DEALING WITH LAND ABANDONMENT

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Presentation Structure

1. **Romania – basic information**

2. **Trend in utilization of farm land, by main land use categories**

3. **Sources of information on farm land abandonment**

   a) *Statistical indicators*

   b) *Land registration system*

4. **Drivers of land abandonment**

5. **Supporting measures to mitigate land abandonment occurrence**

1. Romania – Basic information

- **Population**
  - total: 21.6 millions (July 2016 estimates)
  - rural population: 45.44%
  - Negative growth rate, ever since 1992 (-0.32%, as 2016 estimates)
- **Area**
  - total: 238,391 km^2, concentrically disposed as:
    - 31% mountains
    - 36% hills and plateaus
    - 33% plains and meadows
  - UAA: 13.1 million ha
  - forested area: 6.9 million ha
  - waters and ponds: 0.8 million ha
- **Administrative organization**
  - 42 counties
  - 319 towns and municipalities
  - 2851 communes
  - 12946 villages
- About **2/3 of the rural population** in Romania, farming an important share of the total UAA, depends on income from **subsistence and semi-subsistence farms**.
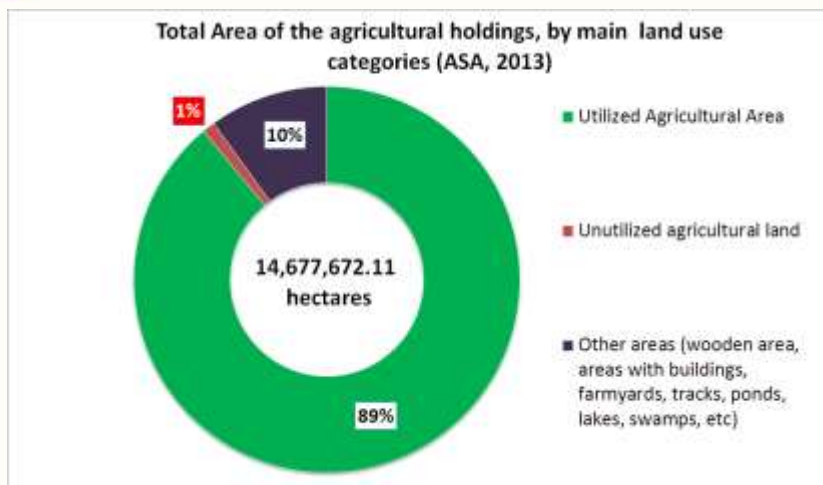
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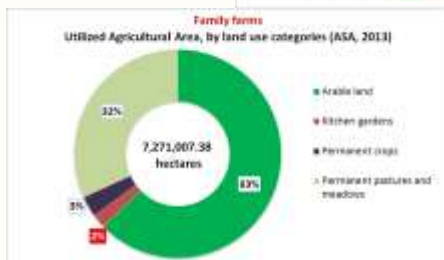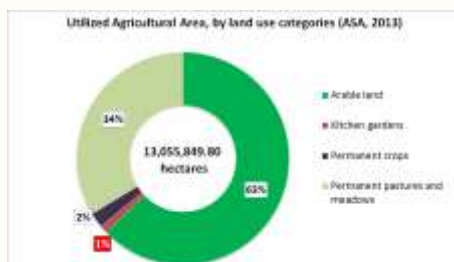## 2. Trend in utilization of farm land, by main land use categories

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Structure of the Total Area of the holdings, by main land use categories

Total Area of the agricultural holdings, by main land use categories (ASA, 2013)

14,677,672.11 hectares

1%

10%

89%

■ Utilized Agricultural Area

■ Unutilized agricultural land

■ Other areas (wooden area, areas with buildings, farmyards, tracks, ponds, lakes, swamps, etc)

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Structure of Utilized Agricultural Area, by main land use categories

Utilized Agricultural Area, by land use categories (ASA, 2013)

13,055,849.80 hectares

14%

63%

2%

1%

■ Arable land

■ Kitchen gardens

■ Permanent crops

☐ Permanent pastures and meadows

Family farms
Utilized Agricultural Area, by land use categories (ASA, 2013)

