

Think global, act local

School of Environmental Planning and Building

Ambitions for international cooperation 2009-2012



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Preface

The Netherlands is one of the smallest but wealthiest countries of Europe. It is the land of cheese, windmills, clogs, Amsterdam, Rembrandt and Van Gogh. But also the land of dredgers, Delta works and famous architects such as Rietveld and Rem Koolhaas, as well as a country with a rich tradition in the field of science and higher education.

We are therefore very pleased to introduce to you Saxion: an all-round university of applied sciences in the eastern part of The Netherlands. Because of its location close to the German border, the Euregion also belongs to the operating area. Saxion as a knowledge institute has the explicit wish to contribute to a vital region, both economically and socially.

The School of Environmental Planning and Building (EPB) is one of Saxion's fourteen schools. The EPB is expert in the domain of the physical living environment: environmental planning, urban development, building, civil engineering, project development and real estate management, environment and nature. Within all these themes Sustainability is essential.

Due to the ongoing globalisation Saxion and the School of EPB also focus on international developments relating to their knowledge areas. International cooperation with universities and local business communities in European, African and Asian countries is a logical consequence of this.

What do we - the EPB and you - have to offer to one another? We hope this brochure will be a source of inspiration for a long-term, fruitful collaboration and possible future partnerships.

Yours sincerely,

*Ms M. (Marjan) Weekhout
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1 The Netherlands



1.1 About The Netherlands

The Netherlands, although a very small European country, is well-known to people all around the world. Not only because of its beautiful tulips or its famous 'orange' national football team; many international students have found The Netherlands to be a reliable place for studying abroad thanks to its high-quality education.

The tolerance of the Dutch is still the main key to the country's popularity. Throughout the centuries, the Dutch travelled all around the world. The arrival of foreigners from all

over the world has enriched Dutch culture. Presently, 45% of the people living in Amsterdam are of non-Dutch origin. They generally live in good harmony with the original Dutch population.

1.2 Living environment: major developments

War against water

The Netherlands is a lowland situated in a delta. A large part lies below sea level and the area available for living and working is small. The eternal war against high water and the need for more land has made the Dutch inventive. In the area of Civil Engineering The Netherlands have obtained a great reputation. Thanks to impoldering and land reclamation, many people are now living on the bottom of what used to be lakes and sea. Ingenious dams such as the famous Delta works protect against storm tides and high water. Dutch civil engineering firms and dredgers are now applying their expertise worldwide. Not to wage war against the water, but to create new ways of dealing and living with it.

Environment

In the 1970s The Netherlands was faced with serious environmental problems as a result of rapid industrialisation. This drawback of welfare forced the government to take action.

In The Netherlands strict environmental legislation and enforcement have resulted in huge improvements. Industries have taken their responsibilities, also under the influence of public opinion. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is becoming an increasingly important issue. Dutch companies have proven to perform very well on CSR. Dutch environmental expertise is now used in countries faced with similar environmental problems caused by increased production and consumption worldwide.

Environmental planning and (urban) building

After World War II, the tiny Netherlands was faced with a strong increase of its population. The limited resources available forced the country to establish a well-considered policy and planning regarding environmental planning. Nowadays, The Netherlands plays a prominent part in the area of sustainable environmental planning, interactive planning, urban renewal, urban design, real estate development and building and living.

2 Saxion University of Applied Sciences

2.1 About Saxion

Saxion is registered as a publicly funded University of Applied Sciences under Dutch law. Its history dates back to the early 1900s. Nowadays, Saxion has become an important centre of expertise. It belongs to the largest Universities of Applied Sciences in The Netherlands, with campuses in the old cities of Deventer, Enschede and Apeldoorn – situated in the beautiful green eastern part of the country where life seems a little more relaxed. The larger cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague lie within a 1 to 1.5 hour radius.

The student population is approximately 20,000 and still growing. About 2,000 are international students following the inter-



national degree programmes in Enschede and Deventer. Over the years, Saxion has welcomed students from over 52 different countries in the world.

2.2 Educational approach

As a University of Applied Sciences, Saxion prepares students for a career in the professional sector. In this type of education cooperation with the professional sector plays a key role. Students are developing competences in realistic real-life projects with an interdisciplinary character. They will be assessed on their professional competences, drawn up in collaboration with the business community. For each individual competence the composition of knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour necessary for exercising the profession has been described. In education, students are constantly working together in small project groups on practical issues, under teacher supervision. Basic courses and workshops provide general theory and support the execution of the project. Students will be trained and empowered to take position and make their own decisions regarding the direction of their future careers.

