

DRŽAVNI ZAVOD ZA STATISTIKU
REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE
CROATIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

INTERESTING FACTS

Zagreb, 29 June 2018

Natural Wealth of Croatian Regions

Today's Croatian landscape has been shaped by many generations that have been cultivating land in different ways. However, the result of land cultivation is not only a rural landscape that exudes beauty but also the richness of fresh food and domestic agricultural products.

Agriculture is the cornerstone of economic development of all European countries, including Croatia, and is defined as an economic branch dealing with the cultivation of plants and breeding of animals for the production of products that primarily meet the nutritional needs of the population¹. Rural areas in Europe account for more than 77% of the surface area, of which 47% is the share of agricultural land and 30% of forests², and almost half of the European Union population lives there. At the level of Croatia, according to the 2017 data, the surface area of agricultural land was 27.3%, while forests extended over 48.8% of the surface area.

Orchard area on the rise

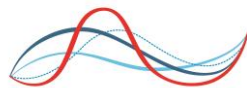
Croatia is abundant with various ecological systems, and the abovementioned agricultural land is used for different purposes. In 2017, agricultural land, precisely 54.5% of it, was most frequently used for arable land and gardens. This land was most often used for sowing cereals, as much as 56.6% of it. In addition to arable land and gardens, a large percentage of agricultural land was used for permanent grassland (40.6%), while only 4.8% was used for permanent crops and 0.1% for kitchen gardens.

Permanent crops include orchards, vineyards and olive groves, nurseries, osier willows and Christmas trees. As regards orchards, vineyards and olive groves, the largest share of agricultural land was used for orchards, as much as 43%, while 30.8% was used for vineyards and 26.2% for olive groves. Although the total utilised agricultural area decreased by 3.2% in 2017 in relation to 2016, the agricultural area used for orchards, vineyards and olive groves increased by 0.2%.

¹ Čavrak, V. ed. (2011) *Gospodarstvo Hrvatske*. Zagreb: Politička kultura. Chapter 9, pp. 173-190.

<https://www.vup.hr/Data/Files/1302211420564.pdf>

² European Commission – The common agricultural policy (CAP) and agriculture in Europe – Frequently asked questions
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-631_hr.htm



Croatian regions

Due to diverse climatic conditions and different soil quality, Croatia is abundant with agricultural products. In order to make it easier for the statistics to identify which sorts are most frequent and where, the National Classification of Spatial Units for Statistics³ is applied, according to which Croatia is divided into two regions – Continental and Adriatic Croatia, containing numerous agricultural lands. According to the 2016 data, more than 134 thousand agricultural holdings operated in these regions, and the core of the Croatian agricultural sector was made up of 130 264 private family farms⁴. The vast majority of private family farms spread over an area smaller than five hectares of land (69.5%). Commercial family farms spread over an area larger than 20 hectares and most of them are mixed-type, which means they are engaged both in growing of crops and breeding of cattle.

Continental Croatia

Continental Croatia is considered a more productive region in terms of agriculture. This region extends over nearly 3.2 million hectares, which is 0.9 hectares per capita, classifying it into the region with intensive crop and animal production.

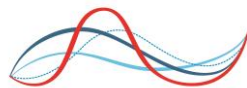
Although cereal production is most common in Continental Croatia, in 2017, compared to 2016, it recorded the largest decrease in surface area, of 12.2%.

The production of rapeseed is also characteristic of this region, which increased by 20.2% in 2017, as compared to 2016, being the largest yield since 1990. The yield of aromatic and medicinal herbs and spices increased by 60.9%, of sugar beet by 10.8% and of sunflower by 4.8%.

The highest decrease in yield per hectare in 2017 was recorded in silage maize, most frequently used for feeding livestock, which was 11.3 tonnes per hectare less than in the previous year. The yield of sugar beet also decreased, by even nine tonnes per hectare, as well as the yield of other crops, such as potato, corn maize and clover. While the production of these crops decreased, the production of fruits and vegetables increased in 2017, as compared to 2016. The largest increase was recorded in the production of sweet cherries, of

³ Croatian Bureau of Statistics – National Classification of Spatial Units for Statistics 2012 (NKPJS 2012.)
https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_08_96_2161.html

⁴ Croatian Bureau of Statistics –
<https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/DBHomepages/Poljoprivreda/Struktura%20poljoprivrednih%20gospodarstava/metodologija.htm>



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437.5%. The production of other fruits and vegetables also went up in 2017, in relation to 2016, with the increase in the production of apricots amounting to 335.2% and of berries to 253.2%, while the production of melons increased by 205.7%, of tomatoes by 68.9% and of cucumbers and gherkins by 60.0%.

