

SURVEY ON THE STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (EEA) 2013

The number of agricultural holdings in the Basque Country fell by 4.3 % between 2009 and 2013

The average size of the holdings increased from 15.8 to 16.4 hectares

The number of agricultural holdings dropped by 4.3% in the period between 2009 and 2013, according to data prepared by EUSTAT. The total area also fell by 0.7% and the utilised agricultural area (cultivated land and land used as permanent pastures) fell by 1.6%. Consequently, the ratio of utilised agricultural area to total area came to 72.1% in 2013, 0.6% less than in 2009.

The average area per holding increased by 3.8% to reach 16.4 hectares per holding, a trend also seen in the average utilised agricultural area, or UAA per holding, which went from 11.5 to 11.8 hectares.

In Spain as a whole the number of holdings also fell (-2.5%), although to a lesser degree, with a larger drop occurring in the total area and the utilised agricultural area (-1.9% in both cases). The average size of the holdings is noticeably greater, and they are continuing to grow, going from 30.92 hectares (ha) in 2009 to 31.13 ha in 2013.

The fall in the utilised agricultural area (UAA) across the Basque Country overall is due to the drop in the area of cultivated land (-3.7%), especially in fruit trees (-24.3%), woody crops (-12.0%) and vineyards (-6.1%), as permanent pastures have remained fairly stable (-0.1%).

Table 1. Main results. Basque Country

	2013	2009	2013/2009 %
Number of agricultural holdings	15.835	16.554	-4,3
Total area (TA) (ha)	259.797	261.700	-0,7
Used agricultural surface area (SAU) (ha)	187.251	190.273	-1,6
Tilled land (TL)	75.880	78.811	-3,7
- Herbaceous and fallow (*)	60.485	62.056	-2,5
- Fruits	1.501	1.981	-24,3
- Olive tree	167	147	13,6
- Vineyard	13.653	14.544	-6,1
- Other woody plants	73	83	-12,0
Permanent grazin	111.371	111.462	-0,1
Structural indicators			
Average land area per holding (ha)	16,4	15,8	3,8
Average UAA per holding (ha)	11,8	11,5	2,6
Average number of cattle per holding	24,2	23,0	5,4
Average number of sheep per holding	57,3	60,0	-4,6
Average number of goats per holding	13,3	13,4	-0,7
Average number of pigs per holding	33,8	17,9	89,0
Average number of fowl per holding	251,9	253,5	-0,6

(*) includes vegetable gardens

Source: Eustat. Survey on the structure of agricultural farms, 2013

The average size of holdings was up in Álava and in Gipuzkoa, but down in Bizkaia

The evolution by province was not homogeneous. In Gipuzkoa there was a rise both in the total area (3.5%) and in the number of holdings (0.8%), with the average size of holdings in 2013 being 13.6 ha, 2.7% higher than in 2009. On the other hand, both quantities fell in Bizkaia: total area by 9% the number of holdings by 4.5%. As a result, the agricultural holdings of Bizkaia remained the smallest of the Autonomous Region in 2013 (-4.8%). In Álava the total area rose (1.5%), whereas the number of holdings fell (-11.3%), with the result that the average number of hectares per holding was up (14.4%), standing at 35.9 ha.

The utilised agricultural area (UAA) rose in Gipuzkoa (1.7%) and in Álava (0.8%) due to the rise in permanent pastures, while in Bizkaia (-10.4%) both cultivated land and pastures were down.

In Álava the area dedicated to vines and the number of holdings decreased, but the average size of holdings (10.9 ha) remained the same; in Bizkaia, it dropped further, with the average size of holdings falling significantly from 1.7 to 0.8 ha in 2013. In Gipuzkoa, however, the number of holdings was down but the area dedicated to vines increased, with the average size of these holdings rising from 2.8 to 4.9 ha.

