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## LIVING STANDARDS OF POLISH AND LITHUANIAN RESIDENTS AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE IMPACT ON LIVING CONDITIONS

This article aims to analyze living conditions in Poland and Lithuania after the COVID-19 pandemic, using Eurostat data for seven chosen indicators. The dynamics indices were used to examine the changes in the analyzed indicators over the studied period. Stepwise regression method was used to investigate the impact of the highlighted variables on GDP *per capita*. The indices allowed us to interpret whether there was a decrease or an increase in the variables throughout the analyzed period, as well as to compare the results for individual years. The results should help the authorities of the analyzed EU countries to make decisions regarding the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. The research shows that the GDP *per capita* variable is influenced by the inflation rate, people's inability to "make ends meet," and the share of people living in under-occupied dwellings. The dynamics of people at risk of poverty in Lithuania have increased by 1.5% since 2013. Based on the results for both Lithuania and Poland, the implementation of the main principles of the sustainable development goals, including the elimination of poverty and hunger, may be at risk. If the governments of these countries do not take decisive steps, the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 may be threatened.

**Keywords:** living standards; Human Development Index (HDI); econometric models; EU countries.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Theoretically, measures of household wealth can be reflected by income, consumption, or expenditure information. However, the collection of accurate income and consumption data requires extensive resources for household surveys. Social economic theories may

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differ from conventional beliefs about economics. Traditional schools of thought often assume that actors are self-interested and make rational decisions. Social economic theories often consider subjects outside the focus of mainstream economics, including the effect of the environment and ecology on consumption and wealth.

In a dynamically changing reality, there is the need to create indicators of the conditions of social life that will be sensitive to the processes occurring in individual countries. Since the synthetic measure should be supplemented with additional determinants (Science and Technology and Living conditions), it can be called a new measure of the study of social and economic development (Mięgała-Warchoł, 2021).

When describing the living conditions, the average usable floor space per household member is considered, as well as its equipment, among others, with sanitary installations, water supply system, and central heating. However, today, the above installations are not a major challenge, and therefore it should be considered whether these aspects should be considered in the study of socio-economic development. A more key issue in the analysis of living conditions is problems related to financial issues, i.e. income and expenses of an individual.

The outbreak of war in Ukraine, and what is associated with it, the increase in oil prices and high inflation, which numerous countries in the world are facing, will inhibit economic development in the countries of the European Union. The only right solution will be the effective management of the funds that EU countries obtain, as well as a properly conducted monetary policy for these countries (Mięgała-Warchoł, Surówka, 2022). The research object of this article is the standards of living in Poland and Lithuania. The aim of the article is to analyse living conditions in Poland and Lithuania between 2013 and 2022.

In the article, the impact of economic and financial variables on the standard of living of residents of Poland and Lithuania will be examined. The following research questions arise from this: Have living conditions in Poland and Lithuania improved in recent years? We want to investigate whether the outbreak of the war in Ukraine has not worsened the living conditions of the inhabitants of Poland and Lithuania. Has the percentage of people unable to make ends meet decreased since 2013? We will use econometric models to determine the impact of economic and financial variables on living conditions in Poland and Lithuania.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW (AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT)**

The analysis of the standard of living has always been at the centre of the attention of scientists. It is related to the evaluation of the living conditions of the society. Living conditions are one of the basic determinants of socioeconomic development. Living conditions are an important determinant of the standard of living of the population.

Franses and Hobijn (2001) analysing the standard of living and living conditions, additionally evaluate four additional indicators that we use daily calorie supply, daily protein supply, infant mortality rates, and life expectancy at birth. According to these scientists, convergence in real GDP per capita does not imply convergence with other social indicators.

Dowrick, Dunlop, and Quiggin (2003) while researching the standard of living, thing that neither GDP rankings, nor the rankings of the Human Development Index (HDI) are consistent with the partial ordering of revealed preference. They think that the set of consumption items that make up the GDP index omits important elements of well-being, such as health status.

Fleurbacy and Gaulier (2009) suggest applying international comparisons based on GDP *per capita*, the measure incorporates corrections for international flows of income, labour, risk of unemployment, healthy life expectancy, household demography, and inequalities.

