

The total **irrigable area** is the maximum area which could be irrigated in the **reference year** using the equipment and the quantity of water normally available on the **agricultural holding**. The outdoor area that the farmer can potentially irrigate with the equipment and normal volume of water at hand should be recorded regardless of the type of irrigation equipment and method.

Trends in **water abstraction** rates depend on different factors: crop variety (examples of water-intensive crops are potatoes in northern Europe and cotton, grain maize, rice and fruit in southern Europe), irrigation area, irrigation technology, water prices, water restrictions, pumping costs and climate conditions. Farmers may select crops that require more water during the growing season, or that have growth periods more sensitive to soil moisture stress. Because of these varying factors, **irrigated areas** change from year to year and irrigable areas, defined as the total area equipped for irrigation, are used instead to present irrigation trends.

Excludes

- Areas under glass or high accessible cover
- Kitchen gardens

Differences between data collections

In **Decision 2000/115/EC** applicable to the **Farm Structure Surveys carried out** in 2000, 2003, 2005 and 2007 the total **irrigable area** was defined as following:

- The maximum area which could be irrigated in the reference year using the equipment and the quantity of water normally available on the holding.
- The total irrigable area may differ from the sum of the areas provided with irrigation equipment since the equipment may be mobile and therefore utilisable on several fields in the course of a harvest year; capacity may also be restricted by the quantity of water available or by the period within which mobility is possible.

In **Regulation (EC) No 1200/2009** applicable to the Farm Structure Survey carried out in 2010 the irrigable area was defined as:

- Total maximum **utilised agricultural area** which could be irrigated in the reference year using the equipment and the quantity of water normally available on the holding]

Regulation (EC) No 1091/2018 states that:

- For variables on irrigation the reference period in integrated farm statistics is a 12-month period ending within the reference year.

Related concepts

- [Irrigated area](#)

Statistical data

- [Agri-environmental indicator - irrigation](#)