

# A Flow Based Pruning Scheme For Enumerative Equitable Coloring Algorithms

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Lehrstuhl II für  
Mathematik

**RWTH**AACHEN  
UNIVERSITY

- 1 Introduction: The Problem and an Algorithm
- 2 Contribution: Additional Pruning Rules
- 3 Evaluation: Computations and Analysis

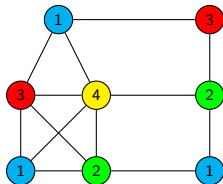
### The Problem:

Given an undirected graph  $G = (V, E)$ , the **vertex coloring problem** (CP) asks for

- the minimal  $k \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,
- such there is

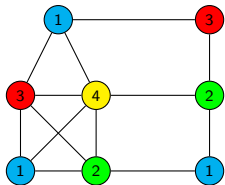
$$f : V \rightarrow \{1, \dots, j\} : v \mapsto f(v),$$

- with  $f(v) \neq f(w)$  for all  $vw \in E$ .

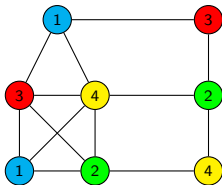


### Applications:

- Assigning workers (colors) to conflicting jobs.
- Assigning machines (colors) to conflicting tasks.



vs.



**Solution:** **Equitable** vertex coloring (ECP) – An assignment  $f$  where

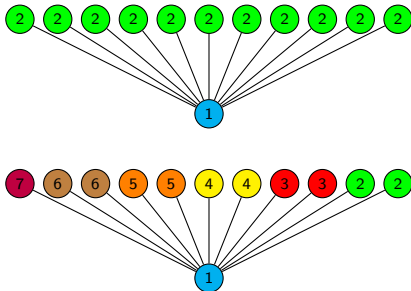
- the sizes of the color classes may only differ by one,
- $\left| |\{v \mid f(v) = j\}| - |\{v \mid f(v) = i\}| \right| = 1 \forall i, j = 1, \dots, k$ , i.e.,
- each worker has at most one more task than any other worker.

- The chromatic number  $\chi(G)$  is the min.  $k \in \mathbb{N}$  for which CP is solvable. The equitable chromatic number  $\chi_e(G)$  denotes the same for ECP.

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## Observation 1

*The difference between  $\chi(G)$  and  $\chi_e(G)$  can be arbitrarily large.*



- I.e., consider a star with  $k$  nodes:  $\chi(S) = 2$  and  $\chi_e(S) = \lceil \frac{k-1}{2} \rceil + 1$ .

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### Observation 1

*The difference between  $\chi(G)$  and  $\chi_e(G)$  can be arbitrarily large.*

- If the number of colors is fixed, so is the amount and the sizes of the color classes:

### Observation 2

*Let  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ ,  $n = |V|$  and  $p \equiv n \pmod k$ . If  $G$  admits an equitable coloring with  $k$  colors, then there are  $p$  color classes of size  $\lceil \frac{n}{k} \rceil$  and  $k - p$  color classes of size  $\lfloor \frac{n}{k} \rfloor$ .*

**DSATUR:** enumerate all possible colorings in a treelike structure.

Branch and Bound where possible (see [3, 4]).

Data: Graph  $G = (V, E)$  with a partial coloring  $\Pi_p$

while  $T \neq \emptyset$ ; //  $T$  - the set of all partial colorings (leaves)

do

    Select  $\Pi_p \in T$ ; // Select partial coloring (leaf)

$T \leftarrow T \setminus \{\Pi_p\}$ ; // Remove this coloring

    if  $U(\Pi_p) := \emptyset$ ; // Check whether the coloring is complete

    then

        | Evaluate  $\Pi_p$ ; // Check equitable coloring

    end

    /\*  $V^*$  as the uncolored vertices with max. dat. degree, choose one. \*/

    Choose  $v \in V^* := \{v \in U(\Pi_p) | v = \operatorname{argmax} \{\rho_{\Pi_p}(v)\}$ };

    for  $i \in F_{\Pi_p}(v)$ ; // For all free colors of this vertex

    do

        | if not prune  $\Pi_p + \langle v, i \rangle$ ; // Check for pruning

        then

            |  $T \leftarrow T \cup \{\Pi_p + \langle v, i \rangle\}$ ; // Extend the coloring, add it to T.

        end

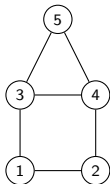
    end

end



**Example:** Lets do some (three-) coloring:

Start with the empty (partial) coloring as the single leaf.



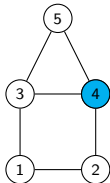
The coloring tree, i.e., the list of **explored** partial colorings.

The **current** graph coloring.

- Only minor difference to DSATUR for **standard** graph coloring.
- Node/color selection for extending partial colorings is not trivial.
- Branching, bounding and pruning was not shown.

