

# A2 - Refinement and Project Focus



**Politecnico  
di Torino**

# MEET THE TEAM

Who are we?



**SIMONE PANIATI**

## *COMPUTER NETWORKS AND CLOUD COMPUTING*

I am a 23 years old student from Chivasso, near Turin. I am passionate about computer networks and everything related to the internet.



**PETER ALHACHEM**

## *ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE*

I am a 22 years old student from Beirut, Lebanon. I am passionate about mathematics and quantum physics. I hope to transmit my love for science through work and academics.



**GIUSEPPE LAZZARA**

## *SOFTWARE*

I am a 24 years old student from Catania. My greatest passions are computer engineering and music. I aim to transmit my musical creativity to the realm of computer science.



**FRANCESCO ROSATI**

## *SOFTWARE*

I am a 23 years old student from Latina, near Rome. I am passionate about programming and I hope I can make an impact on the world through it.

# Domain of interest - Original idea

Human nature satisfies the condition of progression and evolvement. As a matter of fact, relocation has always been a major part of developing this process. Ambition, change and opportunity are three key factors that define the motives behind people relocating to new places and communities, however the process of integration that follows, evidently, relocation has never been an easy step to accomplish. Therefore, through various encounters from our behalf with people that have suffered from this concern, we have opted to study the process of integration for newly incomers into new communities.



# Domain of interest - Specified

Based on a preliminary study conducted in the first report, the team members have found several common points that have been shared during the interviews that highlighted problems faced by our interviewees. Through these ideas, we were able to extract various key factors that were highlighted and processed as **introductory needs**. Consequently, according to a unified emphasis of the interviewees on the subsequent matter as well as the diversity of options that this field holds , the members of the team decided to explore the following domain:


**Integration of international students through communication and information.**



# About the interviews (I)

To deepen the knowledge acquired in a previous initial study, the team members have conducted three additional interviews that were specifically oriented over the more detailed domain of study. Two participants were chosen according to a specific standard: ***International students that have attended several events with local organizations***. Team members have organized a third interview with a profile that satisfies the description of **domain expert**.

Concerning the contextual inquiry, the team members were unable to introduce a right context for this kind of interview. Based on our chosen domain, it was too critical to visualize certain activities performed by our participants that will serve the purpose of our study.



# About the interviews (II)

**Participant #1:** Tony Saliba → **Where?:** Google Meet

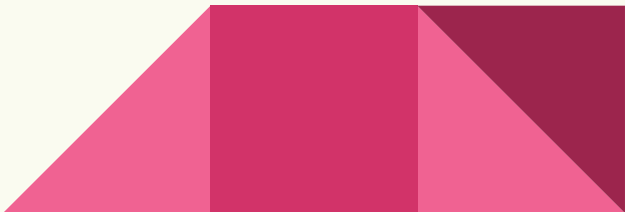
**Who?:** Giuseppe Lazzara (Interviewer)  
Simone Paniati (Writer)

**Participant #2:** Aifric Deane → **Where?:** Google Meet

**Who?:** Francesco Rosati (Interviewer)  
Peter ALHachem (Writer)

**Participant #3:** Lorenzo Ambrogio → **Where?:** Google Meet

**Who?:** Giuseppe Lazzara (Interviewer)  
Peter ALHachem (Writer)





*“Through my work with ESN I have the possibility to make people feel at home during their stay in Italy.”*

## LORENZO AMBROGIO, 27, MALE

FOOD ENGINEER AND ERASMUS REPRESENTATIVE

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Lorenzo is a current volunteer who is in charge of cultural events and international meetups within the Erasmus organization. With Lorenzo, we found a perfect fit to the profile of **domain expert** due to his role in encouraging international students on participating in local events and language exchange meetings that will help the integration process of newly incomers. Through Lorenzo we are also able to extract the point of view of someone who is in direct connection to our main targeted audience.



# Key Quotes

- *“I wanted to give back what I received from ESN while I was an erasmus student by making people feel like at home during their staying in Italy”*
- *“I’m in a daily contact with many young international people that are usually happy about their experience abroad”*
- *“We organize many events which help international students to know each other, like City tours, language cafès and daily trips. We also help international students by giving them informations about local events and daily activities”*
- *“It’s not so easy for international students to integrate in a new community because of the new routine which could be completely different from the old one”*
- *“Usually, international students are able to build strong relationships thank to our events and assistance”*
- *“Many international students don’t participate to our events because they are too shy or because of the costs”*
- *“I think that the communication between local organizations and international students can be improved by organizing highly recommended meetings inside the universities”*
- *“We can reach many international students at once thanks to social networks”*





*"During my stay, I had the opportunity to learn from others and to grow and also to make a lot of new friends. "*

## **TONY SALIBA, 23, MALE**

COMPUTER ENGINEERING GRADUATED

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Tony is a fresh international graduate from the Polytechnic of Turin that has completed his master's degree in Software Engineering. He has since then moved to Amsterdam and is currently working in a well-renowned company there. Through Tony, we are able to discuss his affiliation with a local organization like private residences, international gatherings as well as to get his insight on the constant change either from Lebanon to Turin or from Turin to Amsterdam.