Oulton (2012) suggests applying a general algorithm for calculating true cost-of-living indices when demand is not homothetic and when the number of products may be large. The algorithm is illustrated by applying it to estimating true PPPs for 141 countries and 100 products within household consumption, using data from the World Bank's latest International Comparison Program.

Kelly, Gráda (2013), Allen, Bengtsson, Dribe (2005), Breinlich, Leromain, Novy and Sampson (2022) argue that inflation has a direct negative impact on changes in living standards.

Cantillon (2013), while researching the standard of living, thinks that it would be appropriate to investigate differences in living standards between spouses within households. Adopting a specially adapted standard poverty measurement approach, non-monetary indicators, it explores differences between spouses in terms of possessions and access to certain goods and services, and the control and management of household resources.

Paxot, Rentería, Souto, Peet, Fink, Fawzi (2015) analysing the standard of living and living conditions, noticed that during the observed period, the effect of population has been quite positive, because of the effect of migration, so the economic support ratio has increased. Nevertheless, the positive effect of population age structure is ending, and the opposite effect is expected for the next decades with the baby boom retirement.

Rao and Min (2017) suggest applying a universal, irreducible, and essential set of material conditions for achieving basic human well-being, along with indicators and quantitative thresholds, which can be operationalised for societies based on local customs and preferences – decent living standard (DLS). The DLS offers a normative basis for developing minimum wage and reference budgets and for assessing environmental impacts, such as climate.

To assess poverty, a multidimensional poverty index (MPI) can be used, considering various indicators that were previously overlooked (Shinice, Derek, 2023).

Ngo (2018), Veneri, Murtin (2019), Boter, Watts, Paul, Sen (2020), while researching the standard of living, offers to apply welfare called multidimensional living standards (MDLS) at the regional level. Scientists also show that metropolitan residents experience, on average, higher levels of MDLS and income than those in other regions.

Goldberg, Torras (2021), Guliyeva, Jones (2022), Capelloa, Cerisola (2023) while researching the standard of living, noticed that middle-class living standards have remained relatively flat over the past four decades, and substantial debt has been required to maintain consumption at customary levels.

Economic inequality can manifest itself in various forms: uneven distribution of income or wealth between different groups of people, regions, or countries. The unequal distribution of income in the world is reflected because today 10% of the world's richest population receives 52% of the world's income, while 50% of the poorest population earns 8.5% (World Inequality Report, 2022). On average, the representative of the wealthiest population of the world earns 87,200 euros (122,100 US dollars) per year, while the representative of the poorest population of the world earns 2,800 euros (3,920 US dollars) per year. Global inequality in the distribution of wealth is more pronounced than inequality in the distribution of income (Dluhopolskyi, Zhukovska, 2023).

A good way to improve financial condition and increase energy self-sufficiency may be to use the potential of biogas within cooperatives and energy clusters bringing together enterprises (Cierpień-Wolan, Stec-Rusiecka, Twaróg, Bilińska, Dewalska-Opitek, Wierzbński, 2022)

Sustainable inclusive progress, accompanied by an increase in the income and simultaneous enhancement of its economic opportunities, the level of security and quality of life, should be recognised as the main goal of economic development, not GDP growth, as previously thought (Dluhopolskyi, Zhukovska, 2023).

After reviewing research and scientific articles and their opinions on the standard of living and living conditions in the economy and society, it can be concluded that in all research only a few indicators can be identified and they cannot be supplemented with other indicators. Each research is a different view of standard of living. However, of course, there is a common base of indicators that describe standard of living.

In connection with this planned goal, these prior empirical results allowed to assume the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Living conditions in Poland and Lithuania have improved in recent years.

Hypothesis 2: Since 2013, the percentage of people unable to make ends meet has decreased.

Hypothesis 3: The dynamics of people at risk of poverty have decreased compared to 2013.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives described, data taken from Eurostat databases on the following variables will be used:

1. Inflation rate (-).
2. Unemployment rate (-).
3. GDP *per capita* 1 (+).
4. The percentage of people who are unable to 'make ends meet' (-).
5. The rate of people at risk of poverty (-).
6. Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings by household type and income quintile (+).
7. Human Development Index (+).

