

# Evaluating Geospatial RDF stores Using the Benchmark Geographica 2<sup>☆</sup>

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## Abstract

Geospatial extensions of SPARQL, like GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL, have been defined since 2007 and while several geospatial RDF stores have implemented a substantial part of these extensions, other stores limited their support mostly on point geometry features. A parallel process with the above was that RDF frameworks evolved in an interesting way by presenting a more mature set of geospatial features, such as GeoSPARQL support and including the latest indexing technologies. As a logical consequence, a shift in the use of RDF frameworks is to be expected, from base platforms that users extend to create more complete geospatial RDF stores, to attractive finished RDF solutions for many geospatial applications. Alongside with the ever-increasing size of linked geospatial data that semantic stores need to handle, all the above provided our group the motivation to improve our single node systems benchmark Geographica, originally defined in 2013. Geographica 2 is more comprehensive, because it now includes new geospatial RDF stores and frameworks, big real world datasets of many hundred million triples with up to fifty million features of complex geometries, new tests and queries that reveal the scalability of these systems. The augmented and revised real world workload of Geographica 2 tests the efficiency of primitive spatial functions in RDF stores, their performance in the geocoding scenario against the new Census dataset in addition to many other real use case scenarios and finally includes computation of statistics for geospatial datasets. A more detailed and systematic evaluation is performed using the synthetic workload. The new scalability workload aims at discovering the limits of centralized geospatial RDF stores of various architectures. It employs a set of six well balanced real world datasets with highly complex geometries covering many European countries and compares three RDF stores in terms of storage space, bulk loading and query response time. In addition, a special version of the benchmark has been created for systems with limited geospatial functionality and two more systems of this category are introduced along the six systems of the main benchmark, all stressed against point-only subsets of the workloads. Three out of the eight systems use an RDBMS for the persistence layer, while some of them offer a variety of persistence options.

*Keywords:* benchmarking, geospatial, RDF store, Linked Open Data, GeoSPARQL, stSPARQL, scalability

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## 1. Introduction

Many geospatial datasets have recently been added to the Web of data and geospatial extensions to SPARQL, such as GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL, have been defined.

GeoSPARQL [1] is a standard of the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) for a SPARQL-based query

language for geospatial data expressed in RDF. GeoSPARQL defines a vocabulary (classes, datatypes and properties) that can be used in RDF graphs to represent geographic features with vector geometries.

The query language stSPARQL [2, 3] is an extension of SPARQL 1.1 developed by our group for representing and querying geospatial data that changes over time. Similarly to GeoSPARQL, the geospatial part of stSPARQL defines datatypes that can be used for representing in RDF the serializations of vector geometries encoded according to the widely adopted OGC standards Well Known Text (WKT) [4] and Geography Markup Language (GML) [5]. stSPARQL and GeoSPARQL also define extension functions from

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the OGC standard “OpenGIS Simple Feature Access” (OGC-SFA) [4] that can be used for querying vector geometries.

The query languages stSPARQL<sup>1</sup> and GeoSPARQL were developed independently at around the same time, and have produced very similar representational and querying constructs. A detailed comparison of stSPARQL and GeoSPARQL is given in [6] and the forthcoming book [7].

In parallel with the appearance of GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL, researchers have been implementing geospatial RDF stores that support these SPARQL extensions (e.g., Strabon [2], Parliament [8], and uSeekM). The earlier approach for the implementation was by extending existing RDF frameworks (e.g., Sesame) with limited geospatial functionality and relying on state of the art spatially-enabled RDBMSs (e.g., PostGIS) for the storage and querying of geometries (e.g., Strabon and uSeekM with PostGIS). One reason that this hybrid approach had been successful is that the relational realization of the OGC-SFA standard has been widely adopted by many RDBMS for storing and manipulating vector geometries. The state of the art in this area is summarized in the early survey paper [6].

However new highly competitive geospatial RDF stores appeared lately that belong to the NoSQL graph databases technology family e.g., GraphDB. In addition, as of mid-2018, some RDF Frameworks (e.g., RDF4J, formerly known as Sesame) advanced substantially in terms of GeoSPARQL support, the availability of indexing and search technologies and may make an attractive starting point for building geospatial RDF stores rich in terms of features and more efficient in terms of performance.

The above advances to the state of the art in query languages and implemented systems has also been matched with work on evaluation and benchmarking of geospatial RDF stores. Although there are various benchmarks for spatially-enabled Relational Database Management Systems (RDBMS) [9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14], there are some publications [15, 2, 16, 17] that study the performance of geospatial RDF stores but no widely-accepted benchmark exists.

The work described in [15] has preceded the GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL proposals, therefore it does not cover many of the features available in these languages. Only point and rectangle geometries and only few topological and non-topological functions are included in its workload. Similarly, only the geospatial

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.strabon.di.uoa.gr/files/stSPARQL\\_tutorial.pdf](http://www.strabon.di.uoa.gr/files/stSPARQL_tutorial.pdf)

RDF store SPAUK [18], which is a precursor to Parliament, has been evaluated using this benchmark. [15] uses a synthetic workload only and does not consider real linked geospatial datasets such as the ones that are available in the LOD cloud today.

In [2] authors present the geospatial RDF store Strabon<sup>2</sup> and they include a section that is an evaluation targeted mostly to Strabon than a general evaluation benchmark. Both a real world workload and a synthetic one is used in [2]. The synthetic workload uses only point geometries and spatial selection queries, but it allows the study of performance in a controlled environment.

[16] presents a benchmark based on [15] and adapted to the technological advances at the time. [16] evaluates several geospatial RDF stores taking into account the expressive power of GeoSPARQL and using real data from OpenStreetMap (OSM)<sup>3</sup> of various geometry types (points, lines, polygons). Its workload covers the primary query types covered in [15] (spatial location queries, spatial range queries, spatial join queries, and nearest neighbor queries) and additional query types, such as queries using non-topological spatial functions, and negation and aggregation queries that use spatial filters.

Finally, the previous version of our benchmark [17], named Geographica<sup>4</sup> was a comprehensive proposal at the time and has been used to evaluate RDF stores supporting GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL. It comprises two workloads with their associated datasets and queries: a *real world* workload and a *synthetic* workload. The real world workload uses publicly available linked geospatial data, covering a wide range of geometry types (e.g., points, lines, polygons). This workload, follows the approach of the benchmark Jackpine [13] and defines a micro benchmark and a macro benchmark. The micro benchmark tests primitive spatial functions. The spatial component of a system is tested with queries that use non-topological functions, spatial selections, spatial joins and spatial aggregate functions. The macro benchmark tests performance of selected RDF stores in typical application scenarios like reverse geocoding, map search and browsing and a real world use case from the Earth Observation (EO) domain. For the synthetic workload of Geographica, a generator was developed

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.strabon.di.uoa.gr/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.openstreetmap.org/>

<sup>4</sup>Geographica (Greek: Γεωγραφικά) is a 17-volume encyclopedia of geographical knowledge written by the Greek geographer, philosopher and historian Strabon (Greek: Στράβων) in 7 BC. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographica>)

that produces synthetic datasets of various sizes and generates queries of varying spatial and non-spatial selectivity. In this way, performance of geospatial RDF stores can be studied in a closely controlled environment. This workload follows the rationale of earlier papers [12, 2, 19]. For reasons of reproducibility, both workloads are publicly available on the web site<sup>5</sup> of the benchmark.

The present article revisits [17] and offers the following contributions:

- We present a new version of Geographica, called Geographica 2, which contains the following extensions. We extended the macro part of the real world workload of Geographica [17] by adding two more application scenarios: the geocoding scenario and a scenario that involves the computation of statistics for geospatial datasets. Geocoding is tested against a new dataset Census with detailed information on New York’s street addresses.
- The second important addition to the original benchmark is the scalability workload, which aims at discovering the limits of centralized geospatial RDF stores of various architectures. Six increasingly bigger and well balanced datasets have been constructed by combining OSM and CORINE Land Cover datasets with highly complex geometries covering many European countries. The query set comprises a spatial selection and two spatial joins of different selectivity. We study the behavior of three stores (Strabon, GraphDB and RDF4J) in three key areas, storage space, bulk loading and query response time, all with respect to the number of triples of the dataset. These metrics help discover the positive and negative aspects of each system and can assist future research in the areas of large data storage, indexing strategies and query processing.
- We include in our evaluation a qualitative comparison of geospatial RDF stores in order to stress the differences between them in terms of supported geospatial features and functionality.
- We also include in our evaluation a variant of the main benchmark which compares two systems of limited geospatial functionality along with the six systems that qualified for the main benchmark. OpenLink Virtuoso does not have substan-

<sup>5</sup><http://geographica2.di.uoa.gr/>

tial support of GeoSPARQL<sup>6</sup> and another proprietary RDF store, called here System Y implements point only functionality. We had not included these systems in experiments presented in our previous work [17], because our focus at the time was only on systems that exhibited a high level of GeoSPARQL compliance. We believe that this comparison will help shed light on the performance trade-offs of spatial indexing methods employed by these RDF stores. For the purpose of this special benchmark, we used a point-only subset of the real world and synthetic workloads of Geographica 2.

- In [17], we chose to test three well known open source RDF stores that provide GeoSPARQL functionality, namely Strabon, Parliament and uSeekM. In this benchmark, we also include a geospatial RDF solution offered as option of one of the leading proprietary RDBMSs, called here System X<sup>7</sup>, the free edition of the GraphDB v8.6.1 NoSQL graph database and the RDF4J v2.4.3 Semantic Framework. To the best of our knowledge, these six systems are the only ones that currently provide support for a rich subset of GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL, so we did not include any other system in the main part of Geographica.
- The runtime of Geographica[17] supported systems that are compliant with Sesame API. Geographica 2 provides an additional runtime which allows easy integration of systems that are compliant with the RDF4J API.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the main data models and query languages for linked geospatial data. Section 3 presents previous related work. Section 4 presents well-known geospatial RDF stores and compares them in terms of geospatial functionality that they offer. The benchmark is described in Section 5 and its results are discussed in Section 6. Section 7 discusses the performance of generic RDF stores with limited geospatial capabilities in comparison to geospatial RDF stores providing full

<sup>6</sup><http://vos.openlinksw.com/owiki/wiki/VOS/VirtGeoSPARQLEnhancementDocs>

<sup>7</sup>Two proprietary RDF stores are used in this manuscript. We refer to them as System X and System Y since their licenses do not allow us to reveal their names. However they are still included in our experiments, because it is interesting to have a comparison between open source systems, that are usually developed in academic environments and focus on extending the state of the art and proprietary systems, that mainly focus on serving real applications well.

geospatial capabilities. Finally, the contributions of the paper are summarized and future work is discussed in Section 8.

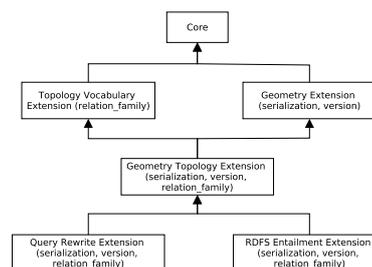
## 2. Background

In this section, we introduce GeoSPARQL and stRDF/stSPARQL. GeoSPARQL allows the representation of geographic data in RDF and querying it using an extension of SPARQL. stRDF is an extension of RDF that allows the representation of geospatial linked data that evolves over time. stSPARQL is an extension of SPARQL that permits querying stRDF data taking into account its spatial and temporal dimension.

### 2.1. GeoSPARQL

GeoSPARQL is a standard, developed by the OGC, that defines a core RDF/OWL vocabulary and a set of SPARQL extension functions for representing and querying linked geospatial data. GeoSPARQL follows a modular architecture, shown in Figure 1, that defines six conformance classes. Each implementation may support one or more conformance classes.

The *Core* conformance class defines a basic RDFS/OWL vocabulary for representing geospatial data. This vocabulary includes the class `SpatialObject` and its subclasses `Feature` and `Geometry`. Features can have geometries and geometries can be encoded by the OGC standards WKT and GML. The *Topology Vocabulary Extension* defines a vocabulary for asserting topological relations between spatial objects. This conformance class is parameterized so that an implementation can use any of the well-known topological relation families: RCC8 [20], Egenhofer [21], and OGC SFA. The *Geometry Extension* conformance class defines a vocabulary for asserting information about geometry data and query functions operating on geometry data. This class defines the appropriate RDFS datatypes for asserting geometry data as literal values. A geometry literal can be encoded in WKT or in GML; this is defined by a parameter of the conformance class. The *Geometry Extension* conformance class also defines non-topological functions that operate on geometry data and return geometry or numeric data (e.g., the distance between two geometries). The *Geometry Topology Extension* conformance class defines topological query functions that operate between two geometry literals and return if a topological relation holds between their corresponding geometries. According to parameters of the *Geometry Topology Extension*, GeoSPARQL implementations can support any



**Figure 1:** Conformance class dependency graph of GeoSPARQL

of the geometry serializations (WKT, GML) and any of the aforementioned topology relation families (RCC8, Egenhofer, OGC SFA). The *RDFS Entailment Extension* conformance class defines a mechanism for matching implicitly derived RDF triples in GeoSPARQL queries. Finally, the *Query Rewrite Extension* conformance class defines rules to support implication of direct topological predicates between features based on the geometries of these features. This is achieved by a set of RIF rules that expand direct topological predicates (from *Topology* vocabulary) into a series of triple patterns and an invocation of the corresponding extension function (from *Geometry Topology* vocabulary). For example a RIF rule asserts that if the function `geof:sfIntersects` holds between two geometry literals then the topological relation `geo:sfIntersects` holds among the corresponding features. Using these rules, queries that contain a topological relation between two variables standing for features (e.g., `?x geo:sfIntersects ?y`) can be re-written into queries that contain topological functions standing for two literals (e.g., `geof:sfIntersects(?f1, ?f2)`).

### 2.2. stRDF and stSPARQL

stRDF and stSPARQL are extensions of RDF and SPARQL that allow the representation and querying of linked spatiotemporal data. stSPARQL has been developed by our group at the same time as GeoSPARQL, and has resulted in a similar representation model. It follows the categorization for feature characteristics, proposed in Perry's PhD thesis [22]: `spatial`, `temporal` and the non spatiotemporal attributes which are named `thematic`. Similar categorization appears in GIS related papers such as [23]. stSPARQL, like GeoSPARQL, defines two datatypes (`strdf:WKT`, `strdf:GML`) for encoding geometry literals and a set of functions that correspond to the functions of the *Geometry* extension and the *Geometry Topology* extension of GeoSPARQL. In addition to these functions,

stSPARQL defines directional relation functions that are based on the minimum bounding boxes of two geometries (e.g., if a geometry is strictly on the left of another geometry) and spatial aggregate functions that operate on sets of geometries and compute new geometry objects (e.g., the union of a set of geometries). Note that both GeoSPARQL and stSPARQL include functions that computes the union of two given geometry literals, stSPARQL additionally includes a function computes the union of a given set of geometry literals.

In addition to its geospatial features, stRDF has a temporal component which can represent the *valid time* of a triple and stSPARQL defines a set of temporal functions for querying the valid time of triples. The temporal component of stRDF and stSPARQL are described in [3] and it will not be considered in the rest of the paper.

### 2.3. Selection of features to test

In the Geographica 2 benchmark, an effort has been made to test against a fusion of non-redundant features from both geospatial extensions of SPARQL, while taking into consideration some common design choices of the majority of the systems under test.

The developers of several RDF stores, when faced with optional requirements or multiple equivalent alternatives of the GeoSPARQL standard, they initially settle for a minimal set of features that provide adequate spatial functionality. Such dilemmas are, the support for multiple CRSs in the WKT serialization, or the three topological relation families (OGC SFA, Egenhofer, RCC8) for spatial relations and functions. It is common ground that several RDF stores implement only the WKT serialization of geospatial data with support just for the default CRS84 and realize only the functions of the Simple Features topological relation family. Anyway, the GeoSPARQL standard also provides an equivalence matrix between the three topological relation families, which allows an implementer to consider using only one of them, without some loss of expressivity or functionality.

With this in mind and since GeoSPARQL is the widely accepted standard, the benchmark experiments focus on features included in the Core, Geometry Extension and Geometry Topology Extension conformance classes, with the addition of the very useful aggregate functions offered by stSPARQL. Datasets and querysets are using the WKT serialization with the default CRS84 and only the Simple Features set of functions is tested. The Topology Vocabulary and Query Rewrite conformance classes are rarely implemented by the majority of the systems and are not considered in this version of the benchmark. The RDFS Entailment Extension albeit

supported by a number of systems, is intentionally not tested since: (i) it is not the primary focus of this work and (ii) it would place additional computing resource requirements to the very demanding task of querying large geospatial data sources.

## 3. Related Work

This section discusses the most important benchmarks that are relevant to Geographica. First benchmarks for SPARQL query processing are presented, followed by those from the geospatial relational databases area and, finally, we concluded with benchmarks for querying linked geospatial data.

### 3.1. Benchmarks for SPARQL Query Processing

A well-known benchmark for Semantic Web knowledge base systems is the Lehigh University Benchmark (LUBM) [24]. It tests scalability, efficiency and reasoning capabilities of memory-based systems and systems with persistent storage. Concerning reasoning capabilities three degrees are tested: (i) RDFS reasoning, (ii) partial OWL reasoning, and (iii) complete or almost complete OWL Lite reasoning. The authors propose a benchmark with fourteen queries over a large dataset that commits to an ontology describing the university domain. This is one of the first benchmarks for SPARQL query processing and its design is based on techniques applied to older database benchmarks. For example, its data are synthetically generated so that the data size can be arbitrarily large and the selectivity and output size of each query can be predefined. Finally, LUBM uses a set of predefined performance metrics, namely load time, repository size, and query response time and it also suggests two new metrics about completeness and soundness of the query evaluations.

EvoGen [25], a LUBM derivative, is a synthetic benchmark for evolving RDF. It includes configurable schema evolution, change logging and representation between versions, as well as query workload generation functionality. EvoGen extends LUBM's ontology with 10 new classes and 19 new properties and adds queries commonly performed in evolving settings, such as temporal querying, queries on changes, longitudinal queries across versions, etc. The implemented change logging mechanism produces logs of the changes between consecutive versions following the representational schema of the change ontology.

