

Poverty and Social Impact Assessment (PSIA) of
Systematic Registration on Rural Romania

Final Report

June 2016

ACRONYMS

AJOFM	County Agency for Employment
ANCPI	National Agency for Cadaster and Land Registration
BCPI	Bureau for Cadaster and Land Registration (local branch of OCPI)
BTO	Back to Office Report
CESAR	Complementing EU Support for Agricultural Restructuring
ID	Identity document
OCPI	Office for Cadaster and Land Registration (county branch of ANCPI)
OV	Other vulnerable groups or respondents
PSIA	Poverty and Social Impact Analysis
UAT	Territorial Administrative Unit
VMG	Guaranteed Minimum Income

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Preface

In this preface, the World Bank task teams explain the background, modalities, output and outcome of the Technical Assistance (TA) Impact of Rural Land Registration on Vulnerable Population in Romania (P150499). The TA resulted in the preparation of the report *Systematic Registration and Vulnerable Groups in Rural Romania: Observations and recommendations*. The report summarizes observations made in 6 rural administrative areas (UATs), four of which were targeted by Systematic Registration. The report also presents recommendations on how to increase participation of vulnerable groups in systematic registration.

Background

The World Bank support to the Land Registration Sector in Romania has been programmatic and continuous since 1998. The General Cadastre and Land Registration Project (1998 – 2003) supported the establishment of an efficient system for securing land titles and a cost-effective mechanism for land transactions. The most significant result was the institutional reform from a dual agency land administration system to a single land administration agency - in line with international good practice. The National Agency for Cadastre and Real Estate Publicity (ANCPI) began operating in January 2005.

The follow-on Complementing EU Support for Agricultural Restructuring Project (CESAR, 2009 – 2013) was to facilitate first registration to the land book, and it resulted in the establishment of a methodology for a systematic land registration activity. However, during project implementation ANCPI faced setbacks in securing budget allocation for systematic registration. In 2013, CESAR had to be suspended due to the inability of government to fund the project. Despite this major setback, ANCPI sought to restore its ability to pursue reforms and land registration campaigns that would enhance its daily operations in a financially sustainable, efficient, customer-oriented, and socially inclusive manner.

In this context, the Government of Romania requested Bank support through a Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) task, the Real Estate System Modernization technical assistance (TA, P145716). The RAS TA provided technical assistance to the government to reform the entire real property sector. The TA helped ANCPI to initiate significant reforms in its policy, regulatory, and institutional framework. The TA supported the preparation of a draft Strategy for Systematic and Sporadic Registration, a draft National Program for Cadastre and Land Book, and a draft Application for EU financing of a major Rural Land Registration Program during the EU's Programmatic Period 2012-2020. The First Fiscal Effectiveness and Growth Development Policy Loan (FEG-DPL I, 2014) supported parallel measures to improve the operational and financial independence of ANCPI. In addition, both the RAS TA and the DPL supported legal reform to draft a new Cadastre and Real Estate Registration law. The upcoming FEG-DPL II will continue to support the sector in regards to the implementation of the new law and progress with the National Program for Cadastre and Land Book.

This PSIA was initiated in April 2014 as a complementary activity to the RAS TA, with the aim to increase ANCPI's capacity to include vulnerable groups in the systematic land registration program and mitigate potential negative social impacts. ANCPI had piloted systematic registration under CESAR and was planning on scaling up the work under the EU program (2012 – 2020) funded Systematic Land Registration Program.

The 2012-2020 Systematic Land Registration Program was expected to cover more than a third of Romania's rural administrative areas (UATs). The overall economic impact of this program was expected to be positive and significant. However, it was also recognized that specific measures needed to be adopted to ensure that the rights of vulnerable groups (especially those of rural Roma communities) would be duly registered and to monitor the impact of real property rights registration on these populations.

Under the PSIA, the Bank and ANCPI agreed to: 1) Create a typology of vulnerable groups in Romania; 2) Conduct field surveys in UATs targeted by the CESAR project to investigate the impact of systematic registration on vulnerable groups; 3) Assess the potential impact of the 2016-2020 Systematic

Land Registration Program; and 4) Prepare guiding tools and methodologies to identify and address the challenges of vulnerable groups in the Land Registration Program.

Execution of work

The PSIA work was contracted out to the Romanian firm Metro Media Transilvania.

In line with the Terms of Reference, a mixed methods approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative methods (i.e. household survey, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions). Quantitative analysis enabled comparisons between subgroups and by key variables (e.g. income levels, counties, project vs. non project localities, etc.). Qualitative analysis generated rich detail and insights into underlying issues not accessible through survey work.

Fieldwork was carried out in February 2015. Six UATs were sampled in two counties. Four UATs were drawn from a list of CESAR's target UATs. Two UATs, which were not targeted by the project were also included for comparison purposes. The sample included 480 households, comprising of 360 households from Roma groups and 120 households from other vulnerable groups defined as disabled persons, illiterate persons, elderly persons, convicts or indicted persons.

A draft report was submitted to the Bank in March, 2015. The report was reviewed by the Bank, the ANCPI, and a short term consultant (STC, Nils Junge, who was selected for this task given his past experience with PSIAs. Based on the reviews, significant revisions were requested of the contractor. Among others, Metro Media Transilvania was requested to include additional analyses, clarify the main findings, and make the report more readable and accessible.

A revised version of the report was submitted to the Bank in September 2015. While substantially improved, the revised report still required further work and the Bank decided to hire Mr. Junge to work with the Bank team and Metro Media Transilvania in the preparation of a final report.

The final report was received by the Bank in e October 2015.

Report's finding and recommendations

The report provides valuable information on the participation of vulnerable groups in the CESAR project, as well as recommendations on how to improve the participation of vulnerable groups in systematic land registration. These findings and recommendations will help ANCPI ensure that vulnerable groups are included in future systematic land registration work. The report is particularly timely as ANCPI is now scaling up systematic registration under the 2016-2020 Systematic Land Registration Program.

Among others, the report shows that:

1. *Limited knowledge* – Public information campaigns have a positive effect, but appear to be reaching a limited number of vulnerable households. In some areas, knowledge about land registration and procedures involved is extremely low. More intensive awareness campaigns are needed when implementing the National Program for Cadastre and Land Book and the EU financed Rural Land Registration Program's systematic registration campaigns.
2. *Limited participation* – Where CESAR was fully implemented, 27 percent of households still have no property documents, and 54 percent have ownership titles. Only a minority of respondents felt the project helped their household. This is a thought provoking, yet also questionable, finding in terms of such a large share of rural population not having property documents. Such should not be possible against what the Bank team and ANCPI knows. The finding underlines the necessity to systematically analyze the impact of every closing systematic registration campaign. Under the EU financed Rural Land Registration Program, this type of analysis will be covered by the Social Monitoring activity.

3. *Lack of identification documents –Constraints inhibiting registration* – The most common reasons given for why people did not obtain property documents were lack of money and the fact that municipal authorities did not issue documents required in the process. Another issue inhibiting land registration is the lack of identification documents by beneficiaries. The matter was addressed by the CESAR project together with local authorities, but going forward it is important to mainstream more strongly ID documentation to the systematic registration campaign.
4. *Willingness to pay to obtain proof of ownership is quite low* – The majority of respondents declared being unwilling to pay to obtain proof of ownership. Therefore, without external support, interest in land registration among is likely to remain low. This finding relates to the access and costs of notarial certifications, as well as inheritance and transfer taxes that have jointly made rural land registration unfeasible for an average family. The matter is addressed in the systematic registration process, but the finding (again) highlights the fact that the matter should also be addressed in the sporadic (transaction by transaction) registration process.
5. *Short-term benefits of systematic registration* – Systematic registration appears to help vulnerable groups registering an address, entering into contracts with utility providers, completing inheritance processes and resolving family conflicts. This confirms one of the logics of Romania investing in rural land registration campaign, which is that the systematic registration is a key action to end perpetuated marginalization from the formal society.

The report also presents a number of recommendations on how to improve systematic registration, which are highly relevant to the design and implementation of the National Program for Cadastre and Land Book, and the EU financed Rural Land Registration Program. These recommendations include:

1. *Improve communication with beneficiaries* – ANCPI should pay greater attention to the public awareness campaign, a key factor in assuring owners' effective collaboration. Communication with beneficiaries should present the expected benefits and clearly specify that registration is free;
2. *Improve community participation* – Work with people from the community or institution representatives who are knowledgeable about private properties, conflicts, property size, etc. Some of these people may have witnessed old transactions and they could help mediate conflicts, should they arise.
3. *Strengthen partnerships* – Promote good communication and a true partnership among key actors, notably between the Office for Cadaster and Land Registration (county branch of ANCPI), contractors, and local public authorities.
4. *Supplement OCPI personnel* – There appears to be a lack of sufficient personnel at the level of the local authorities. Ensuring closer involvement of local authorities and supplementing OCPI personnel could make the process more efficient and improve communication.

The Bank team recognizes that the report has some methodological limitations, largely due to insufficient funding and the limited capacity of the contractor to conduct complex evaluations. As a result, the findings should be interpreted with caution for the following reasons:

1. The report covers only two counties which are not representative of the country as a whole, and sampling units were not chosen randomly and they were small in size;

2. Some respondents were not selected randomly, but based on information provided by local authorities;
3. The survey only targeted vulnerable individuals and does not compare *vulnerable* and *non-vulnerable populations*.

Despite the mentioned methodological and coverage limitations, this PSIA provided substantive recommendations to ANCPI in improving its efforts to reach out and interaction with vulnerable groups, most of which have already been adopted by ANCPI to the National Program for Cadastre and Land Book and the EU financed Rural Land Registration Program design and implementation. Therefore, this PSIA has met its development objective *to increase the ability of ANCPI to include vulnerable groups in the systematic land registration program and mitigate potential negative social impacts* and can therefore be closed. However, the PSIA also reveals the importance of continuous monitoring of the impact of systematic registration to vulnerable groups and the Bank will need to pay attention that vulnerability mapping/social monitoring exercise remains as a mainstreamed part of the systematic registration process in Romania. More generally, the PSIA provides important background information and specific recommendations to other the Bank supported discourse and activities related to the inclusion of Roma (and other vulnerable groups).

In Washington DC, June 22, 2016

The World Bank Task Team

Poverty and Social Impact Assessment (PSIA) of Systematic Registration on Rural Romania

Introduction

The objective of this Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) is to assess the impact of systematic registration on vulnerable individuals, in general, and Roma, in particular. Specifically, this PSIA focuses on the systematic registration approach piloted under the Complementing EU Support for Agricultural Restructuring (CESAR, 2009 - 2013) Project, which was supported by the World Bank. The World Bank involvement in the sector dates back to 1998 and the General Cadastre and Land Registration Project that supported the establishment of an efficient system for securing and trading land titles.

When CESAR became effective in 2009, the lack of reliable information on real property rights in Romania was a major issue affecting the development of the country. Since the early 1990s, Romania, implementing a post-communism land reform, had issued land titles to most property owners. However, the titles were of variable quality, often inaccurate, and rarely registered in Romania's real property rights registration system (the Land Book). Owners had the option of registering their property rights sporadically, however, most had not done that due to associated costs and hurdles. Therefore, a systematic approach to register real property rights was seen as critical to the establishment of a reliable and market facilitating real property rights system.

CESAR piloted a systematic registration approach including approaches to identify and monitor the participation of vulnerable groups. Prior to initiating the work, the National Agency for Cadastre and Land Registration (ANCPI) conducted a survey (called vulnerability mapping) to identify vulnerable groups and individuals in the target administrative-territorial unit (UATs). These vulnerable groups and individuals included disabled, illiterates, elderlies, convicts, widows, minors, and ethnic minorities. During implementation, work was announced through public awareness campaigns, and the surveying firms contracted to carry out the systematic registration work were required to pay particular attention to the identified vulnerable groups. Also, registration fees were waived in order to encourage participation. Finally, CESAR contracted specialized firm for social monitoring to verify the result of the process to the identified vulnerable groups.

The World Bank support to CESAR was closed in 2013 with a number of unfinished systematic registration contracts due to consistent problems to authorize budget for the activity. While CESAR failed to make a mass impact, it was successful in piloting the systematic registration of real property rights in 50 UATs and creating (and establishing in law) a new participatory systematic registration methodology to Romania.

Despite the challenges, the government continued to implement the systematic registration campaigns including the initially Bank financed contracts. After CESAR, ANCPI focused on restoring its ability to pursue new reforms and land registration campaigns to enhance daily operations in a financially sustainable, efficient, customer-oriented and socially inclusive manner.

When this PSIA was initiated in 2014, ANCPI had initiated the preparation of national level systematic land registration program with the Technical Assistance (TA) by the World Bank, which was financed by the EU's Operational Program for Technical Assistance. Among others, the TA was helping ANCPI to initiate significant reforms in its policy, regulatory and institutional framework. Importantly, the TA materialized into a draft Strategy for Systematic and Sporadic

Registration, a draft National Program for Cadastre and Land Book, and a draft Application for EU financing of a major Rural Land Registration Program for EU's Programmatic Period 2012-2020.

The overall economic impact of the National Program was estimated to be extremely positive with eightfold return to the investment. However, it was also recognized that specific measures needed to be adopted to ensure that the rights of vulnerable groups (especially those of rural Roma communities) would be duly registered and to monitor the impact of real property rights registration to vulnerable groups and individuals.

This PSIA was conceived as a complementary activity to the TA to increase ANCPI's capacity to monitor the social impact of the systematic land registration program and to encourage the participation of vulnerable groups. To do so, the PSIA assesses the pilot approach introduced under CESAR to identify, formalize and register the real property rights of vulnerable Roma communities and other vulnerable groups, households and individuals. The PSIA tries to determine to what extent the CESAR approach led to the formalization and registration of the real property rights of vulnerable people. The analysis also seeks to produce evidence of the impact of the pilot on the occurrence of land conflicts, their perception of tenure security, access to credit, and investment behavior.

The findings of this PSIA are directly relevant to the EU financed Rural Land Registration Program design, which has adopted the vulnerability mapping and social monitoring approach, and seeks to improve it. Early PSIA results have also contributed to the dozens of systematic registration contracts signed under the National Program, which are registration fee financed. Contractors are required to pay particular attention to the vulnerable groups.

