



**GHENT
UNIVERSITY**

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON UGENT IT-SPENDING AND THE BENCHMARK

EUNIS BencHEIT workshop – Martijn De Keere – 23/11/2021

- **About UGent**
- **COVID-19 @ UGent**
- **Back to the future?**
- **Impact on the Benchmark 2020 & 2021**
- **Conclusion**

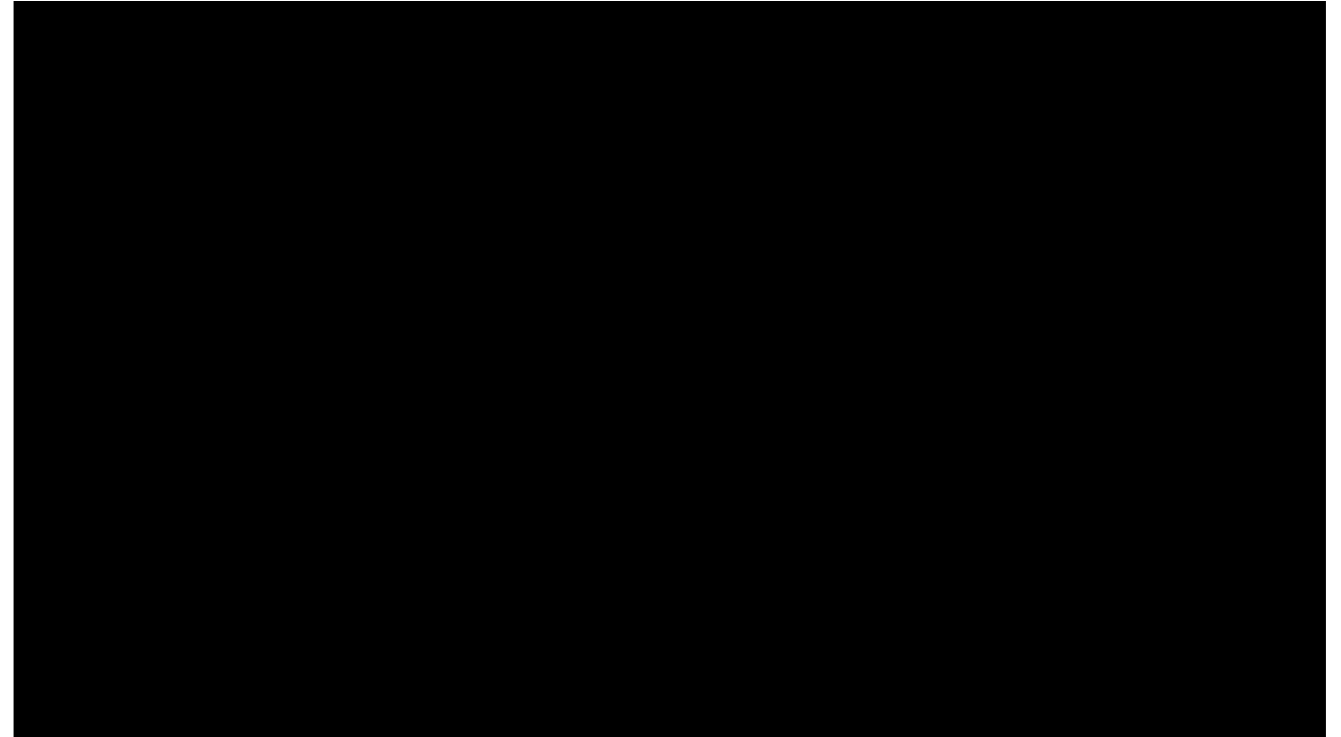
ABOUT UGENT

GHENT UNIVERSITY

- Multidisciplinary pluralistic university based in Ghent Belgium
- Inaugurated 1817

- 11 faculties + 1 campus in S. Korea
- Ca. 50.000 students (21-22)
- Ca. 15.000 admin. & research staff

- Central ICT-department:
 - Staff of ca. 120 FTE (of 211 in total)
 - Yearly (gross) budget of € 28.5 mio ('20)



COVID-19 @ UGENT

FROM TRANSFORMATION TO REVOLUTION

- March 2020: lockdown > IT policy change
- Main features:
 1. Shift from classical to digital education and teaching
 2. Shift from working on-campus to working online
- Various other corona-actions with IT-impact
- **Because of the speed of the Corona-pandemic the central IT-department shaped and enforced a digital revolution in a mere couple of weeks**

FEATURE 1 – DIGITAL EDUCATION AND TEACHING – VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

- First weeks: Further roll-out of ‘Bongo virtual classroom’ and integration in the digital learning environment: allowing livestreaming and recording
- Free license: up to 100 students/class
- Upgrade to 150 students/class
- Success: between 300 and 400 classes/day
 - Between 15.000 – 30.000 students/day

FEATURE 1 – DIGITAL EDUCATION AND TEACHING – VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

- Due to popular demand and increasing focus on online education: Introduction of Zoom as Virtual classroom: > 150.000 participants/ week
- Roll-out of MS Teams for students: tool mainly used for collaborations and examinations

FEATURE 1 – DIGITAL EDUCATION AND TEACHING – LIVESTREAMING AND RECORDING

- First weeks: focus on livestreaming/recording from one of the 60 auditoriums equipped with recording infrastructure
 - More than 26.000 unique viewers/ week
 - increased to 90 auditoria (main ones only)
- Purchase of 500 mobile sets (FullHD webcam + headsets): to allow online and hybrid teaching when allowed

FEATURE 1 – DIGITAL EDUCATION AND TEACHING – MISC.

