

The dynamic landscape of forest ownership in Europe: what does it mean for society and policy?

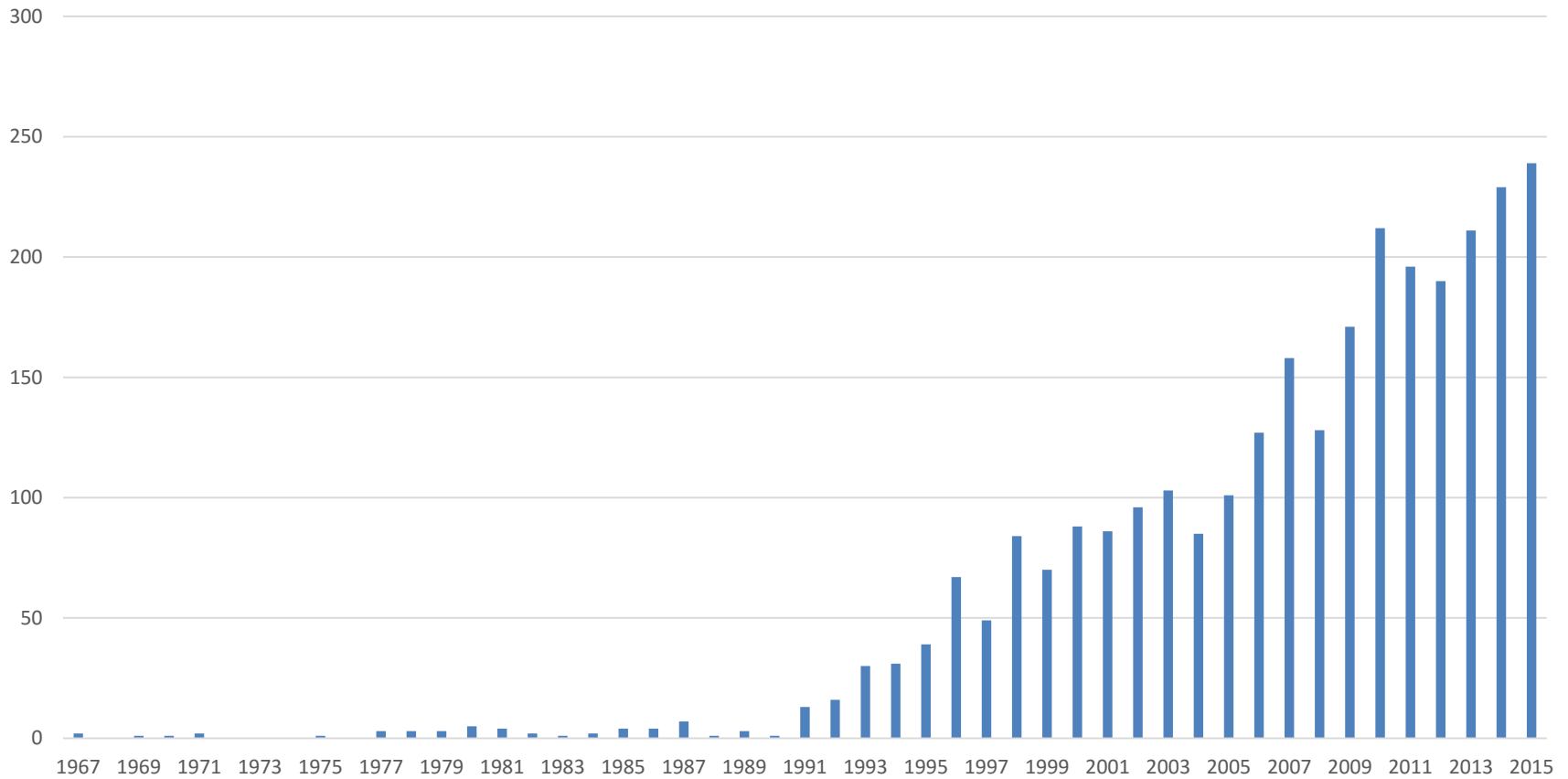
