

PARTICULARITIES OF EMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AREAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract

The majority of employed population in rural areas is engaged either in agricultural activities mostly being informal activities, or they are employed in the public sector through the activities of education, health care, culture, social welfare, which are quite modest share in rural employment structure. Both agricultural activities, which can not ensure a rapid growth of labor productivity and employment in the public sector can not provide a level of income needed for a decent living where salaries depend on the limited possibilities of local budget. In the created conditions, in order to improve the situation of employment in rural areas the necessity to develop non-agricultural activities appears, it would increase rural incomes and would reduce urban migration.

Key words: agricultural activities, non-agricultural activities, rural areas

INTRODUCTION

The last two decades are marked by large-scale changes. The rejection of a centralized system of economic and social management and the appeal to some new principles of social and economic system organisation caused a massive economic recession in the 90s of the last century accompanied by a significant degradation of the society. Though some structural, institutional, legal, behavioural and so on changes, adjustments and readjustments were made during this period, that aimed to ensure the best possible functionality of the new economic mechanism based on market relations, competition and efficiency, we experienced a series of failures characterized by diminishing economic indicators, worsening quality of life and human capital degradation. The global financial and economic crisis, which with some delay impacted the Moldavian economy has worsened these disturbances by: the increased number of the unemployed, the reduced crediting of economic agents by commercial banks and the increased bank austerity, and correspondingly the decreased employment opportunities, the increased degree of inactivity, the increased migration

factor and the comparatively decreased social care.

Economic reforms in Moldova have led to significant changes in rural life too. The agrarian structure has changed; new forms of organization have appeared, such as: farm households, farms, individual enterprises. Fixed assets in agricultural production have been privatized, the era of safe sales with stable prices and unlimited capacity of the domestic demand for agricultural products has finished, competition as a market element has emerged. All this has led to the polarization of farmers, separation of a small number of efficient and competitive producers and marginalization of a significant number of other manufacturers on the one hand and to the emergence of unemployment, reduced living standards in rural areas on the other hand.

The ability of an economic system to function, in terms of labour power, is largely determined by the population number and structure as a part of this system. Therefore, the knowledge of various aspects of interaction between the population and labour market will initially require, an approach to the demography, as a system to provide the national economic system with the manpower.

Quantitative and qualitative changes of the demography produced throughout the post-war period determined the differences between the two residential areas, which are in their turn aspects that caused quantitative and qualitative changes in the labour force of the country. [3]

Poor social and economic conditions resulting from the reforms of transition to the market economy in Moldova, led to the reduction of natural population growth and increased permanent migration, which, in their turn, caused the steady decrease of the total population, which negatively impacted employment indicators. Although the socio-economic situation has made some progress in the country in the past five years, the number of the population continues to decline.

Rural poverty in Moldova is extensively studied in the special literature and perceived by the society as a crucial moment in the national development. To solve this problem one should increase rural incomes derived from farming, non-agricultural activities and migration of the rural population to urban areas. The former involves the increase of the farm product demand that will be faster than the growth of labour productivity in agriculture. Based on Engel's law, it is only possible by implementing agricultural protectionism, promoting local agricultural products on the world market and maintaining technologies that require the implication of the labour force in agriculture. Migration of the rural population to towns will contribute to the depopulation of rural areas, over-urbanization, loss of a part of the national culture and traditions related to rural lifestyle, other unintended consequences. If the rural population is not able to compete on the urban labour market, this will also lead to the shift of the rural poverty into towns.

The developed countries which faced the strong growth of the labour productivity in agriculture, finally stated the need to develop alternative employment in rural areas as an optimal strategy for absorbing surplus of the labour force in rural areas. The alternative employment in rural areas in Moldova is also evolving, but in most cases it is a spontaneous

process, which is monitored and supported by the public policy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main sources of information used in the study are official statistics data provided by the National Statistics Bureau, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, the National Agency for Employment and from other relevant studies. Taking into consideration the data collected we analyzed the population number and movement, employment and unemployment in rural areas of Moldova. The analytical methods of calculation, tabular and graphical methods were used to interpret the data collected. The analysis method was applied in order to interpret the received results. To draw conclusions the author focused on the method of induction and deduction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Against the background of radical changes in social and economic life of the country, the studied situation on the labour market is difficult. In other words, the labour market as one derived fully reflects the recorded success or failure of the national economy.

