Agriculture

Following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the territorial annexations imposed upon Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon, the new international borders severed centuries-old regional economic relations within the Carpathian Basin. Agricultural production decreased in the new border zones, caused by the partial emigration of the population, from a region that, in general, became increasingly isolated. Hungary was left with a predominantly agricultural economy after the Treaty of Trianon. As a result, the country's economy has, for the past 90 years, struggled with the necessity to offset its economic imbalance, time and again managing to cope with agricultural overproduction as a significant part of Hungary's agricultural produce was exported to the German and Austrian markets between 1930–1944, then to the Soviet-dominated Comecon trading area in the period 1960–1985, and finally to West Europe after 1990.

The objective of the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union is precisely to avoid over-farming, by better adjusting land use with a view to its ecological endowments, enabling regions to specialise and distribute activities among themselves. Instead of a narrow 'sectoral' view, such an approach provides more opportunity for a complex regional policy, with the aim of ensuring sustainable development for rural societies.

The share of agriculture and food production has increased to in excess of 7% within the national export output (2007), while imports have grown to 4.7%, thus agrarian foreign trade had a positive balance of EUR 1,599 million (*Table 20*). The commodity contents of exports predominantly consisted of cereals, meat products, as well as vegetable and fruit products, together providing 47% of total agricultural exports. The predominance of cereals was due to the fact that the good yields of previous years helped accumulate a major surplus, thus, 75% of wheat and 96% of maize was sold to other EU member states. Hungary's biggest agricultural export markets are Germany (14.3%), Italy (11%) and Romania (11%), while 5% of agricultural and food processing output is sold outside Europe.

Table 20. ***Commodity pattern of Hungarian agricultural foreign trade (million EUR)***

Commodity groups	Export			Import			Balance		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
Livestock, animal products	923	927	1,076	554	595	656	369	332	420
Plant products	986	1,145	1,944	530	562	696	456	583	1,248
Animal fats, plant oils and wax	116	120	138	111	104	139	5	16	-1
Food products, beverages and tobacco	1,298	1,483	1,649	1,212	1,420	1,718	86	63	-69
Total	**3,324**	**3,675**	**4,807**	**2,408**	**2,680**	**3,209**	**916**	**995**	**1,599**

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

The Position of Agriculture in the National Economy

The growth of Hungarian agriculture and the food industry was most dynamic in the early 1970s, stimulated by an increasing export demand from the Comecon area, and a higher degree of domestic consumption. During the following one and a half decades, the growth rate slowed, but the balance between production and consumption remained stable, as market conditions barely changed (*Table 21*). Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew during the market

Table 21. ***Annual change in agricultural gross production (%)***

Year	Crop production	Animal husbandry	Total agricultural production
1971–1975	5.6	3.5	**4.6**
1976–1980	1.7	3.4	**2.5**
1981–1985	0.4	1.0	**0.7**
1986–1990	- 1.0	0.3	**- 0.4**
1991–1995	-4.7	-8.1	**-6.5**
1996–2000	-1.5	0.8	**-1.0**
2001–2005	13.3	-2.9	**4.3**

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

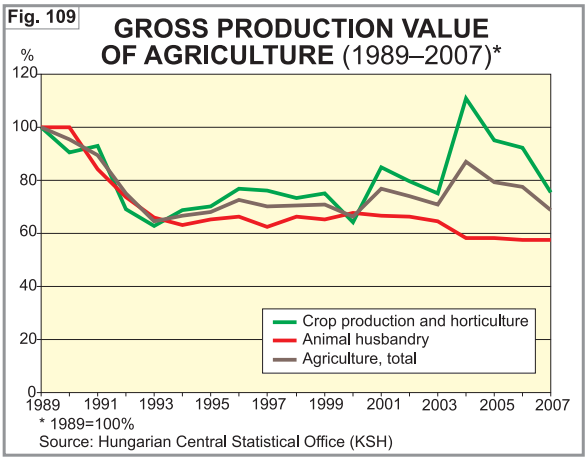
Table 22. ***Ratio of agriculture in GDP***

Year	National economy, total	Proportion of agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	
	million HUF	million HUF	% of total
1985	1,033,658	166,664	16.1
1990	2,089,313	261,236	12.5
1995	5,561,900	347,400	5.2
2000	11,566,473	623,749	5.4
2005	18,838,265	801,125	4.2
2007	21,795,210	878,279	4.0

Remark: At current basic prices, million HUF
Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

economy transition years, chiefly due to foreign direct investment (FDI) in industry and the tertiary sector. Consequently, the share of agriculture within GDP declined (*Table 22*). In the year of the regime change (1989) agriculture was responsible for 13.7% of GDP, and provided 22.8% of export revenues, whilst employing 17.4% of wage-earners. By 2007, the same figures had declined to 4%, 7% and 4.7% respectively. Such declines were essentially caused by the restructuring of the national economy. After a downturn in the early 1990s, gross agricultural production stabilised between 1995 and 1999, followed by a return to growth, but showing extreme fluctuation (mainly in the crop production sector). Output has since fallen back to the level of the 1990s (*Figure 109*).

Fig. 109



Land Use Structure

The proportion of the country's productive land (agricultural land, forest, reed and fishponds) decreased from 94% to 83.5% over the past 100 years, primarily as a result of urbanisation (urban growth, infrastructure development, etc.). The share of the agricultural land area (encompassing arable land, gardens, vineyards, orchards, meadows and pastures) has also decreased, while afforestation has accelerated.

Land use follows the spatial pattern imposed by the natural conditions (*Figure 110*): forested area is predominant in mountains, but also widespread in hilly terrain and on poor quality, sandy soils. Arable land extends over more than 70% of the lowlands (Alföld, Kisalföld and Mezőföld) and the gently sloping hills (e.g. Outer Somogy and the Tolna Hills).

