

Farm structure survey 2013

While area used for agriculture remained stable, over 1 out of 4 farms disappeared between 2003 and 2013 in the EU

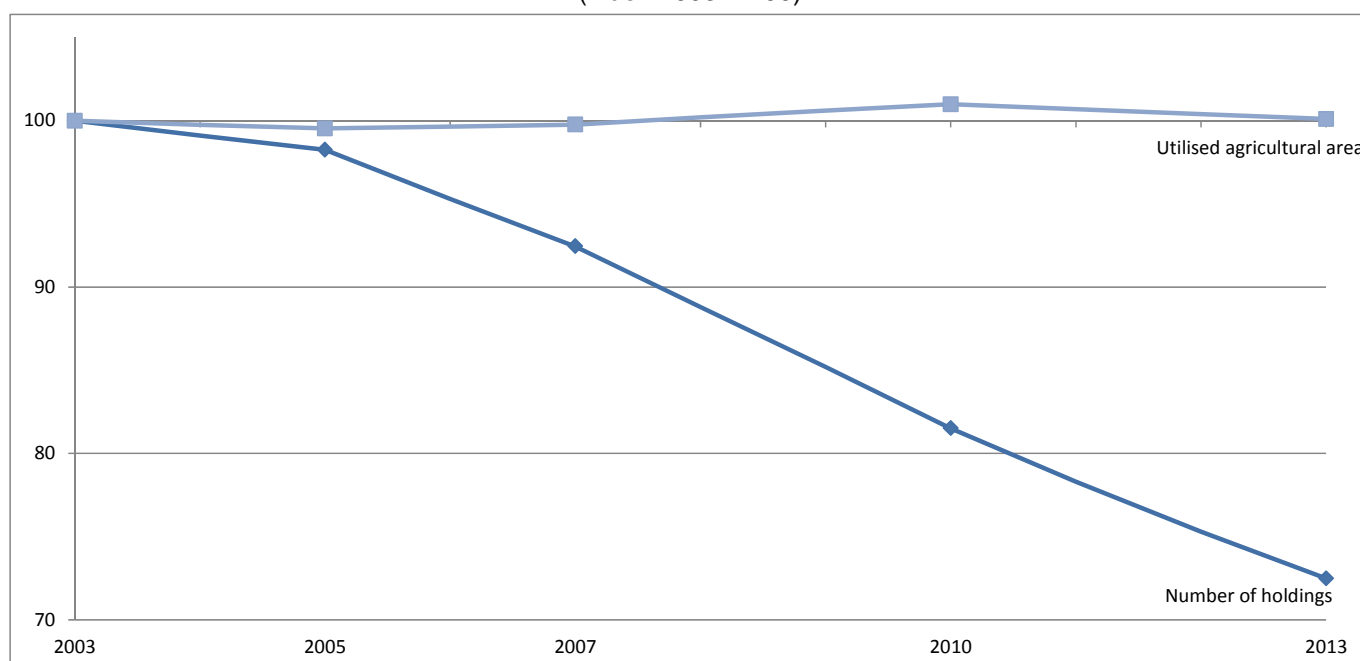
Almost a third of holding managers aged 65 or over

In the **European Union** (EU), there were 10.8 million farms in 2013 working 174.6 million hectares of land (the utilised agricultural area). Between 2003 and 2013, slightly more than 4 million holdings disappeared in the **EU**, while the total area used for agriculture remained almost stable. This means increasing agricultural concentration, with the average area per holding growing by 38%, from 11.7 hectares in 2003 to 16.1 hectares in 2013.

Of the 10.8 million farms in the **EU**, almost 3.5 million (31.1%) were managed by persons aged 65 or over and a further 2.6 million (24.7%) by managers aged between 55 and 64, while those younger than 35 accounted for 6.0% of all farm managers.

This information, published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, comes from provisional results of the latest EU farm structure survey. This Eurostat survey on the structure of agricultural holdings helps assess the agricultural situation across the **EU**, monitoring trends and transitions in the structure of agricultural holdings.