7,271,007.38 hectares

32%

13%

3%

2%

■ Arable land

■ Kitchen gardens

■ Permanent crops

☐ Permanent pastures and meadows

Juridical entities
Utilized Agricultural Area, by land use categories (ASA, 2013)

5,784,842.42 hectares

86%

12%

1%

0%

■ Arable land

■ Kitchen gardens

■ Permanent crops

☐ Permanent pastures and meadows
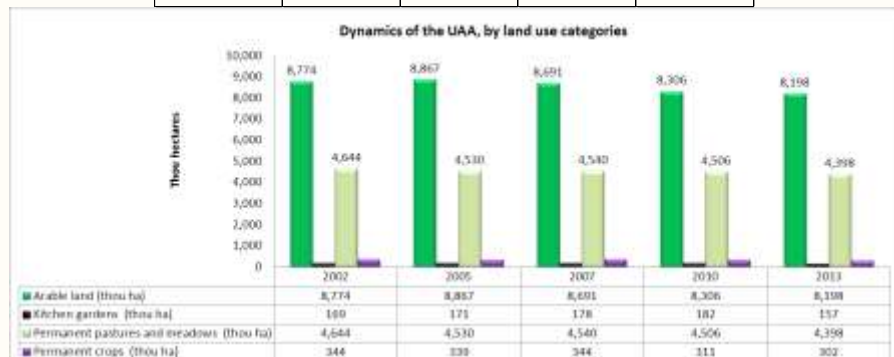
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Trend in utilization of farm land, by main land use categories

In 2013 total Utilized Agricultural Area diminished with 6.3% as compared with 2002 (875 thou hectares)

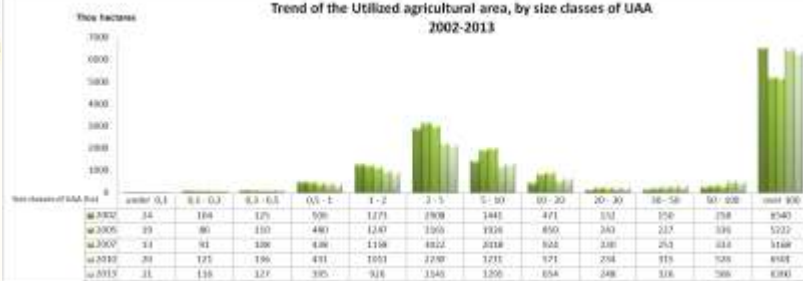| Trend of total Utilized Agricultural Area (UAA) during 2002-2013 (hectares)				
2002	*2005*	*2007*	*2010*	*2013*
13,930,710.10	13,906,701.28	13,753,046.49	13,306,128.33	13,055,849.80

Dynamics of the UAA, by land use categories

	2002	2005	2007	2010	2013
Arable land (thou ha)	8,774	8,867	8,691	8,306	8,198
Kitchen gardens (thou ha)	160	171	178	182	157
Permanent pastures and meadows (thou ha)	4,644	4,530	4,540	4,506	4,398
Permanent crops (thou ha)	344	330	344	311	302

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Trend of the Utilized agricultural area, by size classes of UAA 2002-2013

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Trend of the Arable land, by size classes of UAA 2002-2013

