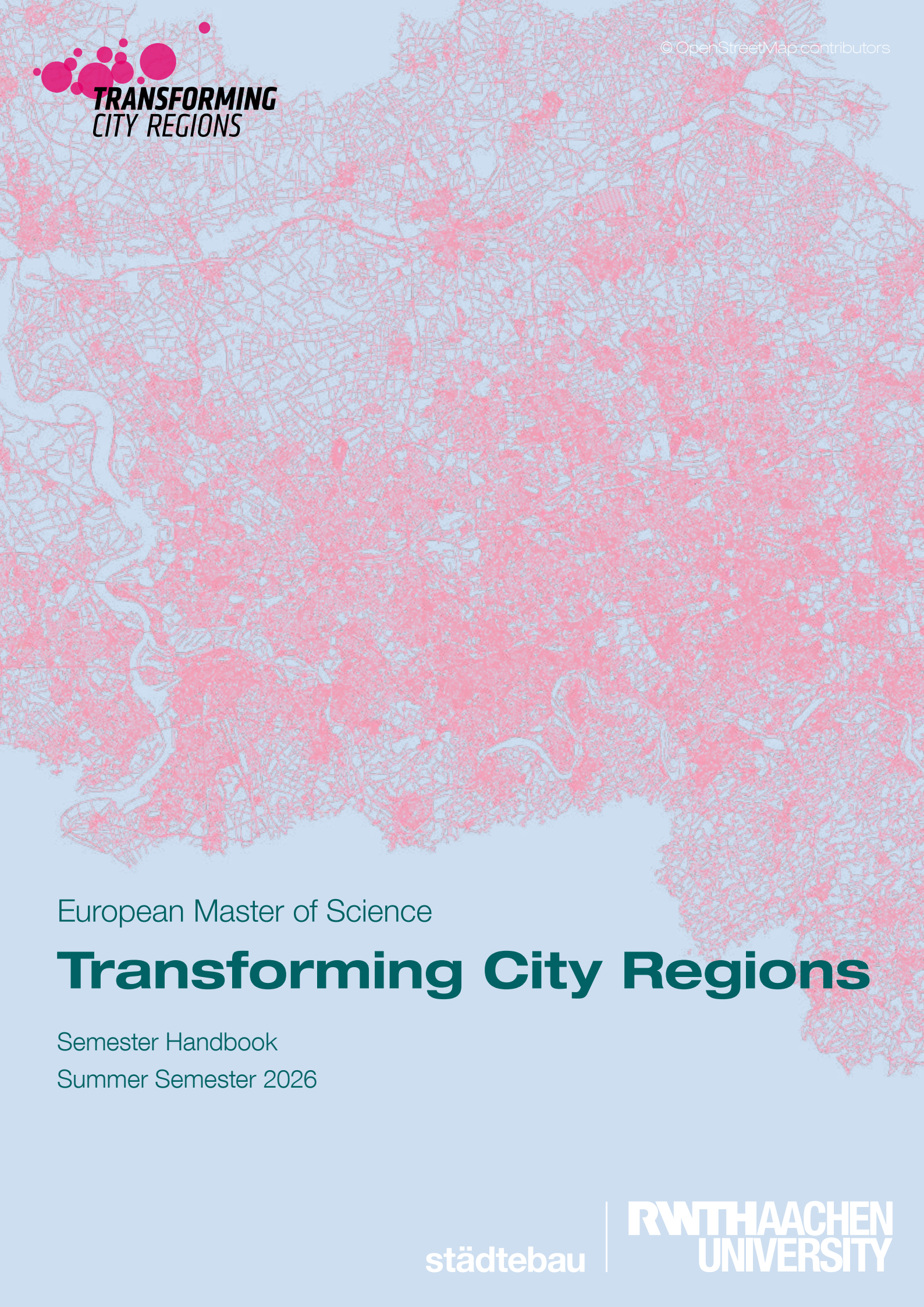




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European Master of Science

Transforming City Regions

Semester Handbook

Summer Semester 2026

städtebau

RWTHAACHEN
UNIVERSITY

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Foto: Michel-Kitenge

Dear Reader,

The English taught master programme “TRANSFORMING CITY REGIONS” at RWTH Aachen University was launched in the winter semester 2019/20. The high demand from students from Germany, Europe and, last but not least, the whole world shows that the content orientation of the degree programme towards international transformation processes was well-chosen. Students from the disciplines of architecture, urban planning, landscape planning, civil engineering, geography, and cultural studies have been very successful in the past semesters in dealing with concepts and strategies in urban design and in neighbourhood, city and regional development.

This has involved an intensive examination of the major challenges of transformation – urbanisation in the form of reurbanisation and suburbanisation as well as the reshaping of entire regions, such as the lignite mining region in the Rhineland. Above all, there is agreement that transformation processes can only be successfully mastered if the right instruments, concepts and strategies are applied. And many of these challenges and questions for the future can no longer be answered by looking at the local context, but require an international exchange of experience, as is taking place within the framework of the English taught master programme “TRANSFORMING CITY REGIONS” (TCR).

In times of globalisation and increasing networking, knowledge in dealing with international transformation processes is more important than ever. It not only opens up new career prospects for graduates, but also qualifies them in every respect for the future challenges in the broad field of urban and regional planning.

The teaching results presented in the following show how students have dealt with transformation processes at the various spatial scales and levels - from the neighbourhood, to the city, to the region - and how the spatial level can be successfully linked with the strategic level.

I hope you enjoy exploring these projects.

Prof. Christa Reicher
Head of the international TCR programme



5 hour distance

2 hours distance

1 hour distance

Aachen

Copenhagen

Hamburg

Berlin

Amsterdam

London

Rotterdam

Eindhoven

Brussels

Cologne

Frankfurt

Luxembourg

Paris

Munich

Zurich

Milan

Rome

Coordination

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Foto: Michel-Kitenge

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Elif Ertemiz

Research Assistant
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People

The international teaching and research network Transforming City Regions is based at RWTH Aachen University and led by Prof. Christa Reicher, head of the Chair and Institute of Urban Design at the Faculty of Architecture. The network includes partners from academia and practice and aims to advance the level of knowledge of regional transformation processes in post-industrial areas within the framework of an international comparative action.

Teaching Core



Prof. Dr. Jakob Beetz

Chair for Design Computation (DC)
Module(s): Territorial analysis and digital tools

j.beetz@caad.arch.rwth-aachen.de



Prof. Dr. Stefan Bösch

Chair of Society and Technology (SoTec)
Module(s): Changing Societies and Economies

stefan.boeschen@humtec.rwth-aachen.de



Prof. em. Dr.-Ing. Andrea Haase

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Module(s): Urban Transformation I & II, Elective courses

a.haase@raumstruktur.de

Foto: Sirtoli



Prof. Dr. Agnes Förster

Chair for Planning Theory (PT)
Module(s): Multiple scales of urban planning and design, Elective courses, Impromptu courses

foerster@pt.rwth-aachen.de



Prof. Dr. Tobias Kuhnimhof

Chair and Institute of Urban and Transport Planning (ISB)
Module(s): Research Module in urban and regional transformation

kuhnimhof@isb.rwth-aachen.de

Prof. Dr. Michael Leuchner

Physical Geography and Climatology (GEO)
Module(s): Elective courses

michael.leuchner@geo.rwth-aachen.de



Prof. Dr. Frank Lohrberg

Chair for Landscape Planning (LA)
Module(s): Evolving environment. Transforming landscapes

lohrberg@la.rwth-aachen.de



Visiting Prof. Dr. Jan-Peter Voß

Chair of Society and Technology (SoTec)
Module(s): Changing Societies and Economie

Jan-peter.voss@humtec.rwth-aachen.de



Foto: Volker Kuntzsch

General Information

Transforming City Regions (TCR) is a unique, multidisciplinary master programme with a strong focus on the European dimension of territorial development. The degree programme is taught in English and is designed to respond to the environmental, social, technological, and economic challenges which European cities and regions are facing. TCR takes a technically advanced and solution-oriented approach so that you can understand economic efficiency and identify societal needs.

The TCR programme is one of the few programmes that have been newly designed at RWTH Aachen University to respond to European territorial challenges. The special focus is on a project and design-oriented education that equips graduates not only with up-to-date and solid knowledge, but also with the tools and methods to help them tackle the problems of Europe's changing cities and regions. Despite its clear multidisciplinary orientation, the engineering and design-oriented profile of the graduates is deeply rooted in the tradition of the Faculty of Architecture at RWTH Aachen University and also gives the programme a strong identity.

Key Facts

Degree:
Master of Science RWTH

Start of Studies:
Winter Semester

Standard Period of Studies:
4 semesters

ECTS Credits:
120

Language:
English

i Transforming City Regions

is a European master programme that integrates many disciplines in order to educate professionals being able to respond to the challenges of evolving European territories of different scales with respect for the environment, using the technical excellence and a solution-oriented approach, understanding the economic efficiency and respecting social needs.



Programme Structure

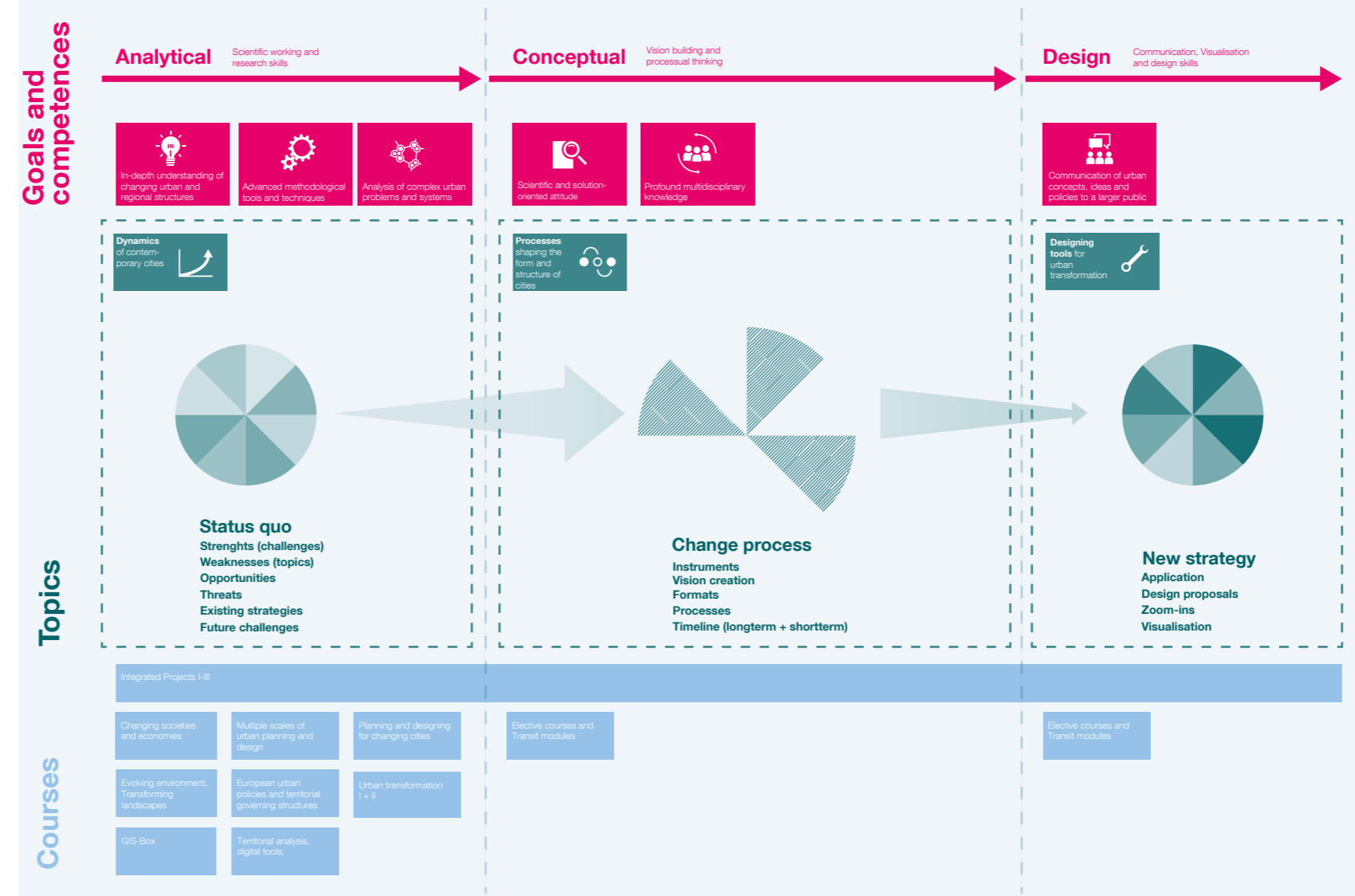
The degree programme is structured in 4 semesters, with the last semester being dedicated to the Master thesis. The core of the master programme is formed by three major integrated project works during the first three semesters. The increasing territorial complexity and issues with different structural and content-related priorities and the link with the foundations of other disciplines should lead to integrative and conceptual thinking.

