

Economic performance of dairy sheep farms in less-favoured areas of Greece: A comparative analysis based on flock size and farming system

V. Papanikolopoulou¹, S. Vouraki¹, S. Dimitriou², G. Arsenos¹

¹School of Veterinary Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

²Achilleas Socratis P.C., Amyndeo, Greece

Introduction

Greece has the second largest dairy sheep population in Europe offering job opportunities and income for families, especially in LFAs. However, the sector faces many economic challenges that threaten its viability. Studies investigating the economic performance of dairy sheep farms are limited.

Objectives

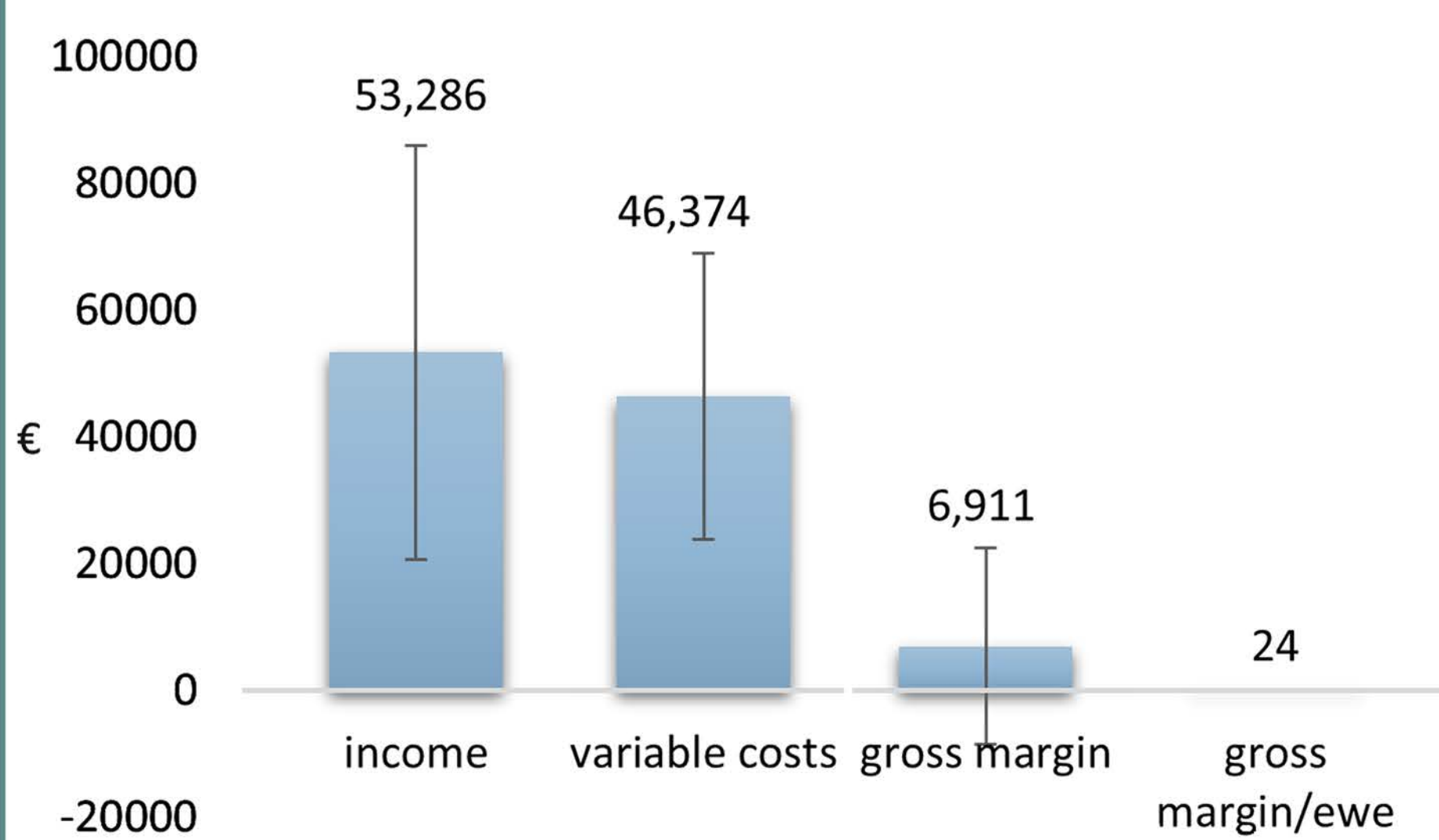
- Economic performance of dairy sheep farms located in LFAs of north western Greece
- Comparative economic analysis by flock size and farming system

