

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Harini Sivakumar
Student number	5726867

Studio		
Name / Theme	Planning Complex cities	
Main mentor	Verena Balz	Spatial Planning and Strategy
Second mentor	Birgit Hausleitner	Urban Design
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My first studio choice for my project is Planning Complex Cities. Since my topic deals with the issues in the European Union due to the increasing number of refugees, there are several political, cultural and social dimensions involved.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Shared spaces, Shared lives Imagining the integration of refugees living in temporary asylum shelters through common spaces of interaction.
Goal	
Location:	The Netherlands
The posed problem,	Problem Statement: The number of forcibly displaced people has increased to 110 million worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order (UNHCR,2023). Among them, the E.U. receives a considerable number of refugees. As one of the countries receiving a large percentage of asylum seekers, the Netherlands has been struggling to

accommodate the new population.

The asylum seekers go through several stages before getting distributed to social housing around the country. The first stage is registering for asylum at the reception centre which is located at the borders of the country. The next stage is where they get dispersed in temporary shelter locations around the country which is managed by the COA (Centraal Orgaan Opvang Asielzoekers). During this period, they start with the Inburgering, which is a series of integration exams in the Netherlands to get in the process of obtaining a permanent resident permit.

A strong increase in asylum requests during 2022 led to the opening of some emergency reception centres across the country to help mitigate this crisis, but it has not helped to contain it. But the shortage of housing means that many people are kept on the waiting list and stuck at overcrowded reception centres. This in turn leads to the overcrowding of the temporary shelters. Only a few people whose asylum gets processed get the opportunity of being distributed to social housing.

	<p>The project investigates the significance of the in-between temporary asylum shelters that the municipalities, COA, and several local organisations are responsible for. These shelters come in various locations, forms, quality etc. and can become a major part of the integration and inclusion process of the asylum seekers with the natives.</p>
research questions and	<p>Main research question: How can common spaces provide a setting for interaction between asylum seekers living in isolated temporary shelters and native citizens in the Netherlands?</p> <p>Q1. What characteristics of common spaces influence interaction between native citizens and refugees?</p> <p>Q2. What is the asylum procedure in the Netherlands and what is the spatial translation?</p> <p>Q3. What are the locations and spatial characteristics of isolated temporary asylum shelters in the Netherlands? How do these locations and characteristics influence the interaction between refugees living in these shelters and native citizens?</p>

	<p>Q4. What are the needs for interaction of refugees living in isolated temporary shelters? What kind of spatial qualities of common spaces support meeting these needs?</p> <p>Q5. How can spaces facilitating interaction between native citizens and refugees living in isolated temporary shelters be implemented?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these results.</p> <p>[This should be formulated in such a way that the graduation project can answer these questions. The definition of the problem has to be significant to a clearly defined area of research and design.]</p>	<p>The intended outcomes of the project are separated into the following sections, which answer the research questions.</p> <p>1. Conceptualising: The project starts with analyzing the asylum-seeking process in the Netherlands and the spaces associated with it. It particularly focuses on the temporary asylum shelter phase, identified as the critical phase where the integration of the refugees starts. This is identified as the problem area which will guide the research.</p> <p>2. Contextualising: Researching both spatial and non-spatial concepts is integral to understanding the characteristics of common spaces where migrants and native citizens interact. This will form a strong conceptual framework for the project. Moreover, case studies on the common spaces of interaction specifically</p>

	<p>between refugees and natives are analyzed to give perspectives on the existing practices in other European countries. This will help in looking for essential aspects when analysing the locations and vice versa.</p> <p>3. Analysing: The locations of the current shelters and their characteristics in relation to their degree of isolation from the natives etc. are identified. From this, case studies are analysed to contextualise the problem.</p> <p>4. Projecting: The needs of the refugees are identified further to make the existing spatial patterns of common interaction spaces better. Here design explorations are made by combining concepts, case studies and the needs.</p> <p>5. Strategy Building: Since the project is highly shaped by the political landscape, national and municipality policies are analysed and better policies are recommended (top-down and bottom-up). This is followed by building strategies for the project through design exploration and policy recommendations.</p>
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Process

Method description

1. What characteristics of common spaces influence the interaction between refugees and native citizens?

methods:

- Literature review on the factors affecting the well-being of immigrants in a new society. It includes research on solidarity, sense of belonging, social isolation, integration etc.
- Semi-structured interviews with refugees on how they feel while using the common spaces in the new society.
- Case studies on types of public/common spaces of interaction, community led activities between refugees and native citizens, in other European countries.

2. What is the asylum procedure in the Netherlands and what is the spatial translation?

methods:

- Analysis of the legal and organisational aspects at the temporary asylum shelter phase using open data, policy documents and informal conversations with past refugees.
- Analysis of the spatial implications of the temporary asylum shelter phase through observations from site visits, pictures from google earth, street views, and news articles.
- Mapping of the existing temporary asylum shelters, population density of municipalities using open data and QGIS respectively and focusing on the region of South Holland.

3. What are the locations and spatial characteristics of temporary asylum shelters in the Netherlands? How do these influence interaction between refugees and native citizens?

methods:

Analysis of the selected isolated temporary asylum shelters using open data and Google Earth based on,

- Location and type of shelters
- Number of refugees and user groups
- Surroundings of the shelter
- Degree of accessibility to basic services such as public transport, public spaces etc.

