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report bergisch.project

No.1 2013



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THE BERGISCH L

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It has been over one year since the so-called bergisch.project has been launched. Having been founded as a co-operation project between the Bergisch Universität Wuppertal and the Bergisch development agency, it deals, on an urban-spatial level, with the Bergisch city triangle of Remscheid-Solingen-Wuppertal and tries to sound out possible development perspectives.

Ragnhild Klußmann, Bergische University Wuppertal

The university frame offers a basis for a broad academic and interdisciplinary work process on one hand, and on the other, the possibility to test innovative approaches and ideas through projects with students. This project wouldn't have been possible without a financial backing which has significantly supported the conceptual and academic work of the Lehrstuhl Städtebau Institut for urban design and development. We would therefore like to thank the Jackstädt foundation in Wuppertal, which follows our project with interest. Meanwhile, our project has developed and is conceptually stable, allowing us to present a first preliminary result of our work. In the form of this bergisch.paper we want to show the status quo of the project and give a still unfiltered outlook on further sub-projects and developments. The paper has to be seen more like an up-to-date paper rather than a continuously devised documentation. For some readers, and in particular the attendees of the expert workshop, the project is well known and not all contents are new. Nevertheless, the

present summary will be able to show which subjects and results of the expert workshop will be incorporated into further research.

As the project is still in the planning and conceptual stages, it is likely that fundamental changes and innovations, further ideas and projects will evolve, as well as new partnerships develop which is something that we strongly desire: the present document is simply a contribution to the work in progress, hence neither complete nor systematically drawn up. The bergisch.paper thus represents an invitation for discussion and debate in the hope that it will soon be updated and superseded by the second bergisch.paper. For us it represents a practical means of communication with all those who have an interest in the Bergisch city-triangle and its characteristics. With this in mind, we'd like to invite you to read, scan or leaf through this document and would be pleased to receive comments, criticism and additions concerning the bergisch.project!

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„What chances stands such a small region that is situated right in the centre of North Rhine-Westphalia between Rhine and Ruhr, but will always be marginal in terms of geography and importance? „

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„...The centre escapes from one city to the next, as if using **centrifugal strength**, keeps rotating and hence becomes an **exterior view**.

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Are there really any mutual aims?...”





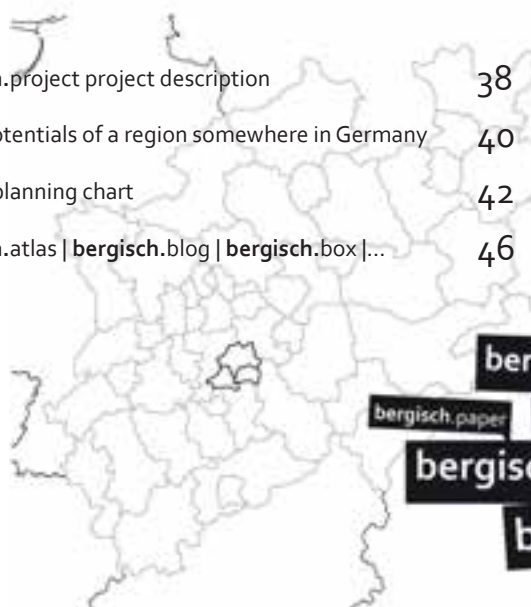
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international
urban
summer. school
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bergisch... a region...

What exactly constitutes the Bergisch city-triangle? What chances stands such a small region that is situated right in the centre of North Rhine-Westphalia between Rhine and Ruhr, but will always be marginal in terms of geography and importance?

What exactly constitutes the Bergisch city-triangle?

Which qualities characterise the regional co-operation of the three cities in the Bergisch region? How can the region deal with its problems? How can it create a network and cultivate its own profile despite its constraints of options?

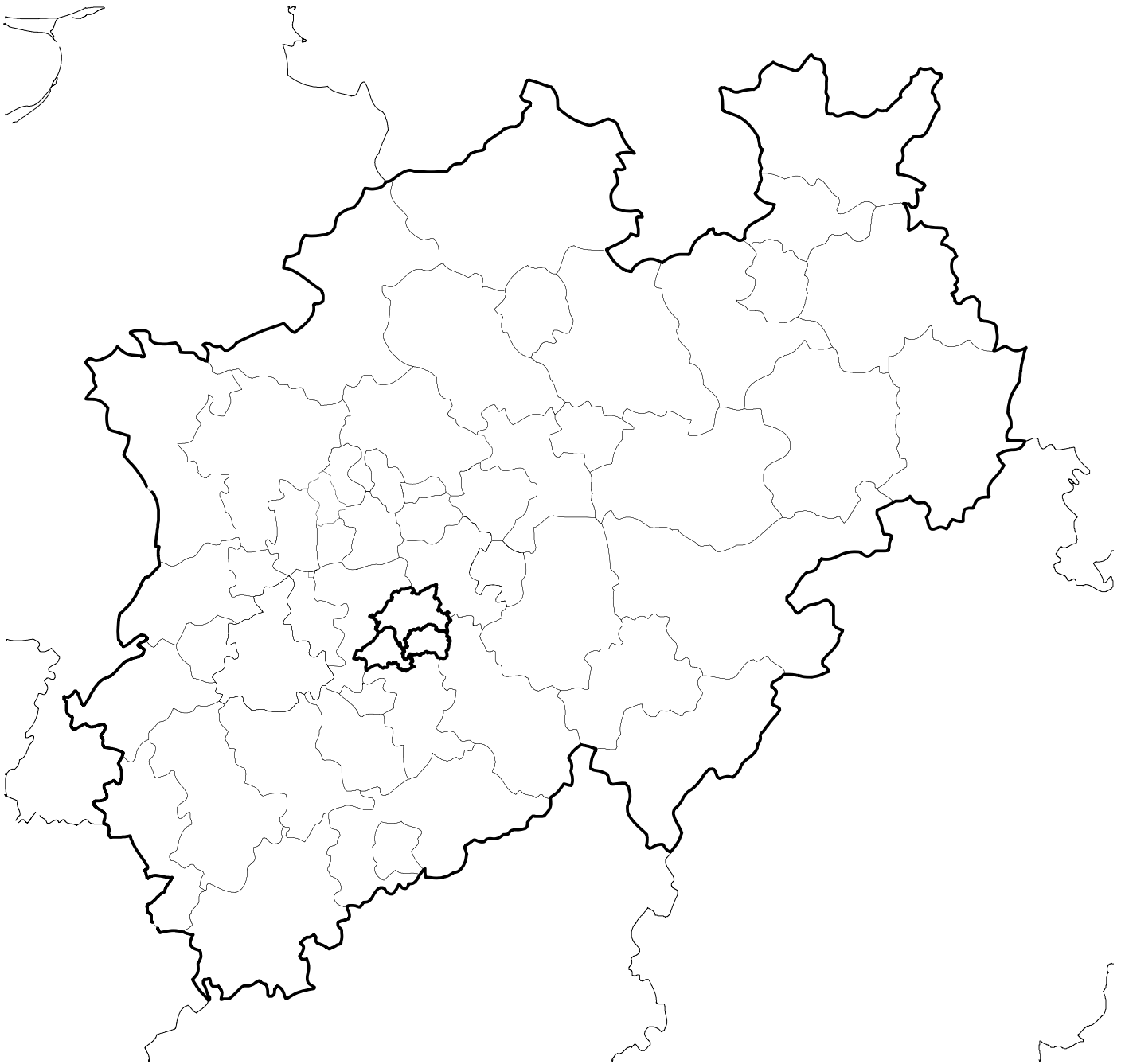
In today's discussions on urban and regional transformation processes, a region like the Bergisch city-triangle does not draw any trans-regional attention, given it has all the same problems and functions that can be found elsewhere and, at a first glance, no particular singularities that would warrant close attention. The spatial fragmentation doesn't just express itself in the cities along the Wupper and development processes since the early industrialisation, but, since the beginning of settlements, the geographical composition of valleys and heights, woods and watercourses determines a certain scale that defies every big gesture. Nevertheless or maybe because of this, interesting developments are possible, which have not yet been fully evaluated or compared to similar regions (see also chapter 2). With respect to urban planning, there are numerous starting points on how this region will be able to develop and what potentials are available in order to assert its position amongst cities and regions. To achieve this it has to break new ground and develop new strategies. This is where the bergisch.project comes into play: it wants to ask questions, sound out potentials and develop scenarios for the region, not only with regards to urban development, but also, in co-operation with various disciplines, to introduce new topics, ideas and suggestions into the discussion. Most of all it wants to examine the vibrant and lively region. The focus of the project

is the summer academy at the Bergisch University Wuppertal, which will be held 2013, 2014 and 2015, and brings together students and experts of different universities and disciplines in a ten-day workshop to deal with interdisciplinary questions. This summer academy is accompanied by scientific research, additional projects and tasks at the university as well as by other formats like exhibitions, publications and events which deliberately seek contact to the region and its people and with the aim to establish and linking the project into the region.

The conceptional preparations for the bergisch.project began in the autumn of 2011 and evolved from several architectural projects and tasks which were undertaken at the department of architecture, namely the Lehrstuhl Städtebau Institut for urban design and development. (Professor Tanja Siems) and the Lehrstuhl of Bauen im Bestand (acting Professor Annette Paul) in co-operation with the Bergisch development agency as well as other local partnerships. In the process, the lecturers developed a curiosity and fascination for the manifold activities and initiatives within the region, which only a closer look revealed. The idea of a summer academy, which dedicates itself to the region over several years, was then developed in co-operation with the Bergisch development agency. This agency was founded as a central organisation for the three cities of Wuppertal, Solingen und Remscheid in the course of the Regionale 2006. The organisation brings together projects in the Bergisch city-triangle, applies for support, moderates and co-ordinates and hence acts as central hub for many future projects. In order to produce innovative

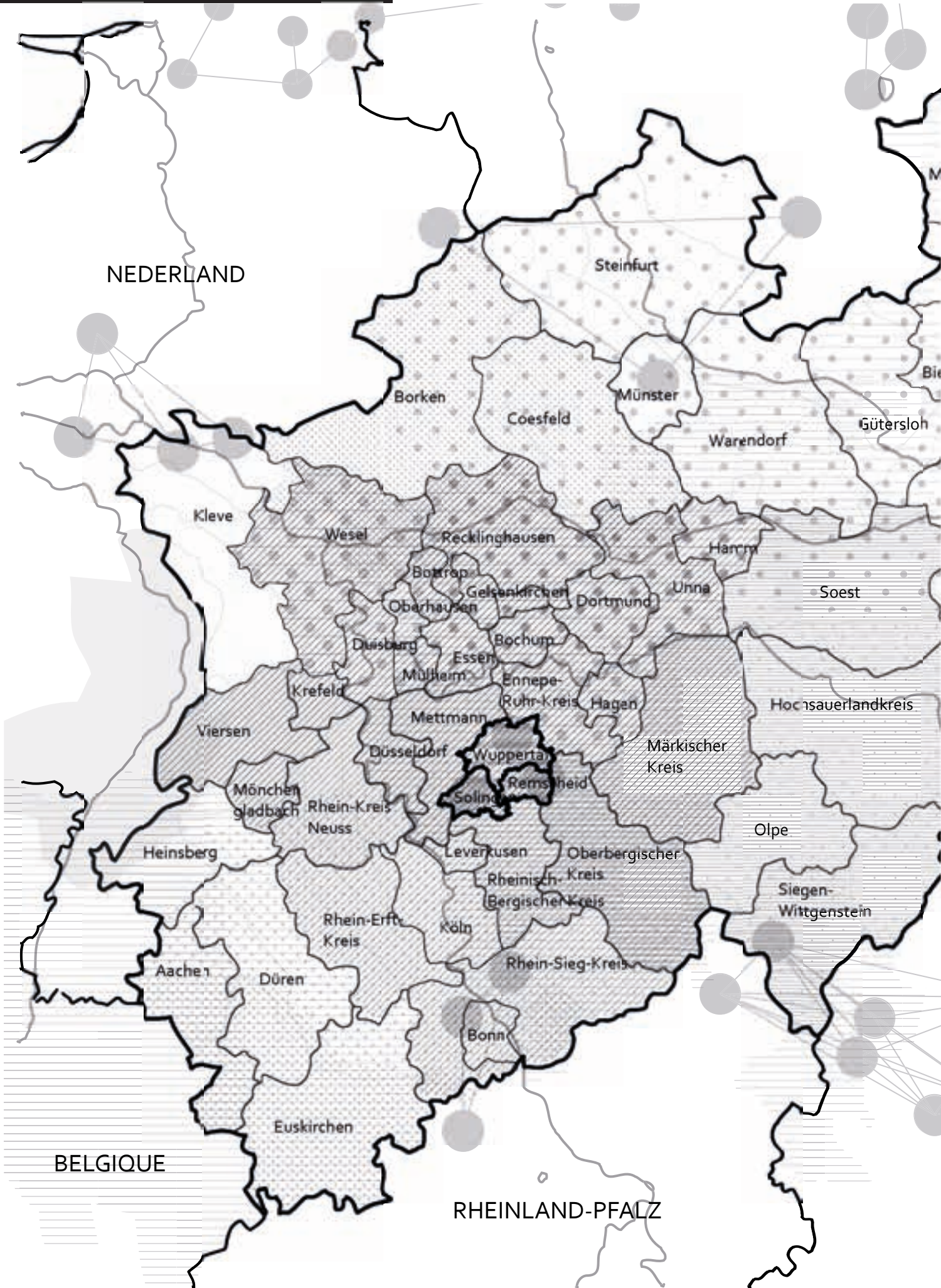
results in a summer academy and truly enrich already existing initiatives and suggested developments, the participants, led by the Lehrstuhl Städtebau Institut for urban design and development, feel an innovative methodology for the summer academy and accompanying projects is of importance (see also chapter 4). Firstly, it is about working on an interdisciplinary level, which has already been tried out in student seminars within the framework of the Bergisch University. The involvement of different disciplines allows for the development of multi-faceted strategies that can emerge from the specific topic. This is particularly the case in the context of urban planning. Another important dimension of this project is the scientific and urban transformation research and comparison with similarly structured regions that can be found across Europe rather than in Germany. For this purpose international experts and students are included in the discussions.

In order to bring together the knowledge on the region and to obtain an initial overview, an expert workshop was held at the Bergisch University Wuppertal and the Train station Mirke in July 2012, which, in form of a lecture, provided expert knowledge and examined possible questions, topics and projects for the summer academy through working groups consisting of interdisciplinary members (see also chapter 3). In this context it was interesting to see that already the perception of the region was discussed in many facets and that the question of the regional identity of the Bergisch city-triangle will certainly be a main feature of the bergisch.project.



... somewhere in ■■■ **Germany**

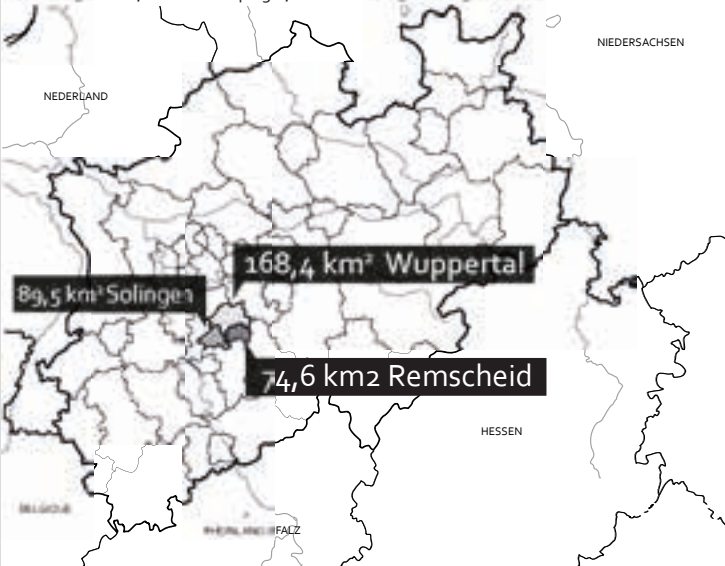
But where exactly is this Bergisch city-triangle? The following maps show the region, the Bergisch Land and a cultural space that perhaps doesn't really know its own borders...