The labour market is a segment of the economy, which entered the crisis later than others. The rural market of the labour force faces greater difficulties, whose features make it difficult to realize a balance and must be taken into consideration when developing measures on employment and social care of the unemployed. The main characteristics of the rural labour market are dispersed employment (and labour force), lack of the territorial access due to the underdeveloped infrastructure, limitation of non-agricultural activities and employment spheres of the labour force, lack of the information of the rural population concerning vacancies, reduced liquidity of assets owned, low competitiveness of the labour force compared to the urban labour market, psychological factors, insufficient guidance for small business, seasonal fluctuations in labour demand. [2]

The second half of the twentieth century was characterized by the positive dynamics in the population number of the country. Thus, almost 30 years the number of the Moldavian population impressively increased - from 2,884,500 inhabitants in 1959 to 4,335,400 inhabitants in 1989 (Table 1), the absolute increase was 1.45 million people (about 50%). The discourage of the people due to the economic downturn that took place in the 90s of the last century, unfavourable age structure of the population and negative values of the natural and migration increase, caused a recession of the population number of the republic in the following period, which may be observed in our days too.

Table 1. The dynamics of the stable population by area and sex in Moldova, thousand people

Years	Total population	of which: on average		In % of the total	
		urban	rural	urban	rural
1959	2884.5	642.2	2242.2	22.3	77.7
1970	3568.9	1130.1	2438.8	31.7	68.3
1979	3949.8	1532.9	2416.9	38.8	61.2
1989	4335.4	2020.1	2315.3	46.6	53.4
1999	3649.9	1516.8	2133.1	41.5	58.5
2009	3567.5	1476.1	2191.4	41.4	58.6
2010	3563.7	1476.7	2087.0	41.4	58.6
2011	3560.4	1481.7	2078.7	41.6	58.4
2012	3559.5	1485.7	2073.8	41.7	58.3

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, labour market in the Republic of Moldova 2012, p. 15

Thus, in 2012 about 3,559,500 inhabitants were registered in Moldova, this is about 90 thousand people less than in 1999 or 2.5%. Under these conditions, there were essential household and structural changes in the two residential areas, caused by some urbanization promotion policies, which resulted in the excessive growth of the urban population level compared to rural areas. The period from 1959 to 1989 was characterized by a three-fold increase in the urban population level, the increase was from 22.3% in 1959 to 46.6% in 1989 (+24.3 %), the increase of the rural population for the same period being as much as only 3.2%, its share decreased from 77.7% to 53.4%.

Overpriced housing and its increased maintenance costs determined a considerable flow of the population from towns to surrounding areas, which would explain the slow dynamics and hence the relative stability of the proportion of the rural population. The

sedimentation tendency of the rural population, which manifests itself in the last decade, associated with administrative-territorial reforms through which a series of villages obtained the status of an urban settlement, led to a slight decrease in the share of urban population in the last 10 years (the so-called ruralization trend of the population), characterized by an average annual growth of the rural population by about 0.1 per cent. A stabilization of the population structure by the residence are is observed in these conditions.

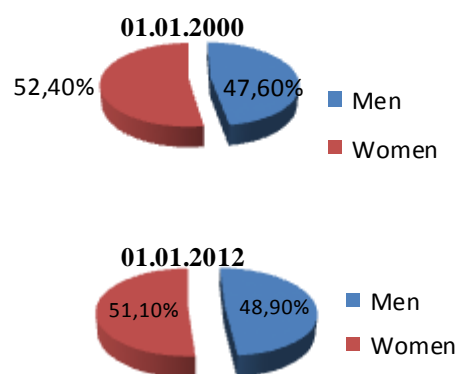


Fig. 1. The sex structure of the rural population in Moldova, on 1 January 2000 and 2012, %

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Moldova's population by age and sex, on the territorial basis, January 1, 2012, p.6

Thus, on January 1, 2012 Moldova had a relatively balanced population structure by sex: 48.9% men and 51.1% women, and it is relatively stable over the time, the rural area is characterized by a more balanced share of the two sexes than the urban one. So, early in 2012, the share of men in villages was 48.9% and the share of women - 51.1%. Meanwhile, about 52% of the total number of women and 48% of the total number of men live in rural areas. The above mentioned information indicates that the labour force demand may be greater in the country than in towns. According to the analysis, the dynamics of the gender structure of the population in rural areas is characterised by a slow, but continuing tendency to balance the shares of the two sexes. Thus, the difference of about 4.8 % between the sexes in favour of females in 2000 reached the value of about 2.2 % in 2012. This situation can be explained by an increased migration of women from villages

to towns, driven by higher benefits and labour market prospects that exist in towns.

