

## FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT IN BIHOR COUNTY

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**Abstract:** *The contemporary world is in a continuous dynamic process that calls for perennial flexibility to change in the labor market. Unemployment is an important reality that influences people's lives from an economic, social point of view, as well as the development and economic growth of society as a whole. The purpose of this article is to illustrate the evolution of female unemployment in Bihor County during 2006-2016. We also carried out a comparative analysis of the female unemployment rate registered at national level to illustrate the variations that occurred during the above-mentioned period.*

**Keywords:** *unemployment; unemployed; imbalance; labor market.*

**JEL Classification:** *E24; F16; F66; J64.*

### 1. Introduction

The issue of unemployment among women requires a specific approach, the factors that influence this phenomenon, but its effects are also significantly different in relation to male unemployment. Studies in this regard have been developed by Gordon Marshall (1984), Franz W. (1985), Albanesi S., Sahin A. (2018) and others. Popescu Gh. and Ciurlău C. (2013: 280) define the labor market as an economic and social area in which interactions, confrontations, negotiations between labor demand and supply of labor arise. Overlapping labor demand with labor supply is reduced due to differences in the structure and dynamics of the two components. Another definition attributed to the labor market is that in which it is described as "the whole of the relationship between demand and supply of resources according to the salary level and oscillations, on the basis of which the process of occupying the active population in size, structure and quality corresponds to the requirements of the market" (Fruja, 1994, p. 86).

Unemployment is considered "an imbalance between labor demand and labor supply, lower demand than supply, an imbalance between the active human potential and the human potential used, hence relative active overpopulation" (Bădulescu, 2006: 13).

The International Labor Organization (ILO) provides a strict definition claiming that "unemployment refers to people without a paid or profitable job seeking and is available to start working for a salary or profit in the specified reference periods" ([https://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/statistics-overview-and-topics/WCMS\\_470304/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/statistics-overview-and-topics/WCMS_470304/lang--en/index.htm), 2018).

According to the International Labor Bureau, the unemployed are those aged 15-74 who meet the following three conditions simultaneously:

- do not have a job;
- it is available to start work in the next two weeks;
- have been actively seeking a job at any time during the last four weeks

## 2. Causes and forms of unemployment

Among the multiple forms of unemployment, we recall: seasonal unemployment, which results from the diminution of production capacities affected by seasonal weather conditions or meteorological vicissitudes, short-term unemployment emerges in crisis situations under certain circumstances and structural unemployment is that category of unemployment which arises from a mismatch between vacancies on the labor market and the skills available to workers on the market (Wolfgang Dorow et al., 2001).

In August-September 2018, the Institute for Public Policies, in cooperation with the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy, carried out an opinion poll on a sample of 1220 people over the age of 18 who, in the previous period, they came. The results of the survey were confronted with the results of two focus groups. The research findings highlight the important changes in the labor market caused by the high degree of automation of activities, the development of "artificial intelligence. Numerous jobs are expected to disappear in areas that involve, in particular, routine work and lower-level skills, thus emphasizing the need to implement professional reconversion programs for better insertion into the labor market. It also notes the insecurity of those in the workforce, 1 in 5 employees consider the probability of being laid off in the next period of up to 6 months, and 1 in 4 interviewees think it would be difficult for them to re-enter the labor market under the conditions dismissals. More prominent is the flexibility of the living conditions from which the activities take place, for example 1 in 5 respondents claim that they work at home for at least part of a week, while 7% work in public places such as café, airport etc. New forms of work such as telework, work using communications and information technology, casual work, 1 out of 4 respondents say they have been involved in at least one of the new forms of work. Communication skills and knowledge in computer science are considered imperative to get a good job." (<https://www.ipp.ro/angajatii-din-romania-se-adapteaza-rapid-schimbarilor-din-piata-fortei-de-munca-asimiland-noile-forme-de-munca-gig-economy-in-ciuda-legislatiei-neadaptate/>, n.d.)

Structural unemployment is often considered permanent because of the difficulty of acquiring new skills adapted to changes in the labor market as well as moving workers to other areas where such skills are required. Governments set up programs and policies designed to prevent unemployment. "Many social problems become more severe during periods of high unemployment. Among them are the increase in the incidence of thefts, alcoholism, depression, suicide and domestic violence " (Parkin, 1997). However, incentive-based policies cannot completely eliminate structural unemployment because sometimes acquired skills are no longer used in production. Eliminating those jobs that require the use of low-level, routine skills means that there are other job opportunities that involve different skills.

Unemployment costs are multiple, as L. Andrei concludes (2011):

social costs reflected in the sense of marginalization faced by the unemployed, house-specific costs generated by the decrease in contributions to national budgets and the increase in social aid and economic costs arising from the inactive labor productivity.

