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.

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.).

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

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,
- climate features,
- land utilization,
- production structure,
- land ownership,
- land property structure,
- efficiency of production,
- protected areas,
- infrastructure conditions,
- development suggestions of the area
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 neither 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 plan 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 information needed for 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 the planning level of the micro-region.
- The micro-region has become stronger as a planning unit during the decentralization of the development and tasks of 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 processes.

In the present situation one of the possibilities is to coordinate the financial resources during the planning activity:
- so we miss the type of land use plan on the micro-regional level.

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- In the Hungarian planning system the regional development policy and the spatial planning are not integrated in the same planning processes.

- The micro-regional structure plan is suitable to prepare land consolidation if it contains the required elements.

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Planning 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 the complex purposes 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 participatory and negotiated methodology.
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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 spheres.

- 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 founds, might result, that they could handle locally their special problems and could allow to finance such kind of projects (land consolidation), which are not yet supported by governmental budget.