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THE CONSUMPTION STRUCTURE OF FOOD ARTICLES IN IMPOVERISHED HOUSEHOLDS – THE EXAMPLE OF THE WIELKOPOLSKIE PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT. The aim of the article was to present the food consumption in years 1999-2003. There was discussed the diversification of incomes and expenditures in particular quintile and social-economics groups as well as their influence on consumption size. It was mentioned that the incomes are less diverse in each group than in whole rural population. It was noticed that in groups of the lowest income the consumption size is not sufficient and often does not let satisfy all basic needs. It was affirmed that in the first quintile, the price for one good is usually lower than in the fifth quintile, which proves that goods purchased by poor people are generally of worse quality. Quantitative and qualitative consumption improvement may be caused by income increase of rural areas population.

Key words: food consumption, income, expenditure, poverty

Introduction

The consumption of food articles in households is dependent on a number of endo- and exogen factors. The range and source of income and expenditure constitute one of the major factors. Although they are not a sufficient determinant, enabling to describe living conditions, they determine, to a large degree, the level of basic material and im-material needs not being met. The paper aims to describe how income influences the volume of people's expenditure and the consumption of selected food articles, as well as to outline how households evaluate their own consumption. Unpublished data of GUS from 1999-2003 and survey research conducted in all districts of the Wielkopolskie Province at the turn of 2004/2005 have been used as sources of information. The sample amounted to 786 households.

Incomes and expenditure of rural population of the Wielkopolskie Province

The amount of average monthly disposable income per person is one of the major factor shaping the level and structure of consumption. According to GUS, the level of average income per person in a rural household amounted to 537.56 PLN, while in urban areas it reached 734.45 PLN in the analysed period between 1999 and 2003. The level of disposable incomes in rural areas has been constantly increasing, but the growth is not sufficient to eliminate considerable income differences between urban and rural areas. Increasing differences in the level of incomes in society, resulting in a growing number of impoverished rural people is alarming. According to the unpublished GUS data, in 2003 households with highest incomes in the Wielkopolskie Province owned 41.4% of all money supply, while the poorest households owned only 6.1% and the quintile variation ratio was 6.8. The parallel ratio amounted to 5 in urban areas and 5.7 in the Province.

Considerable interquintile differences lead to the feeling of injustice and often contribute to the growth in people's passiveness and pretence. Income variation is much lower within a given social stratum than between a whole rural population. Considering all socio-economic strata, considerable variations exist among pensioners, as 20% of households with high incomes hold 5 times as much monetary means as 20% of households with low incomes. The value is low as regards farms – 3.3. The variation with regard to the self-employed farmers amounts to 3.5, to farmers – 3.9, to hired employees – 4.1 (Fig. 1). However, one needs to notice the fact that low income variation as far as the self-employed are concerned results from higher than average incomes in the first quintile, compared to the rest of households.

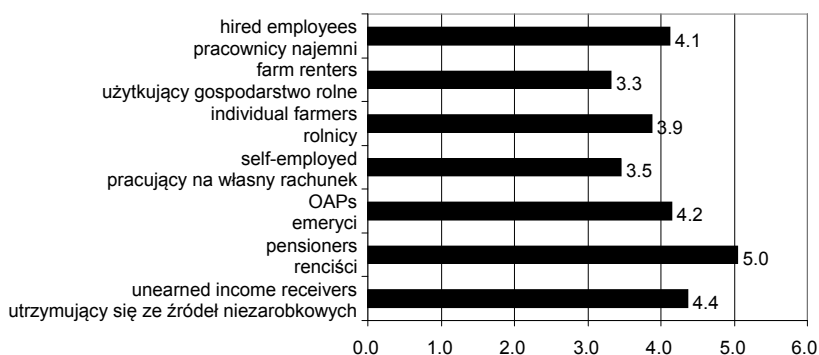


Fig. 1. Quintile variation ratio of incomes in 2003 (quintile V to quintile I)

Source: authors' own compilation based on unpublished GUS data.

Ryc. 1. Współczynnik różnicowania kwintylowego dochodów w 2003 roku (kwintyl V do kwintyla I)

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

Just as incomes determine life satisfaction, expenditures are a measurement of meeting people's needs. They constitute an important element describing the material satisfaction of a society. Average monthly expenditures of hired employees' households,

farmers, employees renting farms and self-employed vary more than incomes and amount to 4.1-6.2. As regards OAPs, the ratio of quintile variation of expenditure is equal to the ratio of income and amounts to 4.2. As far as pensioners' households and households of unearned income receivers are concerned, the differences between the ratios are lower and amount to 3.7 and 3.5. The expenditure converge as regards the groups with least quintile variation. Households in quintile I spend on food 478.6 PLN, which is 165.7 per person. Households in quintile 5 spend 935.5 PLN, which is equal to 188.1 PLN per person. Households receiving unearned income have lowest expenditure, amounting on average to 215.36 per person, while the self-employed have the highest expenditure, amounting to 234.74 per person. Therefore, average dispersion of expenditures in quintile 1 regarding socio-economic groups amounts to about 20 PLN. As far as quintile V is concerned, the dispersion is higher and reaches nearly 700 PLN (Table 1). Considering the volume of expenditure in quintile 1, one can assume that these households do not fully meet their consumption needs, including nutrition needs.

