

1. The development of the structure of the subjects involved in agriculture

39,396 actively farming agricultural subjects were recorded in 2007. In comparison with the previous structural survey in 2005, this was 2,856 (6.8%) less. Most (92.5%) of the reporting units were holdings of natural persons. Out of the total number of holdings of natural persons, 72.3% consisted of the holdings of private farmers or agricultural entrepreneurs and 1/5 (22.6%) consisted of holdings of natural persons without a Identification Number (IČO) which are involved in agriculture as self-suppliers and which met the threshold values for the survey. Holdings of legal persons accounted for only 7.5%. The development of the number of agricultural subjects since 2000 is different for holdings of natural and legal persons. Whereas the number of holdings of natural persons has fallen, the number of holdings of legal persons has risen.

Tab.1 - Structure of active entities in agriculture from 2000 to 2007: by legal forms

	Indicator	AGC 2000		FSS 2003		FSS 2005		FSS 2007		Index 07/05 (%)
		abs.	Share (%)	abs.	Share (%)	abs.	Share (%)	abs.	Share (%)	
Active entities, total	Number	54 158	100,0	54 071	100,0	42 252	100,0	39 396	100,0	93,2
	Area (ha)	3 607 572	100,0	3 618 920	100,0	3 557 791	100,0	3 518 073	100,0	98,9
	Avg. area (ha)	66.6	x	66.9	x	84.2	x	89.3	x	106.1
By legal forms:										
Natural persons	Number	51 473	95,0	51 287	94,9	39 419	93,3	36 455	92,5	92,5
	Area (ha)	952 082	26,4	1 009 078	27,9	1 041 454	29,3	1 034 568	29,4	99,3
	Avg. area (ha)	18.5	x	19,7	x	26,4	x	28,4	x	107,4
Legal persons	Number	2 685	5,0	2 784	5,1	2 833	6,7	2 941	7,5	103,8
	Area (ha)	2 655 490	73,6	2 609 842	72,1	2 516 336	70,7	2 483 505	70,6	98,7
	Avg. area (ha)	989.0	x	937.4	x	888.2	x	844.4	x	95.1
Business companies & partnerships	Number	1 859	3,4	2 069	3,8	2 154	5,1	2 294	5,8	106,5
	Area (ha)	1 562 790	43,3	1 657 363	45,8	1 634 490	45,9	1 679 562	47,7	102,8
	Avg. area (ha)	840.7	x	801.1	x	758.8	x	732.2	x	96.5
Limited liability companies	Number	1 264	2,3	1 400	2,6	1 493	3,5	1 607	4,1	107,6
	Area (ha)	773 549	21,4	769 712	21,3	785 576	22,1	779 486	22,2	99,2
	Avg. area (ha)	612.0	x	549.8	x	526.2	x	485.1	x	92.2
Joint stock companies	Number	559	1,0	627	1,2	622	1,5	651	1,7	104,7
	Area (ha)	773 901	21,5	870 111	24	834 436	23,5	886 151	25,2	106,2
	Avg. area (ha)	1 384.4	x	1 387.7	x	1 341.5	x	1 361.2	x	101.5
Cooperatives	Number	741	1,4	631	1,2	584	1,4	548	1,4	93,8
	Area (ha)	1 059 451	29,4	917 936	25,4	848 797	23,9	773 946	22,0	91,2
	Avg. area (ha)	1 429.8	x	1 454.7	x	1 453.4	x	1 412.3	x	97.2

Holdings of legal persons

Since 2000, the number of holdings of legal persons has risen by 9.5%. In the period from 2005 to 2007, the number of holdings of legal persons increased by 3.8%. Both limited liability companies and joint stock companies contributed to the growth in the number of holdings of legal persons. On the other hand, there has been a further fall in the number of agricultural co-operatives. Whereas there were 741 co-operatives in the Czech Republic in 2000, there were only 548 in 2007. Traditionally, co-operatives have had the highest average area of utilised agricultural area (1,453.4 ha in 2005 and 1,412.3 ha in 2007), so their share of the utilised agricultural area (22.0%) is comparable with limited liability companies (22.2%) and joint stock companies (25.2%).

Holdings of natural persons

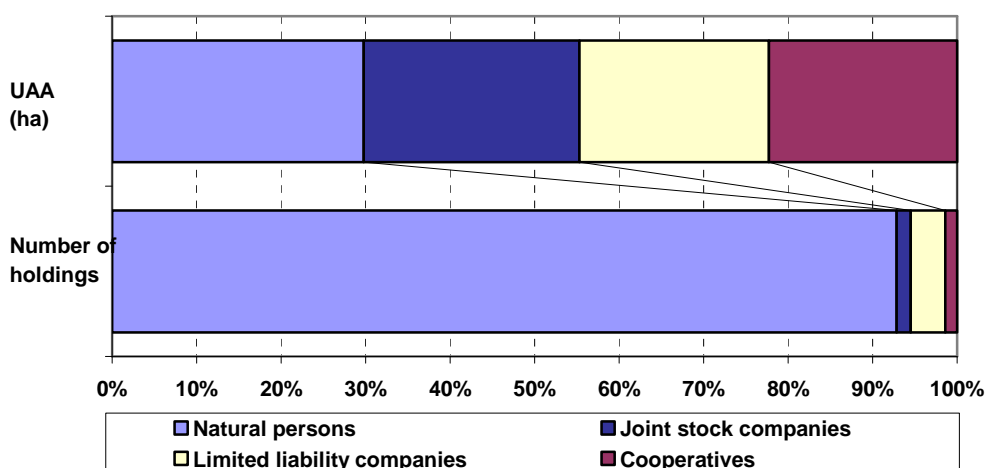
The number of holdings of natural persons fell by almost 30% in comparison with 2000. In comparison with the results of the last survey in 2005, their numbers fell by 7.5% in 2007. Family farms, which are characteristic for most of the states in the EU, are not typical in the Czech Republic. The fall in the numbers of holdings of natural persons due to the obligation to reregister, which commenced in 2004 and will continue to mid 2009, also continued.

It is not possible to infer any impact on the actual agricultural production from the significant fall in the numbers of holdings of natural persons active in agriculture after 2000. The large number of holdings of

natural persons in that period was preliminarily caused by the growth in the number of subjects which registered as private farmers during the course of privatisation in order to achieve their restitutional claims, but without any real intention of farming the land. Most of the land thus remained rented by the original or transformed large holdings. This did not substantially affect the total area of utilised agricultural area (in 2007, the area of the utilised agricultural area was at 97.5% of the 2000 level). In 2007, 83.3% of the utilised agricultural area was rented (in 2005, it was 85.7%).

Even though the numerous holdings of natural persons predominate, their production potential is small in comparison with the holdings of legal persons. Out of a total of 3.5 million hectares of utilised agricultural area in the Czech Republic, holdings of legal persons farm 70.6% of the land. The remaining 29.4% of the land is farmed by holdings of natural persons (see graph 1).

Graph 1 – Share of main legal forms in number of agricultural holdings and utilised agricultural area in 2007



The average area of land per agricultural subject

The growth in the average area of the agricultural land per holding arises from the fact that the overall number of agricultural subjects has fallen, while the utilised agricultural area has remained at a relatively stable level (or has fallen slightly). The Czech Republic is at the forefront of the entire European Union with an average area of 89.3 ha. Whereas the average area of holdings of natural persons has continued to rise between the monitored surveys (from 18.5 ha in 2000 to 28.4 ha in 2007), the average area of holdings of legal persons has fallen (from 989.0 ha in 2000 to 844.4 ha in 2007).