The SPARQL performance benchmark (SP<sup>2</sup>Bench) [26] is an RDF benchmark directed towards a comprehensive performance evaluation of

RDF stores. The authors of this benchmark cover a wide spectrum of SPARQL features. They define queries with various SPARQL operators (e.g., UNION, OPTIONAL, FILTER) and solution modifiers (e.g., DISTINCT, ORDER BY, LIMIT) and they also test negation as failure queries. Queries are grouped in two categories: (i) long path chains and (ii) bushy patterns and they are designed so they are amenable to SPARQL optimization techniques (e.g., triple reordering, FILTER pushing). SP<sup>2</sup>Bench defines a data generator that produces datasets resembling the DBLP dataset.

Another SPARQL query processing benchmark is the Berlin SPARQL Benchmark (BSBM) [27]. This benchmark compares the performance of native RDF stores with the performance of SPARQL-to-SQL rewriters. BSBM uses synthetic data that describes an e-commerce use case. Different vendors offer products and reviews have been posted about these products by consumers. Unlike the systematic approach of SP<sup>2</sup>Bench, the Berlin SPARQL Benchmark uses an application-based query mix that emulates the search and navigation pattern of a consumer looking for a product. Thus, the query mix covers an adequate range of SPARQL features but not all of them. Since BSBM is application-oriented, it uses metrics defined for application scenarios and not for single queries, such as query mixes per hour (QMpH) and queries per second (QpS).

The DBpedia SPARQL benchmark (DBPSB) [28] follows a different approach and proposes a generic SPARQL benchmark creation procedure which is based on real application data and query logs. DBPSB proposes a technique to create data of arbitrary size that resembles real data. This technique enables increasing or decreasing the size of a real RDF dataset so that generated data retains the basic network characteristics (in and out degree) and other characteristics, such as the number of classes and properties of the original data. Also, DBPSB proposes a query analysis technique to extract representative queries of a set of real queries. The techniques of DBPSB were applied in the use case of DBpedia<sup>8</sup> but they can be applied to any dataset and query log to produce a use case specific benchmark.

The Waterloo SPARQL Diversity Test Suite (WatDiv) [29] provides stress testing tools for RDF systems that face diverse queries and varied workloads. It defines two classes of query features based on which it discusses the variability of the datasets and workloads in a SPARQL benchmark: (i) structural features such as triple pattern count, join vertex count, degree and

type and (ii) data-driven features such as result cardinality, filtered triple pattern (f-TP) selectivity, basic graph patterns (BGPs) restricted f-TP selectivity and join-restricted f-TP selectivity. The second part of [29] includes an experimental evaluation of other SPARQL benchmarks with emphasis on identifying test cases that are not handled by these benchmarks. The last part of [29] is an experimental evaluation of five RDF stores of different architectures using WatDiv, demonstrating that none of the systems is sufficiently robust across a diverse set of queries.

The Social Network Benchmark (SNB) [30] is the first benchmark issued by the Linked Data Benchmark Council (LDBC)<sup>9</sup>, an independent EU sponsored authority responsible for specifying benchmarks, benchmarking procedures, verifying and publishing benchmark results. SNB targets all types of graph database systems, such as property graphs and RDF stores. Its core component is a synthetic dataset modeling a Facebook-like social network, consisting of persons, their friendship connections and messages posted in forums. It also comprises three different workloads, which all use the common dataset, basically making available three separate SNB benchmarks: SNB-Interactive, SNB-BI and SNB-Algorithms. LDBC has released a draft version of SNB-Interactive<sup>10</sup> and a first stab of the SNB-BI formulated in SPARQL which is tested against OpenLink Virtuoso. The SNB-Algorithms workload is not available yet. The SNB-Interactive query set is defined in plain text, but example implementations exist in Cypher, SPARQL and SQL. It is an OLTP-like workload which measures a system's throughput using a mixed set of simple and complex queries along with concurrent updates. Key contributions of SNB-Interactive are: (i) the DATAGEN synthetic graph generator produces scalable datasets, through a scaling factor, which at the same time are more realistic than previous generators, by employing skewed value distributions, and exploiting plausible correlations between property values and graph structures, (ii) the expert and user community driven choke-point workload design which helps identify important technical challenges for query optimization, (iii) the query driver manages to generate a highly parallel workload to achieve high throughput, on a difficult to partition dataset with a complex structure of connected components, (iv) the introduction of the parameter curation benchmarking concept, which basically involves using data mining techniques during data generation to find good query

<sup>8</sup><https://wiki.dbpedia.org/>

<sup>9</sup><http://ldbouncil.org/>

<sup>10</sup><http://ldbouncil.org/benchmarks/snb>

substitution parameters with equivalent behavior.

LDBC also issued the first draft of their Semantic Publishing Benchmark (SPB v2.0)<sup>11</sup>, an RDF focused benchmark inspired by the Media/Publishing industry. More specifically, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) helped define this benchmark and also contributed with workloads, ontologies and data. Currently the coordinator and main contributor for SPB is Ontotext<sup>12</sup> company, developer of the well known GraphDB semantic store, and the Institute of Computer Science (ICS) of the Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH)<sup>13</sup>. The benchmark considers large volume of streaming content and assumes that an RDF database is used to store both the reference knowledge and related metadata. The main operations on the repository are: (i) updates, that add new metadata or alter the repository, and (ii) aggregation queries, that retrieve content according to various criteria. The benchmark is very much based upon the BBC use-case and places a strict requirement that the engine should handle instantly large number of updates in parallel with massive amount of aggregation queries. To properly execute SPB v2.0, an RDF store has to also satisfy the following requirements: support for storage of RDF data, support for RDF named graphs, loading of data in one of the standard RDF serializations (Turtle for ontologies, N-Quads for data), support for standards SPARQL 1.1 Query/Update/Protocol, RDFS v1.0 and the RL profile of Web Ontology Language (OWL2). SPB provides a data generator which produces scalable in size synthetic data based on ontologies, reference and previously generated data. Following the logic of SNB, SPB identifies eleven choke points (CP1 - CP11), such as CP1:join ordering and CP8:geo-spatial predicates, which respectively test the ability of RDF store engines to decide which type of join to be used based on cardinality constraints and the ability to handle queries about entities within a geospatial range. The two types of workloads offered are: basic and advanced. The basic workload consists of 9 queries of types: search, aggregate, geospatial, full-text search, time-range queries and the advanced workload adds: analytical, drill-down and faceted search queries, a total of 25 queries. Each query definition includes the list of choke points tested by it.

gMark [31] is a benchmark that concentrates on schema-driven generation of graphs and queries. It is

considered [32] the first domain-independent and query language-independent synthetic graph benchmarking tool. Its design aims to cover features and capabilities commonly found in graph query processing, graph analytics, and schema validation. The authors identify the following three problem areas: (i) there is no community consensus on schema formalisms for graph data, (ii) the construction of synthetic workloads with given selectivity and desired structural features is a very difficult problem and (iii) the approaches, used by WatDiv and LDBC, to perform selectivity estimation based on generated graph instances, does not scale for massive graphs and queryworkloads. In gMark, graph instance generation is leveraged through an optional graph configuration, which includes the enumeration of predicates (i.e., edge labels) and node types (i.e., node labels) occurring in the data, along with their properties in generated instances. For query workload generation with desired behavior, gMark does not rely on graph instances to generate them. Furthermore the query selectivity of the workload can be specified. gMark is independent from particular query language syntaxes or systems and supports various practical output formats for the graphs and for the queries, including N-triples for data, and SQL, SPARQL, Datalog and openCypher as concrete query language syntaxes for query workloads. In the last part of [31] an experimental comparison of selected state-of-the-art graph query engines is performed, which reveals some limitations of current graph query processing engines such as recursive query processing.

### 3.2. Benchmarks for Geospatial Relational Databases

One of the first benchmarks for spatial databases is the SEQUOIA benchmark [9] which focuses on Earth Science use cases and which has been used for testing many Geographic Information Systems (GIS). SEQUOIA uses real data (satellite raster data, point locations of geographic features, land use/land cover polygons and data about drainage networks covering the area of USA) and real queries. It also considers different scales of datasets and use cases (e.g., local or national scale). The SEQUOIA benchmark is formed by 11 queries trying to cover the most usual tasks in Earth Science, like (i) data loading and building of respective indexes, (ii) raster data management, (iii) selections based on spatial and non-spatial filters, (iv) spatial joins, (v) and a recursive spatial query.

SEQUOIA was later extended by [10] to evaluate the geospatial DBMS Paradise. In [10] DeWitt et al. study traditional database techniques and how these techniques can be used (or extended to be used) in

<sup>11</sup>[https://github.com/ldbc/ldbc\\_spb\\_bm\\_2.0/blob/master/doc/LDBC\\_SPB\\_v2.0.docx?raw=true](https://github.com/ldbc/ldbc_spb_bm_2.0/blob/master/doc/LDBC_SPB_v2.0.docx?raw=true)

<sup>12</sup><https://www.ontotext.com/>

<sup>13</sup><https://www.ics.forth.gr/>

geospatial query processing. SEQUOIA takes into account only points and polygons, while [10] also tests polylines and circles and broadens the tested functionality (e.g., it tests spatial aggregate functions). Finally, a methodology, called resolution scaleup, is applied to scale up geospatial data. This technique simulates the zoom-in operation of map applications. Existing spatial features are represented in more detail by adding more points to their boundaries, and at the same time new smaller spatial features appear around the existing ones.

Rather than focusing on evaluating performance of systems, the Á La Carte [11] benchmark compares performance of spatial join techniques. In particular, [11] tests the following algorithms: nested loops, scan and index, and synchronized tree traversal. A data generator is presented that generates rectangles with edges parallel to the axes. The Á La Carte generator enables data of arbitrary size that can follow various statistical distributions (uniform, normal and exponential). This allows for the generation of realistic data in terms of spatial distribution. However, the fact that generated rectangles have edges parallel to the axes does not allow testing the full process of spatial evaluation in a DBMS. The usual workflow of a spatial evaluation is composed of two steps. The first step utilizes a spatial index, which is built according to the minimum bounding boxes of geometries, to find candidate results. This step is called *filtering* step. The second step, which is called *refinement* step, tests the actual geometries and discards false positives generated by the filtering step. Using rectangles with edges parallel to the axes means that their actual geometries are identical to their minimum bounding boxes. So, the exact answer is already found by the filtering step that does not generate any false positive.

In order to generate data and conduct experiments, Á La Carte defines some statistical models for the generator that resembles typical cartographic applications. These models are the following: (i) “Biotopes” simulates a biotope map where there are few large rectangles uniformly distributed that may overlap but not to a large degree, (ii) “Cities” simulates the distribution of cities and it is composed of many small rectangles (modelled as squares) uniformly distributed around the map, finally, (iii) a hybrid model is defined that resembles a word map. This model comprises two nested submodels. First, a “Biotopes” model creates the continents of the world and inside each continent there are rectangles modelled by the “Cities” model.

A more complex data generator is used in VESPA [12] to compare PostgreSQL with the Rock & Roll deductive object-oriented database system. The

data generator of VESPA produces spatial features that resemble real maps. The spatial features that are produced by the VESPA generator represent land ownership, states, land use, roads, streams, gas lines and points of interest. They are uniformly distributed, in contrast to spatial features generated by the Á La Carte generator, but they are more complex than simple rectangles. The dataset consists not only of polygons but also of lines and points. The produced polygons are hexagons and triangles, so their edges are not parallel to the axes and both filtering and refinement step of spatial joins can be tested. Apart from spatial selection and spatial analysis queries VESPA also tests updates and spatial aggregate queries which are not tested by previous benchmarks.

Finally, a more generic benchmark is Jackpine [13]. Jackpine defines two kinds of benchmarking, micro and macro. Micro benchmarking tests spatial functions in isolation, in order to evaluate the performance of systems in evaluating spatial selection, spatial join, and spatial analysis queries. Macro benchmarking defines real application scenarios as series of queries and tests the performance of systems for evaluating the entire series of queries for each scenario. Tested scenarios range from simple ones, like geocoding and reverse geocoding, or more complex scenarios like flood risk and toxic spill analysis.

### 3.3. Benchmarks for Geospatial RDF Stores

The first published benchmark for querying geospatial data encoded in RDF has been proposed in [15]. [15] extends LUBM to include spatial entities and test the performance of spatially enabled RDF stores. The data generator of LUBM is extended so that each university, department or student gets a spatial extent (rectangle or point). LUBM queries are extended to cover four primary types of spatial queries, namely spatial location queries, spatial range queries, spatial join queries, and nearest neighbor queries. Range queries aim to test cases of various selectivity, while spatial joins aim to test whether the query planner selects a good plan by taking into account the selectivity of the spatial and ontological part of each query.

Another evaluation of geospatial RDF stores has been done in [2]. In the context of presenting the geospatial RDF store Strabon, experiments studying its performance were conducted. Strabon is compared with Parliament [8] and an implementation on top of RDF-3X [33] that supports spatial queries. In this evaluation more emphasis is given to study Strabon itself rather than creating a benchmark for various RDF stores. This is why different variations of Strabon are studied in

order to demonstrate advantages and disadvantages of different implementation choices. Two workloads are used: one based on real world linked data and a synthetic one. The first workload consists of eight real world queries that are either frequently used in Semantic Web applications (e.g., DBpedia and LinkedGeoData endpoints) or they demonstrate the spatial extensions of Strabon. This workload contains thematic queries as well as spatial selection and spatial join queries and queries using non-topological spatial functions. The second workload uses a modified version of the data generator of [19] to generate spatial datasets with arbitrary size and predefined characteristics. The data generator produces spatial data with point geometries and only spatial query selections are studied.

Patroumpas et al. [16] have reviewed the state of the art in managing geospatial data in the Semantic Web. [16] starts by presenting basic concepts and standards (e.g., GeoSPARQL) about geospatial data in the Semantic Web, then it presents the current state of the art geospatial RDF stores and a qualitative comparison between them. Finally, [16] presents and performs an evaluation of the performance of the geospatial RDF stores. For this evaluation, [16] uses data from OSM and it follows the guidelines of [15] to define a query workload. This workload consists of basic queries that cover the four primary types of spatial queries that has been suggested in [15] and geospatial analysis queries that cover query types not studied in [15]. These are queries that use non-topological spatial functions, combine thematic and spatial criteria, and aggregate and negation queries that use spatial filters.

Bellini and Nesi [34] evaluate the needs and constraints for RDF stores to be used for smart cities services. Several well-known systems, including Virtuoso, GraphDB, Oracle, and Stardog, are assessed for semantically enabled services. The identified smart city requirements for RDF stores include: (i) spatial indexing, like information near a given geographical point, elements along a cycle path or inside a given polygonal area, (ii) high spatial querying performance, (iii) support for quads (named graph), to enable tracking the data source, with metadata and associated licenses, (iv) SPARQL version 1.0 or 1.1, and (v) actively maintained source base. The included benchmark found evidence of partial support of spatial operations in the majority of the RDF stores, and verified that only few of them support GeoSPARQL adequately.

### 3.4. Benchmarks distilled

At this point, it is useful to contemplate about the common requirements, techniques and metrics that got

inherited and evolved in the reviewed benchmarks. This will allow us to more clearly envision which features a contemporary, comprehensive geospatial semantic benchmark should comprise.

**Metrics.** The metrics used in the most comprehensive or generic benchmarks include: (i) *load time*, (ii) *repository size*, (iii) cold and warm cache *query response time* for OLTP applications and (iv) *query throughput* for real world use cases (OLAP applications).

**Datasets.** Synthetic datasets and generators are used in all cases because they allow the creation of data of: (i) *arbitrary size* and (ii) with the *desired structural features* (complexity) which in turn enables tests of controlled selectivity. The attempts, though, to create real world-like synthetic data by using various elaborately engineered distributions at the end cannot adequately substitute real world datasets even when accompanied by real world inspired use cases. Real world datasets are indispensable as they provide *real data complexity*, as in many thousands vertice polygons and line strings instead of rectangles, hexagons or simple sloped lines and points. At the same time these datasets give the opportunity of running *real application scenarios* for demanding applications. Furthermore, by combining and interlinking real world datasets, with the same spatial extent, we can increase even more the opportunities for hosting many more different application use cases. Another real world requirement for some of the datasets under consideration is that they should contain quads (triples with a named graph context), an aspect overlooked by several benchmarks. Quads further complicate benchmarking activities as it involves an extra context index, which increases load time and repository size, but may favor query execution times for appropriately formulated queries.

**Querysets.** The categories of spatial queries used, include: (i) *selections*, (ii) *joins*, (iii) *aggregates*, (iv) *nearest neighbor*, (v) *distance*. The cold or warm cache response time of selections, joins and distance queries can be studied in detail in controlled settings either with synthetic datasets or within the context of a `Micro` benchmark with small to medium real world datasets. On the other hand, the addition of nearest neighbor and aggregate queries comes natural to a `Macro` benchmark setting where we are primarily interested on the query throughput for a complex use case scenario against real world datasets. For datasets of quads, querysets must be designed that can take advantage of the named graph context.

Geographica 2 goes beyond the previously reviewed benchmarks [15, 17, 16, 34] as it is the first one that

takes advantage of the majority of the lessons learned by its predecessors. It makes use of the most effective geospatial benchmarking techniques for dataset and queryset creation and uses appropriate metrics for evaluating geospatial RDF stores. It contains a real world workload that uses publicly available linked geospatial data, covering a wide range of geometry types (e.g., points, lines, polygons), some of which are highly complex. Each dataset is loaded in a different named graph and therefore allows for named graph query patterns. The real world workload follows the approach of the benchmark Jackpine [13] and defines both a micro and a macro benchmark. The micro benchmark tests primitive spatial functions. The spatial component of a system is tested with queries that use non-topological functions, distance, spatial selections, spatial joins and spatial aggregate functions. The macro benchmark tests performance of selected RDF stores in typical application scenarios like geocoding, reverse geocoding, map search and browsing and a real world use case from the EO domain. In these scenarios, a mix of spatial nearest neighbor, spatial selections and spatial joins are tested over multiple named graphs. The benchmark also features a synthetic workload, which is based primarily on VESPA [12] and [2, 19]. It uses a generator that produces synthetic datasets of various sizes and generates queries of varying thematic and spatial selectivity. In this way, performance of geospatial RDF stores can be studied in a closely controlled environment.

#### 4. A Functional Comparison of Geospatial RDF Stores

This section presents all of the RDF stores known to the authors that implement some geospatial functionality, and compares them in terms of the geospatial functionality that they offer.

Although GeoSPARQL is an OGC standard since 2012, it is not fully supported by any geospatial RDF store. Usually systems do not implement the Query-Rewrite Extension. Also there are some RDF stores that provide geospatial capabilities which are limited to point geometries.

