

Andrzej Rosner

The rural labour market in Poland today and tomorrow

Introduction

Rural areas which cover approximately 93% of Poland's territory are inhabited by 38% of the population. Numerically the rural population has not undergone significant change for many years. This was the result of migration from countryside to towns, which all in all balanced the natural growth (although due to its selectivity brought about profound changes in the demographic structure of the countryside). This was a consequence of the economic policy in force until the beginning of the 1990s, which preserved the dominant function of agriculture in the rural economy while supporting the development of non-agricultural sectors in towns. As a result, 38% of Poland's population live in the countryside, demographically a relatively elderly section of society, to a large extent 'drained' of its educated and socially active people during migration processes. While towards the end of the 1980s approximately 8% of the entire adult population were university educated, this was the case for approximately 2% of the adults in the countryside.

There is a considerable territorial differentiation in rural areas as regards population structure (from the demographic point of view, level of education etc.), agrarian (the share of agriculture in the private and state sector, the average area of family farms), settlement (the size of settlement units, buildings, level of development of local centres) etc. This differentiation is largely the result of separate historical destinies of specific regions in the country in the nineteenth century and frontier changes in the twentieth century.

At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, generally speaking, the Polish countryside could be distinguished by approximately 40% of the population who were not connected with family agriculture and 60% by the peasant population. Approximately 50% of the population made a living from agricul-

ture; the rest were for the most part functionally rural (employed in the service of rural infrastructure), commuters travelling to work in towns, people on disability and retirement pensions as well as several numerically smaller groups (trade, rural industry etc.). In Poland there were two agricultural sectors at that time: the state sector including under 20% of rural land and the private (family) sector putting approximately 80% of the land to use. The state sector generally covered areas which were joined to Poland after the Second World War; in many communes the proportion of this kind of land was higher than 50% of arable land. In the other regions the share of state agriculture was much lower and the majority were specialized farms (connected with a system of agricultural consultancy, qualified seed production, agricultural colleges etc.)

Peasant farms played a dominant role in agriculture and were run along relatively traditional lines, with features which were typical of family farms. Their average size was a little under 6 ha, and varied from one region to another. Farm labour resources were determined by family resources and by the possibilities of finding non-farm employment on the local labour market. Hired labour played a secondary role as regards the entire resources in peasant agriculture (approximately 1–2%, mainly used seasonally during the harvest or fruit-picking season etc.).

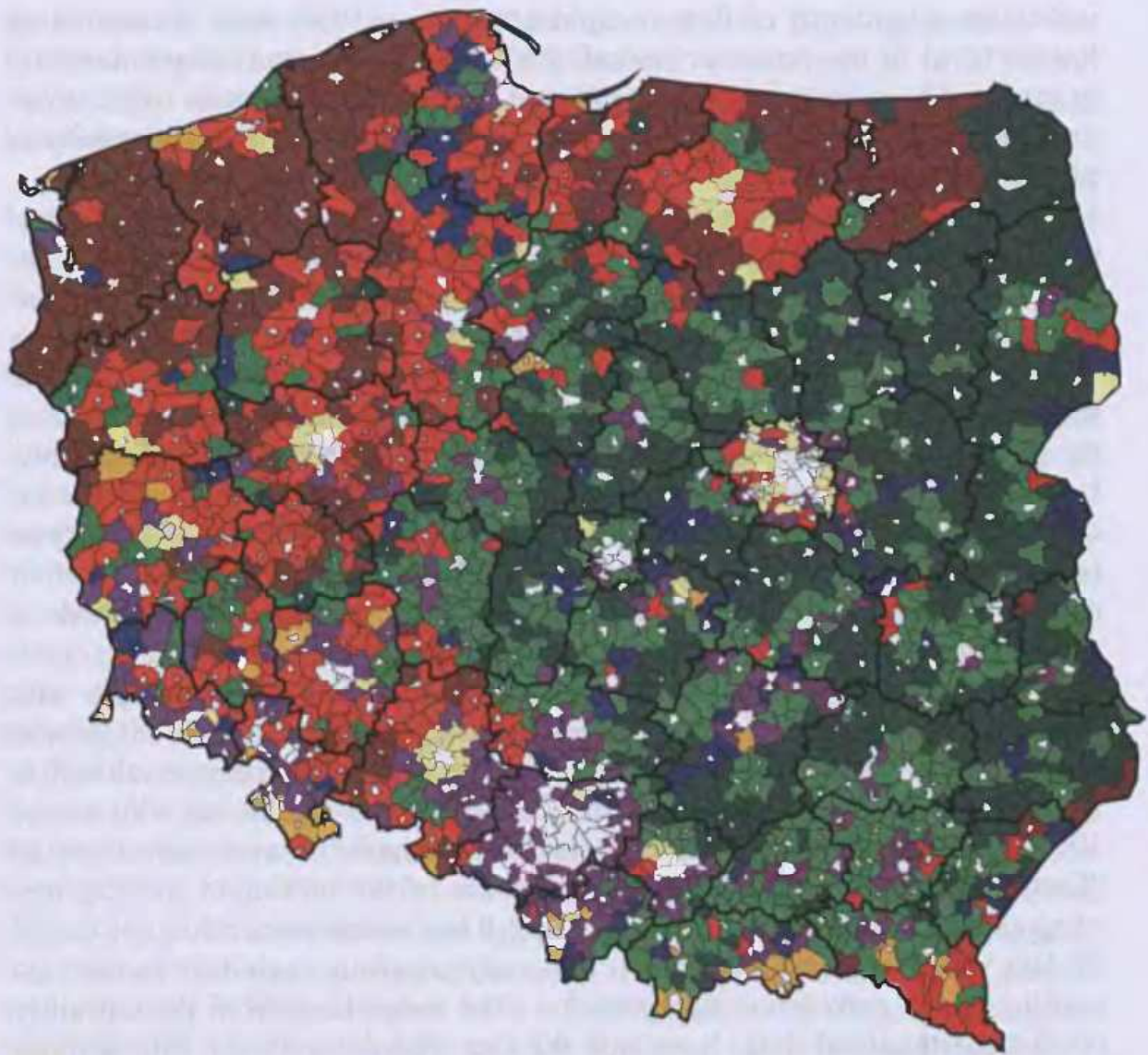
The functional differentiation of rural areas in Poland is shown on map 1. The map was prepared on the basis of results listed in the General Register in 1988, in other words it concerns the period immediately preceding the system change begun in 1989.

