

## **Call for Membership “Gender and Spatial Transformation”**

The Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association (ARL) is currently establishing an international Information and Initiative Group “Gender and Spatial Transformation” and is looking for participants. Information and Initiative Groups (IIGs) are dedicated to a selected task and research field, which has a continuously high scientific and practical significance within spatial research and planning. The term of the international IIG is initially three years and will be extended by a further three years after the submission and approval of an updated work programme by the ARL Executive Committee.

### **About the Academy**

The ARL is an interdisciplinary forum for research and practice in which spatial and planning-related knowledge is generated and communicated in dialogue. The ARL is member of the German Leibniz Association and a non-university forum and competence centre for sustainable spatial development. The research focus is on spatial structures and developments, their causes and effects, and policy and planning options for their management. Holistic, integrative and future-oriented perspectives taken on complex, spatial-social challenges, characterize the work of the Academy. The close honorary co-operation of actors from spatial and planning-related research and practice forms the core of the Academy’s work. In its function as a transdisciplinary network, the ARL researches spatial structures and developments as the basis and expression of social practice. In addition, it is a place of scientific reflection on spatial planning and development.

### **Scope: Gender and Spatial Transformation**

Current crises such as climate change, the Covid 19 pandemic and the energy crisis, which has been exacerbated by the Russian war in Ukraine, highlight the need for socio-ecological transformation towards sustainability. The realisation that social and ecological crisis phenomena – such as poverty and access to resources – are inextricably linked, poses a challenge for science and practice: In the orientation towards real-life problems, it is necessary to abandon disciplinary as well as sectoral thinking and to enter into new inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation. The interactions between theory and practice thus enable communication processes about future developments.

In the still relatively young debates on the importance of space and planning for these transformation processes (cf. e.g. the results of the ARL working group "Nachhaltige Raumentwicklung für die große Transformation"/"Sustainable spatial development for the great transformation", Hofmeister/Warner/Ott 2021)<sup>1</sup>, it becomes clear that the spatial level has an integrative function in under-

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<sup>1</sup> Hofmeister, Sabine/Warner, Barbara/Ott, Zora (Hrsg.) (2021): Nachhaltige Raumentwicklung für die große Transformation. Herausforderungen, Barrieren und Perspektiven für Raumwissenschaften und Raumplanung, Forschungsbericht der ARL 15, Hannover.

standing the socio-ecological crises (system knowledge), in formulating alternative future designs (target knowledge) as well as in implementing these goals (transformation knowledge) (Mölders/Levin-Keitel 2021)<sup>2</sup>.

Gender perspectives (in the form of gender-differentiated data, the consideration of structural inequalities between women and men, intersectional approaches, etc.) have so far hardly been taken into account in the debates on spatial transformation towards sustainability. This is surprising insofar as extensive work on the integration of gender perspectives in (spatial) transformation processes exists both in the field of "gender and sustainability" (for an overview, e.g. Hofmeister/Katz/Mölders 2013)<sup>3</sup> and in the field of "gender and spatial development" (for an overview, e.g. Zibell/Damyanovic/Sturm 2019).<sup>4</sup> This shows that the category of gender enables the change of perspectives and, with its potential for innovation, is able to make significant contributions to a conceptual and normative concretisation of transformation debates. Firstly, the connections between space, environment, and society are theoretically elaborated and empirically investigated in different research fields and approaches. Secondly, gender equality and participation in power and decision-making in all areas and at all levels of society are prerequisites for sustainable (spatial) development. In this way, gender perspectives, as perspectives critical of power and domination, contribute significantly to questioning hegemonic rationalities (e.g. with regard to the economic or the political) and to pointing out alternatives.

The international IIG (IIG) is based on these potentials of gender-related research and planning practice and pursues the goal of demonstrating both conceptually and exemplarily how and where the category of gender can serve as an "eye-opener" in the debates on spatial transformation towards sustainability. In particular, the linking of gender-related sustainability research with approaches to gender-oriented planning under the umbrella of spatial transformation represents a novelty. A prerequisite for this discourse is to clarify which gender perspectives are represented within the IIG at all (feminist, diverse, intersectional, etc.) and which of these perspectives should be adopted with which goals in the IIG.

## Research Questions

The IIG aims to provide a platform for examining current issues in spatial development from a gender perspective. The aim is to make the innovative contributions of gender-related approaches to sustainable spatial development visible at both the conceptual and practical levels. The focus is particularly on the following questions, which can and should be further developed in the course of the collaboration:

- Which analysis and design potentials do approaches in the research and policy fields "Gender and Sustainability" and "Gender, Space & Planning" offer for transformation processes towards sustainability? To what extent do the two research and policy fields overlap? How and where do they complement each other, how and where are they to be distinguished from each other? What kind of connections and contradictions may become visible?
- How do current socio-ecological crises such as the climate crisis, the crisis of care work, or land use conflicts present themselves from gender perspectives? What gender-specific implications

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<sup>2</sup> Mölders, Tanja/Levin-Keitel, Meike (2021): Sustainable (Post-)Pandemic Cities? Contested Forms of Knowledge in Urban Transformation. pnd – rethinking planning, H. 2, S. 151-163.

