

# NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2021

EDITORIAL - NIMISHA VERMA, SOM  
MISHRA, TANUJ PAREEK



Credit - Roberto Ramirez

## INTRODUCTION WEEK - 2021

### *Editorial Board*

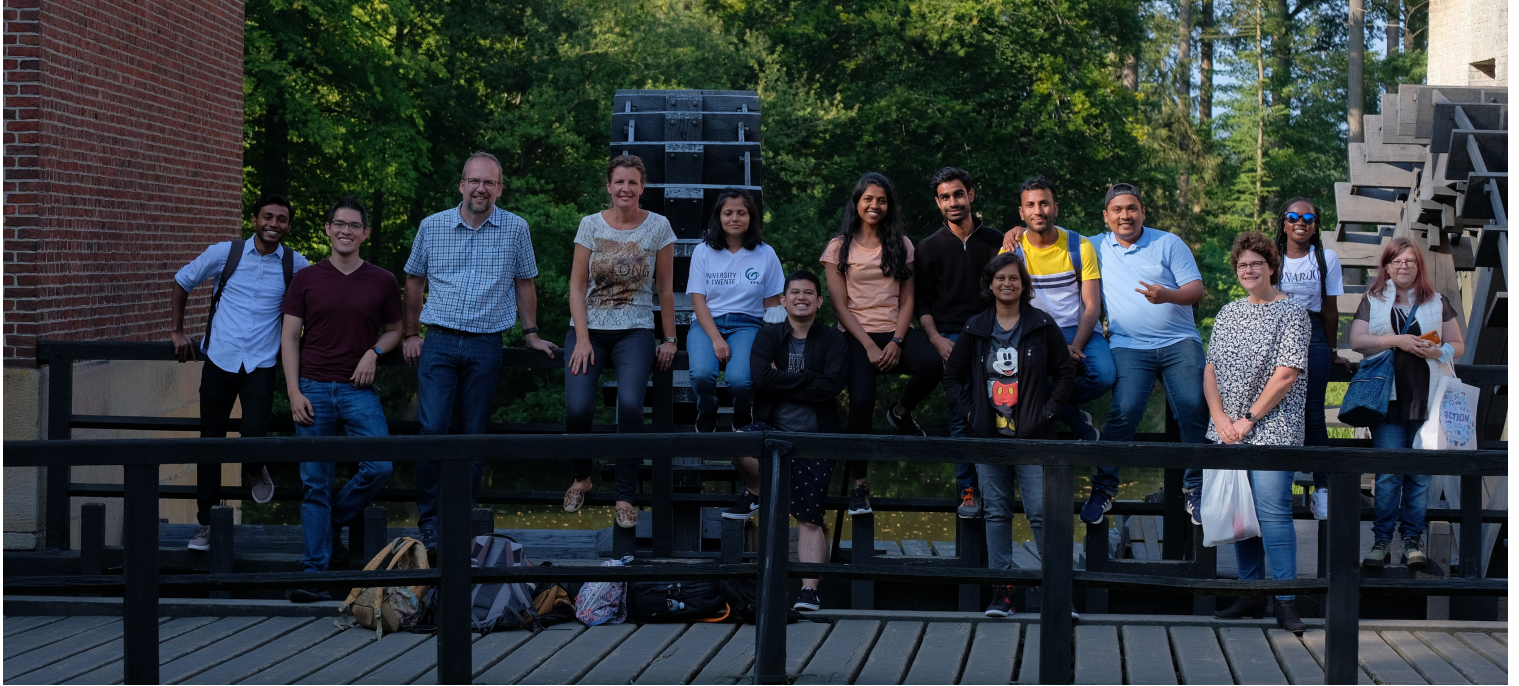
Faculty of Geoinformation Science and Earth Observations held the introduction week for the batch 2021-22 from the 29th of August to the 3rd of September 2021.

The introduction week started with the move-in market, where students skimmed through the items left behind by the seniors. Things like jackets, sweaters, daily clothes, utensils etc., were segregated in the global lounge at the ITC hotel, followed by an informal welcome by the Student Affairs at the Faculty of ITC. Students also got the chance to travel to the University campus to participate in the programs organized by the Kick-in Committee. In the following days, SAB, along with Student Affairs, organized various other activities for the new students like a workshop to "Get to know each other", "Cycling + Poffertjes + water" at Van Heek Park etc. The students were officially welcomed by the Dean of Faculty of ITC - prof. dr. F.D. van der Meer on 2nd September.

