

# Finding sparse induced subgraphs on graphs of bounded induced matching treewidth

Hans L. Bodlaender<sup>1</sup>, Fedor V. Fomin<sup>2</sup>, and Tuukka Korhonen

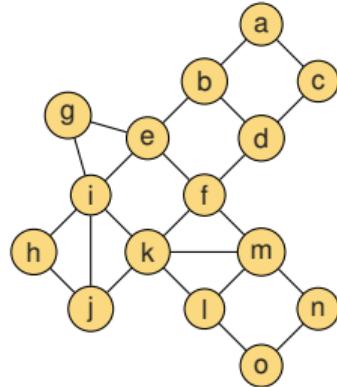


<sup>1</sup>Utrecht University, <sup>2</sup>University of Bergen

SODA 2026

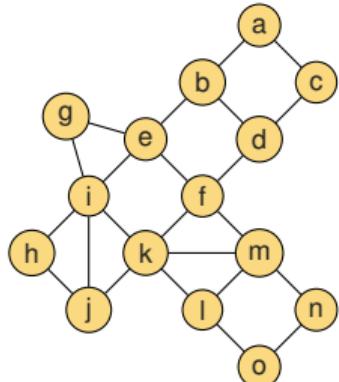
12 January 2026

## Treewidth

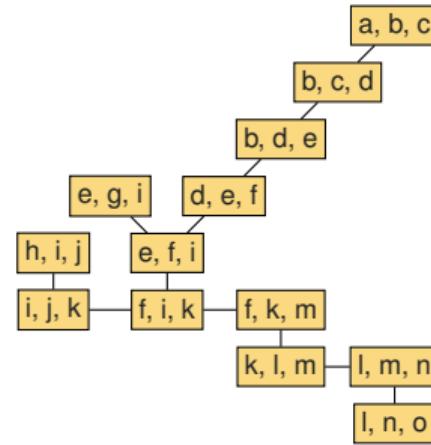


Graph  $G$

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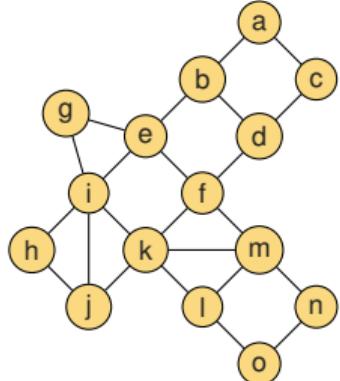


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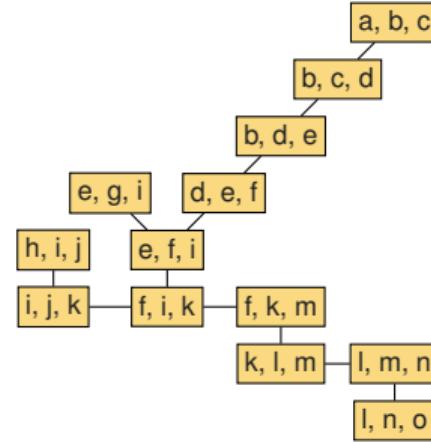