This PSIA was conducted by the Romanian firm Metro Media Transilvania from 2014-2015. It is largely based on a field survey carried out in February 2015 by the same firm in 6 UATs, 4 of which were targeted by CESAR. The sample included 480 households, comprising 360 households living in Roma settlements, and 120 vulnerable people living outside of these settlements such as analphabets, elderlies, convicts, and widows. The results of this survey are anecdotal; however, they provide valuable information on the participation of vulnerable groups in CESAR and highlight possible improvements in the systematic land registration process.

Main Findings and Recommendations

The majority of the families surveyed lived in precarious conditions – While 80% of the respondents had access electricity, only 14% had access to running water, and over a third did not have access to water at home. Only 7% declared having a bathroom, and 56% were living in houses that were in bad conditions. A third of the respondents declared that their house had been built with a construction permit, another third without, and the remaining third preferred not to answer. With an average income per capita of 128 lei, those who were living in Roma settlements were the poorest.

Most respondents did not know about CESAR – In UATs where ANCPI had completed CESAR, only 42% of the respondents had heard about the project. In UATs where CESAR was ongoing, only 10% of the respondents declared knowing about the project, while a mere 1% of those living in UATs that were not targeted by CESAR were aware of the systematic registration project. Those who had heard about CESAR generally knew it as “the project that allows land registration for free” or “the project of the land registration office people”.

Many respondents living in target UATs did not register their rights – In UATs where ANCPI had completed CESAR, 27% of the respondents did not have property documents. The reasons provided for not registering rights included the lack of resources, information, and documents, as

well as the fact that the property had already been registered under the name of someone else. Another issue inhibiting land registration is the lack of identification documents, although CESAR may be encouraging persons to rectify this.

While interest in regularizing property rights is high, willingness to pay for it is low – The great majority of respondents without documents reported that they wish to obtain a formal proof of ownership. At the same time, only 18% declared being willing to pay to obtain such a proof. While this percentage was slightly higher in target UATs, these observations suggest that, without external interventions, interest in land registration among vulnerable groups is likely to remain low.

There are visible short-term benefits of systematic registration – CESAR appear to help respondents registering an address, entering into contracts with utility providers, completing inheritance processes, and resolving family conflicts. There may be other positive effects of systematic registration such as greater tenure security, incentive to invest in house improvements, or increased economic opportunities. However, they will only become visible in the longer term and would require a much more robust analysis.

These findings suggest a number of possible improvements to ANCPI's systematic registration approach, the first of which is that ***ANCPI should pay greater attention to public awareness campaigns***. Public information campaigns have a positive effect but appear to be reaching a limited number of vulnerable households. Campaign should make clear that registration is free of charge and clarify the short- and long-term benefits of registration. Increasing awareness could help address what seems to be a lack of interest in land registration among poor households.

Vulnerable families should receive adequate financial and legal support – The fact that many respondents declared that they were not able to register their rights because they could not afford it or were not able to obtain the required supporting documentation suggest that support provided may be insufficient. For respondents, even notarizing documents was challenging because the closest notary was far – more than 20km on average – and the vast majority of those who had used notary public services declared that they were costly.

Strengthen the involvement of local public authorities – ANCPI contracts out part of the systematic registration activities, and respondents felt that some contractors were interested in finishing the work rapidly without paying due consideration to the specificity of their case. OCPI staff could participate more actively in the process, accompanying the contractors during the data collection phase. OCPI staff have an important role to play in advising families, notably on the required documents. This is critical to resolve issues families may face.

Supplement OCPI personnel – There appears to be a lack of personnel at the level of the local authorities. Ensure closer involvement of local authorities and supplementing OCPI personnel could make the process more efficient and improve communication.

Improve community participation – ANCPI should ensure that community representatives who are knowledgeable about the local land tenure arrangements actively participate in the program. These people witnessed old transactions and they can mediate conflicts, should they arise.

Strengthen partnerships – Promote good communication and a true partnership among key actors and notably Office for Cadaster and Land Registration (county branch of ANCPI), contractors, and local public authorities.

Methodology

Methodological framework

The PSIA uses a mixed methods approach combining quantitative methods (household survey) and qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and focus group discussions). Quantitative analysis enabled comparisons between subgroups and by key variables of interest (e.g. income levels, counties, project vs. non project localities registered vs. non-registered Roma, etc.) while qualitative analysis generated rich detail and insights into underlying issues not accessible through survey work.

This observations and recommendations made in the PSIA draw from a survey of 480 households, comprising 360 households from Roma groups and 120 from households from other vulnerable groups. At each household, the head of the household or the most knowledgeable person responded to the survey, face-to-face, at the respondents' residence. Every household was also geo-referenced with GIS coordinates of latitude and longitude, using a smartphone application.

Households interviewed are evenly distributed between 6 UATs from the counties of Mures (a better off area located in the region of Transylvania), and Olt (a poorer area in the region of Wallachia). The rationale for selecting these two counties was to capture differences associated with the cultural dimension of land use and possession, and land registration practices.

The 6 UATs were selected based on the following criteria:

- 1) Large presence of vulnerable groups, defined as Roma communities¹, disabled persons, illiterate persons, elderly, convicts, widows, single mothers or poor people;
- 2) Status of the CESAR project. In each county, 1 UAT where CESAR had been completed, 1 UAT where CESAR was ongoing and 1 UAT where CESAR had not been implemented. In this way, the analysis sought to get a sense of the influence of the CESAR project.

Table 1. Survey UATs

	Mures county	Olt county
CESAR completed	Saschiz	Iancu Jianu
CESAR ongoing	Bahnea	Brebeni
Not targeted by CESAR	Nades	Stoenesti

Households were selected using different methods.

- *For Roma communities:* Roma settlements were initially mapped and then households were selected within the settlements area.

- *For other vulnerable groups:* Household selection was based on information collected from social assistants (employed by the mayors' offices in each county who are responsible for identifying, mapping, and providing support for poor households). Some

¹Note that there are a very few cases of persons who do not belong to Roma ethnicity living in Roma settlements (but usually married to Roma). For the purposes of simplicity, however, they are included under the phrase 'Roma population' and 'Roma households'.

vulnerable people were selected based on the vulnerability status of the household head, age (for elderly) and some were based on presence of a vulnerable family member.

The qualitative component of the study included 16 in-depth interviews with local and county stakeholders in each sampled UAT. The interviews were carried out with the following categories:

At the local level:

- Representatives of the Public Local Authorities (Mayor, Vice-mayor, City Hall secretary, clerks involved in systematic registration)
- Informal leaders (Roma community leaders, teachers, doctors, other leaders)
- People involved in land acquisitions/transfers - tenants

At the county level:

- OCPI representatives
- OCPI managers
- OCPI clerks involved in systematic registration.

Focus-group discussions were held with vulnerable persons in 5 counties (Iancu Jianu, Brebeni, Saschiz, Bahnea, and Nades).

Limitations

The survey and focus group discussions only targeted vulnerable individuals (Roma and ‘other vulnerable’) and thus an analysis of differences between *vulnerable* and *non-vulnerable populations* is not part of the study. It is therefore important to keep in mind that the findings apply only to these two populations, and not the population in the surveyed areas as a whole, which may have significantly different characteristics and been affected by the project differently.

The findings cover only two counties, Mures and Olt, which cannot be considered as representative of the country as a whole. They were selected for the diverse nature of their characteristics. The vast differences between the two counties for numerous variables (e.g. 75% of Mureş respondents made property improvements, compared with just 14% of Olt respondents) indicate that if the survey was to be repeated in other counties, results would likely be quite variable and hard to predict, although presumably other counties in Transylvania would have more in common with Mures and counties in Wallachia more in come with Olt.

The survey respondents were not selected using randomized sampling methods, but based on information collected from social assistants working at the municipality authorities. This means that the findings cannot be considered statistically representative of all vulnerable groups, even in the counties they are from, let other project areas.

The study design would not meet evidence standards of cause and effect. Because the UATs are systems, because sampling units were not chosen randomly, and because of the small samples size (essentially two for each type of area – intervention, partial intervention and non-intervention), the study design is far from a robust. The data is ‘clustered’, so that households are nested in their UATs, and are thus their characteristics, and impacts are likely to be similar to one another because they live in the same administrative, geographic, cultural area, under the same administration. A true quasi-experimental research design would have, for example, randomly selected, for example, 100 UATS and assigned them randomly to participate or not participate in the project, and then treated each UAT as a unit of analysis. Comparisons would have been between the aggregate indicators of 50 treatment and 50 non-treatment UATs. Of course, the costs of the study would also have increased substantially.

Just because a household has an ‘other vulnerable’ member, this doesn’t mean that the household as a whole is vulnerable. Insufficient information is available on other household members to be able to determine how critical the vulnerable member’s situation is for the entire household. Some OV households may not be vulnerable at all, e.g. if they have more than enough resources and capacity to care for their vulnerable member. Lacking data on non-vulnerable groups, it is not possible to determine how similar or different the OV category in the survey is compared with the population at large.

The sample size is relatively small, especially for OV groups (120 respondents) which can become an issue for subgroup analysis. For example when only a minority of OV respondents report being aware of the CESAR project, confidence in more nuanced responses (which then fall to the single digits), such as ‘reasons why’, is quite low, and such findings must be taken as indicative, not representative.

Using different methods (survey, focus groups and interviews) the research and analysis could somewhat mitigate these drawbacks. Nonetheless, the implications of these limitations are that the PSIA study’s findings may not be broadly applicable, i.e. beyond the two regions surveyed, or even true. For now, the results should be treated as tentative. Any follow-up measures should take into account local conditions and population characteristics.

Socio-economic context



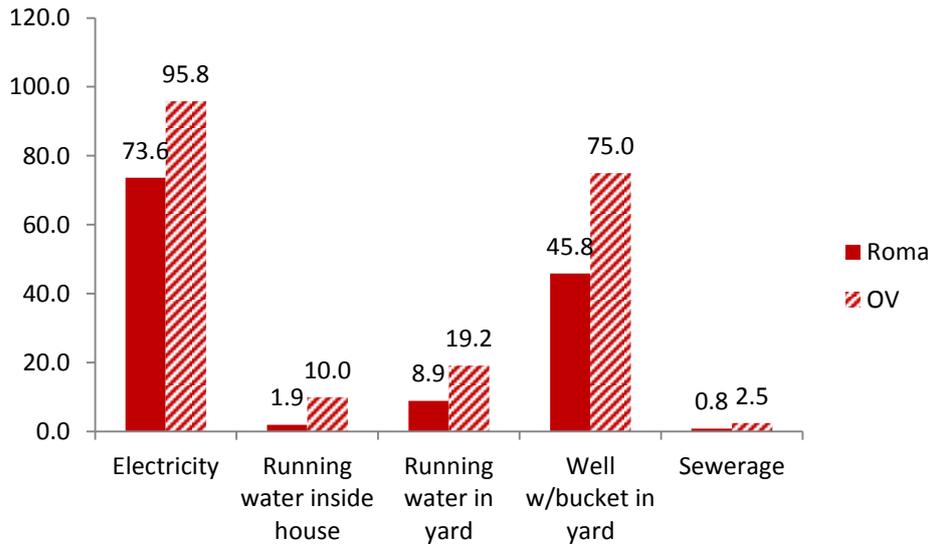
Photo: Roma in Stoenesti (non-project site)

Housing Conditions

Housing conditions in the study areas are poor. Virtually everyone in the surveyed areas lives in a detached house. Most homes consist of 2 or 3 rooms, kitchen included. While 80% have electricity, just 14% have running water, and 55% use a well with a bucket. Over a third of the households surveyed do not have access to water in the house or even in their yard (including running water or a well). Only 7% of households have a bathroom, and most houses (56%) are reported to be in a ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ state of repair.

Vulnerable people who are outside of Roma settlements are more likely to have access to network utility services and to have a well (Figure 2). Access to water is a more acute issue in Roma settlements where 45% of the households reported no access, compared to 10% for those who were interviewed outside of these settlements. Such figures underline that those who live in Roma settlements are the most vulnerable. Indeed, living conditions are related to income, and better-off Roma households (those who declare earning more than 300 RON per capita) do have better access to utilities.

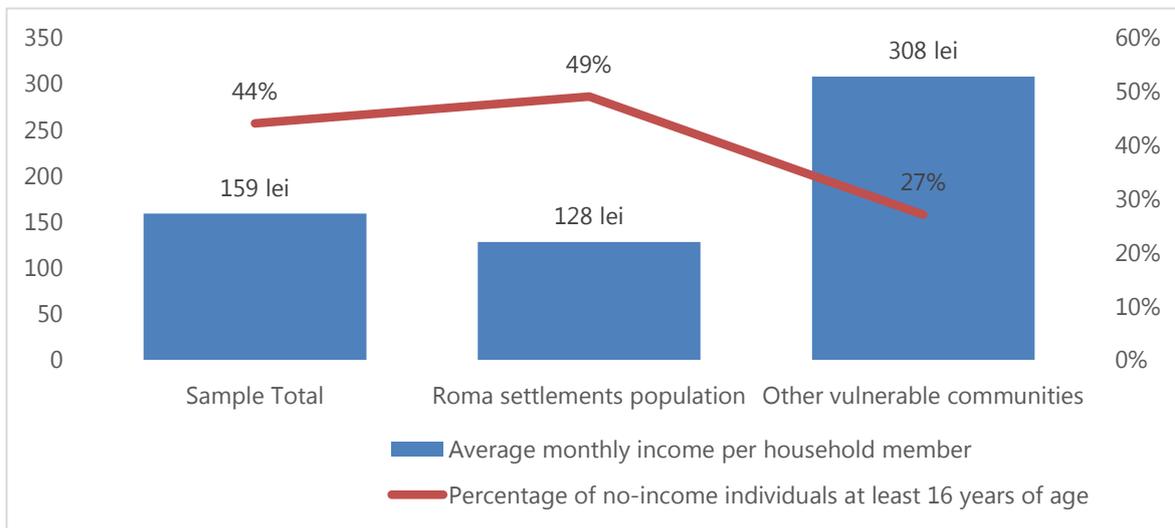
Figure 2. Access to water and electricity, by group



Income and livelihoods

There is a stark difference in socio-economic conditions between household survey inside and outside or Roma settlements. In Roma settlements, the average income per person is just 128 lei, compared with 308 lei for those who live outside (Figure 3). In Roma settlements, 49% of the individuals aged 16 and over reported earning no income. This is nearly two times higher than outside of these settlements (27%). In Roma settlements, 46% of the households interviewed reported having no income at all, compared with 33% outside of these settlements.

