

# News Release



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**Compiled by:**  
**Agriculture & Fisheries Statistics Unit**  
e-mail: [agri.nso@gov.mt](mailto:agri.nso@gov.mt)  
Tel: 25997529

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## Agriculture

### Farm Structure Survey 2007

*The third biennial survey on the structure of agricultural holdings was carried out in the months of September and October 2007, covering the agricultural year from 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2007.*

#### Legal personality and management of the holding

Agricultural holdings in Malta are predominantly run by *sole-holders* (98.0 per cent) as can be seen in Table 1. *Group holdings* and *companies* amounted to 1.7 and 0.3 per cent of all agricultural holdings respectively. The sole holder was also the farm manager in 95.4 per cent of all *sole-holder* holdings (Table 2).

#### Utilised agricultural area (UAA)

In the structure survey of 2007, the total utilised agricultural area amounted to 10,326 hectares (Table 3). Agricultural holdings in Malta and Gozo are quite small, with nearly 8,000 agricultural holdings (72.5 per cent) having a utilised agricultural area of less than 1.0 hectare each. Medium-sized agricultural holdings made up 24.9 per cent of the total; such holdings comprise between one and five hectares, while 2.6 per cent of all agricultural holdings are considered large, having five hectares of utilised agricultural area or more.

The distribution of the utilised agricultural area is seen in Table 6. Arable land accounted for 77.6 per cent of the total, while permanent crops and kitchen gardens respectively made up the remaining 12.8 and 9.6 per cent. The cultivation of forage crops (58.5 per cent) dominates the use of arable land. While fresh vegetable and potato cultivation accounted for 23.9 and 8.9 per cent respectively, 8.4 per cent of the arable land was left fallow. Only 0.3 per cent of arable land was dedicated to the production of flowers and seeds.

A total of 1,322 hectares of utilised agricultural area was planted with permanent crops, of which 56.9 per cent was dedicated to vineyards (Table 8). Fruit and berry plantations, mainly peaches, made up 28.9 per cent of the total permanent crops, while citrus and olive plantations accounted for 6.9 and 7.4 per cent respectively.

#### Livestock

The farm structure survey also took into consideration the number of livestock on the holding as at 31 August 2007. The total cattle population resulting from the survey amounted to 18,906 heads with 8,082 or 42.8 per cent being dairy cows (Table 9). The survey revealed that the pig population on agricultural holdings amounted to 79,186 heads, while sheep and goat stocks amounted to 8,788 and 5,738 heads respectively (Tables 10-12). A total of 1.2 million poultry heads was registered, with 53.9 per cent being broilers destined for meat production. The remaining 46.1 per cent were laying hens (Table 13).

#### Labour force

In 2007, the agricultural labour force was made up of 17,148 persons or 4,220 annual work units. Part-time employment amounted to 15,385 persons (89.7 per cent) while 1,763 persons (10.3 per cent) worked on a full-time basis. Males (80.7 per cent) predominated in the agricultural labour force. Information on the gainful, non-agricultural activities of sole-holder farm managers is given in Table 17. Of all sole-holder managers, 44.4 per cent reported that they practise a major gainful activity apart from agriculture, while 52.6 per cent stated that they have no other gainful activity. The majority of the latter were either totally engaged in agriculture or were pensioners. 85.8 per cent of all sole-holder managers were 45 years of age or older, while the majority of sole-holder managers work less than 25 per cent of one annual work unit (Tables 18 and 19) ■

**National Statistics Office**  
**Library & Information Unit**  
Lascaris, Valletta VLT 2000, Malta  
Tel: (+356) 25997219  
Fax: (+356) 25997205  
e-mail: [nso@gov.mt](mailto:nso@gov.mt)  
<http://www.nso.gov.mt>

## Legal Personality

Table 1. Distribution of legal personality of agricultural holdings by region

Type of holding	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total agricultural holdings</b>	<b>11,017</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,619</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Sole-Holder	10,793	98.0	8,447	98.0	2,346	97.8
Group or Partnership	190	1.7	140	1.6	50	2.1
Company	34	0.3	32	0.4	2	0.1

