

Opening Remarks

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On the occasion of the Fourth International Conference on Webometrics, Informetrics and Scientometrics & Ninth COLLNET meeting, it is a great pleasure to see so many familiar faces, as well as so many new ones, here in Berlin, the city which gave birth to both ISSI in 1993 and COLLNET in 2000. In both births, Dr. Hiltrun Kretschmer played a major role. In eight years, this is the ninth time COLLNET has met. I don't know if you've noticed that tonight's program features short breaks with Chinese music, Indian folk dance, and German music – a most welcome tribute to the originators of COLLNET: Liang Liming, Ramesh Kundra, and Hiltrun Kretschmer.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the organizing committee for this conference, co-chaired by Dr. Kretschmer and Dr. Frank Havemann, and aided by Michael Heinz, Divya Srivastava, and the program committee.

As of June 13, we had for the joint conference 111 papers representing 184 unique authors from 22 different countries. Those papers had 2.18 authors on average. 35 papers were singly authored. Of the 242 times authors' names appeared, China had the most, 67, with Iran and India close together with 45 and 41 authorships respectively. Germany, Spain, and Belgium came next with 18, 16, and 12 authorships. Mexico outpaced the USA by 10 to 7. We also have contributions from Bangladesh, Bulgaria, and Ukraine.

It is remarkable that China, Iran, and India are so productive, accounting for 63% of the authorships, and signaling a shift in the center of productivity away from the West towards the Near and Far East.

According to the COLLNET program, we had 22 posters accepted, from 42 unique authors, with 2.23 authors on average. 8 of the 22 are by single presenters. In this case, India led with 15

authorships, and China and Iran each had 14 and 13 authorships. Here the dominance of China, India, and Iran is even more marked than with the papers. The three countries together account for 86%, nearly 7/8ths of the authorships!

One measure of our healthy state is that in about four days we somehow have to take in about 133 papers and posters. It's a good thing that we have a proceedings volume to follow and take home with us.

In the world of collaboration, webometrics, informetrics, and scientometrics, there's such an enormous amount of activity that it's become no longer possible to keep up with all the different fields. Nonetheless we all have in common our commitment to quantitative measurements of scientific activity, today more important than ever before. We are producing new measures and indicators of activity and productivity in science and technology and even venturing to construct predictors of future value. The great variety of approaches to our subjects continues to expand, and academia, industry, and government increasingly look to it for useful tools and making successful policy. Our keynote speakers exemplify that diversity of methods and approaches, and will help us focus on current and future possibilities.

With our growing success in mind, the proceedings of this conference should be regarded as a celebratory milestone, and an occasion to build even more connections amongst ourselves.