A synthesis of the FACESMAP Cost Action

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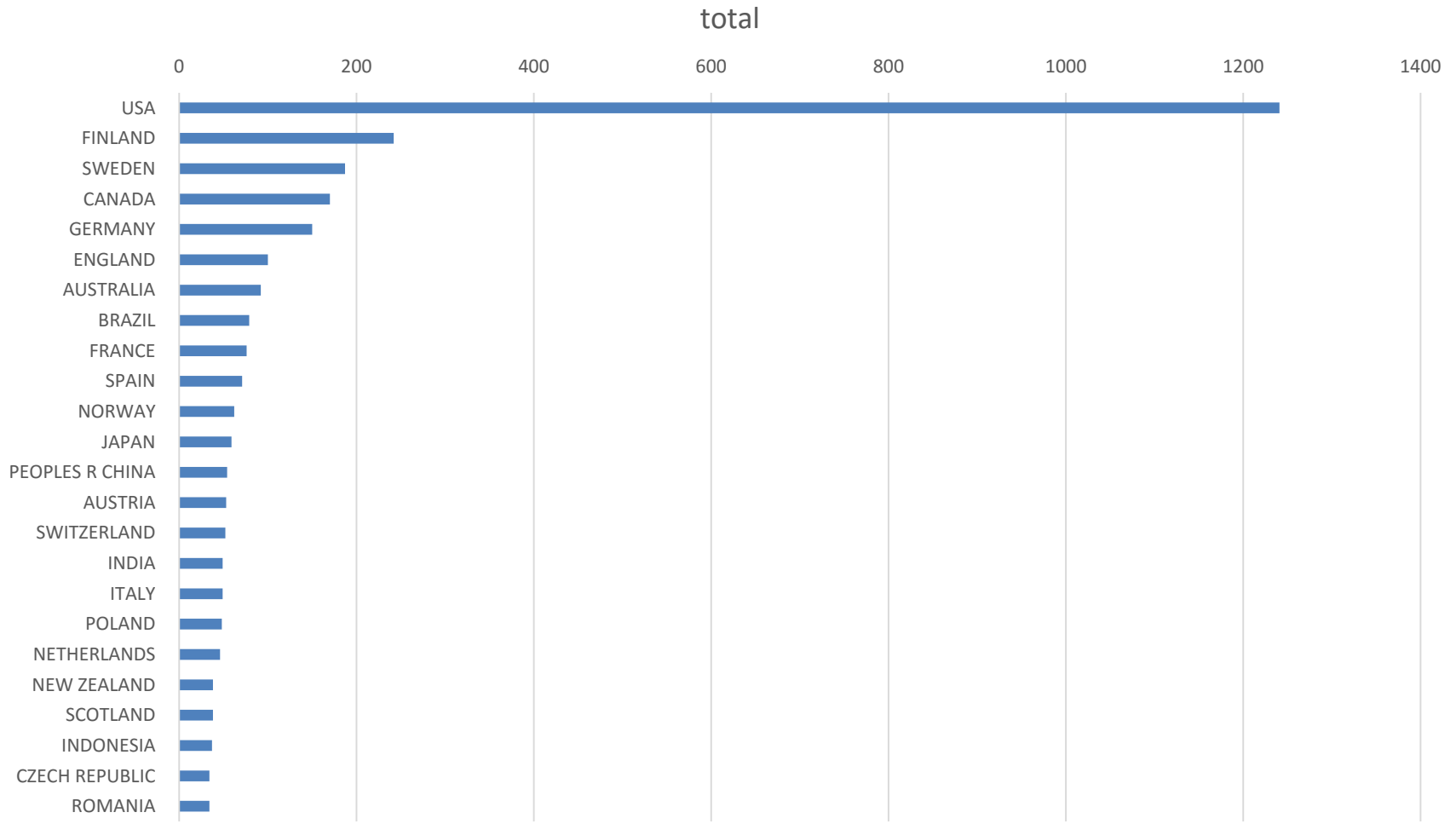


Interest in forest owners ...

