

Agriculture in Europe : the spotlight on women

Jean-Marc FREMONT

In Agenda 2000, rural development is referred to as the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). But it will only be viable and sustainable if women, and the farmers among them in particular, are fully involved, as they are key players in the social and economic life of their local rural communities. Although one person in three working on agricultural holdings is a woman, half of them have the status of "spouse" of a farm manager, and they are usually recorded as working shorter hours on the holding than men. Women managers are generally older and have had a lower level of agricultural training than men. They manage small holdings and seldom have other gainful activities.

A - Women make up over one in three of the workforce on agricultural holdings

Traditionally, a farm in Europe is a family concern worked basically by a couple, with the wife helping her husband with numerous daily tasks.

In 1997, the Farm Structure Survey (FSS) recorded 14.65 million people working on farms in EU-15¹ as family labour or in permanent paid employment². Of these 5.37 million, or **37%**, are women.

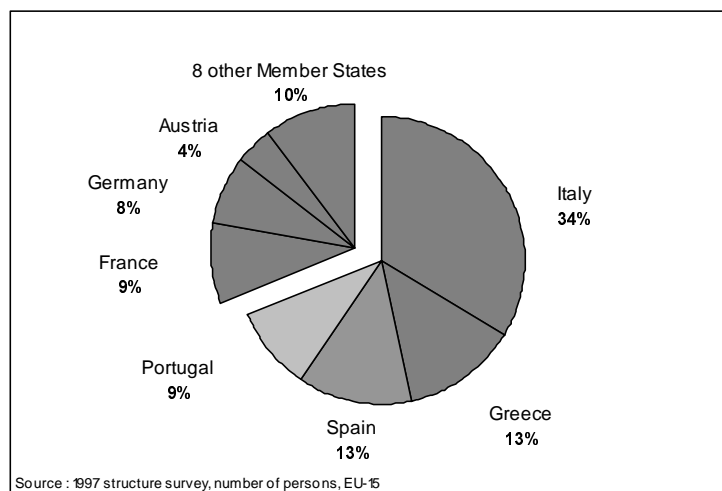


Figure 1: Distribution of the permanent female labour force on agricultural holdings

The relative share of women has not changed over time, even with the various enlargements. In both 1980 (EU-9) and 1990 (EU-12), women made up 37% of the agricultural working population.

¹ EU-9 means the Europe of the Nine (B, DK, D, F, IRL, I, L, NL and UK), EU-10 the Europe of the Ten (EU-9 plus EL), EU-12 the Europe of the Twelve (EU-10 plus E and P), EU-15 the European Union of 15 (EU-12 plus A, FIN and S).

² Seasonal working is recorded in terms of volume, not numbers of people.

It accounts for 9% of total work, and is not taken into account in this "Statistics in Focus".

Statistics in focus

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

THEME 5 – 7/2001

AGRICULTURE

Contents

A - Women make up over one in three of the workforce on agricultural holdings 1

With numbers in agriculture declining, the share of women remains stable 2

One woman in two is counted as a "spouse" 3

12% of women who work do so full time..... 3

One woman in four is aged between 45 and 54 years 4

B - One holding in five is managed by a woman 4

Managers' other gainful activities 6



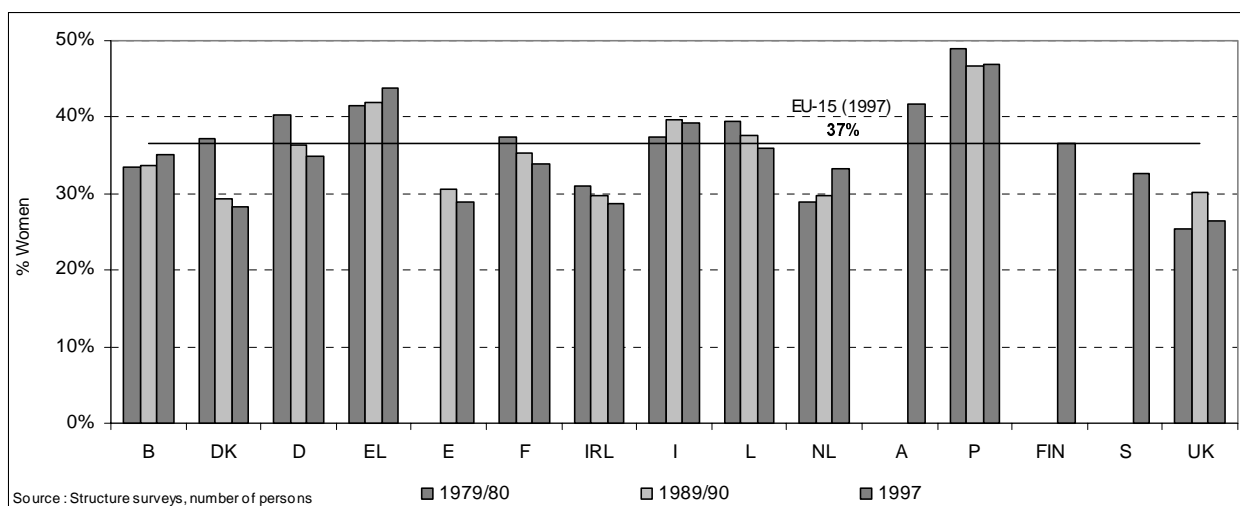


Figure 2: Changes in the share of the permanent female labour force in agriculture, by Member State

The percentages vary considerably, however, from one country to another. In Portugal (47%), Greece and Austria, women account for over 40% of the total as opposed to countries such as the United Kingdom (26%), Denmark, Spain or Ireland, where the figure is under 30%.

Of the total female agricultural population in Europe, one in three is Italian and two in three come from

southern European countries (I, E, EL or P). Eight Member States out of the fifteen have only 10% of the female population between them, a pattern of distribution which is repeated for the male population and for agricultural holdings.

The characteristics of the female population depend very much on geography.

With numbers in agriculture declining, the share of women remains stable

In our societies, it is increasingly common for women to have a professional activity. In 1990 in EU-12, 39% of total employment - all branches of the economy taken together - was accounted for by women, and in 1999, the equivalent figure was 42%.

Agriculture is rapidly losing ground, however, in terms of both absolute numbers and percentages of employment.

In 1983, 7.7% of all jobs in EU-10 were in the agricultural sector (agriculture, hunting, fishing and forestry). In 1999, the figure for EU-10 was only 3.8% and for EU-15 only 4.5%.

The losses have been enormous. Between 1983 and 1999, 3.3% of jobs were shed in EU-10 every year on average.

In the agricultural sector as a whole, the share of female employment moved roughly in line with this numerical decline. In EU-10, it was whittled down from 36.8% in 1983 to 32.1% in 1999.

Labour productivity on farms in the European Union remained high over the same period.

In 1980 (EU-9), 5.8 million holdings employed 11.9 million people, 4.4 million of them, or 37%,

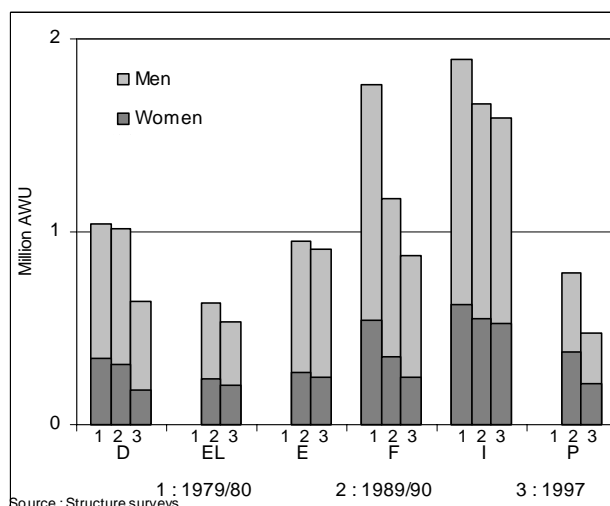


Figure 3: Work carried out on agricultural holdings

women. In terms of the volume of labour³, 1.9 million of the 6.1 million AWUs were produced by women.

In 1997 - still with EU-9 - there was a sharp drop in the number of holdings (-29%). There were now only 3.1 million women, but the share of female labour remained at 36%.

³ The volume of labour is measured in Annual Work Units (AWUs), i.e. the work of one full-time person over a whole year.

One woman in two is counted as a "spouse"

In 1997, half of those working in agriculture in EU-15 were recorded as being either holders or farm managers.

The vast majority of the labour force employed on farms in Europe is made up of family workers. 93% are holders, managers, spouses or other members of the family (parents, children, etc.). Paid employment is still rare, confined to a few large holdings and certain types of output.

The status of women working in agriculture tends to be very different from that of men. Whereas one manager in five is a woman, four spouses out of five are women. This inverse proportion is a clear indication of how responsibilities are shared out. Of the total female population in agriculture, one woman in two is recorded as a "spouse". Her husband is frequently responsible for the holding.

This situation varies from one Member State to another. Whereas one manager in four is a woman in Austria or Italy, fewer than one in ten is in Germany⁴, Ireland (9%), Denmark (7%) or the Netherlands (6%).

The national rates have changed very little in ten years.

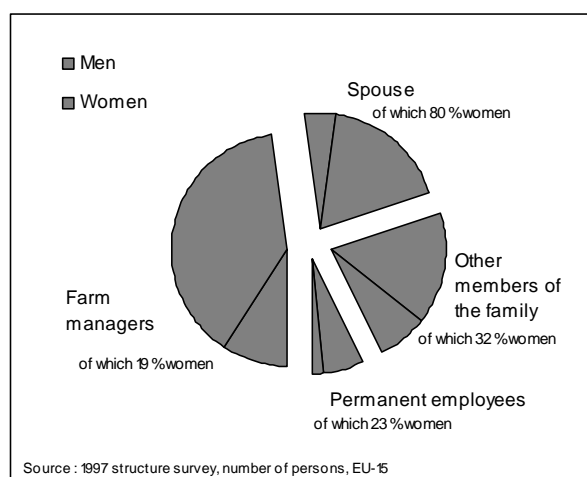


Figure 4: Status of the population working in agriculture

Similarly, although one spouse in three (Spain) or four (France and Austria) is a man, fewer than one in 20 are men in Germany or Ireland.

It is common for women to be paid employees in Finland (40% of permanent employees are women), in Germany and the Netherlands (one in three), but very rare in Ireland (8%) and Greece (5%).

12% of women who work do so full time

The working time of all those who work on farms is recorded in the FSS. It may be full time (1 AWU) or part time ($\frac{3}{4}$ time, half-time or $\frac{1}{4}$ time).

Women (family plus permanent employees) account for 31% of total working time on holdings, a rate which has remained extremely stable over time.

In 1997, women worked on farms only just over one-third time on average (0.37 AWU) whilst men worked almost half time (0.47 AWU). These averages are declining as a result of productivity gains. In 1980, women supplied 0.43 AWU and men 0.56 AWU (EU-9).

The averages also vary with status. Permanent employees work $\frac{3}{4}$ time (0.76 AWU) on average, whereas women who are "other members of the family" work only 0.28 AWU. Spouses work an average of 0.38 AWU.

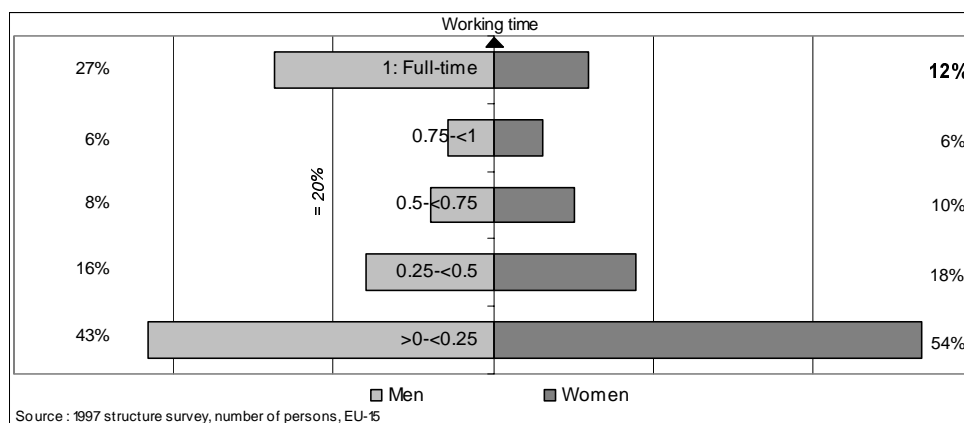


Figure 5: Working time, women compared with men

Part-time working is more common among women than men. In 1997, 12 women in 100 were working full time on farms and 54 less than quarter time. 27 in 100 men were working full time and 43 less than quarter time.

Here, too, the situation varies enormously from one country to another. 40 Danish women in 100 were working full time as against 30 Irish or Belgian. Only 4 Greeks and 7 Italians in 100 were working full time.

⁴ Germany: as from 89/90, the data published here refer to the unified country, and before that date to the Federal Republic as it then was.

One woman in four is aged between 45 and 54 years

The agricultural population is growing older. In 1997 in EU-15, 20 in 100 people working on farms were under 35 years and 21 over 65 years.

In 1980 in EU-9, there were as many young people (21%) but fewer older people (16%).

The agricultural population is oldest in the southern European countries. One Greek, Italian or Portuguese farmer in four is over 65 whilst almost one Danish or Irish farmer in three is under 35.

Number of persons	Women %	Men %
< 35 years	18	22
35 – 44	17	17
45 – 54	22	18
55 – 64	23	21
≥ 65 years	20	22
Total	100	100

Table 1: Distribution of the agricultural population by age class in 1997

The percentage of women is not the same in all age classes. Proportionally, there are fewer women under 35 and more over 65. The under 35-year-olds are likely to be spending more time with their children.

After they reach 65, they give up hard, physical labour sooner than men do. It is between the ages of 35 and 65 that women do most of their work on farms.

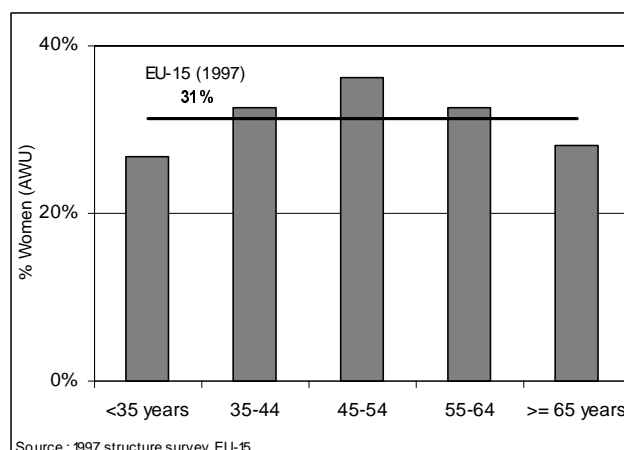


Figure 6: Share of work done by women by age class

B - One holding in five is managed by a woman

In 1997, 1.3 million women were managing farms in EU-15, a 1% increase in ten years (over EU-12).

29% of Austrian holdings and 24% of Italian are managed by women, as against only 7% in Denmark and 6% in the Netherlands.

Holdings managed by women are noticeably different from others.

They tend to be much smaller in terms of economic size⁵ than those managed by men (Figure 8).

In EU-15, the vast majority of holdings may be counted as "small" (under 8 ESUs). Out of 100 women managing farms, 82 are responsible for "small" holdings and only 3 for "large" holdings of over 40 ESUs. The numbers for farms managed by men are 68 and 9 respectively.

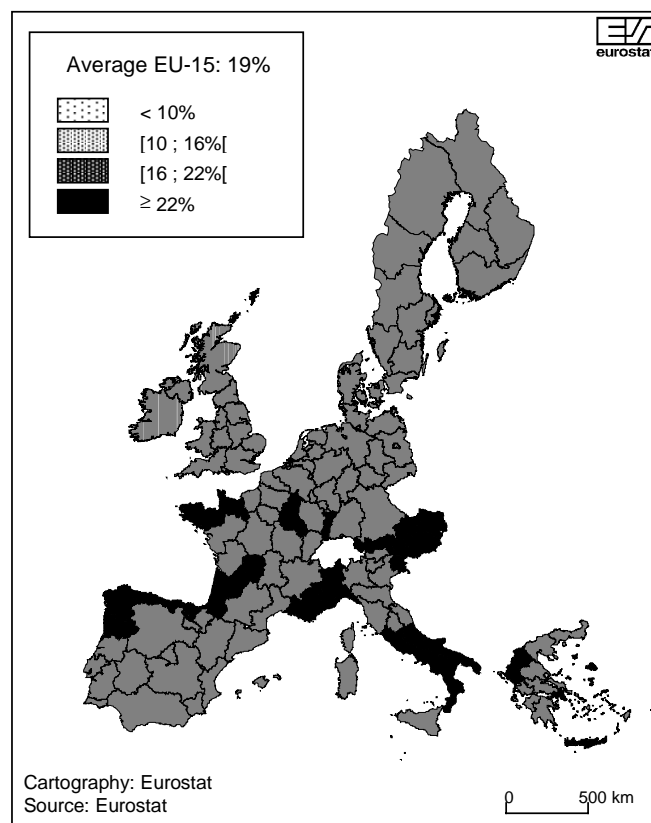


Figure 7: Share of female farm managers in 1997

⁵ The economic size class of a holding is measured in terms of European Size Units (ESUs). These can be used to compare holdings with very different systems of production: horticulture, dairy cows, cereal-growing, etc.

Nevertheless, the general tendency towards larger farms also benefits women farm managers.

Out of 100 holdings of over 40 ESUs, 8% were managed by women in 1997 as against only 6% in 1990.

Economic size	Farm managers	
	Women %	Men %
< 8 ESU	82	68
8 – 40	15	23
≥ 40 ESU	3	9
Total	100	100

Table 2: Distribution of holding managers by economic size class of holdings, 1997

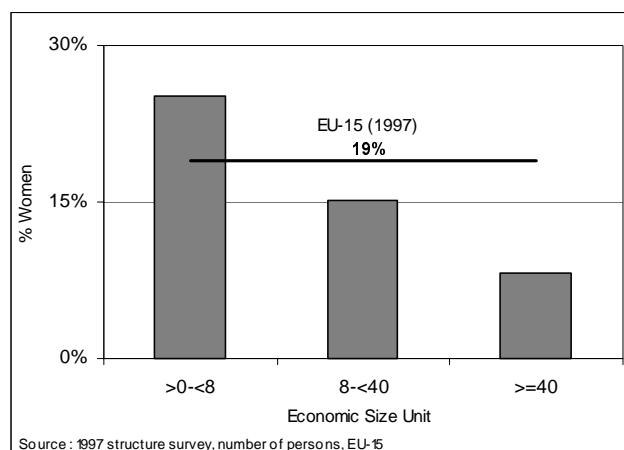


Figure 8: Share of holdings managed by women, by economic size, 1997

The definition of "farm type" (or "type of farming") is based on the estimated value added of each type of production.

For analytical purposes, holdings are divided into 17 main farm types. Some are over-represented compared with others. 12% of holdings are classed

as cereals or oilseeds whereas only 3% specialise in horticulture and only 1% in non-grazing livestock (pigs or poultry).

Their importance in economic terms also varies widely. 17% of the total economic size of holdings is concentrated on dairy cows and 12% on cereals. A few types (oilseeds, small grazing livestock) account for under 3% of total economic size.

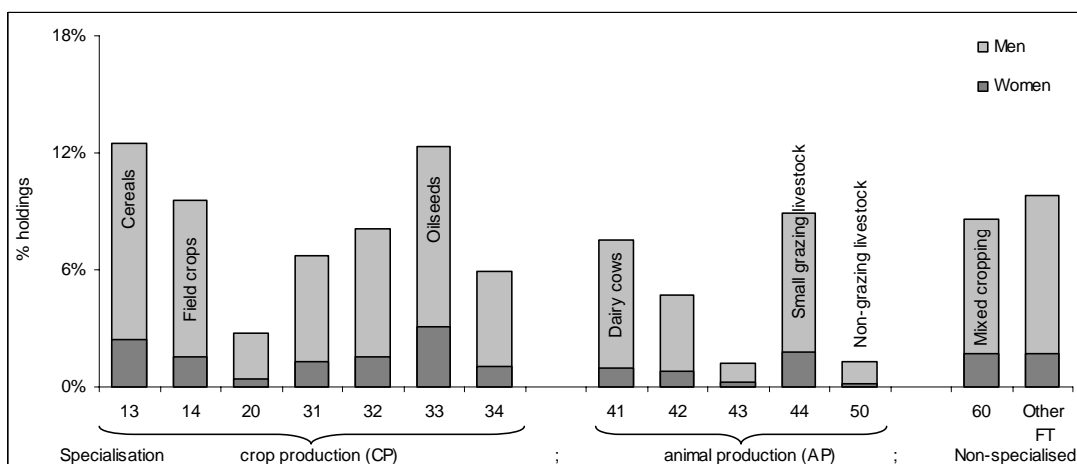


Figure 9: Agricultural holdings in 1997: farm type

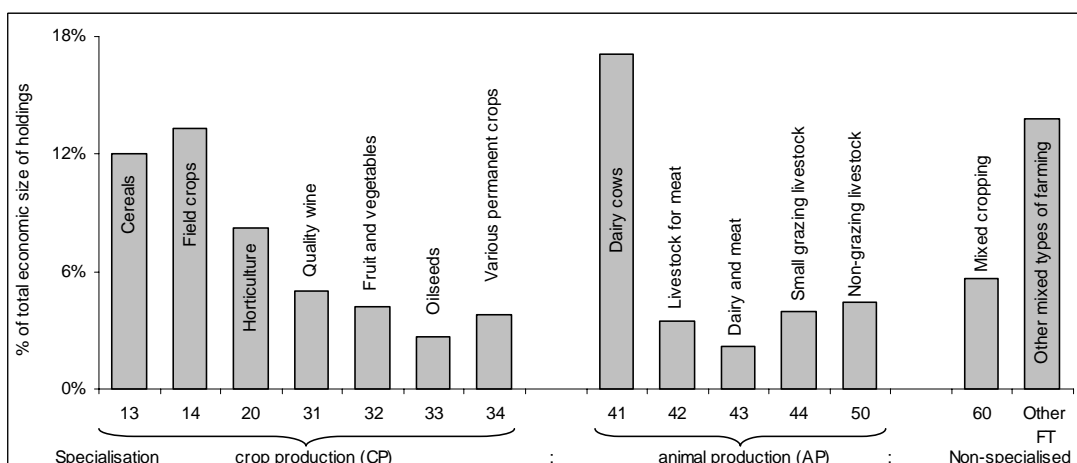


Figure 10: Economic size of holdings in 1997

Women are responsible for all types of specialised holding, but the percentages vary considerably. They manage only 13% of holdings specialising in dairy

cows but 25% of those specialising in oilseeds. One reason for this is the geographical distribution of women managers, as discussed above.

Managers' other gainful activities

Regardless of their agricultural activities, farm managers may have other gainful activities. On average, three out of ten do so, a rate which has remained virtually the same since 1980.

However, if the person responsible for the holding is a woman, the rate is lower. In 1997, only 16% of such women had another gainful activity, as against 32% of men.

Whilst one-quarter of men responsible for holdings report another gainful activity as their main one, only 13 women in 100 do so. This difference is most likely due to the kinds of other activity which are traditionally carried out by women.

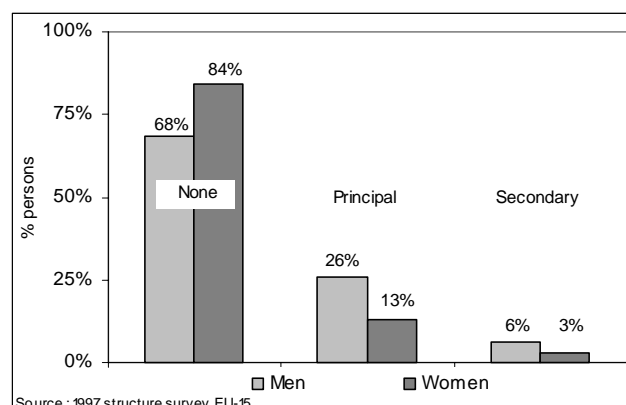


Figure 11: Other gainful activity (OGA) of managers

Training of farm managers

Those who are responsible for holdings need training if they are to be good managers from the point of view of both technology and economics. Their training may be purely practical, but more and more people who are responsible for farms have decided to undertake elementary or even full training. Young people starting out in agriculture have often had longer periods of training than their elders.