A common problem area is CRS support. A coordinate reference system (CRS) also referred to as spatial reference system (SRS) is a coordinate system related to an object (e.g., the Earth) through a datum which specifies its origin, scale, and orientation. OGC is among the authorities that maintain partial or non fully compatible lists of CRSs and it provides a set of CRS URIs<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>14</sup><http://www.opengis.net/def/crs/>

Another related organization is the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP)<sup>15</sup> which after the absorption of the European Petroleum Survey Group (EPSG) maintains the EPSG online registry of geodetic parameters<sup>16</sup>.

We organize our comparison according to the GeoSPARQL standard. We indicate which extensions of GeoSPARQL are supported by each RDF store, which spatial relation classes and geometry serialization formats are implemented, and whether multiple CRSs are supported. We have also included a selection of available geospatial extensions which are not part of GeoSPARQL, such as the use of geometry literals as objects in triple patterns, the spatial aggregate functions defined by stSPARQL [2] and three main spatial query classes that are used for querying points. A tabular view of this comparison can be found in Table 1. The rest of the section essentially explains the contents of Table 1 by discussing in detail the functionality of each system.

##### 4.1. Geospatial RDF Stores that Conform to the GeoSPARQL Standard

The system Strabon, which has been developed by our group, is a storage and query evaluation module for stRDF/stSPARQL [2]. Strabon extends the well-known RDF store Sesame, allowing it to manage both thematic and spatial data expressed in stRDF and stored in the PostGIS spatially enabled DBMS. The version 3.2.9 of Strabon fully implements stSPARQL, which provides the machinery of the OGC SFA standard as well as spatial aggregation functions, other useful spatial functions (e.g., directional relations) and temporal extension functions. Given the close relationship between stSPARQL and GeoSPARQL [6], it was straightforward to implement the relevant subset of GeoSPARQL in Strabon. Strabon implements fully the Core, Geometry Extension and Geometry Topology Extension components of GeoSPARQL. It supports all three topological relation classes defined by GeoSPARQL (OGC-SFA, Egenhofer, RCC8), both geometry serializations (WKT, GML) and multiple CRS.

OpenSahara uSeekM<sup>17</sup> also builds upon the RDF store Sesame. uSeekM is based on the native store of Sesame to store and query thematic information and it utilizes PostGIS for storing and querying spatial data. uSeekM supports the majority of GeoSPARQL, namely the GeoSPARQL Core, Topology Vocabulary

<sup>15</sup><https://www.iogp.org/>

<sup>16</sup><https://www.epsg-registry.org/>

<sup>17</sup><https://opensahara.com/projects/useekm/>

System	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X	Virtuoso	System Y	GraphDB	RDF4J
GeoSPARQL								
Core	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Topology Vocabulary	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no
Geometry	yes	partial	yes	yes	no	no	partial	partial
Geometry Topology	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Query Rewrite	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
RDFS Entailment	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Relation classes								
OGC-SFA	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Egenhofer	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes
RCC8	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes
Geometry Serializations								
WKT	yes	yes	yes	yes	partial	no	yes	yes
GML	yes [GML-SF]	no	yes [GML-SF]	no	no	no	no	no
CRS support	yes	no	yes	yes	partial	partial	no	no
Functionality not described by GeoSPARQL								
Aggregation	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Geometry literal as Object	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
Specific functionality for RDF stores with limited geospatial capabilities								
Buffer	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Distance	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Bounding Box	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes

**Table 1:** Functionality of geospatial RDF stores

Extension, Geometry Topology Extension, RDFS Entailment Extension components and partially the Geometry Extension. uSeekM implements all three relation family classes (OGC SFA, Egenhofer, RCC8). Since the implementation does not use URIs for coordinate reference systems, it does not conform to requirement 20<sup>18</sup>, because `geof:getSRID()` returns an integer instead of a URI, and fails requirement 12<sup>19</sup> of the GeoSPARQL standard, because axis order interpretation in `geo:wktLiterals` is fixed lon-lat/x-y ordering and not derived by the spatial reference system of the literal. It supports only the WKT serialization for geometries in WGS84 CRS. Therefore, the Geometry Extension support is marked as partial. Finally, uSeekM implements some extension functions (not defined by GeoSPARQL), which compute, for example, the area of a geometry and the shortest line between two geometries accordingly. For spatial indexing uSeekM utilizes a PostGIS database to create an R-Tree-over-GiST [35]. The optimizer will check whether the query evaluation will benefit from the extra index and if so, the spatial part of the query is executed by PostGIS using the R-Tree and the rest of the query is executed by the native store of Sesame.

The RDF store Parliament<sup>20</sup> [8] implements most of the functionality of GeoSPARQL except the Query

Rewrite Extension. Both WKT and GML serializations are supported as well as multiple CRS and all three topological relation family classes. Unlike Strabon and uSeekM, which detect spatial objects from their datatype, Parliament works as follows. The RDF graph is scanned for triples that contain `geo:asWKT` or `geo:asGML` predicates and for each matching triple Parliament creates a record for the geometry that is represented in the object of the triple and inserts it into its spatial index (a standard R-tree implementation). The query optimizer tries to split SPARQL queries into multiple parts and produce an optimized query plan between the spatial and thematic components of the query. The current version of Parliament (v2.7.4) concentrates on optimizing query patterns (using the Topology Vocabulary extension of GeoSPARQL) while it omits optimization for functions in the filter clause of a query. However, when the topological comparisons are included in the triple patterns as predicates instead of the corresponding filter functions, the optimizer of Parliament takes both thematic and spatial dimensions into consideration in order to produce a better plan.

The proprietary RDF store System X also supports the GeoSPARQL standard for representing and querying geospatial data in RDF. System X supports the Core, Topology Vocabulary Extension, Geometry Extension, Geometry Topology Extension, and RDFS Entailment Extension components of GeoSPARQL. Multiple CRS are supported but only the WKT geometry serialization

<sup>18</sup><https://opensahara.com/issues/675>

<sup>19</sup><https://opensahara.com/issues/675>

<sup>20</sup><https://github.com/SemWebCentral/parliament>

and the OGC SFA relation family class are supported. Additionally, System X offers some specific functions that are not defined by GeoSPARQL, such as computing the area or the minimum bounding rectangle of a geometry, computing the union of two geometries, etc. System X uses an R-Tree to index spatial data. When creating a spatial index, a user should define the CRS which will be used to create the spatial index, the minimum and maximum value for each dimension of data and a positive number indicating how close together two points must be to be considered the same point.

RDF4J<sup>21</sup> is a Java-based RDF framework which provides for creating, parsing, reasoning and querying over linked data. It offers two core store NoSQL implementations. The Memory Store allows the creation of a very fast transactional RDF repository in main memory with optional persistence to disk. A more scalable alternative which allows the creation of transactional RDF repository of up to a hundred millions of triples is the Native Store, which uses direct disk I/O for persistence. Many of the systems examined in this paper have extended the precursor of RDF4J, Sesame, which additionally offered out of the box a third repository implementation, the RDBMS Store supporting persistence in PostgreSQL and MySQL database systems. Its architecture allows for constructing repositories in a layered approach using Sails(Storage And Inference Layer) adding storage and inference options. Starting from October 2018 and version 2.4.3, RDF4J offers adequate geospatial functionality and GeoSPARQL support through the use of Location-Tech's Spatial4J<sup>22</sup> and JTS<sup>23</sup> libraries. RDF4J supports the Core, Geometry Topology Extension, RDFS Entailment Extension and partially the Geometry Extension components of GeoSPARQL. It supports all three topological relation classes (OGC-SFA, Egenhofer, RCC8), non-topological and common query functions and the WKT geometry serialization. Repositories can use the RDFS Inference Sail. Although GeoSPARQL is supported natively on all types of store implementations, geospatial querying on large datasets is advertised to benefit when enabling the Lucene Sail which spatially indexes a customizable list of fields that contain the <<http://www.opengis.net/ont/geosparql#asWKT>> field by default.

GraphDB<sup>24</sup> v8.6.1 (formerly known as OWLIM) is a

<sup>21</sup><http://rdf4j.org/>

<sup>22</sup><https://projects.eclipse.org/projects/locationtech.spatial4j>

<sup>23</sup><https://projects.eclipse.org/projects/locationtech.jts>

<sup>24</sup><http://graphdb.ontotext.com/documentation/free/>

NoSQL semantic graph database enhanced with geospatial capabilities and it is the flagship product of company Ontotext. GraphDB is implemented as a SAIL (Storage and Inference Layer) of the RDF4J Framework v2.3.2 and can support billions of triples per server. The supported semantics, which are RDF rule-entailment by default, can be configured through ruleset definitions such as RDFS with OWL Lite and OWL2 profiles RL and QL. GraphDB supports the Core, Topology Vocabulary Extension, Geometry Topology Extension, and RDFS Entailment Extension and partially the Geometry Extension components of GeoSPARQL. Only the WKT geometry serialization and the default WGS84 CRS are supported. It supports all three topological relation classes (OGC SFA, Egenhofer, RCC8). A provided extension which is not part of the GeoSPARQL specification is the ability to use geometry literals in the object position of triple patterns. For its geospatial capabilities it relies on a uSeekM implementation. The spatial index mechanism is controlled through an optional GeoSPARQL-plugin. The plugin supports two approximate matching indexing algorithms, a quad prefix tree [36], which is the default option, and a geohash prefix tree [37], each one with a different range of accuracy values. GraphDB also provides support for the WGS84 Geo Positioning RDF vocabulary<sup>25</sup> which allows for the representation of latitude, longitude and altitude of features with geo-spatial index and basic operations such as distance calculation between points, filtering points within a rectangle, polygon or circle.

#### 4.2. RDF Stores with Limited Geospatial Capabilities

OpenLink Virtuoso<sup>26</sup> provides geospatial support for representing and querying two-dimensional point geometries. Virtuoso allows geometries to be expressed either in WGS84 or a flat two-dimensional plane. Virtuoso does not support GeoSPARQL but it models geometries by typed literals like stSPARQL and GeoSPARQL. For this purpose, it introduces its own datatype `virtrdf:Geometry`. The value of such a literal is the WKT serialization of a point. Virtuoso offers vocabulary for a subset of the ISO 13249 SQL/MM standard [38] to perform geospatial queries using SPARQL. For example, a user can ask for points in a region utilizing SPARQL functions corresponding to the `st_intersects`, `st_contains`, and `st_within` SQL/MM functions. Note that these functions are extended with a third argument (called precision) which specifies a maximum distance between two

<sup>25</sup>[https://www.w3.org/2003/01/geo/wgs84\\_pos](https://www.w3.org/2003/01/geo/wgs84_pos)

<sup>26</sup><http://virtuoso.openlinksw.com/>

points such that the points will still be considered to overlap with each other. Thus, these functions can support buffer queries exploiting the spatial index of Virtuoso. Virtuoso utilizes an R-tree index implemented as a table in the relational database component of Virtuoso. It is worth mentioning that we also had the opportunity to examine the development branch v7.2.6-rc1 of Virtuoso OpenSource Server available since early October 2018 which introduced some features of GeoSPARQL. However, there was still not enough support for several of the features that we evaluate in our benchmark, so we decided that it would only be fair to continue our experiments, once a more stable release of Virtuoso supporting these features becomes available.

The proprietary RDF store System Y, also provides limited support for geospatial data. System Y can store and query only points. Support is provided both for Cartesian coordinate systems and for spherical coordinate systems but not for standard geographic CRS, like those maintained by the IOGP. System Y supports only range queries (points within a rectangle or a circle) utilizing either property functions<sup>27</sup> or a non SPARQL compliant syntax.

## 5. The Benchmark Geographica 2

This section presents in detail the benchmark Geographica 2 which extends our earlier benchmark Geographica [17]. Section 5.1 presents its first part (the real world workload) while Section 5.2 presents the second part (the synthetic workload).

### 5.1. Real World Workload

This workload aims at evaluating the efficiency of basic spatial functions that a geospatial RDF store should offer. In addition, this workload includes five real use case application scenarios.

#### 5.1.1. Datasets

In this section we describe the datasets that we use for the real world workload. We have datasets that are part of the Linked Open Data Cloud, such as the Greek version of DBpedia and part of the GeoNames dataset referring to Greece.

DBpedia is a crowd-sourced knowledge base that contains structured information from Wikipedia. DBpedia contains also geographic information for its articles.

<sup>27</sup>[https://www.w3.org/wiki/SPARQL/Extensions/Computed\\_Properties](https://www.w3.org/wiki/SPARQL/Extensions/Computed_Properties)

For example a point position for a country, a city or a building.

GeoNames<sup>28</sup> is a crowd-sourced geographical database containing more than eleven million unique features. These placenames are classified according to a two-level schema. The first level uses very generic categories. For example, a point may be characterized as a waterbody or some kind of facility. The second level narrows down to very specific categories. For example a waterbody may be characterized as a river, a lake, etc., while a facility may be characterized as a bank, a hospital, etc. Each point in Geonames is a pair of latitude and longitude in CRS WGS84. More complex geometries (e.g., lines or polygons) are not included.

Since the spatial information of GeoNames and DBpedia is limited to points, datasets with richer spatial information are also used in Geographica 2. LinkedGeoData<sup>29</sup> (LGD) is a project which in 2009 made OSM data available on the Web as linked data [39]. We have included a part of the OSM dataset about the motorways and rivers of Greece.

We also chose to use a dataset containing geometries of Greek municipalities defined by the Greek Administrative Geography<sup>30</sup> (GAG) and the CORINE Land Cover<sup>31</sup> (CLC) dataset for Greece which have complex polygons. The CLC dataset is made available by the European Environmental Agency for the whole of Europe and contains data regarding the land cover of European countries. Both of these datasets with information about Greece have been published as linked data by us in the context of the European project TELEIOS<sup>32</sup>.

Finally, Geographica 2 includes a dataset containing polygons that represent wild-fire hotspots. This dataset has been produced by the National Observatory of Athens (NOA) in the context of project TELEIOS by processing appropriate satellite images as described in [40]. Each dataset is loaded in a separate named graph so that each query access only the part of the dataset that is needed.

All the aforementioned datasets were loaded in a common repository for each RDF store and they were used for all experiments of the real world workload of Geographica apart from the "Geocoding" scenario, that is described in Section 5.1.3. This scenario requires detailed information about street addresses (e.g.,

<sup>28</sup><http://www.geonames.org/>

<sup>29</sup><http://linkedgeo.org/>

<sup>30</sup><http://www.linkedopendata.gr/dataset/greek-administrative-geography/>

<sup>31</sup><http://www.linkedopendata.gr/dataset/corine-land-cover-of-greece>

<sup>32</sup><http://www.earthobservatory.eu/>

Datasets	Size	Triples	# of Points	# of Lines (max/min/avg # of points per line)	# of Polygons (max/min/avg # of points per polygon)
GAG	33MB	4K	-	-	325 (14K/4/192)
CLC	401MB	630K	-	-	45K (15K/4/171)
OSM (only ways)	29MB	150K	-	12K (1.6K/2/21)	-
GeoNames	45MB	400K	22K	-	-
DBpedia	89MB	430K	8K	-	-
Hotspots	90MB	450K	-	-	37K (4/4/4)
Census	3.3GB	23M	-	894K (262/2/6)	-

**Table 2:** Dataset characteristics

zip code and building number) which is not provided in any of the above datasets. So, the "Geocoding" scenario uses data about the street network of New York that is publicly available as part of TIGER (Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing) products<sup>33</sup> produced by the US Census Bureau<sup>34</sup>. This dataset contains geometries of streets of New York as linestrings and address information like street name, zip code, building numbers, etc. It has been stored in a separate repository for each RDF store and it was used only for the "Geocoding" scenario.

Table 2 describes important characteristics of the datasets. In this table the size of each dataset is presented in MB and the number of contained triples. The size in MB is calculated from uncompressed text files in N-Triples syntax. Also, Table 2 presents the type and number of geometries that each dataset contains. In parenthesis we give the maximum, minimum and average number of points per geometry to give an insight of the geometry complexity for each dataset.

### 5.1.2. Micro Benchmark

The micro benchmark aims at testing the efficiency of primitive spatial functions in state of the art geospatial RDF stores. Thus, it uses simple SPARQL queries which consist of one or two triple patterns and a spatial function. In this way, the spatial module is stressed instead of the basic triple pattern matching module of RDF stores. First, simple spatial selections are tested. Next, more complex operations such as spatial joins are tested. Spatial joins are tested using the topological relations defined in stSPARQL [2] and the Geometry Topology Extension component of GeoSPARQL.

<sup>33</sup><http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger.html>

<sup>34</sup><http://www.census.gov/>

Table 3 summarizes the combinations between topological relations and geometry types that are tested by Geographica 2. In Table 3(a) columns indicate the geometry type of the constant used for the spatial selections and rows indicate the geometry type of retrieved spatial features. In Table 3(b) both columns and rows indicate the geometry types that participate in each join query. In parenthesis the datasets that participate in every query are reported. The possible combinations of geometry types and topological relations are too many and it would be pointless to exhaustively test all of them. Thus, we selected an interesting part of this combinations based on previous work (e.g. [13]) and our experience in building geographical applications. All topological functions defined by the OGC SFA relation family and every geometry type combination are included at least once. Mainly, we focus on topological relations including polygons since polygon is the most complex 2-D geometry type which can form many topological relations and is the most demanding geometry type to handle.

Apart from topological relations, the micro benchmark tests non-topological functions (e.g., `geof:buffer`), defined by the Geometry Extension of GeoSPARQL, which construct new geometry objects from existing ones. Additionally, a metric function for evaluating the area of a polygon is tested. This function is not defined by GeoSPARQL, but it is supported by almost all tested geospatial RDF stores (Strabon, uSeekM, System X, GraphDB). The aggregate functions `strdf:extent`, and `strdf:union` of stSPARQL are also included in the evaluation although the GeoSPARQL standard does not define them. We include aggregate functions in Geographica 2 since they are present in all geospatial RDBMS, and we found them very useful in EO applications in the context of the project TELEIOS [40]. A short description of queries used in the micro benchmark can be found in

(a)				(b)			
	Query Point	Query Line	Query Polygon		Point (DBpedia)	Line (OSM)	Polygon (GAG)
Point (GeoNames)	Within Buffer In Distance	-	Within Disjoint	Point (GeoNames)	Equals	Intersects	Intersects Within
Line (OSM)	-	Equals Crosses	Intersects Disjoint	Line (OSM)	-	-	Intersects Within Crosses
Polygon (CLC) (GAG)	-	Intersects	Overlaps Equals	Polygon (CLC) (CLC) (GAG)	-	-	Within Overlaps Touches

**Table 3:** Topological relations tested in (a) spatial selections and (b) spatial joins

Table 4 and the full SPARQL queries can be found online<sup>35</sup>.