Figure 3. Average per monthly income and HH members reporting no income



Those who are living in Roma settlements are poorer than the vulnerable people who do not live in Roma settlements. As Table 3 shows, households interviewed in Roma settlements are more likely to fall into the lowest per capita income group (32.2%) and much less likely to fall into the highest income group (12.5%), while the reverse is true for those who live outside of these settlements. The same patterns persist across almost all variables.

Table 3. Income levels by group

Income (monthly, per household member) (RON)	Type of respondent			
	Roma settlement		Other vulnerable	
	N	%	N	%
< 75	116	32.2	9	7.5
76-150	152	42.2	28	23.3
151-300	47	13.1	36	30.0
> 300	45	12.5	47	39.2

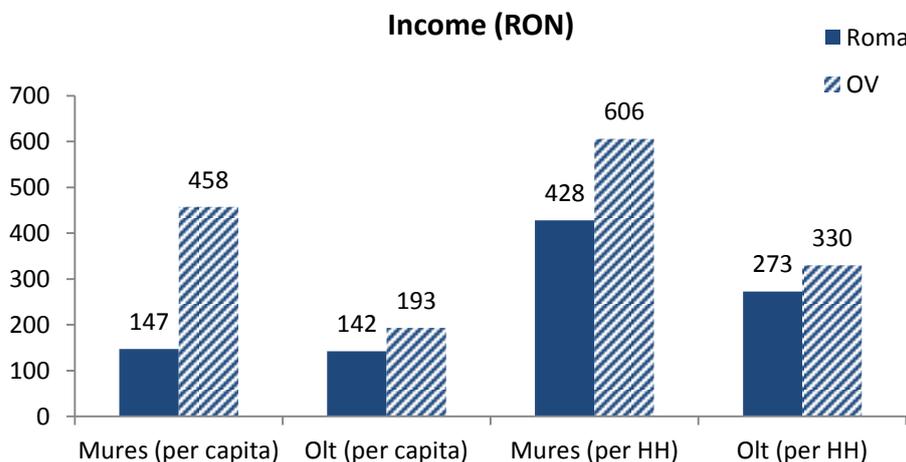
Education and employment

Those who leave in Roma settlements have lower educational attainment than those who live outside. Three quarters of the population in Roma settlements (74%) attended maximum 8 years of school (and more than half did not go beyond 4 years), whereas in the case of households living outside Roma settlements, only 56% did not go to school beyond 8 years. In line with these education attainments, the share of population graduating from mid-level vocational education is just 18% in Roma settlements and 27% outside Roma Settlements.

Regional differences

There are significant regional differences in income between Mures and Olt. Income levels (both per capita and per household) vary widely for those who do not live in Roma settlements, and to a lesser extent for those who live in Roma settlements. These trends seem to be associated with historical and geographic factors that make Romania’s northern Transylvania historic region better off.

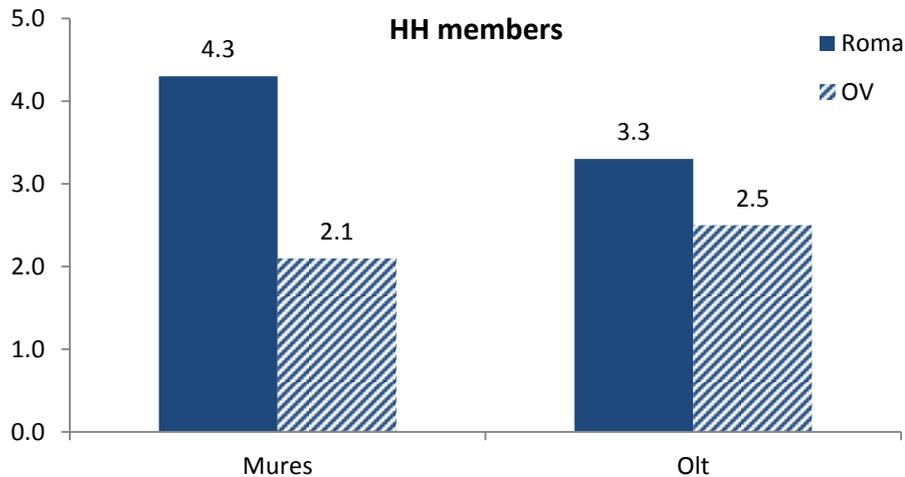
Figure 4. Income levels by group and region



Mures county households differ from Olt. In Mureş, nearly all unemployed individuals declared that they were looking for work, whereas in Olt, more than 40% of the persons without work described themselves as uninterested in finding employment. The difference may be explained by cultural attitudes toward work and linked to municipality support: 31% of Mures respondents receive various forms of social assistance (Child-raising allowance or other social benefits for families with many children, Guaranteed Minimum Income - VMG), which requires registration with the AJOFM (County Agency for Employment).

In Mures, both those who live inside or outside Roma settlements have larger families than those who live in Olt.

Figure 5. Household members, by group and region



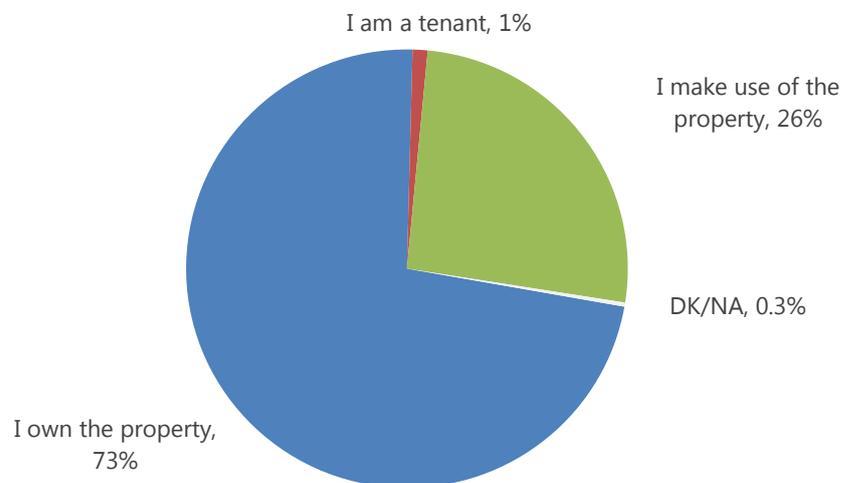
As the regional discrepancies underline, ethnicity and vulnerability are contributing factors but not defining factors. Throughout this report, differences between the two regions (which are often substantial) will be highlighted, demonstrating the importance of factors beyond ethnicity or vulnerability and beyond project effects and activities.

Land Use and Ownership

Owners, Possessors, and Tenants

Property ownership is common. Nearly three quarters of the respondent declare that they own the lot they occupy (72% of Roma and 81% of OV households), while 26% or Roma report being possessors compared with 18% of OV households. Only 1% declared being tenants.

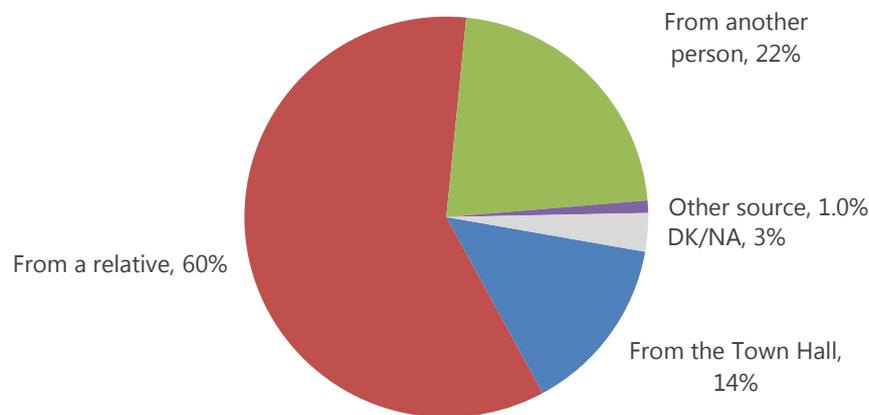
Figure 6. Which statement best describes your relationship with the property you occupy? (N=562 plots)



The presence of the project is not associated with higher ownership status, which is instead closely associated with region (and income levels). Ownership levels are far higher in Mures (86%) than in Olt (61%), and this pattern holds true irrespective of project status. Ownership is highest in CESAR UATs and among Roma with rights registered, and lowest among Roma in CESAR UATs without rights registered. In only 2% of cases could differences in the property status, i.e. the coexistence of different legal rights over land as held by the same family, be identified.

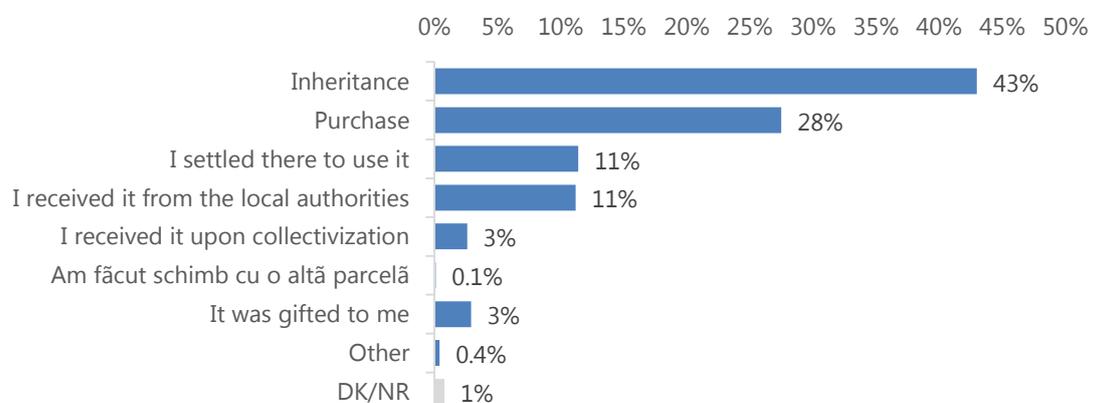
Most plots that are not under direct ownership belong to relatives (68%). Only 6% of all respondents indicated that they lived in public housing, and a further 9% indicate other persons (outside the family). While we could not identify any statistically significant differences, it can be seen that the utilization of land owned by the Municipal administration (public property) is correlated with lower income and is more frequent in Olt County, in localities not included in the CESAR project, and in Roma settlements.

Figure 7. Whom did you buy/receive the property from? (N=562 plots)



Inheritance is the most common manner (43%) in which the plots were obtained, with the next most common path of acquisition through purchase (28%) (Figure 8). Of all plots, 11% were occupied without any sort of agreement with a proprietor, and a further 11% were acquired from local authorities. Most land plots were acquired from relatives.

Figure 8. How respondent came into possession of the property? (N=562 plots).



The main issue specific to those who live in Roma Settlements is the lack of legal documents for their properties, a requirement for recording property rights, which applies to about 20% of households in Roma communities. The following explanations for lack of required documents were given:

- Construction without building permits or without performing subdivisions of the land (e.g. dwellings built in the past few years for younger families near parents' houses without any legal document or permits). Representatives of vulnerable groups reported that this happened because they do not possess other plots and the authorities failed to provide additional residential land for them.
- Houses built outside legally approved residential areas, on unused arable land where Roma live based on verbal agreements with the owners. Several cases in Iancu Jianu and Nadeş were mentioned. No legal documents or building permits were issued, making them vulnerable to inspections and possible demolition.
- Roma and OV groups living in homes acquired from sale with uncertified documents, only handwritten agreements
- Lack of income to make succession acts or acts to legalize old, handwritten agreements. Moreover, in some cases, the previous vendors make financial claims by exploiting the handwritten agreements.
- A case in Saschiz and Nades (Mures County): where there are Roma and OV groups living in old abandoned houses of the previous Saxon population who had emigrated to Germany. Although these houses have not been claimed for over 60 years, the registration process must take into account the previous owner's, or their successor's, rights.

Size of land plots

Land plot size correlates closely with income, increasing by about 500 m² or more between income categories. Roma households with rights registered own larger plots than Roma without rights registered. In localities where CESAR was fully implemented, total land surface area is double (1825 m²) compared with partial implementation (942 m²) or no project (890 m²), but since purchase of most land predates CESAR, this difference cannot be attributed to the project.

Usage of land plots

OV categories, income levels and project UATs are positively associated with household engagement in agricultural activities. Households most likely to report being engaged in agricultural work are OVs (48%), high income (48%) and CESAR completely (40%) or partially (45%) implemented. In contrast, only 26% of low income households (under 75 lei) and Roma in non-project settlements (18%) have very low engagement in agriculture activities.

Agricultural activity is low, with most plots used for residential purposes. While all primary lots are used for residential purposes, about 22% of these are also used for agricultural purposes. Of the minority (13%) who own more than one lot, most use their other lots for agricultural purposes, with a small share (2%) using them for related purposes (e.g. hayfield, and orchards). Agricultural activities are associated with higher

income levels indicating that households who engage in this way have the resources to invest in the land.

Poverty and dependency may mitigate against agricultural practice. Two key aspects define the structure of rural poverty. First, engaging in agricultural activities requires certain preconditions, namely finances, knowledge, and a market, and these conditions tend not to obtain for the poorest households and poorest villages. Second, social assistance (e.g. guaranteed minimum income, other forms of allowances), widespread in poorest villages, may discourage private initiative, with families receiving assistance tend to be dependent and not get involved in other income generating activities.

A small minority of persons are engaged in income-generating activities and employment rates are low. Whether on a temporary or permanent basis, in the public or private sector, persons engaged in income-generating activities is 15% (11% for Roma and 29% for OV households). The percentage of people without employment is 70% in the case of Roma settlement residents, compared to only 40% for active age-group respondents from the OV communities.