Das Bergische Städtedreieck

Grundlage: 2011, IHK Zahlenspiegel, Wirtschaftsregion Bergisches Städtedreieck

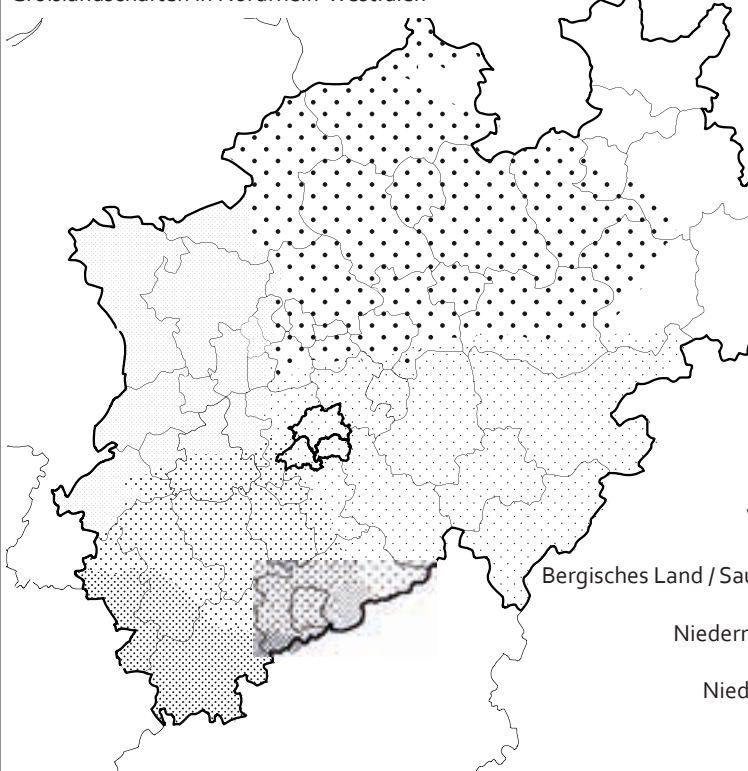


EinwohnerInnen

Quelle: 31.12.2010, IHK Zahlenspiegel, Wirtschaftsregion Bergisches Städtedreieck

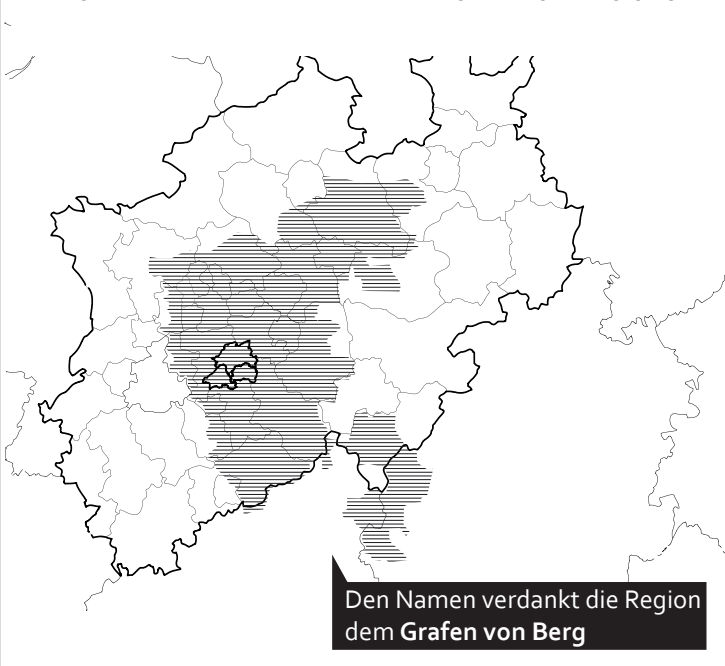


Großlandschaften in Nordrhein-Westfalen



Herzogtum Berg

Das Bergische Land ist aus dem historischen Herzogtum Berg hervorgegangen.

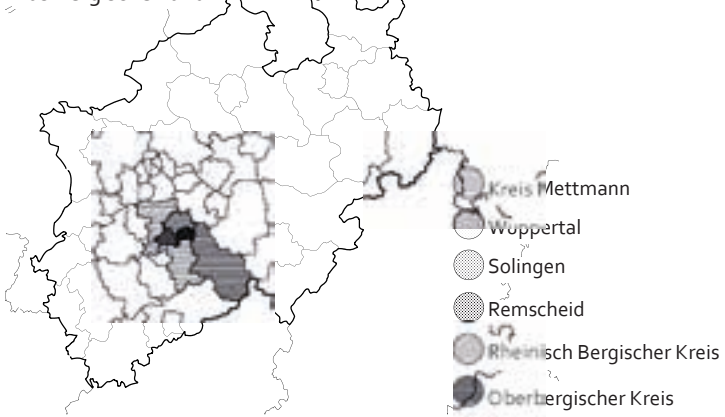


Kulturlandschaft in Nordrhein-Westfalen

Grundlage: LWL-Amt für Landschafts- u. Baukultur Westfalen



Das Bergische Land

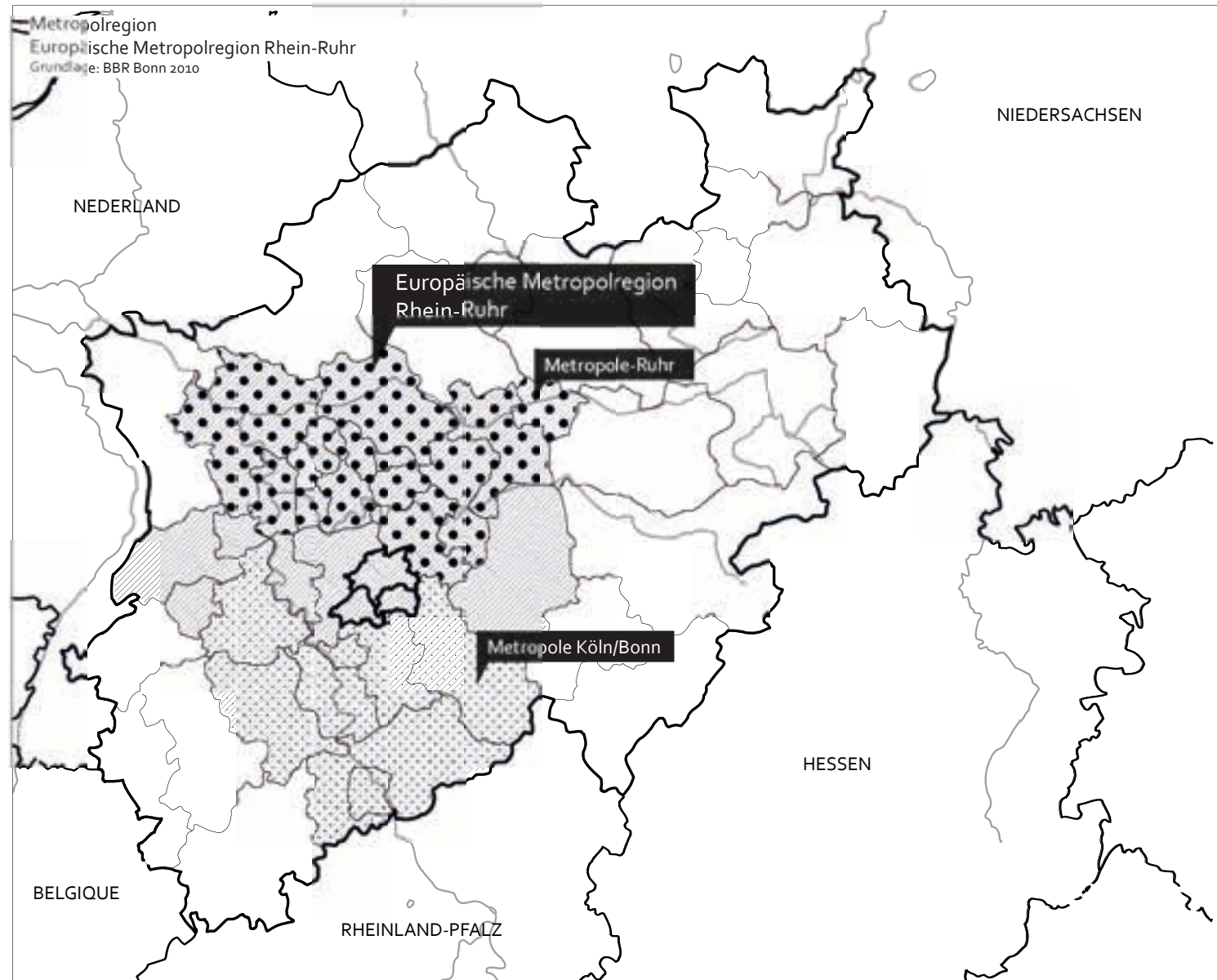
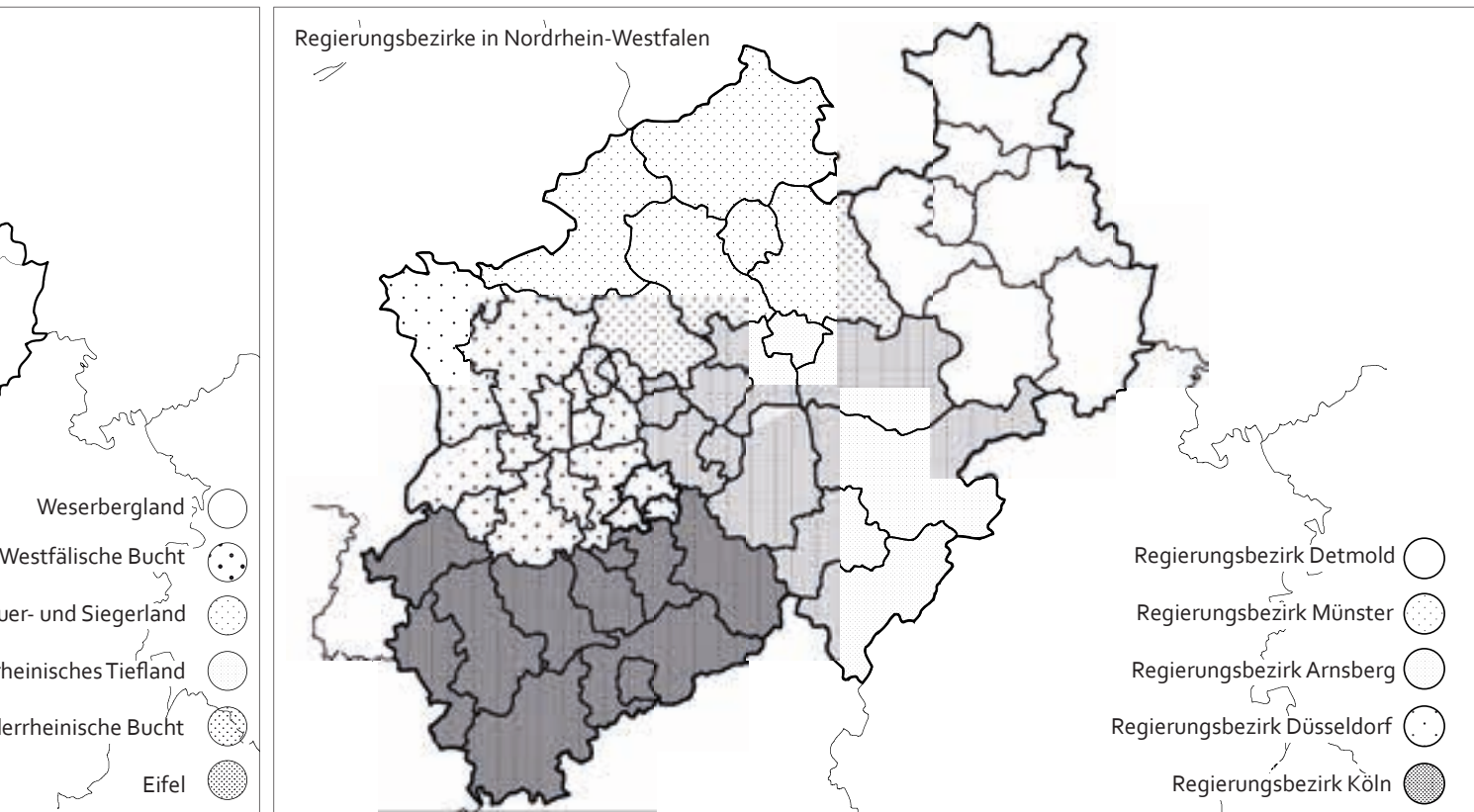


Regierungsbezirke in Nordrhein-Westfalen

Grundlage: metropoleruhr



Regierungsbezirke in Nordrhein-Westfalen



graphic:

Lehrstuhl Städtebau/ Urban Scape (RK,BO)

A REGION FINDS

ITSELF

From a spatial point of view, the Bergisch city-triangle is one of the smallest regions in North Rhine-Westphalia and lies as a sort of hinge between the river Rhein and the Ruhr area. Despite its small size, the region displays manifold characteristics, which put the three cities above other regions and, at the same time, demarcate them too. In order to get to know the region better, to value its particularities and to raise its potential, we would like to give an overview of the region using different structural attributes.

zukunfthoch³: a region finds itself

Text: Carsten Zimmermann, Team leader regional development and management, Bergisch Development Agency



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Unique cultural landscape

The three Bergisch cities of Remscheid, Solingen and Wuppertal are characterised by a unique cultural landscape. The cities are closely tied and have been shaped by their early-industrial history. Its uniqueness consists of the tight interlocking of topographical landscape, settlement area, historic city centres and relics of the industrial culture. This provides a specific profile of the region. This will be discussed in depth below.

Settlement structure

The settlement structure in the Bergisch city-triangle is highly influenced by the topographic characteristics of the region. To

this day, areas with high inclines have not been developed. This limits the uninhibited development of settlements and prevents a conglomeration of the three cities, particularly through the deep valleys of the Wupper and Morsbach.

The three cities are characterised by a poly-central settlement structure. Even though the formerly independent cities have largely converged by now, their historically founded cores are still present as independent centres of the region. The strength of these independent centres can be attributed to the relative young age of the three cities. Local characteristics the individual centres' city scape ensure that their local identity remains intact.

Besides these common denominators of settlement structure,

the differences between the three cities are also clearly visible. In Wuppertal, the main settlement lies within the Wupper valley and forms a long line of agglomeration. The growth of Elberfeld and Barmen, both important centres, has long been constrained by the steep slopes of the Wupper valley. With the settlement extensions since WW II, namely at the northern heights of Barmen and Elberfeld and the districts of Vohwinkel, Cronenberg and Ronsdorf, elevated areas now also take up a big area of the city. However, since their creation, the cities of Solingen and Remscheid have been characterised by a concentration on top of the hills. This is particularly true for Remscheid. Due to its elevation the city centre's skyline is defining the landscape. The valleys were not subject to major settlements as these are too narrow in the Remscheid and Solingen area. However, proofs of pre- and early-industrial use can particularly be found in the valleys. In many areas the slopes of the valleys form the natural borders for the development of both cities and their districts.

Historic city centres

There are historic city centres within the Bergisch city-triangle, that offer touristic value due to their fragmented structure and historic building complexes (for instance, Solingen-Gräfrath, Wuppertal-Cronenberg, Remscheid-Lennep). It is there, that the typical Bergisch architecture with its regional building materials can be seen in its authenticity.



- 1 [Photographer: Peter Breuer](#)
- 2 [Photographer: Foto: Carsten Hahn](#)
- 3 [Photographer: Tom V Kortmann](#)
- 4 [Photographer: Carsten Hahn](#)
- 5 [Photographer: Gunnar Bädle](#)
- 6 [Photographer: Gunnar Bädle](#)

Hofschaften

Characteristic for the urban development within the present area of Solingen and Remscheid were the so-called "Hofschaften". As a result of the expanding development, these got integrated in the expansion and nowadays only very few can be seen in their historic environment (e.g. Hofschaft Dahl in Solingen).

