Leisure and Tourism, a Concept for the Economic Regeneration of Heavily Industrialized Regions?
- The Example of the German Ruhrgebiet -

"Urban futures and economic regeneration"

Leisure Studies Association (LSA)

Bristol 11th July to 14th July 2006

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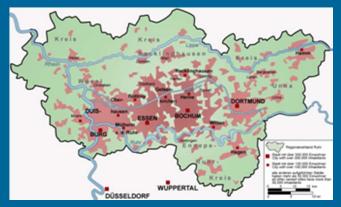
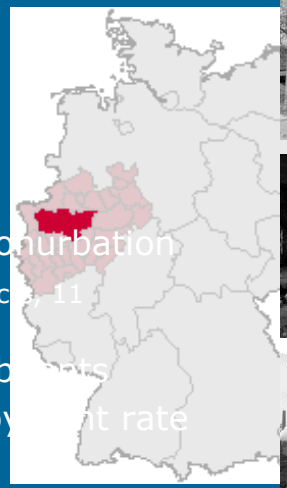
Agenda

1) **The starting situation in the 90ies**
2) **"Leisurealisation" of the Ruhrgebiet**
   a) **Establishing Infrastructure**
   b) **Creation of Awareness**
   c) **Management of the Destination**
   d) **Results and Transferability**
3) **Conclusions and Perspectives**

The starting situation





- Largest German conurbation
- ~ 450 km2 (4 districts, 11 independent towns)
- ~ 5,3 million inhabitants
- ~ 13,2% unemployment rate

The transformation of the Ruhrgebiet

- Structural crisis of coal and steel industry => abandoned industrial estates & waste areas
- Participative approach in the 90ies: International Construction Exhibition (IBA-Emscher Park)
- New image: „Der Pott kocht" *(the pot is boiling)*

The making of … a destination

- Marginal role of tertiary employment
- Tourism just a side effect
  (business trips, congress and convention tourism)
- Rare sights
- Image as a dirty and polluted region

=> Poor starting conditions for tourism

"Leisurealisation" of the Ruhrgebiet

- Concept of "Leisurealisation" is based, referring to the master plan, on three major missions:
  a) Establishing the necessary infrastructure
  b) Creating awareness for the region as a tourism destination
  c) Managing the tourism destination

a) Infrastructure

- Three major approaches towards development of necessary infrastructure:
  - Conservation
  - Change of use
  - Demolition for new infrastructure

Conservation: Zeche Zollverein

Conservation: Zeche Zollverein (public funds)

The former coal mine today is listed as UNESCO-world heritage and hosts

- a museum on modern design
- a museum on industry in the Ruhrgebiet
- and an info center for industrial tourism in the Ruhrgebiet

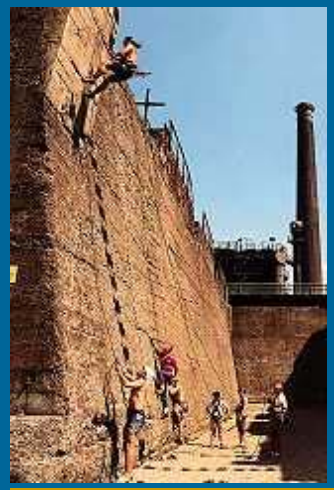
Change of use Landschaftspark Duisburg

Change of use Landschaftspark Duisburg (public funds)

The former steel factory today hosts a recreation area including:

- Outdoor activities
  - Climbing area
  - Hiking and mountain bike trails
  - Diving center
- Light installations
- Cinema
- Bar/Restaurant
- Event areas