These projects are characterised by a broad spectrum of methodological, procedural, morphological, landscape architectural, ecological, legal, and economic aspects. The remaining ECTS are available through compulsory modules, elective courses, research modules, field trips/impromptu courses and transit courses.

If you have a degree in urban design, urban planning, urban studies, spatial planning, regional planning, landscape architecture, architecture, transport planning, environmental engineering, urban geography, urban ecology or urban governance, this degree programme is particularly suitable for you.

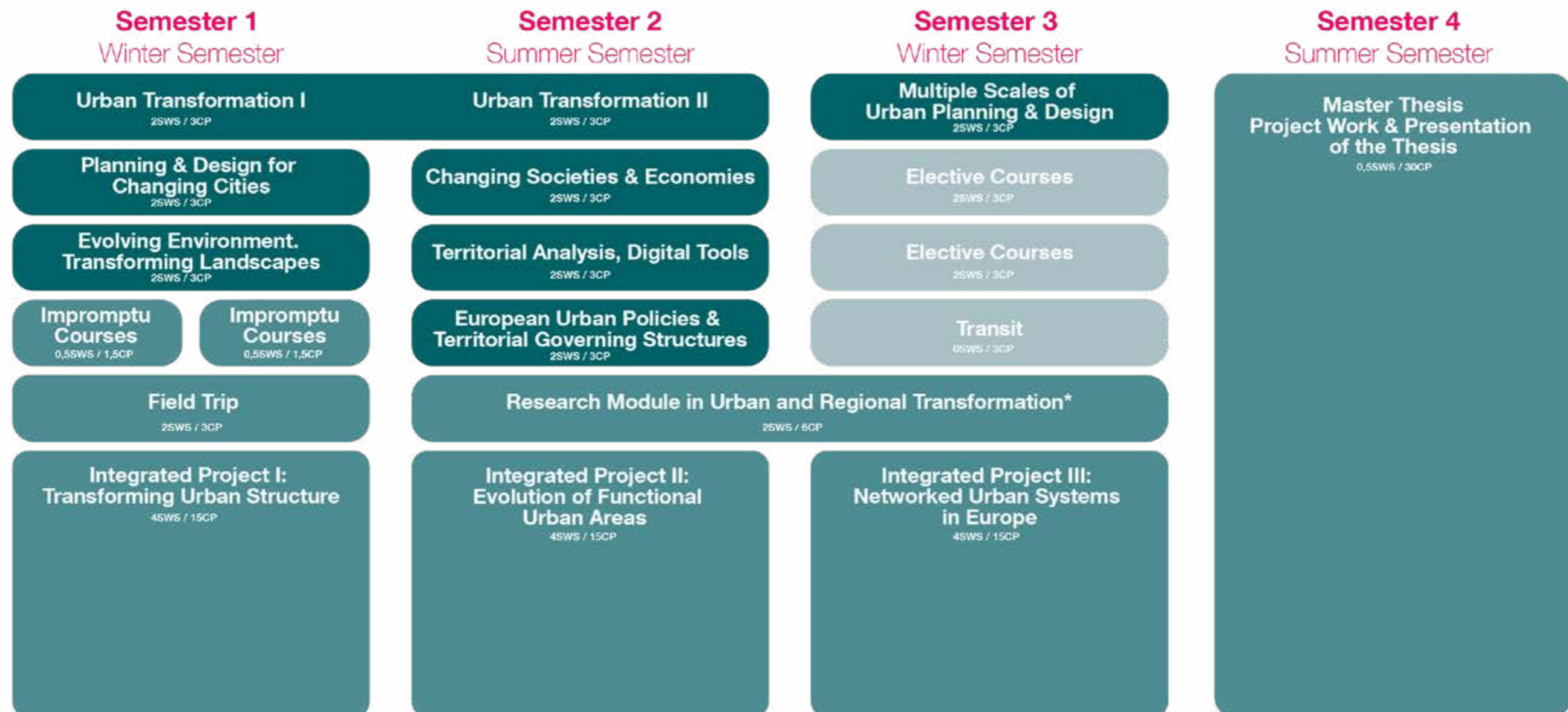


M. Sc. Transforming City Regions



Curriculum Framework

The programme consists of a wide range of courses covering current topics of urban planning and design. Within four semesters the students learn theoretical backgrounds and methodological skills. The knowledge is applied in three different integrated projects, as well as the master thesis. There are several elective courses to be chosen from within the faculty and the further pool of RWTH wide courses.



*This field of study may last 1 or 2 semesters. In any case, it is worth 6 CP.



Compulsory Modules

The compulsory modules or core courses focus on dynamics of contemporary cities, the processes shaping the form and structure of cities, and designing tools for urban transformation. The knowledge provided by a multidisciplinary teaching staff provides knowledge, tools, and methodologies to respond to challenges of evolving European territories while being aware of different spatial aspects such as social, economic, and ecological ones.



Urban Transformation II

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. em. Dr.-Ing. Andrea Haase

Lecture dates

Thursdays, 11.00-13.00, SG301

Examination Date

16.07.2026

Examination Format

Group-exercise + oral

Course Content

The course builds up on the analysis of phenomena/ processes of urban growth, having been introduced in general and related to the urban structure of the students' hometowns by individual exercises in Winter Semester 2025/2026. It leads this understanding of socio-culturally specific processes to guiding the conditions of urban transformation for "healthy environments" in Germany by group-exercises. It introduces structural as well as legal conditions and rules for guiding urban transformation in Europe/ Germany. General knowledge from weekly inputs by lectures is to be applied locally with reference to a "local culture", case of Aachen. Herewith, an evaluation of ongoing processes of urban transformation is set up by a multi-scale approach to locations of pre- and post-WarII-settlement of social housing to be investigated. Small-spatial processes of the land-market and opportunities for counterbalancing preventatively any damages to "healthy living and working conditions" are searched for. Starting point: Basic parameters for guiding urban transformation are long-term values of qualifying the environment relative to any appropriate perspectives for implementing a circular economy spatially. The lectures enfold thematic fields informing about criteria for guiding the quality of urban space under the formal and informal rules of the German Federal Planning System, which will be contrasted in principle to the centralized British Planning System. They introduce the importance of the municipality in Germany as the smallest and most powerful level of the system, partially responsive for guiding tasks of the local/ regional economies with respect to space-become tangible and intangible heritage. The tools of the planning system will be tested in their appropriateness.

Learning Objectives

The exercise offers – per group/ location of post WarII-settlement – a mezo-model for an approach to evaluating local conditions of urban transfor-

mation for counterbalancing preventatively potential decay of "healthy living conditions" in the city of Aachen/ region. It links different levels of scale for the different locations of urban space in the municipality – considering them as systemic parts of the overall urban structure and its integration into the region. The task is about understanding ongoing urban changes and setting up long-term visions for turning processes of exploiting resources into conditions for a "circular economy" to become space. It considers interventions of planning for the dialogue of "territory/ space/ arena for activities" by back-casting from a long-term vision via mid- and short-term scenarios and their options of implementation.

Reading Recommendations

Alexander, St. Pascucci, F. Charnley (eds.)(2023), Handbook of the Circular Economy, Transitions and Transformation, De Gruyter

Hillier, B. (1996): Space is the machine. Space Syntax, London.

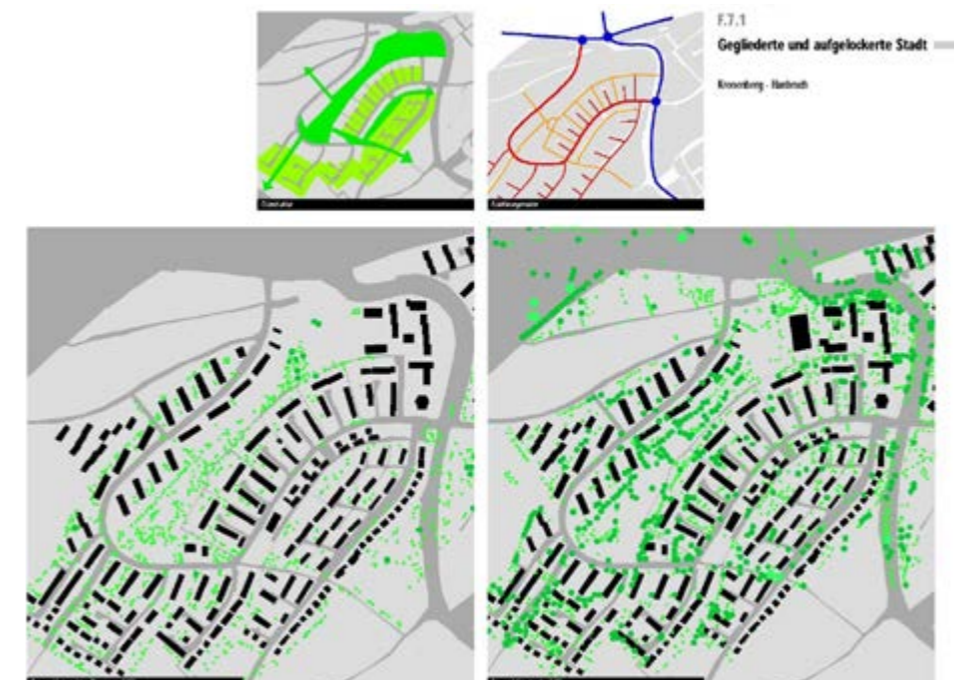
Lefebvre, H. (1991): The production of space. Blackwell, Oxford.

Lynch, K. (1960): The Image of the City. MIT Press, Cambridge (MA)

Haase, A., (2005): Topographies of values: Urban transformation in East-Germany, in: Urban Design International, 10. Jg., S. 115–136

Haase, A. (2004): Culture of Establishing and Using Space. In: Baukultur. Stadtkultur, Lebenskultur, 8. Jg, Heft 2, S. 21–34

Hall, P. (2000): The centenary of modern planning. In: Freestone, R. (Hrsg.): Urban Planning in a changing World. Spon, London, S. 29–35



© ILS, 1997, Das Aachener Grünsystem – in: Aachen in Schichten. Grün. Raum. Struktur

European Urban Policies & Territorial Governing Structures

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

2

Teaching Staff

Dr. Fabio Bayro Kaiser

Dates

Wednesdays, 09:00–12:00, SG301

Lecture Block: Understanding

15.04.2026- Introduction I: European urban governance, institutions and frameworks

22.04.2026- Introduction II: European urban policies and funding mechanisms

Workshop Block: Policy cycle analysis and application

29.04.2026- Agenda setting and problem definition

06.05.2026- Policy formulation and decision-making

13.05.2026- Policy implementation, evaluation, and revision

Debate Block: Reflecting

03.06.2026- Multilevel governance challenges and implementation gaps

17.06.2026- Urban futures and policy innovation

24.06.2026- Consultation (optional)

Examination Date

15.07.2026, 09.00-12.00

Examination Format

Oral

Course Content

This course examines how European urban policies and territorial competences shape cities and regions within a multi-level governance system. Participants analyse EU institutions and strategic frameworks to understand how policy objectives are formulated and structured across governance levels. Using the policy cycle as a guiding framework, the course traces how priorities such as socio-economic transformation, climate and energy transition, and digitalisation translate into local practice, enabling students to identify structural constraints and implementation gaps.