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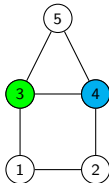
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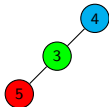
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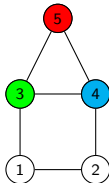
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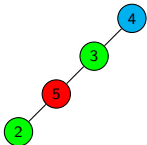
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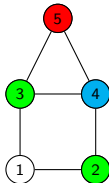
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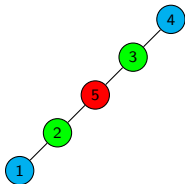
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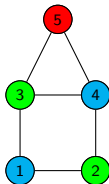
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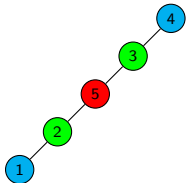


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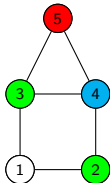
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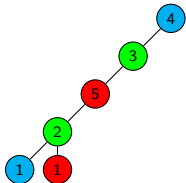


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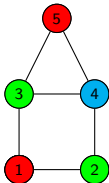
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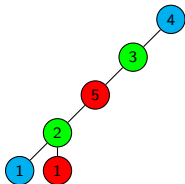
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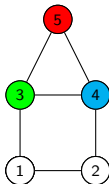


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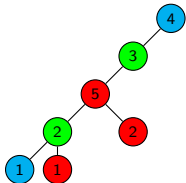


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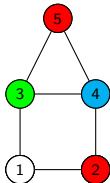
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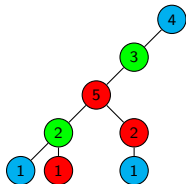


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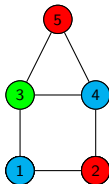
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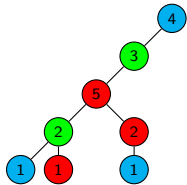


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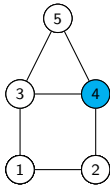
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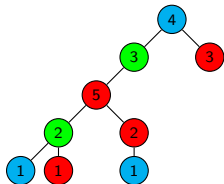


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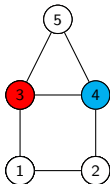
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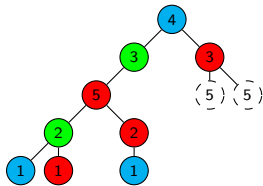


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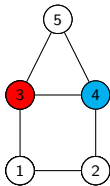
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**Notation:** given a partial coloring  $\Pi_p$ .

- $M(\Pi_p) := \max\{|C_i| \mid i = 1, \dots, n\}$  as the **size** of the **largest color class**.
- $T(\Pi_p) := \{i \in \{1, \dots, n\} \mid |C_i| = M(\Pi_p)\}$  as the **indices** of the largest color classes, and its **cardinality**  $t(\Pi_p) := |T(\Pi_p)|$ .

### Theorem 1 (Méndez-Díaz et al. [4])

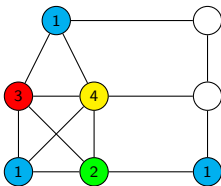
If  $\Pi_p$  can be **extended** to an equitable  $k$ -coloring, then

$$\begin{aligned} n &\geq (M(\Pi_p) - 1)(k - t(\Pi_p)) + M(\Pi_p)t(\Pi_p) \\ &= (M(\Pi_p) - 1)k + t(\Pi_p). \end{aligned}$$

Or, given a lower bound  $\underline{k}$  for  $\chi_{eq}(G)$ , it is

$$n \geq (M(\Pi_p) - 1) \max\{\underline{k}, k\} + t(\Pi_p).$$

**Example:** Consider the partial coloring



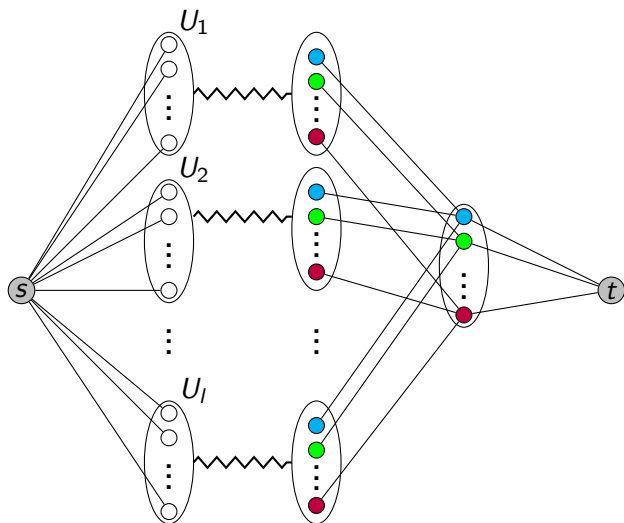
**Question:** Is it *extendable*?