2.3 About the School of Environmental Planning and Building

Saxion consists of fourteen divisions named 'schools'. The School of Environmental Planning and Building is involved in education (bachelors, masters and short courses) in the area of environment and nature, environmental planning, urban design, real estate management and project development, building and living and civil engineering.

Applied research in these areas has been accommodated with the Research Centre for Urban and Environmental Development.

Philosophy: sustainability

Sustainability is the common denominator for the domain of the living environment, supported by both the School of EPB and the Research Centre. Both wish to collaborate with universities and companies abroad working from the same notion of sustainability.

3 International ambitions and possibilities for cooperation



strongly emerging economies such as China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. In Africa the main contacts are with South Africa and countries in West Africa such as Ghana and Cameroon. The next few years the School of Environmental Planning and Building wants to develop more sustainable long-term relationships with universities and NGO's as well as partner companies, defining joint projects for students as well as employees.

3.2 Cooperation with universities abroad

Saxion has the ambition that by 2012 all students will have achieved international competences through different kinds of international activities during their programmes.

3.1 International network

Internationalisation is one of the key points in Saxion's strategic vision 2008-2012. Long before that, internationalisation has played an important part at Saxion's School of Environmental Planning and Building. For nearly twenty years the School of EPB has had united cooperative and exchange alliances with polytechnics and universities in the European Erasmus network. In the past ten years these alliances have been supplemented with contacts in Asian countries with

A successful, recent example of cooperation in the area of education is the Crossing Border project of the Environmental Science and Urban and Regional Planning bachelors. In this project students from universities in The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and Denmark are working together on cross-border living environment issues such as international traffic problems or urban fringes. In this joint project students learn to apply European policy and legislation as well as to deal with cultural differences which play a role in international cooperation.



On what other aspects could cooperation possible between the School of Environmental Planning and Building and universities abroad be possible? e.g.:

- Using (elements of) one another's curricula
- Exchanging new teaching modules or teaching methods
- Joining one another in an international (applied) research programme
- Exchanging students and staff
- Using one another's local (professional) networks

3.3 Cooperation with (international) companies

Besides the contacts with universities, the School of Environmental Planning and Building wants to extend relations with companies which may play an important part in practical education. This goes especially for sustainable relationships with Dutch companies with international branches, and companies abroad with a keen interest in European developments in environmental planning and building.

The possibilities for collaboration are manifold. International companies in the domain of sustainable environmental planning and building can play an important part as:

- Advisors on the course content of the programmes

- Members of professional advisory boards
- Principals for student internships
- Principals for assignments in various stages in the curricula
- Partners in joint international projects

Students of Urban Design, for example, not only perform assignments for Dutch commissioning parties but also for foreign urban development consultancy and design firms. On the short term, the course director of Urban Design would like to increase the number of assignments with companies abroad.

3.4 Benefits for companies

The cooperative relationships between Saxion and international companies will lead to a win-win situation. Companies get more access to the latest knowledge and students are enabled to gain and train practical competences. Staff members also exchange experiences: company staff members by delivering guest lectures to students and Saxion staff members by internships and projects offered by companies. This is also particularly useful for acquiring intercultural awareness. Sometimes student assignments lead to innovations which are relevant for the professional field.



Harry Webers, Witteveen+Bos:

"In the past few centuries, Deventer has developed from an international commercial town (Hanze alliance) into a real industrial city. In the past century the city's character has changed, in particular regarding the sectors of education, care and professional services. Nowadays Deventer accommodates the head offices of three international consultancy and engineering companies including Witteveen+Bos, as well as several other international firms. For Saxion Universities of Applied Sciences it is very interesting to seek out alliances with the international network and experience of Witteveen+Bos. Vice versa, for us it is very interesting to make use of Saxion's expertise and international network. In the end the (international) students of Saxion will benefit."

Joint recruitment

In order to get sufficient and high quality students and future employees Saxion and international companies have also joined forces in the recruitment of students and staff, in The Netherlands as well as abroad.



3.5 Product-market combinations for cooperation

The next few years the School of Environmental Planning and Building has to make decisions regarding the focus of future product-market combinations for international projects.

The School of EPB was already going to establish the following projects in cooperation with universities abroad, international companies and research organisations:

- Infrastructural projects in Poland
- Environmental management projects in Indonesia
- Urban Planning & Design projects in Europe (e.g. Berlin and Barcelona)
- Biodiversity management in West Africa
- Integral area development in Central China

The Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs has provided Saxion with a grant for the development of these sustainable collaborative projects: the PIB SURE project.

3.6 Inspiration

For additional inspiration, in the next chapters you'll read about examples of existing international cooperation between Saxion and partners abroad. Maybe you will see similar possibilities for cooperation. Do not hesitate to contact our coordinator of international cooperation, referred to at the last page of this brochure.

