

Youth as initiators of changes in organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija

Mladi kao pokretači promena u organskoj poljoprivrednoj proizvodnji na Kosovu i Metohiji

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Abstract

Recognized as an innovative concept in agriculture, organic production, due to its complexity, requires continuous improvement of knowledge and mastery of new skills of farmers in order to achieve numerous benefits in the long term. As organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija is at the very beginning, human capital, valorized through young people, is very important for its expansive development, which in modern conditions stands out as the fourth economic pillar. The proper development of human capital in agriculture can contribute to the improvement of education about organic agricultural production, its principles, ecological sustainability, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and the development of techniques that are crucial during the management of organic crops. Considering that young farmers are the future of agriculture, especially the creative and ambitious ones, their role in this sector becomes incommensurable. This paper strives to determine, based on the conducted research, the views of young people on the importance of organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as to assess the possibilities and willingness of young farmers to improve their knowledge and improve their skills in this activity.

Keywords: organic agricultural production, human capital, youth, Kosovo and Metohija

Sažetak

Prepoznata kao inovativni koncept u poljoprivredi, organska proizvodnja zbog svoje kompleksnosti zahteva kontinuirano usavršavanje znanja i ovladavanje novim veštinama poljoprivrednika da bi se u dugoročnom periodu ostvarili brojni benefiti. Kako je organska poljoprivredna proizvodnja na Kosovu i Metohiji na samom početku, za njen ekspanzivni razvoj jako je važan ljudski kapital, valorizovan kroz mlade ljude, a koji se u savremenim uslovima izdvaja kao četvrti ekonomski stub. Pravilan razvoj ljudskog kapitala u poljoprivredi može doprineti unapređenju edukacije o organskoj poljoprivrednoj proizvodnji, njenim principima, ekološkoj održivosti, kao i sticanju znanja i razvoju tehnika koje su ključne tokom upravljanja organskim usevima. S obzirom na to da su mladi poljoprivrednici budućnost poljoprivrede, posebno oni kreativni i ambiciozni, njihova uloga u ovom sektoru postaje nesamerljiva. Ovaj rad nastoji da, na osnovu sprovedenog istraživanja, utvrdi stavove mladih o značaju organske poljoprivredne proizvodnje na Kosovu i Metohiji, kao i da sagleda mogućnosti i spremnost mladih poljoprivrednika da usavrše svoja znanja i unaprede veštine u ovoj delatnosti.

Ključne reči: organska poljoprivredna proizvodnja, ljudski kapital, mladi, Kosovo i Metohija

1. Introduction

In the twentieth century, the century of technological and scientific progress, fundamental changes took place in the areas of human life and work, which also affected the agricultural sector. The traditional model of production, accompanied by constant population growth, has initiated an increase in the area dedicated to agricultural

production, which, in the long term, is unsustainable. Negative trends, which are largely presented as attributes of modern agriculture, require revision of the traditional concept of production, all with the aim of minimizing negative existing effects (Bojičić & Tripković, 2023). As a possible alternative, the idea of developing sustainable agriculture, known as organic agricultural production, which is based on ecological, social and economic

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determinants, appeared. Organic agricultural production has been researched for a relatively long time by many authors in the world, from various theoretical and methodological aspects, and it is observed that it has an increasing application in practice, which is confirmed by the examples of many countries where the number of organic producers is growing, the percentage of areas under organic crops and the number of heads of animals raised in organic livestock farming (Ristić et al., 2023). As Bojičić and Tripković (2021) write, organic agriculture, in addition to its great importance in the production of organic food, is also one of the models for revitalizing nature, changing the principles of agriculture and preserving natural resources. Unlike intensive (conventional) production, which is based on high application of agrochemicals, organic production is based on the improvement of traditional knowledge and skills with modern scientific achievements, as well as permanent education and counseling of producers (Čengić-Džomba et al., 2014). The Research Institute for Agricultural Activity (FiBL) and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) continuously publish data on the state of organic agricultural production in the world, emphasizing that it records progressive growth, thus highlighting its role as a long-term and profitable sustainable activity. The latest available data show that in 2021, 76.4 million hectares of land were under organic production, including areas in the process of conversion (Table 1). According to the mentioned report, Oceania occupies half of the organic agricultural land in the world (47%), followed by Europe (17.8%) and Latin America (13%), while Africa is the continent with the lowest rate of participation in the total area of organic land in the world (3.5%) (FiBL-IFOAM, 2023). The increase in areas under organic soil is causally connected with the increase in the number of organic producers in the world, which from 2.8 million registered in 2018, was increased by 32% in 2021, of which the largest percentage of registered are in Asia (49%), Africa (31%), Europe (12%) and Latin America (8%).

