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**IMPACT OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL
PROPERTY STOCK OF THE STATE TREASURY
ON THE STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS
IN 1996-2010**

Abstract

As a result of “primary” distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury (1992-1996), the structure of agricultural holdings changed considerably as regards ownership, legal and organisational issues and area. However, these changes clearly deviated from the adopted assumptions. The crucial goal of speeding up ownership changes, thus improving the agrarian structure of the existing individual farms, was executed to a minor degree. What was established, though, was a substantial group of large-area farms of natural persons and private legal entities. Therefore, a trend to correct the structure was increasingly more clear in agricultural policy. The paper attempts to assess its effects. The analyses held show that the corrections failed to bring considerable effects. The impact of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury after 1996 was slight and gradually dropping.

The changes in the structure of holdings in the pre-accession period continued the trends noted in 1992-1996. Also in the post-accession period the operations of the Agency had no greater impact on extension of farms of natural persons of 1-100 ha, including farms of 20-100 ha, i.e. strong family farms. Changes in this group of farms took place primarily under the influence of liquidation of small-area farms, family sections of farms, private land trade and land rents from other entities than Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (now Agricultural Property Agency). Whereas the actions of the Agency, in particular based on the statutory provisions on counteracting excessive concentration of agricultural land of 2003 – which consisted in “secondary” distribution of land belonging to the State Treasury – had an important impact on the development of the group of farms of

natural persons of 100 ha and more, and its structure, especially on accelerating development in the group of 100-300 ha and hindering development in the groups of farms of 500 ha and more. These changes largely followed from adjusting farms of natural persons to the upper area limit of family farms set by the legislator at 300 ha of UAA.

Keywords: farms, ownership structure, legal and organisational structure, area structure, Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury, Agricultural Property Agency.

Introduction

As a result of “primary” distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury (1992-1996) the structure of farms changed significantly both as regards ownership, legal and organisational, area and production and economic issues. Key determinants of these changes are:

- significant reduction in the public sector and separation in the sector of agricultural holdings owned by local government;
- major growth in the private sector and its higher internal differentiation (dynamic development of the group of private farms owned by legal persons organised under other legal and organisational forms than cooperatives, primarily in the form of corporations, slight growth in the group of farms owned by natural persons, contraction in the number of cooperative farms);
- very strong growth in internal differentiation of the group of farms owned by natural persons (significant drop in the group of farms up to 1 ha of UAA, small drop in the group of 1-100 ha of UAA and clearly outlined internal polarisation of the group and rapid development of the group of large-area farms, i.e. above 100 ha of UAA);
- very strong regional differentiation of changes in the number and structure of farms, especially in the development of the group of large-area farms, both owned by natural and private persons;
- strong deteriorating trend in the level of use of the national agricultural land stock, especially for agricultural holdings remaining in the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury and intended for privatisation (Dzun, 2015a; Dzun, 2014b).

The above-presented changes clearly deviated from the assumptions taken in the agricultural policy. Vivid formation of the ownership, legal and organisational and area structure, largely contrary to the assumptions of the agricultural policy and expectations of individual farmers with their strong socio-political representation, led to increasingly clearer trend in the agricultural policy to correct the structure in the initially assumed direction.

The paper attempts to analyse the impact of the above-presented measures – especially in the field of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury (especially the “secondary” distribution) – on the changes in the

ownership, legal and organisational and area structure of farms, including also in regional terms, formed as a result of the “primary” distribution of the Property Stock.

The analysis was based, above all, on the data from the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury and the Agricultural Property Agency and data from the PSR 1996, PSR 2002, PSR 2010. It also used the results of research from various research centres, primarily the Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development at the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute.

Distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury as a factor of changes in the structure of farms

After 1996, just like in the previous period, agricultural policy was very important for the dynamics of changes in the structure of agricultural holdings, especially as regards trade in agricultural land and operations of the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury in the field of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. However, macroeconomic conditions of farm’s operations were an equally important factor. Considerable variability should be pointed out, upon analysis of these conditions in particular the differences between the pre- and post-accession period. Already in 1997, a certain improvement in these conditions was clear, but as of 1998 – until Poland’s accession to the EU – they decidedly deteriorated. Hence, the income situation of farmers was increasingly more difficult. Although after Poland’s accession to the EU little changed as regards profitability of agricultural production, covering Polish agriculture with the EU’s CAP evidently improved the income situation of farmers. In relation to a successive growth in subsidisation of agriculture and mainly direct payments, in the conditions of slight changes in the “price scissors”, the growth rate of household income of farmers was high until 2007. In subsequent years, given the dropping profitability of agricultural production, the income situation of agriculture, against other sectors of the economy, started to decline, and further growth in the income of farmers was essentially based only on the growth in the level of payments. Nonetheless, the tendency to modernise farms, both in the pre- and post-accession period, was strongly varied (more details in: Józwiak, 2012). This was caused mainly by a differentiated production capacity of farms but also varied qualifications of farmers, their entrepreneurship and innovativeness, location of farms as regards the sales market for agricultural products and provision of agriculture with factors of production, etc. In such conditions the demand for agricultural land grew, despite its raising price¹.

¹ The actual level of agricultural land prices at sales from the Property Stock and when sold under transactions between neighbours, after a minor increase in 1997-1999 dropped until 2002, and as of 2003 it started to grow rapidly and in 2010 it was by ca. 4 times higher than before accession to the EU. Similar dynamics was typical also of changes in the level of land rent expressed in quintals of wheat per 1 ha (see: A. Sikorska, 2008).

Amendment of the existing acts and new acts, and different guidelines and instructions from the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury from the beginning of the analysed period were aimed at better formation of the structure of farms after the period of the “primary” distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. This translated into stronger and stronger support for the development of individual farms and limited development of large-area farms, primarily of legal persons, based on lease of land from the Property Stock. At the same time, it was necessary to include in these actions rapid changes taking place in agriculture and farms. On the one hand, the minimum area limit for agricultural farms clearly moved up, thus enabling competition on the agricultural market, and, on the other, the upper area limit for family farms extended due to changes in production techniques and technologies and progressing process of stabilisation of these farms. This was clear already in 1995 in the adopted solutions concerning the preferences in buying land from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury and in particular in establishing the upper area limit for land purchased under preferential conditions to 300 ha or 500 ha, depending on the region in the country. Although these solutions were, above all, targeted at individual farmers, the provision – under the conditions of still low demand for land from typical individual farmers – benefited many leaseholders of large-area farms who purchased some part of leased land (especially economic centres), thus increasing their certainty of farming. The area structure of individual farms, especially from areas of the greatest agrarian fragmentation, was to be improved also by the programme of settlement in the areas of former state-owned farms, launched by the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury in 1996. But because farmers showed no interest in the programme, in 1999 the amendment to the Act on management of agricultural property of the State Treasury introduced an institution of property exchange. Farmers from voivodeships characterised by fragmented agrarian structure in exchange for transferring their farm to the state could receive a much larger property from the Property Stock (basically the proportion was 1 to 10) in a voivodeship of former state-owned farms. However, no such exchange had been executed since there were no farmers willing for the exchange and meeting the exchange criteria. Financial and organisational preferences for the settlers proved to be insufficient.