### 5.1.3. Macro Benchmark

The macro benchmark tests the performance of the selected RDF stores in three typical application scenarios, namely "Geocoding", "Reverse Geocoding", and "Map Search and Browsing" and two more sophisticated scenarios from the EO domain, namely "Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring" and "Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets". Descriptions of the queries associated with these scenarios can be found in Table 5 and SPARQL templates used to generate these queries are provided on the site of the benchmark.

*Geocoding.* Geocoding is the process of finding the coordinates of a feature based on other geographic data, such as street address, house number, city, country, etc. The simplest method of geocoding is called address geocoding and is applied to street network data that contain street segments and address ranges for each segment. The address range of a street segment is the minimum and maximum house numbers that are attributed to this street segment. Usually, two address ranges are assigned to a street segment, one for its left side and one for its right one. A geocoding query retrieves a street segment based on thematic criteria and then interpolates its geometry within the address range to estimate the position of the given house number. Imagine a user who is looking for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (address is 1000 5th Avenue, New York, 10028). A geocoding query will retrieve a street segment with name "5th Avenue", ZIP code equal to 10028 and an address range that contains even numbers including 1000 (e.g., from 998 to 1002). Then taking into account the spatial extent and the minimum and maximum numbers of this segment an estimation of the position of the museum in 5th Avenue is calculated and returned to the user.

Because neither GeoSPARQL nor any geospatial RDF store offer any sophisticated function for geometry interpolation, used queries perform a simple linear interpolation between the start and end points of a street segment. This scenario tests two identical queries that search the left and right sides of streets and they return a point estimation for the given address number and the actual geometry of the street segment that is matched to the given address. This scenario, uses the Census dataset that is described in Section 5.1.1. Address ranges are published by Census Bureau as ESRI shapefiles. Each shapefile contains a relational table and each tuple of the table represents a street segment. The main contents of the shapefile can be modelled as the relation: `StreetSegment(geo GEOMETRY, fullname VARCHAR, lfromhn NUMBER, ltohn NUMBER, rfromhn NUMBER, rtohn NUMBER, parityl VARCHAR, parityr VARCHAR, zipl VARCHAR, zipr VARCHAR)`. In this relation `geo` represents the geometry of a road segment and `fullname` its name. The minimum and maximum house numbers of the left (right) side of a road are represented by `lfromhn` (`rfromhn`) and `ltohn` (`rtohn`). One side of a road usually has only odd or even house numbers. This is indicated by `parityl` and `parityr` that take the values "O" for only odd numbers, "E" for only even numbers, and "B" if a road side has both odd and even house numbers. The zip code of a road side is represented by `zipl` and `zipr`. Finally, in order to simplify the linear interpolation computation, the following extra attributes are added: `minx` NUMBER, `maxx` NUMBER, `miny` NUMBER, `maxy` NUMBER. These attributes represent the coordinates of the extreme points of a road segment. This data was transformed into RDF in a straightforward way. For each tuple of the table an instance of the class `StreetSegment` was generated and for every column of the table a data property that associates the `StreetSegment` instance with the relevant value from the table column was created. This transformation resulted in 23 million triples and 1 million linestrings. Also a list of addresses composed

<sup>35</sup><http://geographica.di.uoa.gr/>

Query	Operation	Description
<b>Non-topological construct functions</b>		
Q1	Boundary	Construct the boundary of all polygons of CLC
Q2	Envelope	Construct the envelope of all polygons of CLC
Q3	Convex Hull	Construct the convex hull of all polygons of CLC
Q4	Buffer	Construct the buffer of all points of GeoNames
Q5	Buffer	Construct the buffer of all lines of OSM
Q6	Area	Compute the area of all polygons of CLC
<b>Spatial selections</b>		
Q7	Equals	Find all lines of OSM that are spatially equal with a given line
Q8	Equals	Find all polygons of GAG that are spatially equal a given polygon
Q9	Intersects	Find all lines of OSM that spatially intersect with a given polygon
Q10	Intersects	Find all polygons of CLC that spatially intersect with a given line
Q11	Overlaps	Find all polygons of CLC that spatially overlap with a given polygon
Q12	Crosses	Find all lines of OSM that spatially cross a given line
Q13	Within polygon	Find all points of GeoNames that are contained in a given polygon
Q14	Within buffer of a point	Find all points of GeoNames that are contained in the buffer of a given point
Q15	Near a point	Find all points of GeoNames that are within specific distance from a given point
Q16	Disjoint	Find all points of GeoNames that are spatially disjoint of a given polygon
Q17	Disjoint	Find all lines of OSM that are spatially disjoint of a given polygon
<b>Spatial joins</b>		
Q18	Equals	Find all points of GeoNames that are spatially equal with a point of DBpedia
Q19	Intersects	Find all points of GeoNames that spatially intersect a line of OSM
Q20	Intersects	Find all points of GeoNames that spatially intersect a polygon of GAG
Q21	Intersects	Find all lines of OSM that spatially intersect a polygon of GAG
Q22	Within	Find all points of GeoNames that are within a polygon of GAG
Q23	Within	Find all lines of OSM that are within a polygon of GAG
Q24	Within	Find all polygons of CLC that are within a polygon of GAG
Q25	Crosses	Find all lines of OSM that spatially cross a polygon of GAG
Q26	Touches	Find all polygons of GAG that spatially touch other polygons of GAG
Q27	Overlaps	Find all polygons of CLC that spatially overlap polygons of GAG
<b>Aggregate functions</b>		
Q28	Extension	Construct the extension of all polygons of GAG
Q29	Union	Construct the union of all polygons of GAG

**Table 4:** Queries of the micro benchmark

by a street name, a zip code, and a building number is exported. For each iteration of this scenario an address is randomly selected by this list, the queries are produced using the corresponding SPARQL query templates, populating them with the street name, the zip code, the building number and the parity of the number (even or odd) of the selected address and the estimated coordinates of this address is retrieved. This random sequence of addresses is generated using a pseudo-random number generator, which is initialized with the same seed for every experiment run. The same process is repeated for the initialization of each iteration of the other scenarios thus, the experiments of the macro benchmark are repeatable.

*Reverse Geocoding.* Reverse geocoding is the process of attributing a readable address or place name to a given point. This scenario tests two nearest neighbor queries which retrieve the nearest point (from GeoNames) and the nearest motorway (from OSM) of the given point. To achieve this nearest neighbor functionality the queries of this scenario sort retrieved geometries by their distance to the given point and select the first one. Every iteration of this scenario is initialized with a given point. This point is picked at random from a list

of point coordinates extracted from GeoNames.

*Map Search and Browsing.* This scenario demonstrates the queries that are typically used in Web-based mapping applications. A user first searches for points of interest based on thematic criteria. Then, he/she selects a specific point and information about the area around it is retrieved (e.g., POI and roads). Similarly to the "Reverse Geocoding" scenario, this scenario is initialized by picking at random a toponym from a list of toponyms extracted by GeoNames. The coordinates of this toponym is retrieved by the first query of the scenario. Then, these coordinates are used to create an area of interest which is used by the remaining two queries. These queries retrieve points of interest (from GeoNames) and roads (from OSM) that lie inside this area.

*Rapid Mapping for Wild Fire Monitoring.* This scenario tests queries which retrieve map layers for creating a map that can be used by decision makers tasked with the monitoring of wild fires. This application has been studied in detail in project TELEIOS [40] and the scenario covers its core querying needs. First, spatial selections are used to retrieve basic information of interest (e.g., roads, administrative areas, etc.). Second, more complex information can be derived using spa-

Query	Description
<b>Geocoding</b>	
G1	Geocode left side of roads (from Census)
G2	Geocode right side of roads (from Census)
<b>Reverse Geocoding</b>	
RG1	Find the closest populated place (from GeoNames)
RG2	Find the closest motorway (from OSM)
<b>Map Search and Browsing</b>	
MSB1	Find the co-ordinates of a given POI based on thematic criteria (from GeoNames)
MSB2	Find other POI in a given bounding box around these co-ordinates (from GeoNames)
MSB3	Find roads in a given bounding box around these co-ordinates (from OSM)
<b>Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring</b>	
RM1	Find the land cover of areas inside a given bounding box (from CLC)
RM2	Find primary roads inside a given bounding box (from OSM)
RM3	Find municipality boundaries inside a given bounding box (from GAG)
RM4	Find detected hotspots inside a given bounding box (from Hotspots)
RM5	Find coniferous forests inside a given bounding box which are on fire (from CLC and Hotspots)
RM6	Find road segments inside a given bounding box which may be damaged by fire (from OSM and Hotspots)
<b>Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets</b>	
CS1	Compute how many instances of each CLC class exist in a municipality (from CLC)
CS2	Compute how many instances of each GeoNames class exist in a municipality (from GeoNames)
CS3	Compute how many instances of each GeoNames class exist in areas characterized as "Continuous Urban Fabric" according to CLC (from GeoNames and CLC)

**Table 5:** Queries of the macro benchmark

tial joins and non-topological functions. For example, a user may be interested in those road segments damaged by fire. We point out that this scenario is representative of many rapid mapping tasks encountered in EO applications. Again, a list of areas, and the relevant time, where fire occurred has been compiled by data from the real fire monitoring application and used to randomly initialize each iteration of this scenario.

*Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets.* This scenario concentrates on generating a high level overview of geospatial datasets by calculating summary statistics (e.g., how many fields are identified as agricultural by a dataset) and discovering correlations between different datasets describing the same geographical area (e.g., how many farms in Crete, according to GeoNames, lie in areas that are identified as agricultural areas by CLC). Since geospatial datasets are produced in many ways (e.g., contributed by users, produced by experts using surveys, satellite images, aerial photographs, etc.) such overviews and comparisons are meaningful and interesting for specialists. An example of user-contributed data is GeoNames. In this dataset, users provide information about points on a map and a two level schema, with various classes, is used to characterize these geographic features with broad terms (e.g., administrative division, waterbody, road) or more specific terms (e.g., village, lake, tunnel). On the other hand, specialists, such as geographers and cartographers, have compiled information originated from aerial photographs, topographic maps, satellite images, etc. to

create the CLC dataset, that provides information about the land cover in European countries using a more targeted schema with broader terms (e.g., urban fabric, agricultural area, etc.). Despite the fact that these two datasets contain different kinds of information, the comparison between them can help to evaluate the consistency between these datasets in order to validate the provided information. For example a useful query would be to discover the kind of geographic features, according to GeoNames, that are contained in areas of CLC with specific land use. It is expected that urban areas should contain more features identified as roads, buildings, bus/metro stations etc., while agricultural areas should contain more geographic features identified as farms, irrigated fields, plantations, etc. In project TELEIOS we investigated such a scenario in collaboration with the German Aerospace Center (DLR).

DLR used the knowledge discovery and data mining framework for satellite images presented in [41] to identify semantic classes of geographic features (e.g., parking area, port, etc.) in radar images from the archive of the TerraSAR-X satellite. Since the knowledge discovery and data mining framework relies on semi-supervised machine learning techniques, the comparison of the DLR classification with classifications of other datasets can prove important for the training phase of these techniques but also for evaluating the effectiveness of the framework.

This scenario is composed of three queries that represent two main query categories that were useful in

the DLR use case of the project TELEIOS. The first category (first level statistics) computes statistics about one dataset (e.g., compute the distribution of CLC classes in a city). The second category (second level statistics) helps to investigate possible correlations between datasets by computing statistics that involve two datasets (e.g., compute how many instances of each GeoNames class lie in areas characterized as "continuous urban fabric" by CLC). Such queries are usually applied for a specific area (e.g., a city, a country). A list of the minimum bounding rectangles of all Greek municipalities have been created and for each iteration of this scenario the queries are applied to a randomly selected bounding rectangle. The main characteristic of these queries is that they compute aggregations over spatial selections of a dataset and spatial joins between two datasets. The results of the queries can later be visualized (e.g., on a chart) to provide insights on the correlations of these datasets. Since the classification that was produced using the techniques developed by DLR is not freely available, we decided to use the publicly available dataset GeoNames to keep our experiments easily reproducible. This scenario, also, compares GeoNames with information from CLC which is also publicly available.

## 5.2. Synthetic Workload

The synthetic workload of Geographica 2 relies on a generator that produces synthetic datasets of various sizes and instantiates query templates that can produce queries with varying thematic and spatial selectivity. In this way, the evaluation of geospatial RDF stores can be performed in a controlled environment in order to measure their performance with great precision. The synthetic generator is a component of Geographica 2 and is distributed freely as open-source software.

### 5.2.1. Datasets

The workload generator produces synthetic datasets of arbitrary size that resemble features on a map. As in VESPA [12], the produced datasets model the following geographic features: country states, land ownership, roads and points of interest. For each dataset, we developed a minimal ontology that follows a general version of the schema of OSM and uses GeoSPARQL ontologies and vocabularies. In Figure 2(a) the developed ontology for representing points of interest is presented. As in [19, 2], every feature (i.e., point of interest) is assigned a number of thematic tags each of which consists of a key-value pair of strings. Each feature is tagged with key 1, every other feature with key 2, every fourth feature with key 4, etc. up to

key  $2^k, k \in \mathbb{N}$ . This tagging makes it possible to select different parts of the entire dataset in a uniform way, and perform queries of various thematic selectivities. For example, if we selected all points of interest tagged with key 1, we would retrieve all available points of interest, if we selected all points of interest tagged with key 2, we would retrieve half of them, etc.

Every feature has a spatial extent that is modelled using the GeoSPARQL vocabulary. The spatial extent of the land ownership dataset constitutes a uniform grid of  $n \times n$  hexagons. The land ownership dataset forms the basis for the spatial extent of all generated datasets since the size of each dataset is given relatively to the number  $n$ . By modifying the number of hexagons along an axis, datasets of arbitrary size can be produced. As we will see in the following section, this enabled us to adjust the selectivity of the spatial predicates appearing in queries in a uniform way too.

As in [12], the generated land ownership dataset consists of  $n^2$  features with hexagonal spatial extent, where each hexagon is placed uniformly on a  $n \times n$  grid. The cardinality of the land ownerships is  $n^2$ . The generated state dataset consists of  $(\frac{n}{3})^2$  features with hexagonal spatial extent, where each hexagon is placed uniformly on a  $\frac{n}{3} \times \frac{n}{3}$  grid. The cardinality of the state geometries is  $(\frac{n}{3})^2$ . The generated road dataset consists of  $n$  features with sloping line geometries. Half of the line geometries are roughly horizontal and the other half are roughly vertical. Each line consists of  $\frac{n}{2} + 1$  line segments. The cardinality of the road geometries is  $n$ . The generated point of interest dataset consists of  $n^2$  features with point geometries which are uniformly placed on  $n$  sloping, evenly spaced, parallel lines. The cardinality of the point of interest geometries is  $n^2$ . In Figure 2(b), a sample of the generated geometries is presented. Large blue hexagons represent country states, land ownerships are depicted as small red hexagons, horizontal and vertical gray sloping lines map to roads and tiny green circles represent points of interest.

### 5.2.2. Queries

The synthetic workload generator produces SPARQL queries corresponding to spatial selection and spatial joins using the two query templates presented in Table 6.

The query template, presented in Table 6(a), used for producing SPARQL queries corresponding to spatial selections is identical to the query template used in [19, 2]. In this query template, parameter `THEMA` is one of the values used when assigning tags to a feature and parameter `GEOM` is the WKT serialization of a rectangle. As in [2], we define the *thematic selectivity* of a query as the

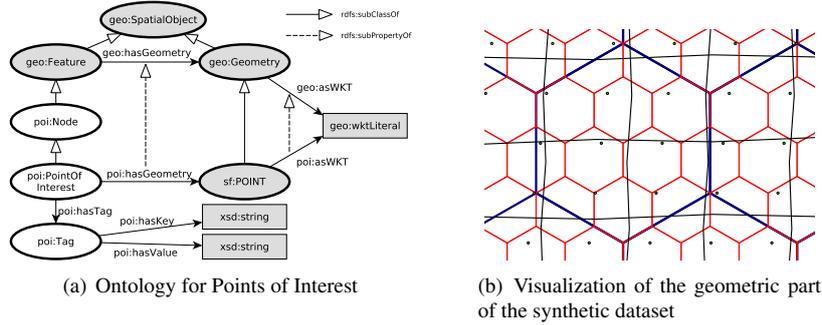


Figure 2: Synthetic Dataset

fraction of the total features of a dataset that are tagged with a key equal to THEMA. For example, by altering the value of THEMA from 1 to 2, the thematic selectivity of the query is reduced by selecting half the nodes it previously did. We define the *spatial selectivity* of a query as the fraction of the total features for which the topological relations defined by parameter FUNCTION holds between each of them and the rectangle defined by parameter GEOM. By modifying the value of the parameter namespace ns we specify the dataset and the corresponding type of geometric information that is examined by an instance of the query template.

The query template, presented in Table 6(b), used for producing SPARQL queries corresponding to spatial joins involves two datasets identified by the values of the parameter namespaces ns1 and ns2. In this query template, parameters THEMA1 and THEMA2 control the thematic selectivity of the query. The value of parameter FUNCTION defines the topological relation that must hold between instances of the two datasets that are involved in an instance of the query template. Parameter FUNCTION can be instantiated with every function defined in the Geometry Topology Extension component of GeoSPARQL. In our experiments, as described in Section 6.3.2, `geof:sfIntersects`, `geof:sfTouches`, `geof:sfWithin` were used. For example, by instantiating the query template (b) with the values `poi` for ns1, `state` for ns2, 1 for THEMA1, 2 for THEMA2 and `geof:sfWithin` for FUNCTION, we get a SPARQL query that asks for all generated points of interest that are inside half of the generated states.

These query templates allow us to generate SPARQL queries with great diversity regarding their spatial and thematic selectivity, thus stressing the optimizers of the geospatial RDF stores that we test and evaluating their effectiveness in identifying efficient query plans.

