No 3 | September 2013

IRS AKTUELL

Newsletter for Social Science-Based Spatial Research

Promotion of Young Researchers at the IRS

For the Future – Strategic Promotion of Young Researchers

Towards the PhD – Doctoral Research at the IRS

Open Doors – Structured Career Paths as a Post-Doc

The Path to the Doctoral Degree

Subsequent to the completion of their university studies, some graduates specialised in spatial sciences make the decision to remain in academia by aiming for a doctoral degree. The IRS considers itself an attractive alternative to completing a PhD solely at a university. Interdisciplinary research contexts, flexible time budgets and well-structured support for doctoral candidates provide a good basis both for a well-founded dissertation and developing an academic career.

Be it economic geography, sociology, history, planning or political sciences university graduates of various disciplines have the option to pursue further their research interests, subsequent to the completion of their studies, by taking up employment as a research assistant at the IRS and, on this basis, embarking on a doctoral project. Usually working part-time, these researchers are involved in research projects financed from the IRS budget or third-party funds. This offers them the chance to reflect upon their own intellectual approaches against the background of the IRS's interdisciplinary approach to social-scientific spatial research.

PhD students are supported in a structured process that also comprises closely assisting young scholars during their orientation phases. As a first step, the doctoral candidates seek out the subject of their doctoral thesis by sketching, partly discarding and honing the main questions and themes, before finally drafting an exposé. As soon as the decision to embark on a doctoral project is settled, and the research topic as well as the supervising higher education institution have been found, the institute's director and the doctoral candidate usually sign a mutual doctoral agreement. This agreement specifies some general conditions and formally confirms the PhD student status of the doctoral candidate. "The most important elements of this agreement include questions related to working time organisation, leave from normal work duties during the writing-up phase or financial means provided by the institute", says Dr. Gabriela Christmann, currently head of the IRS doctoral colloquium. "Within the confines of their project commitments, doctoral candidates may organise their time budget in a flexible way and fall back on the options of working in blocks or utilising leave periods."

Furthermore, the doctoral agreement offers the opportunity to participate in voluntary mentoring programmes with one of the IRS's senior researchers. It encourages the young scholars to commit themselves to the agenda of internationalisation and supports participation in advanced training programmes throughout the entire doctoral phase. The training concept foresees a three-year cycle, which, ideally, each doctoral candidate is expected to fully complete. It contains three advanced training courses per year that cover predominantly the fields of theories, methods and professional skills. "The internationalisation support of doctoral students at the IRS has become increasingly important, too", says Christmann. "By means of guest stays co-funded by the institute, workshops with renowned researchers from abroad linked to the IRS international lecture and through their participation in international graduate schools, PhD candidates become acquainted with differing perspectives and research contexts. This provides them the opportunity to build up a network that will be of great importance for their further career progression."

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Felix Claus Müller – My Dissertation

Investment Relationships and the Pathway of Biotechnological Innovation in Germany

I have dealt with German biotechnological industries for quite some time now. This sector is an unusual case in that it lacks any previous industrial history and has been created exclusively upon the basis of outstanding research. The USA served as a model for this development, particularly because they succeeded in developing such an industry by establishing their own particular model of capital accumulation and the commercialisation of scientific knowledge as early as the 1980s.

In Germany, a similar success story was achieved only through a broad and government-led interest coalition, which launched initiatives in several policy fields from the 1990s onwards. Capital market policies are an essential element of these initiatives, especially because of the extremely demanding character of funding product developments in the biotechnology sector. Apart from being very costly, these developments are also known to be tedious and involve a tremendously high risk of failure. Insights of basic research – with all their imponderabilities – almost always find their way into biotechnological innovation. Once a new medically active substance or a diagnostic marker has been identified on a biotechnological basis, clinical studies are needed to prove their effectiveness and suitability. While costs arising from these measures run into hundreds of millions of euros, the risk of failure is extremely high. No single biotechnology company is able to master such a process solely with means available "in house". Which investor would, however, be willing to risk such an endeavour? And what are the implications as to the selection of innovation projects and ideas once investors are granted such an exclusive influence?

Frequently, questions of this kind have been examined using approaches of institutional theory. Institutions are considered formal and informal "rules of the game", and as such determine economic allocations of resources as well as innovation dynamics. Normative structures even affect the cognitive level and are thus occasionally defined as "thinking habits". The discipline of economic geography analyses institutional systems on various scales (national, but also trans- and subnational). The problem with such an approach lies in the fact that it presumes institutional homogeneity within a given territory. The assumption therefore is that a set of fixed and applicable rules already exists. In my opinion, it is exactly this assumption which we cannot make about the field of biotechnology in Germany. Rather, this sector is still a young industry searching for rules and structure. There is no clarity about which standards apply to investors or what we are to expect from them. Since the foundation of this sector, two severe financial crises have demonstrated little more than the failure of attempts to transfer the American system to Germany. Moreover, innovation activities have not remained confined to Germany or particular regions. Instead, the stakeholders involved in a certain innovation process may have various territorial or institutional backgrounds.

Relations between technology developers and their investors are at the heart of my study. How do these relations come about? What kinds of logics of action play a role? In what ways can we attribute these logics to the stakeholders' "contextual-origins", and what are the consequences for the innovation processes?

