

This seminar introduces the current urbanization trends and challenges in the SWANA/Arab region. Urbanism in Arab countries is currently on different paths. Some countries are still suffering from civil wars, others are struggling with political reforms. On the other hand, the Gulf countries are booming with many mega urban projects that are still controversial, creating a new identity accompanied by a diversification of economic resources. The seminar will discuss the geopolitical situation in different countries of the Arab region and its impact on urbanization processes, different typologies of urban settlements and the ques-

tion of urban identity in specific cases. The course will focus on the opposition between local traditional cultures, vernacular architecture and urban traditions vs the modernization process, and how participation is perceived and practiced. Issues such as urban transformation, informality, climate change, public space, smart cities, urban agriculture, water management, and land governance will be core themes that represent the roles and relationships between the state, citizens, and other relevant stakeholders. The right to the city and vulnerable groups will be examined. This will include the discussion of cases from Tunisia, Lebanon,

Jordan, Iraq, Palestine and Egypt, as well as some reflections and contributions from invited experts who will share their experiences from other Arab countries.

This seminar will be combined with two workshops both in one of the partner Arab countries on the African west coast (Nouakchott, Mauritania) that recently faces a rapid urbanization process, funded by PROMOS, in addition to a workshop in Berlin, and a workshop in Siwa oasis-western desert of Egypt (tbc), as a part of the international cooperation project "Towards Greener Egyptian Cities", funded by the DAAD Program Praxispartners (2023-2026).

Seminar, 6 ECTS

Wahlpflicht WP

MA UD, MA A, MA AT, MA StaPla

Teaching Day

Tuesdays, 10 am - 12 pm,
IfA Room 508

First meeting

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, 10 am
IfA Room 508

Inscription

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Contemporary Arab Urbanism

Urban Transformation and Desert Urbanism of Arab Cities - Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA)

WS
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Seminar

Habitat Unit