After Poland’s accession to the EU the legislator faced a problem of a clear growth in the demand for agricultural land by farmers, including also individual ones, especially in the areas characterised by a significant share of developing farms. However, it was necessary to take into account the fact that after the primary distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, based on lease and partly on purchase of land from the Property Stock, a large group of large-area farms was created which was characterised by higher production and economic efficiency. In the conflict of interest individual farmers, who have

a strong political and local representation, gradually marked their advantage. This was evident in 1999, when it became possible to organise limited tenders for purchase and lease of land from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. This provision was to eliminate competition in purchase of land by individual farmers to extend a farm and to create new farms. The upper area limit of a farm created by purchase or additional purchase of land was taken at the level of 100 ha of conversion UAA. However, the most efficient and simultaneously marked by the most profound effects for the leaseholders organised based on lease of agricultural land from the Property Stock, was the pressure put on the Agency to gradually increase the supply of land to extend agricultural holdings of individual farmers by non-renewal of lapsing lease contracts, conclusion of lease contracts for increasingly shorter terms, exclusion of some part of leased land from large-area leases. Thus created land stock, broadened the possibilities of later exclusion of land from lease along with a growth in demand from these farmers.

What was important for the dynamics of changes in the structure of farms and especially for the development of large-area farms was the Act of 11 April 2003 on the formation of agricultural system. Although the most acute problem of the Polish agriculture was and still is the progressing fragmentation of farms, the Act was primarily to counteract excessive concentration of agricultural property. Basically its aim is to limit the area of agricultural land in large-area farms based on lease of land from the State Treasury. This Act – although it did not introduce specific area norms for a farm – clearly indicated which farms will be covered by actions to counteract excessive concentration, by defining a family farm as a farm of up to 300 ha run by an individual farmer, and in conjunction with the constitutional provision on the protection of and support to individual family farms.

The possibilities of influencing the structure of agricultural farms by distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of State Treasury²

The possibilities of influencing the structure of farms by the Agricultural Property Stock of State Treasury the after 1996 clearly declined. The Property Stock still had 719 thousand ha of land for the so-called “primary” distribution, but these were undeveloped lands (ca. 500 thousand ha available for agricultural use) and lands newly acquired by the Property Stock. For “secondary” distribution there were the lands released from lease (termination of a contract, withdrawal from a contract on the request of the leaseholder or due to a fault of the leaseholder and based on exclusion clauses) and lands intended for privatisation of farms under temporary management, administration and in companies of the State Treasury.

² All data concerning the formation and distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, if not stated otherwise, were taken from the annual reports on the operation of the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (Agricultural Property Agency).

Inflow of new agricultural property to the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury after 1996 was minor. Agricultural property was primarily taken over from different state entities, but mostly only formally, because these entities, in general, retained the right to use the property under former conditions. They were only obliged to conclude, within 2 years, new use contracts with the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury. Moreover, the Property Stock was to take over agricultural land from individual farmers transferring their farms to the State Treasury under the Act on social insurance of individual farmers (for pensions). However, this source of the Property Stock increase basically “dried out” as a result of waiting for a raise in land value. The Agency also could, on the basis of the Act of 11 April 2003 on the formation of agricultural system, takeover as pre-emption (under specified conditions) agricultural land subject to ownership agricultural trade with the view to improve the area structure of family farms, but the Agency used the possibility to a slight degree. All in all, after 1996 and by the end of 2002 around 200 thousand ha was incorporated into the Property Stock, and after 2002 – ca. 40 thousand ha.

Whereas in the first years of the analysed period, especially due to a low and gradually deteriorating profitability of agricultural production, the agricultural land area released from lease grew (from 238 thousand ha in 1997 to 300 thousand ha in 1999). In the next years, the area of released land systematically dropped to 2008, when it fell to 90 thousand ha. In 2000-2003, this was linked to the expectations of better farming conditions after accession to the EU and in subsequent years, mainly, to introduction of direct payments. The rate of this drop was hindered by intensified release of land from leases for their buyout by leaseholders and on the request of the Agency based on the exclusion clauses. After 2008, a clear upward trend in the area of land released from lease was marked, mainly due to the operations of the Agency aimed at extension of the envelope of land to be distributed between individual farmers and increased determination of leaseholders to buyout all or some part of the leased lands.

When distributing the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, just like in the former periods, the Agency preferred mainly sales. Property, subject to lease, was property, for which there were no buyers or whose sale was hindered by unregulated ownership issues (above all, due to the claims of former owners). It also needs to be pointed out that dropping sales of property was to a somewhat extent influenced by employee-owned companies, benefiting from their pre-emptive right, to takeover for lease the liquidated farms of the State Treasury under administration. In 1997-2010, a total of 1584.6 thousand ha of land was sold (in 1997-2002 nearly 802 thousand ha of land, including 80% to natural persons, and in 2003-2010, respectively: 782.5 thousand ha and 86%). Therefore, there was a gradual growth in the share of natural persons in the sales of land in the analysed periods: from 73.8% at the end of 1996 to 77.8% at the end of 2002, and 80.9% at the end of 2010. This growth primarily resulted

from higher share in the area groups of 100 ha and more: from 52.6% in 1996 to 61.1% in 2002 and 62% in 2010, because in area groups of up to 100 ha the share in all of these periods was dominant and changed only slightly (respectively, from 91.3% to 92.8% and 92.6%). Natural persons purchased, by the end of 2010, ca. 103 thousand ha of land based on 149 contracts and thus 43% of all agricultural land sold in the area groups of over 500 ha.

Destining most of the lands released from lease to sales, caused rapid decrease in the area of leased land (in 1997-2002 by 724.7 thousand and in 2003-2010 by further 207.5 thousand ha). Consequently, if by the end of 1996 leased land in the structure of all sold and leased lands amounted to nearly 88% then by the end of 2002 – 64%, and by the end of 2010 – only 37%. Because in the land lease individual farmers were preferred, the structure of leased land was increasingly more dominated by natural persons. In 1992-1996, their share amounted to ca. 54%, while in 1997-2002 – 74%, and in 2003-2010 – ca. 81%. There are no data available on the share in leases of natural persons at the end of the analysed periods. However, given that after 1996 the size of lease was limited and land released from leases of smaller areas – higher, it can be assumed that the share slightly grew – mainly by a considerable increase in the share in area groups of over 100 ha (respectively, from 43% to 57% and 62%), since the growth in the area group of up to 100 ha was slight (respectively, 94%, 95% and 92%). However, it needs to be noted that the changes in the shares of area groups of leased parcels (farms) were linked, primarily, to buyout of some part of leased land and not to an increase or decrease in the area of farms of leaseholders. Basically a decrease in the area of farms of leaseholders was noted only due to intensified activity of the Agency in the field of realising from lease large-area leases, based on exclusion clauses or non-contractual pressures.

It should be also noted that some part of land from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury was transferred free of charge to the State Forests, territorial local units, Churches, agricultural chambers, state schools and universities, the Polish Academy of Sciences, foundations, etc. In 1997-2002, ca. 158 thousand ha was transferred, and in 2003-2010 – 117 thousand ha³. Without more in-depth research it is hard to determine its impact on the structure of farms. Based on the given data, it is even difficult to state what was the share of utilised agricultural area in the transferred land, because these were mainly forest areas, lands under water, build-up lands, etc. Apart from that, some part of the lands already in the beginning of the ownership changes was used by farms – e.g. farms of the institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences dealing with agricultural issues, farms of agricultural universities, farms of secondary

³ By the end of 2010, the Agency transferred free of charge nearly 152.2 thousand ha of land to the State Forests, 53.1 thousand ha to local government units, 84.7 thousand ha to legal persons of the Church, 47.6 thousand ha to different authorised institutions, organisations, foundations, etc., and also 23.8 thousand ha was made as a contribution in-kind to companies.

and vocational agricultural schools, farms of farm advisory centres, etc. Some part of these lands was leased to other entities, including natural persons. However, new farms were created in some part of them. These new farms are organised under different legal and organisational forms, for instance, Church farms, farms of various kind of foundations and public benefit organisations, etc.