Trend of the Kitchen gardens area, by size classes of UAA 2002-2013

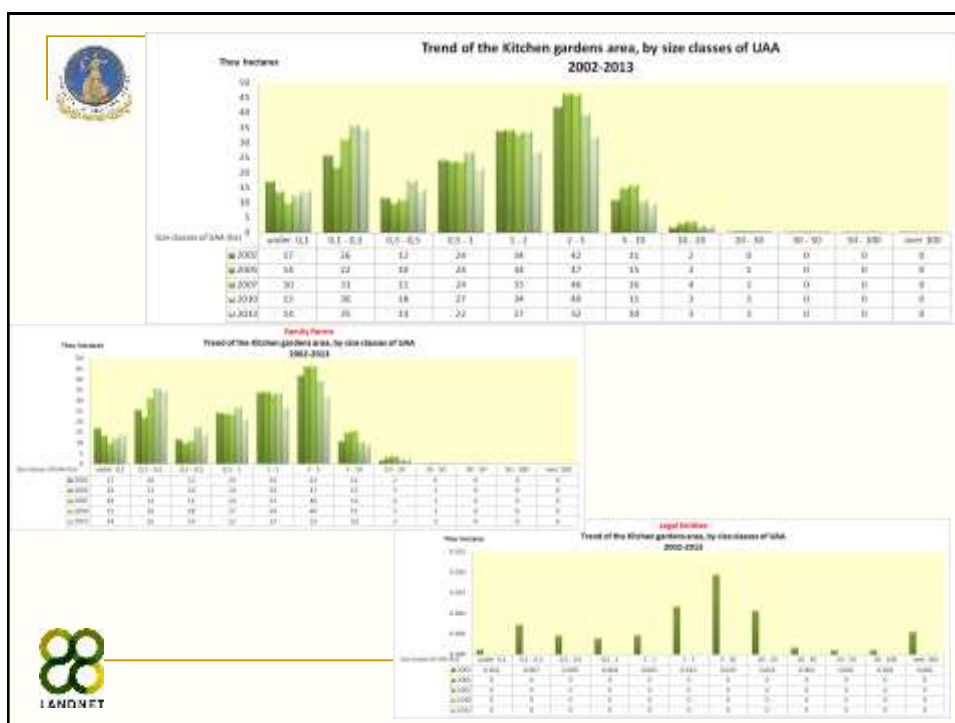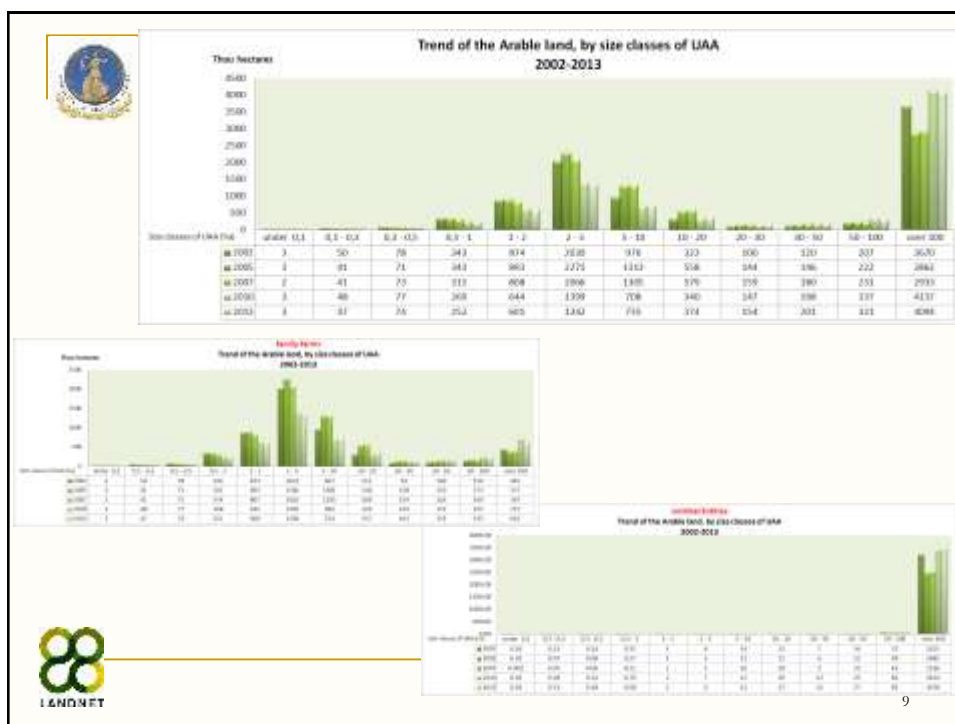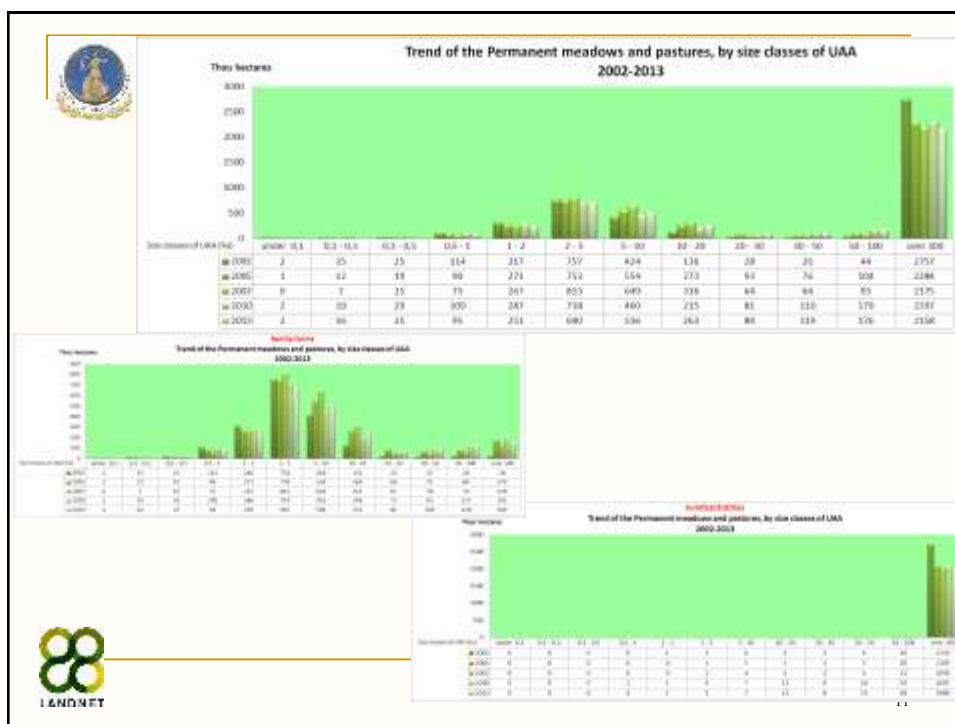Trend of the Permanent meadows and pastures, by size classes of UAA 2002-2013