Table 1

Average expenditures in quintile groups (PLN per person)
Średnie wynagrodzenia w poszczególnych grupach kwintylowych (w zł/osobę)

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Quintile no. Grupa kwintylowa				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Hired employees Pracownicy najemni	228.76	337.73	453.91	591.35	1 177.78
Farm renters Pracownicy użytkujący gospodarstwo rolne	234.00	344.01	443.08	589.29	962.23
Farmers Rolnicy	220.42	345.18	450.47	569.21	1 006.72
Self-employed Pracujący na własny rachunek	234.74	350.62	441.86	614.42	1 456.73
OAPs Emeryci	227.39	344.30	437.46	586.64	955.18
Pensioners Renciści	232.97	344.06	441.56	582.22	872.46
Receivers of unearned incomes Utrzymujący się ze źródeł niezarobkowych	215.36	352.33	443.19	562.10	757.94

Source: authors' own compilation based on unpublished GUS data.

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

Differences in the share of food expenditure in spending household budgets appear among specific groups of households. A higher share gives evidence of worse financial situation. The share of food expenditure is negatively correlated with households' wealth, therefore the higher the share, the less they spend on satisfying other needs and the degree of satisfying them is limited. The ratio is about twice as high in impoverished

households than in an average household, amounting to 41-62%. Its value is highest among pensioners and receivers of unearned income, which confirms their worse material situation. Still, it is the lowest among the self-employed and individual farmers. In groups linked with agriculture, it results from a high share of food from self-supplied food in food consumption (Table 2). It needs to be mentioned that this share is subject to changes in the long run and it is conditioned by, first of all, economic and social changes.

Table 2

The share of food expenditure in disposable income in impoverished households (%)
Udział wydatków żywnościowych w dochodach rozporządzalnych
w ubogich gospodarstwach domowych (%)

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Share of food expenditure Udział wydatków na żywność
Hired employees Pracownicy najemni	50.6
Employees renting farms Użytkujący gospodarstwo rolne	52.3
Individual farmers Rolnicy	41.2
Self-employed Pracujący na własny rachunek	48.1
OAPs and pensioners Emeryci i renciści	58.0
Receivers of unearned income Utrzymujący się ze źródeł niezarobkowych	62.1

Source: authors' own research.
 Źródło: badania własne.

The source of food supply

The source of food supply is an equally important determiner of consumption in households. In recent years, the importance of purchased food has increased slightly, while at the same time, the importance of self-supplied food has decreased slightly (self-supplied food comprises here both food supply from households' own farms and non-agricultural activity).

In 2003, 79.8% of the total food consumed was purchased, while in 1999 the share amounted to 72.4%. The food received free of charge increased its share between 1999 and 2003 from 2.0% to 3.2%, however its share in total consumption is still low (Fig. 2). It should be expected that the improvement of the economic situation in the country will contribute to a further decrease of the share of self-supplied food (Gutkowska 1997). The process of denaturalisation of consumption, i.e. replacing self-supply of food with

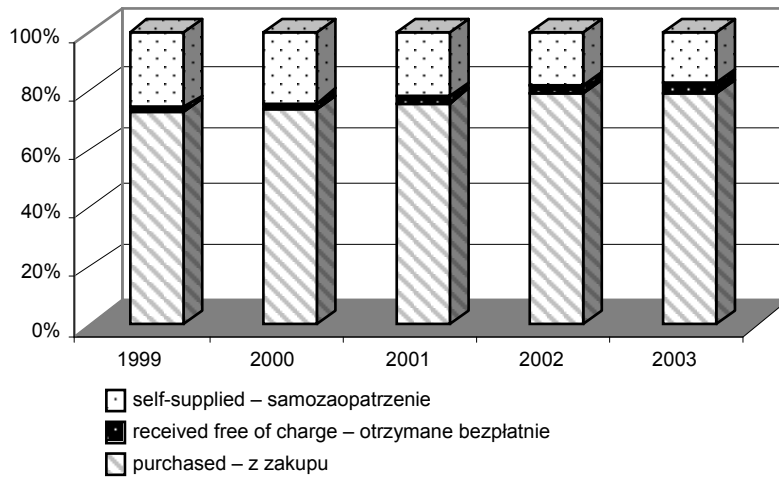


Fig. 2. Sources of food supply in rural households in 2003

Source: authors' own calculation based on unpublished GUS data.

