



# Per vectum

## FEATURING

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- Online Exchange in Iceland
- Women in Data Science
- Catching up with Ofek
- Everything Pumpkin
- The Vectum Blog



AUTUMN EDITION • 2020



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# WORD OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear fellow Vectum members, professors, partners, and friends of our association,

This is my first opportunity to address you in our quarterly PerVectum magazine during the 2020-2021 academic year. To our incoming cohorts of Bachelor's and Master students, I would like

to welcome you to the Econometrics & Operations Research programmes at Maastricht University, especially our students who are following their degrees virtually from different places around the world. To our professors and tutors, I would like to welcome you too and extend our gratitude and appreciation for your flexibility and creativity in adapting to the new normal of online education. To our sponsors in the private and public sectors, I would like to thank you for continuing to stand by us in spite of these difficult times and I wish you all the best in your commercial or academic endeavours. Unfortunately, I can not give you all the warm welcome that I otherwise would have preferred to have done in person. Nonetheless, I can be proud of the resilience, solidarity, and social responsibility that our Vectum community has exhibited in the fight against Covid-19. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the work of our members in this largely unconventional start of the academic year.

Many students have started their university studies in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to concerns about the health and safety of their loved ones and open questions about the future. In addition to the uncertainty of embarking on a new academic adventure, these students have to do so in an unfamiliar environment of distanced learning. Unlike previous years, these students have not been able to meet and make friends with their new classmates under conventional circumstances in person. This was usually enabled at the welcome events hosted by Vectum with the purpose of introducing new students to each other, getting them settled in Maastricht, and integrating them into the community of Econometrics & Operations Research students. Instead, this year, we at Vectum recognised the need to fill this void in a safe and responsible manner. Thus, even though Vectum could not host any physical welcome events, some of our experienced members volunteered to share their guidance and support in the form of an online buddy programme that saw pairs of older students engaging with tutorial groups of first-year students on a bi-weekly basis. For this effort, I would like to thank the buddies Amel, Tobias, Amber, Kristina, Aisja, Radina, Victoria, Toby, Izzy, and Pedro for being there for the first-year students and helping them adjust to university life.





Not only have our welcome events transitioned to an online environment, but so have our traditional weekly activities on Tuesdays. Here, our Treasurer and Activities Coordinator Alexander Noordman had the responsibility of hosting online events that allow our members to engage with each other and experience a sense of community in spite of physical isolation. For this, I would like to congratulate Alexander and his Activities Committee, consisting of Enrico, Aisja, and Hugo, for the impressive and inventive ideas that they have implemented for the enjoyment of our Vectum community. Throughout this first academic period, our members participated in a diverse array of activities hosted over Zoom with participants joining from the comfort of their own homes, such as a virtual magic show by esteemed magician Pete Heat, workshops in cooking and cocktail mixing, and an online quiz with the help of third-year students Anne, Tessa, and Victoria. Although a Zoom meeting may not be able to replace the atmosphere of a night together at the pub, our members have collectively accepted our responsibility in preventing the spread of Covid-19. Therefore, Vectum will patiently continue to organise online social activities until the respective authorities and the School of Business and Economics deem it safe to return to physical events.

In addition to social activities, Vectum's responsibilities to its members also encompasses academic and career-related support. Under the careful supervision of our Secretary and Public Relations Coordinator Joshua Vink, Vectum has been able to continue offering extra tutorials in first-year mathematics courses. These have been taught in a combination of online classes over Zoom and physical classes taught at the SBE facilities under the required hygiene and social distancing guidelines. These extra tutorials were taught by experienced, successful students who mastered these courses. Thus, I would like to thank the student-tutors Anne, Luc, Enrico, Marie, Amber, and Tobias for their hard work and flexibility in teaching these classes under new circumstances. Further academic activities included the regular research lecture and our first session in a series of academic debates, hosted by PhD student Moritz Buchem and Enrico from the activities committee respectively.

Furthermore, Joshua's responsibilities also include our public relations and technical infrastructure. In the summer, Vectum revamped its website and introduced a brand new logo. This was done in line with our rebranding from SCOPE | Vectum back to Vectum, which was agreed with the faculty-wide association SCOPE Maastricht for the sake of outward clarity towards third parties. Additionally, Joshua has been reliable and attentive in managing the technical needs of our members and guests at our online events, ensuring that these function smoothly. With the help of the Public Relations Committee, which is made up of our members Amel, Izzy, Nhi, and Radina, Vectum has retained an active digital presence, which is especially vital nowadays. Thanks to them, we can look forward to this PerVectum and more to come.

With respect to the external representation of our members, Joshua and I decided to combine our respective responsibilities of public relations and spokespersonship to recruit Vectum's first-ever Social Initiatives Committee, which now includes Siemen, Marie, Rebecca, Lilly, and Leopold. The purpose of this brand new committee is to branch out of our comfort zone and give Vectum members the opportunity to interact with other organisations or study associations that go beyond our familiar field of Econometrics & Operations Research. Especially in these debilitating times, I am inspired by the initiative shown by these members to shine a light on social issues and offer a helping hand to charitable causes. I very much look forward to what this committee can accomplish together in this upcoming academic year.

