

Life-Strategies in Nagyrákos

Piroska Szabó

(Summary)

The settlement, the population of which is 316, is in one of the better developed regions of the country, close to the Slovenian border. Given the features of its surroundings, its environs are well suited for animal husbandry and silviculture. Following the regime change, the agricultural cooperative which previously had provided work for many of the local inhabitants ceased to exist for good and the industrial workplaces in the surrounding towns were liquidated at a shockingly rapid pace. Since they got back land and had no other source of income, almost without exception active members of the population of the settlement took up independent smallholder farming. However, they did not have the knowledge necessary under the present circumstances. Furthermore, they lacked capital and were exceedingly cautious in their undertakings. For the majority of the farmers today, agricultural activity therefore constitutes only a supplementary source of income. They strive to maintain their current standard of living. People moving to this community undertook new initiatives. One agricultural engineer couple has established a thriving horticulture, which has provided work for several local inhabitants, and three others have launched village tourism. Local small business owners find work in the service sector.