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CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING DIMENSIONAL STRUCTURE OF SHEEP AND GOATS FARMS AT REGIONAL LEVEL

CREȚU DIANA¹, CHETROIU RODICA²

Abstract: *The paper presents dimensional structure of sheep and goats farms at national level, as well as a comparative analysis of it, conducted at the level of development regions. As of April 30, 2019, there were 338,371 sheep farms, of which 65% were in the category "below 10 heads", belonging to households. At regional level, dimensional structure indicates that, in all areas of the country, most sheep farms are in the category "below 10 heads", between 47% in the West Region and 72% in the South-East. In fact, in the west part of the country, the shares of larger farms are higher than in other areas. Most farms are located in the south-east part of the country, where most of them are in the category under 10 heads. At the same time, there were 134,069 goats farms, of which 83% were in "under 10 heads" category. At regional level, most goats farms are in this category, between 67% in Bucharest-Ilfov region and 91% in the southwest of the country. Also, the largest share of holdings over 50 heads are in Ilfov (11%). It seems that the proximity of the capital has stimulated the development of larger goat farms, whose products are easier to find in the market in Bucharest.*

Keywords: *dimensional structure, farms, sheep, goats, regions.*

JEL Classification: *Q12; Q19*

INTRODUCTION

The paper is part of the research results of the *ADER Project 24.1.2, Phase 2 - "Economic efficiency of sheep and goat farms of different sizes, located in different geographical regions and landforms"*, funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Research has shown that most sheep and goat farms are found in small size categories, respectively in households, where the resulting productions are used mainly for family consumption. This is the situation at both national and regional level.

In order to enter the economic circuit, it is necessary to increase the size of these holdings and their market orientation. Of course, the supply of dairy products and sheep meat is made by commercial farms of different sizes.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The studies were based on available statistical data, from official sources – Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and National Institute of Statistics, on the basis of which structural comparative analyzes of sheep and goat breeding sectors were performed, both nationally and regionally.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

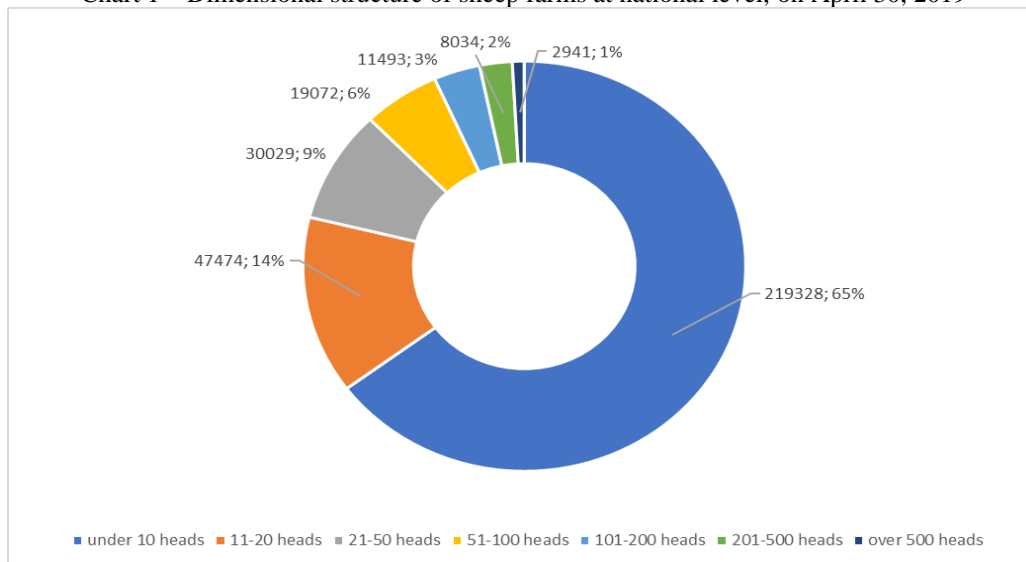
At national level, on April 30, 2019, there were 338,371 sheep farms, and in terms of their size, 65% (respectively 219,328 farms) were part of the category under 10 heads, meaning in households.

In the category 11-20 heads, there were 14% of holdings, and holdings with over 500 heads accounted for only 1% of the total (Chart 1).

