

Topic Page: [Essen](#)

Definition: **Essen** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

City on the River Ruhr, Nordrhein-Westfalen, NW Germany. Essen developed around a 9th-century Benedictine convent. Prussia annexed it in 1802. Lying at the centre of a major coalfield, it underwent a huge industrial expansion during the 19th century and is home to the Krupp steelworks. It has a cathedral (begun 11th century). Industries: mining, iron and steel, glass, textiles, chemicals. Pop. (1999) 600,700.

Summary Article: **Essen**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

City in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, 29 km/18 mi northeast of Düsseldorf; population (2003 est) 588,800. It is the administrative centre of the Ruhr region, situated between the rivers Emscher and Ruhr. Industries include metalworking, glass-making, chemicals, telecommunications, brewing, and electronics. Its 9th–14th-century cathedral is one of the oldest churches in Germany. Half of the city's buildings were destroyed during World War II.

Essen grew up around a Benedictine convent (founded in the mid-9th century) along the Hellweg, the ancient trade route running from Cologne to Leipzig. It was a small imperial state ruled by the abbess of the convent until 1802, when it passed to Prussia. In the 19th century it boomed as a result of coalmining and iron and steel smelting. The armaments empire of the Krupp family also provided an impetus for growth until World War II. Coal mining, once the city's principal industry, ended in 1986. The city is now a trading and research centre; it has a university (founded 1972) and several research institutions.

Features Villa Hugel, the mansion of the Krupp family, who founded the iron and steel industry here in the 19th century, is located in parkland to the south of the city at Baldeney-Stausee, in the Ruhr valley. The city has a number of museums, including the Ruhrland Museum, and a number of large parks.

Economy At the end of the war the Krupp steelworks were closed and used by other industrial undertakings. Essen is the site of the offices of SVR (the Ruhr planning organization founded in 1920), Ruhr Kohle (the controlling body of all coalmines), and Karstadt (the supermarket chain). The university stimulates employment in modern sectors and contributes to the industrial diversification process. The docks on the Rhine–Herne canal handle 2.5 million tonnes of goods annually.

World War II During World War II, being the site of Krupp's armament works and an important rail centre, Essen was one of the main targets of the Allied bomber forces. Some 50,000 tonnes of bombs in all were dropped on the city.

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