

SITUATION OF POPULATION EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE

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Abstract: We need to underline that economic development of agriculture, particularly of agricultural households, is closely dependent on each category of agricultural production resources. Without underestimating the role and importance of all resources, we need to mention that, of all resources and production factors, human resources have a decisive influence on productive factors in agriculture, no matter the agricultural system. This is the reason why the authors of this article present the evolution of population employed in Romanian agriculture based on their analysis.

Key words: people employed, diminution, constraints, share, youth

INTRODUCTION

Population is defined as a community of people that live within a certain geographical area.[5]. Socio-economically, population may be described as a social subsystem counting inhabitants, density, age and gender structure, birth rate and death rate, feminisation, migrations, ageing, and labour force renewal. [2]

In Romania, economically, there is still a poor diversification of economic activities since most localities still have an agriculture-based economy.[8] Non-performing agriculture still dominates with small size agricultural holdings that lack proper equipment and that can only cover family subsistence in most cases. [1]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Analysis of Romanian rural area allowed the caption of the main issues confronting our rural areas.

One of the methods used to prepare the raw analysis material was to document the official databases provided by the National Institute of Statistics (INS – time series Tempo Online), Romania's Statistics Yearbook – collection, databases published by EUROSTAT, as well as different publications or complementary information retrieved from the Internet.

RESEARCH RESULTS

During the entire period after December 1989, agriculture has played a very important social role acting like an occupational buffer against transition socio-economic effects and absorbing an important share of the labour force released by urban industries. [6]

Thus, the decades of rapid industrialisation of our economy were followed by increasing decrease of the active population in agriculture, an extremely complex socio-economic phenomenon with huge implications in rural society. [7]

As for the quantitative and structural-qualitative evolution of labour resources in Romania's agriculture, we need to mention that long-term labour force in agriculture follows the general trend of developing countries – absolute and relative diminution. The diminution of agriculture-employed labour resources started, practically, after the

establishment of agricultural cooperative system whose peak was in 1965. Between 1981 and 1989, the reserve of agricultural labour force kept relatively constant; starting with 1990, the trend reversed: there has been absolute and relative increase of active population in agriculture (Table 1). At present, the share of population employed in agriculture in Romania is much larger than the mean of the E.U. member states.

Table 1

Evolution of the main demographics

Year	Total population	Rural population	Total population employed	Population employed agriculture	Rural population from total population	Population employed in agriculture from rural population	Population employed in agriculture from total employed population
	thousands of people				%		
1990	23,207	10,598	10,840	3,055	45.7	28.8	28.2
1995	22,681	10,224	9,439	3,187	45.1	31.2	33.6
1999	22,458	10,155	8,420	3,466	45.2	34.1	41.2
2000	22,435	10,190	8,629	3,570	45.4	35.0	40.8
2001	22,408	10,164	8,563	3,498	45.4	34.4	40.4
2002	21,795	10,186	8,329	3,011	46.7	29.7	36.3
2003	21,733	10,133	8,306	2,884	46.6	28.4	39.5
2004	21,673	9,778	8,238	2,634	45.1	27.0	31.6
2005	21,624	9,744	8,390	2,674	45.1	27.4	32.1
2010	21,431	9,632	9,240	2,780	44.9	28.8	30,0
2016	19,760	9,129	8,318	1,727	46.2	18.9	20.8

Source: our own processing of *Anuarul statistic al României, colecție, INS, BFM* [10]

In Romania, the share of active population employed in agriculture was rather stable until 1990, with about 3,000,000 people. Structural economic reforms and the dismemberment of the production agricultural cooperatives at the beginning of the 1990s, led to a drastic increase of the number of people employed in agriculture. [3].

The labour force in the rural area employed in agriculture is one of the major constraints of local economy development. [4].

The share of population employed in agriculture of the total rural population has increased significantly since 1990, from 28.8% to 35.0% in 2000, after which it diminished gradually reaching 28.8% in 2010. After 2010, the decrease was even higher, reaching 18.9% in 2016.

Thus, after 1995, rural population decreased slightly due to the return to the countryside of urban dwellers that had lost their jobs in industry. The attraction force of the towns and cities decreased because of the increase of the living costs and of the dwelling maintenance costs.

The evolution of demographics in Romania's rural area has known lately a different dynamics because of the trend to modernisation, of the trends during the previous period, and because of the impact of the new economic, political and social factors.

