

Farm structure in Bulgaria – 2005

84% of the agricultural land is in farms of 100 ha or more

This Statistics in Focus is part of a series of country-specific publications on the results of the Farm Structure Survey (FSS) 2005. It provides a brief but nevertheless comprehensive insight into the farm structure in Bulgaria. A similar publication was issued in November 2005 presenting the results of the FSS 2003 in Bulgaria.

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In October-November 2005 in Bulgaria, about **118.1 thousand*** agricultural holdings had an economic size of at least 1 European Size Unit (ESU).

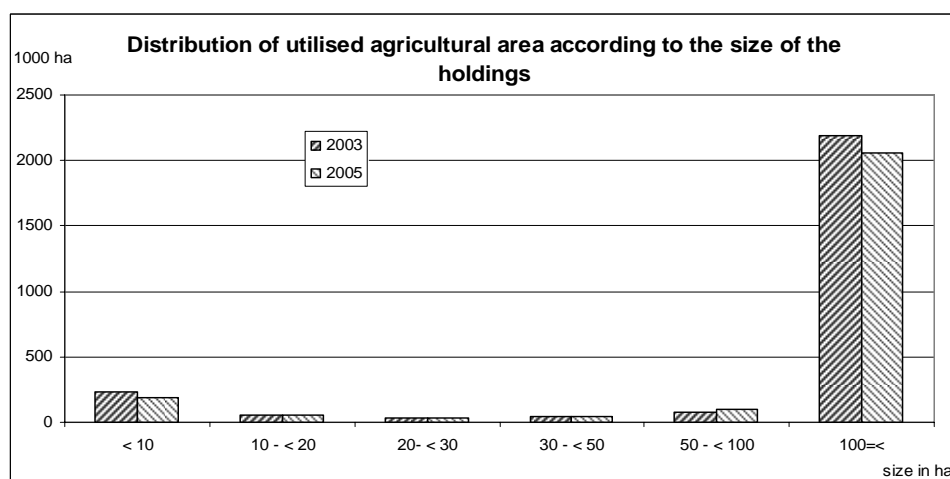
- These holdings employed 246.4 thousand AWUs (annual work units), the equivalent of 246.4 thousand persons working full time;
- they made use of about 2.5 million ha of agricultural area, which is on average **21.1 ha per holding** (compared to 16.7 ha in 2003).

Among these 118.1 thousand agricultural holdings

- 21% made use of less than one AWU, while 32% made use of 2 or more AWUs;
- 81% used less than 5 ha agricultural area, while 3% used 100 ha or more;
- 23% were holdings of the type general field cropping, 12% specialist dairy farming, 10% were engaged in mixed cropping, 9% in combined field cropping and grazing livestock and 9% had specialised in sheep, goats and other grazing livestock;
- 36% were producing mainly for their own consumption.

Among the 115 thousand sole holders

- 13% were women;
- 52% were aged 55 or more, and only 7% were younger than 35 years;
- 24% had another gainful activity as their major occupation.



** Due to differences in the threshold across Member States, the total number of farms is not comparable between countries. This is why the present analysis, including Tables 1-4 and the graphs focus on holdings of at least one ESU. See methodological notes for more information on the concept of the ESU.*

