

## Situation Report: Landschaftsverband Rheinland LVR

- The Region
- Policies
- Stakeholders
- Good Practice



## 1) The region



With an area of 34,092 square kilometers, North Rhine-Westphalia is the fourth largest federal state in Germany. It borders the states of Lower Saxony, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate as well as Belgium and the Netherlands. Its national borders extend over a total of 1,662 km.

North Rhine-Westphalia is characterized by large cities and metropolitan areas and by disparities between prospering cities and those cities and regions that were affected by industrial and demographic change.

Düsseldorf is the capital of North Rhine-Westphalia and Cologne with about 1.07 million (as of 31.12.2016) inhabitants the largest. By the way: In North Rhine-Westphalia, there are 29 cities with over 100,000 inhabitants.

North Rhine-Westphalia is not only diverse, but also enjoys an internationally high cultural and historical reputation. Because with the Aachener Dom, the castles Augustusburg and Falkenlust in Brühl, the Cologne Cathedral, the Zeche Zollverein in Essen and the Corvey Castle are five UNESCO World Heritage Sites in North Rhine-Westphalia.

North Rhine-Westphalia is becoming increasingly popular with visitors from Germany and abroad. In 2017, the hotels, guesthouses and campsites in North Rhine-Westphalia welcomed more than 23.2 million guests. North Rhine-Westphalia is one of the most popular short trip destinations.

North Rhine-Westphalia generated just under € 691.5 billion in 2017, just under 21.2 percent of Germany's gross domestic product (GDP). This places North Rhine-Westphalia at the top of all federal states. In international ranking, the state is ahead of other European countries such as Sweden, Poland and Belgium.

Important education and research facilities in the state are 14 public law universities, 16 public law colleges, seven state art and music colleges, 28 recognized private and church universities with headquarters in North Rhine-Westphalia and five administrative colleges, the Forschungszentrum Jülich, the NRW Graduate Schools and the DLR (German Aerospace Center).



Member bodies are the 13 independent cities and 12 districts (counties) in the Rhineland as well as the StädteRegion Aachen: they carry and finance the LVR.

Determination of the general principles of administration and the budget are tasks of a parliamentary committee, the Landschaftsversammlung Rheinland with 124 members from the Rhineland municipalities.

The LVR performs tasks throughout Rhineland in the areas of disability and youth welfare, psychiatry, culture and culture landscape. The LVR is the largest service provider for people with disabilities in Germany, operating 41 schools, ten clinics and three networks of curative education aids as well as 19 museums and cultural institutions. He is committed to an inclusive society in all areas of life.

### **3) Regional Policies with relevance for UL2L**

Against the background of high demand for cheap housing in metropolitan areas there is a considerable competition to notice to receipt and to dedicate green areas within urban spaces.

Related to the OP EFRE NRW (Operationelles Programm NRW 2014-2020 für den Europäischen Fonds für Regionale Entwicklung) the supporting Ministries (Ministry for Building Housing, Urban Development and Transport of NRW; Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Conservation and Consumer Protection of NRW; Ministry for Economy, Energy, Industry, SME and Crafts of NRW) identified 3 frame issues in project relevance which will work by the LVR:

- Social integration
- Ecological revitalization/mitigation of climate change
- Use of open spaces for economic development

In addition to this the project will develop the measures based on different programs:

#### **a) "Green Infrastructure"**

Poor environmental conditions and a lack of green spaces damage the people in the cities. Therefore only a few animal and plant species find a suitable habitat. With the Program "Green Infrastructure" the state government (Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Conservation and Consumer Protection of NRW) wants to create, network and upgrade green and recreational areas - especially in structurally weak