The most fertile cropland is cultivated in the Kisalföld, Mezőföld, Bácska, Békés and Hajdúság regions. Of the more intensive land uses (vineyards, orchards and gardens), the historic wine-growing regions, the vineyards and orchards of the Danube–Tisza Interfluve as well as the orchards of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County are the most characteristic and well known landscapes. This land use type includes suburban gardens found in built-up areas. Grassland (meadow and pasture) is most extensive in the Transdanubian Hills, on the slopes of the Cserhát and Cserehát Hills, and on the wet

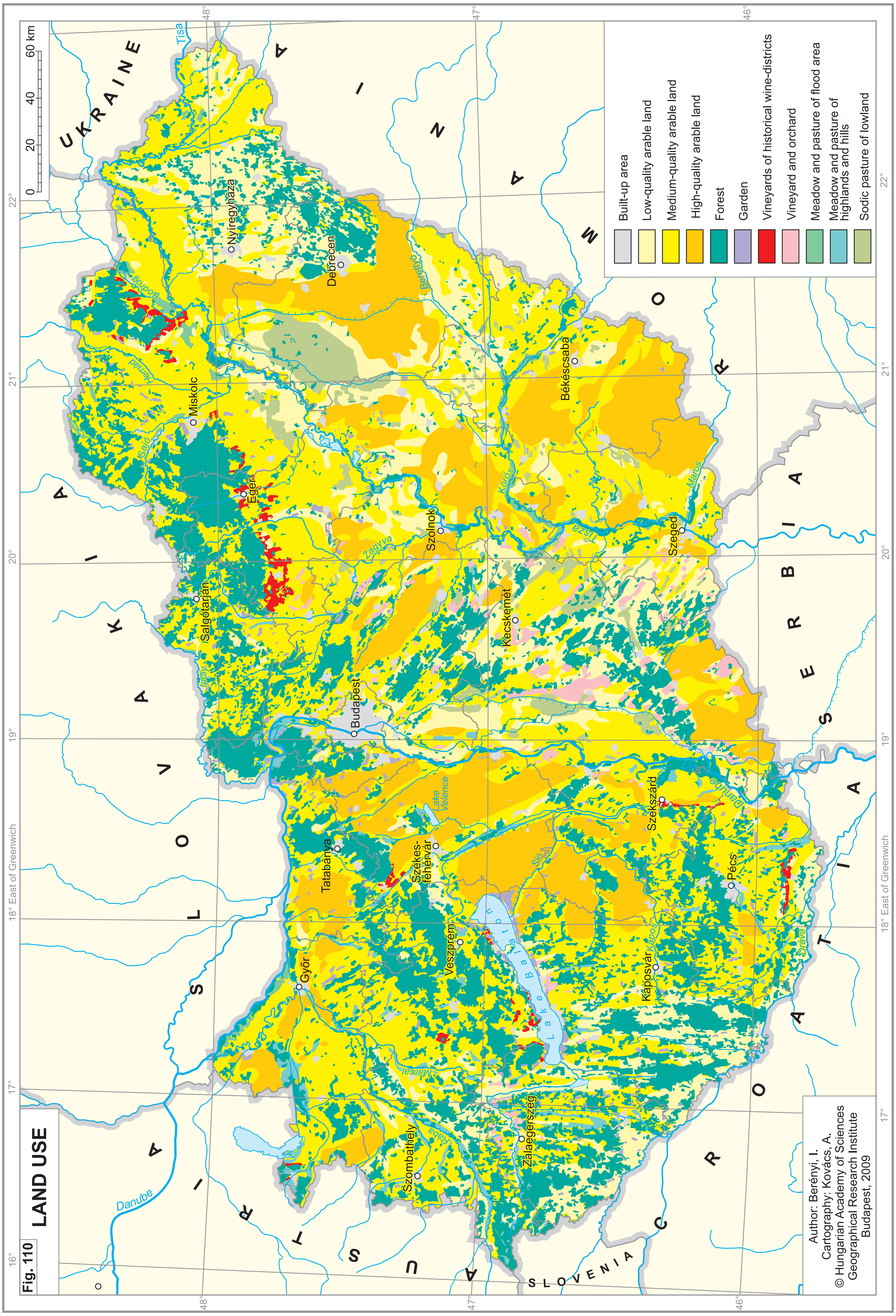


Fig. 110
LAND USE
Built-up area
Low-quality arable land
Medium-quality arable land
High-quality arable land
Forest
Garden
Vineyards of historical wine-districts
Vineyard and orchard
Meadow and pasture of flood area
Meadow and pasture of highlands and hills
Sodic pasture of lowland
0 20 40 60 km
UKRAINE
ROMANIA
SERBIA
CROATIA
SLOVENIA
AUSTRIA
SLOVAKIA
Budapest
Debrecen
Miskolc
Nyíregyháza
Salgótarján
Eger
Szolnok
Kecskemét
Békéscsaba
Szeged
Székesfehérvár
Tatabánya
Győr
Veszprém
Szombathely
Zalaegerszeg
Kaposvár
Szekszárd
Pécs
Danube
Tisza
Lake Balaton
Lake Velence
18° East of Greenwich
Author: Berényi, I.
Cartography: Kovács, A.
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Geographical Research Institute
Budapest, 2009

Table 23. ***Land use categories (1960–2008)***

Year	Arable land	Garden	Orchard	Vineyard	Grassland	Agricultural land area	Forest	Reed	Fishpond	Productive land	Uncultivated land area	Total
	Thousand hectares											
1960	5,309.8	107.5	82.3	203.6	1,437.9	**7,141.1**	1,306.2	26.1	..	8,473.4	829.6	**9,303**
1970	5,046.2	146.3	171.6	229.7	1,281.3	**6,875.1**	1,470.7	32.3	..	8,378.1	924.9	**9,303**
1980	4,734.7	291.4	138.4	167.8	1,294.2	**6,626.5**	1,610.3	37.7	25.3	8,299.8	1,003.2	**9,303**
1990	4,712.8	341.1	95.1	138.5	1,185.6	**6,473.1**	1,695.4	40.4	26.8	8,235.7	1,067.3	**9,303**
2000	4,499.8	101.6	95.4	105.9	1,051.2	**5,853.9**	1,769.6	60.0	32.0	7,715.5	1,587.5	**9,303**
2008	4,502.8	96.1	98.5	82.6	1,009.8	**5,789.7**	1,884.4	59.4	34.7	7,768.3	1,534.7	**9,303**
	%											
1960	57.1	1.2	0.9	2.2	15.5	**76.8**	14.0	0.3	0.0	91.1	8.9	**100.0**
1970	54.2	1.6	1.8	2.5	13.8	**73.9**	15.9	0.3	0.0	90.1	9.9	**100.0**
1980	50.9	3.1	1.5	1.8	13.9	**71.2**	17.3	0.4	0.3	89.2	10.8	**100.0**
1990	50.7	3.7	1.0	1.5	12.7	**69.6**	18.2	0.4	0.3	88.5	11.5	**100.0**
2000	48.4	1.1	1.0	1.1	11.3	**62.9**	19.1	0.6	0.3	82.9	17.1	**100.0**
2008	48.4	1.0	1.1	0.9	10.9	**62.3**	20.2	0.6	0.4	83.5	16.5	**100.0**

