and telecommunications expenses, respectively expenses for stationery items.

Total in lei for a family of two adults with two dependent children in rural area	Equivalence Scale 3,1	3 287 lei	Equivalence Scale 3,1	3 007 lei
Cost of the first active adult	1	1 060 lei	1	970 lei
Cost of the second active adult	0.9	955 lei	0.9	873 lei
Cost of the first child	0.7	742 lei	0.7	679 lei
Cost of the second child	0.5	530 lei	0.5	485 lei

## Austerity in the education system

The year 2025 was, for education in Romania, a year of brutal turning points in which promises of reform were materialized through a package of harsh austerity measures adopted to reduce the budget deficit.

Under the pretext of fiscal responsibility, the state cut scholarships for hundreds of thousands of students, merged over 500 schools, increased the number of students in classes, increased teachers' working hours and restricted free transportation. The efficiency proposal is, in fact, a policy that hits the most vulnerable children. The figures speak for themselves: over 345,500 students lost their scholarships in the first two months of the 2025-2026 school year, with approximately 440,000 children completely outside the education system and with the highest early school leaving rate in the European Union – 16.8%, compared to the average of 9.4%.<sup>5</sup> The costs of the education system have tripled in the last seven years, so that 87% of poor families can no longer cover these expenses alone. All these austerity measures come in the context of an already chronically underfunded system. In 2023, Romania allocated only 3.4% of GDP to education, well below the European Union average, which is around 4.6-4.8% of GDP, and far from the 6% target set for years in legislation and public policy documents. In terms of spending per student, Romania remains in the category of states that invest the least in each child, which translates into less money for infrastructure, educational resources, teacher training and support for vulnerable students.

## The education system in austerity

The adoption of Law no. 141 in 2025 fundamentally changed the structure of the Romanian education system. The increase in teaching hours by 2-4 hours per week over a period of five years was presented as necessary, but in reality it means overloading teachers who are already teaching in crowded classes, plus reducing salaries and fewer positions for teachers. Also, the increase in class sizes to 34 students per class in high school has the direct effect of reducing individualized attention and real support for students with difficulties, a measure completely at odds with expert recommendations and current international trends. The most painful measure is the drastic restructuring of the scholarship system. 153,971 students lost their resilience scholarships, almost 3,000 Olympians lost their performance scholarships, and merit scholarships were capped at 15% of the class, down from 30%, according to an analysis conducted by EduPedu<sup>7</sup> based on data provided by the Ministry of Education. While the state talks about equality and merit, the message sent to society, through the measures adopted, is completely the opposite: poor children and those who excel are not (anymore) a priority. Problems with school transportation were also a key cause of school dropout. In fact, transportation for students between localities is only reimbursed for those who cannot study in their locality of residence. Student associations have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that purchasing school minibuses is not the best solution for ensuring student transportation and that the solution lies in ensuring an accessible and predictable county transportation program, which

would provide rides between localities that both students and other social categories who need this public service can rely on.

However, the national “Healthy Meal” program was expanded, being one of the few positive signals in terms of social policies for children. Even so, the number of beneficiaries was capped at 500,000 (compared to the 1 million in the approved program), and implementation is still uneven. In some communities, the program works, while in others, due to tenders, infrastructure or lack of personnel, hot meals remain just a promise.

Romania also went through an austerity experience, including in education, between 2010 and 2013, with devastating long-term results. At that time, the closure of vocational schools, staff cuts and rapid restructuring led to a doubling of the dropout rate in vocational education and the loss of over 700,000 students from the system. An entire generation was deprived of access to trades and professional qualifications, fueling the massive migration that continues today and which generated the chronic shortage of qualified labor that we feel in many economic sectors. In 2024, 16.8% of young Romanians between 18-24 years old left the education system, compared to the EU average of 9.4%, and regional disparities are brutal: the South-East region has 26%, South-Muntenia 19%, Center 21%, while Bucharest only 3%, according to the FES Social Monitor.<sup>6</sup> Over 440,000 children between the ages of 7 and 17 are completely out of the education system, representing 18.7% of the population of this age, eight times more than the OECD average, according to a report by Save the Children.<sup>7</sup> Even though education should be free and the state should finance this free education, public education is still expensive for parents. The average annual cost that parent’s bear for a child has reached almost 10,000 lei, triple compared to 2018, with variations from 6,800 lei for primary education to about 12,000 lei for high school. And this is without tutoring or afterschool, transportation and other hidden or informal expenses. Thus, according to Save the Children, 87% of poor families cannot cover these costs alone, which makes education, a luxury good for many families in Romania.