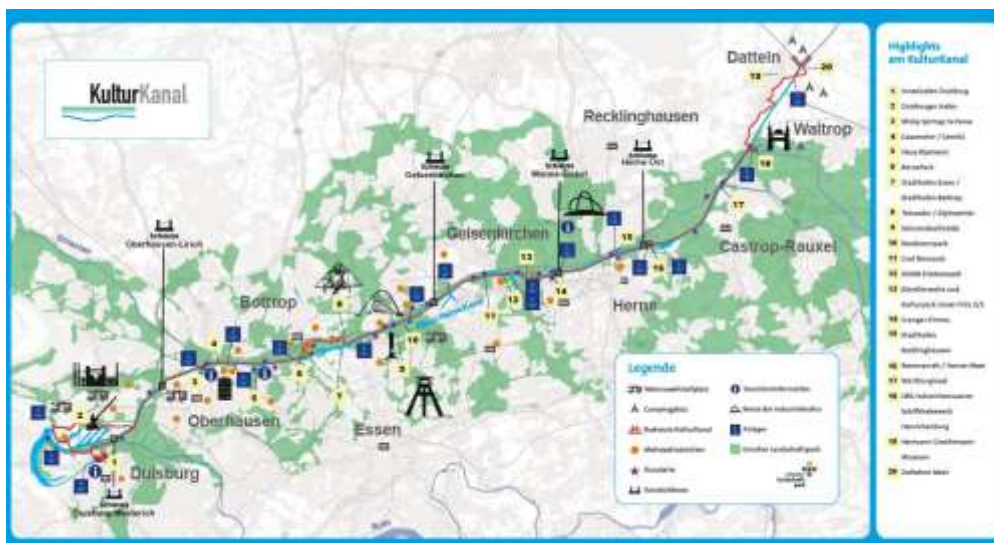
areas. Local actors are called upon to apply for funding with their concepts.

*Ecological contribution to society and the environment*

In many municipalities in NRW, poor environmental conditions and a lack of green and recreational areas have a negative impact on biodiversity, urban climate, health, quality of life and the economy.

With the Green Infrastructure NRW call, the state government is therefore aiming at the sustainable improvement of climate and environmental conditions. The people in the neighbourhoods, but also in the surrounding urban areas, benefit from this, as does biodiversity. The concept of green infrastructure is intended to create, network and enhance green and open space elements for many functions - also on brownfield and conversion sites. In particular, people living in structurally weak, socially disadvantaged and faceless urban neighbourhoods and districts should be given new access to nature and opportunities to learn more about their natural environment.

The EU and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia are funding total investments for the renewal of the park in the amount of just under 28.6 million euros. The funds will flow within the scope of the "Green Infrastructure NRW" competition, which the Ministry of the Environment has announced, in order to create, network and upgrade additional green and recreational areas.





## **b) Metropolregion Ruhr**

With around 5.1 million inhabitants and an area of 4435 square kilometres, the Ruhr area is the largest conurbation in Germany and the fifth largest in Europe.

This densely populated central region of North Rhine-Westphalia is named after the Ruhr River, which runs along its southern edge. With its equally densely populated hinterland and the conurbations along the Rhine, which extend far into the Bay of Cologne, it forms the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region in which some ten million people live on an area of around 7000 square kilometres.

The term Ruhrgebiet usually refers to the borders of the settlement association Ruhrkohlenbezirk, which was founded in 1920 and is now known as the Regionalverband Ruhr (RVR). In 2010, the Ruhr region was European Capital of Culture under the abbreviation RUHR.2010.

To support the Ruhr area to a successful metropolitan region the state government has initiated a "Ruhr conference" with 20 theme forums to excite a good teamwork between municipalities, business enterprises, creative artists and associations. To expand and strengthen the green infrastructure in the Metropolregion Ruhr the forum "Green Infrastructure" was established by the Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Conservation and Consumer Protection of NRW.

## **c) IGA 2027**

The Ruhr area will host the International Garden Exhibition IGA in 2027. The exhibition concept envisages three main locations of the IGA on the first level. These include the "Rheinpark" in Duisburg, the "Future Island Gelsenkirchen" (Nordsternpark and Emscherinsel) and "Emscher Nordwärts" in Dortmund.

On the second exhibition level "Our Gardens", regionally relevant parks and gardens in the Ruhr area will be presented. As part of this exhibition level, numerous park and green areas will be upgraded and connected via theme routes. Of the 200 reported projects, 80 are associated with investment. Selection, qualification and filtering of the project applications is carried out in accordance with processes of the NRW structural funding measure "Regionale" together with the municipalities and the state.

The third level "My Garden" is intended to promote civic engagement and identification with the region. Associations and private initiatives can present their neighborly green initiatives.

