



STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN ROMANIAN AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS FOLLOWING EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION: A POST-2007 PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 represented a fundamental turning point for the country's agricultural sector. Prior to EU membership, Romanian agriculture was characterized by significant structural fragmentation, a dominance of subsistence and semi-subsistence holdings, outdated technology, and low market orientation. The integration into the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) framework introduced new opportunities and challenges for both smallholders and large-scale producers.

Post-Accession Structural Changes

• Reduction in Number of Agricultural Holdings

EU membership accelerated the consolidation of agricultural holdings. According to Eurostat, the number of farms in Romania decreased from approximately 3.9 million in 2007 to around 3.4 million in 2010, reflecting a trend toward fewer, larger farms.

• Increase in Average Farm Size

The average farm size increased due to consolidation efforts. In 2007, the average area per holding was 11.0 hectares, a 31% increase from previous years.

• Specialization and Modernization

Post-accession, there was a shift toward specialized farming. By 2021, many Romanian farms had specialized in field crops, aligning with trends observed in other Central and Eastern European countries.

• Access to EU Funding

EU membership provided Romanian farmers with access to substantial funding through the CAP. Between 2007 and 2012, Romanian agriculture benefited from €16.4 billion, with €7.8 billion funded by the EU. These funds supported both direct payments and rural development programs.

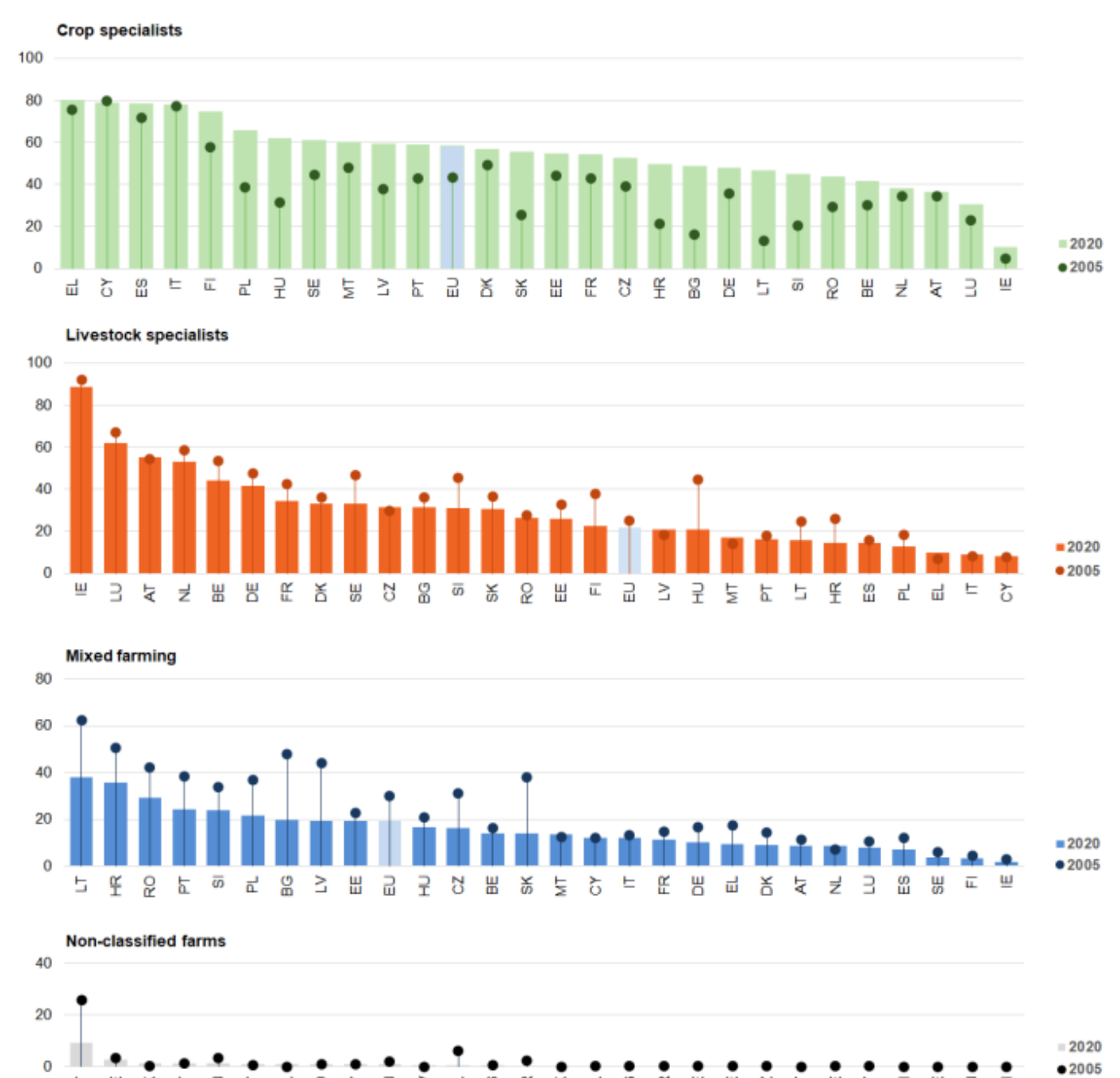
• Foreign Investment and Land Ownership

The post-accession period saw increased foreign investment in Romanian agriculture. Foreign entrepreneurs acquired significant tracts of land, leading to tensions with local communities and debates over land ownership policies.

Size of farm holdings	Romania Number of farm holdings		Δ numbers Δ %		EU27 Number of farm holdings		Δ numbers Δ %		Romania Share (% of EU farm holdings)	
	2010	2020			2010	2020			2010	2020
0 ha	134,710	45,570	-89,140	-66.2	248,160	126,500	-121,660	-96.2	54	36
0-2 ha	2,731,730	2,042,630	-689,100	-25.2	5,751,090	3,733,420	-2,017,670	-54.0	47	55
>2-5 ha	727,390	519,440	-207,950	-28.6	2,467,680	1,925,520	-542,160	-28.2	29	27
>5-10 ha	182,440	161,020	-21,420	-11.7	1,311,310	1,121,510	-189,800	-16.9	14	14
>10-20 ha	43,610	56,200	12,590	28.9	889,330	789,040	-100,290	-12.7	5	7
>20-30 ha	9,730	18,160	8,430	86.6	366,380	341,690	-24,690	-7.2	3	5
>30-50 ha	8,210	16,890	8,680	105.7	375,070	353,530	-21,540	-6.1	2	5
>50-100 ha	7,480	11,150	3,670	49.1	359,780	349,630	-10,150	-2.9	2	3
>100+ ha	13,730	16,010	2,280	16.6	286,530	326,470	39,940	12.2	5	5
Total	3,859,030	2,887,070	-971,960	-25.2	12,055,330	9,067,310	-2,988,020	-33.0	32	32

Source: Calculations based on Eurostat data

Farm specialisations
(% share of all farms, 2005 and 2020)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: ef_lus_main)