People who are unable to make ends meet it means people who live in households that reported having difficulties in making ends meet (i.e. whose financial resources did not cover their usual necessary expenses). Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings means that people live in their dwellings mostly alone and they have lot of space in their apartments.

The paper uses fixed and variable dynamics indices to compare the results for both countries for the variables mentioned above. The indices allowed one to interpret whether there was a decrease or an increase in the variables analysed throughout the analysed period, as well as by comparing the results in individual years. In the last part of the article, a model was built in which the Y variable was the GDP *per capita*, while the variables 1–2 and 4–6 of the list appeared as independent variables X.

The dynamics indices were used to examine the changes in the analyzed indicators in the studied period. In order to investigate the impact of the highlighted variables on GDP *per capita*, the stepwise regression method was used. The stepwise regression model provide estimates of marginal effects for each of the variables used as well as the model fit

statistics. The progressive stepwise regression method is particularly useful when there are a large number of potential independent variables and the most relevant ones for the dependent variable are to be identified in the study. The progressive stepwise regression method will be used to obtain a set of variables that statistically significantly affect the dependent variable.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After applying a quantitative research approach, data from Eurostat databases regarding the above-mentioned variables were used. Table 1 presents the values of the HDI index for developed and developing EU countries for 2021.

Table 1. The developed and developing countries of the European Union by the Human Development Index

No.	Developed Country	HDI 2021	No.	Developing Country	HDI 2021
1	Denmark	0.948	9	Malta	0.918
2	Sweden	0.947	10	Slovenia	0.918
3	Ireland	0.945	14	Cyprus	0.896
4	Germany	0.942	16	Estonia	0.890
5	The Netherlands	0.941	17	The Czech Republic	0.889
6	Finland	0.940	19	Poland	0.876
7	Belgium	0.937	20	Lithuania	0.875
8	Luxembourg	0.930	22	Latvia	0.863
11	Austria	0.916	23	Croatia	0.858
12	Spain	0.905	24	Slovakia	0.848
13	France	0.903	25	Hungary	0.846
15	Italy	0.895	26	Romania	0.821
18	Greece	0.887	27	Bulgaria	0.795
21	Portugal	0.866			

Source: Author's calculations.

According to the UNDP HDI ranking for 2021, Poland is in the 19th place and Lithuania is in 20th place. The difference between these two countries in HDI value is 0.001. Compared to 2020, Poland obtained the same value, 0.876, while Lithuania fell from 0.879 to 0.875. Both countries are in the middle of the list of developing countries.

Tables 2–7 present the dynamics indexes for Poland and Lithuania for 2011–2022. For the variables, the rate of people at risk of poverty and the share of people living in under-occupied dwellings, the downloaded data relate to the 2013–2022 time series. For the variable the unemployment rate, the downloaded data relate to the 2009–2022 time series.

The results presented in table 2 indicate a significant increase in inflation in 2022 compared to 2021 for both Poland and Lithuania. In case of Lithuania, the inflation rate in 2022 was 18.9% and for Poland 13.2%. In both countries, these are double-digit values, which we have not observed in previous years. In Lithuania, the value increased by 310.9% compared to 2021, and for Poland, the value increased by 153.9% compared to 2021. Compared to 2011, for Lithuania, this indicator increased by 361.0%, for Poland, it

increased by 238.5%. Table 3 presents the unemployment rate dynamics indices for Poland and Lithuania for the years 2009–2022.

Table 2. Inflation rate for Lithuania and Poland for the years 2011–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	Inflation rate	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	Inflation rate	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2011	4.1	100.0	-	3.9	100.0	-
2012	3.2	78.1	78.1	3.7	94.9	94.9
2013	1.2	29.3	37.5	0.8	20.5	21.6
2014	0.2	4.9	16.7	0.1	2.6	12.5
2015	-0.7	-17.1	-350.0	-0.7	-18.0	-700.0
2016	0.7	17.1	-100.0	-0.2	-5.1	28.6
2017	3.7	90.2	528.6	1.6	41.0	-800.0
2018	2.5	61.0	67.6	1.2	30.8	75.0
2019	2.2	53.7	88.0	2.1	53.9	175.0
2020	1.1	26.8	50.0	3.7	94.9	176.2
2021	4.6	112.2	418.2	5.2	133.3	140.5
2022	18.9	461.0	410.9	13.2	338.5	253.9

Source: Author's calculations.

