

ANALYSIS REGARDING THE SITUATION OF THE ROMANIAN VILLAGE - CASE STUDY, TETOIU COMMUNE, VÂLCEA COUNTY, ROMANIA

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Abstract

The Romanian village is facing demographic problems, an ageing population, low birth rates, and a lack of jobs that contribute to the depopulation of villages. The main purpose of the paper is the identification of socio-economic problems, taking as a study the research of the commune of Tetoiu in Vâlcea County. The work is based on official data provided by the town hall of Tetoiu, as well as data provided by the National Statistical Institute, on the basis of which the following statistical indicators were calculated: standard deviation, coefficient of variation, and growth rate. The lack of qualified teachers and interest in education is a major problem in the rural environment, contributing to migration to other countries in order to secure a secure source of income and a decent living. Lack of information on access to European funds leads to a reduction in agricultural activities and a shift towards the urban environment. All these problems form a crisis of the Romanian village and lead to the fall of the villages.

Key words: Romanian village, young people in rural areas, rural area

INTRODUCTION

"The rural comprises all activities that take place outside the urban and comprises three essential components: administrative communities made up of relatively few members and which have mutual relations; pronounced dispersion of the population and collective services; the special economic role of agriculture and forestry" [3, 5].

The word "rural comes from the Latin *ruris* which represents culture, field, territory occupied and man-made." [6].

In the rural economy, the largest share is "agricultural activity, which is a characteristic of the rural environment and which is followed by other activities such as forestry, tourism, agritourism" [7].

The introduction of elements of the urban, affects agricultural activity and hence the rural economy, and the use of land for cultural development, infrastructure development and land use for purposes other than agricultural purposes has a significant influence on agricultural activities. Rural activities are carried out in agriculture, forestry, fisheries,

aquaculture, low population density, the promotion of traditions [9].

The basic function of the rural area is the economic function comprising a number of activities on social implications for maintaining the current workforce and placing it in agricultural activities and obtaining agricultural products and material goods, with the aim of securing a source of income, but also obtaining additional income. In the rural wash economy agriculture is a staple activity, and product processing, the wood industry, artisanal production complements the rural economy. The ecological function of the natural space plays an important role in maintaining the balance of the rural environment. Pollution of the natural environment, of basic resources, is a phenomenon with rapid access, due to the rapid deterioration caused by human activity, general industrialization, deterioration of agricultural and forestry space, reduction of fauna and flora. Measures are needed to reduce the negative factors caused by pollution, such as sustainable management of natural resources, environmental protection,

rehabilitation of ecosystems, recording of places of historical and traditional importance, compliance with legislation on environmental protection. The social-cultural function is the observance and transmission of future generations to the customs and traditions for the preservation of the natural heritage of the villages. The exploitation of cultural assets and the transmission of cultural background from the urban environment lead to the development of creativity and civic spirit, and the transmission of the principles of our forefathers completes the idea of the canonical village and maintains the image of the uniqueness of folklore. Beliefs, dates, superstitions, spiritual life influence people's lives preserving the image of the authentic peasant [10, 11]. Industrialization has a strong impact on agriculture, the development of processing industries and the development of trade stimulate production, cultivation on large areas and the creation of competitive environments [8].

"The village is the territory in which the population has adapted to the conditions offered by the natural environment and which is concentrated on specific agricultural activities" [2].

Human capital is a large-scale component and influences and is a defining element in the economic development of villages. Diversification of rural activities can lead to the stabilisation of industries and the practice of smart agriculture, which results in high quality products and high yields, implicitly in high and secure incomes. The structure of the villages influences the socio-economic development of the villages, by ensuring links with the external environment and carrying out activities easily [1, 4].

Vâlcea County is located in Southern Romania and borders Alba, Sibiu, Arges, Olt, Dolj, Gorj and Hunedoara counties, divided into 2 municipalities, 9 towns and 78 communes. Vâlcea County has most of the forms of relief: mountains, hills, plateaus and plain-looking mountains and is crossed over almost the entire county by the Olt River.

