

Corporate Network Governance: Power, Ownership and Control in Contemporary Global Capitalism

Javier Garcia-Bernardo, Eelke Heemskerk & Frank Takes

University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

CSL colloquium
Amsterdam, December 11, 2015

About us

About us



Eelke Heemskerk



Frank Takes



Javier Garcia-Bernardo

- Eelke Heemskerk: PI. Political Science PhD.
- Frank Takes: Post-doc. Computer Science PhD.
- Javier Garcia-Beranndo: PhD. Computer Science M.Sc.
- Nick Hogan: M.Sc. Anthropology B.Sc.
- Roberto Lucchese: M.Sc. Computer Science B.Sc.
- Jouke Huijzer: M.Sc. Political Science B.Sc.
- Coming next March: 2xPhD candidates and 1xPost-doc.

About us

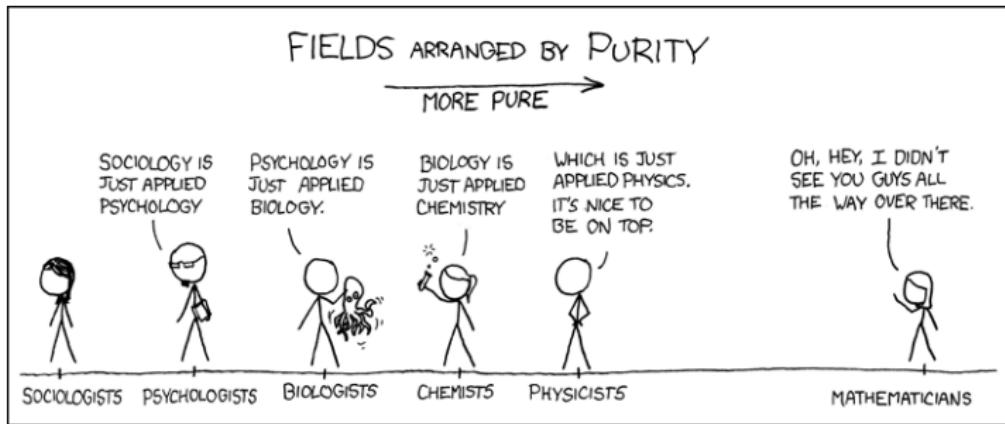




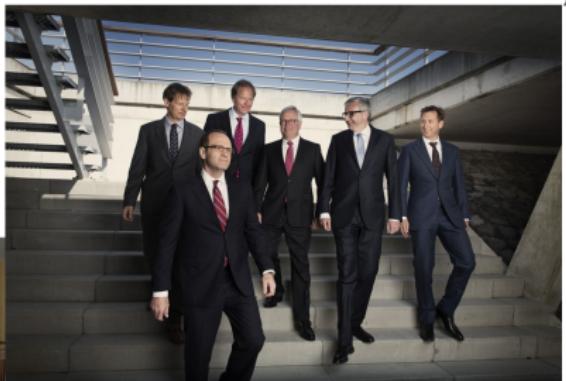
Figure: The mascot,
roboctopus.

- Vermont Complex Systems Center (@uvmcomplexity)
- Great people
- Awesome projects
- New masters in Complex Systems and Data Science (Deadline May 31st)

CSL at UVM (Computational Story Lab)



Corporate networks



Corporate networks

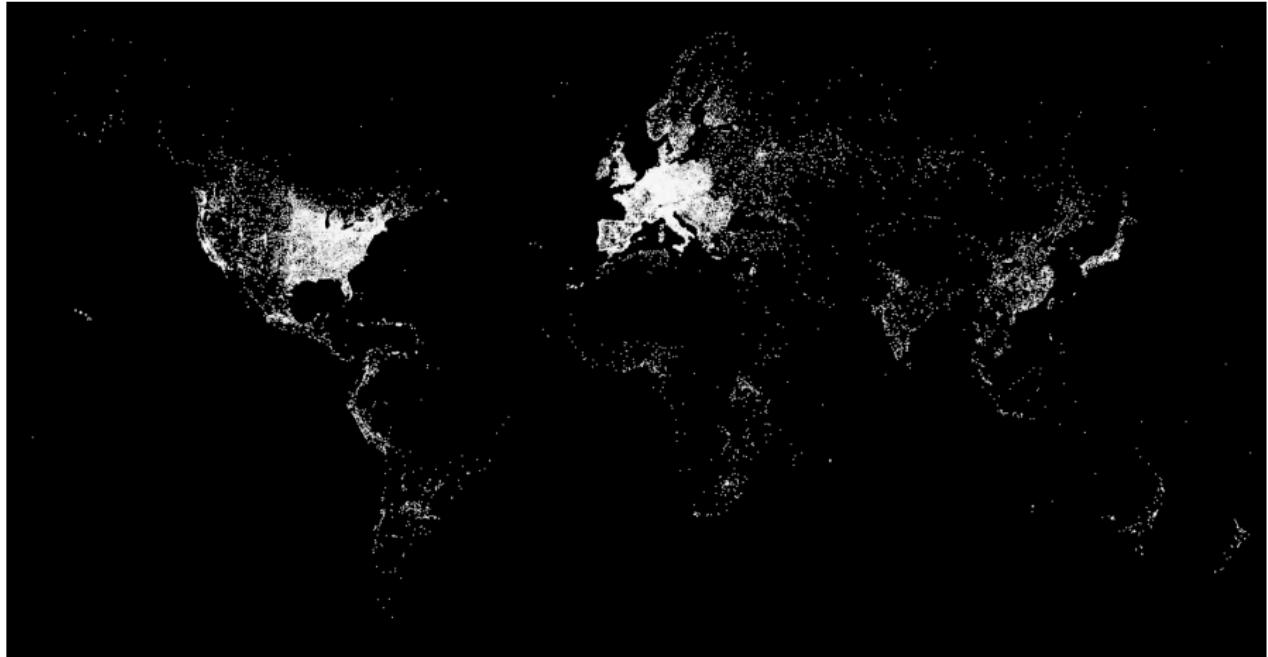
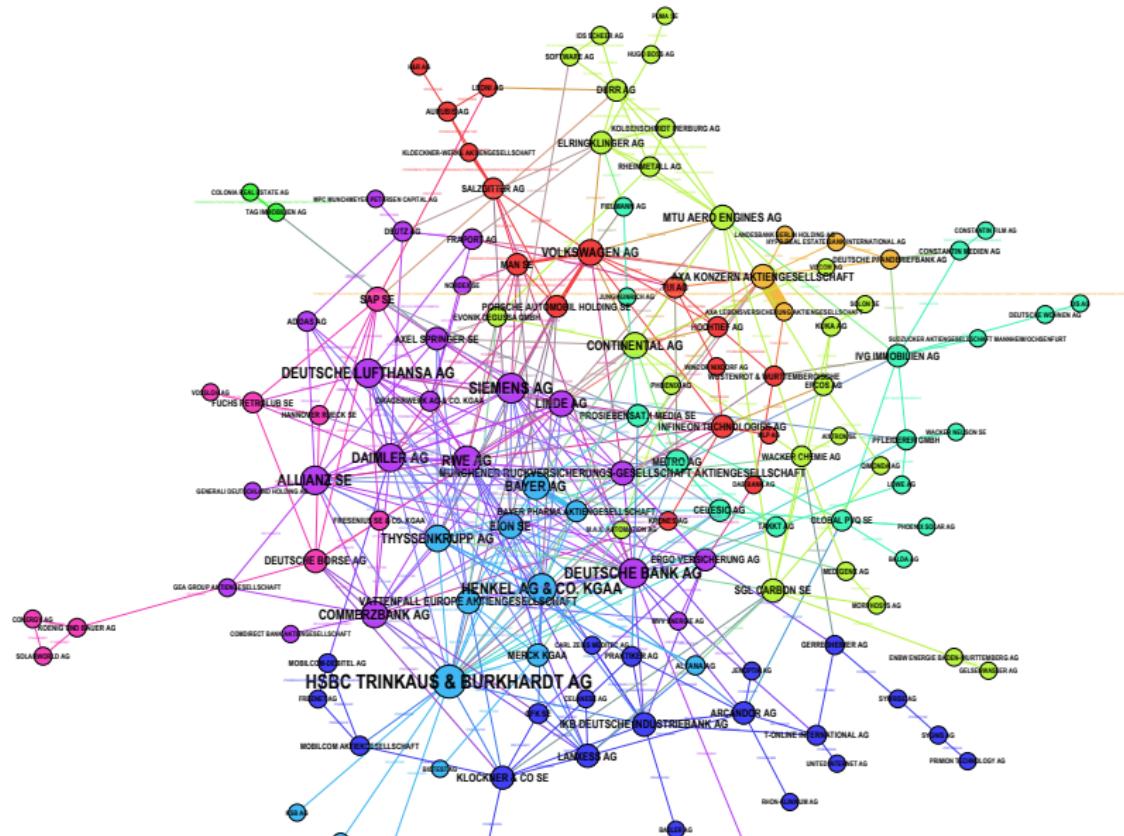


