

ROMANIAN RURAL ECONOMY-FEATURES AND PERFORMANCES

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Abstract: For current Romanian economy, the rural environment and its specific activities occupy a central place, which is why the topic of this paper is an actual one. For Romania, rural area, both in size and structure and in functionality, has a particular importance, so in the paper are pursued some aspects: Evolution of rural area-tendencies, The structure of the rural economy, Structure of agricultural holdings by size and utilized agricultural area, Structure of agricultural holdings from Romania by economic size, The distribution map of large agricultural holdings.

Key words: rural area, agriculture, structure and features, rural economy

INTRODUCTION

Romania's agriculture is at the crossroads. Two profound restructuring in only 40 years, two "transitions" from one system to another, two fundamentally different periods, do not represent much for the Romanian farmer. The negative effects of these distortions are now felt in the mentality, in the conception of the peasants towards the private-family household (farm). [7,8,9,11]

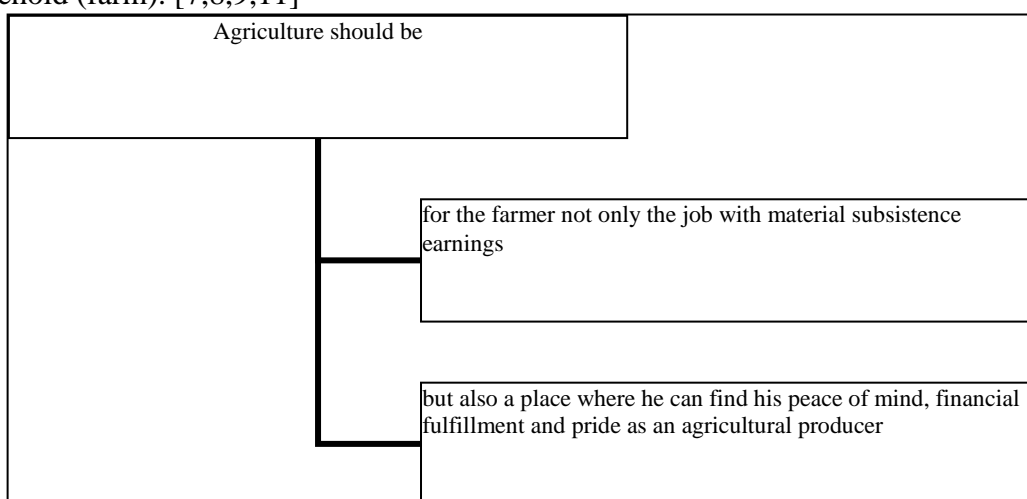


Figure 1. Agriculture-important aspects

Source: own processing

Agriculture should be for the farmer not only the job with material subsistence earnings, but also a place where he can find his peace of mind, financial fulfillment and pride as an agricultural producer. Currently, Romanian agriculture is predominantly of subsistence, its commercial character is quite low. The causes of this condition are mainly due to the refuge that it constitutes for the labor force made available in other sectors or for the people who cannot find jobs in other fields. These represent also one of the reasons why the competitiveness of Romanian agriculture is extremely low. The development of agriculture involves a complex of systemic changes at the level of production and all the links related to its valorization, consisting mainly of the gradual transfer of the existing patrimony from private property, the capitalization of the economic agents, the stimulation of investments, the setting of prices through the specific mechanisms of the free market, the modernization of the distribution and marketing network, of the agricultural raw

material processing industries, the increase of the expenses for the scientific research of profile, etc. [3,4,6,11,18]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main purpose of this paper is to underline the specific features and performances of Romanian rural economy, so in the paper are pursued some aspects:

- Evolution of rural area-tendencies
- The structure of the rural economy
- Structure of agricultural holdings by size and utilized agricultural area
- Structure of agricultural holdings from Romania by economic size
- The distribution map of large agricultural holdings.

