

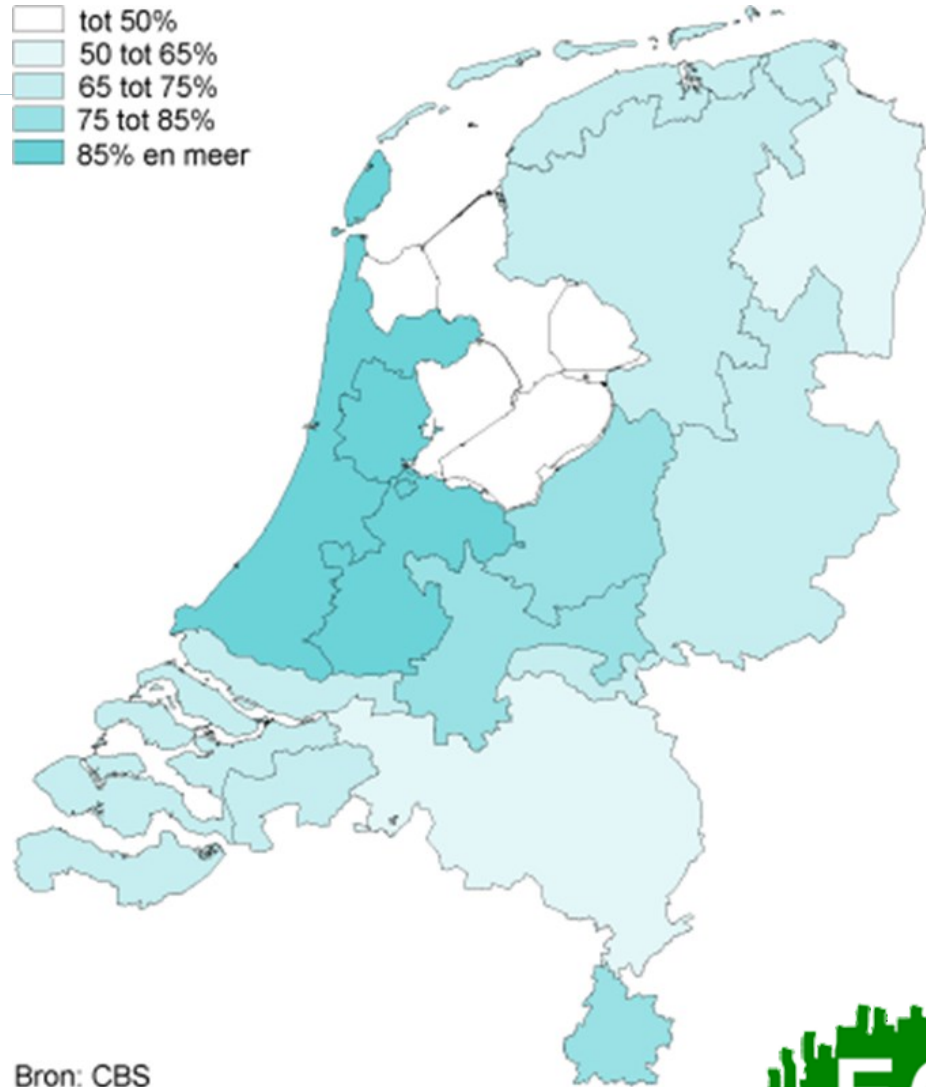
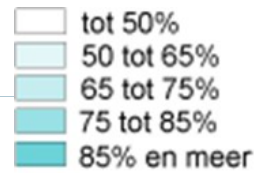
Future of grazing in the Netherlands and in Europe

