

Chapter 4

Leisure Time in Family Life



Abstract The chapter in its first part presents changing understanding of leisure time in the past and currently. Major shifts have occurred in the increasing amount of free time and its democratization. The free time or leisure time is understood only just as a supplement or the rest after work; however, it has its intrinsic value, carries potential of freedom, self-realization, fun and relax. The text deals with leisure time functions and its meaning for individuals and complete family. It highlights issues that are connected with spending of leisure time. In the second part of the chapter, there are results of survey, which was mapping of family spending of free time, its amount and fulfilment. In all the surveyed countries, spending of leisure time has proved to be an important prerequisite for family life satisfaction. Activities that are the most likely to be undertaken together with family members are watching TV, walks, trips, visits of friends or relatives, visits of cultural actions and social games.

Keywords Leisure time · Family life · Functions of leisure time · Leisure time activities · Lifestyle and leisure · Amount and quality of leisure

4.1 Meaning and Function of Leisure Time

Leisure time is part of a lifestyle and can significantly affect the quality of life. Balancing work with relaxation and changing diverse activities is important for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The way you spend your free time is influenced by several factors and is specific to each person. In families, parents often determine the way of spending free time. Children can later take this model into their future independent lives. The way families spend their free time can also be an indicator of their social status. In recent decades, there have been changes in the area of leisure time in terms of its quantity and quality. The basic trend is an increase in leisure time as well as a wider range of various individual and group activities.

4.1.1 *Free Time in the History and Now*

The alternation of activity and rest corresponds to the biorhythm of all living creatures; in case of man, it took a concrete form of alternation of work and leisure time. Leisure time has existed throughout the course of human history, but it has come to the forefront of interest gradually and slowly.

From the point of view of the development of leisure time, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are particularly important. Attention to leisure time had an individual and collective dimension (Hofbauer 2010). Leisure time ceased to be a privilege of the nobility, since the beginning of the nineteenth century it has been promoted in the middle-class families, and in the second half of the nineteenth century also in the working-class families. Activities, associations and facilities opened itself up to new people from different social backgrounds, helping them to go beyond the traditional family framework.

The scientific character of leisure time studies was the origin of sociology of leisure time (Veselá 1999). **Thorstein Veblen** (1857–1929), an American of Norwegian origin, is considered to be its founder thanks to the book **The Theory of the Leisure Class** (1899). Veblen pointed out to the emergence of leisure time as a new important area of life, but at the same time he identified leisure time with idleness, and he criticized it. In addition to theoretical considerations, empirical studies began to emerge, the time-frame technique was improved, and factors influencing the leisure time structure of various population groups were identified. Leisure time was gaining in scope, importance and the interest of society in leisure time grew. Legislative documents of European countries as well as other emerging institutions dealt with it. Later, sciences on leisure time, e.g. leisure time education, came into being.

Most scientists had no doubt about the importance and value of leisure for individuals and society. They saw it from an individual point of view as a place for rest, fun, cultivation of abilities and skills; from the social point of view, time for the reproduction of the workforce, for the acquisition of culture and for the very cultural creation.

In the second half of the twentieth century, leisure time gained in scope, importance and aroused the interest of society.

A milestone in the study of leisure time was the 1962 book by French sociologist **Joffre Dumazedier** entitled **“Vers une civilization du loisir?” (Towards to a leisure time society?)**. It brought the idea that the main achievement of the modern civilization is not the material welfare, but the universality of the existence of leisure time, which affects all other spheres of life.

The title of the book is intentionally a question. The author wanted to draw attention to the ambivalence of leisure time. It can be a space for the positive development of an individual and for giving meaning to his place in society, but it can also lead to his isolation, to the lack of interest in what is going on outside of his privacy.

In the second half of the twentieth century, especially in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, under the influence of the practice of the then Soviet Union, new concepts of education and leisure time association based on mass and unification were

developed. Youth activities at the place of residence were supported. The participants were activated by working together with their peers.

The 1990s were a breakthrough period, and the consequences of globalization also began to show more significantly. The quantitative and qualitative development of leisure time activities of children and youth continued. At the same time, individualization in leisure activities developed. The differences in age, social and interest groups began to be considered. In this period, the influence of computers and modern technologies is beginning to grow significantly.

Němec et al. (2002) summarize the post-war development of the concept and content of leisure time into three stages:

1. **Stage—1950s and 1960s:**

The lifestyle of society **favours work**, the opposite is free time. Therefore, rest and recreation become the basic function of leisure time in order to reproduce the workforce. In out-of-school education establishments, activities include rest, outdoor activities, walks and mass preparation for classes.

2. **Stage—1970s and 1980s:**

There is **no longer a sharp differentiation between work and leisure time**. In our free time, we satisfy our material and cultural needs, free time serve not only for rest and recreation, but people also want entertainment and experiences. Numerous interest activities of all ages are developing.

3. **Stage—1990s:**

From the balance between work and leisure time, we move towards **an excess of leisure time**:

The borders between work, partly-leisure time and leisure time are blurred. People enter free time with the requirements of “I want”, “I need”, “I enjoy it”, etc. Human cultivation is essential.

Summing up these changes in the understanding of leisure time, the increasing amount of leisure time and its democratization is essential.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the average daily working hours in Europe were 12–14 h. Around 1900, a working week with 60 h of work prevailed. In the early 1930s, a requirement of 40 h of work per week was set across European countries. In 1978, working hours, counted into all days of the year, were 5.9 h per day in the USA, 6.4 h in England and 7.7 h in France (Hofbauer 2004).