In order to achieve the proposed desideratum, the authors of the paper used the multi-criteria analysis, based on the different existing information in the specialized literature. Thus the authors of the paper used: data collection, processing, analysis, observation and their interpretation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The rural environment is expressively detached from the urban environment. The rhythm of life and work processes is subordinate to biological laws that print cyclicity and seasonality, with different intensities of work. Seasonality and cyclicity of work processes print a specific way of life that has more divergences than the convergence with the urban way of life. [10,12,15,16]

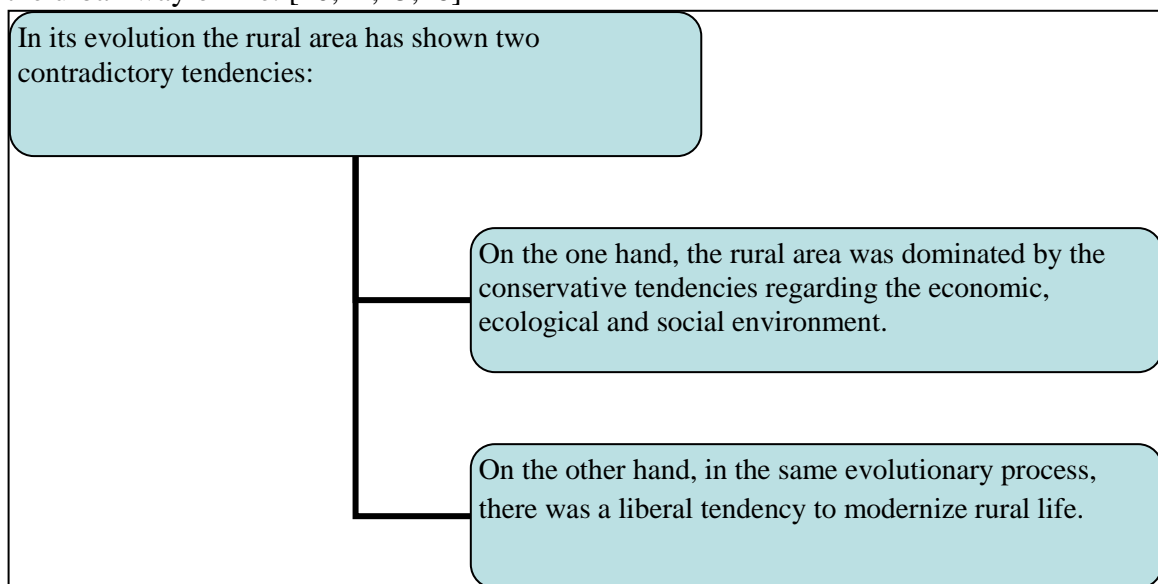


Figure 2. Evolution of rural area-tendencies

The decision factors must create the framework in which the balance between the tendency of preserving the traditional values of the rural area and the one of its modernization. Next, the Romanian rural area will surely follow the path of structural and functional changes due to the emergence and development of non-agricultural activities, among which the services will have the highest share.

Agriculture today enjoys of a special attention in all countries of the world, regardless of the level of economic development. In the contemporary world, the most economically developed countries are also the largest producers and exporters of agricultural products.

At the level of 2011, the Romanian rural economy is predominantly agrarian, because in Romania the agricultural economy itself has a share of 60.5% in its structure, compared to only 14.1% in the EU. In the European Union, in 2011, the dominance of the rural economy is the services economy, with a share of 42.2%, higher by 2% compared to the agri-food economy.

Table 1.**The structure of the rural economy, %**

	Romania	European Union
Agriculture	60,5	14,1
Food industry	15,8	20,5
Tobacco products industry	1,7	3,2
Pisciculture	0,1	2,5
Agri-food economy	(78,1)	(40,3)
Forest economy	(6,3)	(8,2)
Extractive index	2,6	4,1
Processing industry	3,1	5,2
Industrial economy	(5,7)	(9,3)
Agrotourism economy	0,1	4,4
Other services	9,8	37,8
Services economy	(9,9)	(42,2)
Non-agricultural economy	(21,9)	(59,7)

Source: Otiman, P.I., *Alternativele economiei rurale a României: dezvoltarea agriculturii sau insecuritate alimentară și deșertificare rurală severă*. Editura Academiei Române, 2011 pp.83

The Romanian rural economy, according to figure 3, has as its predominant feature the very large percentage of small farms, which mainly produce for self-consumption, by marketing on the market only the obtained products. The existence of a very large number of small farms in parallel with the very large farms reveals the structural imbalance that influences the agriculture of our country and its competitiveness. [17,19]

Based on the Law of the Land Fund, Law 36/1991 on agricultural societies and other forms of association in agriculture, the typology, it is presented as follows:

I. Farms:

- family farms;
- commercial agricultural holdings.

II. Commercial agricultural holdings:

A. Commercial vegetable holdings:

- cereals and technical plants;
- natural grasslands;
- vegetables;
- apple trees and nurseries;
- strawberries and shrubs;
- noble living, nurseries and hops;
- greenhouses and solariums.

