



ISSN: 2543-6821 (online)

Journal homepage: <http://ceej.wne.uw.edu.pl>

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To cite this article

Górka, K., Thier, A. (2021). The Issues of Justice in Economic and Environmental Policy. Central European Economic Journal, 8(55), 191-200.

DOI: 10.2478/ceej-2021-0013



To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.2478/ceej-2021-0013>

This article was edited by Guest Editor:

Mikołaj Czajkowski
University of Warsaw, Poland

as part of the Special Call to mark the 70th Birthday of Prof. Tomasz Żylicz



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The Issues of Justice in Economic and Environmental Policy

Abstract

The article presents the gist, the kinds and manifestations of justice, with the discussion of the controversies around social justice. The analysis deals with the relationship between social justice and economic efficiency and effectiveness – especially in the environmental protection – as well as the concepts of international and cross-generational justice. In summary, the authors discussed inequality of income and the structure of welfare benefits as well as the scale of poverty and social exclusion in Poland.

Keywords

cross-generational justice | economic effectiveness versus economic efficiency | income differentiation | social justice | social exclusion

JEL Codes

D63, E24, Q57

1. Introduction

The discussions on justice – and the ensuing controversies – have been on the agenda for years. This is because justice, as a rudimentary legal and ethical term, has not been defined in a universally accepted way, mostly for reasons attributable to social changes and the progress in civilisation. Such fundamental issues as equal and fair treatment of citizens by the state, and the distribution of common good along predetermined and well-known rules and criteria have no match. Hence, the wording of the concept of justice is very general – what is owed to whom, in the spirit of righteousness and rationality, devoid of subjective or ideological interpretations. That is why there are so many theoretical concepts and manifestations of justice. Nonetheless, the core of justice is fairly unambiguous, which facilitates its application in the economic and social policy as well as in the environmental protection.

The purpose of this article is to show the essence and manifestations of justice, with a special highlight on the controversies attributable to social, international

and cross-generational justice. The discussion includes the occurrence and the scale of poverty and social exclusion. Other important issues that have been considered by the authors include the connection between social justice and economic efficiency in environmental policy.

2. The Concept of Justice and Its Kinds

In philosophical and social terms, justice is the oldest criterion in goods and merits distribution, and it observes the principle of reciprocity (compensatory justice). The examples include the Hammurabi Code of the 18th-century BC ('an eye for an eye') or the Old Testament. Ulpian, the Roman lawyer, succinctly defined justice in the following way, 'justice is the habit whereby a man renders to each person his due with constant and perpetual will.' In a way, this was repeated by St. Thomas Aquinas in the century.

That definition has been accepted as a general or legal justice, which means that the law regulates the relations between citizens and the state. In turn, in religious terms, justice is considered to be a moral virtue consisting in the constant will to give God and the neighbour what is due to them. In addition, Christianity adopted four cardinal virtues of the ancient philosophers: prudence, justice, temperance and bravery. In the centuries to come, justice became associated with the human rights and human property, proclaiming the principle of equality in law and before the law, and freedom from external coercion and freedom of contract.

John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant, the philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries, valued human rights more than contracts, including social contracts. In the 19th century, there emerged other theories of justice such as the utility category of John S. Mill, Karl Marx's criticism of the exploitation of workers by the capitalists (a variety of distributive justice), and similar concepts of socialists who professed egalitarian policy. Hence, the following principle of justice: *from each according to his means, to each according to his work* (in communism, according to his needs). In addition, an interchangeable category of justice was distinguished – relationships among individuals – and distributive justice, i.e. relations between the community and its members (Wróbel, 2013; Thier, 2020).

In the 20th century, the supporters of liberalism and neoliberalism came to fore. An Austrian economist, Friedrich A. Von Hayek (1899–1992) presented extremely liberal views. He opposed etatism (state socialism) and interventionism, and accepted only compensatory justice, where the services provided were remunerated according to the value for the recipient. He maintained that inequalities resulted from the form of people's participation in the free market and were excused by not taking advantage of the opportunities. In turn, Milton Friedman from Chicago (1912–2006) believed that freedom was more important than equality; otherwise, we would not obtain this or that. However, other prominent representatives of neoliberal movement such as Ronald Dworkin (1931–2013), Robert Nozick (1939–2002) and Michael Walzer (b. 1935) recognised distributive justice. John Rawls (1921–2002), in a publication of 1971 titled *The theory of justice*, combined liberal approach with egalitarianism by melding two principles: equal right of each person to freedom and the existing inequalities should be so distributed that they allow

greatest benefit to the most disadvantaged (Rawls, 1994: 17–80; McArtur, 2018).