Every year, approximately 23,000 students drop out of school, generating an economic cost of 2.3 billion euros per year, equivalent to 0.77% of GDP. These figures may seem like simple statistics, but in fact they are lives of children condemned to poverty and exclusion because the state chose to sacrifice education for years, and even more so in 2025. The state promised that, no matter how poor a family is, the child has a real chance through education, without even keeping its promise. In 2025, this contract was knowingly broken. And if there is anything worth remembering at the end of those affected by these austerity decisions, it is that they were not a calculation error, but a choice, a public policy decision.

## Housing imbalances in Romania

Although Romanians have the highest percentage of homeowners in the EU, it seems that the homes they own are cramped, unlike other EU citizens who enjoy more space in their homes. Romanians live in the most crowded housing in the European Union with an overcrowding rate of 45.8%, compared to the European average of 17%.<sup>8</sup>

However, 90% of respondents are satisfied with their personal housing, according to data from a public opinion barometer conducted within the framework of the “Sustainable Romania” project,<sup>9</sup> and 84% say that they have enough space in their home. Eurostat considers a person to live in an overcrowded household if the building does not

have at least one room for the entire household, as well as one room for a couple, for each single person over 18 years of age, for a pair of teenagers (12 to 17 years old) of the same gender, for each teenager of the opposite gender and for a pair of children (under 12 years old). For example, a two-room apartment in which a family consisting of a couple and a child lives is considered overcrowded. The barometer also shows that citizens generally have a perception of their personal homes as safe. Specifically, 83% say that their home is safe in case of possible disasters, extreme weather phenomena (such as floods, very heavy rains, heavy snowfalls, avalanches). In addition, 79% say that their home is safe in case of a possible earthquake. Also, 13% of respondents say that the home they live in is damp, 10% say that the roof is leaking, 9% say that the home has insufficient light, and 6% that they live in homes with rotten windows, floors, or doors. These results are close to Eurostat reports where 10% of Romanians are indicated in 2020 as having such housing problems.

In terms of regional impact, families in urban areas, such as Bucharest or Cluj-Napoca, feel these increases more acutely, given that housing prices and living costs are significantly higher compared to rural areas. For example, a recent study conducted by the State University of Bucharest shows that in the capital, the average cost of a home has increased by 15% in the last 12 months, which contributes to the economic pressure on middle-income families. In addition to increasing costs, it is essential to analyze the impact of these changes on the well-being of families, especially in the context of global economic crises: “the increase in the cost of living can lead to significant financial stress for families, affecting not only the economy, but also health and interpersonal relationships.”<sup>10</sup>

Romania is the EU country with the highest number of people living in overcrowded housing. In 2024, 16.9% of EU citizens lived in overcrowded housing, a slight decline from 18.1% in 2023, according to data published on Monday by the European Statistical Office. In Romania, however, the percentage reaches 40%, the highest in the European Union. More than 30% of people in five EU member states lived in overcrowded housing in 2024. The highest shares were recorded in Romania (40.7%), Latvia (39.3%), Bulgaria (33.8%), Poland (33.7%) and Croatia (31.7%), and the lowest in Cyprus (2.4%), Malta (4.4%) and the Netherlands (4.6%).