Changes in the 1990s

The nineties were a period of accelerated change in Poland's economy. These also affected rural areas and agriculture. Moreover, some of them were primarily the result of change in the economy in urban areas. This happened when due to employment rationalization in non-rural areas it is estimated that approximately 400,000 people who previously commuted to work in towns (peasants — workers) returned to farm work. Some unemployment which was concealed in the non-rural economy thus became unemployment concealed in peasant agriculture.

For present and future issues concerned with the socio-economic development of the countryside the changes taking place on a macro-economic level as well as structural changes within the rural system are of greatest significance.

The nineties saw a decisive termination of the period of the surplus of the large definitive workforce migrations from the countryside to towns. In the mid-1970s annual figures of migration from countryside to towns were in excess of 250,000, whereas in 1992 these figures were down to 86,000,



- Multifunctional communes, high share of trade and services
- Multifunctional communes, high share of tourism
- Multifunctional communes without a clear specialization
- Well developed functions related to industry
- Domination of agriculture on large farms
- Extremely monofunctional, agriculture on large farms
- Monofunctional, peasant agriculture
- Extremely monofunctional, peasant agriculture

Map 1. Typology of communes from the point of view of economic functional development

Source: The author's own elaboration based on results of the 1988 National Census. See also: map 10 in chapter 6 of the *Atlas demograficzny i społeczno-zawodowy obszarów wiejskich w Polsce* (Demographic and socio-professional atlas of rural areas in Poland) edited by Izaak Frenkel and Andrzej Rosner, IRWiR Polish Academy of Science and the Polish Demographic Society, Warsaw 1995

indicating a tendency of further rapid decrease in 1999 when it reached its lowest level in the post-war period: 2800 people who moved permanently to towns. There appeared an urgent need to look for directions of development of rural areas which would make use of rural (and local) possibilities of creating non-farm jobs.

An important change in the nineties was the reduction of the role of agriculture in providing sources of supporting the rural population. This concerns both the peasant and the non-peasant population. As far as the non-peasant population is concerned this is primarily connected with the restructurization of the old state sector in agriculture which resulted in the reduction in demand for hired labour jobs on large-scale farms. As far as the peasant population is concerned the problem is connected with the low income from farm work. Consequently, many farmers combining their income from farm work with extra so-called non-earned income (disability or retirement pensions, social security etc.), started treating the latter as their main source of income and that from farm work as extra. The growth in number of people entitled to benefits also had a certain influence.