B. Commercial holdings in animal husbandry:

- milk cows;
- fattening calves;
- sheep and goats;
- to serve;
- other animal species;
- laying hens;
- meat birds;
- other species of birds;

- agriculture;
- brood fish;
- fish for consume;
- trout.

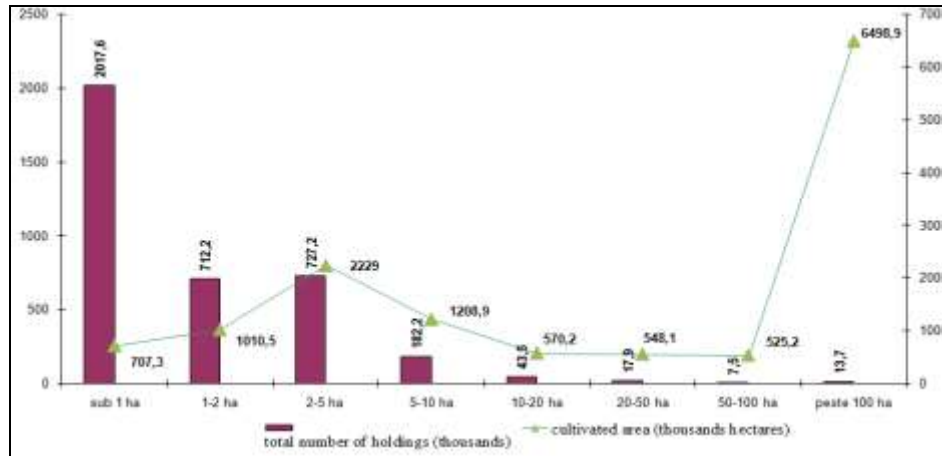


Figure 3. Structure of agricultural holdings by size and utilized agricultural area

A typology of the Romanian farms according to the orientation of the production and according to the economic dimension, realized by Eurostat, highlights the following situation: [1,2,5,13,14]

- large farms in terms of economic dimension, over 40 ESU22, are specialized mainly in cereal, oil and protein crops;
- the small farms (households), smaller than 1 ESU, are “specialized” in birds, pigs and combinations of animals and field crops;
- semi-subsistence farms, between 1 and 40 ESU, are specialized in raising pigs, birds, sometimes in combination with various crops and specialized in fruit, sheep, field crops, sometimes vegetables.