Tetoiu is located in the south of Vâlcea County, comprises the villages of Băroi, Budele, Măneasa, Tetoiu (residence),

Nenciulești, Popești and Tepești. The activities of the area-specific inhabitants are agriculture, beekeeping, animal husbandry and trade. Tetoiu is considered one of the most important communes in Romania and even in Europe due to the discoveries made in the Valley of Greuceanu, namely a humanoid skull, *Homo Olteniensis*, 2,000,000 years old, which is currently on display in Craiova at the Oltenia Museum and remains of hominid (femoral diaphysis and a remnant of a tibia).

The Treasure of Piscul Șasei included the commune of Tetoiu in the list of the oldest settlements in the world. In the 60s of the 20th century, the remains of a Dacian fortress were discovered, which was part of a defensive system of defend of the Sarmizegetusa kings. The cave-in of a shore revealed 140 silver coins and several Byzantine coins, which over to the authorities. were discovered by the tenants and handed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is based on the analysis of official data requested and received from the municipality of Tetoiu in Vâlcea County, as well as statistical data provided by the National Statistical Institute on the basis of which the following indicators were calculated:

standard deviation $\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2}{(n-1)}}$, where:

x - sample media;

n - sample size;

coefficient of variation $v = \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}} \times 100$ where:

σ - mean deviation;

x - the average level of a variable;

growth rate $\bar{R} = (\bar{I} \times 100) - 100$, where:

\bar{I} - average overall growth index.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Romania's resident population shows a decrease during the period under review, so in urban areas, the resident population in 2014 was 10.7 million, reaching 10.4 million in 2019, representing a decrease of about 3% in the population over 6 years (Table 1).

In rural areas, the resident population suffered a decrease of 241 thousand inhabitants in 2019 (8.9 million inhabitants) compared to 2014 (9.2 million inhabitants).

Table 1. Situation of the number of inhabitants of Romania according to the environment of residence

Areas of residence	Specification	Year					
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
		UM: Number of people					
Urban	TOTAL	10,752,617	10,703,051	10,636,418	10,531,819	10,503,470	10,455,362
	SOUTHWEST OLTENIA region	936,575	929,177	918,765	901,198	900,033	892,200
	Vâlcea	162,934	162,122	160,654	158,518	157,920	156,918
Rural	TOTAL	9,200,472	9,172,491	9,124,167	9,112,130	9,027,161	8,959,096
	SOUTHWEST OLTENIA region	1,097,209	1,086,615	1,074,717	1,071,742	1,049,907	1,034,660
	Vâlcea	202,763	201,148	199,160	198,129	195,268	193,141

Source: processed data INSSE, Accessed on 05.08.2020.

In the case of the county of which Tetoiu commune is a part, it also showed a decrease in the number of inhabitants, so in 2014 the urban population was 163 thousand inhabitants, and in 2019 the number of inhabitants was 157 thousand inhabitants.

The population of the rural environment of Vâlcea County registered a decrease in the period 2014-2019, so that in 2019 the population decreased by 9.6 thousand inhabitants compared to 2014, representing a decrease of about 5% (Table 1.).

Table 2. Analysis of statistical indicators on the number of inhabitants of Romania by residence environment

Areas of residence	Specif.	Min (no)	Max (no)	Aver. (no)	Stand. Dev. (no)	*Coef. of var. %	Growth rate %
Urban	TOTAL	10,455,362	10,752,617	10,597,122	118,384	1.12	-0.56
	SOUTHWEST OLTENIA region	892,200	936,575	912,991	17,836	1.95	-0.97
	Vâlcea	156,918	162,934	159,844	2,425	1.52	-0.75
Rural	TOTAL	8,959,096	9,200,472	9,099,252	90,815	1.00	-0.53
	SOUTHWEST OLTENIA region	1,034,660	1,097,209	1,069,141	23,194	2.17	-1.17
	Vâlcea	193,141	202,763	198,268	3,594	1.81	-0.97

Source: processed data INSSE, Accessed on 05.08.2020, variation coefficient (<10 - small; 10-20-medium; >20-high);

In urban areas, Romania's resident population was between 10.4 and 10.7 million. The average period was 10.5 million, with a negative growth rate of 0.56%. In the case of Vâlcea County, the highest number of inhabitants was recorded in 2014, i.e. 162,934, and the lowest in 2019 with 156,918 inhabitants with a negative growth rate of 0.75% (Table 2.)

