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Dynamics of livestock farming in extensive livestock territories: what processes are going on?

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War and transition: livestock farming systems trends, roles and goals in Croatia

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Croatian livestock sector endured two huge turnovers – war (1990-1995) and post-war transition (1996-2010). The biggest drop in livestock numbers happened in 1992 and continuously dropping until 1998 that could be contributed to the war events. In 1991 National cattle breeding program was established (still in force). Number of cattle was still dropping until 2002 after that increase was obvious till 2006 with continuous fall after which could be contributed to transition. The similar trends could be observed for sheep, pig and poultry populations. The fact is we never reached pre-war numbers again. Agriculture and livestock production had very important role in pre-war Croatia and was supposed to play important role further more. Instead of that they almost collapsed. In 2000 there was 3.16 million ha of arable land in use but in 2010 there was 1.33 million ha still in use. In spite of proclaimed goals of livestock sector intensification and concentration and in spite of huge amount of money invested, Croatian livestock sector stayed mostly in small households (almost 80% of cattle on farms with less than 11 cows). In last decade we also witnessed expected fall in number of households involved in agricultural production (in 2003 we had almost 60,000 households delivering milk and in 2010 only 17,000 left). Considering global trends of intensification and concentration and in the same time viability of production we came to the crossroad (crux mortis of agriculture). Less people is involved in agricultural production earning less money for their hard work and more people living in the city's earning more money wanting to pay less for food but forgetting how hard it is to produce it. Some authors came to conclusion that smaller production units are more flexible because of their lower fixed costs but still forcing concentration in this turbulent time.

Dynamics of livestock farming in extensive livestock territories: what processes are going on?

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The dynamics of family livestock farming in extensive livestock farming territories are crucial for the future of these territories. Indeed livestock farming is an activity anchored in a society, with its market sectors and its local environment. It provides products and multiple services: social and economic dynamics, desirable landscape, biodiversity. Family livestock farming has to reshape itself, and face up to local factors of change such as demographic evolution or land pressure and global factors like climate or market. The purpose of our communication is to shed light on the processes of transformation of family livestock farming, based on a comparative analysis carried out on 8 extensive livestock farming territories: 2 in South America, 1 in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2 in the Mediterranean area and 3 in the French mountains. We propose a transversal reading of these processes based on three complementary considerations: the link between family and livestock farming, the link of the farm to space and finally the link of the livestock farm to market sectors. This reading informs us on the diversity of adaptation dynamics of family livestock farms. In all the territories we can demonstrate the influence of two driving forces for change on the construction of this diversity of family livestock farm adaptation dynamics. These driving forces are globalisation and territorialisation. We propose a stylised representation of this and discuss the tensions and/or complementarities which this diversity of dynamics creates within the territories.