

ROMANIA'S AGRICULTURE FROM THE EU ACCESSION UP TO PRESENT - EVOLUTION AND STRUCTURE

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Abstract

From Romania's accession to the European Union up to present the agriculture's evolution and restructuring process was rather a slow one.

The phenomenon of structural coexistence of the two types of agricultural farms, with or without juridical personality was maintained in this whole period.

The agricultural farms' structure as regards the utilized agricultural area is one of contrasts, from some ars in the case of the subsistence households, to tens of thousands hectares in case of commercial farms. Thus, 97.8% of total of agricultural farms own 55.7% of the agricultural area, while, 2.2% of them own 44.3% of the country's agricultural area.

Key words: agriculture, agricultural farms, structure.

INTRODUCTION

The Romanian agriculture's state is determined by the Romanian agrarian structure and is the most important economic and social present issue.

The multifunctional role of agriculture is fully recognized, reason for which an overall knowledge of its structure and evolution has in view mainly the agricultural farm.

The evolution of the agricultural farm was and is strictly linked to the transformations in the Romanian society.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The information analyzed was collected through the documentary study of the papers regarding the theme approached. The methodology comprised the statistical analysis of primary data using as a working instrument the program of quantitative analysis Excel. The statistical data which stood at basis of the analysis were at national level, covered the 2007-2013 period and came from the following sources: a) statistical data NSI: i) publications – Romania's Statistical Yearbook 2013; ii) statistical data/ information on line - www.tempo-online; b) statistical data /information on line from the MARD.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Agriculture represents a sector of first importance due to the contribution which has in the national economy. Agriculture's contribution in the GDP is high, oscillating from a maximum of 6.6 % in year 2008, to a minimum of 4.9% in the year 2012, the average of EU-27 being of 1.7%.

Table 1. Share of agriculture in the GDP

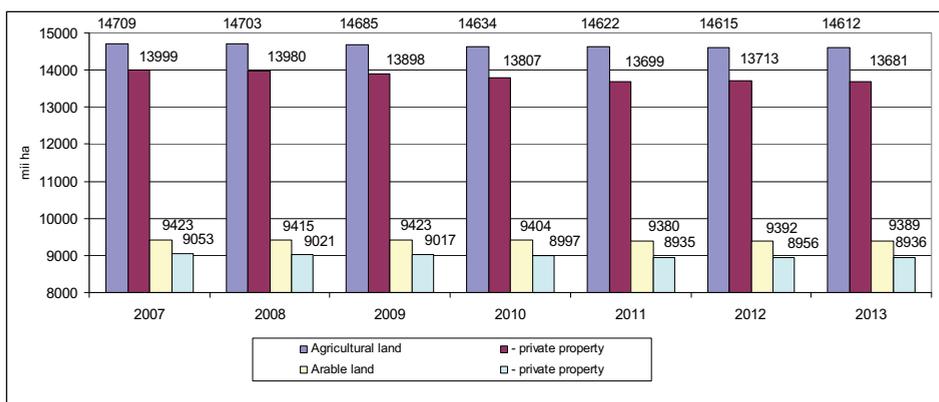
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
%	5.8	6.6	6.4	5.7	6.5	4.9	5.6

Source: www.madr.ro; Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2013, tab.11.1; data for the year 2013: NSI - press communicate no.80 from April 2 e 2014 (provisory data)

The land fund

Agriculture represents an important factor of the natural environment having in view that the share of the agricultural land in the ensemble of the country's territory is of over 61%.

In the year 2007 Romania's agricultural area was of 14.7 mill. ha (95.2% private ownership), and the area of the arable land was of 9.4 mill. ha (95.7% private ownership). In the year 2013, Romania's agricultural area was of 14.6 mill. ha (93.8% private ownership), and the area of the arable land was of 9.4 mill. ha (94.7% private ownership) (Figure 1).



Source: *www. INSE tempo online*

Figure 1. The land fund situation, by the utilization way, on ownership forms

Table 2. The situation of the agricultural farms in the years 2007 and 2010

Indicative	MU	Total		Of which:			
		Agricultural farms		Agricultural farms with juridical personality		Agricultural farms without juridical personality	
		2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Total number of agricultural farms	thousand	3931	3859	17	31	3914	3828
Agricultural farms which utilized agricultural area	thousand	3851	3724	17	30	3834	3694
Utilized agricultural area	thousand ha	13753	13306	4787	5856	8966	7450
The agricultural utilized area averagely:							
- per an agricultural farm	ha	3.50	3.45	270.45	190.78	2.29	1.95
- per an agricultural farm which utilized the agricultural area	ha	3.57	3.57	275.37	193.74	2.34	2.02

Source: *NSI, Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2013, tab. 14.4*

In the analyzed period the areas of agricultural land and arable land were not modified significantly, while their shares being in the private ownership decreased in year 2013 opposed to the year 2007. The transfer of the land areas to the forestry sector and that of constructions has constituted the main cause of the reduction of the agricultural area in the last years. The reduction of the land areas, by their including into the urban zone, represents a phenomenon met in the zones with higher productivity, while the change of the utilization category for the agricultural land into that of forestry appears, mainly, in the less favored zones.