Learning Objectives

- Develop a structured understanding of European urban policies and shared competences within multi-level governance.
- Apply the policy cycle to analyse how EU strategies are implemented at a local level.
- Critically assess governance arrangements and identify structural implementation gaps in urban contexts.

Reading Recommendations

Bridgman, P. and Davis, G. (2003). What Use is a Policy Cycle? Plenty, if the Aim is Clear. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62: 98-102. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1467-8500.2003.00342.x>.

Edelmann, N. and Albrecht, V. (2023). The Policy Cycle: a framework for knowledge management of practitioners' expertise and role in participatory processes. *Front. Polit. Sci.* 5:1223013. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2023.1223013>.

European Commission (2016) Urban Agenda for the EU – Pact of Amsterdam. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf.

European Commission (2020) Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (Updated Version). Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/brochures/2020/new-leipzig-charter-the-transformative-power-of-cities-for-the-common-good

European Commission (2019) The European Green Deal. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

European Commission (N.N.) Europe's Digital Decade. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/europes-digital-decade-digital-targets-2030_en

Eurostat (2024) Urban-rural Europe - demographic developments in rural regions and areas. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Urban-rural_Europe_-_demographic_developments_in_rural_regions_and_areas#:~:text=On%201%20January%202023%2C%20more,a%20city%3B%20see%20Figure%202.

Glocker, D. (2018) The Rise of Megaregions: Delineating a new scale of economic geography. *OECD Regional Development Working Papers*, No. 2018/04. OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/f4734bdd-en>.

OECD (2020) *Regions and Cities at a Glance 2020*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/959d5ba0-en>.

UN-Habitat (2016) *New Urban Agenda*. Available at: <https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>



Territorial Analysis, Digital Tools

Teaching Unit

Chair of Design Computation
Prof. Dr. Jakob Beetz

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

2

Teaching Staff

Noemi Kremer

Dates

Thursdays, 12:30 - 14:00, online
First Session: 16.04.2026

Examination Date

03.08.20226, 09:00 - 10:00, online

Examination Format

Dynexite online exam (Take home exam)

Course Content

Meaningful maps are based on a solid foundation of information. But what does this look like? Data formats such as CSV, JSON or GeoPackage help to store information in a structured way, but how is it best processed? OpenStreetMap offers a wealth of geoinformation, but how can this information be accessed and easily processed?

Beyond applications like QGIS (GIS Basics), information can be customized, adapted, visualized and analysed by using Python programming. In this course, we show the basics of object-oriented modelling as well as different data formats. We also deal with data transformation and scripting, data modelling and work out basic algorithms of spatial analysis. We will query OSM for information and create simple analysis maps and graphs. The aim is to understand the structure and composition of spatial data in order to be able to process and analyse it.

Learning Objectives

Analysis and modelling of data

- Basic understanding of data structures generic / GIS-specific
- Basic Python programming skills
- Data transformation and linking
- Data examination and investigation



Changing Societies & Economies

Socio-Technical Change and Transformation Dynamics

Teaching Unit

Chair of Society and Technology
Prof. Dr. Stefan Böschen

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. Dr. Stefan Böschen
Visiting Prof. Dr. Jan-Peter Voß

Course Content

The seminar offers a selection of theoretical concepts to analyze and describe different forms of socio-technical change. How is society shaped by technology and how is technology shaped by society? How do they co-evolve? And what is the role of place and space in all this?

The focus is on how socio-cultural processes and structures relate with technical-material processes and structures. What are specific dynamics of transformation resulting from their interaction?

The so discerned complexity and contingency poses fundamental questions for design and planning. Where are the limits of predictive analysis and instrumental control? How else could one engage with transformation dynamics, with what kind of orientation could one try to shape them? This is where approaches of collective experimentation and real-world laboratories come into play.

Students are encouraged to re-think their own urban planning and design projects with the help of conceptual openings and productive irritations offered by the seminar readings, and they are asked to write up their reflections on how their project could take up and integrate some of the insights into how society and technology are intertwined, how patterns form and stabilize, and how transformations can be shaped.

Dates

Tuesdays, 14:30 - 16:00, online
(the pause between 12.05.2026-09.06.2026)

Examination Date

31.08.2026

Examination Format

Essay (2000 words)

Course Capacity: 30 Students

Learning Objectives

The main objective is to bring students in contact with conceptual perspectives capturing complex relations of society and technology (or culture and materiality). A selection of sociological approaches is offered for consideration, also in relation with concrete design and planning projects that students are concerned with. Students are asked to articulate the questions that are opened up by acknowledging both the socio-cultural constitution of technology and the techno-material constitution of society as well as complex patterns of co-evolution resulting from it. Strategies of collective real-world experimentation are introduced as an orientation to cope with and shape complex dynamics of transformation and students are asked to consider in how far they already are practiced in their planning and design projects or how they could fruitfully be integrated as a way to practically acknowledge and engage with complex dynamics of socio-technical change.





Elective Compulsory Modules

The increasing territorial complexity and issues with different structural and content-related priorities and the link with the foundations of other disciplines should lead to integrative and conceptual thinking. The elective compulsory courses are characterised by a broad spectrum of methodological, procedural, morphological, landscape architectural, ecological, legal, and economic aspects.



Integrated Project II

Designing Net-Zero Neighbourhoods: Social Value and Community Participation in Hoensbroek, the Netherlands

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for
Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

15 ECTS Points

30

4 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. ir. Ceren Sezer,
Furkan Erdem Sözeri

Dates

Mondays, 14:00 - 17:00, SG301
Starting date: 13.04.2026
Midterm presentation 15.06.2026

Examination Date

10.08.2026

Examination Format

Oral presentation, poster presentation and
report

Course Capacity: 16 Students

Course Content

The transition toward climate-neutral cities is often framed as a primarily technological and infrastructural challenge. However, achieving meaningful net-zero transformations also requires socially legitimate and locally supported processes. Built environment function as critical social infrastructures that shape how residents experience and engage with sustainability transitions. In this context, community participation and the creation of social value become essential components of successful net-zero strategies. This Integrated Project II design studio examines how community-centred design approaches can support net-zero urban transitions, using Hoensbroek in the Netherlands as a living laboratory for inclusive spatial transformation. Hoensbroek provides a relevant case due to its ongoing efforts to improve neighborhood living quality, strengthen place identity, and address sustainability challenges typical of post-industrial urban areas.

The studio investigates how spatial design, climate-responsive spatial interventions, and participatory governance strategies can contribute to socially meaningful sustainability transitions. Rather than treating sustainability as purely a technical optimisation problem, the course emphasises value creation through spatial quality, community engagement, and everyday public space use.

Students will analyse the neighbourhood's spatial structure, environmental conditions, and social dynamics through spatial analysis, field observation, and participatory research methods.

Learning Objectives

This studio aims to develop students' understanding of the relationship between spatial design and climate-neutral urban transformation. Students will learn to critically examine how spatial quality and community participation shape the success of sustainability transitions. Through spatial analysis, field observation, and participatory research methods, students will gain the ability to analyse urban conditions, including spatial structure, environmental performance, and social dynamics. They will learn how to interpret residents' experiences and translate these insights into design knowledge. Outputs include design proposals, presentations, and written reports.



Integrated Project II

Healthy Campus RWTH

Teaching Unit

Chair of Planning Theory and Urban Development

Prof. Dr. Agnes Förster

15 ECTS Points

30

4 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. Dr. Agnes Förster

Laura Brings

Maria Dörter

Dates

Mondays, 13.00 - 15.30, SG314

1. Colloquium: 11.05.2026 14:00 – 18:30

2. Colloquium: 10.06.2026 12:30 – 18:00

Examination Date

06.07.2026 13:30 – 20:00

Examination Format

Posters or report + oral presentation

Course Capacity: 16-20 Students

Course Content

Climate change, lack of exercise, stress... these are just a few of the health challenges on university campuses. In this course, we explore how we can sustainably address these health challenges on the RWTH campus in the context of the city of Aachen as a whole: What health challenges exist and where? Where can spaces and incentives for exercise be created in everyday work and study life? How will we deal with heat and other stresses caused by climate change on campus in the future?

In cooperation with the Sustainability Staff Unit and the Campus Health team, we want to work together to develop solutions for promoting health on the RWTH campus in times of climate change. Students will first learn about the challenges through site visits and input lectures and then analyse the current situation based on this information. The findings will either form the basis for the development of a strategy and initial measures, which will then be elaborated on at various spatial levels. Alternatively, a scientific question can be addressed based on the initial analysis.

Learning Objectives

- You will engage in theoretical discussions about health in the city and the effects of climate change, as well as the design of university campuses.
- You will analyse the RWTH campus with regard to aspects that promote or inhibit health.
- You will develop measures that contribute to health promotion on campus or engage in scientific research on health-promoting campus design.
- You will learn to collaborate with partners from the fields of university health and sustainability management.



Integrated Project III

The German Limes. Border, territory and spatial organisation

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

15 ECTS Points

30

4 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. F. Javier Ostos Prieto
Elif Ertemiz

Dates

Mondays, 09:00 - 11:00, SG309

Examination Date

10.08.2026 (subject to change)

Examination Format

Oral presentation, poster presentation and report

Course Capacity: 10 Students

Course Content

The project focuses on the German Limes, one of the most significant historical border landscapes in Europe. Once forming part of the frontier of the Roman Empire, the Limes marked the boundary between Roman-controlled territories and the lands beyond the imperial administration. Today, large sections of this frontier—particularly the Upper Germanic–Limes—are recognized as part of the UNESCO World Heritage site Frontiers of the Roman Empire. Stretching across southern and western Germany, the German Limes represents today a complex system of territorial organization, infrastructure, and cultural exchange. Forts, watchtowers, roads, and civilian settlements structured the landscape and created a network that once regulated movement, defense, trade, and communication across the frontier.

The project aims to reinterpret the Limes as a linear cultural landscape and territorial structure that still influences spatial organization today. Students will explore how this historic border system can be understood as a framework for contemporary territorial thinking—connecting archaeology, landscape, infrastructure, and cross-regional identity. By examining the Limes as both a historic boundary and a shared European heritage landscape, the course will address questions of borders, territory, and cultural continuity. From a regional perspective, the project investigates how the Limes corridor can be understood as a sequence of nodes and landscapes, linking archaeological sites, towns, natural areas, and cultural institutions. Students will explore how these elements form a spatial narrative across the territory and how the historic border can be reinterpreted through contemporary design and planning strategies.

Learning Objectives

- The goal of the project is to develop a vision for the German Limes as a connected cultural and territorial corridor. Students will explore how a former imperial border can be reimagined as a contemporary framework for cultural heritage, landscape development, and regional connectivity. The course will encourage participants to think critically about the meaning of borders—historically as instruments of control and today as spaces of encounter, memory, and cooperation.
- Working from a regional scale, students will analyse the spatial structure of the Limes and identify strategic nodes such as forts, settlements, museums, and landscape areas. Through design proposals, they will develop scenarios that connect these elements into a coherent system, highlighting the potential of the Limes as a shared European heritage landscape and an educational and cultural network.