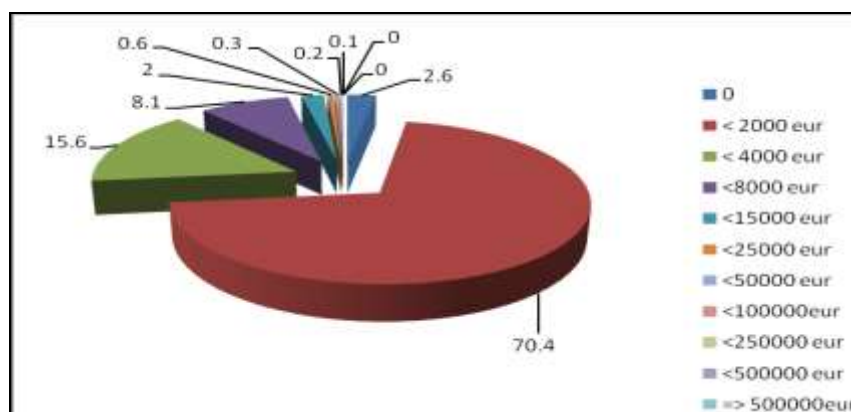


Figure 4. Structure of agricultural holdings from Romania by economic size, 2011

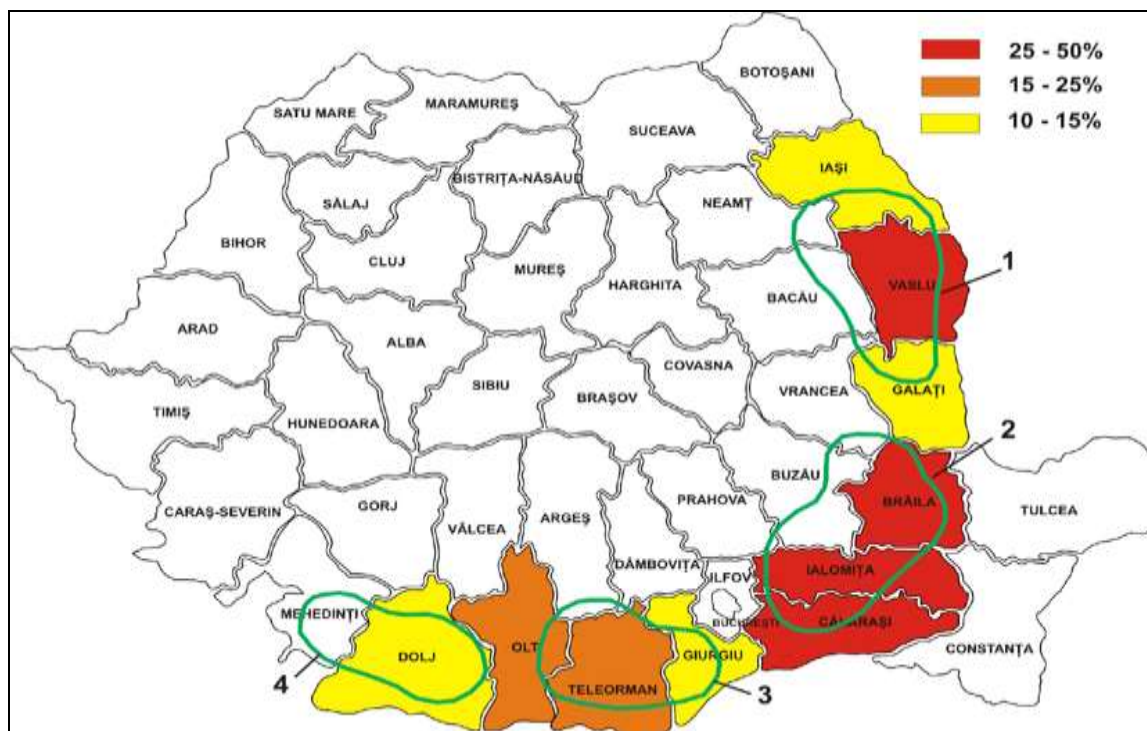


Figure 5. Structure of agricultural holdings from Romania, (over 2000 ha), 2011

Source: *Revista IEA „Economie Agrară și Dezvoltare Rurală”, Structura agrară actuală a României o mare (și nerezolvată) problemă socială și economică a țării, Editura Academiei, 2012*

European agriculture, in its current concept, is both a producing and profitable branch of agricultural products and a way of life. Reported to the total population employed in various sectors of the national economy, the population employed in Romania in agricultural, forestry and fishery activities remains at a high level. The vast majority of statistical data shows that the population employed in agriculture is, in a very large percentage, very vulnerable from a social point of view, generally aging and with a low level of education.

The requirements related to the environmental protection and recreational functions of the rural areas are becoming more and more important, their satisfaction supposing additional changes for agriculture, as the main land user. However, this growth will also provide new development opportunities that farmers and their families can benefit from.

CONCLUSIONS

Broadly speaking, there are several guidelines whose improvement would lead to the improvement of rural conditions:

- Consolidation and restructuring of subsistence farms is a necessary wish, starting from the premise that small farmers having a strong point in production, in the future they should orient themselves in order to sell their own products by creating active producer organizations that can influence prices, can negotiate sales contracts, dealing only with selling production of a certain type.

- The establishment of some groups of farmers, for the common marketing of agricultural products would be a key priority.

- Increasing the productivity of farms, which is currently below the European average, an important reason being the lack of management, marketing and technical skills for a large part of the small farm sector would also be desirable.

- Stimulating the farms that practice the multi-activity and diversification of the agricultural production from which they obtain agricultural products with assured sale, measures to protect the environment and to ensure the welfare of the animals, to develop and improve the technical equipment of the localities and the rural territory, the conservation, renovation and modernization of the rural localities, respecting the specific traditions and architecture, by using local materials, extending the services of all kinds for the groups of agricultural producers. At the base of this support standing, as a possibility European funding.

Thus the modernization and revitalization of agriculture, we say, is a necessary wish in the future for the improvement of living conditions in the rural area, and in this field projects it would be not only timely but also necessary:

- Establishment of agricultural consulting centers;
- Modernization of the agricultural holding through the acquisition of high performance machines;
- Diversification of production and introduction of new species and crops, suitable for the soil of the area and with high added value;
- Development of networks for collecting agricultural products and forest fruits;
- Construction of storage spaces;
- Entrepreneurship in rural areas through LAGs;
- Transformation of local products into brands.

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