Evolution of the number of holdings and the utilised agricultural area in the EU*
(index 2003 = 100)



* EU aggregate excluding Croatia for which the whole time-series is not available.

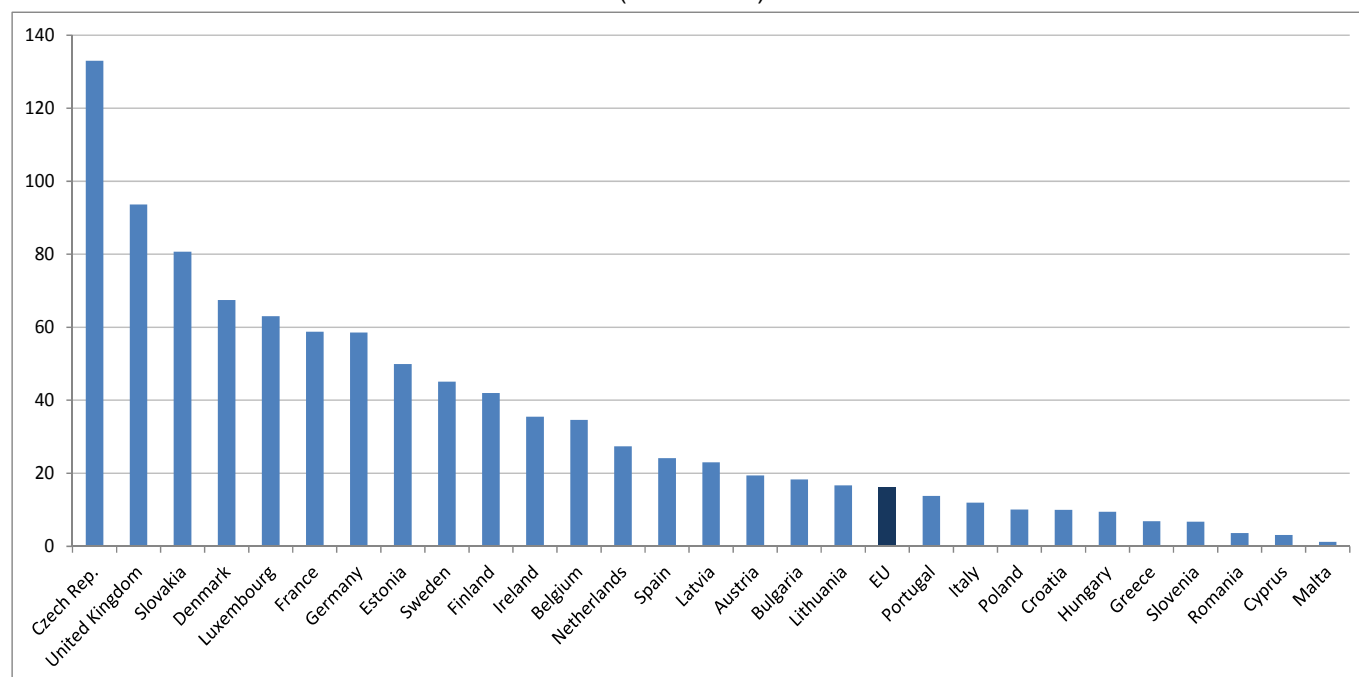
France and Spain account for almost 30% of the utilised agricultural area in the EU

Regarding agricultural land, **France** (15.9% of EU total) and **Spain** (13.4%) were the two Member States with the largest utilised agricultural area in 2013, followed by the **United Kingdom** (9.9%), **Germany** (9.6%), **Poland** (8.3%), **Romania** (7.5%) and **Italy** (6.9%). The largest decrease of utilised agricultural area between 2003 and 2013 was registered in **Cyprus** (-30.1%), followed by **Austria** (-16.3%) and **Slovakia** (-11.0%), while the highest increase was recorded in **Bulgaria** (+60.1% – see country note), followed by **Latvia** (+26.1%), **Greece** (+22.4%) and **Estonia** (+20.3%).