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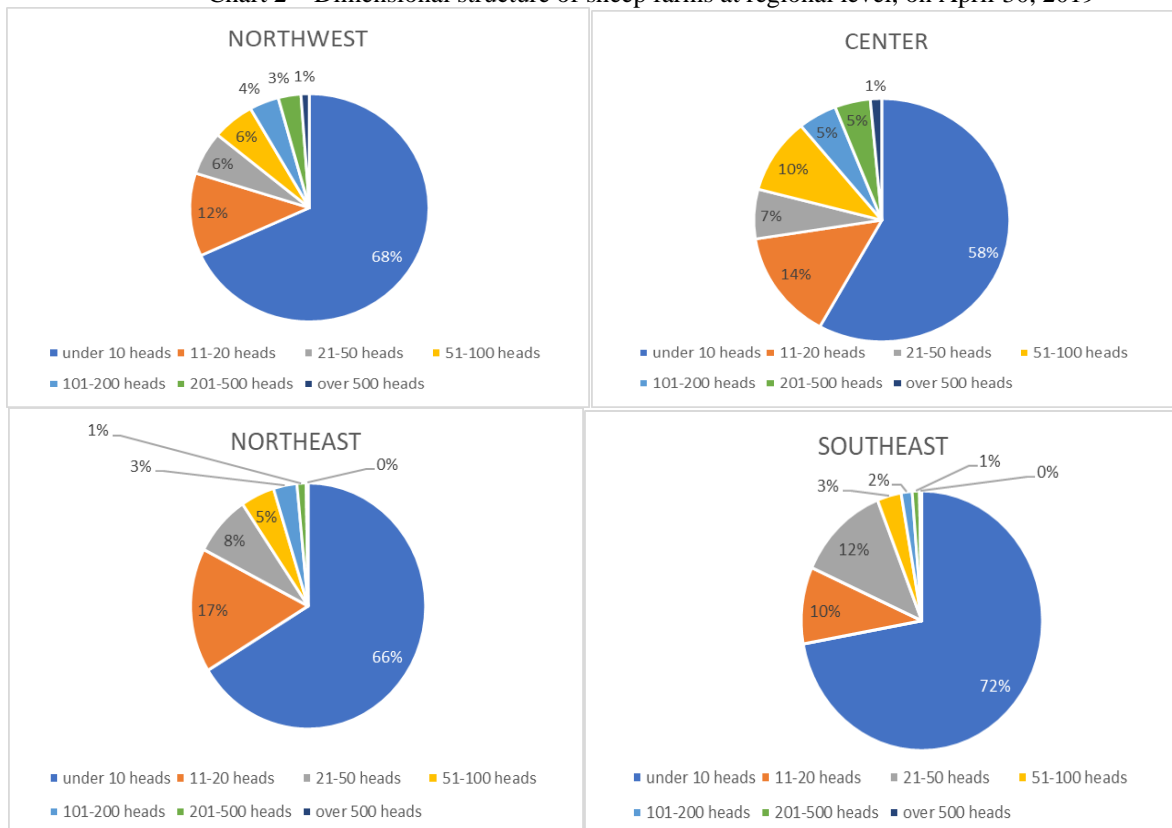
Chart 1 – Dimensional structure of sheep farms at national level, on April 30, 2019