Another quintessential role of Vectum is to build connections between our potential employers and our members. In fact, Vectum would not be able to offer the established standard of academic or social support without cooperation with our sponsors. Especially during this economic environment, we at Vectum are committed to preparing our members in the best way we can for their future careers. For this crucial task, our Vice President and External Affairs Coordinator Edwin van der Vegt has taken on the necessary responsibility with the assistance of his External Affairs Committee, which includes Anne, Victoria, Amber, Kristina, and Tom. Although physical events are not possible at this point in time, Edwin and his committee have been working hard to offer viable alternatives. In this academic period, our members had the opportunities to participate in online in-house days with FlowTraders and Optiver, which showed us how Vectum can still offer events with companies in a digital environment. In addition, I can already announce that Vectum will participate in the upcoming 2021 edition of the National Econometricians Day (Landelijke Econometristendag – LED for short). This will be offered in an entirely online format. Therefore, I am confident that Vectum will be able to continue our cooperation with our sponsors in spite of these unconventional circumstances.

Lastly, as the Econometrics & Operations Research study association at the School of Business and Economics, we are dedicated to maintaining our social, academic, and professional support for the students of our study programmes. However, we also recognise that our community plays an active role within the overarching community at our faculty. Four years ago, the different study associations under the SCOPE framework decided to merge into the faculty-wide association SCOPE Maastricht, which we did not participate in. Since then, my predecessors have maintained a consistent commitment to the independence of Vectum. However, in this academic year, the SBE has expressed its intention for the two parties to agree on a legal arrangement that clearly defines the roles of SCOPE Maastricht as the faculty-wide study association and Vectum as an autonomous subsidiary that specialises towards the Econometrics & Operations Research study programmes. As President of Vectum, my position remains consistent with those of my predecessors before me: Vectum should not relinquish its responsibilities towards its members in a full merger under SCOPE Maastricht. Under the current conditions, I have made it my priority in my board year to negotiate an arrangement that satisfies and respects the needs of our members. Therefore, I have carried on with the negotiations at the stage where I succeeded my predecessor, Tobias Bechthold. So far, my discussions with the President of SCOPE Maastricht, Myrthe den Braber, under the supervision of the SBE Student Representative as a mediator, Elif Karakurt, have been respectful and productive. By the end of this semester, I am confident that we can propose an arrangement that would satisfy the needs of all parties, which our members will have their opportunity to consider and make a decision on. At the end of the day, my position remains the same: I will not consider an arrangement that does not guarantee the needs of our members.

Without the diligence, dedication, and determination of my fellow board members, Vectum could not have persevered in the start of this unconventional and unprecedented year for our association. I can consider myself lucky to have been chosen to work with three fellow members that I have come to know and respect as not only my teammates, but also my friends. Among the four of us in the board, six different nationalities are represented, which reflects our international outlook at Maastricht University. Now, I would like to thank our predecessors Tobias, Zoë, Amel, and Nirmay for their guidance and faith in us. They set a good example for us and can be proud of what they have accomplished. For the remainder of this academic year, we will do our best to offer our members the academic, social, and professional support that they deserve and I will be happy to hear any of your remarks, concerns, or questions for the sake of our study association.

Sincerely yours,

Frederick Hagelstein

President of the 2020-2021 Board of Vectum

# THE vectum BOARD PICTURES

A big thank you to Pedro Duarte for taking the board pictures. If you want see more of his pictures, you can follow him on Instagram using the tag @pedrojcd





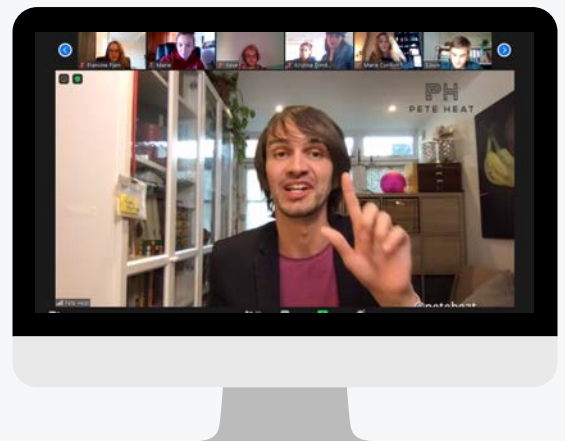
## VECTUM MEETS THE WORLD OF MAGIC

Magic is in the air! Or at least in a zoom call. We started the academic school year with something never done before at Vectum, namely a magic show! Pete Heat came by Maastricht digitally to show us some of his mysterious magic tricks. Pete Heat is most famous for his performances at the BBC and Amazon, and now world-famous at Vectum.

The whole show was based on a prediction he had made before the event had even started. By showing awe-inspiring tricks, he guided us through his programme. One of the tricks was that Edwin had to search up a word on a Wikipedia site and only by telling Pete the first letter he could predict what that word would be. Of course, there was quite a bit of scepticism from several people, myself included, as nobody trusted that they didn't cahoot right before the show. They assured us that no chicanery was happening from Edwin's side, Pete was rather suspiciously dismissive about the shenanigans.

Another one of his tricks was that Marie could switch about a Rubik's cube by saying which direction Pete should move it. All this moving about resulted in a seemingly random Rubik's cube, but after Pete pointed out that the cube, lying dormant throughout the show, behind him had precisely the same pattern, we knew that he was a true wizard.

After all his acts were done, he revealed that the prediction he had made at the beginning was correct! To this day, scientists and the like, aka me, are still baffled on how he performed the tricks right before our eyes. If you have any clue how this illusion came into place, please contact the Vectum hotline...





# THE GREAT VECTUM QUIZ

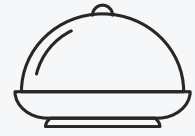
On the 8th of September, the summer sun was still shining bright, and the academic year of 2020-2021 had just begun. A year without a welcome activity, a scavenger hunt or our precious Oktoberfest. The university had moved its operations online, and exchanges were held from the comfort of your parent's couch. While normally, Vectum members would be terrorising the city, proposing to strangers or having silent discos in the library, you could now find them watching TV with the family once again. Instead of at the Preuv, Vectum's nights ended up in zoom breakout rooms. Romantic, isn't it?

