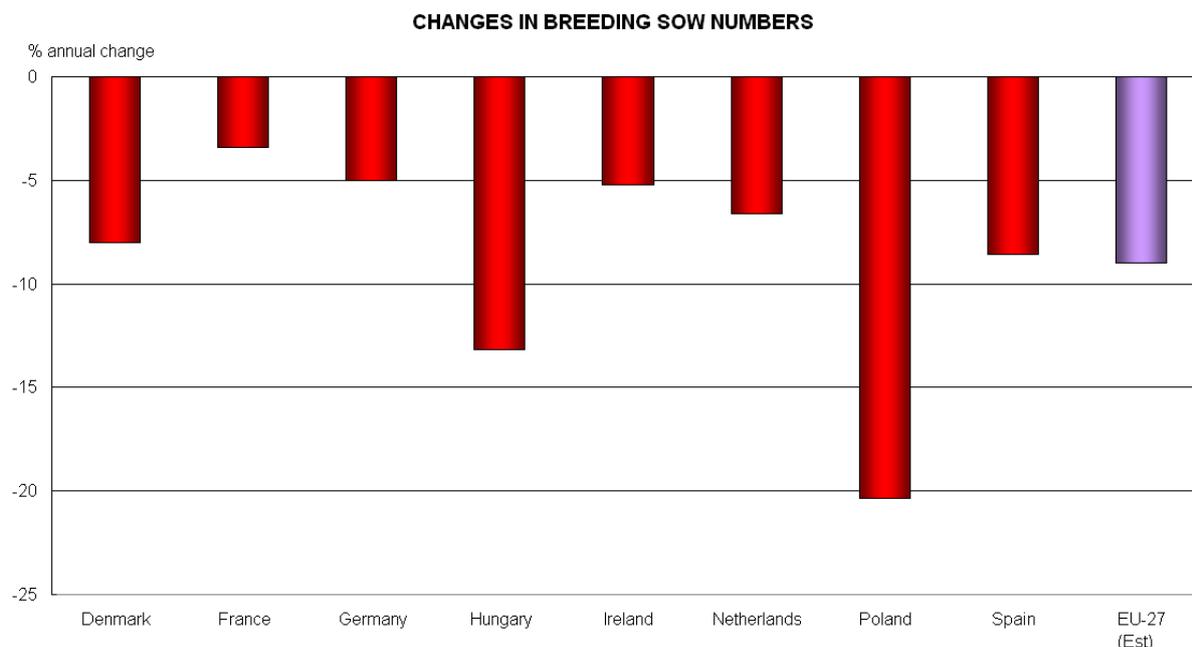




BREEDING SOW NUMBERS IN THE EU

EU member states are only obliged to carry out surveys of pig numbers once a year, in December. However a year is a long time in the pig industry, and consequently most major producing countries also carry out surveys around mid-year.

The following chart shows the results of surveys carried out between April and June and which have been published. The UK June results will be available in September.



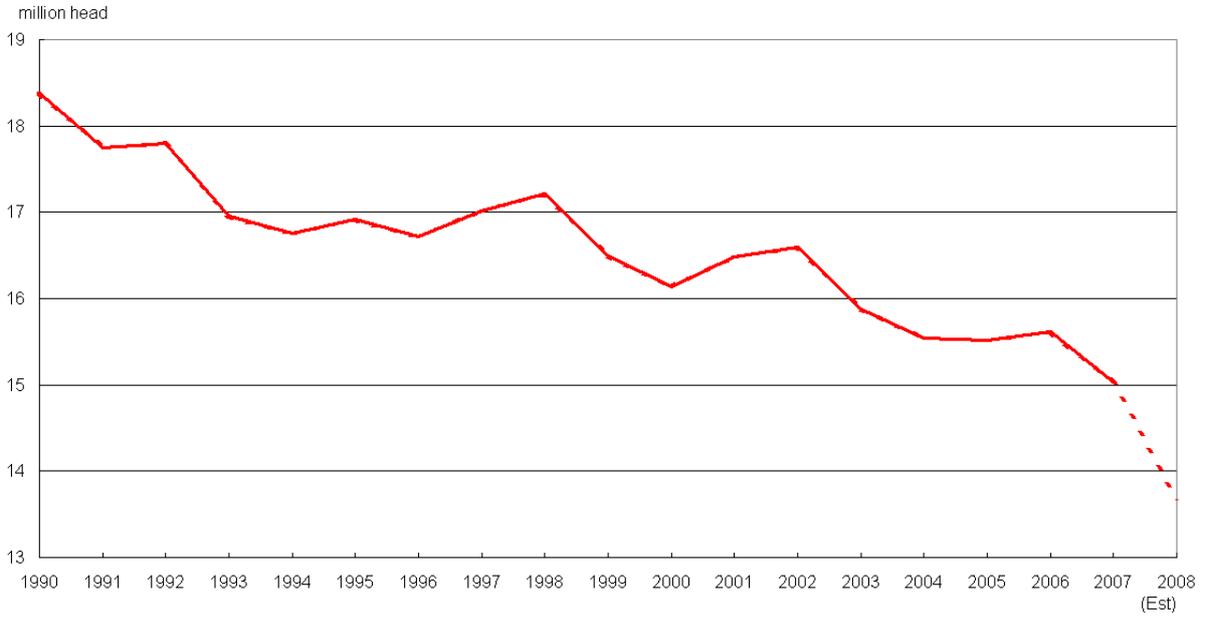
The very high feed prices across Europe have led to a contraction in the pig herd in every member state. Poland and Hungary have also been influenced by restructuring and the ending of access to subsidised feed. In most cases the annual rate of decline has also accelerated compared with the trend in the year to December 2007.

Sow numbers in the eight member states for which mid-year results are available account for 73 per cent of total EU numbers, and will therefore have a considerable influence on overall EU results. It is estimated that the total EU breeding herd in June 2008 was nine per cent smaller than in June 2007.

There were 15.03 million breeding sows in the EU-27 in December 2007. If December 2008 numbers also fall by nine per cent, this implies a decline to 13.68 million. This would be the lowest breeding herd for at least 20 years, and probably far longer (data for some member states are not available in this earlier period).

The chart below shows trends in total breeding herd numbers since 1990. Total production has not followed the same trend as there are now three more pigs produced per sow per year and the average carcass weight has increased by 3kg.

EU-27 BREEDING SOW NUMBERS, 1990 - 2008



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