- The **biggest color class** is blue, containing **three** nodes.
- **Three** color classes do not have enough nodes (for the coloring to be equitable).
- They need to contain at least **two nodes** each.
- But only two nodes are still uncolored.



**Idea:** Deciding whether a partial coloring  $(\Pi_p)$  is **extendable** to a  **$k_0$  equitable coloring**.

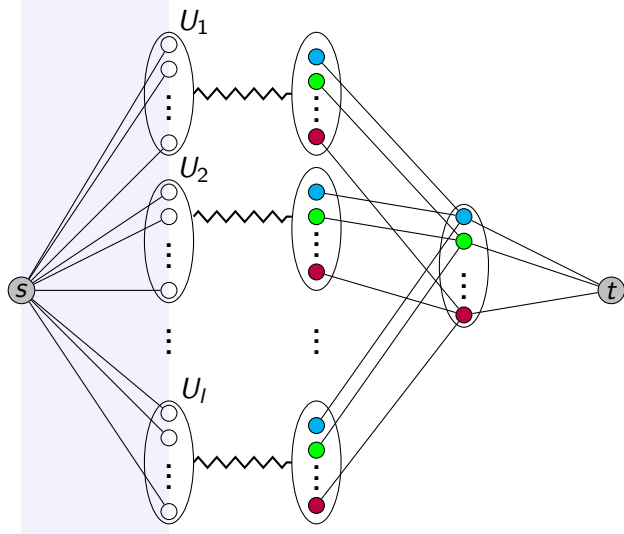
- Model extendability by some  $s - t$  network.
- If there is **no**  $s - t$  **flow** of a **certain value**, the partial coloring is not extendable to a  **$k_0$ -coloring**.
- If there is **a**  $s - t$  **flow** of a **certain value**, the flow **can** yield an extension to a  **$k_0$ -coloring**.
- Similar to a network model presented by de Werra [1, 2].
- Theorem 1 states a **special case** implying the condition.
- Let  $U(\Pi_p) = \uplus U_i$ .  
Define the directed network  $N(G, \Pi_p, k_0) := (V_N, A_N)$ .  
Visualization: next slide.



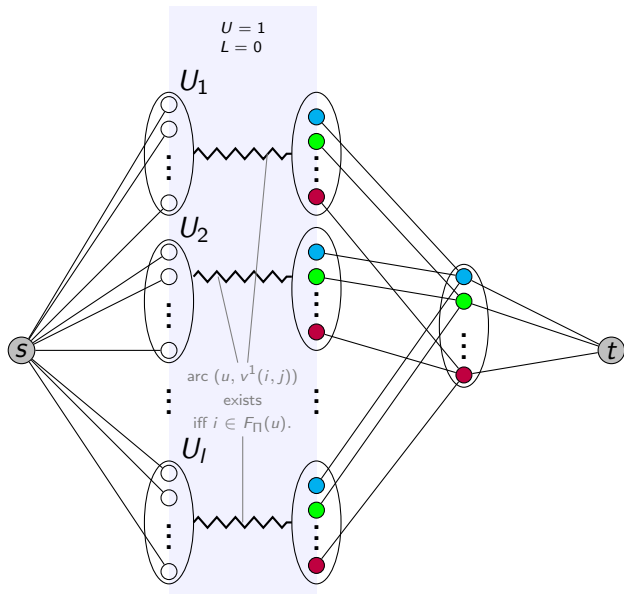
Capacities:

$$U = 1$$

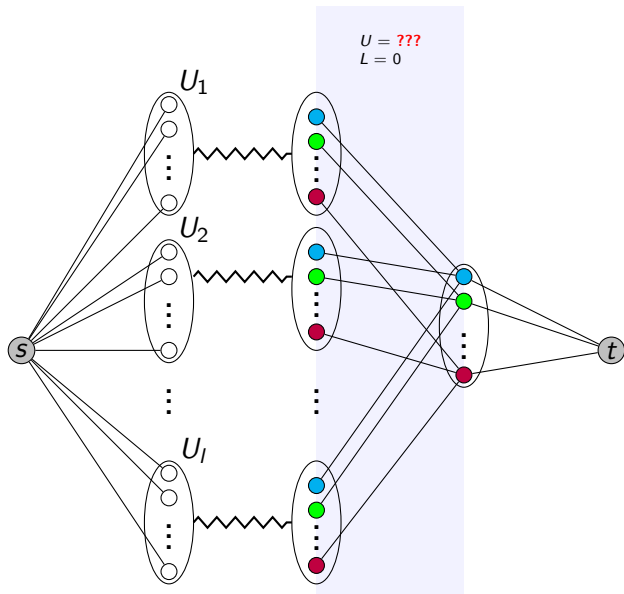
$$L = 0$$



Capacities:



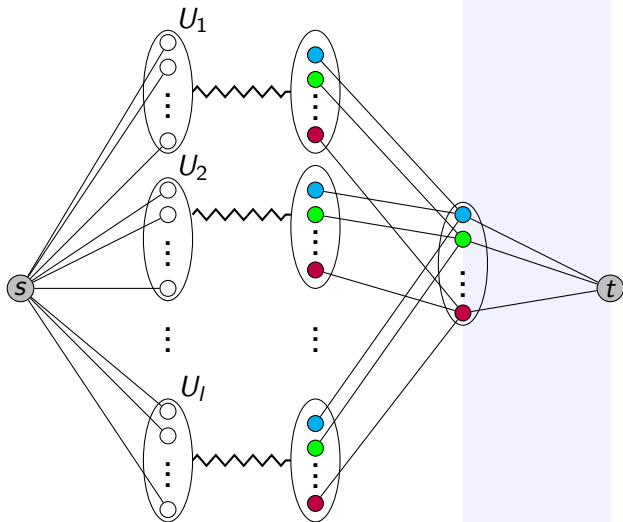
Capacities:



Capacities:

$$U = \lceil \frac{n}{k_0} \rceil - |C_i|$$

$$L = \lfloor \frac{n}{k_0} \rfloor - |C_i|$$



Given a partial  $k$ -coloring  $\Pi_p$ .

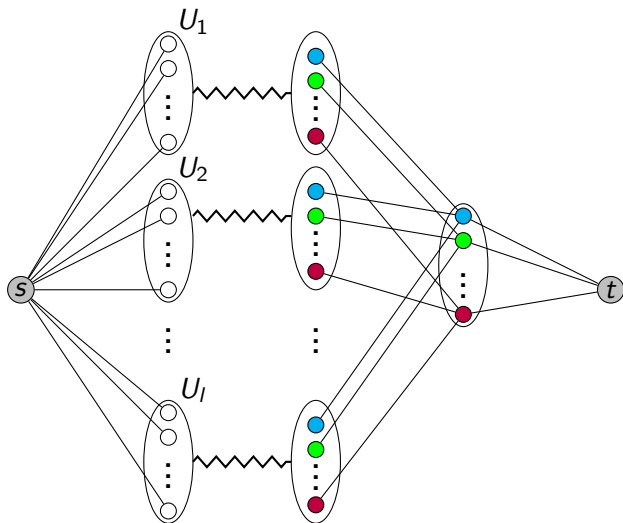
## Theorem 2

Assume  $k_0 \geq k$  and  $U(\Pi_p) = \biguplus U_i$ .

If  $\Pi_p$  can be *extended* to an *equitable*  $k_0$ -coloring, then the network  $N(G, \Pi_p, k_0)$  has an admissible flow of value  $|U(\Pi_p)|$ .

Finding a "good" decomposition of  $U(\Pi_p)$  is crucial:

- Direct and fast:  $U_1 := U(\Pi_p)$ .
- Strong:  $U(\Pi_p)$  decomposes into nonadjacent cliques  $U_j$ .
- Mixed: Non-adjacent cliques + rest  
(see next slide).



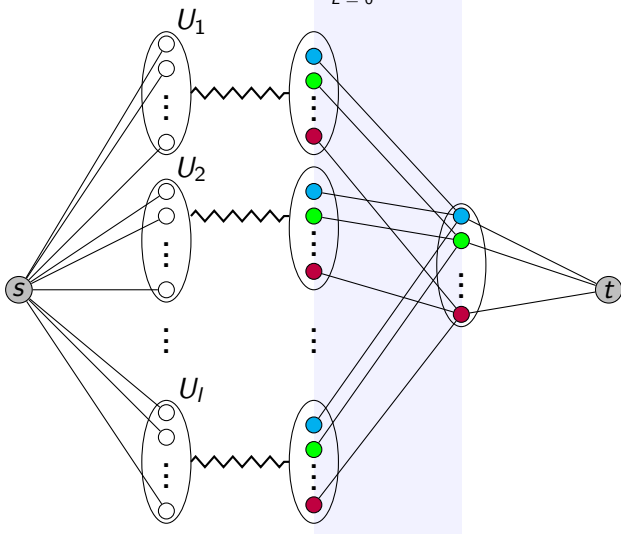


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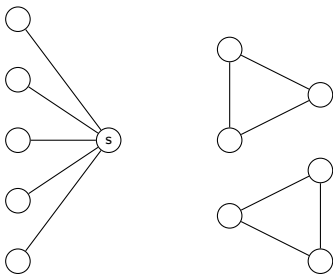
$$U = |U_i| + 1$$

$$-x(G[U_i])$$

$$L = 0$$

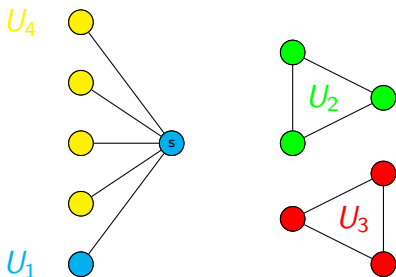


- It is  $\chi_e(G) \leq 4$ . How to see that  $\chi_e(G) \neq 3$ ?