Ryc. 2. Źródła pochodzenia żywności ludności wiejskiej w 2003 roku

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

purchase on the market, comprises both quantitative and qualitative changes, resulting from the changes in the range of products and the increase in the share of food purchased by the processing industry (Gulbicka 1990).

Food consumption

Baker's goods has a substantial share in the food consumed by the inhabitants of rural areas of the Wielkopolskie Province. Its average consumption amounts to 7.8 kg per person monthly. The consumption of fruit, vegetables and processed food amounts to 21.7 kg and the consumption of milk and dairy drinks reached 9.4 litres. Meat constitutes another important ingredient of everyday diet, as its consumption reaches on average 7.5 kg monthly. The inhabitants of rural areas of the Wielkopolskie Province consume about 8.9 kg of potatoes. According to GUS data, the consumption of the majority of food products between 1999 and 2003 came to a fall, including a dramatic decrease of 50% as regards mutton, goat meat and venison and a decrease of 30% in the consumption of beef and veal, both resulting, among other factors, from an increase in the prices of these products. At the same time, increases in the consumption of pasta (13.1%), cakes (12%), ripening and melted cheese (10.1%) and vegetable fat (6.6%) were observed. Between 1999 and 2003, part from a fall in the amount of food consumed, there was a fall in real expenditure on the majority of articles. A dramatic fall in expenditure on flour was observed – 30.3%, poultry – 39.7%, other meat, including venison and veal – 29.2%. The only slight increases observed included the increase of expenditure on cakes, fish and processes fishery products, reaching respectively 3.2% and 5.7%. Despite the fall, fresh and preserved meat as well as cereal products (including baker's goods) still rank high in expenditure on food articles (Table 3).

Table 3

Average monthly consumption and expenditure on food articles in 1999-2003
Przeciętne miesięczne spożycie i wydatki na artykuły żywnościowe w latach 1999-2003

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Average consumption (kg per person) Średnia konsumpcja (kg/os.)					Average expenditure (PLN per person) Średnie wydatki (zł/os.)				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Cereal products Produkty zbożowe	11.99	11.84	12.06	11.75	11.06	37.83	39.50	43.17	39.52	37.51
flour – mąka	1.48	1.52	1.44	1.40	1.29	2.62	2.59	2.37	2.09	1.83
baker's goods pieczywo	8.59	8.39	8.66	8.47	7.84	23.29	24.86	25.86	24.47	21.85
pasta – makaron	0.45	0.44	0.48	0.38	0.50	2.76	2.15	2.29	1.64	2.56
porridge, rice, cereals kasze, ryż, płatki	1.02	0.97	0.95	0.99	0.92	3.58	3.75	3.69	3.31	3.32
cakes wyroby ciastkarskie	0.46	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.51	5.58	6.14	6.11	6.00	5.76
Meat – Mięso	10.81	7.10	7.48	7.79	7.47	89.26	63.15	61.73	72.53	64.65
beef and veal wołowe i cielęce	2.06	1.48	1.12	1.34	1.44	21.12	21.15	12.09	23.07	15.28
pork – wieprzowe	1.88	1.72	1.81	1.79	1.61	19.05	17.37	18.10	17.20	14.72
poultry – drobiowe	2.91	2.69	2.90	2.77	2.41	21.06	18.99	20.17	17.18	14.80
other – inne	3.96	1.19	1.65	1.89	2.00	28.03	5.66	11.36	15.08	19.85
Processed meat Przetwory mięsne	3.49	3.50	3.38	3.36	3.13	41.60	39.59	38.69	38.29	33.92
Fish and processed fishery products Ryby i przetwory	1.48	1.95	1.60	1.35	1.51	15.57	16.57	18.14	14.60	16.46
Milk and dairy drinks* Mleko i napoje mleczne*	12.34	11.75	10.57	9.74	9.45	18.74	17.58	16.71	15.51	14.96
Cream and creamer* Śmietana i śmietanka*	0.42	0.43	0.41	0.38	0.38	2.55	2.63	2.52	2.36	2.23
Butter – Masło	0.60	0.54	0.59	0.53	0.51	7.40	7.42	6.45	5.70	5.39
Other animal fat Pozostałe tłuszcze zwi- rzące	0.50	0.50	0.43	0.46	0.44	2.30	2.21	2.05	2.08	1.96
Cheese – Sery	0.78	0.76	0.75	0.68	0.76	8.79	8.59	8.57	7.61	8.27
cottage cheese twarogowe	0.51	0.51	0.47	0.42	0.47	4.65	4.45	4.22	3.80	4.17
ripening and melted cheese dojrzewające i topione	0.27	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.30	4.13	4.14	4.34	3.82	4.11
Eggs** – Jaja**	16.84	17.10	16.37	15.80	15.10	5.68	5.81	5.56	4.98	4.84

