

LABOUR RESOURCES IN ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE

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Abstract: Romania is, at present, one of the European countries with most agriculturists (about 26% of the working population). The share of working population in Romanian agriculture was rather stable until 1990 (about 3,000,000 people). Structural economic reforms and the dissolution of the former agricultural production cooperatives at the beginning of the 1990s led to a higher availability of the labour force and to an artificial raise of the labour force employed in agriculture. Agricultural labour force follows the general trend of market economy countries (i.e., absolute and relative diminution). The conclusions of the study point out that, at present, in Romania, young labour force deserted agriculture and migrated to other fields of activity or abroad.

Key words: labour resources, agriculture;

INTRODUCTION

Labour resources are determined, in general, not only in agriculture, by the volume of available active population (potential labour force); this is why this paper approaches also the issue of total population, of available active population and of employed population. [1].

In the first decade after December 1989, the number of people employed in agriculture increased unlike that of most developed countries. Thus, if at the end of 1989, 28.5% of Romania's population worked in agriculture, in 2001, its share was 43.5%. [3].

The explanation lies in the licensing of employed people from other economic sectors (particularly industry and mining) and in the fact that most of those people were rooted in the rural area which made them migrate from the urban to the rural areas (another paradox within the European context) and ensure the simple bare necessities of life by practicing subsistence agriculture. By 2008, the population employed in agriculture decreased to 28.8% because of the high degree of ageing in the rural area and due to new movement flows towards the urban areas, particularly for the youth. In 2016, following the same trend, 23.1% of the population worked in agriculture.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main methods used in this study are analysis, synthesis, data processing and data interpretation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

In 2016, Romania's active population was 8,979,000 people, of which 8,449,000 were employed and 530,000 were unemployed (Fig. 1).

ACTIVE POPULATION (8979)			
Employed population (8449)			Unemployed people (530)
Employees (6201)		Other categories (2248)	
Industry and construction (2300)	Services (3707)	Agriculture (194)	

Figure 1. Population categories in 2016 (thousands of people)

Source: Own processing by [10]

In 2016, the employment rate of active population (15-64 years of age) was 61.6%; young people (15-24 years of age) shared 22.3%, and aged people (55-64 years of age) shared 42.8%.

Employees shared 73.4% of the total employed population (6,201,100 people). In 2016, free lancers and unpaid family workers shared 25.6% of the employed population (2,248,000 people).

Table 1.

Labour force per gender and environment (2016)

	Total	Men	Women	Urban	Rural
	<i>- thousands of people -</i>				
Active population	8979	5145	3834	4962	4017
<i>Of which:</i>					
Employed people	8449	4806	3643	4684	3765
Unemployed people	530	339	191	278	252
	<i>- percentage -</i>				
Activity rate	65.6	74.8	56.2	66.4	64.6
15-24 years	28.0	33.9	21.8	20.2	35.4
25-54 years	81.9	91.0	72.4	84.9	77.9
55-64 years	44.2	55.1	34.4	39.7	50.6
Employment rate	61.6	69.7	53.3	62.6	60.2
15-24 years	22.3	27.2	17.1	15.2	28.9
25-54 years	77.6	85.5	69.2	80.7	73.3
55-64 years	42.8	53.0	33.6	38.3	49.2
Unemployment rate	5.9	6.6	5.0	5.6	6.3
15-24 years	20.6	19.9	21.8	24.9	18.3
25+ years	4.8	5.5	3.9	4.7	4.9

Source: Own processing

As for unemployment rate, it reached a peak (20.6%) among young people aged 15-24 in 2016.

According to the National Institute of Statistics, population employed in agriculture in 2012 was 2,680,000 people, i.e. about 29% of the total employed people. It decreased with 890,000 people compared to 2000, when it shared 41% of the total employed population due to Romania's becoming a European Union member nation and to the liberalisation of the labour market in Europe.

In 2016, of the total employed people, 23.1% worked in agriculture, 29.9% worked in industry or constructions, and 47.0% worked in services.

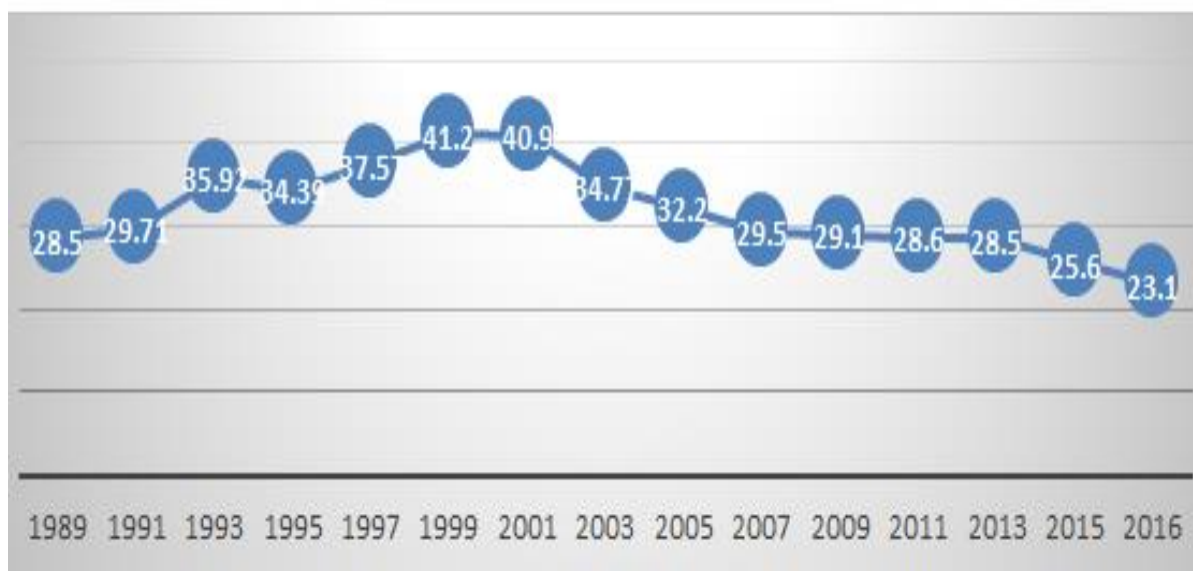


Figure 2. Evolution of population employed in agriculture (1989-2016)

CONCLUSIONS

Romania's population employed in agriculture during **1989-2016, though decreasing, still maintained at a high level (23.1%) in 2016, ranking Romania last among European Union member states, where the mean is 4.4%**: this is not a negative aspect, because without agriculture there would be no Romanian village. The problem is that most rural population is aged and it work on subsistence farms (farm households).

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