The ideas of justice set goals, and the law provides instruments for their implementation. From that perspective, the concept of legal justice means that its provisions are derived from the positive law (binding law) regulations. Nonetheless, a dilemma arises: should justice become a criterion of the positive law? Historically speaking, in legal terms, there are three trends in the approach to justice:

- Primacy of natural law (Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Hugo Grotius from Holland in the 17th century);
- Legal positivism (Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza, Georg Hegel, 17th to 19th century);
- The concept of social good except natural law, based on a social contract and society's participation in law-making (David Hume, John S. Mill, John Rawls, 17th to 21st centuries).

3. The Issue of Social Justice

Social justice in today's meaning of the term became popular only in the 19th century, when it was realised that an individual has his rights, which should be provided for by the state. Social justice is a term that has not been legally defined, and it has raised more controversy and ambiguity than justice at large. That is because there is no consensus on the scope and content of social justice, and especially on the set of statements defining regulation of social relations in the state (Sut, 2016). However, there is a certain agreement that social justice is a systemic principle and that it relates to mutual relationships of social groups, and it is more than the social function of the state. It means granting every person the rights stipulated by the principles of democracy. It may be equated with the distributive justice, i.e. the issues of distribution of common resources, honours and money, which are dealt by the state to its citizens. Generally speaking, an individual is in the centre of justice while social justice focuses on a social group or the entire society. Nonetheless, public interest should pursue the interest of individuals.

Social justice has also been defined as such form of organisation of the state system that ensures fairly equal access to staple material goods and utilities for all the citizens, or at least gives equal opportunity in

access to them. This guarantees assurance of proper quality of life and ensures there are no groups of people who have been excluded, i.e. pushed to the social margin (regrettably, that cannot be achieved even in the countries more affluent than Poland). Sometimes social justice is defined as a moral concept that is crucial for building the system of social order.

Among theoretical constructs of social justice, the views of Rawls and his supporters come to fore. They suggested five priorities: fighting poverty, creating high standards for education, availability of work to all who are able to work and willing to work, social welfare system protecting human dignity and levelling income inequalities so that to foster social cohesion (Sut, 2016: 400). Currently, the concept presented by Amartya Kumar Sen (b. 1933), the economist and philosopher, the theoretician of welfare and poverty economics (Nobel Prize laureate of 1998), became most popular.

He considered the inhibiting factors and the barriers that are encountered by an individual in transforming primary goods, for example, freedom in obtaining the necessities of life and functioning in the appropriate conditions. He strongly emphasised that the freedom of speech and information are prerequisite for development, that in the decision-making process, humans should be guided not only by the economic efficiency benefits (profit) but also by the system of values, i.e. axiological and ethical prerequisites and that the diversity of human identities is to be found in the closest surroundings (Sen, 2002, 2009). In general terms, in the past, the slogans of social justice were propagated by the socialists and socio-democrats, but currently also liberals recognise freedom and human equality to be the highest value rather than personal property.

Despite the fact that there are various views about the meaning and scope of social justice, it has become a constitutional principle and a constitutional norm in many countries. The Constitution of the Polish Republic stipulates in Article 2 that Poland is a democratic state of law, and it implements the principles of social justice, which it expresses through the principle of equality. The Constitution addresses that obligation to the state, which is understood as a common good. It also upholds the moral imperative of solidarity, particularly with those who are less endowed for reasons beyond their control. Hence, social justice is regulated by the law and is interpreted by the ruling of the Constitutional Tribunal, whereby it is regarded as a more general principle, which is overriding the principle of equality. According to

the ruling, equality is an element of social justice. The constitution upholds other important values by ordering care for stable and sustainable social and economic development, budgetary balance, protection of the natural environment, health protection while forbidding arbitrariness of the state which might take the form of granting unreasonable privileges to the selected groups of the society.