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

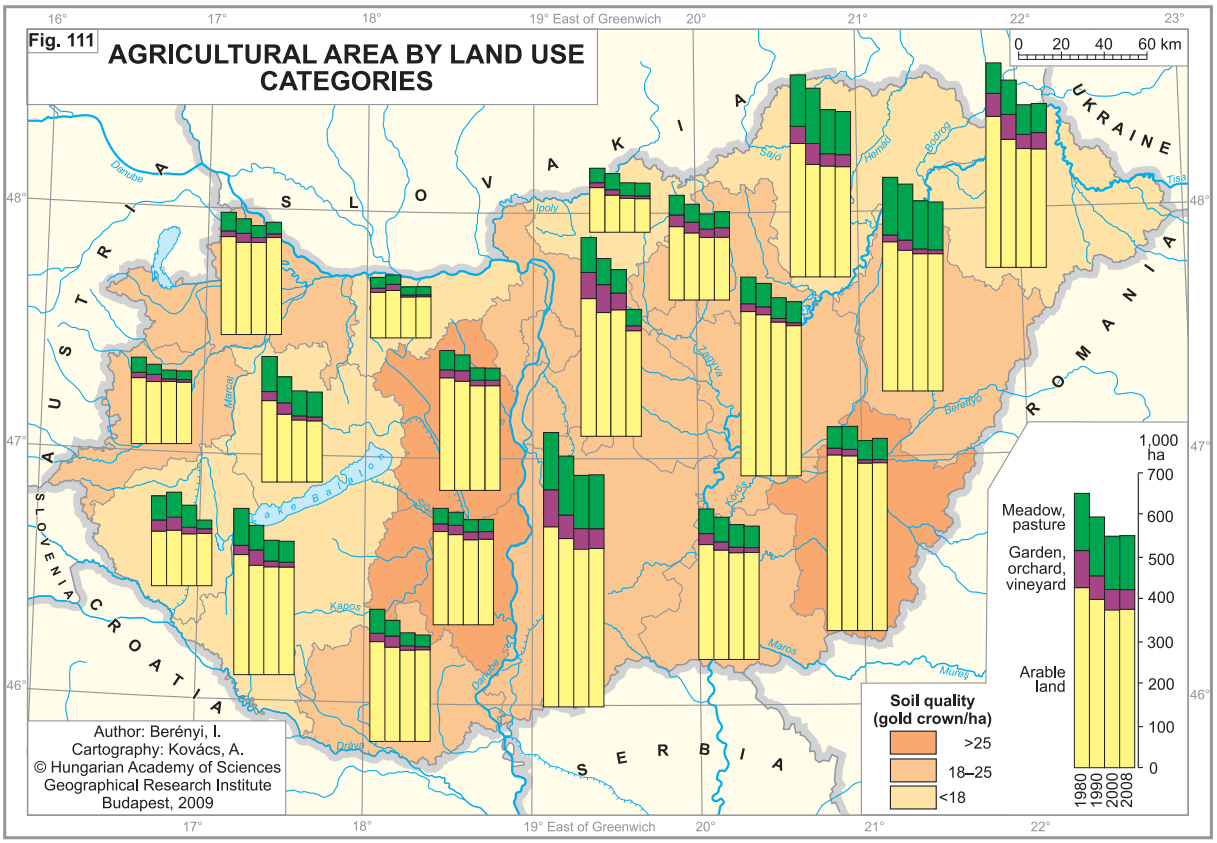
or dry floodplains along the Tisza and Körös rivers (alkali pastures, Hortobágy).

After 1960, due to accelerating urbanisation the extension of the area of cultivated land reduced as over 40 years approximately 800 thousand hectares ceased to be used for cultivation. In certain regions, the agricultural land use structure changed barely, even though the economic role occupied by agriculture, and the significance of some of the regions for farming, had changed profoundly. During the past decade the share of arable land (48.4% in 2008) within agricultural land use remained relatively stable (*Table 23*).

The productivity of agricultural land and, within this category, of ***arable land***, displays marked regional differences. A quarter of the country's agricultural land needs protection against wind erosion, or flood prevention and there are considerable regional differences in productivity, depending on the prevailing natural conditions (altitude, slope exposure, etc.). Therefore the extension of agricultural areas decreased between 1995 and 2000, with the exception of Békés County (*Figure 111)*.

Meadows and pastures occupy less than 18% of the country's agricultural area. Their total extension decreased between 1960 and 1980, particularly during the consolidation of land holdings (leading to the formation of larger plots of arable land between 1960 and 1965). In the early 1980s, some poorer quality arable land in the hills were converted back into pastures, as sheep stocks had increased to over 3 million, thanks to the good market conditions. Today, sheep stocks have fallen to 1.2 million, while the extension of grassland has actually increased; in the North Hungarian and Transdanubian Mountains a continuous grassland belt is beginning to take shape. Classic grassland management techniques were employed only for the sake of sheep farming, especially in the Hortobágy and the North Hungarian Mountains. The utilisation of natural grasslands is likely to gain ground once again if markets favour cost-sensitive production systems.

The most intensive agricultural sectors (wine and fruit production) were characterised by mixed ownership, even during the communist regime. Producers' cooperatives undertook organisational and marketing roles (e.g. in Bács-Kiskun County), so the transition after 1990 had much less impact upon this sector.



