The Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography [Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde, IfL] in Leipzig analyses social processes from geographical perspectives and makes social change visible. The IfL is the only research institute for geography in Germany which is not attached to a university. As a member of the Leibniz Association, the institute is funded by the Federal Republic of Germany and its states.

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Research

The IfL conducts basic research on the regional geography of Germany and Europe and communicates its research findings to a wider public. Under the heading “Geographies of the Regional”, the institute develops perspectives on socio-spatial developments in a globalised society that is increasingly characterised by differences, diversity and complexity.

In our current research we deal with these topics:

- Multiple geographies of regional and local development
- Geographies of belonging and difference
- Mobilities and migration
- Historical geographies
- Geovisualisations
- Data and practices
MULTIPLE GEOGRAPHIES OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

This research area offers new perspectives on understanding the emerging socio-spatial developments, which may be called “multiple geographies” of Europe. Its practical aim is to conduct policy-relevant research to tackle the political, economic, and societal challenges connected to increasing polarisation and peripheralisation. Researchers in the group are particularly interested in understanding the role of political, economic, and civil society actors in initiating new developments, challenges that need to be addressed, as well as processes, which determine socio-spatial conditions, in which actors, places, and regions find themselves.

Contributing to the wider debate on spatially balanced and socially just development, the research area looks into alternative perspectives on structurally weak and peripheralised regions. Of particular interest are approaches to local and regional development, which are less prominent in the current discourses:

- innovation and knowledge generation in “ordinary” places,
- the progressive potential of alternative and social economies,
- regional and local change as collaborative processes,
- re-positioning of cities, regions, and peripheralised areas in the context of internationalisation and globalisation.

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GEOGRAPHIES OF BELONGING
AND DIFFERENCE

In the context of current social and political developments such as migration and refugee movements, recurrences of strong national identities and borders or a generally waning trust in the state, spatial references are often used to highlight difference or belonging. This research group analyses how and to what end differentiations and belongings are produced in and through references to space, how they are articulated and how they are purposefully employed in various social arenas. We particularly analyse the relation between political regulation and everyday practices, as well as between media discourses and subjective emotions and experiences in the relational production of social inclusions and exclusions.

Current research deals with

- everyday experiences of young refugees and asylum seekers in public space,
- security-related practices of state and non-state actors at the German-Polish border,
- nature-based solutions for sustainable urban development in Europe.

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MOBILITIES AND MIGRATION

This research group is working on spatial mobility in its broadest terms: participation in traffic, everyday movements, commuting, in- and outmigration, as well as return migration. It focuses on questions of access to and negotiations of mobility, on infrastructures which enable or preclude mobility, and on biographical approaches to mobility decisions. Based on theories of the mobility turn in social sciences, the group is also increasingly turning towards the mobility of goods, concepts, practices, ideas and data. Particular attention lays on the mutual interdependencies of mobilities and power relations, e.g. looking on justice issues, but also on the interplay between mobility and socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion processes, socially embedded norms and gendered social practices.

Current research deals with

- unintended consequences and adverse effects of mobility transitions and their everyday negotiations,
- adolescent’s everyday mobility and spatial perception in urban contexts,
- success factors for a social and economic integration of international migrants in rural areas.

Contact: Wladimir Sgibnev / w_sgibnev@leibniz-ifl.de
HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHIES

This research area examines how international geography has evolved over the different phases of globalisation in the past 200 years. With the results of our research, we attempt to narrate regional geographies under the current global condition in new and different ways. For transferring knowledge on regional geography, we also use formats that cater to the needs and habits of a digital society. At the moment, we are renewing the concept of the book series *Landschaften in Deutschland* [Landscapes in Germany], which, along with its supplementary online materials, is one of our Institute’s most important products of knowledge transfer.

Current research deals with

- spatial semantics of geography in the 19th and 20th centuries,
- the exploration of the “Wismut” heritage,
- new methods to teach students about their region in a playful way and to stimulate interest in issues on regional geography.