A tree decomposition of  $G$

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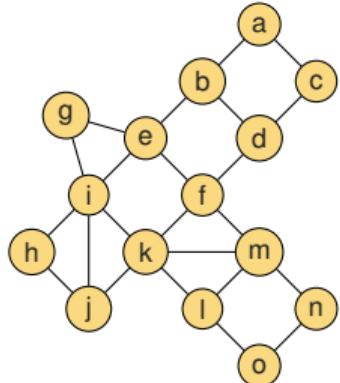
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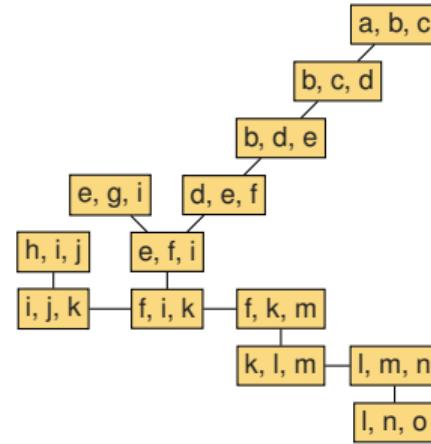
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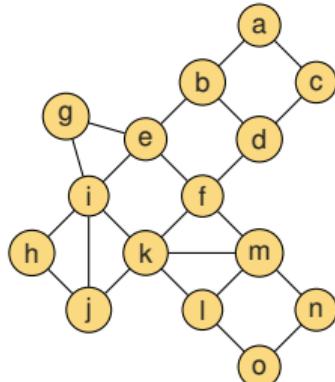
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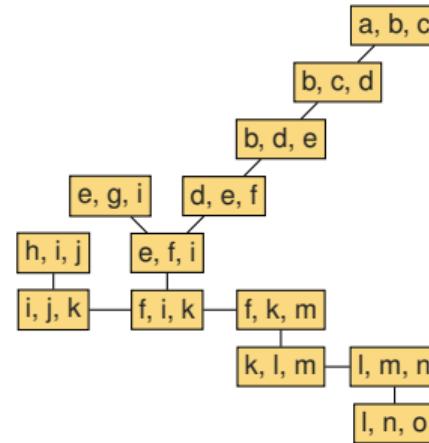
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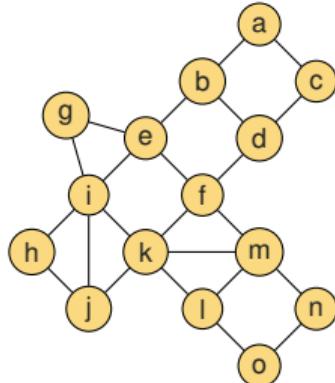
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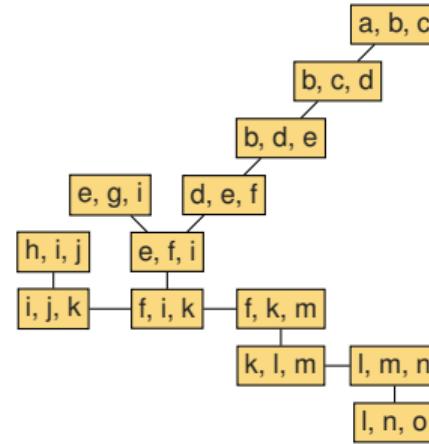
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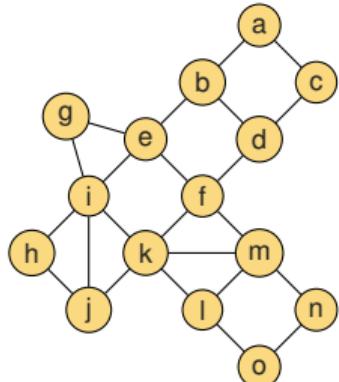
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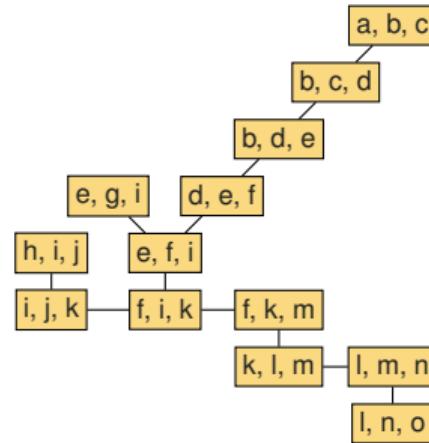
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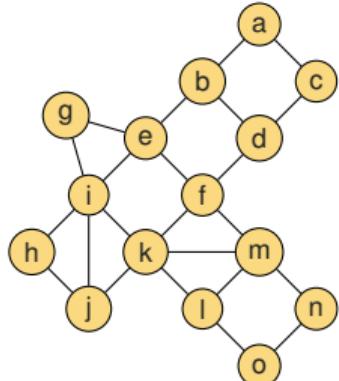
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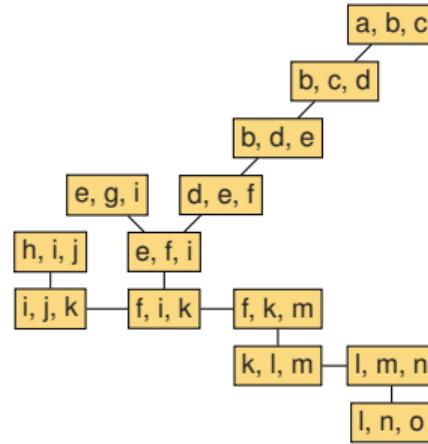
A tree decomposition of  $G$   
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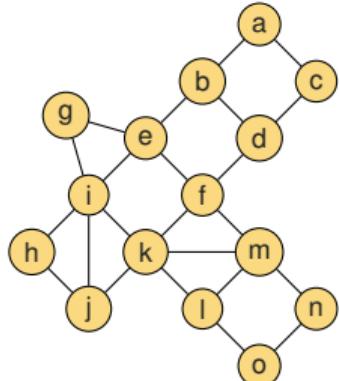
Graph  $G$