Over the last two hundred years, the life span of the people in Europe has increased by half. While in 1800 the average life expectancy was about 50 years, at present the average life expectancy of the population in the European Union is almost 74 years (Czech Statistical Office 2018). The composition of life also changed significantly. H. W. Opaschowski (in Hofbauer 2004) gave an overview of the evolution of lifetime. He structured lifetime into three categories—(1) time devoted to biological needs (e.g. sleep, food), (2) time devoted to work, profession and (3) time which is freely available to man (i.e. free time). While at the beginning of the nineteenth century the structure of time (in the order of categories as given, respectively, and in percentages) was 41-34-25, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the proportion was quite different: 40-9-51. This comparison shows that there was a similar amount of time

to meet biological needs. However, the proportion of working and free time has fundamentally changed. Today, free time with its range occupies the first place in the structure of human life. The sphere of work gets to the last place.

Leisure time has been democratized over the past centuries, providing new opportunities for free decision-making. Nevertheless, paradoxes can be found in its development. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, efforts were made to reduce the amount of working time. However, some people are currently trying to expand their working hours. They work overtime, refuse to take a holiday and look for second jobs. Some European countries are considering raising working hours again, and retirement age is also raising up. The reason and motive of these measures is probably an increase in the efficiency of the economy, an effort to maintain the standard of living of the society and a reaction to current demographic trends.

Despite these paradoxes, the development of leisure time can be described as positive from the family perspective. By reducing the long working hours of parents, more favourable conditions for family life and raising children were created. The wage labour of children and youth has been eliminated. Leisure time has become an important part of life. On the one hand, it contains perspectives and opportunities, and on the other hand, it also contains difficulties and risks.

In the following text, we will look at the ways in which leisure time is currently perceived and defined in more detail.

4.1.2 *What is Leisure Time?*

There are many definitions of leisure time in pedagogy, sociology, psychology and other disciplines. The simplest division of time is given by Kolesárová (2016) and divides time into two basic categories—**working and non-working time**. Non-working time (i.e. time after work) is further divided into **free and bound time**. In the bound time can be included activities that are necessary, and people do not do them out of interest or free will (e.g. ensuring the running of the household, transport to work).

Kaplánek (2012) points out at the fact that when defining leisure time, we distinguish between leisure time in a broader sense and leisure time in a narrower sense. Leisure time in the broader sense includes all time outside of working hours. Free time in the strict sense of the term contains only activities that one devotes to himself/herself entirely to his/her own free choice.

Structured time is more detailed in Vážanský (2001) and lists the following categories:

1. **working time**
2. **bound time**—time related to work (e.g. commuting, compulsory education after work)
3. **non-working time**—this is further divided by:

- (a) **time for personal provision** (sleep, nutrition, hygiene, supply),
- (b) **time for roles of necessity** (family and social commitments),
- (c) **individually available time**—can be divided into
 - (i) **partly-leisure time**—activities that the individual carries out partly as a hobby and partly as a duty, e.g. handwork, gardening, work in home workshop
 - (ii) **leisure time**—time for yourself and your interests.

The perception and definition of “leisure time” is varied. The term “leisure time” can be understood either neutrally—time that is not yet fulfilled by anything, positively—free time, or negatively—unfulfilled, wasted time (Kaplánek 2012).

Knotová (2011) has a similar view on leisure time. She presents different concepts of leisure time—optimistic and sceptical. Knotová presents the concept of optimistic leisure time as meaningful. Sceptical approach, on the other hand, highlights the potential risks and negative aspects of leisure time.

Perception of leisure time is influenced by subjective view. It always depends on the individual, his/her value orientation and lifestyle. Some people consider leisure time to be a waste of time, for others it has a higher value in relation to the development of their personality, or it can be a period of rest after work. The same activity (e.g. plant cultivation) is for one person working time, for another purely leisure time, for others it falls into the category of partly-leisure time.

A similarly diverse situation is in the search for a definition of leisure time. There are usually two different definitions of leisure time in the literature—negative and positive (e.g. Vážanský 2001; Hofbauer 2004; Kaplánek 2012, 2017; Kolesárová 2016; Kraus et al. 2015):

1. **Quantitative, negative definition of leisure time**—defines leisure time by what it does not contain, what is not leisure time. It is a traditional and historically older approach, in literature, that appeared especially in the 1960s and 1970s. It is based on the definition of free time in relation to working hours. It defines it as a residual time that remains after deducting working time, completing given tasks and meeting basic needs. This is the approach of the French sociologist and founder of leisure time pedagogy, Joffre Dumazedier, who does not include into leisure time:
 - time spent on employment for adults, and in case of adolescents’ time devoted to learning;
 - time devoted to preparation and transport to work or school;
 - time needed to meet basic biological needs (sleep, food, hygiene and other self-service activities);
 - the time needed to fulfil other duties (e.g. related to households).

Thus, leisure time is a set of activities that a person does for his/her own pleasure, either to relax or to have fun, or to develop their awareness, personality, voluntary social participation or free creative ability after fulfilling work, family and social responsibilities and obligations (Dumazedier 1966).

2. **Qualitative, positive definition of leisure time**—defines leisure time on the basis of its quality and focuses on the content of leisure time. It is a time that a person can freely dispose; it means a true freedom for an individual.

In the negative definition of leisure time, we can see that duties (work, family, satisfying physiological needs) are given first, and time that is disposable is given the second place. The positive definition of leisure time refers mainly to freedom, interests, self-realization, recreation and entertainment.