Reading Recommendations

Breeze, D. J. et al. (eds.) (2023) Frontiers of the Roman Empire: The Upper Germanic Limes. Archaeopress. <https://acortar.link/wA1rq4>

Chokhachian, A., Santucci, D., Auer, T. (2017) A Human-Centered Approach to Enhance Urban Resilience, Implications and Application to Improve Outdoor Comfort in Dense Urban Spaces. Buildings 2017/7, p. 113. <https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings7040113>

ICCROM / ICOMOS / IUCN (2013). Managing cultural world heritage. World Heritage Resource Manual. Paris: UNESCO <https://whc.unesco.org/document/125839>

Loorbach, D. (2010). Transition Management for Sustainable Development: A Prescriptive, Complexity-Based Governance Framework. Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions, 23(2), 161-183. <https://acortar.link/aHBXkJ>

Turvey, K. (ed.) (2016) Understanding World Heritage in Europe and North America. In World Heritage reports, 43. Paris.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre, documentation for Frontiers of the Roman Empire – Lower German Limes / Danube Limes (Germany). <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7959/>



Research Module

Blue-Green Heritage: Assessing Climate Adaptation in Historic Urban Landscapes through Microclimate Simulation

Teaching Unit

Chair and Institute of Landscape Architecture
Prof. Dr. Frank Lohrberg

6 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. Dr. Axel Timpe
Lailly Vaz de Miranda

Dates

Fridays, 15:00 – 17:00 (Institute of Landscape Architecture, Seminar room)
Starting date: 17.04.2026

Examination Date

24.07.2026, 15:00

Examination Format

Oral presentation and research report

Course Capacity: 10 Students

Course Content

Rising urban heat stress has made climate adaptation a central concern in urban planning, particularly in dense inner-city areas where sealed surfaces, limited vegetation, and compact urban form intensify thermal discomfort. In this context, simulation-based tools are of increasing importance for the development of heat mitigation strategies, as they enable planners and designers to test, compare, and evaluate the microclimatic effects of interventions prior to implementation. This research module applies this approach to a historic urban context, in which adaptation measures must not only improve thermal conditions, but also respond carefully to the spatial character, cultural significance, and urban legibility of historically layered environments.

Using Aachen as its case context, the research module examines climate adaptation strategies in the inner city through a simulation-based approach, with particular attention to the relationship between heat mitigation and historic urban landscape qualities. Students will be introduced to the fundamentals of urban microclimate simulation in ENVI-met and will learn how to use the software to prepare, structure, and analyse simulation-based case studies. Please note that ENVI-met currently operates only on Windows systems due to a software limitation.

Students who have previously developed climate adaptation design proposals for Aachen's inner city may use their earlier projects as a basis for simulation scenarios and research analysis within the module. However, prior experience with such a project is not a prerequisite for participation. Participation requires basic knowledge of QGIS and an interest in using and

learning new software tools and in developing a well-structured research report. If you are interested in participating in this research module but have no previous knowledge of QGIS, please contact the teaching staff during the course registration period.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to use ENVI-met to model, set up and run microclimate simulations; produce and interpret maps of simulation results; discuss the results in relation to thermal comfort indicators, spatial effects, and historic urban landscape questions; and communicate research questions, hypotheses, methods, findings and limitations in a clear, research-oriented format.



Research Module

Adaptive Urban Form Atlas

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

6 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. Fabio Bayro Kaiser

Dates

Wednesdays, 14:00 – 17:00, SG301

15.04.2026: Framing Adaptive Urban Form: data, constraints, and tools

22.04.2026: Shaping urban form from constraints

29.04.2026: Testing for heat: urban form under extreme exposure

06.05.2026: Designing for energy: roofs, retrofit, and performance

13.05.2026: Designing for change: adaptation over time

Atlas Design Lab — New Regional Bauhaus, Heerlen

26.05.2026: Building the atlas: comparing performance

27.05.2026: Rethinking the form: targeted redesign

28.05.2026: Interim review: presentation and reflection

Examination Date

17.06.2026, 14:00 – 18:00

Examination Format

Oral

Course Capacity: 12 Students

Course Content

The Adaptive Urban Form Atlas explores how urban density is shaped by constraints such as regulations, site conditions, and the surrounding area, and how these spatial forms perform under changing conditions. Rather than viewing density as merely a numerical value (e.g. FAR), the course considers it as a spatial outcome: a particular urban form created by regulations, topography, and parcel structure. Using one city as a case study, participants translate these constraints into buildable envelopes for buildings and develop typologies for high-, medium- and low-density areas. The research focus is on understanding how urban form is produced and how it can endure over time.

The course is organised as a comparative atlas. First, participants generate constraint-based morphologies using Autodesk Forma as a design laboratory. These typologies are then stress-tested under three scenarios: extreme heat, energy retrofit and roof use, and long-term programme change. The analysis uses clear performance indicators to identify trends; it does not simulate exact environmental outcomes. AI-supported tools help to structure regulatory information, organise comparisons, and highlight patterns across scenarios.

Based on these insights, participants identify the strengths and weaknesses of each typology and propose targeted redesign strategies. Thus, adaptive urban form is not only about following constraints, but about shaping urban structures that can evolve over time. The course provides a practical framework for designing robust density as environmental and programmatic conditions evolve.

Requirements and resources:

- Basic familiarity with GIS concepts and urban morphology is expected.
- Core spatial datasets, analytical frameworks, access to software, and deliverable templates will be provided.
- Introductory guidance on the required digital tools will be given.
- Sessions are interactive and workshop-based, focusing on learning through application.
- Participants are expected to use AI-supported tools critically; verification and independent judgement remain essential.
- A hands-on workshop will take place at the New Regional Bauhaus in Heerlen during the excursion week.

Learning Objectives

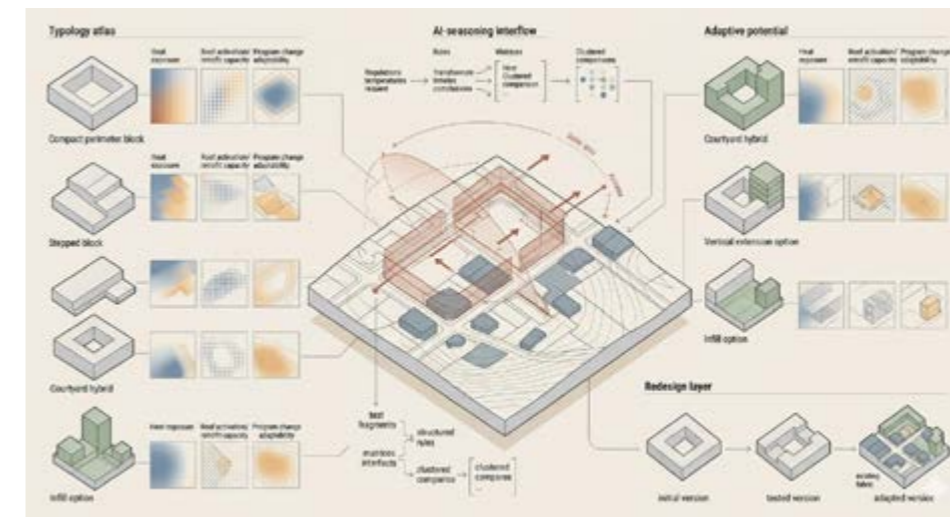
- Understand how layered constraints shape different urban density typologies.
- Apply scenario-based testing to evaluate how urban forms perform under changing conditions.
- Use digital tools and AI critically to support adaptive urban design decisions.

Reading recommendations

Knoblauch, S., Li, H., Biljecki, F., Li, W., & Zipf, A. (2026). Urban AI for a sustainable built environment: Progress and future directions. *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science*, 53(2), 255-262. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/23998083261418565>.

Marey, A., Zou, J., Goubran, S., Wang, L.L., & Gaur, A. (2025). Urban morphology impacts on urban microclimate using artificial intelligence – a review. *City and Environment Interactions*, 28, 100221. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cacint.2025.100221>

Zhang, Y., Li, X., Chen, J. and Wang, L. (2026). Generative AI for urban planning and design, *Engineering*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eng.2026.03.001>



Research Module

Mobility Research and Transport Modeling

Teaching Unit

Chair and Institute of Urban and Transport

Planning

Prof. Dr. Tobias Kuhnimhof (ISB)

6 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Tobias Kuhnimhof

Zixuan Chen

Dates

Lectures:

Mondays, 10:30 – 12:00, (H11 (1385 | 218))

Exercises:

Thursday,s 10:30-12:00, (H11 (1385 | 218))

Examination Date

11.09.2026

Examination Format

Written exam

Course Content

The course consists of a lecture and an exercise. It introduces fundamentals of spatial and behavioural data analysis for mobility research. Topics include: Fundamental concepts and terminology of mobility, travel behaviour research and spatial analysis; density measures and their impact on mobility; spatial autocorrelation; accessibility; modelling of travel demand and choices in the context of mobility behaviour.

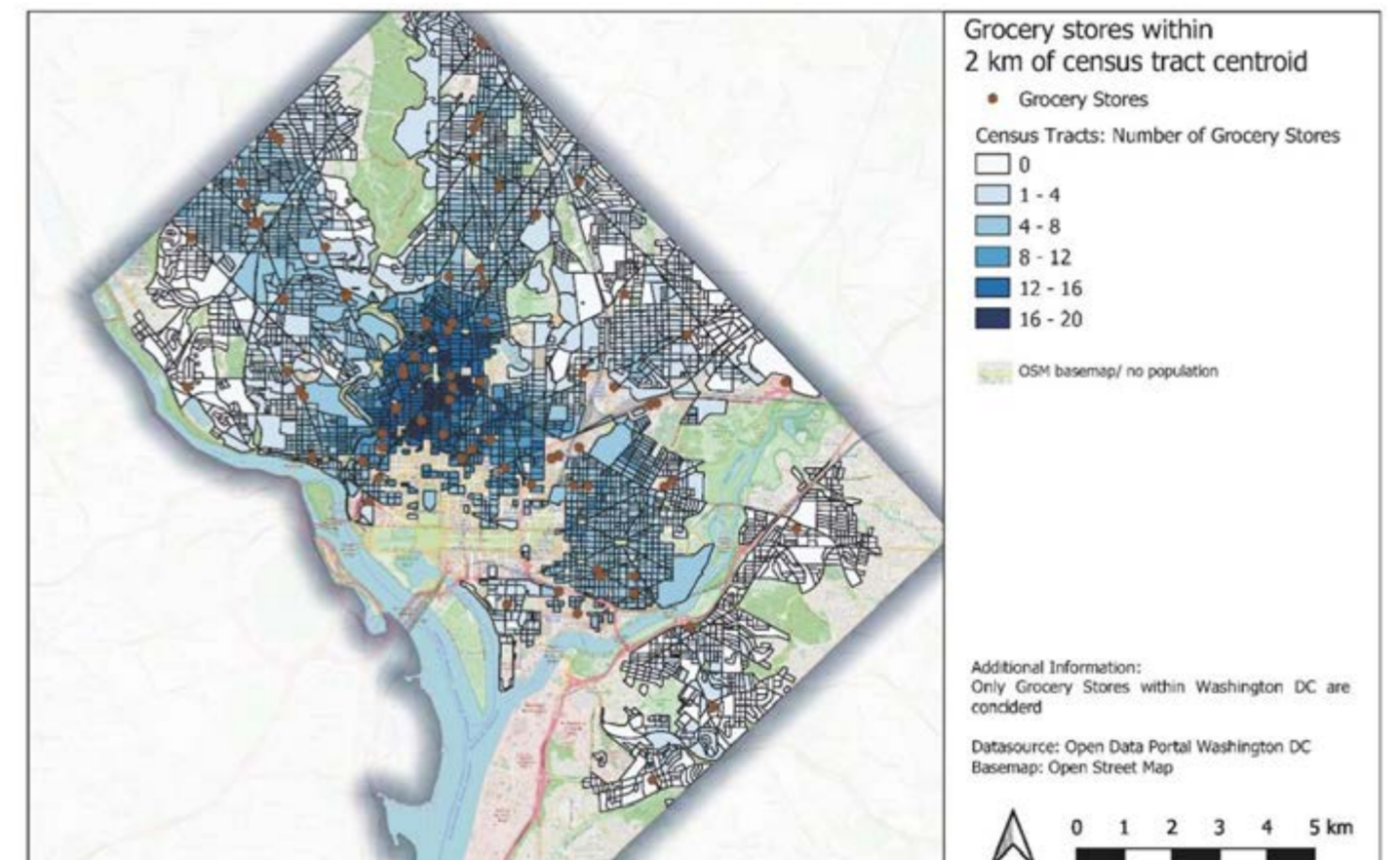
Students understand relationships between spatial configurations (e.g. urban densities) and transport, are familiar with the basic concepts of travel demand modelling and understand the concept of choice modelling in the context of transport. Students are able to apply spatial analysis methods in QGIS, e.g. weighted densities, analysis of spatial autocorrelation, computing of accessibilities.