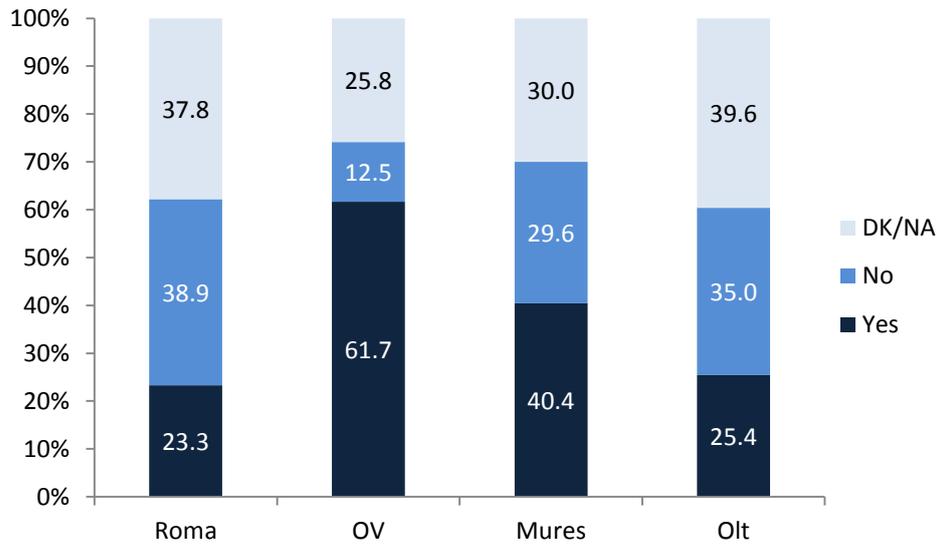
Property investments and improvements

Nearly half (43%) of respondents reported making improvements to their plot (including their homes). The survey assessed both the use of authorization permits, and the likelihood of improvements, as indicators of stability and ownership security. The majority of improvements consist of repair work, with a significant share (about 20%) extending their residence by adding one room. As the range of possible interventions is diverse, their associated costs vary significantly (from 200 lei to 60,000 lei). Investments made on plots which include their residences cover a wide range of activities to preserve and increase the quality and value through construction or addition of amenities. Improvements include roof repairs, adding a new roof, adding one or more new rooms, redecorating the kitchen, adding a second level, and fencing.

The likelihood of a household reporting property improvements is highly dependent on region, rather than the presence of the CESAR project. There is vast variation not just by county but by UAT. Three quarters of Mureş respondents reported making improvements, compared with just 14% of Olt respondents. The proportion of residences with improvements is extremely high in Bahnea, at 91% (Mures) even though it is only partial CESAR, and extremely low in Iancu Jianu (Olt) although CESAR is completed there. In the other Olt UATs of Brebeni (19%) and Stoenesti (11%) it is also extremely low. There may be a social effect at play, e.g. the likelihood of a household making an improvement rises if others are doing it.

Residence in Roma settlements, low income levels, and residence in Olt region reduces likelihood of using construction permits. Overall, a minority (35%) of respondents reported that their residence was built with the proper construction documents, with the remainder reporting they did not obtain proper documents (30%) or declining to answer (35%). OV households were more than twice as likely to report using a construction permit (61.7%) compared with Roma households (Figure 9). It was also more common to obtain a permit in Mures (40.4%) compared with Olt (25.4%). OV and high income categories were the most likely to report authorized construction (62% and 63% respectively), as expected.

Figure 9. Share of respondents reporting use of building permits



In Roma communities, CESAR implementation is associated with a higher rate of residences built with proper authorization. In CESAR project areas (complete or partial) 38% have used a permit, compared with 23% in non-project area, while in Roma settlements in CESAR UATs, almost double the number of people with registered rights have residences built with proper authorization. CESAR’s appears to be having a disciplining factor on building. (The survey shows that where CESAR is partially implemented, authorized construction is far more likely (52%) than where it completely implemented (28%) or not implemented (22%). This counterintuitive finding is largely explained by the differences between counties.)

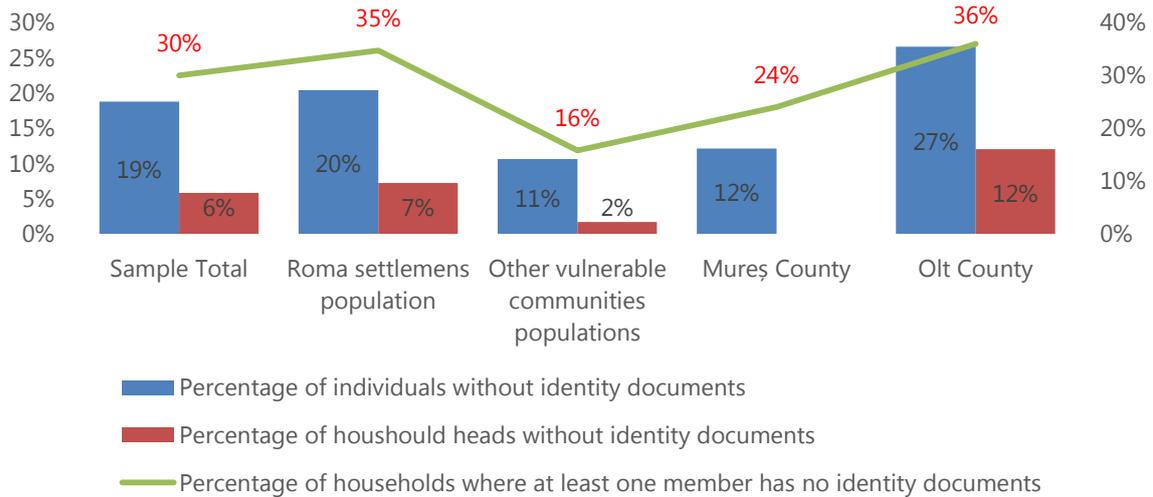
Property documentation

Possession of identity documents

The process of land registration requires that a set of preconditions be met by the land users / owners, one of which is identity documents. Absence of identity documents limits the ability to assert property rights and other benefits from formal state institutions.

The percentage of Roma without identity documents is approximately 20% (and 6% for household heads) about twice as high as in OV households. The findings highlight how Roma settlements are disproportionately affected by this issue, as compared to OV households (Figure 10.)

Figure 10. Ownership of identity documents, by group and region

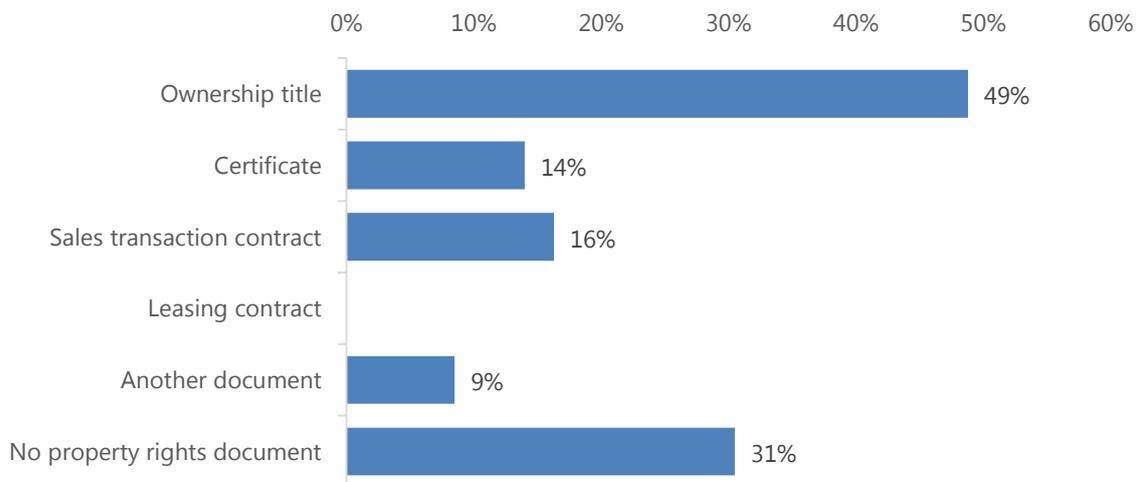


The issue of ID possession is strongly correlated with municipalities’ actions to collect data and formal evidence about their citizens, as can be seen by the large differences between the two counties. Therefore, we cannot isolate the CESAR impact in clarifying personal ID situation, although Roma households with their rights registered have a higher incidence of IDs than in the households without rights registered.

Property rights documentation

Almost half the land in possession (of the 562 lots owned by the 480 respondents) is held under ownership title, while 31% of lots have no documentation at all. Other documentation is in the form of ownership certificates (present in 14% of lots), and purchase / transaction documents (16%). Some 9% hold certificates of fiscal registration (which are not property deeds, but prove that the holder is a taxpayer and could be registered as a land possessor, although not a land owner) filed with the municipal administration, which shows that the tax for the estate has been paid (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Respondents holding a document, a legal or official title as proof of ownership rights? (N=562 plots, more than one answer possible)



Ownership titles tend to be present in the case of:

- Families with a high level of income (over 300 RON/HH member), at 77%, as compared to families with low income, where the share is 24%;
- Settlements included in the CESAR project, 54%-58%, as compared to those that are not included, where the share is 27%;
- People from OV groups, 68%, as compared to households in Roma settlements, where the share of lots with ownership titles is 42%.

Certificates also tend to be held by the same categories, except this document is held to a larger extent in Mureş County, 22%, as compared to Olt, 2%.

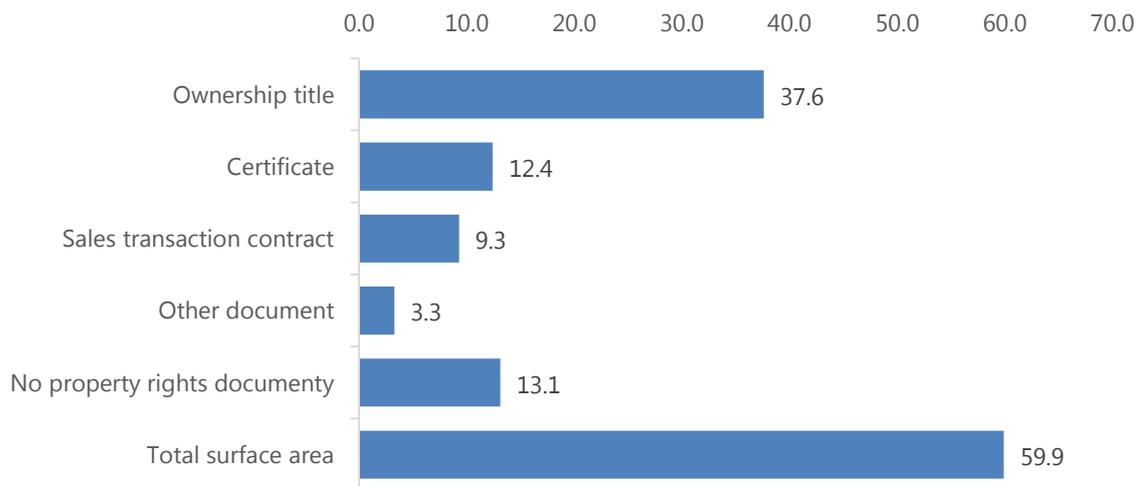
Sales transaction contracts are more frequently found in households with higher incomes, those in Mureş County, and those where the CESAR project was not implemented. Roma settlements do not stand out in this respect.

Problems regarding the owners' identification: particularly regarding vulnerable groups: lack of inheritance papers, sales hand written contracts unauthenticated at a notary office, papers which could not be use in this project. More houses built on the same land (usually by owner's inheritors), without building permit and without inheritance subdivision of the land. The incidence of plots without any ownership document is higher among:

- Households with low income, of maximum 75 RON/member monthly (almost half of them have no ownership documents),
- Settlements in Mureş,
- Settlements not included in CESAR (50% of the lots have no documents as compared to about 25% in the case of program settlements),
- Households in Roma settlements, with over twice as high a share of lots without documents as in the households of OV groups.

In settlements where CESAR was fully implemented, 27% of households still have no property documents, and only 54% have ownership title. This is better than in non-project UATs, where just 27% report having ownership title, but suggests there is significant room for improvement.

Figure 12. Surface area covered by property rights documents (ha, N=562 plots, more than one answer possible)



Registration under the project

As expected, households in project areas were more likely to have obtained documents in recent years. In settlements under CESAR, about 23% of documents were issued in the last 5 years (2011-2015), while in non-project settlements the share is just 1%. The share of documents recorded in the last 5 years in households in Roma settlements is 21% as compared to 8% in the case of OV groups. For over 50% of the lots, respondents also hold other documents, such as proof of tax payments or utilities bills. However, for 18% of the lots they hold no documents at all.

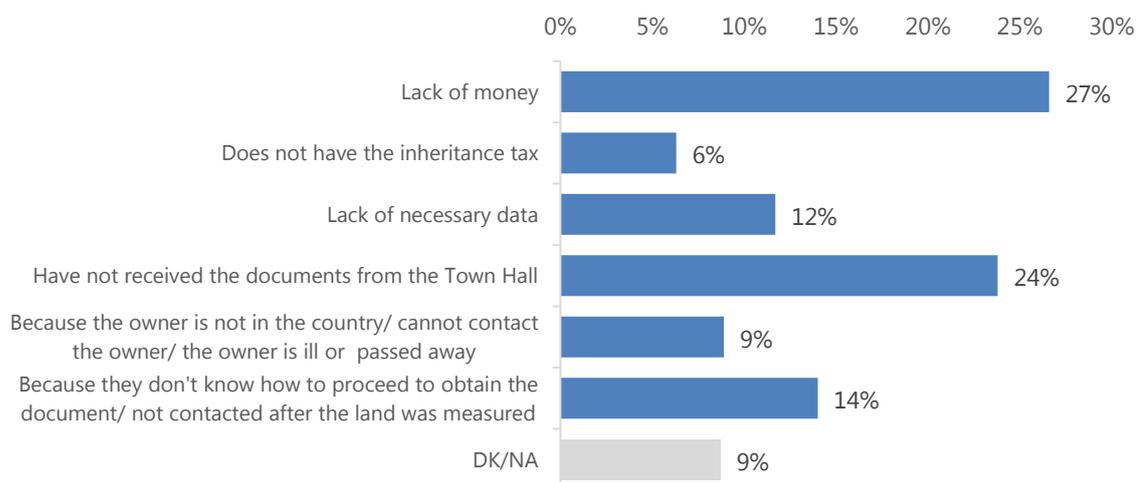
The project appears to have had a significant impact on attempts to obtain documentation. For lots with property rights documents, attempts to secure such documents were only made in 30% of the cases. CESAR appears to be the key factor: for lots in CESAR UATS, 40% of those where the implementation is partial, and 50% of those where the implementation is complete attempted to secure documentation, while in non-project settlements, the share is just 4%.

Most respondents who registered their property report that the title describes the land plot accurately. Only a small percentage of respondents (6%) said that the title of their property was incorrect. In most cases (80%), the person who holds the title of the property is the head of the household.

Interest in regularizing property rights is high. The great majority (90%) of respondents without documents report that they wish to obtain the documents to prove their property rights.

