

## Conference *Advances in Computational Analysis of Political Text*

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The international multidisciplinary conference *PolText 2016* was held in Dubrovnik from 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The conference was focused on advances in computational analysis of political texts. Scientists in the fields of political science, computer science, and linguistics gathered with the goal of pointing out possible and essential cooperation possibilities in analysing political processes. The principal organisers were the Centre for Empirical Research in Political Science (CEPIS, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb) and Text Analysis and Knowledge Engineering Lab (TakeLab, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb) in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh (School of Social and Political Science) and the University of Oslo (School of Social and Political Science).<sup>1</sup> Technological developments, advancements in media coverage and an increasing number of open government practices have led to a large amount of information available to social scientists for their research. Even though the situation is getting better, political and other social scientists still have problems analysing a large quantity of data and that is where the cooperation between disciplines comes in handy. Since computational scientists are not very experienced in dealing with social science theories and have less contextual knowledge about political data, they compensate that by using their knowledge of computation technologies such as automatic language processing, machine learning and information extracting technologies, which make research a lot easier for social scientists.

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Out of 70 applicants, the Committee consisting of Daniela Širinić and Jan Šnajder from the University of Zagreb, Shaun Bevan from the University of Edinburgh and Zoltán Fazekas from the University of Oslo – had chosen 21 papers written by young scientists from highly regarded universities and research centres such as Arizona State University, the University of Gothenburg, the Swedish Institute of Computer Science, the University of Glasgow, the University of Chicago, London School of Economics and Political Science etc. Along with the presentations of selected papers, the Conference had two guest lecturers, Jon Oberlander from the University of Edinburgh and Stuart Soroka from the University of Michigan who significantly contributed to the event with their expertise. After the first day and the registration of participants in the Centre for Advanced Academic Studies (CAAS), the papers focusing on themes such as text categorization, topic modelling, information extraction, corpus analysis, sentiment analysis, stance classification and ideal point estimation, argumentation mining, political reputation analysis, techniques for multilingual text analysis and other language technologies were presented over the course of two days.

At the very end the participants selected the paper which had the best presentation (Blake Miller: Automatically Detecting Regime Commentators in Chinese Online News Media). This multidisciplinary gathering has shown that there is interest and benefit in the analysis of political science topics and that it should be further developed and explored. The Conference can be considered a success since the scientists from both sides of the spectrum have seen the possibilities for intensifying existing cooperation and beginning new projects.

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