4.1 | Dortmund

Big, green, hospitable and gregarious: the City of Dortmund has a lot to offer.

Being the biggest city in the Ruhr Area, Dortmund is the hub of business and trade in the region and also an example for structural change: today, the former industrial site has become a science city and a centre for services and future technologies – TU Dortmund University and the neighbouring “TechnologieZentrum Dortmund” play no small role in this development. In Dortmund, research and business work hand in hand and allow the interweaving of theory and practice.

About 600,000 inhabitants ensure that Dortmund is a diverse and lively metropolis. In an area that is already well connected, Dortmund boasts an excellent transport infrastructure – and yet is still a green city: almost half of the urban area is given over to green sites and parks. Some of the largest and nicest are the Westfalenpark, which hosts the electronic music festival “Juicy Beats” each summer, and the Romberg Park with the neighbouring zoo. A very popular meeting place with a beer garden and petanque courts is the Westpark near the Kreuzviertel, a favourite residential and nightlife area – and a prominent address amongst academics.

Culture also plays an important role in Dortmund. The most recent, shining example is the “Dortmunder U”, an elaborately redeveloped fermenting and storage area formerly belonging to the Dortmunder Union brewery, which is now a centre for art and creativity. The name of the TU’s own part of the building “Campus Stadt” indicates that the university is represented in the city. Anyone on a tour of discovery around town will soon encounter the numerous interesting industrial monuments. Particularly recommendable are the Zollern Colliery and the Hansa Coking Plant.

For those interested in culture, the highlights include the Opera House, the Theatre and the Concert Hall in the heart of the city. The unique acoustics in the Concert Hall not only attract opera stars but also ensure that pop concerts enjoy their own special atmosphere. When it comes to bigger events and concerts, the Westfalenhalle is the place to be. International artists and bands of all kinds also regularly tread the boards of the Freizeitzentrum West (FZW), near the main station.
One topic that is very important and brings everyone together in Dortmund is football. BVB, which regularly qualifies for the Champions League, has also thrilled the town in recent years by becoming German League champions in 2011 and taking the double, Championship and Cup, in 2012. In 2009, the British newspaper “The Times” dubbed Signal Iduna Park “the world’s best football stadium” in which every home game is an experience guaranteed to send shivers down the spine. So existing and prospective football fans will definitely get their money’s worth. And Dortmund teams and individuals have made a name for themselves in other sports, too, such as the world-class German rowing eight and the basketball team of SVD 49 Dortmund.

For all of those who prefer to take part in sports themselves, the city has a wide variety of leisure and sporting activities on offer: altogether, there are nearly 600 sports clubs, numerous sports halls, eleven swimming pools, a mountain bike arena, three indoor climbing walls, a good network of cycle paths and several fitness fun sports facilities in Dortmund.

4.2 | The Ruhr Area

The “Ruhrgebiet” (Ruhr Area) is an urban region in the west of the Federal Republic of Germany. A total of 53 towns and municipalities combine to form a unique, seamless metropolitan area that has the feel of a single town. The Ruhr Area is not a natural region but an economic one; one that owes its cohesion first and foremost to its history as the largest industrial mining region in Europe. It stretches from Ham in the northeast and Witten in the north-west as far as Duisburg in the southwest and Hagen in the south-east (see page 13). As such, the Ruhr Area covers an area of 4,435 square kilometres; roughly 13 per cent of the total area of Nordrhein-Westfalen.

Just 200 years ago, the Ruhr Area was a thinly-populated rural region, but with the advent of industrialisation its rich reserves of coal soon turned it into the most important coal mining and steel region in Europe. Within a few decades, several hundred collieries had appeared and the population exploded. The heyday of the mining industry lasted from the 19th to the mid-20th centuries. Altogether, some 3,200 collieries and numerous coke ovens, ironworks and steelworks grew up, employing up to a million people.

The undiscovered metropolis

Hardly anywhere in Central Europe has changed as much over the last few decades as the Ruhr Area. In the second half of the 20th century, a period of structural change meant that most of the collieries and iron- and steelworks in the region shut down, throwing the region into serious crisis. Since then, the Ruhr Area has not only been fighting for its economic future but also for its regional cohesion. Despite this, the Ruhr Area with its 6.3 million inhabitants from more than 150 different countries is still the largest economic region in Europe and one of the most important centres of education, science and research. In place of yesterday’s mines, today’s service industries and educational establishments have found a home here. Technology, trade and service industries are the economic sectors of the future. The Ruhr Area has been a conurbation and industrial landscape for 200 years - now it is developing into a metropolis. Nowhere in Europe can you marvel at so many old buildings or gaze at so many new ones, and nowhere are they so closely interwoven.
Business and science

Since the 1960s, the “motor and energy supplier for the German economic miracle” has been transform- ing itself into a modern science and technology lo- cation. With five universities, a university of the arts, 16 universities of applied sciences, four Fraunhofer and three Max Planck institutes, and five members of the Leibniz Association as well as more than 150 other non-university educational, research and de- velopment institutions, today’s Ruhr metropolitan area is one of the most important science landscapes in Europe. And there is a special feature, too: wall-to-wall linkages between the many collaborations and centres of excellence in the various research areas.