Change of use Landschaftspark Duisburg



Demolition
The CentrO Complex Oberhausen

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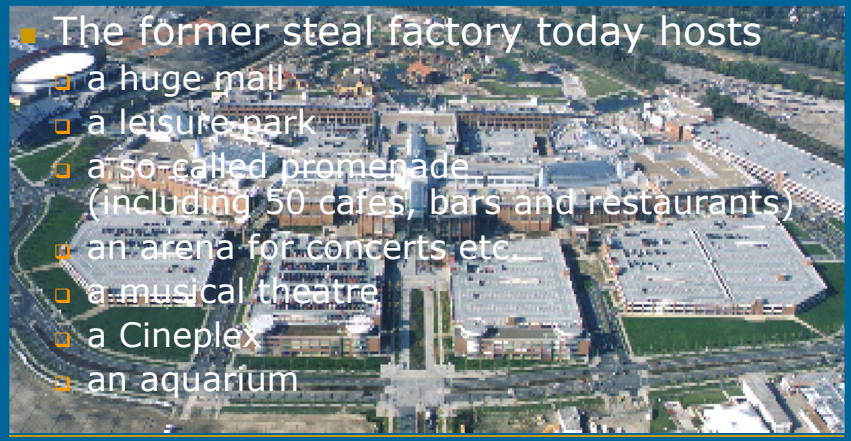
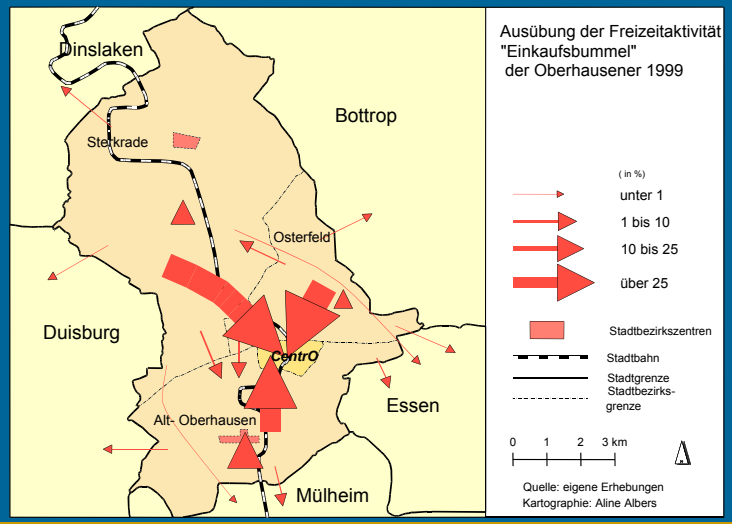
Demolition
The CentrO Complex Oberhausen
(several private investors)



- The former steal factory today hosts
  - a huge mall
  - a leisure park
  - a so-called promenade (including 50 cafes, bars and restaurants)
  - an arena for concerts etc.
  - a musical theatre
  - a Cineplex
  - an aquarium

Shopping orientations towards the CentrO



Creating awareness

- Intra-regional marketing
  (change local perception towards the region)
- Supra-regional marketing
  (change of the image of the region)

Ruhrgebiet: associations

Inside	*Rang*	*Outside*
Coal mining (31%)	1.	Coal mining (49%)
Green spaces (18%)	2.	Industry (18%)
Industry 14%	3.	Certain Cities (14%)
Region of origin (11%)	4.	Metropolitan area (11%)
Metropolitan area (8%)	5.	Traditional industrial area (8%)
Attractive place for living (8%)	6.	Football (8%)
Many people (7%)	7.	Iron & steel industry (7%)
Structural change (6%)	8.	Pollution (6%)
Positive Development (6%)	9.	Dirt (6%)
Leisure facilities (5%)	10.	Positive Change (5%)

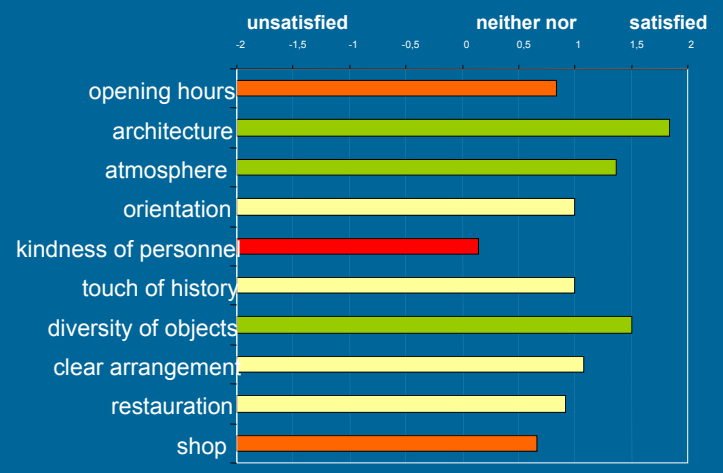
Source: KVR 2001

Destination management

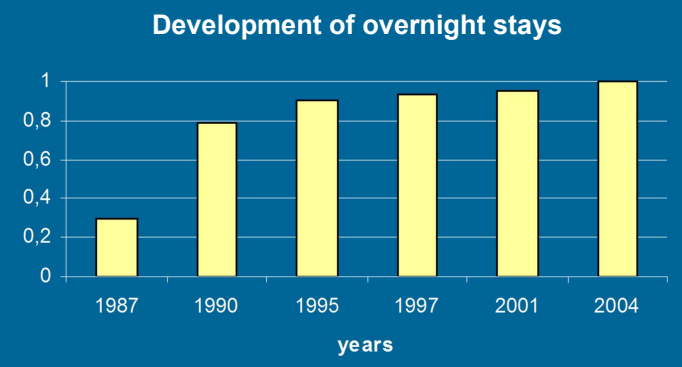
- Establishing the Private Public Partnership RTG (Ruhrgebiet Tourism Ltd) as a central contact for tourism in the region.
  Functioning as
  - Tourist agency (information material, etc.)
  - Tour operator (packages, programmes, etc.)
  - Tourism promoter (public relations, etc)
- Bundling and promotion of the attractions
  =>The Route of Industrial Heritage

Destination management: The Route of Industrial Heritage

Strengths & weaknesses of the product



Results and transferability



Results and transferability

The Ruhrgebiet

- is today one of the driving forces of tourism within North Rhine Westphalia!
- has more than tripled its overnight stays!
- has more than doubled the average duration of stay!
- offers today the highest density of leisure facilities in Germany!
- has created a more positive image!

