



UNIVERSITEIT
GENT

THE UNIVERSITY AS A SCHOOL OF LIFE
EXPERIENCES FROM GHENT UNIVERSITY'S PILOT
IN THE USE OF 'BADGES'

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INTRODUCTION



THE BROADER PICTURE: EUROPEAN DIGITAL CREDENTIALS FOR LEARNING

- European Digital Credentials for Learning are statements issued by an organisation to a learner, documenting their learning:
 - qualifications (e.g. professional certificates, university diplomas and other learning achievements),
 - assessments (e.g. transcripts of records), and
 - entitlements (e.g. right to enrol in learning opportunities, or to undertake an occupation
 - activities (e.g. participation in classes and non-formal learning events),



“CREDENTIALS” FROM A HEI PERSPECTIVE

- Formal learning:
 - At the level of courses (also: joint courses).
 - At the level of sharing courses (including mobility!) / micro-credentials
- Non-formal & informal learning

SITUATION IN FLANDERS

- Legal possibilities for formal learning
 - Issuing/recognising credit certificates
 - Issuing/recognising other types of micro-credential

(unlike some other countries, cfr. use of Edubadges in the Netherlands...)

→ Ghent University decision: use Badges for the recognition of informal/non formal learning

PILOT PROJECT

BADGES AT

GHENT

UNIVERSITY



BADGES IN GHENT UNIVERSITY'S POLICY ON VALUING EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- *"Elaborated framework for supporting and valuing extra-curricular activities and student engagement at Ghent University"* approved by Education Council
- *New element: use of digital "**badges**" (= way of valuing student engagement) - pilot via "Badgr"*

DEFINITION OF “UGENT-ENGAGEMENT”

- implies a clear social contribution
- can be situated both within the university and in a broader social framework, but is always linked to university life
- offers learning opportunities to students and thus has a potential learning effect on the students (*competence reinforcement*)
- whether or not to engage is the student's own free choice (voluntary) and the student is by definition not paid for it

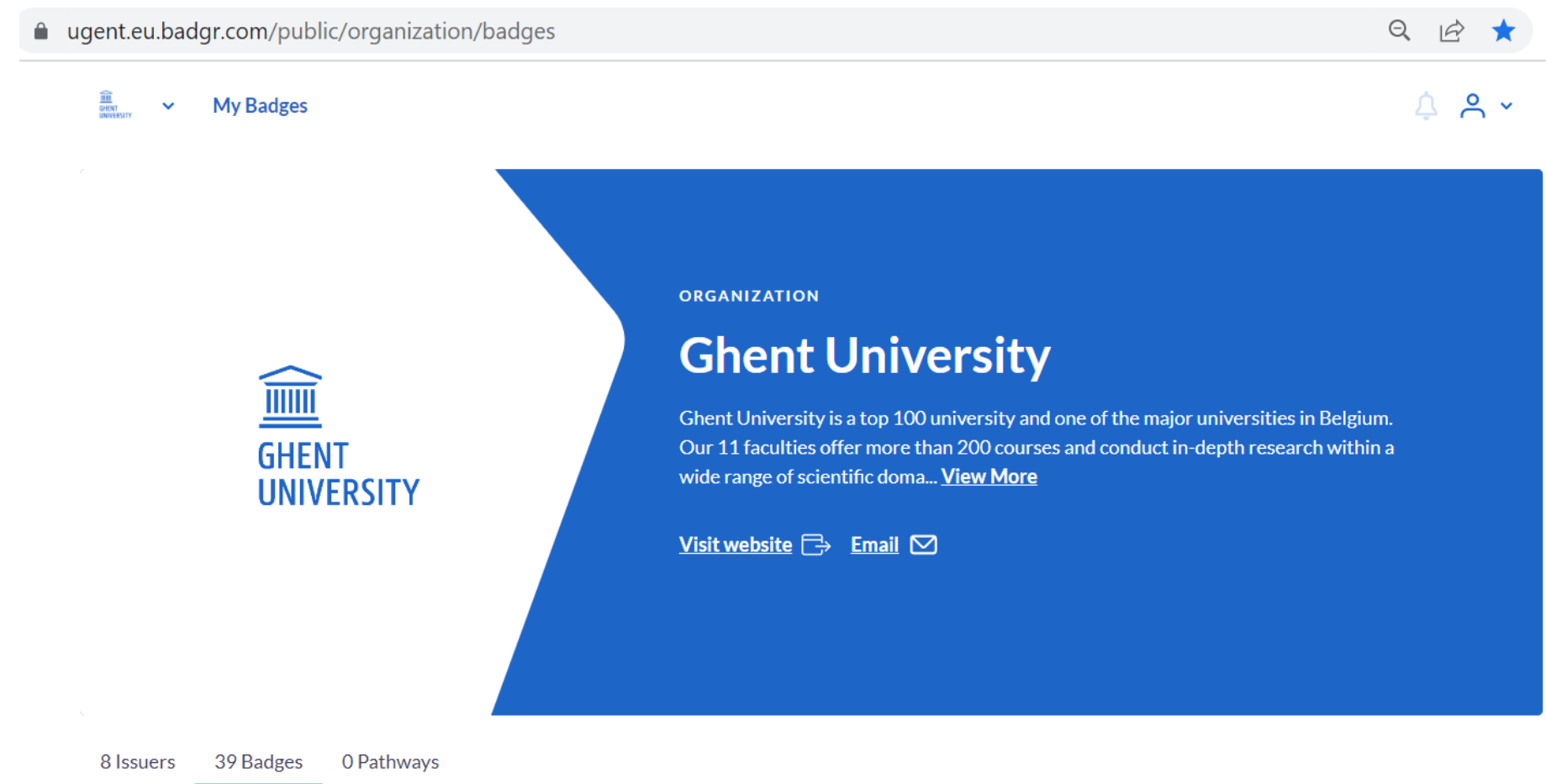
TYPES OF BADGES FOR “UGENT-ENGAGEMENT”

