

Economics of agriculture

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## SERBIAN FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS IN RESPECT TO RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

*In this paper is given relation between rural household and rural tourism. Serbia has numerous resources for rural tourism development. Involvement of households, economic and no economic activities which have interest in rural tourism development, tourism should become one of the most important generators of rural development and therefore overall economic activities. Resources of family households in Serbia are significant and enable their members to participate in touristic activities also. Family households in rural areas can produce healthy food which is important part of rural tourism development.*

**Key words:** *family households, rural development, rural areas, rural tourism.*

### Introduction

Family households in Serbia occupy the biggest part of arable land, the most of cattle, perennial trees, agricultural machines, buildings, working power. In rural areas of Serbia live around 42% of total population and part of them participates in agricultural production. Active farmers are 526.960 of them. Members of family households are bearers of agricultural production and also other activities in rural areas. Serbia has numerous resources for development of rural tourism. Bigger involvement of agricultural households and economical and no economical activities which have interest in development of rural tourism, it should become one of the most significant generators of development in rural areas but also overall economical activities in Serbia.

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Rural areas have enormous possibilities for organic food production as one of the most significant factors for rural tourism development.

Family households are at the moment in process of considerable changes which have influence on rural development and also to each member of households putting them in position to adapt to economical survival. Knowing that dominant activity in rural area is agricultural production which doesn't fulfill all needs of family households, some of those households engage in other activities, including rural tourism.

In order family households to have significant role in development of rural tourism it is necessary to take appropriate measures for development not only of agricultural production as basic activity in rural areas but also development of other significant activities.

Scope of living conditions improvement and development of infrastructure in rural areas, as much as providing of necessary funds for development and improvement of agricultural production and other activities is something that development of rural tourism depends on.

### **Purpose and method of paper**

This paper has goal to indicate on significance of family households to development of rural tourism. Particular attention is given to those family households which have appropriate resources. In this paper will be show structure of family households according to some determinants derived from statistical data published in editions of Serbian statistical college.

Resources of family agricultural households are significant but it is necessary to create condition for development of rural settlements which already have some possibilities and chances for development of rural tourism, agricultural and other activities.

Family households as basic activity have agricultural production, but more and more households become mixed because they beside agricultural production start to participate in other activities among which is rural tourism. All this have influence on rural development.

### **Results of research**

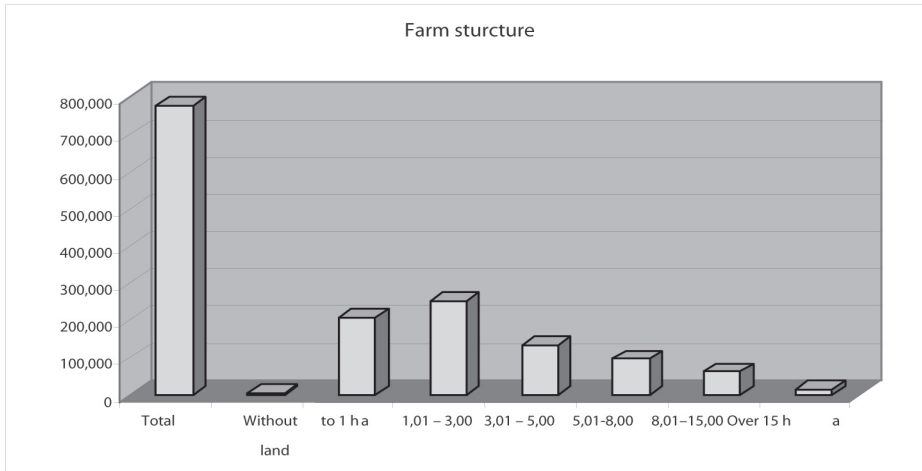
In second half of 20th century family households changed significantly. Changes in demographical and socio-economic structure of rural population had influence also on households. Number of total and active agricultural population decreased which also lead to decrease of working population in family households.