4. Social Justice and the Environmental Protection

Although social justice is not strictly an economic term, yet it yields some economic consequences, and for this reason it has become a factor considered in the economic policy of the state. Economic results may become a measure for gauging the consequences of implementation of social justice, and the latter may serve as the internal criterion for the assessment of economic results, i.e. profitability of companies from the financial perspective. For this reason, research is being done on the relations between the economic results and social justice, particularly from the angle of a welfare state and the rights of an individual, commonly called the economic and social rights. However, to this moment, there is no clear answer how to reconcile profitability with social justice. It might be easier to prove that they may become interdependent in the long run. This is particularly apparent in the projects that are launched in the environmental protection.

The connection between social justice and economic issues will be presented by the example of the state social policy, which is close to the heart of every citizen due to its tasks for the protection of social issues, employment, health protection, education, culture, work conditions, housing and everyday security. The state has been gradually assuming all these obligations till the emergence of the welfare state at the close of the 20th century, with the continually increasing costs. For this reason, the state developed the institutions responsible for the manufacture of goods and provision of services, and their distribution, in the quest for prosperity.

Currently, a new stage of social policy is emerging in the consequence of such challenges as ageing of the society, migrations, unemployment, poverty of certain groups of the society and certain regions, changes on the labour market attributable to the IT revolution and

overwhelming consumerism. The foregoing aspects bring about an increase or a decrease in the supply of labour in certain professions as well as a drop in the demand for labour. Despite globalisation processes and an economic integration, social policy remains quite differentiated even within the confines of the EU, with its five models: liberal (British), socio-democratic (Scandinavian), conservative (Continental), south-European (Mediterranean) and central-east European. The first four models are characterised by high economic outlays on welfare, with the diversified role of the family, the market and the state in financing the beneficiaries of social welfare.

The South-European model is characterised by a relatively low employment of women and a high poverty level. In turn, the East-European model shows low social welfare expenditure and a high poverty level as well as the withdrawal of the state from social welfare expenditure through the budget in favour of institutional pluralism (Zgliczyński, 2017). Therefore, such economic issues as income and property inequality, differentiation of the tax system, diversified access to utilities, education, healthcare and welfare, unemployment level, poverty level and the protection of human dignity are being gauged, and then quantified through statistical indicators, such as the income concentration coefficient facilitating detection of the manifestations, and the definition of various kinds of social justice.

Some composite indexes have been elaborated in that area; they test the changes in time and can be presented in international rankings. Human Development Index (HDI), a comprehensive gauge of the quality of life, has found the greatest application. The gauge was elaborated by A. K. Sen and it has been applied in the UN publications since 1993. It has been acclaimed a better index of social and economic development than the index based on GDP, which still remains the basic gauge of the economic development. Apart from pure production, considered by GDP, HDI also includes other elements that are related to social justice and the quality of life such as security, housing conditions, the level of education, health protection, culture and recreation and the length of life.

HDI is still subject to modifications and improvement. Recently, the government Polish Institute of Economics created the Index of Responsible Development (IRD) that rests on three tiers; prosperity (consumption and inequality according to the reversed Gini index), development potential (R&D outlays, the number of granted trademarks) and the quality of life

(life expectancy, air quality, number of suicides). The idea of that index closely corresponds to HDI. Within such social development ranking, Poland ranks 23rd by GDP classification and 29th by R&D index, taking 33rd position by HDI and 39th by Marcin Łuszczczyk life quality index for 2010 (Łuszczczyk, 2013: 268).

Environmental policy of the state is one of the examples connecting efficiency with justice. In the evaluation of the foregoing, the first thing to consider is the effectiveness, i.e. the extent of implementation of goals, or tasks in the area of the environmental protection. There are misunderstandings already in that area since colloquially, efficiency and effectiveness, or even performance, is understood as the same thing. This happens in the translations of the EU documents, since English, the language characterised by the ambiguity of words, often has those three terms represented by a single word *effective* or *efficient*. Professor Tomasz Żylicz mentioned the mistakes in that area made by the ministerial officials a long time ago (Żylicz, 2006).

Reverting to the protection activity, the tasks are implemented at a certain cost (especially the investment outlays), and that is why the *economic results* are so important. The first time effectiveness was connected with the justice of ecological policy following the analysis of the *external costs* i.e. the consequences of the emissions and other environmental violations committed by the economic entities. These included the losses and increased operational costs attributable to functioning in the polluted environment which were noted by other entities and third parties, often without knowing the perpetrators. Hence, a tax levied on the emissions (proposed by Cecil Pigou) should settle that issue, provided the rate is *fair* (optimal), and it has been calculated by comparing the marginal costs of the abatement with the marginal benefits obtained with such reduction. This is a complicated issue, since with a low emissions threshold, the tax becomes an excessive burden for the emitter in comparison to the external costs borne by the environment, which translates into a substantial increase in the price of products or cessation of the economic activity.