Table 2. Total area, utilised agricultural area and type of holding

	Basque Country			Araba/Álava			Bizkaia			Gipuzkoa		
	Exp.	Ha.	Average number of ha per holding	Exp.	Ha.	Average number of ha per holding	Exp.	Ha.	Average number of ha per holding	Exp.	Ha.	Average number of ha per holding
Total area (TA) (ha)	15.835	259.797	16,4	3.265	117.348	35,9	6.733	63.131	9,4	5.837	79.318	13,6
Used agricultural surface area (SAU) (ha)	15.804	187.251	11,8	3.262	102.954	31,6	6.706	39.919	6,0	5.836	44.378	7,6
Tilled land (TL)	13.277	75.880	5,7	2.830	70.752	25,0	5.380	2.748	0,5	5.067	2.380	0,5
- Herbaceous and fallow (*)	11.826	60.485	5,1	1.928	57.530	29,8	5.079	1.958	0,4	4.819	997	0,2
- Fruits	3.876	1.501	0,4	169	93	0,5	1.643	538	0,3	2.064	870	0,4
- Olive tree	252	167	0,7	226	164	0,7	15	0	0,0	11	3	0,3
- Vineyard	1.618	13.653	8,4	1.189	12.918	10,9	331	250	0,8	98	485	4,9
- Other woody plants	69	73	1,1	24	47	2,0	21	2	0,1	24	24	1,0
Permanent grazin	13.611	111.371	8,2	1.413	32.202	22,8	6.486	37.171	5,7	5.712	41.998	7,4
Other land	11.630	72.376	6,2	1.415	14.206	10,0	4.768	23.302	4,9	5.447	34.868	6,4

(*) includes vegetable gardens

Source: Eustat. Survey on the structure of agricultural farms, 2013

In Álava there was an increase in the average number of animals per holding for every one of the livestock species

The number of livestock holdings in the Basque Country fell for every type of livestock, except for goats, which were up by 9.5%. The sharpest drops occurred in pig holdings (-37.5%) and cattle holdings (-10.9%), with those of poultry and sheep remaining practically the same (-0.7% and -0.1%). The concentration of holdings seems to be the reason behind the drastic reduction in the number of pig holdings, which went from 17.9 pigs per holding in 2009 to 33.8 in 2013, and to a lesser degree in cattle holdings, whose average number of cows rose from 23.0 to 24.2 in 2013. The average size of poultry and goat holdings decreased slightly, going from 253.4 animals to 251.9 in the case of poultry and from 13.4 to 13.3 in the case of goats. Sheep holdings, for their part, went from 60.0 sheep per holding in 2009 to 57.3 in 2013.

By province, however, the situation varied: in Álava the number of pig holdings fell sharply (-62.4%), as did those of poultry (-44.6%) and sheep (-18.2%) whereas there was an increase in goat (10%) and cattle (0.6%) holdings. In Bizkaia the total number

of livestock holdings fell. While goat holdings increased (22.4%), there was a significant reduction in those of pigs (-45.8%) and cattle (-21.9%). In Gipuzkoa there were fewer holdings for pigs (-20.6%), goats (-11.0%) and cattle (-2.6%) but more for poultry (12.5%) and sheep (7.2%).

Regarding the size of the holdings, each province had a very different structure: holdings in Álava had the greatest number of animals of each species, and Bizkaia was the province with the smallest holdings. The evolution in relation to 2009 was uneven. In the case of Álava, there was a significant increase in the size of livestock holdings for every species, particularly in the case of pigs and poultry, where the number of animals per holding was multiplied by four and two, respectively. In Bizkaia, however, only goat and pig holdings increased in size, whilst in Gipuzkoa the number of animals per holding fell for every type of holding.

Table 3. Livestock. Number of holdings and livestock of the main species

	Basque Country		Araba/Álava		Bizkaia		Gipuzkoa	
	Exp.	Heads	Exp.	Heads	Exp.	Heads	Exp.	Heads
Heads of bovines	5.284	128.111	684	40.231	2.084	40.747	2516	47.133
Ovines	4.534	259.592	427	55.050	1.791	61.180	2316	143.362
Caprines	1.758	23.393	165	4.431	1.092	12.858	501	6.104
Porcines	561	18.982	32	13.562	251	1.812	278	3.608
Birds	6.255	1.575.502	355	182.512	2.485	745.286	3415	647.704

Source: Eustat. Survey on the structure of agricultural farms, 2013

Methodological note: These data refer to the agricultural year from 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013. An agricultural holding is considered to be located in the municipality where the majority of the land is, or, if in doubt, where the single or main building of the holding is situated. The population coverage refers to agricultural holdings with at least one hectare of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA), 0.2 ha UAA dedicated to vegetables, flowers, and ornamental plants in the open air, under shelter, in irrigated orchards, nurseries, or greenhouses; 0.1 ha UAA dedicated to greenhouse vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants; 0.5 ha UAA dedicated to tobacco, hops or cotton, one or more Livestock Units (LU) and with a Total Standard Production (TSP) equal to or greater than 0.75 European Size Units (EDU).

This survey was performed in collaboration with the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE) in the Basque Country.

For further information:

Eustat - Euskal Estatistika Erakundea / Instituto Vasco de Estadística

C/ Donostia-San Sebastián, 1 01010 Vitoria-Gasteiz

Press Service: servicioprensa@eustat.es Tel: 945 01 75 62

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