Table 2. The distribution of the rural population by participation in economic activity in the Republic of Moldova during 2005 - 2011

Indicators	Years						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Active population, the total number, thousand people	776.2	739.4	724.5	710.9	669.6	639.6	650.8
of which:							
- engaged	745.1	696.4	698.6	691.8	636.1	605.0	616.7
-unemployed (ILO)	31.2	43.1	25.9	19.1	33.5	34.6	34.1

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Labour force in the Republic of Moldova, employment and unemployment 2012, p. 28

The aspects concerning the evolution of the key indicators of labour force participation in rural economic activity shows a continuous decrease in recent years.

Thus, from 2005 to 2012 the economically active population decreased dramatically, from 776,200 to 650,800 people (by 125,400), simultaneously there was registered a reduction of the employment from 745.1 to 616.7 thousand people or by 17.2 %. The share of the economically active rural population decreased too - from 36.5% in 2005 to 31.3% in 2011.

However, according to ILO, the number of the unemployed people increased from 31.2 thousand in 2005 to 34.1 thousand people in 2011 or by 9.2%. It should be noted that the increase of the number of the unemployed in rural areas took place against the background of a general decrease in the number of the unemployed from 103,700 in 2005 to 84,000 people in 2011 (-19.7%). A weaker consolidation of the labour market relations in rural areas, that is still in the formation stage and on the other hand, the lack of employment opportunities in this area results in the reduced flexibility of the market and therefore an increase number of the unemployed.

Although general trends of the number of the employed people in rural areas shows a major decrease in number, almost continuous, seen in terms of the age structure, this may show some peculiarities.

Table 3. The distribution of the rural population by age groups employed in the Republic of Moldova during 2005 - 2011, %

The age group	Years						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
The total employed population	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
of which:							
from 15 to 24 years old	9.7	11.6	9.4	9.7	10.8	10.8	10.1
from 25 to 34 years old	16.2	16.5	16.5	17.7	17.0	19.8	20.3
from 35 to 49 years old	42.3	41.9	42.1	41.7	42.2	38.2	37.8
from 50 to 64 years old	24.9	24.7	26.6	25.7	26.9	28.9	29.1
over 65 years old	7.0	5.3	5.4	5.2	3.2	2.4	2.7

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Labour force in the Republic of Moldova, employment and unemployment 2012, p. 31

The analysis (table 3) of the labour force employment in rural areas by age reflects changes in the number of the employed population from age groups. In the period 2005-2011 the most stable manifestation in terms of the age structure show people between 15-24 years old. Thus, the number of young people employed in this period showed a slight increase of about 0.4 %. This situation can be explained by the young people's tendency to remain in the system of education for a longer period.

In 2005-2011 a growing trend registered the population aged 25-34 years old (+4.1%), followed by the employed of 50-64 years old whose share increased by about 4.2 %. Structural changes that are observed in the group of 50-64-year old people can highlight the "accumulation" of the rural employment at the level of a more advanced age, which is associated with an "aging" of employment. The decrease of the employed population of 35-49 years old can be explained by the increasing inactivity of such cohorts, in respect of their active involvement in the processes of international labour force migration. [3]

Another feature of the dynamics of the population employed in rural areas is a substantial reduction in the number of people aged over 65 (- 4.3 %), which is mainly due to the great increase in economic inactivity of the retired people. This situation on the labour market in rural areas is disadvantageous

because the employed elderly population will leave the labour market in about 10 years. Therefore, it is important to renew the labour force (inactive young people able to work, the unemployed) as soon as possible, especially as the Republic of Moldova lacks it.

The reorientation of a part of the rural population to other fields of activity caused changes in its professional status. So, the most common forms became the employees and the self-employed, the majority of the latter being employed in additional one's own households. Thus, in 2011 employees held a share of 55% (+9.6% in comparison with 2005) and the share of the self-employed was about 39.1% (-13.4% compared to 2005) of the total employed population, respectively 52.5%.