Statistics in focus

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

43/2007

Agriculture

Authors

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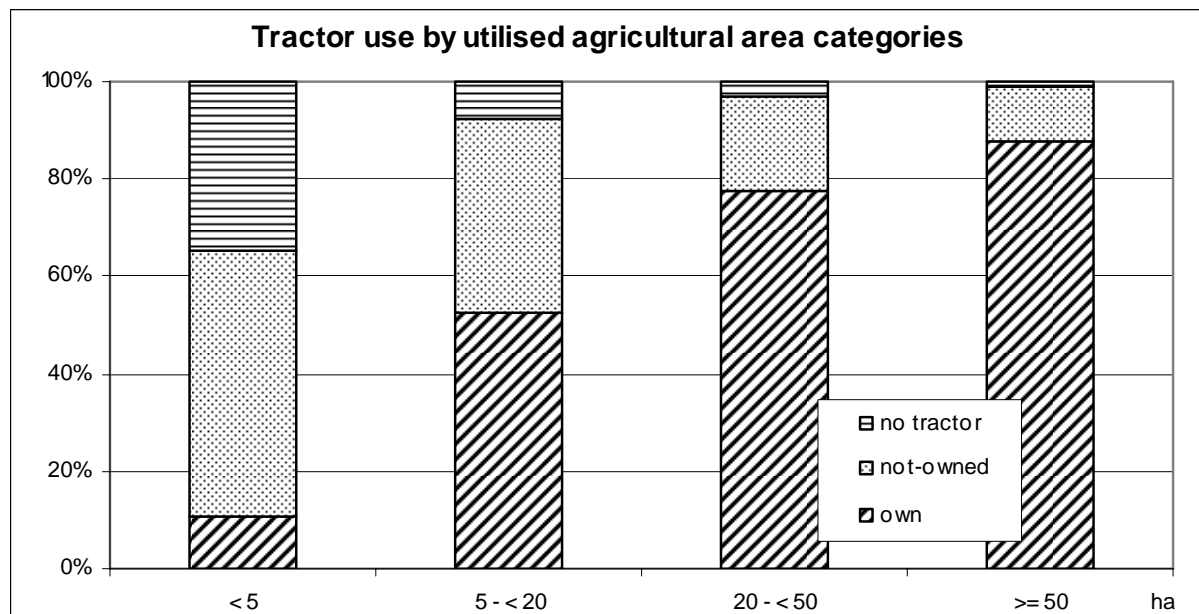