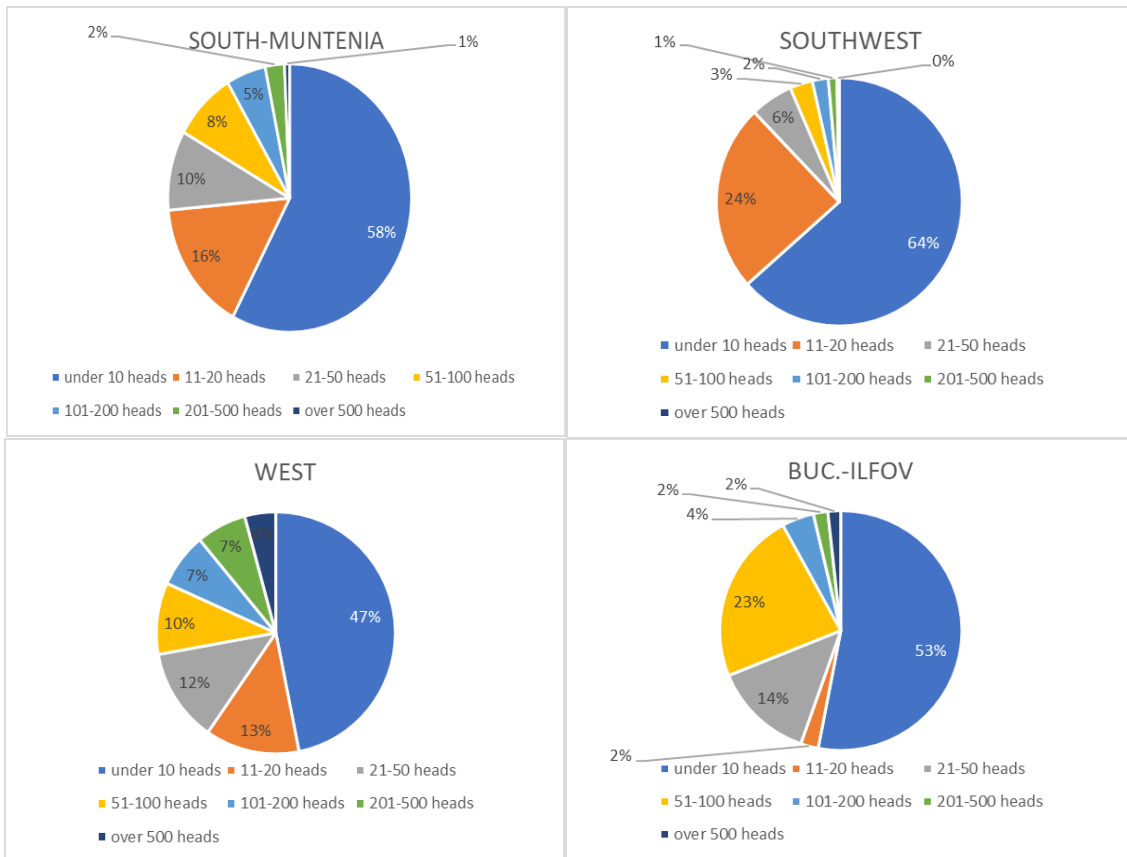


Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

According to Law no. 285/2015 for the amendment of Law no. 37/2015 regarding classification of farms and agricultural holdings, holdings that have below 1999 SO fall into the category of subsistence farms, and those that have between 2000-7999 SO are semi-subsistence farms. Corroborating these values with the standard production coefficients specific to sheep (54.91 sheep + ewes breded; 26.72 other sheep, lambs, rams, and reformed sheep), it can be seen that 94% of sheep farms fall into subsistence categories, and semi-subsistence (all holdings with less than 100 heads): 65% + 14% + 9% + 6% = 94%. At regional level, the dimensional structure illustrated in Chart 2 indicates that, in all areas of the country, most farms are in the category below 10 heads, between 47% in the western region and 72% in the south-east of the country. In fact, in the western part of the country, the shares of larger farms are higher than in other areas.

Chart 2 – Dimensional structure of sheep farms at regional level, on April 30, 2019