Wilhelminian workers' quarters and exclusive residential areas

The industry of the Bergisch city-triangle is characterised by its small to medium sized companies but also by many global enterprises which work from here or even have their headquarters in the area. All these have left their mark on residential building areas. Big, continuous expansive residential areas were built for the management to live in, like for example the Briller district in Wuppertal, but also expansive Wilhelminian-style workers' quarters. Still today, and alongside Leipzig only, Wuppertal boasts the biggest number of Wilhelminian-style buildings per head in the whole of Germany, despite the vast destruction during the war. Similar quarters can be found in the other two cities – but not on the same scale.

Growth of population

Since 1970, the population within the Bergisch city-triangle has been in decline. Back then the population was 730,000. After a short-lived incline in the early 90s which ensued after the German Reunification, the population since 1993, is again on the decline but with an increased momentum. While the region's population in 1993 was 680,000, in 2007 it decreased to 633,000. With a decline in population of approx. 5% between end of year 1996 and 2006, the cities of Remscheid and Wuppertal are amongst the settlements with the highest decline in population. Solingen follows with a significantly lower decline of 1.3%.

The percentage of foreigners compared with the overall population in the Bergisch city-triangle in 2007 was at 14%, which was far above the countrywide average of 10% and at the top of the list of all independent cities and districts in North Rhine-Westphalia (for instance with Dortmund, Cologne, Bonn, Hagen, Gelsenkirchen and Hamm). This percentage is calculated on the basis of inhabitants with a foreign passport. The percentage of people with immigrant background is far higher. Within the Bergisch city-triangle around 29% can be included in this group. In 2007 this puts the region above the Land's average in this category and at the top of all areas within North Rhine-Westphalia. People with immigration background therefore constitute a significant and important group.

The effects of demographic changes – ageing of the population – in the Bergisch city-triangle set in earlier than on average in North Rhine-Westphalia. The percentage of over 65s is for all three cities higher than the average for NRW. The differences within the region are marginal. The proportion of young people is slightly higher in Remscheid than in its two neighbouring cities: in 2005 around 20% of the population were between 0-20 years old. With regards to the proportion of the group of "60 and older", all three cities are on the same level.

The LDS prognosis regarding the development of age distribution up until 2005 clearly shows a trend towards an ageing of the society. Particularly the percentage of the group "80 and older" will increase significantly, it will nearly double. However, the percentage of 60 to 80-year olds increases only moderately. The biggest decline is predicted for the group of 6 to 20-year olds.

Landscape

Due to natural conditions and historic industrial development the Bergisch city-triangle is perceptible as an area of cultural landscape with set boundaries. Being part of the Rhenish Massif, the Bergisch city-triangle shows the typical characteristics of a low mountain range. It consists of a plateau with deep valleys dropping from south to north and east to west. Highest point in the area is Remscheid-Hohenhagen with 379m above sea level. The lowest point however, situated in

the far west, within the city limits of Solingen and bordering Hilden, is only 53m above sea level and belongs to the Niederrheinische Bucht. Valleys and plateaus alternate creating stunning views. This is particularly impressive on the so-called Wuppertal Südhöhen. Looking north, there are views over big parts of Wuppertal, while in the south the silhouettes of Solingen and Remscheid can be seen. From the top of the plateaus in Remscheid and Solingen it is possible, weather permitting, to look as far as the Rhine plains.

Today, the stream and river valleys have a functional significance for the city climate and the biotope compound and represent important areas for local recreation. Due to the interweaving structure of built environment and open areas, nature and open spaces are easily accessible from the urban living areas. However, transport routes divide the leftover open spaces. This not only has a negative ecological impact but also restrictive effects on how the landscape is experienced in its spatial context. Despite the area's metropolitan character, it is still characterised by a high proportion of arboreal spaces. The forested area of the region lies at 28%, in Düsseldorf it is only 11, in Bochum down to just 7 percent within city limits.

The biggest continuous forests can be found on the slopes of the Wupper valley and the big feeder rivers, amongst which can be found the federal forest of Burgholz and Marscheider Wald. Agricultural areas, particularly green pastures, can be found in areas of lesser inclines. These are located particularly in the north and southeast of the area. The alternation of open grassland, fields and forested areas creates a varied scenery. To the southwest of Solingen, this scenery changes to gently sloping typical pastures. Only a hundred years ago, a small band of spacious grassland and impenetrable marshland forest ran along the western limit of the Bergisch region. A visible relic of this special cultural landscape is the Ohligser Heide in Solingen.

Moreover, the Bergisch city-triangle is abundant with water. This abundance formed the basis for the development of the knife and tools industry as well as the textile industry within the region and to this day has a high impact on the character of the landscape, which is shaped by numerous river valleys and the Wupper valley, running through the region in a large bow. Within the built up areas, the watercourses have been widely channelled or at least heavily narrowed and are therefore hardly tangible.

Outside the built up areas, the Wupper and its feeder rivers move freely for the most part and hence add to the diversity and beauty of the landscape. Numerous 'Schleifkotten' (grinding/sanding/polishing cottages/mills) and hammer mills along the rivers are proof of the beginning industrialisation in the region and represent an unmistakable characteristic of the Bergisch city-triangle. The area includes seven dams, which represent important parts of the landscape. Besides their size they differ from each other mainly with regards to usability and accessibility for the population. While Sengbach-, Eschbach- und Herbringhauser dam are used for drinking water abstraction, the other dams are mainly open to visitors and function as important local recreation areas. The Beyenburger dam is used extensively for canoeing.

Nature conservation

Many areas of the nature reserves can be found in the river valleys of the three Bergisch cities. The interlocking of the aforementioned areas with the urban green spaces through river valleys reaching as far as the city centres represent a particularity that marks the Bergisch city-triangle.

Living Bergisch industrial culture

The Bergisch city-triangle is a cradle of the early industrialisation on the continent. Like the landscape, the economic and settlement structure too has been characterised by the abundance of water in a diverse topography. Hundreds of mills and Schleifkotten were built alongside the Wupper and its numerous

tributaries and form the roots of the textile industry in Wuppertal, the knife industry in Solingen and the tools industry in Remscheid.

Today, the Bergisch industry culture can be experienced in two ways: in the footsteps of its historic heritage and the businesses with a long tradition that are still alive. Authentic places and historic traffic routes in the city and countryside can be found and communicated through the routes of the industrial culture. The big technical museums in the region (Deutsches Klingmuseum, Deutsches Röntgenmuseum, Deutsches Werkzeugmuseum, Historisches Zentrum Wuppertal, Engelshaus und Rheinisches Industriemuseum – Gesenkschmiede Hendrichs) put the Bergisch industrial culture in its historical framework and refine it didactically. The numerous voluntarily-run and sometimes still manufacturing places of the industrial culture give an opportunity to experience historic craft and get involved.

Many businesses, sometimes still run by the founding family, allow an insight in the industry and business culture between today and tomorrow by offering factory visits and outlets. A unique feature of available events that are show-casing industrial cultural content are the historic modes of transport.

They are the answer to the development of infrastructure and economy in the challenging central uplands. To this day unique modes of transported have and still are invented and operated:

- Wuppertal's suspended monorail train
- Solingen's bus system, powered by overhead electrical wires



- historic trams and busses
- Burg's cableway
- Draisines running on tracks
- Müngsten's transporter bridge located in the Brückenpark etc .

The key icon for the meeting of technique and nature, outstanding engineering work and Bergisch solutions for topographically challenging demands and heart of the region is the Müngsten bridge. There is a notion in the area to apply for UNESCO world-heritage status for this bridge as well as further comparable bridges dating back to the same era across continental Europe.

Touristic infrastructure

The touristic area of the Bergisch city-triangle is within a max. 1.5 hours drive from the urban centres along the Rhein and Ruhr as well as the Benelux countries and hence predestined for daytrips and short vacations. Furthermore, due to its high density of (industrial) cultural and scenic offers, manifold experiences can be had in a short space of time. This corresponds with the current needs of tourism.

The particularities of the landscape and the industrial cultural places are connected by a regional and supra-regional road network. The paths itself offer activities of high quality. Particularly in the valleys, hiking trails have been developed to converge with the industrial culture hiking routes and have been enhanced by additional artistic installations. Up until 2012, a hiking trail through the city triangle between Essen along the Ruhr and Drachenfels along the Rhine will be upgraded and marketed as quality hiking trail.

With regards to cycling tourism, the disused railways form a system, which opens up the low mountain range for cyclists and at the same time conveys some industrial culture. With very low inclines and little traffic, inner cities are being connected with the countryside including numerous attractions. Up until 2012/13, the supra-regional connection between the Ruhr, Rhine and Sieg is established via the Panorama Cycling Paths, which mostly run on disused railways. So-called touristic experience markers, which give foreign tourists a reason to visit are qualified and marketed:

- tourism axis Brückenpark Müngsten–Castle Burg with adjacent countryside
- area of the Wupper valley between Wuppertal and Remscheid-Lennep with draisin traffic , textile city of Wülfring and numerous activity offers, for instance at the Beyenburg reservoir
- potential for development of the tourism and leisure industry at the former waste disposal site of Remscheid.

Further potential areas for the development of tourism are long-term options (from about 2030), like for instance the limestone quarry area at the border between Wuppertal and the Mettmann district. However, a first qualification is happening with the Zukunftspark Grüne Meile in Lüntenbeck (Future Park Green Mile Lüntenbeck) situated on the Nordbahn railway, with which the touristic development of the limestone quarry area can tie in with.

Verkehrsinfrastruktur und Pendlersituation



Schloss Burg

Photographer: Peter Breuer

The infrastructure between the nearby cities with the major airports of Düsseldorf and Cologne/Bonn and the inland harbours along the Rhine can be described as sufficient. The infrastructural connection to the wider area is secured by the motorways A1, A46 and A3, which surround the Bergisch cities. The existing rail network offers ICE (Inter City Express = high-speed train) and IC (inter city) connections to Cologne and Dortmund and local connections to Ratingen, Düsseldorf and Essen. Remscheid is connected via train lines to Wuppertal and Solingen, with the Müngsten bridge playing a central role. For Wuppertal and Solingen the excellent connections towards Düsseldorf should be pointed out, from which travellers from Remscheid can profit too. In addition, the Regio-bahn line (regional train) Kaarst-Düsseldorf-Mettmann is to be extended shortly.

With the decline of work in the region, commuter numbers changed too. Wuppertal and Remscheid show a slightly positive number of commuters. Solingen's value however is clearly negative. Approximately 21,000 people, that is 40% of all workers from Solingen, work in other cities, but only 15,000 people commute to work into Solingen. This constitutes nearly 32% of all workers in Solingen. The highest commuter rate into a city is seen in Remscheid with 41 percent. Overall, the intensity of commuter complexity is increasing. Most important destination for commuters out of the Bergisch city-triangle is Düsseldorf. Commuters travelling in come mainly from the surrounding cities and towns.

Education and research / health care

Research and secondary education is of particular significance within the regional context. Well-known institutions are local to the Bergisch city-triangle with the Bergisch University Wuppertal holding a prominent position regarding education and research. It is affiliated with numerous institutes and research centres, inter alia the Bergisch Institute for Product Development and Innovation Management in Solingen and the Research Group Tools and Materials in Remscheid. The Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, Energy GmbH enjoys supra-regional significance. Moreover, highly specialised educational and research facilities can be found, which have formed according to the locally present economy branches, like for example the research centre Aprath in Wuppertal (Bayer AG) or the Institute for Galvano and Surface Technology as well as the vocational school for sweets in Solingen.

Economy

The Bergisch city-triangle is one of the oldest industrial areas of Germany. For a few decades now, it has been undergoing significant economical changes. This corresponds with business insolvencies and massive job losses within the secondary sector. These losses cannot be compensated by the development of the service sector as declining employee fi-

gures equally mark this sector. The result are high unemployment numbers in the region, especially in Wuppertal.

The economic strength of the Bergisch city-triangle almost stagnated in the last ten years. Between 1996 and 2006 the area's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 11% only. With 6.6% Remscheid shows the smallest growth amongst the three cities. Within the same time span the overall German GDP grew by 23.7%. Also the supposedly weak Ruhr area achieves a growth of 21.4% (regional alliance Ruhr-RVR). The growth of the Ruhr GDP between 2001 and 2006 was even slightly higher than the national average, while the Bergisch city-triangle falls behind even more.

This increase in productivity can be traced back to a significant decrease in employee numbers. The number of employees subject to social insurance contributions decreased in the same space of time by 14.7%. This development is particularly noteworthy. As a result, there were significant job cuts between 2001 and 2006. According to the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (CCI) the number of industry employees in the Bergisch city-triangle halved compared to 1991. A reason for this is the decline in the number of industrial businesses with 20 or more staff by nearly a third within the same space of time.

Despite the economic change, the Bergisch city triangle still shows an above average industrial share with a multitude of competitive businesses.

Regarding employment the percentage of the secondary sector is 39 for the Bergisch city-triangle and even 49 for Remscheid. Germany-wide this percentage decreased in the meantime to 25.5 due to the de-industrialisation of recent decades.

The economic structure of the Bergisch city-triangle is characterised mainly by small to medium sized businesses. The still high percentage of employees in the secondary sector does not only show its strength but is rather proof of the weakness of the service sector (tertiary sector) of the Bergisch city-triangle. While employee numbers in the service sector increased nationally and in North Rhine-Westphalia – with overall employment numbers down – the service sector as such showed a significant decline within the Bergisch city-triangle. However, the decline is considerably smaller than the employee numbers within the secondary sector.

The Bergisch economy is highly export-orientated. Thereby it is particularly dependent on

the development of the world economy. The export quota of industrial businesses in the area is at 45% (NRW: 42%). The Remscheid economy is particularly geared towards the foreign markets with a share of 50%.

The most important sectors regarding employment numbers in the Bergisch city-triangle are health and welfare, production of metal goods, mechanical engineering and the chemical industry. Amongst these, the production of metal goods is the most important for the three cities, where employee numbers are significantly above the national average. In 2006, 22,500 people worked in this sector, making the region the second-biggest location of metal working industry in Germany, marginally behind the Märkisch District.

Retail

The retail situation in the Bergisch city-triangle is predominantly characterised by its geographical situation in immediate proximity of important shopping cities like Cologne and Düsseldorf as well as the Ruhr area. Given this background, the region's city centres are subject to fierce pressure from competitors.

Determining factor for profits in retail is the purchasing power potential available in the area. This is determined through population and purchasing power per head. The purchasing power of private households in the region is slightly above the national average, however, the development over the last few years shows a trend to below average. The purchasing power index of the Bergisch city-triangle has therefore decreased from 107 in 2005 to 103 in 2007 (BRD=100).

The three Bergisch cities suffer from a decreasing purchasing power which is lost to the neighbouring main cities of Cologne and Düsseldorf. This is illustrated in the three Bergisch cities' centrality index. A centrality index of 100 shows that the retail profit of any one city corresponds to the actual purchasing potential. In this case, purchasing power increases and decreases are balanced. With 99 Wuppertal came just below the threshold of 100 in 2005. Remscheid and Solingen follow with 95 and 89 respectively. The comparison with other cities increases the significance of the centrality index. Bochum shows an index of 110, Bielefeld 126 and Düsseldorf 133.

Despite Wuppertal's highest centrality of the three Bergisch cities, its index would have to be significantly higher to become a main centre. Reasons for this are primarily losses to Düsseldorf, but also the lack of appeal of Wuppertal's retail offers for neighbouring smaller towns. Solingen loses around 10% of purchasing power to Cologne and Düsseldorf and hence suffers from the immediate spatial proximity to these main centres.

Most important retail locations

The inner city of Elberfeld with a retail area of

approx. 140,000 square meters and a profit of around 520 Million Euros per year is by far the most important retail location in the area. The catchment area however is essentially confined to Wuppertal's urban area. The development of the Döppersberg could increase the retail area by approx. 25,000 square meters over the next few years.