Figure: 400,000 largest firms globally, plotted based on their latitude/longitude.

Corporate networks



Figure: Global board interlock network.



- Apply techniques from (social) **network analysis** to corporate data
- **Nodes** represent around 200 million firms across the globe
- **Edges** could denote different relationships:
 - (Undirected) **board interlocks**: shared senior level directors
 - (Directed) ownership ties based on shareholder information
- Node attributes: country, sector, performance indicators, number of employees, ...
- Edge attributes: number of interlocks, type of shares, number of shares, ultimate share percentage, ...
- Data source: ORBIS database. Longitudinal
- Computer: 1.5TB RAM (ready early February)

- **CORPNET** — Corporate Network Governance: Power, Ownership and Control in Contemporary Global Capitalism
- *What are the features, origins and power political consequences of corporate governance networks in modern economic life?*



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- **Nature:** Map and analyze the network.
- **Origins:** Uncover generating mechanisms
- **Power:** Understand how it operates: “nearly 4/10 of the control over the economic value of transnational companies (TNCs) in the world is held, via a complicated web of ownership relations, by a group of 147 TNCs in the core, which has almost full control over itself” (Vitali et al., 2011)

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European Research Council
Established by the European Commission



CORPNET

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- Previous work: **community detection** and **centrality** analysis on the largest 400,000 firms (nodes) and 1,700,000 interlocks (edges)

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CORPNET

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- Previous work: **community detection** and **centrality** analysis on the largest 400,000 firms (nodes) and 1,700,000 interlocks (edges)
- Focus in the first few months of the CORPNET project: **data quality** of the 200 million firm dataset

Community detection

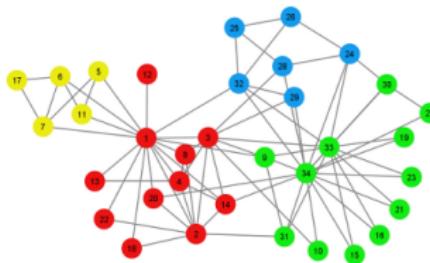


Figure: Communities: node subsets connected more strongly with each other

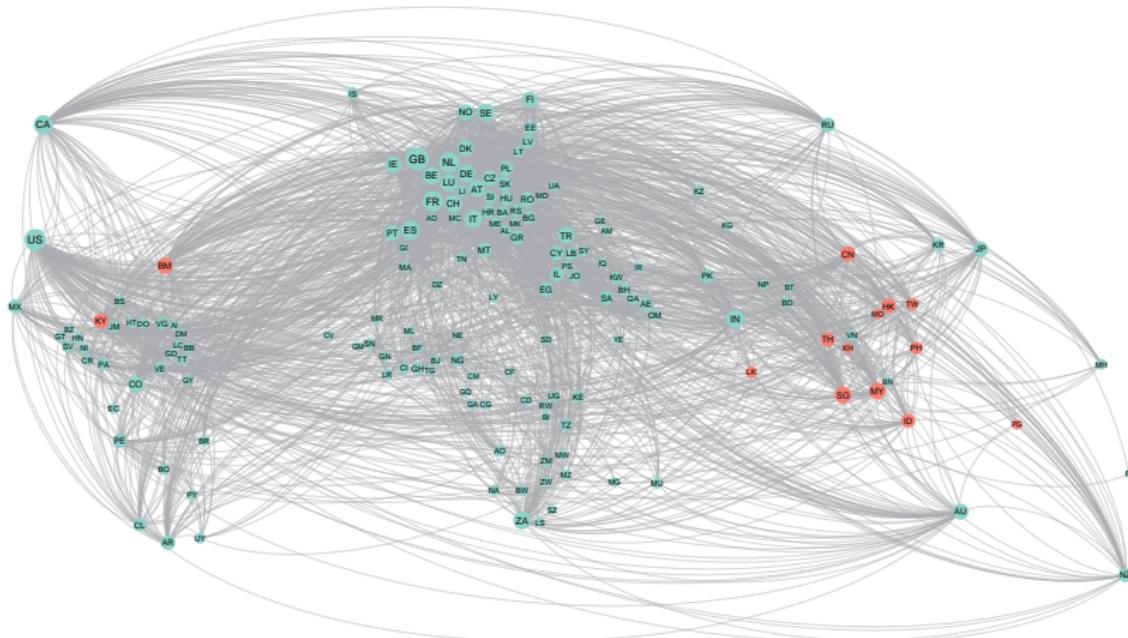
Image credits: Waltman & van Eck, CWTS Leiden

- Country network: aggregate firms from the same country
- E.M. Heemskerk and F.W. Takes, The Corporate Elite Community Structure of Global Capitalism, in *New Political Economy* 21(1): 90–118, 2016. [dx.doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2015.1041483](https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2015.1041483)

