POVERTY IN INDONESIA:
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH

Introduction. Indonesia with population of more than 277 million, is the fourth most populous country on the planet. It has shown strong economic growth in recent decades, making it the biggest economy in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Beside the great monetary grow, it is still a country with lower than average incomes. Famine in Indonesia continues to be an important problem [5].

Materials and Methods. The percentage of the poor we correlate to the percentage of the population below the poverty line. The poverty line is calculated as the sum of the food and non-food poverty lines.

The food poverty line relates to the minimum cost of food needs, which is equivalent to 2100 calories per capita per day. Packages for basic food needs are represented by 52 types of goods (grain, tubers, fish, meat, eggs and milk, vegetables, nuts, fruits, oils and fats, etc.).

Non-food poverty line relates to the minimum cost of non-food needs such as housing, clothing, education and health care. Commodity packages for non-food basic needs are represented by 51 types of goods in urban areas and 47 types of goods in rural areas [3].

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) includes not only the income of the population, but also includes three key dimensions: health, education and living standards, which in turn include 10 indicators. People who are most deprived of at least one third of these weighted indicators fall into the category of multidimensionally poor [5].

The following methods were used in the research: analysis and synthesis, monography analysis, statistical, cartographic methods.

Results and discussions. For Indonesia, the MPI in 2012 consisted 0,028; and in 2017 it was 0,014. This figure is not the worst in the Southeast Asia, but it does not show the territorial differences of the provinces in terms of poverty.

Poverty is still concentrated in rural areas: 13,1% of the rural population lived in poverty in 2018, that is more than half of the total poor. In addition, the problems of high food prices and unequal access to food remain unresolved, despite growing trends in food production and availability. Due to poverty and lack of food, 15,8 million Indonesians are unable to meet their food needs.

A 2019 report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Food Research Institute (IFPRI) found that about 22 million people suffered from chronic hunger in Indonesia between 2016 and 2018. Despite Indonesia’s significant growth in the agricultural sector, many families across the country are still engaged in traditional, low-paid agricultural activities. This
leads to hunger and growth retardation in children [2].

The analysis of the poverty level by provinces shows a fairly clear spatial differentiation of poverty. Thus, the lowest levels of poverty were recorded in Jakarta, the provinces of Bangka Belitung, South Kalimantan and the tourist province of Bali. The highest levels of poverty are recorded in West Papua and Papua. There is an increase in poverty with the distance increasing from the capital. In the case of the Papua, this can also be attributed to the high proportion of the rural population and difficult natural conditions (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Percentage of the poor population in the provinces of Indonesia. (Developed by author with data source [2].)

Impressive economic growth has led to significant improvements in many aspects of human development in Indonesia. The under-five mortality rate has fallen from 85 out of 1,000 born in 1990 to 31 in 2012. The prevalence of children with underweight is also low and consists 5.4% [3].

However, growth retardation among Indonesian children remains widespread. Approximately 37.2% of children under the age of five in 2018 suffered from stunted growth [1]. Today, about 30% of children under the age of 5 suffer from stunted growth. Growth retardation in children, and the sign of chronic malnutrition, has lifelong consequences. It interferes with other processes of body development, including brain development, which negatively affects intelligence, school performance and productivity at work later in life.

Hunger can be hindering right off the bat throughout everyday life. At the point when children are malnourished in the belly, they become more inclined to stoutness when their bodies devour more food. This, thus, makes them powerless against other non-transferable illnesses, like diabetes and coronary illness. This is a twofold weight of unhealthiness that Indonesia faces. It is estimated that 4.7% of adult women and 4.3% of men are obese, while 7.7% of women and 5.1% of men in Indonesia have diabetes. In addition, more than 1 per 4 women of childbearing age suffer from anemia [1, 4].

The negative consequences of malnutrition are felt not only by people suffered, but also by society as a whole. It is estimated that losses due to growth retardation and malnutrition account for 2-3% of Indonesia's gross domestic product (GDP).

The two main causes of poverty in Indonesia are corruption and volatile food prices.

Corruption in Indonesia is widespread in various sectors, including the judiciary, public administration and the police. Among them, corruption in public services has a particularly significant impact on poverty. According to the Global Corruption Barometer report in 2020, 30 percent of Indonesians said they paid a bribe for public services in the previous 12 months, and 26 percent offered bribes in exchange for votes [1].
Another cause of poverty in Indonesia is the instability of food prices, especially in rice prices. The Indonesian population spends most of its disposable income on rice; a typical low-income family spends about 27 percent of their monthly salary on government-subsidized rice. Although the Suharto government has managed to keep the price of rice stable over its 30-year rule, stabilization efforts over the next period of democratization and reform have yielded mixed results. For example, Indonesia’s inflation rate in 2015 exceeded 6 percent, while its GDP growth was only 5 percent. In 2021, the government managed to stabilize the economy for only 1.56% of inflation and 3.69% of GDP growth.

In an effort to provide food for low-income households, the Indonesian government has set up a program called Raskin to deliver subsidized rice to the most vulnerable households on a monthly basis. Under this program, eligible families could buy 15 kg of rice per month for one-fifth of the market price. Each year, the government distributes 3.4 million tons of rice to a target population of 17.5 million. With an annual budget of $1.5 billion, Raskin is Indonesia's largest social assistance program. For example, in 2010 Raskin budget allocations were equivalent to 56.970,09 USD per actual Raskin household.

The government is also coordinating with NGOs around the world to help fight hunger in Indonesia. Because of its size and geography, Indonesia is especially helpless against cataclysmic events that cause food security in numerous networks. The World Food Program (WFP) is working intimately with the Indonesian government to further develop sustenance and food quality. It likewise mitigates the effect of catastrophic events on food security by giving strategy exhortation and specialized help.

The Indonesian government aims to achieve zero poverty by 2024, and poverty in 2022 will reach 3-3.5% [6].

In the near future, the government will also conduct a national socio-economic survey (susenas) to support this program to combat extreme poverty.

Incumbent Indonesian President Joko Widodo has set a goal of overcoming poverty by the end of 2024.

Conclusions. Thus, the analysis of the poverty situation in Indonesia has shown that in order to overcome this problem, it is important that the government and other humanitarian organizations continue to put the problem of hunger in Indonesia at the top of the agenda. It is especially important to solve the problem of poverty in the eastern regions, which still lag far behind the central and western ones. We hope that through continuous efforts the country will achieve, first of all, the second goal of sustainable development: the absence of famine in Indonesia.

References: