The IOER – A Partner in Strong Networks

We maintain collaborative relationships with partners that carry out space-oriented research as well as those in related disciplines in more than 20 European countries as well as in the Americas and Asia. Our cooperation with the Technische Universität Dresden includes joint professorships, teaching, and providing support for young scientists. We are a member of DRESDEN-concept, an alliance of research institutions located in the Dresden region, as well as of other scientific networks. Along with the spatial research institutes of the Leibniz Association, we are part of the 5R Network. Furthermore, we coordinate spa-ce.net, the Network of Spatial Research and Planning Institutes in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe.

The IOER is home to the CENTRAL EUROPE Contact Point Deutschland (CCP), the German office of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme. The contact point serves to provide information about the transnational cooperation of the European Union in Central Europe. In addition, we house a specialised library with a focus on ecological urban and regional development.

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The Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER)

The IOER researches and develops scientific foundations for the environmentally sustainable development of cities and regions. To this end, our international team of scientists explores the causal relationships between society and the natural environment as well as related societal management options.

Following the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and New Urban Agenda, as well as Germany’s National Research and Innovation Agenda City of the Future, we deal with issues of ecological sustainability and resilience in national, European, and global context.

Among these research questions, the global and regional challenges of urban and regional development receive special attention. Challenges include climate change and its related environmental risks, the decrease of biodiversity and the shortage of natural resources. In this context we consider the consequences of socio-demographic change, the increasing pressure for urbanisation worldwide, and the uneven development of cities and regions between shrinkage and growth.

Based on our research, we advise political actors and society. Through this knowledge transfer, we firmly anchor questions pertaining to ecological urban and regional development within the societal discourse.

Our work is financed by the Federal Government and the State Governments with the addition of third party funding. This institute is co-financed by tax funds on the basis of the budget approved by the Saxon State Parliament. The institute employs a staff of some 130.

Our Research

The IOER conducts both basic and applied research. Our interdisciplinary research teams focus on the following priorities of research:

The Landscape Change and Management research area analyses the changes in cities and regions. Open spaces and their ecosystem services are given special consideration, as are the strategies, tools, and forms of governance required in order to influence them.

The Resource Efficiency of Settlement Structures research area investigates to what extent and with which approaches cities, buildings and infrastructure can be shaped and developed so as to use land and natural resources in the most sparing and environmentally friendly way.

The Environmental Risks in Urban and Regional Development research area deals with the analysis and assessment of environmental risks caused by natural hazards and climate change as well as with the respective measures, strategies and tools required for taking the risks into account.

The Monitoring of Settlement and Open Space Development research area develops methods for acquisition, monitoring, analysis and visualisation in order to better describe, understand and project the state and changes of land use and the building stock.

The Economic Aspects of Ecological Urban and Regional Development research area deals with the economic analysis of conflicting objectives, resource scarcity and actions of economic agents as well as with cost-efficient management options to encourage ecologically and economically sustainable spatial development.

The Sustainability Transitions in Cities and Regions research area investigates systemic and fundamental processes of transformation to help foster social change towards sustainable ways of life and business practices as well as ensure a balanced spatial development. These are also topics on which the Interdisciplinary Centre for Ecological and Revitalizing Urban Transformation in Görlitz is conducting research. This permanent urban real laboratory is jointly supported by the IOER and the Technische Universität Dresden.

Promotion of Young Scientists

We are committed to promoting the development of young scientists. Doctoral candidates receive structured funding, and postdocs from Germany and abroad have the opportunity to carry out independent research. Together with the TU Dresden we organise the Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS). At this international graduate school we support work that focuses on sustainable and resilient urban development. Furthermore, our researchers teach at universities in Germany and abroad.