

Land consolidation - study of narratives – Skopje Jun2018 - preliminary results

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Agenda

Introduction / Purpose of study

Method of narrative analysis

Results

Introduction

Work plan WPLA: study into Land Consolidation practices in Europe
Interest in Land Consolidation TUM

- Initial meeting / discussion during FIG congress 2017
- Kick-off meeting 14.12.2018, in Apeldoorn->
 - Block 1: Scientific study on how LC is done (via Bachelor and Master student research projects)
 - Block 2: studying legal framework (via FAO and consultancy project)
 - Block 3: Assembling and understanding 'best practices' (via narrative analyses of senior LC managers)
- EU Cost proposal 'A EUROPEAN RESEARCH NETWORK ON LAND INITIATIVES and ScarceCITIES' – submitted April 2018

Purpose of study

- To better understand the breadth and depth of the **internal** perspectives and **experiences** with land consolidation
- To acquire **senior level** experiences, and learn from how experts dealt with difficulties and found solutions
- To synthesize such experiences in order to provide recommendations for:
 - future land consolidation projects
 - When, how and under which conditions to use land consolidation as a land management instrument

Method – Use of narrated vignettes (personal stories)

Data collection thorough -> **narrated vignettes**

Narrated vignettes is best to capture **subjective experiences and views**.

Narrated vignettes are, simply put, stories generated from a range of personal sources and **personal experiences** (Wilks 2004).

Vignettes are not necessarily about the issue of land consolidation itself, but they **describe the feelings and associations which the staff members** have once talking about land consolidation

Method – Use of narrated vignettes (personal stories)

- I first started to work in / for / with land consolidation projects in(year / place / organisation)
- The land consolidation project with which I am most satisfied is the project called in (place / location / year). I am most happy with this project because
- The issue which led to a lot of organisational and operational changes was in(year). It changed not only but also For me personally this change implied that I had to
- I can still remember working with the farmers and other stakeholders in (project name / location / year). What I still remember and what I have often talked about is the fact that, and the
- I have been back to the land consolidation project in Now it looks like All the things that we helped to design are now
- I still remember when the politics decided to(in relation to land consolidation projects).
- In relation to our work in land consolidation I used to be proud of....
- Our work in land consolidation changed dramatically when
- The people with whom I used to work in the land consolidation projects are now working at / in
.....
- Currently my work relates to
- What I always liked in land consolidation was.....
- What someone need to be able to do in land consolidation projects is
- The skills one needs to have to make land consolidation projects successful is

Approach

Request to writing a narrative to 30 European countries

20 responses received

- 18 narratives
- 2 countries do not have LC experiences (England, Scotland)
- 4 pending

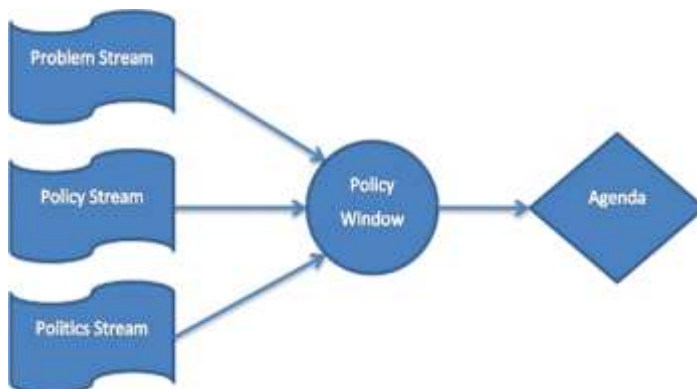
Received narrative vignettes:

Austria, Azerbaijan, Bavaria/Germany, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine)

Pending narrative vignettes:

Russia, Belgium, Armenia, France

Analytical framework – 3 streams influence success of adoption and acceptance



Analytical framework – 3 streams model

Problems

- Problem frames/framing
- Perceived cause and effects of problems

Processes

- Process steps,
- Points in time which mark fundamental changes,
- Characteristics of process sequence / work flows (i.e. how LC was/is/will be implemented)

Policy

- Main goals, and adaptaiton to goals
- Changes in politics which mark the changes
- Degree of difference between new and old goals and objectives

Policy window

- New opportunities
- Changes in fundamental values
- Discursive shifts

Results

Excerpts from narratives

It was during these years as a farmer I had a glimpse of what we refer to as "the classical village land consolidation". The local land surveyor had initiated a land consolidation in our village. In those days, the Ministry of Agriculture had an annual budget for land consolidation.