Table 3 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Vegetable fat Tłuszcze roślinne	1.49	1.59	1.63	1.56	1.58	10.54	9.97	9.80	7.83	8.39
Fresh and processed fruit Owoce i przetwory	11.86	14.32	13.64	12.18	11.12	42.74	43.83	37.75	36.68	32.42
Fresh and processed vegetables Warzywa i przetwory	11.84	11.83	11.87	8.94	10.64	33.66	35.31	36.09	28.46	29.50
Potatoes Ziemniaki	9.73	9.70	9.69	8.48	8.95	5.91	6.86	5.00	5.71	5.00
White sugar Cukier biały	2.51	2.38	2.40	2.26	2.01	5.56	7.56	6.02	5.08	4.17
Other confectionery Pozostałe wyroby cukier- nicze	1.30	1.26	1.31	1.35	1.32	17.61	15.85	16.12	16.62	15.12

*litres – litrów, **pieces – sztuk.

Source: authors' own compilation based on unpublished GUS data.

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

Owing to the local eating tradition and nutritive advantages, meat constitutes an important element of consumption. It is a source of animal protein, fat which supplies energy as well as iron, zinc and vitamin (Chmielewska 2000, Ziemiański 1998). Between 1999 and 2003, a substantial fall of 22.3% in meat consumption took place in households of hired employees, and in households of farm renters (17.5%) and farmers (5.8%). At the same time, consumption of meat rose in household of receivers of unearned income (36.9%), OAPs and pensioners (9.7 and 6.7%) and self-employed (6.7%). As regards meat, the highest increase was noted among farmers (52.6%), concerning beef and veal. At the same time, a decrease in consumption of the same kinds of meat (36.3%) was noted among farm renters. A decrease in consumption of milk and dairy drinks was noted in all households, except for receivers of unearned income. It amounted to 27.5% as regards self-employed and 9.1% as regards farmers. The same situation could be observed with regard to cream and creamer, but the fall was milder and amounted to 14.6% as regards farm renters and 1% as regards the self-employed. At the same time, an increase in the consumption of ripening and melted cheese was noted, which amounted to 26.6% as regards farm renters, 8.7% as regards hired employees, 6.7% as regards self-employed and 5.3% as regards receivers of unearned income. Cheese consumption came to a fall in the households of OAPs and pensioners (9.1 and 3.5% respectively). Vegetables play an important part in human nutrition. They are sources of a number of vitamins and minerals, fibre and mineral resources which cannot be obtained from other products (Ziemiański 1998). Consumption of raw and processed vegetables fell in the households of: OAPs and pensioners (15.1%), hired employees (14.6%), farm users (9.7%) and self-employed (5.5%). It rose in the households of farmers (6.1%) and receivers of unearned income (0.1%). At the same time, each of the groups, except for receivers of unearned incomes, was subject to a fall in the consumption of potatoes, ranging from 20.5 to 6.4%. Fruit plays as important a part in diet as

vegetables. It serves as a source of vitamins and microelements, reducing the level of cholesterol in blood. In the analysed period, consumption of raw and processed fruit in households of OAPs and pensioners fell by 10.7%, and in households of hired employees and self-employed – by 1.9%.

At the same time, fruit consumption rose in households receiving unearned income (17.7%), farmers (10.1%) and farm renters (7%). As regards the households of farmers, there consumption of self-supplied products is considerable. They include eggs, milk, potatoes, animal fat and meat (mainly poultry). They consume products which have not been substantially processed, which results from their nutritional conservatism and incomes lower than in the case of employees' families. As a result, these families adopt less varied diet and hardly ever look for substitutes of the consumed products.

A high level of food consumption in households connected with agriculture results from physical work, but also from the tradition of eating at home, which is usually connected with low professional activity of women. Generally, households in which women are more active in terms of their professional activities, i.e. employees' households and the households of self-employed, visiting restaurants or using catering services, not considered in research (Niemczyk 2000, Griega 2005), is more popular.

