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## Studies On The Evolution of The Agricultural Sector In Romania

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**Abstract:** The paper analyzes the evolution of Romanian agriculture after 1990. The aim of the study is to highlight the transformations of the agricultural sector in the context of economic transition and European integration. The methodology is based on the analysis of official statistical data provided by the INS and other national sources. Time series, intertemporal comparisons and economic interpretations are used. The results show a significant decrease in the share of agriculture in GDP, from 21.2% in 1990 to 4.1% in 2022. The agricultural area has remained relatively constant, but its structure has changed. The number of agricultural holdings has decreased, but small farms, under 2 hectares, predominate. Crop production has a majority share, while the livestock sector is in decline. Yields remain below the EU average. The workforce is aging and poorly qualified. Technical equipment is insufficient, and the use of chemical fertilizers has decreased significantly after 1990. The main conclusion is that Romanian agriculture requires modernization. Coherent policies, investments in commercial farms, technology and professional training are needed. Agriculture can become a strategic sector again if it is supported effectively and oriented towards sustainability and competitiveness.

### • Introduction

**Agriculture holds an important place in our country's economy and politics, representing one of the most important resources for development.** Thus, agriculture is traditionally an important branch of the Romanian economy, both in terms of the size of the agricultural area (14.7 million hectares) and the area covered by forests and other wooded lands (6.7 million hectares) and especially in terms of the share of the population employed in agriculture (20.6% in 2019) in the total population

### • Material and method

The methodology used in the research consists of collecting statistical data, processing them, interpreting them graphically, and analysing and synthesising information on the evolution of agriculture from the literature in the field.

### • Results and discussions

#### SHARE OF AGRICULTURE IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

- The share of agriculture in Romania's GDP has declined considerably since 1990 from 21.2% to 4.2% in 2015, and by 2023 it will be 3.8%. This decrease is mainly due to the growth of the other economic branches, namely industry and services.