- Start DSATUR by coloring the center of the star.  
Continue with the satellites, the cliques are colored last.
- DSATUR **without** extended pruning rules: hundreds of nodes.
- With** extended pruning rules: Solved in a single node.

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## Comparison:

- DSATUR with extended pruning rules (EEQD) to DSATUR as presented in [4] (STD).
- The pruning rules are applied at every node.
- At first the pruning rule given by Th. 1 is evaluated. If no pruning occurs, the **mixed approach** is evaluated, i.e., the corresponding  $s - t$  networks are tested.
- EEQD will have at most as many B&B nodes as STD. We employ the **decrease within these nodes** as **main criterion** for improvement of EQDC over STD.
- Test on Erdős-Rényi  $G(n, p)$  graphs (200) with  $n \in \{40 + 5i \mid i = 0, \dots, 5\}$  and  $p \in \{0.1 \cdot i \mid i = 1, \dots, 9\}$ ,
- **Timelimit:** 3600 seconds.

Comparisons only on the instances **both** Alg. could solve.

	p	Nodes		Time			# Unsolved	
		STD	EEQD	STD	EEQD	FF	STD	EEQD
n=40	0.1	107	57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0
	0.2	301	116	0.00	0.01	0.01	1	1
	0.3	734	248	0.00	0.03	0.02	0	0
	0.4	846000	721	1.17	0.06	0.04	2	0
	0.5	5277732	2269	9.96	0.17	0.13	0	0
	0.6	5670632	2278	10.97	0.17	0.13	2	0
	0.7	112556	601	0.15	0.09	0.06	0	0
	0.8	1005	393	0.00	0.05	0.03	2	0
	0.9	4598	39	0.01	0.01	0.00	2	2
n=45	0.1	284	90	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	623	147	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.3	25479	1558	0.03	0.08	0.07	0	0
	0.4	7989770	557998	8.28	11.02	9.29	1	0
	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
	0.6	9135279	3174	16.93	0.38	0.28	2	0
	0.7	44647230	2137	45.83	0.25	0.16	2	0
	0.8	4935	1006	0.01	0.15	0.09	0	0
	0.9	58836	83	0.08	0.02	0.01	1	1
n=50	0.1	315	82	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	590799	679	1.06	0.08	0.06	0	0
	0.3	1558958	59274	2.37	2.34	1.84	0	0
	0.4	10014800	41453	16.52	2.03	1.71	1	0
	0.5	5727211	60236	8.97	5.51	4.23	3	0
	0.6	925567	12444	1.22	1.92	1.36	2	0
	0.7	38600548	10333	38.29	1.41	0.94	5	0
	0.8	39618	3111	0.06	0.67	0.41	0	0
	0.9	3966324	289	6.54	0.06	0.03	0	0

Comparisons only on the instances **both** Alg. could solve.

	p	Nodes		Time			# Unsolved	
		STD	EEQD	STD	EEQD	FF	STD	EEQD
n=40	0.1	<b>107</b>	<b>57</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0
	0.2	<b>301</b>	<b>116</b>	0.00	0.01	0.01	1	1
	0.3	734	248	0.00	0.03	0.02	0	0
	0.4	846000	721	1.17	0.06	0.04	2	0
	0.5	5277732	2269	9.96	0.17	0.13	0	0
	0.6	5670632	2278	10.97	0.17	0.13	2	0
	0.7	112556	601	0.15	0.09	0.06	0	0
	0.8	1005	393	0.00	0.05	0.03	2	0
	0.9	4598	39	0.01	0.01	0.00	2	2
n=45	0.1	284	90	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	623	147	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.3	25479	1558	0.03	0.08	0.07	0	0
	0.4	7989770	557998	8.28	11.02	9.29	1	0
	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
	0.6	9135279	3174	16.93	0.38	0.28	2	0
	0.7	44647230	2137	45.83	0.25	0.16	2	0
	0.8	4935	1006	0.01	0.15	0.09	0	0
	0.9	58836	83	0.08	0.02	0.01	1	1
n=50	0.1	315	82	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	590799	679	1.06	0.08	0.06	0	0
	0.3	1558958	59274	2.37	2.34	1.84	0	0
	0.4	10014800	41453	16.52	2.03	1.71	1	0
	0.5	5727211	60236	8.97	5.51	4.23	3	0
	0.6	925567	12444	1.22	1.92	1.36	2	0
	0.7	38600548	10333	38.29	1.41	0.94	5	0
	0.8	39618	3111	0.06	0.67	0.41	0	0
	0.9	3966324	289	6.54	0.06	0.03	0	0