The national ***wine-growing area*** covers 82.6 thousand hectares, which is less than one third of the area compared to 40 years ago. 89% of vineyards are owned privately. About one third of them are found in the county of Bács-Kiskun, as its sandy soils produce good quality wine and champagne in larger volumes. The historical wine-growing areas stretch along the foothills from South Transdanubia to the Tokaj (Zemplén) Mountains, and the regions are popular not only for their wines, but also as rural tourist attractions for those interested in viticulture. The revival of wine-growing communities may help to strengthen local awareness and a sense of responsibility towards their home, which are essential ingredients for safeguarding the environment, soils, and maintaining high quality of wines.

The majority of the 98.5 thousand hectares of ***fruit-growing area*** is concentrated in two counties: apple and plum typical of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, and apricot, peach, cherry and sour cherry are mainly grown in Bács-Kiskun County. As domestic consumption patterns have changed, canned fruit and drinks have become predominant.

The total area of ***gardens*** amount to 96 thousand hectares, although a trend in their decrease is visible, similar to that of land used for intensive cultivation. With urban growth and the horizontal expansion of settlements, gardens have partly been re-classified as 'built-up' (uncultivated) land. The functional change of gardens has mostly occurred in city agglomerations and on the urban fringe.

Forestry is an important activity on the land, second only to agriculture and is responsible for the management of 1.9 million hectares of forest. The forested area has grown by nearly 200 thousand hectares between 1989 and 2008, although privatisation and compensation in land are not favourable for long-term investment.

Uncultivated area extends over 1.53 million hectares. Between 1990 and 2006, the share of uncultivated land tended to grow (from 11.5% to 17.4%) on account of the newly emerged greenfield investments, the relocation of certain urban functions, the ongoing tradition of building detached houses and the construction of new 'residential parks'. This expansion came largely at the expense of the productive land area, although since 2006, this unfavourable trend has been reversed, mainly due to afforestation; productive land has grown by almost 100 thousand hectares.

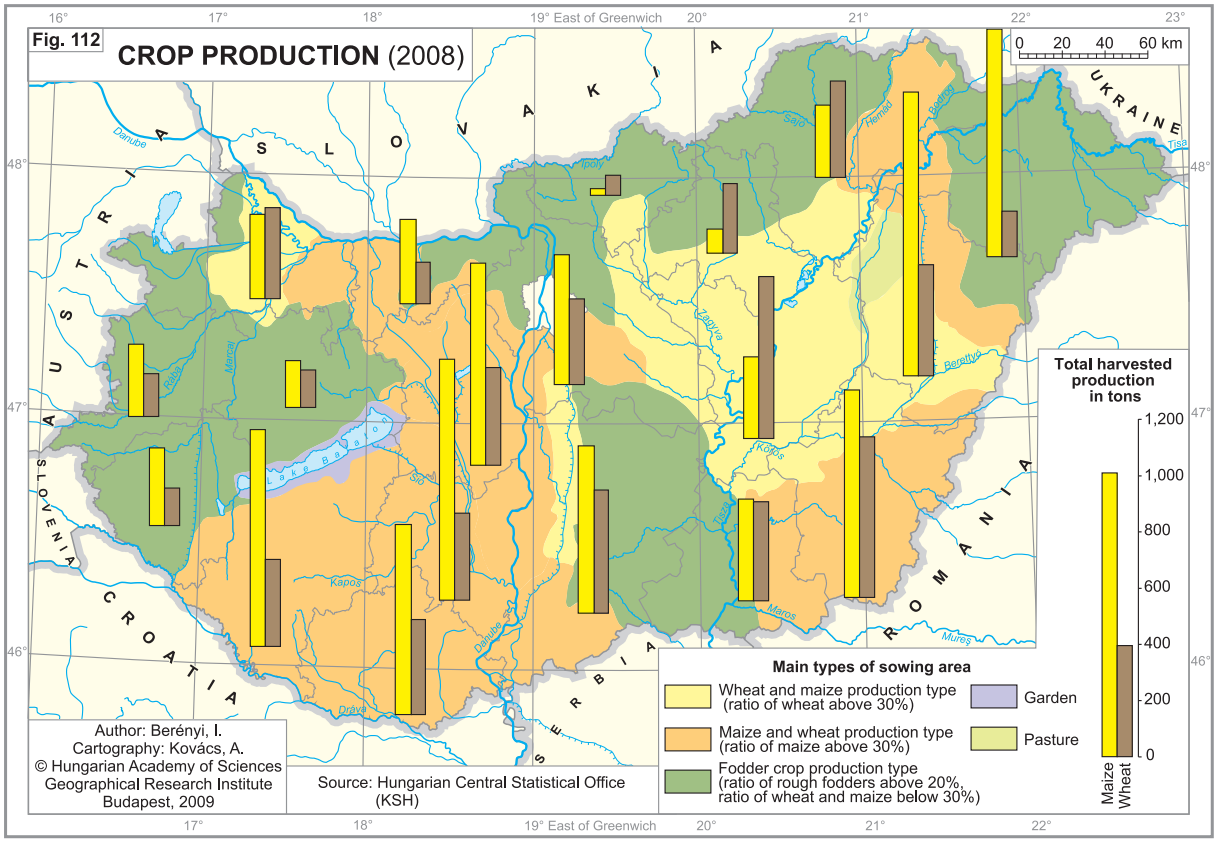
The structure of ***crop production*** hardly changed after 1990. Cereals currently occupy 64% of all arable land, and wheat is produced on 39% of this area (*Figure 112*). However, the land under fodder plants has shrunk due to the strong decline in livestock. A favourable change in the crop structure has been an increase in the cultivation of 'other crops', such as chilli peppers, vegetables, industrial crops and medicinal herbs, totalling 91 thousand hectares in 2007.

The sown area for wheat averaged 26.9% between 1986 and 1990. Since then this share has diminished, yielding 4 million tons in 2007. Maize cultivation continues to rank second by its extension within arable land, occupying 22.5% of cropland. Due to the decline in its domestic consumption, there has been a shift towards agricultural export, with expansion in its sown area and annual yields averaging 6 million tons over the past seven years.