Conversely, with the excessive emissions threshold, the emitter may understand the levied sum as a subsidy, not a fine, since the price they pay is much lower than the benefits derived by the limited outlays on the emissions reduction, attributable to the relaxation of ecological regulations (Żylicz, 2009). In Poland, pursuant to the regulations of 1980 and 2001, Pigou tax was replaced by the emission charges levied

along the same principles. The charges apply to the emitter's running costs and are paid to the Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management. Even though there are no precise calculations of the marginal costs and ecological benefits, the system is an important and efficient economic tool for the environmental protection. On the other hand, the charges against the company's profits – such as the Pigou tax – are paid only when the ecologic regulations are violated (Małecki, 2012).

Economic efficiency, or profitability, takes place when the benefits exceed the costs. However, it happens in the environmental protection that the effects of an economic project are difficult to assess, or even impossible to calculate, and any attempts at their assessment raise controversy. While significant progress has been made by science in the development of valorisation and practical methods for the valuation of the environmental components and *cost/benefit* analysis, new solutions are still being sought. One of such solutions is cost-effectiveness; even though it is not quite new (at sometime it was known as the effectiveness of non-productive projects), it was later adapted to ecological projects. In this method, investment costs and other outlays are not related to the costs measured in PLN, to natural units such as 1 cu.m of treated sewage or desulphurised waste gases (Żylicz, 2008). The obtained result is then compared to the standard or a good model. In 2008, the editors of *Aura* monthly held a discussion on that subject, which was attended by the co-author of this article (Górka, 2008).

5. International and Cross-Generational Justice

The concept of *international* justice was coined in the consequence of the globalisation of economic and social processes. Owing to the increasing commercial exchange and growing economic integration among the countries, they are becoming legal and ethical subjects upholding moral principles and creating global common good such as peace and security, economic prosperity, and convergent intellectual and moral culture. It facilitates solution of border conflicts, care for the immigrants, protection of ethnic minorities, environmental protection, organising aid for the victims of natural disasters, etc. (Šlimo, 2014).

The on-going global pollution of the natural environment and the depletion of the world resources,

particularly its mineral deposits, show the factors hindering economic development, or even becoming its barrier. To prevent this from happening, the theory of eco-development was drafted in the 1960s, i.e. an economic development consistent with the requirements of the natural environment protection. The First Roman Club Report 'The Limits to Growth' of 1971 (published in Poland in 1973) and other reports showing the effects of shrinking natural resources gave rise to Sustainable Development concept (Kassenberg, 2018). Literally, it means a self-perpetrating development, mainly by the use of recyclable materials and renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels. Initially, this term was used in this meaning in Polish professional literature. However, pursuant to the Polish Republic Constitution of 1997 and other government documents, a new meaning for sustainable development came into use, and for this reason became commonly applied. Regrettably, in Polish this term does not correspond to English semantics, and it even has some flaws. Hence, following the lead of Tomasz Żylicz and Jerzy Śleszyński, the term *sustained development*, or sustained and sustainable development is used more and more often (Górka, 2010). Sustainable development is to ensure a closed-circuit economy and sustain proper quality of life for the future generations. Hence, the idea of cross-generational justice is connected with the sustainable development. It denotes such economic activity that will not reduce or limit the availability of staple natural resources for the future generations (Żylicz, 2014).

Cross-generational justice entails the use of non-renewable resources but also calls for the rational management of renewable resources such as forests, waters and farmland. Propensity to share those resources with the future generations raises the issue of cost of the environmental protection that would be accepted by the present generation. Another issue is the scope of possible and permissible substitution of natural capital by the economic and social capital. The principle of cross-generational justice was officially proclaimed at the Sorbonne in Paris in 2017, within the framework of the project 'Global Pact for the Environment'. Later, the project was presented by Emmanuel Macron at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The concept was supported by Poland and other countries. Presumably, this means further extension of global protection of the natural environment by means of new and better enforceable ecological standards recognised in the whole world.