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	0.4	<b>846000</b>	<b>721</b>	1.17	0.06	0.04	2	0
	0.5	<b>5277732</b>	<b>2269</b>	9.96	0.17	0.13	0	0
	0.6	<b>5670632</b>	<b>2278</b>	10.97	0.17	0.13	2	0
	0.7	<b>112556</b>	<b>601</b>	0.15	0.09	0.06	0	0
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	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
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	0.4	7989770	557998	8.28	11.02	9.29	1	0
	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
	0.6	9135279	3174	16.93	0.38	0.28	2	0
	0.7	44647230	2137	45.83	0.25	0.16	2	0
	0.8	4935	1006	0.01	0.15	0.09	0	0
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	0.8	1005	393	0.00	0.05	0.03	2	0
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n=45	0.1	284	90	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
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	0.3	25479	1558	0.03	0.08	0.07	0	0
	0.4	7989770	557998	8.28	11.02	9.29	1	0
	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
	0.6	9135279	3174	16.93	0.38	0.28	2	0
	0.7	44647230	2137	45.83	0.25	0.16	2	0
	0.8	4935	1006	0.01	0.15	0.09	0	0
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	0.2	590799	679	1.06	0.08	0.06	0	0
	0.3	1558958	59274	2.37	2.34	1.84	0	0
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	0.7	38600548	10333	38.29	1.41	0.94	5	0
	0.8	39618	3111	0.06	0.67	0.41	0	0
	0.9	3966324	289	6.54	0.06	0.03	0	0

Comparisons only on the instances **both** Alg. could solve.

	p	Nodes		Time			# Unsolved	
		STD	EEQD	STD	EEQD	FF	STD	EEQD
n=40	0.1	107	57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0
	0.2	301	116	0.00	0.01	0.01	1	1
	0.3	734	248	0.00	0.03	0.02	0	0
	0.4	846000	721	1.17	0.06	0.04	2	0
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	0.6	5670632	2278	10.97	0.17	0.13	2	0
	0.7	112556	601	0.15	0.09	0.06	0	0
	0.8	1005	393	0.00	0.05	0.03	2	0
	0.9	4598	39	0.01	0.01	0.00	2	2
n=45	0.1	284	90	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	623	147	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.3	25479	1558	0.03	0.08	0.07	0	0
	0.4	7989770	557998	8.28	11.02	9.29	1	0
	0.5	12535143	6160	14.63	0.64	0.50	2	0
	0.6	9135279	3174	16.93	0.38	0.28	2	0
	0.7	44647230	2137	45.83	0.25	0.16	2	0
	0.8	4935	1006	0.01	0.15	0.09	0	0
	0.9	58836	83	0.08	0.02	0.01	1	1
n=50	0.1	315	82	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	590799	679	1.06	0.08	0.06	0	0
	0.3	1558958	59274	2.37	2.34	1.84	0	0
	0.4	10014800	41453	<b>16.52</b>	<b>2.03</b>	1.71	1	0
	0.5	5727211	60236	8.97	5.51	4.23	3	0
	0.6	925567	12444	1.22	1.92	1.36	2	0
	0.7	38600548	10333	38.29	1.41	0.94	5	0
	0.8	39618	3111	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.67</b>	0.41	0	0
	0.9	3966324	289	6.54	0.06	0.03	0	0

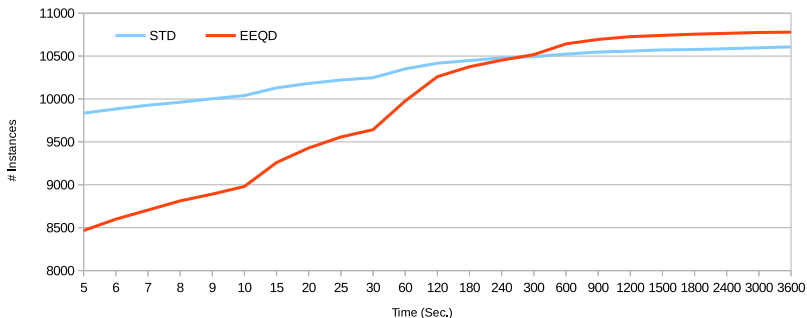
Comparisons only on the instances **both** Alg. could solve.

