
ALTERATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT-SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF MEZŐHEGYES

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ABSTRACT

One of the most significant large-scale industrial works of Mezőhegyes was closed down at the end of the 1990s. When the population that thus became unemployed could not find work even at the price of commuting left the settlement. It had an influence on both the social and economic structures of the settlement. By 2001 the proportion of people working in agriculture had decreased to 36,6% to the advantage of the tertial sector (44,2%), though in this respect it was still behind the county's average (55,1%). All in all, the service sector (trade, traffic, postal and communication services etc.) occupied the leading position thus pushing agriculture to the second position. In case of Békés county, as a whole, it is the tertial sector which has the first position (55,1%) but it is followed by industry and construction industry (33,4%) while agriculture is only in the third position (11,5%) regarding the number of employed.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant large-scale industrial works of Mezőhegyes was closed down at the end of the 1990s and apart from this, the other great employer, Mezőhegyesi Állami Ménesbirtok Rt carried out a reorganization that time which resulted in the reduction of number of employees. As a result, the number of unemployed increased in the examined period. When the population that thus became unemployed could not find work even at the price of commuting left the settlement. The types of migration can be classified from different points of view, I would mention only some of them. According to the constancy or provisionality of the movement we can distinguish two groups: constant and provisional migration. In case of constant migration the migrant changes his permanent residence for another permanent address (Becsei J. 2004). If the migrant crosses the borders, we can call this event external migration, if not, internal migration. According to the way of decision making we can make a distinction between spontaneous and forced migrations, according to the number of migrants: individual and group, as per the legal regulation: legal and illegal, and from the aspect of the duration of absence: final and provisional migrations (Illés S. 2000). In case of internal movements we can talk about intraregional and interregional migrations (Tóth J. 1998). The majority of people migrate because of unemployment (Nemes Nagy J. 1987) or to get a new, perhaps a better job, for example in another settlement. Migration of people with higher education is more significant than the ones with lower qualification (Illés S. 2000; Harcsa I. 1987; Eke P.-né 1998; Nemes Nagy J. 1998) since possessing higher level of knowledge they can achieve more favourable income conditions in the new environment.

Due to the winding-up of the sugar plants, the majority of population who thus became unemployed left the settlement, so both the employment and social structures of the settlement have changed. I am aiming to examine its direction and measure.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

I examined the period between 1990 and 2001 obtaining the necessary data from KSH (Central Statistical Office). During my research I always compared these data with the ones of Békés county. There is a question all the time; living outside of towns in farm can be interesting for inhabitants nowadays or not? Traditions, economical pressure or which type of motivations can be found? (Gálné 2010) How does it look in Mezőhegyes area?

3. RESULTS

In 1990 98,8% of the economically active population was employed. It was not far from the county's value: 97,29%. By 2001 the number of people in active age had decreased in the settlement. Or more exactly, in 2001 only 86,67% of the economically active population was employed. It can be explained not only with the lack of the new generation and the increase of the aged but with migration, as well. We can conclude from the data that together with the reduction of the economically active population, the number of the dependent decreased, too (*Table 1*). The percentage of the dependent was reduced from 28,7% to 25,1% between 1990 and 2001. In both cases this value was under the county's average (29,9%, 26,8%). It was due to not only the less birth and mortality but the migration of families, too.

In 1990 1,2% of the economically active population of the settlement was unemployed which is, comparing to the county's average of that time (2,71%), a relatively good value. In 2001 13% of the population in working age was unemployed. In 1990 only 38 registered unemployed were in Mezőhegyes, whereas 318 in 2001.

Table 1. The population according to the economic activity (person)

	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive	Dependent	Altogether
1990					
Békés county	172 898	4 816	110 883	123 290	411 887
Mezőhegyes	3 267	38	1 755	2 040	7 100
2001					
Békés county	125 151	19 754	146 435	106 451	397 791
Mezőhegyes	2 069	318	2 405	1 607	6 399

Source: KSH

The number of the economically inactive people per 100 employed was better than the county's average during the examined period which means that in 1990, 100 employed had to support 116 economically inactive people in Mezőhegyes, while 135 people, as an average, in Békés county. By 2001 the situation had worsened both in local and county levels. 100 employed had to support 194 economically inactive people in Mezőhegyes, while 202 people in Békés county.

25,7% of the employed belonged to the group of white-collar workers in 1990, while 31,8% in 2001 (*Table 2*). Although, it shows an increasing tendency, it is still behind the county's average. Since in 1990 27,7% of the employed of Békés county belonged to the group of intellectual workers, and in 2001 34,2%.

Table 2. Composition of the employed according to their occupation (person)

	Intellectual	Physical	Altogether
	1990		
Békés county	47 826	125 072	172 898
Mezőhegyes	838	2 429	3 267
2001			
Békés county	42 810	82 341	125 151
Mezőhegyes	657	1 412	2 069

Source: KSH

Table 3. The employed according to the sectors of the national economy (person)

	Agriculture and silviculture	Industry, Construction industry	Branches of services	Altogether
	1990			
Békés county	46 779	57 454	68 665	172 898
Mezőhegyes	2 173	369	725	3 267
2001				
Békés county	14 385	41 761	69 005	125 151
Mezőhegyes	757	398	914	2 069

Source: KSH

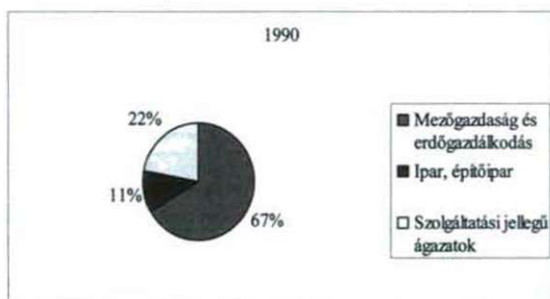


Figure 1. The employed according to the sectors of the national economy (1990)

Source: KSH data, my own edition

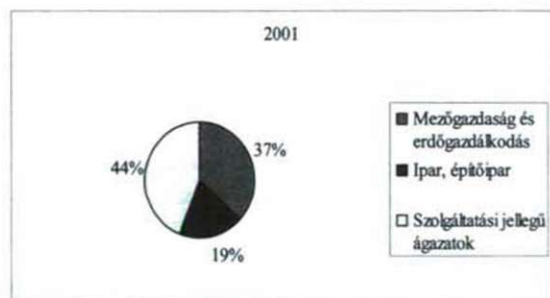


Figure 2. The employed according to the sectors of the national economy (2001)

Source: KSH data, my own edition

In 1990 the majority of the employed (66,5%) worked in the agriculture in Mezőhegyes, only 22% were employed in the branches of service sector, and the 11,3% left found work in the industry or in the construction industry (Table 3), (Figure 1). By 2001 the percentage of the people working in the agriculture had decreased to 36,6% to the advantage of the tertial sector (44,2%) (Figure 2), but in this respect it was still behind the county's average (55,1%). In case of Békés county, as a whole, it is the tertial sector which has the first position (55,1%) but it is followed by industry and construction industry (33,4%) while agriculture is only in the third position (11,5%) regarding the number of employed.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Collapse of the economic sphere resulted in the collapse of the social sphere, too. The number of those migrating has significantly increased, thus the employment-social structure of the population was considerably modified by the alteration of the number and composition of the population that stayed in the settlement.

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