Analysis of the identified common characteristics such as,

- Isolation from the city centre,
- Difficulty in accessibility to public spaces, services
- Engagement with the immediate surroundings

4. What are the needs and future ideas of refugees living in isolated temporary shelters, the municipality, NGO and natives? What kind of spatial qualities of common spaces support meeting these needs?

methods:

-Semi-structured interviews with refugees at the case study location. The interviews will investigate with questions on their,

- Current spaces of interaction
- Cultural needs
- Interaction with native citizens
- Ideas for the Future

- Semi-Structured interviews with government and non-government bodies dealing with accommodation and integration of refugees.

5. How can spaces facilitating interaction between native citizens and refugees living in isolated temporary shelters be implemented?

methods:

- Strategic Vision for the selected municipality using interviews and concepts from literature.

- Analysis of the public and semi-public spaces in the municipality using land use map from QGIS.

Analysis of the selected routes based on,

- Land and building use
- Degree of pedestrian activity
- Spatial qualities

-Examples of spaces with qualities that relate to the needs of refugees and natives.

Literature and general practical references

Problem Field

Luyten, K. (2022, October). Addressing pushbacks at the EU's External Borders - European parliament. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/738191/EPRS_BRI\(2022\)738191_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/738191/EPRS_BRI(2022)738191_EN.pdf)

MacGregor, M. (2019, January 31). How do migrants decide where to go?. InfoMigrants. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/14891/how-do-migrants-decide-where-to-go>

Pronkhorst, A., Provoost, M., & Vanstiphout, W. (2019). A city of comings and goings. nai010 Publishers.

Tidey, A. (2023, January 13). "unprecedented pressure" as EU's borders face rising migrant numbers. euronews. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/01/13/unprecedented-pressure-as-eus-borders-face-rising-migrant-numbers>

Tsourdi, E. L. (n.d.). Solidarity deficit, refugee protection backsliding, and EU's shifting borders: The future of asylum in the EU? Groupe d'études géopolitiques. <https://geopolitique.eu/en/articles/solidarity-deficit-refugee-protection-backsliding-and-eus-shifting-borders-the-future-of-asylum-in-the-eu/>

Conceptualisation:

Oosterlynck, S., Loopmans, M., Schuermans, N., Vandenabeele, J., & Zemni, S. (2015). Putting flesh to the bone: looking for solidarity in diversity, here and now. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(5), 764–782. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1080380>

Oosterlynck, S., Verschraegen, G., & van Kempen, R. (2018). Introduction: Understanding super-diversity in deprived and mixed neighbourhoods. *Diversity*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447338178.003.0001>

van Liempt, I., & Staring, R. (2023). Homemaking and places of restoration: Belonging within and beyond places assigned to Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. *Cities, Migration, and Governance*, 142–160. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003373933-8>

Ubels, T., Kinsbergen, S., Koch, D.-J., & Tolsma, J. (2023). The well-being of undocumented migrants in the Netherlands: Learning about post-migration experiences. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2023.2235674>

I intend to research the social and psychological experiences that refugees face in a new country and the actions of the native citizens. I also intend to research more on policies and their effect on spaces. Interviews with the refugees will be a crucial component helping with my research process.

Reflection

Relation between the thesis' topic and the topic of the studio Planning

Complex Cities:

The thesis topic aligns with the Planning Complex Cities studio which focuses on a research-based approach to a project. Especially, my project deals with the social issue of integration of refugees in a host society, which has multiple dimensions of

research to it. So, it becomes crucial to understand the wider problem and its details through research in the beginning, before providing recommendations and solutions.

Relation between the thesis topic and the master track of urbanism:

The thesis aligns well with the master's track since it extensively looks at a problem's social aspects. Besides, the track translates intangible elements to tangible spatial outcomes through multiple scales. Thus, there is a strong sensitive connection that is formed between the built environment and society.

Relation between the thesis topic and other Master Tracks:

My topic can be looked at through various lenses right from the journey of the refugees from their home country to the host country. This implies that fields of Architecture and Management in Built Environments, for example, can see the thesis as a need for shelter/housing projects. Landscape can see the project from the lens of the effects of the environment on the well-being of refugees or reimagine the destroyed land and resources in their home country.

Societal relevance: Migration and refugee crises have been a longstanding aspect of human history, yet in recent years, it has gained heightened significance. Global political conflicts and climate-related challenges have intensified migration, with the European Union (E.U.) emerging as a sought-after refuge for those in search of improved opportunities and livelihoods. Paradoxically, the E.U. has responded by imposing stringent entry restrictions, exacerbating the challenges faced by arriving individuals. The infrastructure and resources in E.U. member states have struggled to accommodate the surging influx of migrants and refugees, leading to adverse conditions.

With these challenges, political parties and host societies have witnessed a rise in intolerance marked by racism and discrimination against refugees. This underscores the project's growing societal relevance, as it seeks to address these pressing issues and promote a just and equitable environment for all residents within the E.U. It is imperative to engage with these complexities to foster a more inclusive and harmonious future.

Professional relevance: With cities having an increasing influx of refugees from different cultures, there is an immediate need to change cities to accommodate them. The old ways of planning and designing are no longer suitable for the rapid changes in social values and structure. This calls for interdisciplinary research in both academia and the profession.

Scientific relevance: Numerous research studies have explored aspects like well-being, solidarity, tolerance, and equality within the domain of planning and design for refugee integration. Yet, given the persistent changes in this field, there is a pressing need for research into the intricacies of these issues within Western planning and design methodologies. Developing and incorporating new spatial and non-spatial

concepts in the specific context can offer innovative approaches to address these challenges.