Nowadays, experts incline to the second concept. *“Leisure time is a time in which one freely chooses and does such activities that bring joy, pleasure, enjoyment, relaxation, which restore and develop his physical and mental abilities and eventually creative skills as well. It is the time in which man is him/her-self, and mostly belongs to him/her-self, when he/she performs mostly freely and voluntarily activities for himself or herself. Eventually for others, out of their inner impulse and interest.* (Němec et al. 2002, p. 17).

Kratochvílová (2004) defines leisure time as a time of freedom that the individual has at his or her own disposal beyond his/her duty of self-expression and self-realization according to his/her own needs and interests. She states that everyone should be free to decide how to use their free time.

The aspect of freedom in leisure time is also evident in legislation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights mentions the right to leisure time. Article 27 reads as follows:

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author. (<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>)

In response to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Leisure Board of Directors approved The Charter for Leisure in the year 2000 (The World Leisure Organization 2001).

The right to leisure time is also included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Article 31 of the Convention states that states parties recognize the right of the child to rest and to leisure time, to participate in play and recreational activities appropriate to his or her age, and to freely participate in cultural life and artistic activities; they help to provide children with adequate and equal opportunities in cultural, artistic, rest time and leisure activities (<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text>).

These approaches imply that the value of leisure time is both individual and social. From an individual point of view, it consists in creating space for self-realization and human development. The value in terms of society is because it can be used rationally for its benefits. From the individual’s point of view, it is possible to define basic **functions of leisure time**: relaxation, cultivation, personality development (Kolesárová 2016). The functions are similarly described by Kraus et al. (2015). He

sets among the three basic functions of leisure time the function of **relaxation** (relaxation, regeneration), **entertainment** (compensation) and **cultivation** (personality development). The function of **socialization** (socialization, belonging to a group) is also characteristic for youth.

Leisure time pedagogues often rely on the description of leisure time functions created by the important German leisure time pedagogue Horst W. Opaschowski (In: Vážanský 2001). He based definitions of the functions of leisure time on individual needs of the individual and current social requirements at the end of the twentieth century:

- **the need for recreation**—recovery, relief from daily stress, rest, activities beneficial to health;
- **need for compensation**—balancing deficiencies, distractions, promoting nature, conscious use of life, eliminating disappointment, frustration;
- **need for education**—knowledge, education, desire for experiences;
- **the need for contemplation**—peace, well-being, contemplation, time for oneself, seeking the meaning of life, finding identity;
- **need for communication**—communication, contacts, sociability, searching for social relations, desire to share common experiences;
- **the need for integration**—grouping, social security and stability, a sense of belonging, seeking emotional security, adherence to rituals and traditions;
- **the need for participation**—engagement, initiative, participation in social life and shaping the environment through social activities;
- **need for enculturation**—creative development, participation in cultural life, creative application.

These needs could be divided into individual needs (recreation, compensation, education, contemplation) and general needs, respectively social (communication, integration, participation, enculturation). All needs are reflected in functions of leisure time. These intertwine with each other, and the need to analyse leisure time activities comprehensively in the family, school, the media or a village is becoming increasingly important. The functions and goals of leisure time activities, contents, methodology and material facilities have substantially expanded in recent decades.

4.1.3 Leisure Time and Family

A family, as a primary social group, is also a prime environment of leisure time and upbringing for children and young people. The ways in which leisure time activities are carried out in families vary depending on their social status, lifestyle and relation to leisure time needs. A desirable goal is the interest of the family in enabling children to spend their free time actively, meaningfully, on the basis of their voluntary decision. At the same time, sensitive leading by parents or other members of the family is

important. The family should inspire, support and implement children's leisure time activities, approach them in a creative way and create attitudes that children will be able and willing to apply in the future even after their own family is established.

Bendl et al. (2015) point out at the fact that family activities differentiate in some ways from the influence of school and school institutes. It is not possible to expect a professional approach from parents because they usually do not have a pedagogical education, but there are strong emotional relationships between its members. The quality of these relationships is essential for the educational effect of the family.

This action takes place:

1. **Reproduction of similar patterns of positive leisure time behaviour of parents.** Parents should be able to manage their free time appropriately, not overestimate it or underestimate it. It should be evident from the behaviour of parents that both the fulfilment of duties and leisure time are a natural part of our lives, that leisure time activities include, besides rest and relaxation, personal interests, our hobbies. It is desirable that children encounter the mutual tolerance of their parents to the interests of their partner, that they see some interests in common.
Significant influence of parents as role models is confirmed by the results of a research from 2009, which was attended by Czech children aged 9–17. The most common answer to the question: “To whom do you want to resemble in adulthood?” Was the “someone from the family” option, which was answered by 40% of children (Stašová et al. 2015). However, the imitation of the lifestyle of parents is desirable only if there is no anti-social activity or that boredom does not prevail.
2. **Experiencing the free time together,** carrying out individual and common regular leisure time activities within the family (sports, tourism, art, science, technology, entertainment, etc.). However, activities need to be chosen in which all members can participate and feel comfortable. The nature of each activity must be appropriate to the age of all family members, their capabilities and interests.
3. **Promoting children's interests,** responsive and purposeful responses to needs, interests and talents of children. It is essential to listen to own children, to show real interest and to show them the joy from their success. Parents' participation in presenting the results of their children's hobbies, material support, accompanying hobbies or transport is essential. In particular, it is essential to respect the fact that leisure time activities are voluntary. It is beneficial to define each time together with children a specific goal towards which children will aim (Hofbauer 2004; Bendl 2015).

