



Working Party on  
Land Administration



# Land Consolidation Study

## Preliminary results

Walter de Vries, Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany

Konttinen Kalle, Maanmittäuslaitos (MML), Finland

Rik Wouters, WPLA / Kadaster, Netherlands

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## Outline presentation

- Introduction
- Purpose of study
- Method of narrative analysis
- Results

# Introduction



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# Introduction



## Purpose of study

- To better understand the **internal** perspectives and **experiences** with land consolidation
- To acquire **senior level** experiences from LC-experts
- To learn 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

## Introduction

Program of Work WPLA 2018-19: study into Land Consolidation practices in Europe

- Initial discussions during FIG conference May 2017
- Kick-off meeting December 2017 in Amsterdam
  - Block 1: Scientific study on how LC is done (TUM: BSc and MSc students)
  - Block 2: Studying legal framework (FAO and consultancy project)
  - **Block 3: Assembling and understanding ‘best practices’ (WPLA/TUM)**

## Method – Use of narrated vignettes

- ❑ Data collection thorough -> **narrated vignettes** (personal stories)
- ❑ Narrated vignettes is best to capture **subjective experiences and views**
- ❑ Narrated vignettes are stories generated from a range of **personal experiences** (Wilks 2004)
- ❑ Vignettes are not necessarily about the issue of land consolidation itself only, but they **describe the feelings and associations which the LC-experts** 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 31 European countries

**25 responses** received

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

### **Received narrative vignettes:**

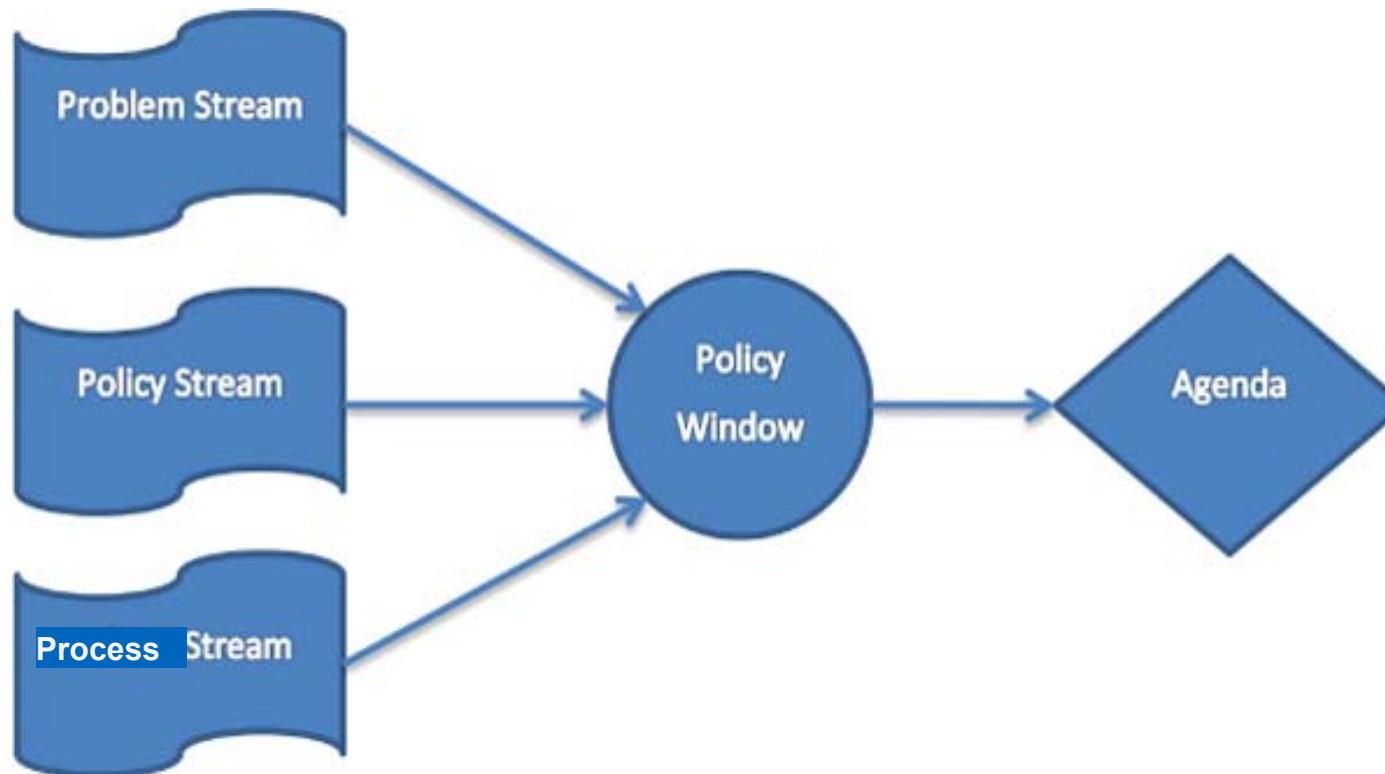
Austria, Azerbaijan, Germany, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine)

### **Pending narrative vignettes:**

Russia, Belgium, Armenia, France

## Analytical framework

3 streams influence success of adoption and acceptance



# Preliminary 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 organisations responsible for LC (Eastern Europe)
- External resistance (farmers refusing to accept new rules and conditions)
- etc

## 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 quality of information
- Degree of **State interference**
- Option of **voluntary LC** projects
- Degree and possibility of **participation by stakeholders**

