



The cradle of the Ruhr industry

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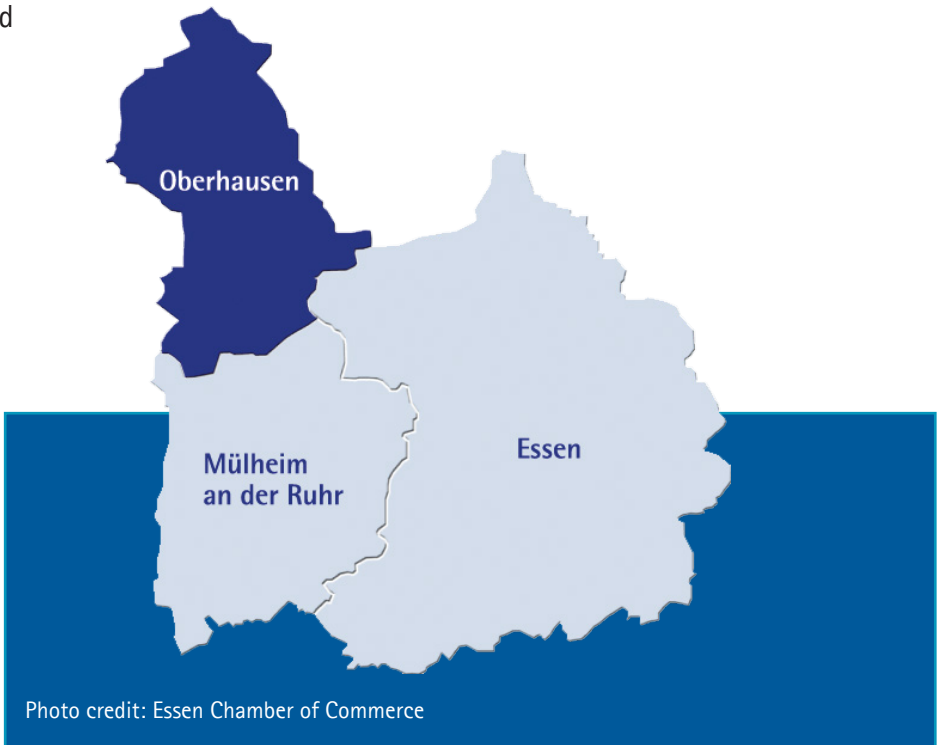
Area and population

The city of Oberhausen, which lies in the Emscher Zone, has an area of 77 km² and 210,000 inhabitants. Its population density of 2,718 per km² is more than twice as high as that of the Ruhr Area (1,150 per km²).

The city of Herne (3,048 per km²), which lies in the middle of the industrial zone in the Emscher Area, is more densely populated. The more agriculturally structured

district of Wesel, however, has only 441 inhabitants per km².

In 1964 Oberhausen reached its highest population level with 260,000 inhabitants. In the following decades, the city lost around 50,000 citizens due to industrial restructuring and a high mortality rate.



Mix of trades and industry

De-industrialisation – as can be observed in most Western industrial nations – and the progress towards a service society has been clearly visible in the city of Oberhausen in recent years.

As a result of structural change, the appearance of the city of Oberhausen has changed fundamentally: For example, coal mines and factory halls have given way to the Neue Mitte Oberhausen (CentrO.). A successful example of the restructuring is undoubtedly the site of the former Concordia mine, which today houses, among other things, a large shopping centre with 44,000 m² of retail space.

However, initially, the change to the service sector in Oberhausen did not take place as strongly as in the neighbouring cities. However, this trend was broken in the late 1980s. Oberhausen has got in with the same state level as North Rhine-Westphalia. The share of employees subject to social security contributions in this sector increased from 42% in 1982 to 75% in 2020.

Also when measuring the economic power, the service sector was able to further expand its position. Its gross value add-

ed share increased almost continuously from 42 to 75% in the period from 1980 to 2019 – more recent figures are not yet available. However, production still plays an important role in Oberhausen. More than a quarter of the economic output is generated here, and a 25% of all employees work there.

The companies in Oberhausen, especially the suppliers to the steel industry and the mining industry, were forced to change their production programs. These companies have demonstrated a high level of flexibility and efficiency particularly in this area and have increasingly opened up foreign markets. 49 % of the turnover of industry of Oberhausen (2020) is from exports and the trend is still rising.

Hard Location Factors – Soft Location Factors

In addition to the "hard location factors", so-called "soft location factors" such as traffic, education and research facilities as well as the environment and leisure facilities are becoming increasingly important. These "soft location factors" will play an increasingly decisive role in location competition.

The central location of the city of Oberhausen in the core area of the Emscher Zone has gained additional value with the opening of the markets in Eastern Europe and the associated reactivation of the European West-East corridor. The Ruhr Area opens up a market of 60 mil-

lion people within a radius of 250 km, more than 15% of the EU population. In addition to numerous direct connections to the international road, rail, waterway and air traffic networks, the Ruhr Area has a well developed and efficient transport infrastructure compared to other metropolitan areas.

This also includes the largest transport association for public local transport in the Federal Republic of Germany, the "Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Ruhr".



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Environmental Protection

Environmental protection is firmly established in Oberhausen. The Oberhausener Technologiezentrum Umweltschutz (TZU) in the former GHH factory guest house and the Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology (UMSICHT) as well as numerous innovative companies are tackling clean-up operations and waste management concepts.

The renaturation of former industrial wastelands as well as planned landscape

management and nature conservation are implemented systematically.

The "Internationale Bauausstellung Emscherpark" (IBA), which was funded by the North Rhine-Westphalian state government, aimed to restore the old industrial structures to new uses and to restore the landscapes and ecological systems destroyed by industrialisation to their original condition, including in Oberhausen.



"Oberhausener Technologiezentrum Umweltschutz TZU"

Photo credit: City of Oberhausen

Cultural and leisure activities

High-quality and varied cultural, sports or more general recreational facilities have become an important location factor for a modern service centre. The city of Oberhausen was able to gain a national profile with its music theatre. The Rheinisches Industriemuseum, with its headquarters in Oberhausen and its branches in the Rhineland, documents the economic, social and technical changes in this region during the industrialisation process of the last 200 years.

The Revierpark Vonderort (district park) offers numerous leisure and sports fa-

cilities. If you are looking for recreation in green surroundings, there is plenty of opportunity in Oberhausen and the surrounding area with its numerous forest and agricultural areas as well as restored historic buildings.

The Oberhausen Gasometer is a visible landmark even from a considerable distance. Until 1988, the gasometer served as a disc-type gas tank, today it is the highest exhibition and event hall in Europe.



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