

# From Land Reform to Land Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe

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## SUMMARY

The countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) began a remarkable transition from centrally planned economies towards market economies in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell. Land reforms were high on the political agenda in most of the countries. In some countries, land reforms resulted in a complete break-up of the large scale collective and state farms while in other countries the farm structures fundamentally remain the same. In many countries in the region, land reforms have resulted in farm structures dominated by small and fragmented farms which are not competitive in the globalized economy. A recent PhD study has explored the correlation between the land reform approaches applied and the outcome in form of farm structures and the fragmentation of both land ownership and land use. The results of this study are explained and discussed in the paper. Most of the Central and Eastern European countries have during the quarter of a Century, which has passed since the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 introduced land consolidation instruments to address the structural problems with small farm sizes and excessive land fragmentation. A second recent study analysis the experiences from introduction of land consolidation instruments in 25 CEE countries and provides the first full overview. Seven of the countries already have ongoing national land consolidation programs while land consolidation instruments have been introduced in further 13 countries, which not yet have an operational program. It can be expected that additional four to five CEE countries will have ongoing programs within the next four to five years. While land consolidation instruments are developing in the region, land banking instruments, as tools to support land consolidation programs, have largely failed in the region. The paper reviews the experiences with land consolidation and land banking in CEE and provides lessons learned as well as perspectives for the future.