Table 1. Organic production – key indicators in leading countries (2021)

Indicator	World	Top countries
Countries with organic activities	191 countries	
Organic agricultural land	76.4 million hectares	Australia (35.7 million hectares) Argentina (4.1 million hectares) France (2.8 million hectares)
Organic share of total agricultural land	1.6%	Liechtenstein (40.2%) Samoa (29.1%) Austria (26.5%) China: 319.000 ha (+13%)
Increase of organic agricultural land 2020/2021	1.3 million hectares (ha); +1.7 %	France: 228.000 ha (+9%) Spain: 198.000 ha (+8%)
Producers	3.7 million producers	India (1.599.010) Uganda (404.246) Ethiopia (218.175)

Source: FiBL-IFOAM, 2023. The World of Organic Agriculture. <https://www.fibl.org/en/shop-en/1747-organic-world-2024>

Table 1. (continued)

Indicator	World	Top countries
Organic market	124.8 billion euros	US (48.6 billion euros) Germany (15.9 billion euros) France (12.7 billion euros) Switzerland (425 euros)
Per capita consumption	15.7 euros	Denmark (384 euros) Luxembourg (313 euros)

Source: FiBL-IFOAM, 2023. The World of Organic Agriculture. <https://www.fibl.org/en/shop-en/1747-organic-world-2024>

Organic agricultural production, as a form of sustainable agricultural system, requires land, resources and, finally, people who must be motivated, loyal and intellectually agile for production that complies with ethical and ecological standards. Namely, human capital plays a very important role in modern agriculture, helping farmers to effectively choose a set of inputs and improve capabilities by choosing between different sets of inputs, outputs and technologies (Parman, 2012). Ignjatijević et al. (2022) claim that human capital in organic agriculture affects production and financial results, while the socio-economic characteristics of producers can affect the future development of this production system. Improving human capital in organic agriculture is aimed at changing the behavior of the workforce in the process of producing healthy food, all in order to stimulate production efficiency, create higher standards and solve strategic problems of rural areas (Mehdi, 2011). Despite the fact that a person as an individual with his characteristics and knowledge can influence the health and biodiversity of the soil, the World Bank confirms that employment in agriculture decreased in 2019 to 26.76% of the workforce (World Bank, 2020b). Girdziute et al. (2022) argue that agriculture is the sector with the highest risk indices, as it represents a job that is dangerous due to the used chemicals, demanding at the same time hard work, such as heavy physical activity and unconventional working hours (Cecchini et al., 2018; Kusić et al., 2014; Pfeifer, 2016). Based on this, it can be said that the fate of the entire society depends on young and ambitious people who in every state represent the persons responsible for stability, economic development and demographic evolution (Dash, 2018). Young people are the agents of change of the next generation, who can, with greater responsibility, influence the agricultural future of the country (Suswadi et al., 2021). Eurostat data (2016), which monitor the state of agriculture in the world, confirm that in the base year of 2016, only 5.6% of farmers under the age of 35 managed farms, while more than 31% of farmers were older than 65, and only 10.6% of farms had managers under the age of 40 (Girdziute et al., 2022). Negative stereotypes associated with farmers can be minimized and removed by encouraging young people to get involved in the agricultural sector, around the age of nineteen, when they consider their own aspirations and decide what they want to do in the future. As Lundy and the authors (2007) say, the stereotypical

notion of farmers that is present among young people refers to their visions that farmers are associated with a rough man, tanned by working in the fields.