The Barmer city centre is the second biggest retail location of Wuppertal with a retail area of 45,000 square meters. Over the last few years, Barmer has lost its attraction to Elberfeld. This decline is visible in vacant shops along the peripheral lines and the decline in quality of goods in the central areas of the shopping area.

Remscheid's city centre with a retail area of about 58,000 square meters and a profit of approx. 233 million euros in 2005 is the second biggest retail location in the Bergisch city-triangle. Most purchases are being made on the Alleestraße and the adjoining Alleecenter, an urban mall with 100 shops and 26,000 square meters of retail area.

Solingen's city centre is approximately on the same level as Remscheid's city centre and offers 55,000 square meters and a profit of around 227 million euros. However, it is less confined in space with the main focus along the Hauptstraße with the Clemens-Gallery as the northern border. At the Neumarkt, situated in the western part of the city centre, a new shopping mall with 18,000 square meters retail area is being built where the Karstadt warehouse used to be. This project will increase Solingen's city centre's retail space significantly and will raise Solingen's overall retail facilities to national average.

A particularity of the Bergisch city-triangle is the historically defined strong position of sub-ordinate centres.

These tend to offer a wide range of retail and services. The district's population benefits from these local offers. It facilitates the provision of the most important products, particularly for people with limited mobility.

Bergisch Development Agency (BEA = Bergische Entwicklungsagentur)

The Bergisch Development Agency GmbH is a joint-venture of the cities of Wuppertal, Solingen, Remscheid, the regional Stadtsparkassen (banking institute), the CCI and the Economic Progress Wuppertal. The Bergisch Development Agency ties together and co-ordinates development tasks and structural projects of regional importance. The agency works within the areas of economic development and regional marketing, location marketing and tourism as well as regional development and management.

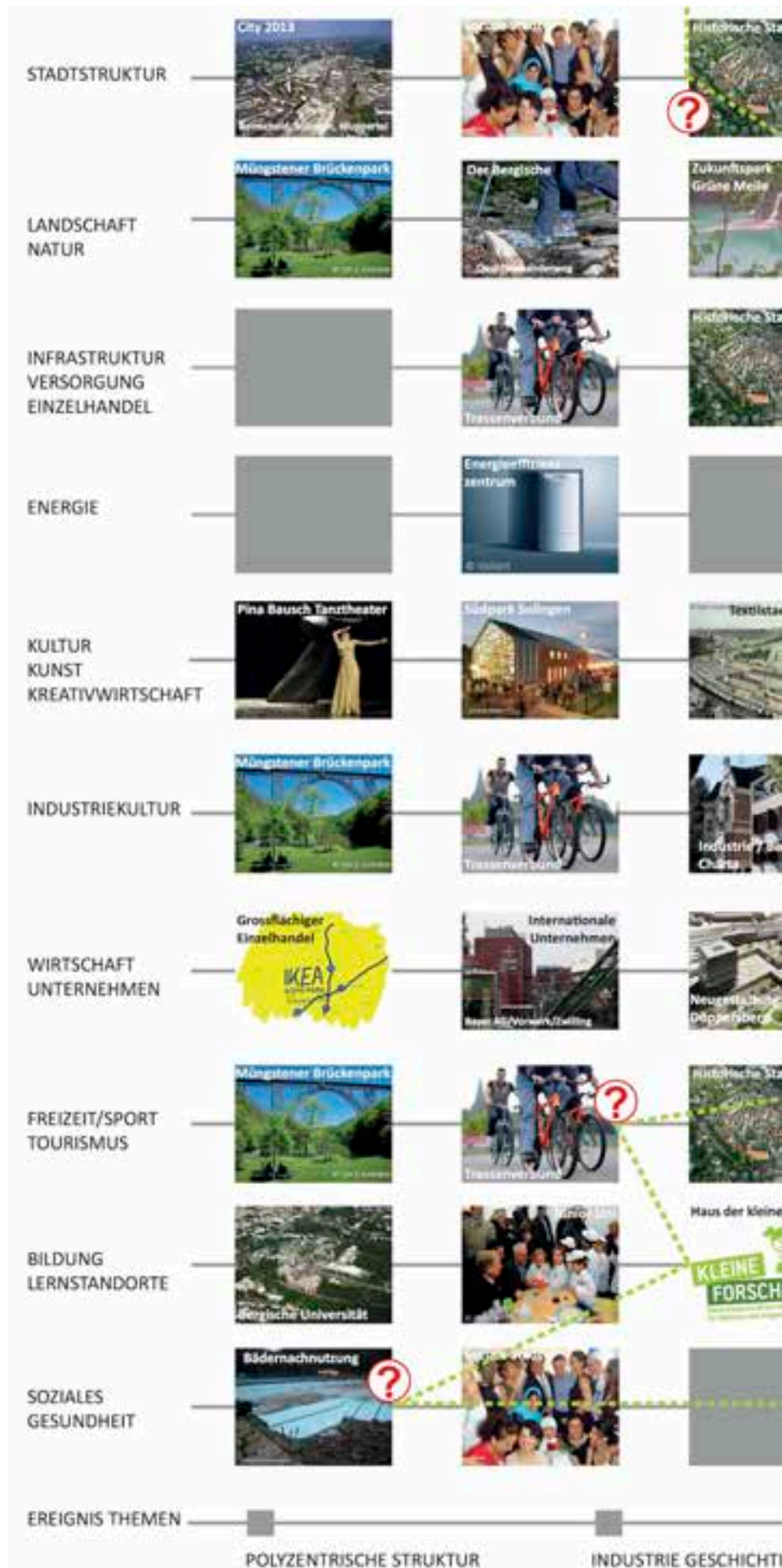
Main objectives of development over the next years in the so-called Aim 2 Booster period 2014-2020 will be in the following areas: Energy efficiency, Renewable energies, Health, Retail space development, Touristic destination, urban planning

Co-operation between **bergisch.project** and **BEA**

With the regional location concept Zukunfthoch3 the Bergisch city-triangle has developed a regional development strategy for the area, which has been agreed unanimously by all three councils. The concept is of programmatic character and determines, by use of SWOT-Analysis, the strategies, aims and cluster concerning urban and regional development, leisure and tourism as well as economy. A spatial approach has explicitly not been defined in the concept. Through the co-operation with the bergisch.project and by means of bringing together students of diverse disciplines, a unique opportunity has arisen to develop ideas for a spatial approach which can then serve as the basis for a spatial guidelines for the region.

PROJECT MATRIX

The project matrix shows significant projects and initiatives, which were mainly realised in the last few years. Fundamental drive for many measures were programmes such as Soziale Stadt (social city), Regionale 2006 as well as programmes supported by the Land North Rhine-Westphalia and the federal government. But there are also other important influences for the development that can be seen with the help of the matrix: the quantity and variety of projects, which can be attributed to civic involvement, show a lively and active region, which is being portrayed here. In the first instance, possible key projects will be identified. These projects take effect on many levels and serve as examples for this matrix to show possible developments and topics in the region. The project analysis in form of the matrix will show dependencies and important topics can be illustrated. The shown status quo of the matrix should therefore not be seen as final but rather as a tool, which will develop over time.



2/3 workshop

Part 1 lectures in the morning, Bergisch University, Haspel



region(er)finden...

On 4th July 2012 an expert workshop with the title 'find and invent the region' ('Region (er)finden') was held in Wuppertal. It was divided into a lecture in the morning and a workshop in the afternoon. All delegates also changed location on this day: after starting in the valley at Campus Haspel, everyone drove to Trainstation Mirke in the afternoon, an important showcase project for the numerous initiatives within the region. This first shared introduction into the topic of the Bergisch city-triangle allowed all delegates to reflect on possible views and their own work's focus within the more general framework.

Expert workshop on 4th July 2012

Programme and delegates

Prof. Dr. Lambert T. Koch

Vice-chancellor Bergisch University Wuppertal
Bringing a region to life?

Bodo Middeldorf

Managing Director Bergisch Development Agency

Filmvorführung

Heimat. Zukunft. Kooperation.
Homeland. Future. Co-operation. A positioning.

Bergisch Development Agency

The Bergisch city-triangle on its way into the future –
the regional location concept futurehigh3 as basis for the
development of a spatial guidelines

Carsten Zimmermann

Anette Nothnagel

Bergisch Development Agency

Dr. Reimar Molitor, Region Köln/Bonn e.V.

Initiation, establishment and perpetuation of regional development
formats as seen in the Cologne region. From the benchmark of
creation to the draft for the region's future and back.

Michael Schwarze-Rodrian, Regional Association Ruhr Metropolis Ruhr:

A great deal of experience – from the IBA to the Ruhr 2020

Esther Gruß, District Administration Düsseldorf

The national perspective
The growing together of the region, regional planning for the Bergisch
city-triangle.

Acting Prof. Anette Paul, Prof. Dr. Tanja Siems, Ragnhild Klußmann, Bergische University Wuppertal,

The interdisciplinary summer academy as a scientific entry for the
discussion about the region: reason, methodology and aims.

Organisations involved:

Bergisch development agency, Bergisch University Wuppertal: Department B (Schumpeter School of Business), D (Architecture and structural engineering, safety technology), Department F (Design), Department G (Sociology, Geography), District Administration Düsseldorf, Cologne/Bonn region, Regional Association Ruhr, City of Remscheid, City of Solingen, City of Wuppertal, Wuppertal Institute.

Participants:

Mohamed Fezazi, Lisa Gerlach, Stefanie Gernert, Johannes Geyer, Esther Gruß, Kerstin Hamburg, Christian Hampe, Melisa Hasanovic, Dr. Michael Hecker, Sarah Hellebrandt, Christel Hildesheim, Marc Hübert, Prof. Dr. Peter Imbusch, Katja Indorf, Prof. Dr. Andreas Keil, Ragnhild Klußmann, Prof. Dr. Lambert T. Koch, Wolfgang Kuhn, Rainer Lucas, Dr. Tim Lukas, Marcia Meier-Marletz, Elif Mert, Bodo

Middeldorf, Dr. Reimar Molitor, Maren Nolte, Annette Nothnagel, Bärbel Offergeld, Prof. Klaus Overmeyer, Prof. Annette Paul, Jochen Reetz, Rebecca Schröder, Dr. Ralf Schüle, Tina Schulz, Michael Schwarze-Rodrian, Prof. Dr. Tanja Siems, Katharina Simon, Hans-Gerd Sonnenschein, Asal Tayouri, Tharsana Tharmabalan, Prof. Heinrich Weid, Juliane Wolf, Carsten Zimmermann

Homeland. Future. Co-operation.

account of the lectures

Central and reoccurring topic in all lectures on the morning of the expert workshop was the Bergisch city-triangle's search for identity. The various speeches approached the subject from different perspectives and prompted initial discussion with the audience.

Already the introduction entitled 'Bringing a region to life?' by the vice-chancellor of the Bergisch University Wuppertal, Prof. **Dr. Lambert T. Koch**, raised the question of a definition of the regional awareness and outlined which parameters should be introduced in order to evaluate and identify. The Bergisch city-triangle as a region, which initially saw many medium sized businesses being set up and grow, has a remarkable potential, however has now reached a stage where re-invention has become a requirement. This region needs to be pre-invigorated, however, this can only happen with the creation of corresponding prerequisites, frame works in which a region is capable to re-invent itself from within. A

first step would be **to bring together people and potentials of the region**, in order to develop a new profile based on these strengths.

Bodo Middeldorf, Managing Director of the Bergisch Development Agency, started his speech with an overview of current regional co-operations before moving on to his topic of the Bergisch identity.

Regional co-operation always also means discussion. This discussion expresses the mutual effort to move things forward. The Bergisch

Development Agency sees this co-operation as an important building block for the development of economy and community. The Bergisch Development Agency is the central hub for numerous approaches. Projects are initiated, accompanied and co-ordinated in an interdepartmental and interurban way. It should be highlighted that case-related work with many people and institutions involved is working already. The biggest question therefore is how to develop and move forward regional co-operation in respect of its purpose and other approaches. One important aspect is for example where the borders of the region can be found and what synergy effects will evolve for the individual parties.

As an example of an actual project within the region, the regional location concept 'zukunfthoch3' was introduced by **Anette Nothnagel and Carsten Zimmermann**.

Its aim is to develop strategies and to support projects within the frame of the regional co-operation of the cities of Remscheid, Solingen and Wuppertal, as a joint Region Bergisch city-triangle. (further information can be found in chapter 2.3). Part of the morning session was the film:

Homeland Future Co-operation
– A positioning

[www. http://vimeo.com/chunderksen/bea](http://vimeo.com/chunderksen/bea)

**HEIMAT.
ZUKUNFT.
KOOPERATION.**
Eine Standortbestimmung

The question of a regional understanding of the Bergisch city-triangle demands a definition of belonging and a balance between profile consolidation as independent area of several cities and the orientation towards the neighbouring cities, as for example the Ruhr area or the Cologne/Bonn region.

Dr. Reimar Molitor, managing director of Cologne/Bonn Region e.V., gave the audience an insight into initiation, establishment and perpetuation of regional development formats using the Cologne/Bonn area as an example. His lecture was entitled: From the benchmark of creation to the draft for the region's future and back. Institutions such as the Bergisch Development Agency can be found in almost every region and these co-operation envelopes seem to be needed in order to initiate things. The problematic Reimar Molitor is pointing out the meaning of these institutions: why are these envelopes necessary and what are they there for?

A region does not move in between borders or areas of responsibility, region is dynamic. Therefore, dynamic

instruments and formats are needed,

but one thing is
needed most of all
—people.

Hence, what is needed is a collective image and a collective discussion about homeland and future. In his lecture, Dr. Reimar Molitor emphasises that the most important ingredient for a co-operation is repetition.

Co-operation always
needs an interval,
a rhythm.

Because only regularity
can create an effective co-
operation, a relation or,
ideally, even a friendship.

A major achievement concerning the regional development therefore constitutes the bringing together of all parties involved regardless of apparent regional borders. Taking the Cologne/Bonn region as an example illustrates that regional borders indeed exist but are irrelevant for many projects such like, for example, the Römerstraße. Within the framework of the development of the Römerstraße, Region Cologne/Bonn e.V. co-operates with a total of 19 communities located between the North Eifel and the Aachen agglomeration. Looking at the project, the river or the landscape, the unimportance of city borders becomes apparent. Cross-border co-operation lends the project a scale and relevance which in turn is of touristic, cultural and historic importance. Here again, the task at hand lies in the project co-ordination and the bringing together of part responsibilities in order to create a successful joint project.

After presenting the projects, Dr. Reimar Molitor explained some basics regarding the handling and expectations for the city landscape and of the project participants. Firstly, regional city landscapes need a respective regional, spatial interpretation. In the case of the Bergisch city-triangle the spatial interpretation is extremely specific and the structural challenge of this area has its own regional dimension.

The following speech by **Michael Schwarze-Rodrian** was entitled Metropolis Ruhr: A great deal of experience - from the IBA to the Ruhr 2020. The International Building Fair (IBA) shows the change of a whole region and sees itself as a laboratory, a workshop for the future of old industrial landscapes. The project describes a professionally lead process of dealing with industrial landscapes and the decision to actively attend to the weaknesses of the region. The methodical approach for the development of the IBA is based on the simultaneity of strategy and project. Bringing together diverse groups with different ideas and capabilities is seen as the corner stone.

The project IBA Emscher-Park describes not only the structural and ecological improvement processes of the Emsch area but also the changing of the guideline of an industrial region. It is important to redirect people's perception of mud and dirt to a positive, self-confident awareness of the Ruhr area. The IBA Emscher Park united more the 100 singular projects in 17 cities of the Emsch region and ended in 1999 with a big closing ceremony.

Various masterplans that evolved from the 10-year IBA fed into the project 'New Emsch Valley'. The task now was to integrate the particular case of the IBA into continuity. By means of various further projects and measures the project Nature Park Emsch has been and still is continuously developed. Currently, the Masterplan ELP 2010 constitutes the platform for the future development of the urban landscape. Parallel to this runs the Masterplan Future Ems, which deals with the future of the river and, as a result of 350 singular projects, steadily pushes the remodelling of the Emsch system. These projects demonstrate inter-regional work on a sustainable future. The inter-communal co-operation of 20 cities, 3 districts and 5 North Rhine-Westphalian ministries illustrates

that large scale projects can only be tackled

with a joint vision
for the urban
landscape.