However, many people did not manage to obtain the documents because of lack of money (27%) and the fact that the municipal administration did not issue the documents (24%). In addition, for 14% of the lots, the owner did not know the procedure to obtain the documents. While lack of funds is more frequent in Olt (43%), failure to issue the document is more frequent in Mureş (39%). All those that did not know the procedure to get the documents are from Roma settlements. Over half of the documents obtained did not involve costs. For the rest, the maximum fee was 500 lei.

Figure 13. Reasons ownership documents were not obtained? (N=59 plots for which they have attempted to obtain the documents, open ended question)



The right to change the status of the land (sell, build on, change the use of the land, etc.) rests with the head of the household in an unrestricted manner in only one third of cases. In another about 25% of the cases, the head of the household has no such right. In other situations (e.g. construction, change of use, mortgaging) the need for approval by the local authorities was mentioned.

Property disputes

Most disputes are family affairs - nearly 80% of those who fear a conflict consider it likely to involve other family members. The highest level of suspicion is directed toward relatives, but not immediate family members (spouses or children). The owner of the land plot or the local authorities are also indicated, 19% and 25% respectively. Neighbors are not seen as a cause for concern with regard to potential disputes over the rights of ownership or usage. The main concern relates to security of inheritance or usage rights, as well as to the risk of eviction, mentioned in nearly 50% of cases.

Property disputes are relatively rare - in only 3% of cases did disputes arise. Although there are no statistically significant differences between the various categories included in the study, it is notable that 40% of those respondents who had a history of dispute over land continue to be wary of the potential for other conflicts in the future.

Most property disputes are rapidly resolved. The duration for resolving conflict is 2 years in about half of all conflicts, while a quarter take at least 10 years (and the rest remain unresolved). In over 50% of the situations, conflicts were resolved without involving costs. For another 24%, the costs varied between 200 and 10,000 lei (the limited number of cases does not recommend calculating mean values). In general, the conflicts which were resolved rapidly did not involve costs, while those resolved over a period of at least 10 years affected the financial situation of the household to a larger extent.

Conflicts were said to usually be settled amicably or resolved on their own, while less than 20% were taken to an arbitration authority, whether to the representatives of the local authorities or the court of justice. In most of the settled conflicts, the decision was to the respondents' satisfaction, and only a fifth of them were unsatisfied with the ruling.

Concern over property disputes is higher in fully implemented CESAR UATs (17%) than in non-project UATs (5%). Overall, one in every 8 respondents is worried over potential conflict with regard to ownership or usage rights. Concerns also correlate

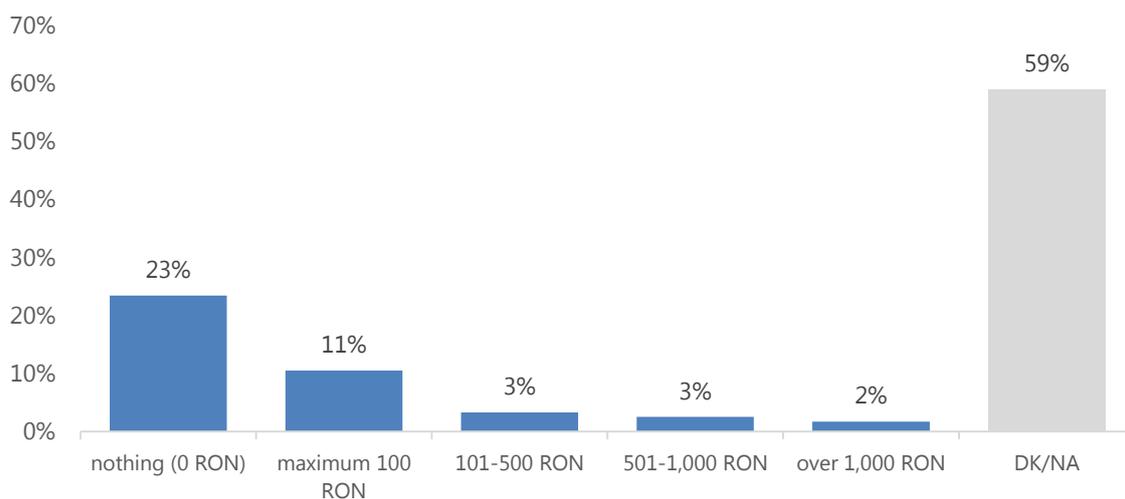
negatively with income. It is also higher in Olt county. Roma respondents are more worried regarding their ownership/ usage rights than the OV groups.

Costs and willingness to pay

No notary public’s offices are located in the settlements surveyed, and the average distance to the nearest notary is 20-23 km, in both counties. In general, notary public services are considered very costly or somewhat costly by about 75% of respondents who have used them

Willingness to pay to obtain proof of ownership is low. Most respondents either didn’t respond or didn’t know (60%) or would be unwilling to pay for a document to prove ownership of land (23%), with just 18 percent willing to pay, in amounts ranging from 100 to 2,000 lei.

Figure 14. Willingness to pay to obtain a formal proof of ownership,



In settlements where CESAR was not implemented, median willingness among those interested in formal proof of ownership pay was far higher (150 RON) compared to those where it was Implemented (50 RON). In non-project settlements, among the 55% of respondents interested in formal proof of ownership and willing to pay for it, the median² amount was 150 RON (and the mean was 529). In CESAR project areas, only 34% of respondents interested in proof of ownership were willing to pay, a median amount of 50 RON (and a mean of 106 RON). This may reflect the awareness in CESAR UATs that fees have been waived. However, a key consequence of CESAR project implementation is that more people are now informed about the actual costs of obtaining property rights documents, and have a realistic reference for these costs.

² We present the median willingness to pay levels because they reduce the effect of a few extreme outliers and can be considered as closer to the value (in RON) given by of most respondents.

CESAR project awareness and sources of information

Project awareness

Project awareness is far higher in Mures than in Olt. When taking into account project status, respondent awareness of the CESAR project is about twice as high in Mures (55%) compared with Olt (28%). As expected, project implementation is closely associated with awareness levels. Differences in awareness rates between Roma and OV are minor (43% and 37% respectively). Most residents do not know the project as ‘CESAR’, but as ‘*the project which allows land registration for free, or the project of the people from the Land Registration Offices.*’

Figure 15. Respondents heard about CESAR project for land demarcation and registration, by county

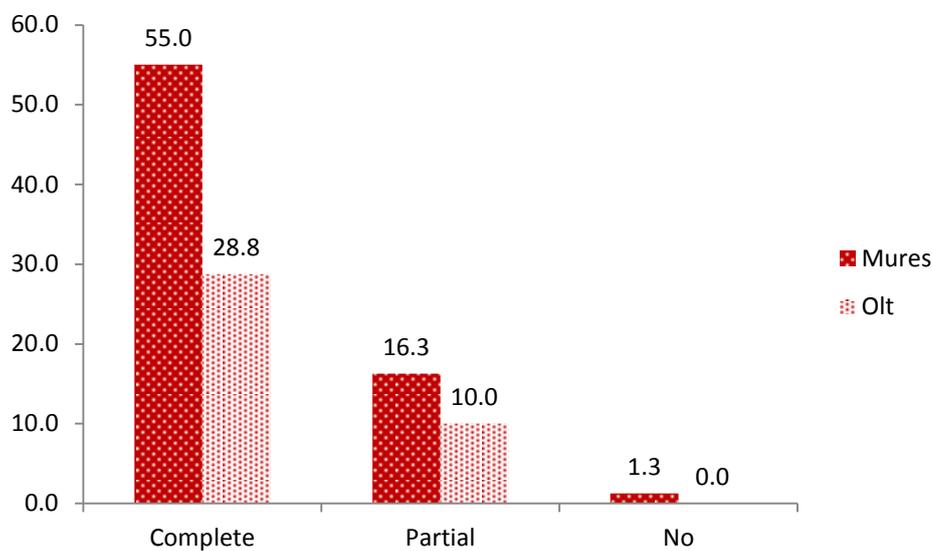
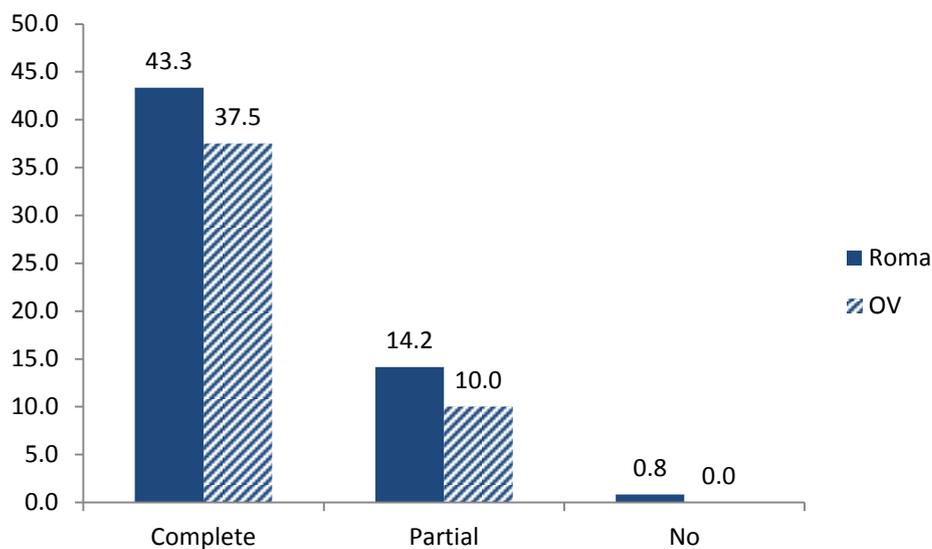
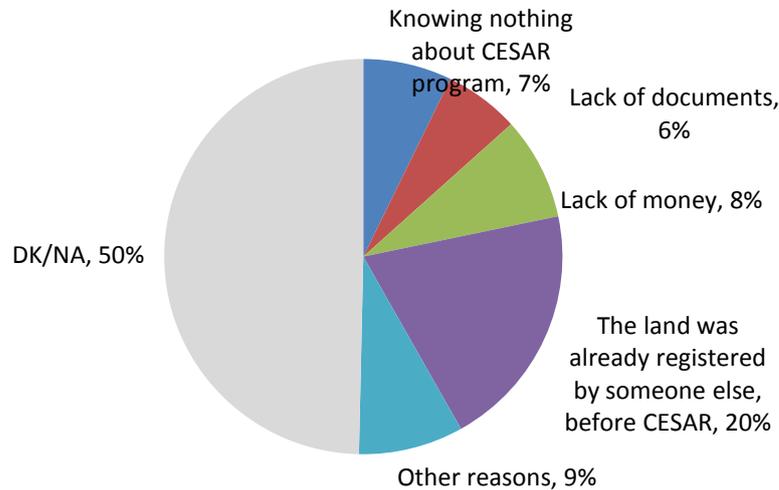


Figure 16. Respondents who heard about CESAR project for land demarcation and registration, by group



Few respondents who reported being aware of the project said they had registered following implementation of the CESAR project.³ Only 34 out of 73 respondents had registered during the project period. Among those who did not register their, 20% reported it was because the land was already registered, because they lacked detailed information on the project (7%), lacked documents (6%), or lacked of money and opportunities (20%).

Figure 17. Why respondent did not record proof of ownership? (After implementation of the CESAR project) (N= 36 respondents)



Sources and channels of information

Exposure to public awareness campaigns is extremely low. From the evidence, it appears that public awareness campaigns were not carried out with the same rigor in Olt as in Mures. Just 10% or fewer respondents in UATs where CESAR was complete said they received a flyer, or saw a poster, or saw a TV or radio commercial about land registration. Roma are less likely than OV groups to have seen or heard TV or radio ads. In CESAR partial areas the numbers are even lower. This means that Roma and OV groups (and maybe others) are not being reached and points toward a opportunities for improving communication.

Figure 18. Respondents exposed to different aspects of the public information campaign, by county

³ The value is calculated in relation with the subsample of respondents which heard about CESAR (73), so that the actual share of people who registered their properties through CESAR is higher.

