

Section 3. Sociology

Darina Çoni (Kacollja)
Lecturer at the Faculty of Education,
'Aleksandër Xhuvani' University, Albania

THE CAUSES OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN ALBANIA AND ITS SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Abstract. Agriculture in Albania is one of the most backward sectors. This study, which was based on interviews with 12 residents in rural areas engaged in agriculture, presents some of the causes that have brought up this backlog. One of the main causes, is the emigration of Albanians to more developed countries. This means that people's interest in agriculture is small. Many residents from rural areas are more interested in working in the fields for a few months during the agricultural season than working on their own land. The fact that the income of work during these 3 months is much higher than the income they earn by working on their land. One other cause is the abusive prices by the most influential traders in the industry which deals with collecting these agricultural products. Being a market where the term 'monopoly' is vastly pronounced has brought up the setting of fixed prices for collecting agricultural products. In this way, the influential traders involved in the collection of these products, earn much more than those who plant these agricultural products. The lack of a functional state, which does not stop price setting by promoting the free market, and the non-subsidization of these products, make this sector unprofitable. This causes a decrease of interest to invest in this sector and the people who take part in the sector will have economic difficulties for their families.

Key words: Albania, agriculture, poverty, emigration, subsidy.

Introduction

Albania is located in the southwestern part of the peninsula Balkan¹. This study is based on the interview of 12 residents, in rural areas, which are engaged in agriculture. After 1990 emigration started one of the biggest problems, which continues even today, mass emigration of the population. Due to poverty, many Albanians take

¹ DAVID S. BREW: *Geomorphology of the Albanian Adriatic Coast*, Taylor & Francis, Ltd, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40573827>

the path of emigration, to ensure a better life. Mass emigration, especially of young people, has returned strongly after the pandemic. Albanians are leaving, risking their lives just like in a war¹. Mass emigration brought a decrease in the labor strength, especially in agriculture, which is one of the most difficult fields, where incomes are also lower. Agriculture is one of the fields with less income, for some reasons the lack of subsidies, even those subsidies, which are not given to farmers, but a good part given to collectors. Since the lands are very fragmented, due to the agrarian reform which took place after 1991, it is very difficult for the tillage to be done with machinery and the costs to be low.

2. Methodology

This study used qualitative methodology. For this study 12 interviews were conducted with people involved in agriculture. Participants were chosen randomly within this frame. The questions were open. Open questions were used in order to give the interviewee, the opportunity to describe, new information about the problem, that agriculture encounters. The interviews last about 30 minutes.

3. Result

Agriculture is one of the sectors, which is less profitable and less interesting for young people. Labor shortage was felt more in the agriculture sector. This lack is emphasized even during the interviews.

Questions if you are missing the workforce. A man about 55 years old emphasizes that it is difficult to find a worker when are the jobs largest in agriculture. Not only, that the payment is small but very young people or people of working age emigrate. And another resident in rural areas he emphasizes that even children have emigrated to us that they had no perspective to work their land. Economic income they are much bigger in emigration.

Question why agriculture is not very profitable. A person about 60 years old which deals with agriculture said:

“Being that the surface of the earth it is small and damaged it is difficult that works with low-cost machinery is impossible”.

While another person emphasizes: Being than the amount of production to get from this earth's surface is small and the price cannot be too low. Competition there are many of these products bigger. But, the main reason is the price setting from bigger collectors, making the market a monopoly.

A man about 55 years old that works with agriculture emphasizes, among other things:

With all the difficulties that we have until we take agricultural products in market. The prices that we sell them at are very low and make us not to have much interest

¹ Revista Monitor, Alarmi i emigracionit! Lufta e heshtur e Shqipërisë 28.10.2022//Monitor Magazine, Immigration Alert! Albania's silent war 28.10.2022.

in dealing with this sector. To produce agricultural products for family consumption. While another emphasizes: it is difficult to sell agricultural products when prices are defined by collectors and the state does not act.

Discussion:

This study shows that agriculture it is one of the most challenging fields in Albania. People who work in this sector emphasize that it is very difficult to survive. This study shows that the lack of labor force you come from emigration. Also the lack of subsidies make it impossible for agricultural products to compete with imported ones.

References

1. Revista Monitor, Alarmi i emigracionit! Lufta e heshtur e Shqipërisë 28.10.2022 //Monitor Magazine, Immigration Alert! Albania's silent war 28.10.2022.
2. DAVID S. BREW: Geomorphology of the Albanian Adriatic Coast, Taylor & Francis, Ltd, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40573827>