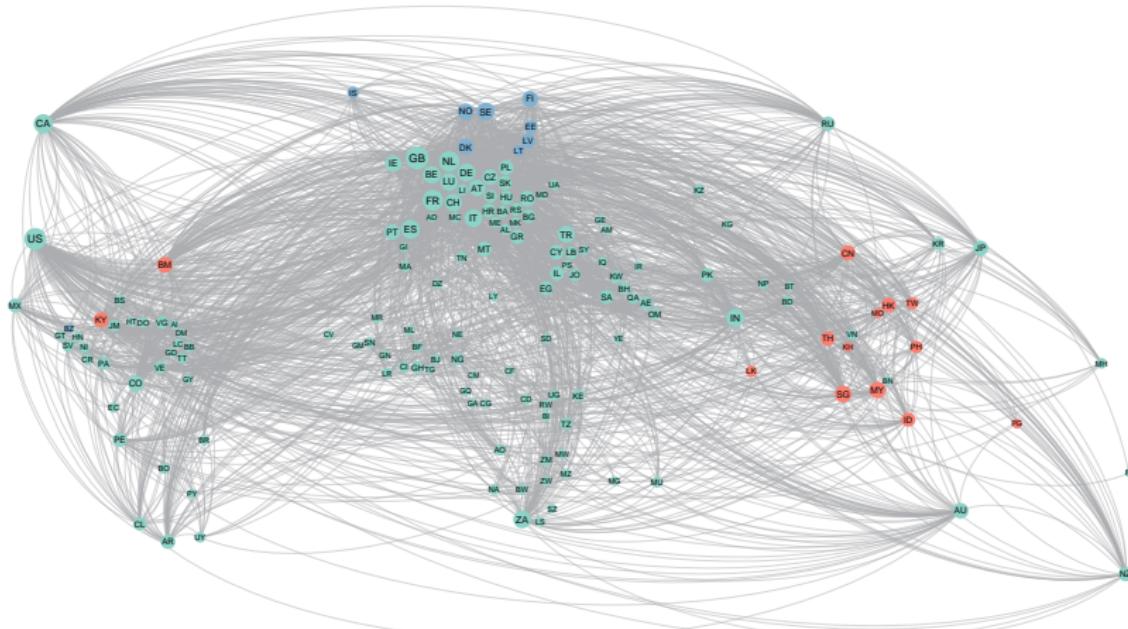
Corporate Network Communities



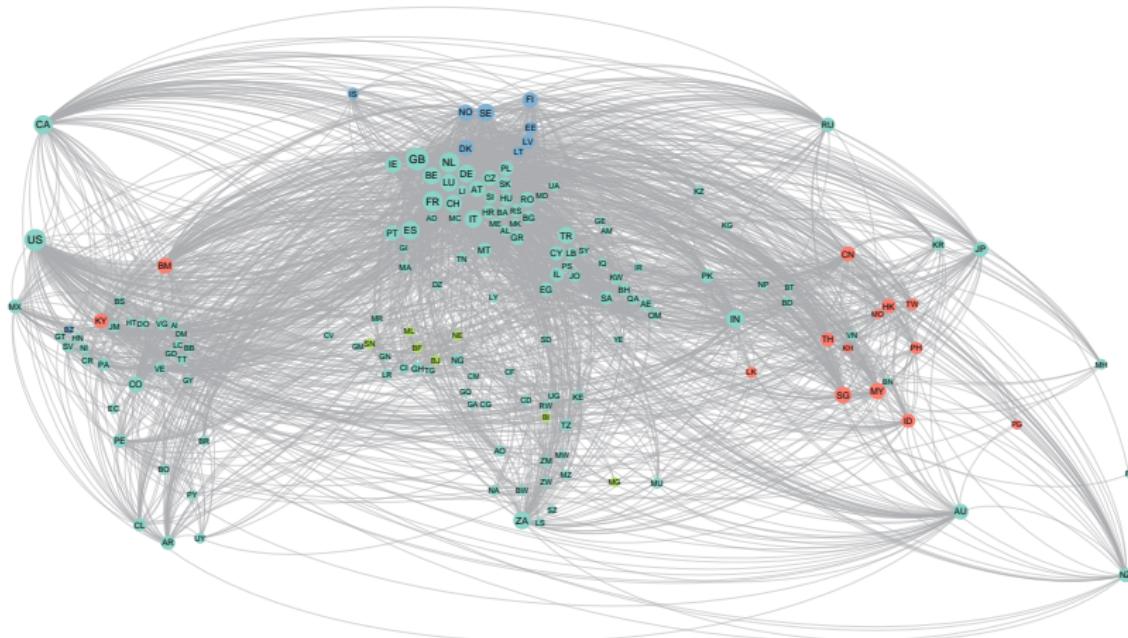
Communities, resolution = 2.0



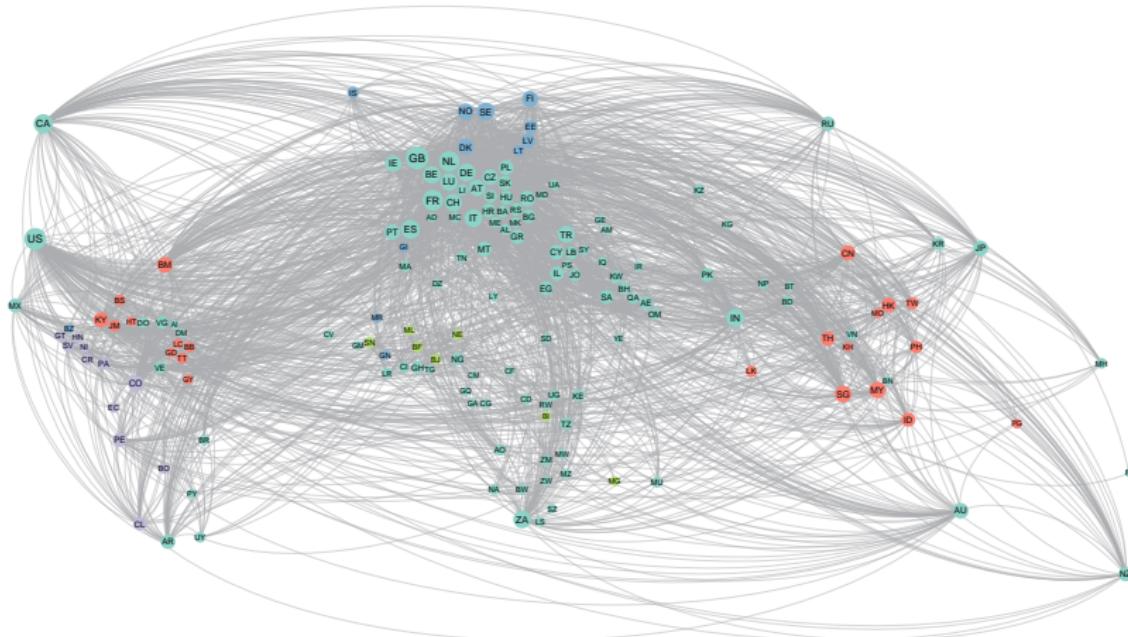
Communities, resolution = 1.75



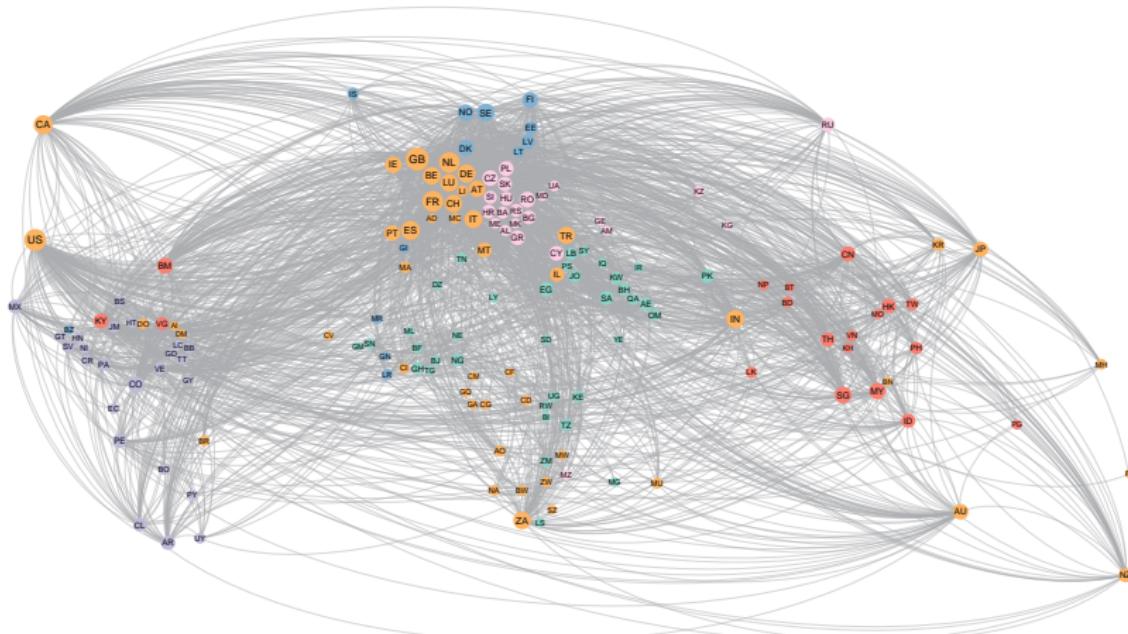
Communities, resolution = 1.55



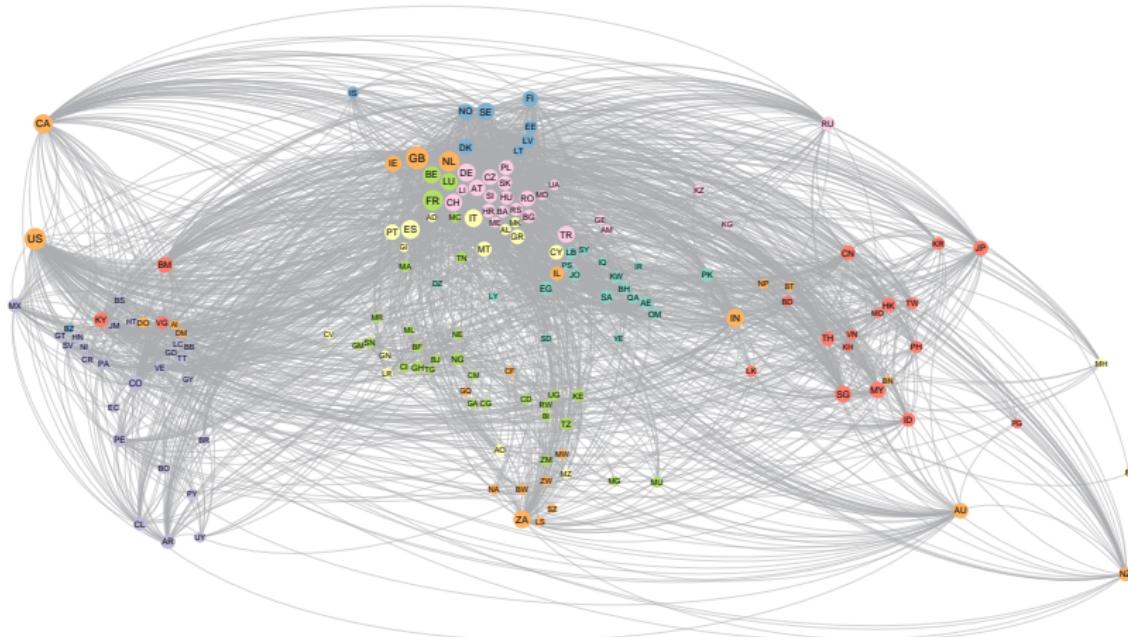
Communities, resolution = 1.5



Communities, resolution = 1.0



Communities, resolution = 0.5



Appearing Communities

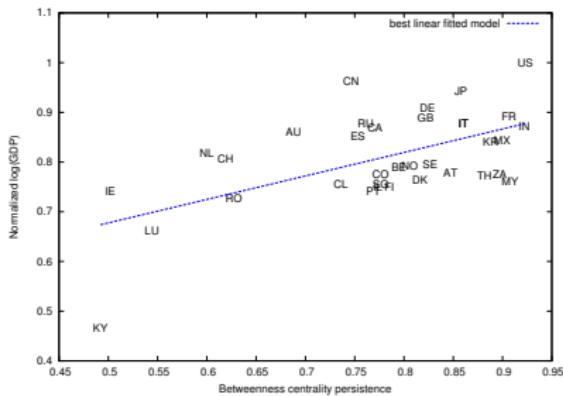
- Clearly a layered / nested community structure
- Some communities are more distinct than other
- The China / Asian cluster separates itself the first. At the highest level of fragmentation it actually includes Western oriented Asian countries as Japan and Korea as well.
- Europe is divided along geographical lines, even when we only consider border crossing ties!
- Although it may look like Europe is integrating, community detection reveals clear dividing lines

Appearing Communities

- Carroll and Fennema concluded that by 1996 the transnational corporate elite network is best described as a superstructure that rests upon rather resilient national bases (Carroll & Fennema, 2002).