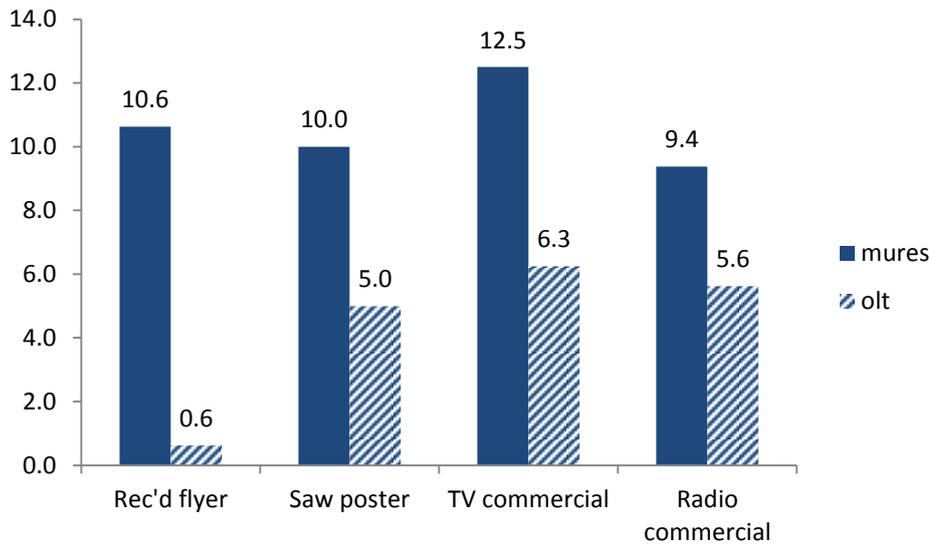
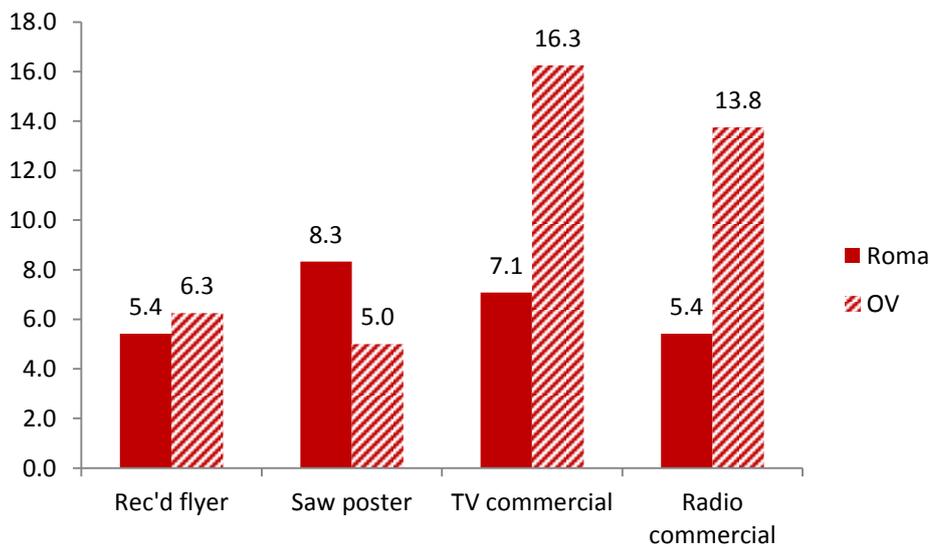
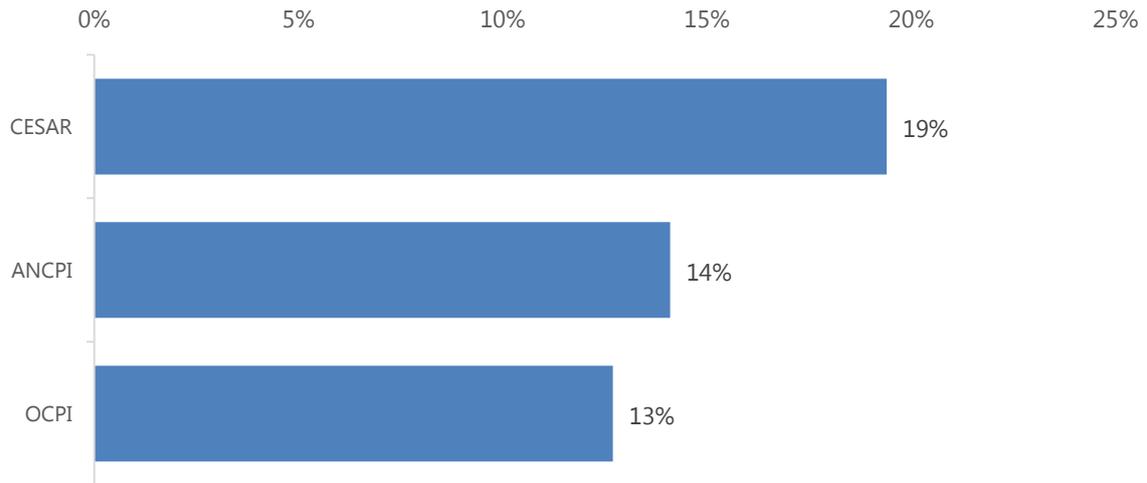


Figure 19. Respondents exposed to different aspects of the public information campaign, by group type



The CESAR project is better known among respondents than ANCPI and OCPI (19% versus 14%, and 13%, respectively). Awareness is higher in some socio-demographic categories, such as in terms of age, in the range of 36-65 years, high school, and post-secondary school or higher education graduates. Also, in Mures County and in areas where CESAR was completely implemented, the project was more likely to be known by respondents.

Figure 20. Respondents who had heard of...? (N=480 respondents)



Awareness of ANCPI and OCPI is far higher in Mures than in Olt, and higher where the project is completed than where it is partially complete. Breaking down respondents by project status, Awareness levels for both institutions is at similar levels, of 42.5% in Mures for completed project UATs, and much lower where it is partially complete. Differences in awareness levels between Roma and OV groups are not large (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Had heard of National Agency for Cadaster and Land Registration (ANCPI), by region

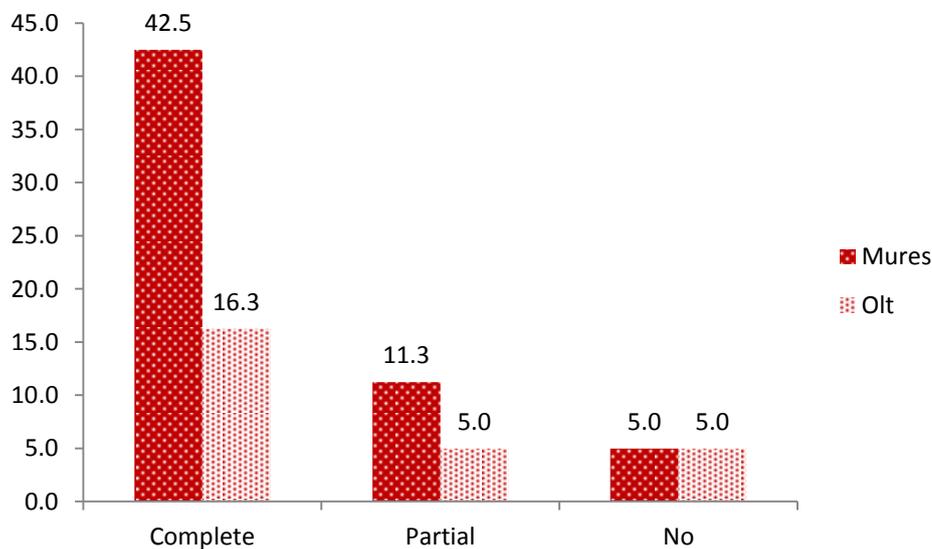
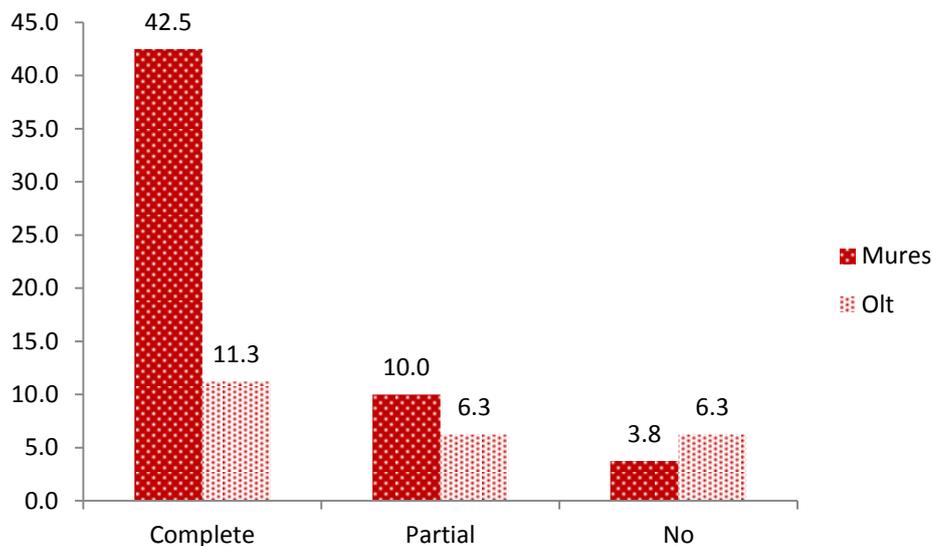


Figure 22. Had heard of Office for Cadaster and Land Registration (OCPI), by region



CESAR UATs are associated with a higher rates of awareness of the main national and county public agencies involved in land registration. Also, in CESAR UATs, Roma households which registered their land are more informed about these institutions than the Roma households which didn't perform this procedure.

This is confirmed by focus group and in-depth interviews, which indicate that the **Focus group respondents mostly were able to recall the measurements stage for houses and lands** (bearing in mind that it had been a few years since the initial stages of the implementation activities). People from Bahnea (where the project is implemented about 40%) or Brebeni (where the project is implemented at about 90%) are eager to receive their land books.

They went from door to door. They measured everyone. Yes, they wanted to cross our land and see that changed. They asked you to allow them to take photos – of the house, from the front, from the back, to measure the space. And the garden, everything. And then two years later they came from Târgu Mureş. And it was already entered. And they would ask 'Are you pleased? Is it well measured?' and things like that, and they showed us, yes. (FG Saschiz)

And then, at home, they explained broadly what it was about, 'I want to make a contract for you' and they did the measurements, where your place is. 'That far', and they wrote, they ... Yes, I prepared an application; applications ... so this is how it was done, we had to submit applications. To have the neighbor sign on, the right hand side neighbor, to sign if he agrees with the perspective... both neighbors had to sign. (FG Bahnea)

Local authorities are reported to be the main information source, the most common way of informing respondents on land registration is via discussions with municipal authorities (20% of respondents). The second way of information commonly found among the obtained responses is discussions about land registration with family, relatives, friends or neighbors.

People who have not completed any level of formal education used, on average, a larger number of information sources than educated people. The same situation is

found in the case of employed people, of those who earn more than 300 lei per month, residents of Mures County, and of those who live in areas where CESAR project was fully or partially implemented.

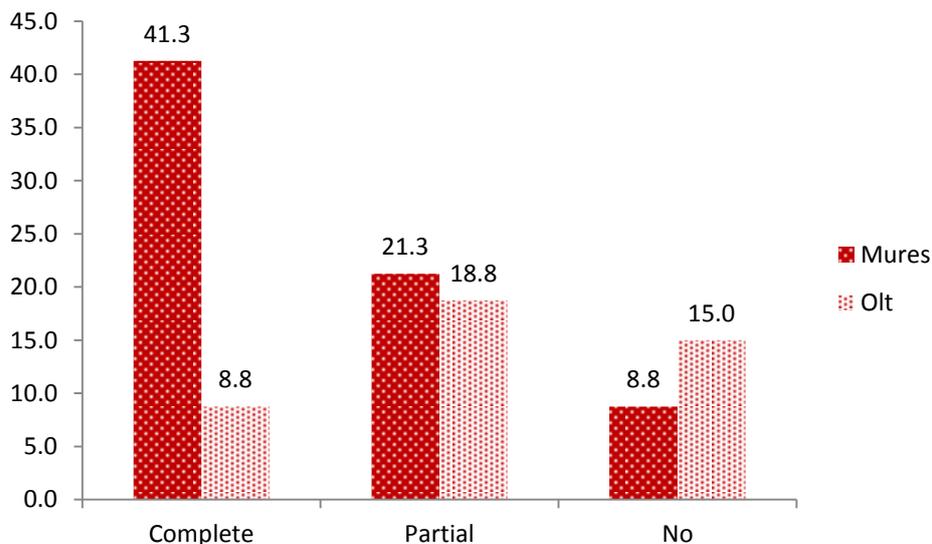


Photo: Brebeni (CESAR partially implemented)

Information levels

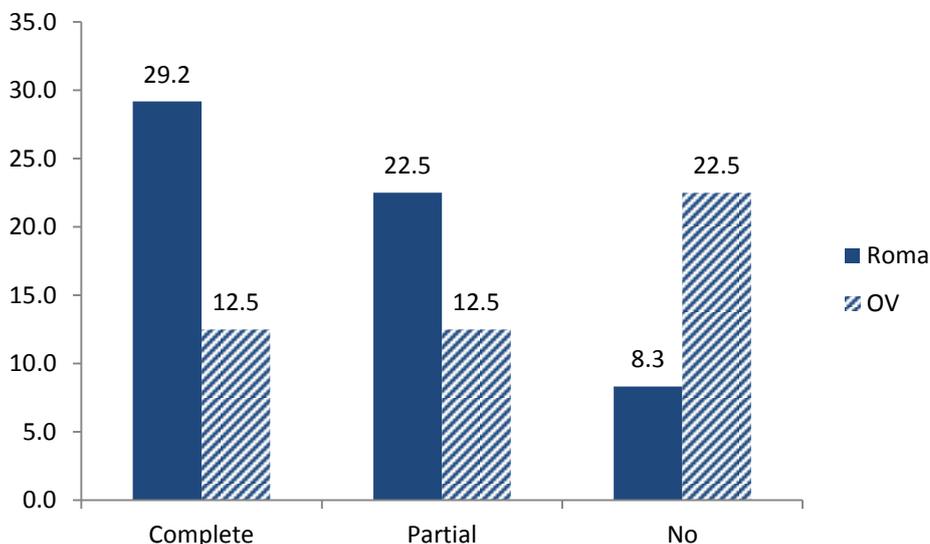
The self-reported knowledge of the procedures to register land is quite limited, but far higher in Mures than in Olt. Close to half of the respondents do not know these procedures at all, while only 18% know them somewhat or well. Broken down by region, in Mures 41.3% reported knowing the procedures for land registration compared with just 8.8% for Olt, although the share is similar in partially completed areas (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Awareness levels of procedures for land registration, by project status and region



Roma report being considerably more aware of procedures in CESAR areas than OV groups. Where the project is complete, 29.2% of Roma respondents were aware, compared with just 12.5% of OV. They also have higher awareness rates in partially completed UATs, though not in non-project areas.

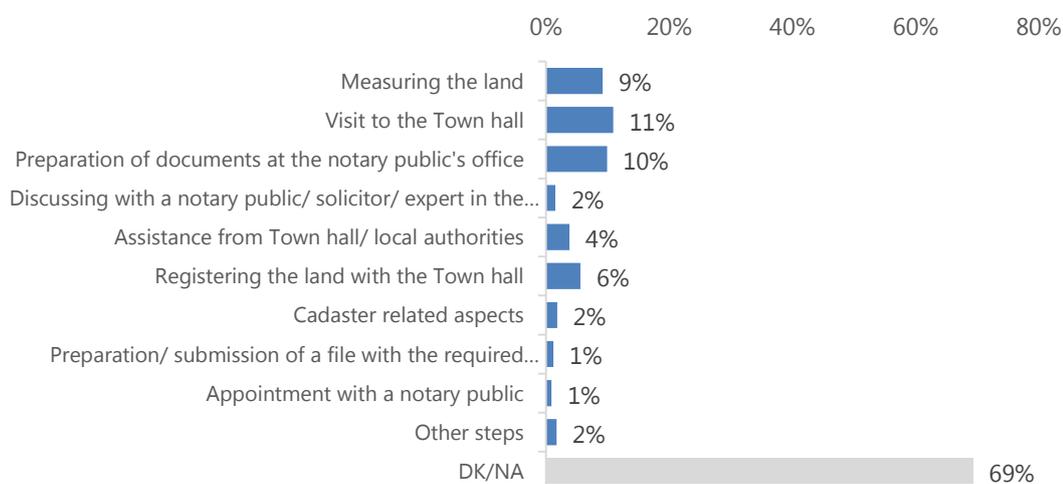
Figure 24. Awareness levels of procedures for land registration, by group



While the variables pertaining to individual status (age, education, occupation) are not associated with knowledge of land registration, there is a negative association with income. What is interesting is that in settlements with complete implementation of CESAR, the percentage of those who know nothing about the procedure is above the average of the sample. This aspect informs the conclusion that the experience of CESAR implementation depends on the performance of both the central institutions involved, and of the local authorities.