4 Applied Research: about what the School of EPB has to offer

4.1 The Research Centre for Urban and Environmental Development

The Research Centre for Urban and Environmental Development at Saxion holds seven Research Chairs. Each research chair focuses on different aspects of the city in its natural and artificial surroundings. One of the more internationalised chairs is the Research Chair in Sustainable Development, attached to the School of Environmental Planning and Building. Out of the over 35 employees of this Research Centre, eight are attached to the Chair in Sustainable Development, including two professors. Next you will learn more about this particular research chair.

4.2 Research Chair in Sustainable Development (Prof. Dr. Theo de Bruijn)

The objective of the Research Chair in Sustainable Development, established in 2003, is the development of, contribution to and analysis of innovative ideas that may strengthen the quality of the living environment. Practice-oriented research focuses on translating the concept of sustainable development into spatial strategies, both in urban development and rural development. I.e.: restructuring of residential areas and brown fields and development of new estates

and water management. Although sustainability calls for an integral approach, research mostly starts from a spatial perspective, taking into account ecological, economic and social aspects as well.





The overarching research question is how different parties can collaborate effectively in creating a sustainable environment. Examples of more specific research questions are:

- How can cities be made more climate-proof?
- How can water be integrated into urban and rural development?
- Which instruments and management tools are available for local governments in revitalising residential areas and brown fields?
- How can run-down neighbourhoods be transformed into sustainable residential areas?
- Under which circumstances will inhabitants use their sustainable houses in a sustainable way?
- Which new economic activities contribute to maintaining the spatial quality of rural areas?
- How can urban fringes be developed in a sustainable way?

The research programme is implemented in close collaboration with societal actors. Research is commissioned by housing associations, provinces and municipalities, consultancy agencies and several Ministries, plus European Research Funds.

The Research Chair in Sustainable Development strongly believes in the benefits of international cooperation. The chair therefore invites both foreign organisations searching for partners in applied R&D projects and partners searching for long-term structural cooperation to get in contact.

4.3 Research project Sustainable International Business

A special project of applied research within the Research Chair in Sustainable Development is the research on Sustainable International Business. This ongoing research project concerns the implementation of sus-

tainability in global industrial supply chains and networks. Stakeholders ask companies to take their social responsibility, the so-called Corporate Social Responsibility, and organise this responsibility throughout the whole supply chain.

The research focuses on the question how companies determine their strategy towards the implementation of sustainability, and which configuration of the innovation characteristics of the (focal) company and the supply network can explain the strategy selected. In this research the fashion/clothing sector is used as a case. The project is carried out as a part-time PhD research project. Students attending the short course “Sustainable International Business” (see under 5.) can participate in the research.

4.4 European research project in regional RTD (innovation)

A successful example of a completed EU funded applied research project is CRIPREDE: Creating an RTD Investment Policy for Regions in Emerging and Developed Economies. In this project six European regions in Ireland, Latvia, Germany, England, Slovenia and The Netherlands joined forces. Each region was represented by a research organisation which functioned as a link to regional stakeholders such as industry and authorities.

Contribution of Saxion

The specific responsibility of the Research Chair Sustainable Development was that of lead-designer of the adaptive model, due to





**Dr Bill O’Gorman, WIT,
Ireland, Project coordinator:**

“Together we were successful, not only in developing and testing an Adaptive Model for regional specific policy and processes of RTD (innovation), but also in publishing two papers already presented at various international conferences.”

**Prof Dr Friderike Welter,
University of Siegen, Germany:**

“CRIPREDE was a really exciting project. What I particularly liked about it was the challenge to work on how regions could become more innovative in a truly European context, with so many different partners and each of them bringing another perspective to the project.”

long-time experience and expertise in the application of process management to real life complex decision-making. The research team experienced the project as an excellent opportunity for combining high-level applied research in an international setting, with a meaningful contribution to the development of the home region in The Netherlands.

Results

CRIPREDE is a successful example of an innovative project based on personal contact, which created trust leading to synergy and mutual learning. Together the six research organisations developed an adaptive and practical model for regional RTD (innovation). The adaptive model was tested simultaneously in the six European regions through an interactive process with regional stakeholders, resulting in tailor-made regional RTD action plans.



5 International degree programmes



5.1 English spoken courses

Students from all parts of the world follow the international degree programmes at Saxion. These programmes challenge students to develop their competences working in international groups on realistic real-life projects with an interdisciplinary character – for example Environmental Impact Assessment, Water Management or Sustainable Development of an area.