In the exercise, the contents of spatial analysis are deepened. Using the geographic information system QGIS, individual aspects of the lecture are deepened with the help of Open Data in the form of small tasks. It is not a prerequisite for the course to already know QGIS. Nevertheless, the focus is mainly on performing the analyses and not on learning the basics of QGIS. It is therefore suggested that students, in addition to the exercise, familiarize themselves with QGIS independently with the help of widespread tutorials. The learned methods for spatial analysis are embedded in a whole project process. Students work on a project in groups for the entire semester.

Learning Objectives

- Understand and apply spatial analysis techniques in the context of transportation systems.
- Understand key concepts of travel demand modelling and their applications in transport planning.
- Conduct mobility data analysis to interpret travel behaviour and mobility patterns effectively.

Accessibility of Grocery Stores in Washington DC



Research Module

The Future Is Passive: Exploring Passive Strategies for Thermal Comfort in Historical Architecture

Teaching Unit

Chair of Heritage Preservation
Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christian Raabe

6 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. Mina Hajian

Dates

Thursdays, 10:00 (Reiff Museum R 108)

Examination Date

Final Project Submission: Thursday,
16.07.2026, 23:59
Final Project Presentation: Thursday,
23.07.2026, 10:00

Examination Format

Final Design Project Presentation + Digital Sheet(s)

Course Capacity: 14-16 Students

Course Content

This seminar offers master students of architecture and TCR a unique opportunity to explore sustainable design strategies in the context of historical architecture. The focus is on passive approaches to achieving thermal comfort, without reliance on energy-intensive mechanical systems. Students will analyze case studies of historical buildings from different climatic regions, identifying principles such as natural ventilation, shading, insulation, and thermal mass. In each session, a specific climatic context will be discussed, followed by student presentations on examples of historical architecture from that region. Building upon these insights, students will develop a final design project: reimagining their own homes by applying passive strategies. Through lectures, discussions, case studies, and design work, the seminar fosters both conceptual knowledge and practical skills. It encourages students to critically assess the role of passive design in preserving architectural heritage while addressing present-day challenges of sustainability and climate adaptation.

Learning Objectives

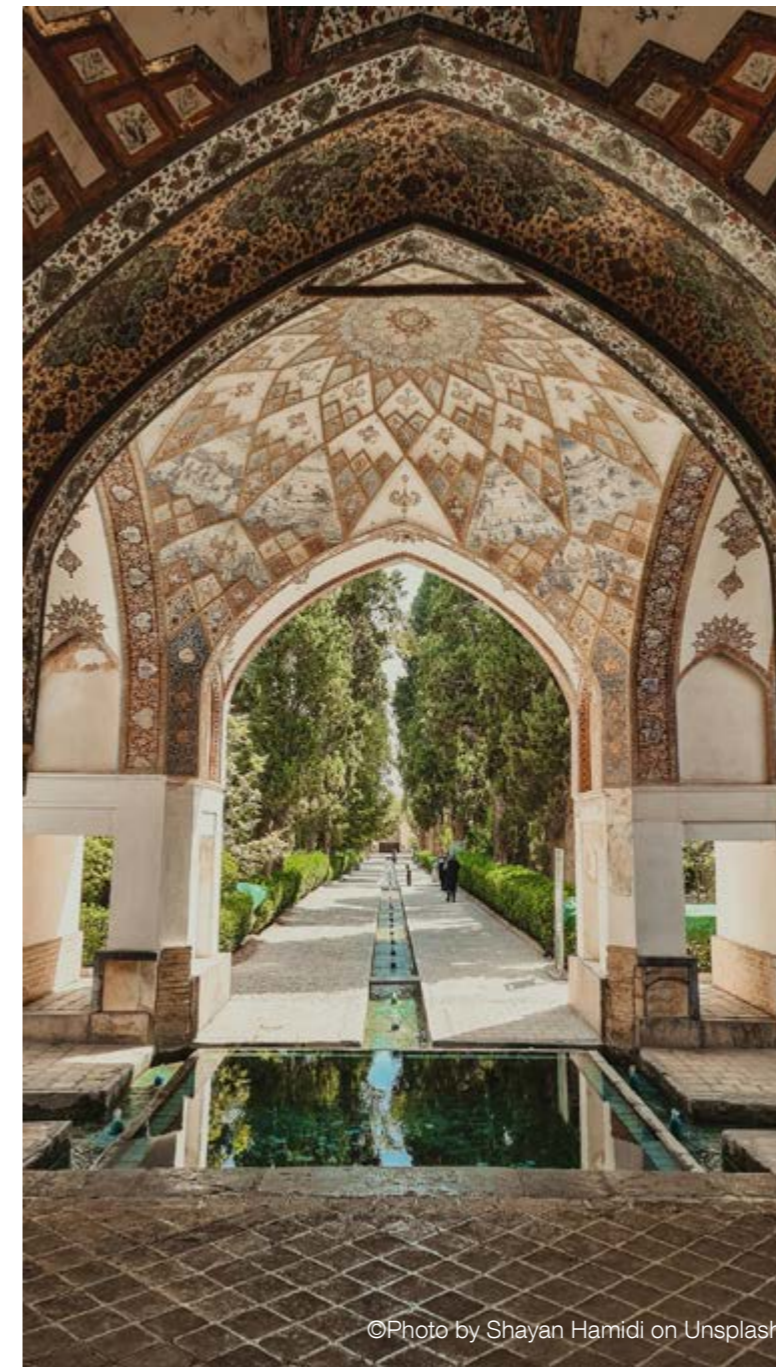
By the end of the seminar, students will:

- Understand key passive strategies for thermal comfort in historical architecture.
- Analyze case studies from different climates to identify effective design principles.
- Translate historical strategies into contemporary sustainable design approaches.
- Develop skills in integrating passive solutions into their own design projects.
- Strengthen their ability to balance heritage conservation with environmental performance.

The seminar equips students with theoretical foundations and practical skills to design energy-efficient and climate-responsive buildings, while deepening their appreciation for the lessons embedded in historical architecture.

Reading recommendations

Lechner, Norbert: Heating, Cooling, Lighting: Sustainable Design Methods for Architects.
Butti, Ken; Perlin, John: A Golden Thread: 2500 Years of Solar Architecture and Technology.
Feilden, Bernard M.: Conservation of Historical Buildings.



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Impromptu Course

Pt.Talks

Teaching Unit

Chair of Planning Theory and Urban Development
Prof. Dr. Agnes Förster

1,5 ECTS Points

30

0,5 SWS

12

Teaching staff

Dr. Nina Berding

Dates

Introduction: 15.04.2026, 16.30 – 17.30,
Online

Talks:

13.05.2026: 17.30 – 18.30, Sophia Beierl,
LMU München: The sounds of green spaces and their role in urban health: Insights from the CitySoundscapes Project

20.05.2026: 17.30 – 18.30, Boris Bachmann, Bergische Universität Wuppertal / Zentrum für Transformationsforschung und Nachhaltigkeit (transzent): Titel noch unklar.

15.07.2026: 8.30 – 9.30, Marlee Bower, The University of Sydney, The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use: The impact of the built environment on loneliness

Examination date

17.07.2026

Examination format

Written assignment and attendance of talks, participation in discourse

Course Capacity: 30

Course Content

The aim of this impromptu course is to engage in meaningful conversations about various topics in the area of planning theory and urban development with young scholars from a range of international institutions and disciplines. Participants will be invited to attend three Pt.talks, an established event series by Pt with the aim to foster a scientific and public discourse about current and emerging critical topics in urbanism. Within the guiding theme of global challenges for sustainable urban development, we see this format as an opportunity to explore new areas of research from different perspectives.

Each talk will feature a young researcher giving a talk on a specific topic and provide for informal, open discussion among all guests. The format can give students an opportunity to network across thematic and geographical boundaries, exchange feedback, and be inspired by new inputs and discussions.

Students attending this impromptu course will produce summaries of each talk, supplementing their own conclusions by relating them to each other and to general topics of planning theory.

Learning Objectives

- An understanding of current and emerging topics in urbanism
- An opportunity to develop own ideas, contribute and network with researchers.



Impromptu Course

Cities for All: Co-design Through Games

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

1,5 ECTS Points

30

0,5 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Alper Al

Dates

Thursday, 14:00 - 16:00

Examination Date

30.07.2026

Examination Format

Oral presentation

Course Capacity: 10-14 Students

Course Content

The 'Cities for All: Co-design Through Games' course explores games as engaging tools to address the complex socio-spatial- environmental dynamics of cities with the participation of many actors. This course investigates game-based methodologies to bridge the gap between the Net-Zero research and community perspectives for navigating more informed and socially grounded solutions. The central question is how urban transformation through co-design can contribute to sustainable urban development. Throughout the semester, students will develop game prototypes that can facilitate the generation of spatial scenarios that would enhance Net-Zero & climate-responsive cities and communities. Students will analyse how gamification encompasses role-playing, storytelling, and digital tools. This will be followed by applying their game mechanics in a co-design framework to mediate stakeholder perspectives, analyse spatio-temporal dynamics, and empower stakeholders.

Through a series of exercises, spatial, social, ecological, and cultural inter-relationships that shape the Aachen will be examined. Students will test the game prototypes with different groups, such as students, residents, and businesses, to assess the games' effectiveness for democratic participation. The curriculum combines theoretical discourse with game workshops to test "play" as a rigorous analytical and design method. Students will be adopted as co-researchers contributing to the development of the theory and practice by combining their game elements with fieldwork, observations, mappings, and interviews.

Methods: Literature Review, Game Design & Prototyping, Developing game mechanics.

Stakeholder Mapping: Identifying power dynamics and different stakeholders.

Tactical Interventions: Students will learn to collect empirical data through fieldwork and translate these inputs as game elements.

Learning Objectives

Throughout the semester, students will...

- explore the physical or digital participation tools in urban design,
- generate analyses on social, spatial, and environmental dimensions on the city level ,
- critically interpret empirical data to understand how power relations, participation, and knowledge production shape urban processes,
- acquire new skills in design thinking through prototyping and iterations,
- explore inclusive urban governance and the new roles of the urban designer as a facilitator of civic agency.



Impromptu Course

Climate Futures

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for
Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

1,5 ECTS Points

30

0,5 SWS

12

Teaching staff

Alper Al

Dates

11.06.2026, 16.00 – 18.00
18.06.2026, 16.00 – 18.00
25.06.2026, 16.00 – 18.00

Examination date

26.06.2026

Examination format

Oral presentations

Course Capacity: 6-10 Students

Course Content

Climate Futures introduces students to the fundamentals of designing with climate, focusing on passive design strategies and the spatial, social, and sensory dimensions of urban microclimates. Through guided climate walks, students observe and document how ‘comfort’ is unevenly distributed in urban space. These explorations lead to the creation of subjective and provocative maps that make invisible environmental phenomena visible.

Using low-tech, low-barrier, hands-on methods, students develop prototypes for citizen-science toolkits that help communities sense, record, and interpret local climate conditions. The course highlights how urban climates are fragmented, how environmental experiences differ, and how climate change is entangled with social and spatial injustices. This will also open broader discussions on inhabiting the urban space for both humans and non-humans. By combining observation, design, and critical reflection, students learn to translate ‘climate’ to support more just and resilient urban futures.

Learning Objectives

- Identify and apply basic principles of climate responsive and passive design.
- Observe, document, and interpret microclimatic conditions through fieldwork and climate walks.
- Produce subjective and critical maps that reveal environmental phenomena.
- Prototype low-tech citizen-science tools that support community-based climate sensing and interpretation.
- Analyse how climate experiences intersect with social, spatial, and ecological injustices in urban environments.