For all these reasons, I opted for a relational approach to research and, in doing so, chose to depart from the assumption of institutional diversity and an ongoing and dynamic renegotiation of rules. Relations between technology developers and their investors are at the heart of my study. How do these relations come about? What kinds of logics of action play a role? In what ways can we attribute these logics to the stakeholders' "contextual-origins", and what are the consequences for the innovation processes? As these key questions suggest, the aspects of stakeholders, agency, and relations are all given an approximately equal weight in my work. Moreover, I combine them with a "geography of spatiotemporal practice". It is my intention to highlight the spatiotemporal and material situatedness of events and, by this means, render (seemingly) coincidental circumstances and boundaries visible. On the one hand, these aspects are sensitive to existing contexts of place. On the other hand, they also help to shape structures. This approach thus considers spatial and "content-related" structural formations as two sides of the same coin.

The project is based on case studies. Each case study is an "innovation biography", which portrays an innovation process from the generation of ideas right through to market entry. For each innovation biography the underlying idea, its pathway to realisation, participating actors and their orientation for action, as well as their relations and interactions are surveyed with the aid of qualitative expert interviews (five or six per case study). All this is accompanied by a "geographic sound track". The lead project of the "Dynamics of Economic Spaces" department headed by Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert (who also supervises this doctoral project) also follows this approach. While the data overlap, we can also identify deviations. Whereas the Lead Project observes all kinds of relations in innovation processes, I decided to concentrate on investment relationships. While the Lead Project focuses on cultural difference in relations ("relational difference"), my own work accentuates the institutional origins of difference and regards actors as "institutional entrepreneurs". The Lead Project uses its innovation biographies to describe a time period that reaches from the early 1990s to the "mid-noughties". In my work, I have gathered data on a second wave of innovation biographies that start right after the year 2000 and are still in progress. This allows me to adopt a dynamic historical perspective.

Notwithstanding that the data analysis is still ongoing, some quite surprising results have already begun to emerge. The comparison of both survey waves indicates a clear dynamic as to the correlation of institutional contexts. The early stages of innovations in the first wave constitute the "wild years". With the aid of transatlantic investment relations, it was also possible to push forward with highly risky projects. It has even been possible to observe innovation drivers in the form of the quite daring attempts of the German industry (acting as a strategic investor) to overtake competitors. Moreover, commercialisation pathways were initiated which, with the aid of hindsight, appear unrealistic today. In the wake of the fi-

The logic of public investment is geared towards a territorial control of technological knowledge practices. In contrast to the attitude towards "technology" that sometimes appears to be susceptible to mystification, there is the more peripheral view concerned with examining market dynamics and user behaviour.

Current Doctoral Projects at the IRS

Name	Topic	University	Supervisor
Verena Brinks	Economic Developments and Communities of Enthusiasts	Freie Universität Berlin	Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert
Thorsten Heimann	Spatio-cultural Differences in Tackling Climate Change	Freie Universität Berlin	Prof. Dr. Jochen Roose PD Dr. Gabriela B. Christmann
Christina Minniberger	Differentiation in the Process of European Integration: A Socio-Spatial Perspective on Interregional Project Cooperation	European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)	Prof. Dr. Jürgen Neyer Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper
Felix Claus Müller	Institutional Path Dynamics: The Example of Venture Capital Investment in the Biotechnological Sector	Freie Universität Berlin	Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert
Anika Noack	Initiating Social Innovations Bottom-up. Innovation Processes in the Urban "Problem District" Berlin-Moabit	Technische Universität Berlin	Prof. Dr. Hubert Knoblauch PD Dr. Gabriela B. Christmann
Kai Pflanz	International Expansion Strategies of Technical Consultancy Firms	Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin	Prof. Dr. Elmar Kulke Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Kujath
Tobias Schmidt	Communication Dynamics in Negotiation Processes: The Example of Urban Development	Friedrich-Schiller University Jena	Prof. Dr. Hartmut Rosa PD Dr. Gabriela B. Christmann

The theses of two associated PhD students are currently in their conception phase.

nancial crisis 2000/1, a decline in the presence of classic financial capitalists in the Germany biotechnology sector was apparent. Ever since, federal and state-owned venture capital funds have shaped the early stages of innovation with their state-territorial logic. This aspect is not, however, without problems, especially since the logic of public investment is geared towards a territorial control of technological knowledge practices.

In contrast to the attitude towards "technology" that sometimes appears to be susceptible to mystification, there is the more peripheral view concerned with examining market dynamics and user behaviour. Correspondingly, the translation to the market entails some difficulties. At the same time, new (now "indigenous") actors have entered the stage. Affluent industrial families invest their personal assets in biotechnological developments and newly emerging enterprises. Depending upon one's point of view, their logic may be described as either philanthropic or despotic.

Wealthy private savers are also, however, "enrolled" as investors on the basis of innovative funding concepts. While they attempt to escape the crisis-induced permanent low interest rates, they also pursue intrinsic, philanthropic aims, such as the development of new medicines or boosting Germany's innovation strength. The latter aspect poses some challenges to the German legal framework. Since the Lehman disaster of 2008, the German investor protection law does not permit private savers to finance high-risk technology developments.

