

**PROBLEMS OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF  
RURAL AREAS IN THE TRANSITION TO THE  
MARKET ECONOMY – THE PREKMURJE  
EXAMPLE**

**PROBLEMI PREOBRAZBE PODEŽELJA NA  
PREHODU V TRŽNO GOSPODARSTVO – PRIMER  
PREKMURJA**

**DRAGO KLADNIK**

**Abstract**

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**Problems of the transformation of rural areas in the transition to the market economy – the Prekmurje example**

Since the independence of Slovenia, intensive socioeconomic changes are under way. The agriculture is facing the accommodation to contemporary market principles. The article deals with the structural problems of Slovene agriculture and of its countryside with the emphasis on the Prekmurje region and, particularly on the Lendava commune. We have developed a model which makes possible to evaluate the present situation from the point of view of the plans envisaged. It provides an overview of the necessary measures and spatial interventions, as well as a complex view of the future concept of the countryside.

**Izvleček**

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**Problemi preobrazbe podeželja na prehodu v tržno gospodarstvo – primer Prekmurja**

Z osamosvojitvijo Slovenije smo se v kmetijstvu znašli pred prilagajanjem sodobnim tržnim načelom, s čimer bo omogočeno konkurenčno soočenje na odprtem tržišču. Prispevek obravnava strukturne probleme v slovenskem kmetijstvu in na podeželju s posebnim ozirom na Prekmurje, še posebej v občini Lendava. Razvili smo model, ki omogoča vrednotenje sedanjega stanja z vidika željenih usmeritev. Prinaša pregled potrebnih ukrepov in prostorskih posegov, pa tudi celovit pogled na nadaljnjo zasnovo podeželja.

*Naslov - Address*

Drago Kladnik B. Sc.  
Institute of Geography, University of Ljubljana,  
Trg francoske revolucije 7,  
61000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

## INTRODUCTION

With the independence of Slovenia intensive social economic changes began and are still taking place. In the course of time these changes will have far-reaching consequences on every aspect of life. A gradual change in the production relations can be expected which will also be visible in the structure of the rural areas.

Predominantly rural region of Prekmurje is in a very good position to take advantage of these facts because its agrarian structure is of great importance for the rest of Slovenia. A fundamental restructuring and adaptation of the production will be required because of the wide variety of former attempts to implement the self-management system of socialism in the villages.

Many problems, which will be expressed in various conflicts, are to be expected because of the complicated interaction of different factors, such as the inadequate property structure, the need of denationalization, the undefined spatial plan of the village settlements and of the countryside as a whole, the unending restructuring of the available work force and assuring their full employment, and the limited financial resources for making improvements. Through these problems and conflicts, individual segments of the whole region will gradually be adapted to an optimal plan. It is not enough that the desired final goals be kept in sight, it is also necessary to define clearly the main steps to be taken by analyzing the intermediate critical phases. At the same time it is important to draw up basic development policy (economic, social and spatial), with adequate instruments for its realization.

With the changing of the basic geopolitical situation, the role of the Prekmurje region is also changing, with new values appearing and new prospects opening up. The goal of this article is to draw attention to incongruencies in the development of the rural areas which could represent fundamental barriers to the process of adapting to market economy in the future, especially in agriculture.

The orientation to market-based economy makes it necessary for Slovenia to adjust its agriculture to modern trends. We want to model our agriculture in the way of West European countries and we seriously consider the structure and characteristics of their agricultural policies. A few years ago we still persisted in our 'specific way' of solving agricultural problems through the so-called pooling of labour, land and resources. The idea was that through consultations of farmers and their joint creation of production plans the negative impact of extreme land fragmentation would be set off without need to tackle the sensitive

issue of property relations. Such an approach failed to take into account the important traits of human nature: mistrust, individuality, the need of motivation.

The results, therefore, fell short of expectations, and discrepancy between the ambitious and actual results only grew larger. By overemphasizing our specific conditions we only evaded urgent radical measures, and shifted the solving of the problems to the generations to come. Indeed, our professed commitment to the market-based economy rings hollow in the absence of adequate efforts of bringing our agriculture face to face with the realities of the harsh but prosperous world market. One wonders how long, and at what price we shall be making up ever new solutions to suit our specific conditions, when just a glance across the nearest northern border demonstrates clearly enough the way a successful economy and a rich society are functioning.