- Our results suggest a multi-level structure.
- In this regional fragmented corporate elite, the transatlantic connection remains particularly strong.

Centrality analysis

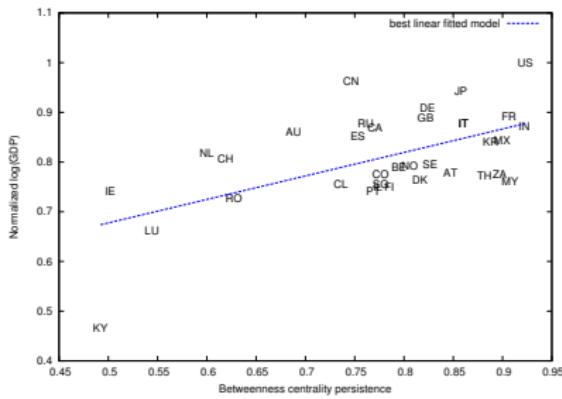
- F.W. Takes and E.M. Heemskerk, Centrality in the Global Network of Corporate Control, *forthcoming*, 2016.



- Main result: large differences between countries in terms of **centrality persistence**, measuring national vs. global power of a country's firms

Centrality analysis

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- Main result: large differences between countries in terms of **centrality persistence**, measuring national vs. global power of a country's firms
- Outliers due to cliques with high degree nodes of administrative interlock ties

Data quality



- Data quality
 - Accuracy: the data is true
 - Consistency: data remains clear and verifiable over time
 - Integrity: data has not suffered from corruption
 - **Completeness:** do we have all the data?
- We “found” that the Spanish market size was ten times larger than the US market: one outlier in the data.
- Other problems are more subtle, such as the size bias: Larger companies are added first to the database.