Trend of the Permanent crops, by size classes of UAA 2002-2013

3. Sources of information on farm land abandonment

> a) **Statistical indicators**
>
> b) **Land registration system**

This topics is conceptualised from the perspective of the

unutilised agricultural land, defined as:

"*Area previously used as an agricultural area and, during the reference year of the survey, no longer worked for economic social or other reasons and which is not used in the crop rotation system, i.e. land where no agricultural use is intended. This land could be brought back into cultivation using the resources normally available on an agricultural holding.*" (*Handbook on implementing the FSS and SAPM, rev 10, March 2012*) .
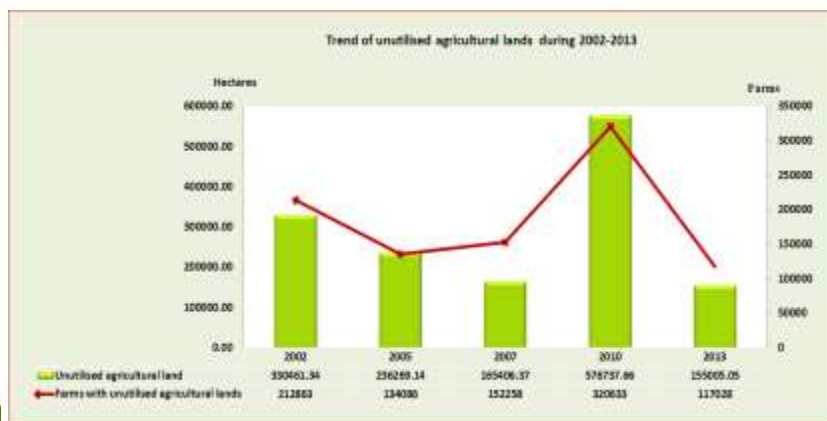
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a) Statistical indicators

Information with regard to **the unutilized agricultural land** at farm level is collected starting with 2002 General Agricultural Census, and continued to be collected in the frame of all Farm Structure Surveys carried ever since (FSS 2005, 2007, AC 2010 and FSS 2013).
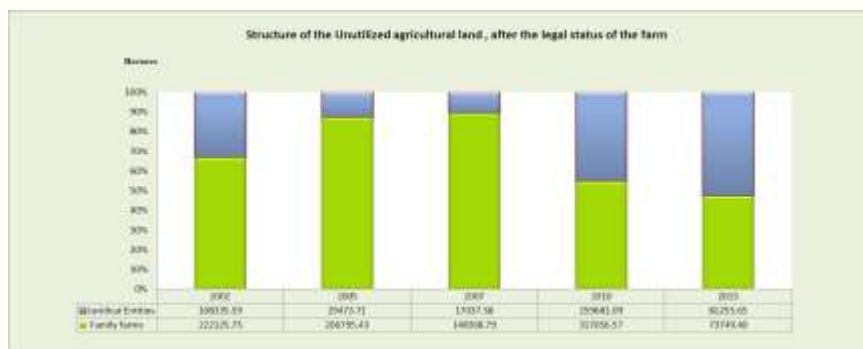

