

## Brussels Periphery - Perspectives of the Urban Landscape

### From Erasme Hospital to the peri-urban fringe



<https://ssl.panoramio.com/photo/82159537>

*“Landscape’ means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.*

*...(This convention) concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes...*

*....Each Party undertakes (measures) to increase awareness among the civil society, private organisations, and public authorities of the value of landscapes, their role and changes to them...”.*

***European Landscape Convention, Florence, 2000***

## Background

This intensive programme deals with integrated approaches to urban and landscape planning. The territorial focus is on the peripheries of European metropolitan areas. The Belgian capital city Brussels is the second case-study to be explored in this context. Integrated planning combines spatial, societal, ecological, economic and cultural aspects in order to build up holistic solutions to complex urban problems that can not be solved by one discipline alone. Innovative governance models and active public participation are further features of this approach.

Urban peripheries are characterised by competing interests and land use demands of housing, agriculture, industry, traffic, commerce, nature protection, water management, recreation and various other sectors. A profound understanding of the driving forces shaping these areas combined with creative procedural and spatial thinking is required for assuring the sustainable development of urban fringe zones. Urban and peri-urban areas are Europe’s key to economic growth, social wealth and

## Intensive Programme 2014 – The Periphery of Brussels

political stability. But at the same time this urban productivity is highly threatened if its ecological foundation is destroyed. Therefore, sustainable growth has become the principal goal of the Europe 2020 strategy. The urban fringe is thus an excellent laboratory for exploring the possibilities of integrated land use management leading to smart integration of different demands for example in the form of multifunctional areas that succeed in combining aspects of infrastructure, water management, recreation, nature protection, agricultural production as well as structural and aesthetical functions.

## Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The main activity is a design studio of 12 days duration in Brussels. The studio work will be accompanied by a theoretical lecture series in which topical issues like urban agriculture, process-oriented planning, public participation and green infrastructure will be addressed. A preparatory phase and a follow-up phase will be delivered in the form of an online seminar.

The following learning outcomes are envisaged:

### ***Competences on the subject-specific level***

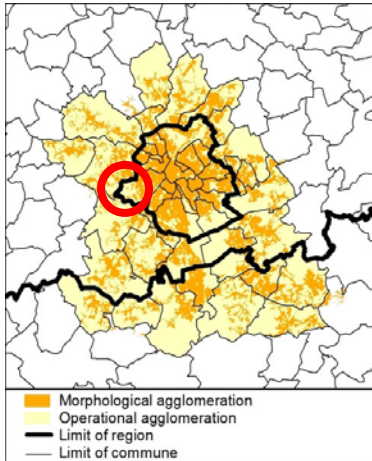
1. Students shall develop spatial visions and design proposals for multifunctional areas located in the urban periphery. These visions and proposals shall result from an integrated approach of urban planning and landscape architecture.
2. Students shall be enabled to work in an interdisciplinary team in which their own competence feeds into a broader consideration while making use of different planning and design methods.
3. Students shall internalise the specific demands of industry, commerce, housing, society, ecology, agriculture and traffic and thus understand the major drivers of urban change and development.
4. Students shall understand the nature of process-oriented planning methods including methods of public participation.
5. Students shall understand the basic principles of European legacy that is increasingly influencing urban fringe areas such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Regional Development Policy and Environmental Policy, in particular the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive (Natura 2000).

### ***Competences on the generic level***

1. Intercultural competence and European identity: ability to work in an international team, to communicate in a foreign language, to respect cultural differences and to make creative use of the others' cultural potentials.
2. Fostering creative, innovative and process-oriented thinking
3. Project management skills: Time and team management, workflows, team communication, targeted and output-oriented group work.
4. Communication and presentation skills by means of several group and plenary presentations.
5. Development of political, environmental and social awareness, civic engagement and the ability to address issues of public concern
6. Knowledge of a new culture and development of European consciousness and identity through intercultural teamwork and by studying a foreign landscape and the culture in which it is embedded.

