

Workshop Open Space Development in Shrinking Towns and Cities Workshop Freiraumentwicklung in schrumpfenden Städten

Dresden, 14/07/2015

Draft Report 31/07/2015

Schedule

Introduction

From Crisis to Choice – Managing change in shrinking cities

Dr. Hans-Jürgen Schlappa, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, U.K.

Perspectives of open space development as issue in urban shrinkage and transformation

- Exemplary projects and relevant topics of open space development
Prof. Cornelius Scherzer, Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Dresden
- Shrinkage as opportunity – Inclusion in instruments of urban development and change in professional assessment
Alexander Hennig, Urban Development Agency Zittau
- Open Space Based Urban Development - A Strategic Change of Perspective. Learning from IBA 2010 Urban Transformation
Regina Sonnabend, kooperativ-planen, Dessau-Rosslau
- Depopulation in Poland – present demographic and urban conditions and emerging issues for future development
Dr. Kinga Racoń-Leja, Politechnika Krakowska, Kraków, Poland
- Green Space Development in Shrinking Cities – Opportunities and Challenges
Dr. Stefanie Roessler, IOER – Leibniz - Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development Dresden

Preliminary Summary

- Important practice-related issues of open space development
- Relation to current approaches in research and international networks, gaps and overlaps
- Priorities for complementary future open space related research in the context of urban management
- Involvement of participants in developing research proposals; suggestions for additional partners in co-operation.

Ablauf

Einführung

Krise als Handlungsoption – Management des Wandels in schrumpfenden Städten

Dr. Hans-Jürgen Schlappa, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, U.K.

Perspektiven der Freiraumentwicklung im Kontext von Stadtschrumpfung und –transformation

- Beispielhafte Projekte und relevante Themen der Freiraumentwicklung
Prof. Cornelius Scherzer, Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Dresden
- Schrumpfung als Chance – Einbeziehung in Instrumente der Stadtentwicklung und Wandel der fachlichen Bewertung
Alexander Hennig, Stadtentwicklungsgesellschaft mbH Zittau
- Stadt vom Freiraum her entwickeln - Ein strategischer Perspektivwechsel. Lernen aus der IBA 2010 Stadtbau
Regina Sonnabend, kooperativ-planen, Dessau-Rosslau
- Entvölkerung in Polen – aktuelle demographische und urbane Situation und absehbare Fragestellungen für die künftige Entwicklung
Dr. Kinga Racoń-Leja, Politechnika Krakowska, Kraków, Polen
- Freiraumentwicklung in schrumpfenden Städten – Möglichkeiten und Herausforderungen.
Dr. Stefanie Rößler, IÖR - Leibniz-Institut für Ökologische Raumentwicklung Dresden

Vorläufige Zusammenfassung

- Wichtige praxisorientierte Fragestellungen der Freiraumentwicklung
- Bezug zu laufenden Forschungsansätzen und internationalen Netzwerken, Lücken und Überschneidungen
- Prioritäten für künftige komplementäre freiraumbezogene Forschung im Kontext des städtischen Managements
- Mitwirkung bei der Entwicklung von Forschungsanträgen; Vorschläge für weitere Kooperationspartner.

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Background to the workshop

The URBACT project *'From Crisis to Choice, Re-imagining the Future in Shrinking Cities'* in 2012/13 marked the beginning of our search for practical actions cities could take to respond to urban shrinkage. Prof. William Neill and Dr. Hans Schlappa as well as practitioners and academics report on interventions cities from across Europe were taking to respond to shrinkage. The results will be published in *'Future Directions for the European Shrinking City'* by the end of 2015.

This workshop is intended to present experiences from different points of view, confirm or open up relevant topical fields and explore options for the development of a multi-disciplinary, international research project concerned with local responses to urban shrinkage and transformation. This workshop discusses how we can make green open spaces a more central topic in the debate on local responses.

Hence the focus of our future work is firmly on exploring the potential for *'positive open space development'* in shrinking cities and to do so by looking at topics related to public administration such as governance, leadership, strategies of professional actors on the one hand, and community development related topics such as civil society organisations, collaborative practice, capacity and empowerment on the other.

Furthermore, as far as a future European level research project is concerned, we want to explore, compare and contrast different successful practices we find to be effective to challenge professional and political attitudes, policy and instrumental frameworks that might be barriers to them. Where does urban shrinkage provide opportunities, how can innovative community action in urban green open spaces become stronger as a lever supporting transformation of public life, political and professional practice?