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From Senior Researcher to Junior Professor

Future career pathways for doctoral candidates can be said to be rather open. At the same time, the decision whether or not to leave academia is frequently only taken during the period subsequent to the completion of the PhD. While the various forms of support provided for doctoral candidates still take this openness into account, support for postdoctoral researchers is deliberately geared towards helping them gain a foothold as professional researchers. Even in cases where students have already decided on academia as a "vocation", today's increasingly diversifying higher education system has come to provide ever more scope for individual pathways.

Professorship at a prestigious university? A highly respected position at a non-university research institution? After completing their PhD, ambitious young scholars are confronted with fundamentally differing career options. In Germany, the classic academic career pathway is based on disciplinary specialisation and leads

first to the so-called "Habilitation" before scholars may apply for a professorship or "chair". Taking a look at the institutes of the Leibniz Association, one will frequently come across "Senior Researchers", a position characterised by managerial responsibilities and content-related skills. Accordingly, the Leibniz Association has prepared a position paper to outline structured career pathways in accordance with the model of "Senior Researchers" (see page xx, guidelines).

In line with this approach, the IRS decided to take on board this model so as to advance its strategy of supporting postdoctoral researchers. In doing so, it aims to provide individually customised support for this particular career stage and funding period. The strategy is designed to offer promising researchers who have just finished their PhD the opportunity to progress into senior researchers. Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert, contact person for postdoctoral researchers working at the IRS: "To us, the concept of Senior Researchers comprises academics with an outstanding doctoral thesis. They are capable of leading project teams and know how to

complete research projects successfully. They attract third-party funds, are actively involved in international networks as well as the organisation of symposia, and we expect them to supervise doctoral candidates". "Our aim is to deliver these competencies to our employees. This is achieved by means of purposefully transferring responsibilities, by providing advanced training measures, as well as by being available as mentors." While in each case the concrete procedure is to be defined individually, we expect senior researchers to gather some experience in all abovementioned areas of responsibility (from the attraction of third-party funding to working as reviewers) within a period of four years.

Apart from these measures that help scholars become senior researchers, the support strategy for postdoctoral researchers also provides assistance in honing academic profiles. It is designed to allow scholars to incorporate the option of a classic academic career into their career planning; more particularly promoting the young scholars' prospects to successfully apply for professorship. On the basis of an agreement with the IRS, and following a pattern similar

to funding for PhD students (part-time position funded by the institute, including up to six months exemption during the final phase), they are given the opportunity to apply for funding during the writing up phase of their "Habilitation-thesis" (as book project or cumulative work). In the future, the IRS aims to further intensify its support for scholars writing their "Habilitation" by making use of the existing cooperation contracts with Berlin-Brandenburg universities in order to establish jointly appointed junior professorships ("S-Juniorprofessuren").

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Perspectives for Postdoctoral Researchers: Interview with Dr. Suntje Schmidt

How did you experience the period immediately after the completion of your PhD? What doors were open to you?

In the first instance, I was of course very happy to have finally managed to complete my PhD – to me, it was a great relief. As I was employed as a research assistant at the IRS, I also had some prospects and therefore it was not a period of radical change. For instance, I was looking forward to finally working on new research topics. While you are a PhD student, you tend to concentrate largely on one research question over a long period of time.

Naturally, a PhD is a prerequisite for further pursuing an academic career. At the same time, it provides options to orientate yourself towards management functions at the intersections of academia and industry or research and administration.

The PhD is a door opener: To some degree, it facilitates access to people you have not met in person yet.

Generally speaking, working on a PhD opens up a range of career options. Naturally, a PhD is a prerequisite for further pursuing an academic career. At the same time, it provides chances to orientate yourself towards management functions at the intersections of science and industry or research and administration.

As for me, I chose to continue on the academic career path. When I was still a PhD student, I drafted a proposal for an INTERREG IVC project. When it was approved for funding, my first task subsequent to the completion of my PhD was thus to concentrate on running an international project consortium. Thanks to the completion of my PhD, I was also formally entitled to take the lead. For me, this was an important step. As someone officially registered as principal investigator, I found myself to be actively involved in information systems to which I had previously lacked access. For example, I often received announcements about conferences and workshops or was even invited as a guest or speaker. I also received calls for projects that are often only made accessible to those subscribed to highly selective distribution lists. Moreover, my role as PI allowed me to advance key competences that had not played a major role during my doctoral phase, e.g. skills like running an international team, controlling, managing conflicts within a consortium, balancing out intercultural differences, dealing with differing legal systems, time and budget management, but also different forms of public relations activities. As a researcher you present results. As a PI, you not only represent your own work, but also the work of your partners.

The PhD is a door opener. To some degree, it facilitates access to people you have not met in person yet – for example when it comes to inviting interesting researchers to symposia, or when you aim to build up project consortia for research proposals. Moreover, a PhD will also be required if you wish to submit research proposals to numerous funding institutions. This is of particular relevance to me, especially as I like developing project ideas and am constantly looking for suitable opportunities to put them into practice. Thanks to these circumstances, I had the opportunity to build up a small project family after the completion of my PhD and render my work visible in various research fields. Finally, my PhD was a precondition for taking the position as the department's deputy head. This function allows me to learn a great deal about the organisational functioning of a non-university research institution and its environment.