I was very young and I had just graduated university, I was working in a cadastral office in the southwestern part of the country, (...) I was fascinated by the fact that so much land could be very well managed, and for sure its productivity could be as high as possible. The only regret of those who harvested the corn was that they did not own that land. I left that institution ...

Personally the project makes me very proud, as there was a very successful end: despite massive changes of the agricultural structure and a many accompanying technical projects there were only 6 legal objections by the involved parties.

As a senior officer I was leading several land consolidation and village renewal procedures (chair of the board). During that period I became also an expert for public planning processes with broad citizen participation (bottom-up) in rural development projects and Agenda 21 activities

Problems associated with

- Persistent **fragmentation**
- Sustainability depends on **efficient** farming systems
- Inheritance **subdivision** (does not stop after LC process)
- Increase of **complexity** and adapting to new rules and adopting new procedures.
- Internal **resistance** (within organisational system; inertia to adapt to new rules; in western Europe there has been more time to adapt and adopt as compared to eastern Europe)
- External resistance (farmers refusing to accept new rules and conditions).

Process associated with

- Degree of **previous experience** in executing with LC (LC managers need to gain experience in order to understand and handle sensitivities)
- Number of years **after or before conversion** from socialists/communist systems to non-socialists land regimes (LC executed as technocratic process, thereby neglecting the socio-human issues and sensitivities – this creates resistance or mistrust)
- Degree of **perceived complexity and associated adaption / adoption of new rules** and execution forms (complexity perceived as LC was originally seen as technocratic, procedural process, and not as idiosyncratic projects each time)
- **Gradual change** from improving quality of land survey data to a more general / overall quality of information
- Degree of **State interference**
- Option of **voluntary LC** projects
- Degree and possibility of **participation**

Policy associated with

- Variation in degree of **stakes** of small and big farmers (smaller farmers thrive on fragmented parts; big farmers thrive with consolidating/merging plots)
- **Influence** of external stakeholders
- Necessity to have a good **start with pilot** and creation of support by stakeholders
- Necessity to be acquainted with **local sensitivities**
- Necessity to be acquainted with negative implications and **connotations of use of certain words**

Policy windows

- Policy windows arise if:
 - the LC project 'ignites' further economic development projects, e.g. new (integrated) rural development (D), recreational areas in a municipality (AU)
 - Start to allow or increase 'voluntary' (bottom-up) activities, incl. voluntary LC projects

In addition, some other external drivers generated policy windows for different kinds of LC projects:

- A shift in professional focus (from emphasizing quality of surveying to quality of GI)
- A shift in educational focus (including negotiation / social / entrepreneurial skills alongside technical skills in formal curricula)

Country specific issues

- Countries are in different stages of LC adaptation (e.g. length of historical developments and gradual revision in LC goals, practices)
- 'Modernisation' of land consolidation occurred in some countries
- Many countries experienced major organisational changes, but not all countries had significant legal changes
 - *Juridical changes have been almost non-existent.* (FI)
 - *required amendments to the regulations of land acquisition, exchange and land consolidation have been drafted by now, and the draft act is currently in the legislative proceeding of the Parliament* (ES)
- *a comparison of more than 750 Bavarian municipalities shows that there is a significant progress of 15% after a land consolidation project* (D/BY)

Success associated with...

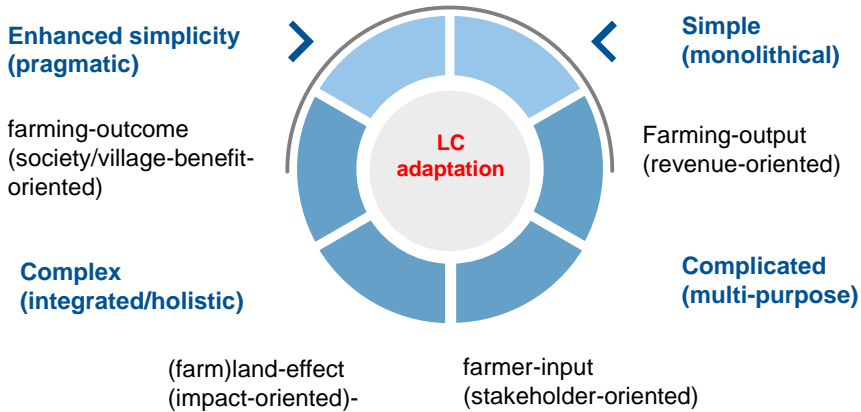
- Opportunities and legal recognition of voluntary LC
 - In some countries this existed already for a long time (D), in others this is only possible recently (e.g. NL)
- Project area not too big: 200 participants and 2000 ha or 500 parcels (LT)
- (Low) Number of objections (AU)
- Land banking and financial incentives
- Need for LC to be connected to multiple policy agendas (in cl. rural development, spatial justice, integrated land and water management)

