Social Network Analysis of 30.000 Schools

For the last 3 years European Schoolnet has hosted a school collaboration platform for European teachers called eTwinning (www.etwinning.net). By now we have about 30 000 registered schools which have done different projects together in different partnerships. We are interested in analysing the underlying network of projects and partnerships to better understand our users. Are school collaboration networks based on static partnerships between participants, are they specific to a unique school project, or are they dynamic and changeable? How does new partnership form and how does the network expand and evolve over time? Is there a network of school collaboration partnerships in Europe or are they just independent clusters with no interaction between different project partnerships? What are some of the causal properties between the project partners and what factors do affect on the partnership?

The above research questions will be used as a starting point. One of the main goals is to find a suitable model for the data to answer these questions and find whether longer-term analysis can also be envisaged over the upcoming 6 years.

In cooperation with the EU IST Network of Excellence PROLEARN in Professional Training and European Schoolnet, this thesis focuses on a social network analysis platform based on existing data modelling, data gathering, data analysis and data visualization strategies for large social networks.

The diploma/master thesis candidate should have knowledge on databases, Java, and XML technologies like XML Schema, XSLT, AJAX etc. English writing skills are preferred in order to present the final thesis in the European scope.

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