Table 4. The distribution of the rural population by the professional status in the Republic of Moldova during 2005 - 2011, thousand people

The professional status	Years						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
The total of the employed population	745.1	696.4	698.6	691.8	636.1	605.0	616.7
of which:							
- Employees	339.1	354.9	355.4	359.4	349.7	332.1	340.1
- Employers	1.7	2.5	2.1	4.0	3.5	3.2	3.7
- Self-employed	391.3	304.0	313.5	300.2	255.8	242.1	241.0
- Other	13.0	35.0	27.6	28.1	27.1	27.6	32.0

The source: Developed by the author based on NSB data, Labour market in the Republic of Moldova 2012, p. 38

The large share of the self-employed in rural areas, employed as a rule in additional households illustrates a critical situation in terms of the sustainable development prospects of rural communities. Moreover, rudimentary agricultural activities practiced by them are characterized by low productivity, which ensures only their existence. The largest part of the products obtained in additional households is subject of the personal consumption. Changes in the structure of the employment status of people in rural areas were greatly affected by the changes in the structure of the employment status of women, who are about 53% of employees and 44% of freelancers.

However, the rapid growth of the number of entrepreneurs is encouraging. Thus, in 2011 the number of rural employers doubled compared to 2005, decreasing by about 300 people in comparison with 2008.

Another unfavourable aspect that occurs in rural areas is the presence of about 32 000 employees that work at family enterprises (about 19% of the employed population). The share of women of this status is even more tragic which confirms that women are largely employed in their own farms.

The lack of employment opportunities in rural areas, their poor regulation, extensive bureaucracy and inability of local governments, the pressing tax system, mistrust towards the state as well as the advanced level of poverty influenced the socio-economic development of the country in recent decades. The above mentioned difficulties caused the appearance of the behaviors typical for underdeveloped economies in the labour market, among them: employment without employment contracts, employees that were not registered by employers, the absence or incomplete declaration of incomes, tax evasion, subsistence activities. [4]

These and many other factors have led to the appearance of some forms of employment, for example an informal employment. An important point that determined the formation of the informal sector in the rural economy was the collapse of big agricultural households and the distribution of the agricultural land among rural residents.

Table 5. The distribution of the rural population by the type of job and employment status in the Republic of Moldova during 2005 - 2011, thousand people

The professional status	Years						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
The total of the employed people	745.1	696.4	698.6	691.8	636.1	605.0	616.7
of which:							
formally employed	439.9	364.2	379.0	390.1	361.7	330.0	336.5
of which:							
- employees	282.4	282.9	292.2	293.1	292.3	274.7	282.0
- freelancers	155.8	78.9	84.7	97.0	69.3	55.3	54.5
informally employed	305.2	332.2	319.6	301.8	274.5	275.0	280.3
of which:							
- employees	56.8	72.0	63.2	66.5	57.3	54.7	58.1
- freelancers	248.5	260.2	256.4	235.3	217.1	217.6	222.2

The source: Developed by the author based on NSB data, Labour market in Moldova 2012, p. 40

The employment in rural areas in our country is characterized by a relatively high share of informal activities. In 2011 the rural economy

was represented by 616,700 employed people, 336,500 (about 54.6%) of which were formally employed, and 280,300 people (about 45.4%) - informally. It is important to note that informal employment in rural areas is much higher than in urban areas. In 2011 more than three quarters of the population was engaged in informal activities in the country.

The informal sector manifests itself quite differently as a professional status. Thus, in 2011 more than three quarters (about 79.3%) of the informally employed population were freelancers, who were engaged in only 22% of informal activities, with small differences between the sexes.

The informal employment is almost entirely specific for the private sector, the share of the public sector is microscopic. Thus, in 2011 only about 196 of 280,300 people employed informally, worked in the public sector. Therefore, informal employment both appeared and grew more intensively due to the accelerated growth of the private sector.

The distribution of activities from the point of view of the organizational and legal form of enterprises is quite relevant in the analysis of the specific character of the informal employment in rural areas. So, the majority of people employed in rural areas – 190,000 out of 280,300 people or 67.8% - worked in their own households and about 41.0 thousand (or 14%) people were engaged in individual work. These are typically farming households, where business is often informal. Unfortunately, informal employment was also quite high in enterprises, organizations and institutions as legal bodies.

The analysis of the rural informal employment by the level of education shows a great predominance of the population with a low level of education in the informal sector. Thus, the largest share of the informal employment in 2011 is held by people with secondary education (103,800 people or about 37%). Generally speaking, the people who graduated from special secondary or secondary institutions, lyceums represent about 89% of rural informal activities.

