

Introduction

From the long-term viewpoint, mortality clearly assumes a crucial position in the demographic development. It codetermines the evolution of the size of a given population and it contributes to the creation of its sex and age structure. As a result, it becomes one of the significant factors of the social and economic development. This fact bestows a deep sense to the entire study of mortality, both in the general context and in real conditions.

Unlike other components of the population reproduction, the process of mortality mostly occurs independently from the will of man and his decision-making. As a rule, demographic events provoked by a decision of an individual or a partnership couple (birth, marriage, divorce) are preceded by a preparatory period lasting some time. In the case of mortality, there is a certain parallel as, apart from suicides and other violent deaths, most events shaping the process under observation result from the influences with a long-term impact on human health. Only a small part of people die “without any blame” such as due to some untreatable congenital defect or accident caused by another person. As a result, the absolute majority of deaths is caused by the way of life that in the long run and systematically harms the health of its bearer, through the neglect of care for one’s own health and often also through the insufficient system of health care.

The submitted PhD thesis has set as its task to present the previous research activities of the candidate and its results in the sphere of general and avoidable mortality. A critical discussion on the concept of avoidable mortality, methodological principles, approach and method of analysis of this type of mortality as well as a specific application of the concept on the conditions of the Czech Republic on both nationwide and regional levels along with a comparison with the development in Slovakia are placed within a framework created by a comprehensive basic analysis of general mortality on the nationwide and regional levels. A theoretical and methodological discussion as well as a practical application of the concept proceeds on two basic levels: first, there is a search for general structures and regularities

in the development that are to enable to assess in a more reliable way the future development of parameters of mortality; second, there is a presentation of the search for the instruments with which to thoroughly assess the provided health care through the identification of premature deaths from the illnesses and other causes that might not occur if there were early and appropriate health care and prevention.