In the conditions of family-farm economy, accompanied by agrarian overpopulation, surplus labour and a low level of market-orientated production, the achieved labour productivity is low. Such farms have no investment funds for improving their technical equipment and the quality of land, so the productivity is stagnating in absolute and relative terms alike (Koren, 1986).

## FEATURES OF LAND OWNERSHIP

Despite the rapid post-war socialization, Slovenia has kept a relatively high share of the land in private ownership. On the long term, that is undoubtedly a great advantage, but for the time being it is rather an obstacle because of the undesirable processes of land fragmentation. The social sector of agriculture holds only 16,8 % of agricultural (11,5 % of arable) land, but accounts for over 50 % of the value of the farm produce compulsory purchase quota. Private sector predominates in the production of vegetables, grapes, cattle and milk, whereas socially owned sector predominates in market-aimed fruit production, pig breeding and poultry farming (Grubelnik, 1986).

The apparently better results in the socially-owned sector are rather doubtful, although better disposition of arable land, better investment possibilities and the fact that production is organized in a chain of agrobusinesses in themselves ensure higher economic efficiency. The trouble is that this sector has too high overhead costs and a great deal of unproductive, surplus labour. In the contest of new and better-quality plots obtained through land reclamation and consolidation actions, social sector often acts as an unfair competitor to the private sector.

Among the chief disadvantages of the existing land structure are the social structure of land owners (a great deal of land is owned by non-farmers who do not depend on farming for their existence, or by part-time farmers who, by holding prevalent ownership shares, hinder possible land concentration processes) and the small size and fragmentation of holdings (Kladnik, 1982).

In 1981, an average farm had 5.51 hectares of land, arable land accounting for only 2.54 hectares. Such a small farm cannot yield a satisfactory income. In reality, this is only statistics, but it should be noted that, in fact, farms with less than the cited average size are by far



the most numerous. The smallest farms are located precisely in the regions where conditions for agriculture are the most favourable (north-eastern Slovenia) and the trend toward the further reduction of the farm size continues (K l a d n i k, 1983).

Table 1: Farms in Slovenia by size in 1981 (K o v a č i č, 1986).

Tabela 1: Kmetije v Sloveniji po velikosti (1981).

|  | Up to<br>1 ha | 1-2<br>ha | 2-4<br>ha | 4-6<br>ha | 6-8<br>ha | 8-10<br>ha | 10-15<br>ha | Over<br>15 ha | Total |
|--|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------|
| Farms                                    | 22.8          | 11.3      | 18.2      | 12.2      | 8.6       | 6.6        | 9.8         | 10.5          | 100.0 |
| Agriculturally inactive rural households | 65.8          | 13.3      | 10.4      | 4.1       | 2.2       | 1.4        | 1.4         | 1.4           | 100.0 |
| All households engaged in farming        | 32.5          | 11.7      | 16.4      | 10.4      | 7.2       | 5.4        | 7.9         | 8.6           | 100.0 |

Due to excessive fragmentation of land, not even the bigger farms achieve optimum production. Research data indicate that with the expansion of land property the number of scattered plots invariably grows. Anxious to acquire more land, farmers often rent plots at mutually separated places, which only further aggravates the land fragmentation problem. It has been established that at least one third of the plots (sometimes as many as 20 plots) are situated more than 1 km from the farm house. They are for the most part labour un-intensive categories – forests, pastures and occasionally vineyards for which specific natural conditions are required. Some farms have even more than 70 separate plots. The organization of work, the level of utilization and the efficiency of such farming are dubious (K l a d n i k, 1982).

Table 2: Average size of plots according to land categories and ownership structure in the Lendava municipality in 1985 (in ares; K l a d n i k, 1987).

Tabela 2: Povprečna velikost parcel po zemljiških kategorijah in lastništvu v občini Lendava v letu 1985 (v arih).

|                   | Private | Social | Total |
|-------------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Agricultural land | 17.49   | 26.10  | 17.60 |
| Forests           | 45.00   | 9.24   | 44.89 |
| Unproductive land | 10.09   | 13.48  | 10.12 |

The fragmentation of farmland is partly due to the configuration of terrain and different soil conditions, on account of which attempts were made in the past to ensure equal conditions for all by 'equitably' dividing arable land among land owners in villages. Negative consequences are largely due to the inheritance law (the Hungarian inheritance law in particular) and also to the sale of land to non-farmers, the construction of buildings and expansion of infrastructure network (K l a d n i k, 1985).