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GEOVISUALISATIONS

How is geographic knowledge adequately conveyed through maps and other spatial visualisations? How do maps shape our idea of space and of developments in space? What is the potential of interactive and user-generated maps with regard to the understanding of space, and at the same time, what challenges arise from the new possibilities of digital cartography?

We address these questions by combining scientific competence with our expertise in knowledge transfer and the making of maps and atlases.

Current projects deal with

- maps and atlases as agents and producers of space or spatial knowledge under conditions of globalisation,
- the development of a new generation of interactive online maps using the ornithological web portal ornitho.de as an example.

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DATA AND PRACTICES

In social practice and often also in science, maps and map-like representations are frequently conceived and created to make singularly clear statements. In contrast, the IfL in its research aims to understand geographies of the regional as multi-perspectival. The research group “Data and Practices” analyses established ways of dealing with data in scientific disciplines. The group investigates procedures that ensure that ambiguous results are retained for research processes or can be consciously engaged. It also develops concepts and approaches for geovisual products that are open to diverse and different user and interest groups.

Current projects deal with

- the development of a digital tool for the analysis and visualisation of migration data,
- approaches to solutions for the use of non-uniformly structured location information [gazetteers].

Contact: Francis Harvey / f_harvey@leibniz-ifl.de
The Collaborative Research Centre “Processes of spatialisation under the global condition” [SFB 1199] has been funded by the German Research Foundation since 2016. The SFB is based on a wide spectrum of area studies as well as disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. Introducing the two main categories of spatial formats and spatial orders, the SFB 1199 develops a systematic approach that establishes a typology of spatial formats as well as a historical narrative about the change of spatial orders under global conditions.

The SFB comprises 17 subprojects and an integrated Research Training Group. Together with the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe, the IfL is a partner of the University of Leipzig. In the second funding period until 2023, the IfL participates in the SFB with projects focussing on three topics: innovations outside the classical regions of knowledge, spatial semantics of geography in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the significance of maps and atlases as mediators and producers of space and spatial knowledge.

Contact: Sebastian Lentz / s_lentz@leibniz-ifl.de

The campus, which was established in 2016, combines the expertise of universities and research institutions in Central Germany. The research focuses on the question of how societies and actors in Eastern Europe position themselves in global processes and conflicts. To this end, the teams work closely with partners in Eastern Europe and jointly accompany the social discourse on the region. A fixed component of the campus is also the regular exchange with the public and the communication of research results to the media.

In the second funding phase until 2024, nine partners are working together on the EEGA Campus: the universities of Leipzig, Halle-Wittenberg and Jena, the Leibniz Institutes for Regional Geography [Leipzig], for Agricultural Development in Transition Economies [Halle], for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe [Leipzig], for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow [Leipzig], the Fraunhofer Center for International Management and Knowledge Economy [Leipzig] and the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology [Halle].

Contact: Lena Dallywater / l_dallywater@leibniz-ifl.de
In the Central Geographical Library, the Archive for Geography, and its cartography, the IfL has three highly efficient research facilities. Library and archive provide a comprehensive collection of specialised literature and primary sources for scientists working at the Institute. Turning space-oriented knowledge into detailed and readable maps that comply with scientific standards is the main task of the classic and digital cartography at the institute.

The Central Geographical Library [Geographische Zentralbibliothek, GZB] at the IfL is one of the largest specialised geographical libraries in Germany. Its main emphasis is literature on human geography, augmented by physical geography and related disciplines such as planning, regional history and cartography. The library of German Heimat-journals offers extensive material for local and regional studies.

The GZB has a collection of valuable historical books and atlases. An important part of the collection are the 50,000 maps as well as statistical materials. The library maintains a wide exchange of books and publications with over 1,700 partners around the world. Literature acquired since 1972 can be found in the online catalogue of IfL and the K10plus network database.

Reference books and textbooks, statistics on Germany, Central and Eastern Europe as well as the current issues of major geographical journals are freely accessible in the reading room. Copies of journal articles can be ordered.