Among industrial crops, the arable land used for sunflower cultivation has enlarged from 7.4% to 10%, which can be explained by the fact that vegetable oil production was privatised the earliest, and foreign ownership provided an easy access to western markets.

Transition after 1990 was the least problematic for the wine industry. Actively cultivated vineyards yielded 540 thousand tons of grapes in 2007, producing 320 million litres of wine. Red wine has gained ground, in harmony with increasing international and domestic demand. Nearly half of the wine-growing region lies in the Alföld (Danube–Tisza Interfluve, including areas around Kiskőrös, Hajós, Baja and Csongrád), with one third represented by the Transdanubian historical wine-growing areas (Villány, Mecsekalja, Szekszárd, Badacsony, Balatonfüred-Csopak, the Balaton region, Mór, Somló, Pannonhalma-Sokoróalja, Ászár-Neszmély and Sopron), and a further 20% to be found in the foothills of the North Hungarian Mountains (Mátraalja, Eger, Bükkalja and Tokaj-Hegyalja).

Fruit production has dropped from 1.5 million tons in 1990, to 1 million tons, largely due to the decline in apple exports to the



east. Illustrative of this decline is the fact that Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County provided 42% of the national fruit production output in 1990, but only 36% in 1996. Large-scale orchards yield 30% of the production in Zala County, but the same figure is less than 10% for the other counties. 56% of the annual fruit growth is made up of four kinds of fruit (apple, peach, sour cherry and plum), which are predominantly processed into beverages, jams and alcohol. The extension of the country's orchards had decreased to 93 thousand hectares by l996, but new plantations opened in the following decade and the total cultivated area grew to 103 thousand hectares by 2006, 62% of which lies on the Alföld, 25% in Transdanubia, and the rest in the northern counties. The share of smallholders has always exceeded 80% in fruit production, since only a quarter of the 75–80 million fruit trees are in commercial orchards. A quarter of the fruit production is made-up of apple. The Danube–Tisza Interfluve (Kecskemét and Nagykőrös areas) has a reputation for various sorts of apricot, and although they only comprise 7% of all Hungarian fruit trees, they rank second in production quantity.

Animal husbandry was affected most severely by the transition in the early 1990s. Difficulties in profiting from livestock first emerged in the 1980s and production levels started to decline somewhat in the period 1985–1990 (*Figure 113*). Cattle stocks had halved in North Hungary, and were reduced to one third in Nógrád County (*Figure 114*). In 2007, cattle stocks were 705 thousand, having slightly increased thanks to the growing market for beef cattle. Pig stocks on the Alföld had decreased by 40%, while the sown area of maize remained unchanged. The pig stocks of North Hungary suffered a less severe decline. The national pig

Fig. 113

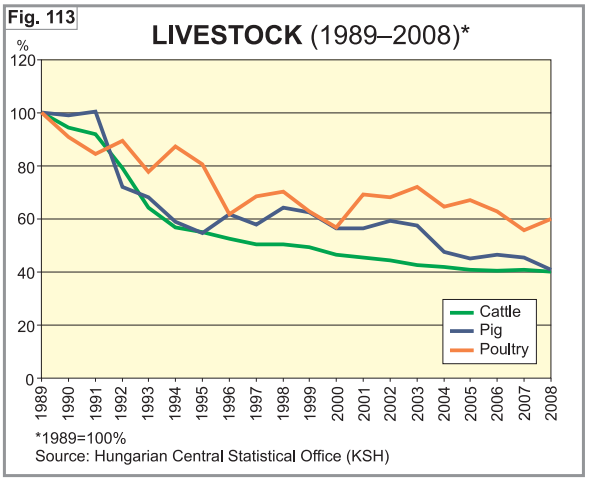
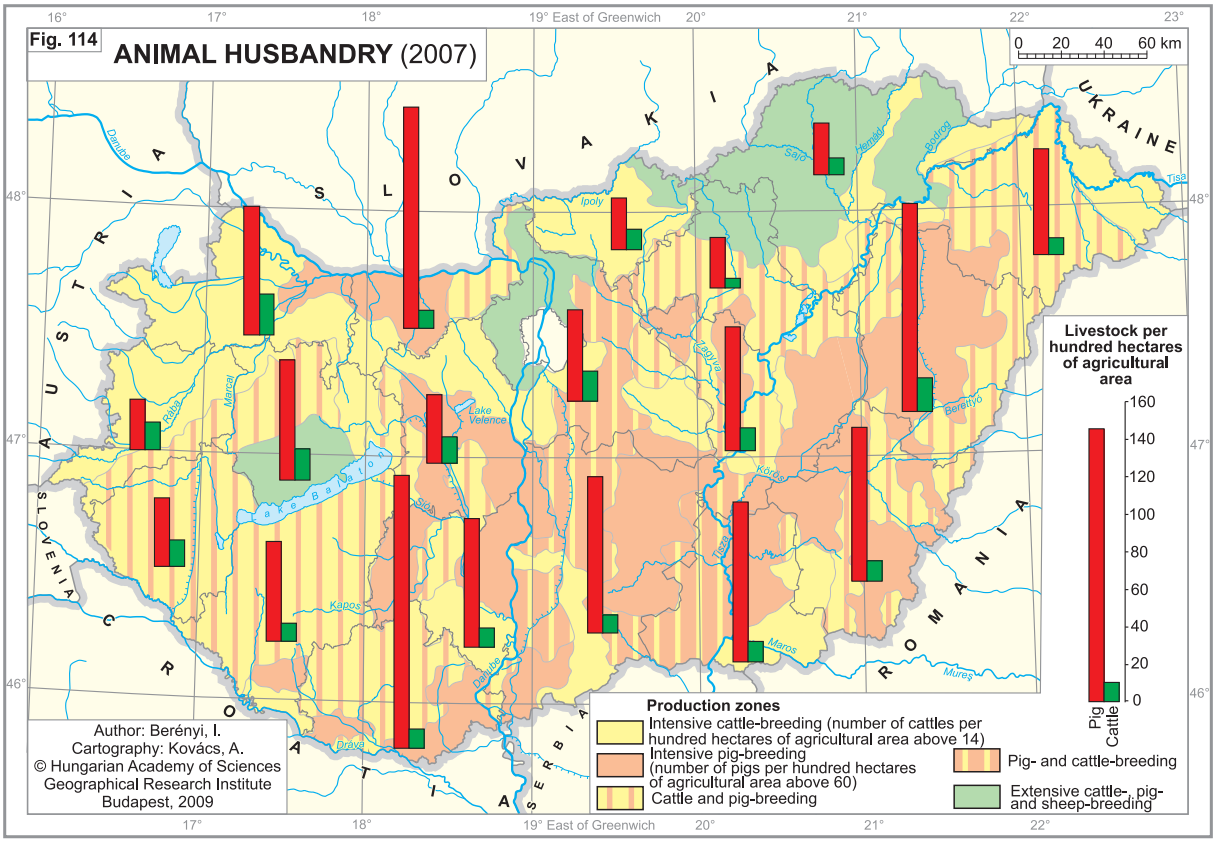