Table 3: Some indicators of the intensity of agricultural production in the Lendava municipality according to land structure (in hectares; K l a d n i k, 1987a).

Tabela 3: Nekateri pokazatelji intenzivnosti kmetijske pridelave v občini Lendava glede na velikost posesti (v ha).

|  | Up to<br>0.5 | 0.51<br>-1 | 1.01<br>-2 | 2.01<br>-3 | 3.01<br>-5 | 5.01<br>-10 | Over<br>10 | Total |
|--|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Average number of plots                  | 1.8          | 3.3        | 5.5        | 8.0        | 11.3       | 15.3        | 16.3       | 8.8   |
| Arable land                              | 0.29         | 0.61       | 1.35       | 2.19       | 3.42       | 5.57        | 8.79       | 2.64  |
| Size of work force                       | 0.61         | 0.77       | 0.95       | 1.30       | 1.45       | 1.99        | 1.50       | 1.28  |
| Ha. of arable land per work force        | 0.47         | 0.80       | 1.41       | 1.68       | 2.36       | 2.78        | 3.86       | 2.07  |
| HP tractors per ha. of arable land       | 12.22        | 9.29       | 7.57       | 7.95       | 9.94       | 11.54       | 8.88       | 9.76  |
| Cattle units 1985                        | 0.33         | 0.69       | 1.76       | 3.47       | 6.38       | 12.67       | 14.94      | 4.88  |
| Cattle units 1975                        | 1.18         | 1.39       | 3.41       | 4.87       | 6.52       | 11.23       | 19.41      | 5.49  |
| Cattle units 1985 per ha. of arable land | 1.17         | 1.13       | 1.31       | 1.59       | 1.86       | 2.27        | 1.70       | 1.84  |
| Cattle units 1985 per work force         | 0.55         | 0.90       | 1.84       | 2.66       | 4.41       | 6.36        | 9.96       | 3.81  |
| Consumption of fertilizers (in kg)       | 162          | 429        | 705        | 1092       | 1951       | 3382        | 5425       | 1502  |
| Fertilizers per arable land (kg/ha.)     | 566          | 698        | 524        | 499        | 569        | 606         | 617        | 568   |
| Share of market oriented farms           | 25.7         | 58.8       | 78.8       | 96.9       | 99.1       | 97.3        | 100.0      | 83.5  |
| Litres of milk sold per cow              | 850          | 590        | 1150       | 1268       | 1358       | 1564        | 1600       | 1373  |

The region of Prekmurje – and within its framework the Lendava municipality – is the most fertile region in Slovenia. The conditions in this region are most favourable for crop production, but due to the small size of the farms, crop farming does not ensure a sufficient income. Livestock production is therefore predominant, as is also evident from the structure of the farm produce sold. The level of market orientation in agricultural production is low, despite the fact that 83.5 % of farms sell their produce on the market. Subsistence production for home needs prevails, and this is why farms, selling only 25–50 % of their total production, are by far the most numerous (K l a d n i k, 1987).

Land consolidation in Slovenia was as a rule connected with the implementation of amelioration works but the share of land on which it was carried out was small. Until the end of 1985 land consolidation was carried out on no more than 10 000 hectares. (A v b e l j, 1986). In this way, the fragmentation of plots was to some extent reduced but the size of farms did not increase. Consolidation on individual farms also encompassed only small portions of total holdings. It is an alarming sign that in some cases the plots which once were consolidated are being parcelled out again because of the tendency of land owners to secure their own supply of the full range of crops. Environmentalists should be invited to participate in land consolidation processes, too. Mistrustful as they are, farmers are not very much inclined to such actions for fear of receiving land of inferior quality.

## MAIN FEATURES OF RURAL POPULATION AND AGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS

In 1981, rural population accounted for only 9.4 % of Slovenia's total population (in 1991 only 7.6 %), whereas townspeople accounted for 49 %. Viewed from rural point, the data tell us that 721,000 people or 38.1 % of total population lived on farms. The percentage of population living on farms was the highest in the regions with the lowest percentage of urban population (in the Pomurje region 70 %, in central Slovenia only 21 %; N a t e k, 1989).