Largest farms in the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom

Overall at **EU** level, while slightly more than a quarter (27.5%) of holdings disappeared between 2003 and 2013, the total utilised agriculture area remained stable. As a result, the average area per holding grew from 11.7 hectares in 2003 to 16.1 hectares in 2013. This upward trend is noticeable in every EU Member State, except **Cyprus**. In 2013, the highest average utilised agricultural areas per holding were registered in the **Czech Republic** (with 133.0 hectares), the **United Kingdom** (93.6 ha), **Slovakia** (80.7 ha), **Denmark** (67.5 ha), **Luxembourg** (63.0 ha), **France** (58.7 ha) and **Germany** (58.6 ha). In contrast, average areas below 10 hectares per holding were recorded in **Malta** (1.2 ha), **Cyprus** (3.1 ha), **Romania** (3.6 ha), **Slovenia** (6.7 ha), **Greece** (6.8 ha) and **Hungary** (9.5 ha).

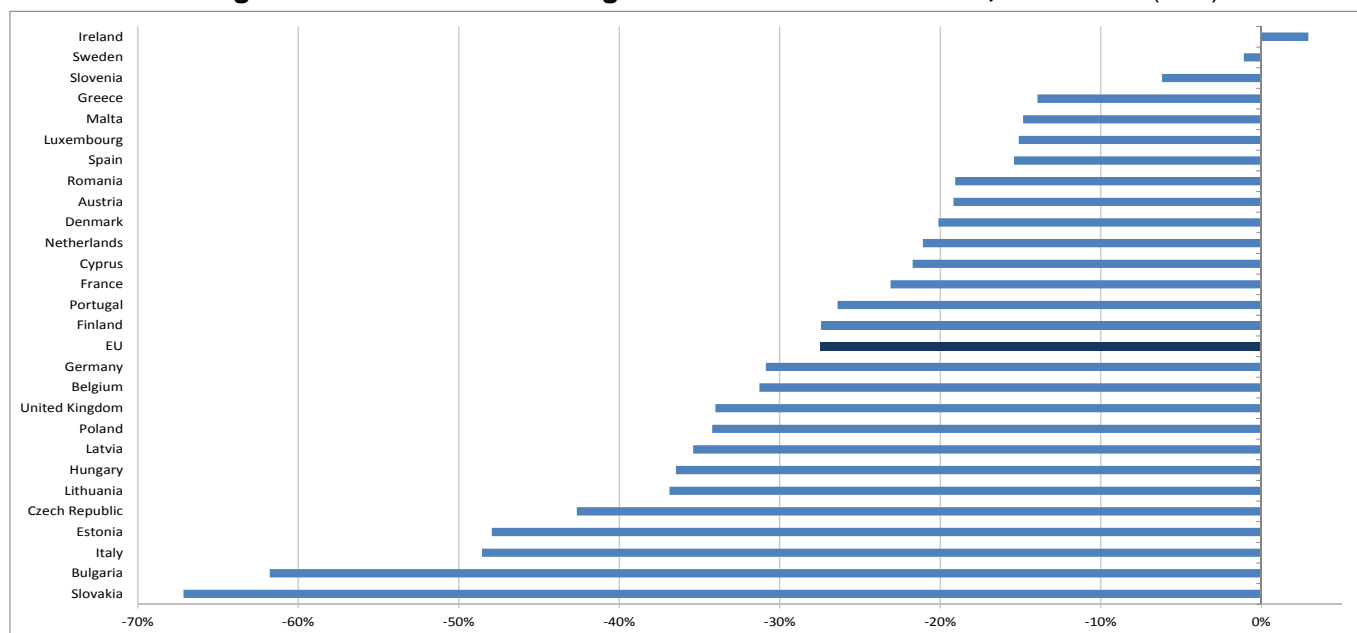
Average utilised agricultural area in the EU Member States, 2013
(in hectares)



A third of all EU agricultural holdings are in Romania

In 2013, 1 in 3 holdings in the EU was located in **Romania** (3.7 million holdings, or 33.5% of EU total), followed at a distance by **Poland** (1.4 mn holdings, or 13.2% of EU total), **Italy** (1.0 mn, or 9.3%) and **Spain** (almost 1.0 mn, or 8.9%). Between 2003 and 2013, the number of holdings decreased in all EU Member States, except **Ireland** (+2.9%). Over this ten-year period, the number of holdings more than halved in **Slovakia** (-67.1%) and **Bulgaria** (-61.8%). Significant falls were also observed in **Italy** (-48.6%), **Estonia** (-47.9%), the **Czech Republic** (-42.6%), **Lithuania** (-36.9%), **Hungary** (-36.5%), **Latvia** (-35.4%), **Poland** (-34.2%) and the **United Kingdom** (-34.0%).