Fig. 114



stock is nearly four million, having fluctuated between 3.8–5.8 million for the past ten years. During the past decades, poultry production was the most rapidly developing (or least declining) sector of animal husbandry. Poultry stocks exceeded 45 million in 1982, then they dropped to 38 million in late 2007, of which 78% are gallinaceans. Nearly half are farmed on the Alföld, and 38% in Transdanubia (chiefly at Bábolna in Komárom-Esztergom County). Goose farming is less widespread, but the production of Hungarian foie gras has a long tradition in the vicinity of Kiskunfélegyháza. Sheep numbers dropped to one-third of previous stocks in the last decade (1.2 million, 2007), with commercial farms particularly cutting down on their stocks.

Transformation of Corporate and Ownership Conditions

According to the 1993 land-use statistics, corporations enjoyed rights over 20.2% of the national agricultural area; cooperatives owned 53.3%, whilst other organisations and farmers (e.g. smallholders and entrepreneurs) had 26.5%. The 1994 survey of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office revealed that 2 million households belonged to the latter group, possessing 1.6 million hectares, but only 1.5–2% of them had holdings over 10 ha. Private entrepreneurs farmed 0.1% of the national agricultural area.

In 1994, 51 thousand private farmers were registered and 80% of these farms had a mixed profile (involved in both plant cultivation and animal husbandry). 86% of the land cultivated by them was in their ownership, and 70% of this land was arable. Territorial data published on the activities of agricultural corporations and private farms in 2000 were not significantly different from those of the previous years. Data available for subsequent years only reveals statistics for both branches at a regional level.

The return of land that had been previously seized by the communist regime after 1990, affected various parts of the country to a differing degree. Fewer people had land returned in Transdanubia, thus, a larger proportion of land remained in the hands of commercial farms. On the other hand, corporate and ownership conditions in the Alföld had a more diversified structure even during the communist regime, due to the existence of producers' cooperatives, and this was further intensified by the compensation process that encouraged the establishment of private holdings (Bács-Kiskun and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties). These two counties harbour 44% of all the agricultural land in the ownership of smallholders living on the Alföld, and have the highest percentage of smallholders across all agricultural areas (*Figure 115*). At the same time, the large-scale farm structure changed less in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, because the rural population had declined to about half of its previous size, and is dominated by the elderly, resulting in weak capabilities for innovation. Thus, the transformation in the economic and farm structure of the intensive arable crop-producing counties of the Alföld was greater than in other counties of the countryside, but there was no change in the ratios of the pre-existing land use types, since entrepreneurs have continued to farm the same produce.

After the transition period, experienced and entrepreneurial groups of large-scale farms were able to become independent, whilst their former managers worked to keep these large farms together and reorganise them by making surplus manpower redundant, in particular on the remaining cooperatives. A smaller group of people that were in receipt of 'returned lands' attempted to establish farming entities. On a national scale, this succession of events resulted in a rapid decline of employment in the agricultural sector (*tables 24 and 25*).

After 1990, agrarian communities found themselves in a particularly difficult situation in counties where large-scale farms had only survived by being in receipt of state subsidies (which were already occurring from 1983–1988). Such a need arose, in many cases, due to the over-employment of labour that had been forced onto the farms through social ideology, which at the same time conserved their production structure (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Borsod-Abaúj-