Cluj-Napoca remained the most expensive city in the country for those who wanted to buy a home in 2024. The average price requested by owners and developers exceeded 3,200 euros per useful square meter. However, the neighborhoods where you have to pay the most to buy an apartment are in the Capital. The most expensive is the Aviatorilor area, where the useful square meter costs 4,910 euros, and it is followed by the Primăverii, Kiseleff and Herăstrău areas, where prices are around 4,500 euros.<sup>11</sup> The average monthly budget required to rent an apartment in one of the most exclusive areas in Bucharest is the one located between Aviatorilor Boulevard and Calea Dorobanti. It is almost 2,100 euros higher than that requested by tenants in the most expensive area of Cluj, Făget, where the average rent is 820 euros per month. Those who want to move into an apartment located on Drumul Poienii in Braşov have to pay an average of 1,100 euros per month. For an apartment in a building in the Faleză Nord neighborhood in Constanţa, the average monthly rent reaches 1,000 euros. The cheapest neighborhood for renters in big cities can be found in Timişoara, the UMT area; renting an apartment requires an average monthly budget of 220 euros. At the same time, the CET areas in Constanţa, Bularga in Iaşi and Lascăr Catargiu in Craiova offer renters options for a budget under 300 euros per month.

## Conclusion

During the analysis period 1990-2025, the incomes of various families with children or those of pensioners could not keep up with the price increases of products and services on the market. This led to a deterioration in the quality of life of these families in urban and rural areas over time. The dynamics of the incomes of various families with children at high risk of poverty or even chronic poverty compared to the decent living minimum and the subsistence minimum calculated by the normative method within the Research Institute for Quality of Life were:

### Single-parent family with one, two and more children

From the studies conducted by the Research Institute for Quality of Life on the way the population lives, the most delicate position is held by families with dependent children and especially those with more than two children, and in the case of single-parent families, also those with two children. Each additional person, namely a child, in the care of a family, through their own needs can worsen the general situation of the family. To the general income of the family, children contribute a small amount, the child allowance. We understand why, these families are finding it increasingly difficult, especially if a second or third, etc. child is added. If poor families with children had higher incomes, they would use them mainly to buy strictly necessary food and food desired by children both in urban and rural areas. The system of increasing child allowances at certain intervals of time, respectively their non-correlation with the monthly price index, leads, in various intervals of time, to a decrease in the contribution to family income and to a depreciation of purchasing power. An aspect that should not be neglected is the degree to which the allowance received by the family for a child covers the expenses imposed by the procurement of goods and services necessary for the child. If we take into account the basic allowance, in October 1999 it represented about 5.8% of the decent living wage of a schoolchild, in 2000 it represented 9% of the decent living wage of a schoolchild; over the course of 10 years, the real value of the allowance increased by only 4%. This insignificant contribution, which is not noticeable in the lives of children from families where the parents have high incomes, plays a derisory, insignificant role in large families and in many single-parent families. In such families, the allowance hardly makes its role felt at all and achieves, only to a small extent, the purpose for which it was established. The situation is particularly serious in families where the state allowance for children represents the only form of income and therefore the only source of support for all the members.

### Couples with different income situations

The situation is critical when we analyze a couple with a minimum wage and two child allowances from an urban area. This income covered the subsistence minimum only in 1989 and 1990, after which the real purchasing power of the income of this type of family no longer covered the necessary living expenses. The family of two adults with two dependent children from an urban area with an income consisting of two minimum wages and two child allowances, over the analyzed period 1989-2018 is still in an extremely difficult economic situation. In recent years, the income of this family has fallen even below the subsistence minimum starting in 1992 (68.7%), continuing to drop dramatically in 2002 (38.9%), and as for the decent minimum, it has been in difficulty to be covered with this income since 1990 (81.6%), reaching 20%, one fifth, in 2000, continuing to remain at extremely

low values until the end. In the final years 2020-2021, the described income approached the decent minimum of life of the reference year, 1989.

### Retired couples

The retired family, if it had only an average net state social insurance pension, survived, and for the farming family the situation was even more dramatic throughout the period.

Regarding Romanian education, the numbers represent statistics, but beyond them are the lives of children condemned to school dropout. The state promised that, no matter how poor a family is, the child has a real chance through education. In 2025, we will be faced with the difficult situation of children from poor backgrounds or far from the localities where school courses are held, which they cannot access, for various objective reasons: lack of public transport between localities, lack of money, other material shortages, etc.

And regarding living space, although there are many families who own their homes, they are inhabited by several families (parents with children, who in turn form a family), creating overcrowding or in the situation of paying rent or a loan to purchase a home, the more acute problem of job stability on the labor market arises. Subjects that can be deepened and that require, a more thorough and longer-term study.

## Acknowledgments

None.

## Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there is no conflicts of interest.

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