

# VOCATIONAL REORIENTATION OF FARMERS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES – A NEW CHALLENGE FOR RURAL POLAND

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## Abstract

*In view of inability of most of the farms in Poland to develop, there arises a big social problem connected with the necessity to hunt for additional main sources of incomes outside farming. This problem was the subject matter of the studies conducted in the Mogilno powiat, which belongs to typical agrarian poviats. These studies aimed at recognizing farmers' and household members' readiness by vocational reorientation. It results from the conducted studies, that 66% of respondents' answers are rather no and decisively no. The fact that on farms up to 5 ha as many as 61% respondents do not want to take up reorientation is particularly alarming. Analyzing main problems why farmers do not want to reskill to another profession, those pooled mention the lack of time connected with excess of work on a farm. Lack of financial means is an important argument, as well as a big distance from educational centres. On the other hand women stress the necessity of care over children and elder persons. However, special attention should be paid to the lack of belief among these polled ones, that they would get a job – it is the opinion of 1/3 of respondents. The results of the poll studies were a kind of inspiration to commence started from 2009, the realization of the regional programme of vocational reorientation in Kujawsko-Pomeranian Province, the effects of which have also been presented in this article.*

*Keywords: differentiation of farms' situation, vocational reorientation of farmers and members of their families, awareness and motivation of taking up a job, readiness to hunt for a job, problems while trying to get a job*

## 1. Changes in agriculture as a reason of vocational reorientation

The relationship between the nature of work and the mode of life of its inhabitants, as well as their mutual relations was the most important indicator of the economic country's system in a traditional agrarian society. Country's local systems were based on a closely fixed hierarchy, where both the skills and technique were subordinate to. Self-sufficiency was an important feature of such local-country systems. As there reminds Wilkin [1999], a traditional country had its character described today as a multi-functional one, as farmers apart from production of crops also produced means for production, tools, machines, pastures, construction materials. The remaining country's inhabitants somehow supplemented that multi-functional system with supplies of other products necessary for country's inhabitants and their families living. After 1989 there occurred many important changes in the Polish agriculture, which decisively speeded up following Poland's integration with the European Union. Work on own farm stopped being the sufficient source of income for most of farmers and members of their families. As it results from the data quoted in the Strategy of Development of Rural Areas<sup>1</sup> the agrarian activity is the main source of living only for about 27% of households with a user of a farm. In the second half of the 90's, there occurred studies talking on a huge scale of unemployment in a village, where there were references to the so-called hidden unemployment,

<sup>1</sup> Directions of Development of Rural Areas assumptions to the „Strategy of Development of Rural Areas” (Warszawa 2010) p. 79.

that is surpluses of unexploited labour force occurring most often on small farms [Frenkel: 1997, 65-68; Frenkel: 2001, 98-153]. On the basis of the data of the Agrarian Census from 1996, in households with a user of an individual farm and an agrarian plot together with the so called „expendable population” amounted to 917 thousand people [Frenkel: 2003, 138]. What’s interesting, the data from the Agrarian Census from 2010, that is the measurement after 14 years, show the increase of persons expendable on farms amounting even to a million [Frenkel: 2012, 61-91]<sup>2</sup>.

The forecasted in the Strategy of the Rural Development by 2015, decreased employment in the I sector of economy<sup>3</sup> from 17,4% in 2005 to 11,0% in 2015 results from the increase of productivity of agriculture, but it also means the necessity of creation of real perspectives of employment outside agriculture for hundreds of thousand of villages’ inhabitants in the scale of the country. As it results from the data of the Agrarian Census 2010 [PSR 2010], per 1 563 thousand of farms of the area above one hectare, as any as 92,3% have the area not exceeding 20 ha. Considering the current developmental tendencies it may be assumed, that in practice on each farm at least one person should try to find for himself an additional source of income. For sure such a process has already taken place in the group of the smallest farms. The process of vocational reorientation considerably differs from other methods of education of adults (for ex. of unemployed persons). There is a proposal to create a new opportunity for farmers and household members based on the skills and abilities gained by them within the frames of work on a farm. The ability to operate different machines field works, works in a garden, preparation of traditional dishes, care over children and elder persons, these are the skills very often encountered in a village, which in order to constitute an opportunity on a labour market, require their formal confirmation, certification, supplementation, acceptance, etc. The process of reorientation means mainly individual consultancy for a farmer, and sometimes for the whole family, within the frames of which there sometimes follow a new glimpse on own professional position and an attempt to find a positive solution.