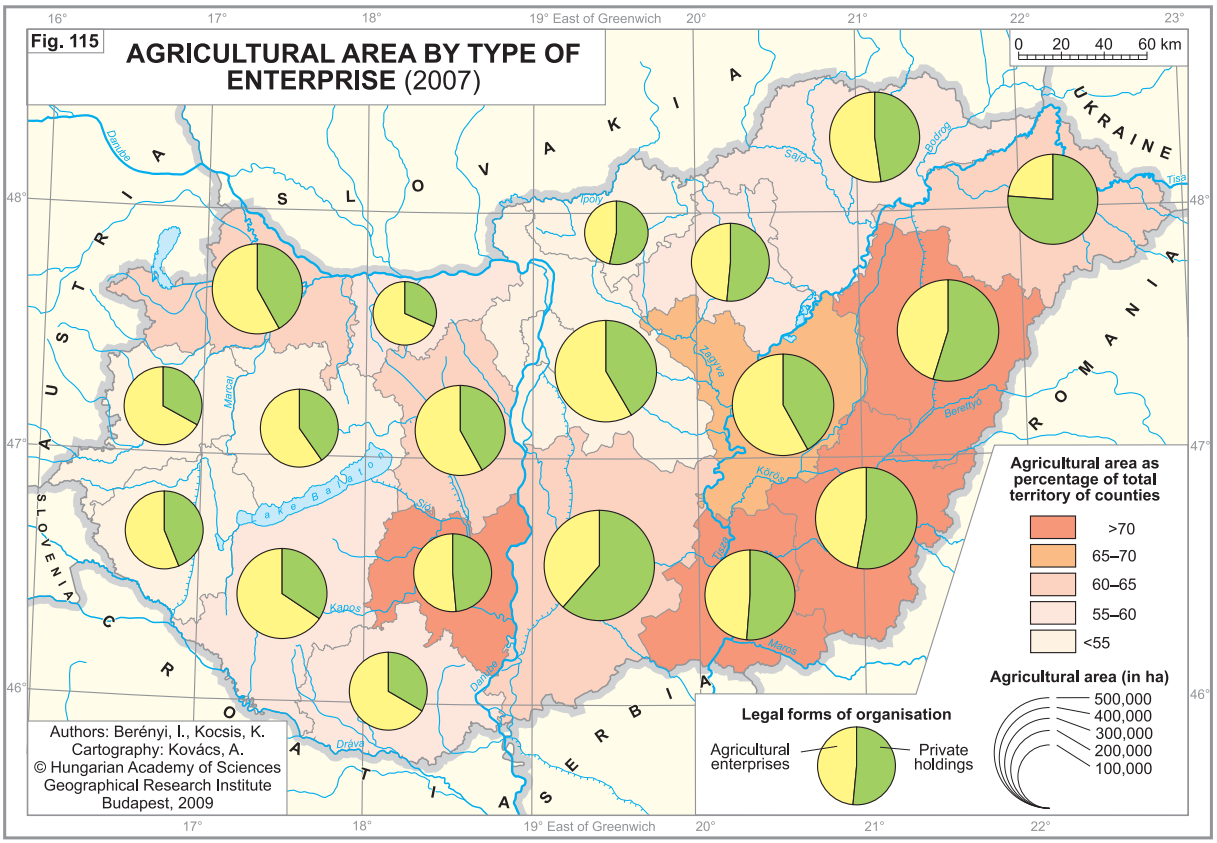


Table 24. ***Economically active persons in the agriculture and food industry (1985–2005)***

Year	Agriculture*	Of which occupied in basic activity	Food industry	Total
	thousand persons			
1985	981.1	660.6	202.5	**1,183.6**
1990	813.3	530.0	203.0	**1,016.3**
1995	308.5	..	..	**..**
2000	255.5	..	158.0	**413.5**
2005	194.0	..	140.0	**334.0**

*Including hunting, forestry and fishing.
Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

Table 25. ***Persons employed in the agriculture and food industry (1985–2005)***

Year	Agriculture*	Food industry	Total	Agriculture*	Food industry	Total
	thousand			ratio, %		
1985	..	..	..	20.0	4.1	**24.1**
1990	693	234	927	17.0	4.2	**21.2**
1995	295	157	452	8.0	4.3	**12.3**
2000	256	154	410	6.6	4.0	**10.6**
2005	194	140	334	5.0	3.6	**8.6**
2007	183	135	318	4.7	3.4	**8.1**

*Including hunting, forestry and fishing.
Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)

Zemplén, partly Heves and Nógrád counties). Among them, the counties and small regions that were in the most critical situation, were those where heavy industry had also collapsed (in the surroundings of Ózd and Salgótarján), and thus both large employment sectors (agriculture and industry) released manpower into the economy.

94% of the land managed as forest (1.9 million hectares) is actually forested, which means that 20.2% of the national territory is woodland (*Figure 110*). The proportion of deciduous stands is 85%, while coniferous areas are slowly declining. 57% of the forest stands can be considered native. With the restructuring in land use, and through environmental and landscape protection activities, forested areas grew by 20 thousand hectares in 2006–2007.

The annual growth of forests is 13.2 million m³, of which 6.6 million were logged in 2007 (*Table 26*). The direct value of this quantity of timber is 0.1% of GDP, but with the added value of the related processing industry, this figure is much higher. However, forests have a greater importance in the maintenance of historic landscapes, for recreation and supporting game stocks.

The international reputation of Hungarian game management and hunting is dependent upon the quality of large game stocks, and on the maintenance of a high standard of facilities for hunting. The top Hungarian trophies appear annually among the 'top ten' in the world, according to the C.I.C. qualifications. This attraction results in 25–30 thousand foreign hunters visiting Hungary annually. Hunting activities are evenly balanced with game stocks, to ensure the long-term maintenance of numbers (*Table 27*).

Fishing is carried out on 136 thousand hectares, and this figure has grown by 1,200 hectares since 2005. Because of low quantities of domestic consumption – a mere 4 kg per year per capita – the annual fish catch is 13–14 thousand tons. The export of live fish is far outweighed by the import of deep frozen sea fish and canned fish.

Table 26. ***Volume of timber production (thousand m³)***

Sector	2005	2006	2007
State	4,749	4,701	4,332
Private	2,395	2,282	2,253
Community	24	22	24
Total	**7,168**	**7,005**	**6,609**

Source: Agricultural Special Office, Forestry Management Department (Budapest, www.mgszh.gov.hu)

Table 27. Indices of game management sector

Game animals	2003–2004 hunting year	2004–2005 hunting year	2005–2006 hunting year	2006–2007 hunting year
	Estimated game stock (thousand units)			
Red deer	78.5	74.1	69.2	76.9
Fallow deer	20.5	21.6	21.8	23.9
Roe deer	320.8	316.0	310.4	312.0
Moufflon	7.9	8.3	9.2	10.1
Wild boar	77.8	78.1	77.7	77.8
Hares	535.1	520.9	535.2	472.1
Pheasants	691.0	736.8	796.9	723.7
	Number of game animals hunted (thousand units)			
Red deer	43.2	41.2	36.7	34.0
Fallow deer	8.4	9.1	8.9	9.3
Roe deer	76.8	85.9	89.9	79.5
Moufflon	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.6
Wild boar	81.5	86.8	79.5	94.0
Hares	102.4	132.7	105.1	95.7
Pheasants	391.3	453.1	474.0	432.8

Source: Szent István University (Gödöllő, www.szie.hu)

Agriculture and the Rural Environment

Some of the severest problems facing the rural community are population decline and ageing, as well as the loss of cultural heritage, causing enduring difficulties. The situation is particu-

larly grave in settlements of less than a thousand inhabitants, where 8% of the population lives, or 776 thousand people. These villages number 1,705 and they make up 54.4% of all settlements in Hungary (2001).