The Ruhr Area is well on the way to becoming one of the leading locations for industry and service indus- tries in Germany. Many enterprises have set up their headquarters in one of the Ruhr cities. This is where important European streams of commerce are organised; this is where future European energy policy is shaped. New, modern branches, especially information technology, medicine and logistics as well as energy and water management determine the economic direction the coal-mining district is taking today.

Industrial heritage

The Ruhr Area is reinventing itself – and has discov- ered a completely new form of culture: industrial heritage. This regional consciousness is and was focused on industrial locations: yesterday’s work- place – the pithead towers and blast furnaces, the slag heaps and gasometers – has become today’s monument or landmark. The buildings and factories abandoned by industry are now often used for art and culture, theatre and exhibitions and, indeed, for sport and leisure.

During the summer “Ruhrtriennale”, the Ruhr Area’s festival of arts, these venues host a top-class the- atre programme with a unique atmosphere. Once a year, the “extraschicht” (extra shift), the long night of industrial culture, opens the doors for one night on industrial facilities from the past and present which become the unforgettable backdrop for productions by international artists. In 2010, the Ruhr Area was the European Capital of Culture. Under the motto “Change through Culture – Culture through Change”, it featured many projects and programmes that kick-started sustainable change in the entire region.

Industrial Heritage Trail

The “Industrial Heritage Trail” links the individual locations in the Ruhr Area. A 400 km route wanders its various ways through the region and features themed trails and cycle trails. The anchor points of the Industrial Heritage Trail include:

Word Heritage Site: the Zollverein Pit in Essen

The “most beautiful colliery in the world” now houses the “red dot design museum”, the “Phänomana/ Erfahrungsfeld” (experiencing science centre) and the Ruhr Museum, to name but three. In the neigh- bouring coke oven there is a works swimming pool and an ice rink.

The Zollern Colliery in Dortmund

This magnificent art nouveau building is now a mu- seum where visitors can get an impression of colliery life in the 19th century. And it is also possible to visit the housing estates built for the miners in the vicinity.

Jaehrunderthalle Bochum (Century Hall)

This impressive hall was built as an exhibition space by the iron and steel works “Bochumer Verein” for the 1902 Düsseldorf Trade Fair. Today, it is a highly atmospheric performance centre for theatre, con- certs and opera.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE ROUTE

www.route-industriekultur.de

www.metropoleruhr.de/en

INSIDER INFO:

For further information on the various aspects of the Ruhr Area visit:

www.ruhr-tourismus.de/en

www.metropoleruhr.de/en
4.3 | Ruhr Culture in Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>How many</th>
<th>Where</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial heritage</td>
<td>approx. 3,500</td>
<td>In the entire Ruhr Area, incorporated in the Industrial Heritage Trail; Visitor Centre at the “Zollverein” world heritage site in Essen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals and festivities</td>
<td>approx. 250 per year</td>
<td>Including the “Ruhrtriennale”, Ruhr Theatre Festival, Ruhr Piano Festival, Ruhr European Classics Festival, as well as other events in many different sectors of the arts (music, cinema, dance etc.) in the entire region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>approx. 200</td>
<td>In the entire region: Dortmund U, Ruhr Museum at the “Zollverein”, Museum Folkwang in Essen, Emil Schumacher Museum in Hagen,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatres</td>
<td>approx. 120</td>
<td>Including the Theater Dortmund, Aalto-Theater and Grilli Theater in Essen, Schauspielhaus Bochum, Theater Duisburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural centres</td>
<td>approx. 100</td>
<td>In the entire region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert halls</td>
<td>approx. 100</td>
<td>Including Dortmund, Bochum, Essen, Duisburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical theatres</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bochum, Oberhausen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.ruhr-tourismus.de

The “Ruhr TopCard” allows you free entry to more than 90 attractions - not just museums, exhibitions and industrial heritage but also zoos, swimming pools, inland waterways and leisure parks. The card is valid for a calendar year and gives you three free entries to each attraction. Prices: EUR 64 for adults, EUR 35 for children (as of 2017). www.ruhr-topcard.de

INSIDER INFO:
In Dortmund and the entire Ruhr Area there are plenty of bicycles to hire, which will enable you to discover the area by following some of the many cycle paths.