	p	Nodes		Time			# Unsolved	
		STD	EEQD	STD	EEQD	FF	STD	EEQD
n=55	0.1	314	95	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	167703	13966	0.33	0.62	0.52	0	0
	0.3	5299	3964	0.01	0.97	0.80	0	0
	0.4	4892479	148580	7.37	19.57	15.57	0	0
	0.5	15846172	109874	23.13	15.23	11.71	2	2
	0.6	9873776	147986	10.36	17.00	12.09	2	0
	0.7	47561545	54194	60.68	9.12	6.17	17	0
	0.8	194259	8663	0.28	2.06	1.30	0	0
	0.9	53112985	875	70.83	0.17	0.08	3	0
n=60	0.1	931	156	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	161554	3882	0.33	1.07	0.91	0	0
	0.3	9711671	161002	14.09	18.03	14.00	1	0
	0.4	7976291	95606	14.57	17.13	13.75	6	5
	0.5	15669370	241625	28.69	53.77	42.33	5	4
	0.6	129671603	208994	136.79	47.23	34.48	19	1
	0.7	7936038	214101	12.14	47.74	32.70	18	0
	0.8	9118364	25454	13.95	7.25	4.57	0	0
	0.9	39384788	5291	53.11	1.24	0.58	23	0
n=65	0.1	1606	206	0.00	0.02	0.01	0	0
	0.2	159866	3680	0.22	1.02	0.88	0	0
	0.3	648497	114286	1.04	25.89	21.86	0	0
	0.4	8994787	972954	20.72	141.47	116.36	1	1
	0.5	47689077	2506469	52.71	517.87	397.83	13	4
	0.6	64290978	2114960	80.67	476.17	365.01	16	0
	0.7	11847345	881496	14.71	205.96	145.65	18	0
	0.8	104398385	282265	110.00	55.65	34.91	2	0
	0.9	14647901	26359	17.35	6.15	2.92	19	0
<b>Av. (Sum)</b>		<b>13,920,351</b>	<b>168,777</b>	<b>17.17</b>	<b>31.77</b>	<b>17.22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

Comparisons only on the instances **both** Alg. could solve.

	p	Nodes		Time			# Unsolved	
		STD	EEQD	STD	EEQD	FF	STD	EEQD
n = 55	0.1	314	95	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	<b>167703</b>	<b>13966</b>	0.33	0.62	0.52	0	0
	0.3	5299	3964	0.01	0.97	0.80	0	0
	0.4	4892479	148580	7.37	19.57	15.57	0	0
	0.5	15846172	109874	23.13	15.23	11.71	2	2
	0.6	9873776	147986	10.36	17.00	12.09	2	0
	0.7	47561545	54194	60.68	9.12	6.17	17	0
	0.8	194259	8663	0.28	2.06	1.30	0	0
	0.9	53112985	875	70.83	0.17	0.08	3	0
n = 60	0.1	931	156	0.00	0.01	0.01	0	0
	0.2	161554	3882	0.33	1.07	0.91	0	0
	0.3	9711671	161002	14.09	18.03	14.00	1	0
	0.4	7976291	95606	14.57	17.13	13.75	6	5
	0.5	15669370	241625	<b>28.69</b>	<b>53.77</b>	42.33	5	4
	0.6	129671603	208994	<b>136.79</b>	<b>47.23</b>	34.48	19	1
	0.7	7936038	214101	12.14	47.74	32.70	18	0
	0.8	9118364	25454	13.95	7.25	4.57	0	0
	0.9	39384788	5291	53.11	1.24	0.58	23	0
n = 65	0.1	1606	206	0.00	0.02	0.01	0	0
	0.2	159866	3680	0.22	1.02	0.88	0	0
	0.3	648497	114286	1.04	25.89	21.86	0	0
	0.4	8994787	972954	20.72	141.47	116.36	1	1
	0.5	47689077	2506469	52.71	517.87	397.83	13	4
	0.6	64290978	2114960	80.67	476.17	365.01	16	0
	0.7	11847345	881496	14.71	205.96	145.65	18	0
	0.8	104398385	282265	110.00	55.65	34.91	2	0
	0.9	14647901	26359	17.35	6.15	2.92	19	0
<b>Av. (Sum)</b>		<b>13,920,351</b>	<b>168,777</b>	<b>17.17</b>	<b>31.77</b>	<b>17.22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

- The pruning has a dramatic effect on the size of the B&B tree. EEQD needs on average 1.2% of the nodes of STD. This factor can be as small as 0.0016% ( $n = 55, p = 0, 9$ ).
- EEQD takes about 1.85 the time of STD, as in each B&B node 2 flow problems are solved (up to two times 2.5 million for  $n = 65, p = 0.5$ ).
- Runtime improvement for 23 out of 54 classes of the instances.
- STD has much more instances which hit the time limit compared to EEQD (193 vs. 21)
- **Conclusion:** EEQD is slower but much more stable than STD.



**Figure :** Instances solved within a fixed time frame by STD and EEQD.

**Trend:** Between 5 and 240 seconds, STD solves more instances. Above 240 seconds, the opposite holds.

Either an instance can be solved in e.g., 600 seconds, or not at all.