In the case of rural areas, the population ranged from 8.9 million to 9.2 million, with a coefficient of variation of 1% and a negative growth rate of 0.35. The population of Vâlcea County registered between 193,141 and 202,763 inhabitants, the average period being 198,268 inhabitants, and the growth rate shows a negative value of 0.97 (Table 2).

The number of inhabitants of Tetoiu commune in Vâlcea County is decreasing according to the 2002 population census when there were 3051 inhabitants, the population

decreased over 17 years by 605 inhabitants compared to the last year analyzed, representing a decrease of 20%. This downward trend is very common in rural areas, due to population migration and extremely low birth rates, to urban centres or outside the country (Table 3).

Table 3. Evolution of the population of the commune, the number of newborns and the number of deaths in Tetoiu commune, Vâlcea county (number)

Specification	2002 *	Year					
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
The population of the commune	3,051	2,683	2,683	2,464	2,464	2,446	2,446
Number of newborns	-	1	2	1	1	1	0
Number of deaths	-	57	43	52	52	48	29

Source: processed data, provided by The Tetoiu commune, Accessed on 30.07.2020.

The number of newborns was on average only one newborn per year, and in the case of deaths, the average period analyzed is 46. These low values for newborns reflect a number of rural issues, whereby the lack or poor development of the right conditions for starting a family in these areas leads to a low birth rate. On the other hand, the high number of deaths reflects the ageing of the rural population (Table 3).

The trend of population evolution in Tetoiu commune, Vâlcea county is a downward one according to the graph above. Although the data presented are data obtained from official sources, we may be raised to question their veracity or, in particular, how to update these data among rural localities, being an essential aspect in the proper management of the activities carried out by the local authorities, since without the most accurate record of the inhabitants, the necessary measures for the development of the locality cannot be taken (Figure 1).

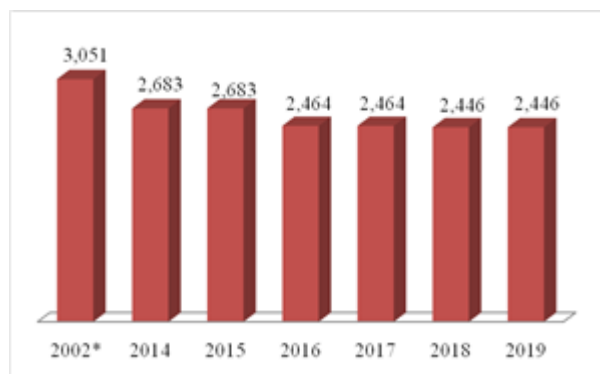


Fig. 1. Evolution of the number of inhabitants of Tetoiu commune, Vâlcea County (number)
 Source: processed data, provided by The Tetoiu commune, Accessed on 30.07.2020.

Taking into account the number of newborns and deaths, as well as the population existing in the municipality of Tetoiu at the level of 2019, and the preservation of the current living conditions, the forecast of population evolution in this locality has been determined. Thus, over the next 12 years, the population of Tetoiu commune will decrease by about 21%, reaching the number of inhabitants in 2030 to be 1929 (Figure 2).

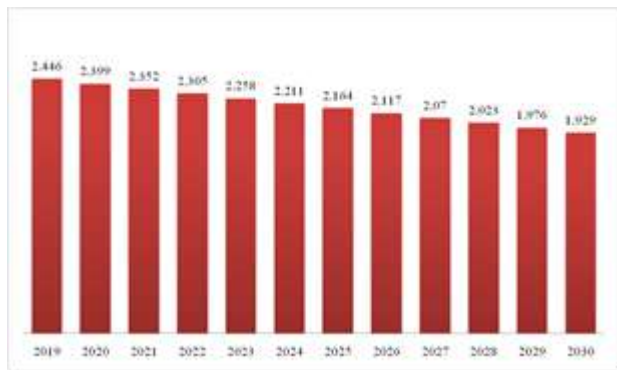


Fig. 2. Forecast of the evolution of the number of inhabitants of Tetoiu commune in Vâlcea County (number)

Source: processed data, provided by The Tetoiu commune, Accessed 30.07.2020.

The number of children enrolled in schools in Tetoiu commune in Vâlcea County shows a downward trend, in 2014 245 children were enrolled, reaching 223 children in 2019 representing a decrease of about 9% (Figure 3).