Average operating revenue

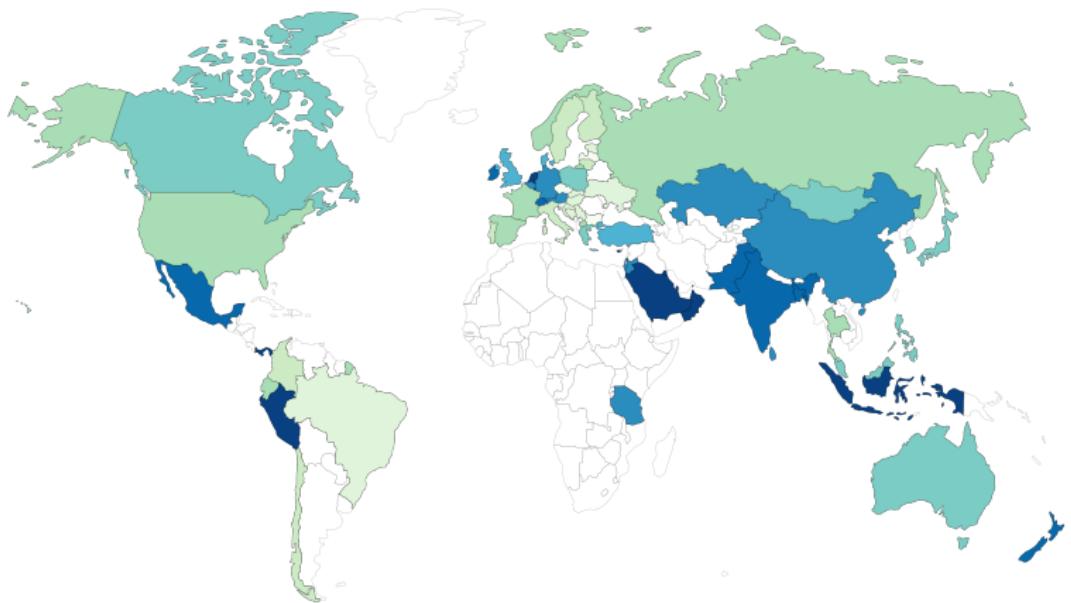


Figure: Observed average revenue per country for 200 million firms

Why we care about the average

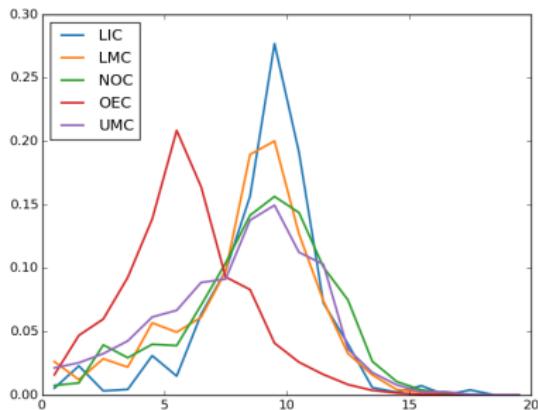


Figure: Distribution of $\log(\text{revenue})$ for different regions

Why we care about the average

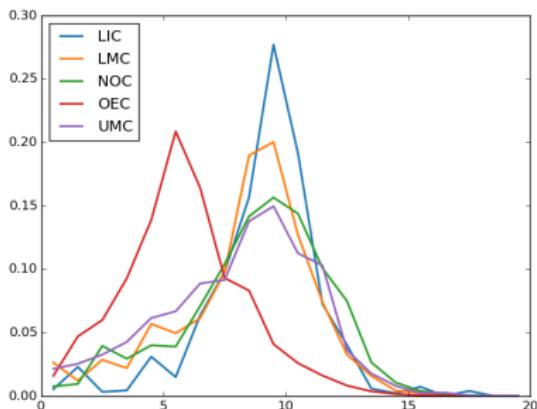


Figure: Distribution of $\log(\text{revenue})$ for different regions

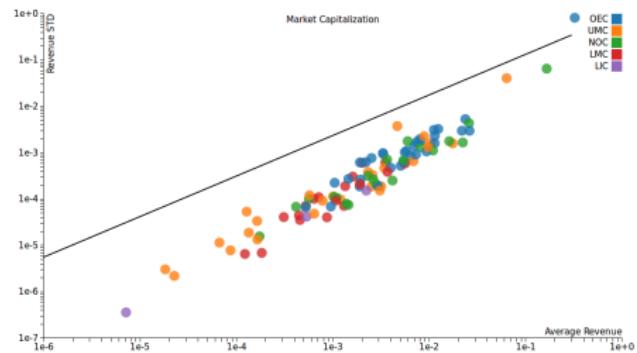


Figure: Average revenue within country vs Standard deviation of the revenue

Why we care about the average

- The distribution of firm operating revenues follows a lognormal distribution for 95% of firms, with consistent variance across countries. Can be described with the average.

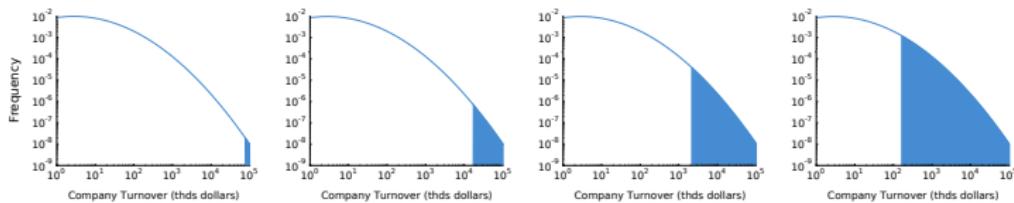


Figure: Lognormal distribution and addition of firms

Data quality

- Assess firm data quality based on comparing intrinsic factors of countries using:
 - Worldbank data on GDP per capita for each country
 - Eurostat data on the number of firms in each county
 - Distribution of sum of revenues per country in our data

Data quality

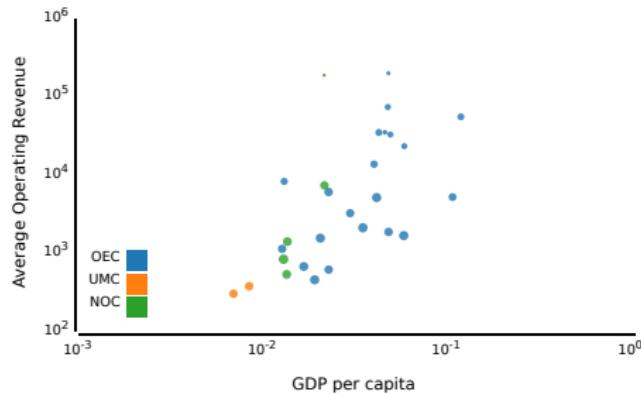


Figure: Richer countries have larger firms

Data quality

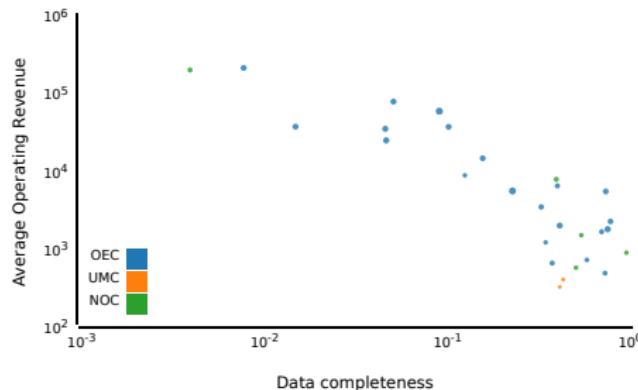


Figure: Richer countries have better quality

- Rich countries have higher average revenue, but better quality, which decrease the observed average (hard to decouple).
- We are interested in the real average (given complete data):

- 1 Real average $\propto \frac{\text{GDP}}{\text{number of firms}}$
- 2 Calculate the effect of intrinsic factors and extrapolate to other countries
- 3 Calculate the quality of our global firm data