Observing the territory of Kosovo and Metohija as a post-conflict region, characterized by unregulated production relations, low productivity, high unemployment rate and limited access to public services, it is clear that a series of organizational and institutional measures must be taken to overcome the mentioned problems and achieve strategic goals (Maksimović et al., 2015). As the southern province of the Republic of Serbia, the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, with a one-year growth of 54.8% and a ten-year growth of 14,350.5% of areas under organic soil, is the territory with the largest increase in agricultural land in Europe (Bojičić & Tripković, 2023). Of the total number of organic land, 1,990 hectares are under organic production in Kosovo and Metohija, which is about 0.0025% of the total organic land in the world. With 56 registered organic producers, a third of which are organic food processors, Kosovo and Metohija is making remarkable progress in the organic sector, leaving behind more developed European countries, above all Liechtenstein with only 47 registered organic producers, Malta with 25 organic food producers and Belarus with 19 manufacturers. Organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija has great potential based on extensive production, mostly in hilly and mountainous regions, with a rich and suitable environment for organic production of medicinal plants, fruit, wine and honey, but this requires a lot of time (Maksimović et al., 2017). The development of organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija must be aimed at animating young people, creating infrastructure in rural areas and learning about natural resources, economic profitability and legal regulations (Bajagić et al., 2022). The everyday life of young people in Kosovo and Metohija is an inexhaustible (sub)topic of scientific research. Gloomy everyday life, contained in the drastically reduced number of constructive people, forced to "live" behind physical, psychological and social barbed wires for more than a decade, broken into small local communities, in gray, impoverished, deurbanized and cramped physical interiors and exteriors, everyday life that shows traces of a collapsed system and the collapse of the collective potential of the remaining community, is most strongly reflected on its youth (Aritonović & Lazarević, 2012). Accordingly, young people in Kosovo and Metohija should be given the initiative and motivation to be ready to take steps in order to be innovators of change in the municipalities where they live and do business. In this regard, the subject of research in this paper is to identify the views of young people on organic agricultural production, as well as on the importance of human capital in this modern and very promising activity.

2. Methodology

The research process was carried out in the period from December 2023 to March 2024 in four districts in Kosovo and Metohija, namely: Kosovska Mitrovica District, Kosovo District, Kosovo-Pomoravlje District and Prizren District. For the needs of the work, a Questionnaire was designed, consisting of three parts, in order to collect

original data necessary for the realization of the set research problem. The first part includes the socio-demographic characteristics of the young respondents, which primarily refer to gender, age, municipality where they live, level of education, average income and the activity they do on their farms. The second part of the Questionnaire includes questions about the state of agriculture in the municipality where the respondents live, knowledge of organic agricultural production, the way in which they are informed about it, the level of development of organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija, the reasons for the low interest of young people in engaging in this activity, and about the impact of this activity on the revitalization of the environment and the reduction of youth migration. The last, third part of the Questionnaire includes a group of questions that determine how familiar the respondents are with the meaning of basic terms in organic agricultural production and what level of knowledge they have about this activity, whether they consider human capital to be the most important element of investment in organic production, in what way they evaluate some of the aspects of human capital, as well as whether they are ready to improve their knowledge and skills in order to increase the efficiency of human capital in organic agricultural production on farms. 150 respondents were included in the distribution of questionnaires, and 138 (92%) valid questionnaires were collected. The statistical package SPSS Statistics-version 26 was used for data analysis, in which descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, normality test and Pearson's correlation coefficient were performed.