An important starting point is enough time devoted to children by parents and active, educated interest of parents.

In each family, leisure time is shaped by various factors, such as family size and type, living conditions of the family, whether the family is complete or one of the parents is missing, the family's economic security, housing standards, the family's

social status, the way the family organizes free time, attitudes and values of parents. The number of children and their sex, the age of parents and children and the style of education also play a role. Interests of parents and their mutual tolerance are also very important.

A number of factors complicate the quality of the way we fill in the leisure time. For example, there are disproportions in the amount of free time. There are some individuals or groups who have a lot or very little of free time.

In the case of lack of leisure time, it is mainly because of work/school duties overload, a large number of leisure time activities or pursuing only one, narrowly focused leisure time activity, or time requirements for commuting to work.

Němec et al. (2002) draw attention to the fact that some individuals and whole families approach leisure time consumedly. The meaning of life becomes for them to gain as much money and material well-being as possible. Instead of taking advantage of the gradual shortening of working hours for own development, they become slaves to their own needs; devotes the time to the second job with the prospect of profit more money, respectively, gaining higher social prestige. In this way, the free time, which brings joy, relaxation, freedom, disappears from life.

On the other hand, there are individuals with a lot of free time, could be said with an abundance of free time, but they are not able to use it appropriately. This problem concerns, e.g. unemployed people. They have enough time, but usually lack the resources to spend their free time in their interests or motivation.

Nowadays, it is also possible to record the problematic ratio between active and passive forms of the use of leisure time. Especially among the young generation, mass media activities have been preferred over the last decades (Sak and Saková 2004; Kraus et al. 2015). These are passive activities, sometimes even harmful to the physical, mental and social development of the young generation. Other problems also include the relationship between the desire to pursue a particular activity during the leisure time and its actual implementation. According to Sak (2000), self-study during leisure time among the youth decreased as well as reading and active movement, interest in public or political activity have declined in the past ten years as well. On the other hand, they spend more time talking to peers (currently mainly in social networks), visiting restaurants and gainful employment. The most common reasons that prevent the pursuit of leisure time activities according to wishes and interests are mainly lack of time, money, unavailability of suitable opportunities in the surrounding area or poor equipment for running the selected leisure time activity.

The leisure time activities reflect the influences and consequences of the society's development. There are quantitative and qualitative changes in leisure time. On one hand, the possibilities for applying new approaches (animation, experiential education) are being expanded and new institutions are created to respond to specific needs, but on the other hand, leisure time is also a space of various pitfalls and dangers (allowing doing nothing, boredom, and in extreme cases undesirable or risky behaviour). As Hofbauer (2004) writes, the development of leisure time can therefore not be understood linearly as a "upward and forward" journey, but as a continuous uncovering of new possibilities, solutions to traditional and new issues.

4.2 Leisure Activities in Families in Terms of Quantity and Quality

In the lifestyle research of contemporary families in Europe, we first looked at how respondents perceived leisure time as a circumstance for a happy family. Parents who participated in the research were asked an open question: “How do you imagine a happy family?” Their responses were subject to content analysis, and nine categories were created: health, housing, employment, financial security, leisure time spent together, mutual help and support, harmonic relationships, success and satisfaction of children, complete family. The three most important areas that respondents associate with family satisfaction are health, mutual assistance and support and harmonious relationships. The category of leisure time spent together was ranked 3rd–6th in individual countries. It is considered as a significant item (3rd place) by the Germans (first and second place is support and assistance and harmonious relationships; 4th place in this country was financial security and health ranked fifth). In Poland and Ukraine, leisure time is ranked in sixth place.

Similarly, another open question was evaluated: What do you lack for your family’s satisfaction?

In all countries included in the survey, the third place (ranked by frequency of responses) got the answer “I miss nothing, I am happy with my family”. In Ukraine, it was even the most common answer chosen by 31% of respondents. In this country, the second place went to financial security, the third place took mutual assistance and support, and the fourth place was assigned to leisure time spent together. In other countries, lack of leisure time spent with the family was perceived as the first or second most common problem (it was similar with the category of financial security).

As is evident from the results of respondents’ answers, leisure time is perceived as an important component of family satisfaction. The lack of common leisure time is perceived negatively and respondents have identified it as one of the two biggest obstacles to family satisfaction.

The following question tried to reveal in more detail the respondents’ satisfaction with the quantity and quality of their leisure time. Respondents commented on eight items, choosing a level of satisfaction on a seven-point scale, where one extreme value was the option of “very satisfied” and the other “very dissatisfied”. Between the extreme statements were the possibilities “dissatisfied, rather dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, rather satisfied, satisfied. The results and country comparison are shown in Table 4.1. In the table, the range of options is narrowed down to “dissatisfied” (brings together “very dissatisfied, dissatisfied and rather dissatisfied”), “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” and “satisfied” (brings together “rather satisfied, satisfied, very satisfied”).

Satisfaction with the amount of their free time predominates among respondents from the Czech Republic and Latvia. In contrast, in Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine, there are more dissatisfied parents with the amount of their free time during working days (after work). In Poland, the highest percentage of those who chose the

Table 4.1 Satisfaction with the amount of free time after work (in %)

With the amount of leisure time after work I am:						
	The Czech republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	41.3	29.6	46	50	44.7	35.4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11.3	20.2	11.8	16.1	14.7	31.1
Satisfied	47.4	50.1	42.1	33.9	39.1	33.4

extreme option “very dissatisfied” is 10.5%. If we looked at the results for the whole sample of respondents, the same percentage of satisfied and dissatisfied came out, 41%. In the middle category of undecided, 17.5% of respondents are for the whole sample.

