

2022 Retreat to Imec and Nieuwport, Belgium

For this HITEC retreat 31 PhD students of 9 different institutes travelled together to visit Imec in Leuven, Belgium. Imec is a leading research hub for advanced CMOS scaling with more than 5000 experts from over 95 countries and close ties to industry and academic partners. We were given talks about their work on photolithography, nano structuring, CMOS technology and energy technologies. Furthermore, they gave us a tour of their state of the art 300 mm semiconductor pilot line, which is located in a large clean room.



After the visit at Imec, we continued on to the Hotel Sandeshoven in Nieuwport. To facilitate discussion between the students we had short presentations on our PhD topic in the conference room provided by the Hotel.

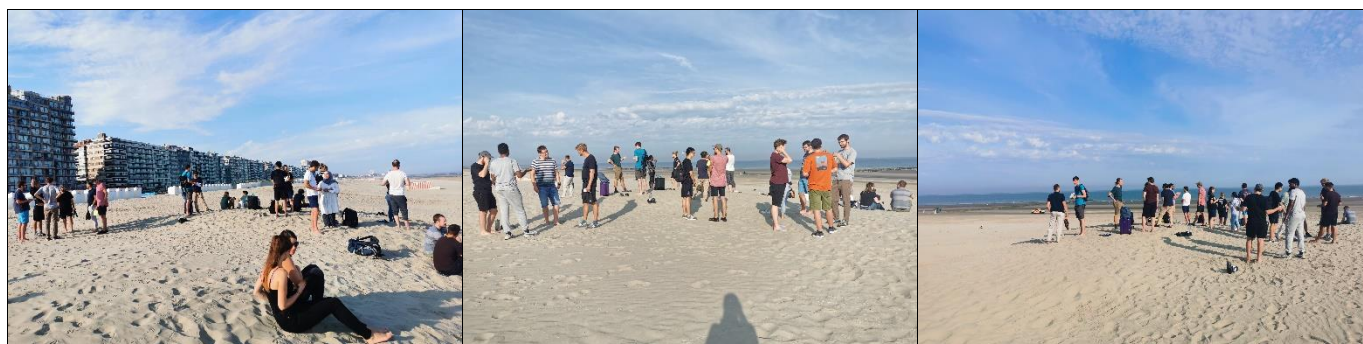


On the second day we also did teambuilding exercises at De Kijkuit Outdoorsport in Beernem. Activities included sack race, crate race, steering an Indian canoe as well as climbing and box stacking, while being secured by the rest of the team. These exercises were fun and improved teamwork as well as trust between participants.



The final point on our agenda was a speed-storming session, in which participants discussed in pairs or small groups about possible cooperation topics between their institutes. Some of the results are listed below:

- Sharing experience on simulation software/ methods like Ansys and DRT
- Using a portable emissions measurement system (IEK-8) to measure exhaust gases from experiments (IEK-1)
- Possible use of EPR spectroscopy (IEK-9) to detect radicals during the oxidation of organic compounds on the atmosphere



All in all, the experience provided lots of insights in different institutes as well as a lot of communication between PhD students of different disciplines.