But the vast majority of holders still have only practical training, in many cases acquired from their parents on family farms. On average, women have received less training than men.

Thus 95% of women as against 87% of men who are responsible for farms state that they have had practical training and only 2% of women as against 7% of men have had full agricultural training⁶. Of 100 persons with full training who are responsible for holdings, only 7 are women.

Farm managers	1989/90 ¹		1997 ¹	
	Male managers	Female managers	Male managers	Female managers
Belgium	11%	2%	18%	3%
Greece	0%	0%	0%	0%
France	20%	5%	36%	9%
Ireland	6%	2%	10%	6%
Italy	2%	1%	2%	1%
Luxembourg	28%	6%	40%	8%
Portugal	0%	0%	1%	0%

¹ Countries not included in this table did not reply.

Table 3: Farm managers who have had full training

The level of training is improving, though. In 1990, only 4% of those responsible for holdings stated that they had received full agricultural training as against 6% in 1997. The percentages for women were 1% and 2%.

Age of farm managers

Managers tend to be older members of the farming population. Fewer than 10% of them are under 35 whilst over half are 55 or over. 19% of women managers are even older, 57% of them being 55 or over as against only 52% of men holders.

It frequently happens that a woman becomes responsible for the farm for a few years when her husband retires, and this allows her to acquire a genuine social status, albeit rather late in the day.

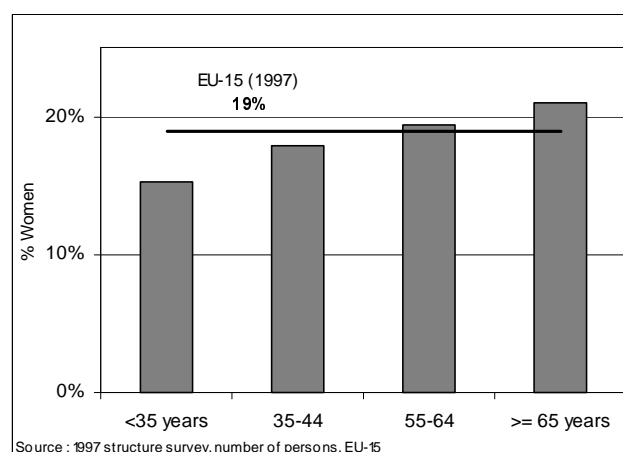


Figure 12: Share of women farm managers by age class

⁶ NB: The training of holding managers was an optional question in 1997 surveys, and percentages published therefore refer to only seven respondents countries.

1979/80		1989/90		1993		1995		1997			
Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	%F	
Number of persons ('000)											
Europe-15						5525	9599	5367	9279	37%	
Europe-12		6036	10106	5557	9437	5154	9029	5017	8725	37%	
Europe-9	4352	7518	3873	6591	3372	6013	3231	5775	3126	5555	36%
Belgium	62	124	47	93	48	84	44	78	41	76	35%
Denmark	87	147	41	98	40	102	37	102	37	93	28%
Germany	797	1186	647	1129	534	944	466	859	429	802	35%
Greece	:	:	648	896	810	964	678	889	698	898	44%
Spain	:	:	787	1786	786	1785	697	1739	690	1704	29%
France	996	1663	657	1200	559	1049	519	987	475	928	34%
Ireland	145	323	93	219	99	221	87	207	81	201	29%
Italy	1988	3313	2101	3187	1808	2954	1838	2936	1802	2799	39%
Luxembourg	5	7	3	6	3	5	3	5	2	4	36%
Netherlands	88	215	86	203	89	201	87	189	94	189	33%
Austria	:	:	:	:	:	:	230	316	213	298	42%
Portugal	:	:	728	833	588	675	548	625	502	568	47%
Finland	:	:	:	:	:	:	87	145	82	142	37%
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:	54	110	55	114	33%
United Kingdom	185	539	197	457	192	454	151	413	166	463	26%
Amount of work carried out ('000 AWUs)											
Europe-15						2079	4551	1993	4378	31%	
Europe-12			2354	4964	2108	4503	1925	4308	1849	4146	31%
Europe-9	1871	4208	1471	3480	1315	3155	1214	2993	1179	2901	29%
Belgium	31	92	24	68	23	61	21	57	23	55	29%
Denmark	51	120	19	72	24	76	24	77	23	70	25%
Germany	341	697	309	704	231	557	195	501	178	464	28%
Greece	:	:	237	392	260	368	217	347	207	323	39%
Spain	:	:	271	683	280	673	252	674	249	660	27%
France	545	1221	350	826	296	712	270	668	247	631	28%
Ireland	65	234	67	179	65	169	55	157	49	148	25%
Italy	620	1275	547	1117	530	1096	526	1088	521	1071	33%
Luxembourg	3	6	2	4	2	4	2	4	2	3	30%
Netherlands	103	130	47	169	52	165	48	154	52	146	26%
Austria	:	:	:	:	:	:	88	97	82	93	47%
Portugal	:	:	375	409	253	307	242	294	213	262	45%
Finland	:	:	:	:	:	:	46	83	42	79	35%
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:	21	62	20	59	25%
United Kingdom	112	433	106	341	93	316	73	288	85	313	21%

Table 4: Permanent family and paid labour on farms

Box 1 : The agricultural population and employment in agriculture - statistical sources

Several Community statistical sources have provided information on employment in the agricultural sector, from various angles.