The scale of impact of the distribution of the Property Stock on the structure of farms differed strongly in regions. It can be determined by the share of sold and leased lands in the total agricultural lands used by the private sector by the end of the analysed periods. The impact thus measured – as obvious – was very small in most of the central and south-eastern voivodeships and very large in the voivodeships of former state-owned farms, and it ranged from 2.2% in 2002 and 3.9% in 2010 in the Małopolskie Voivodeship, to, respectively, over 58% and 75% in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship (Table 1).

Of course, a separate problem is what share of the land indeed went to farms, including in particular to individual farms and what was its impact on the area structure. The Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury termed sales and lease of agricultural property of up to 100 ha to natural persons as distribution of the Property Stock for extension of the farms of individual farmers and of over 100 ha as creation of efficient farms of “entrepreneurs”. Going from this assumption the Agency stated that as a result of the “primary” distribution of the Property Stock, i.e. by the end of 1996, ca. 220 thousand of individual farms extended their area by purchase or lease of lands from the Property Stock (on average by 5 ha of UAA) and ca. 5.5 thousand of farms with an average area of ca. 500 ha were created (Pyrgies, 1998, p. 18). After 1996, the scale of the impact – also according to the Agency – was increasingly lower. At a conference summing up 10 years of ownership transformations in agriculture the President of the Agency stated that in the period (at the end of 2002) “... ca. 5 thousand farms were created having an average area of ca 450 ha, and ca. 265 thousand of individual farms increased their area by ca. 4 ha by purchasing additional assets or leasing assets” (Przekształcenia..., 2002, p. 10). After transformation of the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury into the Agricultural Property Agency and extension of its tasks as regards formation of the structure of farms (agricultural system of the country), it is difficult to find assessments concerning the impact of the distribution of the Property Stock (and other measures) on the structure of agricultural farms in the reports and statements of the management of the Agricultural Property Agency.

Table 1

Area of land of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury sold or leased by the end of the analysed periods in relation to the area of lands in the private sector by voivodships (thousand ha)

Voivodships	2002				2010			
	sale	lease	total	%	sale	lease	total	%
Dolnośląskie	117.7	287.7	405.4	40.5	189.7	209.5	399.2	43.7
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	61.2	138	199.2	16.7	95.9	105.7	201.6	18.9
Lubelskie	67.5	72	139.5	7.9	109.3	43.0	152.3	10.8
Lubuskie	79.2	164.4	243.6	57.1	154.7	122.6	277.3	66.6
Łódzkie	32.1	32.5	64.6	5.1	46.9	17.3	64.2	6.5
Małopolskie	10.4	10.2	20.6	2.2	16.3	9.5	25.8	3.9
Mazowieckie	44.9	36.1	81	3.2	61.9	27.3	89.2	4.5
Opolskie	32.7	135.3	168	30.7	71.8	91.3	163.1	32.5
Podkarpackie	56.8	39.8	96.6	11.0	86.7	27.2	113.9	17.4
Podlaskie	30.2	50.5	80.7	6.1	52.4	35.0	87.4	8.2
Pomorskie	153.2	181.2	334.4	36.2	220.8	120.3	341.1	46.0
Śląskie	16	49.6	65.6	10.8	31.5	29.5	61.0	13.5
Świętokrzyskie	15.2	16.6	31.8	4.5	28.7	9.7	38.4	7.0
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	238.7	347.4	586.1	51.3	413.1	199.3	612.4	63.5
Wielkopolskie	124.8	273.6	398.4	21.2	166.0	229.7	395.7	23.0
Zachodniopomorskie	191.4	368.9	560.3	57.8	332.0	309.9	641.9	74.9
Poland	1271.9	2203.8	3475.7	19.2	2077.7	1586.8	3664.5	24.5

Source: own calculation and compilation based on the reports of the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury and next the Agricultural Property Agency.

When assessing the impact of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury on extension of agricultural holdings, it needs to be, however, remembered that: (1) a large part of purchased and leased smaller-area parcels (especially up to 1 ha) was used for recreation and construction purposes and not for extension and creation of farms; (2) some part of land has already been leased before setting up the Property Stock (especially from the State Property Fund but also from other state bodies) and their lease or purchase was not recognised as extension of farms; (3) simple summing up of purchase and lease contracts overestimates the number of farmers extending their area, because one and the same farmer could conclude several contracts, or could be the buyer and the leaseholder at the same time, and the buyout of the leased part is not recog-

nised as farm extension. It needs to be also noted that distribution of the Property Stock constituted only part of agricultural land trade. In the discussed period, the trade was predominated by transactions between neighbours and the scale of these transactions was the greatest in the voivodeships of former state-owned farms. Land sale transactions by legal persons, thus mainly the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (Agricultural Property Agency), were on average less than 1/5 of all purchase and sales transactions (for more details see: Sikorska, 2008, pp. 11-12). Higher share of transactions of legal persons (primarily the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury) was in lease of agricultural land. In 1996, nearly 297 thousand of farms of natural persons leased land of 1 ha and more, including 103 thousand (35.8% of the total) from the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (GUS 2002, 2003, p. 166). Whereas in 2002 per 281 thousand of individual farmers (1 ha and more) leasing land, 80 thousand (28.5% of the total) leased it from the State Treasury, including 57 thousand (20.3%) of the total from the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (GUS, 1997, pp. 17-20).

Changes in the number of agricultural holdings and area of agricultural land used by them in 1996-2010 as per PSR data

After 1996, what was becoming clear was a trend – started already at the beginning of the 1990s – to withdraw from agricultural production and, consequently, to gradually liquidate some small farms. Only a part of the UAA from the liquidated farms was taken over by nearby farms. Most of the agricultural parcels (up to 1 ha) and major part of small-area farms was converted (most often by family sections) into allotments and building plots and settlements. Thus, a strong trend to decrease the overall number of farms continued (1990 – 3834.0; 1996 – 3066.5; 2002 – 2933.2 and 2010 – 2278.0 thousand), including agricultural holdings of 1 ha and more (respectively, 2143.0; 2046.5; 1956.1; 1563.0 thousand). It needs to be also noted that if in 1990-1996 the structure of liquidated farms had been decidedly dominated by farms of up to 1 ha then after 1996 the share of small farms of more than 1 ha increased. As a result, the area of agricultural land used by farms also decreased (1990 – 18.54, 1996 – 17.34, 2002 – 16.90 and 2010 – 15.33 million ha) along with its share in the national resource (geodetic surface) of agricultural land (respectively, 98.6%; 92.9%; 91.5% and 84.4%)⁴. However, the area of agricultural land off-farms increased quickly – from 1.32 million in 1996 to 1.56 million ha in 2002 and 2.37 million ha in 2010 (for more details see: Dzun, 2012; Dzun, 2014b). These changes were also, to some extent, the result of difficulties and uncertainties in distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. Factors that need to be indicated at this point, include sales of a large number of small agricultural

⁴ The area of agricultural land by definition from before 2002, i.e. excluding land under buildings, roads, trenches, and covered by water.

plots from the Property Stock, most of which was intended for allotments or building plots instead of creation or extension of farms, and leaving in the Property Stock a major part of UAA that was not distributed and not organised into farms (permanently set aside).