Methods

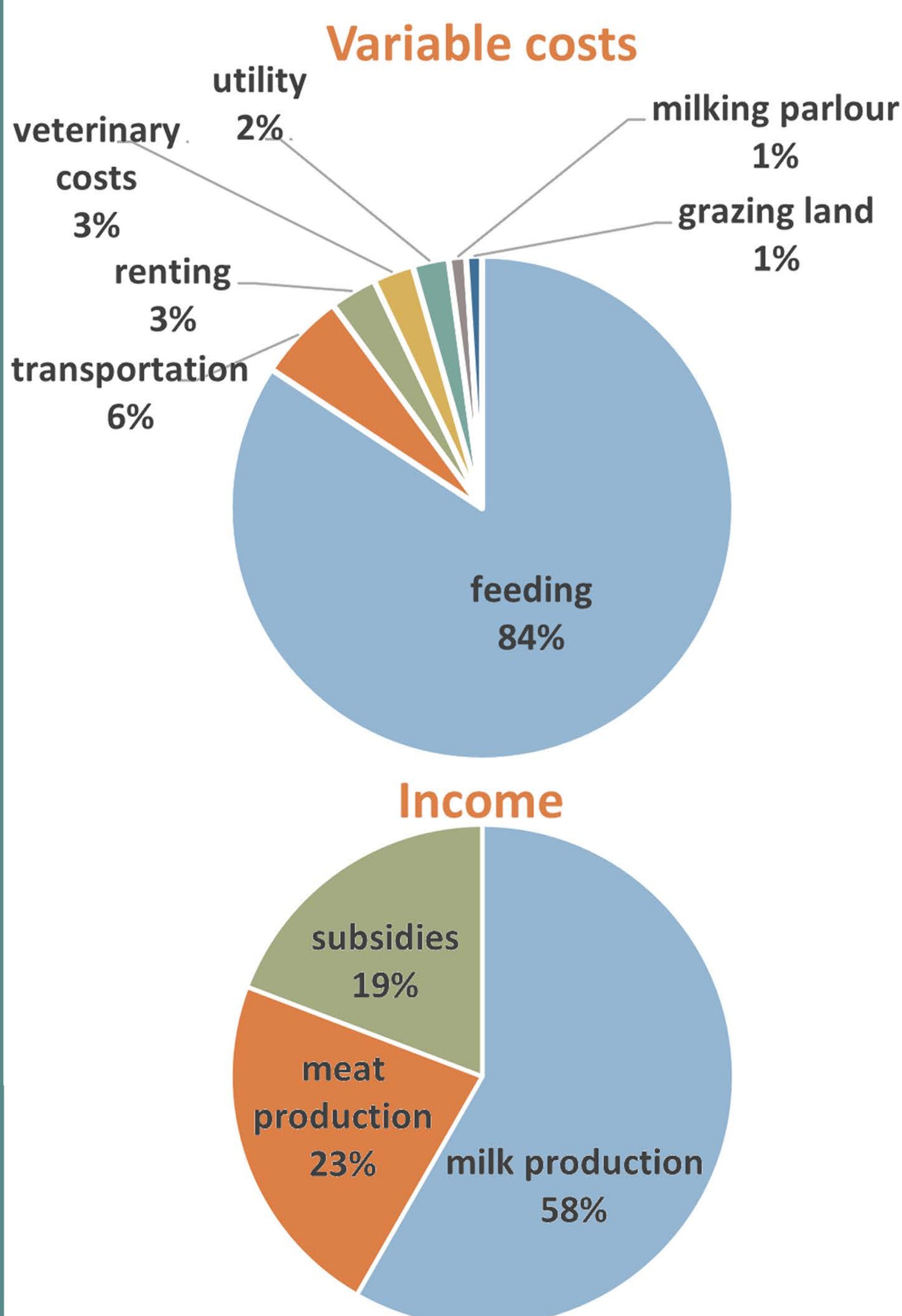
- Technical and economic data from 19 dairy sheep farms
- ISAGEDSS: evaluation of economic performance and assessment of the impact of nutritional management on ewe productivity
- One-way ANOVA: identification of differences on economic performance parameters between:
 - small (≤ 150 ewes) vs large (> 150 ewes) farms
 - intensive/semi-intensive vs semi-extensive farms