Quintile variation of consumption

Although high supply of food allows meeting the nutrition needs of society to a complete degree, the demand is created only by people with sufficient financial means. Therefore, incomes and prices belong to the most important determiners of consumption. As regards households in quintile I, the amount of expenditure reaches 478.6 PLN per household, which corresponds with 165.7 PLN per person. In quintile V, the amount of money spent on food reaches 935.5 PLN, which is equal to 188.1 per person. Self-supply plays a relatively important part in households which evaluate their material situation as poor or very poor. These households limit their expenditure and aim at producing as many goods inevitable to meet their needs as they can. Lower production costs, compared to purchase costs, create an opportunity to increase consumption. Households evaluating their situation as not satisfactory, poor or very poor on average supply themselves with 8% of all consumed goods (Fig. 3). The higher the level of self-supply, the greater dependence of the consumption level from a given household's own production. It leads to a less varied consumption and greater seasonal fluctuations. Therefore, consumption of some products only takes place in times of harvest, while according to the recommendations of rational nutrition, human body should be supplied with all ingredients, in proper amounts and proportions, during all the year.

The amount of consumed food varies, depending on which quintile group is considered. People with low income purchase more inferior goods, less processed. They consume more baker's goods and processed meat, as well as more raw and processed fruit and vegetables. Frequent purchases of cereal products results from their availability and relatively low prices. As regards products whose range is not varied, such as potatoes, eggs and milk, their consumption is similar, measured both by amount and expenditure. On the other hand, if there is a possibility to choose (meat, fish, baker's goods), there are significant differences in consumption and lower quantitative consumption is followed by relatively high expenditure.

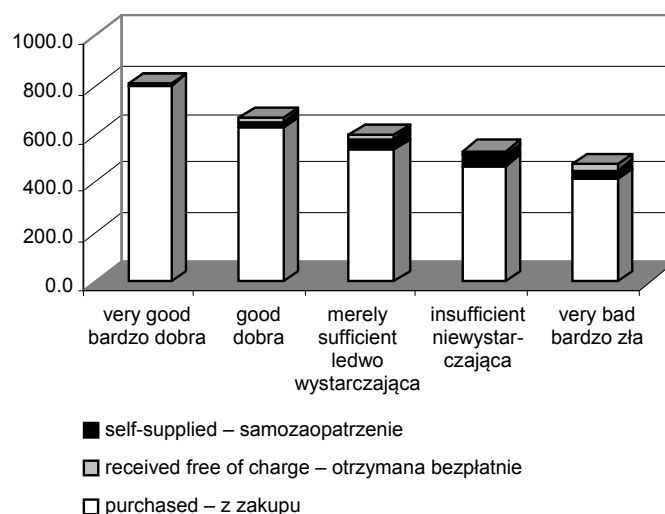


Fig. 3. The source of food supply depending on households' evaluation of their material situation in 2003 (PLN)

Source: authors' own calculation based on unpublished GUS data.

Ryc. 3. Źródło pochodzenia żywności w zależności od samoceny sytuacji materialnej gospodarstwa domowego w 2003 roku (zł)

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

On top of that, quintile variation is increased by people's willingness to show off, which is determined by the frequency of contacting people from upper income classes. The value of consumption is low in quintile group I, regardless from the type of food article, except for animal fat, fruit, vegetables and eggs, which are more accessible for the inhabitants of rural areas and hence their meaning in poor people's diets is substantial (Table 4).

Table 4
Food consumption – amount and value in quintile groups in rural households of the Wielkopolskie Province in 2003
Ilościowe i wartościowe spożycie żywności w grupach kwintylowych w wiejskich gospodarstwach domowych województwa wielkopolskiego w 2003 roku

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Food consumed (kg per person) Spożycie ilościowe (kg/os.)					Consumption value (PLN per person) Spożycie wartościowe (zł/os.)				
	I	II	III	IV	V	I	II	III	IV	V
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Processed cereals Przetwory zbożowe	12.47	11.78	11.67	11.09	10.41	3.09	3.21	3.28	3.38	3.58
flour – mąka	1.53	1.43	1.27	1.28	1.30	1.38	1.40	1.50	1.40	1.41
baker's goods pieczywo	8.88	8.31	8.49	8.00	7.31	2.70	2.73	2.71	2.80	2.92

