

Benchmarking Gender Equality in Lithuanian Agriculture: From EU Commitments to Rural Reality

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

Gender equality has been embedded in the European Union's legal and policy framework for decades. The principle of equal pay was established in the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The 1996 European Commission Communication introduced gender mainstreaming across all EU policy areas. The EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 further emphasizes equal labor market participation, reduction of gender pay gaps, and improved work–life balance. In addition, the CAP 2023–2027 explicitly promotes gender equality and women's participation in farming.

Research aim: to benchmark the situation of women in Lithuanian agriculture against strategic commitments.

METHODOLOGY

Methods

Statistical analysis, comparative analysis, and benchmarking

Data sources

Eurostat (Agricultural Census 2020; Living Conditions and Welfare, 2016–2024);
European Institute for Gender Equality (Gender Equality Index 2024);
Lithuanian CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027

Analytical approach

Policy benchmarking using EU strategic documents as normative reference points

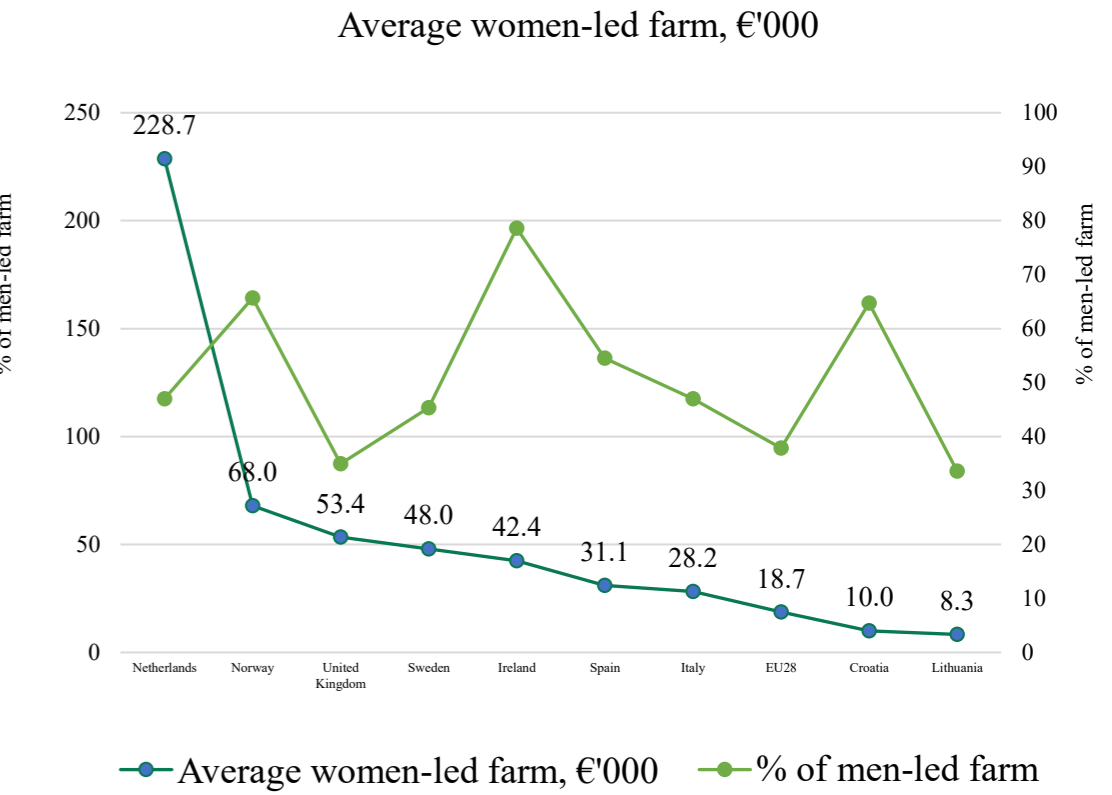
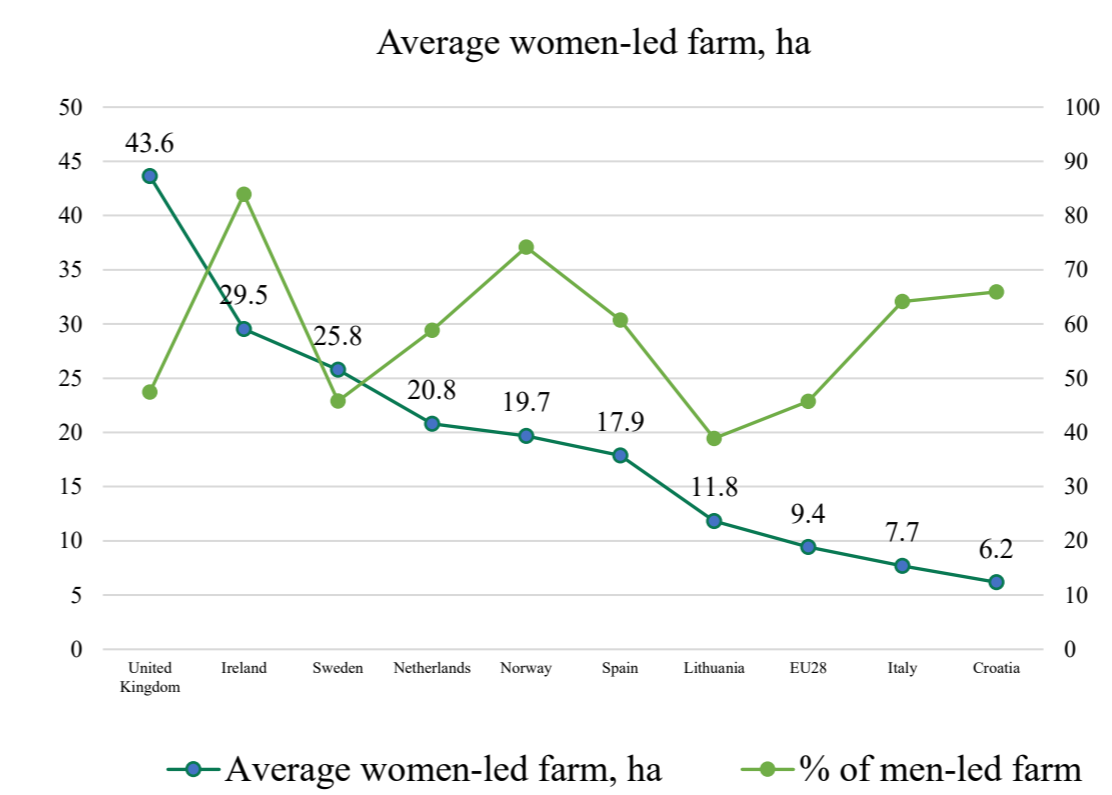
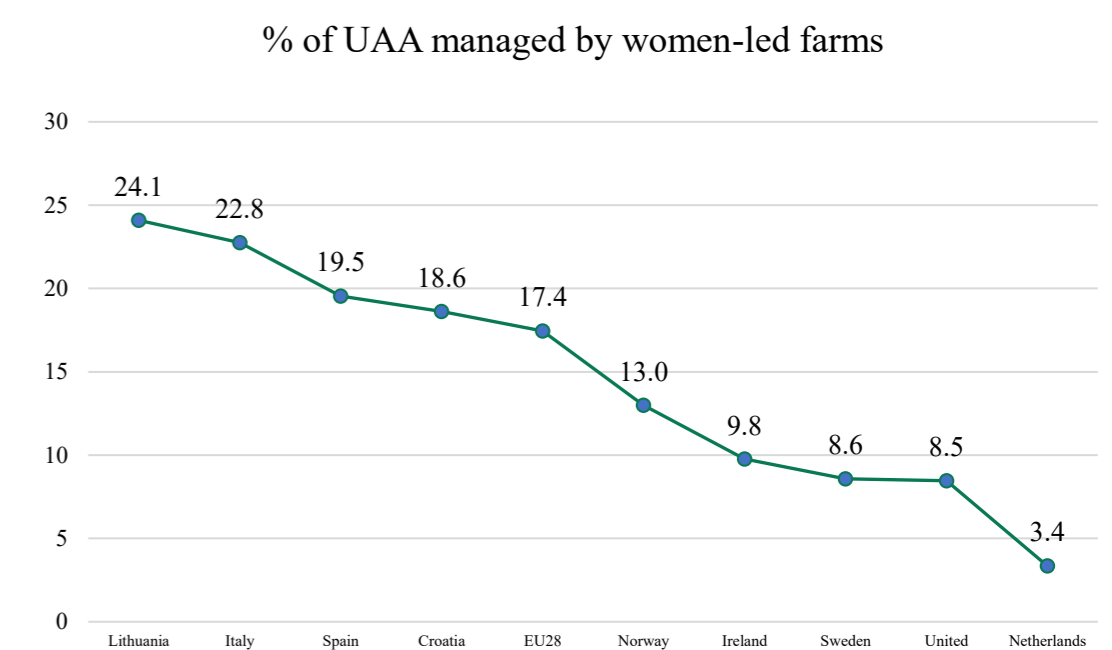
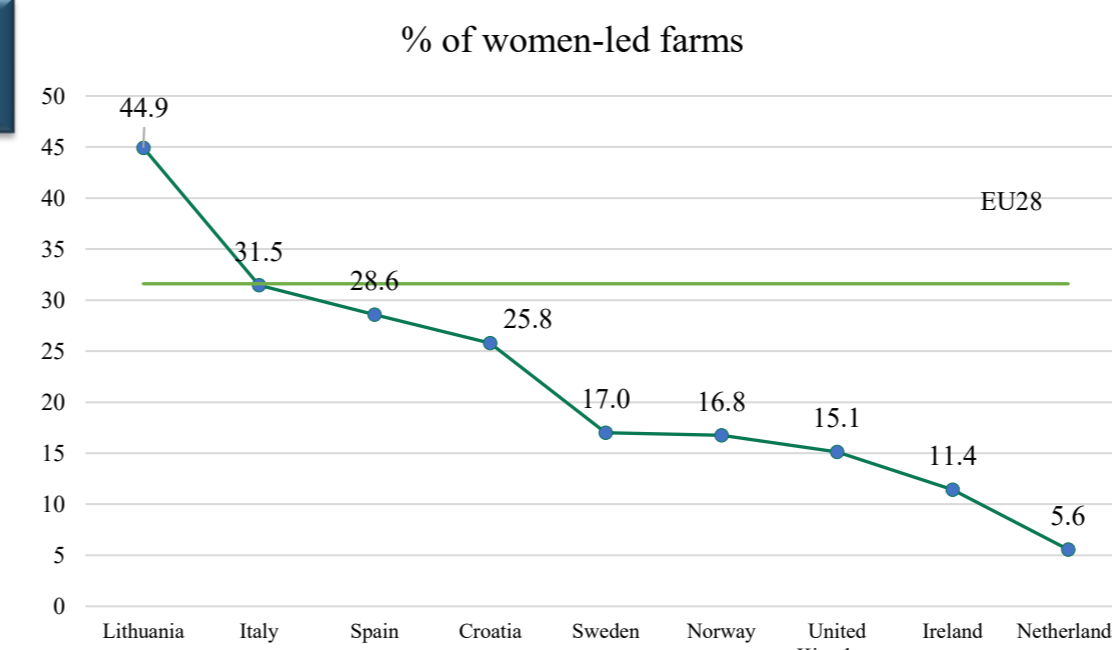
The analysis focuses on Lithuania, with results presented in comparison with selected European countries and the EU average. Alignment with EU gender equality objectives is assessed across three dimensions: economic equality, policy integration, and work–life balance.