Changes in the ownership structure of farms

Distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury led, above all, to reduction in the sector of public farms, i.e. state-owned farms. At this point it needs to be noted that this took place also as a result of privatisation of state-owned farms and farms owned by local governments, staying in the hands of different units and bodies. However, after 1996 – thus after the end of the primary distribution of the Property Stock – the dynamics of reduction in public farms' sector decidedly weakened. Although in 1997-2002 the number of state-owned farms dropped by as much as 1,018 and in 2003-2010 by only 256, the dynamics of decreasing the UAA in this group of farms continued at a similar level (respectively, by 325.5 thousand ha and 364 thousand ha). In the first years of the analysed period what was, above all, liquidated were state-owned medium-sized and small-area farms, easier to privatise (mainly farms under temporary management and in administration) and in subsequent years very large-area farms, as well (including some part of State Treasury trading and commercial companies)⁵. Whereas the number of farms owned by local governments after the growth in the first analysed period by 268 and UAA by 10.4 thousand ha, in the next years dropped, respectively, by 90 farms and 2.7 thousand ha of UAA as a result of progressing privatisation (triggered, to some extent, by deteriorating financial situation of local governments and users of farms owned by local governments). Consequently, the share of the sector of public farms in the use of agricultural lands decreased from 7.2% in 1996 to 5.5% in 2002 and 3.7% in 2010. This did not cause major changes in the structure of farms from the sector by area groups. In 2010, just like in 1996, over 3/4 of agricultural land from the sector was used by farms from the area group of 1000 ha and more (Table 2).

Considerable limitation of the public sector (in 1997-2002 by 315.1 thousand ha and in 2003-2010 by 366.7 thousand ha) did not cause extension of the sector of private farms. For the farms of the sector, despite inflow of lands from privatised public farms, UAA not only failed to grow but even significantly dropped: in 1997-2002 by 133.6 thousand ha and in 2003-2010 by as much as 1029.6 thousand ha (Table 2). Nonetheless, the share of the private sector in the use of agricultural land of all farms increased slightly (from 92.8% in 1996 to 96.3% in 2010). This, primarily, resulted from the previously indicated trend to liquidate

⁵ In March and April 2003, the Agricultural Property Agency has transferred to the Ministry of the Treasury all farms intended for privatisation (commercial partnerships and, above all, commercial companies of the State Treasury). Only crop and livestock companies remained in the Agency (58 companies).

farms, especially small ones, and outflow of agricultural land to the statistical item “agricultural land not forming farms”. Private farms in the Podlaskie, Lubelskie, Świętokrzyskie and Śląskie Voivodeships had the greatest share in the use of agricultural land, as much as 99%, and it was only slightly lower in the Łódzkie and Małopolskie Voivodeships, while decidedly lower, only 90%, in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship and it was within the range of 91-92%, in Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Pomorskie and Lubuskie Voivodeships.

Table 2

Farms by forms of ownership in 1996-2010

Farms	Public			Private		
	1996	2002	2010	1996	2002	2010
Total number	2,016	1,266	920	3,064.5	2,928.6	2,276.7
- including 1 ha and more	1,960	1,240	902	2,044.8	1,954.9	1,561.7
UAA in total in thousand ha	1,249.1	933.5	566.9	16,099.2	15,965.7	14,936.1
- including 1 ha and more	1,249.1	933.5	566.9	15,719.4	15,569.2	14,679.8
UAA structure by area groups for farms of 1 ha and more (% of total UAA of a given group)						
1-10	0.13	0.10	0.12	41.76	37.22	32.0
10-100	1.98	2.01	2.64	42.00	46.18	48.3
100-200	2.66	2.46	2.66	1.74	2.81	5.0
200-300	2.84	2.57	3.23	1.35	1.59	2.7
300-500	5.60	4.65	5.02	2.89	2.98	3.4
500-1,000	12.56	7.57	8.92	5.06	4.38	4.0
1000 and more	74.23	80.63	77.41	5.20	4.84	4.7

Source: own calculations and comparisons based on published and unpublished data of PSR 1996, PSR 2002 and PSR 2010.

Whereas in the private sector, because of the impact of market economy, on the one hand, and policy of limiting the scale of agricultural land concentration at private farms based on land lease from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, on the other, there were major changes in the area structure of farms. First of all, there was a drop in the share of use of agricultural land by farms from the extreme area groups 1-10 ha (from nearly 42% in 1996 to 32% in 2010) and 500 ha and more (respectively, from 10.3% to 8.7%). The share of all other area groups increased, though – the most in the group of 100-200 ha (from 1.35% to 5.0%) and group of 200-300 (from 1.35% to 2.7%) – largely due to the division of farms from the area groups of 500 ha and more (Table 2).

Structural changes in the sector of private farms

The changes presented in the sector of private farms were characterised by large differentiation depending on their basic legal and organisational forms, i.e. farms of natural persons and farms of legal persons (Table 3).

Table 3

Changes in the sector of private farms by basic legal and organisational forms of agricultural holdings in 1996-2010

Farms		1996	2002	2010	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996
Private	number	3,064,519.0	2,931,962.0	2,276,693.0	95.7	77.7	74.3
	thousand ha of UAA	16,099.3	15,965.7	14,936.1	99.2	93.6	92.8
- of natural persons	number	3,058,677.0	2,928,578.0	2,273,284.0	95.7	77.6	74.3
	thousand ha of UAA	14,639.1	14,858.4	13,660.4	101.5	91.9	93.3
- of private persons including:	number	4,387.0	3,384.0	3,409.0	77.1	100.7	77.7
	thousand ha of UAA	1,460.2	1,107.3	1,275.7	75.8	115.2	87.4
- cooperatives of agricultural production	number	2,467.0	1,238.0	837.0	50.2	67.6	33.9
	thousand ha of UAA	501.6	323.9	248.7	64.6	76.8	49.6
- new legal and organisational forms ^a	number	1,920	2,137	2,572	111.3	120.4	134.0
	thousand ha of UAA	958.2	783.3	1027	81.7	131.1	107.2

^a Farms created as a result of system changes, mainly based on distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. These area mainly farms organised in the form of corporations (mainly z o.o. – limited liability) of national and foreign ownership and farms of different units and institutions, including Church farms.

Source: as in Table 2.

Changes in the group of private farms of legal persons

As a result of the “primary” distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, in the group of private farms of legal persons, apart from the long-time cooperatives of agricultural production (Polish: *Spółdzielnie Produkcji Rolnej, SPR*), 1920 farms were created from scratch, which differed as regards ownership (national, foreign or mixed ownership), legal and organisational issues (farms having legal personality – for instance commercial partnerships, and farms of different units and institutions not having legal personality) and area (from very small farms to farms having an area of several thousand ha). These farms used 958.2 thousand ha of UAA. Both in the pre-

and post-accession periods the number of these farms visibly grew. This was the effect of divisions of farms, and establishment of new and, to a small extent, liquidation of formerly existing farms. If it comes to the area of agricultural land under their use, then in the pre-accession period it clearly decreased. To this contributed the operations of the Agency, which withdrew some part of leased land from large-area farms (primarily national companies), sometimes the Agency also did not prolong contracts or prolonged them for a smaller area, etc., but also some agricultural holdings were liquidated most often from economic reasons. In later years, 2002-2010, although the Agricultural Property Agency (successor of the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury) not only upheld but even tightened the former policy on management of leased agricultural property of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, the number of this type of farms and area of agricultural land used by them increased considerably. However, this was mainly the effect of creation and registration of farms by different institutions having agricultural land that was not organised so far, i.e. not forming farms, to lay foundations to benefit from the mechanisms of the EU's CAP⁶. If these processes are eliminated, a thesis can be made that the group of national companies gradually decreases and the area structure de-concentrates and that the group of other national farms (excluding SPR) and farms of foreign and mixed ownership develop (Dzun, 2014c, pp. 103-109; Dzun, 2015b, pp. 149-162).