Unfavorable ownership structure of family households in Serbia had significant influence on development of small households in the first place. Certain legislative measures should regulate inheritance of households, which may stop their further division.

Changes that reach rural areas at all had influence also on family households

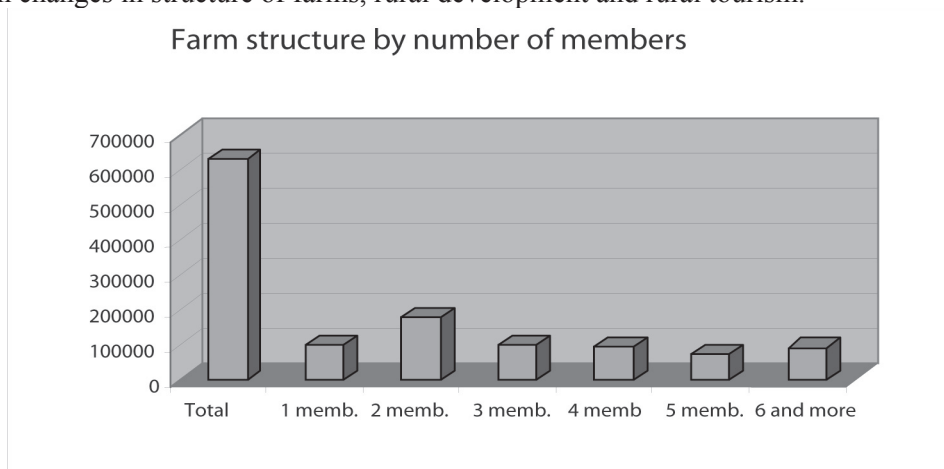
and farms. Average household get smaller because young get away to cities looking for better living and working conditions which lead to changes in structure of family households and farms.

Basic characteristics of family households in respect to ownership structure shows that they are small and split. Such ownership structure of farms has negative influence on scope of agricultural production. All this impose necessity to regulate ownership structure by legislative measures.

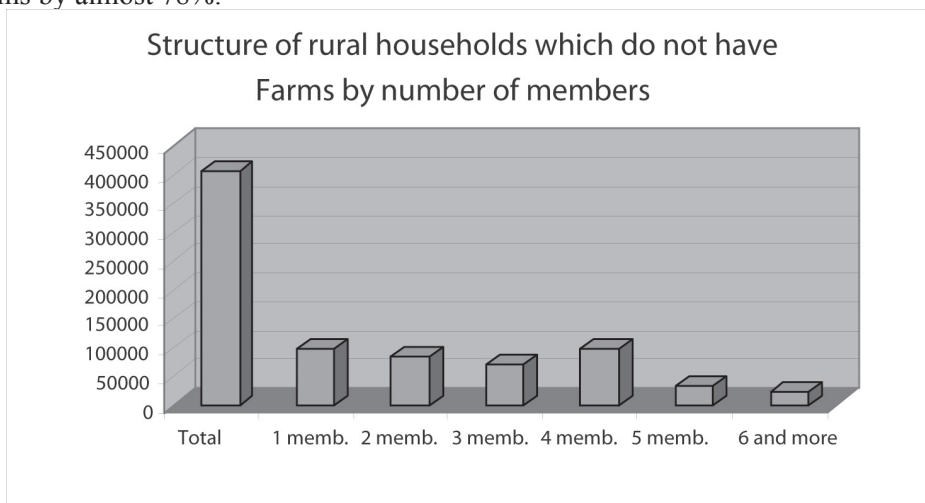


Source: *Agriculture, Census of population, households and buildings in 2002, Agriculture, Agricultural funds, 2003, page 20 and authors calculations.*

Data of ownership structure of farms show that prevail small, split units. Changes in number of farms and their size emerge by numerous reasons, but the most important are changes in number and structure of working power. Reduction of rural population, first of all active farmers, also increase of aged households had influence on changes in structure of farms, rural development and rural tourism.



