

Visualization of Contributions to Open-Source Projects

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ABSTRACT

We analyze visually, to what extent team members and external developers contribute to open-source projects to have a high-level impression about collaboration in that projects. For that, we record the provenance of the development process and draw the resulting property graph. Our graph drawings show, which developers are jointly changed the same files what we apply to Germany’s COVID-19 exposure notification app ‘Corona-Warn-App’.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Human-centered computing** → **Graph drawings**; • **Software and its engineering** → **Open source model**; **Programming teams**.

KEYWORDS

graph visualization, software visualization, provenance, open source

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1 INTRODUCTION

A transparent and traceable team composition and development process is one of the advantages of the open-source model. Understanding the characteristics of open-source projects, where developers with different roles work together, is an important question for projects with high public interests.

The COVID-19 pandemic raises challenges for software developers to help to fight the pandemic with software systems, which must be developed under time pressure. For example, mobile apps for *contact tracing* of infected persons such as Germany’s exposure notification app *Corona-Warn-App* (CWA).

To analyze, to what extent team members and external contributors contributed to CWA on GitHub, we record and store the *provenance of the software development process* [8] according to the provenance data model PROV [5] in a graph database (Section 2). We query a sub-graph for visualization with graph drawing (Section 3)—which we apply to the CWA (Section 4).

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2 PROVENANCE OF SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

We extract provenance of a software development process from repositories with Git2PROV [2, 7] and store it as a property graph in the graph database NEO4J for further analysis [6].

We use the graph to answer the question: “Which files have commits by team members as well as external contributors?” by adding information about the contributors roles as additional edges using database queries with CYPHER; the role of each contributor, which is necessary to construct the proper CYPHER, is requested from GITHUB via their API. We make the assumption, that members of the GITHUB organization corona-warn-app are dedicated team members. Then we query for files, where team members and external contributor made changes at any of the files revisions and visualize the result (Figure 1; see Section 3).

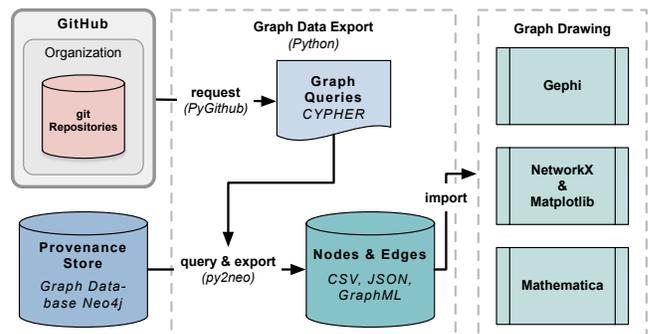


Figure 1: Querying and exporting graph data for visualization.

3 GRAPH VISUALIZATION

We visualize parts of the property graph with GEPHI [1]. During querying and exporting for visualization, we map the property graph as follows: files (i.e., PROV entities) and contributors (i.e., PROV agents) become graph nodes with two distinct colors and contributions become edges, which color depends on their property role (i.e., “team member” or “external contributor”).

For the coloring, we choose distinct colors from two different qualitative color schemes generated by COLORBREWER [3]. The size of nodes are proportional to their degree. In our current approach, we generate two drawings for each project; one where we scale the node sizes according to the in-degree of file nodes and a second one where we scale according to the out-degree of contributors. For the layout we use the ForceAtlas2 algorithm [4].

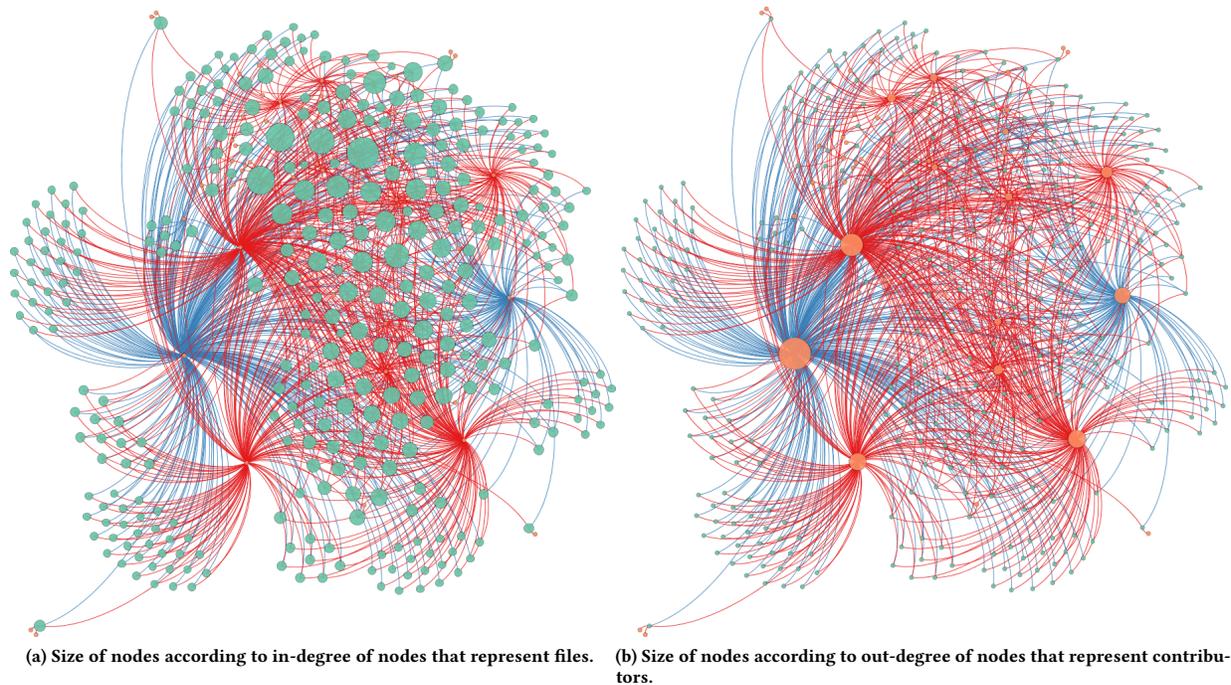


Figure 2: Files (●) and contributors (●) for the cwa-app-android project. Red edges indicate file changes by team members (●→●). Blue edges indicate file changes by external contributors (●→●).

4 USE CASE: CORONA-WARN-APP (CWA)

The CWA has been developed in a short time frame using an open development process—publicly available from 12 repositories¹: development started in April 2020 and the app was released on 16th June, 2020 for Android and iOS.

We visualize the Android app cwa-app-android, for which the database has 3672 Entities, 56 Agents, and 379 Activities. This leads to 571 contributions by team members and 1230 contributions by external contributors. We draw one graph where we scale node sizes proportional to the *in-degree* of file nodes (Figure 2a) and a second one where we scale proportional to the *out-degree* of contributors (Figure 2b).

Our graph drawing show typical patterns: team members and external contributors work collaboratively on many files. Because the drawing is based on provenance data, the interpretation is that over the time of development many files were changed by developers with different roles; where a small numbers of developers made most of the changes.

5 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

We presented graph drawings to visually see patterns how team members and external contributor worked on the same files in open-source projects.

Future work includes user studies to evaluate readability and faithfulness. The graph drawings surely can be improved in many

ways, for example, with other layouts, color schemes (especially to support color blindness), transparency, or shapes.

We add additional provenance information besides the files operations in GIT—for example, actions from the GITHUB platform such as issues changes, pull requests, documentation changes, and *GitHub Actions*. The knowledge within this provenance information allow a much broader set of questions beside file changes.

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¹<https://github.com/corona-warn-app>