What are your further career plans?

To me, it is essential to have the opportunity to talk to people who find themselves in a similar position and thus are expected to take comparable decisions. This, for example, applies to researchers in the field of spatial sciences, but also to friends and colleagues from other academic disciplines. Furthermore, I think it is important to meet people who are more established so as to learn from their career paths, decisions and experiences. I also keep an eye on the labour market. This applies to advertised job vacancies as well as to the research issues tackled by public and private facilities, institutes and faculties. After all, I also continue to search for the issues and activities that appear most attractive to me. I try to find ways and means to deal with societal trends that hitherto appear under-researched and think about the ways of how to best present these topics to funding institutions in the form of project proposals.

The Leibniz Association has developed the model of 'Leibniz Senior Researchers' as an alternative to pursuing a university career as a full professor. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these two options?

In my opinion, the promotion of postdoctoral careers outside the "traditional" university career path must be regarded as an important and unique characteristic of the institute. By pursuing this strategy, we acknowledge an aspect which we have also researched throughout recent years: knowledge – understood as both specialist expertise, but also ability to perform – has not only become ever more important lately; rather, it also requires continuous further development, reflection and contextualisation. Notably, this not only applies to the academic context, but reaches far into other fields of life.

The concept of Leibniz Senior Researchers most of all foresees the development of competencies required to lead research groups, to develop and coordinate projects and to network in a strategically targeted manner. It also includes the ability to present topics in an appropriate manner. This is what differentiates this concept from the university career path: publications, specialist lectures, teaching, and firm embeddedness in the scientific community all play a different role here. Scientific research and the translation of scholarly insights into practice-oriented solutions have become ever more important recently – especially within our so-called knowledge society and against the background of ongoing socio-economic developments. Within this context, the concept of "Leibniz Senior Researchers" certainly fills a gap in the existing system of postdoctoral research funding.

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"Raumwissenschaftliches Kolloquium" on Vulnerability and Resilience

On 16 May, 2013 the fifth "Raumwissenschaftliches Kolloquium" took place at the Tanzhaus NRW, Düsseldorf. Since 2005, the five spatial science-oriented institutes of the Leibniz Association (the so-called 5R-Network) have jointly organised this event every two years. For the second time, the IRS was responsible for the organisation and content. The ILS Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development, Dortmund provided on site support in managing the event. Under the title "Vulnerable Spaces. How Cities and Regions Deal with Threats?", the 5R-Network presented contributions from among its members aimed at broadening the discourse on vulnerability and resilience.

Key Note Speaker David Chandler, Professor of International Relations at the University of Westminster

Throughout the previous decade, the concepts of vulnerability and resilience have become increasingly prominent in international research, particularly with regard to the fields of natural hazards and technology assessment. Given that human beings have always tried to protect themselves against threats, it is fair to say that both the perception and the handling of threats must be understood as an integral part of the history of human societies. It is, however, also possible to detect differences in the ways societies have dealt with threats and this leads to a range of questions. What kinds of phenomena are defined as threats? How do these ascriptions evolve? How do societies raise public awareness for these matters? Once we pose these questions, we find that the answers will vary significantly in both spatial and temporal terms. This also applies to the actions human societies employ to meet perceived challenges.

IRS director Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper welcomed the 85 participants from academia and practice and provided an introduction to the theme. The keynote speech was given by David Chandler, professor of international relations at the University of Westminster, and entitled "Resilience: Beyond the Vulnerable Subject", successfully stimulated intense discussion. During a discussion hosted by the Director of the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL), Prof. Dr. Sebastian Lentz, four members of the 5R-Network presented their particular approaches to the concepts of vulnerability and resilience. Among them was Dr. Gabriela Christmann, Head of the IRS "Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development" department, who gave a talk on the social construction of vulnerability and resilience.

In the panel discussion prominent North-Rhine Westphalian practitioners from the field of spatial development discussed the uses of the dialogue on vulnerability and resilience for social and political decision-making. The panel discussion was hosted by the newly elected general secretary of the Academy for Spatial Research and Planning (ARL), Prof. Dr. Rainer Danielzyk. The event was rounded off with a discussion between Prof. David Chandler and Prof. Dr. Sebastian Lentz.

The presentations at the event can be accessed on the following website:

::: www.5r-netzwerk.de/veranstaltungen/kolloquium2013.shtml

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Ethnographic Research as an Opportunity for Urban Planning

The better a planner knows a city, the more he or she will be able to formulate plans in an appropriate way. While it may, at first glance, sound like a truism, this statement refers to a political and public administrative challenge in our cities and municipalities, one that must not be underestimated. There is a danger of generalising about problem areas and of disregarding differentiated perceptions and perspectives of the people using planned space – be it by traversing it or by residing, staying or working inside it.