Trend of unutilised agricultural lands during 2002-2013

	2002	2005	2007	2010	2013
Unutilised agricultural land	330461.34	236289.14	165406.37	576737.86	155005.05
Farms with unutilised agricultural lands	212863	134080	152258	320833	117028

Share of Unutilized agricultural area in total area of the farms

Structure of Unutilized agricultural lands, after the legal status of the farms

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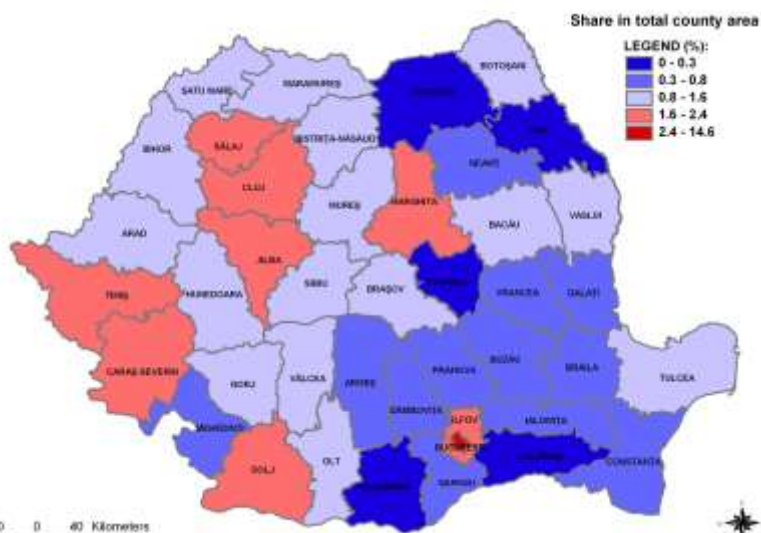Structure of the Farms with Unutilized agricultural lands, after the legal status of the farms

Distribution of Unutilized agricultural land at county level

Share of Unutilized agricultural land in total county area of the holdings

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b) Land Registration system

Responsible body for Land Registration: The National Agency for Cadaster and Real Estate Advertising (ANCPI), a public institution with legal personality, is subordinated to the Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds according to Emergency Ordinance no. 11/2014.
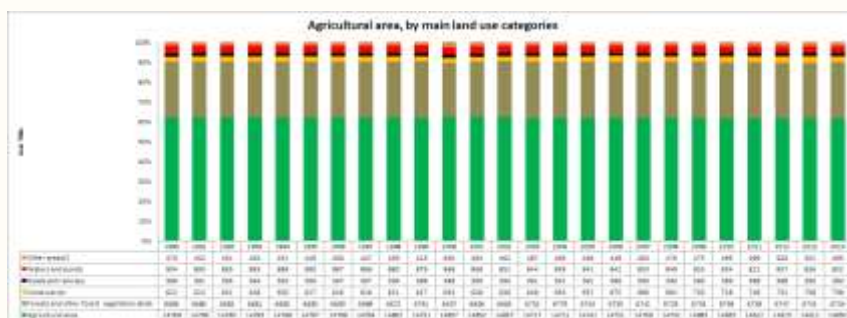
Legal frame: The activity of ANCPI is carried out on the basis of the **Law on Cadaster and Real Estate Advertising no. 7/1996,** republished, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

The general cadaster of agricultural land has not been done for more than 50 years. The last cadaster was done before 1989.