Hintergrund des Workshops

Das URBACT-Projekt *'From Crisis to Choice, Re-imagining the Future in Shrinking Cities'* 2012/13 war der Ausgangspunkt unserer Suche nach praxisorientierten Ansätzen, wie Städte auf Schrumpfungsprozesse reagieren könnten. Prof. William Neill und Dr. Hans Schlappa sowie Vertreter aus Praxis und Wissenschaft berichten von Interventionen, mit denen Städte in Europa auf Schrumpfungsprozesse antworten. Die Ergebnisse erscheinen Ende 2015 als *'Future Directions for the European Shrinking City'*.

Dieser Workshop soll Erfahrungen aus verschiedenen Blickwinkeln darstellen, relevante Themenfelder bestätigen oder auch identifizieren und Optionen eines disziplinübergreifenden internationalen Forschungsprojektes über lokale Reaktionen auf Stadtschrumpfung und Transformation ausloten. Erörtert wird, wie Grünflächen und Freiräume zu einem zentraleren Thema im Diskurs über örtliche Ansätze gemacht werden können.

Unser Ansatz ist deshalb darauf ausgerichtet, Potentiale für eine positive Freiraumentwicklung zu ermitteln und gleichzeitig das Augenmerk auf Themen mit Bezug zur öffentlichen Verwaltung zu richten: Governance, Leadership und Strategien professioneller Akteure einerseits, stadtteil- und bewohnerorientierte Fragen wie die Rolle zivilgesellschaftlicher Organisationen, von Kooperation, Handlungspotenziale und Befähigung zur Mitwirkung andererseits.

Für ein künftiges Forschungsprojekt auf Europäischer Ebene ist beabsichtigt, verschiedene erfolgreiche praktische Ansätze zu erfassen, zu vergleichen und gegenüberzustellen, die einschränkende Rahmensetzungen bei politischen und fachlichen Haltungen, Strategien und Instrumenten in Frage stellen. Wo bietet urbane Schrumpfung Chancen, wie kann innovatives gemeinschaftliches Handeln in städtischen Freiräumen zu einer noch stärkeren Kraft werden, die Transformation des öffentlichen Lebens wie der politischen und fachlichen Praxis voranzubringen?

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Questions

Our premise is that urban shrinkage poses challenges as well as opportunities, especially where open spaces are concerned. Good practice of dealing with green open space needs strategic development of green infrastructure. This in turn is likely to require an active, cooperative and 'empowered' local community. Hence we intend to explore the following questions in the context of urban shrinkage and transformation:

1. Which conditions are fundamental for the successful adoption and adaptation of emerging open space in shrinking towns?
2. What are possible collaborative temporary and/or permanent open space uses including issues of ownership and responsibility?
3. Where are main obstacles for community empowerment to generate innovative uses of open space?
4. Are values of socio-cultural and environmental use of open space to be increased related to economically productive land use?
5. Can "emerging functions of open space" be more fully embraced and integrated in urban development tools and programmes?
6. How can public, political and professional support be strengthened, so that it wins the "hearts and minds" of stakeholders while meeting basic regulatory requirements to reduce risks?

Dr Hans Schlappa
Strategic Management Group
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Hertfordshire University, Hatfield

Fragen

Unsere Prämisse ist, dass urbane Schrumpfung eine Herausforderung und Chance darstellt – insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Freiräume. Erfolgreiche Praxis im Umgang mit Freiräumen verlangt eine strategische Entwicklung grüner Infrastruktur. Diese wiederum benötigt eine aktive Bürgerschaft, die zur Mitwirkung bereit und befähigt ist. In diesem Kontext stellen wir folgende Fragen im Kontext von Städten im Schrumpfungs- und Transformationsprozess:

1. Welche Rahmenbedingungen sind von grundlegender Bedeutung für erfolgreiche Aneignung und Anpassung von Freiraum?
2. Wie sehen denkbare temporäre und permanente kooperative Freiraumnutzungen, Verfügungs- und Verantwortungsformen aus?
3. Worin bestehen hauptsächlich Hindernisse bei der Herausbildung von Handlungsfähigkeit vor Ort für innovative Freiraumnutzungen?
4. Sind soziokulturelle und umweltorientierte Aufgaben der Freiräume gegenüber ökonomisch produktiver Nutzung besser in Wert zu setzen?
5. Können „perspektivische Freiraumfunktionen“ vollständiger erfasst und in Instrumente wie Programme der Stadtentwicklung integriert werden?
6. Auf welchen Wegen lassen sich öffentliche, politische und fachliche Unterstützung herstellen, „Köpfe und Herzen“ der Akteure gewinnen und gleichwohl grundlegende Regeln einhalten, um Risiken gering zu halten?