Changes in the group of farms of natural persons

Farms of natural persons already in 1996-2002, despite their number dropping by 4.3% (by 131.6 thousand), given the significant inflow of agricultural land not only from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury but also from liquidating cooperatives of agricultural production (loss of UAA in the SPR by nearly 178 thousand ha), to some extent strengthened their leading position in the structure of all farms. The area of arable land used by them increased by 219 thousand ha (by 1.5%) and their share in the overall use of UAA increased from 84.4% to 87.9%. But already in 2002-2010, the plummeting number of farms (by over 22%) in the conditions of small inflow of agricultural land from the Property Stock and liquidation SPR, caused nearly 8% drop in the UAA in their use. However, in the conditions of the above-mentioned significant reduction in the area of agricultural land used by the overall number of farms, there was a minimum growth in their former share (by 0.2% to 88.1%).

⁶ Farms of this type were mostly eliminated by introduction of a new definition of a farm. A research held by GUS on the structure of farms in 2013 according to this definition showed that the number of private legal farms in 2013 against 2010 decreased by 13%, and the area of UAA used by them by 15%.

Table 4

The dynamics of changes in the number of farms of natural persons with the area of 1 ha of UAA and more and agricultural land under their use by voivodeships in 1996-2010

Voivodeships	number			UAA			Share of UAA in % ^a		
	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	1996	2002	2010
Dolnośląskie	100.4	76.0	76.2	102.6	93.3	95.7	71.9	76.5	76.6
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	87.3	85.4	74.5	102.9	96.5	99.4	83.1	88.2	86.6
Lubelskie	90.5	85.0	76.9	98.1	92.1	90.3	91.3	93.2	95.3
Lubuskie	110.8	73.3	81.2	109.8	106.7	117.1	56.1	65.1	73.9
Łódzkie	95.8	81.5	78.0	99.6	87.7	87.4	95.7	96.7	96.8
Małopolskie	97.4	74.8	72.9	98.2	86.1	84.6	89.2	88.4	89.9
Mazowieckie	97.8	81.4	79.6	101.2	89.8	90.9	95.5	95.9	96.0
Opolskie	86.0	67.9	58.4	107.9	95.1	102.6	62.7	69.2	71.1
Podkarpackie	96.0	73.0	70.1	94.9	86.2	81.8	87.3	84.9	85.3
Podlaskie	97.0	86.2	83.6	100.1	94.6	94.7	93.2	96.1	97.6
Pomorskie	101.1	79.5	80.4	107.8	90.2	97.3	73.8	79.5	77.3
Śląskie	99.8	69.9	69.8	105.0	90.7	95.3	77.8	80.1	87.0
Świętokrzyskie	93.0	82.1	76.4	94.6	88.6	83.8	92.1	94.7	95.8
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	96.6	85.3	82.5	100.1	98.1	98.2	72.5	78.4	82.2
Wielkopolskie	92.1	88.7	81.7	105.5	98.8	104.2	77.3	82.6	83.0
Zachodniopomorskie	105.6	76.2	80.5	106.1	93.9	99.7	58.9	65.9	65.6
Poland	95.6	79.8	76.3	101.4	92.7	94.0	82.2	85.6	86.5

^a Share in UAA of the overall number of farms.

Source: as in Table 2.

Of course, the presented changes were highly differentiated in respective regions⁷. Still in 1996-2002 in 11 voivodeships where larger transfer of land from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury to the private sector was possible, the agricultural land of farms of natural persons of 1 ha and more grew⁸ – the most in the Lubuskie – by 9.8%, Opolskie – by 7.9%, Pomorskie – by 7.8%. Whereas in 5 voivodeships, in which the inflow of lands from the Prop-

⁷ When interpreting the data given on the number of farms and UAA used by them what should be taken into account is the fact that grouping of farms by voivodeships is grouping by the place of residence of the user of a farm and not the seat of the farm.

⁸ Farms up to 1 ha are omitted, since changes in this group of farms would happen and happen under the impact of definitely different factors than in farms of 1 ha and more.

erty Stock was practically non-existent, a clear drop was noted, including a major drop in the Świętokrzyskie (by 5.4%) and Podkarpackie (by 5.1%) Voivodeships. In 2002-2010, the growth in UAA in the analysed farms was noted only in the Lubuskie Voivodeship (by 6.7%), in which the distribution of the Property Stock in the former periods was the slowest and continued after 2002 (Table 4). A relatively small drop (around 1-5%) was noted in voivodeships which had a favourable area structure of individual agricultural holdings and in which there still were some possibilities to supply land from the property Stock (by limiting lease to large-area farms). These were the following voivodeships: Wielkopolskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Opolskie. The area of land dropped the most – just like in the previous period – in the voivodeships characterised by the most fragmented area structure of farms (Małopolskie and Podkarpackie – 14% each, and Świętokrzyskie – over 11%) – Table 4.

In the analysed group of farms, under the impact of market economy mechanisms (including, above all, the EU's CAP mechanisms, but also the national agricultural policy regarding land trade) and the operations of the Agency in the field of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, there were clear dynamic changes in the area structure of farms (Table 5). In the pre-accession period there was a clear regress (decrease in the number of farms and land used by them) in the area groups of very small and small farms (up to 10 ha) and medium-sized farms (10-20 ha) (Table 5). The share of these farms dropped both in the structure of all farms and in the structure of used land. Whereas the groups of farms from medium-sized farms (20-30 ha) to the group of 1000 ha and more developed in this period. This development was especially rapid in the case of area groups of 50-100 ha and 100-200 ha and then in the group of 30-50 ha and 200-300 ha.

In the post-accession period, contrary to the pre-accession period, a small decrease was marked also in the area group of 20-30 ha (a decrease in the number and UAA, but an increase of the share of both the structure of farms and in the structure of UAA) and a clear drop was noted in the area group of over 500 ha. This reduction in and slowing down of development in the group of 300-500 ha were primarily a result of the above-indicated statutory definition of the upper area limit of an individual family farm at 300 ha of UAA and adoption of the package of measures to reduce over-concentration of UAA in large-area farms. This not only caused a reduction in the UAA leased from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury but also division of large-area farms for them not to exceed 300 ha (Table 5).

Table 5

Changes in the number of farms of natural persons with the area of 1 ha of UAA and more and agricultural land under their use by area groups in 1996-2010

Area groups in ha of UAA	Years			Change dynamics			Structure (%)		
	1996	2002	2010	2002/1996	2010/2002	2010/1996	1996	2002	2010
UAA of farms in thousand ha									
1 and more	14,259.4	14,461.8	13,404.2	101.4	92.7	94.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1-20	10,724.6	9,443.6	7,778.4	88.1	82.4	72.5	75.2	65.3	58.0
20-100	2,409.7	3,508.1	3,959.3	145.6	112.9	164.3	16.9	24.3	29.5
1-100	13,134.3	12,951.7	11,737.7	98.6	90.6	89.4	92.1	89.6	87.6
100 and more	1,125.1	1,510.1	1,666.5	134.2	110.4	148.1	7.9	10.4	12.4
100-300	346.9	583.5	1,009.9	168.2	173.1	291.1	2.4	4.0	7.5
1-300	13,481.2	13,535.2	12,747.6	100.4	94.2	94.6	94.5	93.6	95.1
300 and more	778.2	926.6	656.6	119.1	70.9	84.4	5.5	6.4	4.9
Number of farms									
1 and more	2,041,380	1,951,726	1,558,413	95.6	79.8	76.3	100	100	100
1-20	1,957,229	1,839,113	1,437,237	94.0	78.1	73.4	95.88	94.23	92.22
20-100	80,787	107,489	113,601	133.1	105.7	140.6	3.96	5.51	7.29
1-100	2,038,016	1,946,602	1,550,838	95.5	79.7	76.1	99.84	99.74	99.51
100 and more	3,364	5,124	7,575	152.3	147.8	225.2	0.16	0.26	0.49
100-300	2,121	3,686	6,398	173.8	173.6	301.7	0.10	0.19	0.41
1-300	2,040,137	1,950,288	1,557,236	95.6	79.8	76.3	99.94	99.93	99.92
300 and more	1,243	1,438	1,177	115.7	81.8	94.7	0.06	0.07	0.08

Source: as in Table 2.

