



Udo Gößwald (*1955 in Cologne, Germany) is director of the Museum Neukölln in Berlin since 1985. He has studied Political Science, European Ethnology/ Social Anthropology and Modern History in Marburg and Berlin. The Museum Neukölln has developed its specific profile as a modern regional museum on the basis of a scientific concept and profound strategic planning. In 1987 the museum was awarded the Council of Europe Award for its outstanding achievement in integrating the people of the area in research and activities of the museum.

Activating people to participate in the exhibitions by integrating their stories and displaying various private objects has become the main characteristic of the museum's work. Together with detailed research on micro-historical phenomena the museum has expanded its knowledge and collection about the borough of Neukölln, whose population is very heterogeneous, including a high percentage of migrants.

In the research projects of the museum Udo Gößwald has directed the attention to various fields of local history, that had not been regarded before, such as the history of the Jewish population, the resistance against the Nazi-regime, the traditions of reform-pedagogy and the modern forms of architecture in Neukölln. Besides that the focus has been on the impact of migration to the area. This includes the Bohemians in the 18th century, the landworkers from Schlesia and Pommern flooding into the expanding Berlin at the beginning of the 20th century, the immigration from Turkey, Italy and Greece in the 60ties and 70ties as well as war refugees and asylum seekers in the 80ties and 90ties. Various projects have also been conducted to trace aspects of daily life such as birth, family life and personal love stories.

(see www.museum-neukoelln.de).

Udo Gößwald sees his museum as a field for new experiments in dealing with history and modern times, encourages new forms of exhibition design and museum education. Due to an intensive personal approach to the visitors and many activities, the museum has become a place where people like to go. This has led to a considerable amount of visitors, that reflect all ages and the social and ethnic structure of the district.

Since 1995 a strong focus has been placed on projects, that dealt with comparing urban culture in various European cities. The project "A House in Europe" was implemented to compare the history and sociology of three tenement houses in Amsterdam, Budapest and Berlin. The project "Born in Europe" was an EU-funded co-operation between museums in Lisbon, Gothenburg, Vienna, Aarhus, Copenhagen and Berlin, that dealt with various aspects of migration and cultural identity in Europe.

(see www.born-in-europe.de)