"The use of ethnographies provides the opportunity to incorporate these perspectives into spatial planning – especially since they offer profound insights to the interconnectedness of spaces and social structures" emphasised PD Dr. Gabriela B. Christmann and Dr. Anna Richter from the "Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development" department. For these reasons, they decided to organise and conduct the workshop "Ethnographic Urban Research" at the IRS on 31 May, 2013. They aimed to provide a platform for both German and international colleagues to discuss the ways in which ethnography may be utilised for urban planning and urban research.

This methodology is characterised particularly by the subjective perspectives on urban space it develops. Using a variety of different tools – interviews, photographs, observation, videos and surveys – researchers aim to capture the residents' and users' sense of space as well as their behaviour in space. Little by little, they thus contribute to the construction of a social space that corresponds with physical space: "Many ethnographic studies have shown that urban spaces function in much more complex ways than the structural and architectural situation actually suggests", Christmann explains. "For instance, a slum that may at first appear dubious in functional terms might well be fully intact in terms of its social infrastructure. If we are to improve living conditions there, this cannot be achieved by demolishing and rebuilding the neighbourhood, since this would only result in a destruction of social networks." The ethnographic method is suitable to capture residents' perceptions and constructions of space and by this means allows their integration in the planning process. The challenge, however, lies in the great effort required to develop ethnographies, particularly within highly complex urban environments. "The wide spectrum of methods and the detailed reconstruction of spatial perceptions and everyday practices have impeded the usage of ethnographies in urban planning", says Richter. "Nonetheless, the relevance of the insights gained remains high".

At the workshop, researchers therefore exchanged experiences they had made in various cities and milieux. Moreover, they employed highly elaborate instruments to analyse the potential of ethnographies for urban planning and development processes, but also to reflect upon existing obstacles.

"As a result, there was widespread agreement in our expert community as regards the great potentialities of an in-depth exploration of urban spaces. At the same time, we believe there is still a need to jointly reflect on the methods with practitioners from urban planning", Christmann concludes. "Together with Prof. Dr Tome Lask from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and Prof. Dr. Gertraud Koch from the University of Hamburg, we are now already preparing a follow-up workshop. This workshop will focus on exactly this transfer of knowledge to the sphere of practitioners and will seek to create a dialogue with urban planners."

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Highs and Lows: EU-funded Urban Development Projects

Through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Union finances urban planning projects all across Europe. Together with Peter Ramsden (UK), IRS researcher Laura Colini coordinated a study focused on the key question of how exactly these funds are spent and to what extent this complies with the EU's approaches towards integrative urban development. The results of this study were presented to the European Parliament in June 2013.

Urbanisation project Le Murate in Florence (Italy)

Drawing on numerous interviews with stakeholders as well as statistical data, Colini and Ramsden analysed 50 urban planning projects which had been implemented over the course of the previous funding period 2007 – 2013 with the aid of EU funds. About 30 researchers from all EU member states participated in the study and helped provide a differentiated overview of planning measures. In doing so, they identified the local urbanisation measures that were realised as a result of the ERDF.

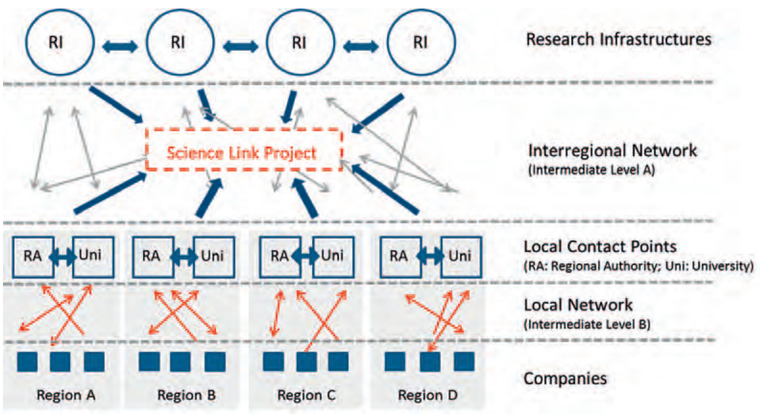
The study was initiated by the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, which also administers the ERDF fund. The EU declares itself in favour of an integrative approach that aims to overcome the limitations of sectoral and fragmentary urban developments. Nonetheless, the risk remains that the current growth paradigm will also dominate the new EU strategy 2014-2020. In fact, the danger of neglecting regionally specific problems related to economic competitiveness, social cohesion and ecological sustainability is likely to continue in the years to come. In the light of their ca. 50 case studies, the authors are convinced that these areas of tension will also manifest themselves in urban construction projects.

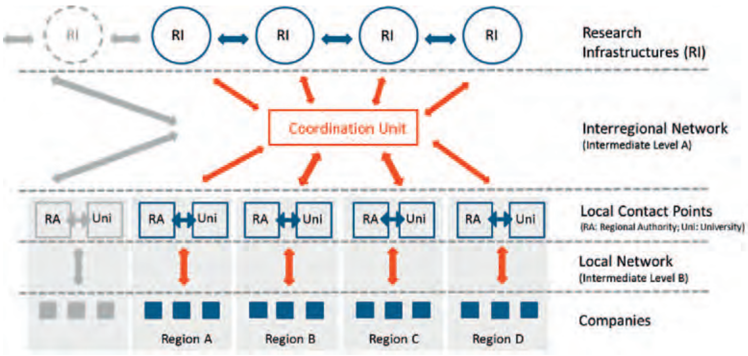
::: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/activity/urban/goodpracticemap_en.cfm
::: www.aeidl.eu/en/projects/territorial-development/urban-development.html

From Smart to Innovative: Research Networks in the Baltic Sea Region

Large research institutions, such as the DESY in Hamburg, provide an extremely specialised and costly measuring apparatus, one that is publicly financed and used by scholars from all over the world. Therefore, it makes sense to optimise the efficiency and utilisation of large-scale research institutions by means of international cooperation. Moreover, public investors have increasingly come to attach importance to the fact that not only the research community but also actors with economic objectives profit from such an infrastructure.

