Trends in permanent grassland cover in Latvia in the period from 2007 to 2016

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Permanent grasslands in Latvia

Aim
To evaluate changes and trends of permanent grasslands cover

Materials and methods
The spatial data of Integrated Administration and Control System from Rural Support Service:
• Field blocks 2007-2016 (declared areas)
• Field parcels 2013-2016 (supported areas)
Data of semi-natural grasslands habitats from Nature Conservation Agency (2014)

Spatial analysis in GIS
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

Permanent grassland
(semi-natural habitats)

Permanent grassland
(improved grasslands, ...)

Sown (temporary) grasslands

n.d.
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

.. some statistics
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

.. some statistics
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

.. some statistics

M10.1: Agri-environment payments
- M10.1.1: Maintaining Biodiversity in Grasslands (MBG)
- M10.1.2: Environmentally friendly integrated Horticulture (EFIH)
- M10.1.3: Stubble field in winter period (SFWP)
- M10.1.4: Environmentally friendly nectar plant growing

M11: Organic Farming (DOF)

![Graph showing statistics]

- OF: 176,030 ha
- MBG: 34,718 ha
- SFWP: 56,489 ha
- EAFRD, million EUR

Beneficiaries 2007-2013

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Results

Changes of total area

Area, ha

Permanent grasslands in Latvia

Results 2013-2016

658 734 ha - total area of permanent grasslands in 4 years

465 581 ha - total area in 2016

286 544 ha - total area of permanent grasslands all 4 years

31 022 ha - total area of supported semi-natural habitats

71%

43%

5%
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

Results

• The total areas of permanent grasslands is «confused» due to dynamic changes even in last 4 years. Important changes are related to – grassland abandonment, improving of grasslands and transformation into arable land.

• Most part of permanent grasslands areas formed from sown grasslands

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Results/Cognitions

• The second most important form of permanent grasslands transformation for last years was fallows (in 2015 – 22 598 ha!, average in 2014 and 2016 - 5 914 ha)

• The results show that permanent grassland is short intermediate stage before transformation to arable land (153 943 ha; 23%)

• 1 390 ha (2.6%) of semi-natural grasslands was transformed to arable land in last 4 years

• Spatial analysis show that grasslands transformation to arable land are evenly typical for all Latvia
Permanent grasslands in Latvia

Results

low env. constr.

intermediate env. constr.

strong env. constr.

Total area, ha

- Permanent grasslands
- Semi-natural habitats
- Supported by measure MBDG
- Transformed grasslands to arable land

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Cognitions/Conclusions

• Since 2008, it is required to ensure a minimum livestock density (LU/ha) and a defined revenue threshold (EUR/ha) to receive the area payments.

• From 2015 greening conditions have been introduced. Significantly that due to implementation of *greening* conditions permanent grasslands were not protected from conversion into the fallows.

• Important changes in the management conditions of permanent grasslands (incl. semi-natural habitats) from 2015: mulching/shredding not allowed any more, no mowing start date, higher LU/ha etc.

• Targeted policy (support) for economically most competitive (intensive) farms in the crop sector, respectively, an increase in demand for arable land.
Permanent grasslands in Latvia – influencing factors

- 1 - 5 Cattle house (decreasing 64%)
- 6 - 10 Cattle house (decreasing 50%)

Thousands


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Thank you for attention!