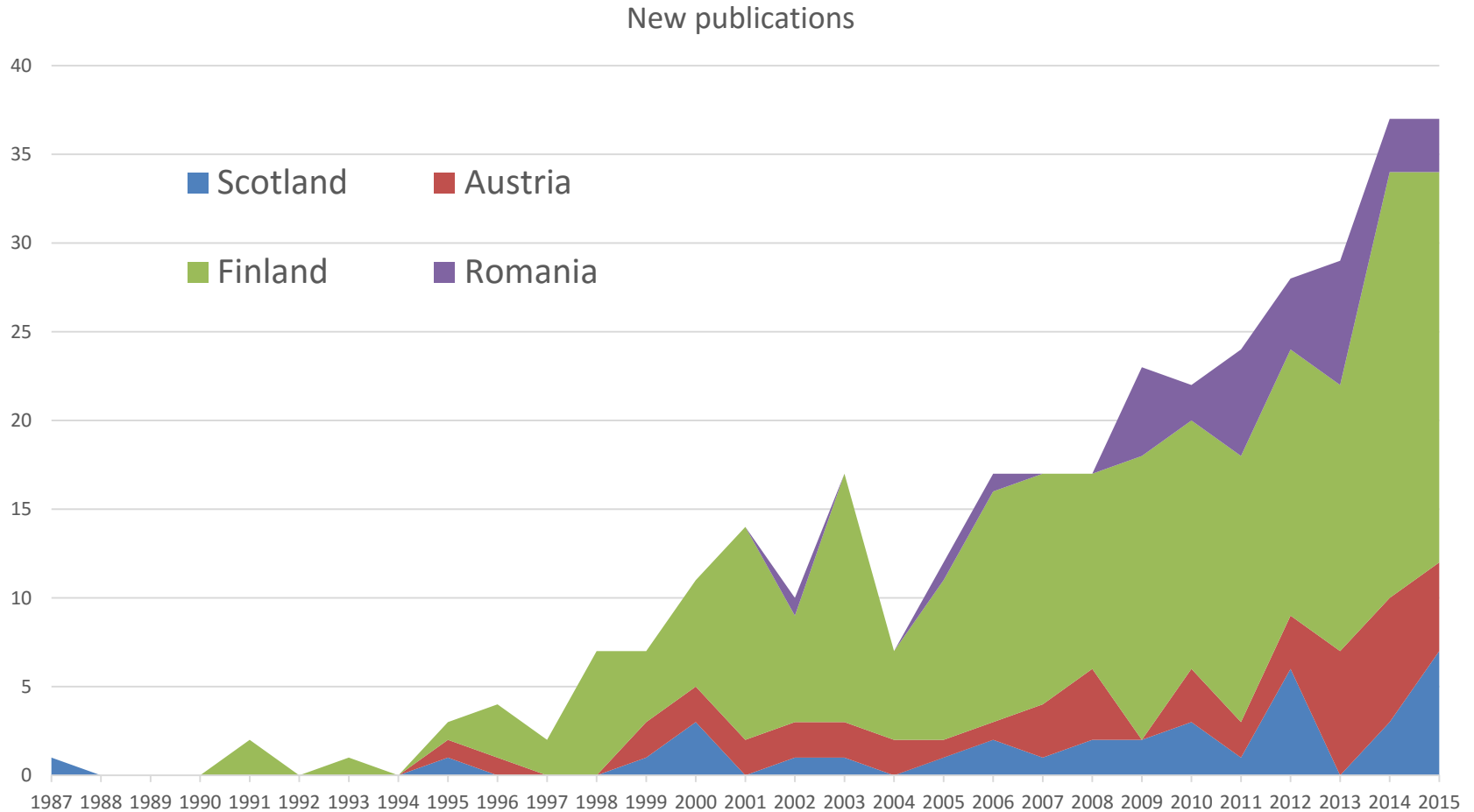
Publications / year on 'forest*' and owner*' - Web of Knowledge



Geographical focus



New publications on forest owners in four European countries



What we did ...

