Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Symposium on Land Consolidation and Land Readjustment for Sustainable Development / LANDNET Workshop

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Land Consolidation in a Global Perspective

- Land Consolidation is increasingly recognized globally as a land management tool with multi-purpose potential.
- Many countries in Europe have a long tradition for land consolidation (land consolidation laws adopted in Poland 1923, Netherlands 1924, Denmark 1924 but even earlier roots).
- In Western Europe the purpose for doing land consolidation has shifted from 1980s from agricultural development (integrated with rural infrastructure) towards nature restoration and in some countries integrated multi-functional local rural development.
- Countries in South East Asia and Africa also have land consolidation traditions.
- Need to establish global overview and to exchange experiences between regions and continents.
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

25 study countries in Central and Eastern Europe
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Most countries in Central and Eastern Europe suffer from structural problems in agriculture.

Land fragmentation in Terbuf Municipality, Albania
Land fragmentation and small farm sizes in Central and Eastern Europe

- Medium or highly fragmented land ownership in all countries except in Belarus, Ukraine and Russia.
- In Poland and ex Yugoslavia land ownership is not fragmented because of the recent land reforms.
- Land use fragmentation is excessive in 5 of 7 countries where state land was distributed in physical parcels.
- In Czech Rep. and Slovakia (restitution), ownership fragmentation and co-ownership is extreme but land use fragmentation low.
- 15 of 25 countries have high level of both ownership and land use fragmentation.
### Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

#### Current level of ownership and land use fragmentation in Central and Eastern Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Level of fragmentation of ownership in agricultural land</th>
<th>Level of fragmentation of land use in agricultural land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltic countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central European countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Germany</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
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<td>Balkan countries except former Yugoslavia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
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<td>Former Yugoslavia countries</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
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<td>Montenegro</td>
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<td>Macedonia</td>
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<td>Kosovo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western CIS countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>Russian Federation</td>
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<td>Belarus</td>
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<td>Low</td>
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<td>Trans Caucasus countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>Azerbaijan</td>
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Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

The need to address the structural problems has been recognized

• So far 21 of the 25 countries have since the beginning of transition recognized the need to address the structural problems in agriculture (land fragmentation and small holding and farm sizes).

• Land consolidation instruments have been introduced.
Status of development of land consolidation programmes in Central and Eastern Europe

As of November 2016:

- **7 countries** with ongoing land consolidation programmes
- **In 14 countries** land consolidation introduced but not yet a programme
- **4 countries** with little or no land consolidation experience
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Minimum requirements for having a land consolidation programme

1. Land consolidation embedded in the overall land policy of the country
2. A legal framework for land consolidation has been adopted
3. A public lead agency for land consolidation has been established
4. Secured funding on an annual basis
5. Technical and administrative capacity developed
Five more CEE countries are coming close to having operational land consolidation programmes (status November 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Land consolidation embedded in country land policy</th>
<th>Legal framework for land consolidation adopted</th>
<th>Lead agency for land consolidation established</th>
<th>Technical and administrative capacity to implement land consolidation projects and manage programme</th>
<th>Secured funding at least 2-3 years ahead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
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<td>FYR Macedonia</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<td>Kosovo</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Land consolidation programme countries

• The EU member countries fund land consolidation programmes through the Rural Development Programmes.
• EU accession has turned land consolidation instruments more friendly towards nature and environment.
• The potential to facilitate structural development (purchase of additional land) is not reached in compulsory land consolidation projects.
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CEE countries with land consolidation experience but not yet a programme

• Driving factors behind introduction of land consolidation has mainly been a wish to address land fragmentation and improve productivity.
• More than 50 international technical assistance projects on land consolidation in CEE since early 1990s.
• Focus is shifting from support to first pilots towards preparation for programmes.
• The road from the first land consolidation pilot to an operational programme is often not straight forward.
**Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe**

Donor funded international technical assistance has funded land consolidation pilots and developed strategies.

- **Pilots implemented (15 countries)**
- **Strategies developed (9 countries)**
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The outcome of voluntary land consolidation pilot project in Moldova (small part of Re-allotment Plan)
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Land banking has so far largely failed in CEE

• None of the seven programme countries have established land banks in support of land consolidation.
• Most countries in the region have “free” state agricultural land after land reform (in Lithuania 400,000 ha).
• Failure in overall land policy and lack of coordination between state agencies.
• Land consolidation projects, especially those with a voluntary approach, are often hampered by low land mobility.
• Need for policy guidelines and practical experiences with combination of land banking and land consolidation.
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The experiences of FAO

• FAO started work on land fragmentation and land consolidation shortly after it was founded in 1945.
• FAO has now for more than 15 years supported land consolidation in CEE by:
  • Providing policy guidelines,
  • Implementing field projects in so far 8 countries and 2 new coming up
  • Organized 15 regional workshops between 2002 and 2015 (LANDNET).
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

The experiences of FAO

FAO land consolidation projects in the region have often had three main components:

1) Preparation of a National Land Consolidation Strategy
2) Implementation of land consolidation pilot in one or more rural communities
3) Training and capacity development

So far FAO projects on land consolidation in Armenia, Lithuania, Serbia, Moldova, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo and Azerbaijan and new project is starting in Ukraine.
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Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGTs)

• Adopted in May 2012 by CFS on behalf of all UN member countries
• First international document on governance of tenure.
• A reference to improve governance of tenure based on international best practice.
• Promotes secure tenure rights.
• All FAO projects in line with VGGTs.
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

VGGTs Part 4, Section 13, is on Land Consolidation including:

- Land consolidation is to assist owners and users to improve the layout and use of their parcels or holdings (reduce fragmentation and increase farm sizes).
- To ensure that participants are at least as well off after the schemes as before.
- Land consolidation for agricultural development but also for local rural development (e.g. infrastructure and environmental protection and multi-functionality).
- Promotes development and adoption of national land consolidation strategies.
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Lessons learned and way forward:

• Land consolidation is understood in different ways in different countries and applied in different approaches, e.g. compulsory and voluntary.

• Land consolidation is in many CEE countries an important land management instrument to address structural problems with land fragmentation and small farm sizes.

• Land consolidation is by nature multi-functional and can facilitate integrated local rural development.

• Land consolidation can be applied on both ownership and use rights.

• Need to establish global overview and exchange experiences between regions and continents.
Land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

Thank you very much!