### 5.3. Scalability Workload

*Scalability* has been an important metric regarding the evaluation of various kinds of systems, such as multiprocessor, network, database and distributed systems [42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49]. In the context of this paper, the scalability experiment aims at discovering the limits of the systems under test as the number of triples in the dataset increase. Each system is tested against six increasingly bigger, proper subsets of the reference dataset. For each system-dataset combination we measure (i) *the repository size* on disk, (ii) *the bulk loading time* taking into consideration the limitations of loading methods of each system and (iii) *the response time* in three queries which represent a spatial selection, a heavy spatial join with high spatial selectivity and a lighter spatial join with lower spatial selectivity.

#### 5.3.1. Datasets

*Reference Dataset Characteristics.* The reference dataset created has an approximate size of 500 million triples. The OSM data concern the following list of countries: *Wales, Scotland, Greece, Northern Ireland, England* and *Germany*. The feature classes selected are: *buildings, landuse, natural, places, points of interest, railways, roads, traffic, transport, water* and *waterways*. CLC-2012 is the 2012 version of the CLC dataset presented earlier. Its data covers the 33 European Environment Agency member countries and six cooperating countries.

The reference dataset has been assembled in the following order: OSM (Wales, Scotland, Greece, Northern Ireland, England, Germany), CLC-2012. Table 7 presents the order and size of each part of the data comprising the reference dataset.

*Reference Dataset Requirements.* For the scalability experiment we needed to design a reference dataset from which we could create six datasets of increasing

(a)	(b)
<pre>SELECT ?s WHERE { ?s ns:hasGeometry/ns:asWKT ?g. ?s c:hasTag/ns:hasKey "THEMA". FILTER(FUNCTION(?g, "GEOM"))}</pre>	<pre>SELECT ?s1 ?s2 WHERE { ?s1 ns1:hasGeometry/ns1:asWKT ?g1. ?s1 ns1:hasTag/ns1:hasKey "THEMA1". ?s2 ns2:hasGeometry/ns2:asWKT ?g2. ?s2 ns2:hasTag/ns2:hasKey "THEMA2". FILTER(FUNCTION(?g1, ?g2))}</pre>

**Table 6:** Query templates for generating SPARQL queries corresponding to (a) spatial selections, and (b) spatial joins.

Datasets	Country	Triples (M)	Size (MB)
OSM	Wales	6.56	1,206
	Scotland	15.78	2,913
	Greece	15.22	2,877
	N. Ireland	15.27	3,240
	England	104.21	18,965
	Germany	326.48	59,002
CLC-2012	39 countries	16.60	11,283
<b>Totals</b>		483.52	99,486

**Table 7:** Scalability workload: reference dataset sources

size. This reference dataset had to satisfy the following requirements: (1) contain real life data, (2) be realistically big for the given infrastructure, (3) contain features of multiple types of geometries (points, lines, polygons), (4) have an as homogeneous feature class distribution as possible among the six datasets, meaning (4a) avoid having fewer feature classes in the smaller datasets so that thematic filtering and by extension spatial filtering would behave in a predictable and unbiased manner and (4b) guarantee that as datasets become bigger, a similar assortment of feature classes will be present, but with more instances per class, (5) if possible, include data with highly complex geometries to stress even more the store’s geospatial capabilities, (6) the different data sources must have an overlapping spatial extent in order for spatial comparisons to be meaningful.

*Reference Dataset Design and Creation.* Requirements (1), (2), (3) were met by a subset of the OSM dataset since it is big enough, with real life data and has features with all the main types of geometries. Requirement (5) was met by the CORINE Land Cover 2012 (CLC-2012)<sup>36</sup> dataset since it contains very detailed geometries such as burned forest areas. The spatial extent of the OSM countries selected fall well within the spatial extent of the CLC-2012 dataset, therefore requirement (6) was satisfied. In order to meet requirement (4), we had to also take into account that the OSM dataset has the same feature classes per country, each data file

describes one feature class per country and that these files differ greatly in size. Therefore, in order to satisfy (4b) we had to use the OSM dataset first and the CLC-2012 second, and for OSM we needed to start from countries with smaller number of triples. In order to satisfy (4a) we had to sort the files of each country based on their file size in ascending order before concatenating them.

*Scalability workload characteristics.* By selecting six subsets containing 10K, 100K, 1M, 10M, 100M and 500M triples of the reference dataset, we created the corresponding six scalability datasets which were used in the scalability benchmark. The basic characteristics of the datasets (e.g., features and geometries) are described in Table 8. The property `<http://data.linkedeodata.eu/ontology#has_code>` (*Igo:has\_code*) was used for thematic filtering in scalability join queries and Table 9 shows the distribution of this property’s values and the value ranges used.

### 5.3.2. Queries

To find an appropriate set of queries we took into consideration multiple factors, such as: (i) the performance of the systems under test with the smaller workloads was presented in previous sections, which showed that only few stores can perform well with spatial joins (see Section 6), (ii) spatial joins are extremely heavy when it involves polygons, (iii) the datasets from 10M triples onward contain a very high number of polygon geometries, (iv) thematic selectivity should be used only if necessary and without breaking the expected load scaling

<sup>36</sup><https://land.copernicus.eu/pan-european/corine-land-cover/clc-2012>

Dataset	# of Features	# of Points	# of Lines	# of Polygons
10K	1,135	587	0	900
100K	12,166	6,623	4,239	2,531
1M	118,161	46,781	45,238	29,200
10M	1,038,739	317,865	328,630	427,842
100M	10,259,959	904,677	2,058,386	7,553,440
500M	48,623,878	5,520,767	15,771,932	23,390,220

**Table 8:** Scalability datasets basic characteristics

lgo:has_code	lgo:has_fclass	10K	100K	1M	10M	100M	500M
1001 (used in SC2, SC3)	city	1	1	7	14	84	232
5601	railway_station	15	284	284	669	1,194	8,449
5621	bus_stop	4	4,416	4,416	22,337	35,555	503,455
5622	bus_station	36	46	46	98	425	2,647
5641	taxi	7	43	43	217	886	5,798
5661	ferry_terminal	4	18	18	153	583	1,508
5601,5621,5622,5641,5661 (used in SC3)		66	4,807	4,807	23,488	38,643	521,857
(5001-5999) - {5260} (used in SC2)	transportation except parking	66	4,875	11,412	264,199	1,978,632	16,151,652

**Table 9:** Value distribution of *lgo:has\_code* in scalability datasets

as datasets got bigger, ( $\nu$ ) queries should provide some narrative and avoid useless Cartesian products between unrelated geometries.

Factors (*i*), (*ii*), (*iii*) led to the decision of introducing thematic selectivity in the spatial join query to have some stores that could successfully run it. Factor ( $\nu$ ) led to the decision of having a fixed thematic selectivity of the first part of the join to the feature class *city* (*lgd:has\_code* 1001). Factor (*iv*) obliged us to find an appropriate feature class range for the thematic selectivity of the second part of the join, which was the group of feature classes that represent transportation (*lgd:has\_code* 5001-5999) with the exception of 'parking' which had a high number of instances. Even this thematic selectivity proved high enough to create difficulties to some RDF stores and we provided an additional lighter variant of the join query by limiting the thematic selectivity of the second part of the join to the following list of feature classes: *railway\_station* (5601), *bus\_stop* (5621), *bus\_station* (5622), *taxi\_stands* (5641) and *ferry\_terminals* (5661). These two join queries are SC2 and SC3 respectively and Table 9 presents a quantitative view of the expected number of spatial operations for each join query and each dataset.

SC1 query is a spatial selection that uses a polygon literal to filter geometries both from OSM and CLC-2012 datasets. Major cities of countries of the OSM dataset such as *Athens*, *Thessaloniki*, *Munich*, *London*,

*Edinburgh*, *Belfast* and *Cardiff* were used as the polygon's vertices, thus asserting that it covers areas from all countries of the selected OSM dataset and areas from an augmented set of countries of the CLC-2012 dataset that include France, Italy, Austria, Belgium, etc.

The queries used for this test are listed in Table 10.

### 5.3.3. Systems

For this test we choose the following three systems to participate: *Strabon*, *GraphDB* and *RDF4J*. Each of these systems has: (a) adequate support of GeoSPARQL, (b) is a good representative of a different design flavor of RDF store, and (c) is actively supported by the corresponding team. *Strabon* is a hybrid system using Sesame RDF framework and PostgreSQL RDBMS extended with PostGIS geospatial capabilities. *RDF4J* is an RDF Framework that supports GeoSPARQL. *GraphDB* is an RDF Store based on *RDF4J* which it extends with specialized libraries for its geospatial capabilities, among other things. As mentioned previously, our intention was to include the latest beta version of OpenLink Virtuoso which is a well established RDF Store but as explained in Section 4.2 our preliminary evaluation results showed that we should wait for a stable release that will cover bigger part of the features that are evaluated in our benchmark.

Query	Description
SC1	Find all geometries that intersect with the given polygon
SC2	Find all transportation-related features (except parkings) within a city
SC3	Find all bus stops, bus stations, railway stations, taxis and ferry terminals within a city

**Table 10:** Queries of the scalability benchmark

## 6. Benchmark Results

This section presents the results of running Geographica against six geospatial RDF stores. As mentioned earlier, we test the open source systems Strabon v3.2.9, uSeekM v1.2.1, Parliament v2.7.4, a proprietary RDF store, called here System X, GraphDB v8.6.1 and RDF4J v2.4.3.

### 6.1. Experimental Setup

This section describes the setup of the experiments used to evaluate the selected triple stores. The machine that was used to run the benchmark is equipped with two Intel Xeon E5620 processors with 12 MB L3 cache running at 2.4 GHz, 32 GB of RAM and a RAID-5 disk array that consists of four disks, 4 x 1.5 TB. Each disk has 32 MB of cache and its rotational speed is 7200 rpm. The experiments of Geographica have been performed on an Ubuntu 12.04 installation, however System X is not officially supported on Ubuntu systems. Alternatively, System X comes with its own Linux distribution that also provides a dedicated volume manager and a file system. Therefore, this distribution was used for System X experiments. Also, System X supports parallelism in query execution. Thus, System X was tested in two different modes; a mode where queries are executed in a single process (indicated as “Ser.” in tables and figures) and a mode (indicated as “Par.” in tables and figures) where the parallel query feature of System X is used. This way, we can assess about how much parallelism can speed up query evaluation.

Each query in the micro, synthetic and scalability benchmarks was run three times on cold and warm caches. For warm caches, each query ran once before measuring the response time, in order to warm up the caches. We measured the response time of each query by measuring the elapsed time from submitting the query until a complete iteration over the results had been completed. The response time of each query was measured and the median of each measurement is reported. The experiments of the macro benchmark have a slightly different setup, each scenario ran many times (with different initialization each time, as described in

Section 5.1.3) for one hour without cleaning the caches and the average time for a complete execution of all queries of each scenario are reported. The time limit for real world and synthetic benchmarks was set to one hour for all queries, while for the scalability benchmark queries it was set to twenty four hours.

Strabon and uSeekM utilize PostgreSQL enhanced with PostGIS as a spatially-enabled relational back-end. For these systems, an instance of PostgreSQL 9.2 with PostGIS 2.0 was used. Because the default settings of PostgreSQL are rather conservative, it was tuned to make better use of the system resources. First, the system configuration file `sysctl.conf` was edited to increase the amount of available shared memory (e.g., increasing the kernel parameter `kernel.shmmax`) and the maximum number of files that can be opened (e.g., increasing the file system parameter `fs.file-max`). Second, the PostgreSQL configuration file `postgresql.conf` was edited. PostgreSQL was enabled to exploit the increased shared memory. Also, we would like to avoid resource intensive operations, like Write-Ahead Logging checkpoints. Thus by editing parameters like `checkpoint_segments`, and `wall_level` we force such operations to happen less frequently and consume less resources than usual. Finally, some parameters were edited so that the query evaluation planner produces better query evaluation plans by avoiding genetic query optimization techniques, merging subqueries into upper queries, and reordering joins. A detailed report of the configuration parameters used is given on the web site of the benchmark.

For every dataset of Geographica, a unique property is used to connect geometries with their serialization (e.g. CLC we use the property `clc:asWKT`), and this property is defined as a subproperty of the property `geo:asWKT` that is defined by GeoSPARQL. Parliament is able to identify and index a triple that represents the serialization of a geometric object only when the property `geo:asWKT` is used. As a result, the RDFS reasoning capabilities of Parliament have to be enabled so that it performs forward chaining during data loading and indexes the geometry using the spatial index as well. Strabon, uSeekM, System X, GraphDB and RDF4J do not

perform any reasoning on the input data. Specifically for RDF4J the Lucene index option had been enabled since it was explicitly and unreservedly suggested as a geospatial optimization in the official documentation. However further tests revealed that the Lucene spatial index increased costs in the repository size and load time do not provide any substantial benefit in most scenarios but instead deteriorate the query response times. Support questions confirmed that this is probably a performance issue,<sup>37,38</sup> therefore RDF4J was tested in two different modes; One with the Lucene Sail enabled (indicated as "Lucene enabled" in tables) and one with no Lucene Sail. The RDF4J results for both experimentation modes have been included in all tables but only the non-Lucene indexed results were included in figures and charts, since they were the best ones. We also encountered technical issues connecting with the GraphDB Free runtime to GraphDB repositories which had the GeoSPARQL plugin enabled, thus we had to disable the plugin for all tests. In this mode no geospatial data is indexed and no GeoSPARQL predicates are handled but only queries with GeoSPARQL functions which are always enabled.

## 6.2. Real World Workload

### 6.2.1. Dataset Storage

This section discusses the time required by each system to store and index the datasets of the real world workload, as shown in Table 11. Also, Table 12 reports the size in MB of the repositories created by each RDF store.

Strabon uses a storing scheme which is called "per-predicate" scheme. This scheme creates a relational table, in the underlying DBMS, for every unique predicate in the input data. These tables are called *predicate tables* and store pairs of subject and object that are associated with a specific predicate. This storing scheme may lead to the creation of many predicate tables and consequently high storing times, if the input data contains a lot of predicates. Apart from incremental loading methods, Strabon provides a bulk loader which produces CSV files that emulate this "per-predicate" scheme and copies them into PostgreSQL. The Strabon bulk loader merges in a single relational table, which is called *triple table*, triples containing predicates that are rarely used in the input data. Thus, the number of created predicate tables is reduced together with the required storing time. The storing times of Strabon are, still, affected by the

number of predicates used in a dataset. The real world dataset contains various different datasets that also contain a lot of predicates. So, Strabon needs more time than uSeekM to store the real world dataset.

uSeekM needs slightly less time than Strabon to store the real world dataset, because it is based on the native repository of Sesame which is known to be the most efficient implementation of Sesame for average sized datasets. This happens because uSeekM stores geometry literals in PostGIS which is more time consuming than storing data in the native repository of Sesame. If the input data does not contain any geometry literals, then uSeekM is entirely based on the native repository of Sesame and achieves much better storing times. Because the Census dataset contains much more geometry literals than the rest real world datasets and it uses much less predicates, uSeekM needs more time to store it than Strabon.

Parliament is slower than uSeekM and Strabon at storing the real world workload datasets, as it requires more time to perform forward chaining on the input dataset in order to index its geometry literals, as described in Section 6.1. However this overhead becomes less important in the case of the Census dataset and Parliament needs less time to store it than Strabon and uSeekM.

System X provides two bulk loading methods. The first, which is based on SQL operations inside its underlying RDBMS, is designed to provide fast loading but does not support large literals. The second uses a Java API and supports large literals but needs more time to store a dataset. For storing the real world workload the Java bulk loading method was used, because of the many large literals that some datasets contain. For example, the CLC dataset contains the longest literal that has size 9.3 MBs. Thus, System X needs at least twice more time than the other RDF stores to store and index data from the real world workload. The Census dataset does not contain big literals, so the SQL bulk loader of System X was used to store it and easily outperformed Strabon, uSeekM and Parliament.

GraphDB has several load methods of which two can be considered as bulk loaders since their are designed for offline loading of data sets, directly serializing RDF data into the internal indexes. *LoadRDF* is fast but as load data variety grows a small degradation occurs because of page splits and tree rebalancing. *PreLoad* is ultra fast with no speed degradation, because of its two-phase load design, which allows it to first process in memory all RDF data creating multiple GraphDB repository images and later on sorting and merging these into the final repository image. Both

<sup>37</sup><https://github.com/eclipse/rdf4j/issues/1281>

<sup>38</sup><https://github.com/eclipse/rdf4j/issues/1160>

Workload	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X	GraphDB	RDF4J	
							Lucene enabled
Real world	220	214	250	531	91	82	198
Census	1,255	1,675	1,085	895	358	785	3,819
Synthetic	221	406	462	270	118	160	250

Table 11: Storing times (sec.)

Workload	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X	GraphDB	RDF4J	
							Lucene enabled
Real world	1,181	997	1,508	2,591	696	625	1,220
Census	5,221	2,952	4,087	6,598	1,765	2,199	6,235
Synthetic	1,271	1,211	1,763	17,088	513	632	763

Table 12: Repository sizes (MB)

tools have the option of enabling parallel multithreaded operation. From our preliminary tests it was clear that PreLoad was the fastest tool of the two in all datasets but the smallest ones. Therefore the tool of choice was PreLoad tool for all workloads with the parallel option enabled. In the real world dataset which is the smallest it recorded the second best time very close to RDF4J's and in all other datasets it outperformed most of the other systems by a factor greater than x2.

RDF4J has a single method for loading data and it records the best time for the real world dataset and the second best for the census dataset. With the Lucene index enabled it performs better than uSeekM, Parliament, System X and Strabon's bulk loader. However for the bigger census dataset the Lucene indexing cost becomes very high and thus RDF4J needs more than double the time compared to uSeekM which is the second slowest system.

Regarding storage space, System X is the most demanding RDF store while GraphDB and RDF4J are again the most efficient ones. System X requires a lot of storage space mainly for semantic indexes and also big literals (e.g., for the CLC dataset), that are stored as BLOB (binary large object) in its internal RDBMS. RDF4J statement indexes are B-trees with 4-letter composite index keys in various combinations (S=statement, P=predicate, O=object, C=context). By default there are two main indices SPOC, POSC and we enabled the context COSP index only for datasets with multiple graphs, such as the real world dataset. RDF4J with the Lucene spatial indexing has high storage requirements for the real world and census datasets which have the most complex geometries. With the Lucene

indexing disabled, RDF4J needs the least storage space for the real world dataset and is the second best for the Census dataset. uSeekM stores most of the data into the native store of Sesame which does not require a lot of storage space and only triples with spatial literal are stored into PostgreSQL. So, it needs less space. For GraphDB there are two main statement indices POS and PSO, the context index CPSO which was enabled for datasets with multiple graphs. The GeoSPARQL plugin was not enabled, which helped allocating the least amount of space. Strabon and Parliament have average space requirements. Strabon stores all data in PostgreSQL while Parliament uses customized binary files to store triples and indexes and it uses a Berkley DB<sup>39</sup> file to implement the resource dictionary.