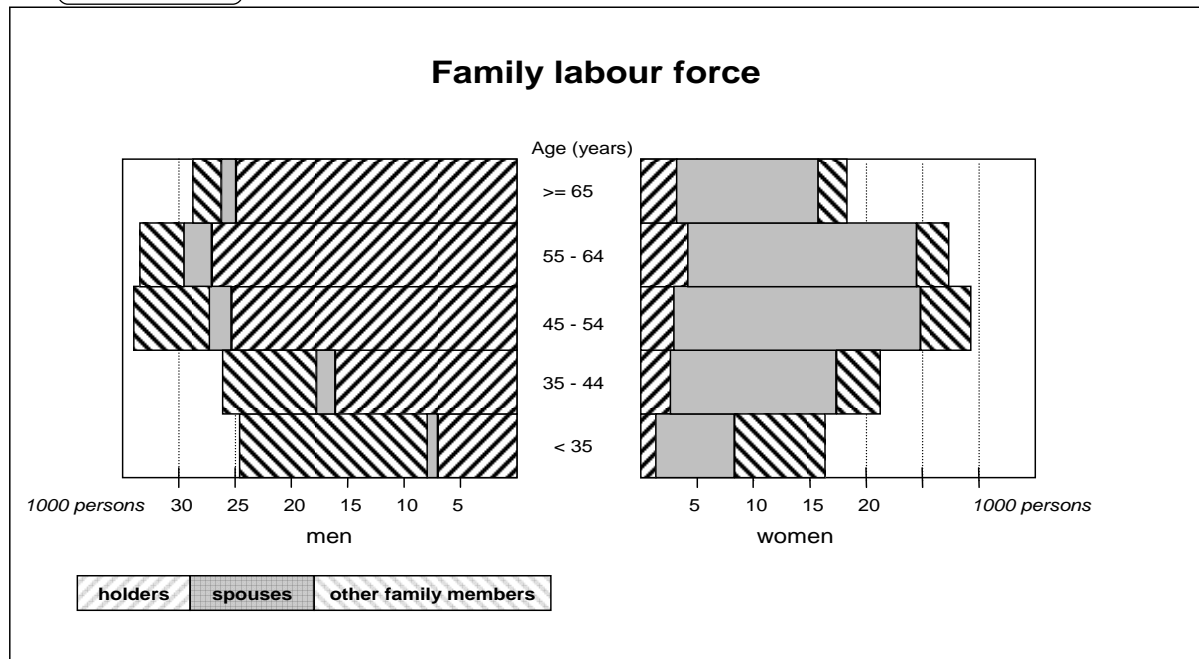
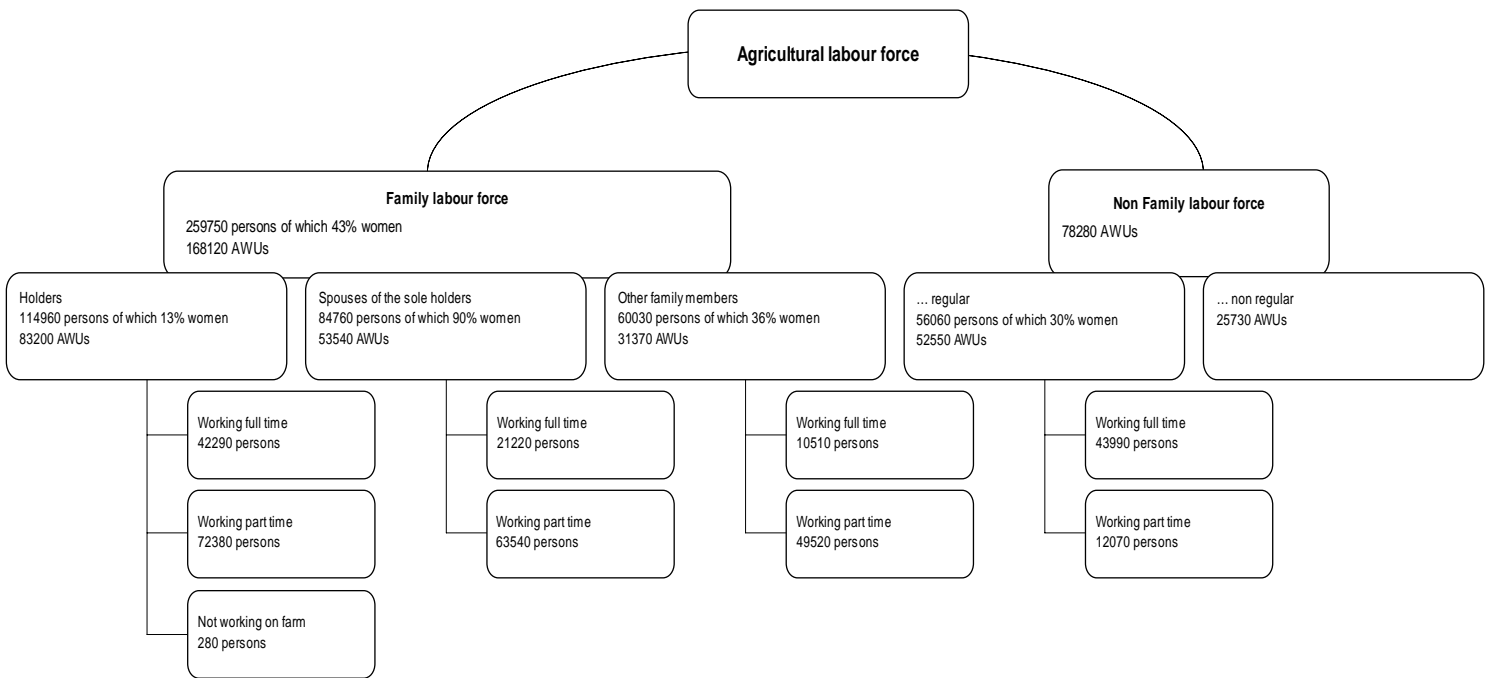
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Bulgaria 2005 – Holdings of at least 1 ESU