Even though this change of setting might be limiting to some, treasurer Alexander and his board took it upon themselves to organise the best start of the academic year they could fathom. After all, the most creative ideas come when restrictions are imposed. To give the first years a good impression of Vectum, and to test the Vectum knowledge obtained by the older generations, a quiz was held on this second Tuesday of the year. Who could be the one to win the immeasurable honour of being the go-to for Vectum trivia? Who knows its members the best, and recognises every single activity?

With Tessa, Victoria and Anne as hosts, Vectum could not have picked any better presentation team. The dream team delivered a fast-paced Kahoot-based quiz, with questions ranging from the definition of LOES to a recollection of events in younger years. Recognising baby photos gave a cuteness overload, which was a welcome pause in this tough battle for Vectum domination. After an embarrassing Taylor Swift dance break, the final rounds of the quiz made for a competitive playing field, leading to wild accusations of cheating being thrown around. In the end, only one winner could prevail. It was yours truly who won the Vectum quiz. Amel - or Mr Vectum Champion, as he prefers to be called these days - decided that nothing could ever beat this historic achievement. He then disappeared into the far lands and was not seen for several weeks to come.

After the end of the quiz, the board thanked the organising team for their amazing efforts, and all Vectum friends enjoyed a beer (or a fristi) while catching up with all things happening each other's lives. It was a great pleasure hearing what all were up to, and I'm looking forward to seeing what the coming year brings each and every one of us. Let's hope that next year, a whole lot of new Vectum trivia will have been created!

# Dinner With Vectum



Dying for an in-person activity (on a small, safe scale, of course!), I was so glad to see Vectum would organize the dinner night that I registered right after I received an email from our lovely Secretary. This time, I decided to host the dinner at my place.

Everyone who registered for this event was then put into a small group of around 4 people by Alex since we still needed to keep distance and protect ourselves. I was lucky enough to be placed in the same group with 2 first years (Karoline and Charlyn) and my amazing friend Siemen. Since that was the first time I had the chance to meet the first years in person, I gotta be honest I was a little bit nervous. It took me a long time to think of something to cook which others would enjoy before I came up with the curry idea.

Siemen came early to help me prepare the dinner. Without his help, the evening would have been a lot messier less organized because I have no skill in arranging and organizing stuff. At around 8pm, the girls arrived at my place, brought a lovely bottle of wine and some snackies snackies for us. While enjoying the dinner, we also shared some tips and experience with them.

At first, I felt like they were still a little bit shy and did not talk much. However, when the alcohol kicked in, everything got so much better. Karoline started sharing more about her life Poland before she came to The Netherlands, her Inkom group and some difficulties she found with the PBL learning approach. Charlyn also gave us an interesting comparison between the university she enrolled in Taiwan and Maastricht University.

Our lovely evening was ended by some few more drinks before Charlyn and Karoline headed home before it was too late. I would like to thank the board, especially our Treasurer Alexander for trying their best and organizing the dinner.

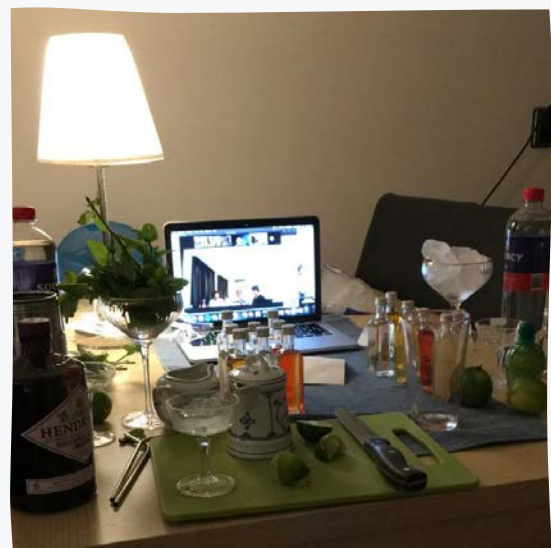
# *Tasting Alexanders Cocktails*

Very few of us can say we don't enjoy a nice cocktail and I personally have been very disappointed in the number of free drinks I have been getting from Vectum since global pandemic hit. Thankfully Alexander Noordman came to the rescue with his covid friendly cocktail event.

Every participant, in exchange for a small fee, was provided with enough ingredients to create four mojitos in the comfort of their own home. Mango, mint, coconut and non-alcoholic varieties were on the menu.

As many of us were novices, Alex and his indispensable assistant Siemen helpfully talked us through each cocktail while also enjoying themselves a drink after each tutorial. After the fourth cocktail, every participant and our hosts were noticeably looser than at the beginning. They were divided into the break-out rooms to have more intimate conversations rather than just 20 drunk people trying to make themselves heard on a zoom call.

Overall, it was a really impressive evening only a credit to the ingenuity of Alex to provide an enjoyable social event during boarder-line apocalyptic circumstances. Thank you Alex, was a great night, I doubt anyone would complain if you were to repeat the event !!



# Research Lecture by Moritz Buchem

Research lectures are always a great way to see what kind of opportunities there are when going into a specific specialisation. This time around we watched how Moritz explained a concept of Operations Research that might sound familiar to some that have completed an OR course before, be it in the second year or third year, or masters for that matter.

The question at hand was that of a load balancing problem, where we have a certain amount of machines, and the aim is to minimise (and in special cases maximise) the length of time that the machine is operational. In proper terms, given a set of jobs and a set of identical machines we need to optimise a given function consisting of loads assigned to a particular machine, with the underlying aim of making the process as efficient as possible.