About the same evolution characterised the share of population employed in agriculture of the total population employed: it grew from 28.2% in 1990 to a maximum of 41.2% in 1999, to decrease **in 2016 to 20.8%** (Figure 1). The increase of the population employed in agriculture in the last decade of the 20th century was determined not by the needs of agriculture but by the licensing of labour force from other economic branches during the transition period of Romanian economy.

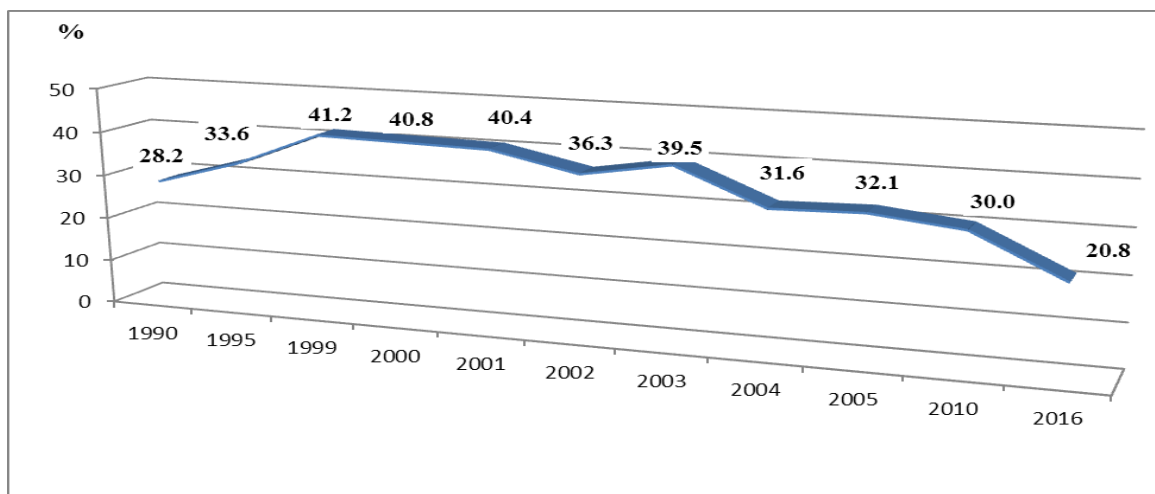


Figure 1. Evolution of population employed in agriculture from total population employed

Source: our own processing of *Anuarul statistic al României, colecție, INS, BFM* [15], [11]

The fluctuating evolution of rural population is a consequence of migration, particularly of young people, to urban areas or abroad, in search for better jobs and for a more attractive way of living.

Migration is of particular importance for Romania: it has positive effects economically and socially due to the important financial resources. Such contributions are particularly important for rural economy because emigration helps changing mentalities and opening towards modernisation provided migrants come back home.

Table 2

Structure of population employed per economic activities

Economics activities	Employed population	
	Thousands of people	%
TOTAL	8,317.6	100.0
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,726.8	20.8
Industry – total	1,957.0	23.5
- Extractive	54.2	0.7
- Processing	1,717.6	20.6
- Production and supply of electricity and thermal energy, gas, hot water and air conditioning	54.4	0.6
- Water supply, sanitation, waste management, decontamination	130.8	1.6
Constructions	684.2	8.2
Commerce and social services	3949.6	47.5
Commerce services	2400.7	28.8
-Whole and retail commerce, and motor repair	1,225.9	14.7
-Transport and storage	444.6	5.3
-Hotels and restaurants	193.3	2.3
-Information and communication	204.2	2.5
-Financing and insurance	105.2	1.3
-Real estate	34.6	0.4
-Professional, scientific and technical activities	192.9	2.3

Social services	1548.9	18.7
-Administration services and support services	320.5	3.9
-Public and defence administration*	202.7	2.4
-Education	378.0	4.6
-Health and social work	403.0	4.9
-Entertainment, cultural and recreational activities	77.4	0.9
-Other services	167.3	2.0

*except for armed and assimilated ones
 Source: *Balanța forței de muncă, 2017, INS*

In January 2017, of the total population employed (8,317,600), **20.8% worked in agriculture, 31.7% worked in industry and constructions, and 47.5% worked in commerce and social services.** Thus, 79.2% of total population employed worked in non-agricultural activities (Figure 2).