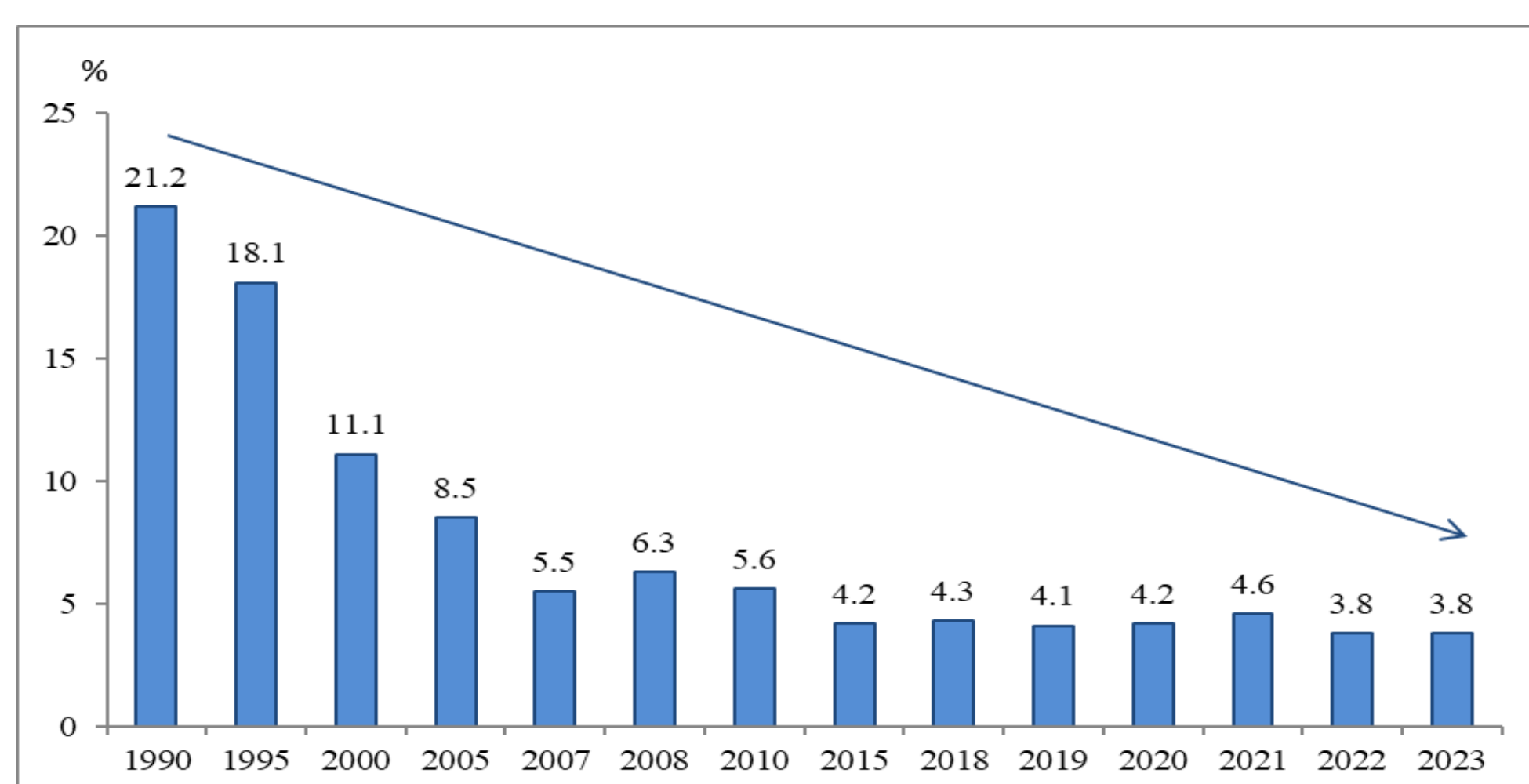


Figure 1. Evolution of the share of agriculture in GDP formation, 1990-2023

#### EVOLUTION OF ROMANIA'S LAND FUND

- Romania's agricultural area did not change substantially during the period analysed, decreasing by 168.9 thousand hectares between 1990 and 2014.

