

Spatial planning, housing and the IBA Basel

*Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland), Solicitor (Hong Kong),
Solicitor (England & Wales)*

The development of the trinational region raises questions of spatial planning that no single authority can answer. Land in Basel-Stadt is scarce, housing prices are high and most remaining development areas are former industrial or railway sites. The neighbouring German and French towns have more land available but face the challenge of integrating new housing with transport and services.¹ The Swiss cantonal structure plans, the German regional plans and the French planning documents follow different legal procedures and time horizons.

The International Building Exhibition Basel, IBA Basel 2020, was an attempt to address these questions through a common programme. Initiated by the TEB, it ran from 2010 to 2020 and was the first international building exhibition to cover three countries. It selected projects in the areas of landscape, urban development and cohabitation, among them the development of the Rhine banks, new urban quarters and cross-border parks.² The IBA had no power to impose decisions, but it raised awareness of the trinational dimension of planning and fostered cooperation between authorities.

One of its key projects is the 3Land area, where the borders of the three countries meet on the Rhine. The canton of Basel-Stadt, the city of Weil am Rhein and the town of Huningue developed a common vision for the transformation of port and industrial land into mixed urban quarters.³ The project depends on the relocation of port activities discussed in the preceding chapter. It illustrates how changes in the logistics sector open space for urban development across national borders.

1 Notes

1. On the spatial planning challenges in the trinational region and the coordination between Swiss, German and French planning authorities,

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see the publications of the TEB and the cantonal spatial planning offices. To be verified. ↩

2. On IBA Basel 2020, launched in 2010 under the leadership of the Trinationaler Eurodistrict Basel and concluded with a final presentation in 2020, see the final report of the IBA Basel and the publications of the TEB. Status to be verified. ↩
3. On the 3Land project for the development of the area at the meeting point of the three borders (Kleinhüningen, Weil am Rhein, Hunningue), see the planning documents of the canton of Basel-Stadt and the partner municipalities. Status to be verified. ↩

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