*Opening hours:* Tuesday to Friday: 9:00 – 16:00

*Contact:* Tel. +49 341 600 55-127 / bibliothek@leibniz-ifl.de
ARCHIVE FOR GEOGRAPHY

The Archive for Geography at the IfL is the largest of its kind in the German-speaking countries. It was founded in 1902 by Alphons Stübel, a private scholar from Leipzig. Today the letters, diaries, manuscripts and route maps of about 200 geographers and explorers are preserved here. Some of the most prominent papers are those of:

- Alphons Stübel – with autographs, drawings and sketches of his South America travels [1868–1877]
- Erich von Drygalski – with the documentation of the first German South Polar Expedition [1901–1903]
- Hans Meyer, colonial geographer and the first man to climb Mount Kilimanjaro [1889]
- Friedrich Ratzel, founder of Human Geography [1882–1891] and Political Geography [1887]
- the Archive of the International Geographical Union

The papers are online searchable via the IfL catalogue. The archive is also a partner in the Kalliope network and the German Digital Library.

The picture collection contains historical photographs and postcards, photograph albums and a collection of landscape paintings. Many images are accessible in digital form via the online catalogue.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday: 9:00–16:00
Contact: Tel. +49 341 600 55-151 / archiv@leibniz-ifl.de
CARTOGRAPHY

The IfL produces thematic maps and graphics to visualise geographic research and to facilitate the comprehension of information on all matters concerning space. Turning space-oriented knowledge into detailed and readable maps that comply with scientific standards is the main task of the classic and digital cartography at the Institute.

Maps are a hallmark of the IfL. They are generally produced in collaboration with the research departments of the Institute. The Cartography creates maps for the journals, series and special publications edited by the Institute, and for the publications of its staff. In co-operation with other institutions in science and research, it is also involved in the development of innovative atlas products.

The IfL provides science-based maps for exhibitions. The media constantly publish thematic maps of the IfL, for example in the monthly magazine *Bild der Wissenschaft*.

The IfL realises increasingly digital and web-based presentation forms for the visualisation of space and spatiality. The cartographic skills and experience of the Institute are an important prerequisite for this.

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The IfL is actively involved in national and international research networks. The Institute has intensive co-operative relationships with universities, colleges and academies as well as with non-university research institutes, geographical societies and associations. National and international contacts are being developed on a continuous basis. Partners include research institutes and experts in spatial sciences as well as from other disciplines of the humanities and social and economic sciences.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The IfL maintains and promotes intensive co-operation with the University of Leipzig, i.e. in the form of joint appointments and the active involvement in the Collaborative Research Centre *Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition* and the Leibniz ScienceCampus *Eastern Europe – Global Area*.

The IfL is in close working contacts with other spatial science research institutions in the Leibniz Research Network *R – Spatial Knowledge for Society and Environment*.

In our cooperative research, we basically include local and regional knowledge. Therefore, we always carry out our research projects on the “geographies of the regional” together with partners from the study areas. Foreign junior researchers come to Leipzig every year to work for some weeks as scholarship holders or visiting scientists at the IfL.
Publications

Open access is an important policy element of the IfL’s scientific remit to discuss its research findings in the academic world and make them accessible to the public. As well as the print editions, the full text of the IfL journal Europa Regional, the Institute’s series forum ifl and Daten, Fakten, Literatur zur Geographie Europas are available online and free of charge on our website. Since 2019, the articles of the journal Spatial Research and Planning can also be read free of charge in digital form.

Beiträge zur Regionalen Geographie
Series focusing on research in Regional Geography, including disciplinary theory and history

Daten, Fakten, Literatur zur Geographie Europas
Series providing basic data for research as well as clear accounts of current spatial structures and processes in European towns/cities or regions

Europa Regional
Peer-reviewed journal on themes in Regional Geography; quarterly publication

forum ifl
Series for the publication of research findings and conference reports as well as topical geographical debates

Berichte. Geographie und Landeskunde
Journal for Regional Geography, co-produced with the German Academy of Regional Science [DAL]; quarterly publication

Raumforschung und Raumordnung | Spatial Research and Planning
Journal co-edited by five leading spatial science institutes in Germany; six issues annually

Contact: Evelin Müller / e_muller@leibniz-ifl.de
In addition to its scientific work and publication activities, the IfL prepares research results and geographical information for a wider audience and contributes to geographical education.