3. Analysis and results

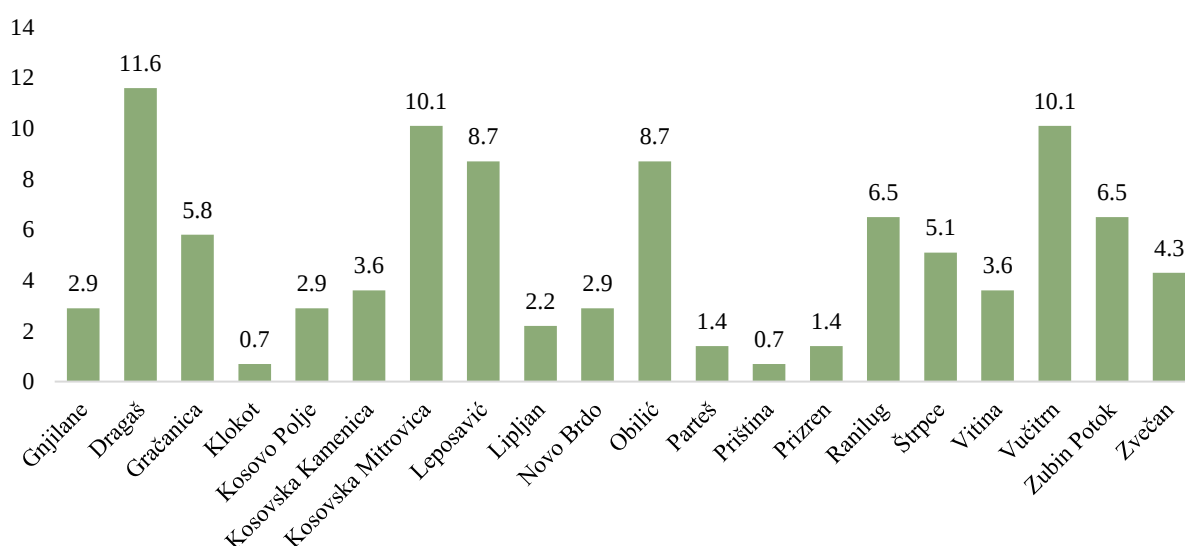
95 male respondents and 43 female respondents from 20 municipalities in Kosovo and Metohija participated in the research (Chart 1). The youngest respondent is 18 years old (0.7%), the oldest respondents are 30 years old (11%), and the most represented are those who are twenty-nine years old (12.3%). In relation to age, 41.3% of the respondents have university education, more than a third (34.1%) have completed master's studies, more than a fifth of respondents (21%) have secondary school education, while the percentage of respondents with primary education is the least represented (2.9%), as well as doctors of science (0.7%). Being mostly involved in agriculture on their farms, the respondents indicated that their average income is between 50,000.00 and 100,000.00 dinars (57.2%), while three of them indicated an amount greater than 200,000.00 dinars (2.2%) as their average income. Evaluating their abilities, 77.5% of respondents confirmed that they have a driver's license and that they speak a foreign language (70.3%), mainly English (59.4%) and Russian (17.4%).

Although they witness social changes, growing up in an intense period of technological innovation, young people in Kosovo and Metohija are very traditional and dependent on their parents, mostly morally and materially (Friedrich Ebert, 2019). Young people represent the most valuable human resource aimed at nurturing the economic, cultural and political development of a nation (Khan et al., 2023). The energy and passion of young

people, if properly used, can lead to great positive changes in agriculture and in the development of the rural sector. Recognized as creative digital innovators in their community, young people contribute to positive sustainable development, and those motivated and skilled ones can improve countries as well, starting from rural areas (Khan et al., 2023). Based on the conducted research, young people in Kosovo and Metohija are engaged in: vegetable growing (53.6%), fruit growing (48.6%), animal husbandry (29.7%), farming (29.7%), viticulture (11.6%) and some other activity (3.6%). Agriculture in Kosovo and Metohija is not only a source of survival, but also provides social security to the population that lives and earns on their farms in municipalities with a majority Serbian population (Bojičić & Tripković, 2021). Regardless of the fact that the labor

force in these areas is relatively cheap, the manufactured products are expensive, and the reason for this is that the quality and quantity are not sustainable at all times due to inadequate production processes (Bojičić & Tripković, 2021). In this regard, young respondents rated the state of agriculture in the municipality where they live as "good" (50%), while a significantly smaller number of them (8.7%) rated the state of agriculture as "fairly good". A little more than a fifth of respondents (20.3%) undeniably point out that the situation in agriculture is "rather bad", citing the impossibility of using arable land that is in the process of illegal privatization, the lack of financial support, as well as political and economic barriers, as some of the indicators of insufficient development of agriculture in Kosovo and Metohija.

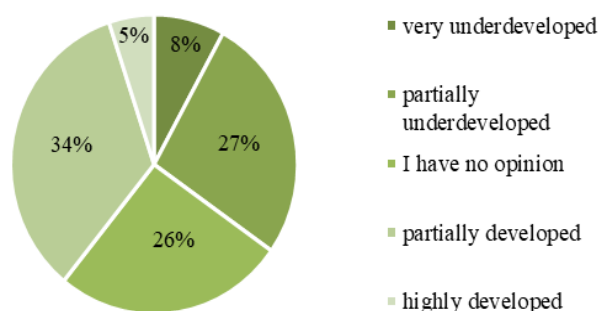
Chart 1. Place of residence of the respondents