Size of the farms	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU*)			
	< 5	5 - < 20	20 -< 50	50 =<		0	0 <- < 5	5 -< 50	50 =<
Total labour force									
1000 annual work units	152.8	28.4	11.0	54.3	246.4	58.4	113.7	55.2	19.1
Family labour force									
1000 persons	217.5	30.4	5.7	6.2	259.8	21.3	168.8	67.7	2.1
1000 annual work units	139.8	19.7	3.9	4.7	168.1	12.5	106.0	47.9	1.7
Non-family labour regularly employed									
1000 persons	8.3	4.6	4.6	38.6	56.1	31.9	2.4	5.3	16.4
1000 annual work units	7.8	4.0	4.3	36.5	52.6	29.8	2.1	4.7	15.9
Non regular non family labour force									
1000 annual work units	5.2	4.7	2.8	13.0	25.7	16.1	5.5	2.6	1.5
Holding managers (1000)	96.1	13.7	2.9	5.3	118.1	13.2	73.5	30.0	1.3
- women (%)	13.6	7.5	9.5	9.9	12.6	16.4	13.5	8.8	9.6
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	25.4	23.3	19.1	8.1	24.2	28.4	27.1	16.3	5.8
- 50 % and over(%)	40.0	31.0	27.6	20.8	37.8	36.8	42.1	28.8	12.8
- with a basic agricult. training only (%)	6.7	15.3	18.6	20.6	8.6	11.5	7.2	10.4	14.4
- with a full agricultural training (%)	0.9	2.9	6.8	22.3	2.3	10.7	0.8	1.5	17.7
Sole/main holders (1000)	95.8	13.5	2.6	3.1	115.0	10.8	73.4	29.8	0.9
- women (%)	13.6	7.3	8.0	6.8	12.6	16.3	13.5	8.9	7.6
- distribution by age (%)									
- under 35 years	7.5	5.0	8.9	10.7	7.3	14.1	6.5	6.8	9.0
- from 35 to 44 years	15.3	19.4	25.5	27.3	16.4	25.3	14.7	16.9	28.3
- from 45 to 54 years	24.7	22.5	28.2	27.4	24.6	29.7	23.6	24.8	38.6
- from 55 to 64 years	27.4	27.3	23.3	24.3	27.2	19.7	27.5	29.4	19.2
- 65 years and over	25.0	25.8	14.0	10.3	24.5	11.3	27.6	22.0	5.1
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	25.5	23.7	21.3	14.0	24.9	34.7	27.1	16.4	8.7
- 50 % and over(%)	40.1	31.6	30.6	36.0	38.8	44.9	42.1	29.0	19.1
- with another gainful activity ¹ (%)	38.4	33.1	36.7	34.6	37.6	50.3	38.7	30.3	37.3
- as main occupation	24.4	19.3	20.5	14.1	23.5	32.2	25.3	16.0	12.7
- as a subsidiary occupation	13.9	13.8	16.1	20.5	14.1	18.2	13.4	14.3	24.8
Spouse of sole holder working on the holding (1000)	72.7	8.9	1.7	1.5	84.8	6.4	57.1	20.8	0.6
- women (%)	89.6	94.3	94.2	92.0	90.2	84.1	89.7	93.5	92.4
- distribution by age (%)									
- under 35 years	9.1	9.3	16.4	12.8	9.3	16.9	8.0	10.3	13.4
- from 35 to 54 years	46.8	49.1	52.2	61.3	47.4	58.1	46.1	47.3	69.8
- 55 years and over	44.1	41.6	31.4	25.9	43.3	25.0	45.9	42.4	16.9
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	34.2	44.0	44.2	42.1	35.6	46.0	36.0	31.6	24.0
- 50 % and over(%)	41.6	27.3	22.5	23.5	39.4	36.6	42.1	33.2	23.4
- with another gainful activity (%)	44.7	47.4	49.3	51.4	45.2	62.1	44.3	42.2	51.4
Other members of the holder's family working on the holding (1000)	49.0	8.0	1.5	1.6	60.0	4.1	38.3	17.1	0.6
- women (%)	37.7	32.1	23.4	27.0	36.4	34.7	38.8	31.6	31.7
- part-time - under 50 % (%)	52.5	50.7	44.5	30.3	51.5	51.1	54.5	45.5	32.8
- 50 % and over(%)	31.8	27.6	24.8	31.8	31.0	33.9	30.4	32.0	21.0
- with another gainful activity (%)	63.7	55.7	56.0	43.2	61.9	60.6	63.7	58.5	55.3

