



MICRO-CREDENTIAL

LAND MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

8.- State Role in Land Resource Management

Regulation of Land Relations

LM-W08-V51

Core relevance

Land is a special resource

Land is fixed in place, limited in area, and used by many groups at the same time. Because agriculture, housing, infrastructure, business, and environmental protection all depend on land, regulation is needed to reduce uncertainty, organize access, and protect the public interest.

- competing claims can create disputes
- unclear rules increase hidden costs
- weak registration discourages investment
- poor monitoring leads to misuse and degradation

State perspective

The state uses regulation to define rights, guide land use, register transactions, collect information, and align private behavior with public goals.

Why this matters in Central Asia

Central Asia combines irrigated farming, dryland pressure, rapid urban change, and strong dependence on land administration quality.

Good regulation helps produce

- legal certainty
- lower transaction costs
- more transparent allocation
- better protection of users and owners
- stronger environmental stewardship

A well-functioning land sector supports growth, social stability, and environmental protection.

Concept

Regulation of land relations means the legal and institutional system used to define, register, allocate, use, protect, transfer, and review rights connected with land.

RIGHTS

tenure security
registration
restrictions and obligations
transactions and legal recognition

USE

planning and zoning
permitted purposes
compliance with environmental
and social rules
protection of land quality

VALUE

valuation and taxation
rents and fees
investment signals
public revenue and market
confidence

WHO?

state
users
owners
firms
communities
courts

In simple terms: land relations connect people, law, land use, and public administration.

Principle set

Legality

clear rules and
recognized
procedures

REGULATION OF LAND RELATIONS

Sustainability

use today without
destroying future
value

Efficiency

lower costs,
better service,
faster transactions

Equity

fair treatment,
access, and
protection

Transparency

visible decisions,
reliable records,
review options

Good policy balances rights,
obligations, and public purpose.

The best systems connect legal clarity
with practical administration.

Weak policy usually fails because one
principle is ignored.

Main instruments

Laws and codes

define rights, limits, and procedures

Cadastre and registration

identify parcels, holders, and legal status

Planning and zoning

guide location, compatibility, and land use patterns

Valuation and taxation

create economic signals and public revenue

Monitoring and enforcement

check compliance, misuse, and degradation

Dispute resolution

support review, appeal, and legal certainty

A functioning system combines legal, spatial, fiscal, administrative, and judicial tools.

Governance map

Parliament / President / Cabinet
laws, decrees, strategic direction

Cadastre and land administration bodies

cadastre maintenance, state registration of rights to real estate, geodesy-cartography, land and cadastral control

Local public authorities

implementation, territorial planning, practical land-use decisions and service delivery

Courts, appeal channels, and review mechanisms

dispute settlement, legality review, accountability, correction of administrative decisions

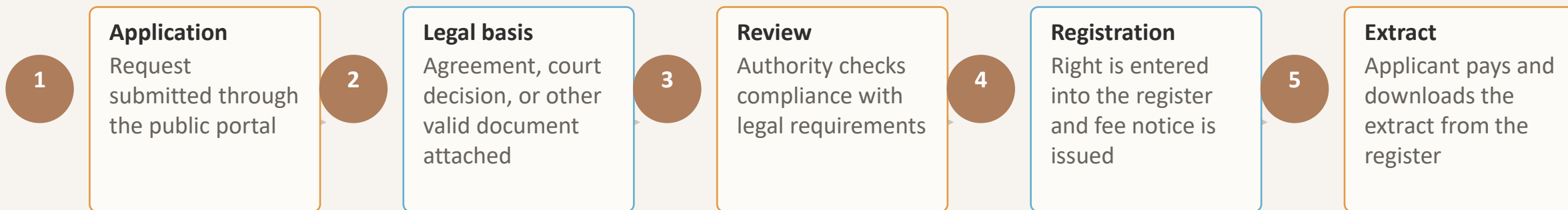
Users of the system

citizens, farmers, firms, households, communities

Why coordination matters

Land regulation touches agriculture, housing, infrastructure, taxation, digital records, and environmental control. Because these tasks are spread across institutions, coordination is a core requirement, not an optional extra.