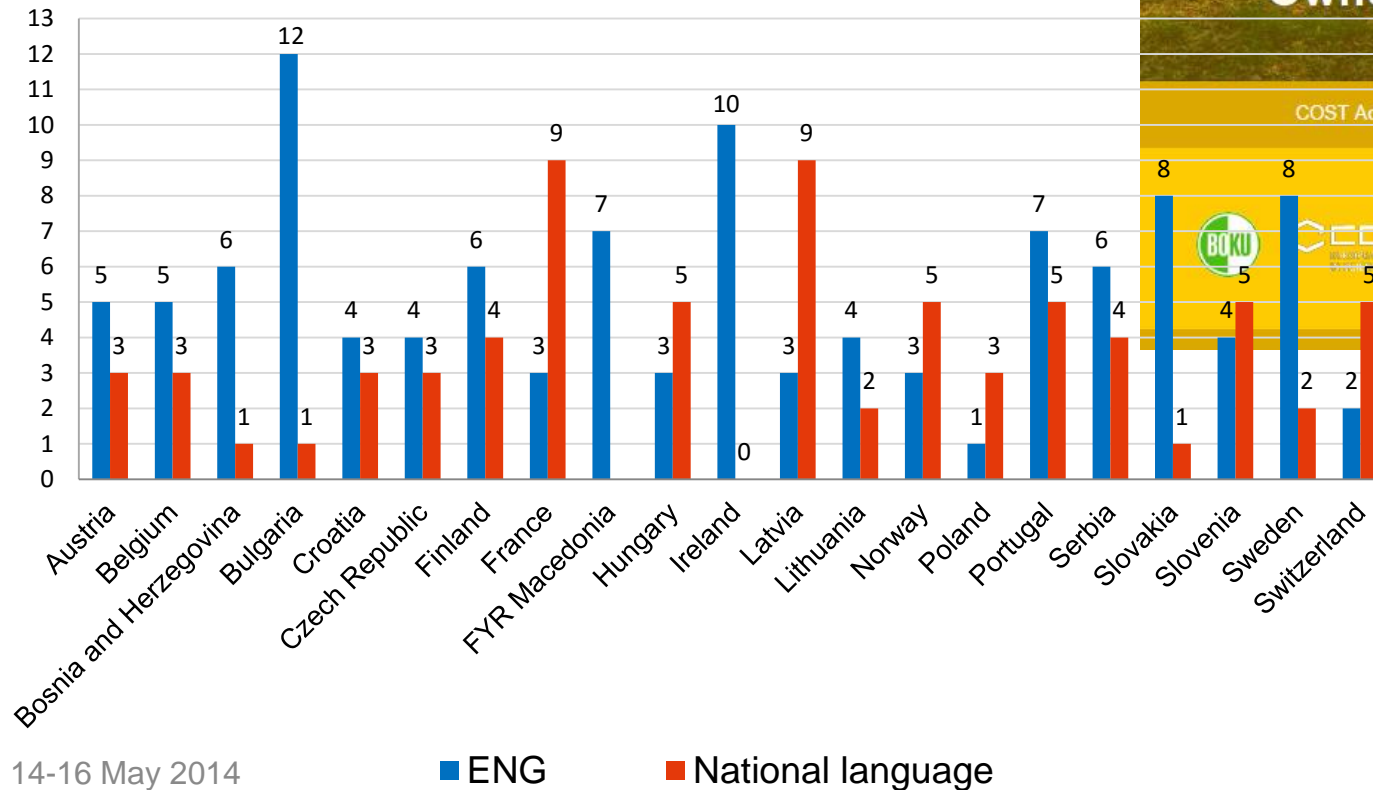
- 30 participating countries; 28 expert country reports
- field visits and interaction with stakeholders using innovative 'Travellab' method
- Three European-level stakeholder meetings
- collaboration with UNECE-FAO Forest and Timber Section and the Confederation of European Forest Owners
- 22 small groups focusing on specific topics producing 25 papers and book chapters.
- internal workshops to deepen understanding across working groups, and an internal online survey