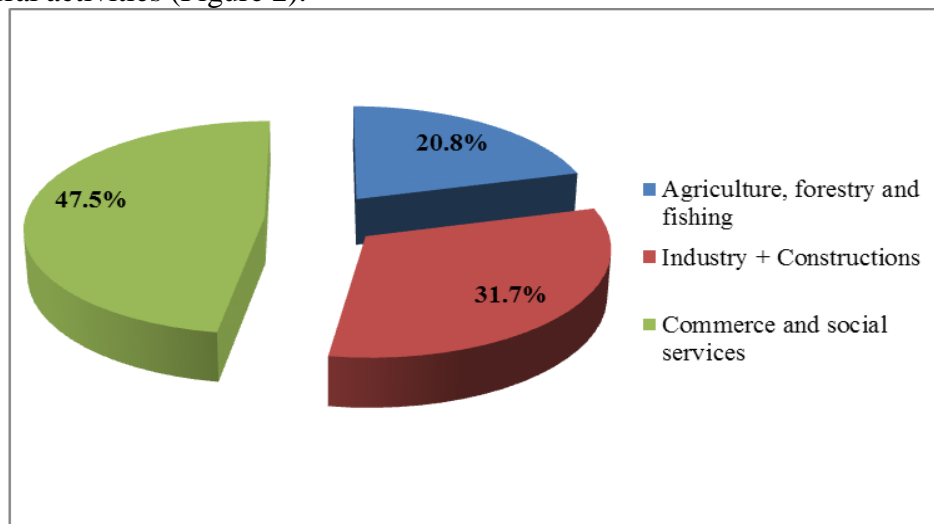


Figure 2. Structure of population employed per sectors

According to Figure 3, the highest unemployment rate is within the 15-24 years range.