- Supporting fellow students
- (Elected) student representative
- Mandate in a recognized student organization
(Student organisation leader)
- Organization of student events and projects
(Student activity organisor)
- Specific commitment in UGent departments or
faculties or programs



USED PLATFORM: BADGR

- Issuer of “Open badges” (= a common standard)
- Easy to set up
- Easy to use
- Paid account
- Powered by
“Canvas Credentials”



- Note: original plan (in the UGent ELO ‘UFORA’ did not work)

Badges

Each of these Badges was created by an Issuer at **Ghent University** to recognize an achievement. Each is embedded with data to verify its authenticity and explain what it represents.

Search Badges 

Badge Name A - Z 

Department of Educational Policy - Ghent University

4 BADGES



Specific commitment



Student representative



Supporting fellow students



Taalbuddy

HOW DID THE PILOT WORK IN PRACTICE (1)

- In accordance with the definition of engagement, students apply for recognition of their engagement within certain initiatives [precedents can be used].
- The initiatives and thus the engagement therein can be both local and international, but always have an explicit link with UGent

HOW DID THE PILOT WORK IN PRACTICE (2)

- Assessing whether an engagement qualifies for the award of a badge is done depending on the type and taking into account the scope, duration, intensity,... of engagement by the entities below:
 - Ghent Student Council (president or mandated) for student representation
 - United Convention Chairs (president or mandated) for student events and projects
 - Respectively the Education Director or Director CA (or person mandated by them) for commitment to UGent boards/departments, faculties or organizations and initiatives aimed at helping fellow students

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PILOT

- 4 Faculties:
 - Veterinary Medicine
 - Engineering and architecture
 - Medicine and health sciences
 - Law and criminology
- 2 Directorates:
 - Administrative Affairs
 - Educational Affairs
- *[Student Council and Conventions]*

PILOT: WHICH BADGES

- Buddy for Erasmus student
- Animal & Welfare
- Study Coach
- Studycoach
- PreventieStudent AJ 2021-2022
- Safety Stewards AY 2021-2022
- Expedition DO! participant
- Expedition DO! finalist
- Expedition DO! winner
- Gespreksleider
- Taalbuddy
- Contribution to an international network



Safety Stewards AY
2021-2022



Student Council
Leadership (2021-2022)