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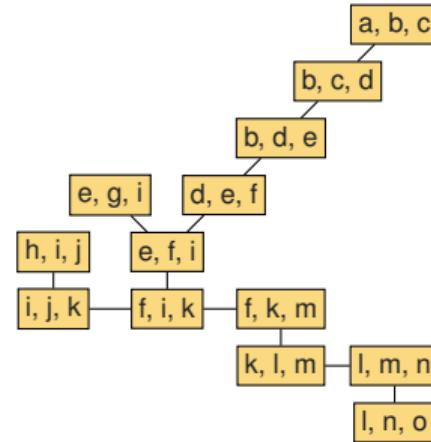
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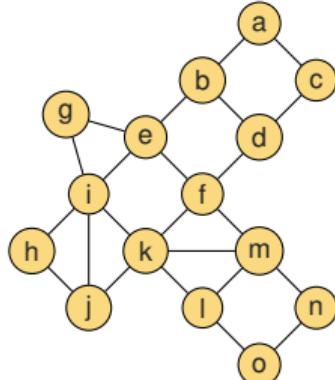
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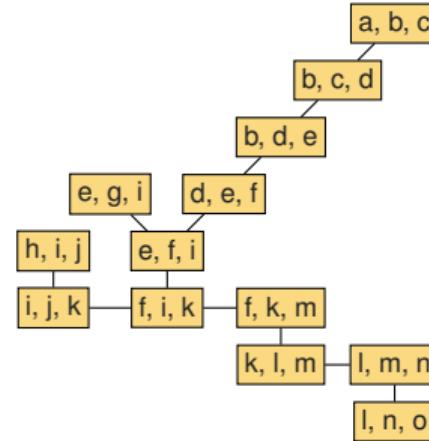
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Graph  $G$   
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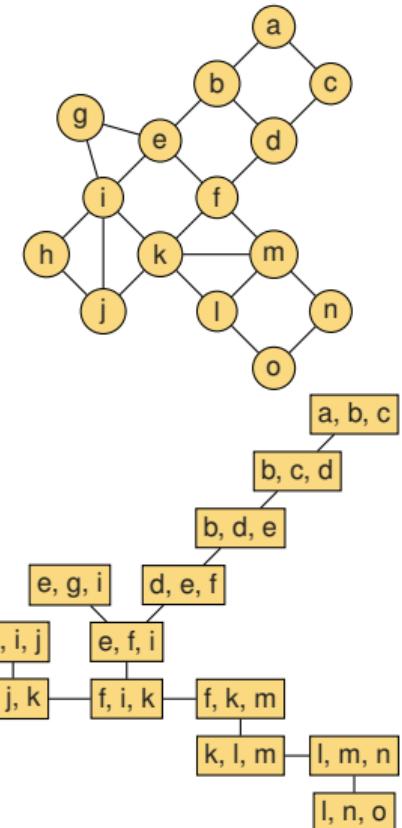
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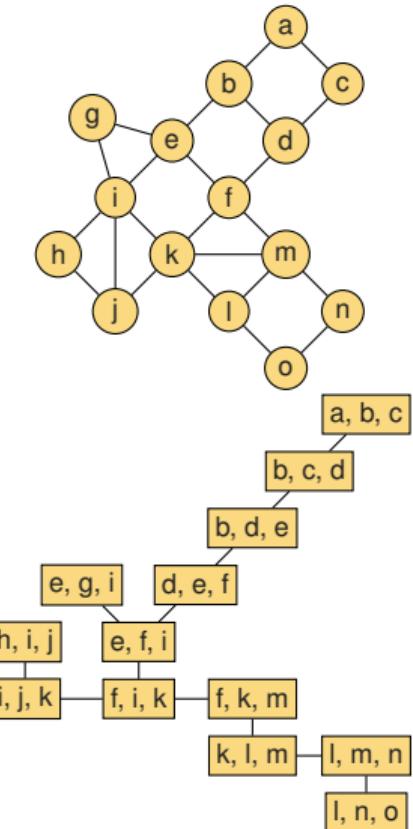
[Robertson & Seymour'84, Arnborg & Proskurowski'89, Bertele & Brioschi'72, Halin'76]

