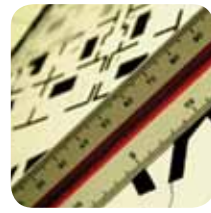


EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Karlskrona, March 2011

Welcome Letter

**Dear future student of the MSc programme in
European Spatial Planning and Regional Development,**

We would like to welcome you to the MSc programme starting on 29 August 2011 at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH) in Karlskrona, Sweden.

In this letter you will find general information about the programme and a few practical hints and points. Please read it carefully - it will help you prepare for your studies at BTH in Sweden.

We look forward to meeting you here at the Swedish School of Planning at BTH!

On behalf of the programme management,

Eric Markus
Programme co-ordinator

Did you know that...

... BTH has some 40 educational programmes and about 390 independent courses in total
... about 4000 students are enrolled at the Institute, both for full time and part time studies
... during the past academic year more than 500 international students have been studying at BTH
... the European Spatial Planning programme is given in collaboration with Nordregio, the Nordic Centre for Spatial Development - www.nordregio.se

ABOUT BTH & THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Swedish School of Planning at Blekinge Institute of Technology (Blekinge Tekniska Högskola, or BTH) is a lively environment for students. There are some 300 students studying at the School on four programmes: the **MSc programme in European Spatial Planning and Regional Development** (in English), the **MSc programme in Urban Design in Europe and China** (in English), as well as the **BSc and MSc programmes in Spatial Planning** (in Swedish). In addition there are a number of exchange students and Swedish students studying individual course modules, as well as several PhD students.

The School is the leading school of planning in Sweden and graduates of planning from BTH are held in high regard by employers both in Sweden as well as abroad.

The international students admitted to the 2010/11 MSc programme come from a variety of backgrounds and countries. Some of you have several years work experience from a number of fields, whereas others are recent graduates keen to further their studies in the fields of European planning and development. We will also have some exchange students taking courses on the programme. This mix of cultures and backgrounds, we believe, will contribute greatly to the programme and make it more interesting and rewarding for all of us!

ACCOMMODATION

Make sure you apply for a student room before you come to Sweden! You will find further information about student accommodation and other arrival information on the BTH Prospective Students website www.bth.se/prospectivestudents or through the programme website.

The municipal housing company, Karlskronahem, is responsible for student accommodation in Karlskrona. Read more in their website:

www.karlskronahem.se > English

As soon you have been admitted (and applied for your visa if you need one), you can also apply for accommodation.

If you have any questions regarding your housing application, contact our International Office or Karlskronahem. See the 'Prospective Students pages' for more information.

THE PROGRAMME

You have probably already studied the information about the programme on our website. If not, please start by visiting:

www.bth.se/europeanplanning

The aim of the programme in European Spatial Planning and Regional Development is to provide students with a good understanding of the nature of European integration and spatial planning in Europe. In order to do this, and in order to enable graduates to be successful in a competitive labour market, we believe it is important to focus not only on the subject-matter but also on the development of personal and interpersonal skills. This way, we hope to lay a good base for the student's future career, studies or working life – be it in Europe or elsewhere in the world.

The subject-matter of the programme focuses on issues such as: the role of spatial planning and integration processes in Europe, the driving forces and history behind integration and enlargement, policies for reducing environmental, economic and social disparities between member states and regions, and for creating a more innovative and competitive economy. The programme is also concerned with the importance of balancing environmental, social and economic concerns in spatial planning and regional development.

During the programme, you will become familiar with several case studies and examples of European integration, planning and cross-boundary projects. The programme also includes a number of field trips to study real-life examples of planning and European regional initiatives. We have a multi-disciplinary faculty and a number of international visiting professors. This way we ensure good connections with areas of research and activity of interest for the programme.

HAVE YOU APPLIED FOR A SCHOLARSHIP? PAYING FEES?

Please see separate information from BTH and University Studies in Sweden regarding fees and Scholarships. Students who are selected for Swedish Institute scholarships will be contacted by the Swedish Institute directly.

VISAS

Most students who are not EU or EEA citizens will need a visa or residence permit to live and study to Sweden. Please check on the Swedish Migration Board website for more information:

www.migrationsverket.se

and contact your nearest Swedish Embassy as soon as possible!

! Please note that it often takes a long time for the Embassy and Migration Board to process your visa application so we urge you not to leave this until the last minute.

If you are a EU or EEA citizen, you do not need a visa. Instead you apply for a residence card once you have arrived at BTH. This is a straight-forward and simple application and our International Office will help you with it when you are here.

Special conditions may apply for students who are citizens of non-EU/EES countries but have EU or Schengen permanent residence permits. See the www.migrationsverket.se website or contact your nearest Swedish Embassy for further information.

Remember that...

... the programme starts on 29 August 2010
... you must tell us about any delays or changes to your circumstances that affect your arrival plans
... you can always check our website for more information about the programme:
www.bth.se/europeanplanning

HOW TO PREPARE

During the programme, we will make use of various software applications and we expect students to have at least a basic level of computer literacy. You should also note that to be able to follow the MSc programme from day one, you need to have (at least basic-to-intermediate) skills in Word, Excel and Power Point.