On the last day of introduction week, the new students went on Twente Excursion, where they could taste some dutch cheese and see how cheeses are made. Throughout the introduction week, SAB had also organized a Scavenger hunt to encourage them to get to know Enschede more.



Credit: Biman Biswas



Credit - Roberto Ramirez

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*Intro week was a very productive and memorable week for me since that allowed me to witness the Dutch culture and make new friends with different nationalities. Above all, the warm welcome of ITC staff and the SAB was extremely impressive and beyond measure. With that, I feel at home here.*

- Arturo

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*The highlight of the week was the official welcome to ITC and Netherlands by the ITC's dean Freek van der Meer and the president of the SAB, we got to wear our traditional attires from home, it was a colorful ceremony.*

- Mwangala



Credit - Biman Biswas

# MOVE IN MARKET

by Student Association Board



# MY EXPERIENCE SO FAR! - ITC, NETHERLANDS

by Charlynnne Jepkosgei - MSc Spatial Engineering, 1st year

I joined the Faculty of Geo-information Science and Earth Observation, ITC, University of Twente on 6th September 2021 and the first week was more of an introduction week to get to know the system well. Personally, I loved the meeting and getting to know each other sessions during the different workshops where we were divided to various groups and we were guided through some questions that made us interact, get to know more about each other, our cultures, previous education background and what we expect of the education at ITC.

The official opening by the Dean of Students, Prof Freel van der Meer, was more of a cultural experience. We were asked to dress in our traditional wears and I really loved seeing the different outfit people came with on that day. This made me appreciate the diversity of culture ITC environment has created. Another amazing experience I had was the Twente Excursion where we visited a Cheese Factory in Hengelow and saw the whole process of cheese making and ofcourse eat a lot of cheese haha! Didn't like it the tastes much.

About Spatial Engineering, I would say it is a very unique Masters course so far. I choose it because of the learning structure which has been integrated in the course. It is made up of effective learning and studying covering 3 core areas; Technical Engineering, Spatial Information Science and Spatial Planning and Governance. All these entails effective learning and studying, working in groups (teamwork) on project led real life case scenarios. Also, we have been assigned mentors who will walk with us during their entire study period and this is such a huge privilege.

The most interesting bit about Spatial Engineering was the Personal Development Portfolio workshops which was focused on personality exercises guided by our course coordinator, Ms Tiny Luiten and the teamwork by Alkema Dinald, where we were divided into groups according to our case studies groups and tasked to build bridges. With all the exercises, we've learnt about various types of personalities and received an in-depth report of our own personality. This has given us much insight into our personal strengths and weaknesses and our preferred communication style. On top of that, made us realize and learn about other types of personalities and ways of behaving and communicating and how best to work with and around each other.



# INTERVIEW - YOLA GEORGIADOU

## *Editorial Board*

My journey at ITC lasted for over 2 decades during which I participated in several formal and informal discussions on organisational change. We regularly asked ourselves what we do, what we should be doing and what we should be seen as doing. Witnessing ITC's organisational life and changes has been a fascinating experience because it was an opportunity for me to see how applicable concepts from organisational theory are for a particular organisation, the ITC faculty. Two major organisational changes are worth mentioning, each change corresponding roughly to a decade.

During the 2000-2010 decade, we were looking at administrative problems of executive organisations—NMOs, cadastres, geological surveys, soil surveys etc—all staffed with technical people like us and guided by scientific integrity as a value. Of course there was uncertainty in spatial knowledge and a belief that this uncertainty would decrease over time with better techniques and technologies. But both we as teachers and the executive organisations we were working with agreed that the gap between the present and desired condition of these organisations could be bridged with more efficiency, reengineering of workflows and administrative processes.

In the 2010-2020 decade we started focusing on global policy problems and a dizzying number of values. Our field of action became enormously complicated. For instance, in addition to scientific integrity, a whole new set of values, vague but potent, entered the picture—political values (eg legitimacy, accountability, transparency), moral values (justice, human dignity). We started seeing spatial knowledge not only as potentially highly uncertain, but also as contested, for example with the rise of deep fake geography. Other epistemologies (meaning ways of knowing) came to the forefront, for example, feminist epistemology. Last but not least, global policy problems, bring in aspects of politics, not only national but global. The “global” brings in with it issues of culture—different ways of perceiving the world and of imagining what life should be like. Fortunately political science literature is packed with strategies to understand how policy problems are contained and how to deal with dissensus, disagreements and contestation.



