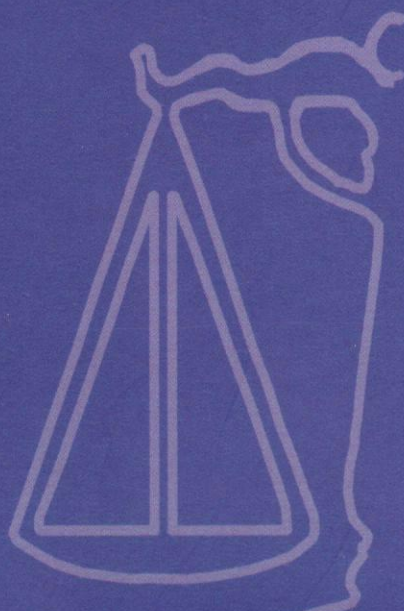


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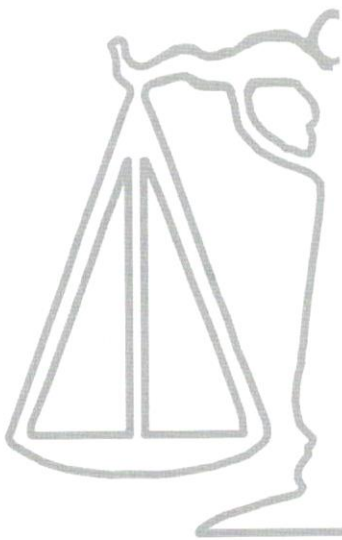
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Spatial Planning and Land Use in Serbia

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**Abstract**

General framework for land use in the Republic of Serbia is determined by the *Strategy of spatial development of Serbia* of 2009, and by many spatial planning documents derived from it, among which are Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (2010 - 2020) of 2010, regional spatial plans, spatial plans of the special purpose areas, spatial plans of municipalities and cities, and general plans.

Purpose and legal regime of land use are more precisely regulated by appropriate laws.

Planning, development, use and protection of arable agricultural land in the Republic of Serbia is regulated by the *Law on Agricultural Land* of 2006.

The Law prescribes that special planning documents, the so called agricultural bases, are to be enacted at the state and provincial levels, for the sake of protection of available agricultural land, writing programs and projects for protection, development and use of agricultural land, assessment of dangers to the agricultural land, assessment of susceptibility of agricultural land to development and use, meeting prerequisites for application of scientific and technological achievements in the area of protection, development and use of agricultural land, and writing of long term strategy of development of agricultural production.

The Law on Agricultural Land, amongst other things, prescribes that agricultural land is not to be used for non agricultural purposes. However, it is simultaneously determined that the rule can be broken in order to meet public interests. Arable agricultural land can be used for the following non agricultural purposes, if authorization of the Ministry of Agriculture has been previously acquired: 1. for creating artificial pastures and meadows on arable agricultural land of particular quality (fourth and fifth category), as well as planting of forests, regardless of the category of the soil; 2. for exploitation of mineral resources and temporary storage of dangerous matter; 3. for other purposes, if it has been determined, according to law, that public interest is at hand, and with obligatory fees for changing of purpose, paid. The fine is between 20% and 50% of market price of the land, depending on the new purpose of the land. Even with so many protective provisions, there has been a decades long trend of decrease in area of arable agricultural land. According to the data of *Corine Land Use*, in the period between 1990. and 2000, total area covered in agricultural land has dropped by 8473 ha. One should also bare in mind that economic activities in that period were drastically decreased, due to military conflicts in the Balkans, and occasional isolation of the country. The process of decreasing the area covered by arable land was hastened after the political changes of 2000. The main reason for that was mass urbanization. It has been slowed down by the great economic crisis, in recent years. The trend of arable land areas being reduced is still present, nonetheless. Such problem exists on global scale, but it has a special meaning in a country in which, according to data listed in the Strategy of Agricultural and Rural development of the Republic of Serbia for the period of 2014. to 2024, around 20% of population works exclusively in agriculture.

**Key words:** Spatial planning, agricultural land use

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