Change in the number of holdings in the EU Member States, 2013/2003 (in %)



Croatia: data not available

Holdings and utilised agricultural area in the EU Member States, 2013

	Number of holdings			Utilised agricultural area			Average area per holding, hectares	
	in thousands	Share of EU total	Change 2013/2003	In 1000 hectares	Share of EU total	Change 2013/2003	2003	2013
EU*	10 841.0	100.0%	-27.5%	174 606.6	100.0%	0.1%	11.7	16.1
Belgium	37.8	0.3%	-31.3%	1 307.9	0.8%	-6.2%	25.4	34.6
Bulgaria	254.4	2.3%	-61.8%	4 650.9	2.7%	60.1%**	4.4	18.3
Czech Republic	26.3	0.2%	-42.6%	3 491.5	2.0%	-3.9%	79.3	133.0
Denmark	38.8	0.4%	-20.1%	2 619.3	1.5%	-1.5%	54.7	67.5
Germany	285.0	2.6%	-30.9%	16 699.6	9.6%	-1.7%	41.2	58.6
Estonia	19.2	0.2%	-47.9%	957.5	0.5%	20.3%	21.6	49.9
Ireland	139.6	1.3%	2.9%	4 959.4	2.8%	15.4%	31.7	35.5
Greece	709.5	6.5%	-13.9%	4 856.8	2.8%	22.4%	4.8	6.8
Spain	965.0	8.9%	-15.4%	23 300.2	13.4%	-7.4%	22.1	24.1
France	472.2	4.4%	-23.1%	27 739.4	15.9%	-0.2%	45.3	58.7
Croatia	157.4	1.5%	:	1 571.2	0.9%	:	:	10.0
Italy	1 010.3	9.3%	-48.6%	12 098.9	6.9%	-7.8%	6.7	12.0
Cyprus	35.4	0.3%	-21.7%	109.3	0.1%	-30.1%	3.5	3.1
Latvia	81.8	0.8%	-35.4%	1 877.7	1.1%	26.1%	11.8	23.0
Lithuania	171.8	1.6%	-36.9%	2 861.3	1.6%	14.9%	9.2	16.7
Luxembourg	2.1	0.0%	-15.1%	131.0	0.1%	2.2%	52.3	63.0
Hungary	491.3	4.5%	-36.5%	4 656.5	2.7%	7.0%	5.6	9.5
Malta	9.4	0.1%	-14.8%	10.9	0.0%	0.8%	1.0	1.2
Netherlands	67.5	0.6%	-21.1%	1 847.6	1.1%	-8.0%	23.5	27.4
Austria	140.4	1.3%	-19.2%	2 726.9	1.6%	-16.3%	18.7	19.4
Poland	1 429.0	13.2%	-34.2%	14 409.9	8.3%	-0.1%	6.6	10.1
Portugal	264.4	2.4%	-26.4%	3 641.6	2.1%	-2.2%	10.4	13.8
Romania	3 629.7	33.5%	-19.1%	13 055.9	7.5%	-6.3%	3.1	3.6
Slovenia	72.4	0.7%	-6.2%	485.8	0.3%	-0.1%	6.3	6.7
Slovakia	23.6	0.2%	-67.1%	1 901.6	1.1%	-11.0%	29.8	80.7
Finland	54.4	0.5%	-27.4%	2 284.4	1.3%	1.7%	29.9	42.0
Sweden	67.1	0.6%	-1.1%	3 028.6	1.7%	-3.1%	46.1	45.1
United Kingdom	185.2	1.7%	-34.0%	17 327.0	9.9%	7.6%**	57.4	93.6
Norway	43.7	-	-24.9%	987.1	-	-5.1%	17.9	22.6

* At EU level, the changes 2013/2003 have been calculated excluding Croatia for which data are not available for 2003.