Data quality

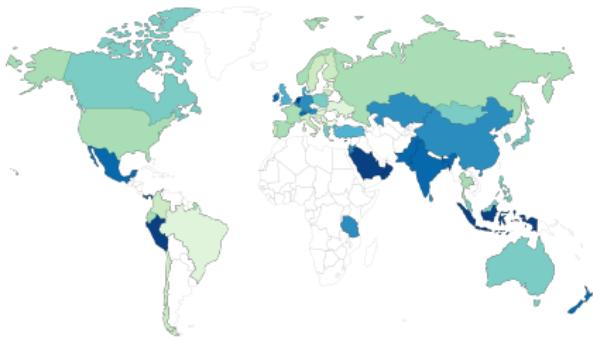


Figure: Observed average revenue

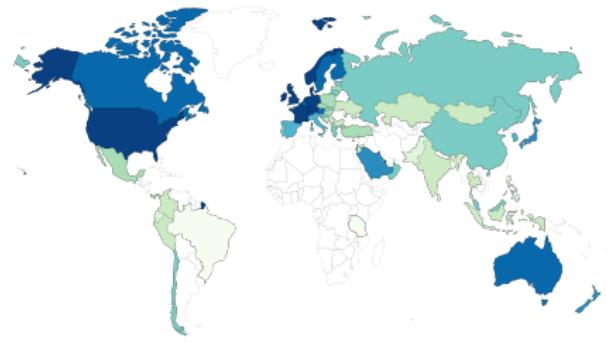


Figure: Estimated average revenue

Data quality

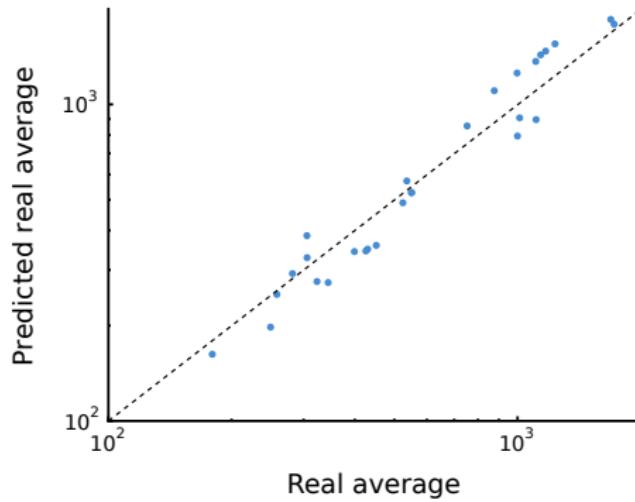


Figure: Pretty good job at predicting

Data quality

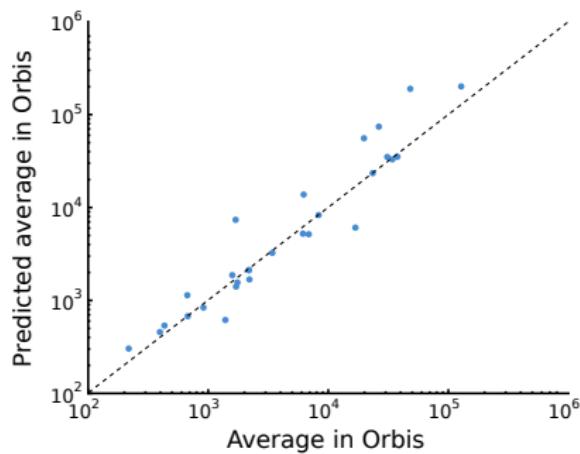


Figure: $\log(\text{predicted observed}) = 3.15 \log(\text{estimated real}) + \log(\text{completeness}) - 1.05$

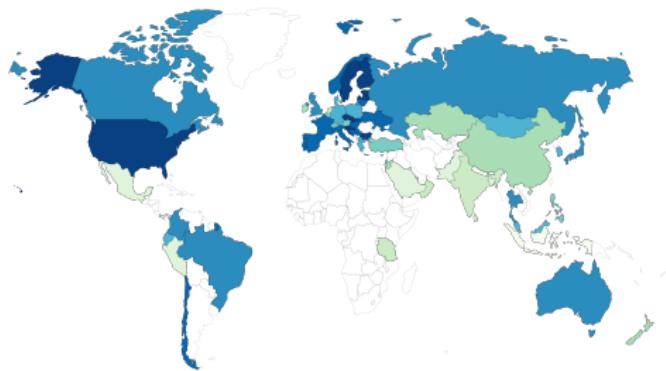
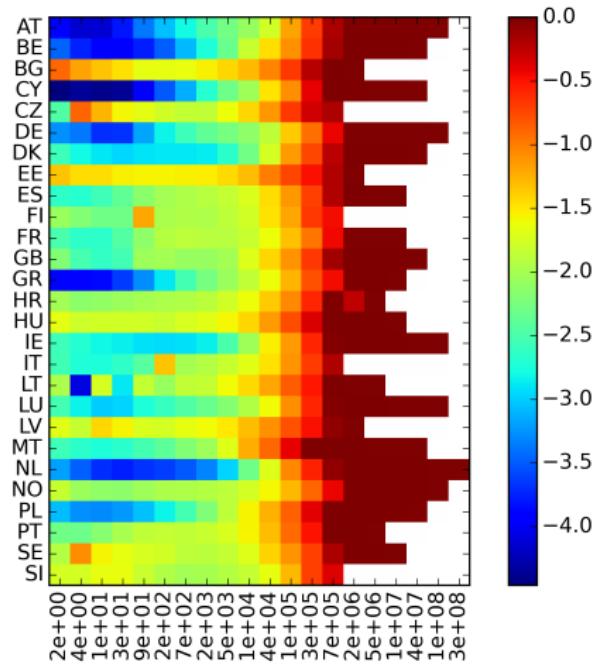


Figure: Actual completeness of our data

Completeness per country



Conclusion

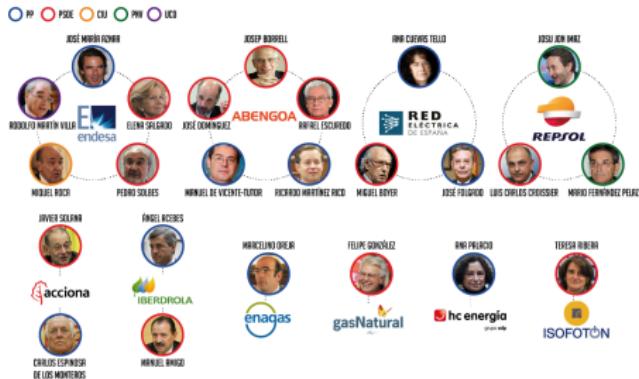
- Big corporate network data provides great insight in firm power and control across the globe
- Topological properties, centrality analysis and community detection all show regional patterns in the global network
- Interpretation of measures is crucial and depends on data quality
- We understand the completeness of our 200 firm dataset, now we can assess the effect on the network

Projects and ideas

Revolting doors

Revolting doors

LOS 24 EX POLÍTICOS EN EL SECTOR ELÉCTRICO



FUENTE: DANILO GRASSO Y JESÚS ESCOBAR

Figure: 24 high-level former politicians in the energy sector

What can be done: See how revolving doors affect economy.

PRECIOS ELECTRICIDAD EN LOS PAISES NUESTRO ENTORNO EN € por Kw/h

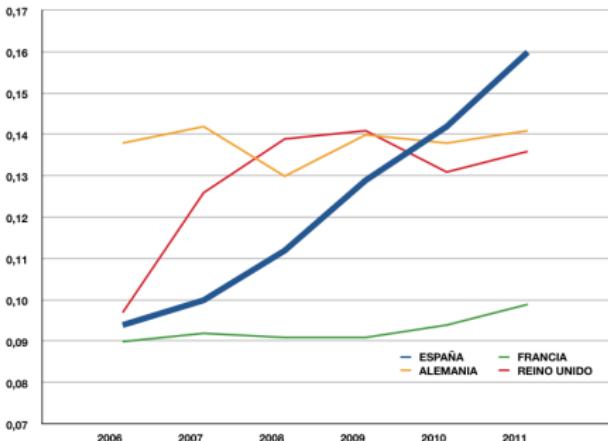
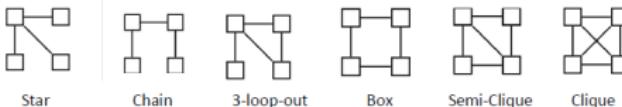


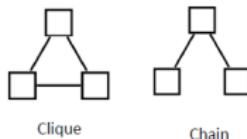
Figure: Price of the electricity for Spain (blue), France (green), Germany (yellow) and UK (red)

Motifs in networks

Connected Motifs of size 4



Connected Motifs of size 3



- Cliques are over-represented: "Triadic closure"
- What can be done: Find other motifs, relate them to functions in the network.

Last names

- What are the elite families?

Last names

■ What are the elite families?