Literature review on forest ownership in change

182 selected reports/publications (20 countries)

Number of selected references per country and their language





Overview: the headlines

- Similar trends across Europe:
 - more diversity of owners
 - lifestyle changes
 - Shift from regulation to voluntary compliance
 - Increased involvement of owners e.g. through forest owners' associations
- New expectations from forests
 - ecosystem services, biodiversity, health, climate change
- Common problems
 - forests and their potentials often neglected
 - advisers not relating clearly or communicating well with owners.
 - policy not working

Overview: the devil in the detail

- Conventional forestry-oriented policies and management options don't reflect diversity of owners and preferences e.g.
- Surprising diversity of local situations:
 - each owner is different personally
 - special types such as common, community or NGO-owned non-profit/third sector forests
 - contexts differ with regard to legal regulations, market demands, environmental frameworks, etc
- the same 'recipes' won't work across different countries, or even across different types of owners in each country
- top-down solutions fail when it comes to local specificities.

Theme 1: The variety of trends in changing land ownership

What did we already know?

- *Lots of change*
- *Restitution and privatisation in post-socialist Europe*
- *Urbanisation of western European forest owners*

What have we added to that?

- Restitution in CEE and SEE has had very diverse goals and implementation;
- Other new modes of ownership – trends and patterns quasi-quantified
- Range of new and old community groups



Theme 2: Simplistic understanding of ownership types and owner categories

What did we already know?

- *Many attempts to develop typologies, often relying on owners' motivations*

What have we added to that?

- Increasing diversity of legal forms of forest ownership types
- Separately (overlapping) increasing diversity of owner values, motivations, knowledge systems
- Hybrids and grey areas: new self-organised community groups, environmental and social NGOs, hobby owners
- Useful typologies have to capture more complex relations and be developed to fit the specific issue and conditions at hand



Theme 3: Ownership is only one component of property rights

What did we already know?

- *The owner's freedom to manage the forest varies widely*

What have we added to that?

Geographical patterns include:

- central control of forest management in (some) former socialist countries
- more access restrictions in private forests in southern European countries

Historic trends include:

- some liberalisation of property rights
- privatisation and decentralisation of public forests
- emergence of governance arrangements which enable management without ownership



Theme 4: Challenge of national data

What did we already know?

- *Challenges with data harmonisation*

What have we added to that?

- Lack and inconsistency of statistical information and forest owner surveys limits possibilities of:
 - overview and comparison
 - better understanding of variety of owners' goals and behaviour
- Some countries lack:
 - complete land registration or cadastral records
 - national records on individual characteristics e.g. gender



Theme 5: Valuing diversity, providing advice and services

What did we already know?

- *Private owners are important for the delivery of forest policy objectives*
- *Extension and advisory systems (aim to) support this policy delivery*

What have we added to that?

- Owners and their objectives are more diverse (and knowledgeable) than is recognised by policy and advisors
- New approaches need to build on participatory approaches while acknowledging a need for forestry technical knowledge
- A diverse and interconnected advisory system may be most useful but possibly does not yet exist.



Theme 6: Need to evaluate and design effective policy instruments

What did we already know?

- A range of policy instruments has been developed and targeted at private forest owners
- On the whole such instruments are perceived to be under-achieving

What have we added to that?

- Policy interventions are rarely documented and even more rarely evaluated (this varies between countries)
- Lack of knowledge on effects of policies on different forest owner types, and lack of specific policy instruments tailored to the needs and objectives of diverse owners.





Why does it matter?

- It's about more than policy efficiency and effectiveness
- 'Spontaneous' change provides options for sustainable society
- Existential tensions for the forestry profession
- Learning → innovation

Conclusions

More positive way of seeing the diversity of owners

Policy silo-thinking works against diversity

Support for advisory services and organisations that work with owners in different ways

Proactive thinking about silviculture and innovation

Opportunities for learning through doing

Risk and how to put boundaries around risk.

We have problematised the owners: now evaluate the policies and the advisory services



Thank you!

