

LAND FRAGMENTATION AND LAND CONSOLIDATION IN HUNGARY

Dr. Géza Kőszegi

Head

Dr. Gábor Remetey-Fülöpp

Senior Counsellor

Department of Lands and Mapping, Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development

Enikő Kovács

Senior Counsellor

Institute for Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing

In Hungary the land ownership and the land use has changed dramatically over the last 12 years due to the large-scale land compensation and privatisation. This resulted social, economical and ecological consequences, which are hampered the viability and competitiveness of the family farming and has some negative effects especially in less favoured and environmentally sensitive or endangered areas.

About 80% of the 7,8 million hectares agricultural area is suitable for farming. By the execution of the Compensation Act and the further land privatisation of the former co-operatives' the land ownership structure has been totally modified. Over 5,1 million ha area suffered by fragmentation whereas 2,6 million parcels have been created, shared between estimated 1,8 million new owners.

As a result of the land privatisation, the previous farming-on-large-scale was replaced by the farming based on private ownership, characterised nowadays by inadequate property field size for sustainable and competitive family farming. Based on the 2000 Agricultural Census, almost 70% of the private farms operating on one hectare land properties as a maximum, while the average property size is between 1-10 ha. According to the Census 2000, there are 958 000 private farms and 8200 farming companies in Hungary. The sizes of the properties belonging to farming companies are between 500 and more than 10 000 ha.

To ensure the transparency and effectiveness of the land registration as needed by the market-oriented economy and the Acquis communautaire made it necessary to improve the public service provided by the Land Administration via its Land Office Network (LON). A series of relevant EU supported IT development projects (TAKAROS, TAKARNET, META) are shortly mentioned. The importance of the land-related information in the national spatial data infrastructure was realised and acknowledged on governmental level and discussed also by the first ever EU Cadastre Workshop held in Budapest last year.

The German-Hungarian TAMA project on the computer aided land consolidation (1993-1999) and TAMA 2 a pilot on the integration of land consolidation into rural development programme (1999-2000) is introduced. As by product, also the Bill on Land Consolidation has been drafted and relevant vocational training of the LON has been started partly in international co-operation (OLLO, LIME etc.).

An update is given on the very recent development in legislation around the land issue (amendments of the Land Act and the Act of Land delivering and Land Managing Committees, the new Act on National Land Fund, and the directives of the Land Tenure Policy). The institutional development is driven by the tasks as required by the EU accession, listed in the Hungarian NPAA Action Plan updated in January 2002.

Finally some new activities is shortly mentioned:

- Recent establishment of the National Land Fund institution
 - Measures to eliminate of the properties having shared ownership
 - Completion of the FAO supported „Forestry and Rural Development Plan of the Buják Region” project
 - FAO TCP proposal on the use of land consolidation in frequently flooded areas
 - Dutch-Hungarian project on the Practice of Integrated Rural Development having land related actions
 - Land tenure policy implementation and SDI support in the further development of the Vásárhelyi Plan
 - Lands and mapping contribution to the elaboration of the international Tisza Agreement
- Launch of the project on „Property rights and land market development project for EU Candidate and Balkan Countries” supported by the World Bank