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Typology of grazing livestock systems in the European Union



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This study builds a classification for grazing livestock holdings applicable to the European Farms Accountancy Data Network (FADN). It was undertaken in response to a request from the European Commission's Directorate of Agriculture which needed a typology to complement the classification by type of farming.

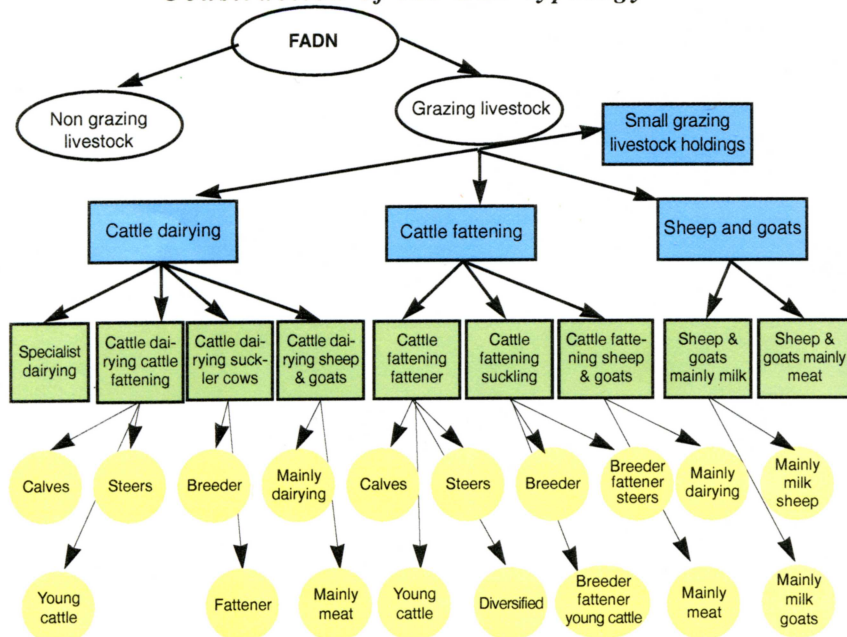
The principles of GLS typology

The GLS typology is based on expert opinion. The indicators and thresholds are common to all Member States. The holdings in the FADN population which have more than one grazing Livestock

Unit (LU) are considered as « Grazing livestock holdings ». Therefore GLS covers all the livestock and the forage areas in the FADN field. Among grazing livestock holdings several classes are identified

having regard to the combination of productions (milk, meat), the composition of the breeding herd (dairy cows, suckler cows) and the categories of animals (calves, young cattle, steers).

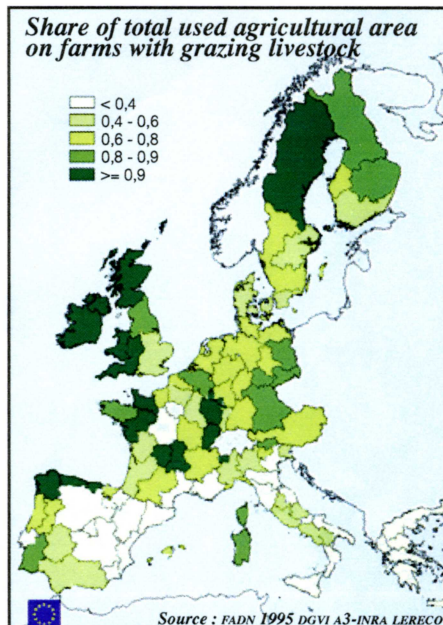
Construction of the GLS typology



Source : FADN EU 1995, DGVI-A3/INRA-LERECO, Nantes

Grazing livestock farms and land use

Two thirds of the European used agricultural lands are affected to grazing livestock farms. While in most countries (UK, Ireland, Belgium, Germany) the farming area of grazing livestock holdings is about three out of four, in the Mediterranean regions less than half of the above area only is occupied



Diversity of grazing livestock systems

The holdings with a population of between one and five grazing LU are considered as « Small grazing livestock holdings ». They are generally not very specialised farms. Holdings with more than five grazing LU are divided into three types of

production : « Cattle, dairying », « Cattle, fattening » and « Sheep and goats ». These holdings are thereafter divided into nine livestock systems and twenty technical systems. This typology can be supplemented by density levels and forage systems.

The GLS typology makes it possible to undertake a comparative study of the structures and economic results of holdings which have comparable systems. The GLS classification will be used by the European Commission to evaluate the microeconomic impact of the Common agricultural policy reform.