

Actors of Land Policy

Deutscher Städtetag and *Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben (BIMA)*
Discussion on the challenges of land policy with the International Working Group

Introduction

It is to be expected that the most important stakeholders of German cities and the owners of the federal land of Germany will be in permanent conflict about land policy.

The *ARL International Working Group on Land Policies in Europe* eagerly awaited the discussion with the German Association of Cities and Towns (*Deutscher Städtetag*) and the *German Institute for Federal Real Estate (BIMA)* on the challenges of land policy in Germany and ten European countries.

After the political objectives of land policy had been discussed in the previous meetings and the instruments of land policy had been debated (see *ARL Nachrichten* 2-49 and 3-50), the focus of the working group on 15-17 September was on the actors of land policy. It quickly became clear that the expected conflict between cities and BIMA could not be confirmed. In an interactive online session, Hilmar von Lojewski and Eva Maria Niemeyer (German Association of Cities and Towns) welcomed the renowned international academics representing 11 different European countries. They explained how land policy and financing of public infrastructure are interrelated and discussed approaches to public value capture with the audience. Differences and similarities between the different countries became clear in an interactive discussion on housing, land use reduction and and densification. The first part of the workshop concluded with a discussion on public value capture.

On the second day, representatives of BIMA welcomed the ARL international working group with a team of four experts on land policy – Robert Erfen, Sabine Lorscheid, Heidrun Hendricks, and Axel Kolfenbach. Robert Erfen introduced BIMA and explained how operates. This raised many questions among the

international experts. Especially the integration of all federal real estate in one agency astonished many colleagues. In many countries, there are separate real estate institutions for different types of land (e.g. residential, commercial, forests, military, land banking, etc.). It then explored what role public ownership of land would play in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Finland, Sweden and the UK, as opposed to Germany. This debate then brought together earlier working group debates on land policy objectives and instruments.

Colleagues also pointed out that the awareness that property entails an obligationis expressed by BIMA's initiative. The debate continued with a discussion on the relationship between the history of property rights and land policy using the example of post-socialist countries. This was followed by a debate on the role of publicly owned land in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, Czechia, Poland, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom as opposed to Germany. This debate then brought together earlier discussions of the working group on objectives and instruments of land policy. On the third day, there was an exchange with yet another ARL working group. Theo Kötter from the University of Bonn presented the group's aims on "net zero land take-up". Together with Brigitte Adams, Hendrik Jansen, and Jan Stielike, who chair this sub-group of the *NRW State-Regional Working Group*, they then moderated an exchange in the style of a World Café between the two ARL Working bodies in order to learn from and with each other. Several statements on land policy, triggered the discussion, which provided a unique opportunity for the ARL's International and Regional Working Group. The *International Working Group on Land Policies in Europe* is very grateful for the insights and the openness of the debate with the *German Association of Cities and Towns (Deutscher Städtetag)* and the *German Institute for Federal Real Estate (BIMA)* as well as with the sub-group of the Regional Working Group on net zero land take-up in North Rhine-Westphalia. With this input, the International Working Group continues its work. It will meet again at the upcoming international academic conference on Planning, Law, and Property Rights (www.plpr-association.org), which will take place in Ghent, Belgium, on 7-11 February 2022. There, results of the working group will be discussed with

a broader audience, and a meeting of the International Working Group will be held to reflect on the lessons learnt so far.

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