

Bulgaria - Agricultural Census 2020

**Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF), Agrostatistics Department, Government of
Bulgaria, National Statistical Institute (NFI)**

Report generated on: October 15, 2026

Visit our data catalog at: <https://microdata.fao.org/index.php>

Identification

SURVEY ID NUMBER

BGR_2020_AC_v01_M_v01_A_ESS

TITLE

Agricultural Census 2020

TRANSLATED TITLE

Преброяване на земеделските стопанства през 2020 година

COUNTRY

Name	Country code
Bulgaria	BGR

STUDY TYPE

Agricultural Census [ag/census]

SERIES INFORMATION

The first census of land ownership in Bulgaria was carried out in 1897. Subsequent agricultural censuses were held in 1934, 1946 (unpublished results), 2003, 2010 and 2020. The Agricultural Census 2020 was the third census conducted with EU legislation and the second after Bulgaria acceded to the EU.

ABSTRACT

The Agricultural Census is a census of all agricultural holdings that takes place every ten years. It is part of an EU-wide programme of agricultural censuses carried out in 2020 under EU Regulation 2018/1091 on integrated farm statistics and conducted under the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (<https://www.fao.org/world-census-agriculture/en/>).

KIND OF DATA

Census/enumeration data [cen]

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Agricultural holdings

Scope

NOTES

The census scope covered agricultural activities (crop and livestock production).

The questionnaire collected information on:

1. Information on the holding
2. Holding Area and Type of Tenure
3. Crops
4. Livestock breeding
5. Animal Housing
6. Manure Management
7. Machinery and Equipment, Insurance, and Innovation
8. Other Gainful Activities
9. Labour

KEYWORDS

Keyword
Structure of Agriculture
Land use
Crops

Livestock and Poultry

Labour in the Agricultural Sector

Agricultural Equipment and Facilities

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The Agricultural Census 2020 covered the entire country.

UNIVERSE

The statistical unit was the agricultural holding, defined as a single unit, both technically and economically, that has a single management and that undertakes economic activities in agriculture in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1893/2006 belonging to groups A.01.1, A.01.2, A.01.3, A.01.4, A.01.5 or to the "maintenance of agricultural land in good agricultural and environmental condition" of group A.01.6 within the economic territory of the Union, either as its primary or secondary activity, as it is stated in the Regulation (EU) No. 2018/1091 of the European Parliament and of the Council on integrated agricultural statistics. Regarding activities of class A.01.49, only the activities "Raising and breeding of semi-domesticated or other live animals" (except for raising of insects) and "Beekeeping and production of honey and beeswax" were included.

The main frame for the CA 2020 met the following thresholds for agricultural holdings established by Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2018/1091:

- 5 ha of utilised agricultural area
- 2 ha of arable land
- 0.5 ha of potatoes
- 0.5 ha of fresh vegetables and strawberries
- 0.2 ha of aromatic, medicinal and culinary plants, flowers and ornamental plants, seeds and seedlings, nurseries
- 0.3 ha of fruit trees, berries, nut trees, citrus fruit trees, other permanent crops (excluding nurseries, vineyards, and olive trees)
- 0.1 ha of vineyards
- 0.3 ha of olive trees
- 100 m² of greenhouses (including all crops under glass or high accessible cover)
- 100 m² of cultivated mushrooms
- 1.7 livestock units

To meet the 98 percent coverage of the utilized agricultural area (UAA), a frame extension was added. Agricultural holdings that are part of the frame extension met the following national thresholds:

- 0.5 ha of utilized agricultural area (UAA)
- 0.5 ha of permanent grassland
- 0.1 ha of potatoes (including seed potatoes), vineyards, fresh vegetables (including melons) and strawberries, pome fruits, stone fruits, fruits from subtropical and tropical climate zones, berries (excluding strawberries), nuts, grapes, other permanent crops including for human consumption, tobacco, hops, flowers and ornamental plants (excluding nurseries), seeds and seedlings, nurseries, or aromatic, medicinal and culinary plants, all outdoor
- 0.3 ha of outdoor pome fruits, stone fruits, fruits from subtropical and tropical climate zones, berries (excluding strawberries), nuts, and other permanent crops including for human consumption, or arable land
- 0.2 ha total outdoor of aromatic, medicinal and culinary plants, flowers and ornamental plants (excluding nurseries), seeds and seedlings, and nurseries
- 0.01 ha of greenhouse, or cultivated mushrooms
- 1 cow, breeding sow live weight 50 kg or over, male bovine 2 years old or over, ostrich, other livestock, deer, or fur animal
- 2 head of bovine less than 1 year old, male bovine and heifers 1 to less than 2 years old, and male bovine and heifers 2 years old and over, live horses, asses, mules and hinnies, or goats breeding females
- 5 head of piglets live weight under 20 kg and other pigs, or sheep breeding females
- 10 bees (hives) or rabbits of domestic species breeding females
- 30 turkeys, ducks, geese, guinea fowls, pheasants, pigeons, and other poultry
- 50 laying hens
- 100 broilers
- 400 quails
- 1.7 livestock units

Producers and sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name
Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF, Министерство на земеделието), Agrostistics Department
Government of Bulgaria, National Statistical Institute (NFI, Националният статистически институт)

Sampling

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The Agricultural Census 2020 was composed of a core module and three thematic modules on labour force and other gainful activities, rural development, and animal housing and manure management, and one-off complete enumeration was used. All census data regarding rural development were collected directly from administrative registers, which were also used partially for the core module, and the frame extension of this module.