## MOST PRECIOUS MOMENT

My most precious memories come from MSc and PhD students at ITC. Whether I taught them anything is for them to say. What students taught me is seeing the “universal” in the “local.” Here is an example that clarifies what I mean. A student from a West African country wrote an essay for my class in Spatial Engineering about a huge infrastructural project of a multinational company building a gas pipeline in West Africa. The pipeline had to cross a major river and disrupted the lives of people living along the river. The people claimed that the river god (a black cobra) had to be pacified with costly pacification rituals for the disruption. After a huge amount of social unrest around the construction project, the company agreed to pacify the river god by paying a large amount of money. The lesson is this: what people locally call the need to pacify the river god is universally known as a just compensation for the disruption caused to their lives and properties. What lies behind the (to some, exotic) claim for pacification of a river god is a universal need for social justice and rightful compensation.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all the ITC students for helping us teachers see the world in a grain of sand

# STUDENT HOUSING AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN ENSCHEDE

by Druti Gangwar

Housing is an utmost priority when we think about 'Quality of Life'. As it is one of the basic human needs. Other than the size and location of the housing, the feeling of satisfaction is also an essential dimension. Keeping these concepts in mind, a group of first-year ITC students researched identifying the housing-related factors that affect the well-being of international students studying at ITC. The student's experiences related to housing were brought to attention by student organizations (AFRISA, LAVoz, and SAB). Since the students are obliged to live within the ITC Hotel for the first 12 months of their arrival in the Netherlands, it was worth investigating how it affects their well-being. Also, a study on international students' experiences in the Netherlands, conducted by the Dutch National Students' Union (LSvb) highlighted that there are very few options for international students because the housing is very expensive and they are not aware of their rights to avail cheaper housing (Koster, 2018).

This study compared the experiences of students living in the ITC Hotel versus other housing locations. It was carried out in three phases- engage, investigate and act; derived from the challenge-based learning approach which focuses on challenging wicked problems and involving the real world. A google form questionnaire was shared with the students to record their level of satisfaction and opinions on positive/negative aspects of their housing. Only the second-year students were surveyed due to limited time and experience with the housing situation in Enschede. A total of 38 responses (22 ITC Hotel & 15 Non-ITC hotel residents) were received from a target of 140 students.

Level of Satisfaction - When the students were asked if they considered looking for different housing, 16 out of 22 respondents said Yes. Further, when they were asked how hard it was to find new housing, the average score was 3.75 out of 5 (1= most easy and 5= most difficult), which indicated a high level of difficulty. The respondents were asked to score their overall level of satisfaction (1= Very dissatisfied and 5=Very Satisfied) in current housing.

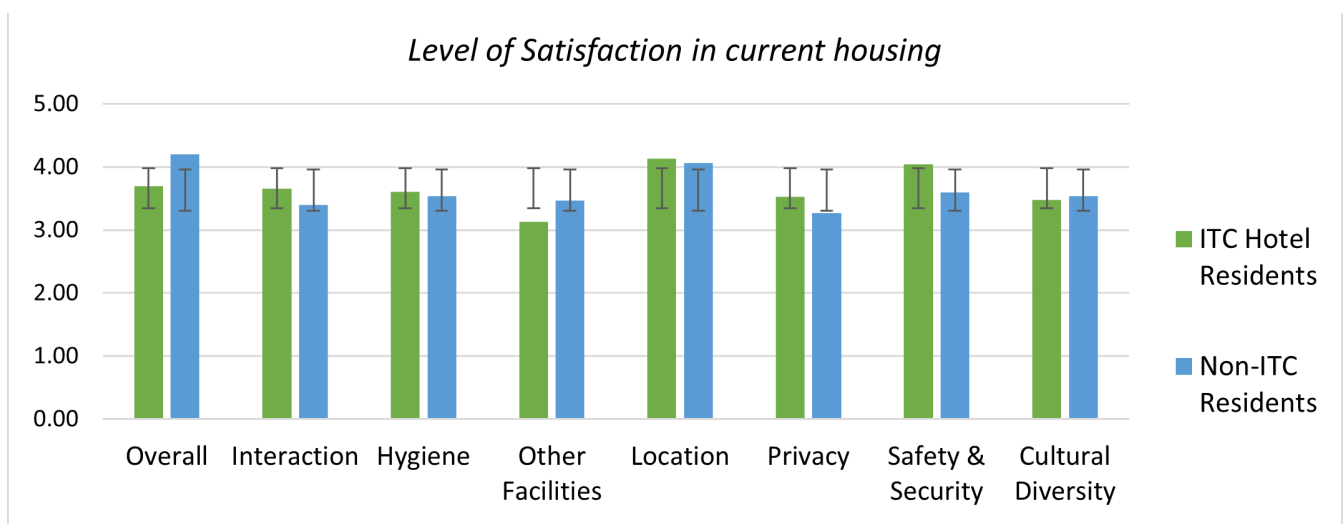


Figure 1 Average score for the Level of Satisfaction (across various housing aspects)

What do you think are the positive and negative aspects of your current housing?