Field Trip

Green–Blue Corridor İzmir: Climate-Responsive Urbanism

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching staff

RWTH Aachen University: Dr. Fabio Bayro Kaiser, Dr. F. Javier Ostos Prieto and Elif Ertemiz

İZTECH: Department of City and Regional Planning: Dr. Nicel Saygin

Chair of Water Resources: Prof. Dr. Alper Baba and Doç. Dr. Ebru Hancıoğlu

İZPA: Prof. Dr. Koray Velibeyoğlu and Elif İzmirluoğlu

Dates

03.07.2026 – 12.07.2026, with followed-up sessions and submissions

Examination format

Oral presentation

Course Capacity: 15 (TCR) + 10 (İZTECH) Students

Course Content

Northern İzmir constitutes a coastal production corridor where heavy industrial clusters (Aliağa), port and logistics infrastructure (Çandarlı Port), agricultural hinterlands (Bergama), tourism (Dikili), and delta ecosystems (Sasalı) coexist within interconnected water systems.

Recent regional and municipal assessments indicate that İzmir's coastal areas are among the most exposed areas in Turkey to climate-related and hydrological risks. Vulnerability mapping of Turkey's coastal cities highlights İzmir as a sensitive metropolitan region, while projections of potential land loss along the Northern Aegean coastline demonstrate that low-elevation coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to losing areas to sea-level rise and coastal dynamics.

Together with water system reports concerning the Gediz and Bakırçay basins contexts, these analyses point to a compound condition including:

- Freshwater scarcity and prolonged drought
- Water quality degradation
- Coastal flooding and sea-level rise exposure
- Delta and wetland fragility
- Sectoral competition for water use

These pressures are spatially observable across Northern İzmir and directly influence land use patterns, productivity landscapes, and ecological resilience

The field trip will be conducted in accordance with current travel recommendations, and participants will be informed in advance of any necessary updates.

Learning Objectives

The field trip is designed to:

- Analyse Northern İzmir as a production corridor where industrial, agricultural, logistical, tourism, and ecological systems depend on limited and availability usage of water resources.
- Examine how water scarcity, declining water quality, and coastal dynamics directly influence industrial activity, agricultural output, logistics infrastructure, tourism intensity, and ecological stability.
- Identify where water-related pressures emerge sectoral demands intersect and generate pressure (e.g. irrigation systems, industrial abstraction points, port expansion areas, delta salinity inflow, flood-prone coastal edges, tourism-related seasonal demand and local supply capacity)
- Observe how different land uses and activities rely on water, and how pressures become visible across the corridor. Support students in constructing a clearly defined, sitegrounded problem framework based on documentation on the field trip.
- Enable five groups to develop one coherent scenario each, grounded in a selected water-related condition and its spatial consequences.
- Conceptualise each scenario into a corridor-scale spatial vision that articulates territorial structure, priority zones, and strategic planning logic resources.



Field trip

Civic Activism and the Development of Blue-Green Infrastructure in Romania

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching staff

Dr. Liliana Iuga

Dates

08.06.2026 – 13.06.2026

Examination Date

29.06.2026

Examination format

Oral presentation and travel diary

Course Capacity: 10-15 Students

Course Content

This field trip to Romania provides an open framework for exploring the country through a series of contrasts, continuities, and layered histories. Moving between metropolitan and regional contexts, the journey encourages participants to understand Romania not as a single, unified narrative, but as a mix of spatial, cultural, and political conditions that coexist and intersect. The focus of the students' work will be Bucharest's central area, linked to the international competition **Dâmbovița 2035**. Launched by several NGOs and architectural professional organizations in October 2025, the competition envisions the river as a future blue-green axis that supports climate resilience, biodiversity, and improved quality of life, while reclaiming riverbanks as public, community-oriented spaces and reducing transit traffic.

Through guided site visits, exchanges with local experts involved in the organization of the competition, and analytical groupwork along the central river corridor and the vast open spaces surrounding the Palace of Parliament (the second largest administrative building in the world), students will critically explore how historical legacies, infrastructures, and concrete-dominated urban environments can be reinterpreted and transformed toward more sustainable and inclusive futures.

The final part of the field trip shifts focus to Transylvania, offering a contrasting spatial, cultural, and historical context, marked by German and Hungarian influences. In Cluj-Napoca, the students will observe the implementation of the project for the revitalization of the river banks and to engage in discussions with architects involved in similar activist initiatives, such as Someș Delivery.

Learning Objectives

- Gain insights into the transformation of urban landscapes in relation to different historical and political contexts
- Develop field-based observation and spatial analysis skills
- Engage with experts and practitioners in the field
- Understand the role of civic activism in shaping contemporary urban development



Field trip

Provada 2026

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching staff

Nicole Maurer

Dates

Preparation and Registration: 18.05.2026,
14:00- 17:00, Location: New Regional
Bauhaus, Heerlen

Excursion date: 11.06.2026, 10:45 – 16:00
Travel: Aachen to Amsterdam Amstel

Examination Date

18.06.2026, deadline for report
21.06.2026, 23:59, Submit via MOODLE

Examination format

Oral presentation
(Spatial statement on South Limburg and
Visual inspiration (Presentation))

Course Capacity: 10-15 Students

Course Content

This fieldtrip is centred on a visit to PROVADA 2026 in Amsterdam. Students will explore how spatial projects, regional developments and transformation strategies are presented to actors in the real estate sector, such as developers, investors, municipalities and other partners.

During the visit, specific attention is given to the South Limburg stand, where regional projects are presented to a professional audience. One of the key projects featured is the Trans Regio Express (TRE), a cross-border daily urban system in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine. This project is approached as an example of how infrastructure can act as a driver for spatial development, regional cooperation and real estate value creation.

Students are asked to observe how such projects are framed, which narratives and arguments are used, and how regional transformation is communicated within a market-oriented context. The fieldtrip is followed by an individual report in which students reflect on their observations and analyse the relevance of PROVADA for regional transformation and spatial development.

Learning Objectives

Fieldtrip to PROVADA 2026 in Amsterdam, focused on the presentation of spatial and regional development projects in the real estate sector. Students analyse how design, strategy and market logic come together in professional project communication and reflect on their findings in a written report.

Field Trip Plan – PROVADA 2026

Step 1 – Preparation and Registration: 18.05.2026, 14:00 – 17:00

Location: New Regional Bauhaus, Heerlen

14:00 – 14:30: Introduction round with participating students and mentors.
Explanation of the fieldtrip, assignment, and objectives by the mentor.

14:30 – 15:00: Short presentation by Parkstad Limburg:

- Regions, municipalities, and real estate organizations in a commercial context

- Explanation of PROVADA Amsterdam and why South Limburg has a stand

15:00 – 16:30: Registration and preparation:

- Provide personal details and passport photo

- Receive badge by email (must be printed)

16:30 – 17:00: Presentation on South Limburg in a Euregional Context and Transregio Express.

Step 2 – Excursion: 11.06.2026, 10:45 – 16:00

Travel: Aachen to Amsterdam Amstel (not Central)

10:45 Arrival at PROVADA (RAI Amsterdam)

11:00 Reception at South Limburg stand

11:30 – 12:15 Opening session (Room E107)

12:15 – 16:00 Expeditie Vastgoed (guided tours + lunch)

16:00 End of programme

Step 3 – Submission (via MOODLE): 21.06.2026, 23:59

Step 4 – Assessment (Results via portal MOODLE): 29.06.2026



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Master Thesis Suggested Topic

Healthy Campus RWTH

Teaching Unit

Chair of Planning Theory and Urban Development

Prof. Dr. Agnes Förster

30 ECTS Points

30

0,5 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

1st examiner: Prof. Dr.-Ing. Agnes Förster

2nd examiner: apl. Prof. Dr.-Ing. Axel Timpe
Maria Dörter

Examination Date

24.08.2026 - 27.08.2026

Examination Format

Poster, maquette, research report, oral presentation

Capacity: 12 Students

Course Content

Climate change, lack of exercise, stress... these are just a few of the health challenges on university campuses. As part of this master's thesis, students are investigating how these health challenges can be sustainably addressed on the RWTH campus in the context of the city as a whole: What health challenges exist and where? Where can spaces and incentives for exercise be created in everyday work and study life? How can heat and other stresses caused by climate change be dealt with on campus in the future?

In cooperation with the Sustainability staff unit and the Campus Health team, solutions for health promotion on the RWTH campus in times of climate change are to be developed. The objectives of this master's thesis are as follows:

- First, to identify the challenges through site visits, to analyse the current situation and, within the framework of a literature and best practice review, to conduct a differentiated examination of the issues involved in developing a health-promoting campus and to gain transferable insights;
- developing a thematic and spatial focus based on these findings, with a derived strategy for a sustainable 'health campus'
- and then elaborating these at various spatial scales or, alternatively, working on a scientific question within the framework of a research project based on the analysis.

Learning Objectives

The objective of the master thesis is to ensure that the skills and knowledge students acquired during the first 3 semesters of their studies allow them to respond to urban and regional problems with the professional excellence and social responsibility. The demonstration of the use of the methodologies learnt and instruments required to deal with this problem shall convince the supervisor that the students can perceive and solve complex spatial problems.

Reading recommendations

von Sommoggy, Julia et al. (2020): How Does the Campus Environment Influence Everyday Physical Activity? A Photovoice Study Among Students of Two German Universities. In: Frontiers in public health vol. 8 561175. DOI:10.3389/fpubh.2020.561175

Cheuk Fan Ng (2024): The Role of the Physical Campus for Productivity and Health. In: Meghan E. Norris and Steven M. Smith (Eds.): Leading the Way: Envisioning the Future of Higher Education. <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/futureofhighereducation/chapter/the-role-of-the-physical-campus-for-productivity-and-health/>

Temple, Paul (2017): The Physical University. Contours of space and place in higher education. Routledge.

Ingram, J.; Hamilton, C. (2014): Planning for climate change - a strategic, values-based approach for urban planners - Toolkit. Nairobi, 2014. <https://unhabitat.org/planning-for-climate-change>

Dates

Introduction |

17.03.2026, 10:00 – 11:00, digital presentation of the task and questions

Meeting-ID: 639 8528 304, Kenncode: 985304

Site visit and getting to know the practice partners |

23.03.2026 09:00 – 11:00

1. Colloquium |

15.04.2026 15:30 – 19:00

16.04.2026 08:00 – 14:00, SG317

2. Colloquium |

18.05.2026 14:30 – 15:30

20.05.2026 17:30 – 20:00, SG317

3. Colloquium |

07.07.2026 16:00 – 19:30

08.07.2026 16:30 - 19:30

10.07.2026 08:00-10:30, SG317

Supervision Dates

30.03.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

31.03.2026 10:00 – 14:00, SG317

27.04.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

04.05.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

08.06.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

15.06.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

27.07.2026 09:00 – 14:00, SG317

28.07.2026 10:00 – 14:00, SG317





Elective Courses

The elective courses supported by a multidisciplinary teaching staff are characterised by a broad spectrum of methodological, procedural, morphological, landscape architectural, ecological, legal, and economic aspects.



Elective Course

Unfolding City Complexity

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for
Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. Stefano Cozzolino

Dates

10.04.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
17.04.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
24.04.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
01.05.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
08.05.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
22.05.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
29.05.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
12.06.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301
26.06.2026, 13:00-15:00, SG301

Examination Date

17.07.2026 (subject to change)

Examination Format

Oral presentation based on a poster

Course Capacity: 10-20 Students

Course Content

Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) fundamentally reshaped the discourse on urbanism, challenging conventional planning and design paradigms. Nearly 65 years later, her ideas remain profoundly relevant, offering critical insights into the complex functioning of urban environments and suitable design approaches.

This course provides an in-depth exploration of Jacobs' theories, combining frontal lectures, roundtable discussions, and student-led presentations. Through a Jacobsian lens, students will develop methods to analyse the interplay between urban form, social structures, and economic activity, focusing on how the built environment shapes and is shaped by urban dynamics. Special emphasis will be placed on the composition and interrelation of physical artefacts, social aspects, and the spatial distribution of economic functions.

A core objective of the course is to operationalise Jacobs' principles into applicable methodologies for urban analysis and design. In doing so, students will engage in critical discussions, analytical exercises, and the investigation of design principles aimed at embracing the spontaneous and emergent order character of urban systems.

The course incorporates contemporary literature and case studies, bridging Jacobs' foundational ideas with contemporary urban challenges. Students will be expected to actively contribute to a collaborative learning environment and develop an independent case study in consultation with the instructor, applying Jacobsian principles to contemporary urban issues.

