



# Typology of Farmer Groups in Ukraine on the Example of Agrarian Cooperatives



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## Introduction

Cooperation of small farmers is one of the possible ways for agriculture sustainable development. Ukrainian legislation separates agrarian cooperatives in two groups: service (or not for profit) cooperatives and productional cooperatives. Also, we can divide all agrarian cooperatives in the world by a type of activity (milk production, fruits production etc). However, in Ukraine one more typology could be used, because in this country are cooperatives that registered as cooperatives but functioning as farm with one owner. In another hand, there are agrarian cooperatives that are not registered but farmers made informal community that functioning as real cooperative.

## Materials and methods

In the paper proposed a new typology for agrarian cooperatives that could be used to characterise cooperative movement in Eastern European countries. The paper examined 79 questionnaires of 29 agricultural cooperatives from 8 regions of Ukraine.



**Fig. 1: Process of data collection**

For filling most of the questionnaires method of field interview were used. Some farmers were interviewed by phone. The survey was held from October 22, 2018, till October 15, 2019, in eight regions of Ukraine: Sumy, Poltava, Chernigiv, Odessa, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Khmelnytskyi, Kharkiv.

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**Fig. 2: Young farmer in Poltava region, Ukraine**

In Poltava, Sumy and Kharkiv region we made face-to-face interviews. However, to have an objective data of agrarian cooperatives functioning in Ukraine and for comparison we continue survey in some additional regions: Odessa, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Zaporizhzhia, Chernigiv. These additional interviews were made by phone or by using Google forms instruments.

## Results

The most of cooperatives surveyed (83 %) was officially registered and functioned as real cooperatives. 10 % of agrarian cooperatives were registered as cooperative, but worked as separate farmer or farmers without any common production or interaction. It was a farmers that gathered to get government or donors support that provided only for cooperatives, or farmers, who choose such form of registration to get some taxes preferences, etc.

Among cooperatives surveyed 7 % were not registered but really functioned as cooperatives. The most popular reason why farmers do not want to register their communities as cooperatives was long and difficult bureaucratic procedure of registration.

## Conclusion

Some of the productional agro-cooperatives in Ukraine were created as a result of the transformation of collective farms that existed in USSR, others - as a result of household's and farmers' cooperation. Some of agro-cooperatives were set up to receive funding from international (UNDP) or local donors (66%).

Not all cooperatives surveyed functioning as a real agrarian cooperative. That is why were proposed the new cooperatives classification by the type of registration:

- officially registered and functioned as real cooperatives;
- registered as cooperative, but worked as separate farmer;
- not registered but really functioned as cooperatives.