6. Income and Property Inequality versus Poverty Issue in Poland

Political and economic transformations in Poland made an impact on shaping social policy. The first issue was growing unemployment and commercialisation or privatisation of social services. Accessing the EU made western models more acceptable, yet the convergence process remained slow. The reforms of the pension system, health protection, education or housing have not been completed, and they have not been supported by financial outlays. Instead, private education system, nursing and healthcare have been developed and subsidised by the state, but the opinions about them vary. Liberal rhetoric praising low taxes to stimulate economic growth and recent lowering of the retirement age and benefits handed out to swing the voters in the elections to the running up party side are not beneficial from the long-term perspective. The reforms following 2015 clearly smack of a welfare state, and they remind of the situation in Hungary (Golinowska, 2018: 87, 136).

The expenditure for social protection amounts to 19% of GDP, which is much lower than the figure observed through the EU (28.7% in 2014), not to mention Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France and Holland, where it climbs to over 30%. In terms of per capita index, Polish expenditure amounts to 49–50% of the EU figure. The breakdown of social protection expenditure is as follows: pensions 60.4%, sick leave benefits 29.6%, family benefits (for children) 7.6%, unemployment benefits 1.3% and housing 1% (Zgliczyński, 2017: 45). Other countries allocate much more for sick leave benefits, unemployment and housing. Within 2010–2017, the expenditure on social benefits rose by 29%, and GDP climbed by 27%. That means that the rise in social benefits by mere 2% is attributable only to Family 500+ benefit initiated in 2016.

In time of market economy, Poland moved rapidly forward in terms of employee income. Even though remuneration is higher than in other eastern European states, it is still behind the pay of Western Europe. This is particularly apparent among the workers and branches of industry with simple technical equipment and low professional qualifications of workers, particularly in services and construction (approx. 15% of employed). Even though in the past decade, and especially since 2015, the hourly rate and monthly pay

noted higher growth than the average wage, increasing the number of workers with growing remuneration, yet employers are discouraged from investment as the observed trend does not correspond to the dynamics of labour productivity.

Nevertheless, Poland noted a high disparity in income. At the beginning of 2019, the press published the opinion of World Inequality Laboratory team headed by Thomas Piketty, the author of a famous book *Capital of the 20th Century*, which came out in Poland in 2015. It appears Poland is the country with the greatest inequality in the EU (within 1980–2017, that growth was the highest in the EU), approaching the proportions noted in the US. It turned out that in 2017, 10% of best-remunerated people in Poland earned 40% of the national income (Blanchet, Chancel & Gethin, 2019). Even though that analysis was criticised for a simplistic approach, beyond any doubt the provided figures reflect the actual relations. Recently, Gini's index amounted to 0.32%, and according to the Main Census Office it reached 0.4–0.45, which is relatively a high figure in comparison to the rest of Europe.

There are approximately 1.2 million affluent people in Poland. To qualify to that category, one has to earn 7,000/month or 85,000/year. Those earners pay the income tax of 18%, and 32% in the second tax bracket. The 32% income tax is paid by approximately 75% of people. Income in excess of 50,000 PLN/month or 600,000 PLN/year is earned by 45,000 affluent people. In addition, in 2018, there were about 41 millionaires in Poland with liquid assets in dollars, gold and securities. It should be noted that there is no tax on property in Poland but only the income tax, hence such millionaires are not listed in the PIT system. In most cases, the richest pay taxes abroad or live on a dividend taxed 19% without progression, i.e. not included in the PIT system. Entrepreneurs who pay a linear 19% tax are yet another group. Approximately 534,000 entrepreneurs earn an average of 224,500 PLN/year, and 25,000 make over 1 million PLN/year paying a joint tax of 23%. They protest considering the system unfair as they invest to develop their companies.

Poland shows lesser property inequalities than those observed in Scandinavia and other western European countries. This is attributable to war damages and the limits once imposed by the communist rule. For this reason, Poland shows slower capital accumulation, yet there are substantial signs thereof. To give an example, according to the Polish National Bank statistics, 76.4% of Poles own inhabited

Table 1. Characteristics of poverty level in Poland within 2005–2017

Poverty rate in %	2005	2014	2017	Population in million in 2017
Utter poverty (below minimum subsistence (582 PLN in 2017))	12.3	7.4	4.3	1.7
Statutory poverty (by social welfare threshold)	18.1	12.2	10.7	4.1
Relative poverty (below 50% of average households)	18.1	16.2	13.4	5.2

Source: *Ubóstwo ekonomiczne w Polsce*. GUS, Warszawa 2015, p. 320, and author's own calculations.

real estate compared to mere 44.2% recorded in Germany. There are 75% of car owners in Poland, and 23% of Poles own two vehicles (even though they are not as luxurious as those found in Western Europe). Although there is no property register or property tax in Poland, since 2014 Poland has been taking part in property evaluation program co-ordinated by the European Central Bank (KPMG, 2018).