According to NRW environment minister, Mr Rimmel, there has been a daily built up of 11.5 hectares of land with streets or settlements in 2010.

While the first part of lectures allowed interesting insights into actual projects of the Bergisch Land and neighbouring regions,

EstherGruß, the representative of the District Administration Düsseldorf highlighted the perspectives of planning. Her lecture on the subject of 'The national perspective. The growing together of the region, regional planning for the Bergisch city-triangle'. District, regional and town planning guides determine spatial requirements on different levels. The challenge is to set aims and principles regarding the use of areas while, at the same time, taking into account diverse interests starting with the governing body of North Rhine-Westphalia to direct influences on the communities. As a principle, these set aims and principles set by the authorities have to be taken into account when dealing with spatial planning and measurements.

A current goal of the regional planning is for instance the so-called 'saving of areas'. According to a statement of NRW environment minister, Mr Rimmel, 11.5 hectare of land have been built up daily with streets or settlements in 2010. The aim is to reduce this figure to 5ha per day. The subsequent consequence is the development of brownfield sites? rather than creating new building plots. The current regional plan (GEP 99) is at present under revision and will be reissued by the end of the year to reflect the developments and prognoses in progress. In addition to the topics in the regional plan, such as settlement areas, retail, industry and energy, the new edition will also develop guidelines for the cultural landscape. It is at this stage that concepts like

identity, culture and homeland

play a role and have to be adequately analysed and integrated into the planning.

Summing up, Esther Gruß suggested the following approach for the development of the Bergisch city-triangle: the aim is to stay within the existing settlement areas and to strive for a development from within as well as for an appropriate urban density. There is to be enough space for industry at suitable locations, but not more than necessary. The basis for regional co-operation and the development of shared ideal locations within the Bergisch Land is the ability to look 'beyond one's nose'.

The concluding part of the speeches was held by the organisers of the interdisciplinary expert workshops. **Acting Prof. Anette Paul** presented student papers on the region in order to give an introduction to the debate on regional subjects and questions. The projects discussed act as examples for regional problems, specific characteristics and potentials, which are addressed in the drafts. Apart from creative solutions to the task at hand, the students' approach can be seen:

what constitutes the Bergisch city-triangle from a student's point of view and what can it be in future?

Six exemplary projects dealing with transformation, identity and networking allow an insight into the working process of regionally relevant topics.

The concept 'Made in Remscheid, innovation park metal' was explored under the umbrella term of transformation. The plot that needed to be developed was an inner city space in Remscheid, which had become available due to structural changes. The metal industry that used to be located there does not exist anymore, meaning new solutions in terms of transformation and development are needed. The point of the exercise was to develop strategies and uses for the area, which combine trade, science and housing in an intelligent way and will give an impulse for the adjoining region.

Another aspect of the University's studies is concerned with the field of identity and integration. In a first phase the study looks, on a small scale, at the university itself, which does not possess a homogenous guideline and no common identity. To this end, a signage and orientation system for the campus was developed in co-operation with media designers and architectural students. This system aims at giving students the possibility to identify with their university and hence giving the university its own identity.

Orientation is the subject of the project Pfadfinder orientation within the Bergisch city-triangle'. How is it possible to transfer the topic of identity and integration, exemplified on a small-scale university campus study to a whole region? Firstly, it is important to understand the particularities of a region. This too will be required of the participants of the summer academy. As a result of the academic examination, the following points have been gathered with regards to the question of what constitutes the Bergisch city-triangle:

transformation, identity, integration.

The Bergisch region is undergoing changes.

Where can we find potentials for development in an architectural culture that is characterised by its industrial heritage?

How can we re-activate existing building structures?

To what extent represents the Bergisch area a periphery within the centre of many other cities?

What is unique about the region?

Prof. Dr. Tanja Siems, head of the department of urban development, presented another approach from a teaching point of view of how to link planners and actors. The emphasis was on the following questions:

How can planning processes be made understandable and changeable for planners and actors.

How can we link areas of high potential and initiatives, especially with regard to the Bergisch area?

Where are we at and what is our vision for the future? (image Hochx). The importance of examining these multi-faceted topics within the framework of the summer academy resulted from the multitude of singular projects and aspects.

Lastly, **Dipl.-Ing. MSc Ragnhild Klußmann** added the project 'towards Wuppertal' ('wuppertalwärts') to the contribution of 'The interdisciplinary summer academy as a scientific entry for the discussion about the region: reason, methodology and aims'. The 'wuppertalwärts' project is an interdisciplinary seminar bringing together various departments of the Bergisch University. On the basis of the project matrix 'inventory Wuppertal', which will be looked at in more detail in chapter 3.x, life and the influx to the Wupper have been examined and it has been noted that their potential has not yet been exhausted. This fact was then researched within the framework of the 'wuppertalwärts' project.

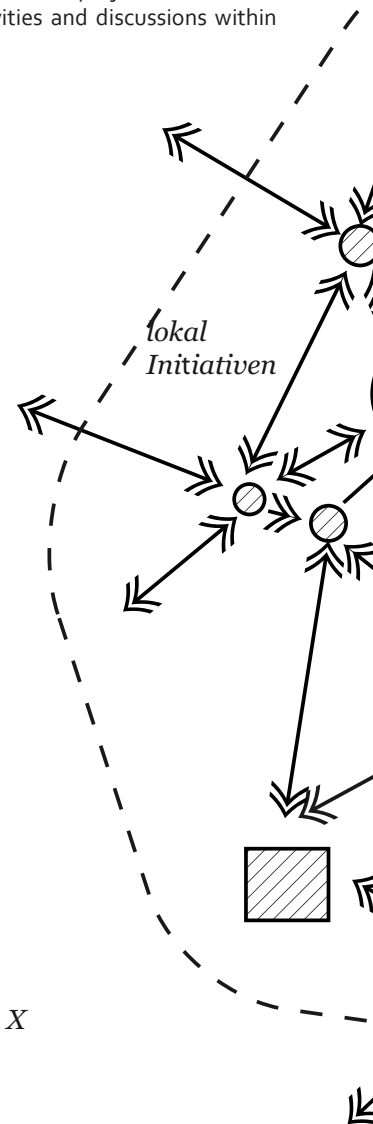
Students of the departments of architecture, sociology, political science, safety engineering, geography and other departments worked together in a seminar about urban spaces along the Wupper. When examining the riverbanks of the Wupper, it

becomes apparent that some parts are not being used by the population. They exist, but are not made use of.

How could we change the perception of these places?

How can we make people discuss this? And how can these places be evaluated? Part of the methodology used to examine the urban spaces along the Wupper are activities. For example a walk along the Wupper with the Wuppertal Kunstverein (art society) and installations with the aim to make the already existing potentials apparent.

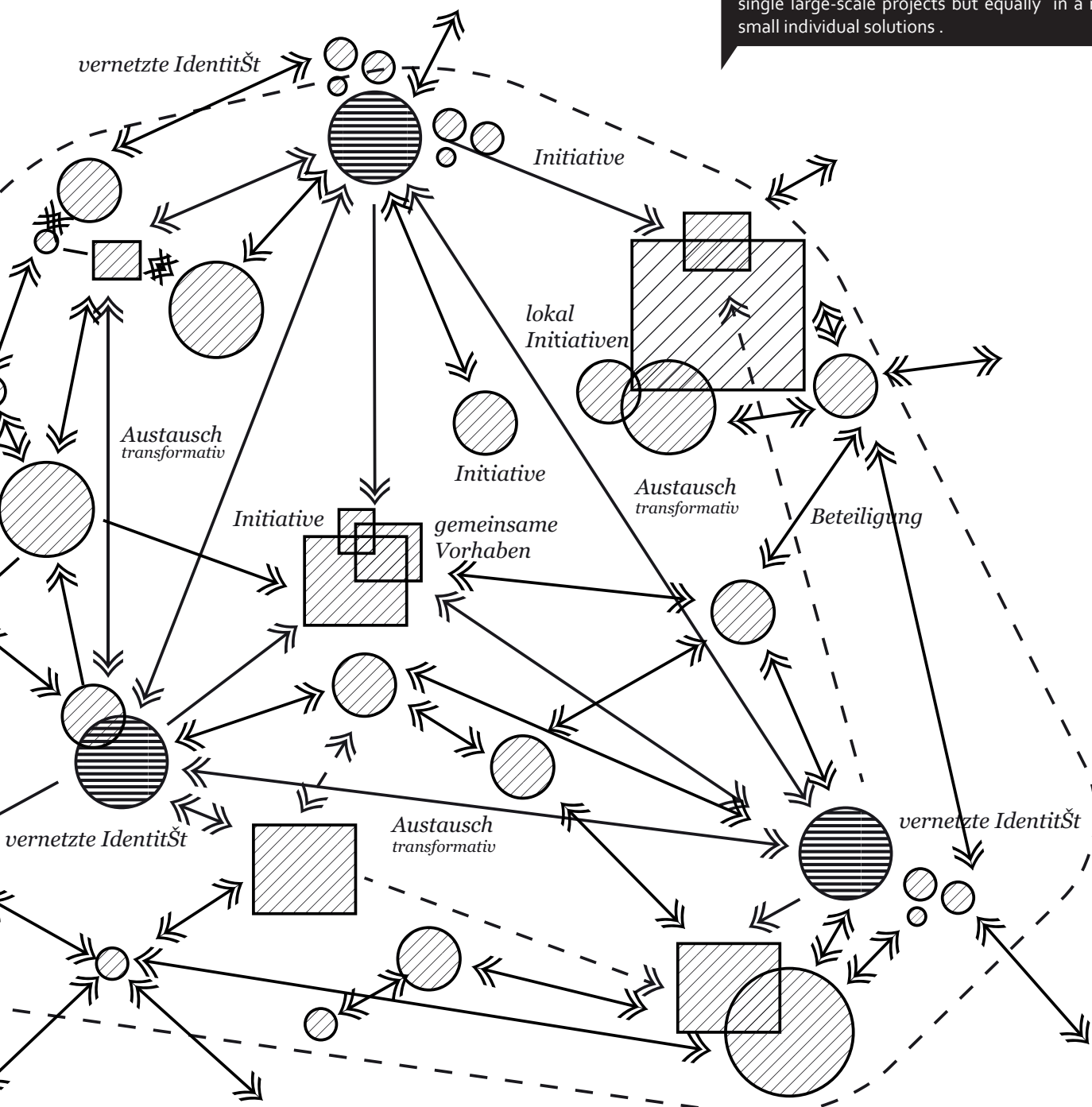
The summer academy uses the same approach. Various different disciplines work jointly on a topic, which does not necessarily culminate in traditional project formats but can lead to activities and discussions within in the region.



The ambivalence between actual **projects on location** and the return to large-scale topics dealing with the region as a masterpiece, marks the **area of conflict** in which the current projects and the **summer academy** find themselves.

The many-faceted and informative lectures given in the morning formed the basis of the second part of the expert workshops.

The combination of creative components within the region initialise various project processes. This might result in single large-scale projects but equally in a multitude of small individual solutions.



2/3 workshop

Part 2 workshop, Train station Mirke, Wuppertal



IDENTITY

QUALITY

NETWORKING

IMPULS

Introduction/methodology of the study groups

The afternoon was spent at Train station Mirke, where four study groups and their teams retired with many initial questions: under the keywords identity, quality, networking and impulse the experts of various disciplines (architecture, urban planning, design, art, landscape architecture, geography, business studies and sociology) started a discussion with the aim to question these theses, prepared by the organisers, and to sound out potential topics. In the closing plenum outcomes were presented and discussed amongst the delegates. Initially, the very mixed groups showed how different the ways of thinking were for the disciplines involved. Technical terms had to be explained first, one's own position defined. Rapidly views and approaches complemented each other's, ideas were taken into account and developed further. Despite the lack of time in order to answer all questions, numerous initial ideas could be developed for the summer academy.

IDENTITY

Does the Bergisch Area have an identity problem?

Presenter: Annette Paul & Bodo Middeldorf

Text by Bärbel Offergeld



The term and the search for identity was already of intrinsic importance in the morning's lectures. The expert groups then tried to discuss the term of identity in more detail with regard to the identity of the region. The interdisciplinary group consisted of actors of the Bergisch Land and experts of the area, which allowed for very diverging views on the identity of the region. The introduction into the intensive discussion was based on five questions.

How is the area perceived? What are the characteristics of the city-triangle? Are there any inconsistencies in the area? Is there a discrepancy between the way the area is viewed from within and out? What distinguishes the area from neighbouring agglomerations?

Strangers to the area commented positively on the quality of the region which came as a surprise to the residents. However, at the same time, comments were made regarding the qualities and the missing communication and packaging of these. Regional qualities are perceived in an ambivalent way and are often restricted to natural attractions of the Bergisch Land and do not take distinctive urban features into account. Team Identity hence developed the thesis that

the Bergisch city-triangle, as comparatively small and compact area, is overshadowed by the neighbouring areas and cannot compete adequately with these in terms of urbanity, attractiveness of living space and cultural offers.

During the observation of the Bergisch city-triangle it became apparent that the city of Wuppertal was very dominant, this was particularly noticeable with regards to the question of characteristics of the city-triangle. The outcome of this question showed that the city of Wuppertal represented the whole area, which the delegates deemed both, positive and negative.

A possible difficulty for the identity of the Bergisch city-triangle was identified in its poly-central structure. Where does the city end, the region end, where does it start, what is the Bergisch city-triangle, what is the Bergisch Land, how can we discuss the term regional identity when the region itself isn't clearly defined, who feels 'bergisch'?

Following this initial discussion, the topic of identity was looked at in more detail by means of four theses.

Thesis 1:
The development of the region is assisted by the formation of a common identity

All participants immediately agreed on this thesis. Identity is a positive factor for the development of a region. However, this seemingly unambiguous thesis prompts further questions: Is there such a thing as a Bergisch identity? What could new identities be? Is identity also the prerequisite for the development of a region – is a regional identity desirable? If so, where does it manifest itself?



In times of a multitude of individual and diverse walks of life, where the traditional social structures fall apart, the longing for identity and positioning in space grows. However, the theoretically growing requirement for identity cannot be perceived in the Bergisch Land, let alone empirically identified. One possible explanation is, here too, the poly-central structure of the Bergisch Land and the resulting indifferent sense of belonging, which was discussed as a problematic issue. The local expert showed some positive examples of identification with a district or neighbourhood, but there is hardly a common Bergisch identity. The Bergisch city-triangle does not seem to be the reference value of regional identity. Relation towards the city lies behind the relation to the neighbourhood and only then follows the identification with the Bergisch area.

The wish for one's own identity and self placement is a basic human need. It is therefore important to ascertain where the potentials are within the Bergisch city-triangle to promote a common identity. An important first step in this direction has been mentioned in the deve-

lopment of former railways into continuous cycle tracks. This project could contribute to perceive the region as more of an entity.

Thesis 2:
The Bergisch Land forms the reference area for regional identity

In order to deliberate about this thesis, it was discussed how an identity is formed in the first place, or rather could be formed. A regional identity evolves mainly through a personal relationship with specific places, through experiences, feelings and the social environment. Identity is therefore a deeply individual feeling. In the discussion it became apparent that in a short space of time it is neither possible to influence a regional identity nor to produce one. Naturally, obvious regional potentials were discussed as well as the possibilities of developing these. Here also, regional integration and demarcation were identified as important contributors to a feeling of identity. Can we represent ourselves as an independent region or is the Bergisch city-triangle only a part of...? How can we support an inner awareness, a regional identity within the Bergisch Land, if not 'create' one? What makes this region singular and special?

Thesis 3:
Development of a joint identity needs an interdisciplinary approach

In order to examine the topic of joint identity, an interdisciplinary cooperation is of immanent importance. From the past discussions it has become clear that further interdisciplinary research is necessary just for the term 'regional identity'.

