to the rest of the world are partly attributable to the prevalence of irrigation-intensive rice cultivation in the region. As seen in Table 6, Egypt stands out as the country with the highest share of equipped area for irrigation (99.7 percent in 2018), as the agricultural land is concentrated in the Nile valley and delta.

Countries with low shares are more dependent on rainfed agriculture, which is affected by changing rain patterns and tends to be more extensive than irrigated agriculture. On the other hand, irrigated agriculture competes with other uses of the water resources available in countries. The share of agricultural water withdrawals in total withdrawals is an indication of the relative weight of agricultural water uses compared to the industrial and municipal ones. As seen in Figure 9, the countries with the highest shares are located mostly in Africa and Asia, with the share of Somalia above 99 percent.

One trait shared by most of these countries is the income level: out of the top 20 countries, the World Bank classifies seven as low-income and ten as lower-middle income while only three belong to the upper-middle income group.

**Labour**

The number of people working in agriculture worldwide, including forestry and fishing, went down 16 percent in the 2000–2019 period, reaching 884 million in 2019, or 164 million less than in 2000 (see Figure 10). Agricultural employment has declined from approximately 800 million people to 600 million in Asia: this means that nearly one out of every four agricultural workers has left the sector for another job outside agriculture in the region. Between 2000 and 2019, the biggest drop was observed in Europe, as the agricultural population there has decreased by 47 percent from about 35 million, which represents a decrease of 16 million people. During the same period, even if the share of employment in agriculture declined in Africa (see Figure 11), agricultural employment increased to approximately 225 million people there. With around 200 million people working in each of China and India in agriculture, together they account for two-thirds of agricultural employment in Asia and 44 percent of global agricultural employment – even though 25 million people left the agriculture sector between 2000 and 2019 in India and 169 million in China (see Table 8).