M1-Project: Project description

**Sustainable development and the role of inter-municipal cooperation. A case study on Lüneburg Region.**

The mobilisation of resources and the joining of forces could foster sustainable development of cities and regions. What role does inter-municipal cooperation play in the process of transition towards sustainability? How could partnerships based on local initiatives contribute to sustainable urban and regional development?

Recent years have seen increasing efforts targeting the achievement of resource efficient and low-carbon economy, environmental protection and social equality. These are mainly put into practice on the local level and address the sustainability goals of individual cities and municipalities. Yet, the interdependencies of territories that are in close proximity to each other and share common resources, assets as well as problems are steadily growing. This requires actions that go beyond the administrative boundaries of individual cities and municipalities and emphasizes the role of inter-municipal cooperation. Drawing on this statement, the M1-Project aims at studying how could inter-municipal cooperation based on local activities foster sustainable urban and regional development.

The project focuses on Lüneburg Region that consists of the city of Lüneburg and its surrounding predominantly rural municipalities. In 2014 the city of Lüneburg has been nominated as one of the three most sustainable middle-sized cities in Germany due its performance in a number of locally launched sustainability initiatives such as the “Environmental trade fair”, the KITA 21 initiative and the “Sustainability days” within the DialogN project. The majority of the locally initiated activities are currently limited within the administrative boundaries of the city and the cooperation between the city and the rest of the municipalities in the Lüneburg Region proves to be rather weak. Against
this background it should be studied how could strengthened cooperation between the city of Lüneburg and its surrounding municipalities foster sustainable development of the whole Lüneburg Region and how could the cooperation be facilitated through the support of local initiatives.

In the course of the term, the project group will investigate the existing local initiatives and the current state of inter-municipal cooperation in the Lüneburg Region. It will study to what extent the city of Lüneburg and its surrounding municipalities could benefit from intensified inter-municipal cooperation and will identify possible fields with potential for development of cooperation. As a result of the project the group will elaborate a concept for inter-municipal cooperation on sustainability identifying perspectives for future sustainable development of the Lüneburg Region.

**Formalities:**
The M1-Projects in the Master Program of Urban Planning at the HafenCity University are inter-disciplinary result-oriented group projects. They promote team work, self-organisation and discussion skills and focus on analysis and conceptualization of a current urban topic as well as the cooperation with practice partners. The achieved project results are summarized in a final presentation and in a written project report.

- Project group: Max. 7 students (project open for students in urban planning)
- Project language: English
- Requirements: Presentation and written project report, min. basic German language skills
- Number of ECTS: 10 ECTS
- Supervisors: Galya Vladova, Prof. Dr. -Ing. Jörg Knieling
- Time and venue: tba.