

## Designing the Railway City Transit-Oriented Development in Kempten and an International Winter School in Goa

Railway infrastructure represents one of the most efficient and spatially sustainable modes of transport. It enables the high-capacity movement of people while requiring comparatively low energy and land consumption. At the same time, it offers a high degree of accessibility and inclusivity, serving diverse user groups regardless of age, physical ability, or income. Beyond mobility, railway systems have the potential to structure urban development, support compact city models, and reduce dependence on private motorized transport.

Despite these advantages, urban development in many regions remains predominantly car-centric. Railway hubs and their surrounding areas are often underutilized, mono-functional, or poorly integrated into the urban fabric. This raises fundamental questions about their future role within evolving mobility systems and cities. This module addresses the spatial, social, and infrastructural potential of railway environments through the lens of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). It explores railway hubs as urban catalysts and investigates how they can be reimagined to meet contemporary and future demands.

Key questions include:

- What role do railway stations play within the broader urban context?
- How can railway infrastructure better integrate with other modes of transport?
- Which user groups are currently served, and how can inclusivity be expanded?
- What spatial and programmatic strategies support sustainable mobility transitions?
- How can station areas be transformed into hybrid environments incorporating housing, retail, public services, and recreational spaces?

The semester consists of a practice-oriented phase centred on the city of Kempten. Working alongside local stakeholders, students will develop ideas for activating and transforming the central railway area. This work is part of an ongoing planning process (VGV Verfahren), which provides direct insight into contemporary planning frameworks and decision-making processes. Students will work in two groups of three. One group will focus on redesigning and reimagining the railway hub and its immediate surroundings, while the other will address the spatial and functional connections between the railway hub and the inner-city pedestrian zone. The course begins with an on-site visit and guided tour with city representatives and concludes with a presentation and discussion of the proposals at an organised city lunch event. The results will contribute to the ongoing discourse on the area's future development. This project can be completed in either German or English.

Following the completion of the Kempten project, a Winter School will take place in Goa, India, from 1–10 October 2026. Students participating in the Kempten design brief will be given priority for this course. The Winter School offers the opportunity to engage with a different socio-cultural and climatic context in collaboration with students from the Goa College of Architecture. It provides a platform for reflection on the transferability of design approaches, enabling participants to expand their perspectives on infrastructure, urban development and mobility in an international setting. All work in Goa will be conducted in English.

Both courses are part of the postdoctoral research of Ayesha Mueller-Wolfertshofer. Students will have the opportunity to contribute their work to this international research initiative. Selected projects may be included in a publication, with students credited as authors of their work.