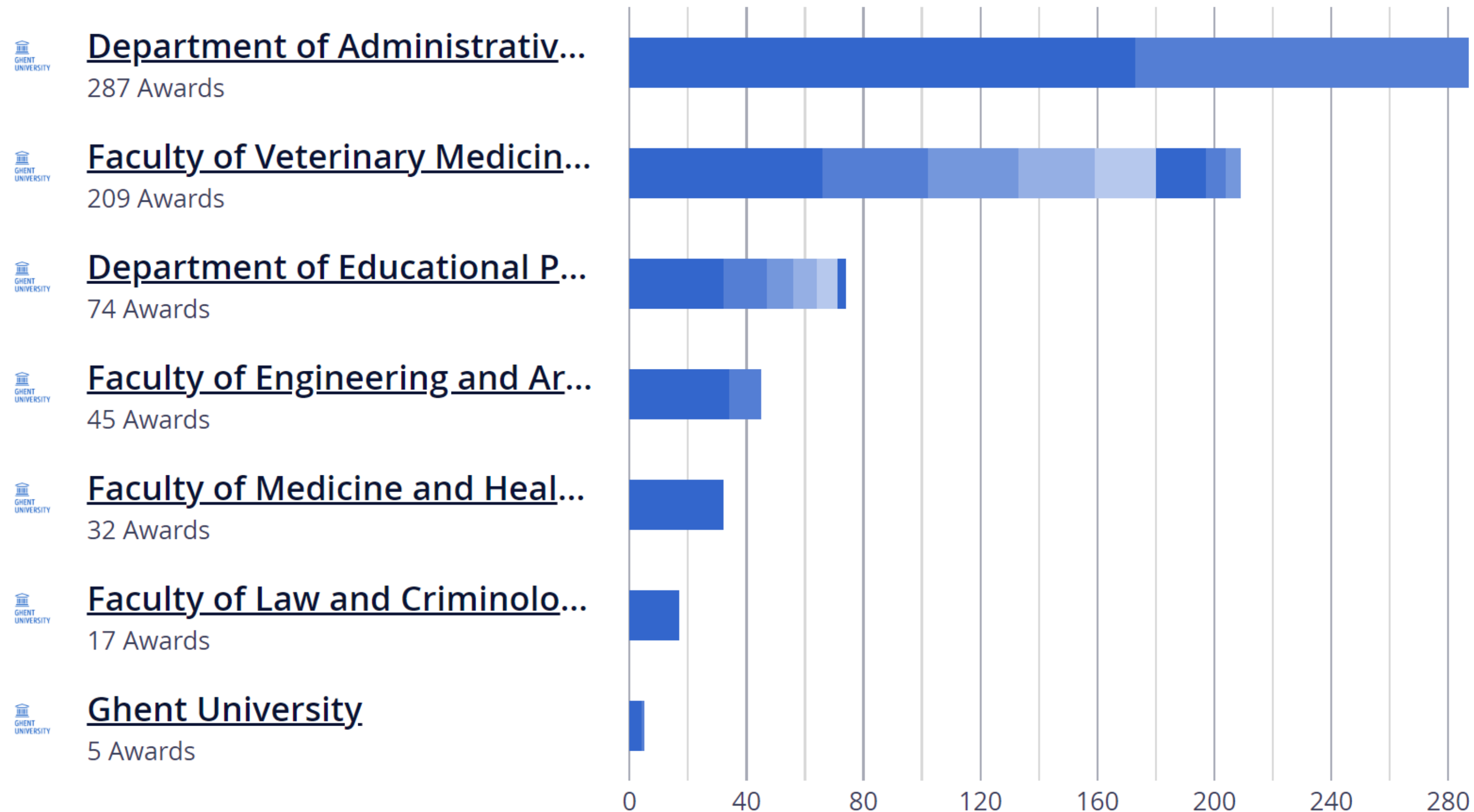


Buddy for Erasmus
student



Expedition DO! finalist

PILOT: NUMBERS (TOTAL = 606 STUDENTS)



PILOT: SHARES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Total Shares

323



Facebook

246



Twitter

3



LinkedIn Feed

28



Pinterest

0



Canvas ePortfolios

0



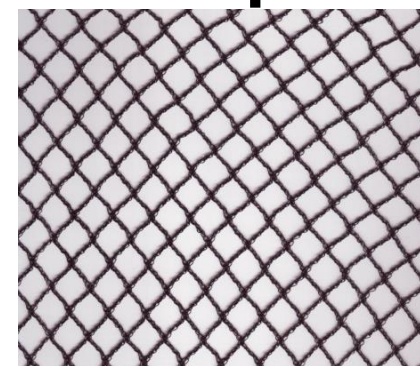
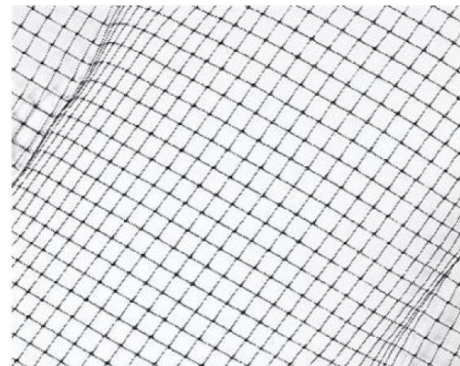
LinkedIn Profile

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EVALUATION OF THE PILOT

- Technically: almost perfect / workload: doable
- Challenges:
 - Badges issued *by* students, *for* students
 - Scalability?
 - How to identify who potentially deserves a badge and to define the right earning criteria?
 - “What type of fishnet you want to use?”
 - Many badges to reward all engaged students
 - Fewer badges in order to keep it more “exclusive”



CONCLUSIONS



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- It is important for universities also to reward engagement as a form of informal learning
- Using an open badge for this has many advantages
- Important to have a clear framework (technical, earning criteria,...)
- Plans for the future: link to RPL and a specific course for engaged students (with a badge)



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