Table 3. Unemployment rate for Lithuania and Poland for years 2011–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	Unemployment rate	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	Unemployment rate	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2009	13.8	100.0	-	8.5	100.0	-
2010	17.8	129.0	129.0	10	117.6	117.6
2011	15.4	111.6	86.5	10	117.6	100.0
2012	13.4	97.1	87.0	10.4	122.4	104.0
2013	11.8	85.5	88.1	10.6	124.7	101.9
2014	10.7	77.5	90.7	9.2	108.2	86.8
2015	9.1	65.9	85.0	7.7	90.6	83.7
2016	7.9	57.2	86.8	6.3	74.1	81.8
2017	7.1	51.4	89.9	5	58.8	79.4
2018	6.2	44.9	87.3	3.9	45.9	78.0
2019	6.3	45.7	101.6	3.3	38.8	84.6
2020	8.5	61.6	134.9	3.2	37.6	97.0
2021	7.1	51.4	83.5	3.4	40.0	106.3
2022	6	43.5	84.5	2.9	34.1	85.3

Source: Author's calculations.

There is an improvement in the unemployment rate for both countries. For Lithuania, the unemployment rate for 2022 is 6%, for Poland 2.9%. For Lithuania, the value decreased by 15.5% compared to 2021, for Poland, the value decreased by 14.7% compared to 2021. Compared to 2009, this indicator decreased by 56.5% for Lithuania and by 65.9% for Poland.

The table 4 presents the GDP per capita dynamics indices for Poland and Lithuania for the years 2011–2022. There is an improvement in the GDP *per capita* for both countries. For Lithuania, GDP per capita for 2022 was 21788.2, and for Poland it was 19029.8. For Lithuania, the value increased by 9.4% compared to 2021, and for Poland, the value increased by 13.7% compared to 2021. Compared to 2011, for Lithuania, this indicator increased by 74.9%, for Poland, it increased by 60.1%. There is an increasing trend, with Lithuania and Poland.

Comparing the results obtained by Migąła-Warchoł, Surówka (2022) regarding the forecasting of GDP values for Poland, it can be concluded that with this variable, an ascending function trend was observed.

Table 4. GDP *per capita* for Lithuania and Poland for the years 2011–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	GDP <i>per capita</i>	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	GDP <i>per capita</i>	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2011	12 455.4	100.0	-	11 886.8	100.0	-
2012	13 140.9	105.5	105.5	12 283.0	103.3	103.3
2013	13 847.8	111.2	105.4	12 318.3	103.6	100.3
2014	14 383.9	115.5	103.9	12 570.5	105.8	102.1
2015	14 980.5	120.3	104.2	13 087.6	110.1	104.1
2016	15 637.6	125.6	104.4	13 268.4	111.6	101.4
2017	16 614.5	133.4	106.3	14 056.8	118.3	105.9
2018	17 521.3	140.7	105.5	14 708.9	123.7	104.6
2019	18 444.8	148.1	105.3	15 437.2	129.9	105.0
2020	18 083.3	145.2	98.0	15 287.7	128.6	99.0
2021	19 908.1	159.8	110.1	16 740.3	140.8	109.5
2022	21 788.2	174.9	109.4	19 029.8	160.1	113.7

Source: Author's calculations.

Table 5 presents the percentage of people who cannot make 'ends meet' dynamics indices for Poland and Lithuania for the years 2011–2022. For Lithuania, the percentage of people who cannot meet their goals for 2022 was 2.4%, and for Poland was 3.7%. For Lithuania, the value decreased by 11.1% compared to 2021, and for Poland, the value increased by 12.1% compared to 2021. Compared to 2013, for Lithuania this indicator decreased by 79.1%, for Poland, it decreased by 70.2%.