What often happens in OR is that such a base problem can be translated to a problem in real life. Moritz showed a perfect example where we had to help Santa Claus with a specific optimisation of delivering presents to the children of the world. He exhibited with this example that it might not always be the case where the aim of the problem is to minimise the load balancing objective, but it might sometimes be beneficial to maximise instead.

However, there is one issue with the load balancing problem, namely that there doesn't exist an algorithm that will solve it in polynomial time. Meaning that there might be an algorithm out there, however, we won't be able to solve it in polynomial time (operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and non-negative integer exponentiation) when the input would increase exponentially. We would therefore need to apply an approximation algorithm, which will then hopefully give us a direction towards where the optimum may lie, thus an approximation algorithm would provide a solution that is a certain "distance" away from the optimum solution. Moritz demonstrated clearly why such an approximation algorithm is needed and how it should look like. He also gave us the basics toward understanding approximation schemes. Moritz also clearly demonstrated the groundworks of the approximation algorithm he would be using for the continuation of his research.

With the use of clear examples and easy to follow explanations of concepts used in OR, Moritz showed us the framework of an additive approximation algorithm for the common load balancing problem. Moritz is currently researching this topic for his PhD, and if you have any questions regarding his research topic, feel free to either contact Moritz or us directly.

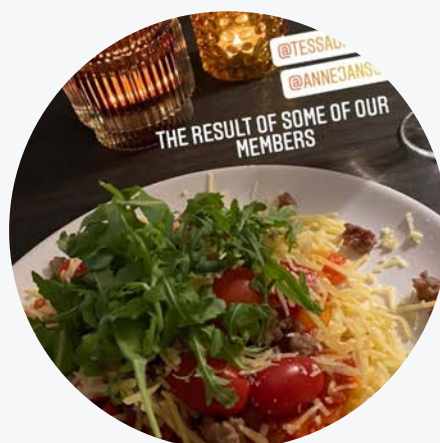


# Pasta Workshop

Another Tuesday another activity...

Pasta is always known to be a typical student meal because of its convenience and easiness to be made. It is pretty hard to go wrong with pasta, I must admit. However, making pasta from scratch is another story. I also heard some people even had a small breakdown when they tried to make their own pasta. Sensing this struggle, on the first Tuesday of October, when autumn finally arrived in Maastricht, Joshua and Alex decided to host a pasta workshop. We were invited to a Zoom meeting because this activity was an online activity. However, making pasta and enjoying it alone to me seemed pretty boring. Therefore, I had 2 amazing friends coming over to join me: Japhlet and Marie. The workshop started at 6.

Everyone looked so excited to make the pasta. Some even invited their mom to be her cooking assistant. Alex and Joshua gave us two versions of pasta: The vegan one without eggs and the normal pasta with eggs. I decided to go with the vegan one as I wanted to keep my pasta longer. Thanks to the clear instructions, we could easily follow all the steps and the results were amazing. Joshua also instructed us to make the really basic tomato sauce which tasted so much better than store-bought sauce, I must admit. During that time, my obsession with aubergine was so huge that I also decided to add some in the sauce. The complete result was so lovely, and all of us enjoyed the dinner so much. We also had a chit-chat with people through Zoom after the dinner. Amel, who had come back from his adventure in Iceland (which sounds awesome, please read his article about that in this PerVectum), joined the Zoom later. He did not make any pasta tho. He was there, telling us about his adventure and maybe supervising us. It was always nice to catch up with others, especially during this time when we do not see the others as often as usual. We then played Among Us as our new virtual bonding. The evening ended up by almost everyone was killed, sadly. Thank you, Alex and Joshua, for organizing a lovely evening and being patient with us when we were making a mess when making pasta then.





## **A Three-Week exchange**

Phew. Time really flies, huh. The whole period of March to now have truly felt like a haze, most days similar and dull. I'd have loved to be on exchange in Singapore right now. Expecting to leave for the far East in July, I cancelled my room in June, going back home for the time being. Months later, the exchange was cancelled, and the university was still online. It was time to take matters into my own hands. Create my own little exchange.



And so we went. With a backpack and a small suitcase, we set way towards Iceland, all while desperately trying to fulfil the tutorial attendance requirements. A year ago, I would have never expected to attend a tutorial while checking in at the airport.



The plane departed from Amsterdam, and landed for a stopover in Denmark, after which Icelandair carried us to our final destination. The half-empty plane landed on the barren Icelandic grounds, and after the covid-test, the handful of passengers embraced their fate of waiting four hours for the bus to Reykjavik. Of course, a 6-day quarantine was ahead of them. Perfect to do some studying to alleviate the working load later on (and enjoy some great Icelandic Viking beers ;))

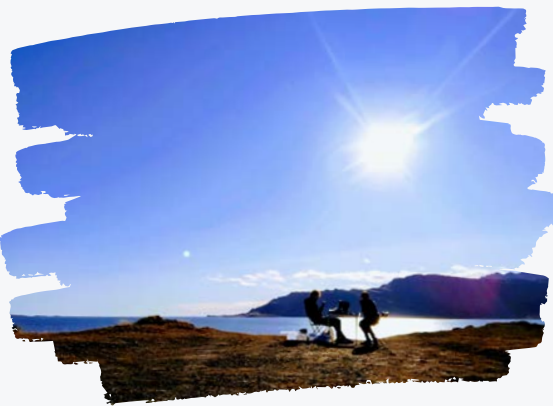
Although Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland, its population is almost exactly the same of Maastricht's. Being a student, I couldn't resist checking out the local universities. The public University of Iceland has about 14,000 students, and its buildings make one reminisce of old Soviet architecture. Not very pretty.

