



New timber hybrid building, Witten/Herdecke University (copyright: ZÜBLIN Timber GmbH / Johannes Buldmann)

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## **Witten/Herdecke University: festive opening of one of the most sustainable university buildings in Germany**

- **ZÜBLIN Timber, as general contractor, successfully completes new turnkey building to a design by Kaden+Lager on schedule**
- **Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, praised the new timber hybrid seminar and office building as exemplary**

The new extension building on the campus of UW/H was inaugurated with a

large opening ceremony on 1 October 2021. The university was proud to welcome the current President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, as a prominent guest of honour. In her speech, she stressed how the university had combined the themes of sustainability and education in an exemplary way with this innovative timber hybrid building: “We want to raise people’s awareness of the European Green Deal. This new building at UW/H shows how it can be done. The building is as sustainable as it is functional and beautiful. I congratulate you on your inventiveness and would like to encourage you to continue working, researching and thinking off the beaten track.”

The building, which the university is calling a “Zukunftsraum” (“Future Space”), was completed on time for the start of the 2021/2022 winter semester after a construction period of about 18 months. The project came in slightly under the estimated budget of € 28 million, with a final total of € 27 million. “We are very pleased about the successful completion of this project, which is so important for our university. Our sincere thanks go to the staff, students and many active partners who have contributed to the project’s success,” said Chancellor Jan Peter Nonnenkamp.

“We expect our university to innovate and promote sustainability in its teaching and research. For this goal, we need a campus concept that will continue to function and remain modern even a few decades down the road despite the rapid changes and challenges facing universities in the 21st century. Our new timber ‘future space’ offers all the prerequisites we need in order to accomplish this goal,” University President Martin Butzlaff said.

The architect of the new building is the office of Kaden+Lager from Berlin, which in 2019 was nominated for the German Sustainability Award. The general contractor for the project was ZÜBLIN Timber, a specialist in timber construction that won the university competition together with Kaden+Lager. “We are proud that we were able to lead and successfully realise this forward-looking project for sustainable timber construction and, as general contractor, hand over the new building to Witten/Herdecke University ready for occupancy and on schedule. The decisive guarantee for success here was the partnership, mutual trust and cooperation with the project team from our client and the lead architect’s office Kaden+Lager, as well as with the teams involved from the ZÜBLIN NRW Subdivision and the STRABAG Rhine-Ruhr Business Unit,” explains Christian Scholz, Managing Director of ZÜBLIN Timber GmbH.

## Local, regional and state politicians among the guests

The realisation of the building project was also a premiere for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the local administrative district and the city government, as a comparable building does not yet exist in Germany's most densely populated federal state. NRW State Secretary Edmund Heller, Witten Mayor Lars König, District Administrator Olaf Schade and a large number of guests and project partners were therefore eager to see and experience the completed building at the opening ceremony.

Instead of the usual fireworks, the highlight of the ceremony was a spectacular LED light show to herald the official opening of the building. Starting 2 October 2021, at 10 a.m., students, staff and interested members of the public are cordially invited to see the sustainable university building for themselves and sample the specialities in the new café.

The opening ceremony can be viewed on the university's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/universitywitten>

## Facts & Figures

- **Type of building:** New construction of timber hybrid campus expansion building
- **Construction:** Ed. Züblin AG, Subdivision Ulm / Business Unit ZÜBLIN Timber (general contractor), ZÜBLIN Subdivision NRW (Concrete Construction), STRABAG Subdivision North Rhine-Westphalia, Business Unit Rhine-Ruhr (Earthworks/Outdoor Facilities)
- **Architects:** Kaden+Lager, Berlin
- **Project schedule:** 5/2020 – 8/2021
- **Gross floor area:** 7,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- **Contract value:** € 22 million
- **Main building material:** 1,200 m<sup>3</sup> of spruce wood from certified sustainable forestry, approx. 10,000 timber construction elements (including façade of

untreated domestic larch)

- **Extract from the spatial planning:** about 300 study places for students in different variations, nine seminar rooms, multi-storey library, café with lounge, event room for up to 350 people, 5 office corridors with about 100 workstations

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Stuttgart-based Ed. Züblin AG, with more than 13,000 employees and an annual output of around € 4 billion, is one of Germany's largest construction companies. Since its foundation in 1898, ZÜBLIN has been successfully realising challenging construction projects in Germany and abroad and today is the STRABAG Group's leading brand for building construction and civil engineering. The company's range of services covers all construction-related tasks – from complex turnkey construction, civil engineering and tunnelling to construction logistics, structural maintenance, ground engineering and timber or steel construction. In recent years, ZÜBLIN has been promoting the topics of digitalisation, LEAN.Construction and sustainability and – supported by the many years of experience of its Zentrale Technik competence centre – is also increasingly offering integrated design and construction from a single source as a general planner. When it comes to partnering, ZÜBLIN has set new standards with its teamconcept partnering model, which has proven its worth on the market for more than 25 years. Current construction projects of the company, a subsidiary of globally operating STRABAG SE, include the EDGE East Side Berlin high-rise project, the Rinsdorf and Rälsbach viaducts on the A45 motorway and the Boyneburg Tunnel on the A44. More information is available at [www.zueblin.de](http://www.zueblin.de).

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