Started from the beginning of the 90’s of the last century in Poland farmers have been taking up adaptation caused by restoration of the market economy and the European integration [Mańko et al.: 2005, 326-336]. More and more distinctly there has been distinguished a group of commercial farms [Karwat-Woźniak: 2005, 13-16]. Farmers from these farms, making use of the EU support programmes and investment credits with surcharges to interest, have been trying to invest, increase the area, modernize technologies and increase the scale of production in order to increase the quality and competitiveness of production conducted with respect for environment. Specialization of production has also been taking place. This group of farmers, through the adaptation activities, aims at reaching a durable improvement of economic situation and maintaining the ability for development and is expecting, that a farm shall be the main source of a family’s income [Józwiak: 2007, 10-23].

A farm stops being a place of existence of an agrarian family, and is becoming an economic undertaking, which is to ensure appropriate incomes [Mańko et al.: 2007, 169-176]. However, it is clearly visible, that a group of developmental farms is in minority, that is about 8-10% of the total farms in Poland. On the other hand, the second group of farms are the non-developmental farms – social ones, which are in decisive majority. From the studies conducted by the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics it results, that only farms of economic area 16 ESU were singled out by over parity of own work’s fee and broadened reproduction of fixed assets. However, farms of the size of 8-16 ESU are characterized by a simple reproduction of fixed assets [Józwiak: 2008, 5-7].

<sup>2</sup> PSR 2010 was conducted with the application of a New methodology of measurement of the so-called annual labor units (RJP) constituting the equivalent of the labour time of a fully employed person (here there are assumed 2120 labour works per year that is 265 laour days 8 hours a day).

<sup>3</sup> covering: agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishery

The purpose of his article was to become familiar with the opinions of farmers and members of their families concerning their readiness for vocational reorientation and factors influencing this process both positively and negatively.

## 2. Readiness of farmers and household members to hunt for a job outside a farm

The topic of vocational reorientation was the subject matter of studies conducted in Mogilno powiat in the Kujawsko-Pomeranian province, which belongs to typical agrarian areas with farms of a small area (only 20% has the area above 15 ha.). The studies aimed at identification of the problem of readiness of farmers and household members of the Mogilno powiat for vocational reorientation towards the increasing necessity to hunt for additional or main sources of incomes outside agriculture caused mainly by worsening of the income standing of most of the farms.

These studies were of a diagnostic survey character, and a questionnaire form was the basic survey tool [Gruszczyński: 2002, 25-36; 2003, 47-56]. The selection of a testing sample was of a random character. In total 312 persons, 223 farmers and 89 household members aged 18-55 were covered by the survey, older persons were not covered as potentially completely not interested in vocational reorientation. Interviews with drawn farmers were conducted with consultants from the Agricultural Advisory Centre in Minikowo, already trained by the employees of the Institute of Sociology of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Having conducted the basic survey, a checking survey at 16 respondents (5%) was conducted. The checking survey confirmed the correctness of conducting of the basic survey.