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Summary of Statements

Challenges (H.S.)

Political changes on global, national and local level lead to shrinking competences and resources of the public sector. Most policies are not designed to support shrinking and small cities. Fundamental responsibilities for provision of services, regulatory frameworks and standards remain, however. Civil activity, voluntary engagement, co-production and self-help can be harnessed as resources. Innovations in governance include new approaches to reconcile top-down and bottom-up planning processes. Having to responsibly manage change in a situation of persistent decline lowers barriers towards unconventional solutions and provides room for manoeuvre in terms of experiments. Open space management offers scope for innovation on a relatively unexpensive level.

Examples (C.S.)

Continuous, transparent, flexible planning procedures including open spaces are exemplarily established in the City of Leipzig's district concepts. Regional and city-wide planning concepts on landscape and green infrastructure are developed in "Landscape Plans" serving as reference for urban structure plans in Germany. Potentials of inputs from resident, volunteers and land owners have been explored in small towns during the IBA 2010 Saxony-Anhalt. partnerships can broaden the base of responsibility and provide qualified personnel, financial and material resources. Community activities in open space need to be encouraged, properly sited, supported, interconnected and responsibly managed – urban gardening is one example. Services, costs and benefits have to be regarded under long-, medium, short term and temporary aspects include economic and socio-cultural criteria. Urban open spaces are resources for the improvement of sustainable green infrastructure. Projects and programmes have to be subject to continuous research, monitoring and adjustment.

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Opportunities (A.H.)

The town of Zittau (1981: 40,000; 2015: 27,000 inhabitants) is located in the triangle of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. The average population age varies between 42 years in the centre and >50 years in some housing estates. Generally, the population will become fewer and older in Zittau whereas neighbouring towns across the border are (still) growing. The Zittau Urban Development Agency is involved in planning and managing strategic development, urban renewal, reclamation of derelict land and development of new sites. Inhabitants are involved (children, students, families, cyclists), moderated meetings help to identify fields of action, partnerships and new ideas. Citizens have founded a working group contributing to the discussion. The city offers open space (disused plots, space reserved for long term traffic project) for temporary use involving stakeholders in design. Redundant private land is frequently not available. Urban programmes supporting demolition excluding changes for 10 years are seen as too restrictive. Creative uses of open space and empty buildings need a lot of courage and readiness to take risks which is increasingly shown by the younger generation of decision-makers in administration. High expectations raised have often to be disappointed as the city and its agencies have not enough influence on private decisions and are limited by regulations and lacking resources. There is a constant exchange in a regional network of rural towns and increasingly expertise can be offered to West German towns finding themselves in a comparable situation.

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Strategies (R.S.)

The International Building Exhibition Urban Redevelopment Saxony-Anhalt 2010 is a model for many regions in Europe affected by population decrease. The federal state of Saxony-Anhalt has been constantly losing population since the 1950s and its population will have halved by 2040. In the towns of Dessau-Rosslau a concept combining consolidated urban cores and landscape zones was developed. The cores had to be developed in terms of use and infrastructure as well as the landscape zones needed qualification regarding uses and management. innovative communication policies included the installation of a contact office, guided walks, a transformation puzzle, appropriation of several 400m² “claims” by volunteers. After the city acquired derelict plots, buildings were demolished, roads partly dismantled, trees and meadows created under ecological and design aspects. In some cases stakeholders suggested plausible uses and buildings were preserved e.g. an industrial hall for BMX and a tower with public access offering panoramic outlook. Urban cores have partly been developed topically, e.g. as “City of Knowledge” combining schools, a university campus and the federal environment agency UBA. Professional experience with the conceptual development and allocation of innovative uses in urban landscape corridors can be used as reference for growing cities.

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Urban Issues in Poland (K. R-L.)

The EU total population is expected to grow by 3,6% until 2040, Poland is supposed to lose 10%. Internal migration between Polish regions varies strongly in intensity since the 1990. Losses happen mainly in the South and East of Poland and in central areas of conurbations. Reduction between 10% and 20% of the population until 2035 are also predicted for cities between 500,000 and 700,000 inhabitants, e.g. Łódź and Poznań and the Silesian region.

