

IGU Urban Geography Commission: Emerging Urban Transformations

Annual Meeting 2012

TU Dortmund, Germany
August 21-August 27

The 2012 meeting of the IGU Urban Geography Commission “Emerging Urban Transformations” will take place in Dortmund, Germany. The last day will be held in Cologne as part of the 32nd International Geographical Congress (IGC) of the IGU (cf. www.igc2012.org). The following circular will provide an outline of this annual meeting of the IGU Urban Geography Commission “Emerging Urban Transformations” and its themes and it will provide basic information on timing, costs and how to get to Dortmund.

Integration with the IGC necessitates some organizational procedures which will differ from previous meetings. Hence, we would like to ask you to study this circular and adhere to the procedures detailed therein – even if you’re an “old hand”. In particular, please do note the **deadline for registration and abstracts**, which is earlier than usual: **February 15, 2012**.

This circular contains the following information/sections:

- I The setting: Dortmund
- II Conference title and themes: Transformations of the urban
- III Call for papers
- IV Registration – and deadlines
- V Dates – tentative meeting schedule
- VI Accommodation and travel
- VII Meeting costs and payment

I The setting: Dortmund

With close to 600,000 inhabitants, the City of Dortmund is the biggest municipality in the Ruhr area, the old “industrial heartland” of (western) Germany. Founded around 880, the city developed into a rich and important trading centre during the Middle Ages, but was then comprehensively transformed during the 19th century, when industrialization led to the emergence of the Ruhr area, and when Dortmund’s economy came to be dominated by coal, steel and beer. Since the 1960s structural change has brought about many urban transformations in terms of the emergence of new industries, new lifestyles and new spatial patterns and urban landscapes. Dortmund’s profound experience of exploitation and destruction during the war and especially of economic, social and demographic change since then generally mirrors the experience of the Ruhr as a whole – a conurbation of 5.5 million inhabitants. It also poses questions as to the new city-regional realities of a 10 million plus Rhine-Ruhr metropolis spanning from Cologne/Bonn via Düsseldorf to Dortmund. The setting thus offers plenty of interesting perspectives for analysis and comparison (and inspection on the ground) when considering our commission’s title theme: emerging urban transformations.

II Conference title and themes: Transformations of the urban

Conference themes

The meeting in Dortmund will focus on two key themes derived from the catalogue of research topics the Commission has decided to study. The special foci of this meeting are connected to the particular urban experiences of Dortmund and the Ruhr hinted at above:

Theme 1 Governance and planning for cities and urban regions

Theme 2 Urban economies – urban cultures

Accordingly, most of the sessions of the Dortmund meeting will be structured around these key themes, which are still – and deliberately so – rather encompassing. They are not intended to exclude any kind of region/ nation or any kind of urban place to study. We welcome papers on small or medium-sized towns and cities just as much as on megacities; papers on de-industrializing and shrinking city-regions just as much as on newly-industrializing or tertiary growth centres. However, we ask you to consider carefully, how your research relates to these key meeting themes.

Special session themes

There are four special sessions with more narrowly defined themes. They largely derive from the fact that the last day of our meeting is integrated into the IGC, so we have more narrowly defined four further themes for sessions that will take place in Cologne.

Special session 1 Urban social transformations: contested social spaces

Special session 2 Conceptualizing regional governance in Chinese mega-urban regions

Special session 3 Complex urban systems

Special session 4 Large scale transport infrastructure and regional and urban impacts

We are also happy to organize “sub-sessions” of the two key themes, e. g. focussing on small towns and cities, sessions focussing on particularly current developments and sessions promoting other forms of discussion than purely paper-based presentations. So, we are certain to be able to build an encompassing and interesting programme from your paper proposals.

III Call for papers

In order to strengthen the thematic cohesion of the meeting, we have drawn up calls for papers that clarify the themes and special sessions. Please read these carefully and specifically target your paper proposals to one of these calls for papers. The registration form will ask you to state which theme or special session your paper refers to.

Theme 1 Governance and planning for cities and urban regions

Urban transformations over the last few decades have deeply affected the way that cities deal with issues of land use, the environment, economic development or social equity – partly, but not exclusively, through the medium of planning. We have seen the emergence of more complex and fluid spatial patterns and structures as well as new forms of territorialisation – of private actors, civic society and also of the state. We have seen an organizational/institutional shift to governance instead of government, and witnessed an increasing and renewed relevance of the city-regional scale.

We therefore welcome papers that investigate processes of contemporary urban (economic, social, demographic, ...) change and their relationships to or implications for the political and/or planning systems which organize, regulate, plan and just generally (try to) deal with these issues of change. Can we observe particular challenges, new institutional responses, changing spatial/ scalar constellations in different countries, urban regions, in particular types of town or city?

Theme 2 Urban economies – urban cultures

Structural economic change affects cities of all sizes and all over the world. New goods and services, new forms of production, changing spatial logics of production, new and more diverse lifestyles and consumption preferences all have implications, on the one hand for how our urban places develop economically, and on the other hand for cities as cultural objects and as places of cultural processes.