The structural changes of the main sources of supporting people with their own incomes (excluding the cost of supporting others) in the period 1988–1996 are presented in table 1. This is based on the only reliable data from that period: materials from the 1988 National Census as well as the 1996 National Agricultural Register. In the latter a new definition of “farm” was applied (including the extension of the minimum surface area of plots considered as farms from 0.5 to 1.0 ha) which meant that a re-count of data was necessary. As a result the analysed group includes “farms” according to the convention accepted for 1988 and differs from the currently published statistical data. It reveals the fact that not only the role of farm work has diminished as regards providing sources of income but so has the role of non-farm work.

Table 1

People with their own source of income living on family farms
(according to the main source of income)

Main source of income	1988 7,363,000 = 100	1996 7,228,000 = 100
Farm work	41.8%	38.2%
Non-farm work	34.3%	24.4%
Benefits	23.9%	37.3%

A similar tendency of the diminishing role of work (both on and off the farm) as a source of income exists in relation to households (i.e. not specific people but entire peasant farms). Among rural families the number of

those stating that they support themselves mainly from agriculture has dropped (from 51 to 42%) and from non-farm work (from 30 to 27%) but the number of those who rely on benefits as their main source of income has risen (from 19 to 31%).

As far as the non-peasant rural population is concerned, the number of households doing hired work for a living has fallen in this period from 64 to 41%, that of the self-employed has risen from 3 to 5% and the number of those living on benefits from 33 to 54%.

A factor bringing about important changes in the countryside turned out to be the restructurization of the former state agricultural sector. Its consequences include (apart from the reduction of employment in large-scale agriculture mentioned earlier) the fact that new private farms (owned or leased) have appeared alongside the former state farms taking on various legal forms. Their functioning relies on (as before restructurization) hired labour, however their principles of functioning forced many processes rationalizing the scale and direction of production, utilizing property, employment etc. It is also important that part of former State Farm land has gone to peasant farms thereby enlarging their productive resources and improving the structure of peasant agriculture.

The average size of a peasant farm in the 1990s rose from just under 6 to 7 ha while considerable regional disproportions appeared. In areas with a high concentration of former state agriculture a significant growth of the average size of private farms was observed, the largest in north-western Poland (in some communes from approximately 10 to 17 ha). In the remaining regions the average size either rose very slightly or not at all and in south-eastern Poland, a region with a traditionally most fragmented agrarian structure, it became slightly smaller. Research has confirmed that a very disadvantageous phenomenon of parts of family farms has appeared in this region (which did not appear in previous decades).

Processes of structural change in agriculture in the nineties concerned the land and particularly production for the market. Farms had to switch over from functioning within a centrally planned to a market economy. As far as agriculture is concerned this change meant the end of the period of maximized production at whatever cost. It became necessary to learn how to act in cases of overproduction. This turned out to be a shock for many farmers: since the Second World War they had got used to the fact that all farm produce was highly valued on the market; they lived under the pressure of propaganda which may best be described by a slogan which was popular at the time: "each ear of corn is worth its weight in gold". As a result of the 1989 reforms it became clear that the cost of production and its quality have a decisive significance for the functioning of a farm. Farmers were faced with a situation which was totally new to them: it appeared that producing a product is not a problem but selling it is.

Sociological research carried out in 1992 showed that when highly abstract declarations were at stake, the peasants supported changes of the capitalist type of economy, based on private ownership. Meanwhile, most peasants could not come to terms with the fact that the state does not fix prices, does not guarantee the purchasing of products and does not guarantee profitability to everyone etc.

