

# EAIR Forum Rome 2006

## SIG on Exploiting Data Repositories

Marcel Herbst & Mantz Yorke

### 1 Introduction

This is a first note we send to those who have pre-registered to attend the constitutional meeting for a new Special Interest Group (SIG) within EAIR, focusing on exploiting data repositories (data banks) and to be held at the EAIR Forum in Rome (Wednesday, August 30, 2006, 10:30 to 12:30, Forum Venue). As explained in our abstract in the Program of the Forum, the main reasons to form such a SIG are the following:

There are many databases, national as well as inter-national, which are underused and whose potential could be exploited further by institutional researchers. This SIG intends to identify data repositories which are available, what is being done with them through official agencies or academic research, and what useful additional work could be done.

The new SIG Exploiting Data Repositories shall focus on practical — and ongoing — exploration of ways in which higher education could exploit existing databases. It should bring together professionals with varying expertise and interests: (i) researchers interested in benchmarking, comparative institutional performance or more general comparative studies (includes ethical issues), and (ii) researchers interested in methodological issues or statistical analysis.

In other words, this SIG should act as a ‘college’, if you will, in bringing together professionals of various orientations who express an interest in the exploitation of data repositories and their ramifications. Hopefully, the members of the SIG will stay in touch throughout the year to exchange experiences and information, and if all goes well, EAIR shall present an electronic platform to support such activities. If we are not mistaken, EAIR plans, in addition to its present publication of the journal *Tertiary Education and Management* (TEAM), a book series for scholarly monographs or

anthologies, not unlike those published by our sister organization AIR. Research and findings which would fall within the theme of our SIG could then also be bundled and published as part of this new book series.

Our SIG will not have a formal structure, at least not in the immediate future. We — i.e. Mantz and Marcel — shall act as facilitators for the time being, and perhaps also as gatekeepers of an electronic platform if this would prove necessary. Colleagues who would want to join us in the necessary tasks of administration are welcome, anytime. We shall review this informal arrangement on the base of the experience during the coming year, at the Forum in Innsbruck.

## 2 Survey of Interests

Since our SIG should serve your interests, you should express them. We shall pose a few questions here, and if you find the time, please try to respond (via eMail). We shall try to collate your answers and present the picture in Rome. Hopefully, we shall have time at our constitutional session in Rome to enlarge on that and you will also have the opportunity to pitch in ideas or pieces of information which you think are pertinent while you attend the session: try to prepare yourself.

**Motive to register for this SIG** Tell us why you have registered, what you would like to learn or to explore. Refer to problems you will have to solve at your workplace or in which direction you would like to enlarge your professional interests.

**Data repositories you extract data from** List the data banks — external to your own institution — that you access for your work, and tell us about the context or purpose for accessing these data repositories. State the research questions that guide that work. Tell us about (external) data that you lack, and why.

**Data repositories you supply with data** List the data repositories — external to your own institution — that you supply with data, and tell us about the context or legal framework which guides this data exchange.

**Focus of your work** Tell us of the particular foci which underly this data exchange:

- uploading data:

- reporting requirements, i.e. supply supervisory boards or national agency with data and reports (e.g. quarterly or annual reports);
- voluntary data exchange with peer institutions.
- downloading data from government or quasi-government agencies in support of:
  - comparative benchmarking regarding academic achievement or educational outcomes (SAT, drop-out rates, transfer rates, graduation rates, employment or promotion rates, etc.);
  - comparative benchmarking in fields like performance measurement of research output (e.g. publications) or research impact (e.g. citations).

**Issues you have to grapple with** Tell us of problems, including ethical issues, which are associated with this data exchange and which ought to be addressed in our SIG.

**Software and platforms** List the software (and associated platforms like Windows, Linux, Macintosh, Unix, et cetera) your institution uses. State the software (and associated platforms) you yourself use at your workplace (if that differs from your institutional setup). State your own competencies in this regard (rough estimate) and your needs.

- integrated mainframe software (like SAP);
- integrated PC-software (like Microsoft Office or Lotus);
- database management software (like Access, Oracle, DB2);
- statistical software (like MS Excel, SPSS, SAS, S+, R);
- reporting software (like MS Outlook, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X).

### 3 Communication

In Table 1 you will find a list of people who have registered for our SIG, including their eMail-addresses (as of July 21, 2006). This list also includes the eMails of Marcel Herbst and Mantz Yorke to whom you should respond (until August 4, 2006 [Friday], if you are not on vacation). It is an international group of people who have signed up thus far. We encourage you to communicate among yourselves, in order to explore the subject matter and to prepare yourself for our constitutional meeting in Rome. See you there!

Table 1: List of Registrants of our SIG

Name	Organization	eMail Address
Baker, Larry	Montana State University	lbaker@montana.edu
Borden, Victor	Indiana University	vborden@indiana.edu
Brink, Leif	Swedish National Police Academy	leif.brink@phs.police.se
Burmeister, Nikolaj	The Danish Rectors' Conference	nb@rks.dk
Chaparro, Debra	University of Minnesota	chap0220@umn.edu
Davies, David	Anglia Ruskin University	david.davies@anglia.ac.uk
Fjell, Marie	Norwegian Ministry of Edu & Res	mwf@kd.dep.no
Hala, Waltraut	Vienna University of Technology	whala@pop.tuwien.ac.at
Hauge, Orjan	University of Bergen	orjan.hauge@medfa.uib.no
Herbst, Marcel	4mation	herbst@4mat.ch
Hoekstra, Peter	Universiteit van Amsterdam	j.p.hoekstra@uva.nl
Hoffman, David	University of Jyväskylä	david.hoffman@ktl.jyu.fi
Hoogewijs, Bert	Hogeschool Gent	bert.hoogewijs@hogent.be
Hugentobler, Urs	ETH Zürich	urs.hugentobler@fc.ethz.ch
Jansen, Ellen	University of Groningen	e.p.w.a.jansen@rug.nl
Kane, David	University of Central England	david.kane@uce.ac.uk
Knyazev, Evgeni	Russian Federation	ekniazev@list.ru
Kolassa, Martin	Vienna University of Technology	martin.kolassa@tuwien.ac.at
Lu, Lina	Portland State University	lul@pdx.edu
Maharasoa, Maboreng	Central University of Technology	mmaharas@cut.ac.za
Marks, Denton	Univ of Wisconsin-Whitewater	marksd@uww.edu
Marley, Robert	Montana State University	rmarley@coe.montana.edu
Masip, Anna	Univ Autònoma de Barcelona	Coegi@uab.es
Nokkala, Terhi	University of Tampere	terhi.nokkala@uta.fi
Ose, Dace	Riga Graduate School of Law	dace.ose@rgsl.edu.lv
Pye, Ian	College of the North Atlantic	Ian.Pye@cna-qatar.edu.qa
Rodriguez, Luis Rafael	University of Puerto Rico	lr_rodriguez@webmail.uprh.edu
Rydberg, Lars	Linköping University	lars.rydberg@liu.se
Pekka Saarela	Univ of Art & Design Helsinki	pekka.saarela@uia.fi
Suhre, Cor	University of Groningen	c.j.m.suhre@rug.nl
Wilmes, Michael	Freie Universität Berlin	mwilmes@zuv.fu-berlin.de
de Wit, Kurt	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	kurt.dewit@dowb.kuleuven.be
Woodfield, Steve	University of Surrey	s.woodfield@surrey.ac.uk
Yorke, Mantz	Lancaster University	mantzyorke@mantzyorke.plus.com