After abusing my rented electric scooter through forest routes and hillside roads, I rolled onto the terrain of the other uni. Reykjavik university, the private university, boasts modern facilities and is located right next to a geothermal beach. Ideal for a swim after your four-hour-long EM1 lectures.

The real Iceland starts when you leave the capital and head into its breath-taking nature, though. From the comfort of a campervan, we enjoyed the sights of geysers, walked on a glacier, saw Europe's largest waterfalls and accidentally drove on an airstrip. Traversing the gravel roads at 80 km an hour with melting snow splashing up at both sides of the car was something to get used to, but alas, we got full insurance, so why wouldn't we?



How do you combine your studies with this, you ask? Curled up in the van, I managed to attend all my tutorials, and even prepare for some. Some of my less favourite memories include waking up early for 6:30 local time tutorials, which wasn't all that nice when I had to facilitate after enjoying some drinks with Belgians until 3am. Throughout the trip, I tried to contribute at least the bare minimum to my team projects (thanks for covering when I couldn't!). The three weeks afterwards were plenty to make up for the lower efforts during the trip, though.



This all goes without mentioning that you do need to be prepared. My awesome friend and travel partner had to return home early to catch up with his studies. It proved to be very hard to keep up with the studies without hard deadlines or tutorial groups. The last few days I was left to my own devices to explore the west coast before Icelandair took me back to the heart of the Netherlands.

Altogether, if you take precautions, and make sure you have all resources you need to study, this absolutely bizarre period of life can be one of the most rewarding ones to travel in, I believe. We got to experience Iceland in a way no one will be after this is all over. It was magical to drive through the surreal landscapes of water, ice and land without coming across a single soul for hours. To enter a massive, empty parking lot to be the only one seeing the geyser erupt. If you're on the edge for a new adventure, do it. Make the best of this messed up situation you possibly can. After all, you only get to be a student once.



I hope you enjoyed my little travel blog.  
Peace, Amel



# Women in Data Science?

## What a crazy idea.

Women in Data Science Amsterdam is an independent conference organized by one of Vectum's favourite sponsor, Pipple, to coincide with the annual Global Women in Data Science (WiDS) Conference held at Stanford University, along with 150+ other locations. All genders are invited to attend WiDS regional event, a fact our all-male board was happy to take advantage of, while the event itself solely featured outstanding women doing outstanding work in data science.

At Women in Data Science (WiDS) Amsterdam 2020, speakers and attendees together discussed the meaning and development of AI for business, society and education. We received data science insights, new approaches and old cases, both from commercial industries as well as non-profit and science.

All speakers in one way or another touched on the lack of a certain (better) gender in data science and data-driven jobs, showing us that less than 15% of data-driven jobs are filled by women. Although this represents a societal deficit, stemming from soci-educ deficiencies in how we view women and the traits typically associated with women, an interesting point was made about how this inequality leads to the field suffering on the whole.

As explained, the lack of women in the data science field is just the uptake of lack of diversity, leading to a lack of a cohesive perspective in the ever-evolving technologies around us. This lack of perspective can bring forward results that borders on comical. Once a speaker toted an example of a racist soap dispenser. One, that when prompted with a non-white hand would simply not register it—rendering, a sophisticated AI-driven soap dispenser complete useless in the modern world. Regardless of the tongue to cheek examples given, the lack of diversity was presented a serious matter considering how susceptible our data and algorithms can be to bias. Any bias we allow will find its way into the lives of anyone that uses them. Our speakers, on the whole, pressed that increasing diversity is the only way to ensure that the technologies that increasingly govern our daily lives are equitable and useful to everyone. Only through diversification of experiences and backgrounds this bias and influence can be prevented.



Despite the serious nature of the topics the event was light and inviting, and informative. We were invited to ask questions and all attendants were extremely stimulated with the talks, Pipple and the associated sponsors were more than generous with the event. We learnt a lot about the world of data science, and its current needs. Individually, each speaker spoke of her own history in data science and their current jobs. An interesting and worthwhile look into their daily lives and a future many of us hope to have. All Vectum members who attended were grateful to Pipple for the invitation.



# Catching up with Ofek



For those of you who don't know, Ofek was the Secretary of 2018/2019. He was also the head of the PR committee where I got to know him on a more personal level. At the time, he was a second-year balancing the board, honours and regular basketball practice. He managed to be excellent in all of them. For example, as part of the board, he was welcoming to all new comers of Vectum helping to create in them a sense of belonging and love of the association. As a committee head, he facilitated an environment that managed to be both productive and friendly. His success in helping Vectum feel more like a community was a defining characteristic of my first year. He then went on to do exchange in UC San Diego and wrote about it in the PerVectum (edition 4 of year 2019/2020). Now, this year's PR committee managed to catch up with him for a bit before his return to Amsterdam where he is studying a masters in Econometrics (at UvA).



The first question I had to ask was how UvA is different from Maastricht University. Both academically and socially, particularly for international students. We have all heard stories from EOR students coming back from exchange, saying courses there couldn't compare to the demanding coursework of UM. However, I never knew where our program shined in contrast to other Dutch universities. Of course, he couldn't exactly compare them because he studied his Bachelor at one while his Masters in another. Still, he had some observations he could share. For one, he noticed that graduates of our university are much better at expressing themselves, thanks to our PBL system. Throughout the three years here we gain more public speaking experience, learn how to ask better questions and how to present well. Tutorials at UvA follow a different format (regardless if in Bachelors or Masters) where the students mostly take notes and listen to the tutor. Secondly, to him it seemed like UvA focuses more on theory compared to Maastricht where applications are discussed more often. When it comes to socializing, his experience was skewed as Amsterdam is very different in 2020, but he said making friends is still possible, regardless if you're Dutch or international, particularly in the Masters as plenty of new international students join. He made his new circle of friends through making / joining WhatsApp groups and showing initiative in meeting people one on one .

