

Abstract

Any comprehensive understanding of sustainable development and proper quantification of its different components requires an accurate information system developed especially for this field. Development trends monitoring relying on indicators that are stranger to business activities precede sustainable development principles formulation and have grown together with the sustainable development strategy definition process. The development of a worldwide accepted system of indicators able to allow SD monitoring is a preoccupation of the utmost importance. Therefore, an increasing number of international bodies, institutes, companies, governments, NGOs, etc. have developed indicators able to provide a full sustainable development image. The high number of examples supports the need to rely on such monitoring tools, which cover a diversified range of applications and help overcome some methodological drawbacks.

The main indices already developed have been analyzed in search of an adequate set of indicators able to measure a country's sustainability level, yet they were found not to fully meet the needs. The main deficiencies are related to the high number of sustainability definitions and to the lack of occasional updates. That is why the Sustainable Society Index (SSI), developed by the Sustainable Society Foundation (SSF), was considered, knowing that it reunites the most important aspects related to sustainability and quality of life in a simple and transparent manner. The set includes 24 indicators divided into 8 sub-categories. The SSF determined the SSI based on data provided by scientific bodies and international organizations from 151 countries. This index enables specialists to conduct fast comparisons among different countries and to follow the evolution of each country in time. Starting with 2006, the SSF determines this index once every two years. Our research aims to describe the calculation methodology and to analyze the evolution of this index as far as Romania is concerned. Also, we will include a European classification focusing on Romania's rank as compared to the other EU countries.

Key words: environmental indicator, sustainable development, Sustainable Society Index