### 2.1. A farm's vision and readiness to take up reorientation

On the first stage of the studies, possible aspirations of respondents both to hunt for a job outside a farm as well as in looking for a chance to change profession, were subject to analysis. We were interested in the vision of a farm in the opinion of respondents, as well as allowing by them for the possibilities of complete giving up of agrarian production in case of its non-profitability. While asked about the future of their farm in two years' time, the respondents presented a high level of optimism. As many as 32% of them considered, that their farm shall develop, while the next group 44% considers, that the situation will not get worse and that the status quo shall be maintained. De facto, the second group also show a positive approach. Only 11% of farmers and members of their family covered by the study, provide for worsening of the situation on one's own farm. In division into farmers and household members, a slightly higher level of pessimism among household members, from which about 14% think, that the situation on a farm they live, shall deteriorate, on the other hand among the farmers such an idea is expressed by only 10% of respondents. However, this difference is too small to determine on existence of decisively different opinions concerning the vision of development of own farm (tab. 1).

Table 1. Future of a farm in two year's time (in %)

Respondents' opinions	Household members	Farmers	Average
Shall develop	35,29	30,51	32,11
The situation shall not change	39,50	45,34	43,38
The situation shall deteriorate	14,29	9,75	11,27
Don't know	10,92	14,41	13,24

Source: own study

## VOCATIONAL REORIENTATION OF FARMERS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES...

However there exists a clear relationship between the area of a farm and the optimism concerning its future. The bigger is a farm, the lower is the level of pessimism amongst its owners and household members (tab. 2).

Table 2. Future of a farm depending on a farm's size (in %)

Respondents' opinions	Size of a farm in ha				
	Up to 5	5-15	15-30	30-50	Above. 50
Shall develop	5,68	19,71	42,31	49,89	76,19
The situation shall not change	61,96	50,36	36,92	38,50	14,29
The situation shall deteriorate	14,71	14,23	9,23	3,92	4,76
Don't know	17,65	15,71	11,54	7,69	4,76

Source: as in tab. 1

From the conducted studies it results, that there occurs a strong relationship between the presented optimism as compared to the future of own farm and the willingness of vocational re-orientation. As many as 22% of respondents seriously thinking of abandoning to conduct agrarian production are the persons who can perceive the future of their farm quite well (tab. 3). Generally, there does not however exist any strong enough dependency between the willingness to abandon production on a farm and pessimism as to its future.

Table 3. Abandonment of agrarian production depending on a farm's vision (in %)

Future of a farm within two year's time	Do You consider abandonment of agrarian production?			
	Decisively yes	Consider	Do not consider	Does not know
Shall develop	11,00	10,50	39,40	12,82
Situation shall not change	4,50	44,50	45,45	35,90
Situation shall get worse	72,00	40,00	4,90	25,64
Do not know	12,50	5,00	10,25	25,64

Source: as in tab. 1

Appearing of the idea to abandon in the future to conduct agrarian production is out of the question in case of owners of farms of the area of 15-30 ha and 30-50 ha. On these farms the level of optimism is the highest one. In the bracket above 50 ha there are more doubts. Maybe among these farmers the decision on resignation from farming and dealing with other business would be easier – maybe emotional ties with a farm are weaker there (tab. 4).

Table 4. Resignation from farm production depending on the size of a farm (in %)

Do You consider resigning from farm production	Size of a farm in ha				
	Up to 5	5-15	15-30	30-50	above 50
Decisively yes	7,41	3,40	0,77	0,00	0,00
Sometimes consider	12,12	8,16	3,08	0,00	23,81
Do not consider	56,23	76,87	86,15	96,15	76,19
Does not know	24,24	11,56	10,00	3,85	0,00

Source: as in tab. 1

## 2.2. Awareness and motivation to take up employment

An important part of the studies was to determine the level of perceptible needs connected with the necessity or willingness to take up a job outside a farm by a farmer himself or members of his family. The issues of motivation which hypothetically accompanies or shall accompany to get a job was also submitted to analysis. We were interested in to what extent these efforts shall be the effect of willingness of respondents („want to get a job”), and to what extent they shall be the result of an internal duress („I *have* to find a job “) and an external duress („they want me to *find* a job “).