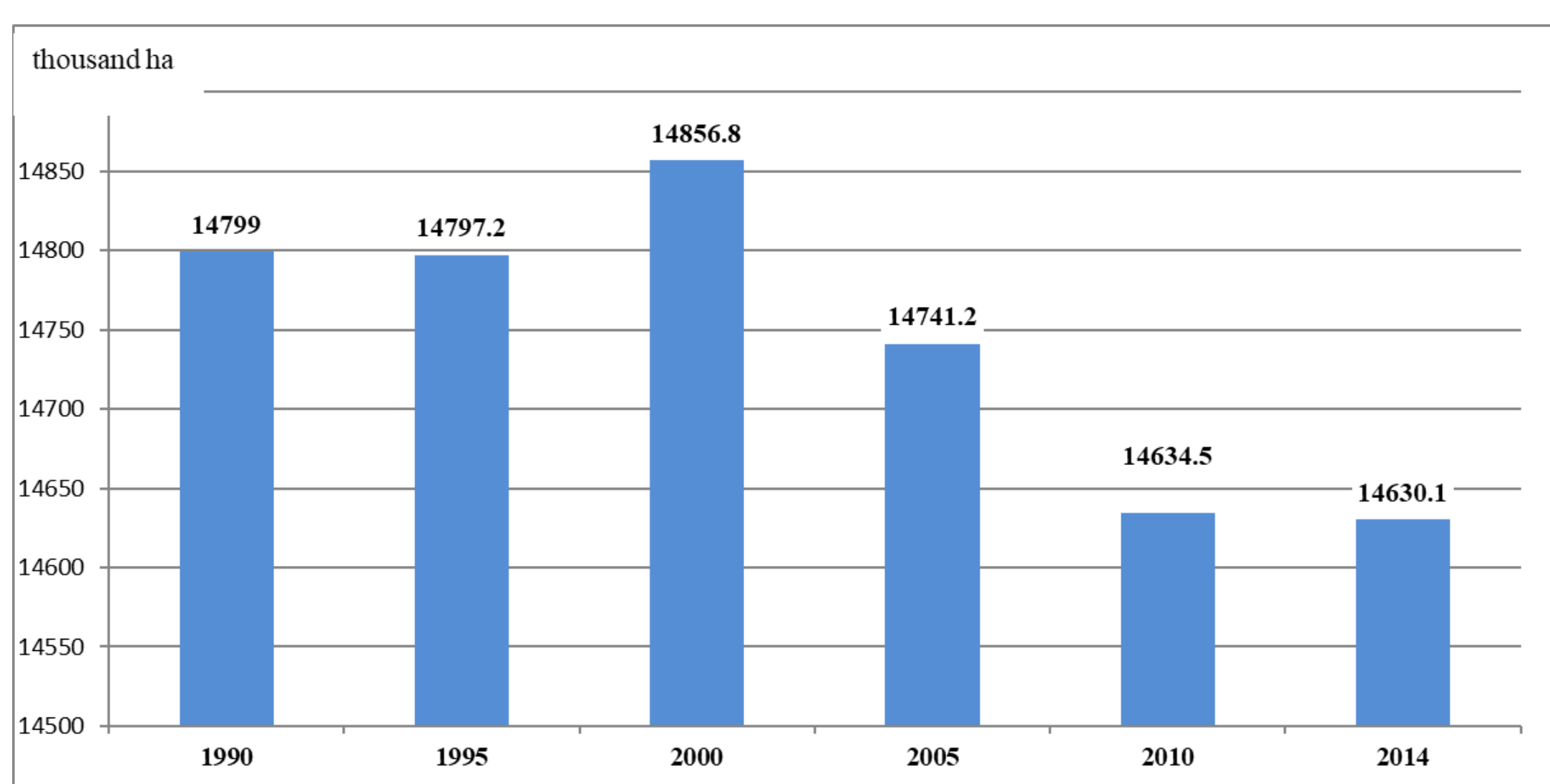


Figure 2. Evolution of Romania's agricultural area

- Analysing its evolution by categories of agricultural use, we can see a slight decrease in arable land by 0.57%, an increase in pastures by 1% and in meadows by 1.6%. The area under vineyards and orchards decreased from 277.0 thousand ha in 1990 to 209.4 thousand ha in 2014, by 24.4%. As regards the area occupied by orchards and fruit nurseries, the percentage decrease in area is 14.76%.

#### STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS IN ROMANIA

- The evolution of the number of agricultural holdings in Romania over the period 2002-2020 is shown in Figure 3, which shows a reduction in the number of agricultural holdings from 4.485 million in 2002 to 2.887 million in 2020.