The countryside has always been a source of urban development. As the process of urban development was advancing, the countryside was losing their identity. The penetration of urban life into the countryside was the fastest in those parts where people combined farm work with regular employment or some other kind of paid work and daily commuted between the place of residence in an outlying district and the place of work in the city. On the other hand, it penetrated into the parts which were intensively settled with urban dwellers either as weekenders (cottages in distant places) or permanent residents (suburbs; Š t e f e, 1990).

Of the total of 192,000 agricultural households in Slovenia, 43,000 are agriculturally inactive. Pure farms account for 21,700 or 11.3 % and mixed farms for 52,000 or 27.1 % of the total. Agricultural households in which no member of the family core engages in farm work as his or her exclusive occupation amount to 116,500, or 60.7 %. On the average, pure farm comprises 10.7 hectares of land (forest included) and mixed farm 7.5 hectares. Labour potential in private rural economy includes a workforce of 147,000 units which, in view of the badly needed expansion of farms and rise in productivity, represents an ample surplus. The age structure of labour potential is markedly unfavourable (K o v a č i č, 1986).

The life of a part-time farmer is harsh. Beside his job he also works on the farm which is well equipped with agricultural machines, on which he spends a substantial part of his

Table 4: Average number of hours worked on the farm with regard to family position, age and employment in Lendava municipality (K l a d n i k, 1986).

Tabela 4: Povprečno število ur vloženega dela na kmetiji glede na položaj v družini, starost in zaposlitev v občini Lendava.

|                       | Works only<br>on the farm | Has regular<br>job | Supported,<br>unemployed | With own<br>income | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Owner, husband        | 9.05                      | 3.35               | 1.75                     | 6.10               | 6.51  |
| Owner, lady           | 8.50                      | 2.85               | 0.26                     | 6.20               | 7.29  |
| Man (15-60 years)     | 8.88                      | 2.79               | 1.77                     | 2.40               | 3.57  |
| Woman (15-60 years)   | 8.63                      | 2.73               | 2.19                     | 2.60               | 4.17  |
| Man (over 60 years)   | 2.60                      | -                  | 1.11                     | 3.33               | 2.15  |
| Woman (over 60 years) | 4.06                      | -                  | 0.43                     | 1.00               | 2.23  |
| Child (10-14 years)   | 6.00                      | -                  | 0.75                     | 1.80               | 1.02  |



income earned by regular employment. While on the average a full-time farmer works on his farm 8.4 hours daily, a part time farmer spends, after work, an additional 2.9 hours daily on his farm (K l a d n i k, 1986).

A great number of small-size mixed holdings and those where farming is not the exclusive occupation of any of the household members doubtless, by hinders the opening of concentration processes. This especially applies to lowlands where facilities for individual segments of modern market production require a space of some 10 hectares. In these areas concentration of land should be carried out at any cost. In mountainous regions where the presence of population and the preservation of production potentials and cultural identity should be secured, different measures should be applied. In these areas, mixed farms should be stimulated and programmes of supplementary activities should be prepared (forestry, rural tourism, cottage crafts). Supplementary activities account today for about 7 % of farm earnings (B a r b i č, 1990).

The rate of mechanization in the social sector of agriculture is 1 kW per hectare and in the private sector 16 kW per hectare. While the former is inadequate, the latter is abnormally high although it is the only way of compensating for the outflow of labour and the highly ineffective utilization of working hours as the consequence of excessive fragmentation of holdings (Š i l c et al., 1981).

## THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

It is obvious that our agricultural policy sought to sustain the supply (i. e. social) function of agriculture instead of enabling it to develop into an economic activity (K o v a č i č, 1986).

Adherence to ideological views which ignored the laws of market economy and viewed farmers as potentially dangerous enemy resulted in the enactment of the law on a maximum individual land holding (10 hectares of arable land). This law, coupled with the gradual mechanization of agricultural production, thwarted all potential concentration processes and dealt them a blow which they will long be unable to get over. In harsh times property becomes even more sacred as a warranty of social security if not as an existential necessity. The protagonists of such ideological views refused to recognize that agriculture is also liable to the laws of capitalist concentration, for they failed to understand (G l i h a, 1987):

- that ownership is the motive which essentially determines the attitude to the land and work in agriculture;
- that family farms are the most effective form of production units in the majority of agricultural orientations;
- that production units must accommodate to technological development and not vice versa,
- that development must not be restrained or denied;
- that we are still fearful of economical powerful farms.

A long process of concentration, which has not even started yet, is thus ahead of us, and its principal natural limiting factor is the relief of Slovenia to which the arrangement of production by regions will have to be adjusted.