Published Cadaster information on land use categories
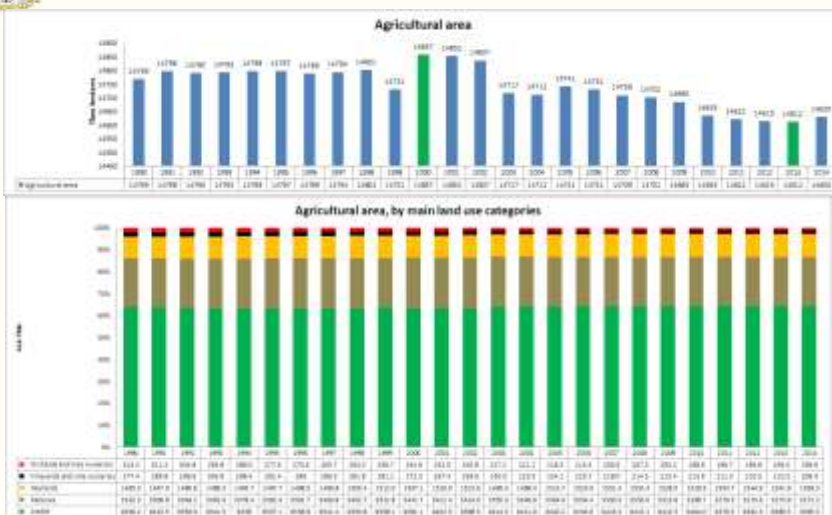

Agricultural area, by main land use categories

Source: For 1990-2006 - National Agency of Cadaster and Real Estate Advertising and or 2007-2014 period - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

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or 2007-2014 period - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

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4. Drivers of land abandonment

As land abandonment is a complex multi-dimensional process with interlinked economic, environmental, social aspects, further on are delineated **potential drivers of land abandonment**, evidenced by the regional distribution of the unutilized agricultural land:

- **Climate change**.
  Researches show that **one third of the Romania's territory** is affected by desertification, especially in the Romanian Plain, Dobrogea and southern Moldova. According to Research Institute for Pedology and Agrochemistry (ICPA), **400,000 hectares of Romania's agricultural area** are affected by the phenomenon of desertification. Half of this area is found in Oltenia. As an effective **measure** it is recommended the emergency planting of trees to provide **a protection curtain along the Dolj County.**

- **Location of the farm in mountain area –** confronting with low production capacity of the agricultural lands.
  For overcoming the risk of abandon farmers have access to *Measure 13 - Payments for areas experiencing natural constraints*. In order to address the difficulties faced by farmers in these areas, this measure will support for the maintenance of agricultural activities in the mountain area, areas facing significant natural constraints and areas facing other specific constraints

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- **Land fragmentation associated with weak land marketing**

The potential of association/sell of the land is often hampered by lack of updated inheritance documents. Even if funds were allocated for farmers who wanted to get associated and, as well, under different government programs, farmers were supposed to receive higher subsidies and other incentives in case of association, **association can not be done without cadaster of the land.** As well, land fragmentation increase contribution of variables affecting the profitability of cultivation.
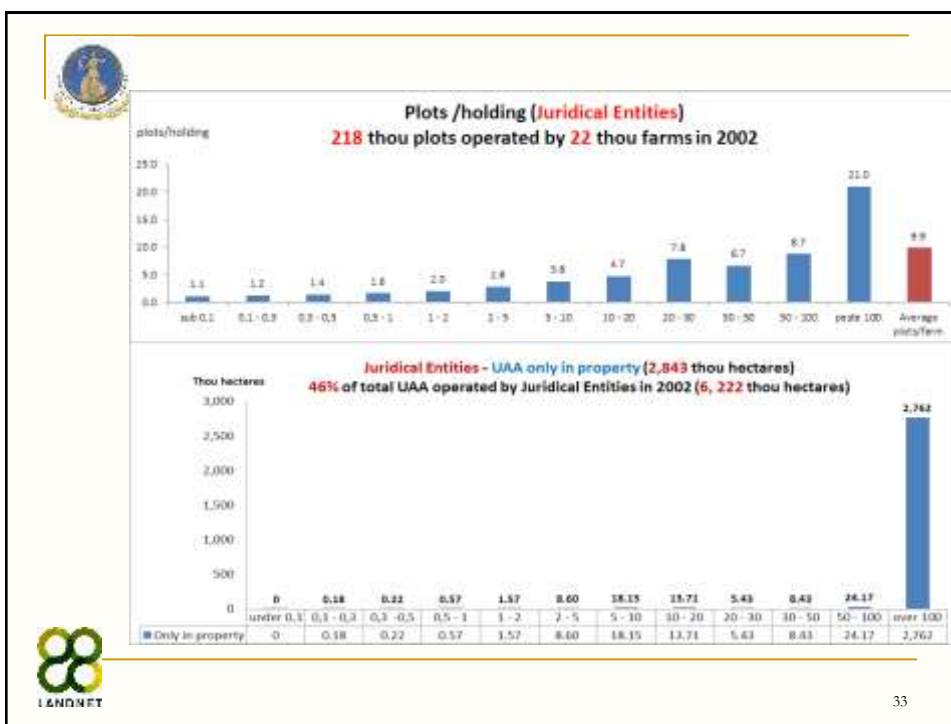
The only available information on land fragmentation comes form the 2002 RGA. As often investment willing/potential is linked to land property, further on it is presented the picture of land fragmentation correlated with the information related to the utilized agricultural area which is under direct property of the holder. For comparability to land fragmentation figure, data on property refers also to 2002.