Table 4.2 shows respondents’ satisfaction with the amount of their free time on weekends:

An analysis of the results in Table 4.2 shows that parents in most of the countries under review are significantly more satisfied with leisure time at the weekend in comparison to leisure time on weekdays. Only in Poland remains the prevailing dissatisfaction over satisfaction, 46% of respondents feel dissatisfied with the amount of free time on weekends. In the overall comparison for the whole sample, 24% of respondents are dissatisfied and 63% are satisfied.

The third item of the question concerned satisfaction with the length of leave. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

Note: In Europe, the length of legal leave varies, most often between 20 and 28 days per year. In some countries, the number of days of leave depends on the age

Table 4.2 Satisfaction with the amount of free time at the weekend (in %)

With the amount of free time on the weekend I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	20	18.6	22.4	46	19.9	17.6
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10.1	13.1	10.5	12.7	14.5	17.2
Satisfied	70	68.3	67.1	41.3	65.7	65.1

Table 4.3 Satisfaction with length of leave (in %)

With the length of leave I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	26.7	18.8	38.7	44.4	34.1	32
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11	13	14.7	14.5	13.9	13.6
Satisfied	62.4	68.2	46.7	41.1	48.8	54.4

of the worker or how long he goes to work. Employees with children, people with disabilities, or people under 18 years or workers before retirement are also favoured in some places (Hovorková 2018).

As in the previous table, satisfaction with the length of vacation prevails. Only in Poland are more dissatisfied respondents than satisfied. By contrast, respondents from Latvia are most satisfied with the length of their leave. In the overall comparison, 33% of the respondents are dissatisfied and 54% are satisfied. Thirteen percentage are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 show that parents in the countries under review are most satisfied with the amount of free time on weekends, while they are the least satisfied with the amount of free time during normal working days.

The following two items examined respondents' satisfaction with the quality of rest. Table 4.4 reports satisfaction with the quality of rest during the holiday.

Table 4.4 shows that respondents' satisfaction with the quality of holiday rest is higher than satisfaction with the length of vacation. The greatest satisfaction was recorded by parents from the Czech Republic, the most dissatisfied can be found in Poland. Overall, 21% of respondents are dissatisfied, 64% satisfied and 15% chose the middle scale.

More generally, satisfaction with the quality of leisure time was measured, without closer time specification (Table 4.5).

The results in Table 4.5 are similar to the previous item. Quality of was rated the best by respondents from Latvia (almost 70%). There was a slight increase in undecided parents who chose the middle variant (a total of 20%). Overall, satisfaction is at 61%, dissatisfaction at 19%.

Table 4.4 Satisfaction with holiday rest quality (in %)

With the quality of the rest that holiday brings me, I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	12.7	17.8	25.3	29.9	22.3	19.4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10.7	15.7	17.3	9.7	12.6	23.8
Satisfied	76.5	66.6	57.4	60.5	65.2	56.9

Table 4.5 Satisfaction with quality of leisure time (in %)

With the quality of leisure that brings me free time, I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	18.2	12.7	17.1	21.4	23.7	21.8
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13.7	17.5	26.3	17.5	17	25.2
Satisfied	68.2	69.7	56.6	61.1	59.4	52.9

Section 4.1 introduced leisure time, its understanding and structure. In addition to rest, leisure time can be filled with leisure time activities. Leisure time activities are focused on meeting and developing individual needs, interests and abilities. Unlike entertainment and relaxation, leisure time activities are always of an active nature (Němec et al. 2002). According to the content, hobbies can be divided into five areas: **social sciences** (e.g. learning foreign language, collecting, journalism, history, homeland studies), **technical–practical** (e.g. modelling, work with materials—paper, wood, glass, textiles; electronics, cooking), **natural science** (cultivation, breeding, protection of the nature, fishing, apiculture, hunting), **aesthetic education** (art, music, literature, drama), **sports and tourism** (fitness and health exercises, sports games, seasonal sports) (Pávková et al. 2002).

Leisure time activities are usually associated with the age category of children and youth, but leisure time activities are a source of self-realization, personal development and joy for adults as well. Table 4.6 shows how satisfied parents are with the amount of time to realize their interests.

The greatest satisfaction with the amount of time for their leisure time activities is felt by parents from Germany and Latvia. On the other hand, the greatest dissatisfaction was expressed by respondents from Slovakia, Ukraine and Poland. Overall, satisfaction prevails (51% of all respondents), in comparison to dissatisfaction (35%).

Leisure time includes, among other things, social activities, meeting family, friends. Research has shown (see above) that care for healthy relationships is a precondition for a happy family life for most respondents. Table 4.7 shows how satisfied parents are with the amount of time they spend with their loved ones.

The greatest satisfaction is found with parents in Germany (70%), the greatest dissatisfaction in Poland (41%). Compared to the previous table, there was a slight increase in overall satisfaction (55%) and a decrease in dissatisfaction (31%).