### 6.2.2. Micro Benchmark

The query response times of the micro benchmark with cold caches are shown in Table 13 and the corresponding results with warm caches are shown in Table 14. The two tables are very similar in terms of how the systems are performing hence we do not discuss these tables separately below.

*Non-topological construct functions.* First, the results of evaluating the queries with non-topological functions are reported. Computing the area of polygons (Query Q6) was tested only in uSeekM, Strabon, System X and GraphDB since Parliament and RDF4J do not offer such functionality. For this class of queries, GraphDB

<sup>39</sup><http://www.oracle.com/us/products/database/berkeley-db/overview/index.html>

Type	Query	Cold caches (sec.)							
		Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X		GraphDB	RDF4J	
					Parallel	Serial		Lucene enabled	
Non topological construct functions	Q1	42.33	38.11	152.71	62.58	293.85	29.68	37.24	37.34
	Q2	22.48	21.47	90.23	44.02	204.65	14.55	18.41	18.75
	Q3	29.48	27.06	98.56	45.86	213.47	19.42	24.57	24.56
	Q4	7.65	3.22	23.16	19.62	309.00	3.20	3.32	3.48
	Q5	14.68	4.17	21.63	23.60	236.60	7.45	4.52	4.64
	Q6	23.82	19.58	-	39.87	199.25	13.53	-	-
Spatial selections	Q7	0.36	1.22	2.42	long string	long string	5.33	3.64	3.97
	Q8	0.42	0.57	7.69	long string	long string	2.04	1.76	1.78
	Q9	0.83	1.27	35.03	long string	long string	28.28	40.46	40.60
	Q10	0.73	1.51	76.85	long string	long string	22.24	25.40	25.24
	Q11	2.66	2.96	195.87	long string	long string	114.29	164.48	164.84
	Q12	0.79	0.55	2.39	8.87	6.07	1.02	0.65	0.67
	Q13	0.82	0.89	63.14	long string	long string	49.67	72.89	72.20
	Q14	0.50	2.29	24.34	13.33	11.35	4.13	1.85	1.90
	Q15	0.50	0.99	3.44	10.24	10.27	0.93	0.44	0.48
	Q16	2.79	5.52	63.20	long string	long string	50.61	72.86	72.34
Q17	3.06	1.60	35.89	long string	long string	28.31	40.41	40.06	
Spatial joins	Q18	4.52	2233.73	2880.20	>1h	14.51	942.89	2894.56	2885.72
	Q19	1272.54	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q20	115.93	>1h	>1h	>1h	396.29	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q21	113.26	>1h	>1h	>1h	409.54	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q22	26.33	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q23	26.29	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q24	26.66	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q25	342.87	>1h	>1h	>1h	1,629.45	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q26	343.30	534.61	2040.00	909.18	>1h	466.86	326.22	324.79
Q27	343.72	>1h	>1h	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	
Aggregate functions	Q28	3.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Q29	258.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 13: Response times (cold) - real world workload

Type	Query	Warm caches (sec.)							
		Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X		GraphDB	RDF4J	
					Parallel	Serial		Lucene enabled	
Non topological construct functions	Q1	41.36	36.25	132.67	57.45	296.96	27.36	36.93	37.20
	Q2	21.06	19.35	70.62	35.35	187.71	13.26	17.80	17.96
	Q3	27.73	24.13	79.40	38.25	206.70	18.17	23.94	24.11
	Q4	7.00	3.08	19.67	19.76	334.93	2.15	3.11	3.12
	Q5	13.78	5.00	19.58	17.41	233.53	6.66	4.45	4.47
	Q6	21.06	18.35	-	31.58	160.40	12.67	-	-
Spatial selections	Q7	0.01	0.02	1.36	long string	long string	4.66	3.49	3.46
	Q8	0.06	0.05	5.84	long string	long string	1.64	1.56	1.55
	Q9	0.16	0.05	34.09	long string	long string	27.95	41.07	40.77
	Q10	0.13	0.10	57.18	long string	long string	21.24	24.32	24.14
	Q11	2.03	1.29	175.98	long string	long string	114.95	164.78	163.44
	Q12	0.38	0.03	1.20	4.02	3.99	0.67	0.57	0.57
	Q13	0.13	0.04	59.60	long string	long string	49.65	72.59	71.92
	Q14	0.03	1.63	19.97	4.12	4.03	3.11	1.69	1.68
	Q15	0.12	0.30	0.56	3.94	3.97	0.30	0.26	0.26
	Q16	2.19	1.96	59.85	long string	long string	49.68	72.63	71.97
Q17	2.62	0.86	34.39	long string	long string	27.66	40.28	39.93	
Spatial joins	Q18	3.98	2504.24	2875.02	>1h	11.53	903.33	2972.27	2969.07
	Q19	1284.62	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q20	105.39	>1h	>1h	>1h	365.01	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q21	107.76	>1h	>1h	>1h	364.32	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q22	25.20	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q23	25.01	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q24	25.37	>1h	>1h	internal error	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q25	341.04	>1h	>1h	>1h	1,577.89	>1h	>1h	>1h
	Q26	341.28	534.15	2030.42	955.21	>1h	465.35	325.69	324.04
Q27	342.06	>1h	>1h	internal error	>1h	>1h	>1h	>1h	
Aggregate functions	Q28	2.92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Q29	258.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 14: Response times (warm) - real world workload

and RDF4J are the fastest systems followed closely by uSeekM which does very well in `geof:buffer()` calculations. uSeekM does not utilize PostgreSQL for evaluating these queries, but it is faster because it uses the native store of Sesame which is known to be more efficient, for small datasets, than Sesame implementations on top of an RDBMS, like Strabon. Strabon performance is average while Parliament and System X perform the worse. Parliament needs three or four times more time to evaluate the non-topological functions. Finally, System X, when it runs in serial mode, needs considerably more time to evaluate non-topological queries. System X stores spatial literals in lexical form instead of a dedicated binary geometric type. This means that each time a spatial function is evaluated, the spatial literals must be transformed from lexical to geometry form. This causes a great overhead, especially for the real-world workload that use complex geometries. However, when System X runs in parallel mode this overhead is distributed among all available processors and System X evaluates these queries up to sixteen times faster.

We also observe that none of the RDF stores exploits the warm caches when evaluating non-topological functions. This is because the non-topological functions used in this set of queries are computationally intensive (especially when complex geometries are used) and the time spent in the CPU dominates I/O time.

*Spatial selections.* In the case of spatial selections, Strabon and uSeekM have similar response times while Strabon is the fastest system in most cases. Both systems choose to start the query evaluation process by evaluating the spatial part of a query in PostGIS using the spatial index that is available. uSeekM continues by evaluating the rest of the query using the native store of Sesame. This adds a small overhead compared to Strabon which evaluates the whole query in PostgreSQL and utilizes a unified dictionary encoding scheme for both thematic and spatial information. GraphDB has an average performance which is expected since it does not use its spatial indexing capabilities while RDF4J and Parliament are at the low end of the list. RDF4J performs very well in queries that deal with points and lines, average with polygon equality test and very low for all other operations with polygons. Parliament, depending on the query, it may need even three orders of magnitude more time than Strabon and uSeekM to evaluate a spatial selection. This happens because the query optimizer of Parliament does not take into consideration filters containing GeoSPARQL functions, so it evaluates the spatial predicate exhaustively over the results of the thematic part of the query. System X is optimized for relatively simple spatial literals, while the tested spatial

selections receive as parameter quite complex polygons and linestrings. For example, the WKT serialization of some polygons are even 10 KB long. Thus, System X returned an error or raised an exception (written as "long string" in Tables 13, 14) for most of the spatial selection queries and it responded to only Query Q12 which uses a small linestring and queries Q14 and Q15 which filter using points.

Let us now consider queries Q14 and Q15, that are semantically equivalent, but they are evaluated in different ways. Both ask for points that have a given distance from a given point. However, Query Q14 creates the buffer of a given point with radius  $r$  and asks for points which are within this buffer, while Query Q15 asks for points that lie within distance less than  $r$  from the given point. uSeekM and Parliament evaluate both queries by starting with the thematic part of the query and then they evaluate exhaustively the spatial operations without using the spatial index. GraphDB follows the same path since it does not have a spatial index. Query Q14 is evaluated slower, than Query 15, by these systems, because calculating the distance between two points is much cheaper than computing the buffer of a point and evaluating the corresponding point-in-polygon operation. Strabon follows a similar process for responding to Query Q15. However, for query Q14, Strabon calculates the buffer of the given polygon, and uses it to probe the spatial index for discovering points that lie inside the constructed polygon. This choice is a good one and the response time of query Q14 is the same as the one of query Q15. Finally, System X evaluates query Q14 with a similar process to Strabon, and regarding query Q15 it is the only system that uses an internal distance function that is able to perform index search instead of evaluating the distance filter over all intermediate results. So, it achieves similar times for both queries Q14 and Q15. For these selection queries, parallelism does not have significant impact on response times, that are very low independently of whether parallelism is being used or not.

*Spatial Joins.* In the case of spatial joins, uSeekM, Parliament, GraphDB and RDF4J are able to evaluate only queries Q18 and Q26 given the time limit of one hour. Parliament, GraphDB and RDF4J do not take into account GeoSPARQL extension functions during the optimization of a query, resulting in query process that evaluate separately the graph patterns corresponding to different graphs, compute the Cartesian product between them, and then apply the spatial predicate to the result of the Cartesian product. This strategy is very costly, thus they are not able to respond to most of the spatial joins within the time limit. uSeekM, also, does

not utilize PostGIS for evaluating spatial joins. Similarly to Parliament, it applies the spatial predicate to the result of the Cartesian product of the graph patterns. Strabon avoids evaluating Cartesian products by identifying graph patterns that are related only through the spatial predicate and pushes the evaluation of the spatial join in PostGIS, thus resulting in very good response times. Strabon has the best performance in all queries with the exception of Q26. In Q26 RDF4J performs the best mainly because the GAG graph is small and the thematic selectivity of the query is high. In Q18 the thematic selectivity is high while the spatial selectivity very low resulting in a similar performance with Parliament's. System X also uses its native RDBMS to evaluate spatial joins and, when running in serial mode, it avoids Cartesian products. But, because of implementation limitations (e.g., the overhead of transforming complex geometries from strings into geometry types) it needs more time than Strabon and it also has some time outs. System X did not responded to Queries Q22, Q23, Q24 and Q27 because of an internal exception. It is interesting that when running in parallel mode, the optimizer of System X prefers to ignore the spatial index and compute a Cartesian product for evaluating most of the spatial joins. These query execution methods, even if they run in parallel mode, lead to higher response times, than the respective methods of serial mode, and time outs.

*Aggregate functions.* Finally, spatial aggregations are tested only in Strabon since it is the only system that supports such functions. Query Q28 which computes the minimum bounding box that contains all geometries of the GAG dataset is much faster than Query Q29 which computes the union of the same geometries since the former operation is much cheaper than the latter one which is computationally expensive.

A general comment about RDF4J is that in the micro benchmark the Lucene index did not make any difference in the query response times.

### 6.2.3. Macro Benchmark

The results of the macro benchmark are shown in Table 15. In this table the average time needed for a complete iteration of all queries of each scenario is reported.

The "Geocoding" scenario includes only thematic queries that retrieve geographic information. Thus, uSeekM evaluates the whole queries in the native Sesame store achieving very fast response times. RDF4J performs second best and GraphDB which is also based on RDF4J follows close by. System X also has very fast response times both in serial and parallel

mode and it is the fourth fastest RDF store for this scenario. RDF4J with the Lucene index performs average because it is not used in these queries. Strabon uses its underlying RDBMS and has slower response times, while Parliament is the slowest RDF store in this scenario.

The "Reverse Geocoding" scenario has two queries which use the function `distance` to sort retrieved geometries and select the first result that is closest to a given point. GraphDB performs the best in this scenario and is followed closely by RDF4J, uSeekM and RDF4J with Lucene. Parliament also has a fast response in this scenario, but it is 3 to 4 times slower than the systems of the first group. On the other hand, System X and Strabon, which are based on an internal RDBMS, need at least an order of magnitude more time to respond to a whole iteration of this scenario.

In order to respond to these nearest-neighbor queries of this scenario, all RDF stores compute the distance of every retrieved geometry from the given point, then they sort these values in ascending order and select the first geometry that corresponds to the minimum distance. Strabon, especially, inserts every value computed by the function `distance` into the respective dictionary encoding table. As more nearest-neighbor queries are posed, this dictionary table is getting bigger and bigger and the performance of Strabon is deteriorating. So, its average iteration time is very high in this scenario. On the contrary, the other systems discard the intermediate distance values, so they achieve faster response times.

The "Map Search and Browsing" scenario has one thematic query and two spatial selection queries. As described in Section 6.2.2, uSeekM and Strabon are efficient in evaluating spatial selections and they have good performance in this scenario as well, followed closely by GraphDB. RDF4J performance in both modes is average while System X (in serial mode) performs the worst in this scenario because of Query MSB3, which asks for complex geometries (linestrings) and gives a lot of results. System X needs, on average, 120 seconds to respond to Query MSB3. In parallel mode the same query needs only around 14 seconds, so the average performance of System X improves. Strabon and Parliament spend most of the time in evaluating this query, as well. On the contrary, uSeekM spends more time in evaluating query MSB1, because it generates the Cartesian product between two triples. But, it has very fast response times so it is still the faster system in this scenario.

The "Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring" scenario is the most demanding one. It comprises three spatial selections queries, but also two complex queries

which include spatial joins and construct new geometries (boundary and intersection). Only Strabon could serve this scenario since all other stores exceeded the time limit of one hour during evaluating queries of this scenario. Parliament, uSeekM, GraphDB and RDF4J timed out while evaluating Query RM6, and System X while evaluating queries RM4 and RM6. These two queries are also the most time consuming for Strabon as well because they produce many results.

Finally, the "Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets" scenario tests computing aggregations over simple spatial selections or spatial joins of geospatial datasets. In this scenario uSeekM is the fastest system that needs, on average, less than a second to respond to all three queries of this scenario. The second fastest system is Strabon that needs about 5 seconds to respond to a full iteration of this scenario. GraphDB, RDF4J and System X have an average performance. Parliament is the slowest store which spends the most of the time in evaluating Query CS1, while for the rest of the systems Query CS2 which contains a spatial join is the most time consuming. Finally, System X has similar performance both in parallel and serial mode.

### 6.3. Synthetic Workload

Let us now discuss experiments that were run using a synthetic workload that was produced by the generator presented in Section 5. A dataset was generated by setting  $n = 512$  and  $k = 9$ , where  $n$  is the number used for defining the cardinalities of the generated geometries, and  $k$  is the number used for defining the cardinalities of the generated tag values. This dataset produced using the synthetic generator contains 262, 144 land ownership instances, 28, 900 states, 512 roads and 262, 144 points of interest. All features are tagged with key 1, every other feature with key 2, etc. up to key 512. The resulting dataset consists of 3,880,224 triples and its size is 745 MB.

#### 6.3.1. Dataset Storage

Table 11 presents the time required by each system to store and index the synthetic dataset and Table 12 presents the required storage space.

The synthetic dataset has fewer predicates and more geometries than the real world one. GraphDB is the fastest system because of the parallel multi-threaded operation of the PreLoad tool and because the GeoSPARQL plugin was disabled. RDF4J performs very well and is placed second. With the additional cost of Lucene spatial indexing, it still performs close to Strabon's time and that is because the

synthetic dataset is relatively small. uSeekM requires more time than Strabon for storing the dataset, since it stores it in a Sesame native store and then it stores triples with geometric information in PostGIS as well. This overhead is significant compared to the total time required for storing the dataset, but leads to better response times of uSeekM in case of evaluating a query with low spatial selectivity, as discussed in Section 6.3.2 (see Figures 3(a)- 3(h)). As already explained in Section 6.2.1, Parliament needs more time to store the synthetic dataset as well as the real world dataset because it performs forward chaining on the input data. The synthetic dataset does not contain any huge literals so we were able to use the SQL bulk loader of System X to store this data. As in the case of the Census dataset, the SQL bulk loader achieves much better storage times than the Java API used to store the real world workload dataset.

Regarding storage space, GraphDB requires the least space because it uses the two basic indexes POS and PSO and the GeoSPARQL plugin was disabled. RDF4J is a little more demanding because it uses by default the more complex SPOC, POSC indexes. Also, the SQL bulk loader of System X and the bulk loader of Strabon, which also utilizes SQL operations to load data, achieve similar fast storage. Strabon, uSeekM and Parliament increase their storage demands to cater for the increase in number of facts and geometries. System X has the highest storage demands because of the semantic indexes and big literals.

#### 6.3.2. Queries

We used the query template presented in Table 6(a) in order to produce SPARQL queries corresponding to spatial selections that ask for land ownerships which intersect a given rectangle, and points of interest that are within a given rectangle. The given rectangle is generated in such a way that the spatial predicate of the query holds for 0.01%, 10%, 25%, 50%, 75% of all the features of the respective dataset. In addition, the query template was instantiated using the extreme values 1 and 512 of the parameter THEMA for selecting either all or approximately 0.02% of the total features of a dataset. The response time of each system for responding to this query template are presented in Figures 3(a)-3(h).

We implemented the query template presented in Table 6(b) in order to produce SPARQL queries corresponding to spatial joins that ask for land ownerships that intersect a state, touching states and points of interest that are located inside a state. We also implemented this query template using all combinations of the ex-

Scenario	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	SystemX		GraphDB	RDF4J	
				Par.	Ser.			Lucene enabled
Geocoding	29.40	0.05	63.26	3.04	7.71	1.51	1.37	10.25
Reverse Geocoding	65	0.77	2.6	15.07	15.16	0.60	0.73	0.85
Map Search and Browsing	0.9	0.6	22.2	22.14	124.49	1.03	4.09	4.80
Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring	207.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets	4.55	0.4	63.49	22.68	19.40	17.04	20.43	21.99

**Table 15:** Average iteration times - macro scenarios (sec.)

treme values 1 and 512 for the parameters THEMA1 and THEMA2. The response time of each system executing template are presented in Figures 4(a)-4(c).