Changes in farm structure are evident. Between two census total numbers of farms in Serbia decrease from 997,235 in 1991. to 778,891 in 2002. that is near 22%. The most significant decrease, around 23%, is at farms with size up to 10 ha, and also decreases of their participation in total number of farms by 2%, which is favorable tendency. Similar situation is with farms from 10 to 15 ha, they decrease by 14% but increase in participation in total number of farms by 9%. On the other side number of farms from 15 to 20 ha increase by 5.5% with increase in participation in total number of farms by 35%. The most significant increase in number is in farms bigger of 20 ha which number increase over 38% with increase in participation in total number of farms by almost 78%.



Based on data given above is evident that small farms dominate further on. It shows that in process of restructuration of agriculture farms stay on level of small land ownership.

Considering average farm size in Serbia it is, between two Censuses, slightly increase from 2.46 ha to 2.49 ha that is by 1%. Looking this data we might think that noting significant happened in this period, but index analyze show that significant changes happened still.

*Table 1. Used cultivable soil – average by farm (in ha)*

Size of used cultivable soil	Average by farm, ha		Index 1991.=100
	1991.	2002.	
Without land	0.00	0.00	100
Up to 10 ha	2.15	2.01	93.17
10,1 to 15 ha	7.46	7.93	106.30
15,1 to 20 ha	8.54	10.66	124.77
Over 20 ha	11.99	22.02	183.56
TOTAL	2.46	2.49	101.22

*Source: IBID., 20 pg. and authors calculation*

## **Rural tourism and rural development**

Exceptionally favorable condition for development of rural tourism, first of all, preserved nature, moderate climate, clean air, rich flora and fauna, unpolluted rivers and lakes offer to tourists different possibilities like walking, recreation, sport activities, excursions, climbing and entertaining activities. In rural areas tourists who show interest can be involved in different agricultural activities with their hosts. Out of all rural households only 800 of them in 50 villages participate in tourism and have around 2500 beds. Numerous villages are settled near valuable and well known cultural and historical monuments which could be interesting for excursions. Cultural values also have traditional buildings, products of old crafts, hand made articles, folk customs etc. It also could be interesting to visit local manifestations, exhibitions, competitions... It is obvious that family households in mountainous areas have advantage in touristic activities because of favorable conditions such as production of organic food, recreational holiday activities, healthy life conditions. Rural areas also are rich with natural beauties, have preserved nature, clean air etc. But all of this is not enough if there is not presented in right way and enriched with diverse programs. It is clear that people after hard work need quality vacation, especially people from big cities.

One of biggest problem of rural households in Serbia is ownership structure. Existing process of deagrarisation and legislative measures doesn't help much especially considering heritage and renting. Investments in agriculture, melioration first of all, were not enough and consist. All this had influence on rural households and after that on rural areas.

### **Conclusion**

Participation of family households in production potential and production itself in Serbian agriculture is the most significant. But till present days this production subject doesn't have appropriate consideration from state administration which brought to significant mistakes. This means that we have to pay especial attention to their development and restructurisation.

Villages near big cities have chance for rural tourism development. It is necessary also to pay attention to regional development. Development of rural areas should be based on interests and realized by support of people who live in that region. Regions are base for rural development because people in some region knows the best what their problems are and what are their needs, they control many resources, local production, they know what they can and want to do. Many regions in Serbia have preserved nature, moderate climate, clean air, rich flora and fauna, unpolluted rivers and lakes and they can offer to tourists different possibilities like walking, recreation, sport activities, excursions, climbing and entertaining activities. In rural areas tourists who show interest can be involved in different agricultural activities with their hosts. Numerous villages are settled near valuable and well known cultural and historical

monuments which could be interesting for excursions. Cultural values also have traditional buildings, products of old crafts, hand made articles, folk customs etc. It also could be interesting to visit local manifestations, exhibitions, competitions...

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