Table 4.6 Satisfaction with the amount of free time for leisure time activities (in %)

With the amount of free time on the weekend I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	39.4	21	21	42.1	42.5	42.3
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14.5	14.2	13.2	15.1	11.1	15.4
Satisfied	46.1	64.9	65.8	42.9	44.9	42.3

Table 4.7 Satisfaction with the amount of free time devoted to close people (in %)

With the amount of time I can spend with my loved ones, I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	30.6	26	18.2	41.2	35.3	35.4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14.5	10.1	11.7	13.5	12.9	18.7
Satisfied	54.8	63.6	70.2	45.3	51	45.9

Table 4.8 Satisfaction with leisure time variety (in %)

With the variety of my free time, I am:						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Dissatisfied	27.9	21.4	18.9	33.6	31.7	37.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.4	17.4	12.2	18.4	19.9	23.6
Satisfied	52.7	61.2	68.9	48	46.3	39

The last item of the question related to satisfaction with the variety of leisure time of respondents (Table 4.8).

Of the total number of respondents, 53% are satisfied with the variety of activities by which they fulfil their leisure time. The most satisfied parents are in Germany (almost 69%). On the contrary, the most dissatisfied respondents are in Ukraine. They are above average (29%) with 38% of dissatisfied respondents.

From all the tables above, it shows that among our respondents' satisfaction with both the quantity and quality of their free time usually prevails over dissatisfaction. In comparison of the countries, the most satisfied are the inhabitants of Latvia, followed by the inhabitants of the Czech Republic. The greatest dissatisfaction with leisure time can be seen at parents from Poland. The question is, to what extent an individual can change the circumstances that are often given to a country by its history. Limits for spending leisure time are set by the state's social policy, its economic level, the number of services provided and their quality, etc.

Several other questions focused on specific leisure time activities of families. The open question asked what respondents would like to do together in their free time as a family. In all countries, trips, travelling, common entertainment, social games and sports were the most common. In this question, respondents could also indicate what prevented them from carrying out these activities. There were two main reasons—lack of time and lack of finance.

Spending leisure time within the family can be divided into active and passive. Active spending of leisure time is activities in which family members participate directly, influence their process and outcome. The activities include board games, sports, hiking, cognitive activities, playing musical instruments and much more. Passive leisure time activities include mainly watching television, watching sport games, visiting the cinema, theatre and meeting friends. These are activities in which family members participate indirectly and cannot fully influence their process (Žumárová, In: Kraus et al. 2015).

The research included questions that try detect typical leisure activities today. An example of spending leisure time passively is playing computer games. In the young generation, computer-related activities become first in the frequency of leisure time activities in recent years (Kolesárová 2016). According to researches by Sak and Saková (2004) and Kolesárová (2016) in the category of 15–18-year-old Czech youth, there was a sharp increase in interest in computers from the mid-1990s to 2005. On the other hand, interest in watching television began to decline after 2000.

Since 2008, the number one and two in free time activities of Czech youth has a computer and chat with friends (nowadays often through social networks). The trend is similar in the 15–40 age group. The three most common leisure time activities are watching TV, chatting with friends and working with a computer.

The question in our research was: “Do you ever play computer games together at home?”.

Gaming together is the most widespread in Poland (43% of Polish respondents) and Ukraine (32% of Ukrainian respondents). On the contrary, this activity is the least popular in Germany, where it occurs in only 1/4 families.

The active way of spending leisure time was addressed by the question: “Do you do sport in your free time?” Most respondents who do sport occurred in Germany (83% of German parents). The least sporting respondents were in Ukraine (43%) and Poland (48%). However, it should be taken into account that the choice of leisure time activities is determined, inter alia, by the way of livelihood, employment. If, in some countries, a larger proportion of the population is employed in positions requiring physical exertion, these people can be expected to spend their leisure time more by relaxing, passively. On the other hand, in countries where the majority of people are employed in services, their work is not physically demanding, they can be expected to prefer sports and physical activities in their free time.

The most frequently represented types of sport activities were: cycling, running, hiking, swimming, fitness. There are slight differences in preferences across countries. Cycling is the most popular sport activity in the Czech Republic and Germany. It has a second place in Poland and Slovakia, but in Ukraine it is only seventh. Skiing is the second most popular sport activity in the Czech Republic. On the contrary, in other countries, skiing ranked seventh or worse. The second most popular activity in Germany is various forms of health exercises (yoga, Pilates, bosu, etc.). In other countries, they were around tenth place. The third most frequently pursued sport activity in Germany is running. It is the most popular activity in Slovakia and the second most popular activity in Ukraine. Fitness activities (gym, aerobics, Zumba, etc.) are most often performed in Poland and Ukraine. Swimming is also popular in both countries.

Interesting results were provided by the question in which respondents were to define the amount of daily leisure time in hours. This is indicative, because the answers could have affected the respondents’ subjective view of what to include in their leisure time and could have been inaccurate—each day is different, and it is difficult to find the average. For example, a time frame would provide more accurate data.

Table 4.9 shows how is it with the respondents and their amount of leisure time in each country. For comparison, the free time of men and women is given.