#### **4. Working groups LVR**

The LVR will follow the demand by citizens and social organisations to use derelict sites and other open spaces for urban gardening as a tool for social inclusion and integration. Outdoor healthcare services e.g. therapy gardens are predicted to offer similar resources.

Small scale climate mitigation measures in the urban context as a newer form of ecosystem services are crucial in agglomerations. Parts of these topics are edited by LVR departments too; the project will include their knowledge and experiences. Also, the IGA 2027 will be supported by the LVR-Department for culture landscape.

To support the state government in Regional Planning the LVR department had published the „Kulturlandschaftlicher Fachbeitrag“ which captures cultural landscape areas and the value of its elements. This technical paper does identify landscape areas all over the Rhineland and put them into a large-scale context which takes into account of development programs of the state government.

Thus the LVR has an immediate influence on the state planning and related funding programs.

UL2L can build on both findings of these surveys and determinations as well as contributing to the security and development and identification with the urban environment.

In addition, the LVR has created an internet-based information format KuLaDig with comprehensive historical and current facts on cultural landscape development conveys. UL2L will also incorporate the knowledge and measures gained here.

As the respective steps are presented in the responsible committees, a comprehensive exchange of information and the information to the memberships is guaranteed.



## 5) The Regional Stakeholder Group



The stakeholder list of the LVR includes

- The Ministry for Building Housing, Urban Development and Transport NRW
- The Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Conservation and Consumer Protection of NRW
- The Ministry for Economy, Energy, Industry, SME and Crafts of NRW
- The Regional Association for Westphalia-Lippe
  
- **The Region Köln Bonn e.V.**  
 The region Cologne / Bonn e.V. is a union of the independent cities Cologne, Bonn and Leverkusen as well as the counties Rhein-Sieg, Rhein-Erft, Rhine district Neuss, Oberbergischer and Rheinisch-Bergischer Kreis (county). Members also include the Chamber of Crafts Cologne, the Chamber of Commerce Bonn / Rhein-Sieg, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Cologne, Kreissparkasse Köln, Sparkasse KölnBonn, Sparkasse Leverkusen, Landschaftsverband Rheinland and the DGB region Cologne-Bonn. Since its founding in 1992, and especially as part of the Structural Program Regional 2010, regional actors have come together in a variety of constellations to bring the region forward through projects and programs. The practical implementation of the regional management is reflected in the working fields / topics and working committees of the association. The implementation of the regional management is reflected in the working fields / topics and working committees of the association.
  
- **Regionalverband Ruhr**  
 The regional association Ruhr (RVR) with seat in Essen is the union of the 11 district-free cities and four circles in the metropolis Ruhr with approximately 5.1 million inhabitants. The RVR is responsible as a regional planning authority for regional planning in the Metropole Ruhr. As a regional council, the association meeting decides on the changes and reorganization of the regional plan in the association area. The RVR is responsible for major infrastructure projects such as the Route der Industriekultur and the Emscher Landschaftspark.

Its legal tasks also include regional economic and tourism promotion and public relations work for the Ruhr Metropolis. Together with his municipal partners, he wears the seven hunting and leisure parks. The RVR also collects geo-and climate data about the region and makes it available to its member municipalities. a. for planning purposes available.

- Members of the LVR Landschaftsversammlung
- Landscape architects, also from universities to involve science
- Organisations on special topics (urban gardening, environment, health care)

## 6) Best Practice Examples

It is not the intention of any good practice example to be transferred one by one into other regions. This is even more true for the good practice examples in North Rhine-Westphalia. The dimensions of both the opencast mining and the Emscher Landscape Park (ELP) are unique. However, there is much in the entire scheme that causes a new understanding of the values and resources of spaces that are often considered to be waste land, brownfields, lost between main uses, unattractive or "out of use". Such spots can certainly be found in many regions, often being part of the areas between settlement areas and landscapes. Their hidden values can be used to enhance the urban links to landscape (UL2L).

BernePark for instance is a good example how an infrastructure that has been made redundant can be used in an innovative way, offering new opportunities to the people who always lived close by and often suffered from this infrastructure.