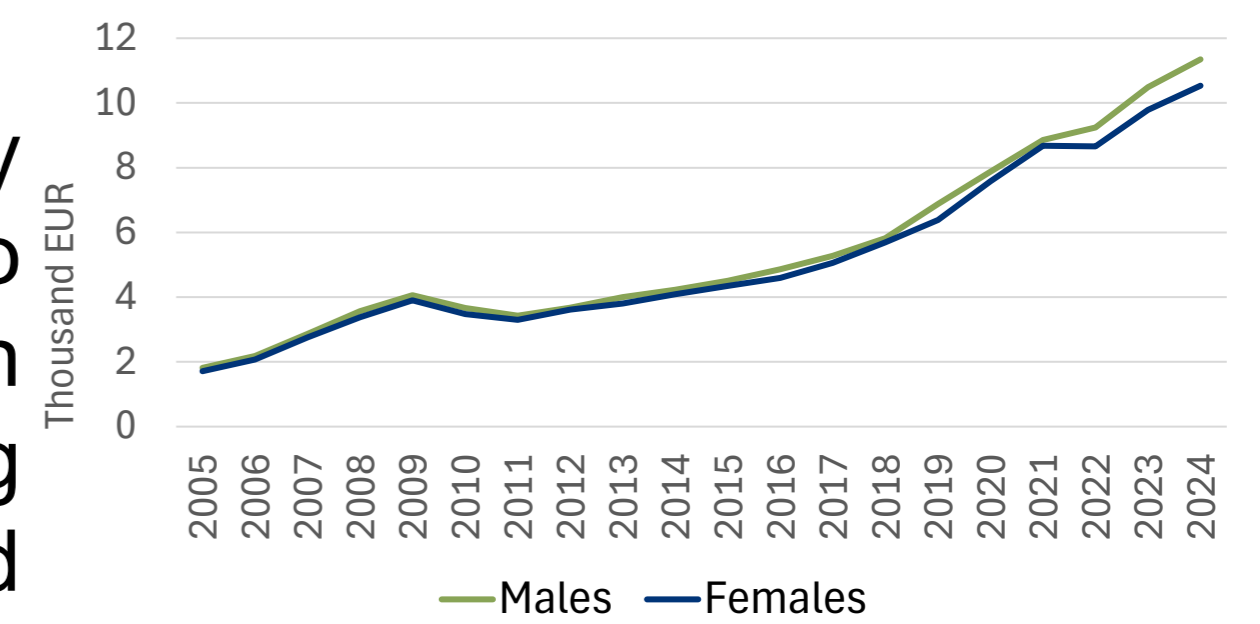
Analyzing and describing results

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Considerable variation exists across countries in the prevalence, size, and economic output of women-led farms. In Lithuania, a relatively high share of women farmers contrasts with their limited economic capacity.

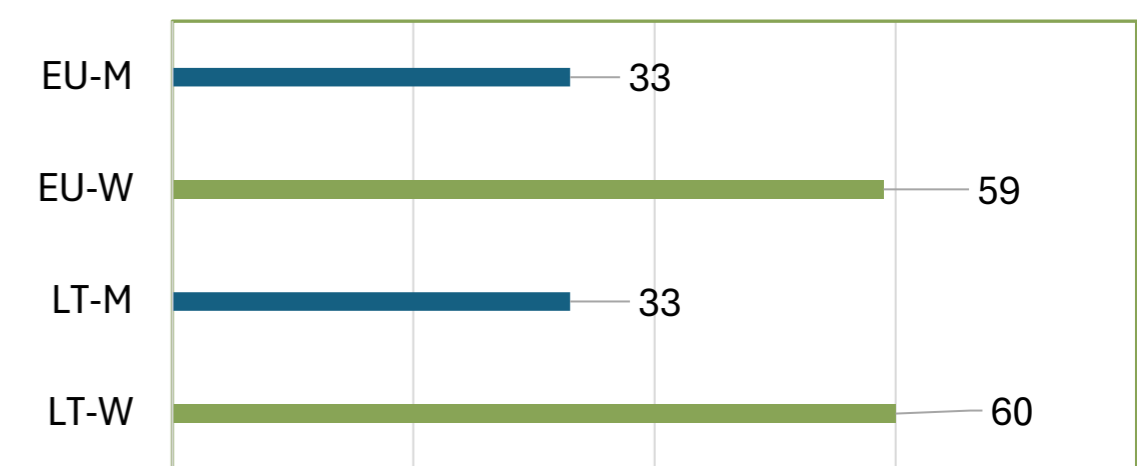


A persistent gender pay gap continues to disadvantage women in rural areas, remaining consistently lower and showing an increasing trend in recent years, thereby limiting their economic security and investment capacity in farming.