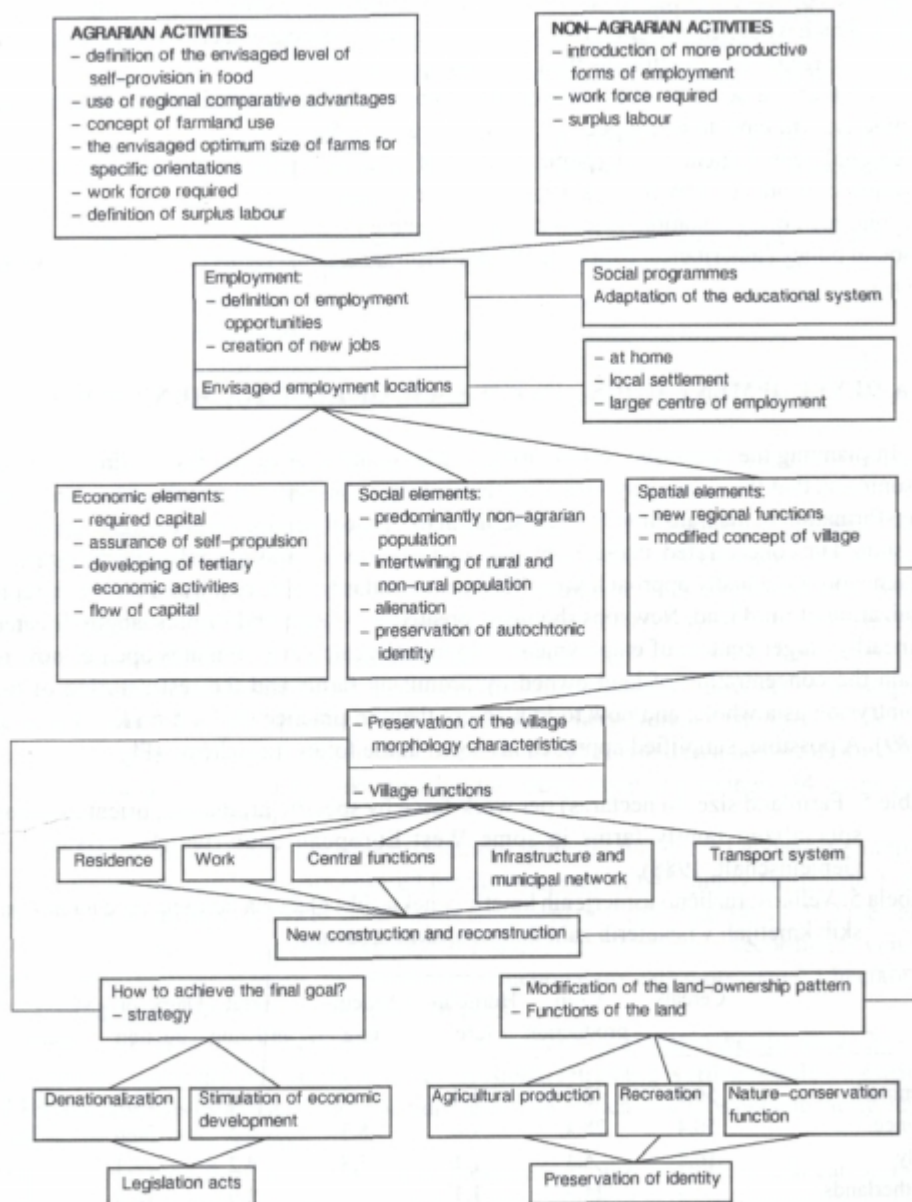


Fig. 1: A development model of countryside.  
Slika 1: Model razvoja podeželja.

Adequate earnings, the possibilities for the development of farms, social security and favorable conditions of life in the countryside must be the imperatives of our agricultural policy which would ensure good prospects for life upon farming and encourage rural population to engage in agriculture as their sole occupation.

To this end, a range of ideology-free policy approaches to be consistently implemented in practise will have to be shaped up. They should include:

- regional development policy (population, creating of new jobs, land ownership, organization of production by regions, protection of farmland);
- economic policy (taxation, prices, credits, investments, subsidies);
- social policy (inheritance, education, health, insurance, equal rights of farmers and workers).

