

Organic farming

Organic area up by 21% in the EU between 2005 and 2008

Organic farming¹ in the **EU27** covered 7.8 million hectares in 2008, up by 7% compared with 2007. Over a longer time period, the data available for the **EU25** show an increase of 21% in the total organic area between 2005 and 2008.

In 2008, the five Member States with the largest organic area in the **EU27** were **Spain** (1.3 mn ha), **Italy** (1.0 mn ha), **Germany** (0.9 mn ha), the **United Kingdom** (0.7 mn ha) and **France** (0.6 mn ha).

In 2007, the total organic area accounted for 4.1% of the total utilised agricultural area² in the **EU27**. The highest proportions of organic area were recorded in **Austria** (15.7% of the total agricultural area), **Sweden** (9.9%) and **Italy** (8.9%).

These figures are extracted from a report³ issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Highest increase in organic area between 2005 and 2008 in Poland, Lithuania and Spain

Between 2007 and 2008, the total organic area increased in all Member States for which data are available, except **Italy** (-13%). The highest increases were recorded in **Spain** (+33%), **Bulgaria** (+22%), **Slovakia** (+19%), **Hungary** (+15%) and **Greece** (+14%). For the longer time period between 2005 and 2008, the highest increases were found in **Poland** (+94%), **Lithuania** (+89%), **Spain** (+63%) and **Belgium** (+57%). Decreases were registered only in **Italy** (-6%) and **Hungary** (-5%).

Cereals and green fodder most important organic arable crops

In 2008, the three main uses for organic land in the **EU27** were pastures & meadows (44% of the fully converted organic area¹ in the EU27 excluding Germany), arable crops (37%) and permanent crops (10%). The remaining 9% are fallow and unutilised land.

In 2008, the most important arable crop in the **EU27** was cereals (44% of the fully converted organic area under arable crops), followed by green fodder (42%), other arable crops such as dried pulses, potatoes, sugar beet, arable seeds & seedlings (7%), fresh vegetables and industrial crops (both 4%).

Cereals were particularly important in **Lithuania** (79% of the area under arable crops), **Portugal** (75%) and **Ireland** (73%), while the highest proportions of green fodder were found in **Latvia** (67%), **Estonia** (66%) and **Sweden** (58%).

Organic area

	Organic area*			Growth in organic area, %	
	1 000 ha, 2008	% of total EU27 organic area, 2008	% of total utilised agricultural area, 2007	2008/2007	2008/2005
EU27	7 765	100.0	4.1	7.4	:
EU25	7 608	98.0	:	7.4	20.6
Belgium	36	0.5	2.4	10.8	57.2
Bulgaria	17	0.2	0.4	22.1	:
Czech Republic	320	4.1	8.3	9.1	25.6
Denmark	150	1.9	5.1	8.7	11.9
Germany	908	11.7	5.1	4.9	12.4
Estonia	87	1.1	8.7	9.8	46.2
Ireland	43	0.6	1.0	4.1	22.6
Greece	318	4.1	6.9	13.6	10.1
Spain	1 318	17.0	3.2	33.3	63.2
France	584	7.5	2.0	4.8	6.1
Italy	1 002	12.9	8.9	-12.9	-6.3
Cyprus	2	0.0	1.6	:	:
Latvia	162	2.1	8.2	9.1	36.3
Lithuania	122	1.6	4.5	1.5	89.3
Luxembourg	4	0.0	2.6	5.0	11.9
Hungary	123	1.6	2.5	15.0	-4.5
Malta	0	0.0	0.2	:	:
Netherlands	50	0.6	2.4	7.3	3.4
Austria	448	5.8	15.7	0.6	5.4
Poland	314	4.0	1.9	8.5	94.4
Portugal	233	3.0	6.7	:	:
Romania	140	1.8	0.9	6.6	:
Slovenia	30	0.4	6.0	1.8	27.0
Slovakia	141	1.8	6.1	19.4	56.0
Finland	150	1.9	6.5	1.1	1.9
Sweden	336	4.3	9.9	9.1	51.0
United Kingdom	726	9.4	4.1	10.0	19.3
Norway	52	-	4.7	6.9	21.5

* Malta 2006; Cyprus, Portugal 2007

: Data not available

- Not applicable

Fully converted organic area under arable crops, 2008

	Fully converted area under arable crops (1 000 ha)	Of which (%):				
		Cereals	Green fodder	Fresh vegetables	Industrial crops	Other arable crops
EU27*	2 195.4	44.1	42.1	3.7	3.5	6.6
Belgium	9.8	30.0	54.0	1.0	5.0	10.0
Bulgaria	2.2	8.6	7.0	67.8	10.0	6.6
Czech Republic	17.8	57.1	30.6	3.0	1.7	7.7
Denmark	112.7	36.7	56.9	0.4	1.6	4.4
Germany	:	:	:	:	:	:
Estonia	29.2	31.7	65.7	1.4	0.2	0.8
Ireland	1.5	72.7	0.0	0.7	26.7	0.0
Greece	88.0	44.8	47.1	4.8	3.2	0.1
Spain	230.6	54.6	29.0	3.6	3.2	9.6
France	247.2	33.9	46.9	7.2	3.3	8.7
Italy	430.3	45.8	39.1	3.2	6.2	5.7
Cyprus	0.7	41.6	0.0	2.6	1.6	54.2
Latvia	92.2	29.0	67.2	1.0	0.3	2.5
Lithuania	67.5	79.0	1.0	2.1	0.1	17.7
Luxembourg	1.2	44.2	42.3	0.6	1.0	11.9
Hungary	41.3	54.0	22.0	16.0	3.2	4.7
Malta	0.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0
Netherlands	11.7	49.8	0.0	2.7	35.2	12.2
Austria	149.1	55.3	30.4	3.9	1.6	8.9
Poland	63.9	63.3	24.2	2.3	5.0	5.3
Portugal	51.4	74.7	23.3	0.1	1.9	0.0
Romania	37.9	66.8	4.3	26.9	0.4	1.6
Slovenia	2.2	33.4	56.6	2.6	4.1	3.3
Slovakia	32.5	35.4	54.3	5.9	0.6	3.9
Finland	114.4	34.8	57.4	1.9	0.3	5.6
Sweden	184.7	33.5	57.7	1.5	0.4	6.9
United Kingdom	175.4	27.2	56.8	0.4	8.4	7.2
Norway	31.1	19.9	75.3	0.1	0.8	3.9

* Estimated excluding Germany

Malta 2006; Cyprus, Portugal 2007; Ireland, Spain: total organic area under arable crops

: Data not available

- Organic farming** is defined as a method of production which places the highest emphasis on environmental protection and, with regard to livestock production, animal welfare considerations. It avoids or largely reduces the use of synthetic chemical inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides, additives and medicinal products. Organic area includes both areas fully converted and areas under conversion. An organic product - crop, animal or animal product - is certified as fully organic if it has been sown or bred using the methods established by Council Regulation 834/2007. This Regulation also establishes transitional periods to certify a crop, animal or animal product as "fully organic". During this period, which varies by type of crop and animal, the area, crop, animal or animal product are said to be "under conversion".
- The **Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA)** is the total area taken up by arable land, permanent grassland, permanent crops and kitchen gardens.
- Eurostat**, Statistics in Focus 10/2010 "**Area under organic farming increased by 7.4% between 2007 and 2008 in the EU-27**" can be downloaded in PDF format from the Eurostat website.

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For further information:

Johan WULLT
Tel: +352-4301-33 444
eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu

Elisabeth ROHNER-THIELEN
Tel: +352-4301-33 429
elisabeth.thielen@ec.europa.eu

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