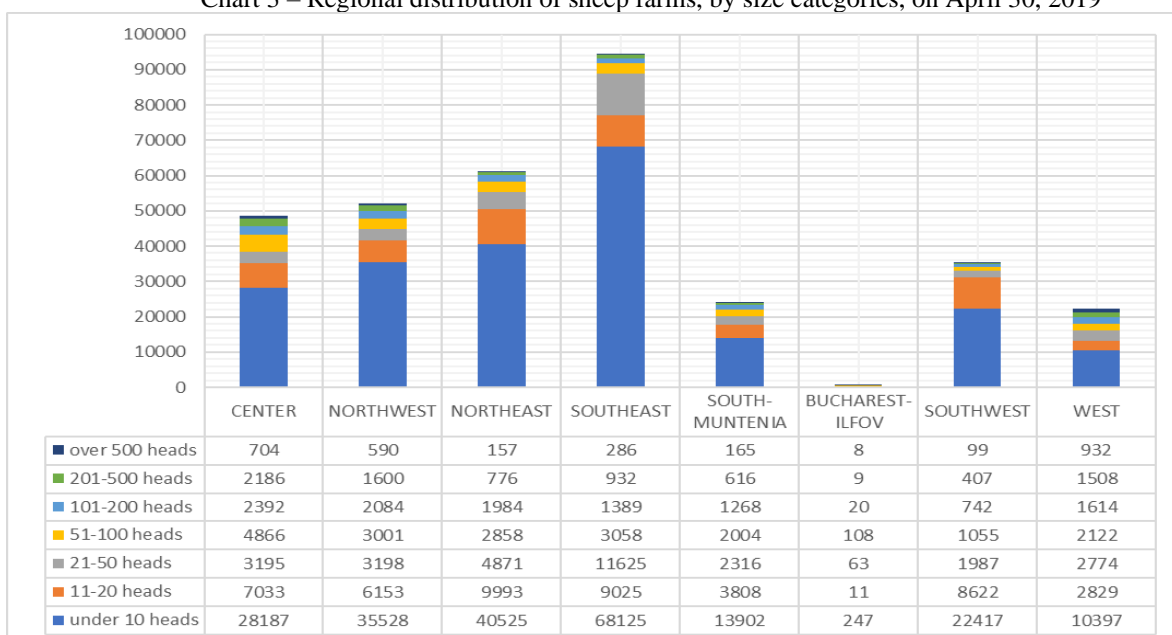




Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

The data in Chart 3 indicate that most farms are located in the southeastern part of the country, where there are most of the category under 10 heads (68125). In the 11-20 head category, most are in the northeast of the country (9993), followed by the southeast area, which also has the most holdings in the 21-50 head category. In the central region of the country, there are most holdings in the 51-100 head category, this area also having the most holdings in the 101-200 head and 201-500 head categories. In the western part of the country, there are the most holdings in the largest category, with over 500 heads (932 holdings).

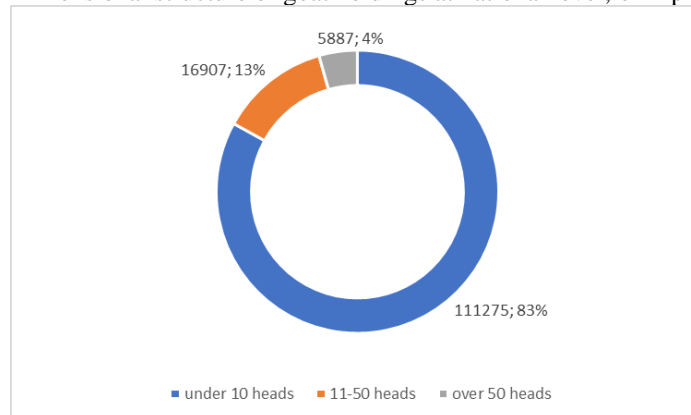
Chart 3 – Regional distribution of sheep farms, by size categories, on April 30, 2019



Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

At national level, on April 30, 2019, there were 134,069 goat farms, and in terms of their size, 83% (respectively 111,275 farms) were part of the category under 10 heads, meaning in households. In the 11-50 head category, there were 13% of the holdings, and the holdings with over 50 heads represented only 4% of the total (Chart 4).

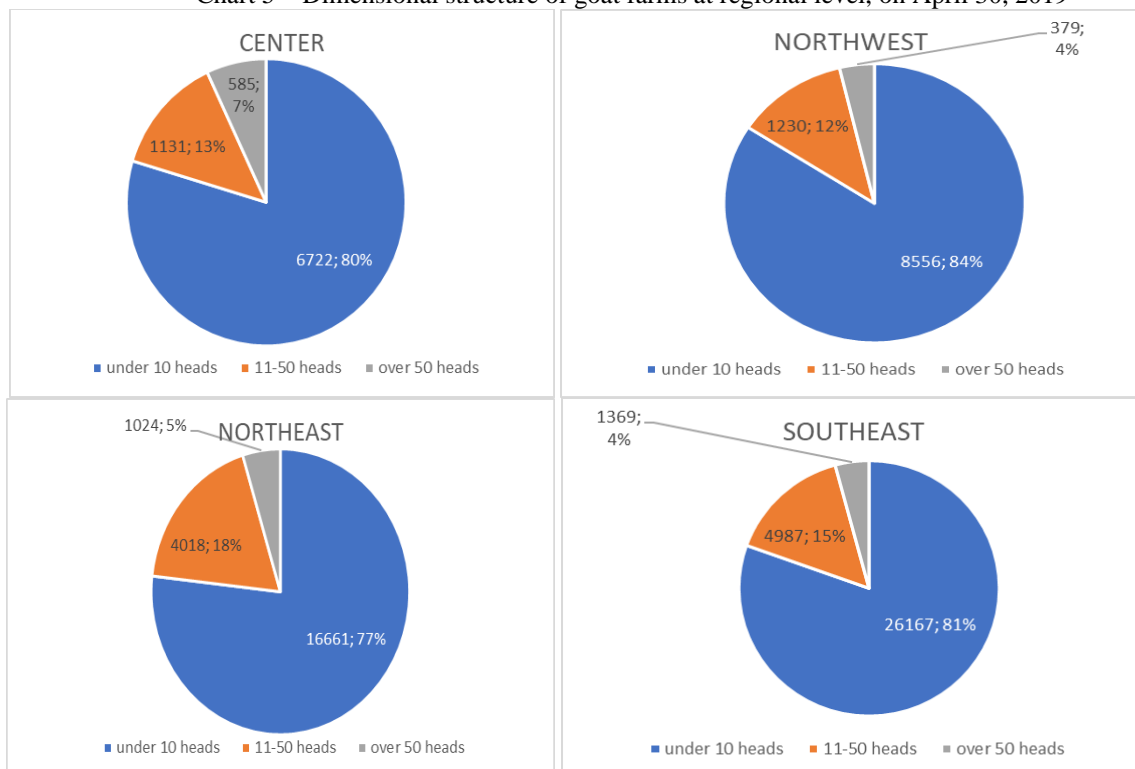
Chart 4 – Dimensional structure of goat holdings at national level, on April 30, 2019