EGF Working Group "Grazing", Aberystwyth, UK

7 September 2014, Agnes van den Pol-van Dasselaar



Differences within the country, % cows grazing



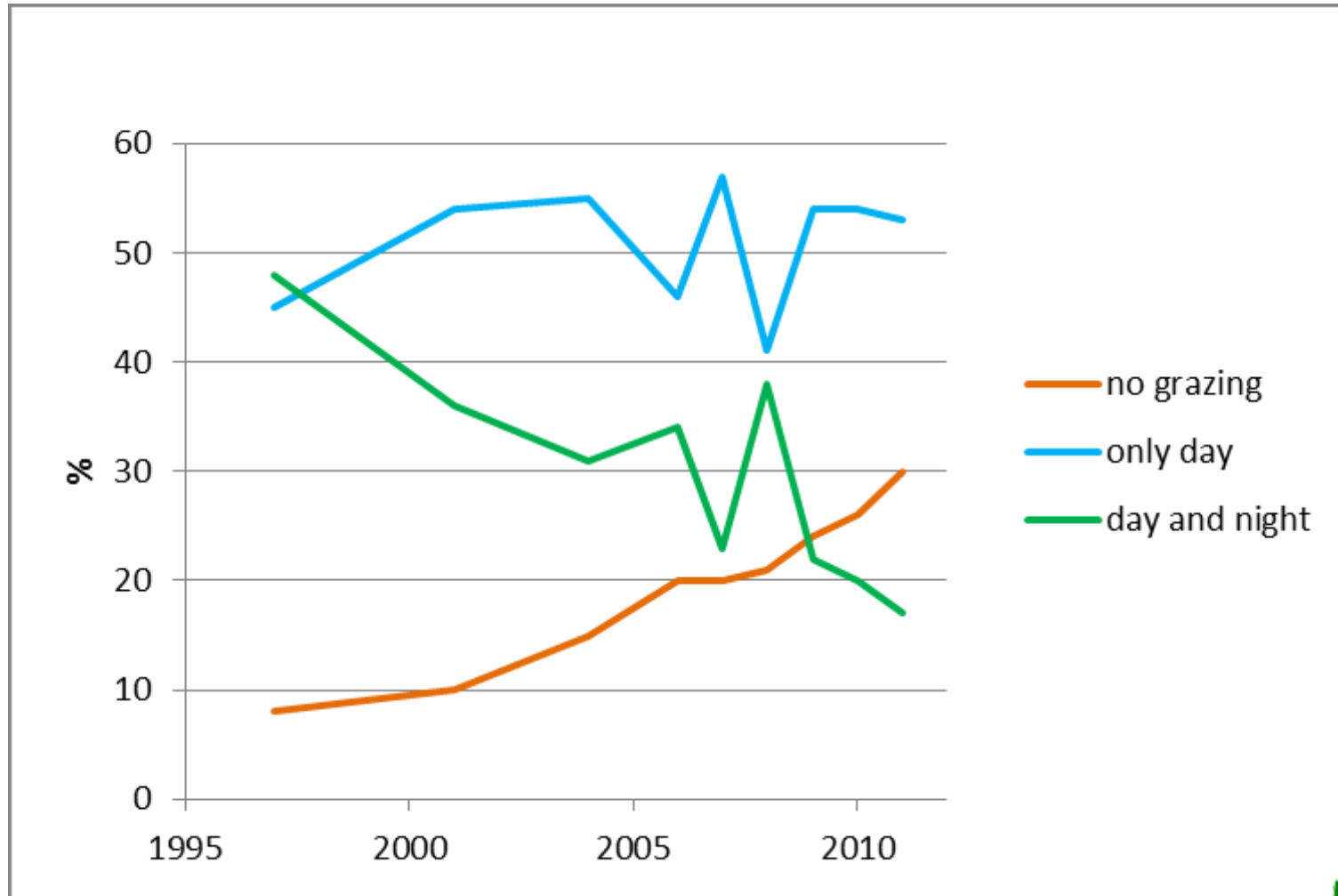
Bron: CBS



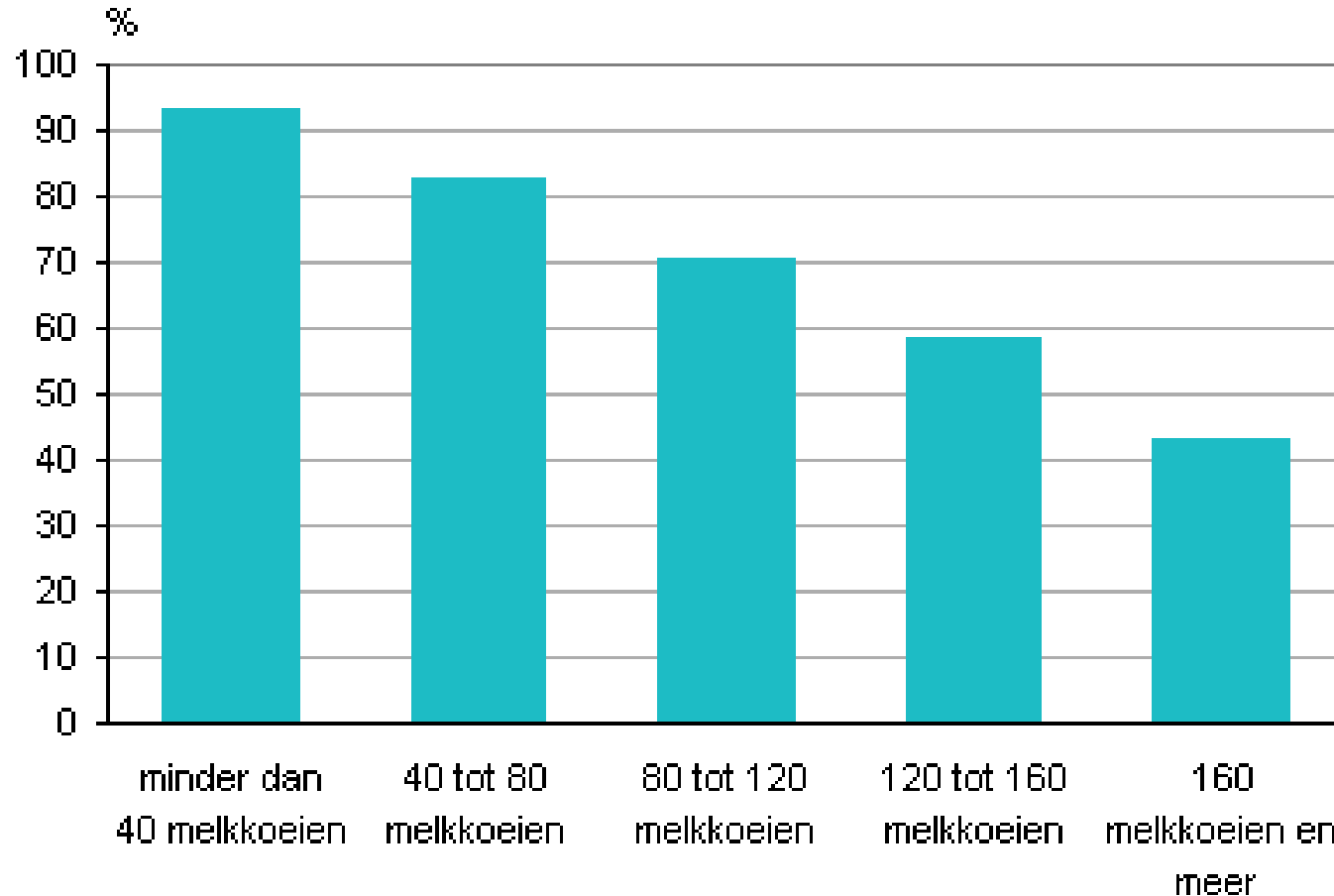
LIVESTOCK RESEARCH
WAGENINGEN UR



Grazing in the Netherlands



Effect of herd size in the Netherlands



Bron: CBS



Future of grazing in the Netherlands

- Larger herds will lead to less grazing
- Countervailing power: “Treaty Grazing”
 - Grazing is societal issue (cultural heritage, animal welfare)
 - Aim “Treaty Grazing” is stable number of grazing COWS



18 June 2012 – Treaty Grazing 2014: ~ 60 parties signed



Convenant Weidegang

- Dairy farmers: e.g. LTO Nederland
- Dairy industry
- Feed industry: e.g. Agrifirm, For Farmers
- Banks: e.g. ABN AMRO, Rabobank
- Accountants: e.g. Accon AVM, Alfa
- Semen industry, veterinarians, cheese sellers
- Retail: Albert Heijn, C1000, Jumbo Supermarkten
- NGO's: Dierenbescherming, Natuur & Milieu, Milieudefensie
- Nature conservation: Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten
- Government
- Education and science

Grazing in Europe

- Data on grazing in Europe are not easily available
- Surveys were conducted among members of the EGF Working Group Grazing
 - Educated guesses (majority)
 - Statistical data (minority)
 - No complete overview

Grazing in Europe (*estimates*)

- Norway, Sweden, Finland: welfare legislation, six weeks to four months outside; the number of hours that cattle spent outside is decreasing
- Denmark: 84% in 2001, 70% in 2003, 40-50% in 2008, 35-45% in 2010, 30-35% in 2011, 25-30 in 2014
