



In Europe, one in five holdings is professional

Half of all agricultural holdings in the European Union are in Romania and Poland. Conversely, both these countries have a low percentage of professional holdings. On this criterion, France is in fifth place in the EU of 27.

In 2005, the European Union had a little over 14 million agricultural holdings, of which nearly half were in Romania and Poland. France ranks seventh with 567,000 holdings. Some of these units are of very limited size in economic terms and are not considered to be “professional”. They are farms run for subsistence, occupation in retirement, leisure or by individuals with jobs other than in farming. At the other extreme, holdings classed as “professional” are well represented in the EU 15.

The Netherlands are at the top with nearly nine out of every ten holdings considered to be professional. France ranks fifth, with seven out of ten holdings classed as professional.

Definitions

In the context of agricultural statistics, an **agricultural holding** is a production unit that meets three conditions:

- It must produce agricultural products,
- It must have at least one hectare of Utilised Agricultural Area or 20 ares of specialist crops, or a minimum level of productive agricultural activity (1 cow, 10 hives, etc.),
- It must be run routinely by a single management.

In addition to this, a **professional agricultural holding** has an economic dimension equivalent to an area of at least 12 hectares of wheat. French surveys add one more condition: the farm must involve a minimum quantity of work equivalent to that of one person occupied at least three-quarters of the time throughout the year.

More statistics on page 24.

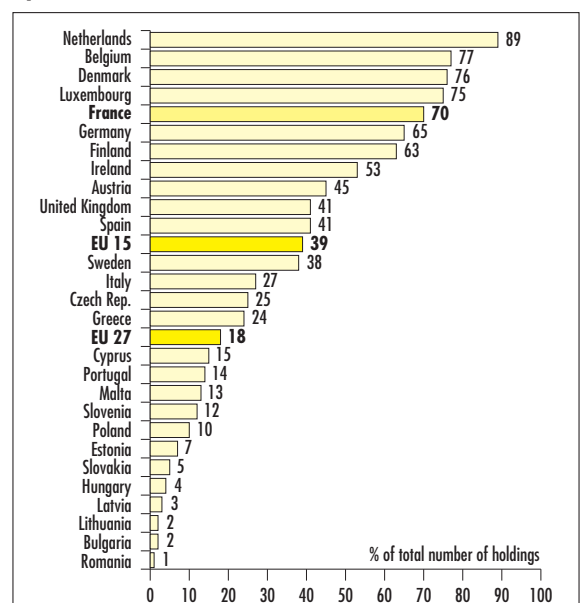
Numbers of agricultural holdings

Thousands of holdings

EU 27	14 478.6	Austria	170.6
EU 15	5 843.1	Ireland	132.7
Romania	4 256.2	Latvia	128.7
Poland	2 476.5	Netherlands	81.8
Italy	1 728.5	Slovenia	77.2
Spain	1 079.4	Sweden	75.8
Greece	833.6	Finland	70.6
Hungary	714.8	Slovakia	68.5
France	567.1	Belgium	51.5
Bulgaria	534.6	Denmark	48.3
Germany	389.9	Cyprus	45.2
Portugal	323.9	Czech Republic	42.3
United Kingdom	286.8	Estonia	27.8
Lithuania	253.0	Malta	11.1
		Luxembourg	2.5

Source: Eurostat Farm Structure Survey 2005

Percentage of total holdings deemed to be “professional”



Source: Eurostat - Farm Structure Survey 2005