But how do private companies get to know about these opportunities in the first place? And how is it possible to increase the responsiveness of large research institutions to the needs of these companies? These questions are tackled by the EU flagship project "Science Link", which is made up of four large research institutions in the Western Baltic Sea region and further regional partners from states bordering the Baltic Sea. The goals are to improve the cooperation between the institutions and to facilitate access for Baltic companies despite the geographic distances involved. Such objectives fit well with the current debates on "Smart Specialisation" of research foci and infrastructures inside the EU. On the basis of interviews with the project partners and those companies that have made use of Science Link, the IRS has conducted an analysis of the project network and developed recommendations on how to further develop this network. The work focused mainly on the project's impact on the associated partners as well as examination of the multilevel project structure.





upper figure: Current Structures of the "Science Link" Project

lower figure: Optimised Project Structures of a Future Science Link Network

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::: www.irs-net.de/download/forschung/Science Link Study_Final.pdf

Analysis has shown that we can observe positive effects on all levels of the project network (see figures above). The horizontal networking of the large-scale research institutions leads to an intensified and shared dialogue on the future development of the individual institutions. Cooperation and coordination can help to compensate for potential overloads. Moreover, the joint appearance in public facilitates contact with companies. At the same time, the institutions currently remain focused on academic users who are familiar with the equipment and measuring instruments. The "service orientation" still leaves much to be desired, especially with regards to an adaption to consulting needs and the short-term time scheduling of technology-orientated enterprises.

Within the network, "Local Contact Points" (consisting of local universities as well as regional administrations and agencies) have the capacity to overcome the spatial distance to other companies and must thus be regarded as key actors in the network. As a matter of fact, they serve as both mediators and filters. Mediators because they assist companies hitherto unfamiliar with the opportunities for large research institutions to find the partners that best fit their research; and filters, since they help to critically reflect upon the often vague research ideas of companies, so as to ask whether they are suitable for testing in a large research institution. In case of doubt, the "Local Contact Points" can help to redirect queries to more qualified partners outside the Science Link network, or they may actively help to further develop and hone the content of ideas. For companies, Science Link provided an exchange of information about (as well as access to) expensive research infrastructures. It is especially small and middle-sized companies otherwise restricted by limited financial and human resources that can profit from Science Link. A minimisation of financial risks allowed companies to approach the evaluation of results in a more open manner. This led to unexpected results in terms of the companies' research activities, which in turn created a positive effect on their competitiveness.

The study indicates that the permanent establishment of a research network can be expected to have positive effects on the further development of companies in the Baltic region. The following areas for further optimisation of the existing network structure could be identified:

- Improvement of the large research institutions' service orientation, e.g. by creating consulting services and by reducing waiting times for companies,
- Focusing and pooling of network structures by way of employing permanent contact persons, for instance by creating a permanent coordination centre (see figure below / above)
- Reinforcement of regional cooperation between universities and large-scale research institutions as "Local Contact Points", especially since both perspectives are relevant for supporting enterprises.

34th Brandenburger Regionalgespräch: "Smart Specialisation: What does it actually mean?" Perspectives for the Capital City in the New EU Funding Period

Supporting regions through "smart specialisation" represents a major goal of the EU's new funding period for regional policy, which is to be launched in 2014. Thus far, however, very little is known about how the strategy will be implemented. The 34th Brandenburger Regionalgespräch, which took place on 28 May, 2013 at the IRS, provided a platform for experts from the European Commission, practitioners from politics and public administration, as well as academic researchers to discuss the opportunities and risks regions are likely to face in view of such a policy focus.

According to the basic idea of "smart specialisation", European regions become aware of their strengths and unique characteristics and, on this basis, develop ways to promote innovative concepts and their economic utilisation. The attribute "smart" is integral to this approach and points to both a specialisation in selected fields as well as the aspiration to integrate all relevant stakeholders in the strategy development process.

In accordance with the general strategy outlined by the European Commission, the attribute "smart" refers mainly to a process which from the very beginning conceptualises invention and innovation in decidedly economic terms. In doing so, it incorporates a dense network of politics, business, research and civil society. "The most promising tactics to promote knowledge-based regional development are: strong support from politicians and administrators, incorporation of stakeholders at an early stage and a diverse mix of subsidies", says Dr. Suntje Schmidt, researcher at the IRS "Dynamics of Economic Spaces" department.

In her presentation at the Regional Dialogue, Schmidt also however voiced criticism of this strategy. For some regions, the focus on just a few selected sectors may cause problems if they happen to develop differently than initially expected, she pointed out. Moreover, Schmidt argued that the development of innovative concepts and the complex incorporation and motivation of stakeholders might be hampered by the very tight timeframe permitted for strategic development measures. In a similar vein, Prof. Dr. Oliver Ibert criticised the concentration on technology-intensive economic sectors and pointed to the creative potential that may arise from the inclusion of enthusiastic users of products or services.

Alexander Kleibrink, representative of the EU Commission's Smart Specialisation Platform also identified challenges. In his opinion, the novel strategy presents regions with complex decisions, e.g. as regards questions related to the scope and the institutionalisation of stakeholder involvement, or issues concerning the prioritisation of innovation objectives. At the same time, Kleibrink also noted that these challenges might have a positive impact. "Our approach is far removed from the attitude 'same procedure as every year'. Instead, our goal is to break up rigid structures, to include hitherto neglected stakeholders and, by this means, increase dynamism in the field of regional innovation strategies."

In order to gain support for creating regional strategies and pursuing their goal to be involved in a European exchange of experiences, regions have the opportunity to register with the Smart Specialisation Platform. To date, 128 regions have made use of this possibility, one of them being the German capital region Berlin-Brandenburg. With its strategy “innoBB”, this region has incorporated a number of essential elements of smart specialisation into its development agenda since 2007. In several fields – such as the healthcare sector or energy technology - regions have come to cooperate with a variety of stakeholders.

Dr. Jürgen Varnhorn and Dr. Suntje Schmidt

Dr. Jürgen Varnhorn (Berlin Senate Department for Economics, Technology, and Research) portrayed “innoBB” as an example of smart specialisation. To him, making smart specialisation a key basis for the upcoming EU funding period represents a great opportunity for the capital region. Varnhorn attaches high priority to the acquisition of structural funds since in his view they will help safeguard the maintenance and further expansion of an effective infrastructure for innovation.

Dr. Marzena Schöne (Saxon Ministry for Economics, Labour, and Transport) provided an introduction to the Saxon approach towards smart specialisation. In doing so, she presented an alternative strategy to promote innovation. “Instead of being geared towards a selection of individual sectors or technologies, Saxony’s strategy towards smart specialisation is, in principle, open to all branches and technologies”, says Schöne. By this means, the goal is to retain the flexibility required to be able to react to scientific or economic developments. “The most successful innovations increasingly tend to emerge at the interface of sectors, disciplines and technologies. This is why Saxon smart specialisation puts particular emphasis on promoting these interfaces.”

By dealing with “smart specialisation”, the IRS has taken up an much debated issue, one that is burdened with several challenges. Gerhard Mahnken (IRS), who acted as moderator and organiser, drew positive conclusions: “The response to the event was exceptionally good.

For the IRS, the ‘Regional Dialogue’ event has not only helped to address a topical and regionally relevant issue, it has also managed to improve its contacts with the European Commission.

Access presentations here:

::: www.irs-net.de/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/detail.php?id=192

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New BMBF-Project: "Solving Conflicts in Local Energy Politics and Realising Public Interest Objectives through New Organisational Forms in the Energy Sector (EnerLOG)"

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New wind turbines, power lines, biogas or solar plants – there are certainly many potential occasions for local conflicts in the energy sector. Common to all these disagreements is the fact that the local scale of political decision-making plays a key role in implementing the energy transition. A new research project at the IRS aims to compile empirically substantiated knowledge that municipalities may utilise to address energy-related local political conflicts. The project is jointly organised with the Zukunfts-Agentur Brandenburg and the international network "ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability". The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research supports the project within its thematic field "environmentally and socially sustainable transformation of the energy system", launched on 1 August 2013.

The project focuses mainly on new organisational forms in the field of energy supply that have emerged in numerous places in recent years. For instance, these novel forms comprise phenomena such as remunicipalisation, energy cooperatives or bioenergy villages. Drawing on selected case studies from all over Germany, the project analyses the role of these new stakeholders in energy supply, assessing their ability to actively contribute to the realisation of public interest objectives.

In the second part, the project conducts more in-depth research on two municipalities in Brandenburg so as to gain a better scholarly understanding of how they solve local political energy-related conflicts. From this, the project will make appropriate recommendations for solving energy-related political conflicts. Moreover, it intends to suggest ways of embedding public interest objectives in new organisational forms of energy supply.

To this end, a number of local workshops will be held over the course of the project. Moreover, a nationwide networking conference on the issue of "New Local Organisational Forms in the Energy Sector" has been scheduled. Apart from providing advice and the publication of working papers and scholarly articles, a key product of the project will be compiling a best practice guide titled "solutions to local political energy-related conflicts and realising public interest objectives through new organisational forms in the energy sector".

Due to its particular composition, this collaborative project rests upon both its regional links in the state of Brandenburg as well as on its ties to projects in other European countries. A newsletter will regularly keep you up to date on the progress of the project.