In 1996, the commonly adopted upper area limit for an individual family farm at 100 ha was exceeded by nearly 3.4 thousand farms of natural persons using 1125 thousand ha of UAA, created mostly as a result of primary distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. The average area of a farm in this group was 331 ha of UAA. This group, in the period by 2010, decidedly developed (growth in number from 7.6 thousand and UAA to 1666.5 thousand ha). However, due to a decidedly faster development of area groups of 100-300 ha and with measures to counteract over-concentration of UAA at the largest area farms, the average size of a farm in this group dropped to 214 ha of UAA. Beyond the limits of 300 ha in 1996 there were 1243 farms of natural persons using 778.2 thousand ha. In 1996-2002, the group of these farms showed a growth (to 1438 and UAA to 926.6 thousand ha, and the share in land use from 5.5% to 6.4%). However, after adoption of the Act on the formation of agricultural system this group started to decrease (drop, respectively, to 1177

and UAA to 656.6 thousand ha and share to 6.4%). The average area of a farm in this group at 626 ha in 1996, after a slight increase to 644 ha in 2002, dropped to 558 ha in 2010. However, it needs to be noted that this followed from a major decrease in area groups of 500-1000 ha (from 515 to 330, and UAA from 351.5 to 219.1 thousand ha) and 1000 ha and more (from 177 to 66 and from 283.9 thousand ha to 144.7 thousand ha). In the group of 300-500 ha, there was only a decisive stop in its development.

Changes in the area structure of the analysed farms (above 1 ha of UAA) were very strongly differentiated in regional terms. In the voivodeships characterised by fragmented area structure and very small Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, i.e. where the improvement in the structure was based primarily on private land trade, in the pre-accession period the area growth was evident already from the area group of 10-15 ha (Małopolskie, Podkarpackie and Świętokrzyskie) and in area group of 15-20 ha (Łódzkie, Śląskie), while in the voivodeship of decidedly better agrarian structure and, in general, having at their disposal a large Property Stock only from the area group of 30-50 ha (Lubuskie, Pomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Zachodniopomorskie). But in all voivodeships there was a clear dynamic growth in the area group of 50-100 ha and 100 ha and more – the largest in the voivodeships with a high share of commercial medium-sized farms (Mazowieckie⁹, Podlaskie, Lubelskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie) and much lower in the voivodeships with a very large Property Stock (Zachodniopomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Lubuskie). At the same time, also the share in the structure of use of agricultural land of the smallest agricultural holdings of 1-2 ha of UAA grew nearly everywhere (except for Opolskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Wielkopolskie and Śląskie Voivodeships), and in half of 2-3 ha farms as well. However, it needs to be noted that the number of the smallest area farms increased to the largest extent in the voivodeships characterised by relatively the largest supply of land from the Property Stock. There also the increased share in the structure of land use covered not only farms of 1-3 ha, but even of 3-5 ha (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Lubuskie, Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie) and 5-7 ha (Lubuskie and Zachodniopomorskie).

Whereas in the post-accession period in all voivodeships there was a clearly marked downward trend in the number of small-area farms. A growth in number and area of farms in the voivodeships of the most fragmented agrarian structure (Podkarpackie, Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie, Śląskie) started in area group of 15-20 ha, in voivodeships with slightly more favourable structure (Podlaskie, Lubelskie, Łódzkie, Opolskie) from 20-30 ha, in voivodeships with a beneficial structure from 30-50 ha (Dolnośląskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Lubuskie, Wielkopolskie). The group of 50-100 ha developed everywhere,

⁹ In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship an additional factor of a significant growth in this group of farms was purchase or lease of farms by residents of the voivodeship in a voivodeship with significant Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury, e.g. Warmińsko-Mazurskie.

although with a decidedly lower dynamics than in the pre-accession period. This was influenced by slowing down of the private land trade due to area subsidies and expected growth in land prices and depletion of the Property Stock. Decidedly the highest dynamics of growth in this area group was in the voivodeships of the least favourable agrarian structure (Podkarpackie, Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie) and the lowest in typical former state-owned farms (Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Dolnośląskie).

Table 6

The dynamics of changes in the group of farms of natural persons with the area of 100 ha of UAA and more by voivodeships in 1996-2010

Voivodeships	number			UAA			Share in UAA (%) ^a		
	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	1996	2002	2010
Dolnośląskie	129.1	145.8	188.2	116.4	99.2	115.4	20.7	23.5	25.0
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	198.4	147.1	291.8	175.5	108.1	189.7	6.4	10.9	12.2
Lubelskie	202.1	164.9	333.3	168.1	112.0	188.2	2.3	3.9	4.7
Lubuskie	156.5	165.2	258.5	133.9	134.2	179.7	21.6	26.4	33.2
Łódzkie	143.4	127.7	183.1	163.0	97.0	158.0	1.8	2.9	3.2
Małopolskie	218.5	172.9	377.8	191.3	352.4	674.2	0.9	1.7	7.1
Mazowieckie	229.3	150.2	344.4	232.2	106.4	247.0	1.8	4.1	4.9
Opolskie	235.7	166.7	392.9	234.6	119.4	280.2	6.6	14.2	17.9
Podkarpackie	102.8	177.3	182.2	86.9	229.2	199.3	3.7	3.4	9.0
Podlaskie	160.5	192.3	308.6	156.4	176.5	276.1	2.1	3.3	6.1
Pomorskie	152.9	122.1	186.6	140.3	89.9	126.2	16.3	21.2	21.1
Śląskie	138.2	157.7	218.0	131.9	165.5	218.3	5.7	7.2	13.1
Świętokrzyskie	148.4	126.1	187.1	107.2	146.5	157.1	1.2	1.4	2.3
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	119.7	144.1	172.4	105.8	107.0	113.2	21.8	23.0	25.1
Wielkopolskie	174.9	147.6	258.2	153.8	103.0	158.3	8.8	12.8	13.3
Zachodniopomorskie	141.3	142.3	201.1	113.9	92.4	105.3	34.5	37.1	36.5
Poland	152.3	147.8	225.2	134.2	110.3	148.1	7.9	10.4	12.4

^a Share in the total area of farms of natural persons of 1 ha of UAA and more.

Source: as in Table 2.