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

* LU = Livestock Unit

¹ Refers only to holders who are also farm managers.

Size of the farms	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)			
	< 5	5 - < 20	20 - < 50	50 =<		0	0 <- < 5	5 - < 50	50 =<
Holdings									
- total number (1000)	96.1	13.7	2.9	5.3	118.1	13.2	73.5	30.0	1.3
- by legal personality of the holder (%)									
- sole holder	99.7	98.1	90.0	57.9	97.4	81.8	99.9	99.3	67.3
- legal person	0.3	1.9	10.1	42.1	2.6	18.2	0.1	0.7	32.6
- group holders	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
- by employed labour force (%)									
- under 1 AWU	21.5	25.4	17.8	6.6	21.2	27.7	23.0	14.9	1.2
- from 1 to less than 2 AWU	49.8	37.3	32.5	17.8	46.5	32.8	49.9	45.6	15.4
- from 2 to less than 3 AWU	23.1	22.5	22.9	15.3	22.6	13.9	22.2	28.2	9.7
- 3 AWU and over	5.6	14.8	26.8	60.3	9.7	25.7	5.0	11.3	73.7
- by economic size (%)									
- from 1 to less than 8 ESU	98.0	90.6	71.0	3.9	92.2	68.4	97.5	93.6	4.7
- from 8 to less than 16 ESU	1.3	6.9	18.4	22.3	3.3	8.2	1.5	4.6	21.9
- from 16 to less than 40 ESU	0.4	1.6	7.0	29.0	2.0	8.0	0.7	1.2	34.1
- from 40 to less than 100 ESU	0.2	0.5	2.6	23.3	1.3	8.5	0.2	0.3	13.5
- 100 ESU and over	0.1	0.4	1.1	21.4	1.2	6.9	0.1	0.2	25.9
- by farm type (%)									
- general field cropping	25.5	12.2	14.5	6.3	22.8	34.9	29.9	1.2	1.2
- specialist dairy farming	12.5	9.1	7.5	1.2	11.5	0.0	4.1	33.6	33.4
- mixed cropping	9.3	16.3	4.5	3.2	9.7	5.4	13.6	2.4	2.6
- field crops – grazing livestock combined	8.3	14.9	9.0	3.6	8.9	0.0	10.6	8.7	5.9
- sheep, goats and other grazing livestock	9.9	5.2	2.5	0.6	8.7	0.2	4.1	23.9	7.2
- other types of farming	34.6	42.3	61.9	85.1	38.4	59.6	37.7	30.2	49.6
- by farming methods (%)									
- organic farming	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
- irrigating	19.4	13.2	11.4	7.4	18.0	26.2	19.3	11.5	6.9
- with fixed irrigation equipment	14.8	12.3	11.8	7.1	14.1	21.8	14.2	10.6	7.9
- with crops under glass	5.1	3.3	1.5	0.8	4.7	9.4	5.4	1.0	0.6
- benefiting of direct investment aids	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
- using a tractor (%)									
- with their own tractor	10.6	52.4	77.4	87.6	20.6	39.7	16.2	21.4	51.6
- using a combine harvester (%)									
- with another gainful activity than agricultural production (%)									
- tourism	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.5
- handicraft	0.1	0.3	1.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1
- processing of farm products	0.1	0.2	1.3	1.1	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.1	3.6
- wood processing	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2
- aquaculture	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.5
- renewable energy production	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
- contractual work	2.2	10.8	18.4	24.2	4.6	8.8	3.3	5.8	10.2
- other gainful activities n.a.e.	0.5	2.2	2.1	4.8	0.9	2.5	0.6	0.8	7.9