The largest share in informal activities belonged to the people trained in agricultural sciences (about 80%). 8% and 6% of people

informally employed in rural areas worked in construction and trade respectively, other types of activity had insignificant shares.

Economic reforms carried out over the years caused a substantial change in the employment structure according to the form of the ownership. People from rural areas employed in the private sector predominate almost in every activity field, with the exception of the public, social, transport and telecommunication sectors. Virtually all fields of rural, with the exception of budgetary, social, transport and telecommunications sectors, most employed people working in the private sector. [4]

Thus, in 2011 there was registered a situation of absolute dominance of the private sector over the public sector (Table 6). The proportion of people employed in the private sector was about 75.7%, those employed in public enterprises - about 24.3%. Large shares of employment in the private sector may be found in agriculture, construction, trade and industry.

Table 6. The distribution of the rural employed population by fields of activity regarding the ownership form in Moldova during 2009 - 2011, thousand people

The field of activity	Years, the ownership form					
	2009		2010		2011	
	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public
The total of the employed population	462.3	155.4	430.3	149.7	466.7	150.0
of which:						
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	313.6	3.9	290.7	4.3	299.4	4.1
Industry	39.3	4.2	36.3	3.1	53.8	4.1
Construction	32.3	0, 0	31.1	0, 0	30.0	0, 0
Wholesale and retail	53.1	3.6	50.6	3.3	52.8	2.7
Transport and communications	12.7	8.7	10.9	7.2	11.14	7.9
Public administration, education, health and social assistance	0, 0	125.9	0, 0	125.2	1.8	123.0
Other fields of activity	10.2	8.7	9.4	6.5	11.3	8.2

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Labour force employment and unemployment in Moldova 2010-2012

However, there is a tendency to reduce the rural population employed in the private agriculture sector from 313,600 people in 2009 to 299,400 persons in 2011 or by 4.5%. The rural population employed in the public sector increased insignificantly from 3.9

thousand in 2009 to 4.1 thousand people in 2011, or by 24%.

The rural population employed industry in the private sector increased in 2011 compared to 2009 by 14.5 thousand or 37%, however there were no changes in the public sector.

About 30 thousand and 50 thousand people that live in the country and work in the private sector are employed in construction and trade respectively, however the number of people from rural areas employed in business activities decreases from 3,600 in 2009 to 2,700 people in 2011 or by 25%.

The transport and communications sector attracted about 11,000 people of the rural population employed in the private sector and, correspondingly, about 8,000 people in the public sector.

However there were significant changes in the employment of the rural population in public administration, education, health and social care, where there were employed mostly

women. The employment situation of women in the public sector can be considered as a favourable one. The work in this sector is safer, providing social guarantees provided by law. The status of the public sector employee allows regulation of labour relations under a contract of employment. Thus, about 85% of rural workers are employed under the contract of employment (about 39% of men and about 46% of women). Hiring employees by contracts, considered as an additional opportunity for the employees rights observance, manifested differently depending on the type of activity. Almost all employees in public administration, education, health and social work are employed under the contract, while only about 92% of those employed in transport have signed employment contracts, in industry - about 90%. The lowest share of employees with employment contracts can be observed in agriculture (about 70%).

Table 7. The population employed in rural areas by working hours depending on the economic activity in 2011 in Moldova, thousand people

Working hours	The total	in which economic activities						
		Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	Indus trie	Constructi on keep	Wholesale and retail	Transport tourists and communists cations	Public administrat ion, education, health and social	Other types of activiti es
The total of the employed population	616.7	304.1	57.9	30.3	60.9	19.3	124.8	19.5
of which:								
<i>full time</i>	553.2	262.7	54.5	26.6	57.6	17.2	117.2	17.4
of which:								
- less than 40 hours	194.7	129.6	6.9	5.0	9.0	2.6	38.8	2.9
- 40 hours	176.0	39.0	35.2	9.5	19.9	8.6	53.4	10.4
- more than 40 hours	182.5	94.2	12.4	12.1	28.7	6.1	25.0	4.1
<i>part-time</i>	63.5	41.3	3.4	3.7	3.3	2.1	7.6	2.1
of which:								
- less than 20 hours	48.7	31.7	2.4	2.1	2.0	1.7	7.1	1.9
- 20 hours and more	14.8	9.7	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Labour force employment and unemployment in Moldova 2012

The difficulties faced by business agents of the republic due to the lack of funds and materials, retail sale crises, as well as tax evasion and illegal intentions to maintain a

double accounting, resulted in a variety of ways of the population employment, including part-time employment. One of the part-time employment forms is hiring workers

with a incomplete work program manifested primarily through a reduced working week. It should be noted that the working week in specific fields of activity may be shorter than that traditionally provided by law, 40 hours.