Employment in agriculture and other sectors of activity (Source: Eurostat New Cronos – Labour force survey Lfs, employment surveys)

Employment statistics cover employment in the agricultural sector (agriculture, hunting, fishing and forestry) and in other sectors of the economy. People are allocated to the sector in which they carry out their main activity, and employment characteristics comply with the same criteria in all sectors of activity. Employment statistics do not cover all those working in the agricultural sector, owing to the extent of part-time working and multiple job-holding, and they will not classify under agriculture someone whose main activity is outside agriculture.

Employment on agricultural holdings (Source: Eurostat New Cronos – Eurofarm, structural surveys)

The Farm Structure Survey (FSS) provides an exhaustive measure of employment on farms.

It records the principal activity of all persons in employment, their working time, social status and any other gainful activities. It can be used to analyse part-time working and multiple job-holding.

The volume of work actually expended on agricultural activity is expressed in Annual Work Units (AWUs). By definition, one AWU equals one person working full-time 8 hours a day and 225 days a year.

These two types of information are not, therefore, strictly comparable.

Further information:

➤ Databases

New Cronos, Eurofarm and Lfs Domain

To obtain information or to order publications, databases and special sets of data, please contact the **Data Shop** network:

BELGIQUE/BELGIË	DANMARK	DEUTSCHLAND	ESPAÑA	FRANCE	ITALIA – Roma
Eurostat Data Shop Bruxelles/Brussel Planistat Belgique Rue du Commerce 124 Handelsstraat 124 B-1000 BRUXELLES / BRUSSEL Tel. (32-2) 234 67 50 Fax (32-2) 234 67 51 E-mail: datasshop@planistat.be	DANMARKS STATISTIK Bibliotek og Information Eurostat Data Shop Sejroegade 11 DK-2100 KØBENHAVN Ø Tlf. (45) 39 17 30 30 Fax (45) 39 17 30 03 E-mail: bib@dst.dk	STATISTISCHES BUNDESAMT Eurostat Data Shop Berlin Otto-Braun-Straße 70-72 (Eingang: Karl-Marx-Allee) D-1 0178 BERLIN Tlf. (49) 1888 644 94 27/28 Fax (49) 1888-644 94 30 E-Mail: datasshop@statistik-bund.de	INE Eurostat Data Shop Paseo de la Castellana, 183 Oficina 009 Entrada por Estébanez Calderón E-28046 MADRID Tel. (34) 91 583 91 67 Fax (34) 91 579 71 20 E-mail: datasshop.eurostat@ine.es	INSEE Info Service Eurostat Data Shop 195, rue de Bercy Tour Gamma A F-75582 PARIS CEDEX 12 Tel. (33) 1 53 17 8844 Fax (33) 1 53 17 88 22 E-mail: datasshop@insee.fr	ISTAT Centro di Informazione Statistica Sede di Roma, Eurostat Data Shop Via Cesare Balbo, 11a I-00184 ROMA Tel. (39) 06 46 73 31 02/06 Fax (39) 06 46 73 31 01/07 E-mail: dipdiff@istat.it
ITALIA – Milano	LUXEMBOURG	NEDERLAND	NORGE	PORTUGAL	SCHWEIZ/SUISSE/SVIZZERA
ISTAT Ufficio Regionale per la Lombardia Eurostat Data Shop Via Fieno 3 I-20123 MILANO Tel. (39) 02 80 61 32 460 Fax (39) 02 80 61 32 304 E-mail: mileuro@tin.it	Eurostat Data Shop Luxembourg BP 453 L-2014 LUXEMBOURG 4, rue Alphonse Weicker L-2721 LUXEMBOURG Tel. (352) 43 35-2251 Fax (352) 43 35-22221 E-mail: dslux@eurostat.datashop.lu	STATISTICS NETHERLANDS Eurostat Data Shop-Voorburg Postbus 4000 2270 JM VOORBURG Nederland Tel. (31-70) 337 49 00 Fax (31-70) 337 59 84 E-mail: datasshop@cbs.nl	Statistics Norway Library and Information Centre Eurostat Data Shop Kongens gate 6 Boks 8131 Dep. N-0033 OSLO Tel. (47) 21 09 46 42/43 Fax (47) 21 09 45 04 E-mail: Datashop@ssb.no	Eurostat Data Shop Lisboa INE/Serviço de Difusão Av. António José de Almeida, 2 P-1000-043 LISBOA Tel. (351) 21 842 61 00 Fax (351) 21 842 63 64 E-mail: data.shop@ine.pt	Statistisches Amt des Kantons Zürich, Eurostat Data Shop Bleicherweg 5 CH-8090 Zürich Tel. (41-1) 225 12 12 Fax (41-1) 225 12 99 E-mail: datasshop@statistik.zh.ch Internet: http://www.zh.ch/statistik
SUOMI/FINLAND	SVERIGE	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
STATISTICS FINLAND Eurostat Data Shop Helsinki Tilastokirjasto PL2B FIN-00022 Tilastokeskus Työpajakat u 13 B, 2/Keros, Helsinki P. (358-9) 17 34 22 21 F. (358-9) 17 34 22 79 Sähköposti: datasshop.tilastokeskus@tilastokeskus.fi Internet: http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tilastokeskus.html	STATISTICS SWEDEN Information service Eurostat Data Shop Karlavägen 100 • Box 24 300 S-104 51 STOCKHOLM Tfn (46-8) 50 69 48 01 Fax (46-8) 50 69 48 99 E-post: infoservice@scb.se Internet: http://www.scb.se/info/datashop pseudatashop.asp	Eurostat Data Shop Enquiries & advice and publications Office for National Statistics Customers & Electronic Services Unit 1 Drummond Gate - B1/05 LONDON SW1V 2QQ United Kingdom Tel. (44-20) 75 33 56 76 Fax (44-1633) 81 27 62 E-mail: eurostat.datasshop@ons.gov.uk	Eurostat Data Shop Electronic Data Extractions, Enquiries & advice - R.CADE 1L Moulton Research Centre University of Durham DURHAM DH1 3SW United Kingdom Tel: (44-191) 374 73 50 Fax: (44-191) 384 49 71 E-mail: rcade@dur.ac.uk Internet: http://www.rcade.dur.ac.uk	HAVER ANALYTICS Eurostat Data Shop 60 East 42nd Street Suite 3310 NEW YORK, NY 10165 USA Tel. (1-212) 986 93 00 Fax (1-212) 986 69 81 E-mail: eurodata@haver.com	