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

Size of the farm (1000 ha)	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)			
	< 5	5 - < 20	20 -< 50	50 =<		0	0 <- < 5	5 -< 50	50 =<
Area									
Total area of agricultural holdings	710.3	223.8	137.1	2602.8	3674.0	2616.4	379.2	306.9	371.5
Other area	580.3	105.4	51.8	448.9	1186.5	1057.3	56.9	35.9	36.4
Wooded area	566.8	96.8	48.7	382.6	1094.9	994.4	39.9	29.4	31.2
Agricultural area	130.0	118.4	85.4	2153.9	2487.6	1559.1	322.4	270.9	335.1
Arable land	102.2	103.7	76.9	2086.1	2369.0	1500.2	299.2	247.3	322.2
Cereals	53.1	68.2	49.5	1389.3	1560.1	992.3	192.3	164.1	211.5
<i>Common wheat and spelt</i>	20.3	35.8	29.5	919.6	1005.2	672.4	113.6	93.6	125.6
<i>Durum wheat</i>	0.4	0.8	0.4	15.9	17.6	13.0	1.6	1.2	1.8
<i>Rye</i>	1.0	0.9	1.1	11.6	14.6	7.5	2.0	1.9	3.2
<i>Barley</i>	6.6	10.9	8.7	206.3	232.5	139.3	29.5	27.0	36.8
<i>Oats</i>	2.9	2.7	1.3	16.8	23.7	9.6	4.1	5.8	4.2
<i>Grain maize</i>	21.8	16.8	8.5	208.2	255.3	142.3	40.7	34.0	38.2
Dried pulses	0.8	0.3	0.2	10.1	11.5	7.1	1.4	0.9	2.1
Root crops	5.5	1.9	0.6	2.1	10.1	3.7	4.7	1.2	0.5
<i>Potatoes</i>	5.3	1.7	0.5	0.8	8.4	2.9	4.5	1.0	0.0
<i>Sugar beet</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.3
<i>Fodder root</i>	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1
Industrial crops	19.9	18.8	21.1	620.1	679.8	460.1	79.1	59.0	81.6
<i>Tobacco</i>	14.5	1.2	1.4	8.7	25.8	9.8	14.6	1.3	0.2
<i>Hops</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Cotton</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.3
<i>Rape and turnip</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	11.0	7.4	0.2	1.4	2.0
<i>Sunflower</i>	3.0	14.1	15.1	553.0	585.1	406.6	56.3	51.9	70.2
<i>Soya</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fresh vegetables, melons, strawberry	8.5	3.9	1.6	4.4	18.4	8.7	8.1	1.1	0.5
<i>outside</i>	8.1	3.7	1.5	4.3	17.6	8.2	7.8	1.1	0.5
<i>under glass</i>	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
Flower and ornamental plants	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>outside</i>	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>under glass</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Forage plants	12.3	8.0	3.4	36.1	59.9	9.4	9.8	16.9	23.8
Fallow land	1.9	2.4	0.5	23.7	28.5	18.6	3.6	4.1	2.3
Kitchen garden	3.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	4.2	0.2	2.8	1.2	0.0
Permanent pasture and meadows *	17.2	8.3	3.6	30.0	59.0	20.4	12.9	18.6	7.1
Permanent crops	7.0	5.9	4.8	37.7	55.4	38.3	7.4	3.9	5.8
Fruit and berry plantation	2.9	2.7	2.4	12.7	20.7	14.3	3.0	1.9	1.4
Citrus plantation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Olive trees	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vineyard	4.0	3.0	2.2	24.5	33.6	23.0	4.3	2.0	4.3
Ratios									
Agricultural area per holding (ha)	1.4	8.6	29.5	406.8	21.1	117.8	4.4	9.0	260.6
Agricultural area... (%)									
... own farmed	81.8	67.0	34.8	11.2	18.4	12.6	45.1	30.0	10.2
... in less favoured or mountain area	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
... organic farmed	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
... irrigated	9.3	4.4	3.1	1.0	1.7	1.5	4.0	1.2	0.6

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

* In line with the EU requirements about 1.8 million ha of permanent pastures and meadows used commonly is not covered by the FSS.