Depopulation in small cities of up to 100,000 happens due to industrial decline and demilitarization, high pollution, lack of work or opportunities for professional development and insufficient services as well as low quality of life and social conflicts in urban neighbourhoods. Shrinkage is a result of inhabitants leaving the entire region or move to suburbs and adjacent rural areas. There is a massive uncontrolled division of rural lots being transformed into housing areas and developers offer cheaper housing outside of towns often without sufficient access to services and public transport.

In Poland, less than 30% of the territory was covered by land use plans in 2012. Even in large cities the coverage is far from complete (Kraków 49,4% in 2015). This makes the implementation of strategic concepts difficult.

The EU Shrink Smart Project shows in case studies the importance of urban governance including the regeneration of the job market and institutions, brownfield use, urban renewal and reinforcement of social structures also using European Social Funds. A recent study of the university of Gdansk points out the importance of improving the quality of housing, access to services and public transport as well as better quality of public spaces for successful urban revitalisation. Increasingly important are issues of an ageing society and involvement of bottom-up initiatives of citizens.

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Open Space Development (S.R.)

Perspectives of open space development in shrinking towns and cities have to regard the given framework of urban development: Demand and distribution, land availability and expectations of financial return, financial sources, responsibility, aims and activities of stakeholders. Opportunities for improvement are e.g. better open space provision for recreation and healthy living, accommodating climate change, promoting biodiversity and nature experience through structurally diverse habitats. The German National Biodiversity Strategy includes redundant buildings, access and circulation areas in a potential of maintaining and extending diverse, green open spaces. These aims can be discussed on the level of local biodiversity, climate and water retention strategies and measures.

International studies on the economics of ecosystems (TEEB, Naturkapital) contribute to a political and social reassessment. Addressing various ecosystem services at the same time contributes to social, economic and ecological resilience and leads to more comprehensive concepts implying civil engagement, social integration and allowing the combination of financial resources and programmes. The ARTS project “Accelerating and Rescaling Transitions to Sustainability” is an EU-supported network of nine European research institutions and five cities aiming at understanding conditions, challenges and mechanisms, stimulate stakeholder action as well as public debate, develop local and general strategies and disseminate knowledge to advance EU-wide sustainability transition.

In Germany, national agencies have published programmatic and research publications on the social, economic and ecological relevance of green open spaces. Measures to improve the open space situation in cities are now included in national and state urban programmes. In the context of urban shrinkage, open spaces are central for increasing biodiversity, coping with climate change, offering healthier living conditions and contributing to social integration.

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Discussion I

Accepting shrinkage, erosion and perforation is difficult to convey and explain. They become sizable only WHEN IT HAPPENS.

On a European level, the serious dealing with open space development has only just begun. (IBA Stadtumbau 2010, Conference "Shrinking Cities – expanding Landscapes in Edinburgh)

There are not too many European projects with open space as central topic. (URGE, GreenKeys, ASOP, COST, ARTS, ...)

Most urban programmes are not addressing the needs of shrinking towns and cities. Successful cooperation and contracts are happening outside of regular programmes.

The disconnection of infrastructure and development of self-sufficiency means more autonomy on one side – and loss of power on the other

Discussion II

Accepting shrinkage, erosion and perforation is difficult to convey and explain. They become sizable only WHEN IT HAPPENS.

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Discussion III

Public agencies remain responsible for a generally acceptable policy. "Holding the baby".

Urban stakeholders and administrations are limited in capability. The pretension to implement plans has to be taken back in some cases without this being assessed as failure.

Which possibilities are there to creatively (re)interpret regulations and standards in favour of specific goals?

Urban and open space policies are dependent on changing constellations of interests. Regulating screws (Stellschrauben) in the urban development process have to be identified and consciously used.

How can everyone involved in the decision-making process be convinced? Who has the courage to take responsibility?

Cities need "enablers" (Ermöglicher) to initiate projects and "carers" (Kümmerer) to manage them.

The dialogue between educational institutions, universities and administrations should be intensified. (E.g. project "transformationspilot" Zittau-Goerlitz university)

Professionals should qualify for roles as interface (Schnittstelle). Intermediate organisations can be opened more widely for information transfer.