Next, I wanted to ask how he continues to be a stellar student, especially given the circumstances. I had asked the same question in my first year when he told me to create a study group and go to the library with people who bring something to the table, even if it's their dedication to learn. According to him, people can help you understand the material better even by just asking good questions. However, that wouldn't work if the study group is mostly for socializing. Now, with corona and a possible second lockdown, going to the library with your study group is not always possible. Yet, he is still a firm believer that studying alone doesn't work. According to him, that can be quite depressing and studying econometrics is already depressing, there's no need to make it more difficult for yourself. Now, studying together is an option through zoom. Additionally, he emphasized to mostly focus on past exams. Exams follow a certain format where they look at a couple of topics and then ask questions based on them, and year to year the questions look very similar. So for him, studying for exams, mostly includes solving past exams (often with his study group). I wanted to hear his opinion on studying because I've always been impressed by him as a student and if you don't trust me, trust his accomplishments, he graduated on the top of his class which got him to attend an UC for his exchange.



Finally, I couldn't stop myself from getting his opinion on the covid pandemic. What would he have done differently, how does he think the world is going. Everything that could be said about the topic has been said, at least by non-specialists yet I wanted to hear his opinion because I still look up to him and respect him. He saw the Netherlands' response to not implement masks as long as they did as a mistake. There are no downsides to it besides convenience. As far as 2021 goes, Ofek thought the world would return to normal, but a new normal where rules of hygiene and distance would persist. Huge groups wouldn't be possible at least for the near future.



The PR committee wants to thank Ofek for taking the time of his day to get interviewed and contribute to the first edition of the PerVectum for the year. Our best wishes go out to him in future endeavors and we hope fate reconnects us soon again .







# EVERYTHING PUMPKIN



Hello Pumpkin! As pumpkins are incredibly in season now, we will give you a few recipes and ideas for you to try out at home! They are relatively simple to do and only require a few kitchen appliances

## *Pumpkin Soup*

*Ingredients (Serves 4-5 people) credit to Heather:*

- 1 Pumpkin, approx. 400 grams
- 1 Medium Sized Onion
- 1 Sweet Chili Pepper
- 1 Tin of Chick Peas (270 grams)
- 1 Tin of White Beans (360 grams)
- 3 Vegetable Stock Cubes
- Little Bit of Sugar
- Chili Flakes



*Method:*

- First cut up your pumpkin, you do this by cutting it in half and spooning out all the seeds and wires (keep the seeds!). Once everything is scooped out, you can cut the pumpkin in slices so you can easily cut off the skin. Afterwards, cut it into cubes of approx. 1cm x 1cm, you can also just buy a packet of pre-cut pumpkins if you're in a hurry
- Cube the onion and slice the sweet chili pepper, do this by cutting the pepper lengthwise, remove the seeds and slice each of the halves. Drain the chickpeas and the white beans and rinse them to remove any of that gnarly tin slime
- Now heat up some olive oil in a big soup pan, then add the onions till they are somewhat see through, add a teaspoon of sugar to caramelize the onions
- Add the sweet chili pepper, the chickpeas and white beans, stir for a minute. Add the pumpkin and add water till everything is just barely covered. Add the 3 stock cubes and 2 teaspoons of chili flakes
- Wait till the pumpkins are soft, or you can let it simmer for an hour with the lid on the pan for more flavour. Take off the fire and use a blender to make the soup smooth



# Pumpkin Cake

*Ingredients (Serves 9 people):*

*Cake:*

- 175 grams of Sugar
- 75 grams of Dark Brown Bastard Sugar
- 2 bags or 16 grams Vanilla Sugar
- 115 grams of Butter
- 2 Eggs
- 150 grams of Pumpkin
- 190 grams of Flour
- 11 grams of Baking Powder
- 5 grams of Baking Soda
- 1 teaspoon of Cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon of Ground Ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon of Salt
- 100 ml of Milk

*Topping:*

- 100 grams of White Chocolate
- 40 grams of Cream
- 50 grams of Cream Cheese
- Little bit of Powdered Sugar



*Method:*

- Bring the 150 grams of cubes pumpkin to a boil and wait till they're soft enough that you can easily poke them with a fork. Drain the pumpkin and squash the pumpkin with a fork till you get a puree. Warm up the oven for 180 degrees Celsius
- Mix the flour, ground ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder and salt till well combined
- In a different bowl, mix the butter with all the kinds of sugar till they're well combined. Add the eggs one by one till you get a smooth mixture (approx. 1 min)
- Add the pumpkin (preferably cooled down) to the sugar mixture and mix for about a minute, till you have a smooth mixture. Now slowly add the milk and the flour mixture to the sugar mixture and mix till well combined
- Grease a tall square baking tray and add baking paper to the sides and bottom. Add the mixture to the tray and bake for about 30 minutes, or when a skewer comes out clean. Keep an eye out at the 25 minute mark, if the top becomes dark, add some tin foil to cover
- For the topping bring the cream to a near boil, remove from heat and add the chocolate while stirring. When the chocolate is molten add the cream cheese and powdered sugar
- Add the topping once the cake has been cooled down and enjoy!



## Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

### Ingredients:

- Handful of Pumpkin Seeds
- Olive Oil
- Salt
- Paprika Powder



### Method:

- You can keep the seeds from the pumpkin to make some delicious roasted pumpkin seeds!
- Add the seeds to a pan to boil and add enough water for a good boil
- Add some salt to flavour the seeds, the amount of salt added will be the on the same level as salty as you want the seeds to be
- Once the water has come to a boil, simmer for ten minutes while preheating the oven to 200 degrees Celsius
- Drain the seeds and add some olive oil to a baking tray, add the seeds and coat them with the same oil. Add some of the paprika powder for flavour or any other spice will work as well
- Roast for about ten minutes or till they are brown of colour
- Wait till they are cooled down, you can use this for decoration or just to eat as is, enjoy!





# PUZZLE PAGE

DEAR

*blank*

Fill in the blank with names of the Vectum community.

*Total number of names is denoted after the sentence.  
The names can be first and last names*

At the critical last match of the LEST, the Fristi Warriors finally got their **nhided win**. (2)

The host of the spotlessly clean house told the one-legged visitor: "You can enter, but take \_\_\_ff". (1)

In a wild effort to save Members' Weekend, the board decided to fly out all members to the \_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_. (2)

In a department-wide \_\_\_\_, professor De Graaff announced to retire and travel the world. "Getting rid of my house, looking to buy a \_\_\_\_,\_\_s?" (2)

The \_\_\_ asked his maid if they had already mopped the top of the ship: "Is the \_\_\_?" (2)

CROSSED

*out*

Cross out the words and discover something shocking.

*The letters not crossed out make up the hidden word  
The hidden word has 15 letters (spaces not included)*

V	E	K	C	T	T	L	U	D	M	T	D	S	E
T	M	I	D	E	S	E	P	N	S	S	S	E	T
O	U	S	E	P	E	S	S	E	P	E	T	O	N
N	T	S	R	O	L	E	E	K	R	F	O	L	E
S	C	I	M	O	N	O	C	E	O	R	C	A	M
T	E	N	U	L	E	H	R	E	C	E	H	T	T
O	V	G	T	P	I	N	E	W	T	B	A	E	R
R	Y	T	C	A	C	A	T	S	O	O	S	G	A
C	B	R	E	R	H	V	A	R	R	T	T	N	P
K	D	E	V	T	L	N	R	E	I	K	I	A	E
E	I	E	A	Y	E	A	Y	B	O	O	C	H	D
N	A	I	C	I	R	T	E	M	O	N	O	C	E
T	P	R	E	R	U	S	A	E	R	T	E	X	K
S	T	A	T	S	H	T	A	M	G	I	M	E	S

Econometrician

Eichler

Exchange

KE Department

Kissing Tree

LEST

LOES

Macroeconomics

Math Stats

Members Weekend

Oktoberfest

Paidbyvectum

Pool Party

Proctorio

Secretary

Semi GMA

Stan van Hoesel

Stochastic

Ton Storcken

Treasurer

Vectum Red



# PUZZLES FROM MEMBERS

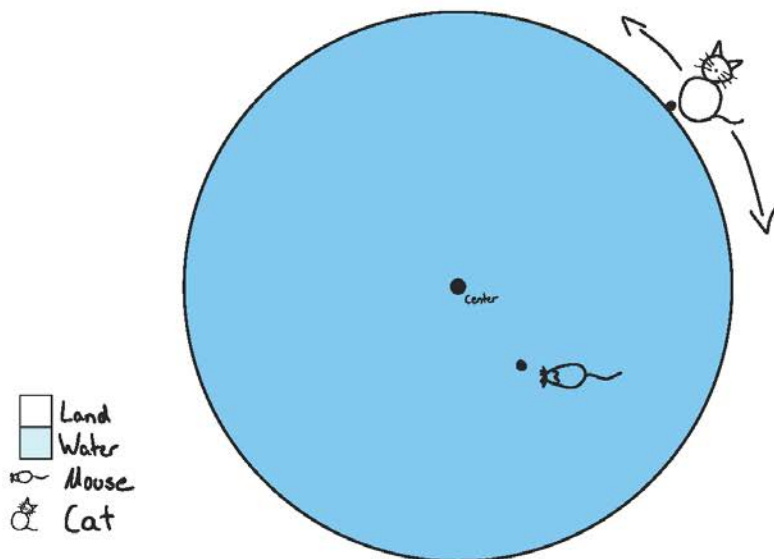
## A Cat and Mouse Puzzle

A cat is chasing a mouse. Accidentally, the mouse has run into a pond and is now swimming. The mouse is trying to exit the pond without getting caught by the cat.

Assume:

1. When on land, the mouse is faster than the cat.
2. The cat runs 4 times as fast on land as the mouse swims.
3. The cat does not go into the water or snatch the mouse from the water. It only attacks the mouse once it is back on land.
4. The cat runs around the pond, which is a unit circle.
5. The mouse does not drown.

Q: Can the mouse escape from any starting position in the pond?  
How?



Tip: - What movement strategies can the mouse follow?  
- Use the circumference

## HOW NOT TO TURN INTO AN ALCOHOLIC DURING QUARANTINE

*We all know the struggle, whether in Singapore, Netherlands or Bulgaria, lockdowns became our reality in 2020 (unless you've been through a war before, in that case feel free to write to us about your experience). Now, the Netherlands is on the verge of another, with many countries in the same position. How to survive & thrive, or at least not come out of it with an alcohol problem?*