- Ireland: 99% in 2010 and 2011, 98% in 2014, grass based seasonal systems dominate, 230-240 days
- UK: 92% in 2013
- The Netherlands
- Belgium: 85-95% in 2010, 75-80% in 2014

Grazing in Europe (*estimates*)

- Luxembourg: 90% in 2008, 75-85% free access in 2010, 73% in 2014
- Germany: 42% of the milking cows are grazing in 2009
- France: 90-95% in 2011, 90% in 2014
- Switzerland: 85-100% in 2011, 75-90% in 2014
- Austria: 25% in 2011
- Poland: decreasing
- Estonia: 35% in 2011
- Lithuania: 50-70% in 2014



Grazing in Europe (*estimates*)

- Czech Republic: 20% in 2010
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 5% in 2011
- Slovenia: 25% in 2010, stable or decreasing
- Portugal: 50% in 2010, increasing
- NW Spain: 20% in 2010, 18.5% in 2014; 78% farm feeding budget from grass in 1996, 37% in 2006
- Greece: 15% in 2010, less than 10% in 2011
- Hungary: 70% of all LSU (cows, sheep, horses, goats) are grazing in 2010
- Bulgaria: sheep and goat: always, dairy: on big farms NO, on smaller farms grazing

Grazing in New Zealand (*estimates*)

- In NZ almost all farms have some grazing in their system
- Percentage is decreasing
- Year round grazing offers NZ dairy farmers a competitive edge in the international market place



The future of grazing ...

- Opinions differ, however consensus on:
 - Grazing is complicated
 - Larger herds lead to less grazing
 - Farming systems that fit with grazing are smaller, have more land available close to the barn and are usually more low-input
 - Farm development complicates grazing
 - In many areas grazing is valued more and more by society, however, consumers buy milk and meat anyway



Future of grazing in the Netherlands and in Europe

