

The Potential of Multi-Purpose Land Consolidation in Eastern Europe

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SUMMARY

Many countries in Western Europe have a long tradition for the implementation of land consolidation projects. In most Western European countries, land consolidation has in the last decades developed into a multi-purpose instrument. Multi-purpose land consolidation means that one land consolidation project has more specific objectives to pursue. Agricultural development, the traditional objective of land consolidation, often remains the purpose in some parts of the project area while in other parts of the project area there are other aims, often related to nature restoration, improved environment, climate change adaptation and mitigation or construction of large-scale infrastructure.

Land consolidation and land banking instruments started to develop in Central and Eastern Europe after 1990 and most of the countries have introduced land consolidation while only few already have ongoing national land consolidation programmes. The introduction of land consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe has been driven by the political aim to facilitate agricultural development by reducing land fragmentation and facilitating a structural development towards larger farms. The countries in Eastern Europe that already have operational national land consolidation programmes, i.e., North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye, are in a very favorable situation because this will allow these countries to apply their land consolidation instruments in a multi-purpose approach in the future.

Land consolidation instruments applied in a multi-purpose approach have a high potential in the countries in Eastern Europe when the scope is broadened from only agricultural development to an integrated approach where agricultural development is facilitated in some parts of the project area and the land use is changed in other parts in connection with the implementation of public initiated projects on nature restoration, improved environment, climate change adaptation and mitigation etc.

Multi-purpose land consolidation is more complex than the traditional facilitation of agricultural development but it also adds new strong political arguments for the introduction of land consolidation instruments in the countries and ensuring their sustainability

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