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Session 7: Integrated Voluntary Land Consolidation — A third land consolidation model for Central and Eastern Europe?

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Land fragmentation and small farm sizes have occurred in many CEE countries (in some countries as a result of land reform but not in all)



Excessive
fragmentation of
both land
ownership and
land use in Terbuf
Municipality,
Albania.



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Overview of land fragmentation in Central and Eastern Europe today

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

Ref.:
Hartvigsen, M., 2013:
Land Reform and Land Fragmentation in Central and Eastern Europe.
Land Use Policy vol. 36
(2014), 330-341



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Most CEE countries have since 1990 introduced land consolidation to address the structural problems in agriculture

- On-going development of national land consolidation programs (2014)




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The discussion on land consolidation in CEE has often been limited to either simple / voluntary or a compulsory / comprehensive approach

<p>Simple / Voluntary LC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few participating landowners Only re-parcelling No or limited facilitation of re-allotment planning Fast and relatively low costs Limited results Many LC pilots have used voluntary approach 	<p>Compulsory / comprehensive LC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All landowners / parcels in the project area participate when agreement by majority LC integrated with investments (e.g. irrigation, roads, land reclamation, village renewal etc.) Time consuming and costly CEE countries with LC program use this approach except Lithuania
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FAO and others have recognized that there could be a third model for land consolidation in CEE

Integrated Voluntary Land Consolidation

- Voluntary participation of landowners and farmers
- Involve all landowners in the process (interview all of them in initial stage and motivate them to participate)
- Integrate facilitated re-allotment planning with local measures for rural development
- Tailor-made solutions for each country based on local preconditions and land policy (but learning from the experiences of other countries)
- The model can be further developed

Land consolidation integrated with local measures for rural development


- Prepare local community development plan through a participatory process with local government and all local stakeholders including landowners and farmers
- An outcome of the community planning can be a prioritized catalogue of local development projects (e.g. field and access roads, irrigation etc.)
- The experience is that it is not always easy to make it work in practise and to secure national budget funding for the projects additional to the re-allotment of parcels

Land mobility is crucial for results in a voluntary land consolidation approach




Key factors determining land mobility

Ref.:
Hartvigsen, M., 2014:
Land Mobility in a Central and Eastern Land Consolidation Context. Nordic Journal on Surveying and Real Estate Research vol. 10, 1/2014, 23-46.




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Illustration of land mobility



Legend
Green - available land pool
Yellow - to be consolidated
Red - not to be consolidated

High land mobility



**Good potential for
voluntary land
consolidation**

Land mobility map from Dracevo LC pilot village (available land pool)



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Tools to increase land mobility

- Land banking is a key instrument but there are other tools.
- Land consolidation legislation to ensure simplified and cost-effective land transactions (make it easy, fast and effective for beneficiaries to participate).
- Financial support of land transaction costs in land consolidation gives a strong incentive to participate.
- Resolving existing land registration problems for those who participate in LC is a strong incentive for participation.
- Make sure to have enough time for the LC process (re-allotment planning takes time and some will only decide to participate when they see results).
- Allow transactions outside the core LC project area.



Integrated Voluntary Land Consolidation – Way forward

- It is the experience in CEE that countries often cannot afford very comprehensive LC projects and that politicians have no time for long projects
- It is also the experience that simple and voluntary LC (scattered re-parceling initiated and agreed among local stakeholders themselves) is often not enough
- The development of a third model with the best from the two traditional models is on the way
- The model needs to be further developed in the years to come based on the lessons learned so far in CEE