Table 4 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
pasta – makaron	0.48	0.42	0.41	0.45	0.35	3.75	4.07	4.03	5.10	4.49
porridge, rice and cereals kasze, ryż, płatki	1.13	1.09	0.93	0.85	0.85	3.02	3.22	3.85	3.60	4.15
cakes wyroby ciastkarskie	0.45	0.54	0.56	0.50	0.59	10.85	10.91	10.56	11.54	11.71
Meat – Mięso	5.64	5.71	5.01	5.44	6.32	8.36	8.52	8.04	8.52	9.25
beef and veal wołowe i cielęce	1.13	1.68	0.97	1.34	2.02	10.73	10.29	9.94	10.22	11.41
pork – wieprzowe	1.71	1.38	1.73	1.69	1.82	9.17	9.40	8.67	8.90	9.47
poultry – drobiowe	2.80	2.65	2.31	2.42	2.48	5.91	6.29	5.90	6.23	6.26
Processed meat Przetwory mięsne	3.25	2.90	3.04	2.69	2.85	10.26	10.31	10.36	10.73	11.20
Fish and processed fishery products Ryby i przetwory	2.01	1.81	1.65	1.75	1.90	10.24	10.77	10.96	10.79	11.45
Milk and dairy drinks* Mleko i napoje mleczne*	11.43	11.06	9.94	8.61	8.69	1.53	1.48	1.61	1.62	1.67
Cream and creamers* Śmietana i śmietanka*	0.43	0.40	0.43	0.36	0.38	5.63	5.74	5.76	5.90	5.95
Butter – Masło	0.53	0.49	0.50	0.52	0.56	10.53	10.44	10.40	10.45	10.99
Other animal fats Pozostałe tłuszcze zwierzęce	0.59	0.48	0.38	0.49	0.39	4.46	4.64	4.49	4.44	4.42
Cheese – Sery	0.79	0.71	0.89	0.74	0.82	10.75	10.75	10.31	10.90	11.36
Eggs** – Jaja**	16.41	16.42	16.01	14.90	15.57	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
Vegetable fat Tłuszcze roślinne	1.96	1.79	1.56	1.48	1.38	4.94	5.64	4.31	4.97	5.61
Raw and processed fruit Owoce i przetwory	13.67	12.30	11.19	9.39	11.37	3.00	2.74	2.99	2.82	2.92
Raw and processed vege- tables Warzywa i przetwory	13.68	10.88	10.99	9.91	10.32	2.78	3.43	2.69	2.55	2.62
Potatoes Ziemniaki	9.95	9.82	8.62	9.26	9.15	0.56	0.58	0.58	0.52	0.56
White sugar Cukier biały	2.19	2.08	2.09	1.91	2.23	2.10	2.09	2.06	2.08	2.07
Other confectionery Pozostałe wyroby cukier- nicze	1.39	1.38	1.49	1.24	1.33	11.00	11.09	11.29	11.91	11.71

*litres – litrów, **pieces – sztuk.

Source: authors' own calculation based on unpublished GUS data.

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

As average income increases, it is not only the volume of food consumption that increases, but also its quality. This can be measured in average prices per kg of selected goods. The price of a kg (litre or piece) of a consumed good, purchased by people from the lowest quintile is usually lower than the price paid by people from quintile five, which suggests that lower income results in buying goods whose quality is inferior (Table 5). This variation is, however, less observable than in urban areas, where the price of a kg of a good purchased by wealthiest people is on average about 30% higher. Research shows that hired employees buy more processed food than other households. Therefore, they pay higher prices. It is believed that these households are more quality-oriented than volume-oriented (**Gulbicka** and **Kwasek** 2000). They tend to consume more expensive food products, i.e. high quality sausages, beef and veal, ripening cheese and less animal fat, potatoes or baker's goods.

Table 5

Price per kg of selected food articles in quintile groups
Cena 1 kg poszczególnych wyrobów spożywczych w grupach kwintylowych

Specification Wyszczególnienie	I	II	III	IV	V
1	2	3	4	5	6
Processed cereals Przetwory zbożowe	3.09	3.21	3.28	3.38	3.58
flour – mąka	1.38	1.40	1.50	1.40	1.41
baker's goods – pieczywo	2.70	2.73	2.71	2.80	2.92
pasta – makaron	3.75	4.07	4.03	5.10	4.49
porridge, rice and cereals kasze, ryż, płatki	3.02	3.22	3.85	3.60	4.15
cakes – wyroby ciastkarskie	10.85	10.91	10.56	11.54	11.71
Meat – Mięso	8.36	8.52	8.04	8.52	9.25
Beef and veal Mięso wołowe i cielęce	10.73	10.29	9.94	10.22	11.41
Pork – Mięso wieprzowe	9.17	9.40	8.67	8.90	9.47
Poultry – Mięso drobiowe	5.91	6.29	5.90	6.23	6.26
Processed meat Przetwory mięsne	10.26	10.31	10.36	10.73	11.20
Fish and processed fishery products Ryby i przetwory	10.24	10.77	10.96	10.79	11.45
Milk and dairy drinks Mleko i napoje mleczne	1.53	1.48	1.61	1.62	1.67
Cream and creamers Śmietana i śmietanka	5.63	5.74	5.76	5.90	5.95
Butter – Masło	10.53	10.44	10.40	10.45	10.99