Data confrontation concerning the necessity to hunt for a job outside forming by persons from families of respondents concerning the visions of the future of a farm looks very interesting. So it was found, that work shall be hunted for in families where the future of a farm shall be perceived in black colours, but such a dependency should be regarded as an obvious one. However – what’s most interesting – also high is the proportion of persons (29%), who say, that the future of a farm shall be clear, but maybe because, that someone from the family shall have to look for a job outside a farm. Interesting is also the fact, that as many as 63% from those who think that in the future the situation of their farm will not change, see no need to look for a job (tab. 5).

Table 5. Necessity to look for a job outside a farm depending on the farm’s vision (in %)

Future in two years’ time	Shall someone from the family have to look for a job outside a farm?		
	shall have to find a job outside a farm	there shall be no such need	do not know
Shall develop	29,21	38,25	32,54
Situation shall not change	16,43	63,23	20,34
Situation shall deteriorate	30,39	15,37	54,24
Do not know	40,47	31,42	28,11

Source: as in tab. 1

In the division among different groups of farm sit can be clearly noticed, that the necessity to look for a job outside a farm shall occur mainly in very small and small farms (from 1 to 15 ha). In farms above 15 ha this need radically decreases (tab. 6). Taking up of employment outside a farm is connected very clearly with the size of a farm. The bigger the farm is, above 15 ha, then more than 50% of respondents do not see any necessity to take up employment. In a group of farms 5-15 ha 40% think, that one or two household members shall take up employment. Attention should be paid to the fact, that 32% respondents from farms up to 5 ha do not see such a necessity, on the other hand 16% of respondents in the group of farms above 50 ha think, that one person shall take up employment (tab. 6). It is important, as in the group of developmental farms (above 30 ha) there is a considerable percentage of persons noticing the necessity to look for an additional employment, and on the other hand in the group of non-developmental farms (up 5 ha) such a big is the share of respondents not perceiving any necessity to look for an additional employment.

Table 6. Necessity to take up employment outside a farm depending on the size of a farm (in %)

Shall anybody from the family take up employment	Size of a farm in ha				
	Up to 5	5-15	15-30	30-50	above. 50
Yes, at least one person or more	15,79	20,95	4,69	0,00	0,00
Yes, it will be one person	21,05	19,05	9,38	16,00	16,67
No, there wil be no such Reed	31,58	33,33	53,13	56,00	66,67
Hard t say, I do not know	31,58	26,67	32,81	28,00	16,67

Source: as in tab. 1.

In the conducted studies, motivations that may accompany respondents in their attempts to find a job outside a farm were taken into account. They depend on the size of a farm and in the smallest farms the willingness to take up employment is expressed only less than 8% of respondents, on the other hand in the biggest farm sit amounts to more than 25%. The respondents coming from small farms as a motive of taking up employment say, that they have to (tab. 7). On the other hand in the biggest farms (above. 50 ha) 25% of respondents want to take up employment, but in his group of farms also 25% of respondents think, that they have to take up employment, what strongly puzzling taking into account big scale of production as for Polish conditions.

Table 7. Motive of taking up employment depending on the size of a farm (in %)

Motives of taking up employment	Size of a farm in ha				
	up to 5 ha	5-15	15-30	30-50	above. 50
I want	7,69	26,56	23,33	38,46	25,05
Somebody from my family wants me to	46,15	10,94	20,00	15,38	50,10
I have to	46,15	62,50	56,67	46,15	25,23

Source: as in tab. 1

The respondents, as the main reasons for looking for employment mention (respondents could give three reasons):

- unprofitability of agrarian production – 79%,
- lack of perspectives in agriculture – 33%,
- better earnings outside agriculture – 24%,
- lighter work, less absorbing from to – 9%.