We would like to explore these issues through papers dealing with economic changes in cities and their relations to the cultural. What trends of economic transformations become notable, what economic sectors gain in importance, how do they create new spatial structures, what are their social and cultural consequences? And how do specific urban cultures, the cultural qualities of cities, their history and heritage (and conservation), specific local identities, images etc. impact on urban economic change? Are their new opportunities, are their new risks implied, where and how do they figure in urban development strategies?

Special session 1 Urban social transformations: contested social spaces

Societies around the world have experienced and are experiencing a series of transformations that, through human agency in various forms, “take place”, make places and shape spaces in our cities and urban regions. Viewing these transformations as socio-political processes, embedded in local cultures and customs while at the same time connected to and interdependent with processes of (not just local) economic restructuring, our cities have become arenas of heightened contestation, where interests collide and conflicts are acted out.

The increasingly multi-layered social and ethnic fabric of many of our cities has led to more complex structures of contestation as well as more intricate patterns of social spaces and life worlds. Polarization or fragmentation of social spaces along lines of income, ethnicity or religion, the reconfiguration of local political agendas in line with the competitiveness-mantra of neo-liberal and often anti-statist ideologies, the physical restructuring of urban space that follows or possibly structures some of these social changes – these are just some examples of the processes of social transformation we want to focus on in this session.

We wish to explore both the processes as well as the patterns that emerge, to analyze the tensions between supra-local forces on the one hand and local conflicts and solutions on the other, and to investigate to what degree the locally (or nationally) specific can be explained or informed by views and theories of a more generalizing nature.

Special session 2 Conceptualizing regional governance in Chinese mega-urban regions

With the huge magnitude of Chinese urbanisation and with the regional clustering of urban growth, globally significant mega-urban regions such as the Pearl River Delta, the Beijing-Tianjin and the Lower Yangtze agglomerations, to name just the most important, have emerged. However, the governance of Chinese urban space has throughout this process always remained very territorialised and has been characterised by strong competition rather than cooperation and integration of adjacent administrative entities. Only recently, with the official acknowledgement and more positive evaluation of these mega-urban regions, has there been a heightened attention by the central state towards regional governance in Chinese mega-urban regions. Many of the above-mentioned regions have developed regional plans and communication channels between the concerned municipal governments. There are now numerous initiatives being developed to connect infrastructures and to integrate the provision of public services in these agglomerations.

The purpose of this paper session is to bring together scholars doing empirical research on the emerging regional governance in Chinese mega-urban regions with those contributing experiences and theoretical conceptualisations derived from long-standing international research on regional governance. We expect to promote comparisons both within China and internationally, and we intend to encourage the engagement of empiricism with a more theoretical understanding. Crucial directions of investigation could be concepts of multi-level governance with reference to scale theories, the governance of regional competitiveness in times of globalisation, and the conceptualisation of the relative roles of the state versus markets in regional development. The focus shall be governance across administrative boundaries in the

mega-urban context. What is particularly hoped for is that the presented studies from China aim at developing originally Chinese contributions to theory-building rather than just applying "foreign" theories to the processes observed in the mega-urban regions of this rapidly urbanising country.

Special session 3 Complex urban systems

There is little doubt that our urban systems have seen radical changes in the last decade and will continue to do so in the coming decades. A few hundred city regions today account for much of the world's consumption and production, just as a few hundred large corporations now dominate most of the world's trade and sites of production. One result of these changes is that these core cities (the 'World Cities') are increasingly connected in many ways: by more rapid, more intense, and spatially extensive linkages of information, goods and money, as well as migration and tourism. Large corporations – and seemingly all too identical national/ regional policies – link distant cities into the same global strategies, and international agencies encourage states to co-operate in international governance. At the same time the intense interaction supports greater variation in economic and political roles among cities dealing with increasing problems of economic competition and development, often based on the role of these cities as centres of innovation and as nodes in networks of ideas, innovation and information.

In this session we would like to discuss just how the various national, continental and global urban systems are changing regarding features such as city size, economic specialization, migration, interaction and control functions? Also, we would like to inquire what processes and differential development paths are involved and how different government policies affect these changes – not just in the biggest and arguably most successful cities, but also in those of lesser centrality or in those that have chosen to follow more unusual development/policy paths.

Special session 4 Large scale transport infrastructure and regional and urban impacts

Joint Session of the IGU Commissions on Transport and Geography & Urban Geography: Emerging Urban Transformations (part of the IGC 2012 general programme in Cologne)

There is a growing interest in the relationship between investment in large scale transport infrastructure and economic development and regeneration both at the urban and regional scale. Investment at the urban scale, particularly in megacities and conurbations, includes heavy and light rail systems and bus rapid transit as well as road improvements and also relates to relieving traffic congestion and environmental issues. Investment at the regional scale includes high speed trains, fixed link bridges and tunnels, airports and new roads and also relates to intra and inter-national transport networks, the elimination of key bottlenecks and environmental issues. Transport plays a critical role in facilitating economic competitiveness. High quality infrastructure and transport services improves the performance of the labour market, helps attract inward investment and can improve the quality of life. However, there is a long history of inaccurate traffic predictions and cost overruns on large scale transport investments.