In 2011 most of the rural population (85.5%) were employed full-time and only 10.3% of it was employed part-time. Since the majority of the rural population is employed in agriculture this economic activity has the highest proportion of the population employed both full- and part-time, 47.5% and 65.0% respectively.

However, a significant share of the rural population employed full-time program (21.2%) belongs to the public administration, education, health and social care.

According to the official statistics in the country, in 2011 the average working week was 37.5 hours, it is higher for employees (39.1 hours) and lower for freelancers (35.8 hours). Being season-dependent and strongly influenced by climatic conditions, agricultural activities recorded an average working week in rural areas equal to about 35.9 hours. [2]

Taking into consideration the large share of people employed in agriculture, the average working week in this sector has reduced drastically compared to the average number of working hours in rural areas. However, agricultural workers had a working week equal to the ordinary one (40.6 hours), while self-employed people in this area worked on average 35 hours a week.

Another activity in rural areas with a large number of employees - public administration, education, health and social care - registered an average working week of 35.9 hours. The longest working weeks were registered in trade, construction and transport, on average of 43, 41 and 40.7 hours respectively.

Analyzing the average length of the working week in rural areas by sex, we observed that it was longer by men than by women (39 hours compared to 35 hours). Studying the average length of the working week of people employed in rural areas by activities, we notice that it is longer by men than by women. Thus, the greatest difference between the average working week of both sexes may be found in public administration, education,

health and social care, where men work 6 hours per week more than women (40 hours for men and 34 hours for women). Transport and telecommunications follow, men work there about 5 hours more per week than women, then comes agriculture with a difference of 3 hours in favour of men. The remaining activities showed insignificant differences of 1-2 hours, all in favour of men. Therefore, the men's working time is longer than the women's, it is on average 40 hours or even more in all activities except agriculture. Taking into consideration the fact that women are the ones who assume the full burden of domestic work, manages the household, they are clean, care, are busy with community activities, the length of their working week increases considerably.

Demands and different socio-economic availabilities, launched by two residential areas, made the activities become traditional and they also caused a social division of labour that separates the profile of urban activities from that of rural activities. Thus, fields of activity in the two residential areas register significant differences in terms of the population number and employment structure. In 2011 the majority of the urban population were in employed in trade, most residents of rural areas worked in agriculture.

Besides the general reduction in employment in rural areas, the recession of farming activities, associated with some sparse and discontinuous processes of its modernization and land parceling, led to the declining share of the employment in this field. Thus, the number of employed people in villages reduced substantially from about 936,100 people in 2000 to about 616,700 people in 2011 (-34%), while the number of people employed in agriculture decreased from 713,300 to 304,100 people. [2]

Under these conditions, a double reduction (-57, 4%) of workers employed in agriculture corresponds with the reduction of about one third (34%) of the employed population in rural areas. The substantial reduction in agricultural employment was mainly driven by a lower agricultural productivity, which resulted in lower revenues, a phenomenon that forced a part of people to shift to other fields

of activity. Because of the great reduction of employment in agriculture, in 2000-2011 there was observed an increase in the number of people employed in construction (+23,700 people or a 3.5-fold increase), in trade (+25,600 people or 74%), industry (14,800 people or 36.8%), public administration, education, health and social care (21,700 people or 20.6%).

Table 8. Evolution of the employed population by economic activity in rural areas of the Republic of Moldova