- Setup and development of 2 professional recording studios: recording of ‘knowledge clips’,
- Integration of Wooclap in digital learning environment: utilisation of smartphones in teaching
- Implementation of remote proctoring software
- **Rollout of BYOD-policy for students**

FEATURE 2 – WORKING ON-CAMPUS TO WORKING FROM HOME

- March 2020: Immediate rollout of MS-Teams for staff (and students)
 - Phase out: Skype for Business
- Possibility to create own Teams-page
- Discussion about the position of MS-Teams vs. Zoom



FEATURE 2 – WORKING ON-CAMPUS TO WORKING FROM HOME

- Student administration:
 - Digital enrolment
 - Student homes
 - BYOD-policy: platform to purchase laptops + guidelines
 - ...
- Business administration:
 - Digital signing
 - HR-amendments: impact on salaries, leave, ...
 - Internal elections
 - ...

BACK TO THE FUTURE?

BACK TO THE FUTURE?

- Clear that students are used to and are counting on online/hybride forms of teaching.
 - Impact on infrastructure?
 - Internationalisation?
 - BYOD-policy: inclusive measures?
- Staff is used to work place and time independent tele-commuting charters have been changed

BACK TO THE CAMPUS (OF THE FUTURE)?

- Government funding: 2022-2023
 - Future proof educational portfolio
 - Strengthen Life long learning
 - Increased commitment to digital forms of education
 - AV-IT upgrade for classrooms
 - Videoplatform
 - New interactive learning paths
 - Implementation of teleclassing
 - ...

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS

BM

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM - BUDGET

- Purchase of additional storage, licenses, equipment, ... = additional costs
- Partially funded by shifting priorities. Funding was already foreseen for most of the projects (e.g. rollout Teams, AV-IT purchases,... in the multiannual budget)
- In 2020: 980k additional costs due to Corona: due to shifting only 500k additional budget needed.
- Additional government funding to mitigate impact of corona: € 1 mio. for 2020 - 2021

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM - BUDGET

Costs by service (1000 EURO)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Infrastructure			4.500 k	6.428 k	7.966 k
Workstations, client and peripherals			8.455 k	9.374 k	9.079 k
IT Service Desk / Helpdesk (incl. Service Point)			2.202 k	2.441 k	2.869 k
Data networks: LAN & WAN			3.415 k	3.460 k	2.778 k
Voice services			747 k	944 k	1.232 k
Business applications			9.789 k	11.295 k	13.055 k
IT management, administration and information security			374 k	713 k	1.295 k
Audiovisual services			592 k	1.216 k	1.513 k
Unspecified					
Total IT costs			30.075 k	35.870 k	39.786 k

