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## **SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE POPULATION IN RURAL AREAS OF MONTENEGRO**

### **SUMMARY**

Recognizing the specificity of life, status and importance of the role of women in rural areas, the European Parliament in 2008 adopted a Resolution on women position in the countryside, where it is stated that many women in rural areas are not registered in the labor market and are not designated as unemployed. The question of the status of women in rural areas is one of the most important in the United Nations (UN) Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, because of the special status and role of women in the countryside.

According to the Census of population in Montenegro carried out in 2011, female population comprises about 50.6% of the total population in Montenegro. The average age of women was 38.4. Women have less favorable educational structure, which disables and slows down their employment. Women make only a third of employees in the agricultural sector, and almost half of them is employed in service.

Considering the importance of agriculture in rural areas, but also the fact that engaging in agriculture is an important base for existence of significant number of women, it is necessary to improve their agricultural employability.

Paper presents the analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of women in rural areas of Montenegro. Depopulation and the aging of the village are the main trends in the population development in Montenegro. Young women are mostly unwilling to stay in rural communities or to engage in agriculture on family farms.

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the importance of the female population in Montenegro. Data from 60 family farms were obtained through survey, and in drafting of the paper were also used particular statistical methods.

**Keywords:** family farm, rural areas, female population

### **INTRODUCTION**

The family has always represented the backbone of Montenegrin society. Historically, the development of the family in Montenegro shows that it has had a

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Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Agricultural Symposium "AGROSYM 2014".

Notes: The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest. Authorship Form signed online.

very distinctive patriarchal family style, which has remained to this day. The essence of Montenegrin patriarchal family was consisted of the subordination of women and unresolved marital status and the principle of monogamy. The husband is the master, the head of the family, but he is responsible to defend and protect his wife and children with all available means and as well to provide them food. Main woman's task was to bear children, especially sons („the happiness"), and to take care of their raising, upbringing and education. By their nature, women were „cooperative biological centre, around who the primeval and very closely related families were gathered and formed“(Vujačić, 1973).

Montenegrin villages still have remains of classical Montenegrin patriarchal family. This means that women are physically bounded to her husband's house, to the farm of her husband's close and distant blood relatives, to the way of thinking, to the attitudes and mentality of her husband's relatives. Woman is still occasionally requested as "a workforce" or as "an economic or reproductive unit" to bear children, especially sons ("the happiness") (Vujačić, 1973). Understanding of the relationship between the genders has still remained enough patriarchal in contemporary Montenegrin rural family, especially in terms of women's indicating a relatively high-profile of men in the case of „patriarchal etiquette".

All the above affected that most of the girls and young women are not ready to remain in rural communities nor to be engaged in agriculture on family farms. This is indicated by the fact that women are accounted for 39.6 % of the total labour force in agricultural family holdings, and 23.7 % of these women are at the age of 65 or more. There is a considerably smaller engagement of young people and young women (up to the age of 34) and it is 17% (Agricultural Census, 2011). On the other hand, there was a change in the gender structure and in the direction of increasing the proportion of women in the population. In 2011, Montenegro had 620,029 citizens of whom 313,793 or 50.6 % were women. A bigger number of women than of men is quite common in most countries of the world and the result is a lower mortality rate of women in relation to the mortality of men. In 1971, the average age of women in 1971 was 29.8, and 27.4 and men. But in 2011, the registered average age of women was 38.4 and men 36.

Historically speaking, Montenegro has a positive tradition in education of girls and women. This is indicated by the fact that in 1871/72, Montenegro had 38 schools with 2,000 students among whom there were 108 girls (Filipović 2003). First Girls' High School in Montenegro was established in 1869. It was a girl's institute established by the Empress Maria Aleksandrovna in Cetinje (Filipović, 2003). However, according to the census in 2011, Montenegro has 1,559 illiterate men and 6,590 illiterate women. Most of the illiterate women are at the age of 70 and over, are this number is ten times bigger than illiterate men. The average age of illiterate women is 66, and for the men the age is 44.

The paper has an aim to demonstrate the importance of the female population in rural areas of Montenegro

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This paper presents the analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of the female population in rural areas of Montenegro. Attention is focused on the engagement of women in agriculture, and their presence as the holders of the farms, as well as the level of women's education in rural areas. Survey was conducted on the 60 farms in municipalities of Bijelo Polje, Pljevlja and Kolašin. The data in the surveys were obtained through interviews performed with owners of family farms in the period from March to May 2014. Surveyed farms are of mixed type, which means that vegetable and animal productions are present. The average size of surveyed farms was 14.34 ha. The survey had 25 questions - open or closed type. Open questions gave respondents the opportunity to express their opinion freely regarding the position of the female population on farms. There were five open questions from total 25. The problems that have arisen in the implementation of the survey were primarily related in what purpose the obtained information would be used. Statistical methods (tabular views, percentage calculation and graphical representation) were used in the survey. Also, we used the analytic and synthetic methods, the method of research at the table and method of comparison.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Montenegro has experienced significant demographic changes. The best illustration of the changes can be seen in comparison to the demographic structure of the population by gender and age categories in the period from 1971 to 2001. In 1971, the population up to the age of 20 was accounted for 42.8% of the total population, but in 2011 it is only accounted for 26.3%. Also, the participation of persons older than 65 increased in 2011 and it is 12.85%, while in 1971, they were accounted for 7.6%.

Basic indicators of the labour market show significant unfavourable status of women in relation to men. Women's participation is significantly less in the labour force than men's. In unfavourable market conditions, women are more easily discouraged and they cease to look for work and thus they are transferred to inactive persons. According to the European Union standards among unemployed women, 77% of them are long-term unemployed (waiting for the work more than a year), while 67% are unemployed for a long time (longer than two years), (Survey on labour force, 2012). The employment rate among women is highest in Denmark, where 71% of women are employed. This is followed by Sweden, where the comparable figure is 70%, the Netherlands (66%), Finland (66%), and the UK (62%), (Pirinc, V., 2014.). Among employed women, there is very low proportion of self-employment. According to the MONSTAT from 2011, women own only 9.6 % of active business entities (MONSTAT, 2011a). Their share declines significantly with the size of the companies, and they make only 2.4% of all owners of large enterprises (MONSTAT, 2011b).

In Montenegro, employment of women in agriculture is only a small part of their total employment (less than 4%), due to the fact that women make a third of the agricultural labour force. It is necessary to improve women's agricultural employment bearing in mind the importance of agriculture in the rural areas of

Montenegro, but also taking into account that the engagement in agriculture it is still an important basis for existence of a significant number of women. The main reasons for poor women's interest to remain in rural communities are: women are rarely property owners in rural areas, they are rarely in a position of the farm holders, i.e. less often they play the role in decision-making on agricultural production and the role of being responsible for the economic risks of the farm business. According to the Agricultural Census data, women comprise only 12.87% of family farms right holders. From a total number of 48,824 holders of family farms most (16,228) are in the age group 65 and over, with a participation of 33.24 % (Table 1). Holders of farms are mostly older men.

Table 1. Labour force on family farms according to the age and gender

Age	Total labour force		Farm holders		
	Members	Participation	Total	Male	Female
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98341</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>48824</b>	<b>42538</b>	<b>6286</b>
Up to 24 years	6717	6,80	344	307	37
Between 24 and 34	11340	11,50	2387	2228	159
Between 35 and 44	15675	15,90	5993	5540	453
Between 45 and 54	21562	21,90	11675	10769	906
Between 55 and 64	19849	20,20	12197	10657	1540
65 years and over	23198	23,60	16228	13037	3191

Source: Agricultural Census 2010, Structure of agricultural farms

Statistics data correspond to the results obtained on 60 farms in three municipalities (Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, and Kolašin). The results suggest that men in 86.67% of the cases appear as holders of farms, and women only in 13.33% (Joksimović, 2014). If we observe the seasonal employment of women in agricultural production, it can also be noted that the percentage of their engagement is significantly lower than in comparison to men (Table 2).

Table 2. Temporary and seasonal engagement of persons who are not members of the farm

	Total numbers of temporary and seasonal engagement of persons on the farms		Seasonal and temporary engaged persons			Contracted employees		
	Members	Participation %	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>17096</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>17092</b>	<b>14313</b>	<b>2779</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>
Family agricultural farms	14656	85,70	14656	11949	2707	-	-	-
Business entities	2440	14,30	2436	2364	72	4	4	-

Source: Agricultural Census 2010, Structure of agricultural farms

Total number of temporary and seasonally engaged persons in agricultural production is 17,096. On family farms, 85.73% of persons engaged of the total number were temporary and seasonally engaged. Regarding to the gender structure in seasonal and temporary persons engagement, participation of women is 16.26%, while men make the majority or 83.74%. However, according to the Census from 2003 in Croatia, the situation was quite different. In fact, women are accounted for 39.28% of the total number of seasonal workers on farms (60,139). Analysis of the labour force on farms in Montenegro shows that over 60% of total number of working-age members of the agricultural farms are men or 59405 people. Of the total number of working-age women on family farms, the largest participation have women over the age of 65 or 23.60%. (Chart 1).

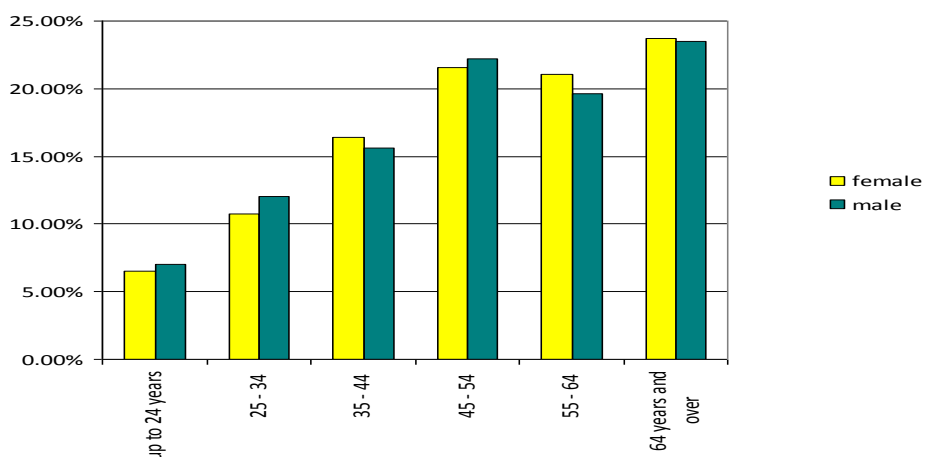


Chart 1. Labour force on family agricultural farms according to the age and gender

If we observe the labour force on family farms by education and gender, we can realize that from total number of 1995 farm holders, without education are 1155 males or 57.89 %. The data shows that the increasing level of education reduces the participation of female holders of farms. Thus, for example from total number of 16195 farm holders with 4 years of other secondary schools is 92.36 % of men and only 7.64 % of women (Table 3).

It is interesting to mention that there are no recorded Masters and Doctors of Philosophy in agriculture and other sciences as a member of the family farms. Unfavourable educational structure creates a low potential for successful economic participation of women and significantly reduces their employability. In order to improve the position of women in rural areas of Montenegro, it is necessary to work constantly on their education and to raise awareness about the importance of their role in rural areas.

Also, it is necessary to continue to improve and to pay attention on the celebration of October 15 - Day of Rural Women

Table 3 Labour force on family farms according to the education and gender

Level of education	Total labour force on the farm		Farm holders		
	Members	Participation %	Total	Male	Female
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>98341</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>48824</b>	<b>42538</b>	<b>6286</b>
No education	3832	3,9	1995	1155	840
Unfinished elementary education	5719	5,8	2755	1930	825
Elementary education	27470	27,9	12997	10556	2441
3 years of Agricultural secondary school	1567	1,6	828	772	56
3 years of some other secondary school	15518	15,8	8064	7559	505
4 years of Agricultural secondary school	2111	2,1	1016	946	70
4 of some other secondary schools	33180	33,7	16195	14959	1236
High or higher agricultural education	1446	1,5	796	745	51
Other high or higher school	7498	7,6	4178	3916	262
Master and PhD in the science of Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-
Master and PhD in other scientific fields	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Agricultural Census 2010, Structure of agricultural farms

## CONCLUSIONS

Demographic depopulation and aging of the village represents the main trends in the development of the Montenegrin population. Participation of persons older than 65 years is present, which is 23.58% of the total workforce, while the participation of persons up to the age of 24 is 6.83% in the total number of workforce.

On the agricultural family farms, women are accounted for 39.6%, in total labour force, where 23.7% are at the age of 65 or more. There is a significantly lower engagement of young people and young women (up to the age of 34) and it is accounted for 17%. The main reasons for low interest of women to remain in rural communities lie in the fact that women rarely own property, as well as their

very low participation in decision-making on agricultural production on the farm. As holders of family farms women appear only in 12.87% of cases, and with increasing levels of education, number of women holding farms is reducing. Survey results in three municipalities (Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje and Kolašin) indicate that men are farm holders in 86.6% of cases, while women are accounted for 13.33%. It should also be noted that women with only 16.26% are present in seasonal jobs on farms, and men in 83.74%. In order to improve the position of women in rural areas of Montenegro, it is necessary to work constantly on their education and to raise awareness about the importance of their role in rural areas.

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