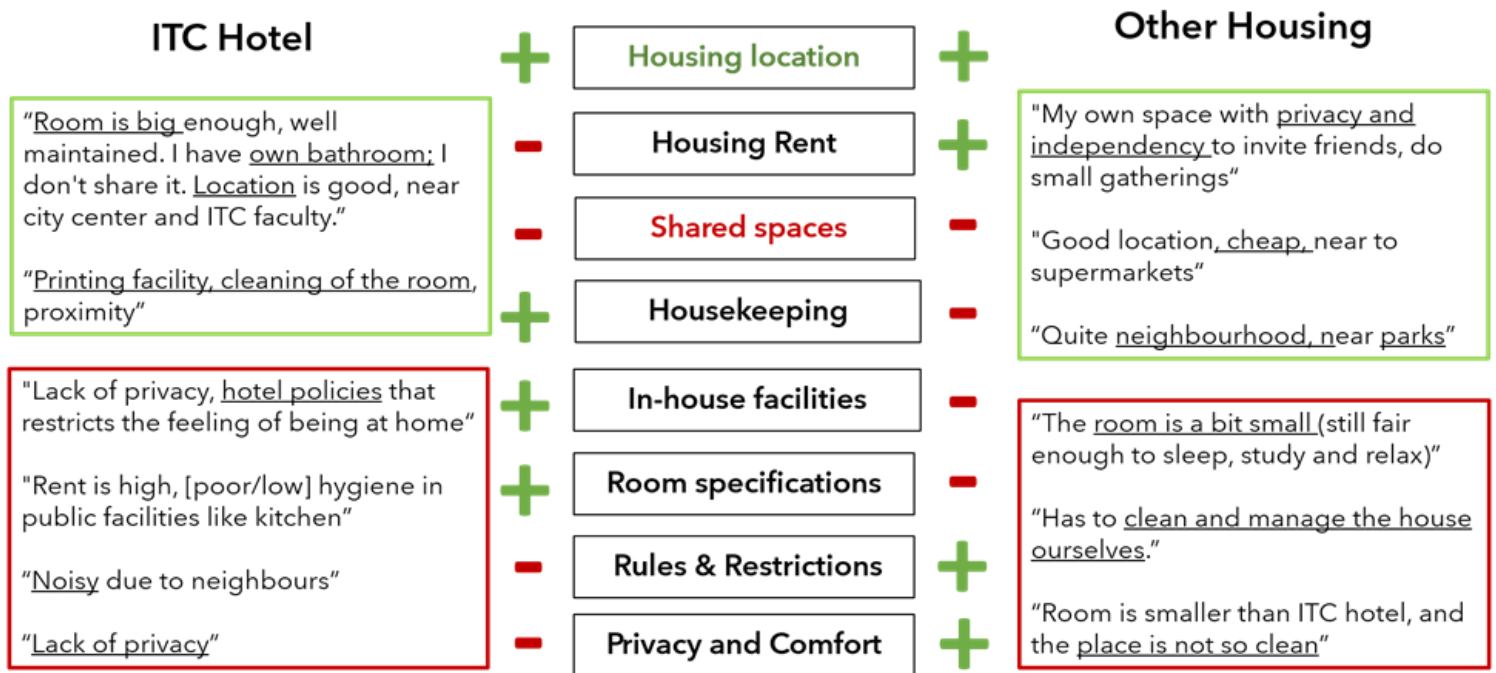


Figure 2 Summary of the responses received for positive and negative aspects of housing  
The descriptive responses were analyzed using the coding tools in Atlas. ti software

What do you think are the positive and negative aspects of your current housing?

Based on the results from this study the key problems are high housing costs, strict housing rules, and difficulties in being able to find a new house. These issues are also similar to concerns with other international students coming to the Netherlands every year (LSvb).

The term 'housing expenditure overburden' is a measure of total housing cost as a percentage of an individual's disposable income (Streimikiene, 2015). If this is 40% or more, it is considered to be a burden. Currently, the students at ITC Hotel pay more than 50% of their monthly allowance as room rent, which puts them under this housing cost overburden. This leaves them with lesser money for other necessities like food and healthcare, which exposes them to financial and mental stress. There could be more variations in rooms rents within the hotel based on the facilities.