The development of the group of farms of 100 ha and more requires a separate discussion. In 1992-1996, the group developed very dynamically and very vividly. Based on the “primary” distribution of the Property Stock most of such agricultural holdings was created in the voivodeships of the largest area of the Property Stock: Zachodniopomorskie – 555, Warmińsko-Mazurskie – 529 and

Dolnośląskie – 484, and least in those with a fragmented agrarian structure and little Property Stock to be distributed: Małopolskie – 27 and Świętokrzyskie – 31. In 1996-2002 the trend was maintained in all voivodeships (Table 6). The most dynamic was the growth in the part of voivodeships, where the growth rate of the group was slight by 1996. Whereas in the remaining voivodeships, where the group of farms in the period of the “primary” distribution of the Property Stock developed very quickly, the development was the least dynamic. In these voivodeships the changes were less predetermined by the inflow of new farms from outside than by internal transformations of the group (divisions of farms, reduction in the area of leased land, sales of land, etc.), following primarily from the premises of purchase or lease of lands from the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury. In 2002-2010, the analysed area group clearly expanded, especially as regards the number (growth by 48% – to nearly 7.6 thousand farms and share in the structure from 0.3% to 0.5%), and to a lesser extent as regards the UAA (growth by 10.3% to 1666.4 thousand ha and share in the analysed group from 10.4% to 12.4%). The dynamics of these changes was very strongly differentiated in the regions: the most dynamic development was at places where the group was still the least developed, i.e. in the voivodeships of small Property Stock (Małopolskie, Podkarpackie, Śląskie, Świętokrzyskie) and relatively less dynamically in the voivodeships of former state-owned farms (Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Dolnośląskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie). In some part of the area of former state-owned farms even the UAA decreased. In the analysed group of farms over 100 ha of UAA, everywhere – apart from the Małopolskie and Podkarpackie Voivodeships – there was a significant reduction in the average area of a farm. What seems especially interesting, voivodeships of fragmented agrarian structure (Małopolskie – 417 ha, Śląskie – 266 ha, Podkarpackie – 272 ha) and dominated by typical individual farms (Podlaskie – 255 ha) were characterised by very high average areas of agricultural holdings in this group by the end of the analysed period (2010)¹⁰, while in typical former state-owned farms the highest averages were lower: Warmińsko-Mazurskie – 239 ha, Lubuskie – 222 ha, Pomorskie – 215 ha.

In the group of farms of 100 ha and more, especially interesting regional differentiation of changes in the post-accession period was manifested in the group of 300 ha and more, thus exceeding the current area standard for individual family farms. In the voivodeships bearing typical features of a former state-owned farms, where development of this group was very dynamic by 2002, there was a clear decreasing trend in both the number of farms and UAA of these farms. Lubuskie Voivodeship was an exception in this regards, where due to continuation of an unfinished process of distribution of the Property Stock, its growth

¹⁰ It should be noted that the users of these farms, although they have a seat in the given voivodeship, could have farms or parts thereof in other voivodeships.

to some extent was visible. Whereas in the voivodeships, where the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury was small, and the former development of the group of farms was rather slow these changes were very different. In some part of them, there was a dynamic development of the group (Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, Śląskie), for some part of the group with simultaneous decrease of the already small number of the farms there was a major growth in agricultural lands they used (Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie), and for some part there was a clear drop in both the number of such farms and their UAA (Łódzkie, Mazowieckie, Lubelskie).

Changes in the group of individual family farms¹¹

When taking 100 ha of UAA as the upper area limit for individual family farms, it can be stated that in the analysed period the number of such farms and area of agricultural land used by them clearly dropped – relatively slowly in 1996-2002 (respectively, by 4.5% and 1.4%), thus even slightly slower than in 1990-1996 (by 4.7% and 1.9%) and much faster than in 2002-2010 (by 20.3% and 9.4%), and in total in 1996-2010, respectively, by 23.9% and 10.6%. As a result of decidedly faster decrease in the number of farms than the number of UAA, the average area of farms increased from 6.4 ha in 1996 to 6.7 ha in 2002 and 7.6 ha in 2010. The presented situation was the effect of a clear regress in the area groups of 1-20 ha (in the entire time of decreasing the number of farms by 26.6% and UAA used by them by 27.5%) and parallel development of area groups of 20-100 ha (respectively, by 40.6% and 64.3%). However, it needs to be noted that the share of the developing group of farms (20-100 ha), despite dynamic growth, was still slight, both in the structure of the total number of farms of 1 ha of UAA and more (growth from 4% to 7.3%) as well as in the structure of the total utilised agricultural area (growth from 16.9% to 29.5%).

The share of the group of farms (1-100 ha) in the agricultural land used by farms of natural persons per 1 ha and more was decidedly predominating, although slightly lower in the entire country (89.6% in 2002 and 87.6% in 2010). In 2002-2010, it decreased in all voivodeships except for the Zachodniopomorskie (intensified actions linked to the Act on land de-concentration), and to the highest degree in the Małopolskie, Podkarpackie and Śląskie (characterised by major dynamics of exclusion of UAA of small-area farms from use by farms) and Lubuskie (significant dynamics of development of farms in area groups of over 100 ha). In 2010, its lowest level was noted in the areas of typical former state-owned farms: in Zachodniopomorskie (63.5%), Lubuskie (66.8%), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (74.9%) and Pomorskie (78.9%) Voivodeships, while it

¹¹ There is no clear definition either of the category of “individual farm” or “individual family farm”. Before entry into force of the Act of 11.04.2003 defining the upper area limit of an individual farm at 300 ha, it was commonly agreed that the upper area limit in this group of farms is at 100 ha. The lower area limit is commonly accepted at 1 ha of UAA.

was the highest in Voivodeships of decidedly the lowest share of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury coming from liquidated state-owned farms and, at the same time, of “healthier” agrarian structure of individual farms: Świętokrzyskie (97.7%), Łódzkie (96.8%), Lubelskie (95.3%), Mazowieckie (95.1%), Podlaskie (93.9%) – Table 7.

Table 7

The dynamics of changes in the number of farms of natural persons with the area of 1-100 ha of UAA and agricultural land under their use by voivodeships in 1996-2010

Voivodeships	number			UAA			Share of UAA in % ^a		
	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	2002/ 1996	2010/ 2002	2010/ 1996	1996	2002	2010
Dolnośląskie	100.3	75.7	75.9	99.0	91.5	90.6	79.3	76.5	75.0
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	87.1	85.2	74.2	97.9	95.1	93.2	93.6	89.1	87.8
Lubelskie	90.5	85.0	76.9	96.4	91.3	88.0	97.7	96.1	95.3
Lubuskie	110.5	72.6	80.3	103.2	96.8	99.9	78.3	73.6	66.8
Łódzkie	95.7	81.5	78.1	98.5	87.4	86.1	98.2	97.1	96.8
Małopolskie	97.4	74.8	72.9	97.4	81.4	79.2	99.1	98.3	92.9
Mazowieckie	97.8	81.4	79.6	98.8	89.1	88.0	98.2	95.9	95.1
Opolskie	85.7	67.4	57.8	99.0	91.1	90.1	93.5	85.8	82.1
Podkarpackie	96.0	73.1	70.2	95.3	81.2	77.3	96.3	96.6	91.0
Podlaskie	96.9	86.1	83.4	98.9	91.8	90.9	97.9	96.7	93.9
Pomorskie	100.8	79.2	79.8	101.4	90.3	91.6	83.7	78.8	78.9
Śląskie	99.8	69.9	69.8	103.3	85.0	87.8	94.3	92.8	86.9
Świętokrzyskie	93.1	82.1	76.4	94.4	87.7	82.9	98.8	98.6	97.7
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	96.5	84.6	81.7	98.5	95.4	94.0	78.2	77.0	74.9
Wielkopolskie	91.8	88.6	81.4	100.8	98.2	99.0	91.2	87.2	86.7
Zachodniopomorskie	105.1	75.4	79.3	102.0	94.8	96.7	65.5	62.9	63.5
Poland	95.5	79.8	76.2	98.6	90.6	89.4	92.1	89.6	87.6

^a Share in the total area of farms of natural persons of 1 ha of UAA and more.

Source: as in Table 2.