## 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 (DE), recreational areas in a municipality (AT)
- Start to allow **'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 (social, economic) information in general)
- A **shift in educational focus** (including negotiation / social / entrepreneurial skills alongside technical skills in formal curricula)



## Success associated with...

- Voluntary LC but based on a legal framework
  - In some countries this existed already for a long time (DE), in others this is only possible recently (e.g. NL)
- Legal framework in place (many countries)
- Project area not too big: 200 participants and 2000 ha or 500 parcels (LT)
- (Low) Number of objections (AT)
- Land banking and financial incentives and subsidies
- 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:

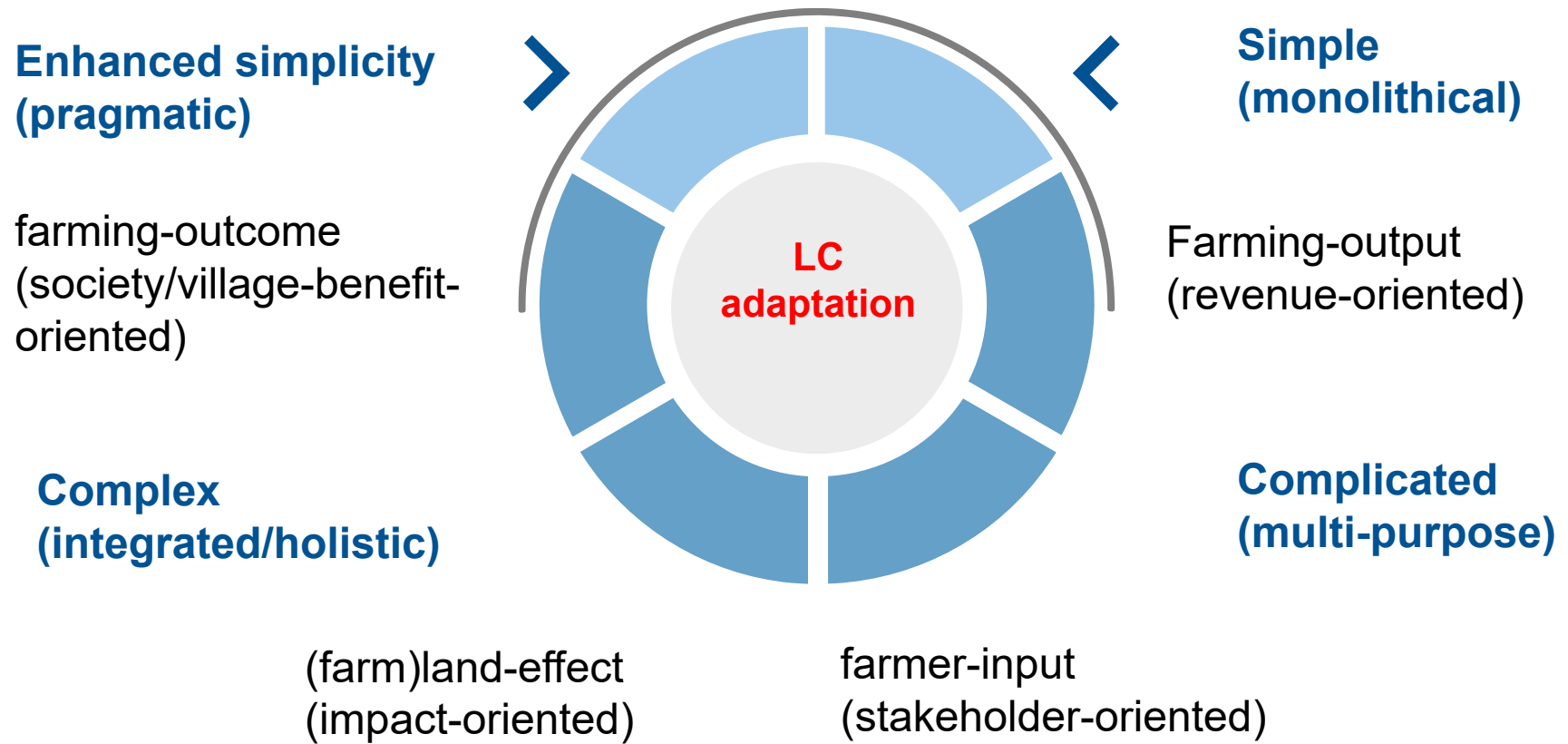
- *High ability to compromise*
- *The art of communication by the responsible persons*
- *Deep interest in all people living and working in the area*
- *Competence to deal with people, to motivate and inspire them*
- *Never to be discouraged from setbacks, be open for new challenges and have a personal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

Steep learning curve to become land consolidator

Experience is crucial

NB: there is no obvious curriculum

New lessons / new insights through narratives



## Next steps

- Consultation with scientific and professional community
- Deriving critical success and failure criteria
- Formulate good practices and recommendations
- Re-construct LC indicators / concepts / paradigms
- Scientific articles and papers:
  - Contributions of experience in land consolidation
  - De facto versus de jure land consolidation – evidence from Europe
- Publications and presentations:
  - Paper 11<sup>th</sup> Session WPLA in Geneva Feb 2019
  - Paper for the World Bank poverty conference in Washington March 2019
  - Paper for FIG2019 Working week in Hanoi May 2019



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Thank you for your attention!