### A DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN THE CASE OF LENDAVA MUNICIPALITY

In planning the envisaged restructuring of the countryside we are proceeding from the assumption that the existing system of settlements is a constant which will undergo a rapid transformation in the transition from an agrarian to a post-industrial society. Agrarian activity should be concentrated in the promising, market-oriented and specialized family farms, which would gradually approach West European standards. This requires a thorough reorganization of rural land. New jobs should be created in villages and surplus labour directed to nearby, larger centers of employment. The question, however, remains open of how to attain the concentration of land owned by promising farms and the restructuring of the countryside as a whole, and how to implement them in practice (K l a d n i k - N a t e k, 1989). A possible, simplified approach is shown in the following scheme (Fig. 1).

Table 5: Farmland size (in hectares) per work force by specific production orientations on specialized family farms in some West European countries (Komission der Gemeinschaft, 1988).

Tabela 5: Velikost različno usmerjenih kmetij (v hektarjih) glede na delovno moč na družinskih kmetijah v nekaterih zahodnoevropskih državah.

|               | Cereals | Crop<br>production | Horticul-<br>ture | Viticult-<br>ure | Fruit<br>growing | Dairy pro-<br>duction | Meat pro-<br>duction |
|---------------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Denmark       | 56.8    | 43.5               | 1.4               | -                | 4.8              | 22.7                  | 23.6                 |
| France        | 50.4    | 28.4               | 1.6               | 8.3              | 5.5              | 20.6                  | 30.3                 |
| Italy         | 16.2    | 5.4                | 1.1               | 3.8              | 4.2              | 7.4                   | 12.2                 |
| Netherlands   | -       | 24.5               | 1.1               | -                | 2.9              | 16.0                  | 10.6                 |
| Spain         | 65.8    | 18.1               | 1.6               | 19.7             | 14.3             | 11.4                  | 17.2                 |
| Great Britain | 51.2    | 34.7               | 2.6               | -                | 5.5              | 26.0                  | 166.6                |
| Germany       | 27.4    | 21.6               | 0.5               | 3.4              | 2.2              | 16.3                  | 16.7                 |
| EU            | 31.3    | 11.3               | 1.3               | 5.4              | 3.8              | 17.8                  | 39.4                 |

Of key importance in this, seemingly, complicated situation is the envisaged orientation of the agrarian policy which is to be based on the accelerated establishment of family farms. This problem is demonstrated in a detailed analysis of the development potential of the Lendava municipality, proceeding from suitable examples from developed, market-oriented West European economies.

Comparisons show that contemporary farming methods permit family farms with two full-time farm workers to cultivate far greater amount of arable land than those characteristic of Slovenia in the present situation.

If we make a model of the desired future orientation of agriculture in the Lendava municipality, we can first establish that the key requirements for its successful implementation are: production specialization, market orientation, assurance of full employment of the work force, and production intensification. We estimate that in order to meet these requirements the most appropriate size of farms for cereal crops would be 50 hectares, for the production of other crops on the average 20 hectares, for cattle breeding 35 hectares, for horticulture 3 hectares, and for viticulture 7 hectares. It is assumed, however, that viticulture will remain in the domain of non-farming population, within the framework of its leisure (afternoon, weekend and holiday work) and recreation activities.

In the Lendava municipality, 10,505 hectares of fields, 5,196 hectares of grassland, 480 hectares of extensive orchards, 419 hectares of pastures and 6.14 hectares of vineyards are in private ownership. Let's suppose that 50 % of all available fields are intended for cereal crops, thus providing survival for 105 family farms with 210 full-time farm workers; that 25 % of fields are intended for other crops production, which covers 131 farms with 262 full-time farm workers; that 5 % are designated for intensive horticulture, thus enabling the preservation of 175 promising farms with a total of 350 farm workers, and that 20 % of the available fields (feed plants), all grassland, extensive orchards and pastures are destined for animal husbandry. This would make possible the establishing of a further 234 farms with 468 full-time farm workers.

The sum of the envisaged possible orientations indicates that in the Lendava municipality as a whole, the conditions are ensured for the existence of 645 family farms with 1,290 full-time farm workers. In 1981, 'pure' farms employed on a full-time basis 1,162 men and 895 women in the age group 20–39 years, i. e. a total of 2,057 persons. According to census data, the total number of farms, including all production units with more than 0.1 hectare of arable land, accounted for as many as 6,146 units.