Learning Objectives

- To acquire proficiency in interpreting spontaneous urban dynamics
- To cultivate the skills necessary to unravel the interrelation between morphological, social, and economic systems
- To employ and integrate multiple research and analytical investigation methods
- To generate professional analyses that are accessible to both experts and non-experts alike.

The final evaluation will consider the following aspects:

- Active participation throughout the semester, including in discussion rounds
- Quality of the case study's analysis and interpretation
- The final presentation and ensuing discussion

Reading recommendations

Jacobs, J. 1961. *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House.
Additional readings will be provided throughout the semester.



Elective Course

Research Methods

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Prof. em. Dr. Andrea Haase

Dates

Thursdays, 14.00-16.00, SG301

Examination Date

16.07.2026

Examination Format

Group presentation – max. 3 students

Course Content

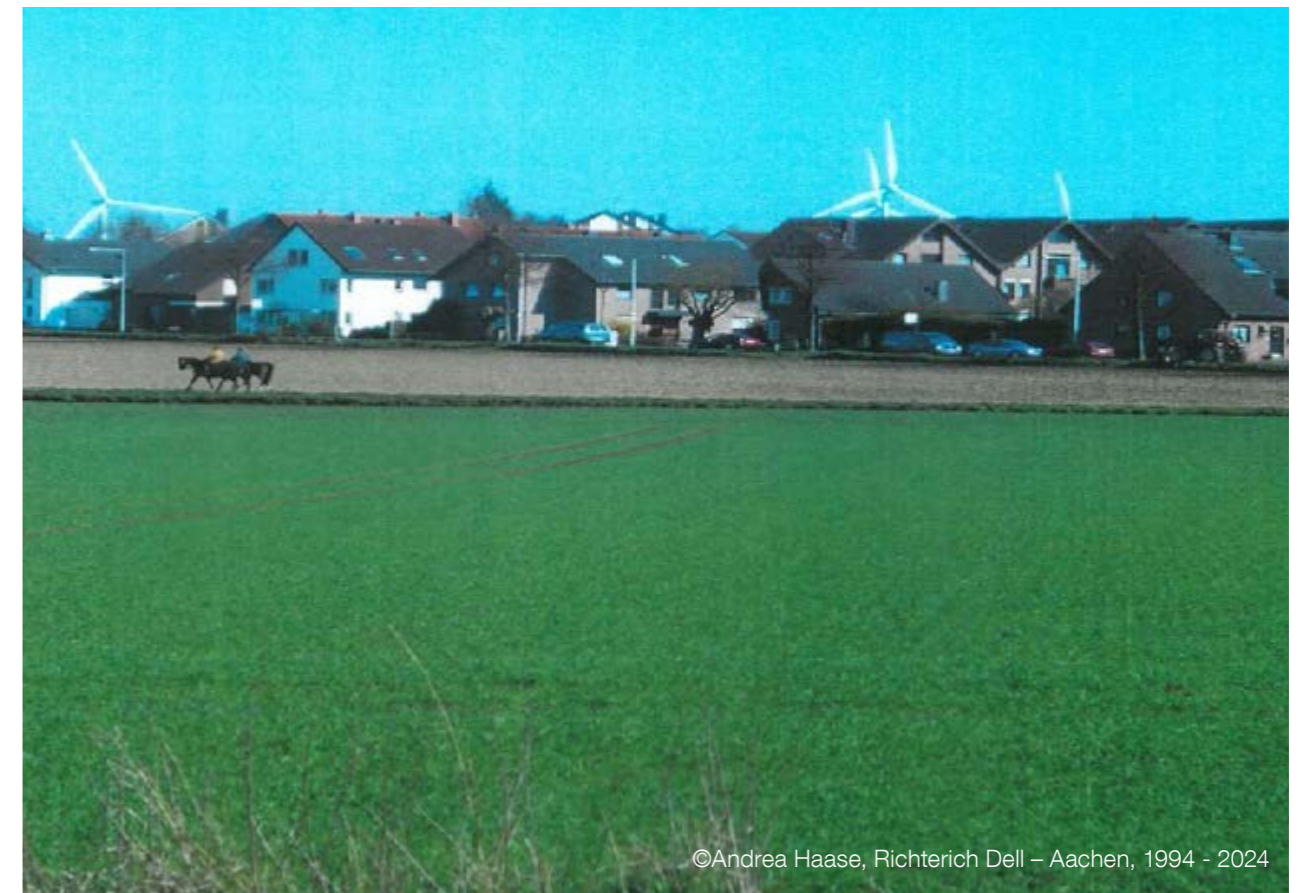
Research by Design will help generating an experience of the reach of inductive approaches, - relating to local specifics and investigating by appropriate ways of SENSING the dynamics of urban transformation. SENSING means to develop knowledge, firstly by the senses, in addition to more scientific methods of testing and evaluating options for urban change by sketching/ illustrating/ modelling. As ideally worked on by a multi-disciplinary team, the students need to carry collectively the responsiveness for considering the major aspects of sustainability (social/ economic/ ecological) and the intended synthesis for an envisaged intervention by action in accordance to local culture.

Learning Objectives

The course prepares for DESIGNING/PLANNING by SENSING. It trains to enfold basic strategies for urban changes from a starting point (to be defined in its proven validity) to a final perspective (to be derived systematically from an evaluation of existing and also aimed to conditions). Techniques of SENSING help to combine scientific knowledge with sensual perception and imagination. The local quality of a healthy environment is to be searched for by a multi-scale approach. System-, modernisation-, and innovation theory are to be applied as parameters for evaluating existing conditions and outlined visions. Criteria are to be set up relative to the late industrial holistic understandings of “qualifying the environment” different from the obsolete routines of linear industrial urban development by “optimization” and “improvement”. Visions and their implied concepts, strategies and their measurements are to be enfolded, evaluated and argued for - by binding the sciences to the humanities.

Reading recommendations

- Matthias Ripp (2022) A Meta-Model for Heritage-based Urban Development, Springer, Cham
- Burgess, R.G.(1982) Field Research: A Source Book and Field Manual, London: George Allen &Unwin
- De Jong, T.M., van der Voordt, D.J.M. (eds)(2002): Ways to Study and Research Urban Architectural and Technical Design. Delft University Press, Delft
- Krikorian, G., Kapczynski, A. (2010): Access to knowledge in the age of intellectual property. Zone Books. New York
- Nieuwenhuis, A., van Ouwkerk, A. (eds.)(2000): Research by Design, International Conference. Faculty of Architecture Delft University of Technology in co-operation with the EAAE/AEEA, DUP Satellite. Delft. November 1-2. 2000
- Turabian, K.L. (2007): A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations, Chicago Style for Students and Researchers. Chicago Press. Ninth Edition. Chicago
- Gleining, A., Vrachliotis, G. (eds.)(2008): Complexity. Design Strategy and World View, Birkhäuser, Basel
- Gleining, A., Vrachliotis, G. (eds.)(2008): Simulation. Presentation Technique and Cognitive Method, Birkhäuser, Basel
- Gleining, A., Vrachliotis, G. (eds.)(2008): Pattern. Ornament, Structure and Behaviour, Birkhäuser, Basel



Elective Course

Digital Ecologies. Unveiling the territorial impacts of data (centers)

Teaching Unit

Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism
Prof. Christa Reicher

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. Cristiana Mattioli (Politecnico di Milano),
Dr. F. Javier Ostos Prieto

Dates

14.04.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
28.04.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
12.05.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
26.05.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
09.06.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
23.06.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
07.07.2026, 14:30 - 17:00
14.07.2026, 14:30 - 17:00

Examination Date

21.07.2026

Examination Format

Oral presentation of a short report

Course Capacity: 15 Students

Course Content

While the concept of the 'cloud' evokes an ephemeral dimension, the materiality of the digital economy has a profound impact on physical territories, particularly through the proliferation of data centers. The development of these infrastructures will expand in the near future and is unprecedented in the field of territorial planning, due to their nature, their respective needs and impacts, the rapidity of realisations, the quantity of capital involved, and the various actors engaged. Consequently, the digital and data economy necessitates careful consideration within the territorial field to address all the different challenges and opportunities posed.

Learning Objectives

The main objective of this course is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the territorial impacts of digital infrastructures. The students will be introduced to the opportunities and challenges associated with the rapid development of data centers throughout Europe and the world. A bibliographic analysis will be conducted to examine the various environmental, social, and urban impacts of such infrastructure. The analysis of European case studies and the related land-use and urban planning regulations will enable students to understand how the phenomenon has been addressed in recent years and what changes are taking place. It is possible to arrange a visit to Frankfurt am Main, the largest digital hub in Germany, as part of the course. The objective of the course is to enable students to cultivate a critical and informed approach to the territorial development of digital infrastructure and to propose operational measures for its more effective integration into the urban and landscape context.

Reading recommendations

Bast D., Carr C., Madron K. Syrus A.M. 2022, Four reasons why data centers matter, five implications of their social spatial distribution, one graphic to visualize them, «Environment and Planning A», 54, 3, p. 441-445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X211069139>

Cournet P., Sanaan Bensi N. 2023, Datapolis. Exploring the Footprint of Data on Our Planet and Beyond, nai010 publishers, Rotterdam.

Diguet C., Lopez F. 2019, The Spatial and Energy Impact of Data Centers on the Territories, <<https://www.ors-idf.org/nos-travaux/publications/limpact-spatial-et-energetique-des-da-ta-centers-sur-les-territoires/>>

Libertson F., Velkova J., Palm J. 2021, Data-center infrastructure and energy gentrification: perspectives from Sweden, «Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy», 17, 1, p. 152-161. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2021.1901428>

Monstadt J., Saltzman K. 2025, How Data Centers Have Come to Matter: Governing the Spatial and Environmental Footprint of the 'Digital Gateway to Europe', «International Journal Of Urban And Regional Research», 49, 4, p. 757-778, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.13316>



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Elective Course

Ways of Citymaking: Depicting Narratives and Practices of Urban Transformation

Module Responsible

Chair and Institute of Landscape Architecture
Prof. Dr. Frank Lohrberg

3 ECTS Points

30

2 SWS

12

Teaching Staff

Dr. Ayça Sancar

Dates

Starting date: 17.04.2026, 10:00

(Institute of Landscape Architecture, Seminar room, Jakobstr. 2)

Examination Date

24.07.2026, 10:00

Examination Format

Oral and visual presentation

Course Capacity: 16 (TCR) + 5 (Geography) Students

Course Content

Overview:

Cities and neighborhoods are continuously reshaped—through formal planning frameworks and through informal, bottom-up practices. Navigating this complexity demands the ability to identify actors and dynamics, to recognize how narratives shape space, and to communicate insights clearly and visually. This seminar equips you with a nuanced understanding of spatial transformation processes and hands-on skills to analyze and depict them.

What you will do:

Working in teams, you will select an urban site (e.g. a neighborhood, district or city) and conduct an in-depth case study of its transformation. Drawing on selected theoretical frameworks and a set of qualitative and visual methods (e.g. mapping, document analysis, photo/video documentation), you will experiment with visual storytelling formats to trace how transformation unfolds, who drives it, and how ideas travel and materialize in space.

Guiding questions:

- How do citymakers shape urban spaces through narratives? How are these narratives produced, contested, and translated into spatial design?
- How does cultural transfer manifest in spatial design? How are “foreign” elements negotiated, and how do old/new, local/global, and national/international approaches merge in the resulting spaces?
- What dynamics characterize socio-spatial transformations that are perceived as successful? By whom are they perceived as such, and under what conditions?

Learning Objectives

The seminar aims to equip you to:

- Apply analytical and critical tools to read and interpret spatial transformations across formal and informal contexts.
- Map and explain actors, conditions, and power dynamics shaping urban change.
- Identify and assess unconventional planning strategies and interventions beyond standard practice.
- Translate research findings into clear visual narratives (e.g., mappings, diagrams, timelines, graphic novels, video essays) tailored to different audiences.
- Reflect on your own role and positionality as a “citymaker” and narrator of urban transformation.
- Collaborate effectively in teams to produce coherent, research-based case studies.