Size of the farm	Agricultural area (ha)				All farms	Livestock (LU)		
	< 5	5 - < 20	20 - < 50	50 = <		0 < - < 5	5 - < 50	50 = <
Total livestock (1000 LU)	616.4	91.9	27.9	135.0	871.1	177.1	318.8	375.3
of which grazing (%)	55.3	80.8	83.1	47.5	57.7	77.3	85.7	24.7
Grazing livestock (1000 heads)								
Equidae	47.8	4.2	0.7	1.6	54.3	29.8	19.6	4.9
Bovine animals	282.2	69.6	23.4	69.7	444.9	107.5	237.2	100.2
Under 1 year	62.8	13.5	4.5	16.2	97.0	27.6	47.7	21.7
From 1 to less than 2 years	32.9	10.5	3.3	9.6	56.2	8.8	33.0	14.4
Dairy cows	168.4	40.2	12.7	36.2	257.5	67.8	138.2	51.5
Other cows	5.5	0.8	0.7	0.9	7.9	0.6	4.9	2.4
Other bovine animals 2 years and older	12.6	4.6	2.2	6.9	26.3	2.7	13.5	10.1
Sheep	595.9	113.7	32.5	67.9	810.0	197.4	536.5	76.2
Goats	114.6	19.7	1.9	3.4	139.5	54.4	81.0	4.2
Granivores								
Pigs (1000 heads)	522.2	45.8	11.8	113.3	693.1	83.3	128.3	481.4
Piglets < 20 kg	150.4	15.7	4.7	30.2	200.9	29.6	48.0	123.3
Breeding sows	75.0	6.9	2.1	13.5	97.5	12.3	22.0	63.2
Other pigs	296.8	23.1	5.0	69.7	394.6	41.4	58.3	295.0
Poultry (million heads)	10.8	0.4	0.2	3.9	15.3	1.2	1.0	13.0
Broilers	4.8	0.1	0.2	2.3	7.4	0.2	0.2	7.0
Laying hens	4.3	0.2	0.0	1.3	5.9	0.7	0.6	4.5
Other poultry	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.3	2.0	0.3	0.2	1.6
Rabbits, breeding females (1000 heads)	71.0	7.0	1.6	1.7	81.3	64.6	15.3	1.4
Beehives* (1000)	192.7	15.4	2.0	2.2	212.3	111.8	24.2	1.5
Average size of herds**								
Equidae (head/holding)	1.2	1.2	1.5	5.5	1.2	1.0	1.3	16.2
Cattle (head/holding)	4.5	9.8	21.7	72.8	6.2	2.3	9.5	118.9
Dairy cows (head/holding)	2.8	6.3	13.2	42.5	3.8	1.6	5.7	63.8
Other cows (head/holding)	5.8	5.7	14.6	28.3	6.8	1.2	7.7	36.8
Sheep (head/holding)	15.2	19.3	39.5	83.8	17.3	6.7	31.2	238.1
Goats (head/holding)	5.6	8.3	5.2	11.9	5.9	3.5	10.4	30.8
Pigs (head/holding)	15.5	7.1	12.1	108.0	16.4	3.0	9.0	843.1
Breeding sows (head/holding)	8.8	3.5	5.6	29.1	8.6	2.0	4.5	174.9
Other pigs > 20 kg (head/holding)	10.2	4.1	6.5	73.6	10.8	1.8	4.6	597.1
Rabbits, breeding females (head/holding)	8.8	6.2	8.4	11.5	8.6	8.9	6.9	34.5
Laying hens (1000/holding)	0.1	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	12.0
Broilers (1000/holding)	0.4	0.0	0.8	12.8	0.5	0.0	0.1	46.1
Beehives (hive/holding)	28.0	13.6	11.9	20.6	25.7	20.3	11.9	35.3

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

* Bees are not taken into account when calculating Livestock Unit, there are 106.1 thousand hives on holdings with 0 LU.