The IfL is committed to political and social consulting. Furthermore, the Institute is actively involved in ongoing issues of systematisation and optimisation of knowledge transfer between [spatial] science and the public.

The IfL fulfils its educational mission and the task of knowledge transfer firstly by publishing series [printed and online] for a wider audience. The Institute provides research results and geographical knowledge in a broader sense through its own exhibitions, as well as through lectures by its employees. The Institute also develops digital analysis and visualisation tools, as well as user-centred online services, which are aimed at multipliers in education and politics, and at professional practice and the media.
LANDSCHAFTEN IN DEUTSCHLAND

The book series *Landschaften in Deutschland* [Landscapes in Germany] documents selected cultural landscapes for a wide readership. The volumes provide science-based information on natural conditions, the historical development, and the current state of a region. Using thematic maps, graphics and photographs, the areas are presented in detail, so that the books can be used as a reference work as well as an excursion guide.

The IfL publishes the series together with the Saxon Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Leipzig and is responsible for editing the printed volumes and the freely accessible online material on the series.

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NATIONALATLAS AKTUELL

In its online journal *Nationalatlas aktuell* the IfL regularly publishes articles on important topics related to Germany and Europe. The focus is always on one or more maps which make socio-spatial phenomena and developments visible in their regional differentiation. Geographers and experts from related disciplines analyse and interpret the representations in concise accompanying texts.

Furthermore, the IfL offers additional instructional material on Germany and Europe to geography teachers. It can be freely used in teaching as a supplement and thematic deepening of existing materials.

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[link tolandschaften-in-deutschland.de]

[link to aktuell.nationalatlas.de]
Support for young researchers

The IfL is actively involved in supporting young researchers and offers young German and foreign scientists optimal conditions for successful research.

At the Institute, gender equality and the compatibility of family and career are seen and promoted as an essential component and guiding principle of successful work.

INTERNSHIP AND DOCTORATE

The IfL organises a six-week internship programme every year, open to a maximum of 15 students from German and foreign universities. The students take on specific tasks in current research projects and gain insights into the overall work of the Institute.

There are always several doctoral candidates and post-doctoral researchers at the Institute whose theses complement the research programmes of the IfL. A fellowship programme provides opportunities for foreign scientists in particular to do research in Germany and to develop co-operative partnerships.
Facts and figures

**STAFF [2019]**

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**FUNDING [2019]**

- **Institutional funding**
  - Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community
  - Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism
  - EUR 4.9 million

- **Project funding**
  - German Research Foundation
  - European Union
  - Others
  - EUR 1.7 million

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How to find us

Main Station – Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde

**Tram [approx. 45 min.]**:  
From the main station take tram 3E or 7 to the final stop Sommerfeld. Walk through the Paunsdorf-Center towards the Sachsen-Therme. The IfL is located diagonally opposite the A.T.U car repair shop.

**Tram and bus [approx. 30 min.]**:  
Take tram 7 [direction Sommerfeld] from the main station to the stop Barbarastraße or tram 3E [direction Sommerfeld] to the stop Permoser-/Torgauerstraße. Continue with bus 90 [direction Paunsdorf-Center] to the stop Schongauerstraße. Cross the Riesaer Straße. The IfL is located in the middle of the three building complexes.

**S-Bahn [approx. 35 min.] / regional train [approx. 20 min.]**:  
From the main station take the S4 or Regionalbahn/Regionalexpress in the direction of Wurzen/Meißen/Grimma to the Engelsdorf stop. Cross the bridge and turn left towards Paunsdorf-Center, then turn left and follow Riesaer Straße. About 150 meters after the junction of Schongauerstraße turn right to IfL.

To plan your journey, please use the timetable information of the Mitteldeutsche Verkehrsverbund: www.mdv.de