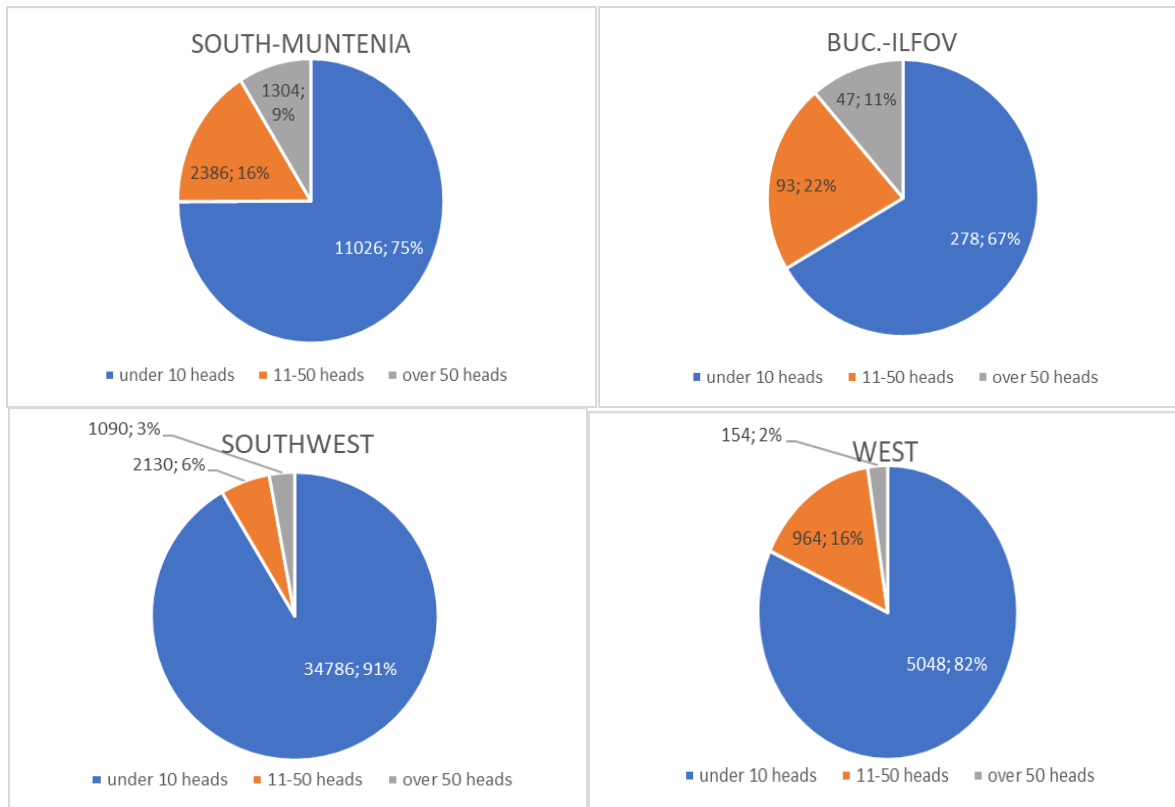


Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

At regional level, dimensional structure illustrated in Chart 5 indicates that, in all areas of the country, most farms are in the category below 10 heads, between 67% in the Bucharest-Ilfov region and 91% in the southwest of the country. Holdings in the 10-50 head category are between 6% in the southwest and 22% in Ilfov. Also, the largest share of farms with more than 50 heads are in Ilfov (11%). It seems that the proximity of the capital has stimulated the development of larger goat farms, whose products are easier to find in the market in Bucharest.