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International Conference "The Bright Side of Night – Perceptions, Costs and the Governance of Urban Lighting and Light Pollution"

Together with the Institute for Urban and Regional Planning (ISR), Technische Universität Berlin, the IRS invited researchers to an international conference, held in Erkner (20-21 June, 2013). About 60 researchers

from various academic disciplines joined the event to discuss current developments, functions and the impacts of artificial lighting. Drawing on research from the BMBF-funded collaborative project "Loss of the Night", the debates revolved around the potential to promote a more sustainable management of artificial light and, moreover, focused on the issue of "light pollution" from the perspectives of economics, cultural studies and social sciences. The event consisted of a poster session and four panels, each of which included presentations and one expert commentary.

The first panel dealt with perceptions and the cultural significance of artificial light. Jane Brox (Maine, US), Dr. Folkert-Degenring (University of Kassel), and Dr. Tim Edensor (Manchester Metropolitan University) addressed issues such as the socio-cultural and physical impacts of the increasing brightness of the night, the ways Anglophone literature deals with metaphors of light and the potential of light festivals to create new spaces of experience. Prof. Dr. Beate Binder (HU Berlin) acted as discussant. The second panel focused primarily on the relationship between artificial light, society and the constitution of (urban) spaces. Katharina Krause (IRS), Dennis Köhler (Lichtforum NRW), Prof. Dr. David Nye (University of Southern Denmark, Odense), and Nona Schulte-Römer (WZB, discussant) discussed the functions of artificial lighting, limitations and possibilities of political interventions at a municipal level and the transformation of urban spaces as a result of artificial light.

Conflicts about light and options for control and regulation were at the heart of the third panel. Dr. Ute Hasenöhrl (IRS) showed that controversies over "real" forms of light were already apparent when artificial lighting was first introduced. Katharina Krause (IRS) pointed to the existing institutio-

nal gaps of lighting design in Germany. Dr. Martin Morgan Taylor (De Monfort University, Leicester) discussed regulatory approaches that may help to reduce light pollution in other European countries. Josiane Meier (ISR-TUB) elaborated on the emergence, stakeholders in and interests behind so-called "star protection areas". Dr. Andreas Hänel (Museum am Schölerberg, Osnabrück) was the discussant.

The fourth panel dealt mainly with methods for assessing artificial lighting. In doing so, discussion topics comprised a) the challenge of developing indicators for comprehending the economic costs as well as the benefit of night lighting (Merle Pottharst, TU-ISR), b) economic models and ethical perspectives related to the accessibility of the starlit sky (Prof. em. Kenneth Willis, University of Newcastle / Dr. Terrel Gallaway, Missouri State University), and c) the results of a residents' survey in Berlin-Brandenburg concerned with a change in street lighting (Anja Besecke and Robert Hänsch, ISR). Lucas Porsch (Ecologic Institute Berlin) commented on the presentations.

Over the course of the event, the production and regulation of artificial light (including its infrastructures) and the perception of light and darkness emerged as the main areas of lighting research in the humanities and social sciences. As Prof. Dr. Dietrich Henckel (ISR) and Dr. Timothy Moss (IRS) stressed during their concluding remarks, there is often still a lack of universally valid criteria for defining good or sufficient lighting. They pointed out that this trouble in dealing with these important public goods can be explained by the highly subjective ways we perceive light and darkness in aesthetic terms. These shortcomings and challenges require further interdisciplinary research that particularly interrogates cultural aspects.

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Exploring Processes of Peripheralisation: Visiting Researchers at the IRS

As many as three guest researchers from England, France and Poland visited the "Urban Regeneration" department in June 2013 to develop their international contacts and to build up new networks. Dr. Szymon Marcinczak from the University of Łódź gave a presentation on socio-spatial segregation processes in Eastern European major cities.

Dr. Héléne Roth and Dr. Tassilo Herrschel

Two guest lectures on the topic area "urban and regional peripheralisation in Europe" were held on 12 June, 2013: Dr. Tassilo Herrschel (Westminster University, London) gave the presentation "Metropolitan Regionalisation – A Question of Competiveness or Marginality". Dr. Hélène Roth (Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand) gave the second lecture, addressing the issue of "Shrinking Cities and Peripheralisation in France."

The subsequent discussion helped to identify a range of research interests the lecturers shared with the department. Therefore, the conclusion was to draw up an application to establish a European research network.

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Gareth Walker
Guest Researcher at the IRS

From July to September 2013, Gareth Walker was employed as a guest researcher at the IRS department "Institutional Change and Regional Public Goods". During his stay in Germany he sought to embed his current research within a European context. In particular, he focused on the EU policy of water liberalisation, juxtaposing the member states' strategies (focusing on Germany) with the English and Welsh approaches. His research interest is the role of the modern state as regards questions of water resources management, the social and ecological tensions resulting from neoliberal water management and the scalar interconnectedness between river basin management and global water security.

For the last three years, Gareth Walker was a doctoral candidate at the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford. He submitted his doctoral thesis on the political ecology of regulatory moves towards water markets and the liberalisation of the private English and Welsh water sectors.

IMPRINT

IRS aktuell No. 3, September 2013
Newsletter for Social Science-Based Spatial Research

IRS

Publisher:
Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung (IRS)
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Layout: Henrika Prochnow

The contributions in this newsletter are a co-product of Jan Zwilling and the reseachers of the IRS.

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