# Key Quotes

- *“I decided to move in different cities to improve myself”*
- *“I was really busy with my studies and work so most of the events I attended were company related”*
- *“Most of the people in my new community are open-minded because everybody has a different background”*
- *“I met a lot of people that are at the same stage of my life”*
- *“In Italy it was really easy to socialize and make new friends while in the Netherlands it’s a bit more difficult because of the lack of time”*
- *“As a student it was easier to meet new people”*
- *“As a member of different study groups and teams, I had the opportunity to meet a lot of people and to grow a lot”*
- *“I really liked the events organized by Italian students for International students: it would be awesome to have more events of that kind”*
- *“I really like the idea of an application that could facilitate the interaction between international students and local organizations”*



*"Ireland is a very small country and it feels very removed from Europe, I always wanted to live somewhere bigger and meet people that were not Irish."*

## **AIFRIC O'LEARY DEANE, 23, FEMALE**

URBAN SCIENCE STUDENT

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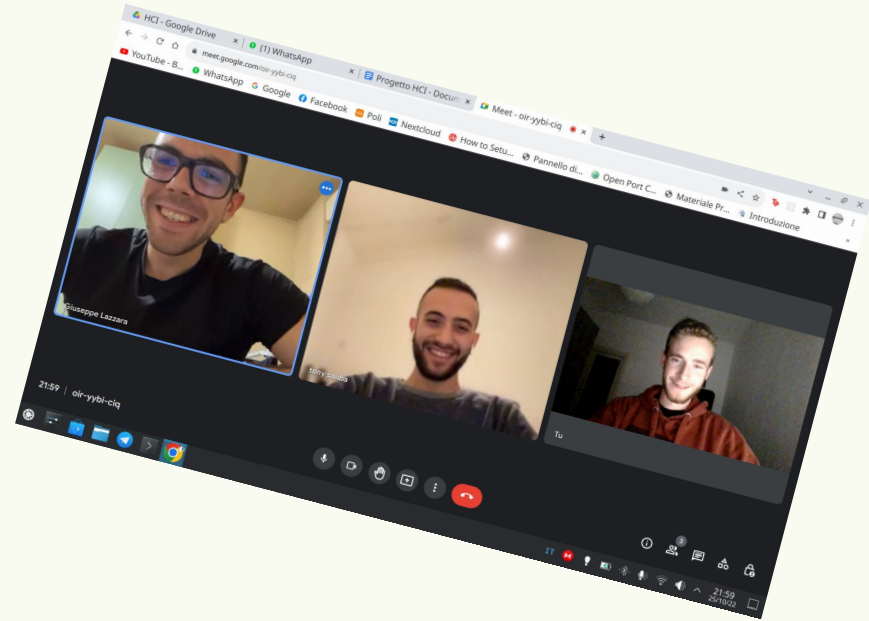
Aifric is an Irish student doing her Erasmus in Turin, studying Urban Science at PoliTO. She qualifies as an invested international student in the events within her new society considering that it's not her first Erasmus exchange to Italy. With Aifric we are able to elaborate a specific view about the local events held in Turin and Siena where she had her first experience. Her contribution is considered as one of the important cores to our ongoing study.



# Key Quotes

- *“Ireland is a very small country and it feels very removed from Europe, I always wanted to live somewhere bigger and meet people that were not irish.”*
- *“I joined ESN and they organize events every week. The first one was a linguistic exchange where we could speak in different languages but realistically it was just a meeting in a bar.”*
- *“I used to exploit the ESN network much more in Siena than in Turin because the city was smaller and there weren't much more international students; it felt like it was less easier to make friends. Now I stopped going to events because I have found friends that I hang out with.”*
- *“I remember that in Siena it was more challenging since I have not done it before but as soon as i went to events, I directly made friends.”*
- *“I think social media is the best way to improve communication between local organizations and international students. I have a friend that doesn't know instagram but maybe the email chain, as it sends you informations about the events, it might be useful.”*
- *“Erasmus students are a specific branch of international students and people who live longer here do not have the same opportunity to access information for events the same as Erasmus students, it would be nice to have the opportunity to meet more internationals not related to Erasmus”*