The type of frame used in the census was a list of agricultural holdings from the previous census, farms from annual statistical surveys after 2010, and farms for which data was obtained from administrative sources. The preliminary list was checked and cleared by experts from the Regional Directorates of Agriculture (RDA), the municipal agricultural service, and the regional directorates for food safety with assistance of the local government.

Data collection

DATES OF DATA COLLECTION

Start	End
2020-09-01	2020-12-18

DATA COLLECTION MODE

Pen-and-Paper Personal Interview [papi] Computer Assisted Web Interview [cawi] Computer Assisted Telephone Interview [cati]

DATA COLLECTION NOTES

The census staff included 90 experts in agrostistics from the Regional Directorates of Agriculture (RDA) and 15 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF). Additional staff were also involved in various stages of the census, as the census was accompanied by many administrative activities. Experts from the National Statistical Institute (NSI), as well as experts responsible for the information systems of the administrative data sources, were also involved in the census activities. The local government actively participated in the census by supporting the activities to update holding lists. For data collection activities, 1 437 enumerators, 224 supervisors, and 272 IT and data processing specialists participated through civil contracts. Software development and technical assistance related to data entry, validation and transmission to Eurostat were outsourced.

The Agricultural Census 2020 data was collected in two phases:

- Phase 1: from 1 to 18 September 2020 using CAWI method for all holdings
- Phase 2: data collection by face-to-face interview using CAPI/PAPI methods was carried out from 19 September to 18 December 2020 in farms with non-response in phase 1

A software application for the census was developed as an upgrade of the existing Agrostistics Information System (ISAS) for collection, processing, and validation of data from agricultural holdings. Geolocation of holdings was carried out through an IACS GIS application, where access was provided to a Digital Orthophoto Map and IACS spatial data for the requested area, by plots.

The characteristics concerning rural development support were obtained using an administrative data source, the State Fund Agriculture - Paying Agency. To reduce the response burden, census data were collected directly from administrative registers such as: Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), bovine register, ovine register, caprine register, and the organic farming register.

****QUALITY ASSURANCE****

The National Statistical Institute (NSI) has a quality management system that follows the guidelines established at https://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/Quality/1.4.%20GUIDELINES%20NSS_BG.pdf, in accordance with the European Statistical Code Practices. The quality assurance and assessment include multi-level data control, training courses, use of best practices, quality guidelines, benchmarking, and compliance monitoring. A pilot census was conducted during the preparatory stage of the census with the main objective of testing census methodology. A post-enumeration survey (PES) was carried out on a sample of agricultural holdings after the completion of the data collection to be aware of the quality and limitations of the data produced.

Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRES

One questionnaire was used for the census. The questionnaire covered 20 out of 23 essential items recommended in the WCA 2020.

Data Processing

DATA EDITING

Before ISAS data entry, data collected with PAPI methods was checked. Data was validated by interviewers, supervisors, and staff from local and central departments, using data format checks, completeness checks, range checks, relational checks, comparisons with previous rounds of the data collection, and comparisons with other domains in agricultural statistics. The tools for data validation comprised comparison of the data, controls for logical connection in the information system (including validations from the manual), and the Eurostat data testing system. Data was compiled using an algorithm created for processing the collected data in the information system for bringing them into a form suitable for transmission to Eurostat (microdata file). Some of the data comparisons and summary tables were prepared using the ISAS, a reference module that uses the Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services tool, and Excel.

****DATA PROCESSING NOTES****

Direct data capture was ensured by the CAWI and CAPI method. For paper questionnaires, manual data entry in the ISAS was used. The IT system contains data entry validations.

Access policy

CONTACTS

Name	Affiliation	Email
Agrostatistics Department	Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF, Министерство на земеделието)	agrostat@mzh.government.bg

ACCESS CONDITIONS

The data request procedure and the data request form: "How to apply for microdata access?" at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/farm-statistics>.

Metadata production

DDI DOCUMENT ID

DDI_BGR_2020_AC_v01_M_v01_A_ESS_FAO

PRODUCERS

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Agrostatistics Department		Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF, Министерство на земеделието)	Metadata producer
Statistics Division	ESS	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Metadata adapted for FAM

Data Dictionary

Data file	Cases	Variables
-----------	-------	-----------