*Spatial selections.* By examining Figures 3(a)- 3(h), we observe that Strabon has very good performance overall in spatial selections. uSeekM has low response times when few features satisfy the spatial predicate but when more features satisfy the spatial predicate the response time increases. Parliament has very high response times in most cases regardless of the spatial or thematic selectivity of the queries. In most cases, System X has average performance when running in parallel mode and it is the second fastest RDF store after Strabon. When running in serial mode System X has worse performance. GraphDB has the second best performance after Strabon and scores the best times in the low thematic selectivity queries. It has low sensitivity with spatial selectivity of the queries. These two features are also shared by RDF4J which scores very high in the "512 tag" group of queries and is insensitive to query spatial selectivity changes, but in the "1 tag" group of queries scores low, being better than Parliament and serial mode System X.

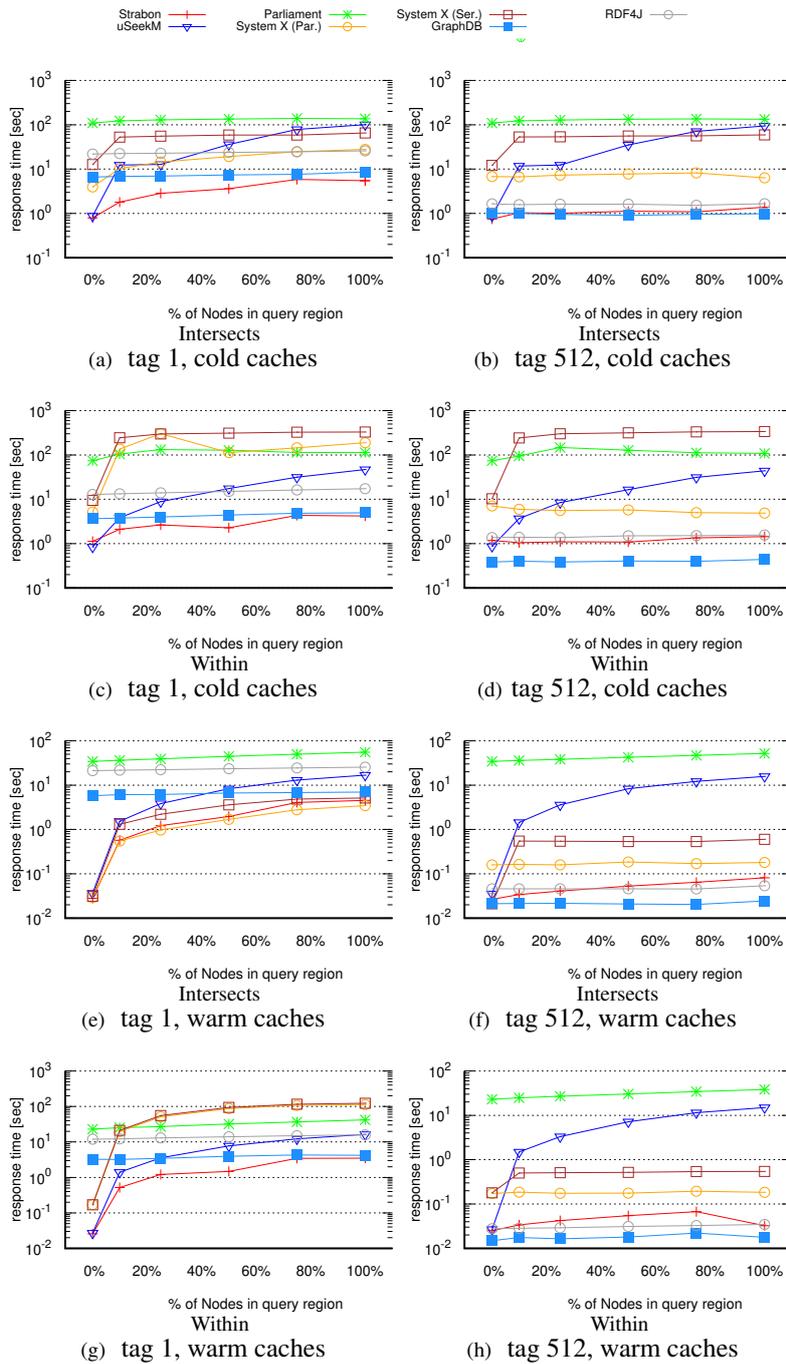
Strabon uses PostgreSQL (extended with PostGIS) to execute a SPARQL query. PostGIS has been enhanced with spatial selectivity estimation capabilities, from versions 2.x onwards. As a result, when a query selects only few geometries, PostgreSQL always starts with execution of the spatial predicate using the spatial index, thus resulting in few intermediate results and good response times. While the spatial selectivity increases and more geometries satisfy the spatial predicate, the optimizer of PostgreSQL chooses different query execution methods. For example, when the value of the parameter THEMA is 1 (Figures 3(a), 3(c), 3(e), 3(g)) and the value of the parameter GEOM is such that all geometries satisfy the spatial predicate, PostgreSQL ignores the spatial index and performs a sequential scan on the table storing the geometries for evaluating the spatial predi-

cate. Similarly, when the value of the parameter THEMA is 512 (Figures 3(b), 3(d), 3(f), 3(h)) and the value of the parameter GEOM is such that all geometries satisfy the spatial predicate, PostgreSQL starts with the execution of the thematic selection that produces few intermediate results since only 0.02% of the features satisfy the thematic predicate, resulting in good query response times.

Regarding uSeekM, its performance is not affected by the thematic selectivity of the query. For spatial selections, uSeekM always starts with the spatial predicate in PostGIS and then continues the query execution in the native Sesame store. As a result, regardless of the thematic selectivity, the response time of uSeekM is low when few features satisfy the spatial predicate and increases when the number of features with geometries that satisfy the given spatial predicate increases.

Regarding Parliament, its performance is not affected by the thematic or by the spatial selectivity of a query. Parliament always starts by executing the non-spatial part of a query and then executes the thematic filter and the spatial predicate exhaustively on the intermediate results. Thus, the thematic and spatial selectivity of a query do not affect its response time.

System X, like Strabon, is capable of estimating the selectivity of both the spatial and the thematic part of a query and to select correct query execution paths. Especially when it runs in parallel mode, System X has fast response times when it starts by executing thematic filters (Figures 3(b), 3(d), 3(f), 3(h)) and outperforms uSeekM and Parliament, which select wrong query execution paths. However, its response times get higher when it starts with executing spatial predicates (Figures 3(a), 3(c), 3(e), 3(g)), even if this choice is correct, and results get mixed. This means that System X, which stores geometries in lexical form and uses an internal function to execute spatial predicates, is slower in executing spatial predicates than uSeekM and Strabon, which utilize PostGIS. Also, the performance of System X in parallel mode compared to its performance in



**Figure 3:** Response times - synthetic workload (selections)

serial mode improves more when it starts by executing the thematic part of a query than when it starts with the spatial part. This indicates that filtering operations on actual lexical values are better parallelized by System X than filtering on spatial values.

In [2], similar experiments have been performed for evaluating the performance of Strabon in spatial selection queries where spatial and thematic selectivity of queries can be controlled. In these experiments only point geometries were used and an older version of Stra-

bon was tested. This older version of Strabon utilized a PostGIS version prior to 2.x which lacks the capability to estimate the spatial selectivity of a query. Experimental results described in [2] showed that the absence of dynamic estimation of spatial selectivity can lead to wrong query execution paths and increase the response time of a system. This happens because the system is not able to correctly select the part (thematic or spatial) of the query that produces less intermediate results. The importance of dynamic estimation of spatial selectivity becomes more obvious in experiments of Geographica where Strabon and, in many cases, System X outperform uSeekM because they are able to select correct query execution paths. For example, in cases where the thematic selectivity of a query is low while the spatial selectivity increases (Figures 3(b), 3(d), 3(f), 3(h)) both Strabon and System X begin the query execution with the thematic part of the query and achieve lower response times than uSeekM that always executes first the spatial part of a query.

*Spatial Joins.* In the case of spatial joins (Figures 4(a)- 4(c)), Strabon is the fastest system in most cases and the only one that responded to every query within the time limit of one hour. uSeekM, System X, GraphDB and RDF4J executed most of the spatial joins, given the one hour time limit, but they needed more time than Strabon. Finally, Parliament responded, within the time limit, the spatial joins only when parameters THEMA1 and THEMA2 are equal to 512.

Strabon relies on the optimizer of PostgreSQL which takes into account the thematic selectivity of the queries and selects good query paths, thus Strabon is the only system that is able to respond to the spatial joins given the one hour timeout when the parameters THEMA1 and THEMA2 are equal to 1.

System X, running in parallel mode, did not respond to any join, with parameters THEMA1 and THEMA2 equal to 1, within the time limit of one hour. While, running in serial mode an internal exception occurred when evaluating functions `geof:sfIntersects` (Figure 4(a)) and `geof:sfWithin` (Figure 4(c)). Also, System X (running in serial mode) needed more than one hour to evaluate the joins with parameters THEMA1 equal to 512 and THEMA2 equal to 1 using functions `geof:sfIntersects` and `geof:Within`. Regarding spatial joins, System X relied on the estimated cardinality of the first variable of the spatial predicate to decide whether to use the spatial index or not. System X chooses to use the spatial index when the first spatial variable has high cardinality (THEMA1=1), regardless of the second spatial variable (consequently the parameter THEMA1). Similarly, when the cardinality of the first

spatial variable is low (THEMA1=512) System X ignores the spatial index, it computes the Cartesian product of the given triple patterns and evaluates the spatial filter over the intermediate results. This strategy is not always effective because it ignores the cardinality of the second spatial variable in planning the evaluation of a query. For example, in Figures 4(a) and 4(c) evaluating the spatial joins with parameters THEMA1=1 and THEMA2=512 needs the same or less time than evaluating the joins with parameters THEMA1=512 and THEMA2=512 even though the latter are more selective.

Finally, uSeekM, GraphDB, RDF4J and Parliament produce the Cartesian product between the graph patterns that are joined through the spatial predicate, and evaluate the spatial predicate afterwards. This strategy is very costly, thus Parliament is not able to respond to most spatial joins given the one hour timeout and the other systems are more than two orders of magnitude slower than Strabon. However, in Figure 4(b) 512-512 it is shown that uSeekM, GraphDB and RDF4J outperform Strabon. Strabon stores all geometries in a single table, so the evaluation of the spatial predicate *Touche*s on this table returns not only the geometries of states that touch each other, but the touching geometries of land ownerships as well. The touching geometries of land ownerships are discarded later on, but this overhead proves to be more costly than producing a Cartesian product and evaluating the spatial predicate afterwards.

## 6.4. Scalability Workload

### 6.4.1. Dataset Storage

This section discusses the time required by each system to store and index the datasets of the scalability workload, as shown in Table 16. Also, Table 17 reports the size of the repositories created by each RDF store. We also reveal weak spots of each process and the workarounds employed to overcome them.

In order to load the data with Strabon we tried both the default loader and the bulk loader and used the most appropriate one. The default Sesame based loader is efficient for datasets of up to 100K triples but in the 1M triples the indexing costs of the PostgreSQL+PostGIS start becoming very high resulting in a time similar to the slowest response by RDF4J with Lucene indexing enabled and x7 slower than the fastest response by RDF4J. Strabon's bulk loader, which is a tailor-made tool, has two issues that we had to take into consideration. First, it has an initial overhead which is only worth when loading files with more than one million triples. That is why we choose not to use it for the

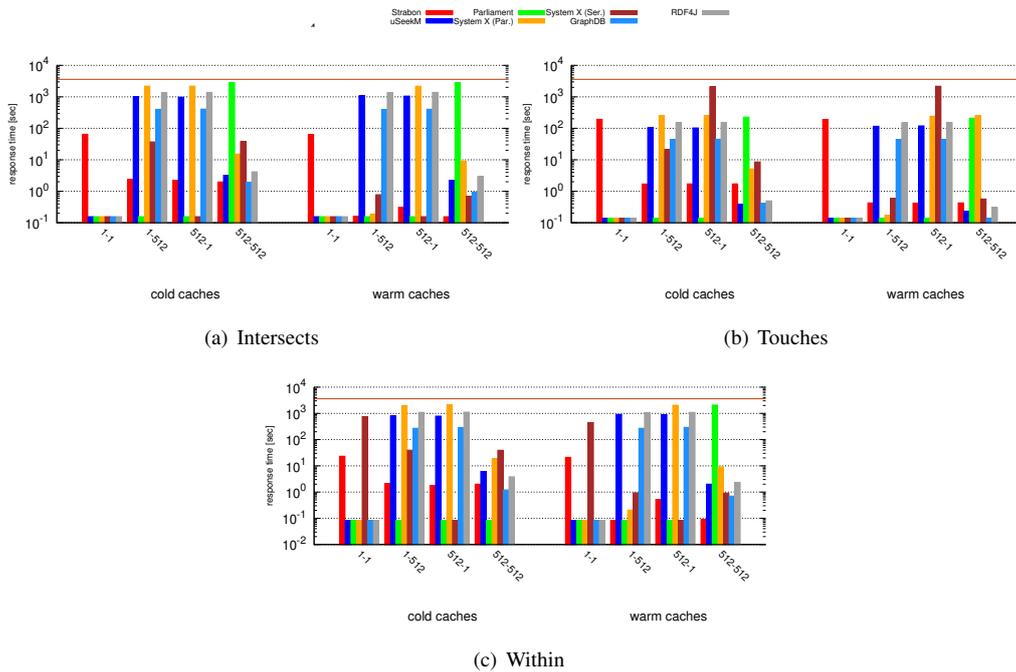


Figure 4: Response times - synthetic workload (joins)

System	10K triples	100K triples	1M triples	10M triples	100M triples		500M triples		
	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	10M chunk	Single chunk	10M chunk	
Strabon	Default loader	7,00 sec	19,00 sec	292,00 sec	-	-	-	-	
	Bulk Loader	-	-	73,54 sec	943,74 sec	1.993,00 sec	-	25.650,00 sec*	-
GraphDB		47,10 sec	4,15 sec	64,59 sec	157,95 sec	1.515,64 sec	-	7.173,00 sec	-
RDF4J		1,37 sec	5,01 sec	43,85 sec	363,64 sec	X	4.252,30 sec	X	169.063.759 sec
	Lucene enabled	4,73 sec	23,61 sec	298,91 sec	2.212,38 sec	X	19.201,34 sec	X	357.970,89 sec

Table 16: Storing times (sec.)

System	10K triples	100K triples	1M triples	10M triples	100M triples		500M triples		
	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	Single chunk	10M chunk	Single chunk	10M chunk	
Strabon	19 MB	51 MB	367 MB	3.1 GB	28 GB	-	134 GB	-	
GraphDB	16 MB	25 MB	132 MB	1.11 GB	10.9 GB	-	54 GB	-	
RDF4J		3.1 MB	14 MB	135 MB	1.23 GB	X	11.82 GB	X	59.10 GB
	Lucene enabled	4.6 MB	35 MB	378 MB	3.2 GB	X	25 GB	X	145 GB

Table 17: Repository Sizes (MB, GB)

two smaller datasets. The sweet spot for switching between the two loaders is somewhere around 1M triples. Second, it requires a memory size near the size of the dataset to load. The reason for this problem is that the RDF library used needs to parse the entire input file in one step before storing it persistently. This situation did not allow the bulk loader to import the 500M triple dataset and obliged us to use a server with 128 GB RAM in order to perform the first stage of the import which creates a set of CSV files. These files were afterwards transferred back to the reference server and we continued with the second step which was import-

ing the CSV files into PostGIS database. The time 25.650,00sec = 14.000sec + 11.250sec of the two steps therefore is “dirty” and reported for completeness purposes only.

The default loader of RDF4J could not support files with more than approximately 15M-triples, therefore the 100M and 500M triples datasets were split into 10M triples chunks and in these cases the total amount of time needed to digest all chunks is reported. It scores acceptable times up to the 10M triples dataset and from there on its performance rapidly deteriorates. With Lucene spatial indexing the performance is extremely

high for datasets over 1M triple.

The two phase import design of GraphDB's bulk loader, the use of parallel thread execution and the very good choice of default values for its highly parametric configuration allowed it to load all datasets, but the smallest one, in a fraction of the time compared to all other systems.

With respect to the resulting repository sizes, RDF4J is the most efficient system for the two smallest datasets and GraphDB is marginally better than RDF4J in the larger ones. The small improvement over RDF4J is that GraphDB uses POS and PSO indexes for statements and the literal index while RDF4J has SPOC, POSC. Since the GeoSPARQL plugin returned ambiguous results<sup>40</sup>, it was disabled and this contributed greatly to the efficient performance times achieved, as the repositories are smaller. Enabling the GeoSPARQL plugin increases the repository size by an average of 40%. RDF4J with Lucene enabled has the same storage requirements as Strabon which more than double than GraphDB.

From Tables 16 and 17 it is clear that GraphDB is the most scalable system in terms of the initial loading time of datasets and the final repository size.

#### 6.4.2. Queries

The results of the scalability benchmark are shown in Figure 5 where the response time of each query is reported for both cold and warm caches. RDF4J with Lucene spatial indexing was slower and only RDF4J standard mode results are included. Strabon is clearly the fastest system in all dataset, query and cache combinations but the smallest dataset with cold caches where RDF4J is the fastest. RDF4J is also faster than GraphDB in the most demanding SC2 spatial join query where high thematic selectivity results in full table scan to produce the result. The same holds to a lesser degree for queries SC1 and SC3 but for the two smallest datasets. GraphDB on the other hand is much faster than RDF4J in the moderate SC3 spatial join query which has a smaller thematic selectivity and is clear that filters results on the thematic part before proceeding with the evaluation of the spatial part. For the 500M triples dataset, GraphDB did not complete query SC2 in the 24 hour limit while RDF4J failed to complete queries SC2 and SC3.