Registration flow



Legal effect of registration

State registration is not only record-keeping. It gives formal recognition, helps protect the right, supports taxation and transactions, and makes public information more reliable.

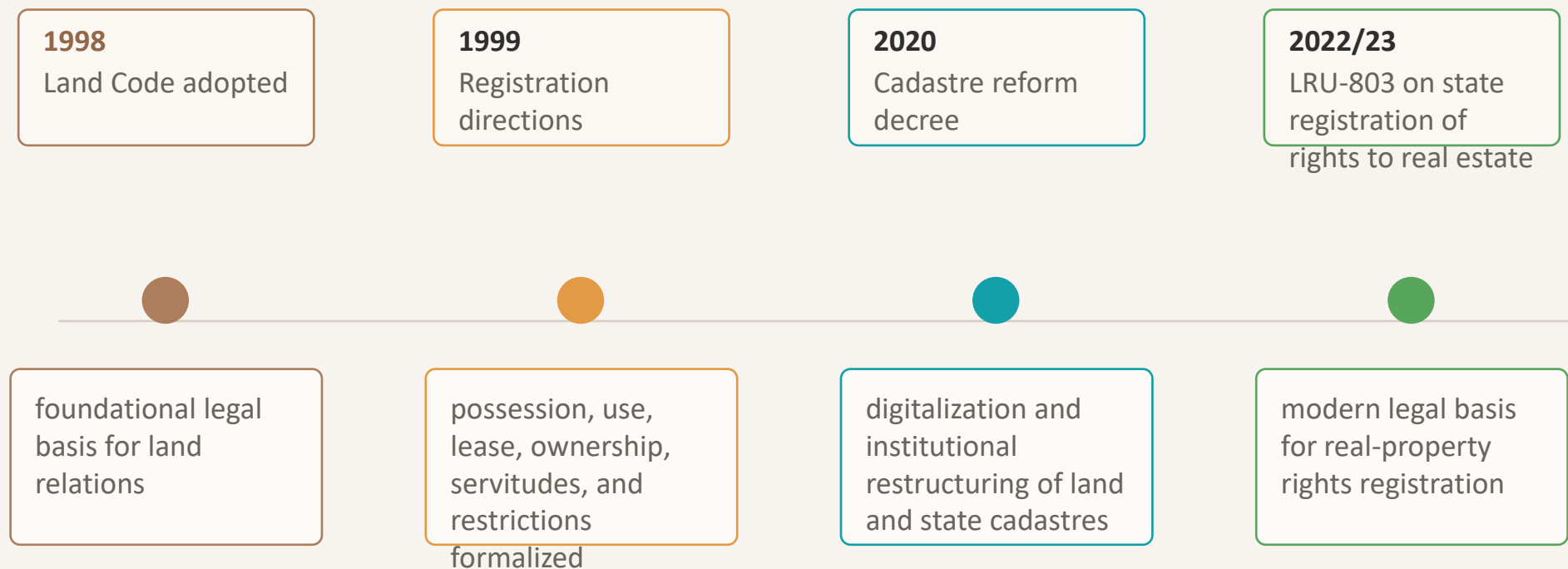
Service note

A 2025 government guidance page states that online registration of property rights can be completed in 2 working days.

Why students should notice this

Procedure matters because rights become meaningful only when law and administration meet in practice.

Reform path



The main pattern is clear: the legal framework moved from basic codification toward registration reform, digital cadastre, and more service-oriented administration.

Operational reform

What modernization tries to solve

- fragmented records
- slow transactions
- weak data exchange between institutions
- limited public access to reliable property information
- difficulty linking law, maps, and service delivery

World Bank project objective

to establish an efficient and accessible real property registration and cadastre system as part of national eGovernment services

Procedure metric

The World Bank reported a reduction from 9 procedures to 5 procedures needed to register rights to real property.

Digital direction

fully digital registry and cadastre, online accessibility, better spatial data exchange, and stronger awareness of real property rights

System reach

By late 2022, phase 2 of the information system was effective for all transaction types in all 206 offices of the Cadastral Agency.

Modernization is not just about software. It is about making rights clearer, services faster, and administration more connected.