## Project Location

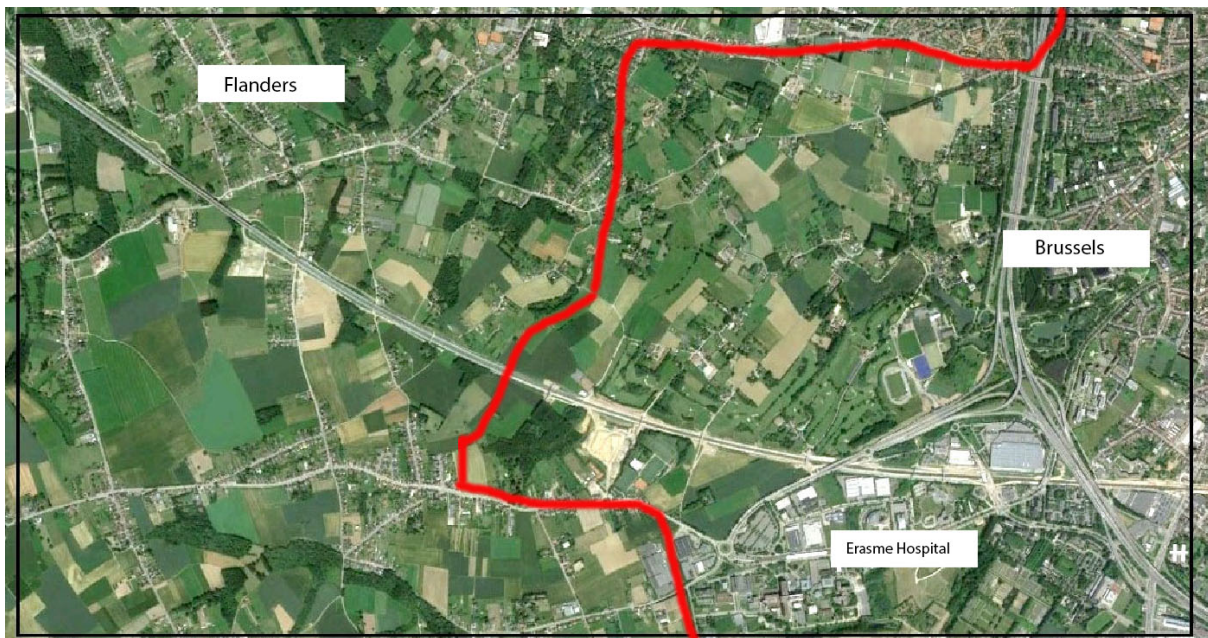
### *From Erasme Hospital across the regional boundaries*



Revisiting the extension of the Brussels urban agglomeration: new methods, new data... new results? Thomas et al., 2012, <http://belgeo.revues.org/6074>

Belgium is divided into three regional units: the flamish-speaking part of Flanders in the North, the francophone part of Wallonia in the South and the urban region of Brussels in the centre. The graphic on the left shows that the morphological extension of the urban agglomeration goes far beyond its administrative boundary.

The project site departs from the Erasme hospital and the major infrastructure elements surrounding it. The area of consideration continues to the northwest where a rural landscape with semi-natural elements can be found. The regional boundary between Brussels and Flanders is another important element. It passes through the north-western part of the area and represents a specific challenge for planning.



The project site and its position at the regional boundary between Brussels and Flanders  
 Map source: google maps

## Project Phases + Outputs

### 1 Preparation Phase: 15.05. – 04.07.2014, 3 ECTS

The working groups will be mixed between the institutions and the groups will already be formed for the preparation phase. Meetings and lectures will take place in the IP virtual classroom.

<b>Detailed Schedule Online Preparation Phase</b>		
<b>Usual timeframe: Wednesdays, 18 – 19 30 CET (19 – 20 30 RO/EE)</b>		
Date	Theme	Activities / Assignments
14.05.2014	Welcome and introduction Overview of activities	Visual essays Reading assignments
19.05.2014 exceptionally on Monday	LE:NOTRE Institute lecture by Lisa Diedrich, SLU 'European Landscape Architecture'	Visual essays
30.05.2014	<i>Deadline e-clic international competition</i>	<i>Possibility to submit visual essays</i>
04.06.2014	Presentation of visual essays	Participants present results in parallel groups Thematic groups start
18.06.2014	Lecture by Nicolas Triboi	
25.06.2014	Lecture by Simon Bell	
03.07.2014	Short presentation of working groups' thematic findings	Participants present

The following activities are foreseen:

#### International Online Lectures

2-3 thematic online lectures related to the project subject from European experts in cooperation with the LE:NOTRE Institute (<http://www.le-notre.org>)

#### Visual Essay

In this exercise students will be asked to tell a visual story of 'their' periphery. This could be a behaviour pattern, spatial structures/patterns, a theme, a landscape element, a story, a colour, a sound...or anything else encountered. Participants are completely free to choose any type of media. Results of this exercise can be submitted for the E-Clic Competition (<http://www.e-clicproject.eu>). Therefore, the visual essay will be announced some time earlier than the official start of this phase.

#### Readings

All readings will be available from the ILIAS online repository. Each participant will be asked to prepare a concept map or a short summary (max. 2000 signs) of his/her reading and publish it on the project wiki before 30<sup>th</sup> of June. The reading list will be made available via googledocs after the first online meeting. Participants will then be able to indicate their selection online.

### **Thematic Analysis**

This activity will start as a collaborative desk research during the online phase and continue on site. Each working group will analyse a specific theme/feature. This information will be brought together on the third workshop day in the form of a plenary presentation. Analytical data will be shared afterwards.