<sup>40</sup><https://jira.ontotext.com/browse/GRAP-143>

## 7. Evaluating the Performance of RDF Stores with Limited Geospatial Capabilities

Apart from the RDF stores that we have already tested, there are also some RDF stores that provide geospatial capabilities only for points. Indexing and evaluating queries only for simple geometry types (points) allows to use different index and query evaluation methods than that for more complex geometry types, like polygons and lines. For example, points can be indexed using two B-trees or a point quadtree, while polygons are usually indexed using an R-tree. In order to find out if there is a performance trade-off between these two approaches, this section evaluates the performance of two RDF stores that provide limited geospatial capabilities (support only points) and compare them with the geospatial RDF stores which are tested in the previous sections. For this purpose Virtuoso v7.1 and a proprietary RDF store (which we will call System Y) are used. Virtuoso and System Y support only point geometries. Thus, for the real world and synthetic workloads of Geographica 2, the parts of the datasets that contains only point geometries are kept and only the queries which handle point geometries are re-run in the geospatial RDF stores Strabon, uSeekM, Parliament, System X, GraphDB, RDF4J and the limited-functionality systems Virtuoso and System Y.

### 7.1. Real World Workload

The real world workload used in this case consists of only the corresponding datasets from DBpedia and GeoNames. Because Virtuoso and System Y do not provide any non-topological function only spatial selections and spatial joins were tested. Also, the macro benchmark is not used in this section, since all scenarios use more complex geometry types than points.

#### 7.1.1. Dataset Storage

The storage times for the real world workload are presented in Table 18 and Table 19 presents the storage space required in each case. For this subset of Geographica 2, we stored only the corresponding datasets of DBpedia and GeoNames. In this table we observe that Virtuoso and System Y need considerably less time to store and index the real datasets than the other systems. They provide dedicated bulk loaders which achieve better storage times in comparison to storage times of the full geospatial RDF stores which either use Sesame, RDF4J and Jena Java API for loading data (e.g., uSeekM, GraphDB, Parliament) or they provide bulk loaders that perform complex processing of the input data (e.g., Strabon, System X).

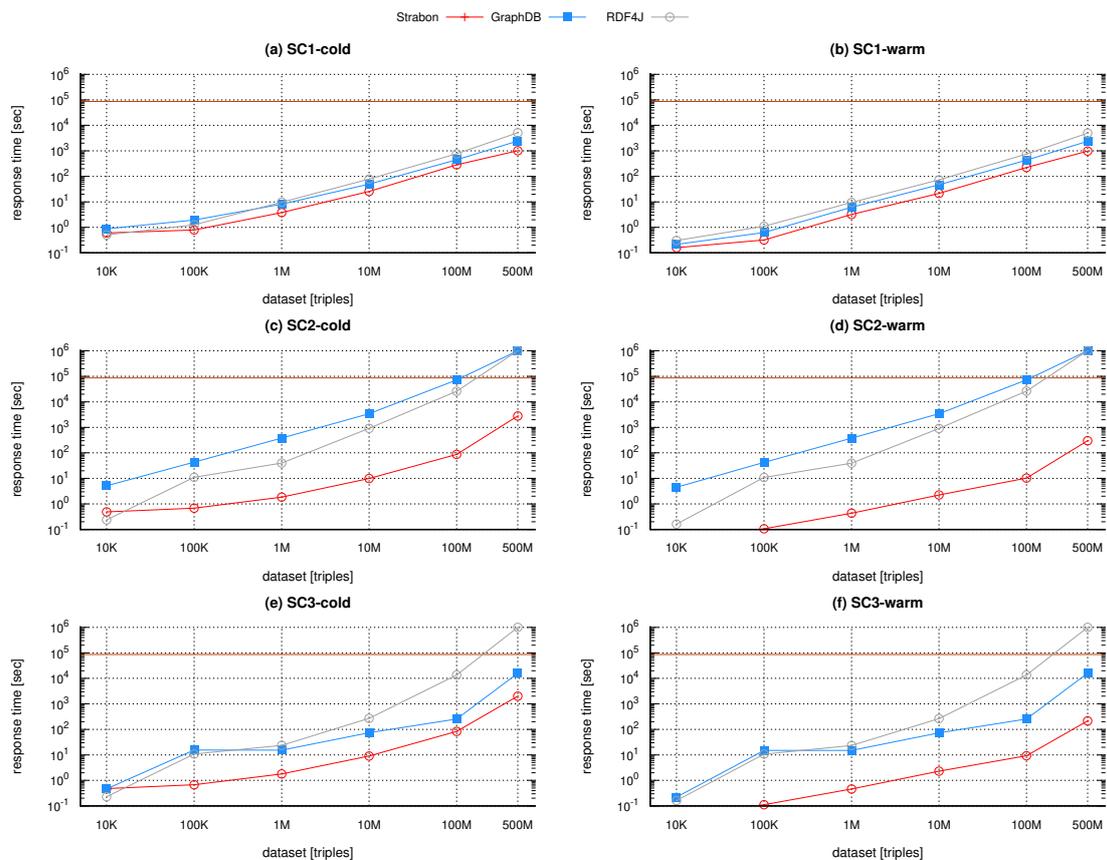


Figure 5: Response times - Scalability workload

Workload	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X	GraphDB	RDF4J	Virtuoso	System Y
Real world	65	45	36	68	62	26	9	8
Synthetic	496	771	874	418	116	306	63	31

Table 18: Storing times (sec.). Real world: GeoNames, DBpedia. Synthetic: PointsOfInterest

Workload	Strabon	uSeekM	Parliament	System X	GraphDB	RDF4J	Virtuoso	System Y
Real world	338	124	238	534	220	122	213	657
Synthetic	2201	1871	2864	2865	733	1031	703	3084

Table 19: Repository sizes (MB). Real world: GeoNames, DBpedia. Synthetic: PointsOfInterest

The space needs of the two RDF stores with point geometry functionality differ significantly. System Y allocates a large amount of space, even more than the full geospatial RDF stores. Virtuoso, on the other hand, needs little space which, however, is almost twice as much as RDF4J and uSeekM.

### 7.1.2. Queries

Given the spatial selections that are supported by Virtuoso and System Y, queries Q14 and Q15 (spatial selections) have been tested. As described in Section 6.2.2, these queries ask for points that lie within a given distance from a given point, but each query uses a different function. Also Query Q18 (spatial join) was tested which asks for pairs of points of the datasets GeoNames and DBpedia that are equal. Virtuoso does not

offer functions to create a buffer. Instead it provides the functions `bif:st_within`, `bif:st_intersects`, and `bif:st_contains` which receive a third argument that is a tolerance value for matching in units of linear distance. In order to emulate Query Q15 in Virtuoso, instead of creating a buffer of the given point with radius  $r$  and asking for points inside the buffer, we can ask for points inside the given point with tolerance  $r$ .

The response times of these queries are reported in Figure 6. Query Q14 has a complex filter clause (point inside a point buffer) but if the point buffer is computed the spatial index can be used to evaluate the query. Thus, the majority of RDF stores that utilize the spatial index to evaluate this query (Virtuoso, System Y, and Strabon) respond to it faster than uSeekM, Parliament, System X

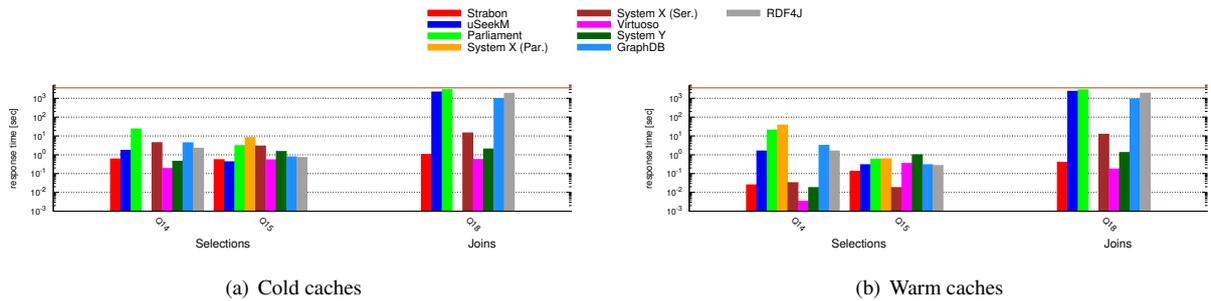


Figure 6: Response times, real world workload

serial, GraphDB and RDF4J which do not use an index. System X parallel did not complete the evaluation of Q14. Especially Virtuoso, which is not burdened with the cost of evaluating a topological relation over complex geometries (like a buffer of a point), achieves the best response time. Query Q15 does not favor the use of spatial index but its filter clause (distance between points) is executed faster than the filter clause of query Q14 (point inside point buffer). Thus, uSeekM, Parliament, GraphDB and RDF4J need less time to respond to this query than Query Q15. uSeekM needs the least time of all systems. Virtuoso and System Y need slightly more time to respond to query Q15 than Q14, because they do not use their spatial indexes. In the case of spatial join (query Q18) Virtuoso has the fastest response time while Strabon comes second. System X (in parallel mode) needs more time than the one hour limit to evaluate this join, as well as in the full micro-benchmark.

## 7.2. Synthetic Workload

The synthetic workload used the generator, which is described in Section 5.2.1, to generate a dataset and only the generated points of interest were stored. Because only points were used we chose to set the generator parameters  $n = 1024$  and  $k = 10$  and generate a bigger dataset that contains about seven million triples.

### 7.2.1. Dataset Storage

The corresponding storage times and allocated storage space are shown in Tables 18 and 19. As well as for the real world workload, Virtuoso and System Y need less time to store the dataset of the synthetic workload than the full geospatial RDF stores. For the synthetic dataset which is bigger than the real world dataset the low requirements in storage space of Virtuoso, GraphDB and RDF4J are more emphasized. While Virtuoso is slightly more compact than GraphDB, both stores need about two times less space than uSeekM and three times less space than the other RDF stores. On

```
SELECT ?s
WHERE {
  ?s ns:hasGeometry/ns:asWKT ?g.
  ?s c:hasTag/ns:hasKey "THEMA".
  FILTER(FUNCTION(?g,
    bif:st_point(45, 45), "TOL"))}
```

Table 20: Query template for synthetic queries of Virtuoso

the other hand, System Y has higher space requirements than the full geospatial RDF stores.

### 7.2.2. Queries

For this subset of Geographica 2 only spatial selections using topological relation `geof:sfWithin` were executed. Since functions in Virtuoso cannot receive a rectangle as argument, the respective queries that were run by Virtuoso are produced by instantiating the template in Table 20. The parameter TOL is the tolerance value that will be used by Virtuoso for evaluating the topological relation defined by parameter FUNCTION. So a circle is considered by `bif:st_within` and the radius of the circle (defined by the parameter TOL) is instantiated to achieve each time the proper spatial selectivity.

The response times for these queries are presented in Figure 7. For high thematic selectivity `tag=1` Virtuoso is the fastest system while Strabon comes second. For low thematic selectivity `tag=1024` GraphDB and Strabon are at the top. Both System Y and Virtuoso executed all queries by starting with the spatial part of the query and then continuing with the thematic part and this is why their performance is affected more by the spatial selectivity of the query than by the thematic. For example, when the value of the parameter THEMA is 1 (Figures 7(a), 7(c)) Virtuoso needs the shortest time to evaluate the spatial selections. But when the value of the parameter THEMA is 1024 (Figures 7(b), 7(d)) Virtuoso does not exploit the fact that

few points satisfy the thematic part of the query and its response time increases while the spatial selectivity is increased and more points satisfy the spatial predicate. Thus, GraphDB and Strabon, which changes its execution path if the spatial selectivity is increased, respond to these queries faster.

### 7.3. Summary

This section compared the performance of RDF systems that implement GeoSPARQL with general purpose RDF systems which provide limited spatial functionality. Regarding data storage, Virtuoso and System Y provide the best bulk loading capabilities while Virtuoso and GraphDB, have very low space requirements. Regarding query evaluation Virtuoso, Strabon and GraphDB have the best performance. Finally, the query optimizers of Virtuoso and System Y do not take into account the selectivity of a spatial predicate. However, this does not lead to bad performance because of their fast search mechanisms, even if the thematic selectivity of a query is greater than the spatial.

## 8. Summary and Future Work

In this section, we summarize the work presented in this article, and discuss the limitations and future extensions of our work.

### 8.1. Summary

This article presents a benchmark for evaluating geospatial RDF stores. First, it presents a functional comparison of well known geospatial RDF stores. Then, it compares their performance according to three workloads: the real world, the synthetic and the scalability workload.

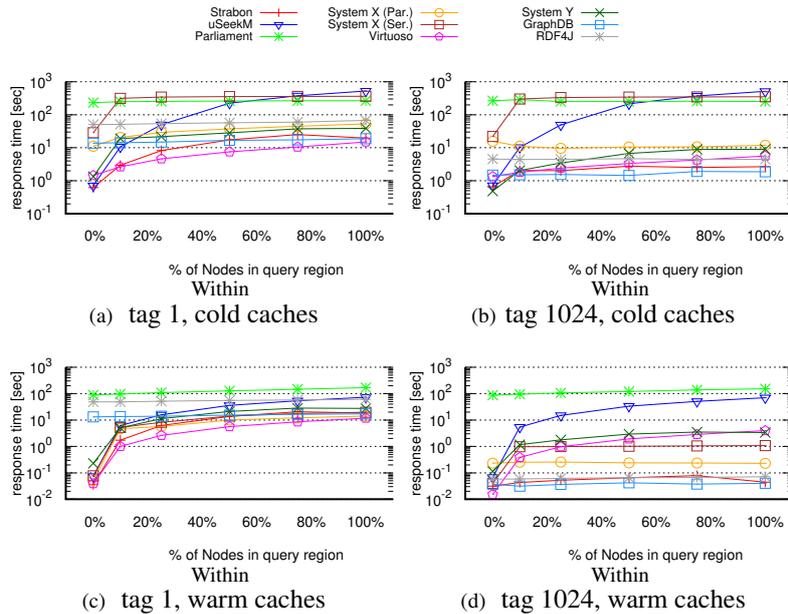
The real world workload is based on real data and is separated into two parts. The micro part tests geospatial operations in isolation and aims at stressing the spatial module of RDF stores. A conclusion that can be drawn from this part is that integration of a spatial module in most of the geospatial RDF stores is not mature. Most of the poor performance issues observed were either because the spatial index was not properly utilized or due to inefficiencies of the spatial relation evaluation engine (e.g., not being optimized for complex geometries).

The macro part of the real world workload evaluates the performance of RDF stores in simulations of real application scenarios. Various application scenarios were specified that range from simple scenarios (e.g., "Geocoding", "Reverse Geocoding", "Map Search and Browsing") to more complicated scenarios

that serve domain expert needs (e.g., "Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring", "Computing Statistics of Geospatial Datasets"). uSeekM has the best performance for queries that consist of simple spatial operations (e.g., spatial selections), like "Geocoding", "Reverse Geocoding", "Map Search and Browsing", and "Computing Statistics" of Geospatial Datasets. For more complex applications that include both spatial joins or spatial aggregations, like "Rapid Mapping for Fire Monitoring" Strabon is the only RDF store that performed well. System X and Parliament performed well only for some scenarios, e.g. "Geocoding" and "Reverse Geocoding" respectively, but they had always worse performance than uSeekM or Strabon. So, every scenario can be well served by at least one RDF store. This means that there are already implementations capable of being used in real applications and bringing the merits of linked data in the geospatial domain.

The synthetic workload uses synthetic data of arbitrary size and queries with various thematic and spatial selectivities and tests whether spatial query processing is deeply integrated in their query engines. The results of this workload highlight the importance of spatial statistics and using them to select appropriate query execution paths. RDF stores that do so manage to have a good performance for all combinations of spatial and thematic selectivity. While, other RDF stores that do not take into consideration the spatial selectivity of a query and stick to only one type of execution path (e.g., always execute the spatial part of a query and then the thematic part) do not always achieve good performance.

The scalability workload is based on a set of increasingly larger subsets of the union of two real world datasets, OSM and CORINE 2012. Three systems participated in this test and they were selected based on being actively maintained and being representative of each one of the different architectures of the RDF stores identified, namely RDF frameworks (RDF4J), NoSQL RDF stores (GraphDB) and hybrid RDF stores with RDBMS as a back-end (Strabon). One spatial selection query and two spatial join queries, a demanding and a moderate one, were used to stress the systems against datasets up to 500M triples. The infrastructure used was a small system by today's standards and helped each system to show its limits early on. Strabon which belongs to the hybrid architecture proved to be the most efficient one in answering all queries but faced problems with its bulk loader over 100M triples. GraphDB achieved exceptional performance in bulk loading and storage size but, as RDF4J, was not able to answer the three queries fast enough. Programmatic operation for GraphDB's stores with the GeoSPARQL plugin enabled was not



**Figure 7:** Response times - synthetic workload (selections)

possible because of runtime errors, so a question remains about how well GraphDB would have performed in queries using spatial predicates. Although RDF4J was not able to manage more than 100M triples datasets with geospatial data, it proved that it can be considered as the basis for building more complete horizontally scalable geospatial RDF stores which will provide a better spatial indexing mechanism both performance and storage wise.

Finally, a comparison between RDF stores with limited geospatial capabilities and geospatial RDF stores was performed, trying to find out whether point-specific spatial indexing schemes perform better than spatial indexes for mixed geometries. RDF stores with limited geospatial capabilities performed very well, especially at bulk loading and at spatial selection queries. However, the difference in performance from some geospatial RDF stores is not as high as expected. For queries with a high selectivity spatial condition, some geospatial RDF stores perform better than stores with point-only support.

## 8.2. Limitations and Future work

The real world and synthetic workloads used in Geographica are relatively small and they covered only a limited geographic extent, such as Greece or New York. However, as the results of experimental evaluation showed, they were enough to stress all systems that were evaluated. By adding the scalability workload we

raised considerably the size of datasets to 500M triples with 100GB of geospatial data that covered many European countries and contained highly complex geometries. By replacing OWLIM with its successor GraphDB and introducing RDF4J, the geospatial successor of Sesame RDF framework, we included the newest developments in systems of this area.

In future work, we plan to include in the benchmark the newest Virtuoso version which offers some GeoSPARQL features; we have not been able to do it in this version due to problems with the current implementation as we discussed in Section 4.2.

Given that there are today institutions such as cartographic agencies (e.g., Kadaster in the Netherlands<sup>41</sup>) that manage TBs of geospatial data and make some of it available as linked data, it is important to develop RDF stores that can manage *big linked geospatial data* [50]. This is currently done in the European project Extreme Earth<sup>42</sup> that our group coordinates. Extreme Earth studies big linked geospatial data coming from the Earth observation program Copernicus<sup>43</sup> of the European Union.

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<sup>41</sup><https://www.kadasterdata.nl/>

<sup>42</sup><http://earthanalytics.eu/>

<sup>43</sup><https://www.copernicus.eu/en>

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