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ESPON Seminar

Small and medium-sized cities in Europe

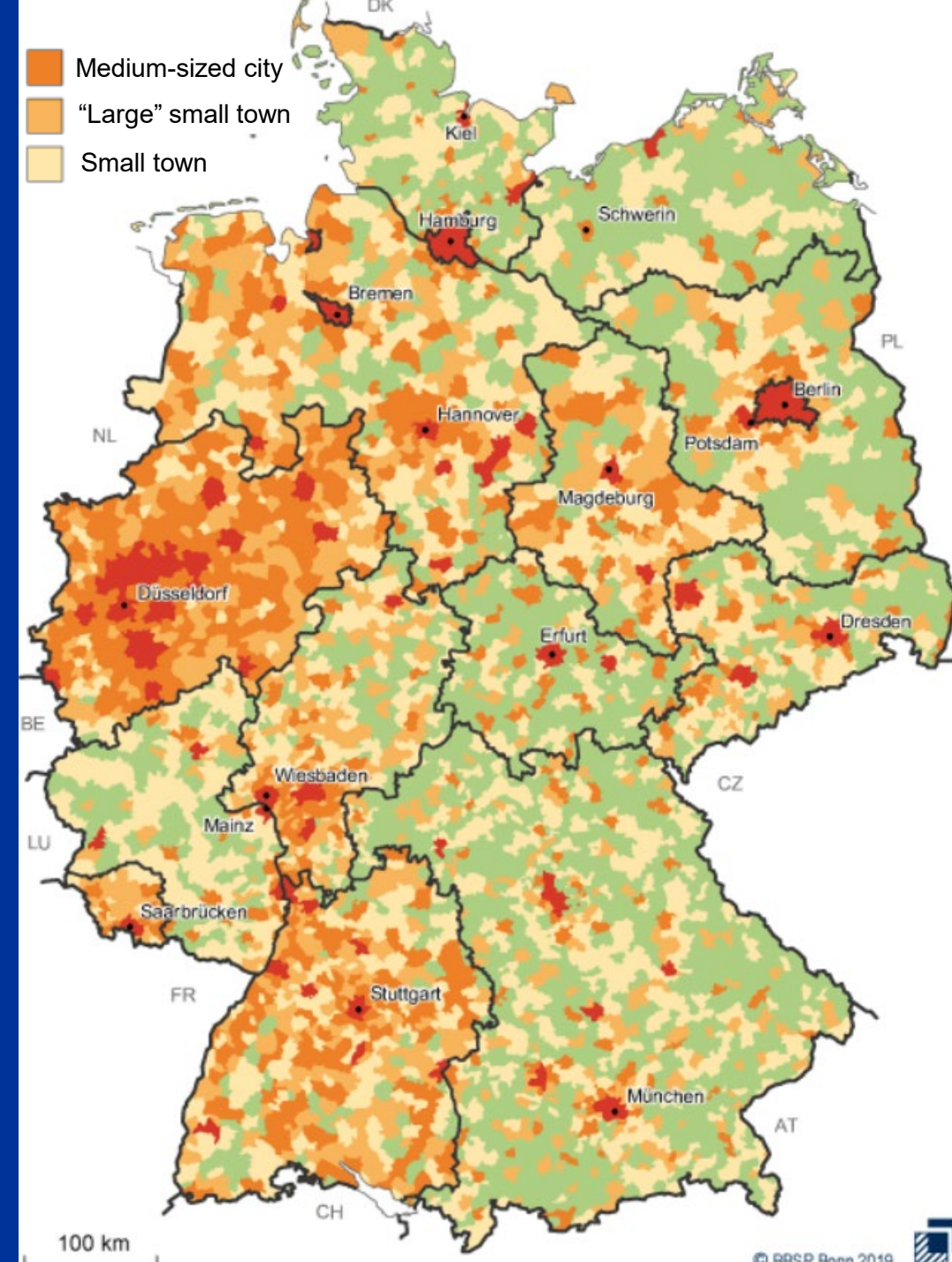
15-16 November 2023 in Cuenca, Spain

*SMS towns and cities: the case of
Oschersleben (Germany)*

Stefan Kah

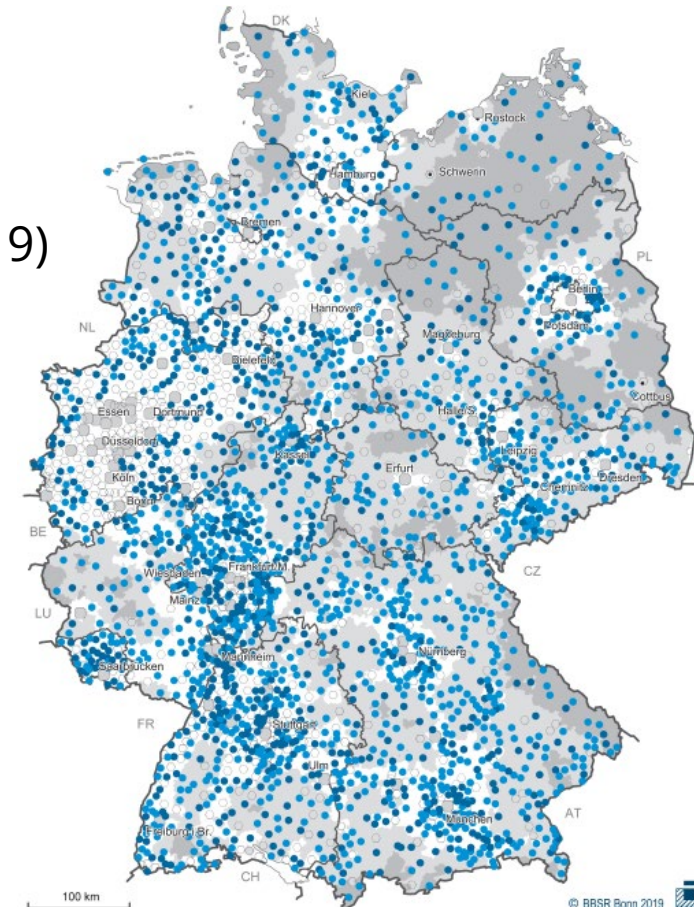


SMSTCs in Germany



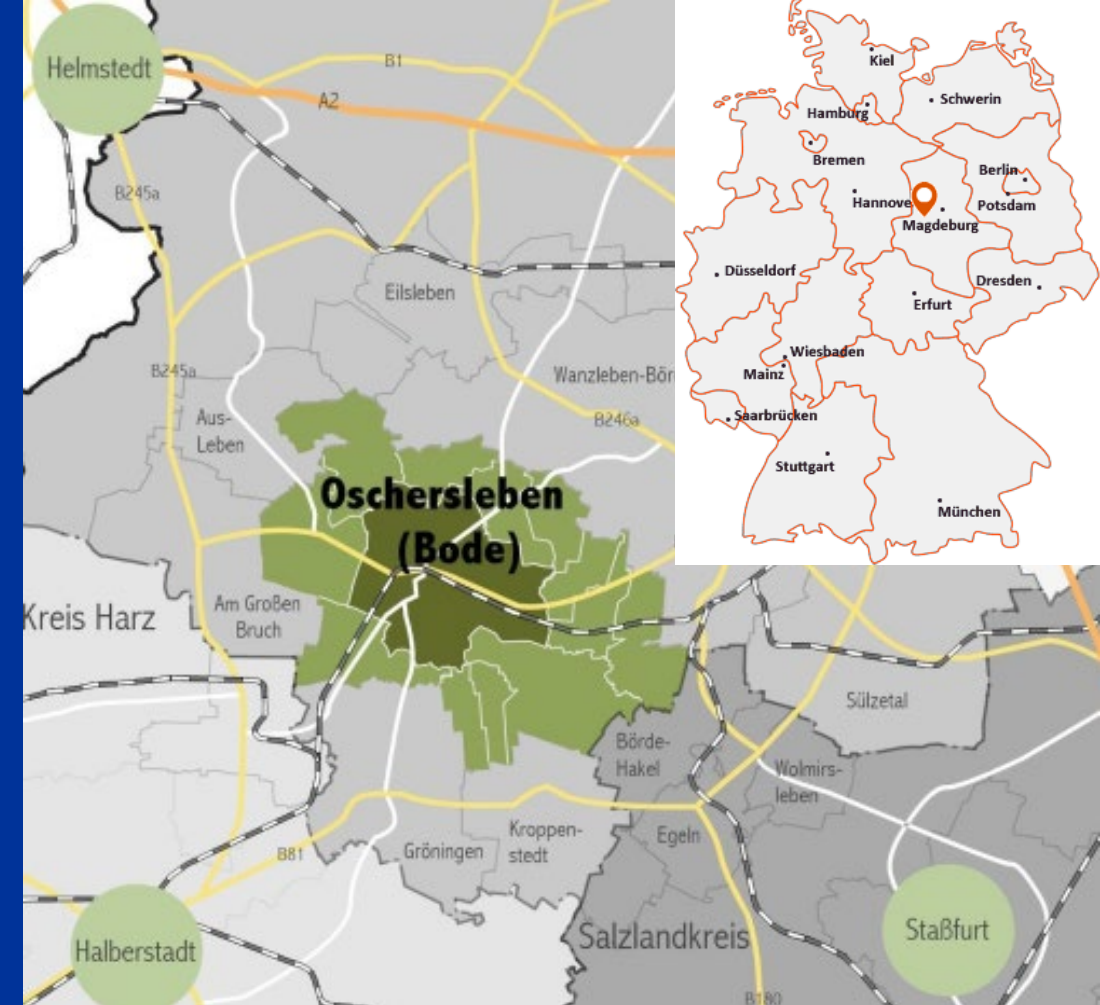
Policy responses for SMSTCs in Germany

- German **Urban Development Policy: substantial funding** (€790 federal funding/year + state cofunding)
- **2020 reform:** streamlining into 3 programmes
- **Multi-level governance** involving the 16 federal states
- Some programmes with high SMSTC relevance, e.g. intermunicipal cooperation and networks for SMSTs (456 cooperation areas, until 2019)
- Open to **municipalities of all sizes**
- **Small Town Academy** (2019, see map)
 - Capacity-building, online platform, exchange, model projects
 - Pilot phase 2019-23 – concretisation of contents and format
- **Also: EU support for SMSTCs**, including