The focus is not on finding an eye-catching static identity for the area but, with respect to the immanent summer academy and the bergisch project, on the processes of finding an identity, i.e. the attention is on the evolution of identity.

To feeling of being 'at home' is generated through individual emotional links between a place and a person and is always influenced by interaction with others.

The definition of identity can only be examined bearing in mind the inseparable interweaving of architecture, social interaction, cultural offerings and local context. All participants agreed at the end of the discussion that it was important to continue the bergisch project in an interdisciplinary way.

QUALITY

What are the potentials for a unique cultural landscape?

Presenter: Annette Nothnagel & Ragnhild Klußmann

Text by Ragnhild Klußmann



Team Quality was presented with a thesis, which tried to summarise the obvious qualities of the region. The aim of Team Quality, however, is to identify less communicated or still hidden qualities and to discuss these in order to generate thematic approaches for the summer academy.

The opposition of centrality and ease of access in NRW on one hand side and living conditions and multi-faceted cultural landscape on the other constitute the quality of the region.

The above-mentioned position in NRW is a determining factor for the economic development of the region and offers the basis for attractive housing within easy reach of the agglomerations of Cologne, Düsseldorf and the Ruhr area. However, there is room for improvement regarding public transport connections in order to establish new housing and business areas. Particularly Solingen and Remscheid's accessibility are lacking behind and the links between the three cities will have to be developed more intensively. The cultural landscape of the Bergisch area is unique in its natural spaces and in its cultural and

industrial evolution but is in competition with the already established industrial culture of the Ruhr area and the cultural transport hubs of the neighbouring cities. In view of the ever changing framework, the proposed thesis therefore has to be followed up by the question of how the region can develop its qualities any further. Representatively, the lack of maintenance and preservation due to the spending caps set by public authorities shall be mentioned here, as these, together with other conditions in the area, oppose a meaningful development of qualities. It is for this reason that the team quite often discusses deficits and problems? Some of the topics discussed in the team shall be touched below.

One important aspect is the question of if and how the region can find a new and common centre. Linking the three cities with each other does not seem to bridge the competition and affiliations are unclear. What is the geographical scope for the citizens, which natural space do they see as belonging to their region? The division of the Bergisch area into smaller parts of the city-triangle and the Bergisch Land is a difficult task with regards to cultural space. Hence, the question en-

sues if and which neighbours shall be included and into what can and must the region be developed with regards to economy, administration, culture and nature; i.e. the regional reference has to be scrutinised from within and out. The amalgamation to the Bergisch city-triangle offers countless possibilities, which couldn't be exhausted by each of the individual cities on their own, however, the spatial connection is missing. According to many experts in the team, the assumption that the city-triangle is the right basis for the region and the successful development of its qualities, has to be challenged too. For the summer academy this implies to examine historic cultural-spatial developments as well as affiliations in the region in its historic and present-day context. This will clarify the spatial dimensions of the area and which supra-regional affiliations should be improved. From a super-ordinate view, various rigorous scenarios will help to sound out the possibilities: numerous unfiltered ideas, starting from breaking up the region, over moving and expanding borders to the formation of a Bergisch city ReSoWu, should be discussed again.

The qualities should also be questioned from within the area in order to find new approaches and to avoid sticking exclusively to already identified markers. What's on offer in the Bergisch city-triangle that can't be found or only with great difficulty elsewhere? For example, will the Bergisch University, like other big employers, remain a commuter university? What would make employees as well as students stay? How could other big employers help make an amalgamated region an attractive centre of life.

The abundance of space in the Bergisch area has been recognised in the expert workshops as an interesting starting point. The late and slow transformation of this space has been regarded as a negative aspect in a highly populated Land like NRW but can also be the bearer of high potentials, space as natural space, public space, cheap living area, space for businesses and industry, but also space for new developments such as tourism, health and other segments. This potential can be used for unique developments. One important task for the summer academy would therefore be to develop concepts of how to make this space available and usable.

Other than the urban qualities, landscape qualities play an important role in the Bergisch region. The following questions have been formulated in connection with the landscape development:

What do people associate with the Bergisch landscape, how can the known qualities be evaluated? How is the relationship with the Wupper, the recognition within the region through the topography and other natural specifics?

How to combine industrial culture and special landscape to develop a unique leisure profile in the Bergisch city-triangle. Which social stratum can be reached through this approach? Can the success of the Müngsten Bridgepark be repeated? Which similar approaches, for example in the Ruhr area, function economically and in their impact?

What potential has the Wupper as combining and identifying landscape element through the whole region? How can the cities' interlinkage through the Wupper be made visible?

What are the potentials for a unique cultural landscape concept that derive from the interlinkage of the Wupper and adjoining former industrial and brownfield sites and monuments?

What other forms of tourism could be developed in the Bergisch city-triangle (camp sites, youth camps, sporting events, spas)? What other successful concepts could be drawn upon?

How could the particularities of the Bergisch nature be communicated and marketed through art projects and cultural events etc.?

Would accompanying cultural projects increase the understanding and interest for the Bergisch city-triangle landscape? What are their consequences on the more intensive use?

These and other questions about the landscape could become actual project and concept studies of the summer academy in order to achieve exemplary approaches.

An important aspect of all topics mentioned is the communication and dissemination of existing qualities of the Bergisch city-triangle. The manner of communication has a great influence on the internal view, the formation of identity as well as the perception of qualities. In practical terms it's about presenting the particularities in tourist guides and other literature, on the internet, through apps and other communication media in order to make them available to all social strata and age groups. It is important to highlight the region! In order to achieve an appreciation for the area, history, industrial culture, the particular landscape and the distinct engagement of the population have to be made tangible and discernible. Appropriate tools for mediation rather than planning can be worked out by means of current examples of urban design as well as in co-operation with the related disciplines of geography and sociology. Like with all other topics, numerous existing initiatives and creative approaches in the region can be drawn upon.

The last discussion item of the round table was the strategic approach to generate extraordinary qualities exactly from those areas that seem to be problematic. Why not develop a new form of urban landscape derived from the decline? Why not mix difficult topics rather than separate them in order to find a solution to the problem? Why not market un-occupancy and ruins as aesthetic qualities of the urban space? Why not interlink contradictions and search for interfaces where they are least likely?

Maybe we really need a new form of 'smart rooms', as was discussed in the workshop, in order to pin down a new way of thinking in the region.

NETWORKING

What is your perception of the region? What are the characteristics of the city triangle?

Presenter: Tanja Siems & Carsten Zimmermann

Text by Tanja Siems

A substantial part of the success of all networks can be seen in the right balance between own and cross-over identity or rather between the integration and the mutual benefit of strengths. This can be seen on all levels of active networking systems, whether these be artistic, scientific or business networks. Often, successful networks show background links, which strengthen the individual but also create a common basis in order to advance sustainable transformation processes in urban and rural regions.

For the Bergisch city-triangle this particularly raises the question of how to highlight and use the particularities of the respective cities as well as the Bergisch Land, while joint interests of all actors generate a synergetic network and hence strengthen the whole area and create a strong joint framework. The main question within the urban framework is with regards to what should be networked and to what end? The Bergisch region offers multilayered qualities in infrastructure, nature, industry and cultural landscape as well as energy potentials. It is therefore important to link these spatially or with the use of media.

In light of these viewpoints, the topics of urban and rural identity and their urban and natural usable space, as well as political, energetic and infrastructural networks are of particular interest for the Bergisch area. A strong historically grown civil engagement can be found in the Bergisch Land as well as a high social interest in their own region. This interest in social and cultural identification should be communicated and reinforced in a 'leading by example' approach in the areas of development and integration of the Bergisch city-triangle.

Team Networking has hence formulated the following statements for discussion:

The region is well positioned for the future due to its multilayered networks and poly-central structure. The poly-central settlement structure allows for forward-looking potentials in the field of regional and political networking (topic metropolis region), processes of decline and transformation as well as resource efficiency.

The Bergisch Land is the reference area, which is supported by the diversity of the Bergisch city-triangle. The linking of the region should be expanded to include all economic and socio-political scopes of duties. The natural landscape, as for example the many watercourses with their dams, the strong topography together with the high percentage of forests can bring new potentials for the energy turnaround.

Other potentials can be found in the development of the regional education system in the areas of craft and industry. The regional industry sector focuses on practical research, for example through various institutions. This should be developed beyond the academic framework to include qualified craft training sectors as well as the industry as an integration project for the youths and migrants.

A strong network of all health and wellness facilities would allow to develop a health resort concept for the region with respect to its unique natural landscape qualities.

Team Networking consists also of various disciplines. The group is composed of experts with an architectural, environmental design, urban planning, geographical, social science and economical background. The following questions were initially put forward at the expert workshop at Train station Mirke.

What is your perception of the region? What are the characteristics of the city triangle? What are the differences of the region with regards to the neighbouring agglomerations? Is there a discrepancy between the external and internal view of the region?

Amongst others, the experts answered these questions spontaneously stating that it was indeed these contradictions that define the region and that the Bergisch city-triangle and its region differentiates itself from the adjoining areas through its extraordinary natural spaces, its cultural highlights (suspended monorail train, bridge park etc.), the regional forfeiture as well as the cultural grouping in the open space.

'The older you get, the more love you develop for the region'.

However, the experts also found that the Bergisch city-triangle hasn't found its path yet and that the region is badly treated by the 'bigger politics'.

The population of the three cities isn't connected as much as it should be. This means that people living in Wuppertal rarely travel to Remscheid or Solingen and often don't even know anyone there.

The cultural networking was highlighted as a positive example. The identity of individual neighbourhoods is characterised by, for example, Polish, Turkish or Russian immigrants. Different networks strongly form the cityscape, which is visible from the example of intercultural supermarkets. Networking is happening and multilayered cultural friendships evolve.

It was discovered that the three cities are based on different branches of industry, which influenced their development in different ways. Business incubators are not the same in all the region's cities and Wuppertal is the most successful.

Overall, the region isn't economically geared towards the future. Most of all there's a lack of integrating and interconnecting concepts.

The resistance towards trans-regional networking is detrimental to secure the sustainability of the Bergisch region. The city triangle has strong neighbours (Ruhr area, Cologne-Bonn area) and runs the risk of being overlooked. Planned actions therefore might have to be provocative in order to be noticed.

On the basis of the given questions and theses, the following actions and programmes were suggested and discussed for the various places and actors.

A flexible handling of positive and negative growth is also suggested in the field of education. This is particularly important in view of the initial increase in student numbers, the double Abitur year (A-level year) and the abolition of compulsory military service and, from 2017, the falling number of students due to the decline in population and birth rates.

Of particular importance are the actual positive and negative growth strategies, like the effective handling of building stock and its reuse. The region should invest in its students, for instance by guaranteeing cheaper rent, developing cultural and creative spaces and understand

these as strengths. A possible business siting along the Wupper valley is worth considering. Given that the Wuppertal technology centre is exceeding its capacities and that the siting of young and innovative enterprises in the central urban space would enhance the value of the inner city, this development should be pursued.

Another approach could possibly be to link the regional co-operations with the existing activities; successful ones as well as the ones that didn't prove successful yet. An example for this would be the projects in the Bergisch region which are characterised by rudimentary regio-



nal co-operation in the field of climate protection. Sustained development in the area is unfortunately still reduced to building restoration, however, in future this sort of approach should be developed in an integrated and networked way.

Finishing off the discussion, the invited experts offered proposals for the further approach to the project and the integrated summer academies. The interdisciplinary summer academies are to be devised in a not too pragmatic way but should work on visions. The students are to be able to choose topics themselves and present their visions in thought-provoking actions. One topic could even be the occupation of vacant buildings, where constructive interventions are conceivable. In this context the topic of 're-programming' is of major significance. How did the cities and the region deal with unoccupancy, caused by the extreme diminution of the last years?

Experienced and area-competent actors who aren't yet biased by their dedicated regional work and not yet overly strained, should be integrated into the summer academy ('science meets practice').

IMPULS

To determine the necessary impulses for the region a clear

Presenter: Asal Tayouri & Michael Hekker

Text by Johannes Geyer



In this highly interdisciplinary team, the perception of the region was discussed intensively. Different perceptions could be found within the group of locals itself but also and particularly between local and foreign team members.

The group of 'endogenous experts' wasn't divided by its disciplines but rather by origin, i.e. people living in the different communities of Wuppertal, Solingen and Remscheid and the surrounding areas. The differences of opinion ranged from 'very beautiful' to 'ugly', which may be due to the industrial history of the region and the corresponding settlement structures and the perception of these. Particularly this technical-industrial past and hence competency was later defined as a stand-alone feature and potential.

Further more, a sense of 'us' seems to suffer from the somewhat undefined position between the highly populated regions of Ruhr, Cologne and Düsseldorf and the individual sense of belonging. This suggests that the region possibly has to develop and promote a still expandable sense of belonging in order to get from a positive – but

most of all an existing – internal image to an external image. This can then be marketed to position the region in the European competition.

Foreign team members found it difficult to give a judgement, as they perceived their view to be partial and therefore not 'valid' as they are unaware of all potentials and weaknesses. However, an external view on the area is very valuable for the debate, especially when discussing the region's external image and its potentials with regard to development and marketable tourism.

On the whole, the external view was – which came as a surprise to many 'natives' – a lot more positive than the internal view of the region, foreigners sometimes even romanticised the landscape.

The consensus reached showed that an important strength of the region, besides the industrial culture, was to be found in the beauty of its nature and its existing tourism as well as its development potentials. These potentials could be developed into excellent week-end destinations at short notice for the residents of neighbouring cities.

Fields of operation:

The following key aspects have been defined by the group as fields of operation: Find potential talents – initially, all potentials must be identified and clearly marketed as strengths of the region.

Metal – the highly specialised metal industry is a promising stand-alone feature particularly due to the location's well-developed traffic connections for Germany and the rest of Europe.

(Wuppertal) institutes – these strong partners with great expert knowledge should be considered an important mastermind for the strengthening and future development of the region. These potentials should be used by economy and communities in order to develop a strong joint strategy of action.

Networking (management) – networking of the actors in the region is indispensable and an important target to reach the next level.

Automotive/electro-mobility – suppliers will have to work towards better potentials and market and develop them further. The history of the region has led to the existence of highly competent enterprises some of which are unique on a European scale. This tradition has to be maintained.

Tourism – all sectors of tourism have to work together to develop a joint marketing concept, for example for cycling tourism. This is the only way a noticeable positioning within the European competition can take place.

Real estate industry – living space must be qualified. It is up to owners but also organisations and communities to develop effective funding strategies. The focus should be on student and waterfront living.

Energy efficiency – the efficient and sustainable use of energy is essential for this like any other area. This requires new ideas and pathways for industry, living and traffic. This means: learn from others but also develop things yourself – a process similar to 'life-long learning'.

Ad thesis 1:

The future of the region is only secured through innovative impulses in economy and education:

team members support this thesis, however, it has to be filled with life, otherwise it is not meaningful. Further more these innovations need a good breeding ground and appropriate 'friction'. Binding working structures should be developed in order to support committed actors and to generate win-win situations with exponential output. Cultural and natural assets have to be strengthened and, moreover, intensively put on display, e.g. similar to the routes of industrial culture and nature in the Ruhr area. Innovative impulses shouldn't stop at tourism but are also necessary for the industry in order to promote branding (see the Delphi company).

Ad thesis 2:

the promotion and strengthening of the 'cultural economy' network would be beneficial. Clear aims have to be defined and strategies developed. The aim is to promote the economy as well as the cultural future of the region. It is essential to primarily develop the location factors in order to improve and expand potentials with regards to the European competition.

Scope of duties:

mobility is a prominent factor regarding the industrial and touristic development. The region has to be thought of and communicated on a bigger and more attractive scale.

There's a need to develop activities to support a new feeling of togetherness. Through this, an image can be achieved, which will be instrumental in creating an external image and branding along the lines of 'studying, working, living'.

