

Land Policy against Urban Sprawl in Germany

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ABSTRACT

Urban sprawl is one of the greatest deficits and challenges of a sustainable development of the settlement. Urban sprawl is commonly used to describe physically expanding urban areas. The EEA has described sprawl as the physical pattern of low-density expansion of large urban areas, under market conditions, mainly into the surrounding agricultural areas. Sprawl is the leading edge of urban growth and implies little planning control of land subdivision. Development is patchy, scattered and strung out, with a tendency for discontinuity. Sprawling cities are the opposite of compact cities — full of empty spaces that indicate the inefficiencies in development and highlight the consequences of uncontrolled growth. As a result, the various demands for land in and around cities in Germany are becoming increasingly acute. On a daily basis, we all witness rapid, visible and conflicting changes in land use which are shaping landscapes in cities and around them as never before. In Germany today, even where there is little or no population pressure, a variety of factors are still driving sprawl. Global socio economic forces are interacting with more localised environmental and spatial constraints to generate the common characteristics of urban sprawl. The drivers of sprawl and their environmental and socio-economic impacts are fully interconnected and essential to the concept of sustainable development and the associated ecosystems view of the functioning of the city and its surrounding areas. In future more effective Initiatives to counter sprawl will be necessary. By the 1990s comprehensive planning concepts were firmly established, based on an integrated urban development plan. Successful strategies and implementations of a compact city model in the planning of the city that has effectively contained urban sprawl are mainly based on the following key objectives and actions:

- integrated city development plan
- regional cooperation
- stakeholders' involvement in city planning
- consequent land management
- emphasis on reuse of vacant brownfields
- continuously improving public transport with as few new roads as possible
- dominant goal: keep the city compact, urban and green.

The successful strategies and instruments will be presented.

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