According to the Main Census Office statistics for 2015, the worst disadvantaged, with the income below poverty line, were found in 6% of households and 7.5% in large families. In 2017, those indexes dropped to 4.3% and 6.5%, respectively. Within the regional cross section the index reaches from 3% up to 13% in Warmia-Mazury Voivodeship.

Poverty is mostly attributable to low professional qualifications, low industriousness and activity level of individuals, alcoholism and drug addiction, overdependence on social welfare and *force majeure* such as illnesses, accidents and natural disasters. Structural poverty is attributable to economic prerequisites such as unemployment, low income, high prices of staple products and services. Poverty level is measured with the following indexes: minimum standard of living (a basket of goods prerequisite to support basic life functions, psychic and physical fitness) and minimum subsistence (average household income that allows a decent living). In addition, relative poverty lines are used in relation to half of the median income or expenditure of a given community, and subjective poverty lines are used according to public opinion polls regarding the assessment of one's own material condition.

In turn, the UN publications apply a comprehensive Human Poverty Index, which includes several factors: probability that a newborn will not live to 60 (or 40), illiteracy rate among adults, the percentage of population living below the poverty line or without access to drinking water and the percentage of underweight children. Poverty mostly becomes the

reason for *social exclusion*, i.e. marginalisation or such economic situation that does not allow an individual participating in normal life of a community.

As shown by the figures presented in Table 1, there has been a significant improvement among the people living in poverty in Poland. Within the period covered by the analysis, there has been an improvement of 40–60% attributable to the drop in unemployment from 10% to 6.6% and the introduction of Family 500+ benefit. This does not mean that the inequality index has declined. The percentage of population in Poland at risk of poverty or social exclusion is higher than that noted in the EU, as it amounts to 27% in comparison to EU 27 for 2011 (Ministry, 2014). It is worth adding that Ukraine is the poorest country in Europe according to IMF or UN reports, where poor people amount to 60% of population.

Bringing market economy to Poland, modernisation of its management system and the creation of citizens' society propelled social and economic development and the progress of civilisation, raising the quality of life of Polish people. Those processes facilitated changes in the application of principles and criteria of social justice. Nonetheless, there are still many issues to be revalued and then implemented. Those issues may be summed up as follows:

- Poland still has a higher percentage of workers with low qualifications (consequently, they are paid less in services, construction and assembly plants). That figure reaches 15% of total employed, and is much lower in hi-tech industries. However, people with higher education are paid better than their counterparts in Western Europe.
- In Poland, minimum remuneration and minimum hourly wage rise quicker than the average income, which declines income disparities (this trend is less favourable in the long run).
- Over the past years, the government has been increasing handouts of money to the potential

voters to win their support while neglecting social services. This exerts adverse impact on the economic growth.

- PIT tax system, VAT and excise levy higher taxes on the lowest income groups, which is not fair. In other countries, the differences are levelled by the progressive tax. Hence the suggestion to introduce the third PIT threshold.
- Raising tax-exempt income to 8,000 PLN (pre-election promises which never came true) would reduce income differences for the earning least people.

7. Conclusion

Despite the efforts made to formulate the concepts and principles of justice, beginning with the ancient philosophers, it is still subject to much controversy. This is attributable to the difficulties in defining justice and adapting it to various societies. The concept of social justice is more recent, nonetheless not less controversial and ambiguous. The changes in the opinion in this area are due to the progress of civilisation and the emergence of citizen society as well as its growing affluence and widening disparities in income and property.

However, we may say there is a general consensus on the opinion that social justice has become a systemic principle and a constitutional norm that defines the ways of regulating social relationships within a country, and it is related to citizens' equality before the law and a factor of the quality of life. Implementation of social justice brings about economic consequences, which facilitate evaluation of its various forms and manifestations, including environmental protection projects. That is why new comprehensive indexes gauging social development, quality of life and poverty are sought. Those indexes are important as there is still a substantial group of population at risk of poverty.

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