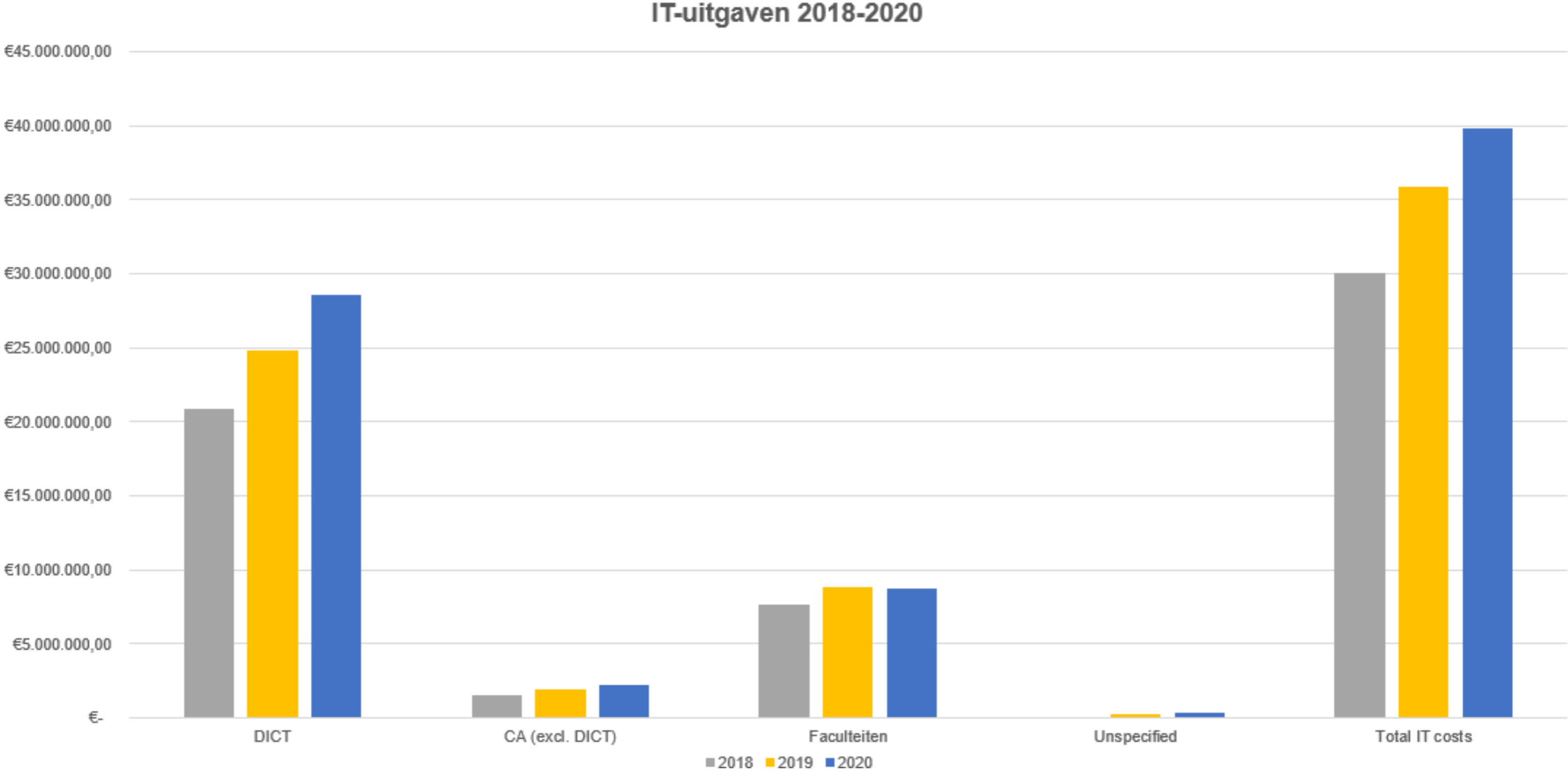
IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM - BUDGET

Business applications (1000 EURO)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Finance			722 k	2.382 k	1.767 k
Human resources			906 k	1.085 k	1.738 k
Facilities			498 k	583 k	407 k
Communications					1.072 k
Student administration systems			1.782 k	1.603 k	1.874 k
Teaching			1.168 k	1.380 k	2.054 k
Research administration			1.640 k	1.154 k	1.347 k
Research				595 k	472 k
Library			410 k	337 k	386 k
Other (BA)			2.664 k	1.887 k	1.815 k
Unspecified (BA)				288 k	124 k
Total BA costs			9.789 k	11.295 k	13.055 k

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM - BUDGET

Costs by account (1000 EURO)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hardware			10.980 k	13.527 k	11.729 k
Software			1.787 k	2.262 k	5.558 k
Staff			11.265 k	13.253 k	14.646 k
Facilities				120 k	114 k
Outsourcing			5.335 k	6.294 k	6.690 k
Unspecified			708 k	414 k	1.050 k
Total IT costs			30.075 k	35.870 k	39.786 k

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM - BUDGET



IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM – FORECAST BUDGET 2021

- Impact of COVID on 2021 estimated to be relatively low
 - Additional funding of the government
 - Planning done based on Corona in 2021: projects have been re-prioritized
 - Additional expenditure in audiovisual services and business applications

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM – IT STAFF

- Impact of Corona on recruitment?
 - More candidates for IT-jobs @UGent
 - UGent is seen as stable employer
 - Reasons?

IMPACT ON THE EUNIS BM – STAFF

IT personnel (FTE)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Centralized IT personnel			92	111	120
IT personnel in other central units			16	17	18
IT personnel in academic units			65	77	74
Unspecified					
Total IT personnel			172	204	211
IT share of institution personnel			2,1 %	2,4 %	2,4 %
Institution staff / IT personnel (FTE)			47	41	41
Students / IT personnel (FTE)			200	173	173
User accounts / IT Personnel (FTE)			341	297	290

CONCLUSION

- Obviously COVID-19 had a big impact on UGent
- On the one hand a digital revolution took place in a couple of months
- On the other hand a clear shift in IT-expenditure is noticeable. It is to be predicted that this shift will hold on for at least the next couple of years
- COVID-19 also clearly affected (IT-)policies

Martijn De Keere
Policy Officer ICT

< DEPARTMENT OF ICT

E Martijn.DeKeere@ugent.be

T +32 9 264 45 27

M +32 499 31 73 55

www.ugent.be

 Universiteit Gent

 @ugent

 @ugent

 Ghent University