Sphere of activity	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	thousands of people	Share, %	thousands of people	Share, %	thousands of people	share,%	thousands of people	Share, %	thousands of people	share,%	thousands of people	share,%
The total number of employed population	696.4	100	698.6	100	696.4	100	698.6	100	605.0	100	616.7	100
of which:												
Agriculture, hunting economy, forestry and fishing	403.2	58.0	381.4	54.6	403.2	58.0	381.4	54.6	295.8	48.9	304.1	49.3
Industry	57.6	8.0	58.0	8.3	57.6	8.0	58.0	8.3	54.8	9.06	57.9	9.4
Construction	24.2	3.0	33.5	4.8	24.2	3.0	33.5	4.8	31.8	5.26	30.2	4.9
Wholesale and retail	49.2	7.0	55.9	8.0	49.2	7.0	55.9	8.0	58.2	9.62	60.9	9.9
Transport and communications	19.3	3.0	22.4	3.2	19.3	3.0	22.4	3.2	19.3	3.19	19.3	3.1
Public administration, education, health and social protection	127.5	18.0	126.4	18.1	127.5	18.0	126.4	8.1	126.6	20.9	124.8	20.2
Other types of activity	18.4	3.0	21.0	3.0	18.4	3.0	21.0	3.0	18.5	3.07	19.5	3.2

The source: Developed by the author based on the NSB data, Moldova's population by age and sex, on the territorial basis, January 1, 2012, p.6

Unfavourable dynamics of the number of people employed in agriculture and other fields in rural regions in 2000-2011 led to major structural changes in employment. If in 2000 training in agriculture was about 76.2% and about 11.3% of the budgetary rural employment, in 2011 the population engaged in agriculture was about 49.3% and the employment in public administration, education, health and social care - 20.2%. Therefore, the recession of agricultural activities in 2000-2011 let a large number of people move to other fields of activity, so that the share reduction of employment in this activity was -26.9%, while the assimilation of a part of people with the agricultural background by budgetary activities increased the share of employment in these activities by about 8.9%.

The structure of the rural employment by economic activities shows increases in all activities (except agriculture) in 2011 compared to 2000. Therefore, there is a tendency to standardize employment fields in rural areas. Employment in public administration, health, social care and education (8.9%) endured the largest structural changes, as well as trade (+6.2%), industry (+5.1%) and construction (+3.9%). Under these conditions the diversification of employment by economic activity may boost the rural economy, which can cause a further increase in the number of people employed in this area. [2]

The disintegration of the rural employment by economic activity and sex reveals insignificant differences observed in the activities traditionally considered female or male. When choosing a profession, women

from rural areas are mainly oriented towards areas considered traditionally female, such as public administration, health, social care, education (14.7% of the employment in rural areas) and trade (5.8 % of the total employment), where the female employment shares were higher than male. The fact that men dominate in better paid activities (construction, transport and telecommunications) is a distinctive feature of the rural employment by economic activities. At the same time, it is worrying that in some activities requiring great physical effort, such as agriculture and industry, the share of employed women is quite high. Unfortunately, gender was ignored in policies and development programs of areas of economic activity – the fact which often places women in more difficult situations than men, causing the retirement of the former immediately after they reached the retirement age and, respectively, the loss of additional sources of existence.

CONCLUSIONS

The study of employment peculiarities in rural areas of the Republic of Moldova states quite a deplorable situation in the volume and structure of employment by gender, age, fields of activity, employment status, etc. Among the most important features of the employment evolution in recent years in rural areas are the following:

- ✓ poor conditions in rural areas determined the decrease of the employment against the background of the growth of both the unemployed and inactive population;
- ✓ part-time and informal employment are increasingly widespread in the new economic conditions;
- ✓ the absence of viable mechanisms of the market economy in agriculture led to a significant increase in the self-employment rate and the spread of some natural elements in the rural economy;
- ✓ people employed in their own additional households practice so-called "survival" farming that can not ensure a decent living, and their activity is mainly directed towards their own consumption, at the same time these

people easily move from the category of active workers to the category of inactive ones;

✓ rural population is the largest, is the largest training base labor is the reserve fund of labor resources;

✓ national policies aimed at the development of rural areas are not directly oriented and do not directly include human resources from rural areas;

The diversification of the rural employment structure in order to ensure more efficient use of human capital in rural areas and to diminish the role of productive agricultural activities in all economic activities in the countryside and to reduce the intensity of labour flows is possible by:

- developing and implementing sustainable mechanisms to support farmers in order to transform the agricultural activity from the category of a "survival" farming in a modern competitive and profitable economic sector that can cope with the demands of the market economy;
- promoting the development of business enterprises in the service sector, processing activities, non-traditional and non-agricultural activities including rural tourism which would help to improve profession structure in rural communities;
- making more consistent efforts in terms of the revival of crafts specific to a given locality, which would make it possible to employ a certain part of the population able to work;
- promoting social entrepreneurship; stimulating rural economic diversification in areas other than agricultural.

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