Economy, tourism and life in the region as well as the built environment and energy efficiency (e.g. at Train station Mirke, the venue itself) will have to be further developed by all regional actors. Development schemes have to be created and it is most important that knowledge is shared together with the strong regional science and research partners. This might require new concepts and forward-looking ideas when networking

Conclusion

To determine the necessary impulses for the region a clear

identification of talents is necessary. These don't seem to be obvious, moreover the internal view differs greatly making the outward marketing of a homogenous position difficult.

Economy, tourism and creative industries, e.g. product design, seem to be some of these impulses – interlinked with research and education in the region, they are a good starting point for the development of an external image. Mobility in the region has some catching up to do – communities should become more integrated in order to communicate and to be noticed.

A big potential lies within the built environment, which can have a great appeal in conjunction with the natural environment of the region – and may even be explored by use of new, energy-efficient mobility.

First and foremost however, a better network between the actors has to be created.



Lessons learnt...

The numerous questions and discussions during the expert workshop made it quickly apparent that the regional amalgamation in the Bergisch city-triangle is perceived and rated very differently. Particularly in Wuppertal, people often rate the city before the region. Even strangers can pinpoint the particular attraction of the biggest and most famous of the three Bergisch cities. This is notwithstanding that Wuppertal probably shows the most problems: next to admiration and love for its particularities like the suspended mono-rail train and the Wilhelminian-style buildings in the more exclusive neighborhoods, we can find rejection and hate for its unattractive, industrial parts and the visible social problems to the point of doom and gloom scenarios for the predicted tendencies of decline. Thinking about the region, thinking about Wuppertal? Naturally this is not the case, however, there is no question of equal perception of the region. Maybe the problem of perception lies in the empty centre. The city triangle is missing a heart; none of the co-operations and joint projects state where to lean on, what to identify with or where to orient oneself in the Bergisch city-triangle. The centre escapes from one city to the next, as if using centrifugal strength, keeps rotating and hence becomes an exterior view. Are there really any mutual aims? Or is there simply an economical 'must'? Is the city triangle a lifeboat for institutions or can we find common ground that defines this area?

3/3 bergisch.project

concept



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

bergisch.project

The bergisch.project is in essence defined by the international and interdisciplinary summer academy which takes place at the Bergisch University Wuppertal during the years 2013-2015. It sees itself as a continuous project. By means of numerous part projects it will be complemented, expanded and most importantly rooted within the region over a three-year period.

Work on the project is an open development process, with a flexible approach to called-for changes in methodology and thematic orientation and can be adapted to the latest state of knowledge. The project is conceived, organised and scientifically accompanied by the Department of Urban Scape.

The summer academy is held annually in September and would like to involve other departments and institutes of the Bergisch University Wuppertal (business studies, sociology, geography, landscape architecture, design and art) as well as win internationally renowned institutions of higher education with their students and teachers as new partners. In the space of ten days and through intensive collaboration with teaching personnel and local experts, the delegates will deal with the topic of this region in form of various tasks. The concept envisages to constantly renew and change the methodology of

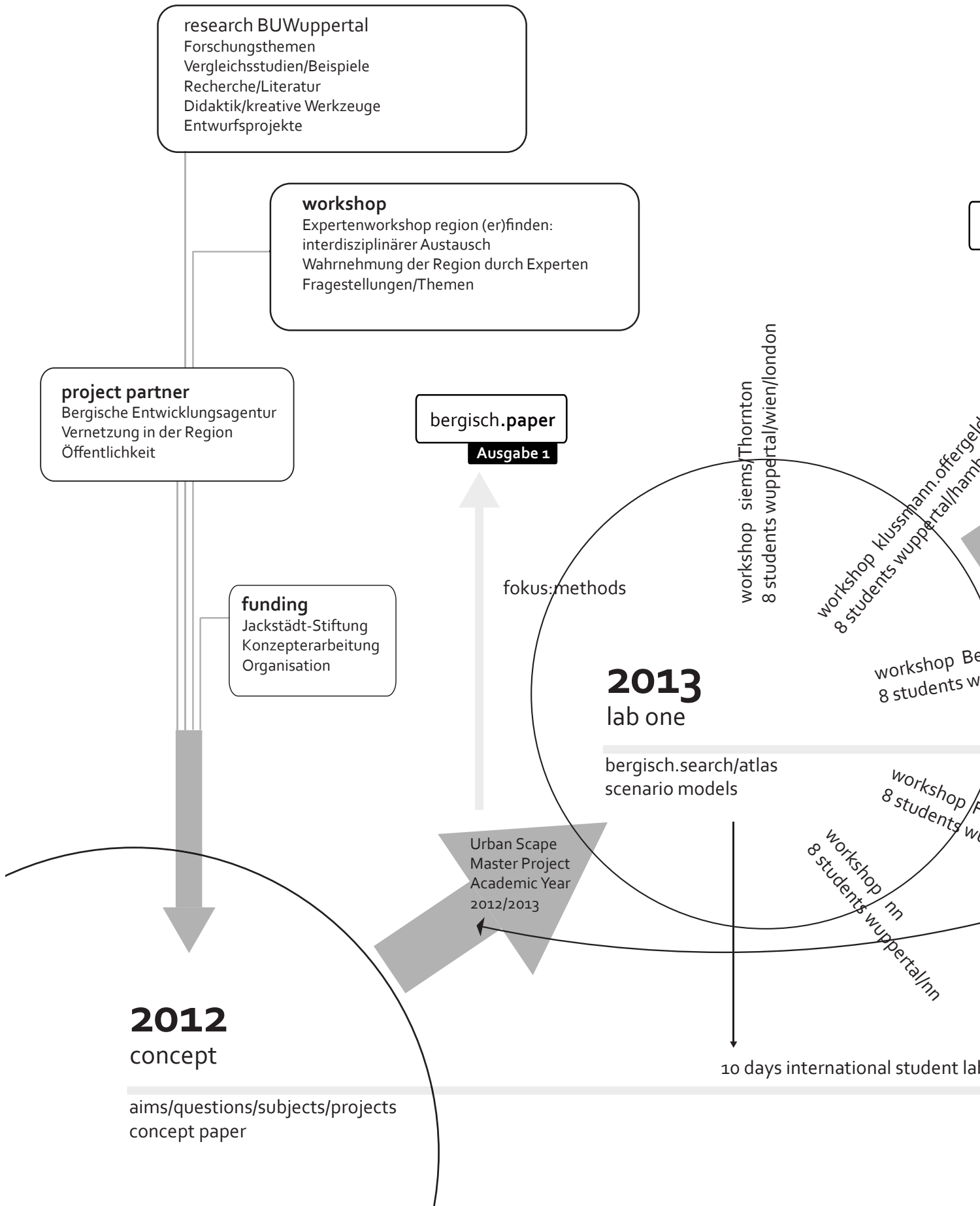
teaching and learning as well as to renew and change the places, topics and aims. Experimental lesson formats and new didactical approaches of the Department of Urban Scape will hence be tested and evaluated.

Aim of the bergisch.project is to improve the knowledge of the region and to attain, within the given space of three years, concrete project suggestions and guidance, which are based on a thorough occupation with the strengths and weaknesses of the Bergisch region. It will also give suggestions for alternative processes for a sustainable development.

A further part of the bergisch.project will be the papers produced at the BUW. Within the three years these will deal in depth with various topics and will be the foundations for the project, something that cannot be achieved in the short space of ten days.

A major point of the above mentioned approach is the communication and relaying of the topic in the region:

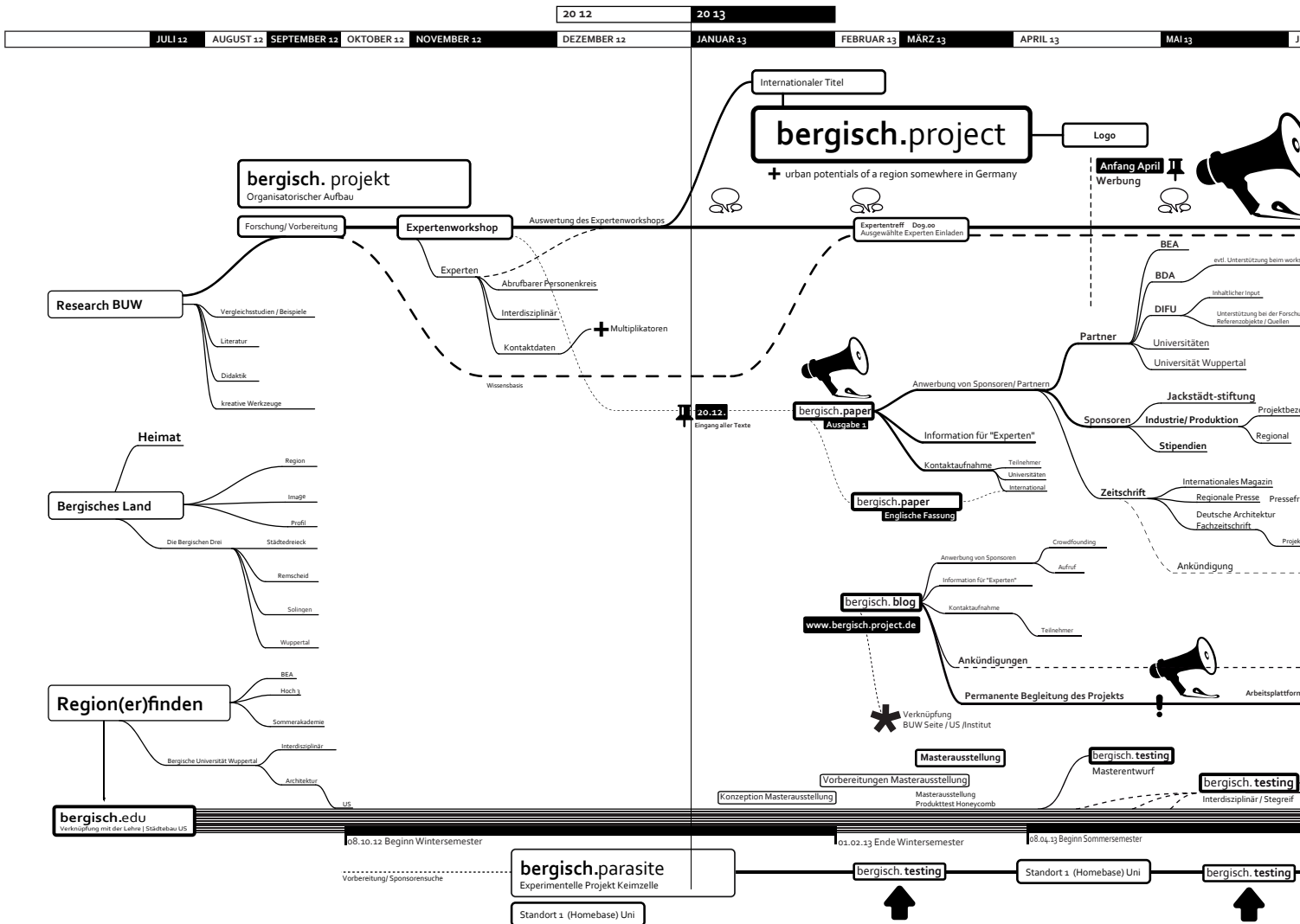
besides the cities we are particularly interested in getting in touch and exchanging ideas with the population, actors, institutions and initiatives for each sub-project, as well as, organise events and projects in the region. This means that the bergisch.project will leave the safe frame of the university and will get involved with the realities of the region in form of the bergisch.box. Conversely, we would like local interested parties to partake in the extensive occupation that takes place at the university. We regard this as an opportunity for students to put studies and practice into relation and to reflect on it.