Practical recommendations

- LC requires:
 - *High ability to compromise*
 - *The art of communication by the responsible persons*
 - *Deep interest in all people living and working in the area*
 - *Competence to deal with people, to motivate and inspire them*
 - *Never to be discouraged from setbacks, be open for new challenges and have a personal vision.*
 - *Expropriation; expropriation is the highest level of good governance*

Steep learning curve to become land consolidator; experience is significant; there is no obvious curriculum

New lessons / new insights through narratives



Next steps

- Incorporate additional narratives
- Synthesize key personal perceptions and convictions
- Consultation with scientific and professional community
- Deriving critical success and failure criteria
- Re-construct LC indicators / concepts / paradigms
- Scientific article(s):
 - Contributions of experience in land consolidation
 - De facto versus de jure land consolidation – evidence from Europe

Block 1: Scientific study on how LC is done (via Bachelor and Master student research projects)

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – TUM – looking at LC in Bayern

- Comparing theory and praxis
- Learning from practitioners
- Testing praxis through in-depth interviews and work observations
- Cases:
 - Oberbayern
 - Schwaben
 - Oberpfalz

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – looking at aspects

- Conformity to legal framework – room for discretionary space?
- Use of software tools and types of algorithms
- Communication and social methods employed for stimulating participation
- Manner of Information exchange with land owners and land users
- Ways of measuring progress, success

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

Legal framework in Bayern provides different LC legal possibilities (Regelflurbereinigung, § 37 FlurbG ; Freiwilliger Landtausch, §§ 103a-i FlurbG ; Beschleunigtes Zusammenlegungsverfahren (BZV), § 91 FlurbG ; Vereinfachtes Verfahren, § 86 FlurbG ; Unternehmensverfahren, § 87 FlurbG

In practice **each region makes different choices**, and frequency of instruments differs highly (also due to topography, types of villages, socio-economic status)

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

- Timeframe of instruments:
 - In general regular LC (Regelflurbereinigung) **takes longer** than prescribed (i.e. 6-10 years), due to changes in human resources and stakeholders in the course of the project.
 - Unternehmensverfahren (e.g. for road re-construction) – 5-12 years in theory – 3-5 years in praxis (Kernwegenetzen) – hence **shorter**

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

- Software applied:
 - **Microsoft**
 - **DAVID** - LC specific software (Firma Riemer)
 - **Amtliches Grund- und Liegenschaftsbuch (ALGB)** - to import data from land registers
 - **Haushalts- und Kostenrechnung (HKR)**: Program for financial (re-) calculations
 - **K2-Liste**: for Dokumentation and monitoring of planning

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

- Ways of communicating and sharing information with stakeholders:
 - Regular **postmail**
 - **Public announcements** in municipal news, public boards, newspapers,
 - **Meetings of LC participants/beneficiaries**
(Teilnehmersammlungen)
 - **Negotiations** (Verhandlungen)
 - **Information papers** (Infobriefe)
 - **Cloud** - for the municipalities and other public agencies involved
 - **Direct contact** (not being negotiations)

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

Occurring conflicts during execution of LC processes:

- Equal pay: Different ideas what is the **same value**
- Money / Financing: amount of **own contribution** of the individual participants
- Area / Land deduction: how much **space deducted** from each individual to implement the measures of the community of participants
- Very many land owners: **Differing opinions** of land owners/users about land consolidation
- The refusal of individuals **(not) to participate** in the process
- Land **use conflicts**

Generally these conflicts are addressed through information, communication and timely participation.

Bachelor Anna Guggemos – preliminary results

Current or frequent bottlenecks in the execution:

- The current **high land prices**: it is very difficult for the TG to acquire land
- **Nature conservation** specifications: you can no longer rearrange the land in the entire land consolidation area
- Fears of **overpaying** or high deductions
- The feeling of some participants **no longer be able to decide** on their own land.
- Different attitude of owner and tenant over the **benefits** of land consolidation

Next steps

Additional Bachelor and Master studies from other European countries looking at specific cases:

-> In progress / in preparation

-> still seeking contacts with other universities