

ARL BRUSSELS TALK 2025

ARL ACADEMY FOR
TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE LEIBNIZ ASSOCIATION

01 October 2025, 12:00 noon to 02:00 pm

On the premises of the Representation of the
State of Lower Saxony to the EU, Rue Montoyer
61, Brussels

Land Policies in Europe No Net Land Take, the housing crisis and densification

Land is a scarce resource that faces competing demands, ranging from urban growth and infrastructure to environmental protection and agriculture. National governments—such as those of France and Germany—have set policy goals to reduce land take and the European Union has adopted a 'No Net Land Take' (NNLT) target for 2050. At the same time, cities are accelerating development for housing or commercial purposes, both by implementing densification strategies and by expanding urban perimeters. Thus, the provision of housing and the policy of reducing land take often contradict each other. Moreover, densification raises new conflicts over the use and distribution of land.

Land policy seeks to tackle these challenges through different instruments and strategies aimed at promoting sustainable spatial development. It thereby continually re-interprets the relationship between land-use planning, property rights, and spatial development. The European NNLT policy needs to be understood within the context of such land policy frameworks.

The ARL addresses the land question in its 2025 Brussels Talk. Together with experts from academia, policy, and practice, we will examine a variety of land policy approaches across Europe and share practical experiences, including insights from Lower Saxony, Germany. Participants will be guided through interactive "Walking Cases" based on real-world case studies from various European countries. This dynamic session will encourage active engagement in the discussion on comparative land policy and invite participants to contribute their perspectives.

Our goal is to enable a better understanding of the No Net Land Take (NNLT) Policy and to explore potential pathways for its implementation in Europe by 2050, while also examining how countries, regions, and municipalities approach the relationship between land, property, and spatial planning.

AGENDA

11:30 | Registration

12:00 | Opening

(Representation of the State of Lower Saxony to the EU)

12:05 | Welcome

(Prof. Dr. Axel Priebs, President of the ARL)

12:10 | Overview of No Net Land Take – Historical Development and European Context

Prof. Dr. Markus Hesse (Vize-President of the ARL, Professor of Urban Studies at the University of Luxembourg)

12:25 | A look towards Lower Saxony – challenges and good practice approaches

Stephan Löb (Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection, Lower Saxony)

12:40 | Walking Cases of Land Policies in Europe – Land-Use Planning, Property Rights, and Spatial Development

Prof. Dr. Thomas Hartmann (TU Dortmund, Chair of the ARL International Working Group on "Land Policies in Europe")

13:30 | Conclusion of the event and continuation of the discussion during a joint lunch.

For any questions, please contact:

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