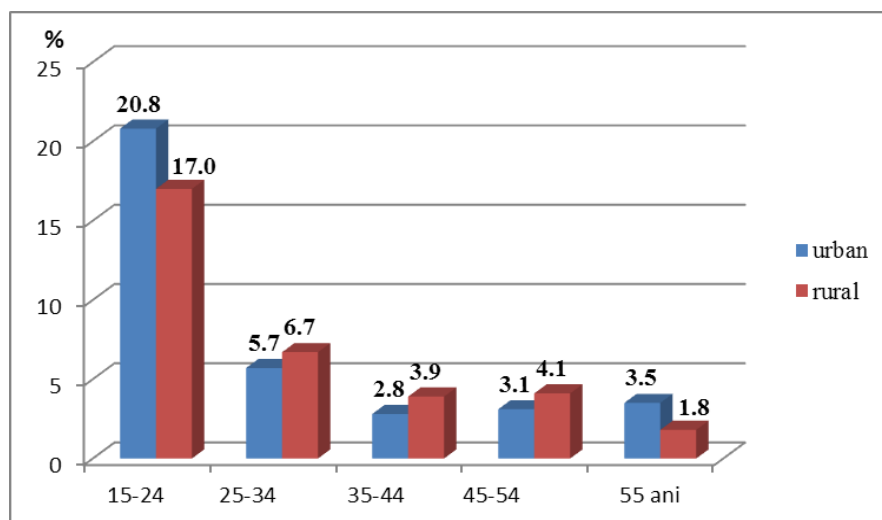


Figure 3. Unemployment rate per age groups and age means in 2017

Source: *our own processing of INS*

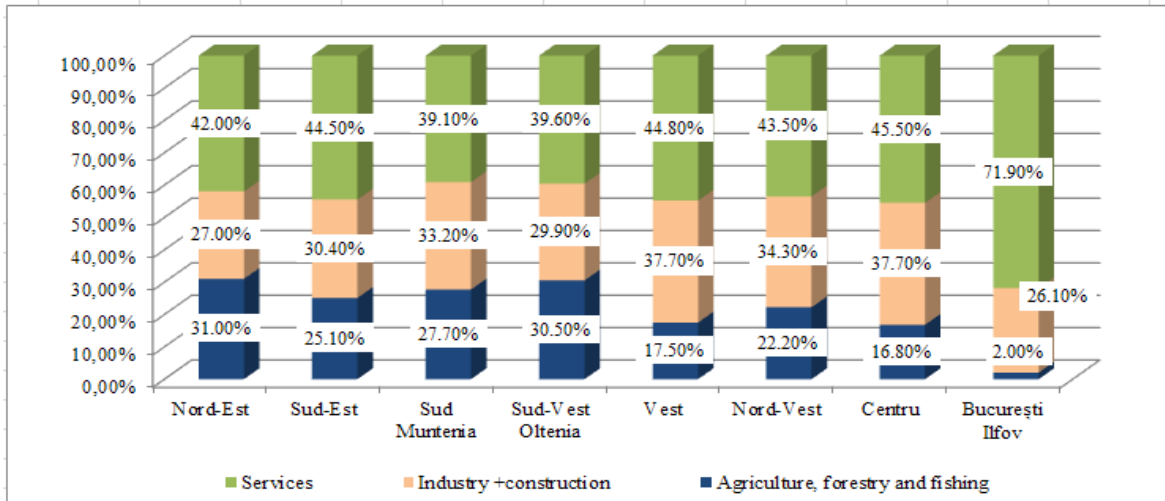


Figure 4. Population employed per regions and economic sectors

Source: our own processing of INS

Analysing the structure of civilian population employed per economic sectors points out that the largest shares of people working in agriculture were 31.0% in the Region North-East and 30.5% in the Region South-West Oltenia.

Industry and constructions shared 37.7% each of the people employed in Regions West and Centre. Services shared over 40.0% of the people employed in the Regions Centre (45.5%) and West (44.8%), while the highest percentage in the field was in Region Bucharest-Ilfov (71.9%).

At the end of 2016, Region North-East shared 18.7% of the total number of **unemployed people**, followed by Region South-Muntenia (17.7%) and South-West Oltenia (16.5%), the smallest share was in Region Bucharest-Ilfov (4.9%) with 20,600 unemployed people.

Unemployment rate was, on December 31, 2016, the highest in Region South-West Oltenia (8.3%), while the lowest one was in Region Bucharest-Ilfov (1.5%).

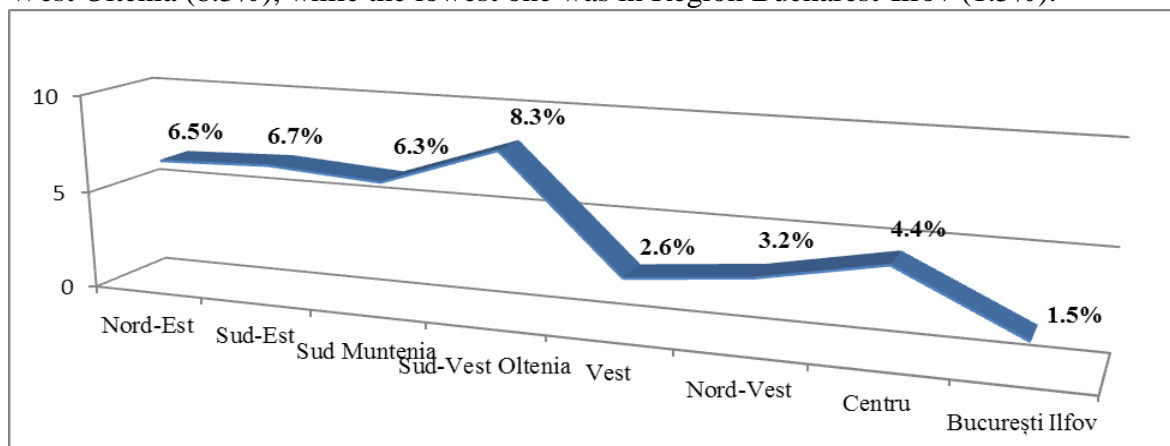


Figure 5. Unemployment rat (%) per regions of development

Source: our own processing of INS

Though the labour force in Romania's agriculture is still one of the most numerous in Europe, the dynamics of the population employed in agriculture shows a gradual decreasing trend from 40.9% in 2001 to 25.7% in 2008 and to 20.8% in 2017. The main economic policy of any country is to employ labour force in services.

CONCLUSIONS

We see that the main factors having contributed to the socio-demographic evolution of the population after 1990 are population natural growth that had negative values after 1990 and migration, particularly that of young people: they led to both a decrease of the total population and of the rural population.

The diagnosis analysis of the rural area shows that demographics is mainly a development potential factor, since Romania's population is more rural than those of other E.U. member states, we believe it is necessary to get involved more in the development of rural areas taking into account specific economic activities, resources available and human resources available in rural communities to be maintained as rural areas.

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