Table 2. Distribution of managers of sole-holder holdings by region

Type of sole-holder holding	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total sole-holder holdings</b>	<b>10,793</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,447</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,346</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Manager is the sole-holder	10,295	95.4	8,047	95.3	2,248	95.8
Manager is the sole-holder's spouse	152	1.4	129	1.5	23	1.0
Manager is a family member of sole-holder	346	3.2	271	3.2	75	3.2

## Land Use

Table 3. Distribution of land (ha) declared by farmers by type of land by region

Type of land (ha)	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
	(ha)		(ha)		(ha)	
<b>Total land declared</b>	<b>11,677</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,216</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Utilised agricultural area	10,326	88.4	8,034	87.2	2,292	93.1
Unutilised agricultural area	138	1.2	117	1.3	22	0.9
Other area (including garigue land)	1,213	10.4	1,065	11.6	148	6.0

Table 4. Distribution of agricultural holdings by size class of UAA (ha) by region

Size class of UAA (ha)	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
	(ha)		(ha)		(ha)	
<b>Total agricultural holdings</b>	<b>11,017</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,619</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
0	238	2.2	179	2.1	59	2.4
>0 - <0.5	5,151	46.8	3,922	45.5	1,229	51.3
0.5 - <1	2,601	23.6	2,139	24.8	462	19.3
1 - <2	1,923	17.5	1,476	17.1	447	18.6
2 - <5	820	7.4	713	8.3	107	4.4
5 and over	284	2.6	190	2.2	95	3.9

**Table 5. Distribution of UAA (ha) by size class of UAA (ha) by region**

Size class of UAA (ha)	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
	(ha)		(ha)		(ha)	
<b>Total utilised agricultural area (ha)</b>	<b>10,326</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,034</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
>0 - <0.5	1,351	13.1	1,008	12.5	343	15.0
0.5 - <1	1,849	17.9	1,495	18.6	354	15.5
1 - <2	2,594	25.1	2,016	25.1	578	25.2
2 - <5	2,506	24.3	2,187	27.2	318	13.9
5 and over	2,027	19.6	1,328	16.5	699	30.5

**Table 6. Distribution of UAA (ha) by type by region**

Type of UAA (ha)	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
	(ha)		(ha)		(ha)	
<b>Total utilised agricultural area (ha)</b>	<b>10,326</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,034</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Arable land	8,017	77.6	6,137	76.4	1,881	82.0
Permanent crops	1,322	12.8	1,189	14.8	133	5.8
Kitchen gardens	987	9.6	709	8.8	279	12.2

**Table 7. Distribution of arable land (ha) by type by region**

Type of arable land	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
	(ha)		(ha)		(ha)	
<b>Total arable land</b>	<b>8,017</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,881</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Potatoes	712	8.9	688	11.2	24	1.3
Flowers and seeds	25	0.3	10	0.2	15	0.8
Forage plants	4,690	58.5	3,322	54.1	1,368	72.8
Fallow land	676	8.4	499	8.1	176	9.4
Vegetables	1,915	23.9	1,617	26.4	298	15.8

**Table 8. Distribution of permanent crops (ha) by type by region**

Type of permanent crop (ha)	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total permanent crops</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Fruit and berry plantations	382	28.9	364	30.6	18	13.8
Citrus plantations	91	6.9	45	3.8	46	34.6
Olive plantations	97	7.4	89	7.5	9	6.5
Vineyards	751	56.9	691	58.2	60	45.1

## Livestock

**Table 9. Distribution of cattle by type by region**

Type of cattle	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total Cattle</b>	<b>18,906</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,684</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,222</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Cattle under 1 year	5,054	26.7	3,296	26.0	1,758	28.3
Cattle between 1 and 2 years	4,593	24.3	3,082	24.3	1,511	24.3
Cattle over 2 years (including dairy cows)	9,259	49.0	6,306	49.7	2,953	47.5
<i>of which:</i>						
Dairy Cows	8,082	42.8	5,459	43.0	2,623	42.2

**Table 10. Distribution of pigs by type by region**

Type of pig	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total Pigs</b>	<b>79,186</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73,805</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,381</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Piglets <20 kgs	18,189	23.0	17,391	23.6	798	14.8
Breeding Sows	7,285	9.2	6,796	9.2	489	9.1
Other Pigs	53,712	67.8	49,618	67.2	4,094	76.1

Note: Breeding Sows include all females intended for breeding whether bred or not. Other pigs include cull sows, cull boars and breeding boars, pigs from 20 to 50 kilograms and fattening pigs of 50 kilograms and over.

