

The Role of Spatial Plans in the Preparation of Land Consolidation in Hungary

Eszter HÖNA, Hungary

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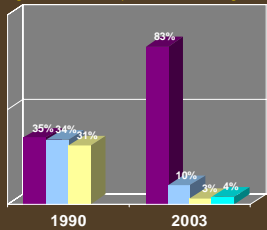
1. THE NEED OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

- By the influence of the privatisation during the transition the Hungarian land tenure structure became subdivided.
 Because of this
 - the major part of the small properties can not be cultivated economically,
 - it is hard to sell or hire them, and
 - in many cases they can not reach the lower limit (0.3 acres) of the agricultural support in Union.

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1. THE NEED OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

Change of Landownership Structure Figure 1



Privatisation process Figure 2



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1. THE NEED OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

- The pressing factors of land consolidation became stronger after EU Accession
 - The National Development Plan and its operational programmes contain a lot of infrastructure investments, which can improve demands of land consolidation.
 - The measures of the national rural policy documents also increase the interests of stakeholders to consolidate their lands (agricultural investments, afforestation of agricultural land, agri-environment, support for Less Favoured Areas etc.).

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2. CONDITION SYSTEM OF SUCCESSFUL LAND CONSOLIDATION

- There is not any legal regulation referring to land consolidation in Hungary.
- The National Land Consolidation Strategy has been finished in the summer of 2004, and it is still under negotiations.
- According to the Strategy four priorities were settled to implement Hungarian land consolidation.
 - The legal background of land consolidation
 - Establishing the co-ordinating institution, modernisation of the related institutional system
 - Creating the financial and other conditions
 - Public acceptance and preparation, strengthening the awareness

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3. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN BASING LAND CONSOLIDATION

- Land consolidation process needs a lot of information about the features of a certain area, which can be produced by making the spatial plans.
 - soil endowment,
 - relief features,
 - land utilisation,
 - production-structure,
 - land ownership,
 - land property structure,
 - efficiency of production,
 - protected areas,
 - infrastructure conditions,
 - development suggestions of the area

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3. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN BASING LAND CONSOLIDATION

- What kind of a spatial plan can base land consolidation?

Local plans

- Land consolidation's scale is connected rather to local plan's scale.
- The land use plan is made for the whole administrative area of the settlement, so it involves the land use suggestions for the agricultural area too.
- But in the local land use plans the importance is the planning of the built up area and it has mainly protecting elements and regulation for the agricultural area.
- The detailed features of the land consolidation do not appear directly in the local plans, but they tend to give a lot of information needed for land consolidation.

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3. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN BASING LAND CONSOLIDATION

Plans for micro-region

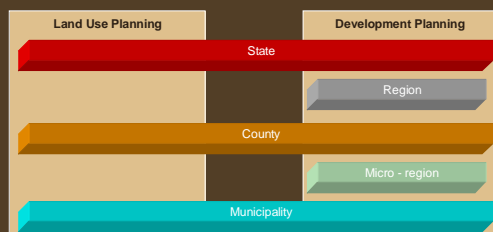
- Both international and Hungarian experiences show that land consolidation can be made effectively by being integrated into the rural and regional planning, so this planning level is the micro-region.
- The micro-region has become stronger as a planning unit during the decentralisation of the development tools and tasks in Hungary. Under the modification of the Regional Development and Planning Act in 2004 a new regional institution, the micro-regional development council was established.
- In the Hungarian planning system the regional development policy and the spatial planning are not integrated in the same planning process.

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3. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN BASING LAND CONSOLIDATION

Hungarian Planning System

Figure 3



- So we miss the type of land use plan on the micro-regional level

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3. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN BASING LAND CONSOLIDATION

Plans for micro-region

- Land consolidation can be based by such a micro-regional plan which integrates the development and land use elements at the same time.
- The structure plan is used for this complex purpose in the international planning practice. The structure plan is such a kind of planning tool, which integrates the development and land use elements in the certain area. It has an important criterion that is not a static document, but it is useful for managing a planning process and it is based on a participatory and negotiated methodology.
- The micro-regional structure plan is suitable to prepare land consolidation if it contains the required elements.

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4. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN FINANCING LAND CONSOLIDATION

- As land consolidation is a very costly procedure that is why the member-states of the Union make efforts to involve union financial resources and they encourage the new member-states to do the same.
- There is not independent central budget for land consolidation in Hungary, and we have no Union financial resources supporting land consolidation until 2007.
- In the present situation one of the possibilities is to co-ordinate the financial resources during spatial planning activity:
 - to co-ordinate the land consolidation demands and the plan making process at the local level,
 - during financing the regional and rural development plan-making process on micro-regional level
 - to give a possibility to make the basic work of land consolidation during the various rural development projects. There seems to be a good occasion in the framework of the LEADER measure in preparing strategy of LEADER programme.
 - to make pilot projects to improve methodological materials used for planning practice with the co-operation of the different fields (land management, regional development, rural development)

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5. THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANS IN THE PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

- A plan containing rational and professional elements and based on participatory and negotiated methodology has to concentrate first of all on the introduction of the possibilities implied in land consolidation.
- Such kind of plan can motivate stakeholders in land consolidation.

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6. CONCLUSIONS

- Land consolidation is the most important issue of rural development.
- The finance of land consolidation should use all subsidies from European Union, central and local governmental and private sphere.
- With the establishment of micro –regional development councils the co-ordination of the regional and rural planning and project management could be more effective.
- It would be necessary to use a new planning instrument –structure planning- in micro-region level, which could integrate the development initiatives (projects) with the sustainable demand (land use) of the area.
- The method of structure plan is suitable to prepare land consolidation if it contains the required elements. The structure plan based on participatory and negotiated methodology could motivate stakeholders in land consolidation.
- The fact, that the micro-regional governments have decentralised financial funds, might result, that they could handle flexibly their special problems and could allow to finance such kind of projects (land consolidation), which are not yet supported by governmental budget.

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