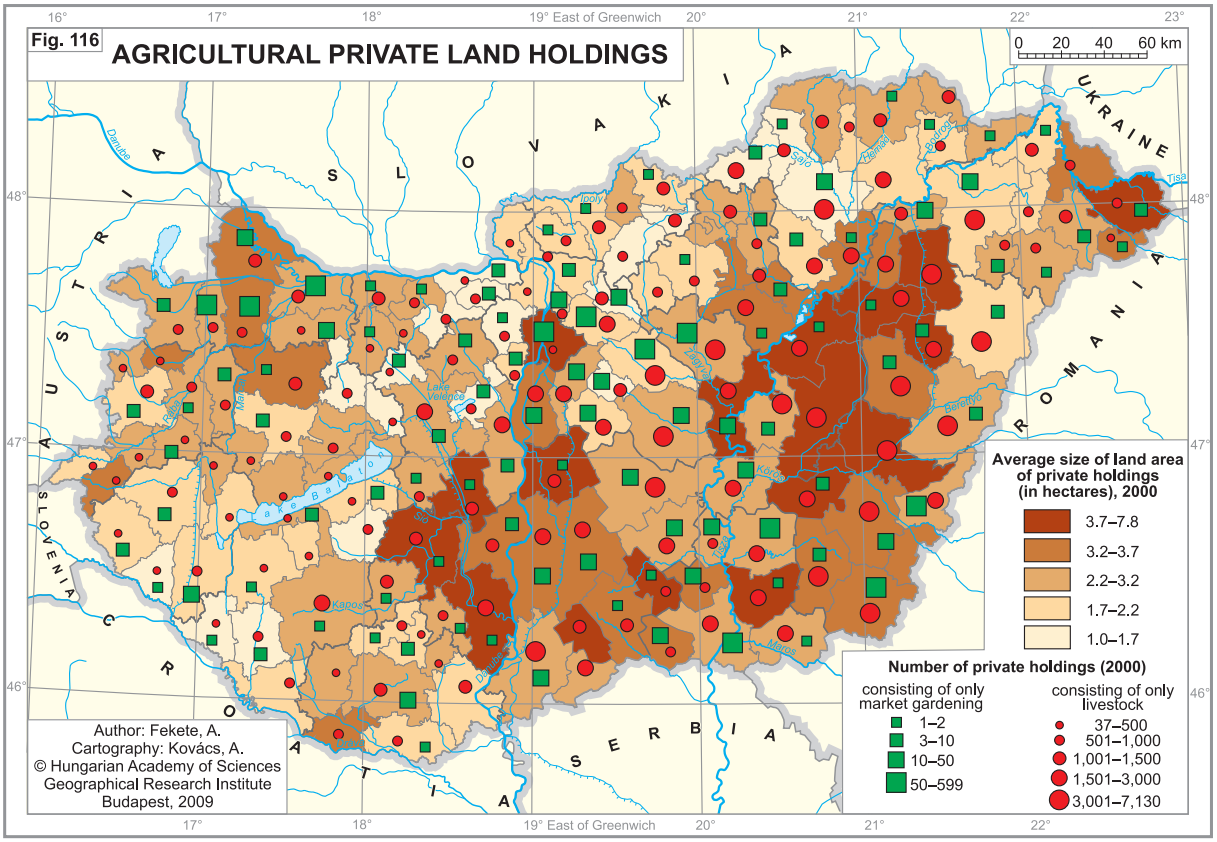
Between 1988 and 1992, the manpower released by a decline in industry partly relocated to their native rural environment, but achieved little else than bolstering the numbers of unemployed. In small villages, population decline has remained a general phenomenon and the proportion of the elderly continues to be well above the national average (*Table 28*). The result is that the age group upon which rural rejuvenation could be founded is steadily waning.

In 2009, the population of the country dropped to 10 million, which is primarily a disadvantage for rural society, as innovative members of society as a rule are likely to see a chance for success in cities and other urbanised areas. At the same time, young agricultural entrepreneurs form a growing class in rural society, using niche specialisation to compete with the mass production of privatised, large-scale commercial farms. A survey in 2000 on the output of private agricultural holdings reveals a definite corporate and territorial specialisation (*Figure 116*). Private holdings only dealing with animal husbandry or intensive horticulture are concentrated on the lowlands (Alföld and Kisalföld) and in city regions, whilst differences in land use and the structure of large-scale commercial production are most visible in the mountains and hilly regions lying along the south-west–north-east

Table 28. ***Age structure of the population of small villages (2001)***

Age group	Population categories of villages with				Country total	
	200–499 inhabitants		< 200 inhabitants			
	persons	%	persons	%	persons	%
0–14	43,522	18.1	6,119	16.1	**1,694,936**	**16.6**
15–59	137,058	57.2	20,623	54.3	**6,421,820**	**63.0**
60 <	59,354	24.7	11,226	29.6	**2,081,559**	**20.4**
Total	**239,934**	**100.0**	**37,968**	**100.0**	**10,198,315**	**100.0**

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu)



axis of the country. The above characteristics may trigger the reinvigoration of rural agrarian society, an aim that was facilitated by the SAPARD (Support for Pre-Accession Measures for Agriculture and Rural Development) programme since 2000, and ended with Hungary's accession to the EU (2004), even though the implementation of some programmes was only completed in 2007 (*Table 29*).

SAPARD and other development programmes have also had an effect on the market for land, increasing demand especially for arable land, mainly in regions, such as South Transdanubia, where the proportion of arable land is low. In this region the market value of arable land with low productivity rose very fast (*Figure 117*).

Table 29. ***Resources and payments of the SAPARD programme (2000–2007)***

Descriptions	Resources		Payments		Payment rate, %
	billion HUF	distribution, %	billion HUF	distribution, %	
Agricultural enterprise development	20,278.7	37.3	20,272.9	37.9	100.0
Food and fish processing; marketing development	17,690.4	14.1	16,678.7	31.2	94.3
Village development and reconstruction; protection and conservation of rural artefacts and cultural heritage	2,715.2	5.0	2,940.9	5.5	108.3
Diversification of activities, development of alternative income-generating activities	463.2	0.9	416.6	0.8	89.9
Development of rural infrastructure	13,187.0	5.9	13,136.3	24.5	99.6
Technical assistance	73.9	0.1	73.9	0.1	100.0
Total	**54,408.4**	**100.0**	**53,519.3**	**100.0**	**98.4**

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (www.fvm.hu)