**Table 11. Distribution of sheep by region**

Type of sheep	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total Sheep</b>	<b>8,788</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,428</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,360</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Breeding females	7,520	85.6	5,378	83.7	2,142	90.7
Other Sheep	1,268	14.4	1,049	16.3	219	9.3

Note: Breeding females are sheep that have lambed, ewes and ewe lambs for breeding and cull ewes. Other Sheep refer to all other sheep other than breeding females.

**Table 12. Distribution of goats by region**

Type of goat	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total Goats</b>	<b>5,738</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,471</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,267</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Breeding females	5,002	87.2	3,856	86.2	1,146	90.4
Other Goats	737	12.8	615	13.8	122	9.6

Note: Breeding females are goats that have kidded, nanny goats and kids for breeding and cull nanny goats. Other Goats refer to all other goats other than breeding females.

**Table 13. Distribution of poultry by region**

Type of poultry	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total Poultry</b>	<b>1,224,267</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>971,341</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>252,926</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Broilers	660,215	53.9	518,423	53.4	141,792	56.1
Laying Hens	563,814	46.1	452,897	46.6	110,917	43.9
Other Poultry	238	0.0	21	0.0	217	0.1

## Labour Force

**Table 14. Distribution of agricultural labour force by worktime by region**

Type of labour	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total agricultural labour force</b>	<b>17,148</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13,623</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,524</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Part-time	15,385	89.7	12,176	89.4	3,209	91.0
Males	12,316	71.8	9,810	72.0	2,506	71.1
Females	3,068	17.9	2,365	17.4	703	19.9
Full-time	1,763	10.3	1,448	10.6	316	9.0
Males	1,528	8.9	1,247	9.2	281	8.0
Females	236	1.4	201	1.5	35	1.0

**Table 15. Distribution of total agricultural labour force by region**

	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total agricultural labour force</b>	<b>17,148</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13,623</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,524</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Males	13,844	80.7	11,057	81.2	2,787	79.1
Females	3,304	19.3	2,566	18.8	738	20.9

**Table 16. Distribution of annual work units (AWU) by type of holding**

	Maltese Islands	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
<b>Total annual work units</b>	<b>4,220</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,457</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Sole-holder holdings	3,676	87.1	3,079	89.1	597	78.2
<i>of which:</i>						
Sole-holder managers	2,529	59.9	2,104	60.9	425	55.7
Other persons	1,147	27.2	975	28.2	172	23
Group or partnership	326	7.7	210	6.1	116	15.2
Company	218	5.2	168	4.9	50	6.6

**Table 17. Distribution of 'sole-holder' managers by other gainful activity outside agriculture**

	<b>Maltese Islands</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Malta</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total 'sole-holder' managers</b>	<b>10,296</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,047</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,249</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
Major activity	4,569	44.4	3,696	45.9	873	38.8
Subsidiary activity	307	3.0	260	3.2	47	2.1
No other activity	5,420	52.6	4,091	50.8	1,329	59.1

**Table 18. Distribution of 'sole-holder' managers by age**

	<b>Maltese Islands</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Malta</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total 'sole-holder' managers</b>	<b>10,296</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,047</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,249</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
<25 years	91	0.9	83	1.0	8	0.4
25 - 34 years	359	3.5	321	4.0	38	1.7
35 - 44 years	1,004	9.8	794	9.9	210	9.3
45 - 54 years	3,049	29.6	2,413	30.0	636	28.3
55 - 64 years	3,266	31.7	2,454	30.5	812	36.1
65 and over	2,527	24.5	1,982	24.6	545	24.2

