Master Thesis (in English)

The municipal governance of “nature based solutions”

Background / Topic:
What central aspects characterising the operation and structure of municipalities enable and inhibit the uptake of nature based solutions in European cities?

“Nature-based solutions” (NBS) have emerged as an important concept governing the development of cities around the world. Through directly addressing urban challenges through “solutions” that are inspired by or utilise “natural” systems, appears to be an effective means of integrating more, and protecting and enhancing existing, blue and green infrastructure in cities, which has demonstrated a range of economic, environmental and social benefits. Yet some municipalities are embracing the approach more than others and the concept appears to be manifesting itself in different cities under different contexts in very different ways.

UNaLab is an EU SCC-2 (Demonstrating innovative nature-based solutions in cities) project which aims to demonstrate nature based solutions to address a variety of urban challenges in three forerunner European cities and facilitate the transfer of these approaches to five follower cites, and beyond. A central element of the project is to develop Municipal Governance Guidelines to identify aspects governing the structure and operation of municipalities, which encourage or inhibit the uptake of NBS in cities. The topic has been deliberately kept broad, as in the context of these activities, there is significant potential for the development of many research questions to guide a master thesis. There is also opportunity for multiple epistemological and theoretical approaches and many project activities that could be utilised for a range of data collection methods.

Overarching objective:
Identifying the central institutional aspects in European municipalities that enable or inhibit the uptake of nature-based solutions

Addressed Disciplines
Political science, sociology, urban planning, geography or equivalent

Further requirements
Oral and written skills in English (must). Good understanding of (municipal) governance and sustainability. An understanding of nature-based solutions, ecosystem services, (urban) hydrology, green/blue infrastructure and/or urban planning is an advantage.

Start:
Immediately / after consultation

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