** See country note.

Shares might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Half of farm managers in Portugal aged 65 or over

In 2013, almost 1 in 3 holding managers in the **EU** were aged 65 or over. In particular, managers aged 65 or over accounted for half (50.1%) of all holding managers in **Portugal** and for at least a third in **Romania** (41.0%), **Cyprus** (40.0%) **Italy** (39.7%), **Bulgaria** (36.7%), **Lithuania** (34.0%), **Spain** and **Croatia** (both 33.3%). At the opposite end of the scale, **Germany** (6.5%), **Austria** (8.6%), **Poland** (9.6%), **Finland** (10.2%), **France** (12.4%) and **Luxembourg** (14.4%) registered the lowest proportions of managers aged 65 or over. In addition, those aged 55 to 64 accounted for at least a quarter of all farm managers in nearly every **EU** Member State.

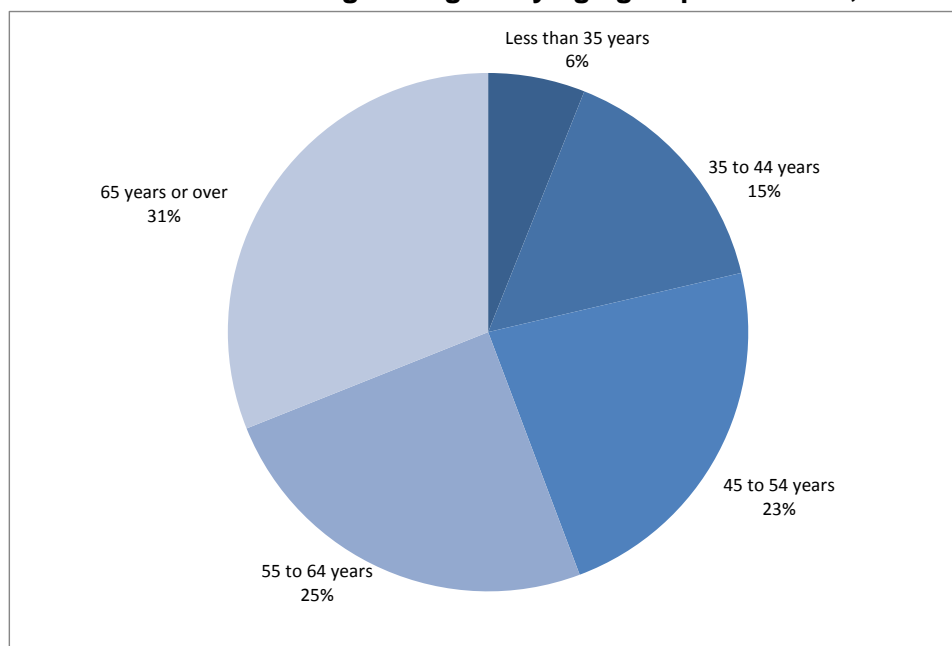
For the younger age group, that is holding managers aged less than 35, their proportion stood below 10% in all EU Member States, except **Poland** (12.1%) and **Austria** (10.9%). The lowest proportions of young farmers were recorded in **Cyprus** (where 1.7% of all holding managers were aged below 35), **Denmark** and **Portugal** (both 2.5%) and the **Netherlands** (3.1%).

Distribution of holding managers by selected age groups in the EU Member States, 2013
(share of total managers - %)