IV Registration – and deadlines

If you want to attend the 2012 meeting of the IGU Commission on Urban Geography “Emerging Urban Transformations” in Dortmund, please fill in the **registration form** and send it to Prof. Ludger Basten (ludger.basten@tu-dortmund.de; Fax: +49-231-755.2918) by **February 15, 2012**. The form also asks you to provide information about any accompanying persons that may join you (and us) for the meeting.

(a) Abstracts

If you want to present a paper at the 2012 annual meeting of the IGU Commission on Urban Geography “Emerging Urban Transformations” – regardless of which of the six calls for papers you refer to – please fill in the registration form and send an **abstract, also by February 15, 2012**, and also to ludger.basten@tu-dortmund.de. This deadline must be kept!

Abstracts should **not exceed 3.000 characters** in length and be submitted as a MS-Word-file citing “IGU abstract” as the email subject. When you submit your abstract, please specify:

- (i) which call for papers your paper refers to
- (ii) the title of the paper
- (iii) your name
- (iv) your institutional affiliation and address (incl. email)
- (v) the abstract itself
- (vi) up to five key words.

(b) Attendance without paper presentation

If you intend to attend the meeting without presenting a paper, please also fill in the **registration form** and send it in by **February 15, 2012**.

(c) Full papers

We intend to publish an edited volume (or possibly even two) about the main themes of the meeting drawing on a selection of papers presented there. Alternatively or additionally, we will also look at the possibility of publishing papers from the meeting, especially from the more narrowly defined sessions in Cologne, as special issues of academic journals. The decision on selecting papers for the edited volume and/or special issues will rest with executive members of the Urban Commission, the meeting/session organizers and publishers.

We therefore strongly suggest that you carefully consider the calls for papers above when deciding on the topic of the paper you wish to present at the meeting in order to make sure that it resonates with the themes of the meeting and the publications planned.

Please let us have your **full papers** (in draft form) by **July 31, 2012**. We will provide further details on the format of these closer to the date.

V Dates – tentative meeting schedule

Tuesday August 21		arrival registration, business meeting, evening reception
Wednesday August 22		academic sessions short excursion: introduction to Dortmund
Thursday August 23		academic sessions (all day)
Friday August 24		excursion: The Ruhr (all day)
Saturday August 25		academic sessions (all day) conference dinner
Sunday August 26		excursion: Ruhr and Rhine (all day) (including transfer to Cologne)
Monday August 27		academic sessions as part of IGC Cologne 2012 departure – or continuing attendance of IGC

VI Accommodation and travel

Travel to Dortmund

Dortmund is easily accessed from a number of intercontinental and international airports, in particular from Düsseldorf (DUS), Dortmund (DTM), Frankfurt (FRA) and Cologne (CGN).

Dortmund is also a hub in the German (and European) high-speed rail network (with so-called ICE trains). Convenient rail services connect all those airports with the city. More detailed information and advice on these airports and on travel to Dortmund from there is available in a [separate document \(Travel to Dortmund\)](#).

Accommodation in Dortmund

You need to book accommodation in Dortmund for five nights between August 21 (Tuesday) and August 26 (Sunday).

We have secured special rates and contingents of rooms at a number of hotels in Dortmund. A list of these hotels will be made available in a [separate document \(Accommodation in Dortmund\)](#) very shortly detailing prices and special booking codes. We shall also make some recommendations based on convenience of location and transport.

Accommodation in Cologne – important!

Since the last day of our meeting will be held at the IGC, we will transfer you to Cologne by bus, and **we will arrange common accommodation there for the night of Sunday, August 26**. Transfer and that one night of hotel accommodation in Cologne (as well as the day-ticket for the IGC) are **included in the meeting price!**

Our meeting programme will end with the afternoon session on Monday, August 27. Hence, **you will only need to book further accommodation in Cologne if you intend to stay longer** (e. g. for the remainder of the IGC or due to flight departure times). If so, you could use the hotel reservation service provided through the IGC website (www.igc2012.org), but we would also be happy to provide further assistance.

VII Meeting costs and payment

IGU Urban Commission Meeting	590 €
Accompanying persons	450 €

These are the “early bird” prices. Payments made after March 31 will incur an additional fee of 80 €!

These fees include the **excursions**, the main **conference dinner** and **various other meals** provided throughout the course of the Dortmund meeting. They also include transfer to the IGC in Cologne for the last day of our meeting, **one night hotel accommodation in Cologne** (the night of Sunday, August 26) plus the **IGC day ticket** for Monday, August 27. You will thus be able to participate in all our commission’s sessions, whether in Dortmund or those also forming part of the IGC.

For accompanying persons there will be a special programme of trips and visits arranged for the days when we are in sessions. They will join the main group for the excursions.

Attendees who will go on to attend the full IGC in Cologne please let us know about this separately and as early as possible! (You will receive a reduced meeting fee since we won’t need to purchase an IGC day-ticket for you. So, you really ought to tell us about this!).

Payment Methods

... are detailed in a [separate document \(Payment Methods\)](#).

We are looking forward to hearing from you – and to welcoming you to Dortmund in 2012.

**Your local organizers,
Ludger Basten & Lienhard Lötcher**