The question was also offered by the extreme option “I never have free time” or “I have free time only on holidays and weekends”. In Latvia (11% of men and 8.2% of women) and in Germany (9.6% of men and 10% of women) were the most respondents who said that they have no free time. If we sum the two answers together,

Table 4.9 Amount of free time in hours (in %)

Amount of free time in hours		The Czech Republic		Latvia		Germany		Poland		Slovakia		Ukraine	
		Men	Wo men	Men	Wo men	Men	Wo men	Men	Wo men	Men	Wo men	Men	Wo men
0 or just during the weekend	12.6	9.2	33.3	30	20	28.2	27.1	16.1	12.4	17.2	15		
Max. 1 h	14.4	21.6	8	12.7	18.3	19.3	31.8	7.7	9.2	10	9.8		
2-3	38.9	39.1	16.3	22.9	38.4	24.4	27.1	22.8	35.9	33.4	33.5		
4-5	20.3	18.8	14	15.8	16.7	16.7	8.4	11.4	8.1	25	24.8		
6 and more	6.5	7.8	5.3	6.2	0	7.7	3.7	10.3	8.2	11.7	16		
<i>In summary:</i>													
0-1	27	30.8	41.3	42.7	38.3	47.5	58.9	23.8	21.6	27.2	24.8		
2-3	38.9	39.1	16.3	22.9	38.4	24.4	27.1	22.8	35.9	33.4	33.5		
4-6	26.8	26.6	19.3	22	16.7	24.4	12.1	21.7	16.3	36.7	40.8		

Note: The numbers in bold are the most significant discussed in the text

in Latvia, 30% of women and 33.3% of men have almost no free time. In Germany, it is 28.8% of men, while German 20% of women. Poland is the third country where 28.2% of men and 27.1% of women said they have no free time at all or only on weekends.

The second extreme option was “I have 6 or more hours of free time a day”. Most parents from Ukraine (16% women and 11.7% men) chose this option and then men from Slovakia (10.3%).

If we consider 2–3 h of free time per day as the mean and most frequently chosen values, we can summarize the number of respondents who have less (i.e. no free time or maximum 1 h per day) or more free time (i.e. 4 to 6 h' free time per day). The most significant deficit of leisure time is in Poland (58.9% female 47.5% male). Half of the German men also have no time or no more than 1 h a day. On the contrary, they are in the best position with a lot of free time in Ukraine. 40.8% of Ukrainian women and 36.7% of men have more than 4 h of free time per day. Parents from the Czech Republic are also doing well in this sense (26.8% men and 26.6% women).

Each family's lifestyle differs depending on the values and priorities of its members. Eight areas of life values were presented to the respondents, and they were asked to rank them according to priorities of their family. Number 1 was the most important priority. The index of the area was calculated on the basis of the order chosen (the lower the number, the more important it is). Table 4.10 provides an overview of the indexes for each country. The column for each country is divided into two sub-columns. The first shows the calculated index of priorities, and the second shows the ranking of the individual areas chosen by respondents from the given country (1–8).

Interestingly, respondents from all countries agreed on the first two priorities, but the rest is in different order. Health is the most important value in all countries. In the second place is happy family life. In Latvia and Germany, the third priority is a healthy environment, while in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, this area ended up seventh (penultimate). Good and interesting work is the third priority for the people of Poland. For Ukrainians, this is financial security. For the Czechs and Slovaks, the third important area is shared leisure time. In other countries, leisure time was ranked fifth. For the most of the countries, the last item was the work for other people, only in Poland the last area was the personal character and moral qualities.

In addition to the amount of free time, it is important to look at its content. Respondents were offered 16 areas of various leisure time activities, and they were allowed to choose a maximum of 5 areas typical for them. Table 4.11 gives an overview of how the activities are represented in each country. The numbers in the table indicate how many per cent of respondents in that country chose this activity.

Dominating activities are reading and watching TV. The order of activities varies from country to country.

In the Czech Republic, 60% of respondents are reading and watching TV in their free time. Trips and walks are third (56%), followed by gardening (51%). The same activities are also the most frequent in Latvia. Most respondents from this country watch TV (75%) in their free time, followed by reading (72%), gardening (70%), trips and walks (58%). All of these four activities are most prevalent in Latvia. In other

Table 4.10 Values and priority areas of family lifestyles

Important values and areas of lifestyle in individual countries												
	The Czech Republic		Latvia		Germany		Poland		Slovakia		Ukraine	
	Index	Ranking	Index	Ranking	Index	Ranking	Index	Ranking	Index	Ranking	Index	Ranking
Good and interesting work	4.4	4	4.2	4 -5	4.5	4	4.1	3	4.7	4	4.6	4
Healthy and safe environment	5.9	7	4.0	3	4.3	3	5.0	4	5.5	7	5.4	6
Happy family life	2.3	2	2.4	2	2.6	2	2.1	2	2.5	2	3.0	2
Material level, financial sufficiency	5.8	6	5.7	6	6.0	7	5.5	6	5.4	6	4.5	3
Health	1.45	1	2	1	2.55	1	1.9	1	1.5	1	1.9	1
Help for others, work for others	6.3	8	6.6	8	6.3	8	5.9	7	6.1	8	6.6	8
Leisure time spent together	4.3	3	4.2	4 -5	4.9	5	5.2	5	4.1	3	4.9	5
Personal character and moral qualities	5.0	5	6.0	7	5.0	6	6.4	8	5.2	5	5.6	7

Note: The numbers in bold are the most significant discussed in the text

countries, they are also at the forefront, but with a lower percentage. The situation is different in Germany. The most common leisure time activity is reading (68%), followed by visits (42%), cinema (40%) and listening to music at home (33%). In Poland, most respondents watch TV in their free time (71%), followed by reading (63%). Other favourite activities are listening to music at home (47%) and visiting the cinema (44%). In Poland, most respondents prefer cultural but passive activities. In Slovakia, watching TV dominates (71%), but in the second place is gardening (58%), followed by reading (57%). Trips and walks are fourth (55%). In Ukraine, the most frequent activity is once again watching TV (64%), followed immediately by reading (62%). Visits (39%) and garden work (33%) are also popular.

