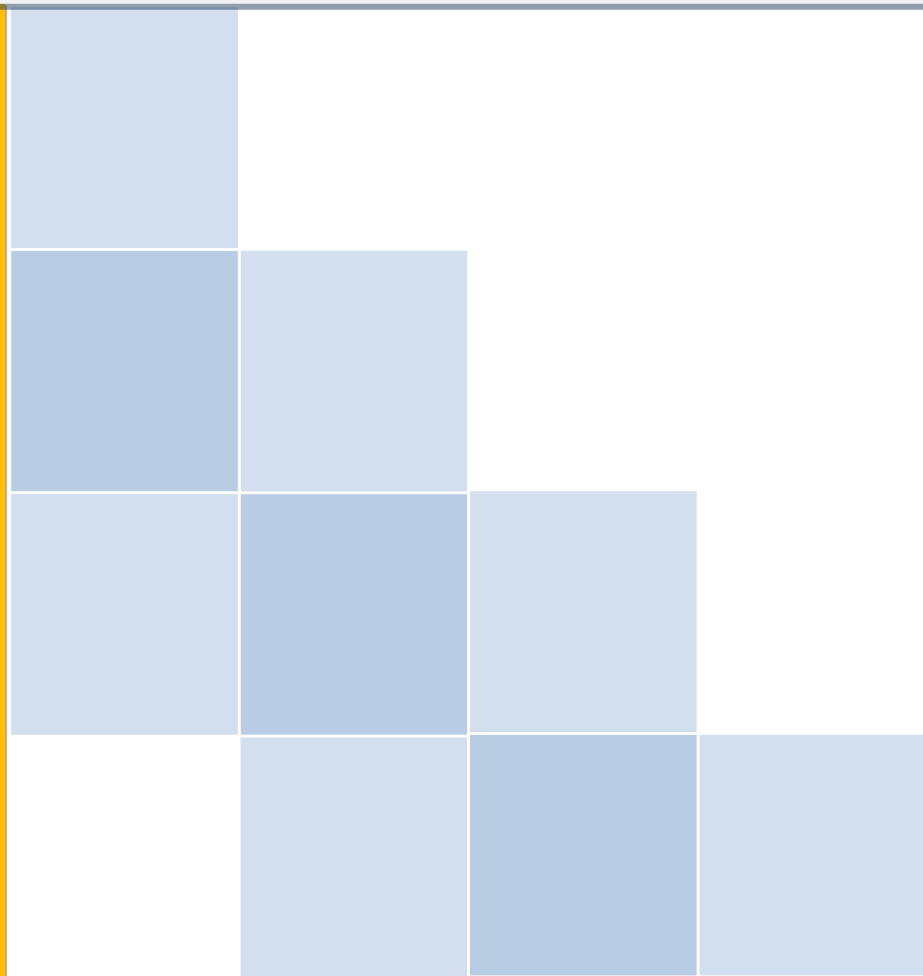




# LÜNEBURG REGION

Office for Regional Development  
Lüneburg



## **Profile** Office for Regional Development Lüneburg

### **Functions and territorial coverage**

The Office for Regional Development Lüneburg (shortly ArL Lüneburg) is one of the four offices for regional development on the territory of Lower Saxony, Germany. ArL Lüneburg is responsible for the coordination and implementation of regional policy in the region of Lüneburg. This consists of 11 counties and three county independent cities.

### **Policy instrument**

Lower Saxon Multi-fund Operational Programme 2014-2020

## **Territorial Context and Major Challenges for the Region**

The region of Lüneburg covers the north-eastern part of the Lower Saxony federal state and is very heterogeneous. It is characterized as an in-between area between the major cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Hanover, which are parts of three different federal states. The region is composed out of three types of territories - peri-urban areas next to the above mentioned major cities, rural areas in between these cities and peripheral rural areas.

The peri-urban areas in the region have stronger economic basis whereas the rural peripheries are significantly affected by ongoing processes of demographic change. An aging population, a rather low level of development of both transport and digital infrastructure and weaknesses in the field of

education and qualification are critical factors that hamper the future economic development of peripheral rural areas in the region.

One of the major challenges for the region of Lüneburg is to strengthen the economic power and attractiveness of peripheral rural areas. The innovation capacities of these areas are to a large extent influenced by the development of and the connections to the major cities and peri-urban areas. The majority of regional colleges, universities and research institutions, such as the Leuphana University in Lüneburg and the Hochschule 21, are located in peri-urban areas.

The lacking connection and accessibility of peripheral rural areas to research institutions is a crucial factor for their innovation delivery.

Improved innovation transfer necessitates major efforts and new approaches to strengthen the connection between stake-holders in peripheral rural areas and major cities and to improve the rural-urban cooperation and partnerships in the field of research and innovation.

In recent years, the innovation transfer in the region of Lüneburg has been fostered by a number of successful initiatives. Here count among others the Innovation Incubator of Leuphana University (a research driven project for regional development), the Innovation Transfer Centre Elbe Weser (a transfer centre for support of SMEs), the cluster initiatives and projects, managed by the Regional Development Agency Süderelbe AG, and various projects and activities conducted at local level. Besides these, the innovation landscape in Lüneburg is characterized by



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spotted innovation, so called “hidden innovation champions”, originating from the whole region including rural areas. The targeted support of innovation actors in rural peripheries and the transfer of knowledge between urban and rural areas is a main condition for strengthening the innovation capacities in all parts of the region.


## Policy Landscape in the Field of Regional Innovation

Innovation is defined as one of the six action fields in the Regional Action Strategy of Lüneburg. The Strategy is elaborated by the Office for Regional Development Lüneburg, in close cooperation with local actors, and covers the period 2014-2020. Three of the five fields of

further action and development defined in the Strategy are the improvement of the innovation conditions, the support of knowledge cooperation and the overcoming of regional disparities. These are also defined in the RIS3 Strategy for Lower Saxony.

Currently, there are no schemes specifically targeting the transfer of knowledge and innovation between rural and urban areas in the region of Lüneburg. Yet, innovation activities between the peri-urban areas and Hamburg could be funded through the Hamburg-Lower Saxony Promotion Fund. Furthermore,

innovation activities are supported out of several existing national and regional funding guidelines. One of the most important policy instruments for supporting innovation activities in Lüneburg is the Lower Saxon Multi-fund Operational Programme 2014-2020.



## Lower Saxon Multi-fund Operational Programme 2014-2020

The Lower Saxon Multi-fund Operational Programme 2014-2020 is managed by the State Chancellery of Lower Saxony. The Programme combines ERDF and ESF and finances projects that enhance the regional innovation capacity in accordance with the RIS3. In doing so, the Programme helps the region of Lüneburg to address its needs and potentials to generate growth and employment. The combination of funds in one programme together with the selected joint strategic approach fosters establishment of synergies and promotes effective regional actions.

The reduction of (sub-) regional disparities is one of the general objectives of the Multi-fund

Operational Programme. The first out of nine priority axes is “Support for Innovation”. Within the funding guidelines different kinds of innovation networks and other innovation activities can be funded.

Possibilities for an integrated urban-rural development in innovation policies could be the implementation of new pilot actions aiming at an increased cooperation between science and economy or the extension of existing approaches to larger geographic areas. This includes in particular strengthening cooperation over administrative borders, especially between the major cities Hamburg and Bremen and the Lower Saxon region Lüneburg.