Results and transferability

BUT:

- Huge investments of the public sector have been necessary over the last 20 years.
- The leisure industry could so far not be a real compensation for the heavy industry (re.: employment, economic power, etc)
- Several private facilities struggle to survive (Alpin center, movie park, etc)
- The in many cases necessary permanent public funding is not secured.

Results and transferability

The "career" of the Ruhrgebiet can be transferred to similar regions, but

- Long duration of the process & lot of funding necessary

Constraints:

- Persistence of images
- Customer orientated attitudes are difficult to achieve
  - on the side of the personnel
  - on the side of the responsible institutions

Thank you for your attention!

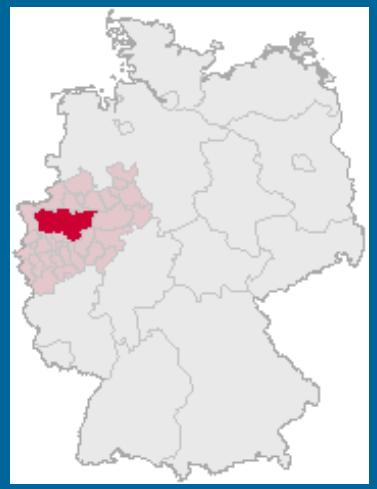
We are now looking forward to your questions.

Relevant trends in tourism

- Industrial heritage tourism
  - Historic roots in the early 20th century
  - 1994 British tourism board proclaimed the "Year of Industrial Heritage"
- Large-scale leisure facilities (multi-functionality)
- Short breaks instead of longer holidays

The starting situation

In former times:
the heart of German
heavy industry



Change of use II
Musical Theatre Essen

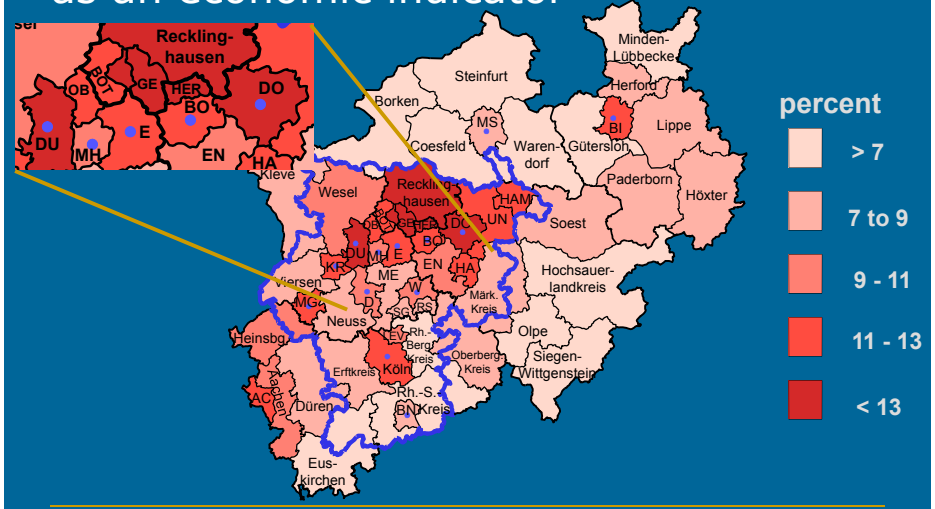
Change of use II
Musical Theatre Essen
(public-private partnership)

The former production hall today hosts a

- Musical Theatre
- Bars and Restaurants
- Event Areas

Change of use II
Musical Theatre Essen

Unemployment rates as an economic indicator



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- Industrial heritage tourism
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a) Infrastructure

- Three major approaches towards development of necessary infrastructure:
  - Conservation
  - Change of use
  - Demolition for new infrastructure
- The development was planned to be carried out by public sector, public-private partnerships and private investors.

Destination management: The Route of Industrial Heritage

- Connection of more than 50 newly established sights under the roof of 24 thematic routes and one main Route of Industrial Heritage
- Different types of sights (covering different target groups)
  - Museums
  - Exhibition sites
  - Information Center
  - Formerly industrial nowadays transformed areas
  - Typical historic complexes (worker housing estates, allotment, etc.)