 - Cohesion policy: €380m in 2014-20: **majority (76) of 102 supported cities/towns are SMSTs**
 - Rural development/LEADER: **small SMSTCs eligible**



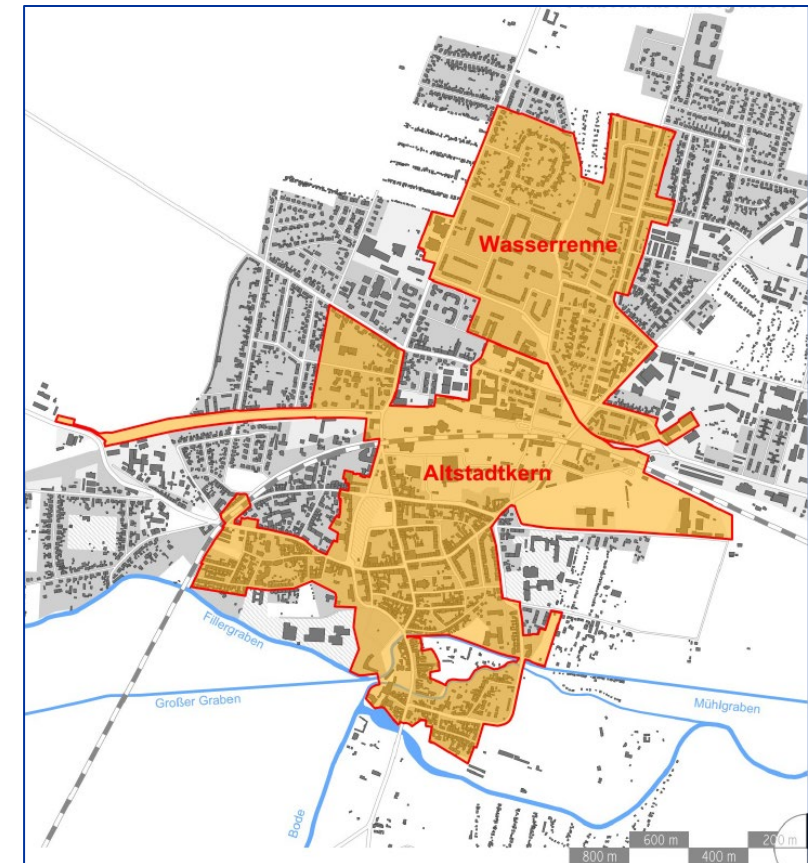
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The case of Oschersleben (Saxony-Anhalt)



Oschersleben (Saxony-Anhalt)

- 19,704 inhabitants but “**middle-order centre**” – relative high importance for surrounding area
- **Large territory incl. many rural parts**, result of municipal reforms
- Negative demographic development (shrinking and aging population)
- c. 25 years of relative “stagnation” since 1990
- **Integrated urban development concept 2030 (ISEK)** in 2017
 - Identification of urban **brownfields** in 2 focus areas:
old town & residential area
 - Use of **range of policies**
- **3 key projects improving attractiveness for inhabitants and surrounding area**
 - Train station area
 - Oschersleben castle
 - Department store “Kaufhaus O”



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Key findings



Findings

National perspective

- **SMSTCs can use wide range of measures** at different levels: EU, national, regional (state)
- **Not only explicit urban development**, but also
 - regional development policy (incl. EU cohesion policy)
 - rural development policy (e.g. LEADER) – where eligible
- **Most measures are for all types of cities/towns** -> challenge for SMSTCs to participate
- **Response: increase capacities** - e.g. via Small Town Academy

Case study Oschersleben

- SMSTCs with **comparatively unfavourable conditions** still can develop positively
- Key success factors:
 - **multifunctional infrastructures** combining physical construction with appropriate functions
 - **use public sector institutions as pioneer or anchor users**
 - **use a range of different schemes** (EU and domestic), combining them where possible

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Thank you!

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