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Discussion IV

The aim of a more or less even distribution of open spaces and opportunities does not stop to be relevant.

Urban space which is not yet used according to long term or final intentions can be held back, remain open, offer opportunities for temporary uses.

Open space functions have to be seen in relation to the size of towns / cities and their spatial structure.

Locally specific situations require bespoke strategies and solutions. Unsatisfactory solutions in design and function lead to a negative image of open space policies.

Which are “compelling visions” which can be reached with local resources?

How can open spaces be used as potential for “place making”?

Appropriation of open spaces in the public realm can serve the self-presentation of...

- ... crafts
- ... associations
- ... professions (apothecaries)
- ... locals and immigrants

Private owners benefit from open space improvements without contributing and may even be tempted to revoke previous agreements

Investment in (new) open spaces is frequently possible. The problem is the lack of resources for maintenance and management.

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Directions for further research

- Concentrate on smaller towns, preferably in rural areas, which have already carried out open space improvements and undergone research to which it is possible to relate to.
- Look both backwards and forward thus serving as a monitoring tool in the cases of previous intervention and deliver criteria for action.
- Understand the concentration on a potential open space system as a preventive approach to a highly integrated urban “future profile”.
- Anticipate and aggregate potentials of “green, blue and grey” infrastructure in the public realm and include the aspects of positive ecological, social and spatial repercussions in the neighbourhood.
- Look at natural and functional aspects of the open space system on the levels of connections into the region, of the city as a whole and of specific spaces and places as possible contributions to placemaking.
- Identify conceivable and compelling emerging temporary and permanent open space solutions related to the specific set-up of stakeholders and process.
- Understand urban open spaces as arena for a range of innovative education processes giving a new and extended meaning to the notion of “management”.
- Structure research in a way which allows results to be used as advice which has a piloting function (without maintaining to be an “autopilot”).
- Find out and discuss obstacles for development of previous projects, include the question whether failure may be an advantage eventually giving way to a better idea.
- Look for good examples of winning hearts and minds in the context of a change of generations in planning and decision-making.
- Look at the role of universities, professional organisations, institutions, commercial stakeholders and volunteers in influencing the way urban shrinkage is seen and dealt with within the profession and outside.

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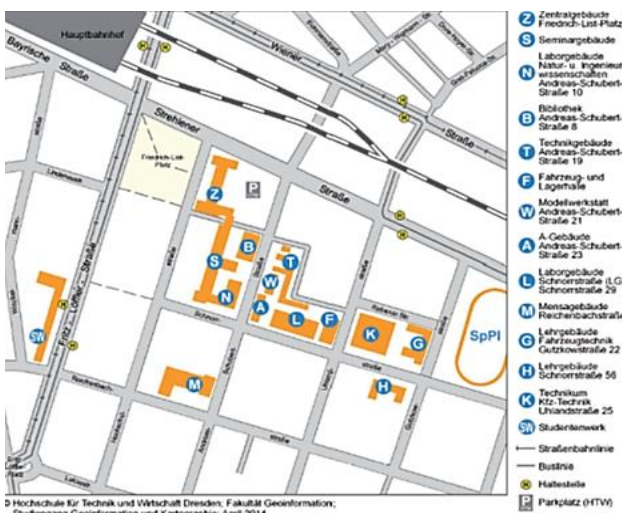


Date and Venue

Tuesday, 14 July 2015, 10:30 – 16:30
Hochschule f. Technik u. Wirtschaft Dresden
University Library
Entrance Andreas-Schubert-Str. 8
01069 Dresden
Seminar room 302b

Veranstaltungszeit und -ort

Dienstag, 14. Juli 2015, 10:30 – 16:30 Uhr
Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft
Dresden
Hochschulbibliothek
Eingang Andreas-Schubert-Str. 8
01069 Dresden
Seminarraum 302b



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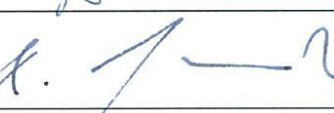

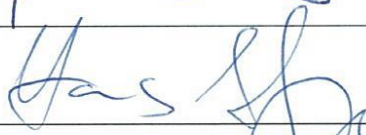

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Participation / Teilnahme

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KINEA RACON-LEJA	CRAOWN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	
Hans Schlegger	Hertfordshire University	
Alexander Hennig	Zittauer Stadtkontroll	
Conradin Liebert	HTW Dresden	