Another important finding was that those students that wish to change to new housing after first year, face difficulty in finding a new house. One of the reasons is the lack of awareness which limits the opportunities for students to ease their financial burden due to housing. This situation can be improved by conducting awareness and information dissemination sessions towards the second half of every first year.

Last but not the least, student satisfaction surveys can be conducted bi-annually and the results can be shared with the Municipality of Enschede, as they decide upon the housing costs. The ITC Hotel administration and the housing department of the municipality of Enschede could revise the rents and other facility provisions on an annual basis. Discussions based on the student survey results and experts interactions could lead to formulating more effective ways to improve the 'Quality of Life' of international students studying at ITC.

# GRADUATION CEREMONY - 2019-21

## *Editorial Board*

The master's graduation ceremony at ITC is a formal acknowledgement of students' hard work in the form of degree certificates, handed by the Dean-ITC, accompanied by the different department heads. The certificate authenticates the completion of the ITC master's program and welcome students to the vast and illustrious ITC alumni family. This year ITC organized 2 graduation days with a total of 4 ceremonies. 3 ceremonies on 16th July and only 1 on 2nd September, owing to the increase in maximum participants allowed. A total of 107 students graduated this year including 14 students who received the degree with Cum Laude.

SAB is proud to be associated with this event. The SAB president, in his speech, expressed the collective thanks of all the first-year students to the seniors for all their help and guidance during this past year. The ceremony ended with a bittersweet formal picture session of outgoing students with their degrees. It marked the end of their master's journey at ITC but the beginning of a new chapter in their life.





# SPORTS DAY AT ITC

## Editorial Board

PVI and SAB ultimately managed to organize ITC sports day, following the norms and regulations in the Netherlands, after a lengthy COVID crisis. As every year, there were Volleyball, soccer, running, jeu de Boules, and SAB Back2School events. COVID made it impossible to continue the BBQ tradition.

Soccer with massive number of 7 teams with 21 matches in total (each against each other), that too in just 2 hours. Our very well known referees, Jan de Ruiter and Jaap Duim (retired ITC staff members) were there to handle overheated situation with care and authority. The most experienced Tukker team claimed the overall victory 5 wins and 1 tie. ESA won the silver medal. Nederland Vijftal lost 5 matches and had 1 tie scoring 1 point. They won the competition for best team outfit. Volleyball competition with 3 teams was intensive, exciting and at a high level. Each team won equal matches of two. Thus our dedicated referees Karl Grabmaier and Dick van der Zee decided to count the point scored and conceived. The Antibodies and the D-ESA-ster team played final against each other. The Antibodies won the match by 30-28.



Jeu de boules had 5 teams registered. For some, experienced players JdB was no secrets, they have been a part of this competition for years. New players found it a bit challenging. The experienced team CCC (Roelof and Roland) won all 4 matches, but their most important win was against their long-lasting opponent; Bitterballen. Despite this, Bitterballen collected enough points to finish 2nd before GDFIAWL. Running did not attract many participants straight away, but as soon as some people tried, it inspired others to attempt to beat the best times. Kids had way more energy than the adults. Kaidan, Memory and Fardad won the Junior, Female and Male 40 m qualifying race, respectively. The 1 mile championship attracted 14 participants, including the winners of 40 m championship. The fastest junior runner was Kaidan Hecker, followed by Memory (1st, female championship), Mira and Sharvi (2nd and 3rd). Silver and Bronze in the male competition were handed out to Chris and Amir. Back2School activities with our SAB president Prashant with other members set up 4 activities: sack race, spoon race, Koekhappen and Blikgooien. All activities led to hilarious situations and strong competitions. This setup is definitely something to cherish and maintain.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

By SAB

27th October 2021 - International Food Festival

13th November 2021 - Amsterdam Excursion

December 2021 - December Newsletter by SAB

# IMPORTANT CONTACTS

*ITC and University of Twente*

Student Association Board - ITC - [sab-itc@utwente.nl](mailto:sab-itc@utwente.nl)

Student Affairs - ITC - [studentaffairs-itc@utwente.nl](mailto:studentaffairs-itc@utwente.nl)

Student Affairs Coaching and Councelling - UT - [sacc@utwente.nl](mailto:sacc@utwente.nl)

University of Twente events - <https://www.utwente.nl/en/events/>

Study in Enschede - <https://www.studyinenschede.com/>

Student Union - [studentunion@union.utwente.nl](mailto:studentunion@union.utwente.nl)



# SAB BOARD

*2020-21*

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Secretary - Som Mishra

Communication - Enzo Campomanes

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Sports/Resident - Tanuj Pareek

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