Table 5. The percentage of people who are unable to ‘make ends meet’ for Lithuania and Poland for the years 2011–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	Inability to make ends meet	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	Inability to make ends meet	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2011	11.5	100.0	-	12.4	100.0	-
2012	12.9	112.2	112.2	13.3	107.3	107.3
2013	9.6	83.5	74.4	12.7	102.4	95.5
2014	8.2	71.3	85.4	10.7	86.3	84.3
2015	6.8	59.1	82.9	10.2	82.3	95.3
2016	6.9	60.0	101.5	8.4	67.7	82.4
2017	7.1	61.7	102.9	6.8	54.8	81.0
2018	5.5	47.8	77.5	5.3	42.7	77.9
2019	3	26.1	54.5	4.5	36.3	84.9
2020	3	26.1	100.0	3.8	30.6	84.4
2021	2.7	23.5	90.0	3.3	26.6	86.8
2022	2.4	20.9	88.9	3.7	29.8	112.1

Source: Author’s calculations.

Table 6 presents the rate of people at risk of poverty dynamics indices for Poland and Lithuania for 2013–2022.

Table 6. The rate of people at risk of poverty in Lithuania and Poland for the years 2013–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	The rate of people at risk of poverty	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	The rate of people at risk of poverty	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2013	20.6	100.0	-	17.3	100.0	-
2014	19.1	92.7	92.7	17	98.3	98.3
2015	22.2	107.8	116.2	17.6	101.7	103.5
2016	21.9	106.3	98.7	17.3	100.0	98.3
2017	22.9	111.2	104.6	15	86.7	86.7
2018	22.9	111.2	100.0	14.8	85.6	98.7
2019	20.6	100.0	90.0	15.4	89.0	104.1
2020	20.9	101.5	101.5	14.8	85.6	96.1
2021	20	97.1	95.7	14.8	85.6	100.0
2022	20.9	101.5	104.5	13.7	79.2	92.6

Source: Author’s calculations.

For Lithuania, the percentage of people at risk of poverty in 2022 was 20.9% and for Poland was 13.7%. For Lithuania, the value increased by 4.5% compared to 2021, and for Poland, the value decreased by 7.4% compared to 2021. Compared to 2013, for Lithuania this indicator increased by 1.5%, for Poland it decreased by 20.8%. The first goal of the



Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030 is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Table 7 presents the dynamic indexes of the share of people living in under-occupied dwellings for Poland and Lithuania for the years 2013–2022. For Lithuania, the share of people living in under-occupied dwellings for 2022 was 21.7%, and for Poland it was 16.5%. For Lithuania, the value decreased by 0.5% compared to 2021, for Poland, the value increased by 1.9% compared to 2021. Compared to 2013, for Lithuania this indicator increased by 13.0%, for Poland it increased by 46.0%.

Table 7. Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings in Lithuania and Poland for years 2013–2022

Years	Lithuania			Poland		
	Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis	Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings	Index with a fixed basis	Index with a movable basis
2013	19.2	100.0	-	11.3	100.0	-
2014	19.1	99.5	99.5	11.6	102.7	102.7
2015	20.1	104.7	105.2	12.9	114.2	111.2
2016	22.7	118.2	112.9	14.2	125.7	110.1
2017	23.0	119.8	101.3	14.6	129.2	102.8
2018	24.3	126.6	105.7	14.4	127.4	98.6
2019	24.5	127.6	100.8	15	132.7	104.2
2020	27.5	143.2	112.2	15.9	140.7	106.0
2021	21.8	113.5	79.3	16.2	143.4	101.9
2022	21.7	113.0	99.5	16.5	146.0	101.9

Source: Author's calculations.

Tables 8–9 present the results of the estimation of the parameters of the stepwise regression model, where GDP *per capita* is the dependent variable.

Table 8. Parameters of the stepwise regression model

	Summary of dependent variable regression GDP <i>per capita</i> , R = 0,66 R <sup>2</sup> = 0,44 Modified R <sup>2</sup> = 0,39					
	b* (without intercept)	Std. error. b*	b	Std. error. b	t	p
<b>Intercept</b>			32922.79	2643.131	12.46	0.000
<b>Inflation rate</b>	-0.53	0.15	-740.52	215.179	-3.44	0.002
<b>Inability to make ends meet</b>	-0.45	0.15	-340.12	116.956	-2.91	0.008

Source: Author's calculations.