Worth stressing is the fact, that none of the respondents can see problem in looking for a job outside agriculture, a desire of social advance and making dreams come true. On the other hand, the main problems a farmer of a member of a farmer's family trying to train may encounter, the following ones have been pointed out (respondents could point out all the possible problems):

- lack of time connected with excess of work on a farm – 44%,
- lack of financial means – 26%,
- too big distance from educational centres/ bad communications – 22%,
- bad state of health – 21%,
- care over small children or elder persons, ill persons from family – 21%,

As the main reasons why the farmers do not want to reskill from a farmer's profession into another profession, there were mentioned (respondents could give all the possible problems):

- as they will not get a job anyway – 34%,
- they do not have time for it – 31%,
- the farm is the most important for them – 28%,
- they do not have money for education – 28%,

Analysing the main problems a farmer or a household member may encounter as well as the reasons why farmers do not want to reskill to another profession, there occur a big unanimity of respondents' opinions as far as expression of the problems is concerned. As the main problem/reason they mention the lack of time connected with the excess of work on a farm. It is a quite big surprise, as the respondents come from middle size farms (10-20 ha), and there are two, three adults in a family. The lack of financial means (26-28%) as well as a big distance from educational centres is also an important argument in the opinion of respondents. Women on the other hand

stress the necessity to care over children and older persons. However, special attention should be paid to the lack of faith among the respondents, that they shall reskill and get a job, this is the opinion of 1/3 of respondents.

### 2.3. Readiness to take up vocational reorientation and hunt for employment

Finding the readiness of the respondents to take up vocational reorientation and to hunt for employment was placed as the main problem. However, earlier their views concerning the best form of employment were examined (permanent job, irregular job or in own company). As far as the preferred forms of employment are concerned, the respondents surprised with a high level of readiness to establish on companies. As many as 38% think, that if they would have to look for other incomes for own family urgently – they would have decided to establish own company. A slightly smaller group would prefer employment permanently – 34%.

Table 8. Willingness to take up reorientation depending on the size of a farm (in %)

Would You take up reorientation	Size of a farm in ha				
	Up to 5	5-15	15-30	30-50	above. 50
Decisively yes	27,78	23,36	7,81	8,07	9,09
Rather yes	11,11	18,69	32,81	20,20	9,09
Rather no	55,56	34,58	46,88	48,00	27,27
Decisively no	5,56	23,36	12,50	24,34	54,55

Source: as in tab. 1

As far as the readiness to take up vocational reorientation is concerned, to the question: would You take up reorientation, as many as 66% answer rather no and decisively no. Such a big percentage of persons not interested in reorientation is astonishing. The fact that in very small and small farms there are more negative than positive answers, should be particularly worrying. As an example, in a group of farms up to 5 ha 61% respondents do not want to take up reorientation, and there is almost 39% (tab. 8) of those decided ones. Puzzling is such a big share of respondents from a group of farms up to 5 ha of arable lands, which has no motivation to hunt for employment outside a farm, there is about 52% of respondents. In this group of farms only 21% is positively predisposed as far as hunting for a job is concerned (tab. 9). Motivation in looking for a job is closely connected with the experience on the labor market. Persons who work, are positively predisposed to hunt for a job (46,5%). On the other hand, the second group is composed of persons who have never worked and as many as 70% of them do not see any need to look for a job, and 14,2 answer do not know (tab. 10).

Table 9. Motivation in hunting for a job depending on the size of a farm (in %)

Will You look for a job	Size of a farm in ha				
	Up to 5	5-15	15-30	30-50	above. 50
Decisively yes	5,26	13,08	6,25	3,85	0,00
Rather yes	15,79	13,08	7,81	11,54	0,00
Rather no	36,84	32,71	35,94	34,62	33,33
Decisively no	15,79	20,56	35,94	38,46	66,67
Do not know	26,32	20,56	14,06	11,54	0,00

Source: as in tab. 1.