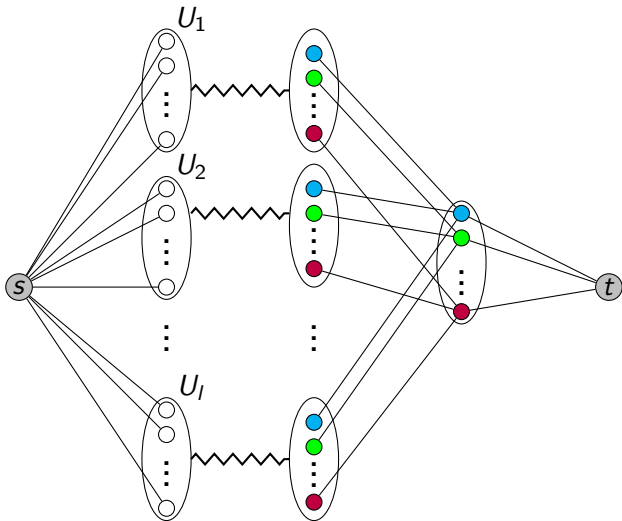
We considered a DSATUR algorithm for equitable coloring.

### Results:

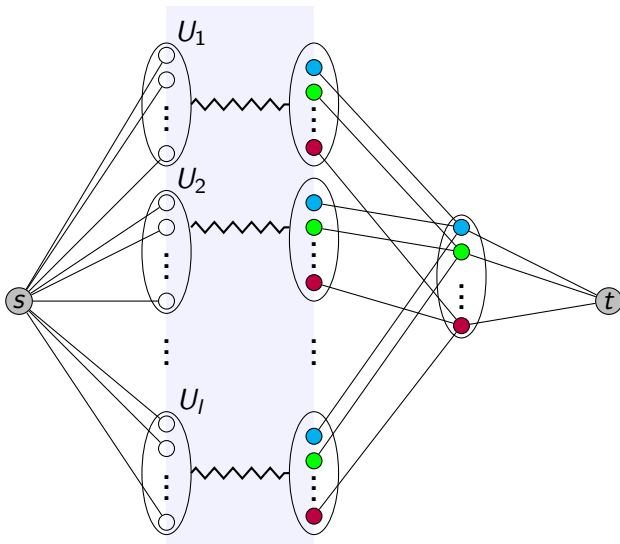
- New Pruning rules, based on network flows.
- Very **effective** w.r.t. the number of **B&B nodes**.
- Mixed effect on solution time:  
On average **slower**, but solves **more instances**.

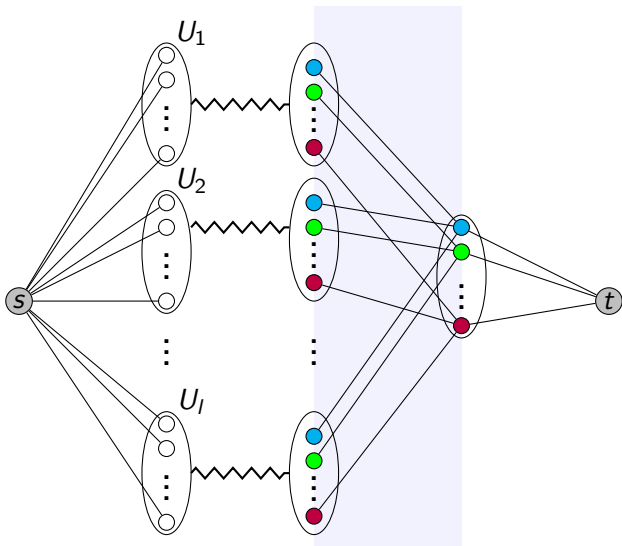
### Future Work:

- More efficient implementation.
- Evaluate different applications of the pruning rules.
- Derive conditions which can be evaluated via formulae.









# A Flow Based Pruning Scheme For Enumerative Equitable Coloring Algorithms

Sven Förster   Arie Koster   Robert Scheidweiler   [Martin Tieves](#)

INFORMS Optimization Society Conference 2016

Princeton, March 17-19



Lehrstuhl II für  
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- [2] D. de Werra *On a multiconstrained model for chromatic scheduling*, Disc. Appl. Math. 94(1) (1999), 171-180.
- [3] I. Méndez-Díaz, G. Nasini, and D. Severín *An exact DSATUR-based algorithm for the Equitable Coloring Problem*, Electron. Notes Disc. Math. 44 (2013), 281-286.
- [4] I. Méndez-Díaz, G. Nasini, and D. Severín *A DSATUR-based algorithm for the Equitable Coloring Problem*, Computers & Operations Research 57 (2015), 41-50.