However, a change in place and role of the group of individual farms (1-100 ha) is more explicitly defined by a change in its share in the agricultural land use in the entire group of farms. After a rather pronounced growth in 1990-1996 (from 72.6% to 75.7%) and small one in 1996-2002 (to 76.6%), in 2002-2010 there was a minor drop to 75.7%. Small changes concerned also voivodeships. After a slight growth of the share in nearly all voivodeships in 1996-2002, in ten of them in 2002-2010 there was its clear drop (the largest in the Małopolskie and Podkarpackie Voivodeships), while in six of them (Lubuskie, Lubelskie, Śląskie, Świętokrzyskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Zachodniopo-

morskie Voivodeships) there was a slight growth. Regional differences in the share of this group in the use of agricultural land changed only slightly not only in 1996-2010, but in the entire period, starting from the beginning of the distribution of the Property Stock. In 2010, still a decidedly lower share thus calculated was in the voivodeships, where at the beginning of system changes state-owned farms predominated (Zachodniopomorskie – 41.7%, Lubuskie – 49.4%, Dolnośląskie – 57.5%, Opolskie – 58.4%, Pomorskie – 60.9%, Warmińsko-Mazurskie – 61.6%), while it was the highest in typically peasant voivodeships, but of relatively better agrarian structure (Łódzkie – 93.7%, Świętokrzyskie – 93.6%, Podlaskie – 91.7%, Mazowieckie – 91.3%, Lubelskie – 90.8%). Whereas in the voivodeships dominated by individual farms characterised by strongly fragmented agrarian structure it was at a lower level: Śląskie – 75.6%, Podkarpackie – 77.6%, Małopolskie – 83.5% Voivodeships (at the beginning of system changes the share on this areas was over 90%). The differences as regards the average area of farm continued: 3.4 ha Małopolskie, 3.7 ha Podkarpackie to 15 ha Warmińsko-Mazurskie and 13.1 ha Zachodniopomorskie.

Changes in the group of individual family farms are quite different if in line with the act of 11.04.2003 it is assumed that the upper area limit for a family farm is at the level of 300 ha. This follows from the aforementioned very dynamic development in, both the pre- and post-accession period of the group of farms of 100-300 ha (over 3 times growth in the number and over 2.9 times growth in the UAA). As a result, the share of thus determined group of farms (1-300 ha) in 2010 in the entire group of farms of natural persons of 1 ha and more would amount to 99.2%, and in land use – 95.1%. In the structure of land use of the overall number of farms, starting from the beginning of system changes the share of the group would show a considerable growth: up to 80.1% in 2002 and 82.2% in 2010.

Conclusions

The presented analyses show that the impact of distribution of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State Treasury on the structure of farms after 1996 was decidedly less pronounced than in the period of the “primary” distribution of the Property Stock and declining. The impact continued to be predominating as regards changes only in the public and private sector in the part referring to farms of legal persons (apart from the group of cooperative farms). A decrease in the sector of public farms, especially of those belonging to the state, was, however, a result not only of privatisation of farms created by the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (as of 2003 Agricultural Property Agency), but also of privatisation of farms handed over from the Property Stock to the Ministry of the Treasury and privatisation of some part of farms of different types of institutions and state bodies. Whereas changes in the group of farms of private legal persons (apart from the group of cooperative farms) and mainly in

companies based on land lease from the Property Stock, took place decidedly under the impact of the “secondary” distribution of the Property Stock, especially the actions of the Agency linked to the execution of the concept of exclusion of land leased from the Property Stock by large-area farms and its allocation to improvement of the structure of individual farms. A definitely more difficult problem is the assessment of the scale of impact of the distribution of the Property Stock on the structure of farms of natural persons, because in this group – especially in the group of small and medium-sized farms – private land trade and land lease from other entities than the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury were very important. The impact of the “secondary” distribution of the Property Stock on the changes in the size and structure of the farm group of 1-100 ha was slight. In the group, apart from the farm group of 50-100 ha, the dominating impact on the structure of farms belonged to the private land trade, family sectors and land lease from other entities than the Agricultural Property Agency of the State Treasury (Agricultural Property Agency). Then the agricultural policy and measures of the Agency targeted at its implementation (through “secondary” distribution of land leased by this group of farms and part of land withdrawn from the national companies) significantly influenced the changes in the size and structure of farms of natural persons of over 100 ha of UAA. The group of these farms increased significantly in quantitative terms and slightly in area terms, primarily as a result of internal divisions (mostly to adjust to the upper area limit set by the legislator at 300 ha of UAA), and to a lesser extent by inflow of farms from lower area groups and by actual limitation of the largest area farms as a result of withdrawal of land from these farms by the Agency. As a result there was a clear dynamic development of farms in the group of 100-300 ha and an explicit drop in the farms of 500 ha and more. Thus, it can be stated that the measures taken by the Agency to increase land supply from the Property Stock to improve the area structure of the existing individual farms, including after 2003 based on statutory provisions on counteracting excessive concentration of land, failed to bring greater effects. At the same time, these measures – by intensified withdrawal of leased land of the Agricultural Property Stock of the State treasury from large-area farms and mainly from companies (including employee-owned companies), strongly abused the trust of leaseholders to the State and largely reduced the possibilities of use of the lease as a factor of improvement of the area structure of farms.

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WPŁYW ROZDYSPONOWANIA ZASOBU WŁASNOŚCI ROLNEJ SKARBU PAŃSTWA NA STRUKTURĘ GOSPODARSTW ROLNYCH W LATACH 1996-2010

Abstrakt

W rezultacie „pierwotnego” rozdysponowania Zasobu WRSP (lata 1992-1996), znaczącej zmianie uległa struktura gospodarstw pod względem własnościowym, prawno-organizacyjnym i obszarowym. Zmiany te wyraźnie odbiegały jednak od przyjętych założeń. Podstawowy cel przyspieszenia przemian własnościowych, a więc poprawa struktury agrarnej istniejących indywidualnych gospodarstw rolnych, został zrealizowany w niewielkim stopniu. Powstała natomiast znacząca grupa „wielkoobszarowych” gospodarstw osób fizycznych i prywatnych osób prawnych. W związku z tym w polityce rolnej coraz wyraźniej widoczna była tendencja do podejmowania działań zmierzających do korekty tej struktury. W opracowaniu podjęta została próba oceny efektów tych działań. Przeprowadzone analizy wskazują, że działania te nie przyniosły znaczących efektów. Wpływ rozdysponowania Zasobu na strukturę gospodarstw rolnych po 1996 r. był już niewielki i sukcesywnie malejący.

W okresie przedakcesyjnym zmiany w strukturze gospodarstw były kontynuacją tendencji widocznych w latach 1992-1996. Także w okresie poakcesyjnym działania Agencji nie miały większego wpływu na powiększanie gospodarstw osób fizycznych 1-100 ha, w tym gospodarstw 20-100 ha, a więc silnych gospodarstw rodzinnych. Zmiany w tej grupie gospodarstw zachodziły przede wszystkim pod wpływem likwidacji gospodarstw małych obszarowo, działów rodzinnych, prywatnego obrotu ziemią i dzierżaw od innych podmiotów niż AWRSP (ANR). Natomiast działania Agencji, w szczególności w oparciu o ustawowe zapisy w zakresie przeciwdziałania nadmiernej koncentracji gruntów rolnych z 2003 r., polegające na rozdysponowaniu „wtórnym” gruntów SP, miały znaczący wpływ na rozwój grupy gospodarstw osób fizycznych 100 ha i więcej i jej strukturę, zwłaszcza na przyspieszenie rozwoju grupy 100-300 ha i zahamowanie rozwoju grupy gospodarstw 500 ha i więcej. Zmiany te były w znacznej części efektem dostosowywania się gospodarstw osób fizycznych do górnej granicy obszarowej gospodarstw rodzinnych, określonej przez ustawodawcę na 300 ha UR.

Słowa kluczowe: gospodarstwa rolne, struktura własnościowa, struktura prawno-organizacyjna, struktura obszarowa, zasób ZWRSP, AWRSP, ANR.

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