Table 10. Motivation in hunting for a job and experience on a labour market (in %)

Will You look for a job	Experience on a labour market		
	Yes and still work	Yes but do not work	Has neper worked
Decisively yes	27,91	8,24	7,08
Rather yes	18,60	12,94	8,85
Rather no	30,23	37,65	30,09
Decisively no	11,63	18,82	39,82
Do not know	11,63	22,35	14,16

Source: as in tab. 1

### 3. Activities for vocational reorientation of farmers and villagers taken up by the Kujawsko-Pomeranian Agricultural Advisory Centre in Minikowo (KPODR)

In 2008 KPODR started up a new type of activities within the frames of the so-called vocational reorientation of farmers and villagers. In the Mogilno, Toruń and Aleksandrowo's poviats, there were realised pilot projects from within that scope and a concept of broadening activity in the next years was drawn up. The studies of the representative group of farmers conducted by the scientists from the Institute of Sociology of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń showed big demand for activities in the field of reorientation. On the basis of the studies there was conducted a series of meetings with the leaders of agrarian organizations, commune and powiat self-governments, and job centres' institutions. As a result of the discussion, there was formed a methodology of activities for reorientation, then included in the implementation project, which was granted the KPODR Minikowo to be implemented started the beginning of 2010 (subactivities 8.1.2. of the Operating Programme Human Resources). Thanks to a special engagement of local partners, in the Mogilno powiat there was signed the „Agreement for vocational reorientation of the inhabitants of the Mogilno Powiat” within the frames of which there was established the Vocational Reorientation Bureau of Farmers.

The specialist courses cover on average 90 theory and practice ours classes and end with an obligatory exam and issuance of a certificate confirming participation and gaining of the basic knowledge and skills necessary for taking up employment or self-employment in a specific profession. The outfarming activity proved to be rather high (27%) (Tab. 11), however the most desired result there would be formal taking up of activity and „getting out of KRUS system”, which so far has occurred rather seldom (5,2%). Farmers and members of their families decisively prefer staying „under the shelter” of KRUS declaring at least taking up an occasional employment.

Among the key problems concerning activities for reorientation, there should also be pointed out the lack of a detailed diagnosis of „non-developmental” farms and members of family of these farmers. The statistics of KRUS, GUS, data bases of agricultural consultancy centres, powiat job centres and other institutions do not give explicit information how many farmers in fact and their household members do need vocational reorientation. Here there are needed detailed studies which shall show the real scale of the problem. The so-far support in the field of vocational reorientation realized within the scale of the whole country among the others within the frames of the Integrated Operating Programme of Regional Development for the years 2004-2006 and other ones financed from the European Social Fund, was of incidental and short-lasting nature (without taking hold in local environment). So there are needed long-term consultancy activities,



Table 11. Activities and results of reorientation in the Kujawsko-Pomeranian province

Activities taken up for reorientation in the Kujawsko-Pomeranian province	Obtained results
2010 project „Time for changes – vocational reorientation of farmers”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of situation of 480 farms</li> <li>• 360 persons completed specialist vocational courses</li> </ul>
2010 - 2013 project „NEW PROFESSION – NEW CHANCE for farmers and villagers of Kujawy and Pomerania” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of 38 reorientation consultants</li> <li>• Creation of 19 poviats vocational reorientation centres</li> <li>• Recruitment and promotion activities in the regional and local press, radio, television, among borough leaders, in job centers, communes, parishes and schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4000 Individual Plans of Vocational Reorientation (by the end of 2013 )</li> <li>• Number of persons who completed vocational courses by the end of 2012:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 408 persons the course for excavating-digging machine operator,</li> <li>– 340 persons the course of small and medium enterprises accountancy,</li> <li>– 260 persons a driver’s course category C and C+E,</li> <li>– 38 persons a course for organizers of occasional parties,</li> <li>– 197 persons the florists course with the elements of interior decorations,</li> <li>– 124 persons completed the course of daily care,</li> <li>– 61 persons the welder’s course,</li> <li>– 61 persons the cook course,</li> <li>– 51 persons the hairdressing course,</li> <li>– 527 persons motivation courses and entrepreneurship trainings,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of beneficiaries’ activity following completion of courses.</li> <li>• <b>By mid of 2012</b> - 937 out of all the persons covered by reorientation (for whom individual plans were earlier drawn up and they were referred to specialist trainings) were covered by monitoring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44 persons got employment,</li> <li>• 33 persons took up economic activity,</li> <li>• 176 persons took up casual or seasonal work in a new profession.</li> <li>• In total 253 persons (27%) took up non-agrarian activity.</li> <li>• 49 (5,2%) persons renounced insurance in KRUS and changed for ZUS.</li> </ul>

