



MAINSTREAMING THE NATIONAL LAND CONSOLIDATION PROGRAMME IN NORTH MACEDONIA

The average farm size in North Macedonia is 1.8-1.9 ha, which is considerably below the average farm size in the European Union of 16.6 hectares. In addition, the small farms consist of several parcels (usually 5-7), which are often distant from each other and lack access to irrigation, drainage and road infrastructure. The fragmentation of both land ownership and land is one of the greatest challenges for the country's agricultural sector, having adverse effects on the productivity, competitiveness and efficiency of farms, and preventing further modernization and economies of scale. Since 2012, the country had already taken several steps towards the development of an operational National Land Consolidation Programme. This European Union-funded project has aimed to assist the Government in taking the final steps to make the Programme fully operational and to implement the first round of land consolidation projects on the ground, in order to improve the competitiveness of the country's agriculture sector, in line with European Union policy.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project successfully supported the implementation of the National Land Consolidation Programme through a complex mixture of interlinked outputs and activities, including awareness raising, improvement of the legal framework, preparation of procedures for each phase of the land consolidation projects, capacity development, and the establishment of monitoring tools. These activities consequently led to the successful implementation of the first round of land consolidation projects on the ground under the MAINLAND project, and ultimately to enhanced capacity at the national level for the autonomous implementation of the National Land Consolidation Programme in the future. In this context, over 200 individuals/experts from the public and private sector received training on land consolidation and are now capable of implementing the process autonomously. In addition, the capacities of key actors from both the public and private sector were effectively enhanced through conventional and in-service training sessions designed for specific audiences. A variety of targeted communication activities and tools conveyed the key principles of modern land consolidation, helping to build close relationships with participating landowners, providing them with the necessary information for informed decision-making, and encouraging their active participation in the land consolidation process. A reduction in the number of land parcels and an increase in the average size per parcel was successfully achieved, thereby positioning the country as a leader in the Western Balkan region and Eastern Europe in the implementation of land consolidation as a complex structural land reform. Specifically, with the nine land consolidation re-allotment plans prepared, the total number of parcels was reduced from 8 237 to 3 344, representing an average reduction of 59 percent, while the average size of the land parcel increased from 0.42 ha to 1.34 ha, which is over three times the baseline size.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
EUR 2 860 000

Duration
March 2017-November 2022

Resource Partner
The European Union

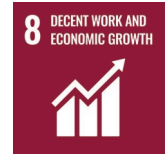
Partners
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE)

Beneficiaries
Staff of MAFWE and other institutions, such as Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (AREC), and National Extension Agency (NEA); private geodetic companies; municipal authorities; Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) representing agricultural landowners and farmers, rural households, farmers and landowners within each of the land consolidation project areas

IMPACT

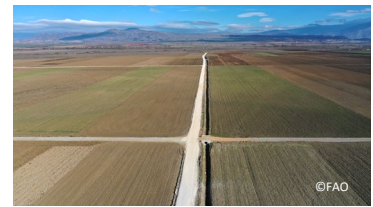
Over 6 200 farmers and landowners were provided with an opportunity to enhance competitiveness and improve their farm holdings through land consolidation, while 2 550 landowners/farmers in nine land consolidation areas directly benefited in terms of improved land structure, reduced land fragmentation and improved access to agricultural infrastructure, including 630 female beneficiaries.

The municipalities in areas where land consolidation was implemented benefited from the improved agriculture infrastructure, as well as better livelihood opportunities for the inhabitants in the selected rural communities.



ACTIVITIES

- Awareness on land consolidation raised through public awareness campaigns, community meetings, direct visits to rural communities, as well as publication/broadcasting of over 1 000 news articles/items.
- Legal framework for land consolidation enhanced and detailed procedures for implementation of all phases of land consolidation prepared.
- Training on all aspects of land consolidation provided for 125 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE) employees, 24 National Extension Agency (NEA) staff, 20 specialists from other public agencies, and 45 experts from private sector.
- Implementation of land consolidation projects on the ground, involving more than 6 200 farmers/landowners in the feasibility phase and 2 550 farmers/landowners in the re-allotment phase, achieved through: i) preparation of Countrywide Feasibility Assessment for land consolidation; ii) selection of 21 potential land consolidation project areas; iii) preparation of 14 feasibility studies for particular land consolidation areas; iv) preparation of nine re-allotment plans and technical designs for improvement of agricultural infrastructure (for majority-based land consolidation projects); v) adoption of seven re-allotment plans by landowners/ farmers; and vi) construction of agricultural infrastructure (drainage and irrigation networks and access roads) in one land consolidation project area.
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for measuring benefits of land consolidation at both Land Consolidation Programme and project level developed, as well as digital tools, providing basis for monitoring of land consolidation projects and the National Land Consolidation Programme.



Project Title
Mainstreaming of the National Land Consolidation Programme (MAINLAND)

Project Code
FAO: GCP/MCD/002/EC
Donor: 2016/382315

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Partnerships and Outreach
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