### 3. Results of the survey on female unemployment in Bihor County

Bihor County recorded during the period 2006-2016. The research was carried out at the Bihor County Agency for Employment. The County Agency for Employment (AJOFM) Bihor has its headquarters in Oradea, on Transilvaniei Street, no. 2, having the subordination: Local Agency Oradea, Alesd Work Point, Beiuș Work Point, Marghita Work Point, and Salonta Work Point.

The purpose of the study was to identify the evolution of the female unemployment structure in the aforementioned period. The objectives of the study were as follows: to identify the evolution of the female unemployment rate in Bihor County over the period 2006-2016, to highlight the gender distribution of the unemployed registered with the County Agency for Employment (AJOFM) Bihor and to perform a comparative analysis between the female unemployment rate in Bihor county and the female unemployment rate at national level in the analyzed time frame.

The hypothesis of the study was that there are discrepancies between the level of female unemployment in Bihor County and the level of unemployment at national level, registered in Romania.

The applied research method was the analysis of the documents and statistics of the County Agency for Employment of Bihor regarding the structure and evolution of female unemployment at county level, as well as the statistics provided by the National Institute of Statistics, in order to carry out a comparative analysis with the evolution of female unemployment at national level. Subjects involved were female unemployed registered with the Bihor County Agency for Employment during the period 2006-2016.

**Table 1:** Number of unemployed registered in Bihor County during the period 2006-2016 (thousands of persons)

Years	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	7,6	6,7	8,6	16,7	16,7	11,6	11,7	10,3	10,0	9,6	8,2
Men	4,6	4,1	4,7	9,7	9,9	6,6	6,7	5,9	5,7	5,4	5,1
Women	3,0	2,6	3,9	7,0	6,8	5,0	5,0	4,4	4,3	4,2	3,1

Source: Bihor County Statistical Office (<http://www.bihor.insse.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ANUAR.pdf>)

Table 1 shows that the number of unemployed men registered in Bihor County was higher than the number of women unemployed throughout the analyzed period. We consider that the number of unemployed women is lower than that of unemployed men because:

women have attended in a larger number the training courses organized by the County Agency for Employment Bihor, it was observed that women tend to accept less paid jobs and below the level of their qualification, the share of women enrolled in higher education institutions was higher than that of men, the number of vacancies in the light industry sector was increasing and the number of divorces increased in 2006-2011.

Following the statistics provided by EUROSTAT, it can be noticed that, unlike Bihor County, at European level, women have recorded a higher unemployment rate throughout history. "In 2000, the female unemployment rate in the EU-28 was about 10%, while the male rate was below 8%. At the end of 2002, the gender gap narrowed by about 1.4%, between 2002 and mid-2007, this difference remained more or less constant. Since the first quarter of 2008, the lowest levels of 6.3% and 7.4% were recorded, male and female unemployment rates were converging, and in the third quarter of 2009 the male unemployment rate was higher. The decline in the male unemployment rate in 2010 and the first half of 2011 and the stability of the female unemployment rate over the same period again brought the male unemployment rate below the female unemployment rate. Since then, the two rates have grown at the same rate until mid-2013, when they peaked at 10.9% for men and 11% for women. Since the end of 2013, both rates have fallen to 7.1% and 7.6% by the end of 2017" ([https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment\\_statistics#Male\\_and\\_female\\_unemployment](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Male_and_female_unemployment)). After analyzing the data provided by the County Agency for Employment of Bihor for the year 2006, it was pointed out that the unemployment rate in Bihor County fluctuated during the analyzed period with decreasing tendencies, its level of 2.9% being lower than the unemployment rate at country level 7.3%. Compared with the previous year, the unemployment rate increased by 0.7%. The female unemployment rate in the county of Bihor for the year 2006 was 2.1%. At national level there was a female unemployment rate of 6,10% ( Institutul Național de Statistică, 2007). The share of men in this situation was higher than that of women. At the end of December 2006, 7647 unemployed were registered, of which 2962 were women. The age groups most exposed to unemployment are between 30-39 years and 40-49 years of age, at least in absolute terms. In the same period, 897 unemployed women were registered, out of a total of 2262 unemployed in the 30-39 age group and 625 unemployed women out of a total of 1587 unemployed people aged 40-49. The unemployment rate in Bihor County at the end of 2011 was 4.11%, 1.2 points higher than in 2006. However, statistics show that the unemployment rate registered at the end of 2011 was 1.71 points lower than in 2010 and 1.79 points lower than in 2009. In 2011, 5048 women were registered as unemployed, out of a total of 11,633, with a decrease compared to 2010 and 2009. Women unemployed aged between 30-39 years and 40-49 years old are also in a majority proportion compared to other age groups. And during the three years 2009, 2010 and 2011 the number of unemployed women who have post-secondary and university studies is lower than those who have completed primary, secondary or vocational education. Appearance that reveals that there is a shortage of skills in the Bihor labor market due to the failure to continue with advanced level studies. In 2011, the County Agency for Employment (AJOFM) Bihor undertook actions aimed at: reducing long-term youth unemployment, promoting the earliest employment of unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefits, subsidizing jobs for certain categories of people such as unemployed aged over 45, unemployed who are the only family carers, the drop in the number of unemployed who are living in rural areas and Roma communities. In 2011, the Bihor County Labor Agency organized a total of 55 courses attended by 1132 people, of which 663 women, thus:

- on forms of training: 214 people participated in initiation programs, 625 people participated in re-qualification programs, 237 people participated in training program, 56 people participated in specialization programs;

- target groups: 4 people with disabilities and 31 Roma followed the courses of the Bihor County Agency for Employment;
- by residence area: 386 people living in the countryside and 746 people from the urban area attended the courses of the Bihor County Labor Agency;

Implementation of the vocational training program had the expected effects, with 212 people being enrolled as a result of the graduation of the vocational training courses, representing a percentage of 141% of the number of people scheduled to be employed at the end of the year (The County Agency for Employment, Bihor).

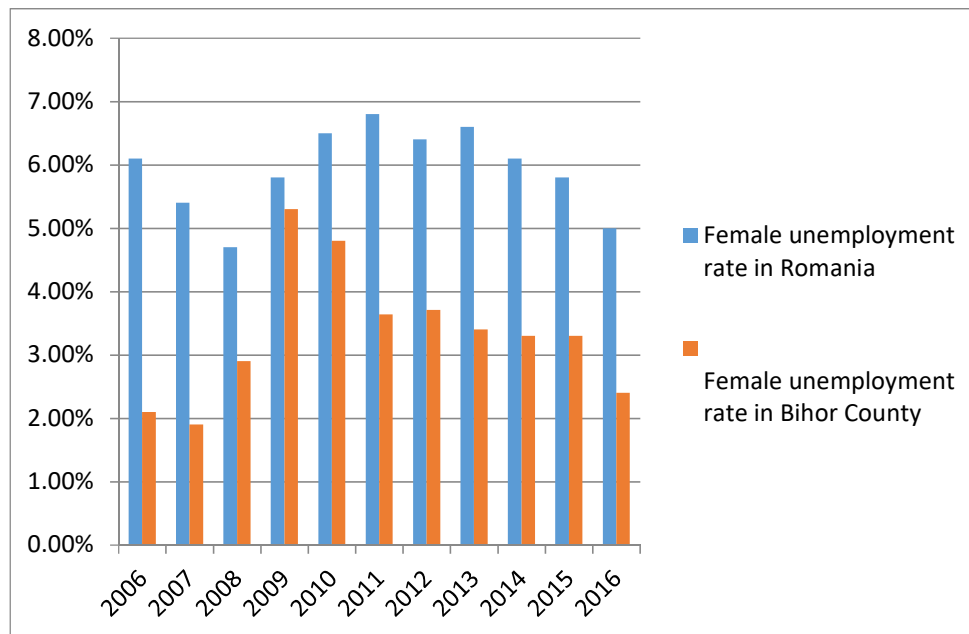
**Table 2:** Female unemployment rate in Bihor County during 2006-2016

Years	Female unemployment rate
2006	2,10%
2007	1,90%
2008	2,90%
2009	5,3%
2010	4,8%
2011	3,64%
2012	3,71%
2013	3,40%
2014	3,30%
2015	3,30%
2016	2,40%

Source: County Agency for Employment Bihor AJOFM Bihor

Bihor County registered during 2006-2016 is fluctuating. The largest variations occurred in 2008-2009, when the female unemployment rate increased by 2.4 percentage points compared to the previous year. The effects of the economic crisis are acute, highlighting the rise in unemployment. National unemployment also follows the same upward trend, with a female unemployment rate of 5.80% in 2009, 1.1% more than in 2008. From 2012, this indicator is on a relative downward slope. As can be seen in Figure1, there are some discrepancies between the evolutions of the female unemployment rate in Bihor County as compared to the evolution of the national unemployment rate in 2006-2016. In 2008, the female unemployment rate in Bihor County increased by 1% compared to 2007. In Romania at the end of 2008 the female unemployment rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points compared to the same period of 2007. In 2010, there is a decrease in the female unemployment rate in Bihor County compared to the previous year by 0.50 percentage points, unlike the female unemployment rate at national level, which increased by 0.7 percentage points, from 5.80% in 2009, to 6.50% in 2010. Also, 2011 shows a decrease of the female unemployment rate in Bihor County by 1.16 percentage points compared to 2010, while the same rate in the country is 0.3 percentage points higher than last year. Another variation of this type can be seen at the end of 2013, when in Bihor County the female unemployment rate is decreasing compared to the previous year, the gap being of 0.31 points. At national level over the same period, the female unemployment rate is increasing by 0.2 percentage points, from 6.40% in 2012 to 6.60% in 2013. Thus, the study hypothesis that there are discrepancies between the

female unemployment rate registered in Bihor County and the female unemployment rate at national level, over the time frame, was confirmed by the results obtained. We consider that one of the factors that led to the decrease of the female unemployment rate during the analyzed period is the increase of vacancies in the industrial field. Table 3 illustrates that the number of women employed in the industry followed a relatively upward trend, especially in the manufacturing sector, reaching 30,968 in 2016.