Media Support Eurostat (for professional journalists only):

Bech Building Office A3/48 • L-2920 Luxembourg • Tel. (352) 4301 33408 • Fax (352) 4301 32649 • e-mail: eurostat-mediasupport@cec.eu.int

For information on methodology

Jean-Marc FREMONT in collaboration with Séverine DENIS, Eurostat/F1, L-2920 Luxembourg,

Tel. (352) 4301 35432, Fax (352) 4301 37317, E-mail: jean-marc.fremont@cec.eu.int

ORIGINAL: French

Please visit our web site at www.europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/ for further information!

A list of worldwide sales outlets is available at the **Office for Official Publications of the European Communities**.

2 rue Mercier - L-2985 Luxembourg
Tel. (352) 2929 4211 Fax (352) 2929 42709
Internet Address <http://eur-op.eu.int/fr/general/s-ad.htm>
e-mail: info.info@cec.eu.int

BELGIQUE/BELGIË - DANMARK - DEUTSCHLAND - GREECE/ELLADA - ESPAÑA - FRANCE - IRELAND - ITALIA - LUXEMBOURG - NEDERLAND - ÖSTERREICH
PORTUGAL - SUOMI/FINLAND - SVERIGE - UNITED KINGDOM - ISLAND - NORGE - SCHWEIZ/SUISSE/SVIZZERA - BALGARJA - CESKÁ REPUBLIKA - CYPRUS
EESTI - HRVATSKA - MAGYARORSZÁG - MALTA - POLSKA - ROMÂNIA - RUSSIA - SLOVAKIA - SLOVENIA - TÜRKIYE - AUSTRALIA - CANADA - EGYPT - INDIA
ISRAËL - JAPAN - MALAYSIA - PHILIPPINES - SOUTH KOREA - THAILAND - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Order form

I would like to subscribe to Statistics in focus (from 1.1.2001 to 31.12.2001):
(for the Data Shop and sales office addresses see above)

Formula 1: All 9 themes (approximately 140 issues)

Paper: EUR 360

Language required: DE EN FR

Formula 2: One or more of the following seven themes:

Theme 1 'General statistics'

Paper: EUR 42

Theme 2 'Economy and finance'

Theme 3 'Population and social conditions'

Theme 4 'Industry, trade and services'

Theme 5 'Agriculture and fisheries'

Theme 6 'External trade'

Theme 8 'Environment and energy'

Paper: EUR 84

Language required: DE EN FR

Statistics in focus can be downloaded (pdf file) free of charge from the Eurostat web site. You only need to register. For other solutions, contact your Data Shop.

Please send me a free copy of 'Eurostat mini-guide' (catalogue containing a selection of Eurostat products and services)
Language required: DE EN FR

I would like a free subscription to 'Statistical References', the information letter on Eurostat products and services
Language required: DE EN FR

Mr Mrs Ms

(Please use block capitals)

Surname: _____ Forename: _____

Company: _____ Department: _____

Function: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Town: _____

Country: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Payment on receipt of invoice, preferably by:

Bank transfer

Visa Eurocard

Card No: _____ Expires on: ____/____/____

Please confirm your intra-Community VAT number:

If no number is entered, VAT will be automatically applied. Subsequent reimbursement will not be possible.