We expect that most students have gained these skills during their undergraduate studies, but if you feel that this is not your strong side, we recommend that you spend some time improving your Word, Excel and/or Power Point skills before the start of the programme.

READING LISTS AND LITERATURE

We will send an email with details of required literature for the programme's courses in June. You may already now wish to read up about European Spatial Planning by searching for this term, for example on Google Scholar or other search engines and/or databases.

PROGRAMME START

The programme starts on 29 August 2011.

You must be at BTH between 09.00 and 11.00 that day for registration to the programme *and* for the first class/meeting that starts at 13.30.

Closer to the start of the programme, we will send you an email with further information about times and schedules for the first few weeks of the programme.

If you are not able to arrive in Karlskrona for 29 August, you must contact us in advance

and explain your circumstances, and to apply for permission to be absent on the registration date. This permission will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances. If your application for late arrival is granted, you will receive an email about this. Our contact details are at the end of this letter. If you do not register on 29 August and if you have not received advance permission to be absent on that date, you will lose your place on the programme.

Sometimes students encounter problems and cannot attend the programme at all in the year they applied for. Under certain conditions, you may apply for deferment of admission. You can find more information on: www.bth.se/europeanplanning > Deferment Information, or you are welcome to contact us at info.planning@bth.se. Note that failure to contact us before the start of the programme will make you ineligible for deferment.

STUDENT MENTORS

To further help you prepare for the programme, and for life in Sweden and Karlskrona, we will put you into contact with former students.

All admitted and coming new students will be contacted by a current or former student of the programme. You can ask your student mentor practical things about the programme and Karlskrona, for example where to live, how to prepare, what to bring, and so on.

Your student mentor should contact you in June.

Please ensure that your correct and current email address is registered in the application database at studera.nu.



Blekinge Institute of Technology is a full member of the Association of European Schools of Planning - AESOP

STUDENT LIFE AT BTH

The Student Union organizes an Introduction Week for all new-comers the week before the semester starts. This week is filled with social activities and the events are open to both international and new Swedish students. This introduction is not mandatory, but we encourage students to join if possible. The aim of the week is for the new students to get to know each other and BTH.

Swedish language classes are offered at BTH, part-time in the evening, free of charge. For more information, see: www.bth.se/tns/aks

Many sports opportunities are available, both indoors and outdoors. The Student Union offers the possibility for students to practice sport free of charge. The Student Union organises several parties and social events for international students every semester. The BTH spatial planning student association also arranges parties and events for all spatial planning students.

Karlskrona is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In and around the city you will find many places to visit in your spare time:

- **Karlskrona's archipelago** is perhaps one of the most beautiful ones in the world
- **Interesting museums** - Blekinge Museum, Båtsmanskasernen Art Museum and The Naval Museum
- Former military forts and installations** - Kungsholms Fort, Drottningkärs kastell and Godnatt - all worth a visit!
- **Beautiful parks and nature** - The Baroque Garden at Grevagården Mansion, Skärfva Manor, Vämöpark or

Many other leisure opportunities exist; go to the cinema, listen to Karlskrona's Symphonic Orchestra, have nice evening in one of the many restaurants and bars (just remember to bring your ID!) or try the shops.

LIFE IN BLEKINGE

Blekinge County is characterized by a typical Swedish small-scale landscape, combined with a surprising variety, and lots opportunities for experiences. Blekinge has several small towns and the distances between the towns of Blekinge are short. As a student at BTH, you can travel in Blekinge free of charge – your student card is valid as a ticket on many regional trains!

From Blekinge there are frequent ferries to Poland or the Baltic States – trips for fun or cheap shopping. Several daily flights and train connections to Stockholm, or hourly bus and train connections to Lund, Malmö or Copenhagen, will also give you the opportunity to see and experience Scandinavia.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO NOW?

Firstly, accept your place on the programme, as per separate instructions from studera.nu (see also www.studera.nu/studera/4872.html for an application timeline). Remember to check that your contact details are correct in studera.nu.

Secondly, remember to apply for a visa – if you need one. The visa often takes a long time – even 8-12 weeks, or more in some cases – so apply early!

Thirdly, apply for housing. See ACCOMMODATION above.

Fourthly, study the information materials you get from BTH carefully.

Finally, start thinking about your travel arrangements.

CONTACT DETAILS

You are always welcome to contact us if you have any questions! The easiest way to get in touch with us is by email: europeanplanning@bth.se In urgent cases you might want to phone us instead: +46 455 385309.

You can find the contact details to our International Office on their website:

<http://www.bth.se/eng/contactus>

You can also check the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) on our website:

www.bth.se/europeanplanning. Perhaps you will find a quick answer to your questions there!

Welcome to Karlskrona and the programme!



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The Swedish School of Planning / DSN
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