**Figure 1:** Comparison of female unemployment rates in Romania and Bihor County recorded during 2006-2016

Source: County Agency for Employment Bihor, National Institute of Statistics (<http://www.insse.ro>)

**Table 3:** Employees' Efficiency by Gender and Industry Activity at NACE Rev.2 Division at the end of the year in Bihor County

Activity (CAEN Rev.2 division)	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Industry total	56986	28595	57033	27956	59320	29039	61167	30411	63433	32122
Extractive industry	2042	273	1956	244	1932	261	1706	225	1903	225
Manufacturing	50226	27392	50566	26844	52942	27967	55088	29360	56912	30968
Production and supply of electricity and gas, hot water and air conditioning	2084	299	1888	340	1835	241	1687	247	1529	231

Activity (CAEN Rev.2 division)	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Water distribution, sanitation, management of decontamination activities	2634	631	2623	528	2611	570	2686	579	3089	698

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Bihor County Statistical Office  
(<http://www.bihor.insse.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ANUAR.pdf>)

It has also been observed that the number of graduate women in Bihor County was higher than that of men over the entire period, although the trend was a downward trend. The number of graduates is decreasing. For the academic year 2006-2007 no data are available as can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Students enrolled in higher education (day, evening, short and open distance) on the Territory of Bihor County

Years	Total enrolled students	Of which women
2007 / 2008	22.075	12.150
2008 / 2009	21.013	10.756
2009 / 2010	19.182	9.952
2010 / 2011	17.497	8.958
2011 / 2012	15.790	8.159
2012 / 2013	14.795	7.597
2013 / 2014	13.710	7.110
2014 / 2015	16.540	8.707
2015 / 2016	16.304	8.614

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Bihor County Statistical Office  
(<http://www.bihor.insse.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ANUAR.pdf>)

We are of the opinion that the increasing number of divorces during 2006-2011 is one of the factors that influenced the decrease of the female unemployment rate in Bihor County because women had to look for a job to support themselves, not being in the posture to be financially supported by life partners.

**Table 5:** Divorces by number of children left marriage in Bihor County

Years	Total	No children	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 children and above
2006	425	174	181	58	9	2	1
2007	512	218	234	51	7	1	1
2008	528	270	186	63	8	-	1
2009	637	351	223	60	1	2	-
2010	1016	512	370	116	12	5	1
2011	1158	532	448	157	10	8	3
2012	873	443	297	121	5	6	1

Years	Total	No children	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 children and above
2013	797	430	256	102	6	3	-
2014	743	429	227	75	9	3	-
2015	1005	507	338	144	12	3	1
2016	1028	538	334	132	20	4	-

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Bihor County Statistical Office (<http://www.bihor.insse.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ANUAR.pdf>)

International Labor Office concludes that "employment trends are directly and indirectly influenced by macroeconomic, demographic, environmental and technological changes, and dynamics that are otherwise complex"( Naoko Otube , International Labour Office, p. 1).

#### 4. Conclusion

The results of the study conducted at the Bihor County Agency for Employment, as well as the data collected through the National Institute of Statistics, showed that the female unemployment rate in the Bihor County differed in comparison with the female unemployment rate at national level in the years 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2013. The female unemployment rate in Bihor County has been decreasing in the mentioned periods compared to the national unemployment rate, which is increasing during the same periods.

We consider that these decreases in the level of unemployment among women in Bihor County are due to the implementation by the County Agency for Employment of active measures for: reducing long-term youth unemployment, promoting full employment, supporting the unemployed from rural areas, as well as those considered socially disadvantaged or marginalized.

Also, the number of vacancies in light industry has been rising, which has favoured employment for women. As well as the number of divorces registered at the county level registered an ascending trend, especially during 2006-2011, women being forced to find a job to support themselves. It was also pointed out that throughout the analyzed period the number of graduates of higher education was higher than that of men, facilitating their insertion into the labor market, due to their acquired competencies.

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##### Bio-note

*Lavinia Stan* is a PhD student in the *Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Oradea*. As a PhD student, Lavinia focused on the study of the labor market in the conditions of unemployment and the lack of competencies of the employees.

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