The results show that the GDP *per capita* variable is influenced by the inflation rate, inability to ‘make ends meet’, and share of people living in under-occupied dwellings. The stepwise regression model provide estimates of marginal effects for each of the variables: inflation rate, inability to ‘make ends meet’, and share of people living in under-occupied dwellings, as well as the model fit statistics. The marginal effects reveal the expected magnitudes of change in GDP *per capita* associated with one unit increase in the value of each variable used. The estimated marginal effects reveal that a one unit increase in measurement of the determinant is expected to decrease in the GDP *per capita* by 740,52 if the inflation rate is a determinant. The estimated marginal effects reveal that a one unit increase in measurement of the determinant is expected to decrease in the GDP *per capita* by 340,12 if the inability to make ends meet is a determinant (table 8).

Table 9. Parameters of the stepwise regression model

	Summary of dependent variable regression GDP <i>per capita</i> R = 0,58 R <sup>2</sup> = 0,33 Modified R <sup>2</sup> = 0,31					
	b*	Std. error b*	b	Std. error b	t	p
<b>Intercept</b>			17352.28	1697.84	10.22	0.000
<b>Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings</b>	0.58	0.16	146.70	41.58	3.53	0.002

Source: Author’s calculations.

The estimated marginal effects reveal that a one unit increase in measurement of the determinant is expected to increase in the GDP *per capita* by 146,70 if the share of people living in under-occupied dwellings is a determinant (table 9).

The results obtained indicate that for the remaining variables: the unemployment rate and the rate of people at risk of poverty, the values of their parameters were not statistically significant.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Agenda 2030 is a global action plan adopted by UN member states in 2015. Its main objective is to create a more sustainable, just, and prosperous world by 2030. Agenda 2030 focuses on three key aspects of the sustainable development, i.e.: economic, social, and environmental. The most well-known part of this agenda is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), comprising 17 goals. These goals aim to address various global issues such as poverty, hunger, lack of access to education, social inequalities, health challenges, and environmental protection. Agenda 2030 is widely accepted internationally and emphasises partnerships between countries, public and private sectors, nongovernmental organizations, and civil society to achieve these ambitious goals by 2030 (<https://glorew.com/articles/17-sustainable-development-goals-united-nations/?gclid...>).

The calculated results should help the authorities of the analysed countries belonging to the European Union to make decisions regarding the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. The results show that the GDP *per capita* variable is influenced by the inflation rate, inability to ‘make ends meet’, and share of people living in under-occupied dwellings.

**Hypothesis 1** was confirmed, which assumed that living conditions in Poland and Lithuania have improved in recent years. Analysing the living conditions in Poland and Lithuania in 2013–2022, the results show that for both Lithuania and Poland, this value has increased by over 200% over the last 10 years.

**Hypothesis 2** was also confirmed: since 2013, the percentage of people unable to make ends meet has decreased. The research results show that in both countries Poland and Lithuania the percentage of people unable to make ends meet has decreased by 70% compared to 2013, so it can be said that both countries are doing better and better in this aspect.

Unfortunately, **hypothesis 3** was partially confirmed, which assumed that the dynamics of people at risk of poverty decreased compared to 2013. Research shows that the dynamics of people at risk of poverty in Lithuania increased by 1.5% compared to 2013. A different situation occurs in Poland, where the dynamics of people at risk of poverty decreased by 20.8%. Obtaining such a result requires additional research to be performed in Lithuania, which will answer the question: What factors influenced the increase in the dynamics of people at risk of poverty in this country, and what caused the deterioration of the situation in this aspect. The search for sustainability stems from the goal of humanity to develop an environment that enhances individual freedom, but also improves the range of choices associated with having a longer and healthier life. To achieve such a situation, it is necessary to combat poverty and introduce solutions that minimise poverty. Another issue that should be noted is the fact that EU governments should allocate more resources to health protection and improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of the European Union countries (Migała-Warchoł, Pichla, 2021).

In summary, it can be concluded that implementing the main principles of sustainable development goals, including the elimination of poverty and hunger, based on the results presented both in Lithuania and Poland, may be at risk. If the governments of these countries do not take decisive steps the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 may be threatened.

It is well known that the better the economic situation, the better standard of living people have. However, today we are currently facing some problems in Europe. One of them is the war in Ukraine, which caused inflation in all EU countries, as well as in Poland and Lithuania. The best solution to fight against it is to raise interest rates. However, this situation resulted in an increase in loan installments and politicians in Poland stopped raising interest rates.

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