# About the interviews - Pictures

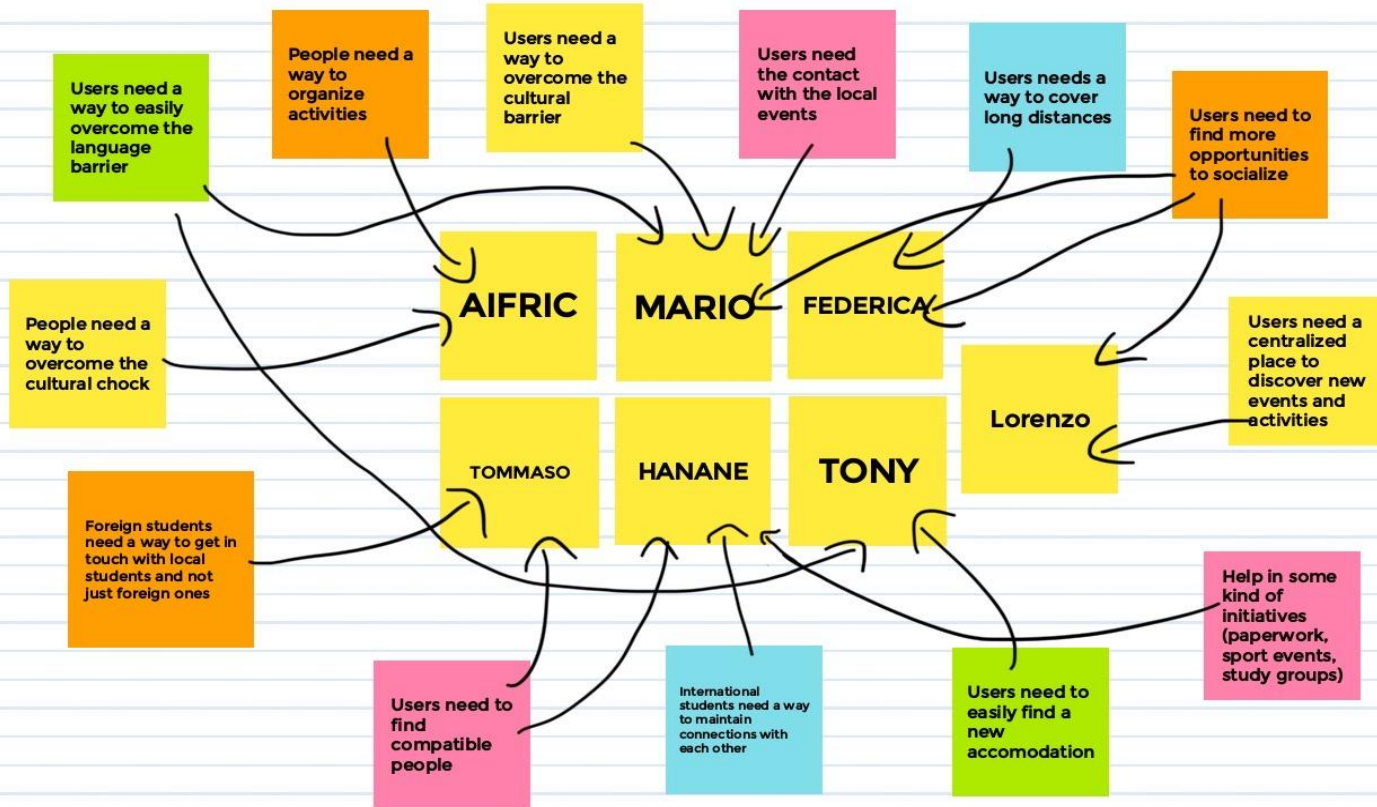


# About the interviews - Conclusion

In the light of the interviews, the team members have found an emphasis on the importance of accessing information that is unavailable in common and easy ways. Participants have explicitly connected unanimously the access of information to diverse locations and digital platforms. This communication has created, according to them, some ambiguity on the various modes to gather events and initiatives. During the interviews, the members, were able to discover a common trait that explains the undeniable relationship between previous and current experiences and its effect on retrieving informations about local activities.



# During the brainstorm...



# Deep Needs (I)

After an exhaustive investigation of the various arguments made through all seven interviews done in both our initial and current studies, the members were able to deduce the following enhanced needs:

- **Ameliorating the bond between international students and local citizens:**  
In fact, the several studies made were able to show a considerable gap between international students and their new locals. Majority of our participants have neglected the human and physical aspects of their relations with locals and this has resulted in an increasing barrier of communication between these two sides.