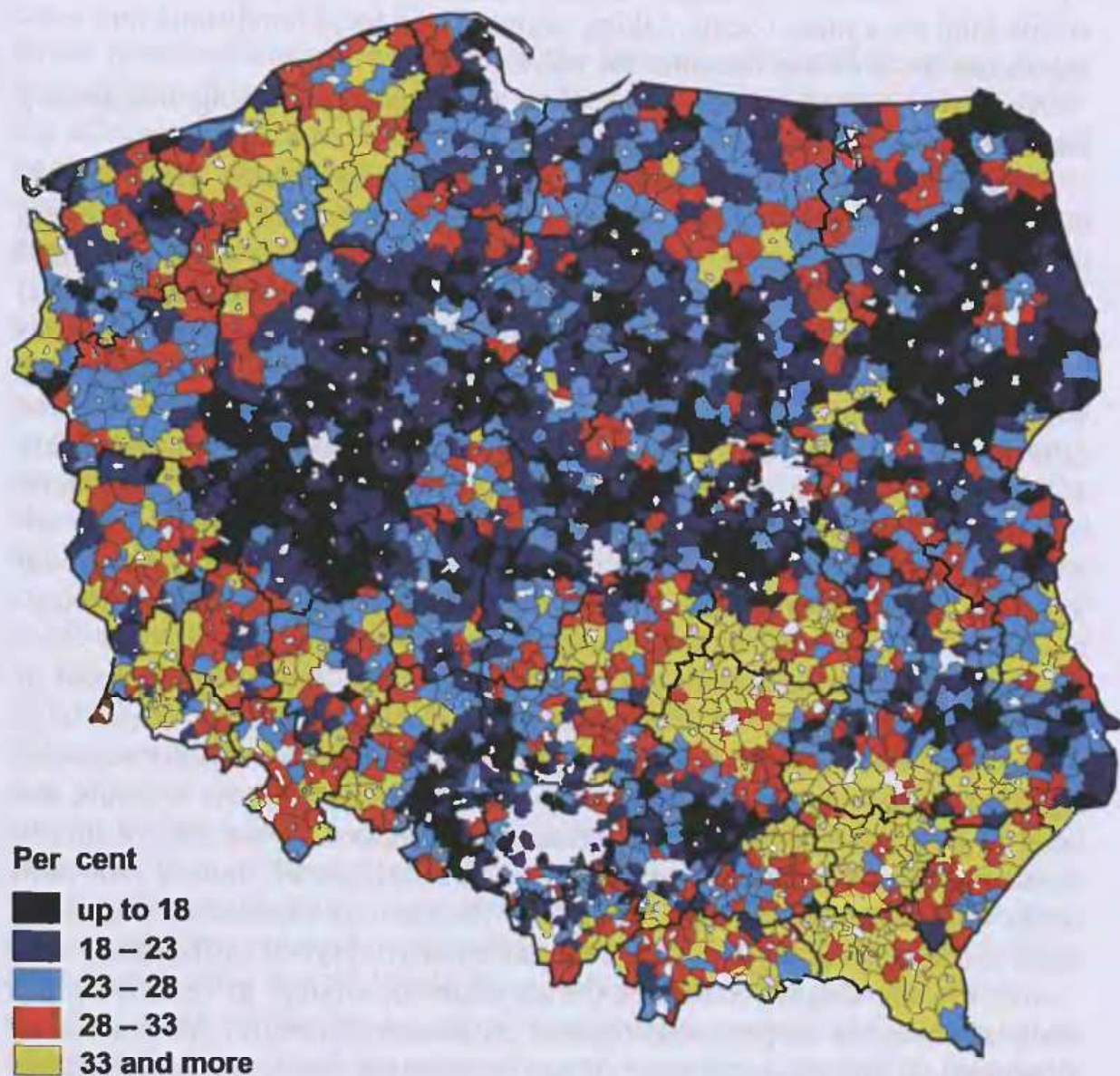
Farmers considered these changes as signs of discrimination. Such convictions were enhanced by the import of agricultural products competing on the market with home produce, the drop in local demand and making prices of agricultural production means more real, i.e. higher, as well as significant changes in credit policy (more expensive credit, restrictions regarding preferential conditions, abolition of remissions applied during the Polish People's Republic).

In these conditions there was an intensive process of concentration of market production on larger farms as far as scale of production is concerned, more modern, better equipped and with lower production costs. As a result, it is estimated that currently approximately 70–75% of market production in agriculture is concentrated on 25–30% of farms. However, the processes of concentration in agriculture should concurrently concern land, capital, work and production. In Poland these procedures must be described as a very non-uniform process. This is undoubtedly connected with the fact that they take place in a situation of profound imbalance on the basic production markets.

Land and manpower resources in the countryside

According to most experts, there is currently a considerable surplus of manpower and land in agriculture. The manpower surplus exists not only in agriculture but in the countryside in general. At the same time, there is insufficient capital in the countryside (and in agriculture).

The thesis about land surplus in agriculture is confirmed by the fact that some of the arable land is currently lying fallow, while on the market there is a surplus of supplies over demand as far as farm products are concerned. It is estimated that the current surplus of arable land is approximately 1.5 million ha, some of which should permanently be excluded from production (by extending forested areas) and some should be left as a future reserve for food production. The problem is, however, that surpluses of arable land (within the current rural structure) exist in regions where forestation needs are not very high due to the natural environment. The specificity of area variation of agrarian structures of peasant farms means that land surpluses exist in regions with a relatively favourable territorial structure; at the same time there is a lack of land in other regions for the improvement of this structure. Therefore, while it is possible to talk about a surplus of



Map 2. Rate of latent unemployment in peasant agriculture. Per cent

Source: The author's own elaboration based on the 1996 National Agricultural Register.

arable land on a macro scale, taking regional and local conditions into consideration the problem becomes far more complex.