### **The following 10 themes will be distributed among the teams:**

1. The wider context: landscape units, peri-urban patterns and transition zones
2. Land use change in the last 100 years, history of the area: are there any traditions or historic events/images that could have a role in the planning?
3. The built environment – typologies and tendencies, incl. monuments, legal framework + current policy objectives
4. Traffic infrastructure and patterns of movement, (status quo and plans)
5. Water bodies + water system
6. Biotopes – flora, fauna + natural monuments, trees, local climate
7. Agriculture, gardens + greenhouses
8. People + behaviour patterns, quality of life and socioeconomic data
9. Industrial uses + technical infrastructure
10. Visual appearance: landmarks, structures, patterns, topography, borders, connections and limits

In addition, the individual, subjective perception – the sense of place – should feed into the analysis and become part of this output. During this analytical phase, drawings, images, videos, topographical maps and GIS data are to be used in an integrated way. Drivers-Response models can be used for presenting analysis findings.

## ***2 Core Phase on Site: 05.07. – 20.07.2014, 5 ECTS***

### **Output 1: Landscape Assessment and Analysis of Driving Forces**

The thematic analysis started during the online phase will be continued and refined on the basis of site observations. A group presentation will be held by mid of the first workshop week.

### **Output 2: Scenario Building**

After bringing together the different analysis themes each group will produce a scenario in order to discuss the perspective of the area under observation. Alternative futures will be formulated depending on the groups' specific selection and combination of factors, values and criteria. Challenging aspects like economic and political uncertainty should be considered. Scenarios will be presented in an interim plenary at the end of week one.

### Output 3: Translation to the site and visualisation

During the second week each group will be free to design their own work programme. Three areas of specification can be distinguished: strategic, territorial or site specific. Practically, groups may decide to focus on one of them or use mixed approaches depending on the constellation of interests. All projects need to include a sustainability model in which aspects of governance, finance and participation are outlined.

### 3 Documentation Phase: 21.07. – 02.08.2014, 2 ECTS

Reworking and refining of project outputs for the printed documentation.

#### Repository link with project data:

[http://ilias.hfwu.de/goto.php?target=cat\\_2834&client\\_id=hfwu](http://ilias.hfwu.de/goto.php?target=cat_2834&client_id=hfwu)

Username: IP-Periphery

Password: Bucharest\_2013

#### Project WIKI

<http://european-peripheries.imla-campus.eu>

## Contact Persons and Teachers

### Host Institution

Université Libre de Bruxelles- Faculté d'Architecture lacambrehorta

#### ULB contact person:

Didier Vancutsem

[didier.vancutsem@ulb.ac.be](mailto:didier.vancutsem@ulb.ac.be)

#### ULB lecturers:

Axel Fisher

[axel.fisher@ulb.ac.be](mailto:axel.fisher@ulb.ac.be)

Patrice Neirinck

[patrice.neirinck@ulb.ac.be](mailto:patrice.neirinck@ulb.ac.be)

#### Further team members

Olivia Adamska

[olivia.adamska@hotmail.be](mailto:olivia.adamska@hotmail.be)

Catalina Codruta Dobre

[catalinacodrutadobre@gmail.com](mailto:catalinacodrutadobre@gmail.com)

Julie Martineau

[Julie.Martineau@ulb.ac.be](mailto:Julie.Martineau@ulb.ac.be)

Serge Peeters

[sepeeter@ulb.ac.be](mailto:sepeeter@ulb.ac.be)

Thibault Verheugen

[thibault.verheugen@gmail.com](mailto:thibault.verheugen@gmail.com)

### ***Coordinating Institution***

**Nürtingen-Geislingen University**

Faculty for Landscape Architecture, Environmental and Urban Planning

#### *HfWU contact person*

Ellen Fetzer

ellen.fetzer@hfwu.de

#### *HfWU lecturers:*

Kristin Faurest

faurest.kristin@chello.hu

Roman Lenz

roman.lenz@hfwu.de

Rainer Sachse

rainer.sachse@hfwu.de

### ***Partner Institutions***

**Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences**

Ingrid Scheck

ingrid.schegk@hswt.de

Uta Stock-Gruber

uta.stock-gruber@hswt.de

**Estonian University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Landscape Architecture**

Simon Bell

simon.bell@emu.ee

Toomas Muru

toomas.muru@emu.ee

**University for Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu Bucharest**

Department for Territorial and Urban Planning

Gabriel Pascariu

gabi@urbaplan.ro

Mihai Alexandru

mi.alexandru@yahoo.com

Irina Pața

irinapatza@yahoo.com

Claudiu Runceanu

cldrun@yahoo.com

Ana Opris

anna\_opris@yahoo.com