	Less than 35	From 35 to 44	From 45 to 54	From 55 to 64	65 or over
EU	6.0%	15.2%	22.9%	24.7%	31.1%
Belgium	4.0%	15.2%	32.9%	26.8%	21.2%
Bulgaria	6.4%	13.2%	18.5%	25.2%	36.7%
Czech Republic	4.6%	14.8%	23.8%	33.9%	23.0%
Denmark	2.5%	14.7%	31.2%	27.6%	24.0%
Germany	6.8%	19.7%	37.2%	29.8%	6.5%
Estonia	7.5%	16.8%	23.4%	21.8%	30.4%
Ireland	5.7%	15.2%	23.7%	26.1%	29.4%
Greece	5.2%	14.7%	23.9%	24.9%	31.3%
Spain	3.7%	12.7%	25.0%	25.2%	33.3%
France	8.8%	19.1%	32.7%	27.0%	12.4%
Croatia	4.0%	9.9%	21.8%	29.1%	33.3%
Italy	4.5%	10.8%	21.6%	23.3%	39.7%
Cyprus	1.7%	6.9%	21.5%	30.1%	40.0%
Latvia	5.0%	14.5%	26.2%	24.1%	30.0%
Lithuania	5.6%	13.9%	25.6%	20.9%	34.0%
Luxembourg	8.7%	17.3%	32.2%	27.4%	14.4%
Hungary	6.1%	14.9%	19.4%	29.2%	30.3%
Malta	3.8%	12.9%	24.8%	33.4%	25.1%
Netherlands	3.1%	16.3%	32.7%	26.9%	21.0%
Austria	10.9%	24.4%	36.5%	19.6%	8.6%
Poland	12.1%	23.7%	30.2%	24.3%	9.6%
Portugal	2.5%	7.2%	16.6%	23.6%	50.1%
Romania	4.7%	13.9%	16.9%	23.5%	41.0%
Slovenia	4.8%	14.4%	26.4%	29.1%	25.3%
Slovakia	8.1%	15.4%	24.9%	30.0%	21.6%
Finland	8.5%	22.0%	30.1%	29.2%	10.2%
Sweden	4.4%	12.8%	24.8%	28.0%	30.0%
United Kingdom	3.9%	11.0%	26.6%	27.9%	30.6%
Norway	8.0%	21.2%	31.3%	26.5%	13.0%

Shares might not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Distribution of holding managers by age groups in the EU, 2013



Methods and definitions

The data source is the basic **Farm structure survey (FSS)**, also known as Survey on the structure of agricultural holdings. The FSS is carried out every 3 or 4 years by all EU Member States. The FSS are conducted consistently throughout the EU with a common methodology and provide therefore comparable and representative statistics across countries and time, down to regional levels. EU Member States collect information from individual agricultural holdings covering land use, livestock numbers, rural development, management and farm labour input (including the age, gender and relationship to the holder of the agricultural holding). Data can also be broken down by size class, area status, legal status of the holding, objective zone and farm type.

An **agricultural holding** is a single unit, in both technical and economic terms, operating under a single management, which undertakes agricultural activities within the economic territory of the European Union, either as its primary or secondary activity. Other supplementary (non-agricultural) products and services may also be provided by the holding

Utilised agricultural area describes the area used for farming. It includes the following land categories: arable land, permanent grassland, permanent crops, other agricultural land such as kitchen gardens (even if they only represent small areas of total utilised agricultural area). The term does not include unused agricultural land, woodland and land occupied by buildings, farmyards, tracks, ponds, etc.

Country notes:

It should be noted that some methodological changes, such as coverage, thresholds and inclusion of common land, were introduced in some Member States for the FSS 2010 onwards, which limit comparability with previous surveys (for more information, see Eurostat Statistics Explained article "[Farm structure survey - thresholds](#)").

Bulgaria: Part of the increase in utilised agricultural area is due to the inclusion of common land (ca 860.000 ha) from 2010 onwards.

United Kingdom: Without the inclusion of common land areas (ca 1.2 million ha) from 2010 onwards, the UK utilised agricultural area would have declined slightly (-0.24%) between 2003 and 2013.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to agricultural statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on agriculture.

Eurostat [metadata](#) on farm structure statistics.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

Vincent BOURGAIIS
Tel: +352-4301-33 444
eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu

ec.europa.eu/eurostat
[@EU Eurostat](https://twitter.com/EU_Eurostat)

Production of data:

Roberta FORTI
Johanna PLEIJTE
Johan SELENIUS

Tel: +352-4301-37 322
estat-eurofarm-data-users@ec.europa.eu

Media requests: Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu