Table of Contents
Areas subject to at least one greening obligation ........................................................................................................... 2
Areas of organic farmers (ipso facto compliant with greening) ........................................................................................................... 3
Areas subject to crop diversification ................................................................................................................................. 4
Areas subject to environmentally sensitive permanent grassland .......................................................................................... 5
Areas subject to the ratio of permanent grassland .................................................................................................................. 6
Areas subject to ecological focus areas obligation .................................................................................................................. 7
Composition of ecological focus areas types at EU level .......................................................................................................... 8
Composition of ecological focus areas types at MS/regional level ............................................................................................ 9
Trends of main indicators ....................................................................................................................................................... 10
Areas subject to at least one greening obligation

- In 2015, agricultural land covered by at least one greening obligation accounted for 75% of the total EU utilised agricultural area, corresponding to 134.9 million ha.
- The proportion of farmers under at least one greening obligation stands at around 40% of direct payment beneficiaries, corresponding to 2.7 million farmers.
- Areas not covered by any of the green direct payment obligations correspond to:
  - agricultural areas not under the system of direct payments (which account for approximately 11% of the EU’s total agricultural area);
  - areas exempted from the greening obligations, i.e. farmers benefiting from the small farmers scheme, organic farms or farms with less than 10 ha of arable land. These exemptions can overlap with the small farmers scheme, organic farms and farms with less than 10 ha of arable land, which means that the overall percentage cannot be ascertained; an analysis on small farmers is available in the document on Direct Payments.
  - areas under permanent crops, which account for 7% of the total EU agricultural area. Such areas receive green direct payments even though no greening obligations are applicable to these types of crop. The data presented on the implementation of greening excludes areas of farms that have only permanent crops.

Source: Member State 2015 notifications on greening and ESTAT-AGRI statistics 2015.
Areas of organic farmers (*ipso facto* compliant with greening)

- Organic farms are *ipso facto* compliant with greening and don’t have to respect the specific obligations.
- Overall, in 2015 organic farmers quantified in the context of greening notifications are around 100,000, representing 2% of the total number of farmers in the EU receiving direct payments. Compared to the data on agricultural area from the Eurostat FSS for 2013, organic farms account for 5.6 million ha of the total agricultural area (3%), 2.8 million ha of arable land (3%) and 2.5 million ha of permanent grassland area (4%).
- In four Member States (CZ, EE, LV, AT), organic farms account for over 10% of the total agricultural area.
- The percentage of organic farms’ total agricultural area occupied by permanent grassland is higher than for other farms in all Member States except IT, LT, RO. The proportion is very high for some countries, e.g. CZ (43%), EE (25%), AT (23%) SK (21%) and FI (82%).
- The high proportion of permanent grassland on organic farms reflects the typical structure of European organic farms. Eurostat data 2014 on organic farms shows that permanent grassland represents around 46% of total organic agricultural areas in Europe, compared to around 30% of total agricultural areas.

Number of organic farms as a proportion of the number of farmers benefiting from direct payments, total utilised agricultural area and permanent grassland, as a proportion of the same aggregates in ESTAT-AGRI statistics 2015. Malta reported no organic farms on its territory.

Source: Member State 2015 notifications on greening and ESTAT-AGRI statistics 2015.
Areas subject to crop diversification

- Crop diversification aims at improving soil quality by diversifying the crops cultivated on the arable land of the farm.
- Farmers subject to crop diversification cultivate around 80 million ha of arable land, corresponding to 75% of the total arable land in the EU.
- Farms not subject to the obligation are either not under the system of direct payments or exempted by the obligation:
  - More than 50% of farms exempted to crop diversification at EU level have less than 10 ha of arable land, with a high proportion of these farms in Member States like MT, HR and RO.
  - Other exemptions are awarded mainly for the presence of grassland or land lying fallow, especially in UK, LU, NL and PT.
- The proportion of arable land that is subject to the two-crop and the three-crop requirements respectively amounts to 11% and 64% at EU level.
- The differences in the proportion of farms exempted and subject to the two-crop and the three-crop requirements, based on the quantity of arable land of the farm, are linked to the agricultural structure of arable land farms in the different Member States.

Source: Member State 2015 notifications on greening and ESTAT-AGRI statistics 2015.
Areas subject to environmentally sensitive permanent grassland

- Environmentally sensitive permanent grasslands (ESPG) are designated by Member States in and outside Natura 2000 areas with the objective of maintaining such areas for carbon sequestration.

- The figure shows the proportion of permanent grassland designated areas in Natura 2000 (sum of green and blue parts of the bars) compared to the total areas of permanent grassland in Natura 2000. Within the designated areas, farmers concerned declare their grassland on a part of this areas (green parts of the bars) while the remaining part may not be covered by the direct payments scheme or can be exempted (e.g. small farmers). At EU level, 49% of permanent grassland in Natura 2000 is designated as ESPG and 27% has also been declared. In 9 Member States (BG, CZ, GR, IT, HU, NL, SK, FI and SE), the designated areas are more than 90%, while in EL all areas of permanent grassland present in Natura 2000 are both designated and declared.

- 5 Member States (BE Flanders, CZ, LV, LU, UK Wales) designated areas outside Natura 2000 for a total of 310,000 Ha, with the highest proportion in CZ.

Proportion of permanent grassland (ha) in Natura 2000 designated and/or declared as ESPG, by Member State. Source: Member State 2015 notifications on greening.
Areas subject to the ratio of permanent grassland

- Member States monitor changes in the permanent grassland area, in order to maintain such areas for carbon sequestration, at national or regional level by comparing reference and annual ratios. In case the difference between annual and reference ratio is higher than 5%, Member States have to issue a reconversion obligation for farmers.

- At EU level, permanent grassland accounts for 30% of total agricultural land.

- The Member States/regions with the highest proportion of permanent grassland in their total agricultural area are IE, UK and SI. In particular, IE and three UK regions (Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, not shown in the graph) recorded figures of around 90%.

- Other Member States account for a proportion of permanent grassland between 40% and 60% while the ones with the smallest areas of permanent grassland are CY (2%), FI (6%) and DK (9%). Malta does not have any permanent grassland.

- In 2015 and 2016, the ratio of permanent grassland decreased by more than 5% in 5 Member States (CY, EE, one French region, RO, UK England), while 6 Member States (CY, DE, EE, LU, IT, PT) activated a prior authorisation or warning system in order to follow closely the trend of the ratio.
Areas subject to ecological focus areas obligation

- Ecological focus areas (EFA) aims at improving biodiversity by keeping at least 5% of such areas on the arable land of the farm.
- Farmers subject to EFA cultivate around 75 million ha of arable land, corresponding to 70% of the total arable land in the EU.
- Farms not subject to the obligation are either not under the system of direct payments or exempted by the obligation:
  - Around 65% of farms exempted to EFA at EU level have less than 15 ha of arable land, with around 100% of this exemption in 12 Member States.
  - In EE and FI, the forest exemption accounts for almost 100%, while in LV and SE it accounts for around 50% of the total exempted land.
  - The other kind of exemptions are awarded mainly for the presence of grassland, leguminous crops or land lying fallow, especially in PT, LU, IT, SI and UK.
- The proportion of arable land on which the EFA obligation is being implemented is calculated before and after applying weighting factors (Annex 2 to Regulation (EU) No 639/2014). The weighting factors are applied to the physical area actually occupied by EFAs (corresponding to the calculation before the weighting factor is applied), and reflect the ecological value of the different EFA types and the duration of their effects. In absolute terms, in 2015, 10 million ha of land (before weighting factors) was declared as EFA.
- The 5% minimum EFA area/arable land area that farmers are required to achieve is calculated after the application of weighting factors: the actual ratio for the EU as a whole is 9%, almost double the percentage that farmers are legally required to observe under the EFA requirement (percentages may differ at farm level). The proportion of arable land on which the EFA is applied is particularly high in MT (21%), HR (16%) and ES (16%), while Member States where the EFA area is between the regulatory 5% and 7% are DK, DE, AT, SI and FI.
- The ratio of the EFA area to total arable land, as calculated before weighting factors are applied, is 13% in the EU as a whole. The ratio is particularly high in NL and MT (26%), BE (22%) and HR (22%).
Composition of ecological focus areas types at EU level

- The composition of EFA types available for farmers at EU level is taken into account before applying the weighting factors (equivalent to physical areas on the ground) and after its application.

- In 2015, the most frequently declared EFA types were those linked to productive or potentially productive agricultural areas: nitrogen-fixing crops (37.3 % of the physical EFA on the ground), catch crops (33.4 %) and land lying fallow (25.9 %). The sum of these three main types of EFA is 94 % before weighting factors are applied. Other areas like landscape features and buffer strips reached 1.7 % and 0.7 % respectively.

- After applying the weighting factors, their sum slightly decreased to 93 %. Nitrogen-fixing crops and catch crops reached 54 % of the total weighted EFAs (39 % and 15 % respectively). This was 5.4 % of the arable land under the obligation and seems to have contributed to overshooting the required 5 % at farm level. Other areas like landscape features and buffer strips increased to 4.8 % and 1.5 % compared to areas before weighting factors.

Breakdown of declared EFA areas by main EFA type, at EU level, before applying weighting factors

Breakdown of declared EFA areas by main EFA type, at EU level, after applying weighting factors.

Source: Member State 2015 notifications.
Composition of ecological focus areas types at MS/regional level

- The analysis of EFA types at geographical level taking into account the composition at MS and NUTS 3 level showed clear geographical patterns.
  - A substantial share of landscape features and buffer strips is found only in IE, the UK and MT.
  - Land lying fallow is more present in Mediterranean countries like ES, PT and CY and in Member States located in the boreal biogeographical region, like FI and LV.
  - Nitrogen-fixing crops are prevalent in HR, CZ, IT, PL and RO.
  - Catch crops are more widespread in BE, DK, DE, LU and NL.
- At NUTS 3 level, each region was classified in nine categories based on a cluster analysis. Six clusters were identified with high cumulated percentages of catch crops (CC), nitrogen-fixing crops (NFC) and land lying fallow (LLF), while the remaining three clusters had high cumulated percentages of landscape features (LF, mainly represented by hedges) and buffer strips (BS).

Breakdown of the main types of EFA area, after applying the weighting factors

Spatial distribution of main EFA type categories for each NUTS 3 region.
Source: Member State 2015 notifications. Data not available for France and Scotland. Italy’s data still subject to verification. Regions not classified in Finland are under the forest exemption.
Trends of main indicators

- In 2016 and 2017, the main indicators analysed for greening showed a substantial stability: a slight increase of few percentage points was recorded in some indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers subject to at least one greening obligation</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>41 %</td>
<td>41 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural areas subject to at least one greening obligation</td>
<td>75 %</td>
<td>78 %</td>
<td>79 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arable land subject to crop diversification</td>
<td>75 %</td>
<td>77 %</td>
<td>77 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent grassland designated as ESPG (ESPG designated / PG in Natura 2000)</td>
<td>49 %</td>
<td>51 %</td>
<td>52 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of permanent grassland (PG / total agricultural area)</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>29 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arable land subject to EFA</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>71 %</td>
<td>71 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA areas / arable land before weighting factor</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA areas / arable land after weighting factor</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison between main indicators in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Where not specified, percentages are calculated on ESTAT-AGRI statistics 2015.
Source: Member State 2015-2017 notifications. In 2017 data from IE, FR, IT and SE are not yet available.