As well, various other drivers can be added, of which:

Low Farm Income that triggers the investments potential:
The percentage of consumption from own sources in total consumption of rural farms is between 55% and 80%. According to regulations, direct payments per hectare are calculated for eligible agricultural area (more than 1 ha, distribute in parcels larger than 0.3 ha).

Low Farmer Qualification: Romanian holders/managers hold the last place in the European Union (EU) regarding professional training, having more than 80% of the farmers with "practical experience only".

Production factors, in general: large amount of labor force involved in agricultural activities, equipments, irrigation system, storage capacities

5. Supporting measures to mitigate land abandonment occurrence

❑ **Legislative frame for systematic registration work on cadaster:**

According to **the 2017 updates and amendments to the Law 7/1996**, "**until December 31, 2017, at least one cadastral office and real estate publicity office**, referred to as a **territorial office or**, as the case may be, **a public relations office**, **will be set up and will operate at the level of district court** as units without legal personality, subordinated to the territorial offices".

Main objective of latest 2017 amendments to Law7/1996: to carry out systematic registration work on cadastral sectors under the **National Cadaster and Land Book Program 2015-2023 (PNCCF**) **for free registration of all real estates (land, buildings and apartments)** in Romania in the Integrated Cadaster System and Land Book. The program is **funded from ANCPI's own revenues** - **over four billion lei,** but also from **external funds obtained through the Regional Operational Program**, amounting to more than **300 million euros**.

Supporting measures to mitigate land abandonment occurrence *(cont.)*

❑ **Agricultural Register**

According to **Law no. 54/2017** amending and supplementing the Government Ordinance no. 28/2008 on the agricultural register, staring with from **1 January 2018,** the Agricultural Register shall be **filled in** and kept **up to date** in electronic format.

❑ **Taxation:**

A new rule to **support farmers working the farmland,** but also to **"sanction" those who leave the land for two consecutive years**.

According to a **draft ordinance to complete Law no. 277/2015 regarding the Fiscal Code**, published on the website of the Ministry of Public Finance (MFP), **the owners of agricultural land will be exempted from the tax on the land**. As well, for **non-cultivated agricultural lands** for two consecutive years **the tax will be increased by the Local Council with up to 100 lei/ ha**, starting with the third year.

Area under successful land management contributing to bio diversity and high nature value farming/forestry, water quality, mitigating climate change, soil quality, avoidance of marginalization and land abandonment

Related measure		Area (hectares) under succesful land management contributing to:				
		a) bio-diversity	b) water quality	c) mitigating climate change	d) soil quality	e) avoidance of marginalization and land abandonment
211	Support for Mountain Areas	4,169,931.00	0	0	521,440.43	4,169,931.00
212	Support for Less favoured Areas – other than Mountain Areas					
214	Agri-environment payments	1,903,376.07	2,186,400.82	1,431,351.70	342,686.43	1,843,714.39
221	First afforestation of the agricultural lands	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00
TOTAL		6,073,307.07	2,186,400.82	1,431,351.70	864,176.86	6,013,645.39

Source: Ex-post evaluation of NRDP 2007-2013

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Thank You for Your Attention!

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