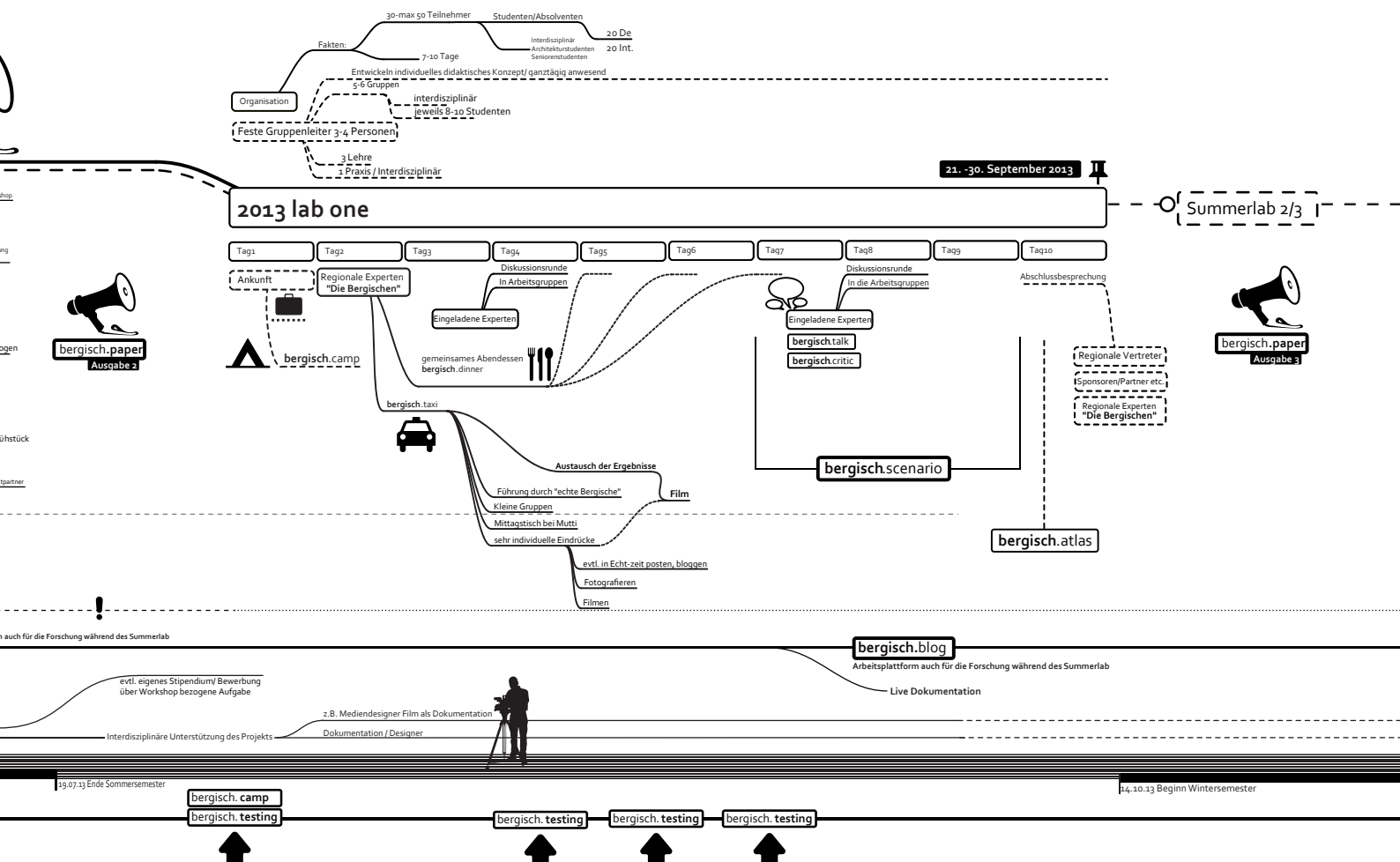
PROJECT PLANNING

bergisch.pro

urban potentials of a region somewhere in Germany



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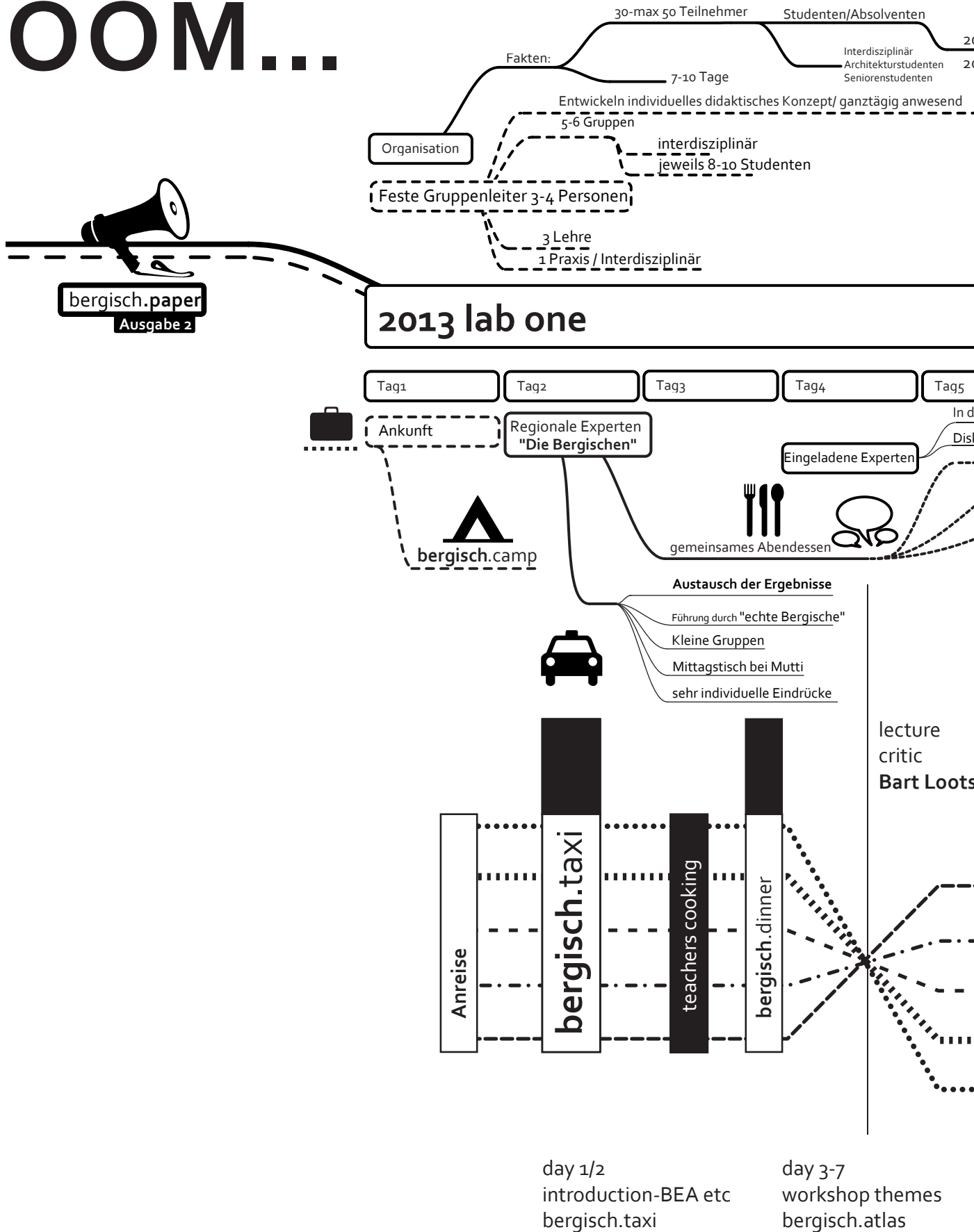


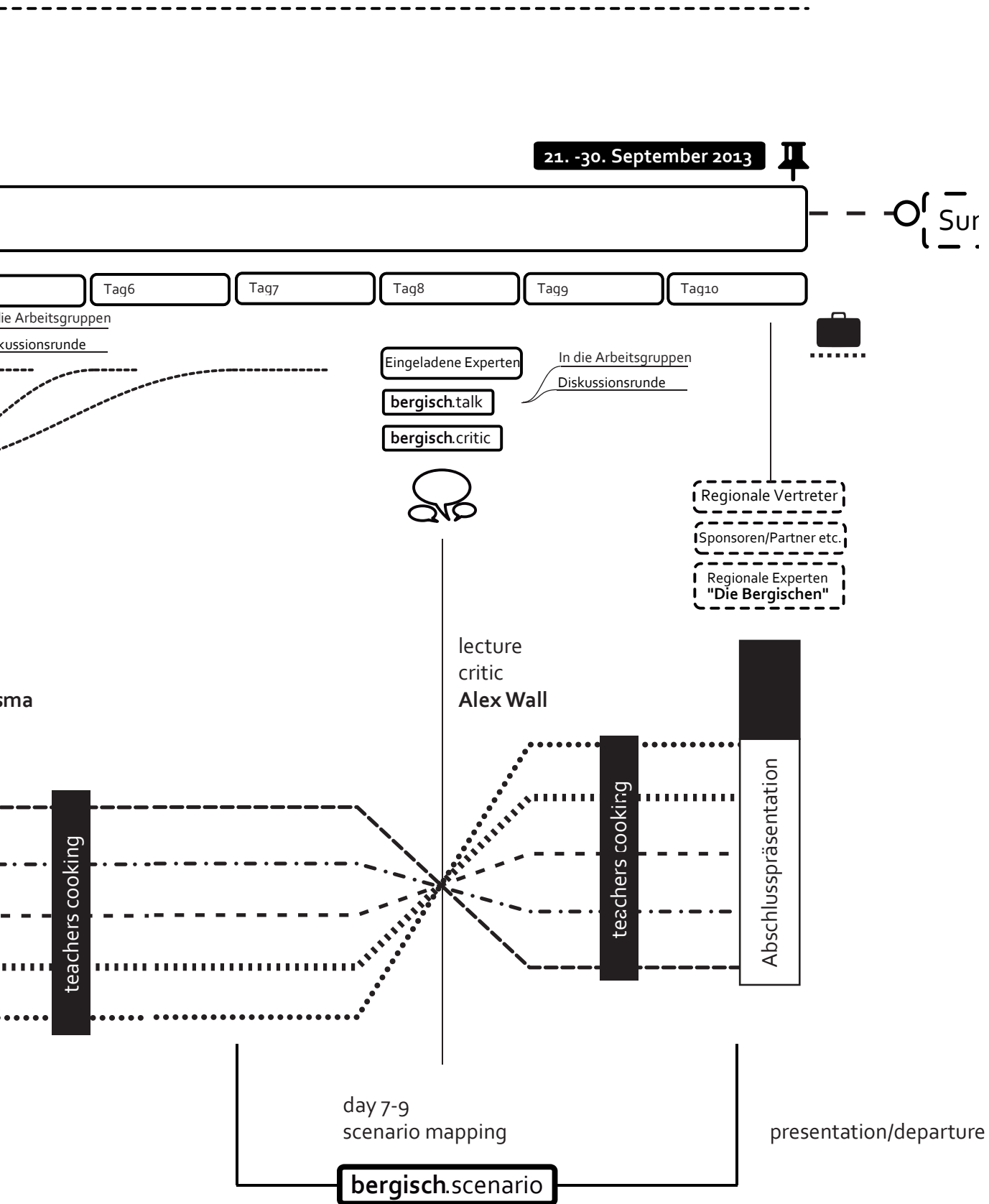
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Lehrstuhl Städtebau/ Urban Scape Bärbel Offergeld

PROJECT PLANNING 2013

ZOOM...





3/3 bergisch.project

an outlook international summer school



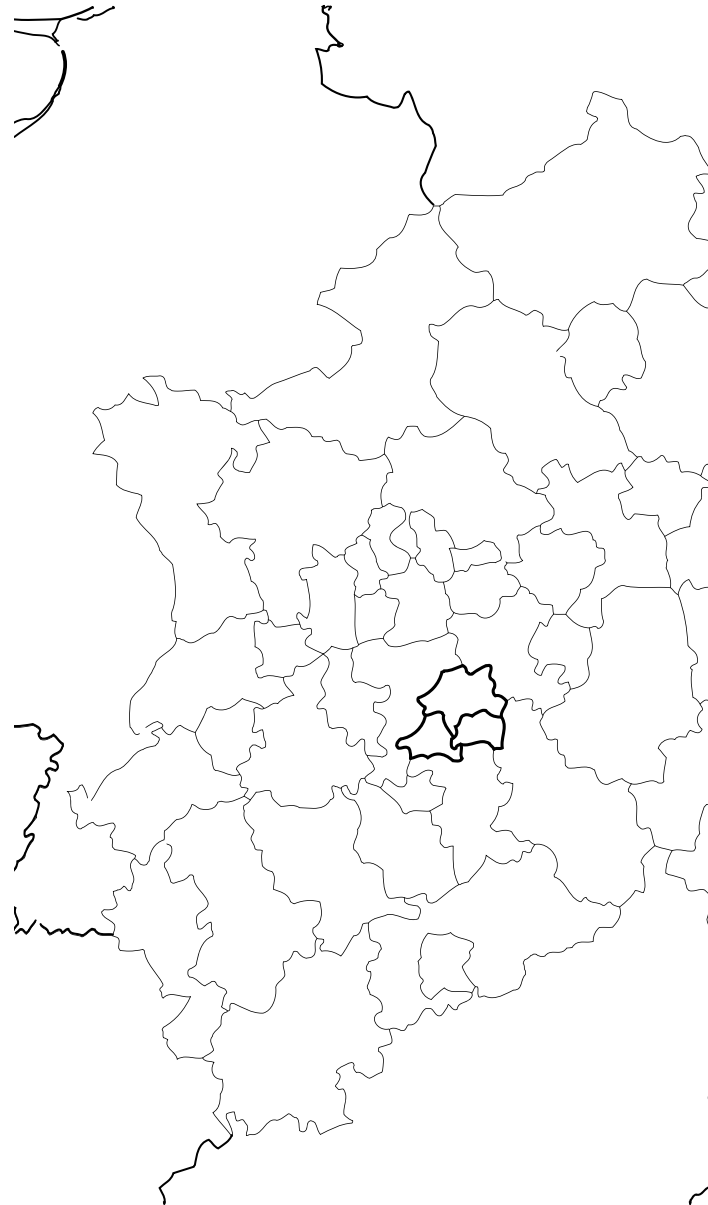
bergisch.project

AN OUTLOOK

We'll be setting off on our own, go out in the region and talk to the people. We are looking for projects that people are interested in, which define the Bergisch area regardless of constellations of actors and interest groups. What are our tools? Conventional planning tools of urban design won't help us: we will have to discuss, improvise, organise, modernise. We will have to explore, read and get lost in order to find what there is available in the Bergisch city-triangle – we want to create a bergisch.atlas of stories, images, experiences and thoughts, a mosaic, an odyssey.

We want to network in the region, hear stories and tell stories. We'll do this with the help of the bergisch.blog, which will always be up to date and the bergisch.box, which, as a meeting point, will create an actual project space. And, instead of taking a coach, we'll take the bergisch.taxi to explore the region.

URBAN POTENTIALS OF A REGION SOMEWHERE IN GERMANY



MANY



international
urban
summer. school

2013 | 14 | 15



bergisch.search

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bergisch.project

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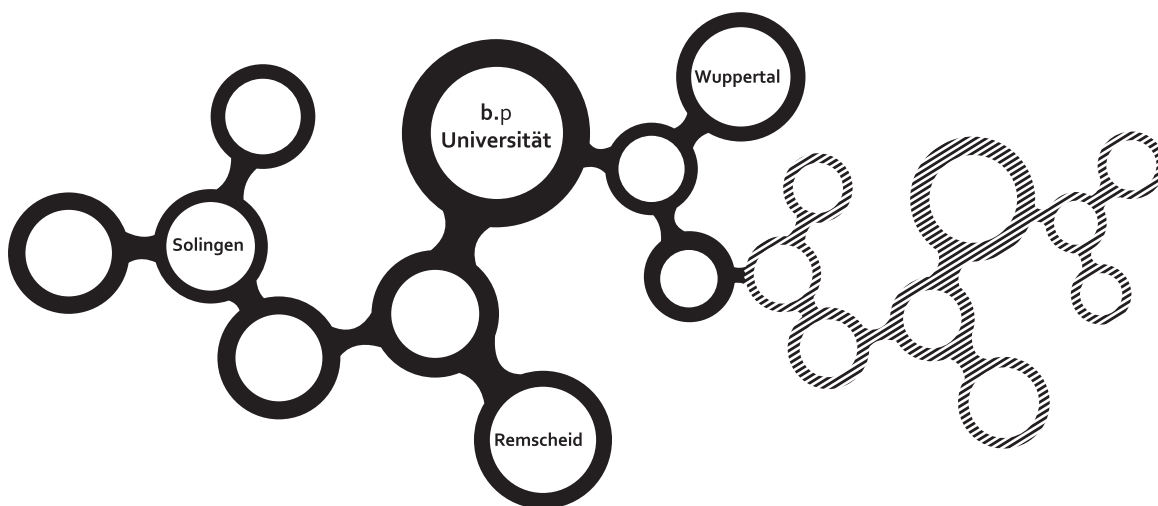
bergisch.box

In order to integrate the project, the bergisch.project will also spatially place itself in the region. The bergisch.box is a discussion platform, exhibition space, address, contact point and information carrier. The box will be placed or settle itself at various locations in the region. One possibility for a box is the design and use of a container, another would be the interim use of vacant shops. The bergisch.box is also meant to be a communication space for the population: anyone with an idea for an event, a discussion or a project is expressly invited to appropriate this space.

bergisch.blog

The bergisch.blog constitutes the internet appearance which will accompany the whole project. We will be able to gather all findings and add news in real time at any time. Further more the bergisch.blog will provide background information regarding the project, sponsors or events. A digital version of the bergisch.paper will be available, allowing permanent access to the information gathered for the whole project.

---> www.bergischproject.com



ZWISCHENNUTZUNG ?

Das Grundprinzip der Zwischennutzung ist „Günstiger Raum gegen befristete Nutzung“.

Das bergisch.project sucht leerstehenden Raum oder brachliegende Gebäude zum Erproben, Untersuchen und Erkunden von urbanen Potenzialen und Stadtentwicklungsprozessen. Wir möchten eintauchen in Nachbarschaften, gemeinsame Aktionen starten und Impulse setzen. Die bergisch.box ist ständig in Bewegung und auf der Suche nach neuen interessanten Standorten im

---> www.bergischproject.com/bergischbox

bergisch.atlas

The emphasis of the first summer academy year will be on creating an inventory. The various teams will test out different methods and views in order to learn as much as possible about the region and its population. Everyday occurrences and professional projects will play an equal part, the participants' personal experiences as well as analytical and new systematic descriptions which document the Bergisch city-triangle are all integral parts. We will try to consciously take an individual and methodically heterogeneous look at the region beyond known statistics and data.

bergisch.taxi

WHO'S WITH ME?

The annual summer academy is both, interdisciplinary and international and it is therefore of the utmost importance to allow all participants an intensive and authentic insight into the Bergisch Land. The more informative and easier to get to know the area, subsequently the more precise the work on the regional topics will be. The project bergisch.taxi is looking for 'real Bergisch people' who will offer the participants of the summer academy the experience of a day trip through the Bergisch Land in their company.

The drivers of the bergisch.taxi are invited to show the participants their personal highlights of the Bergisch Land. Getting to know country and people is equally part as trying out culinary regional specialities.

---> www.bergischproject.com/bergischtaxi



For more information:

www.bergischproject.com

„The ambivalence between actual projects on location and the return to large-scale topics dealing with the region as a masterpiece, marks the area of conflict in which the current projects and the summer academy find themselves.“ - Ragnhild Klußmann

Extract from the report on the lecture from 4th of July 2012

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Bergische Universität Wuppertal
Fachbereich D Architektur
Lehrstuhl Städtebau - Urban Scape
Prof. Dr. Tanja Siems

RESEARCH PROJECT

Project team

Ragnhild Klußmann, Bärbel Offergeld
Tel *49 (0)202 439 4330 Mail bergischproject@uni-wuppertal.de

Project Partner

Bergische Entwicklungsagentur, Kölner Straße 8, 42651 Solingen
Tel *49 (0)212 88160660 Mail info@bergische-agentur.de

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Editors Ragnhild Klußmann, Bärbel Offergeld, Tanja Siems

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