In an indication of the low perceived relevance of land registration, when asked to spontaneously mention a few steps that must be taken to register the land, almost 70% of the respondents could not think of anything. Most of the rest could mention only a single step of the procedure. In general, they referred to the institutions involved and the actors with a role in the procedure.

Figure 25. Could you mention a few steps of the land registration procedure?

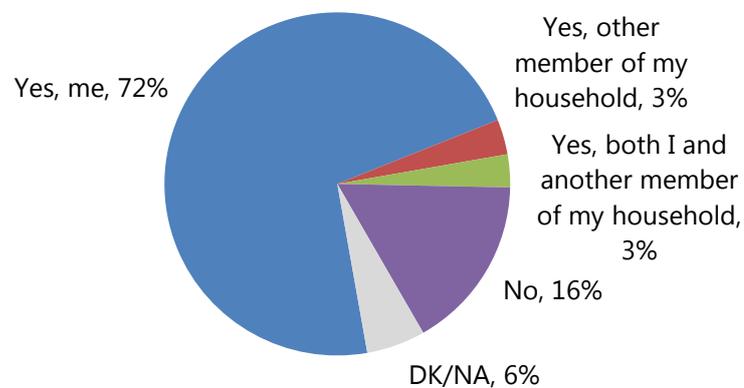


CESAR project implementation

Participation in activities implemented the CESAR project

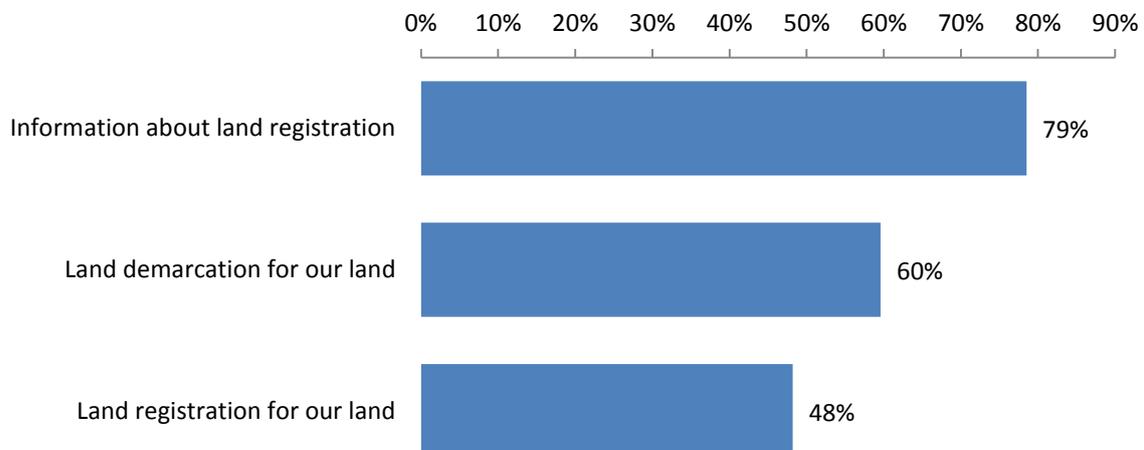
Unsurprisingly, among the 20% of respondents who had heard of the CESAR project most participated in project activities. Thus, 72% of this group participated in activities such as information sessions, meetings with specialists, land demarcation and registration. Only 16% of them did not take part.

Figure 26. Did a respondent or another member of their household participate in any activity of the CESAR project if the respondents heard about the CESAR project? (N=93 respondents)



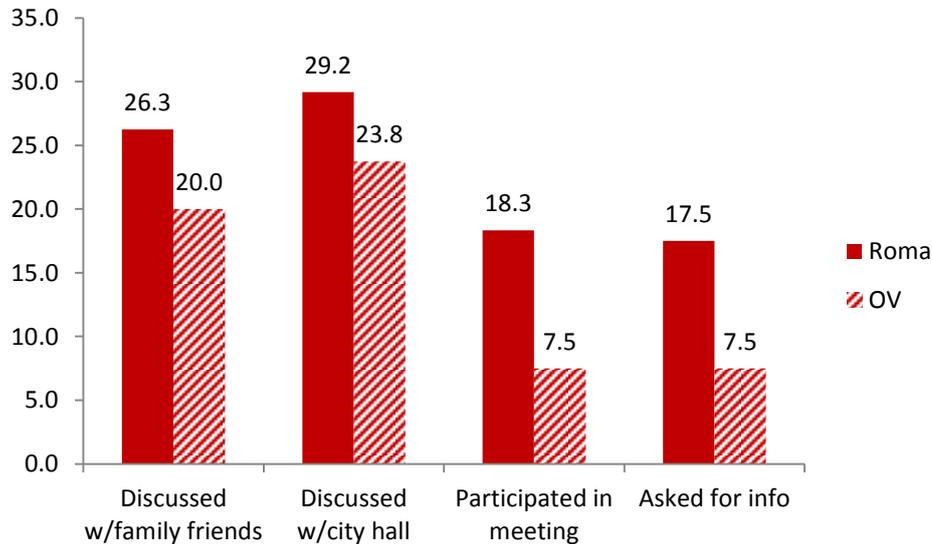
Approximately 79% of the individuals who participated in project activities stated the main advantage being useful information about land registration. 60% achieved a demarcation of the land they own and 48% confirmed the fact that due to the implementation of the CESAR project, they managed to register their own land.

Figure 27. Type of help received from CESAR project (if the respondents or any members of the household participated in any activity in the CESAR project) (N=73 respondents)



While Roma households may have less access to media, for reasons related to poverty, they nonetheless report being slightly more likely to be engaged on issues of property rights than OV households. Based on the survey, Roma households are more likely discuss issues around property registration with family, friends, neighbors, etc. to discuss them with the municipal authorities, to participate in meetings, and to request information. There is a tendency for engagement to be more common among higher income households than lower income households.

Figure 28 Respondents who engaged in the following in the last two years.



Interviews and focus group discussions found there were no individuals who would refuse to be part of the project. No one interviewed expressed anything against participating in the project. Rather, there were cases where, due to lack of official documents people could not be registered as owners, and many people who simply weren't aware of the project, for a variety of reasons.

Those less likely to report having participated in activities were unemployed, and vocational school graduates. Individuals who did not participate in activities within the CESAR project reported that nobody invited or called them to participate (47%). Other impediments were lack of time, or being away (8%).

Representatives of vulnerable groups who had legal documents (the majority), did not express discontent with regard to the implementation of project front CESAR, or their discontent was not different from the rest of the population. Also, the respondents mentioned a set of sub-activities implemented in the CESAR project:

- i) Selection of a private implementation company (the provider) which will take care of communication, measurements and elaboration of the deliverables for OCPI
- ii) Preparation of the preliminary report by the provider company
- iii) Public information campaign implemented by the provider company in collaboration with city halls
- iv) Measurements and household interview sheets
- v) Data corroboration
- vi) Publication reception of the results
- vii) Results consultation and solving the complaints
- viii) Data migration in eTerra at OCPIs

ix) Sending the land books to the owners

Then we did this information campaign. They began to put up posters in the communes. ...They organized this together with the municipal authorities, in order to explain to people what will be done, so the people would give them access, that in every household they're about to take measures, to collect data. Then, the people had to provide the ownership titles. ...people had some questions; ...because there were many situations, there were small to large problems, many inheritances undiscussed...Almost everybody had an issue. (OCPI Mureş)

It was explained very clearly what it was about. We are doing measurements. This is a free cadaster. We register your estate, and I think it was clear enough.

They resisted – when they had to give the documents to the provider, to study them to make copies. You know people in the countryside, they are old, eh, what can one do? They say “they take away our land, they leave us without papers.”

Challenges to CESAR project implementation

Challenges included delays in assigning the implementation contracts to providers (for example in Mures, the project implementation team was set up in 2009, and the contract with the provider was signed in 2011) and attribution of the contracts to companies that were not experienced, competent or responsible with project's deadlines (e.g. in Bahnea)

At Bahnea we had and we still have problems with this division, At Saschiz it was okay. The provider made a good division of cadastral sectors which is very important. There are some national geodesic points, from the national network of points, on this basis, when work is being done, (OCPI Mureş)

Lack of sufficient personnel at the level of **OCPI**, especially in the verification phase and results reception. The OCPI representative from Slatina reports that if they had been allowed to be in the field during data collection, the amount of complaints would have been reduced from 800 to a maximum of 200.

The inability to check on the provider, although we had it in every technical specification, we could not resolve this, because we simply could not be present physically. As we had too few, here in the office, and at the general register, it was almost impossible, we would have collapsed, if they had sent us all to do check-ups. (OCPI Slatina)

Lack of sufficient personnel at the level of the **local public authorities** who could have made the process more efficient and would solve communication problems with the owners. **Insufficient collaboration** from the **local public authorities** (e.g. in Bahnea, and to a lesser extent in Iancu Jianu)

Errors in ownership titles, difference in surface area entered in papers and the area used by the owner.

So we first divided the land and then we started measuring it. And we had a surprise at the general cadaster. Yes, we found lots that had not been actually measured then, and the ownership title said more than what was found in the field. (Solicitor Brebeni)

Problems regarding the owners' identification: particularities regarding vulnerable groups: lack of inheritance papers, sales hand written contracts unauthenticated at a notary office, papers which could not be used in this project. More houses built on the same land

(usually by owner's inheritors), without building permit and without inheritance subdivision of the land.

Owners who built without a building permit or owners who didn't own the land where they built the house

We found house owners without them being the owners of the land, and without authorization to build on the land. The previous mayors, several years ago, made them owners. That is, they told them to build the house there, but they did not give them documents, or maybe just a written record of what was done on the land, the people kept them at home, but they had no right to ownership. (Secretary Brebeni)

Project obstruction before sending the land book to the owners (Brebeni or Bahnea). Individuals who have only old written contracts or other unauthenticated papers are now subjects of a new situation: the old owners require them to pay if they want the papers legalized.

They can hardly wait for them to not get the document so that they can make an extra 10 million, or 7 million. The old owners? They don't have documents. No-one admits what was in the past. But the receipt is done with witnesses, which was the rule at the time. Now that the times changed, what can I do? If I have the receipt, they cannot do anything. If you don't have the receipt and you just talk, then they can eat you alive and sell you ten times over. I have the receipt (FG Brebeni)

The problem regarding the residential area (within settlement boundaries). In both counties most problems were connected to the surface within the settlement limits and fewer problems related to the out-of-own lands. The mayors in Mures county stated that as concerns the residential areas, the lands inside the villages should not have made the object of the project, because they had very accurate land books from previous years.

One aspect that, in my opinion, especially in the villages of Transylvania where there is a Land Book and where the built-up areas have a Land Book excerpt shouldn't be the subject of the project... in my opinion, the built-up areas should not be covered. But if the built-up area is re-measured, is there a conflict with the old land book or...? No, but mistakes occur. (Mayor, Saschiz)

The fact that the public authorities were not involved in the Commission of Reception Results produced by the provider. A too small sample (10%) of the land books used for validation of the provider's work. Too short time and too few people for checking the provider's activity.

So it is pretty clear in the pilot manual. So when there aren't any inaccuracies to be corrected, in the reception committee report, the data will be downloaded by OCPI, and they will issue the certificate for accepting the work. Based on the acceptance report signed by the reception committee at OCPI. Signed by the reception committee from OCPI. So we were not involved. They took it and checked it. But we need to verify when we give them to people because they tell us that they don't have that respective land. We contact the OCPI and we send the citizens to Iancu Jianu, or we send them to Slatina. (Iancu Jianu Mayor).

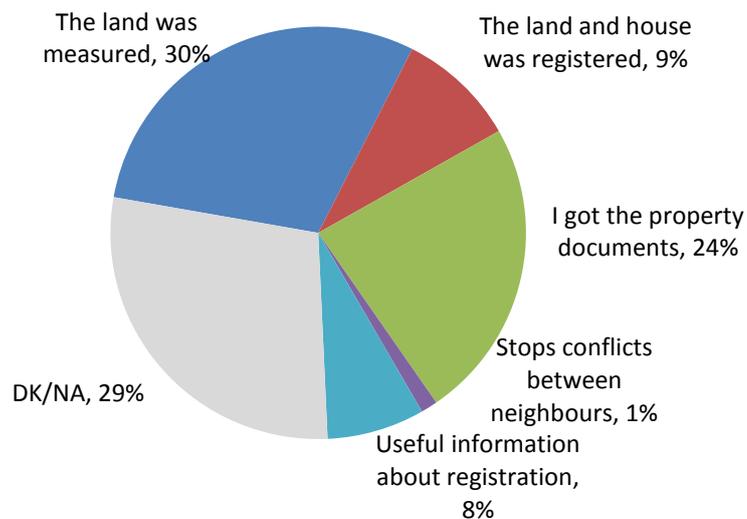
The land books were issued in the names of the old owners, most of whom are dead, and without having the inheritance process completed. This was an issue because the heirs had problems understanding that they will all be owners of an undivided land book.

Benefits associated with registering property

A minority of vulnerable persons who registered believed the project helped their household. Of the 88 persons who had heard of the project, 82% of households participated in the project (either the respondent or a household member), and 47% responded that it helped them ‘to a great extent’ (24%) or ‘to some extent’ (23%), while 24% said that it did not help at all. Perceived benefits (combining ‘to a great extent’ and ‘to some extent’) were greater in Mures (52.6%) than in Olt (35.5%). Differences between Roma and OV do not appear significant.