Chart 5 – Dimensional structure of goat farms at regional level, on April 30, 2019

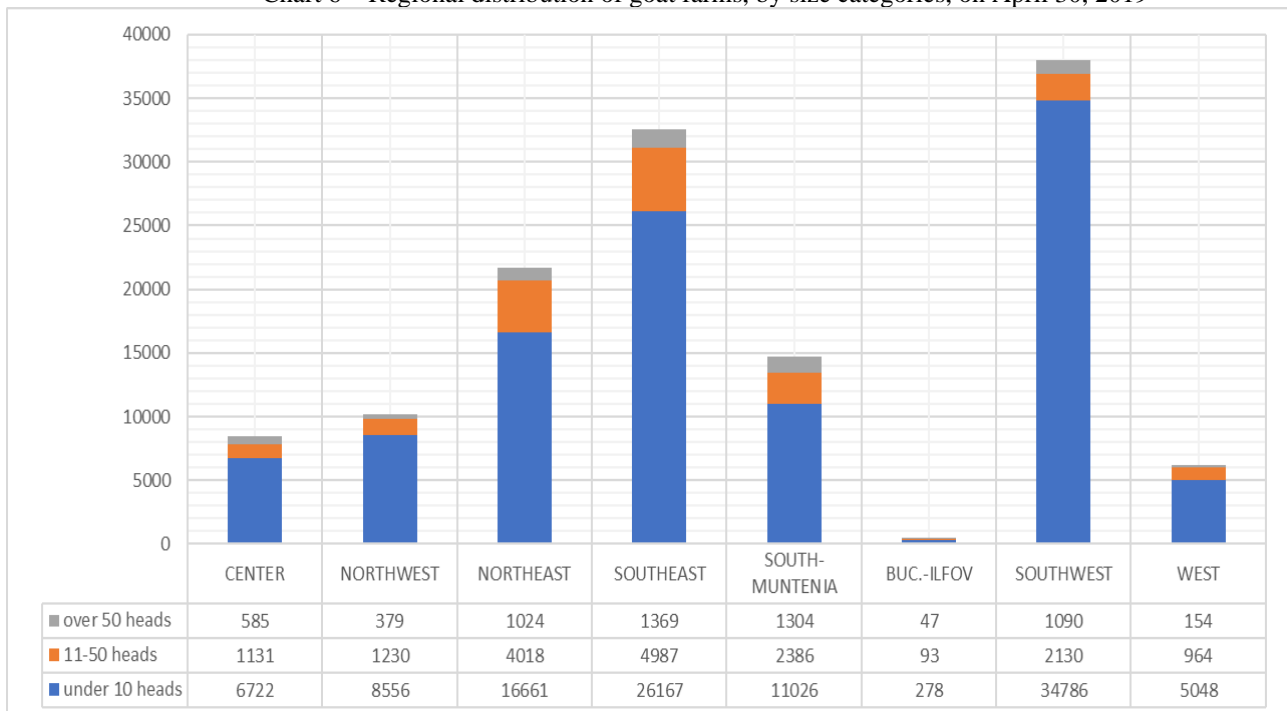




Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

The preponderance of farms in the category under 10 heads, illustrated in Chart 6, is evident in all areas of the country, as they are not commercial farms, but provide products especially to the family. However, as can be seen from the calculated indicators, a certain uninterrupted rhythm of growth in activities in this sector has been observed in the last decade.

Chart 6 – Regional distribution of goat farms, by size categories, on April 30, 2019



Source: Own calculations following operative data from MARD

CONCLUSIONS

The sheep and goat farming sector is characterized by great diversity in terms of dimensional structure and scale of production. Most of the holdings are represented by those in the category under 10 heads, a situation encountered in all regions of the country, their share being between 47-72% for sheep and 67-91% for goats. Farms in the category over 500 heads are in the proportion of 1-4% for sheep and 4-11% for goats.

The general feature is that, as the size class of farms increases, their share in the overall dimensional structure decreases. Whereas the sheep and goat sectors have significant potential for many fragile rural areas and for many peri-urban areas in terms of development and employment, in particular through the sale of sheep meat and goatmeat, as well as high-quality dairy products, which can be distributed through short supply chains locally, it is necessary to increase the size of farms that ensure the penetration of products into the economic circuit.

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