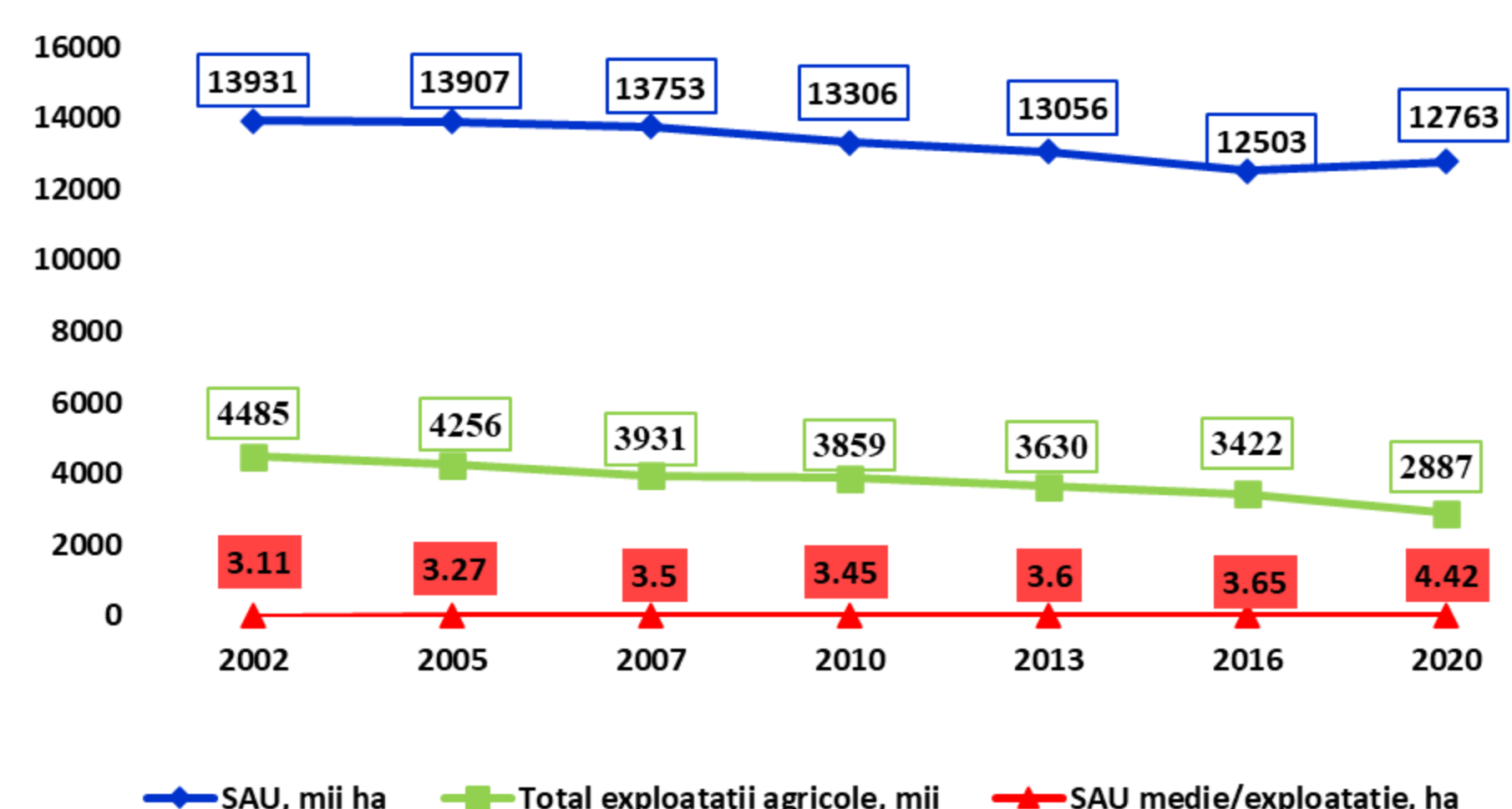


Figure 3. Number of agricultural holdings and utilised agricultural area, 2002-2020

- If we analyze the average area of farms in Romania, we see that it has increased from 3.11 hectares in 2002 to 4.42 hectares in 2020, which shows that the process of concentration is reflected by the reduction in the number of farms and the increase in the average area in our country is still very slow.
- Analyzing the presented results, it is found that most farms in Romania are small farms, of which almost 75% of farms have less than 2 hectares, and the share of farms under 10 hectares is 97.9% of the total number and 39.12% of the total utilised agricultural area. At the other end of the scale, farms larger than 50 hectares represent only 0.5% of the total number but **account for 51.52% of the agricultural area. The existence of a very large number of small farms alongside very large farms reveals the structural imbalance influencing agriculture in our country and its competitiveness. In contrast to other European countries, the segment of medium-sized farms, between 10 and 100 hectares, is relatively poorly represented in Romania.**

### Conclusions

- Improving this aspect and the generally balanced development of agricultural holdings requires the involvement of the state through its specialised bodies, by supporting farmers, by providing advice and assistance in the work of small and medium-sized holdings, in organising their cooperation in the valorisation of production and other necessary measures.
- Consequently, **Romania's agriculture needs to be helped and supported both financially and through the adoption of viable agricultural policy decisions that ensure increased performance.**