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## **CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION AND DEAGRARIZATION IN RURAL AREAS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

Since the existence of villages and towns, villagers tried to leave their villages and move to town. The rural emigration, i.e. transition of the surplus of rural population to the cities, was mostly conditioned by the scarce and insufficient resources in the villages and the technical level of changes in the production process.

In the Republic of Macedonia, the preindustrial urbanization also took place, especially because it was intensified with rural emigration. This relocation of the villagers in Macedonia was not caused only by the poor conditions of life and work in the village, where there were no elementary living conditions and necessary institutions and where the spirit of poverty and hopelessness was dominant, but also there was violence demonstrated by some formal or informal groups in the villages. At the end of the Ottoman rule, and during the rule of the Balkan countries after the partition of Macedonia, the rural population was exposed to a range of unlawful and political torture more than the urban population. This absence of basic security for the dignity of the people was a significant reason for emigration of the peasants to the cities.

The transfer of rural population to the cities in the era of rapid industrialization at the same time represents a transition from traditional and rural civilization to industrial, technical and urban civilization. These migrations of peasants are bound to the term rural exodus.

The departure of the rural and the agricultural population in the city and in non-agricultural activities is one of the most impressive and most complex phenomena. This process of transformation of the social and economic structure in modern conditions appears to be the necessary accompanying manifestation of the processes of industrialization and urbanization.

The aim of this research is to determine the factors of migration and deagrarization and their influence to the overall development. For that purpose, we used the following methods: the inductive-deductive method, then the method

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of averages and indexes, the comparative method, and at the end, archive and literature sources.

**Keywords:** Migration, deagrarization, rural exodus, rural population.

## INTRODUCTION

The deteriorating conditions in the villages are threatening to ravage the Macedonian social, economic and cultural society, because the conditions in the cities constantly deteriorate under the impact of migration. To change the lack of prospects that reigns between the youth and the general population in the country, legislators must introduce various law stimulations measures to prevent the huge increase in the cities. It is necessary to improve the current situation in the villages, so it would encourage the resettlement of the oversized urban population from the cities in the villages.

The transfer of rural population in the cities in the era of rapid industrialization at the same time represents a transition from traditional and rural to industrial, technical and urban civilization. These migrations of the peasantry are usually bond to the term exodus, which means emigration of nations, and indicates a mass movement for a long period of time. This phenomenon, due to its massiveness, causes series of positive and negative economic, social and political implications.

The settlement of the rural and agriculture population in the cities and in non-agricultural activities is one of the most impressive and most complicated social phenomena. This process of transformation of the social and economic structure in modern conditions appears to be the necessary accompanying manifestation of the processes of industrialization and urbanization. The market economy and industrialization caused the sudden emergence of various forms of stratification of the peasantry and the agrarian structure.

According to this, the objective of this research is to detect the causes and consequences of migration and deagrarization in rural areas in the Republic of Macedonia for the past 50 years.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main source of data in our study is the Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia through statistical yearbooks from specific years, statistical surveys for agriculture, as well as data from the Institute for Political Research, and the Institute of Economics. We used many statistical surveys and statistical yearbooks for the past fifty years, such as regular censuses of population and property of agricultural holdings, etc.

Because of the comparability of the phenomena in the development processes, we used numerous publications by well-known authors, which are given in the list of references. During the period of the study, we used mainly the survey, some archive sources, then literature sources, the inductive-deductive method, the method of indexes, the comparative method, averages, and more. For better perspective, the data is arranged in tables.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Factors of migration and deagrarization

The migration of people from rural areas to the cities, anywhere in the world, and particularly in the so-called undeveloped or "developing countries" are intertwined with a huge network of factors and forces of action. One group of these factors affects on the mobility of the population and creates an ambient framework, among the other things and to the rural migration and deagrarization. On the one hand, they represent the social and cultural changes that generate the movement of the population and they appear to be an instrument of the development of the cities, and on the other hand, they are intertwined with variety of circumstances that motivate people as individuals and their families to leave the village and agriculture and seek a different life in the cities.

For the mobility of the population, in the sociological and demographic literature there are several explanations for the factors of migration of the rural population and its deagrarization. They are classified in a few groups, such as economic, technical, psychological, sociological and institutional (Shanin, 2007).

It all comes down to the separation of the factors that affect the immigration side of the village and the agriculture and the emigration factors acting on the side of the city and non-farm activities. The explanation of the mechanism, according to which these factors influence, is usually done with the so-called push-pull concept, or with the influence of repulsive (repulsion) and attractive (attraction) factors. The repulsive factors are actually the factors of emigration areas - the village and agriculture, which simply "chase the peasant" from the village and agriculture. Besides the previously mentioned general factors that affect the overall mobility of the population, we will mention: insecurity in the production, prices and marketing of agricultural production, difficult working conditions, low labour productivity, large agrarian population, small dispersion of the industry in rural areas, unfavourable structure of the land possession, i.e. the chopped possession of the land, series of factors of social or psychological nature, etc. (FAO, 2010).

This group of factors often includes factors related to the village as a local community that provides a general framework and environment of living, such as: low level of infrastructural development and equipment (lighting, water, paved road), and also the absence of the basic institutions in the village (school, health center, post office, shop, cafeteria, companies for purchase of agricultural products, etc.).

The attractive factors are actually factors of immigration or factors of the city and non-agricultural activities, which moves the rural and agricultural population. In the city and non-agricultural sectors, the peasants are attracted by the higher and more reliable salaries, better working conditions, more favourable social status, opportunities for better education for their children, opportunities for professional advance etc.

In fact, the separation of the repulsive and attractive factors of migration and deagrarization are just two sides of the same process, and they are mutually complemented.

### **Permanent rural-urban migrations**

In the process of migration, it needs to be distinguished the term rural exodus (fast comprehensive and permanent transfer of the population), which determines a string of consequences, than the professional separation of farmers from agriculture to other occupations - deagrarization, and at the end, the gradual permanent migrations (Puljuz, 2007). The farmer may leave the agriculture as his profession, so he can perform another job, but still staying in the village. But very often, the fact that someone is leaving the agriculture and is looking for another profession, is not a simple change, but real permanent leaving from the village and the agriculture.

The process of reduction of the rural population is also present in the Republic of Macedonia. From 68.7% in 1953, its participation decreased to 44.8% in 1981 and 40.2% in 2002. For the Republic of Macedonia, the rural exodus happened between 1960 and 1980 when the extensive development of the industry absorbed large contingents of mainly unskilled labour from rural areas (Jakimovski et al, 2000). In the Republic of Macedonia, the rural population notes not only relative reduction (compared to the total), but also its absolute reduction. From 869,000 peasants in 1953, it drops to 799,756 in 2002, which represents an absolute reduction of the rural population in this period by 11%. But this reduction leads to consequences that are not only numerical.

The rural-urban migrations will not only continue to reduce the already small rural society, but the exodus simply destroys its relations and structures, its institutions and culture. The rural-urban migration was the most dominant form of spatial mobility of the population in the Republic of Macedonia. The data in Table 1 shows how turbulent and dramatic these migrations were.

Table 1. Scope and dynamics of migration from villages to cities in the Republic of Macedonia

Indicator	1953-1961	1961-1971	1971-1981	1981-2002
Migration balance of the rural population	-200,466	-175,870	-94,247	-80,224
Migration balance in favour of the cities	-55,236	-139,826	-95,067	-82,120
Annual average in favour of the cities	(1946-1952) + 3,914	+ 13,984	+ 9,425	+ 8,155

Source: Statistical Yearbooks of the Republic of Macedonia for these years

The migrations have enabled the intensification of the processes of urbanization, they changed the character of the urban settlements, and they made appropriate changes in the demographic and socio-economic structure of the population. This process is particularly intense in the period from 1961 to 1971

when all the natural population growth from the villages left (157,029 inhabitants), plus 8,841 residents. In the period 1971-1981, out of 124,610 inhabitants as natural population growth of the rural population, 94,247 people have left the village, and some of them (30,363 inhabitants) remained in the countryside as a result of the improved living and working conditions in the village and agriculture, but also due to difficult conditions for employment in the cities.

The data on the larger migration balance of the rural population, the one that migrated in favour of the cities, shows that certain contingent of the rural populations migrated out of the country and in other republics of Yugoslavia and abroad.

### **Transfer from agricultural to non-agricultural population**

Constant migration from rural areas – to city, abroad- has contributed towards significant reduction of the rural population and increase in the city population. The problem of professional mobility of the population, i.e. deagrarization, is happening with significant tempo. The constant leaving of agriculture as a profession and as an activity is connected with the dynamic development and with the advancement of the industry as a moving force that drives not only its own development, but the development of other industry branches, too (Kartalov, 1996). The transfer of the working force is not only a number indicator, but it is an indicator of the economic structure of the population, of the place and role of the agriculture in the economic development, of the changed roles of the agricultural family, social categories and the groups constituted in an village, etc. The data in Table 2 are the illustration of this process.

Table 2. Agricultural population according to the place of living

Total	Agricultural population				
	1953	1961	1971	1981	2002
	818,467	721,550	657,138	392,293	250,000
City	83,673	74,826	75,846	41,154	33,000
Village	764,830	646,724	581,292	351,129	217,000
Participation of agricultural in total population					
Total	62.7	51.3	39.9	21.7	12.0
City	20.8	13.8	9.4	3.9	1.6
Village	82.0	74.9	68.9	41.0	10.4

Source: Statistical yearbooks of the Republic of Macedonia for these years

In the period 1953 - 2002, there is an evident intensive process of deagrarization of the population that can be analyzed through absolute and relative decrease in the agrarian population. The rate of natural increase at the agricultural population in this period decreases from 20.4% (at 1000 persons, 20.4 children are born) in 1961 to 11% (at 1000 persons, 11 children are born) in 2002, having the main reason the decrease of the fertility ability of the agricultural population.

Table 3. Absolute transfer of the agricultural population

Period	Natural increase of the agricultural population	Absolute decrease of the agricultural population	Total transfer of the agricultural population	Average annual	Index of deagrarization Increase = 100
1961-1971	139,000	-64,412	203,412	20,341	146.3
1971-1981	75,889	-264,845	340,734	34,073	449.0
1981-2002	60,000	-150,000	210,000	10,500	350.0
Total	274,889	-479,257	754,146	18,854	274.3

Source: Macedonian academy of sciences and arts

As we can see in Table 3, if, to this number of 754,146 deagrarized people for this 40 years, we add those 50,000 working abroad, and have the origin from the rural settlements, than the total volume of the population deagrarization will be around 804,146 persons, or, around 20,104 per year, in average. In other words, the whole natural increase of the agricultural population has migrated, plus around 480,000 habitants, as an absolute decrease of agricultural population.

### **Consequences of the migration and deagrarization**

The migrations and the deagrarization are a positive and natural process in the development of all contemporary societies. Its positive impact can be noticed by reducing the agrarian density of population, decreasing the demand, and by that, the price of the land as a factor and a precondition in the agricultural production, releasing space for penetration of the processes of modernization and industrialization of the agricultural production, increasing its labour productivity, and enabling higher income and higher living standard of agricultural population, creating different opportunities for modernization and improvements in the life in villages. But, when this process is transformed to exodus, wider consequences are evident, both for the villages and for the cities (Murarcaliev, 1994).

The first consequence from this development of the rural-urban migrations everywhere in the world led to a huge increase of the cities, which became enlarged much more because of the mechanical inflow of people from rural areas, rather than their natural increase. In Macedonia, this increase was especially dynamic for Skopje and for the rest of bigger cities. The enlargement of the cities had their own urban, economic, social and cultural consequences. The migrations towards cities created a network of social problems. Those problems are connected with the increase of criminal and delinquency, intergroup contacts, health – hygienic conditions, employment, traffic, living conditions, etc. The migration from villages to cities contributed to increased living standard. Aspirations for higher living standard, as a motive for migrations, sometimes are expressed as a wish toward more quality education, better work, more comfortable housing, higher income, higher social status, etc. The younger generations are the first who leave the villages in a large scale. It makes some distractions in the age group of the population and contributes to appearance of

certain demographic and social consequences. The rural population becomes older, and their vital characteristics, especially the decreasing of the natality are one of the manifestations of this process. In the society with predominantly elderly people, with no weddings and baptisms, the mentality is being changed in a huge manner, as well as the levels of optimism, loneliness and entrepreneurship (Jakimovski, 2004). The homogamy of the misbalance between genders causes certain social-sociological consequences. Men (male youth) are those who leave in the first migration waves. That is the reason why in certain rural areas a misbalance in the gender structure is recognized, through higher relative women participation. Recently, the situation has been changed, having the women leaving faster and in greater number (using the marriage) and because they can easily find a job in the tertiary sectors (Perspectives of women in rural areas, 2012). It is well known that the youth dominantly participates in the intensive rural exodus, especially in the period of the biological and sociological maturity (after finishing the high school, the faculty, i.e. jobs which are mainly non-agricultural occupation). This contributes to the situation where the non-agricultural and elderly people are mainly engaged in the individual farms, which contributes to the problems in social reproduction of these farms. Only few farms can assure a farmer to heritage the family farm, and the rest of the farms will be liquidated as productive-economic and socio-demographic units in the village, and probably be bought by non-agricultural owners of other professions and qualifications. In the Republic of Macedonia at 2002 the picture was as following: 20% of the surveyed households keep a younger person staying on the land, 70% educated their youth and 30% from the households were already without any youth population. These unfavourable trends were more expressed at farms in the hilly areas.

## CONCLUSIONS

The improvement of the transport routes, which was done in the beginning of the twentieth century, was the first change that will become an instrument of the rural-urban migrations. The modern development of the traffic, production and import of motor vehicles, maintenance of the roads, railways, and air transport, have contributed that people can easily outgrow the spatial distances. The system of education in many societies is at a low level, and that is the second factor that helped the path of the extensive internal migrations. Villagers often migrate because of the desire for high quality education. The labour legislation and measures of the welfare state in many parts of Macedonia were a factor for migration. These benefits of the welfare state are a lot more used by the urban workers than the farmers.

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