Source: Author's research

When talking about organic production, it is often assumed that it is a production that was formed as a criticism of modern agriculture and the desire to overcome its negative effects (Čikić & Petković, 2016). Out of the total number, 32.6% of respondents pointed out that they are partially familiar with the principles of organic agricultural production, 28.3% of respondents are fully familiar with this concept, while, surprisingly, 10.9% of young respondents plan to expand production on their farms. To the question "Name the sources from which you get information about organic products?", the respondents answered that in 72.5% of cases they get information about organic agricultural production through the Internet, which, according to Kumar and the authors (2023), has been a powerful weapon for young people in the last decade in agriculture. By increasing opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and implementation of agricultural projects, social media raise awareness of agricultural issues and advocate for sustainable practices and policies that support smallholder farmers (Kumar et al., 2023). In addition to the Internet, young people are also informed about organic agricultural production through family and friends (24.1%), through television (31.2%) and newspaper articles and publications (26.1%).

Chart 2. At what level of development is organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija?



Source: Author's research

Although respondents cited the fear of failure (39.1%), high investment costs (34.8%), the existence of unstable organic markets (29.7%), lack of information about the benefits of organic products (29.7%) as the main reasons for young people's lack of interest in organic agricultural production, certification problems (29.0%) and problems finding reliable customers (23.9%). More than a fifth of them (27.5%), guided by their own wishes and

pretensions, points out that they plan to improve their skills in the field of organic agricultural production, given that this activity can affect the revitalization of the environment (28.3%) and the reduction of youth migration in Kosovo and Metohija (21.7%). The youth in rural areas in Kosovo and Metohija should be given the initiative and should be provided with every social incentive, which implies getting to know the benefits of the environment in which they live, and here knowledge must also be a productive force (Tripković et al., 2022). Bearing in mind the increasing importance of organic agricultural production in Kosovo and Metohija, respondents state that human capital is a more important element of investment in agriculture compared to the means of production (24.5%), while on the other hand 10.9% of them state that it is the most important element of investment, as well as skills (33.3%), abilities (31.2%),

work experience (29.7%) and knowledge (25.4%). Moreover, young people emphasize that they are ready to motivate farm members to get involved in the process of organic agricultural production (41.3%), they are ready to acquire new knowledge (47.8%), master new skills (44.9%), attend education (42%) and, following global trends, they are ready to apply modern technology, taking care of the environment (43.5%). Despite the fact that young people are constantly searching for better living conditions, the results of the survey show that 35.5% of the respondents have not attended workshops and trainings on organic agricultural production.

In the continuation of the research, the analysis of the obtained research results will be presented, which is of great importance for understanding the real situation.

Table 2. Correlation matrix of observed variables

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13
V1	1												
V2	0.216	1											
V3	0.239*	0.238	1										
V4	0.261*	0.240	0.237	1									
V5	0.550**	0.131	0.116	-0.125	1								
V6	0.196*	0.014	0.155*	0.036	0.033	1							
V7	0.159	0.083	0.214	0.058	-0.042	0.296**	1						
V8	0.022	-0.274**	0.039	-0.032	0.119	0.268	0.168*	1					
V9	0.036	-0.313**	-0.065	0.058	0.021	0.148	0.242**	0.115	1				
V10	0.259	-0.247**	-0.078	0.169	-0.216	0.528	0.189*	0.036	0.071	1			
V11	0.089	-0.202**	0.265	0.145	0.025	0.369	0.192*	0.177	0.208	0.003	1		
V12	0.169	0.177*	0.067	0.070	0.258*	-0.011	0.111	0.099	0.026	0.049	0.014	1	
V13	0.215*	0.176*	0.179	-0.015	0.087	-0.025	-0.404**	0.017	0.084	-0.058	0.019	0.056	1
V14	0.058	0.036*	0.058	0.352	0.167	0.031	0.227**	0.028	0.261	0.138	0.178*	0.243	-0.098

Note

V1 – level of education

V2 – municipality

V3 – the state of agriculture

V4 – knowledge of the concept of organic production

V5 – level of development of organic production

V6 – human capital is the most important element of investment

V7 – level of knowledge about organic production

V8 – knowledge

V9 – abilities

V10 – skills

V11 – working experience

V12 – reduction of migration

V13 – attending workshops

V14 – increasing efficiency

Source: Author's research

The variable "level of education" of the respondents is correlated with the following variables:

- "the state of agriculture" ($p = 0.019$; $\rho = 0.239$);
- "knowledge of the concept of organic production" ($p = 0.024$; $\rho = 0.261$);
- "level of development of organic production" ($p = 0.000$; $\rho = 0.550$);
- "human capital is the most important element of investment" ($p = 0.041$; $\rho = 0.196$);
- "attending workshops" ($p = 0.038$; $\rho = 0.215$).

