

Welcome to the
RSA Webpage on Germany

There are quite a few Institutions in Germany which deal with regional studies, spatial planning and geography. This might not least be rooted in the still strong political aim of „equality of living conditions” and the open mindedness towards planning. Many Germans speak English. Children start learning this language in third class at school. However, the German speaking scientific community (including Austria and parts of Switzerland) is so large that it often has its own debates, discourses and topics. So, there are also several high quality journals in German. In some fields of scholarship you still have the chance to make a successful academic career for yourself with hardly having published in English.

On the other hand the international orientation is certainly about to prevail. More and more people appreciate the cooperation with academics abroad. So if you are interested to do research about urban and regional development in Germany you are sure to find the right information or committed partners. This page gives an overview of subjectively selected institutions drawing mainly from their websites. You can find a comprehensive list of links to many, also geographical, institutes on the website of the ARL (see description of ARL). We hope you find this page useful. Comments on the page are very welcome.

Gerd Lintz

Contact: see end of page

Selected Schools at Universities

In Germany there are around 80 universities. Many of them have geography faculties. Among the economics faculties there are only few dealing with regional or urban economics. Some universities are leading in research and education in the field of spatial planning. They are presented here.

Dortmund: School of Spatial Planning at Technische Universität

The School of Spatial Planning based in the Ruhr area pursues an interdisciplinary approach covering all spatial levels of planning. The School of Spatial Planning in Dortmund was founded in 1969 and was the first school in the Federal Republic of Germany of this type. There are around 14 Professors involved. In 1974 the Institute of Spatial Planning (Institut für Raumplanung – IRPUD) of the Technische Universität Dortmund was founded. It is the School’s central scientific institute and nationwide the only institute of a university that offers such a wide range of areas of research. The Institute’s aim is to integrate the different disciplines of the School by means of interdisciplinary research projects.

URL: http://www.raumplanung.uni-dortmund.de/rp/home_en.html

Berlin: Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the Technische Universität

At the Technische Universität Berlin there is a faculty of Planning, Building and Environment. Part of it is the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. Founded in

1974, the Department offers an integrated study programme designed to provide comprehensive training for future planners. The Department's seven chairs cover the main issues of urban and regional planning. These are: urban design, urban and regional planning, urban renewal and strategic development, urban economics, urban heritage, urban and building law, and the theory of planning. In cooperation with the Department of Sociology and the Department of Architecture, the areas of urban sociology and the international development of urban areas are also covered. The curriculum thus treats a broad range of economic, social, environmental, technical, legal, and aesthetic aspects of planning. All aspects are integrated in planning studios that deal with existing planning concerns, thus linking theoretical input with practice.

URL: <http://www.isr.tu-berlin.de/index.php?id=589>

Kaiserslautern: Spatial and Environmental Planning at Technische Universität

The small city of Kaiserslautern is mainly known for its football club. But there are also at least 8 Professors who do research and education in the field of spatial and environmental planning. Unfortunately, there are no webpages available in English.

URL: <http://www.uni-kl.de/wcms/946.html>

Hamburg: Urban Planning and Development at the HafenCity Universität

At this URL you find an interesting PDF-file in English:

URL: <http://www.hcu-hamburg.de/stadtplanung.html>

Research Institutions Independent of Universities

As a rule research at the universities tends to be somewhat fragmented. So also bigger research institutions are publicly funded. They are expected to do more interdisciplinary and long-term research. Four of these research institutions dealing with spatial science constitute an efficient and unique competence network of spatial research in Germany, the 4R Competence Network. Since 2006 they publish the "German Annual of Spatial Research and Policy" in English. In the following these four institutions and four others are presented.

URL: <http://www.4r-netzwerk.de/engl/index.html>

Academy for Spatial Research and Planning (ARL), Hannover

Founded in 1946, the Academy for Spatial Research and Planning (Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung, ARL) is a research institute for the spatial sciences performing service functions in both fundamental and applied areas of research. A big secretariat promotes an interdisciplinary personal network with the task of bringing together competences within the spatial sciences. The principal function of the ARL is to be a forum to promote co-operation both between theory and practice and among regions. The ARL's role includes undertaking research and facilitating knowledge transfer in the field of spatial research and spatial development. As a neutral forum, it creates the framework for an interdisciplinary dialogue between theory and practice; it does this by

stimulating, structuring, concentrating and promoting both basic and applied research, in most cases within interdisciplinary working groups; the results of its work are made available to scholars, politicians and public administration, as well as to the general public, through ARL publications and events.

On the website there is also a comprehensive list of links!

URL: http://arl-net.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=63&Itemid=115

Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development (IOER), Dresden

With a staff of over hundred the Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development, IOER (Leibniz-Institut für ökologische Raumentwicklung, IÖR) is situated in Dresden. The IOER undertakes interdisciplinary research into the requirements for sustainable, environmentally compatible regional, urban, and landscape development. Institute researchers investigate interdependencies between land use and the natural environment, evaluate strategies, and develop approaches to sustainable spatial development in both the national context and on a European and international scale. Climate change and demographic change and their impact on future environmental and spatial development play a major role. The results of this research provide actors in politics and society with an important basis for planning and policy decisions.