<sup>3</sup> Hofmeister, Sabine/Katz, Christine/Mölders, Tanja (Hrsg.) (2013): Geschlechterverhältnisse und Nachhaltigkeit. Die Kategorie Geschlecht in den Nachhaltigkeitswissenschaften. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Barbara Budrich.

<sup>4</sup> Zibell, Barbara/Damyanovic, Doris/Sturm, Ulrike (Eds.) (2019): Gendered approaches to spatial development in Europe – Perspectives, similarities and differences. Abingdon, New York: Routledge.

- are associated with the various "transitions" (mobility transition, energy transition, consumption transition, etc.) that are required for the realisation of sustainable (spatial) development?
- To what extent can central strategies and orientations of sustainable spatial development (e.g. resilience, services of general interest, equality) be deciphered from gender perspectives (e.g. with regard to time structures, availability of space, land, resources; distributive justice and participation also on a procedural level)?
  - How will the different approaches to the category of gender be operationalised? What normative orientations are effective and essential? What goals and target systems should a Great Transformation aim for with regard to gender equality? (Ideas of a good life "for everyone", heterodox economic concepts such as a precautionary economy, post-growth, etc.)? And last but not least, how can spatial (planning)-related knowledge production be thought "differently" from the various gender perspectives?
  - What analytical and visionary perspectives do gender approaches open up in the context of spatial transformation research and practice? Which spatial and planning policy recommendations can be derived from a science and planning practice that (also) considers spatial transformation processes from a gender perspective?

## **Products**

The iIIG raises questions and opens up discourses within and outside the ARL within the framework of the usual formats. For this purpose, members of the iIIG work e.g. together on position papers, which they discuss, revise or further develop in close dialogue between practice and science.

The aim is to formulate and document socio-ecological positions on spatial development from a gender perspective in order to make them usable for the further work of the ARL as well as for the discourse with the (expert) public/political (consultation) outside the ARL.

To this end, the iIIG uses, among other things, the ARL's new international knowledge and communication platform: [arl-international.com](http://arl-international.com), by making the results of its work available here for discussion and, for example, by supplementing the existing country profiles of different European countries in a suitable manner.

The iIIG also aims to provide suggestions for the ARL's research planning or for new research topics as well as for new working groups by identifying both research gaps and desiderata and by developing research questions.

## **Organisation**

The iIIG is composed of 10-12 experts from academia and planning practice. Members are expected to have a relevant gender profile in a spatial and planning science discipline and to make independent contributions to the topic within the framework of participation. Members are appointed for five years, reappointment is possible.

The initial term is three years and will be extended by a further three years after submission of an updated work program. The iIIG is expected to begin its work in autumn 2022.

In 2-3 meetings per year, which take place alternately digitally and in presence, current developments and main topics are discussed and processed in a target-oriented manner. If considered appropriate by the members of the iIIG, further experts may be invited to give lectures and to contribute to publications.

Travel expenses are reimbursed for all members in accordance with the German Travel Expenses Act and the Rules of Procedure for ARL Information and Initiative Groups.

Until further notice, Prof. Dr. Barbara Zibell (em. Leibniz University of Hannover) will be in charge of the working group. The responsible scientific officer at the ARL Headquarters is Prof. Dr. Tanja Mölders (Department "Spatial Planning and Policy").

## **Application**

The Call for Membership (CfM) addresses an international community from science and practice of spatial development in cities, rural areas and regions. Members of the iIIG are members of universities, non-university research institutions, planning departments, other administrative institutions, associations, chambers of commerce and industry, and civil society organisations.

If you feel appealed and are interested in joining the iIIG, please send your written application

until 15.09.2022.

The application should include:

- an outline (500-800 words) with your content-related connecting factors, your own competencies and professional experience with regard to the content-related requirements presented;
- a short curriculum vitae (including information on projects and publications in the subject area).

Please send your application in digital form to Kathrin Kube:

**kathrin.kube@arl-net.de**

Questions regarding the topic and objectives of the iIIG can be send to Tanja Mölders ([tanja.moelders@arl-net.de](mailto:tanja.moelders@arl-net.de)) and Barbara Zibell ([b.zibell@igt-arch.uni-hannover.de](mailto:b.zibell@igt-arch.uni-hannover.de)).

## **Contact**

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