Source: reports of KPODR Minikowo

establishment of reorientation offices, appointment of local coalitions for reorientation of such institutions as: agricultural consultancy centres, forming organisations, job centres, local self-governments, local activity groups, other non-governmental organisations and other ones. Also the lack of appropriate preparation of agrarian consultants but also other institutions (job centres, social assistance centres, etc) taking up with farmers and members of their families within the scope of reskilling is also an undoubted limitation. So, training of personnel in the direction of vocational reorientation is needed.

## 4. Summary

Following integration with the European Union, the process of diversification of farms' income situation speeded up. Data from the Agrarian Census 2010 as well as forecasts up to 2020 point out at several hundred thousand of persons employed at present on farms, who shall be forced to hunt for an alternative of additional source of income for themselves.

In case of farmers and members of their families, there should be made a distinction between vocational reorientation and other forms of lifelong learning. Most of all, persons so far working on a farm have skills and abilities constituting a base for performance of many different activities and works in other professions, however very seldom they may turn out to be formal skills. The process of reorientation means most of all individual consultancy for a farmer, and sometimes for his whole family, within the frames of which there occurs a quite new look at own vocational situation and an attempt to find a positive solution.

In the farmers and members of their families' researches concerning the future of farms and the change of a profession, there occurs a big level of optimism towards the future of a farm and an accompanying it the lack of willingness concerning taking up of activities both in aid of hunting for employment as well as the change of profession (most of a the population of optimists is composed of persons with agrarian education). Optimism as to the future of a farm results in the lack of activity concerning the willingness to reorientate. It mainly concerns persons from big farms and persons who have never had any contact with the labour market. Small area middle-aged and young ones farmers (not household members) who have to take up employment and their vocational preparation is not adequate for the market needs and vocational ambitions are on a real level, is the most promising group for the needs of reorientation. Optimism of respondents towards the future of own farms does not correspond with pessimistic vision of respondents as to the quality of life on a Polish farm. They can see, that life in a village is much harder, the number of small farms decreases, but they do not see such negative changes at themselves (or do not want to see).

Reorientation should cover educational and informative activities forming among the farmers the ability to assess the consequences of structural transformations in agriculture and also growing requirements of the labor market resulting from the development of market economy. Hard issues connected with a decision on abandonment the profitable insurance in KRUS for permanent employment and converting to ZUS, for sure are a big challenge for resigning from agriculture and looking for systemic solutions on an all-Poland scale.

Experiences of the Kujawsko-Pomeranian Agrarian Consultancy Centre show a real scale of demand for a support in vocational reorientation of farmers and members of their families. The specific approach to consultancy-reorientation covering usually whole agrarian families is worth stressing. If in the Kujawsko-Pomeranian province, where farming is counted among the best one is Poland, the problem of the income situation of farms has risen at present to such dimensions that decisive steps have to be taken up to offer a real alternative for many farmers and members of their families, then in the regions of less intensive and efficient farming these issues require much bigger interest. From that perspective, the experiences of the regional programme realized by KPODR Minikowo may become a specific testing ground for implementation of this part of assumptions of the „Strategy of Rural Areas Development” on the territory of the whole country.

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