Innovative Opportunities for heavy industrial regions

The Case of the Ruhr

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Industrial development of the Ruhr, 1960 - 2000
Employment in manufacturing and services  (1975=100)

- West Germany
- NRW without Ruhr
- Ruhr

Source: LDS NRW; Calculations by IAT
Employee in Northrhine-Westphalia as percentage of West Germany without NRW, 1976 - 2002

Northrhine-Westphalia without Ruhr

Ruhr

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Employment in manufacturing: Northrhine-Westphalia as percentage of West Germany without Northrhine-Westphalia, 1976 - 2002

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Employment in services: Northrhine-Westphalia as percentage of West Germany without Northrhine-Westphalia, 1976 - 2002

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Sectoral profiles of occupation in the regions of NRW 2003 (NRW = 100)

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
A Gloomy Picture
The data just presented, make up for a quite gloomy picture.

The picture becomes even more gloomy, if we look at some indicators for future prospects.
Employment in R&D - intensive industries

- Percentage of total employment, 2003
- Percentage of manufacturing, 2003

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Employment in knowledge intensive services

- Percentage of total employment, 2003
- Percentage of services, 2003

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Patent applications at the German Patent Office per 100,000 employees, average 1995 – 2000 (Germany = 100)
Population development in the Ruhr, NRW and West Germany (1975 = 100)

Source: LDS NRW; Calculations by IAT
Employment by education, 2002

Source: BA-Regionalagentur NRW; Calculations by IAT
Behind the gloomy picture
The gloomy picture is only part of reality, but is the part which shapes both the image of the Ruhr and the predominant feelings of much of its population

- Low ranking of the Ruhr and its cities in comparative surveys
- Motivational problems, in particular little self-reliance
Behind the gloomy picture, there is a lot of positive development:

- Universities and other institutions of higher learning and of R&D
- Innovative industries, both new and old
- Cultural development
- Quality of life
- New networks
- Institutional learning in regional policy
- Market potentials
Some theoretical reflections
Some theoretical reflections may help to better understand that the developments just described, carry the potential for fundamental change. The reflections concern:

- Clusters, milieus and institutions
- Economic drivers in the knowledge-based economy
Clusters, milieus and institutions

- Structural change and cluster development
- milieus and cultural change
- regional policies
- institutional learning
Economic drivers in the knowledge-based economy

- Knowledge and the application of knowledge
- Markets and technology
- Comparative advantages of firms and regions
- The importance of labour
Regional strategies and the knowledge-based economy
Implications for regional strategies and policies:

- Activating policy
- Innovative spaces
- Cluster development
- Lead markets
- Problem-solving growth
Some illustrative cases

- ChemSite
- Logport
- Neue Mitte Oberhausen and O.Vision
- Dortmund-Project
- MedEcon Ruhr
- Ruhr Tourism