Adriatic Croatia

Adriatic Croatia extends over nearly 2.5 million hectares, which is 0.6 hectares per capita. The area of Adriatic Croatia has an important and noted place on the "wine atlas", and the most important vineyards are located in the County of Istria. It thus comes as no surprise that the most common variety of white wine in 2017, in terms of area under vines, was Istrian Malvasia, covering as much as 1 662 hectares, while the most common variety of red wine was Plavac mali, covering 1 550 hectares.

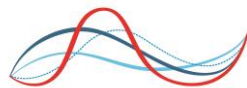
The production of red and white wine in 2017 on the entire territory of Croatia amounted to 726 thousand hectolitres, of which 257 thousand hectolitres were produced in Adriatic Croatia.

It is important to mention growing of olives and production of olive oil, which takes place entirely in Adriatic Croatia. As regards olive production, it fell by 7.2% in 2017, as compared to 2016. However, the production of olive oil increased by 8.5% in 2017, as compared to the previous year, due to a very good olive oil yield.

When talking about Adriatic Croatia, maritime fishing should also be mentioned, which is significant in this region. In 2016, the production of pelagic fish in Croatia was 53.9% higher than in 2012, when the lowest production of pelagic fish was recorded in the last five years. The three most often caught pelagic fish in 2016 were pilchard, with catches of 53 909 tonnes, anchovy, with 8 125 tonnes, and Atlantic chub mackerel, with 1 640 tonnes. The catches of Bluefin tuna amounted to 511 tonnes, while its production amounted to 2 934 tonnes.

Organic farming in Croatia

When talking about agriculture in Croatia, we must mention organic agricultural holdings bearing the label as defined in Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on



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organic production and labelling of organic products and in the Ordinance on Organic Production⁵.

In 2017, as compared to 2013, the number of new organic agricultural producers increased by 1 088, amounting to a total of 1 382 in 2017. In the same year, the largest number of organic agricultural producers was located in the County of Osijek-Baranja, 661 of them, followed by the County of Sisak-Moslavina with 346 organic agricultural producers and the County of Slavonski Brod-Posavina with 301 organic agricultural producers.

The largest area of utilised organic agricultural land in 2016 was in the County of Osijek-Baranja, precisely 17.2 thousand hectares, followed by the County of Lika-Senj with 11.5 thousand hectares and the County of Split-Dalmatia with almost 9.4 thousand hectares. As regards organic livestock farming, the largest number of sheep was farmed organically in 2016, as much as 50.5 thousand head, while in 2013, this number amounted to only 19 thousand. The largest number of organic sheep was farmed in the County of Lika-Senj, almost 12 thousand head, while the County of Sisak-Moslavina recorded the highest number of organically farmed cattle (two thousand head) and poultry (911 head).

Agricultural policy of the European Union and Croatia

Agriculture is influenced by a wide range of natural factors such as poor soil fertility, shortened farming season, inaccessible terrain, remote locations and lack of water.

Precisely because of the unpredictability of nature, the European union introduced the Common Agricultural Policy in 1962. The main goal of this policy is to help European farmers meet the needs of 500 million citizens, and its task is to enable them a decent life and to ensure a stable and safe supply of food at affordable prices for consumers. The June 2013 reform is focused on three priorities: viable food production, sustainable management of natural resources and balanced development of rural areas throughout the EU⁶.

The importance of agriculture is immense, and in the last 50 years, the EU Common Agricultural Policy has been the main driver of most of the European agriculture by recognising the important role of farmers and other landowners in landscape management and preservation.

⁵ Croatian Bureau of Statistics –

https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/DBHomepages/Poljoprivreda/Ekoloska%20poljoprivreda/EP_metodologija%20HR.htm

⁶ [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-13-631_hr.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-631_hr.htm)