**Table 19. Distribution of 'sole-holder' managers by worktime**

	<b>Maltese Islands</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Malta</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total 'sole-holder' managers</b>	<b>10,296</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,048</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,248</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>						
>0 - < 25% of 1 AWU	7,561	73.4	5,752	71.5	1,809	80.5
25 - < 50% of 1 AWU	1,062	10.3	857	10.6	205	9.1
50 - < 75% of 1 AWU	397	3.9	304	3.8	93	4.1
75 - < 100% of 1 AWU	286	2.8	270	3.4	16	0.7
1 AWU	990	9.6	865	10.7	125	5.6

## Methodological Notes

### 1. Scope and Overview

The aim of the survey is to provide a complete overview of the structure of agricultural holdings at a particular point in time through a representative sample and serves to monitor developments in the structure of agricultural farming practices.

The structure survey is in line with Council Regulation 571/88 of 29th February 1988 on the organization of Community surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings, which has been amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1444/2002 of 24th July 2002 *amending Commission Decision 2000/115/EC relating to the definitions of the characteristics, the exceptions to the definitions and the regions and districts regarding the surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings.*

### 2. Definitions

#### *Legal personality and management of the holding*

The agricultural holding is a single unit which has a single management and which produces agricultural products. A holding may have agricultural land in different localities and hence, all information related to it is taken at the holder's residence.

#### *Utilised agricultural area (UAA)*

The utilised agricultural area is all the land used by the holding for agricultural production, whether rented or family owned. This includes arable land and permanent cropping

#### *Arable land*

Arable land is land which is worked regularly, generally under a system of crop rotation such as potatoes, vegetables, fodder and fallow land. The area under greenhouses is included under this heading.

#### *Fallow land*

Fallow land is land which is included in the crop rotation system but is not producing a harvest and is left to recover for the duration of the crop year.

#### *Permanent crops*

Land under permanent crops is the land cultivated with crops that occupy the land for long periods and need not be replanted after each harvest.

#### *Kitchen Gardens*

Kitchen gardens include those areas devoted to the cultivation of agricultural products mainly intended for consumption by the holder and his household.

#### *Annual work units (AWU)*

The annual work unit corresponds to the work performed by one person who is occupied in an agricultural holding on a full-time basis. Persons with a minimum working time of 1,800 hours annually are considered full-time workers and count as 1 AWU. The performance of part-time workers is converted into AWU pro rata.

### 3. Data collection

The data has been collected by means of a statistical sample survey extracted from a list of farmers from the agricultural register. The whole list of farmers was stratified by economic size, typology, and region of the holdings. This type of stratification enabled groups of homogenous holdings to be grouped into specific strata. The units from each stratum were extracted using the optimum allocation method.

The holding is the unit of enumeration. The holding comprises land and buildings on which agricultural activities are carried out. The holding is operated by the 'holder' who is a single individual, a partnership of individuals or a limited company. The total population at the time of the sample selection amounted 11,058 agricultural holdings. No thresholds were used. Through the survey it was found that 47 holdings were no longer engaged in agricultural activity and that there were 6 new units. Therefore, the population frame was altered to represent a total of 11,017 agricultural holdings.

The Farm Structure Survey (FSS) was carried out in the months of September and October, 2007. The survey had a reference period of the 1st of September 2007 for livestock, while the reference period for land cover and the agricultural labour force referred to the agricultural crop year, from 1st September 2006 to 31st August 2007.

The structure survey was carried out over an 8-week period through door-to-door interviewing.

A total of 1,332 out of 1,552 holdings responded to the survey. Thus, the response rate for the survey is considered very high at 85.8 per cent. For unit non-response among the very large agricultural holdings, imputation techniques were used. It was assumed that these holdings still existed but could not be reached. In order to tackle unit non-response from strata where random sampling was undertaken, correction factors on the weights were applied.

4. The data in this release are final and are not normally subject to revision.
5. Figures may not add up due to rounding
6. The data are published by the NSO. The data and the national methodological report can be obtained directly from the NSO website <http://www.nso.gov.mt>