No fewer complications arise when thoroughly analysing the second factor of which there is a surplus, i.e. work.

Evident unemployment currently exists in the countryside (registered in the appropriate employment agencies and unemployment benefit offices) numbering approximately 1 million people. These people fulfil the legal requirements (the law on employment and acting against unemployment) for acquiring unemployment status.¹ The Central Statistics Office constantly monitors the labour market using a different definition of unemployment, which is closer to criteria applied in Western Europe.² According to these criteria the unemployed in the countryside are a group of approximately 800,000 people. The exact number of unemployed is not important here, both sources confirm the existence of a high number of people who are unemployed in the countryside, and, what is important, the majority (over 90%) of the registered unemployed are people from non-peasant households.

The manpower surplus in the countryside is not limited to the form of registered unemployment. The specificity of peasant family farms is in some cases such that the financial aims (the maximum profit) are replaced by others, connected with values such as family security. As a result, the level of employment on peasant farms is the function of the size of family workforce, the farm's need of work and possibilities of finding non-farm work. If there is no such possibility — the farm is capable of absorbing those resources, for which there are no alternative ways of utilization.

In 1996 the Central Statistics Office made an attempt at describing the scale of so-called surplus employment on peasant farms (or hidden unemployment). Using the experience of earlier research the so-called subjective method was applied,³ farmers were therefore asked whether there are people on the farm who exclusively work there and who could take up employment (permanent, full-time) without causing harm to agricultural production. The advantage of this method was that answering the question the farmer takes all the farm conditions into account, i.e. farm size, applied production techniques, equipment, services and even cultural factors connected with the family structure and the traditional division of work be-

¹ For simplification, an unemployed person is somebody without work and willing to undertake it.

² In the research it was defined that an unemployed person is somebody who during the week preceding the research did not undertake waged work for longer than one hour and who is willing to undertake it the following week.

³ The applied method was elaborated before the Second World War at the Institute of Social Economy in Warsaw. Cf. *Bezrobocie wśród chłopów* (Unemployment among the peasants), Collective work, IGS, 1938

tween men and women. Analyses of the Institute of Social Economy show that other methods, using more objective measures are incapable of including all these conditions. Moreover, this question may later be supplemented by indicating people who would be prepared to undertake employment, which also allows the definition of elements of structures of hidden unemployment on peasant farms.

Results of this research showed that approximately 800,000 "redundant people" find employment on peasant farms in the countryside. Half of them might very well not work on farms at all, the other half could link their main non-farm jobs with a small share in farm work.

The structural characteristic of redundant people shows that the majority are young people, half of whom are men and the other half women, who after finishing school could not find non-farm employment. The phenomenon of hidden unemployment concerns all groups of farms and all regions in the country although there are relatively more redundant people on small-scale farms and in areas with a generally monofunctional economy.

The structure of redundant people points to the fact that as time goes by and with successive groups of peasant youth leaving school the scale of hidden unemployment in family agriculture will tend to increase. The current phase of demographic processes connected with the alternating demographic explosions and depressions in Poland is highly conducive to this. This is a phase of demographic growth of the population of productive age. This is the result of two coexisting factors: the age of beginning professional activity is reached by those born during the demographic boom (echoes of the boom after the 2nd World War), while those born during the war depression reach retirement age. The demographic growth of the population of productive age (and consequently manpower) is expected to last until 2009 after which there will be a demographic decline (see diagram 1).

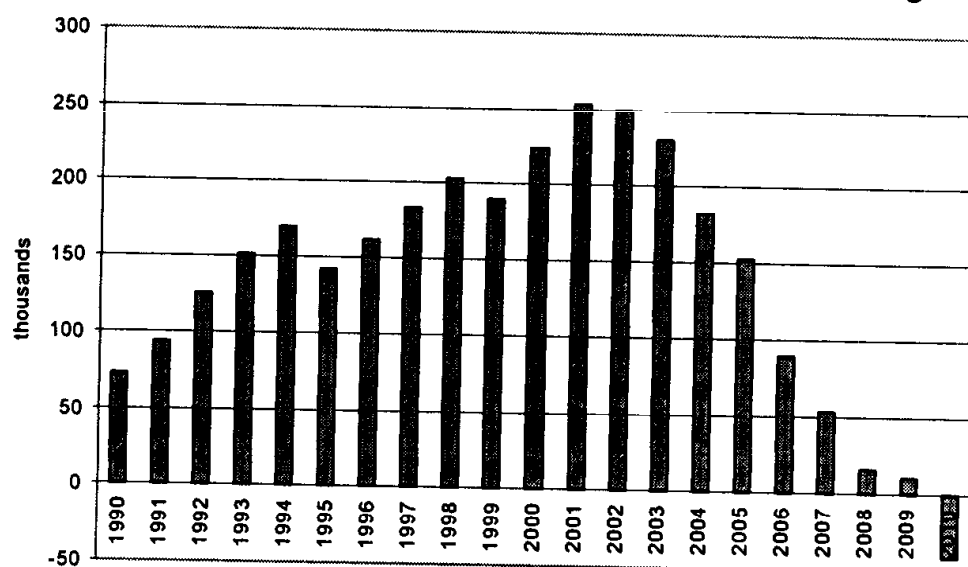


Diagram 1. Increase of population of productive age, 1990–2010

The general growth in the population of productive age in the years 1996–2010 will be approximately 2,200,000 people. An estimated division of this number between town and countryside (while assuming a lack of migration) allows us to assume that in the countryside the increase will reach approximately 1,300,000 of which the peasant population will include 570,000 and the non-peasant population 720,000. Since the scale of migration from the countryside to towns is currently very low and shows a tendency of further decrease — the present estimates should not significantly differ from reality.

To recapitulate, the rural labour surplus is not only official unemployment but also that which is hidden in family agriculture as well as the effect of demographic growth of the population of productive age. These three factors together make it possible to describe the scale of the imbalance on the rural labour market. Hidden unemployment in peasant agriculture is concentrated among a group of families using a farm, the official form of unemployment is largely concentrated among the non-peasant population. The effects of the growth in labour resources are of course connected with both groups of rural population. It is also worth remembering that the differentiation of these different forms of unemployment shows certain similarities (their statistical expression is a positive correlation between the level of official and unofficial unemployment). In the regional system there are phenomena of the accumulation of an imbalance on the labour market in some regions (being the result of both forms of unemployment) and regions of relatively lower surplus of labour resources.

What next?

Counteracting rural unemployment is essentially possible in a few ways, not all of which may be useful in Polish conditions. As I mentioned earlier, a significant reduction of the discussed disproportion by means of stimulating migration processes does not seem possible. On the one hand, there is also a surplus of labour resources in towns in relation to demand, on the other — the widely understood costs of migration are currently very high (one of the fundamental facts here is the shortage of accommodation in towns, a consequence of which are expensive lodgings).

Much research confirms that when applying for jobs rural migrants and commuters generally lose the competition with the urban unemployed. In addition, the qualification structure of potential migrants is very similar to the structure of the urban unemployed. In this sector of the urban labour market the current surplus is relatively highest.

Sometimes the issue of migration abroad of rural inhabitants is raised, particularly to countries of the European Union. Such a possibility worries the EU countries and it has become one of the difficult subjects in negotia-

tions concerning conditions of Poland's membership. While politicians are either wary of these migrations or have certain hopes, social analysts are widely in agreement that these migrations will not take place on a significant scale. They have such expectations because both earlier experiences (e.g. from the time of Greece's joining the EU) and the fact that such migrations have already taken place. It may be possible for the status of migrants to change from illegally employed workers to being officially employed. Research concerning the current flow of labour between Poland and EU countries in this matter lead Polish authors as well as those from the EU to the same conclusions.⁴

There is, therefore, a need to look for opportunities of activating rural labour surpluses in the countryside or, where possible, in towns, but in local conditions. This means the necessity of moving away from a purely agricultural type of rural economy to a multifunctional countryside, in other words a varied economic structure. Research carried out in the Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development at the Polish Academy of Science shows that with the growth of the level of complexity of the economic fabric of rural areas there is an improvement as regards the state of imbalance on the labour market. It is worth quoting the results concerning this problem.

A typology was compiled for a group of communes (rural and the rural areas of the mixed, rural-urban communes) of the former Opole province, the result of which was the selection of four types of communes according to their economic fabric.⁵ The unemployment rate of each of these types was calculated. It transpired that:

In agricultural communes with a large portion of former state farm land the unemployment rate was	12.7
In agricultural communes with mostly peasant farms and some industrial enterprises	10.1
In multifariously developed communes, including services	6.6
In communes situated within reach of the influence of urban markets	4.6

⁴ Expectations that there will not be significant money-making migrations from the countryside to EU countries justify research carried out at the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt und Berufsforschung in Nuremberg by Elmar Hönekopp, presented at a conference devoted to this matter organized in 2000 in Szczecin by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. Dariusz Stola from Warsaw University reached similar conclusions in his presentation at that conference

⁵ See: *Rolnictwo i jego miejsce w rozwoju gospodarczym Opolszczyzny* (Agriculture and its position in the economic development of Opole province), collective work under the editorship of Marek Kłodziński and Andrzej Rosner, SGGW, Warsaw 1994.

The research was repeated the following year over a wider area of Poland.⁶ It should be remembered that that was a period of unemployment growth in the whole of Poland. Results explicitly confirmed the earlier convergence between the unemployment rate and the nature of the local economic fabric.

In communes with a large portion of former state farm land the unemployment rate was	19.0
In communes with a mixed agricultural fabric and industrial enterprises	14.9
In agricultural communes with a high rate of employment in forestry	11.6
In suburban communes and those with a varied economy (including industry)	8.5

The problem with the development of non-agricultural functions in rural areas now means that after a period of intense activity of local communities and a booming economy at the beginning of the nineties came a period (which is continuing) of considerable slowing down of these processes. This is connected with, among others, the fact that simple reserves have run out, mainly depending on local demand. The spirit of enterprise was manifested by the rural inhabitants mainly in commerce and services, which demanded relatively low capital but were dependent on local demand. Indeed, in some parts of the country symptoms of the multiplying effects have been noticed in the non-agricultural development (the emergence of one business creates the need for others, functioning in the field of e.g. transportation, supplies etc.). However, in most cases there is a dominance of competition (an emerging business pushes another which is less effective out of the market). At the same time, the Polish countryside is less attractive than towns as far as investment is concerned which means that beyond the areas of the borderland (mainly western) foreign investment in rural areas is relatively low. The majority of foreign investment is particularly concentrated in average and large towns, and economic policy does not sufficiently encourage investors to change this situation.

Decisive factors call for an urgent need for the multifunctional development of rural areas. This can be noticed in a certain evolution in statements made by the authorities, the inclusion of this topic in most programme documents emerging at government level,⁷ the modification of the

⁶ See: *Przeobrażenia społeczno-ekonomiczne obszarów wiejskich pogranicza zachodniego* (Socio-economic transformations in the rural areas of the western borderland), collective work under the editorship of Marek Kłodziński and Andrzej Rosner, IRWiR PAN and SGGW, Warsaw 1996

⁷ I have the following documents in mind: *Pakt dla rolnictwa i obszarów wiejskich* (A pact for agriculture and rural areas), *Spójna polityka strukturalna rozwoju obszarów wiejskich i rolnictwa* (A cohesive structural policy for rural areas and agriculture), Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy, Warsaw 1999, *SAPARD* —

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy into the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. In spite of this from the practical point of view it is still difficult to notice an evolution as regards supplementing rural policy with elements of structural policy of the development of the countryside as well as in fact functioning of the instruments of carrying out such a policy.

The rural development policy generally postulated in recent years by academic circles concerned with rural issues is connected with the diagnosis of changes now taking place. The process of concentration of goods production taking place on farms which are economically sounder, generally larger and technologically more modern was earlier mentioned. This also means the emergence of a sector of weak farms at the other extreme, not producing much for the market or running a natural economy. This sector is heterogeneous, including farms which have an auxiliary role and are the property of people working outside agriculture. Most farms in this sector currently belong to retirement or disability pensioners and that is why it is sometimes termed the "agricultural social sub-sector". While the instruments of agricultural policy are in accordance with the market sub-sector, they do not in fact fulfil their role towards farms belonging to the social sub-sector. It would be more appropriate, within the rural development policy, to compile social and activating instruments aimed at such farms.

It is worth remembering that the social sub-sector fulfils a very important role in the economy, it maintains a considerable rural manpower surplus beyond the registered unemployment system (it merges the majority of unemployment hidden in agriculture). One may say that it acts as a social cover-up for the market reforms of the nineties and lowers their social costs. Funds reaching the population connected with this sector are not agricultural subsidies but are social, supplementing farm incomes.

Social components within the rural development policy should therefore continue to serve incomes from the social sub-sector in agriculture. At the same time, activating components should act on the rural population in order to support the multifunctional development and should support the emergence of farms from the social sub-sector developing agricultural production (including ecological) and running a multifunctional economy (connected with the development of agro-tourism, landscape conservation etc.).