URL: http://www.ioer.de/index.php?id=522&no_cache=1&L=1

Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL), Leipzig

Based in Leipzig, the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde - IfL) is the only non-university research institute for geography in Germany. It pursues original research on the regional geography of Germany and Europe and publishes regional geographical information for a broad readership. Ca. 30 scientists and 30 other employees analyse spatial developments in Europe and present their findings to the scientific community and the general public. The IfL houses the Central Geographic Library. With its 200.000 books it is one of the largest geographical libraries in Germany. Moreover, the institute edits the German National Atlas which provides a wide range of information on physical, economic and social themes in Germany.

URL: <http://www.ifl-leipzig.de/institut.0.html?&L=1>

Leibniz Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning (IRS)

With a staff of 70 the institute (Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung) researches social, economic and spatial urban and regional development and its governance. The IRS is based in Erkner near Berlin. With its research projects the institute devises objectives and strategies for the development and stabilisation of European sub regions. Our interdisciplinary basic research is practice-oriented and focuses on generating knowledge in four fields: • Regionalisation and Economic Space, • Institutional Change and Regional Public Goods, • Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development, • Regeneration of Cities and Towns. A leaflet in English provides more information:

URL: <http://www.irs-net.de>

German Institute of Urban Affairs (Difu), Berlin

Following an initiative from German cities, the German Institute of Urban Affairs (Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik, Difu) was founded in 1973 to facilitate problem solving in municipal government through sound academic research and further training and to forecast long-term prospects and possible strategies for urban development. The institute investigates municipal policy issues, conducts interdisciplinary research on fundamental problems for municipalities and devises methods, tools and concepts for implementation in municipal planning and administration. Central focuses of the Difu programme provide assistance for individual cities in solving current problems typical to Germany today. The institute is based in Berlin and has a workforce of more than hundred.

URL: <http://www.difu.de>

Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development (ILS), Dortmund

New processes of urbanisation in the European context and the urban future form the core areas of interest and the main research focus of the Institut für Landes und Stadtentwicklungsforschung (ILS). The ILS has core research competences in the areas of urban and regional research, mobility research, architecture and building, and in the spatial planning research. Both in its substantive orientation and in its organisational structure, the ILS seeks to occupy a distinct and unique position within the national and international research landscapes. Great importance here is attached to co-operation with universities and research institutes dedicated to the spatial development research. The institute has more than 50 employees.

URL: <http://www.ils-forschung.de/index.php?lang=en>

Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UfZ), Leipzig

The Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung, UfZ) in Leipzig is a large scale research centre with a staff of around 900. Apart from natural science and engineering they also deal with aspects of spatial development. For example, in the division of social sciences there are units dealing with urban and environmental sociology, environmental and planning law as well as urban ecology, environmental planning and transport.

URL: <http://www.ufz.de/index.php?en=11382>

Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (IAMO), Halle

As a globally unique research institution of agricultural economics, the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (Leibniz-Institut für Agrarentwicklung in Mittel- und Osteuropa, IAMO) focuses primarily on the penetrating processes of change, and the ongoing developmental deficits of the agricultural and food economy and of rural areas in Central and Eastern Europe. In this context they also deal with rural development.

http://www.iamo.de/iamo-links/home.html?L=1&tx_institute_pi1%5Bmid%5D=&tx_institute_pi1%5Bid%5D=&tx_institute_pi1%5Bgo%5D=&tx_institute_pi1%5Bgo_sub%5D=

The Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning

The Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) is a superior federal authority in the operational division of the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs (BMVBS). The scientific department of the BBR was reorganized into a Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR) within the BBR. At the same time, the former Institute for Rehabilitation and Modernization of Buildings (IEMB) was integrated. The BBSR is a departmental research institution and supports the federal government with sectoral scientific consultation in the political areas of spatial planning, urban development, housing and building.

URL: http://www.bbr.bund.de/EN/Home/homepage__node.html?__nnn=true

You can even subscribe to a free information service in English:

URL:

http://www.bbr.bund.de/cln_007/nn_25624/BBSR/EN/Publications/ResearchNews/researchnews__node.html?__nnn=true

Associations

German-speaking Section of the Regional Science Association

With its around 300 members the German-speaking section of the Regional Science Association (RSAI/ERSA) is one of the strongest associations in regional studies or regional science respectively. They organise one event in summer and one in winter and edit the journal "Jahrbuch für Regionalwissenschaft". Fortunately, the relationship between RSAI/ERSA/GfR and the RSA is very good. The website of the Gesellschaft für Regionalforschung (GfR) is in German only.

URL: <http://gfr.ersa.org/>

German Association of Geographers

There is a big association of geographers (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Geographie, DGfG) in Germany with around 25,000 members. The most relevant sub-association for regional studies is the German Association of Applied Geography (Deutscher Verband für angewandte Geographie, DVAG). It shows 1.300 members.

<http://www.geographie.de/>

Contact Dates of Country Representative

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