Table 4.11 Leisure time activities of parents (in %)

Which leisure time activities are typical for you						
	The Czech Republic	Latvia	Germany	Poland	Slovakia	Ukraine
Reading	60	72	68	63	57	62
Music (actively)	13	14	23	12	17	19
Concerts (visit)	17	45	28	10	17	25
Theatre (visit)	24	41	32	15	17	29
Cinema (visit)	29	23	40	44	28	32
Handicraft	26	41	23	10	31	27
DIY	19	12	27	6	20	18
Gardening	51	70	23	31	58	33
Watching TV	60	75	32	71	71	64
Music (listening at home)	32	48	33	47	42	29
Disco, wine bars, restaurants	23	18	31	30	32	24
Visits	28	27	42	38	31	39
Trips, walks	56	58	18	41	55	26
Sport	38	40	32	19	33	14
Board games	9	17	12	8	14	3

Note: The numbers in bold are the most significant discussed in the text

An interesting comparison brings a comparison of the participation of respondents from individual countries in given leisure time activities. The most devoted to reading are Latvians and the least Slovaks. The most active in performing music are the Germans and Ukrainians. Concert and theatre visits are most represented in Latvia, while the least in Poland. Cinema is a favourite activity among Germans and Polish people. Handicraft enjoys the greatest popularity in Latvia, while DIY in Germany. Watching TV is almost the most popular leisure activity in all the countries except Germany. In Germany, only 32% of respondents chose this option, which is half less than in other countries. As far as visits and similar social activities are concerned, they are mostly realized in Germany, Ukraine and Poland. Trips and walks are popular in Latvia and in the Czech Republic, and on the contrary, they do not have much fans in Germany (only 18%).

In addition to choosing the leisure activities themselves, respondents were also asked to determine whether they pursue the activity themselves, with family members or friends. The results are shown in Table 4.12. For each activity, it is differentiated with whom respondents carry the activity. Column (a) means that the respondents carry out the activity themselves, (b) is with a family member, (c) is with friends. The most frequently chosen option for each activity and country is highlighted in

Table 4.12 Leisure time activities of parents (in %) divided into individual x family x with friends

Which leisure time activities are typical for you																		
	The Czech Republic			Latvia			Germany			Poland			Slovakia			Ukraine		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Reading	53	6	0	62	10	0	58	9	1	54	9	0	53	4	0	57	4	1
Music (actively)	5	6	2	4	7	3	10	6	6	9	3	0	9	3	5	11	3	5
Concerts (visit)	2	9	6	4	32	9	0	12	17	1	5	4	1	4	12	3	11	12
Theatre (visit)	1	18	5	5	28	8	0	17	15	1	9	5	1	9	7	2	17	10
Cinema (visit)	1	22	6	1	19	2	0	18	22	3	32	9	1	10	17	3	17	13
Handicraft	22	3	1	37	4	0	21	1	1	9	1	0	24	6	0	24	2	1
DIY	14	5	4	9	3	0	6	19	1	4	2	0	10	10	0	12	5	1
Gardening	18	33	0	23	46	1	6	15	1	6	24	1	16	42	0	10	23	0
Watching TV	8	52	0	16	59	0	1	30	1	14	56	1	8	62	1	12	51	1
Music (listening at home)	18	14	1	22	26	1	13	15	5	24	20	3	24	15	2	19	8	2
Disco, wine bars, restaurants	2	7	15	1	12	6	1	9	21	3	12	15	2	5	26	1	8	15
Visits	1	16	11	5	13	9	4	21	18	2	25	11	1	22	7	3	24	12
Trips, walks	3	49	4	6	46	6	1	14	3	5	30	6	6	37	12	2	17	7
Sport	12	21	5	18	19	3	12	6	14	6	9	4	14	12	6	8	4	2
Board games	0	7	2	2	13	3	1	6	4	1	4	3	1	8	5	1	1	1

Note: The numbers in bold are the most significant discussed in the text

colour (yellow = the possibility that respondents do the activity themselves; green = activity with family members; blue = activity with friends).

Table 4.12 shows that, across countries, some leisure time activities are purely individual, while others are most often implemented with family members or friends.

Individual activities include reading and handicrafts in all countries. This is not clear for other activities. Except Germany, the DIY is also individual, just in Germany it is an activity shared with family members. In four countries, active music playing is most individually performed, but in two it is most often with family members. It is similar with listening to music at home.

The activities that are clearly mostly together with other family members are: watching TV, gardening, visiting the theatre, visits, trips, walking and playing board games. It could be said that these activities strengthen family cohesion in all the countries under review, ensuring common experiences for family members. In almost all countries, this also applies to cultural events such as concerts and cinema visits. The most varied were activities that are most often carried out together with friends. Except of Latvia, there was some kind of leisure time activity in each country that respondents prefer to engage with friends. Most often, it is a visit to entertainment venues such as discos, wine bars, restaurants, etc. In Germany and Slovakia, respondents prefer to visit concerts and cinemas also with friends and Ukrainians also prefer to attend concerts with friends. The most interesting are the differences in the perception of the sport category. In two countries, sport is the most individual activity; in three countries, it is most practiced with family members; and in Germany, it is most often an activity practiced with friends.

The table shows in bold the three most frequently performed activities with family members (green fields) in each country. It is positive that at least one of the three most common family leisure time activities has an active character (trips, gardening, DIY, etc.)

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