Table 5 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Other animal fats Pozostałe tłuszcze zwierzęce	4.46	4.64	4.49	4.44	4.42
Cheese – Sery	10.75	10.75	10.31	10.90	11.36
cottage cheese twarogowe	8.91	8.99	8.52	8.99	9.25
ripen and melted cheese dojrzewające i topione	13.54	13.46	13.50	13.85	14.56
Eggs – Jaja	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
Vegetable fat Tłuszcze roślinne	4.94	5.64	4.31	4.97	5.61
Raw and processed fruit Owoce i przetwory	3.00	2.74	2.99	2.82	2.92
Raw and processed vegetables Warzywa i przetwory	2.78	3.43	2.69	2.55	2.62
Potatoes – Ziemniaki	0.56	0.58	0.58	0.52	0.56
White sugar – Cukier biały	2.10	2.09	2.06	2.08	2.07
Other confectionery Pozostałe wyroby cukiernicze	11.00	11.09	11.29	11.91	11.71

Source: authors' own compilation based on unpublished GUS data.

Źródło: obliczenia własne na podstawie niepublikowanych danych GUS.

Subjective evaluation of needs' satisfaction

Subjective evaluation by rural areas inhabitants, concerning the degree to which their needs are met serve as important information on the deprivation of nutrition needs. However, they often result from the respondents' feelings and do not always depict the real situation in this respect. Respondents more often pay attention to the deterioration of the situation with respect to nutrition than to its improvement. Research shows that in 2005, every fourth income household showed a deterioration in consumption level, while only every twelfth showed an improvement. Particularly, households living under the subsistence minimum line (29.0 and 6.9%) and it is also the case of households living below the social minimum (28.2 and 7.3%). However, irrespectively of the level of income and the level of the dissatisfaction of needs, respondents do not notice changes in meeting their own nutrition needs (Table 6).

Impoverished households are much more frequently forced to resign from meeting some needs than wealthy households. Research shows that only milk, butter and baker's goods are consumed every day in more than 50% of households. Such articles as meat,

Table 6

Subjective feelings of meeting nutrition needs in rural households of the Wielkopolskie Province in 2005
Subiektywne odczucia zaspokojenia potrzeb żywnościowych w wiejskich gospodarstwach domowych w województwie wielkopolskim w 2005 roku

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Deterioration Pogorszyła się	Improvement Poprawiła się	No change Bez zmian
Total – Ogólnie	24.9	8.7	66.7
Social minimum Minimum socjalne			
Wealthy households Gospodarstwa zamożne	23.0	9.5	67.5
Impoverished households Gospodarstwa ubogie	28.2	7.3	64.5
Subsistence minimum Minimum egzystencji			
Wealthy households Gospodarstwa zamożne	17.4	12.0	70.7
Impoverished households Gospodarstwa ubogie	29.0	6.9	64.1
Subjective poverty Ubóstwo subiektywne			
Wealthy households Gospodarstwa zamożne	24.5	8.5	67.0
Impoverished households Gospodarstwa ubogie	26.3	9.1	64.5

Source: authors' own research.
 Źródło: badania własne.

fish, eggs, fruit or vegetables are consumed less frequently than once a week. As regards fruit and vegetables, it can be explained by their relatively greater availability in rural areas (Fig. 4).

Purchasing food articles is conditioned with a number of non-income related factors. How consumers feel concerning the healthiness of the consumed food is one of the most important factors. In impoverished households, consumption is verified mainly with respect to objective limits, connected with income. Worse financial situation determines the purchase of food with worse nutritive values. However, as research shows, the feelings regarding the inferior nutritive quality of the consumed food are not as remarkably different in impoverished households and wealthy households as it is commonly believed. Regarding social minimum and subjective poverty, the belief of unhealthy eating habits is greater among the well-off than among the poor, which generally results from their greater consumption awareness (Table 7).