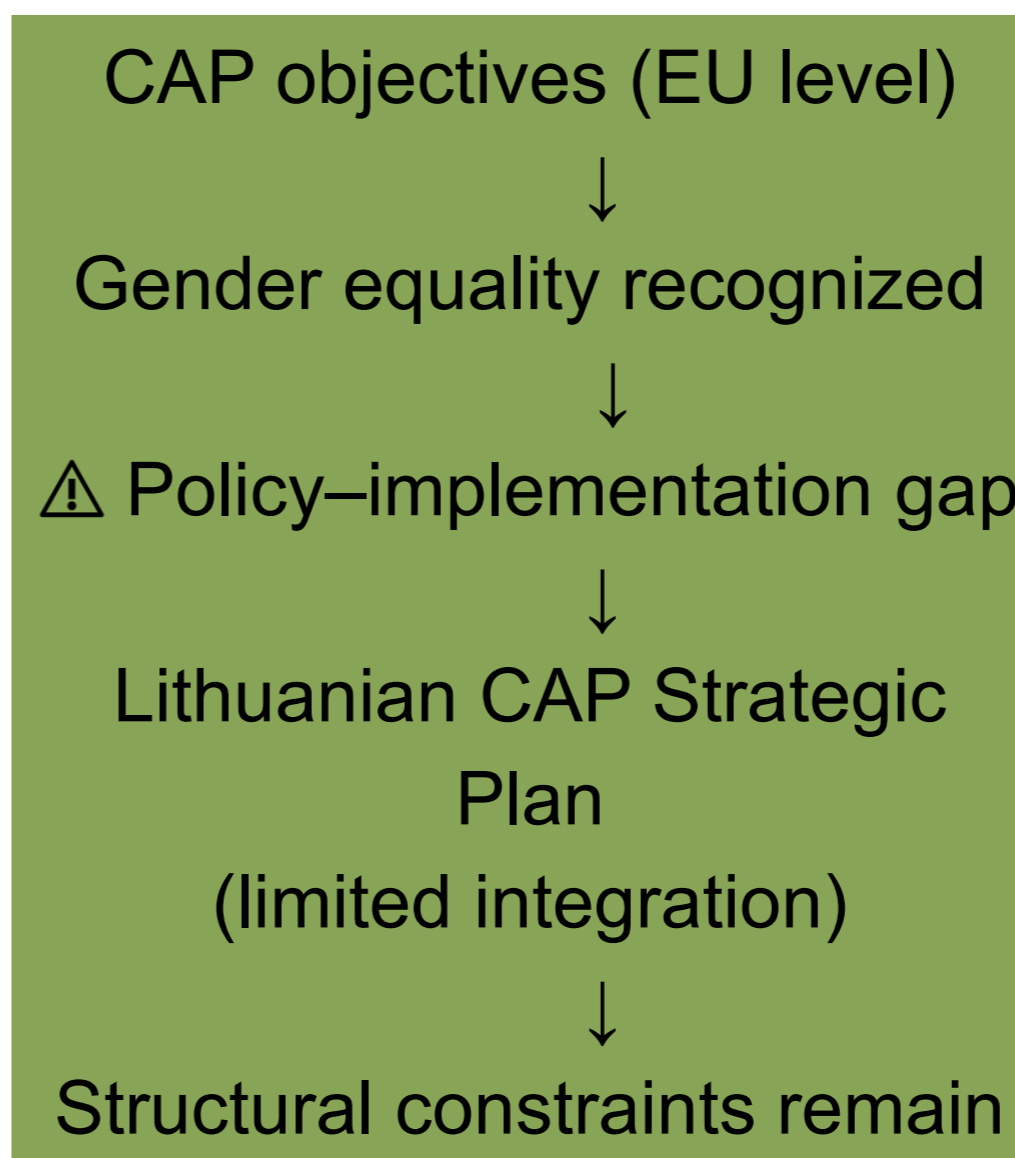


In 2024, women in Lithuania still carry a disproportionate share of daily care and housework responsibilities.

Housework chores every day (% , 16-74)



Although gender equality is recognized in CAP objectives, Lithuania's CAP Strategic Plan does not systematically address the structural constraints faced by women farmers.



CONCLUSION

The Lithuanian case demonstrates a clear implementation gap between EU gender equality commitments and rural realities, highlighting the need for gender-sensitive agricultural policy and targeted structural support.