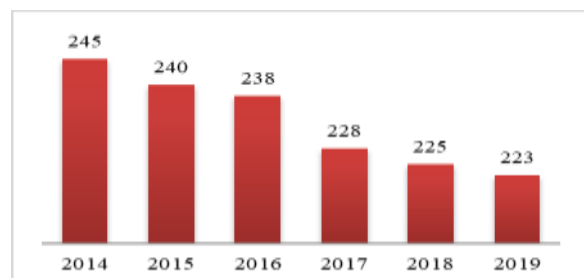


Fig. 3. Evolution of the number of children enrolled in schools in Tetoiu commune, Vâlcea county (number)
 Source: processed data, provided by The Tetoiu commune, Accessed on 30.07.2020.

The number of people receiving social assistance in the municipality of Tetoiu shows a decrease in the period under review, 2014-2019. In 2014, the number of welfare recipients was 68, reaching 19 in 2019, representing a decrease of 72% (Table 4).

Table 4. Situation in terms of social aid and jobs in Tetoiu commune (number)

Specification	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of people receiving social assistance	68	60	45	32	20	19
Number of jobs	50	48	46	40	40	40

Source: processed data, provided by The Tetoiu commune, Accessed on 30.07.2020.

The number of jobs is also decreasing, in 2014 there were 50 jobs in Tetoiu commune, reaching 40 jobs in 2019 (Table 4).

However, it can be seen that if in the first 2 years analysed, the number of social workers was roughly equal to the number of people receiving jobs, in the last two years the number of social workers has halved by the number of jobs.

The decrease in the number of people receiving social assistance can be attributed to the fact that most of them were elderly people who died and, on the other hand, the measures taken government, which have more closely checked the granting of these aids, have contributed to the decrease in the number of such aid.

CONCLUSIONS

Tetoiu commune in Vâlcea county is facing a depopulation and a low birth rate, illustrating a population decline.

The population of the villages is mostly aged, the average number of retirees in the period 2014-2019 was 725 and the average population was 2,531 inhabitants.

The situation of newborns is not at all favorable, the average of the analyzed period was two newborns, and the number of children in schools is decreasing. School dropout is a major problem in rural areas, it occurs in disorganized families and low-income families, feeling a lack of interest in education and reduced opportunities to support children in school.

The situation of education in rural areas is a major problem, the lack of qualified teachers and interest in educating students both at school and personally is an obstacle in the preparation of future generations.

Cases where parents can not be an educational model for children are increasingly common in rural areas and is represented by divorced parents, aggressive behaviour and alcoholism. Psycho-pedagogical counselling for teachers and students would be a major solution in case of school dropout. Individual or group counsellor, understanding and adapting the needs of each student, creates teacher-student relationships, but also student-student, thus helping social integration, and also understanding students' thinking about the school environment, teaching system and

learning. In-depth knowledge of students and their families, creating a school-family relationship, can be a mandatory measure that helps to train students. By visiting the students at home, one can know the environment in which they live, the parents and thus understanding the family and financial situation.

Regarding the number of jobs in Tetoiu commune, there is a decrease in the period 2014-2019. In 2014, 50 jobs were registered, reaching 40 jobs in 2019, representing a decrease of 10%.

The rural environment is in an accelerated change, the migration of young people has become a worrying phenomenon being influenced by the lack of jobs both in Tetoiu commune and in Vâlcea County.

Young workers, skilled or unskilled, who have completed basic education, high school or university, migrate to cities or abroad. The low standard of living and the lack of jobs cause the rural environment to lose active labour. The idea of a secure job, which provides young people with income that covers their basic expenses and at the same time saves, is the main reason why they choose to leave their place of origin.

The lack of education of farmers on obtaining European funds and the benefits of practicing agriculture is another problem facing the rural environment. Obtaining non-reimbursable funds can be a real motivation to carry out activities in agriculture and can contribute to the economic development of the area, thus representing an opportunity that is not exploited to its true potential.

Accessing European funds for the modernization of the commune, ensuring the basic conditions, improving the infrastructure, modernizing buildings and monuments of historical importance, encouraging tourism can lead to socio-economic development and stopping the depopulation of the commune.

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