Legal practice

Rights commonly registered

possession
use
lease
ownership
servitude
other registered restrictions

Operations in land plots

Rights may be established, changed, transferred, restricted, or discontinued through legally recognized operations in land plots.

Why registration matters

Registration is an official obligatory procedure on whose basis rights are established and recognized from the date of registration.

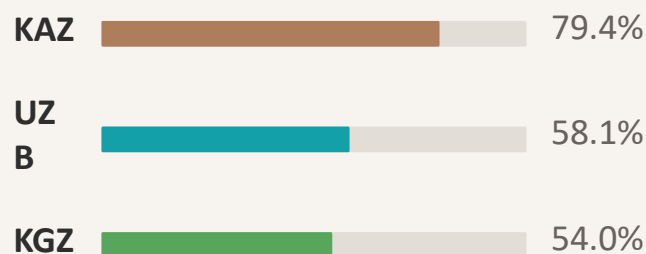
Important consequence

Operations in land plots that have not been registered with the state authority are regarded as invalid, except in cases provided for by law.

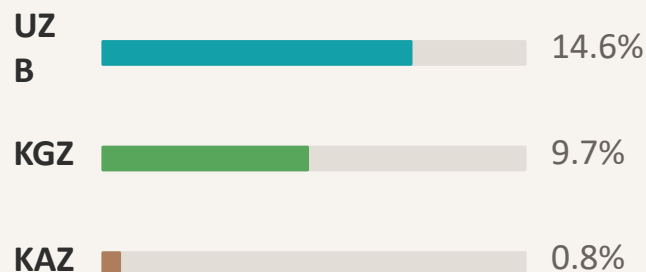
This is the bridge between law on paper and rights in real life.

Regional data, 2023

Agricultural land as % of total land area



Irrigated agricultural land as % of agricultural land



Interpretation

Kazakhstan has the largest agricultural share of land. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have lower shares but a stronger role for regulated agricultural and irrigation systems. Different land structures create different regulatory priorities.

Why this matters for land relations

Where irrigation is important, regulation must closely connect land rights, water access, monitoring, and maintenance obligations.

Method note

Agricultural land shares for Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyz Republic were calculated from World Bank land data for 2023.

Formula used:

$$\text{share} = \frac{\text{agricultural land (sq. km)}}{\text{total land area (sq. km)}} \times 100$$

Calculated values:

$$\text{KAZ} = 2,142,657 / 2,699,700 = 79.4\%$$

$$\text{UZB} = 255,820 / 440,650 = 58.1\%$$

$$\text{KGZ} = 103,588 / 191,800 = 54.0\%$$

Risk map

Unclear boundaries

more disputes

Weak registration

hidden assets, legal
uncertainty

Poor monitoring

misuse, degradation,
salinity

Fragmented institutions

slow decisions and
duplication

Informal expansion

planning mismatch and
service gaps

Low public trust

less investment and more
avoidance

Weak land regulation is costly because it produces legal, economic, and environmental losses at the same time.

What good regulation of land relations looks like

Design principles

Integrated

law + cadastre + planning + service delivery

Transparent

visible rules, procedures, and records

Evidence-based

maps, monitoring, and statistics used in decisions

Fair

equal treatment and protection against arbitrary decisions

Adaptive

responds to urban growth, climate pressure, and technology

Enforceable

rules that can actually be implemented and reviewed

The strongest systems connect secure rights with practical administration and long-term stewardship.

Key takeaways

Five main ideas to remember

1. Land relations need regulation because land is limited, valuable, and socially important.
2. Regulation combines law, institutions, registration, planning, monitoring, and review.
3. Uzbekistan's framework has moved toward stronger registration and digital cadastre.
4. In Central Asia, land structure and irrigation make administration especially important.
5. Good regulation protects rights, supports transactions, and promotes sustainable land use.

Closing thought

Regulation of land relations is not simply about control. At its best, it creates legal certainty, reduces conflict, improves public administration, and guides land use toward social and environmental responsibility. For students of land management, the real task is to see how legal rules, cadastral information, and institutional practice fit together.

From land control to land stewardship: that is the key shift to understand.

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*End of
lecture.*



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