The following bachelor and master programmes of the School of Environmental Planning and Building are offered in English:

- Exchange programmes for students from European partner universities:
- Spring Semester – Crossing Borders (12 – 20 weeks)
- Autumn Semester – Sustainable Development (12 – 20 weeks)

- Short course Environmental Impact Assessment (10 weeks)
- Short course Integral Water Management and Sustainable Development (10 weeks)
- Short course Sustainable International Business (20 weeks)
- Short course Management of Environmental Disputes and Cultural Awareness (7 weeks)
- Final year Bachelor degree programme Civil Engineering (10 months)
- Final year Bachelor degree programme Environmental Science & Technology (10 months)
- Final year Bachelor degree programme Urban Design (10 months)
- Final year Bachelor degree programme Urban and Regional Planning (10 months)

- Master of Science degree programme Environmental Science (13 months)
- Master of Science degree programme Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Management (13 months)
- Master of Science degree programme Urban and Regional Planning (13 months)

5.2 Experiences of international students

Foreign students from e.g. Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Cameroon, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Belgium, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Cyprus and of course The Netherlands appreciate the applied approach of the international degree programmes. They also like living in the beautiful medieval city centre.



Daniela from Spain:

"All I wanted was to have a good experience in a foreign country. And all I can say is that everything I got there was great. An incredible experience in all senses. We got very diverse subjects to learn from, taught with great interest by all the teachers. Combined with a lot of practice, group working and different trips to better understand what it was all about. But what I remember most is the social and international experience. Sharing moments, conversations, lectures, projects, dinners, and all the organised and non-organised trips around The Netherlands made me learn and gain a unique experience. People from around the world allowed me to know different cultures, languages, way of living, cooking or even spending time!"

Website

Read more about Saxion, the international courses and life in The Netherlands on our international website: www.saxion.edu.



Muhammed from Indonesia:

"In advance I was triggered by the Dutch expertise in water management. Coming to Saxion was a good decision. The education is comprehensive, effective and more practice-oriented. The lectures cover a wide range of topics. Practical exercises and case studies using the theory helped me to digest the theory and develop my capability to analyse and solve problems. There are plenty of opportunities to do an internship in a Dutch company. I was working at one of the leading engineering consultant companies, on a real project with real responsibilities. My responsibility was to create a water supply network and sanitation system for an African country. Working in the company was a wonderful experience: learning how to apply my knowledge in practice and getting to know the people and their culture. I can just recommend anyone to come to Holland."



6 Curriculum Development: sharing knowledge

6.1 Long-time experience in student centred learning strategies

In the fifty years after establishing the first course on Construction and Civil Engineering, Saxion's School of Environmental Planning and Building has developed its own teaching and learning strategies and curricula,

based on the demands of the professional sector and main developments in society and educational policies. Due to this long time experience Saxion was asked to share knowledge and help colleges abroad to improve their curricula. In previous years projects were conducted with international partners in Hungary and Poland. Next you learn more about a recent project in Vietnam.

6.2 Project in Vietnam: strengthening the position of two Colleges

In Vietnam the environment is high on the political agenda. The country needs students with professional skills and knowledge in this field. Since January 2004 the School of Environmental Planning and Building

supports two Colleges in Nature Conservation and Environmental Resources in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The project aims upgrading the courses of Hydrology and Environment up to Bachelor's level, including strengthening the position of the Colleges in both the professional and educational sector. Within this framework, Saxion is training the teaching staff in implementing and applying modern teaching and learning methods. Students and teachers alike enjoy these methods now.

Professional network

Especially for developing applied research, the Colleges need a solid base in Vietnam in Environmental and Hydrological matters. Therefore extension of the professional network of the Colleges is needed. During the project's fourth year a network meeting was organised in Hanoi. Many Vietnamese organisations attended this meeting representing the government, the professional sector and the educational sector. The Dutch consortium partners: UNESCO IHE (water management), ITC (earth sciences) and Saxion also participated this meeting, together with several former students: Vietnamese students who obtained their bachelor or master degree at Saxion and now have important functions in Vietnam.

New teaching methods

One of the core aspects of the upgraded curricula is the implementation of new student centred learning and teaching methods. However, in Vietnam both teachers and students are not accustomed to these methods. Vietnamese staff members initially found the new methods rather hard to apply. Therefore, when training the Vietnamese staff members in implementing these methods, the staff members of Saxion were impressed by the enthusiasm and skills of both Vietnamese teachers and student. They were very surprised to see Vietnamese students already doing applied research by preparing plans of action, making questionnaires, gathering information by sample taking and measuring, presenting the results to teachers and fellow students and discussing the results.

In short, showing in all aspects how to apply the research results. After five years of training and other activities, both parties -Vietnamese and Dutch- have every confidence in the future developments of the Colleges in Vietnam.

For further information about the courses, projects and possibilities for international collaboration we invite you to get in contact with the coordinator International cooperation, mentioned at the last page.





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