2823	herowitz	0.000035	0.000589	4.382193e+11	16.925534
2600	gupta	0.000039	0.000623	4.605060e+11	16.181555
2752	mehta	0.000036	0.000476	3.402674e+11	13.251747
4214	hollander	0.000021	0.000272	1.935952e+11	12.945244
977	kaplan	0.000109	0.001405	9.993748e+11	12.889562
3748	frankel	0.000025	0.000306	2.161069e+11	12.432170
2951	freeman	0.000033	0.000385	2.684895e+11	11.635076
3119	lieberman	0.000031	0.000340	2.336258e+11	10.961698
956	goldberg	0.000011	0.001042	6.899919e+11	9.379767
3047	scully	0.000032	0.000292	1.753170e+11	8.548746
1700	hirsch	0.000063	0.000469	1.742742e+11	7.742770
2039	hadid	0.000073	0.000272	1.708991e+11	7.579714
641	stein	0.000161	0.001201	7.414170e+11	7.476160
1570	gold	0.000069	0.000476	2.873987e+11	7.037540
2045	wenstein	0.000051	0.00051	2.100484e+11	6.858198
1356	healy	0.000079	0.000544	3.250415e+11	6.847610
2701	reddy	0.000037	0.000249	1.484879e+11	6.790080
1161	stern	0.000091	0.000589	3.437826e+11	6.451354
1256	rubin	0.000085	0.000532	3.066996e+11	6.255854
1761	gerber	0.000061	0.000362	2.046825e+11	5.981301
1923	sharma	0.000055	0.000326	1.852137e+11	5.961625
1156	shapiro	0.000092	0.000521	2.873413e+11	5.688276
2307	hassan	0.000044	0.000249	1.363710e+11	5.599909
301	cohen	0.000023	0.000767	9.552497e+11	5.465592
805	lynn	0.000138	0.00014	3.000000e+11	5.166666
1609	grossman	0.000096	0.00051	6.71815e+11	5.302299
980	richter	0.0000108	0.000532	2.714213e+11	4.911191
1891	goddard	0.000056	0.000272	1.373592e+11	4.837191
2107	epstein	0.000049	0.000238	1.201519e+11	4.834733
1334	siegel	0.000081	0.000385	1.933025e+11	4.784112

Figure: US
overrepresented

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3748	frankel	0.000025	0.000306	2.161069e+11	12.432170
2951	freeman	0.000033	0.000385	2.684895e+11	11.635076
3119	lieberman	0.000031	0.000340	2.336258e+11	10.961698
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2039	hadfield	0.000037	0.000272	1.708919e+11	7.579714
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805	lynn	0.000130	0.000474	3.000000e+11	5.076666
1609	grossman	0.000066	0.000551	6.671815e+11	3.302099
980	richter	0.000018	0.000532	2.714213e+11	4.911191
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1334	siegel	0.000081	0.000385	1.933025e+11	4.78412

Figure: US
overrepresented

179	pierce	0.000056	0.000265	2.599537e+11	0.514766
3	proctor	0.000156	0.000283	3.182000e+12	0.506864
172	dawson	0.000514	0.000249	5.703256e+12	0.484440
45	roberts	0.001257	0.000646	9.885009e+11	0.475013
88	sanders	0.000819	0.000385	6.131644e+11	0.470291
104	patterson	0.000736	0.000340	5.764456e+11	0.461720
170	fernandez	0.000516	0.000238	4.067305e+11	0.460529
103	simmons	0.000748	0.000340	6.076401e+11	0.454599
112	wallace	0.000707	0.000306	6.453542e+11	0.432515
101	henderson	0.000779	0.000326	7.520451e+11	0.421784
151	hicks	0.000570	0.000238	5.619529e+11	0.417680
126	mcdonald	0.000653	0.000272	6.483840e+11	0.416437
133	wood	0.000630	0.000261	6.000000e+11	0.416004
2	williams	0.005687	0.000266	5.711752e+12	0.4131
71	ward	0.000942	0.000385	7.934856e+12	0.408833
18	jackson	0.002469	0.000963	2.822774e+12	0.399909
10	willson	0.002903	0.001076	3.677759e+12	0.370715
119	bryant	0.000681	0.000249	8.862143e+11	0.365919
106	hamilton	0.000720	0.000249	1.044657e+12	0.345913
5	jones	0.005052	0.001552	9.102997e+12	0.307186
61	rogers	0.001091	0.000300	2.302082e+12	0.280245
28	walker	0.001856	0.000511	4.062537e+12	0.274293
57	nguyen	0.001150	0.000238	3.888390e+12	0.206914
30	allen	0.000761	0.000266	7.000000e+12	0.199900
33	sanchez	0.001636	0.000249	4.463070e+12	0.152348
15	hernandez	0.002619	0.000396	1.363299e+13	0.151403
29	perez	0.001811	0.000272	9.534061e+12	0.150119
9	rodriguez	0.002081	0.000442	1.586607e+13	0.148176
8	garcia	0.003182	0.000408	2.052576e+13	0.128163
23	gonzalez	0.002216	0.000272	1.509750e+13	0.122693

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1700	hirsch	0.000063	0.000469	1.000000e+11	7.947270
2039	hadfield	0.000037	0.000272	7.089918e+11	7.879714
641	stein	0.000161	0.001201	7.41470e+11	7.476160
1570	gold	0.000069	0.000476	2.873987e+11	7.037540
2045	weinstein	0.000051	0.000551	2.100484e+11	6.858198
1356	healy	0.000079	0.000544	3.250415e+11	6.847610
2701	reddy	0.000037	0.000249	1.484878e+11	6.790080
1161	stern	0.000091	0.000589	3.437826e+11	6.451354
1256	rubin	0.000085	0.000532	3.066996e+11	6.255854
1761	gerber	0.000061	0.000362	2.046825e+11	5.981301
1923	sharma	0.000055	0.000328	1.852137e+11	5.961625
1156	shapiro	0.000092	0.000521	2.873413e+11	5.688276
2307	hassan	0.000044	0.000249	1.363710e+11	5.599909
301	cohen	0.000023	0.000176	9.552497e+11	5.465592
805	lynn	0.000131	0.000404	3.000000e+11	5.400000
1609	grossman	0.000066	0.000551	6.71815e+11	5.302099
980	richter	0.000018	0.000532	2.714213e+11	4.911191
1891	goddard	0.000056	0.000272	1.375982e+11	4.837791
2107	epstein	0.000049	0.000238	1.201519e+11	4.834733
1334	siegel	0.000081	0.000385	1.933025e+11	4.78412

179	pierce	0.000008	0.000265	2.999537e+11	0.514766
3	probst	0.00016	0.000283	3.182000e+11	0.506884
172	dawels	0.000514	0.000249	5.703256e+11	0.484440
45	sanders	0.000819	0.000365	9.885006e+11	0.475013
88	paterson	0.000736	0.000340	5.764456e+11	0.467291
104	patterson	0.000736	0.000340	5.764456e+11	0.467291
170	fernandez	0.000516	0.000238	4.067305e+11	0.460929
103	simmons	0.000748	0.000340	6.076401e+11	0.454599
112	wallace	0.000707	0.000306	6.453542e+11	0.432515
101	henderson	0.000779	0.000326	7.520451e+11	0.421784
151	hicks	0.000570	0.000238	5.619529e+11	0.417680
126	mcdonald	0.000653	0.000272	6.483840e+11	0.416437
133	wood	0.000653	0.000261	6.088300e+11	0.416004
2	williams	0.005687	0.000266	5.711752e+12	0.4131
71	vard	0.000442	0.000385	7.736485e+12	0.408833
18	jackson	0.002469	0.000963	2.822774e+12	0.399909
10	valenzia	0.002903	0.001076	3.677759e+12	0.370715
119	bryant	0.000681	0.000249	8.862143e+11	0.365919
106	hamilton	0.000720	0.000249	1.044657e+12	0.345913
5	jones	0.000502	0.001552	9.102997e+12	0.307186
61	rogers	0.001091	0.000308	2.302082e+12	0.280245
28	walker	0.001858	0.000511	4.062537e+12	0.274293
57	nguyen	0.001150	0.000238	3.888390e+12	0.206914
30	allen	0.000623	0.000266	3.888390e+12	0.206914
33	sanchez	0.001636	0.000249	4.463072e+12	0.152348
15	herman	0.002619	0.000396	3.363299e+13	0.151403
29	perez	0.001811	0.000272	9.534061e+12	0.150119
9	rodriguez	0.002081	0.000442	1.596607e+13	0.148176
8	garcia	0.003182	0.000408	2.052576e+13	0.128163
23	gonzalez	0.002116	0.000272	1.509756e+13	0.122693