# Why treewidth?



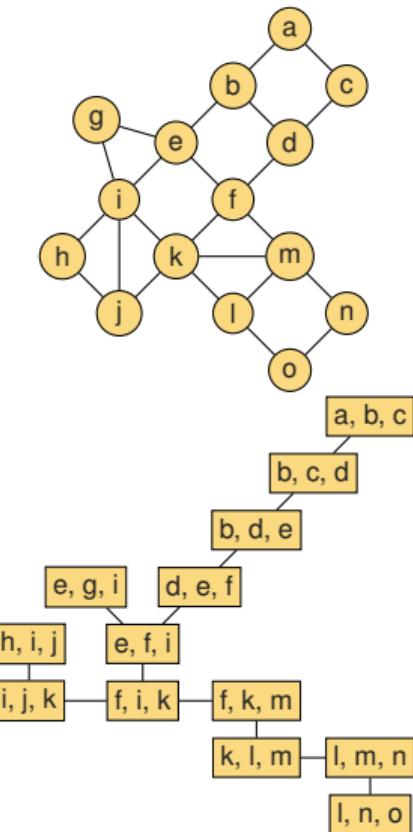
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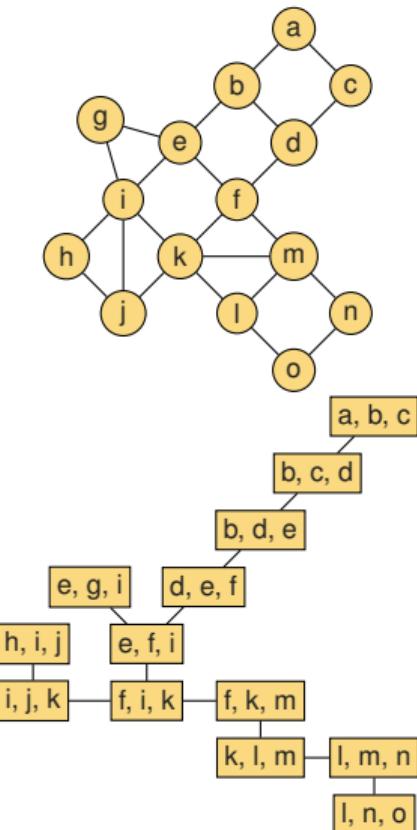
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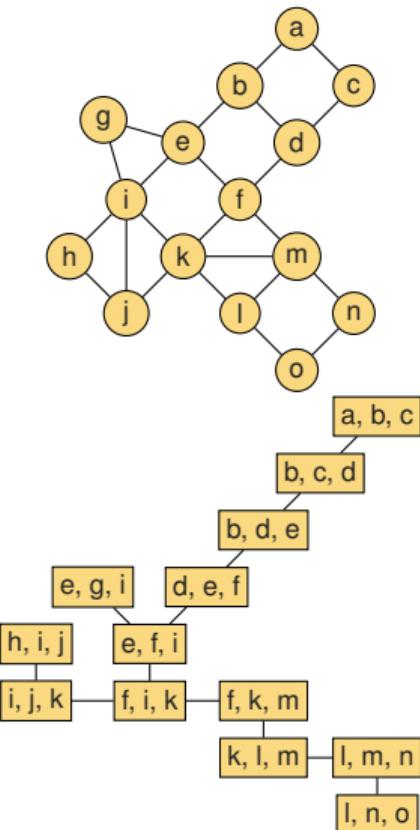


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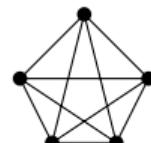
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Given an  $n$ -vertex graph  $G$  with  $\text{tree-}\mu(G) \leq k$ , a **CMSO**<sub>2</sub>-sentence  $\Phi$ , and an integer  $w$ , we can in time  $f(k, w, |\Phi|) \cdot n^{\mathcal{O}(kw^2)}$  find a maximum-size set  $X \subseteq V(G)$  so that

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Answers an open problem of [Lima, Milanič, Muršič, Okrasa, Rzążewski, and Štorgel, '24], who gave a similar theorem for tree-independence number

# The algorithm

## Step 1: Containers

Yolov's idea:

Lemma (Yolov'18)

For a set  $B \subseteq V(G)$  with  $\mu(B) \leq k$ , there are at most  $n^{O(k)}$  possible intersections  $B \cap I$ , where  $I$  is a maximal independent set of  $G$ .

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- edges of  $G[X]$  intersecting  $B$  must have vertex cover of size  $\mathcal{O}(kw)$
- guess the vertex cover
- use Yolov's lemma, a “kicking out”-lemma, and properties of **CMSO**<sub>2</sub> to guess the rest

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- There is a partition  $(X_1, X_2)$  of  $X$  so that:

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Let  $T$  be a nice tree decomposition of  $G$  with  $\mu(T) \leq k$ , and  $X \subseteq V(G)$  a set with  $\text{tw}(G[X]) \leq w$ . There is a tree decomposition  $T_X$  of  $G[X]$  of width  $\mathcal{O}(kw^2)$ , whose structure “follows”  $T$ .

- The trees of  $T$  and  $T_X$  are the same
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  - ▶ Vertices in  $X_1$  extend their appearances upwards compared to  $T$

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- This allows to run a dynamic programming on  $T$ , that simultaneously:
  - ▶ Guesses the set  $X$
  - ▶ Guesses the decomposition  $T_X$
  - ▶ Evaluates  $\Phi$  on  $G[X]$  by using  $T_X$

## Conclusion

- An  $f(k, w, |\Phi|) \cdot n^{\mathcal{O}(kw^2)}$  time algorithm for finding maximum induced subgraph of treewidth  $\leq w$  satisfying  $\Phi$  on graphs of  $\text{tree-}\mu(G) \leq k$

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Thank you!