ENHANCE

„Together with six other leading technical universities, RWTH Aachen University has founded the European alliance ENHANCE – European Universities of Technology Alliance.“
(RWTH, 2023)



Field trip / Elective / Impromptu/ Transit Course

ENHANCE Summer School - Synergic Urban Systems

Organizers

RWTH Aachen, TU Berlin, Politecnico di Milano, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Warsaw University of Technology, ETH Zurich

Contact

Christian Larisch, larisch@staedtebau.rwth-aachen.de

Dates

Application deadline: 30.04.2026
Online phase: 06.07.2026 - 24.0.2026
Onsite phase: 27.07.2026 - 31.07.2026

Location:

Warsaw University of Technology, Poland

Can be credited as a Field Trip, an Impromptu, a Transit or an Elective Course.

4 ECTS Points

30

Course Content

Join the ENHANCE Summer School SYNERGIC URBAN SYSTEMS to learn how to design innovative interdisciplinary approaches to urban systems integration across key sectors, including mobility and connectivity, blue-green infrastructures and ecosystem services, social life and communities, urbanity and density, resources and circularity, culture and heritage

Please find more information on:
[Event page and Application Form](#)
[ENHANCE course catalogue](#)

WELCOME TO WARSAW !!!



 **ENHANCE SUMMER SCHOOL 2026 ON SYNERGIC URBAN SYSTEMS**

"BUILDING XXI CENTURY TOWN FOR THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE"

ONLINE PHASE 6 - 24 / 07 / 2026

ONSITE PHASE 27- 31 / 07 / 2026

FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE - WARSAW UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



 **ENHANCE**

For more info and registration:
www.architecture.pw.edu.pl/enhance
contact@architecture.pw.edu.pl

ENHANCE

European Education Pathways

Partner Universities

RWTH Aachen University
 Chalmers University of Technology
 Norwegian University of Science and Technology
 Politecnico di Milano
 Technische Universität Berlin
 Universitat Politècnica de València
 Warsaw University of Technology

Facts & Figures

7 Partner universities
 5 study programmes
 Hundreds of pre-approved courses
 Automatic recognition of ECTS credits
 Embedded virtual mobility
 Two-semester mobility funded

What are the European Education Pathways?

The European Education Pathways are part of the ENHANCE vision of creating One European Campus among the partner universities. European Education Pathways are a system of shared learning goals and outcomes, a subject mapping tool that allows students to select courses across all educational offers of the partner institutions.

Through this initiative, the ENHANCE Alliance promotes a seamless physical and virtual mobility giving the students the opportunity to take curricular courses within their study paths from the educational offer of several partner universities.

The courses offered within the European Education Pathways are pre-approved and the recognition of ECTS credits is guaranteed.

The ENHANCE Alliance foresees extending the number of study programmes involved, providing partner institutions with a framework for deeper international cooperation and exchange and an increasing number of students with a wider European experience. (ENHANCE, 2023)

Which are the Benefits of Enhance?

- Become part of the ENHANCE Alliance
- Design your personal education pathway by choosing from the offer of the leading European universities of technology
- Access the catalogue of pre-approved courses specially selected by all the universities of the ENHANCE Alliance
- Build your own study plan without difficulties by selecting from the list of courses inside the EEPs Catalogue. All of them have been pre-approved by

your home institution.

- Enjoy the pre-approval of ECTS credits. You do not need to worry anymore about getting your ECTS recognised by your home university
- Upon your return, the ENHANCE partners automatically recognise ECTS obtained abroad and your transcript will be updated (ENHANCE, 2023)

Courses

- Social Ecological Urbanism, Chalmers
- Methods for Participatory Planning, Co-Design and Localizing SDGs, NTNU
- Globalisation and Urban Development, NTNU
- City And Territory: Intervention Instrument, UPV
- Digital Modelling, WUT
- Planning Theory A - Planning as Political Process 1, TUB
- Global Urban Challenges: Concepts and Context, Polimi

... and many more!

Recommendations

<https://enhanceuniversity.eu/>

<https://www.rwth-aachen.de/cms/root/studium/Im-Studium/Internationales/Outgoing/Studium-im-Ausland/~qilvx/ENHANCE-European-Education-Pathways/?lidx=1>

Check this for further information!



THE MOUNTAIN THAT FED THE WORLD: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR RISK-ADAPTED HERITAGE PROTECTION IN POTOSÍ

INTRODUCTION CONCEPTUAL

ABSTRACT

Once synonymous with immeasurable wealth, Potosí was defined in global language as a measure of value, worth a Potosí. The city was shaped over centuries of silver extraction from Cerro Rico, the rich mountain. Potosí evolved through the economic, labour relations, and everyday urban life around the production of value. Like a double-sided coin, one face structured values, while with the same foundation, the other face embedded dependencies, exposure to risk, and long-term vulnerability into the city's structure. What once produced value now underlies heritage risk. Grounded in the city's inherent uncertainty, this research addresses the question: How can Potosí's heritage system be addressed through a risk-adapted planning approach?

Two primary instruments: a Vulnerability Atlas to reflect socio-spatial fragilities and a card-based Planning Toolkit designed for actionable strategy development. By reframing adaptation as a model of co-existence between heritage and sheltered risk, the thesis proposes a move away from static preservation toward a system-aware, grounded planning framework. The work concludes that a risk-adapted approach, supported by these tools, enables heritage protection to negotiate long-standing territorial tensions, ensuring the continuity of value through iterative and contextual urban management.

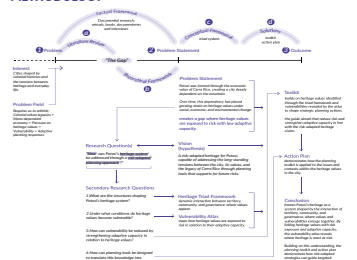
Keywords: Colonial Mining Landscape, Silver Extraction, Vulnerability Atlas, Planning Toolkit, Adaptive Capacity, Cerro Rico, Heritage Values.



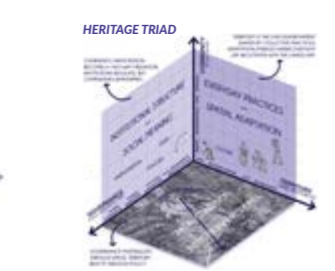
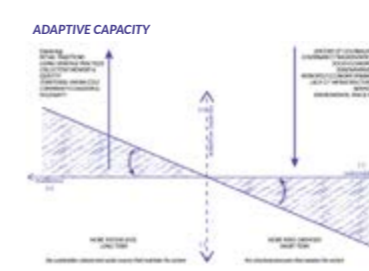
UNESCO HERITAGE



METHODOLOGY



"THE VALUE OF HERITAGE LIES NOT IN ITS AGE, BUT IN THE MEANINGS WE ASSIGN TO IT."
-PIERO DELLA PALESTRINA (1557)

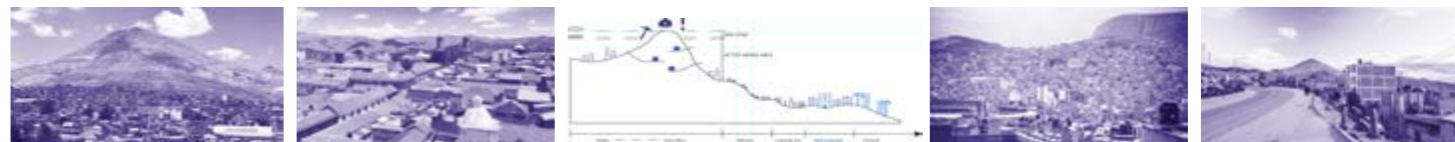


THE BACKGROUND

TIMELINE OF THE WORTH OF POTOSÍ



CITY SCAPE OF IMPERIAL VILLA DE POTOSÍ



READING POTOSÍ

URBAN DEVELOPMENT



HERITAGE VALUES IN POTOSÍ



PERSONAS AND THE GROUPS

LOCALS	INSTITUTIONAL	TEMPORARY
who live, shape, and reproduce daily life in Potosí	who plan, manage, interpret, or produce knowledge about the city	short-term actors who shape the external image of Potosí
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FORMAL VOCATION: office workers, teachers... INFORMAL VOCATION: street vendors, artists... ARTIST: craftspeople, artists... MINERS: underground workers... OTHERS: elders, children, housewives... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACADEMY: researchers, educators... GOVERNMENTAL: decision makers, architects, engineers... NON-GOVERNMENTAL: entrepreneurs, organizations, groups... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOURIST-VISITORS: short-term actors who shape the external image of Potosí INVESTORS: investors, developers...
Daily life, cultural customs, micro-level vulnerabilities, livelihood pressures, belonging	Historical frameworks, governmental policies, policy gaps, heritage interpretation, implementation issues	External perception, UNESCO world heritage, cultural image

INTERVIEWS



Master Thesis

Brief information before starting to the project work and presentation of the thesis. Master thesis shall be prepared within one semester time. The presentation and defence of the thesis will take place at the end of the 4th semester

©Master's thesis by Elif Ertemiz, Winter Semester 2025/26
The Mountain That Fed The World:
A Strategic Framework For Risk-Adapted Heritage Protection in Potosí

Supervised by:
Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Christa Reicher, Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism, RWTH Aachen University
Prof. Em. Dr. Ing. Andrea Haase, Chair of Urban Design and Institute for Urban Design and European Urbanism, RWTH Aachen University

Before Starting to the Thesis

Information

Dates

Application for admission of external second examiners:

Deadline 19.08.2026

(Contact: bayrokaiser@staedtebau.rwth-aachen.de)

Application for admission (ZPA):

Deadline 02.09.2026

(Contact: marion.matheis@zhv.rwth-aachen.de)

30 ECTS Points

30

0,5 SWS

12

Requirements

- At least 81 credits completed
- Module **Scientific Integrity** completed
- Free or suggested topics are possible
- Theoretical scientific work or a design project are possible
- English or German language is possible
- It is an individual work, but materials and research/design questions can be prepared as a team
- Two examiners: The first must be from the faculty. The second can be from the faculty, university, or external. Both supervisors must be full professors.
- Single right of return
- Online submission via CMS DIVA: **Tutorial**
- Max. 80 pages
- Citation style to be discussed with the examiner
- If applicable, 2 Reiff-Walls for design posters + maquette(s)
- Joint (public) examinations

Resources

[RWTH Examination Regulations](#)

[TCR Examination Regulations](#)

[TCR Moodle Room](#)

[Applications, deadlines, timetables](#)

Submission

Master's thesis must be [submitted](#) via CMS by 11:59 PM.

Note: Some information may change, please check the relevant links.

Thesis Dates and Deadlines

Winter Semester 2026/2027

Free Topic

NOW

Work on the topic and task
Contact a chair/institute for supervision.
Clarify requirements and conditions for supervision. Also dates and deadlines.

**05.06.2026–
15.06.2026**

Declaration of intent for the thesis in RWTH online

by 19.08.2026

Request for approval of external supervisors

by 02.09.2026

Submission of “Application for Admission” at the ZPA
(incl. confirmation of supervision)

08.09.2026

Start of Master Thesis
5 months of independent work
With colloquia and individual consultations if necessary

08.10.2026

Single right of withdrawal

25.01.2027

Deadline for title changes

08.02.2027

Online submission of thesis

12.02.2027

Hanging of posters and maquettes

**15.02.2026–
18.02.2026**

Master examinations

Suggested Topic

NOW

Work on the topic and task
Explore chairs/institutes and their topics.

**05.06.2026–
15.06.2026**

Declaration of intent for the thesis in RWTH online

Selection of suggested topic

by 02.09.2026

Submission of “Application for Admission” at the ZPA
(incl. confirmation of supervision)

08.09.2026

Start of Master Thesis
5 months of independent work
With colloquia and individual consultations if necessary

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**15.02.2026–
18.02.2026**

Master examinations

Contact

RWTH Aachen University
Faculty of Architecture
Chair of Urban Design
Institute for Urban Design and European
Urbanism

Univ.-Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Christa Reicher

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