The above-mentioned considerations justify the view that the main problems of the Polish countryside will centre around issues concerning the labour market and creating sources of income for the rural population. The process of formation of the agricultural goods sector taking place without exceptional steps by agricultural policy indicates that there are farms in

program operacyjny dla Polski (SAPARD — an operational programme for Poland) and others.

Poland which are relatively modern, innovative and which will be able to live up to the challenges during the period of Poland's integration with the EU. The remaining farms, gathering around the emerging "social sub-sector" will be a serious problem. The scale of this problem is partly shown by the estimated results of the potential restructurization of the agricultural sector in Poland carried out by Professor Izasław Frenkel.⁸

Data concerning the western lands of Germany in the beginning of the nineties were selected as a comparison in order to evaluate the scale of problems. The author used two prerequisites in the process: firstly the conditions in which agriculture functions in Germany and Poland are comparable in many aspects (climate, the production structure, agro-technical conditions etc.) and secondly — there is a great similarity in the statistical categories of the description of agriculture and particularly in rural employment. The specificity of both production and (what is perhaps more important here) the applied statistical categories makes it impossible to carry out analogical comparisons with data from e.g. Spain, Portugal or France.

It so happened that the size of rural families on equal sized farms in Poland and Germany is similar and so are family labour resources similar. Both countries essentially differ in ways of distributing their family labour resources between farm and non-farm work. In Polish agriculture there are current surpluses of agricultural employment numbering approximately 1,300,000 people (current means existing in the present agrarian structure). This number should be seen in the context of approximately 800,000 hidden unemployed in peasant agriculture and approximately 400,000–500,000 employed as a result of not very modern work equipment and the underdeveloped socio-economic domain of the rural environment. Thus without a change in farm structure and as a result of the modernization of existing structures approximately 1,300,000 people could quit their farm jobs.

However, if in Poland there were to be processes of land concentration similar to those in Germany (which would mean comparable employment in agriculture in both countries on 100 ha) then approximately 1,700,000 people would have to quit their farm jobs. This number may be described (for distinction) as a potential surplus of agricultural employment.

Talking about factors which have to be taken into consideration when evaluating the scale of rural labour surplus, mention was made of official

⁸ A few variations of Izasław Frenkel's estimates were prepared. The complete version of results is presented in an article by Izasław Frenkel: *Bezrobocie w rolnictwie indywidualnym* (Unemployment in private farming) in: *Wieś i rolnictwo na przełomie wieków* (The countryside and agriculture at the turn of the century), a collective work edited by Izabela Bukraba-Rylska and Andrzej Rosner, IRWiR PAN, Warsaw, 2001

and unofficial employment as well as the effect of demographic processes. A fourth factor must be mentioned which although not yet totally conspicuous, it will no doubt start functioning: the effect of the process of agricultural restructurization. Regardless of the real scale of this effect for the rural labour market the problem of labour surplus in the countryside will become the major problem in the Polish economy.

A question arises here about whether the restructurization of agriculture is necessary and how far it should reach. It is most frequently asked by members of agricultural circles and politicians with a peasant leaning. Doubts in these matters arise particularly in the light of threats carried by intensive agriculture applying industrial technologies and which recently appeared in western Europe during the BSE and foot-and-mouth disease epidemics.

The problem of the restructurization of Polish agriculture is very complex and solving it would be very expensive. The full range of complications is revealed particularly when we look at it in the regional and local contexts, taking into account considerable distinctions as regards the size of economic, demographic, educational and settlement structures etc.

It seems that there is no other way of developing the countryside and agriculture than that which was earlier followed by the developed countries, in other words the reduction of agricultural employment and appropriate processes of land concentration, capital and production. The current proportions of employment in agriculture (approximately 20% of the country's labour resources) and the present participation of agriculture in creating GNP (approximately 5%) indicate that without restructurization agriculture will be unable to provide a socially acceptable income for the population employed in this field.

The restructurization of Polish agriculture will be an enormous undertaking, whose costs will have to be borne by the whole of Polish society. This is impossible to implement within a short period of time. The implementation of structural changes in the countryside is a programme which will last a generation. It appears that in Polish conditions in particular (most rural areas are decidedly monofunctional), changes in agriculture will primarily depend on the development of the non-agricultural domain in the countryside, and even more so, the extent to which it will be possible to create a receptive rural (and local) labour market.