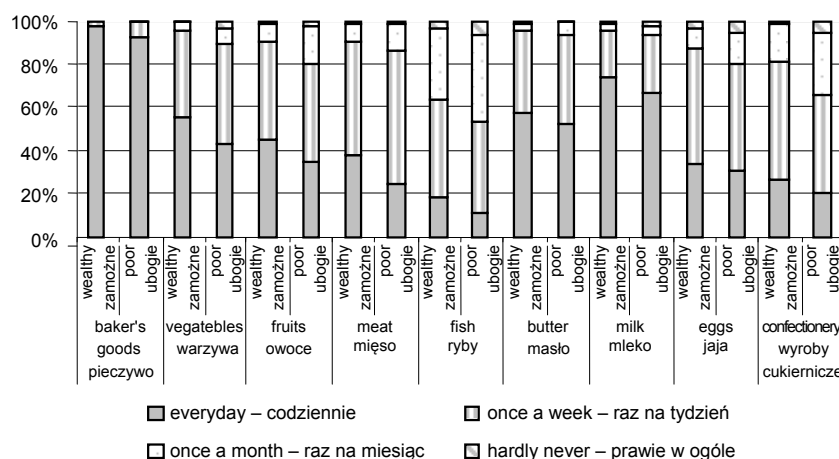


Fig. 4. Frequency of consumption of selected food articles in households

Source: authors' own research.

Ryc. 4. Częstotliwość konsumpcji wybranych artykułów żywnościowych w gospodarstwach domowych

Źródło: badania własne.

Table 7

Self-evaluation of eating habits in households
Samoocena sposobu odżywiania gospodarstwa domowego

Specification Wyszczególnienie	Social minimum Minimum socjalne		Subsistence minimum Minimum egzystencji		Subjective poverty Ubóstwo subiektywne	
	below poniżej	above powyżej	below poniżej	above powyżej	below poniżej	above powyżej
Healthily Zdrowo	16.8	18.9	16.5	19.6	18.2	15.8
Rather healthily Raczej zdrowo	62.9	62.6	63.6	61.2	62.4	63.9
No idea Nie wiem	13.0	12.2	13.3	11.5	12.7	12.6
Rather unhealthy Raczej niezdrowo	6.3	6.3	5.9	6.9	5.8	7.7
Unhealthily Niezdrowo	1.1	0.0	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.0

Source: authors' own research.

Źródło: badania własne.

Many specialists claim that increasing social inequalities result in growing differences among quintile groups. The richest groups follow the mode of healthy food consumption, while as regards the poor, consumption is first and foremost a way to meet basic needs, with no attempts at enriched consumption mode (**Chmielewska** 2004). A decrease in the variation of quantity and quality of consumption is possible after food has become more economically accessible, i.e. after the society's incomes increase. However, this ought not to happen by means of raising social security benefits, but by means of increasing employment, which is followed by an improvement in people's income situation.

Conclusion

Increasing income variation among the inhabitants of rural areas of the Wielkopolskie Province has become a phenomenon of recent years. This has resulted in growing pauperisation of society and hence, in growing income differences. Therefore, the way consumers meet their needs differs, depending on which income group they belong to. It was particularly noticeable when comparing the amount and quality of consumed food. In groups of lowest incomes, less high-quality food was consumed and the unit price used to be lower than in wealthiest group. Processed cereals, animal fats, milk, eggs, vegetables and fruit were the major ingredients of the food articles bought. Processed meat tended to be relatively more often consumed than meat among the poor, in comparison with the well-off.

The consumption structure of food in rural households results mainly from their membership in a quintile group, but it is also affected, to a large degree, by the possibility of self-supply. The meaning of self-supply has been declining in recent years, however, it is still considerable among the poorest and its value is still relatively higher in their households, although absolute values tend to reach a similar level.

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STRUKTURA KONSUMPCJI WYBRANYCH ARTYKUŁÓW ŻYWNOŚCIOWYCH
W UBOGICH GOSPODARSTWACH DOMOWYCH
NA PRZYKŁADZIE WOJEWÓDZTWA WIELKOPOLSKIEGO

S t r e s z c z e n i e

W artykule przedstawiono konsumpcję wybranych artykułów żywnościowych w latach 1999-2003. Omówiono zróżnicowanie dochodów i wydatków w poszczególnych grupach kwintylowych oraz społeczno-ekonomicznych oraz ich wpływ na wielkość spożycia. Zwrócono przy tym uwagę, że dochody są mniej zróżnicowane w poszczególnych grupach niż w całej zbiorowości wiejskiej. Wskazano również na subiektywne odczucia odnośnie spożywanych dóbr konsumpcyjnych. Przedstawiono wielkość i strukturę spożycia żywności przez ludność wiejską w grupach kwintylowych. W grupach o najniższych dochodach (I kwintyl) wielkość spożycia kształtuje się na niewystarczającym poziomie i często nie pozwala na zaspokojenie wszystkich podstawowych potrzeb. Stwierdzono, że w kwintylu pierwszym, cena 1 kg dobra jest z reguły niższa niż w kwintylu piątym, co świadczy o tym, że nabywane przez osoby ubogie dobra są zwykle gorszej jakości. Ilościowa i jakościowa poprawa spożycia jest możliwa głównie dzięki zwiększeniu dochodowości ludności wiejskiej.