Only 12 percent of households could think of any benefits, and these related principally to technical outputs (as opposed to social or economic outcomes or impacts). The benefits identified by the 59 out of 89 respondents who were aware of the project concerned land measurement (30%), land and house registration (9%), obtaining the property documents (24%), and obtaining useful information about the project (8%). One percent reported ending the conflicts between neighbors as a benefit (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Benefits mentioned (If CESAR project brought benefits to respondents) (N=59 respondents)



Focus groups and interviews mentioned a series of additional project benefits, which have been divided into administrative, social, economic categories. It should be kept in mind that most of these apply to all stakeholders, not just vulnerable households:

Administrative benefits

- The ability to register one’s address
- A significant increase of the proportion of owners with land books, from approximately 5% in all localities to almost 100%
- Computerized demarcation of the properties;
- Development of the systematic new land book system at no cost to the owners or the local public authority;
- A clear image of land plots and the opportunity for the public authority to better calculate taxes;

Social benefits

- The social value of having registered title to land, legitimating ownership status
- A clear image of land plots, reducing conflicts over land delimitation;
- Greater degree of security, especially among vulnerable groups, or people who have not inherited the land, and are constantly afraid that previous owners might come and evict them. These situations is especially common among those who illegally occupy land, who built a house without a permit, or made transactions using mutual or written but not authenticated (by notaries) agreements.

Economic benefits

- Opportunities to engage in various property transactions (sale, mortgage, rent, inheritance);
- The existence of land registrations in the new book land system makes it easier and cheaper for individuals to resolve their inheritance or make a mortgage
- Having an ownership title for ID papers, for receiving social benefits or for the contracts with public utilities (electricity, gas), insurance contracts
- Ability to access European funds for both owners and the local public authority; (e.g. Greenhouse program)

Lack of funds and low expectations of selling were reasons given for weak interest in updating property registration in the absence of the project. Key informants felt that vulnerable groups would not have updated their property registration (at anywhere near the ratio achieved) without the project. This was attributed mainly to lack of money and lack of motivation. Most Roma and OV households do not possess agricultural land, and thus had little interest in engaging in economic transactions or making investments, since most do not expect to sell their houses, planning instead to pass them on to family members as inheritance.

In Saschiz households face an issue particular to Transylvania, where many Roma live in old houses abandoned by the Saxon population who had emigrated to Germany. The Mayor of Saschiz and OCPI representatives pointed out that the project's initial goals would have been achieved had inheritance issues been sorted out so that the new land books could be issued in the name of the actual living owners. The documents of these properties were recorded by the previous owners and it was necessary to open succession trials. CESAR did not provide support for these trials, and instead it was envisioned that the National Union of Notary Publics would handle the successions, in order to regularize the cadastral situation for the current owners. However, this proved too costly. CESAR thus failed to all the cadastral problems from Saschiz and while the benefits are real, they are less than optimal. For inheritance process, the people will now have to pay to have their land books updated.

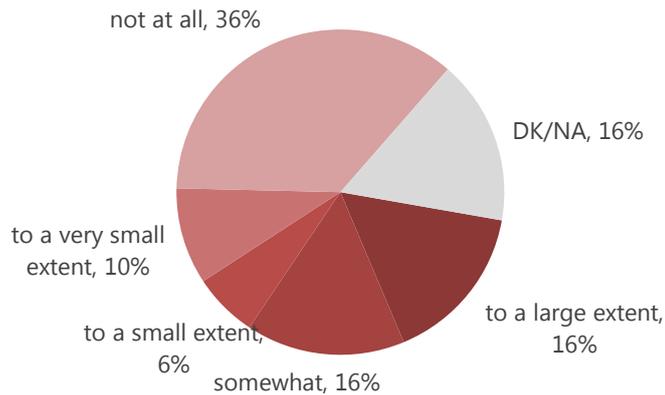
Eighty percent of the land book extracts are with deceased owners. From an administrative point of view, the problem remains unsolved. Why? Lease contracts are between the living and then we have the land register extract in the father's name...And then the owner or the person who inherits the property comes and says, "Well, I don't have the money to do the inheritance process." (Mayor, Saschiz)

Responses on perceived benefits from land registration are similar to anticipated benefits About one third of respondents think that land registration brings a many or some benefits. However, a significant segment of respondents (36%) do not expect any potential benefit from this procedure (with Roma being more pessimistic, at 40%, than OV, at

32%). Again, responses from Mures households are more positive, with only 23% expecting no benefits compared with Roma, where the figure is 53%.

The ownership title is helpful, first of all you get all the documents, and if you want social assistance, the full allowance, from ASF, state allowance, that is, it proves that you are the owner, you are the rightful owner, right? (Roma leader, Brebeni).

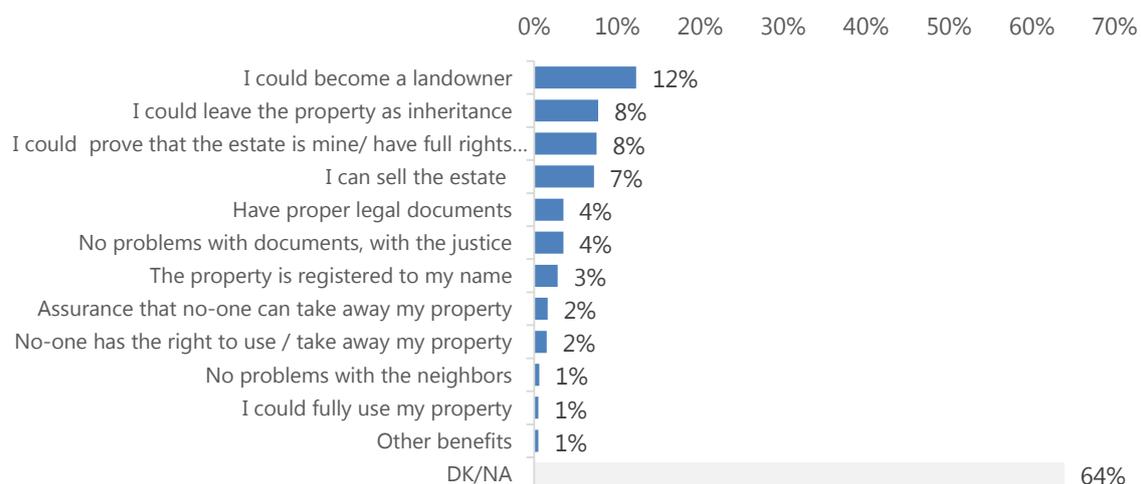
Figure 30. To what extent do you think that land registration can bring you benefits? (N=480 respondents)



Most likely related to awareness levels, respondents' positive expectations of registering land are associated with living in CESAR UATs. The share of those who think land registration will bring benefits to a great extent or some extent is much higher in CESAR UATs (53%), compared with partial CESAR UATs (32%), and non-project areas (15%). Roma with their rights registered are more aware about land registration benefits.

Almost two thirds of respondents could not think of a specific benefit. Among those who were able to, the largest share (12%) referred to gaining ownership, followed by the ability of leaving the estate as inheritance, obtaining proof of ownership and the ability to sell the property (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Types of benefits respondents named (N=480 respondents, multiple answers, open-ended question)



Conclusion



Photo: Nades UAT (no CESAR project)

Awareness and information levels

Public information campaigns have an effect, yet appear to be reaching few vulnerable households. Living in a project area does increase the chances a household

has heard of it. Nonetheless, where CESAR is being, or has been, implemented, less than 10% of respondents had received public information flyers, or seen posters, or seen TV ad or heard radio ads. Project awareness among vulnerable groups is relatively low: just 42% (where CESAR was completed) and 13% (where CESAR is ongoing), suggesting there are considerable opportunities in this area. Because the survey did not cover non-vulnerable households, it is unclear whether this is a targeting issue (of Roma and vulnerable) or a problem with awareness raising in general. Also, the fact that Mures county respondents were almost twice as likely to have heard of the project as those from in Olts county points to public information campaign implementation issues.

In some areas, knowledge about land registration and procedures involved is extremely low. In Olt county, fully 70% of respondents reported that they did not know about land registration procedures at all (in Mures this figure is only 19%) while only 9% (41% in Mures) reported knowing the procedures ‘to a great extent’ or ‘somewhat’.

While Roma households may have less exposure to media (possibly for reasons related to poverty) they nonetheless are more likely to be engaged than OV households on issues of property rights. Based on the survey, Roma households are more likely discuss issues around property registration with family, friends, neighbors, etc., to discuss them with the municipal authorities, to participate in meetings, and to request information. There is also tendency for engagement to be more common among higher income (Roma or OV) than lower income households.

Project effects and outcomes

It is too early to speak of CESAR’s impact on Roma or other vulnerable (OV) group households in terms of either land transactions or economic impacts. Project activity in the surveyed UATs is not associated with higher ownership status or property investments, which are more closely linked to region and income levels. While the survey identified differences in terms of project awareness, and perceived project benefits between project and non-project areas, these have not yet translated into discernable outcomes or impacts, such as investments in housing or land, or increased property transaction activity.

A range of factors may be impeding better outcomes. There appear to be multiple factors which suppress more positive impacts from manifesting themselves: i) not all property owners have participated yet; ii) low interest in registration because of low property values; iii) low investment ability (i.e. poverty may explain weak interest in land registration, and in improving living conditions, quality of life and property values; and iv) effects from regularizing land rights take time to materialize.

For vulnerable groups, the most significant short-term benefits of formalizing property ownership appear to relate to registering an address, entering into contracts with utility providers, and resolving inheritance processes and family conflicts. Project benefits are thus not necessarily associated with the opportunity to sell or engage in other transactions. Even though the survey shows that many vulnerable have not yet taken advantage of project support, without CESAR it is even less likely that they would be able to register their properties, or would even consider doing so. These positive effects may potentially lead to other outcomes, such as better quality public services, greater security, etc. Eventually, they may translate into improved welfare levels. If this study were repeated in five years, project impacts should become more apparent.

Only a minority of respondents felt the project helped their household. Correlated with the above, the project does not appear to be reaching vulnerable persons at levels which would be considered optimal. Thus, even in areas where the project is complete, i.e. settlements where CESAR was fully implemented, 27% of households still have no property documents, and only 54% have ownership titles. There is clearly more work to be done.

Financial constraints inhibit registration. The major reasons given for why people did not manage to obtain the documents were lack of money (27%) and the fact that municipal authorities did not issue the documents (24%). In addition, for 14% of the lots, the owner did not know the procedure to obtain the documents. There are big differences by region, with lack of funds is the most frequent reason given in Olt (43%), and failure to issue the document in Mureş (39%).

Willingness to pay among households to obtain proof of ownership is quite low (with majority willing to pay zero, and median willingness to pay between 50 and 150 RON (in project and non-project areas) Without external interventions (such as CESAR), interest in land registration among is likely to remain low, at least among vulnerable groups.

Property ownership status

The presence of CESAR is only one factor among others that influence registration rates, while regional differences, implementation issues, and income levels are key. Based on the data collected, the biggest differences in responses (across a range of variables) appear to relate to region (Mures vs. Olt) and household income levels. Across many indicators Mures households are better off than Olt households, and households with higher incomes have better land registration indicators, in terms of land registration, than lower income households.

Because of the informal nature of many property transactions, even clarifying property status through the project may lead to disputes between current owners and other relatives, because previously it had not been an issue. Land transaction, and disputes are mostly a family affair – in many cases, property was transferred to the present owner (through inheritance, purchase, or gift) from relatives. Often the transaction was not formally documented or registered, creating an informal, undocumented situation, and complicating ownership. Accordingly, trust issues and land disputes are reported to be far more common between family members than with others. However, despite a relatively few individuals being worried about potential conflicts, findings show that in CESAR UATs Roma with rights registered are less worried over property than Roma without rights registered.

A key issue inhibiting land registration processes is lack of identification documents, although the CESAR project may be encouraging persons to rectify this. One in every five residents from Roma settlements has no identification documents. During legalization procedures lack of ID can lead to serious delays and additional costs. The lack of identity documents for a large part of the population may be related to ongoing difficulties in formal interactions between individuals and public institutions or systems, irrespective of their nature: educational, civil registry, labor market, or, in the present case, systematic land registration. However, in CESAR UATs, the share of Roma households without IDs (for all household members) is lower among households who have registered

their rights than those who haven't. This suggests the project may be having a secondary effect of encouraging people to obtain IDs.

CESAR appears to be the key factor in encouraging attempts to secure documents proving property rights. For respondents living in CESAR UATs, 40% made attempts to obtain documentation where implementation is partial, and 50% of those where the implementation is complete. In the settlements where CESAR is not implemented, the percentage of those who have attempted to secure property rights document is only 4%. The project is clearly having an effect in this area.

The high rate of construction without proper authorization is another indicator of informal conditions associated with real estate, with political economy a possible factor. A strong correlation between legal construction and income levels points toward the (perceived) high costs of obtaining authorization. Relations between vulnerable groups and state institutions probably also play a role. Informal agreements are said to exist between local authorities and Roma populations, whereby, in exchange for election support, the authorities turn a blind eye to informal construction.

The possession of ownership documents is positively associated household income, assets and, as expected, with CESAR program implementation. Owners have title deeds or property titles covering only 70% of plots under their control. Fear of disputes over ownership is higher in cases where there is possession of property documents (65%). The great majority (90%) of respondents without documents wish to obtain the documents to prove their property rights.

CESAR project implementation challenges

Delays in assigning the implementation contracts to providers and provider competence. In the case of Mures, the project implementation team was set up in 2009, and the contract with the provider was signed only in 2011. Attribution of the implementation contracts to companies which were not experienced, competent or responsible with project's deadlines, such as the provider for Bahnea.

Lack of sufficient personnel at the OCPI level, especially during the verification phase and results reception. The OCPI representative from Slatina reported that if they had been allowed to be in the field during data collection, the amount of complaints would have fallen from 800 to a maximum of 200.

Lack of sufficient personnel at the local public authorities level who could have made the process more efficient and would solve communication problems with the owners. Insufficient collaboration from the local public authorities, for example in Bahnea, and to a lesser extent in Iancu Jianu.

Project obstruction before sending the land book to the owners (in Brebeni and Bahnea). Individuals who have only old written contracts or other unauthenticated papers are now subjects of a new situation: the previous owners require them to pay if they want the papers legalized.

Issues regarding residential area within settlement boundaries. In both counties most problems were connected to the surface within the settlement limits and fewer problems related to out-of-own lands. The mayors in Mures county stated that as concerns

the residential areas, the lands inside the villages should not have been included in the project objectives, because they had very accurate land books from previous years.

Lack of involvement by public authorities in the Commission of Reception Results produced by the provider. A too small sample (10%) of the land books was used for validation of the provider's work. There was too little time and too few people checking the provider's activity.

The land books were issued in the names of the old owners, most of whom are dead, and without having the inheritance process completed. This was an issue because the heirs had problems understanding that they will all be owners of an undivided land book.