** Number of animals of a given livestock category per holding with this kind of animal.

		Absolute figures			% of total	
		Total	< 1 ESU	>= 1 ESU	< 1 ESU	>= 1 ESU
Regular labour force	(1000 persons)	1077.9	762.1	315.8	70.7	29.3
Regular labour force	(1000 AWU)	596.6	376.0	220.7	63.0	37.0
Holders	(1000 persons)	531.4	416.5	115.0	78.4	21.6
... at least 65 years old		222.2	194.1	28.1	87.3	12.7
... having another gainful activity		178.4	135.3	43.1	75.9	24.1
Number of holdings	(1000)	534.6	416.5	118.1	77.9	22.1
... producing mainly for own consumption		367.9	325.1	42.9	88.4	11.6
... producing mainly for direct sales		26.2	17.1	9.0	65.5	34.5
... using a tractor		236.2	152.9	83.3	64.7	35.3
Standard Gross Margin (SGM)	(1000 ESU)	930.9	155.6	775.3	16.7	83.3
Agricultural area	(1000 ha)	2729.4	241.8	2487.6	8.9	91.1
... owned farmed		663.2	206.3	457.0	31.1	68.9
Livestock	(1000 LU)	1327.0	455.9	871.1	34.4	65.6

Symbols : not available 0 less than half of the unit or nil

► METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The survey on the structure of agricultural holdings in Bulgaria was carried out between October and November 2005 on a sample basis. This was the first FSS in Bulgaria being in compliance with EU requirements after the last census in 2003. The livestock number was recorded on the day of the survey and the labour force characteristics 12 months prior the survey date, while the reference period in case of land area, land use and other characteristics was the crop year 2004/2005 (from 1 October 2004 to 30 September 2005).

The target population was all agricultural holdings of the census 2003 updated with newly established ones from different registers (e.g. organic farms, bovine, etc). The holding is an independent economical unit under single management, producing agricultural products and exceeding at least one of the specified thresholds (0.5 ha UAA, 0.3 ha arable land, 0.1 ha of specialized crops – vegetables, tobacco, hops, cotton, aromatic and medicinal plants, seeds, flowers or permanent crops, 0.05 ha under greenhouse, 0.2 ha permanent grassland or having 1 cow/female buffalo/mare/sow/reproductive male animal, 2 other bovines/draught animals/breeding goats, 5 pigs/breeding sheep, 50 laying hens, 100 broilers, 10 beehives/10 breeding rabbits) or the agricultural production exceeds certain physical thresholds. The population was stratified using farm type and economic size at NUTS 3 level. The two variables were then combined. Certain strata were included exhaustively (e.g. new farms, SGM >= 9600, organic farms, units with special products – rice, hops, etc), as well as strata with very few holdings. The 40,000 sample size was randomly allocated using the Neyman method.

For each activity ('enterprise') on a farm (for instance wheat, dairy cow or vineyard), a **standard gross margin (SGM)** is estimated, based on the area (or the number of heads) and a regional coefficient. The sum of such margins in a farm is its **economic size**, expressed in **European Size Units (ESU)**. 1 ESU is equal to 1200 euros.

Each farm is classified in the community typology by its economic size and its **type of farming**, depending on the share of each enterprise in its economic size. For instance, a farm where breeding sows account for more than 2/3 of the economic size, is classified as *specialist pig rearing* (type 5011). Depending on the level of aggregation, farms are grouped into 8 to 70 types.

Annual work unit (AWU) is equivalent to a worker employed on a full time basis for one year. In Bulgaria it is 1856 hours (232 working days of 8 working hours per day).

Livestock Unit (LU) is equivalent to a dairy cow. The number of animals (number of heads) is converted into LU using a set of coefficients reflecting the feed requirements of the different animal categories.

Subsistence farming refers here to all farms below 1 ESU economic size. Note that the number of farms cannot be compared between countries due to the differences in coverage of FSS.

► REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

Структура на земеделските стопанства в България през 2005 година (preliminary results of the FSS 2005), Bulletin No. 93, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Sofia, April 2006.

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






Website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Bulgaria: www.mzqar.government.bg

National Methodological Report – FSS 2005 (available on request)

Further information:

Data: [EUROSTAT Website/Theme: Agriculture and Fisheries/Data](#)

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