From the comparison of both syntheses it can be concluded that in the age group 20–39 years alone – being the only one in which professional retraining is still possible – a surplus of 800 persons was established (only on pure farms) for which new jobs outside the agricultural sector should be secured.

Of course, modifications of the model presented are also possible which can significantly affect the estimated number of the work force required in the private sector of agriculture. First of all, possibilities can be sought for new supplementary sources of income on farms (crafts, trade, rural tourism, other activities) which would enable survival on relatively small farms. The second modification would be an accelerated introduction of biological farming requiring a higher labour-input but a reduction in farm land. Yet, due to



lower outputs and higher labour costs, such products are expensive and hardly competitive with today's classical agricultural products. It is therefore questionable to what extent, and when, our market will become open to such offers; especially due to present global environmental pollution, the micro-level quality of farm produce is also questionable. The third modification would be an extensive denationalization of formerly nationalized farmland, which would open up possibilities for the creation of additional family farms.

## CONCLUSION

Since we are turning our eyes upon the EU and EFTA countries and wish to take the attainments of their economic system as our model, we must accommodate our agriculture and the development of our countryside to contemporary trends in these countries with their orientation to production of market surpluses. Only by introducing appropriate INPUTS which would provide for the desired European-standard OUTPUTS we shall be able to modernize our agriculture and countryside.

An adjustment which would be limited to the field of agriculture only is, of course, out of question. The socio-political system in its entirety should be adjusted, especially production relations in the secondary and tertiary economic sectors. Also, certain unproductive programmes which only further increase the high costs of administration should be abandoned. Only after this part of adjustment has been successfully completed, it will be possible to improve the situation in agriculture. Overall economic efficiency and a satisfactory level of productivity in manufacturing and other productive activities are the prerequisites to ensure normal standard of living from a single employment (in agriculture or outside it) and reduce their superhuman efforts for survival and the provision of material goods to the normal but effective measure (K l a d n i k, 1990).

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## **PROBLEMI PREOBRAZBE PODEŽELJA NA PREHODU V TRŽNO GOSPODARSTVO**

### **Povzetek**

Z osamosvojitvijo Slovenije so se pričele in se še uveljavljajo obsežne družbeno-ekonomske spremembe, ki bodo imele sčasoma daljnosežne posledice v vseh porah našega bivanja in ustvarjanja. Pričakovati je postopne spremembe v proizvodnih odnosih, ki se bodo pokazale tudi v ustroju podeželja. Prav Prekmurje s svojo prevladujočo ruralnostjo je v okviru Slovenije zaradi nadpovprečno pomembne agrarne funkcije najbolj na udaru.

Paleta preživelih poskusov uvajanja samoupravnega socializma na vasi zahteva v pogojih uvajanja tržnega kmetovanja temeljito prestrukturiranje in prilagajanje proizvodnih inputov željenim outputom.

Zaradi zapletenega součinkovanja različnih dejavnikov je, upošteva povsem neustrezno zemljiško lastniško strukturo, potrebe po denacionalizaciji, nedorečeno prostorsko zasnovo vaških naselij in podeželja nasploh, neprestano prestrukturiranje razpoložljive delovne sile in zagotavljanje njene polne zaposlenosti ter omejena finančna sredstva za izboljšave, pričakovati vrsto problemov, ki se bodo pokazali v mnogoterih konfliktih in le v počasnem,

postopnemu prilagajanju posameznih segmentov željeni optimalni zasnovi. Ni dovolj, da vidimo le željeni končni cilj, potrebno je jasno opredeliti potrebne ukrepe z ovrednotenjem vmesnih, kritičnih faz, obenem pa moramo pravočasno postaviti temelje razvojne gospodarske, socialne in prostorske politike, obogatene s predvidenim instrumentarijem za njeno realizacijo.

Naš namen je opozoriti na tista neskladja v razvoju podeželja, ki bodo predvidoma predstavljala temeljne ovire pri prilagajanju tržnogospodarskim odnosom, predvsem na področju kmetijstva. Pri tem upoštevamo regionalno specifiko Prekmurja in njegovo vlogo v razvoju celotne Slovenije. S spremembami osnovnih geopolitičnih potez se spreminja tudi vloga Prekmurja in pojavljajo se nove vrednote ter odpirajo nove perspektive.