- Average farm income, variable costs, gross margin and gross margin/ewe

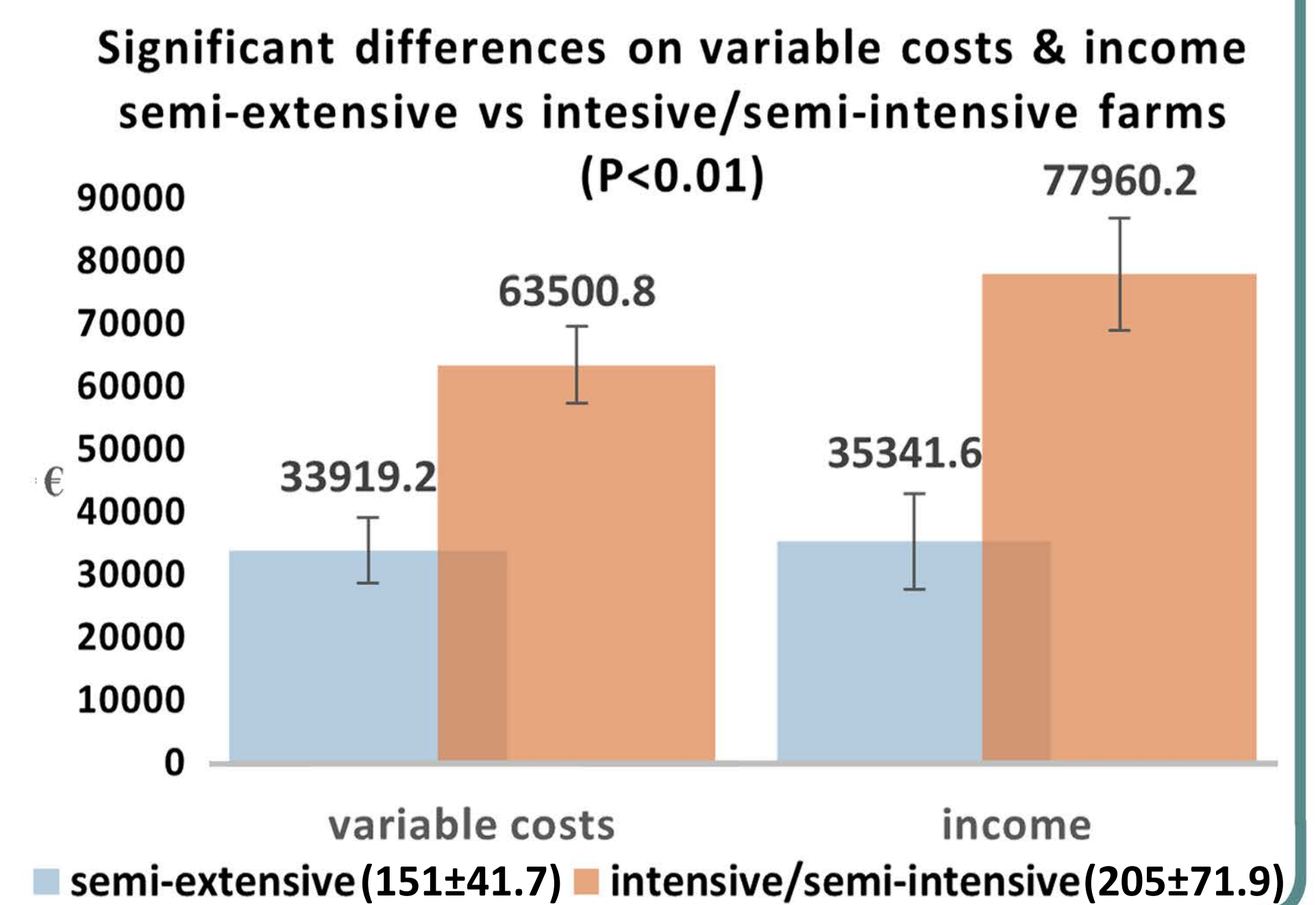
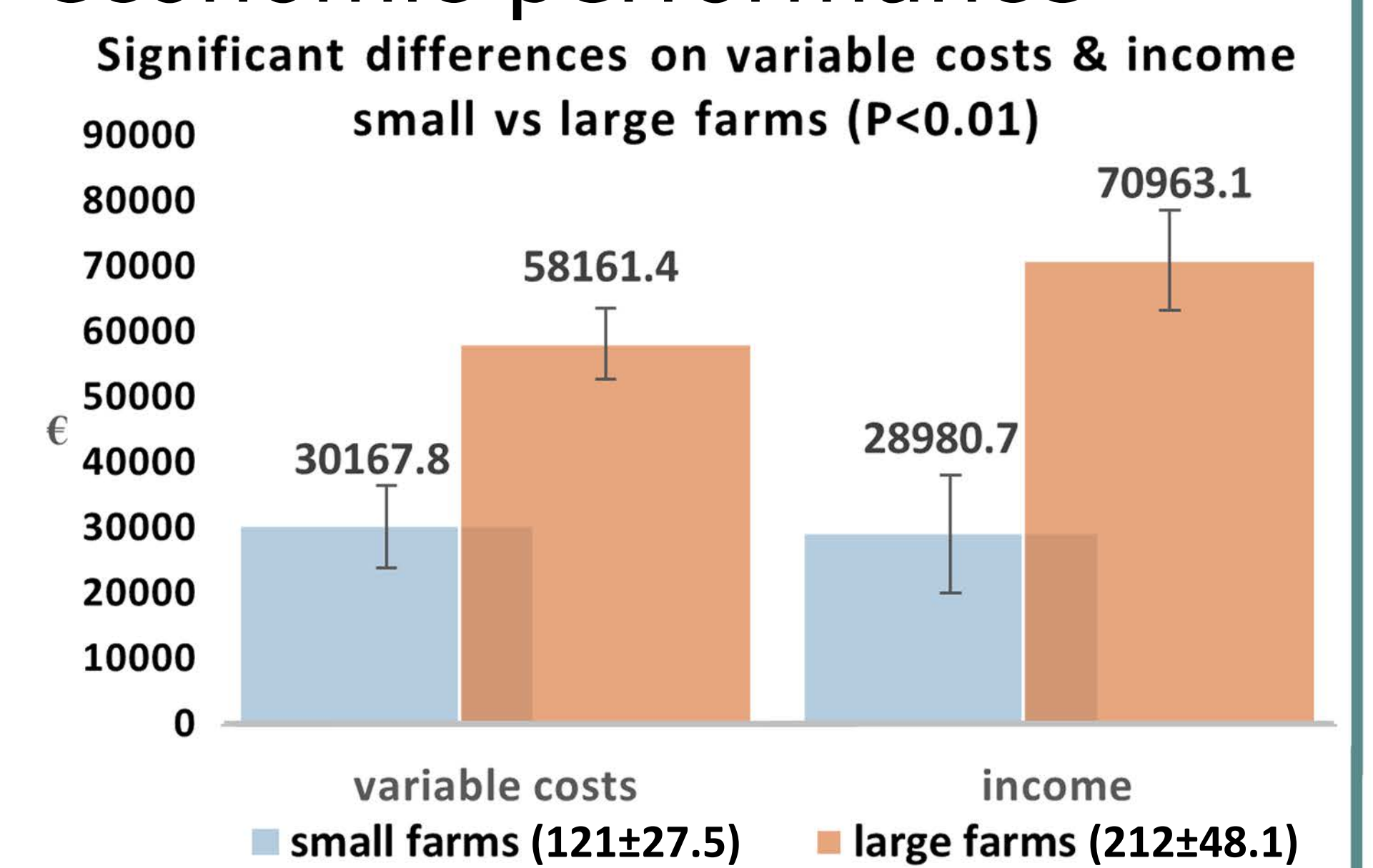


- Farms variable costs and income



Results

- Significant differences on economic performance



Discussion

- 36.8% of farms operate with losses
- Small and semi-extensive farms have significantly lower income mainly due to reduced milk production indicating poor management and animal welfare status

Conclusions

Dairy sheep farms in LFAs of Greece could economically benefit by increasing flock size, while also adjusting nutritional management according to animal productivity.