Figure: US overrepresented

Figure: US underrepresented

- What can be done: Find how last names are overrepresented for different fields (academia, business, politics, economy)

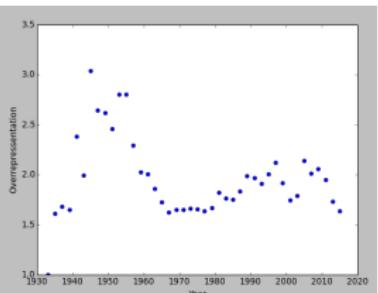
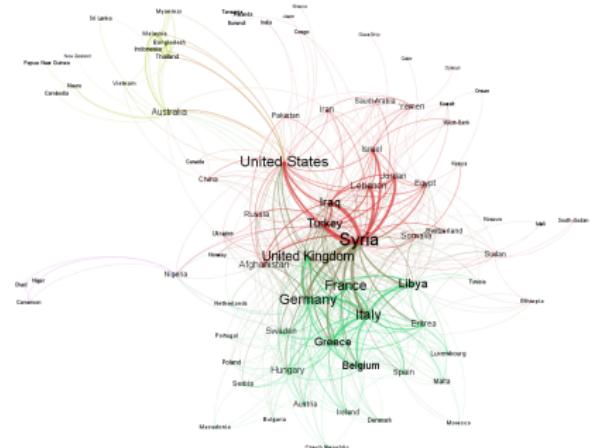
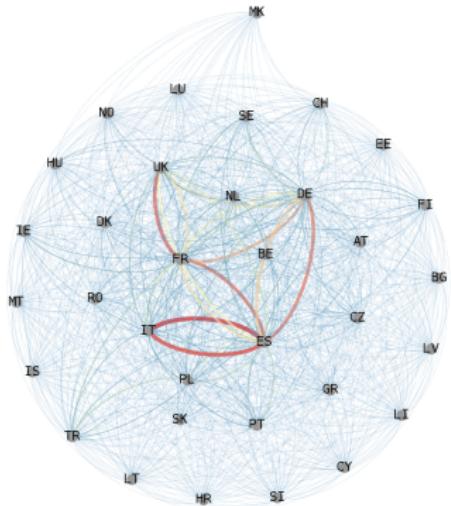


Figure:
Overrepresentation in industry for the last names of congressmen

Last names

name	perc	perc2	CATALANITY	chiSq	perc3
garriga	0.000125	0.000399	76.475163	1.330853e+14	3.182386
vilanova	0.000112	0.000345	64.408641	1.112150e+14	3.083621
planas	0.000153	0.000446	75.057906	1.340273e+14	2.903358
sole	0.000289	0.000817	79.913169	2.378695e+14	2.826290
vila	0.000814	0.002246	61.755611	6.342631e+14	2.759836
jorda	0.000122	0.000325	46.420110	8.830136e+13	2.678109
rius	0.000113	0.000297	75.814902	7.811046e+13	2.621398
palacio	0.000163	0.000421	-20.793683	1.091496e+14	2.591856
roca	0.000652	0.001689	59.537106	4.368070e+14	2.589036
soler	0.001046	0.002583	42.069533	6.222004e+14	2.469568
giner	0.000235	0.000576	1.709732	1.368931e+14	2.448892
comas	0.000141	0.000331	71.873229	7.345977e+13	2.348692
vilar	0.000202	0.000472	16.666456	1.040648e+14	2.340618
uriarte	0.000135	0.000316	-84.223830	6.964932e+13	2.339333
gimeno	0.000496	0.001158	2.986512	2.542731e+14	2.335723
gilabert	0.000131	0.000304	32.098324	6.563229e+13	2.314886
simo	0.000115	0.000265	42.516089	5.711536e+13	2.308484
miralles	0.000340	0.000784	18.268128	1.682431e+14	2.305632

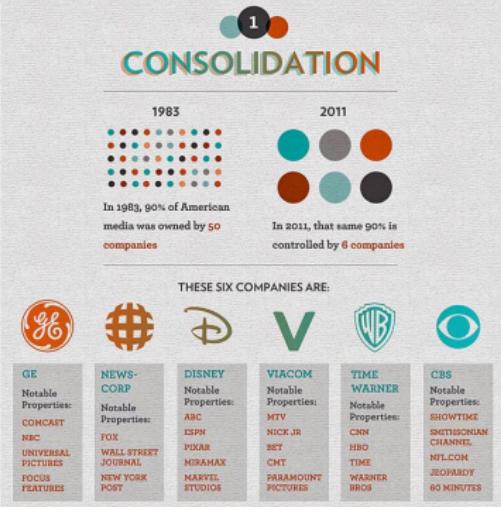
Migration



- What can be done: Networks of migration (erasmus, refugees, top executives)

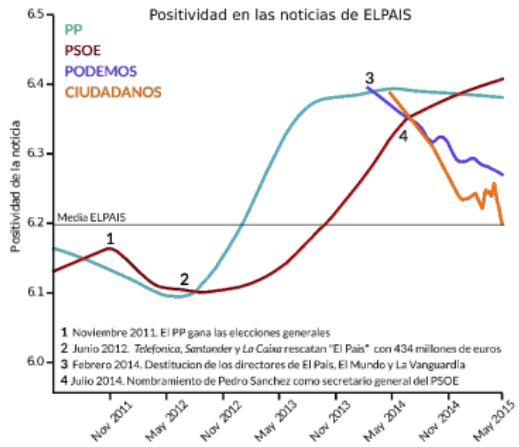
Media Consolidation: THE ILLUSION OF CHOICE

Media has never been more consolidated. **6 media giants** now control a staggering **90%** of what we read, watch, or listen to.



- What can be done: Effect of independence in news (variety, positivity towards the system/government...).

Industry independence



Proxy votes

- Company/Fund A is a shareholder of Company B, C, D...
- Company/Fund A hires company X to manage what to vote in the meetings of those companies
- Particularly (maybe) important in the case of Exchange Trade Funds
- E.g. blackrock: Founded in 1988, it has \$4.1 trillion in assets under management, making it bigger than any bank, insurance company, government fund or rival asset-management firm. It single-handedly manages almost as much money as all the worlds private-equity and hedge funds. Though its holdings are mostly equitiesit is the biggest shareholder in half of the worlds 30 largest companiesit also holds bonds, commodities, hedge funds, property and just about anything anyone would ever want to invest in. (The Economist)
- What's the effect of ETFs? Market coordination?

Others

- States as owners: Liberalism in first world vs. state ownership in emerging markets.
- Who rules: Cohesive transnational elite or competing elites?
- Old's boys club:
 - What determines who is linked to who?
 - Origins of inequality (Only 3% of top executives are women).

Prediction

- Predict crashes (network resilience) and cascades. When should we rescue the bank and when should we let it burn?
- Predict merges. What influence mergers and acquisitions?
- Predict performance based on network measures.



Thank you!

- CORPNET has a challenging yet exciting time ahead!
- We are open to collaboration, sharing data, resources and ideas!
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