The degree of education of young people can be very useful in raising awareness in society about ways to preserve the environment and adopt agricultural practices that are socially and ecologically acceptable (Barreda, 2018). And while 34.5% of respondents with secondary school education assess the state of agriculture as good", respondents with a higher level of education, mostly in the municipalities of Kosovska Mitrovica, Leposavić and Zubin Potok, describe the state of affairs in the municipality as "very good" (41%). The moderately strong positive relationship between the observed variables is a consequence of the less latent (physical) energy needs of young people in the Prizren district for

participation in all agricultural operations in organic production (Girei et al., 2017). Also, knowledge of the concept of organic agricultural production has a statistically significant relationship with the level of education of young people. More precisely, young people with completed university education are more familiar with the principles of organic agricultural production, stressing that it is "the source of the future", that it "contributes to the satisfaction of broader needs", "solving local problems", compared to young people with a lower level of education, especially in the municipalities of Klokot and Vitina, who have more confidence in traditional - conventional agricultural production. The Pearson coefficient shows that a very strong positive relationship was established between the respondents' level of education and their views on the importance of human capital in organic agricultural production. In support of this, he says that respondents in the municipalities of Obilić, Štrpce, Gračanica and Zubin Potok, who have a higher level of education, point out that human capital is more important than other elements of production, means of work and objects of work (38.3%), while respondents, primarily in the municipalities of Gnjilane, Lipljan and Priština, where this activity is

passed down from generation to generation, emphasize the importance of means of production (33.6%). In addition to the above, a statistically significant relationship was established between the variables *"human capital is the most important element of investment"* and *"state of agriculture"* ($p = 0.029$; $\rho = 0.155$), which undoubtedly means that the activity the respondents are engaged in, in combination with the present challenges, greatly influences their views on the importance of human capital development in agriculture. As a result, the level of education of young people is directly related to their needs for attending workshops and education in organic agricultural production, and 32.6% of young people with higher education have so far attended some form of workshops and education at least once, compared to the group of young people with lower education, who attended workshops on organic agricultural production in only 3.6% of cases.

"Municipality" in which young people live and do business has a statistical relationship with the following variables:

- "reduction of migration" ($p = 0.038$; $\rho = 0.177$);
- "knowledge" ($p = 0.001$; $\rho = -0.274$);
- "abilities" ($p = 0.000$; $\rho = -0.313$);
- "skills" ($p = 0.004$; $\rho = -0.247$);
- "working experience" ($p = 0.018$; $\rho = -0.202$);
- "education" ($p = 0.036$; $\rho = 0.176$).

The respondents' place of residence greatly influences their views on the development of the concept of organic agricultural production and the importance of human capital on agricultural farms. Covered by ethno-nationalism, multi-confessional, economic and other features, clothed in political and ideological, extremely extremist goals, the conflicts in Kosovo and Metohija produced enormous migrations, especially visible among young people (Radovanović & Obradović, 2022). According to the respondents, organic agricultural production can reduce or slow down the migration of young people on farms in Kosovo and Metohija, whereby a statistically significant relationship was established between the variables *"level of development of organic agricultural production"* and *"reduction of migration"* ($p = 0.041$; $\rho = 0.258$). Deviations exist in the Kosovo – Pomoravlje District, where the respondents under 30 years of age are pessimistic about this issue and believe that there is "little interest in organic production, which can be improved with the financial support of local authorities" (39%). Respondents in the municipalities belonging to the Kosovo District are of the opinion that by organizing education on the principles of organic production, the awareness of young people can be influenced (31%), while respondents in the municipalities of Kosovska Mitrovica, Zvečan and Leposavić claim that organic production can only be combined with other activities to reduce youth migration, and in the municipality of Obilić (37.5%) the most common opinion is that organic agricultural production can fully influence the reduction of youth migration. The evaluation of different aspects of human capital among young people depends, in addition to the level of education, on the

