

BASIC PRESS RELEASE Summary

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The UNESCO World Heritage Site Zollverein

Essen. The "most beautiful coal mine" in the world: the Zollverein Coal Mine and Coking Plant in Essen is a landmark of the Ruhr area, a monument of industrial culture and a symbol of the transformation of the once largest coal mine in the world into an attractive location for culture and leisure, education and business. Today, Zollverein stands for an identity-creating culture of remembrance in the Ruhr area and simultaneously for future-oriented location development.

The site of the Zollverein Coal Mine and Coking Plant comprises about 100 hectares. Since the closure of the coal mine in 1986 and of the coking plant in 1993, the facilities have been successively renovated and redeveloped for new uses. With approximately 1.5 million visitors per year (2011–2017), the Zollverein UNESCO World Heritage Site is today the region's leading tourist attraction. In addition to the monumental industrial architecture designed by Fritz Schupp and Martin Kremmer, it is above all the museum and cultural offerings that attract visitors from near and far. These include guided tours of the above-ground facilities of the coal mine and coking plant along the Denkmalpfad Zollverein (monument path), which have been preserved in their original state, the permanent and temporary special exhibitions of the Ruhr Museum, the Red Dot Design Museum and cultural events such as "ExtraSchicht" or concerts. Leisure activities and seasonal highlights - e.g. the Zollverein Park, the Works Swimming Pool and the Zollverein® Ice Rink - complete the offer.

Zollverein has also made a name for itself as an event location, and the World Heritage Site has been repeatedly awarded as the best event location in Germany. More than 40 rooms and buildings provide room for a wide variety of events such as congresses, conferences, company events, product presentations or private functions. In 2017, the Grand Hall Zollverein with an event area of 4,000 square metres and a capacity of up to 2,500 people was opened in the former Extraction and Compressor Hall at the coking plant.

In addition, Zollverein Foundation and its partners are continuously developing the World Heritage Site into an innovative business location. Museums and art studios along with some 40 young creative companies use the former facilities. In the years ahead, the real estate focus will be on the two quarters of the coking plant and Shaft 1/2/8. The first milestones have already been reached: for example, six new tenants have moved into the thoroughly refurbished Comb Building at the coking plant in 2016. In autumn 2017, the new building of the Folkwang University of the Arts for the design faculty on the former materials stockyard of Shaft 1/2/8 was inaugurated. Construction work on a new hotel building in the immediate vicinity is to commence in 2018.

In 2017, the new headquarters of RAG-Stiftung and RAG Aktiengesellschaft on the southwestern edge of the Zollverein Coking Plant was completed. As early as 2012, the RAG subsidiary RAG Montan Immobilien GmbH moved into its headquarters at the coking plant - the initial impetus for the expansion of the site as a sustainable business location. The EUREF Campus of Berlin-based investor and project developer Reinhard Müller is currently in the planning stage - the former gasometer of the Zollverein

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Coking Plant as well as adjacent facilities and areas are to be converted into a business incubator as from 2018. The basis for all building activities on the World Heritage Site is the urban master plan developed by Rem Koolhaas, Office for Metropolitan Architecture, in 2002. Between the conflicting interests of existing structures and new ideas, the unique industrial architecture is preserved and at the same time redeveloped to meet the requirements of the creative industries.

The industrial monument

Between 1847 and 1986, a total of 240 million tons of coal were mined at the Zollverein Coal Mine, with up to 8,000 miners working in shifts both above and underground. The coal mine with its largely automated workflows was considered to be the largest and most efficient one in the world. The last of a total of twelve shaft facilities was put into operation in 1932 and, due to its functional design in the style of New Objectivity according to plans by Fritz Schupp and Martin Kremmer, has been regarded from the outset as a technical and aesthetic masterpiece of modernism. From 1957 to 1961, the Zollverein Coking Plant was built in the same style west of Shaft XII.

The Zollverein Coal Mine was closed on 23 December 1986 as the last of a total of approximately 290 collieries in Essen, once the largest mining town in Europe. Shortly before the closure, the first parts of Shaft XII had already been put under a preservation order. Three years later, the refurbishment of the complex began within the scope of the International Building Exhibition (IBA) Emscher Park, a ten-year future-oriented programme (1989-1999) of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia. In addition to Shaft XII, the coking plant and the Shaft Complex 1/2/8 were also declared industrial monuments in 2001. In the same year, the Zollverein Coal Mine and Coking Plant was officially included in the UNESCO World Heritage List as the "Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex". The production facilities exemplify the social, economic, aesthetic and industrial history of the coal and steel age.

Zollverein Foundation

The non-profit Zollverein Foundation was founded in 1998 by the City of Essen and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and is sponsored by the Landschaftsverband Rheinland. In addition to the promotion of culture and the preservation of historical monuments, the foundation's central task is to preserve, secure and develop the existing buildings and facilities of the UNESCO World Heritage Coal Mine and Coking Plant for future use, in line with monument preservation requirements.

Highlights at the Zollverein World Heritage Site 2018 (selection):

22.01.–02.09.2018	"Josef Stoffers: Coal Mines. Photographs from the Ruhr area", special exhibition
14.–17.03.2018	Dance Platform Germany 2018
27.04.–11.11.2018	"The Age of Coal. A European History" special exhibition of Ruhr Museum and German Mining Museum (DBM) Bochum at the Mixing Plant
01.–03.06.2018	contemporary art ruhr (C.A.R.) 2018, media art fair & photo special
03.06.2018	UNESCO World Heritage Day 2018
30.06.2018	ExtraSchicht. The Night of Industrial Culture
14.07.–02.09.2018	Works Swimming Pool
29.–30.09.2018	29. Großes Zechenfest (Great Coal Mine Festival)
03.10.2018	Türöffnertag "Sendung mit der Maus" (live show of "The Programme with the Mouse")
08.10.2018–03.02.2019	Ruhr Area Images by Albert Renger-Patzsch, special exhibition Ruhr Museum
10.–14.10.2018	lit.RUHR. International Literature Festival
26.–28.10.2018	contemporary art ruhr (C.A.R.) 2018, the innovative art fair
08.12.2018–06.01.2019	Zollverein Ice Rink

Further information is available at: www.zollverein.de

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