Agricultural farms

According to the statistical data¹ in Romania it existed in the year 2010 a total number of

agricultural farms of 3,859 thousand, with 1.8% less than in the year 2007 (3,931 thousand).

The number of agricultural farms which utilized the agricultural area was with 3.3% smaller in the year 2010 (3,724 thousand) than in the year 2007 (3,851 thousand).

The utilized agricultural area diminished from 13753 thousand ha (2007), to 13306 thousand ha (2010), such that the average size of a farm decreased, from 3.50 ha/farm in the year 2007, to 3.45 ha/farm in the year 2010. With all this, the average size of an agricultural farm which utilized agricultural area was of 3.57 ha/farm, both in the year 2007 and in the year 2010 (Table 2).

Since the year 2007, from the accession of Romania to the EU, the phenomenon of structural duality of agricultural farm maintained itself, the structural modifications being rather small. Thus, in the analyzed period

¹ NSI, *Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2013*

there were farms with juridical personality and without juridical personality.

In the year 2010 the total number of the agricultural farms without juridical personality was of 3828 thousand, with 2.2% less in the year 2007.

As regards the number of agricultural farms without juridical personality which utilized agricultural area, in 2010 there were 3,694 thousand farms, less with 3.6% than in the year 2007. The utilized agricultural area by them decreased from 8966 thousand ha (2007), to 7450 thousand ha (2010), such that the agricultural area per agricultural farm without agricultural personality decreased from 2.29 ha/farm (2007), to 1.95 ha/farm. The average size of an agricultural farm without juridical personality which utilized agricultural area decreased from 2.34 ha/farm (2007), to 2.02 ha/farm (2010).

Even though in the analyzed period, the total number of farms registered a decrease, the number of agricultural farms with juridical personality was that which registered a significant increase. In the analyzed period the agricultural farms with juridical personality represented an extremely low percentage in the total number of farms, but their evolution was a positive one, registering an increase of 1.7 times in the year 2010 opposed to the year 2007.

On the background of the increase in the number of agricultural farms with juridical personality and of the increase of the utilized agricultural areas by them (from 4787 thousand ha in year 2007, to 5858 thousand ha in year 2010), nevertheless, the average size of the agricultural farm with juridical personality diminished from 270.4 ha/farm (in year 2007) to 190.8 ha/farm (in year 2010). A decreasing trend was registered also in the case of the average size of the agricultural farms with juridical personality which utilized agricultural area, from 275.27 ha/farm (2007), to 193.74 ha/farm (2010).

In the year 2007, the farms without juridical personality were utilizing 65% of the agricultural area, and the farms with juridical personality were utilizing 35% of the agricultural area of Romania. In the year 2010 these shares suffered major changes, such that the farms without juridical personality were

utilizing 56% of the agricultural area, and those with juridical personalities were utilizing 44% of the agricultural area of Romania.

The profile of the agricultural farms

The number of mixed agricultural farms, with utilized agricultural area and livestock numbers, registered a decrease, from 3254.2 thousand (2007), to 2702.4 thousand (2010).

In the analyzed period, the numbers of agricultural farms specialized only in crop production and only in animal production registered increases, from of 1.7 times, in both cases.

Table 3. Agricultural farms which utilized agricultural areas and/or owned livestock numbers
- thousand -

	2007	2010
Agricultural farms with utilized agricultural area and livestock numbers, of which:	3254.2	2702.4
- agricultural farms only with utilized agricultural area	597.5	1021.9
- agricultural farms only with livestock numbers	79.6	134.6

Source: NSI, Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2013, tab.14.3

The way of lands' farming

In the year 2007, from the total of utilized agricultural area, the area under ownership represented 73.2%, that leased 17.0%, that concessioned 2.1%, that taken in shares 2.0%, the rest being farmed under other forms.

Table 4. The way of farming the lands in the year 2010 opposed to the year 2007
- % -

	2007	2010
Ownership	73.2	60.0
Lease	17.0	27.0
Concession	2.1	3.0
In shares	2.0	2.1
Others	5.7	7.9

Source: The Presidential Commission for Public Policies for Agricultural Development, The National Rural Strategic Framework, 2013

In the year 2010 the share of areas under ownership decreased, while the shares of the other forms of farming the lands increased, the highest increasing trend being registered by the leased areas, from 17.0% (2007), to 27.0% (2010), which means that the leasing phenomenon started to get amplitude.

Romania's agrarian structure

Romania's agrarian structure is made of four big categories of agricultural farms²:

- The family agricultural households with areas comprised between 0.1-1 ha, which because of the small agricultural areas and strongly fragmented are not eligible for the EU financing; their agricultural land is made mostly by gardens, pastures, natural hayfields and the soil is weakly productive;
- Subsistence and semi subsistence farms with agricultural areas comprised between 1-10 ha which are producing mainly for their self consumption needs;
- Commercial family farms with areas between 10-100 ha;
- The commercial companies with areas bigger than 100 ha, with agricultural areas made of arable land of the best quality, placed in most favourable zones (table 5).

The two types of farms, those with areas under 1 ha and those of subsistence and semi subsistence are the ones which give the image of the Romanian agriculture. These represented 97.4% of the total of the agricultural farms in 2007 and respectively 97.8% in 2010 and they were utilizing 55.7% of the agricultural area of the country both in and in 2010.

The family commercial farms, with agricultural areas between 10 and 100 ha represented 2.3% of total agricultural farms in 2007 and 1.8% in the year 2010 and utilized 10.1% of the agricultural area of the country. These types of farms are majoritary in the countries in the European Union, but in Romania they are more weakly represented from number point of view.

Table 5. Agricultural farms by size class and utilized agricultural area

	2007		2007		2010	
	%	%	UAA (thousand ha)	%	UAA (thousand ha)	%
0.1-1 ha	43.8	54.2	5079	34.5	5059	34.6
1-10 ha	53.6	43.6	3114	21.2	3102	21.2
10-100 ha	2.3	1.8	1500	10.2	1485	10.1
Over 100 ha	0.3	0.4	5016	34.1	4988	34.1
Total	100	100	14709	100	14634	100

Source: own calculations on basis of data from the Statistical Yearbook 2012, NSI

² Otiman, P.I., (2012), The present agrarian structure of Romania– a great (and unsolved), social and economic issue, of the country, in the Romanian Sociology Magazine, new series, year XXIII, no.5-6, p.339-360, Bucharest

The commercial companies with areas of over 100 ha represented 0.3% of the total of agricultural farms in 2007 and respectively 0.4% in the year 2010 and were utilizing 34.1% of the country's agricultural area. The commercial companies were owning the smallest share of the total number of the agricultural farms, but they owned one third of the country's agricultural area, area formed of arable land and situated in the most favourable zones.

The last two categories of agricultural farms represented 2.6% of the total number of agricultural farms in 2007 and respectively 2.2%, in 2010 they utilized 44.2% of the agricultural area of the country.

CONCLUSIONS

In the period 2007-2013 agriculture's contribution to the GDP maintained at a high level, much over the EU average.

The areas of agricultural land and arable land did not change significantly, but suffered changes the shares of them under private ownership, registering decreases in the year 2013 opposed to the year 2007. The leasing phenomenon was in a full evolution process because the share of areas under ownership decreased, but grew the share of the areas leased in.

The total number of agricultural farms decreased, it also diminished the utilized agricultural area, and the average size of a farm decreased from 3.50 ha/farm in the year 2007, to 3.45 ha/farm in the year 2010.

The number of agricultural farms without juridical personality decreased, it also decreased the utilized area by them, such that the average size of an agricultural farm without juridical personality which utilized agricultural area decreased from 2.34 ha/farm in 2007, to 2.02 ha/farm in year 2010.

In total of agricultural farms, those with juridical personality are holding a very small percentage, but their number increased by 1.7 times in the year 2010 opposed to year 2007. It also increased the utilized agricultural area by them, but the average size of an agricultural farm with juridical personality which utilized agricultural area decreased from 275.27 ha/farm in 2007, to 193.74 in the year 2010.

These decrease of the average size shows the fact that the agricultural farms with juridical personality utilize only the areas of land with a high productivity.

In the year 2007, the farms without juridical personality were utilizing 65% of the agricultural area, and the farms with juridical personality were utilizing 35% of Romania's agricultural area. In the year 2010 these shares have suffered major changes, such that the farms without juridical personality were utilizing 56% of the agricultural area, and those with juridical personality were utilizing 44% of the agricultural area of Romania.

In the period 2007-2010, on the background of the decrease of the number of mixed farms, it grew the number of those specialized, only in the crop farming or only in livestock raise.

Predominant in the Romanian agriculture there were the farms with less than 1 ha agricultural land and the subsistence and semi subsistence farms, which represented over 97% of the total number of farms and which were utilizing almost 56% of the country's agricultural area. Even though these are not contributing to the development of a performant agriculture they have an important social role because they are ensuring the food security of the inhabitants in the rural environment.

The commercial agricultural farms, the family farms and the commercial companies were owning an extremely reduced percentage from the total number of farms, but they were utilizing over 44% of the country's agricultural area. The territorial amalgamation of these agricultural farms confers to them a competitive potential.

Such a distribution, accentuate bipolar, with most of the agricultural land divided, on one side, between farms, extremely modest as

physical size, which are producing in majority for the own needs, and on the other side, of a relatively small number of agricultural commercial farms which are producing in industrial system and are adopting modern technologies are the main factor limiting the growth of competitiveness of the Romanian agriculture and which reveals the structural imbalance of it.

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