municipality in which they live and do business. Medium-strong relationships between variables point out that respondents in the municipalities of Obilić and Vučitrn value knowledge as the most important determinant of organic production (29.6%), which is neglected in other municipalities. Also, respondents, predominantly in the municipalities of Leposavić and Zubin Potok, are of the opinion that work experience is crucial in organic agricultural production, due to the very complexity of this activity, which, on the other hand, is the least rated aspect in the Prizren region, which pays attention to abilities, while in 46.5% of cases, respondents in Ranilug and Kosovska Kamenica attribute the success of agricultural production to the skills of farmers. In order to improve their knowledge and skills, young people claim that they would attend educational programs and, while respondents in Kosovska Mitrovica point out that they have attended seminars and trainings several times (28.7%), respondents in Štrpce and Gračanica have not had the opportunity to attend education and trainings on organic agricultural production (31.4%).

"Level of knowledge about organic production" is related to the following variables:

- "human capital is the most important element of investment" ($p = 0.000$; $\rho = 0.296$);
- "knowledge" ($p = 0.049$; $\rho = 0.168$);
- "abilities" ($p = 0.004$; $\rho = 0.242$);
- "skills" ($p = 0.027$; $\rho = 0.189$);
- "working experience" ($p = 0.024$; $\rho = 0.192$);
- "attending workshops" ($p = 0.000$; $\rho = -0.404$);
- "increasing efficiency" ($p = 0.007$; $\rho = 0.227$).

and it is a statistically significant relationship that is positive, except for the one with the variable *"attendance at workshops"*. Education in organic agricultural production is a type of vocational training that equips young people with knowledge and skills in production (Olusoga, 2014). Respondents engaged in organic agricultural production, following the news in modern agriculture, are aware of how much attention must be directed to creative and capable people, ready for further training. It is well known that education is the key factor to overcoming development challenges in rural areas. Not only is there a direct link between food security and youth education in organic agricultural production, but according to research by the Food and Agriculture Organization (2007), basic numeracy and literacy skills help to improve the lives of farmers on farms. On the example of Kosovo and Metohija in the period of post-war transformation, the importance of education becomes ambivalent - at the same time, there is a trend of self-reproduction of the middle and upper classes, but also a trend of reducing the motivation of a number of young people to acquire new knowledge (Aritonović & Lazarević, 2012), which is noticeable in the relationship between the level of knowledge of young people and their needs to attend workshops in organic production. As many as 56% of respondents who showed a higher level of knowledge about organic agricultural production confirmed that human capital can increase its efficiency, which is in contrast to the views of those respondents who

are not familiar with the meaning of basic terms in organic production, and 32% of them answered that they do not have an opinion on this, which confirms that young people still have conflicting views on the analyzed topic.

4. Conclusion

In addition to the visible problems that are present in Kosovo and Metohija in general, but also in agriculture itself, it is evident that special attention must be directed to human capital, that is, to young people who want to fight to save their homes. The expansive development of organic agricultural production in the world, which does not bypass the southern province of the Republic of Serbia, is a great challenge for young people in this region. Young people need a lot of support, financial and moral, in order to valorize their ideas into a concrete project. As the results of the research show, the level of education of young people represents large disproportions in their attitudes about organic agricultural production and the importance of human capital in it. In this regard, it is necessary to take certain steps in order to improve the role of young people in organic production, and here we particularly refer to:

- investing in formal education;
- investing in non-formal education;
- organizing workshops on organic agricultural production;
- providing support through education;
- organizing seminars;
- engagement of experts;
- providing financial support to young people to start a business;
- providing financial support to young people to improve their knowledge and skills;
- formation of centers where young people would gather to exchange knowledge;
- encouraging the elderly to provide support to the young;
- greater involvement of local and international authorities.

By undertaking some of the mentioned measures, young people in Kosovo and Metohija engaged in organic agricultural production, can realize long-term benefits, improving their own knowledge and skills, but also satisfying existential needs. Looking at the current situation in areas with a majority Serbian population, it is clear that it takes a lot of time for organic agricultural production to take root in these areas, primarily from the aspect of improving the competences of young people. However, good things take time, and the most important thing is that there is a will to progress among young people in all districts in Kosovo and Metohija. Ludwig Andreas von Feuerbach, a German philosopher and anthropologist, said "*Learning must begin with ourselves*".

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