The services provided at Haus Ripshorst and its integration into the ELP with its cycling and walking tracks and with the bridges giving access to areas that have not been accessible before is certainly a model to be transferred. Also, the process of implementing ELP by long term policies and financial support as well as by managing a fruitful cooperation of many public bodies and early and convincing inclusion of the public can be considered as good practice.

It must be stressed that the combination of architecture, art, culture, heritage, ecology gains and social improvements was and is a key factor for a new urban landscape (including the links between urban areas and the landscape) and for economic benefits, such as the allocation of new business sectors on former industrial sites in the Ruhr area with the Emscher Landscape Parks as one element.

### **a) Opencast mining in Garzweiler II**

The opencast mining in Garzweiler II is part of the Rheinisches Braunkohlerevier. The mining in Garzweiler II started in 2006 and its current size is 48 km<sup>2</sup>. Since the mining will operate until about 2045, but some areas will have to be restored earlier, plans and ideas for future development are currently under discussion. The scale of Garzweiler II is challenging in many ways. On the one hand, it provides a massive “white canvas” and with this holds vast opportunities and place for inspiration. On the other hand, the interest of the landowner, the mining company, politicians and local residents differ and even contradict. The solutions found for the small, redeveloped parts east of Garzweiler II proof that the lowest common denominator does not always lead to inspiring results. To develop a plan including the different stakeholders and be laid out for such a long-term developing progress, while also gathering short term results needs a clear vision, open-minded management and excellent communication. A new Identity can only emerge when beside practical issues also emotional aspects are considered.

### **b) Emscher Landscape Park**

The Emscher Landscape Park (ELP) with around 450 square kilometres and over 200 completed projects is a vital element of the Ruhr metropolis. The ELP consists of several individual parks, industrial naturescapes, artificial landmarks and much more. Elements are interconnected via green corridors and small-scale green slinks with hundreds of kilometres of leisure trails, e.g. cycling tracks on defunct railway lines and riverside trails. Viewpoints on former slag heaps show how surprisingly green this metropolitan area is. With their high aesthetic quality and innovative environmental approaches and ecological benefits, these projects are signs of a dynamic and forward-looking mood and a request for others, including private investors, to follow this example and to implement not only high-quality architecture and open spaces but also high-quality jobs and services.

The development and implementation of the ELP is a joint venture project with more than 30 stakeholder organisations. At Haus Ripshorst an interactive exhibition shows well-known highlights alongside many smaller projects.

### **c) BernePark**

BernePark in Bottrop is one of the extraordinary, transformed industrial monuments in the Ruhr region. Wastewater has been treated here since the 1950s. In 1997 the sewage treatment plant with the two round basins and the

turbine house was shut down and almost fell into oblivion. Its revitalisation as a place of industrial culture took place within the context of EMSCHERKUNST.2010, a summer art festival with installations and interventions at a number of places along the river Emscher. Internationally renowned artists and landscapes architects transformed the previously inaccessible sewage treatment plant into a unique park. One clarifier remained as a lake accessible via a pontoon bridge, the second was transformed into a "theatre of plants" with thousands of perennials and grasses reminiscent of a green amphitheatre. The main building now serves as a restaurant and the unique "Parkhotel" offers five canal pipes converted into bedrooms.

#### **d) Nordpark Pulheim**

By the year 2030, the north-western edge of Pulheim should be fully bordered by the North Park. The park is situated between Pulheim's city limits and adjacent farmlands, characterized by field paths, tree lined avenues, wooded sections and parcelled fields. The public areas within the park framework secure the most important pathways, views and spatial relationships. They mediate between the urban fabric and rural expanse, presenting the characteristic features of the landscape. The framework includes two types of paths - the horizon avenue and the field promenade - and two types of fields: the open fields and parcelled plots.

The concept neither outlines intentionally foregoes nor defines predetermined allocation of spaces and uses. It focuses rather on the protection and enhancement of existing landscape features and spatial qualities, while allowing adaptation and transformation. Pathway infrastructure, connections and field layout can be adapted to changing demands. Gradual transitions between agricultural activity, extensive and intensive cultivation are possible, while additional uses can be introduced within the overall design. Existing and future initiatives by private persons or groups of citizens should contribute to the development of the park.