**1. Work with yourself.** During a lockdown your responsibilities are supposed to continue going on as usual. Yet, when it comes to leisure time, if you want to interact with actual people in real life, then that would most likely be declared as harmful to society and you, as the enemy of humanity. This ignores the sober reality that while social distancing may be the new normal, our body's needs haven't changed over the course of a year. It's been consistently documented that loneliness (understood as lack of emotional and/or physical closeness) makes your body more susceptible to inflammation, decreases dopamine as well as increases the stress hormone. This is not me arguing that we should have all of our needs met during a pandemic that has affected everyone, with many having it worse than us. However, it would be ludicrous to believe our bodies can go on functioning as if everything is okay and that productivity won't suffer in some way or another. Don't forego social interaction completely, instead focus on small groups of people who live close to you, for example, your housemates. There are plenty of activities that can be done with under 3 people, look for some who fit the interests of the people in the group. For example, following Bob Ross' tutorials, making soap/candles or just good old watching movies

**2. Don't give up on being productive.** In the previous point, I had mentioned that one's productivity will most likely take a hit during a lockdown. That doesn't mean that you should give up on getting stuff done altogether. We are still students and failing massively is a fast ticket to disappointment which in turn might lead to turning to the bottle. Most well-adjusted people will automatically understand that less productivity doesn't mean giving up on it altogether but given the headline of the article and the people who it's targeting, it needs to be stated. Being productive does make you feel good.

**3. Move & Meditate.** Two in one as it's a very common advice for keeping both your body & mind feeling fresh and healthy. Any movement is better than just staying in your house, even if it's just walking, especially considering the second lockdown is looking to be in winter. Rigorous exercise is good, but options for it can be extremely constrained and if doing HIIT in your room is not your thing (or jogging outside), be okay with taking regular walks, you'd be surprised how much they can help you feel rejuvenated. When it comes to meditation, personally, I found it to be very helpful during quarantine, but only if there was a guide walking me through it. Quarantine is already quiet and lonely so designating extra 10 minutes for complete silence can't relieve much, at least when it comes to me, unless it is accompanied by someone's soothing voice. I can recommend Headspace, but there are plenty other apps (for that matter Youtube has nice walk-throughs that are for free).

**4. Keep a routine.** An imposed lockdown breaks down any semblance of a normal life you can have. The library? Gone. The gym? Same. Now, unless you don't set rules for it, your life would be ruled by when you're going to the supermarket. Having a routine can help you feel normal and stay productive even if you don't feel like it. Also, while lockdowns can suck the life of you, they definitely free up your time giving you the opportunity to focus on whatever is important to you. Take advantage of that. A mistake that a lot of people made during the first one, was to believe that they can fill all of the time with being productive & learning new things which as mentioned in 1, I don't see as feasible. Some people might be able to keep it up, but for most, it would be unreasonable that you'd be able to spend all of your days studying and reading. Hence, find a compromise, have a routine based on social activities (whether through zoom or in person), pursuing goals, chores & relaxation.

**5. Choose the lesser of two evils.** The article is called how not to turn into an alcoholic for a reason. Alcohol is extremely addictive, both physically and mentally, and very easily accessible. Like the U.S. election, choices need to be made and some are better than others. For example, overeating can also be unhealthy, but it would be better to come out of the lockdown as fat than as an alcoholic. For that matter, while debatable, abusing weed is better than abusing alcohol. If you're prone to addiction and you can't structure your lockdown life in a semi-stable state, or you do, but then it starts falling apart, and you feel yourself getting closer to old habits, be okay with choosing the lesser evil.



*Learn from the Russians, say no*

# *The Vectum Blog*

The corona crisis has taken a toll on all of us, be it via university/ academic life or personal. We want to get through this challenging period together with you and make the best out of a bad situation. However, as everyone is house-ridden, we aren't able to see the beauty that Maastricht has to offer. Which is a shame as there is so much to see of Maastricht, its people and communities. That is why we want to introduce a new initiative that will bring the Maastricht life to you digitally!



We, therefore, introduce the Vectum Blog (Name pending). The aim of the blog is to keep you up to date about everything Vectum related. We also want to show you other opportunities Maastricht has to offer and introduce you to new (or familiar) people. The Vectum Blog can be found on the website, and you can read the articles on social media's. We try to post one blog item every week to keep content fresh. For now, we will introduce a few series where we will post content related to that series.



The first one being "Vectum meets ...". In this series, we will introduce you to different people and communities in Maastricht. This can be, for example, an interview with a first-year econometrics student or a peek at the life at a different association, think of sports associations or other kinds of social groups. The aim of this series is for you to meet new people that may spark new interests.



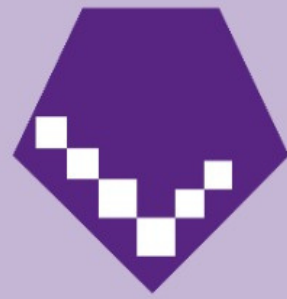
The second series we will introduce is "How to ...". In this series, we guide you through several tips and tricks that can aid you in your daily life or in your academic/ future career. One can think of content related to delicious recipes or advice on how to get through an interview at a company. The idea of this series is to bring those helpful conversations from in-person events to you digitally, so you won't miss out on any beneficent info.



As we are trying this out for the first time, you might experience a few hiccups, please let us know if there are any suggestions or if you want to help out! The Vectum Blog will officially start on **Monday the 9th of November!**



LED 2021



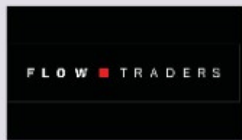
# We Go Online.



With online cases...



Online speeddating...



optiver



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of companies...



All accessible through  
the comfort of home!

[www.leditbeyourday.nl](http://www.leditbeyourday.nl)

Join us at the 4th of February 2021!

Registrations open 25 November 2020  
at **20.00h** sharp!

*Thank you for reading, hope you will have a  
great period ahead of you!*

# ***Quotable***

"There's two things I cannot give:  
money and love. Money, because I'm  
always broke. Love, because that goes  
to my wife"

TON STORCKEN