*“My relationship with locals is more difficult, you know them from limited activities or when you meet them randomly”*

*~ Mario Mastrandrea*





# SOLUTIONS:

**Advertise local events for them to reach as much internationals as possible**

**Join Diverse competitions whether it is physical or entertainment competition where they can test themselves and connect with people**

**Network of ambassadors that are in charge of helping international students in all their stay until a finite amount of time**

**Volunteering work that will make you engage in your new community**

**Ameliorating the bond between international students and local citizens**

**Libraries, Food markets and stations, Spiritual and social groups (church, scouts), Local bars and coffee shops**


**University Clubs or Working groups that usually join different students from different fields together**

**Student Groups that create initiatives to eat together at the canteen or outside in the premises of their place of study**

## Deep Needs (II)

- **Detecting compatibility between international students and their chosen groups:**  
One of the most evident reasoning revealed during our study is the cultural diversity between the members that have participated in our interviews. This diversity is evidently defined through a large plethora that goes from cultural all the way to principles and beliefs. And in order to respect their ideologies limits and concerns, our participants favorise to be part of groups where they feel accordant with their members and where they can be themselves.

*“I really need to make new friends in my life, I really like it, but you can't make connections with everyone because people can be way different than you and I don't click with everyone.” ~ Tommaso Natta*



# SOLUTIONS:

Survey that matches  
you with compatible  
people from your  
community

People matching  
based on their  
common hobbies,  
interests and  
activities (art,  
museums, sports,  
music)

Match people  
based on their  
Search  
histories

Detecting  
compatibility  
between  
international  
students and their  
chosen groups

Ideology  
based groups  
that have the  
same principle  
and beliefs

Using known  
platforms like Meet  
or Tinder or Meetup  
that demonstrate  
people close to your  
place of living

# Deep Needs (III)

- **Narrowing down the available resources to access needed information:**

Whether it is for legal or entertainment purposes, our participants presented some valid justifications about the vagueness and diversity of sources to access the targeted information. Not only that, but it is very important to take notice of the credibility and verification of the information that is acquired by people who are witnessing a new experience in a new environment.

*“I am subscribed to so many groups on social media and sometimes it is very hard to follow the informations that I need, it would be nice to have one place that gather them all.” ~ Aifric O’Leary Deane*



# SOLUTIONS:

**Groups on social media where events are shared**

Voice announcements in gathering places where events are mentioned to all the people

Mail Chain subscription that notifies you with update on a daily, weekly or monthly basis

Organizations or InfoPoints that are responsible on publishing and providing informations on demand for students that show credibility and verification

**Narrowing down the available resources to access needed information**

University board or digital wall where all types of flyers are shared in one place to avoid repetitiveness

Paper or digital newspaper that share on a weekly or monthly basis all the news feed for the students

# OUR FINAL SOLUTIONS:

**Centralized platform  
(could be counter,  
infopoint, physical  
place, or digital)**

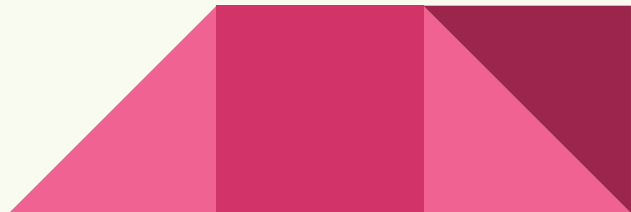
**Surveys at the  
beginning of the  
experience to let  
students express  
things they really  
like through email  
chains or other  
tools, different  
groups can join**

**Improvement of  
surveys with  
information on local  
events and their  
suggestions. Adding  
related categories  
on local events.**

# Our Final Solution

Following an elaborated examination of the various specified needs and their associated solutions the team members have established the current solution:

**Creating a centralized platform that includes: groups, events, help, gatherings and other useful tools for easing the integration process of internationals.** This platform is **survey and category based** and can be performed through infopoints, counters, physical places or digitally.



# Our Final Solution - How and Why?

After a thorough analysis of the available solutions, the team members were able to narrow down the diverse solutions into three main ones that satisfy the general view of our intended project. We then have chosen to merge the solutions into a final product that covers all the necessary ideas we have mentioned in our brainstorm.

In our solution, we intend to merge between several specific ideas that we have found beneficiary into the main target of our study. The team members also made sure to cover all the possible specific needs that were critical into the purpose of our domain.





# SpaceCom - *“Where internationals become locals.”*

“SpaceCom” is a conjunctive abbreviation of the two words “**Space**” and “**Community**”. The team members have set on this particular name because it englobes two core principles of our devoted work. With “**Space**”, we intend to provide an area with all the necessary informations that will help our targeted party in their integration process. With “**Community**”, we plan on building a bridge between international students and their new societies in hopes of unifying the diversity in a community into a single one.