Med strukturalnimi problemi izpostavljamo visok delež mešanih delavsko-kmečkih gospodinjstev, prekomerno zemljiško razdrobljenost, pomanjkanje delovnih mest izven kmetijstva, pomanjkljivo prometno povezanost in stihijski razvoj podeželskih naselij. V svojem prikazu podrobneje predstavljamo problematiko v obmejni občini Lendava, za katero je značilno obsežno sklenjeno narodnostno mešano območje.

Razvili smo model, ki omogoča ovrednotiti sedanje stanje z vidika željenih usmeritev. Prinaša pregled potrebnih ukrepov in prostorskih posegov, pa tudi celovit pogled na nadaljnjo zasnovo podeželja.

Pri predvideni prenovi podeželja izhajamo iz predpostavke, da je obstoječ sistem naselij konstanta, ki bo doživela naglo notranjo transformacijo na prehodu iz agrarne v postindustrijsko družbo. Agrarna aktivnost naj bi se skoncentrirala na perspektivnih, tržno usmerjenih in proizvodno specializiranih družinskih kmetijah, ki naj bi se v svojih razpoložljivih zemljiških postopoma približale zahodnoevropskim standardom. Za doseg tega cilja je potrebna temeljita preobrazba vaških zemljišč, v vaseh naj bi se ustvarila nova delovna mesta, viški delovne sile pa bi se usmerili v bližnja večja zaposlitvena središča. Odprto ostaja vprašanje, kako doseči koncentracijo zemljišč v lasti perspektivnih kmetij ter celovito preново vasi in, kako jih konkretno izpeljati.

Pri vsej navidezni zamotanosti je ključnega pomena učinkovita kmetijska politika. Problem je prikazan s podrobno analizo stanja in razvojnih možnosti na primeru občine Lendava, izhajajoč iz ustreznih zgledov v razvitih, tržno naravnanih zahodnoevropskih gospodarstvih.

Konkretna izvedba modela najprej postreže s spoznanjem, da so ključne razvojne predpostavke proizvodna specializacija, tržna usmerjenost, zagotovitev polne zaposlenosti delovne sile in intenzifikacija pridelovanja. Za zagotovitev njihovega uresničevanja lahko predvidevamo, da je ustrezna velikost kmetije za pridelovanje žitaric 50 ha, drugih poljedelskih usmeritev povprečno 20 ha, govedoreje 35 ha, vrtnarstva 3 ha in vinogradništva 7 ha, vendar se predpostavlja, da bo vloga slednjega še vnaprej prvenstveno domena nekmečkega življa v okviru njegove prostočasne rekreacijske dejavnosti.

Proučitev možnih predvidenih usmeritev kmetijske pridelave pokaže, da je v občini Lendava na razpoložljivih površinah (19 200 ha kmetijskih zemljišč) mogoče oblikovati 645 družinskih kmetij s 1290 polno zaposlenimi delovnimi močmi. Leta 1981 je bilo samo na čistih kmetijah polno zaposlenih 1162 moških in 895 žensk v starostni skupini 20–39 let, skupaj torej 2057 ljudi. Skupno število kmetij po popisnih podatkih, ki vključujejo vse proizvodne enote z več kot 0,1 ha obdelovalnih zemljišč pa je bilo kar 6146. Povzeti je

mogoče, da je samo v starostni skupini 20–39 let, ki jo je edino še mogoče poklicno prekvalificirati, ugotovljen višek 800 ljudi, ki bi mu bilo potrebno zagotoviti nova delovna mesta izven kmetijstva.

Seveda so možne tudi modifikacije predstavljenega modela, ki lahko pomembno vplivajo na izračune potrebne delovne sile v zasebnem kmetijstvu. V prvi vrsti se lahko išče možnosti za nove dopolnilne vire dohodka na kmetijah (obrt, trgovina, kmečki turizem, druge dejavnosti), kar bi omogočilo možnosti za preživljanje na sorazmerno manjših kmetijah. Druga modifikacija je pospešeno uvajanje biološkega kmetovanja, ki zahteva večje vložke žive delovne sile in zato manjše kmetije. Ker pa so donosi manjši in je cena dela visoka, so tovrstni pridelki dragi in slabo konkurenčni današnjim konvencionalnim pridelkom, zato je vprašanje, v kolikšnem obsegu in kdaj bo naše tržišče omogočilo obsežnejši prodor tovrstne ponudbe, obenem pa je tudi zaradi sedanje globalne onesnaženosti okolja vprašljiv mikronivo neoporečnosti kvalitete pridelkov.