

Report NISK 2018 - Alessandro Budroni

On Monday 17th of September, I flew, together with my colleagues Andrea Tenti, Irene Villa, Navid Ghaedi Bardeh, Diana Davidova, Nikolay Stoyanov Kaleyski, Dan Zhang and Isaac Andrés Canales Martinez, from Bergen to Longyearbyen.

We went there in order to attend the conference Norsk Informatikkonferanse 2018 (NISK) and to the annual COINS Ph.D. student seminar. We first took a flight to OSLO, then, after a couple of hours of stopover, we took another flight to Longyearbyen.

My accommodation was at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel, very close to the city center and main conference venue.

COINS seminar took place the 18th of September at Radisson Blu Polar Hotel, the topics covered were: Lessons learned from doing a Ph.D., Life after the Ph.D., plus six more presentations by six Ph.D. students about their projects. In particular, I appreciated very much the presentations

- "There is always light at the end of the tunnel" by Bo Sun from UiB,
- "How to get (and not to get) a Ph.D. + why you should / shouldn't travel".

They gave us many motivational suggestions to pursue and to successfully finish our Ph.D. by Chris Carr from NTNU.

Also, the talk titled as "Cyber Risk Quantification for Business and Economic Gain" by Mazaher Kianpour from NTNU caught my attention very much.

The 19th of September the conference NISK started. The sessions were held at Kulturhuset, only five minutes walking from my hotel. The first session was about crypto-primitives and was the most interesting for my research because of the similarity of the topics. Next sessions' topics, crypto-protocols, security analysis, biometrics, and malware, were very interesting and inspiring as well. I particularly appreciated the following talks:

- "A Successful Subfield Lattice Attack on a Fully Homomorphic Encryption Scheme" by Martha Norberg Hovd.
- "Fake Chatroom Profile Detection" by Patrick Bours, Parisa Rezaee Borj and Guoqiang Li
- "Evaluation of Smartphone based Finger-photo Verification System: A Preliminary Study of Technology Readiness" by Pankaj Wasnik, Mihkal Dunfjeld, Martin Stokkenes, Kiran Raja, Raghavendra Raghavendra, and Christoph Busch.

The 19th evening we had the Conference dinner inside an evocative tend in the middle of the Arctic tundra. The tend was surrounded by armed guards in case of a polar bear attack. The food was delicious and I had the opportunity, together with my colleagues, to meet other Ph.D. students and researchers from many Norwegian universities.

Despite the many talks and workshops, we had enough free time to practice some outdoor activities like hiking and dog sledding. The conference also offered a tour on a bus with a guide telling us about the history and the past of Longyearbyen. The 19th night was also possible to see northern lights. I had also the possibility to visit the Svalbard Museum which was right at the back of the hotel.

We came back on the 21st of September. Again we stopped by Oslo for a couple of hours before flying to Bergen.

I thank Coins for giving me the chance to attend to NISK 2018 and to the COINS Ph.D. student seminar. It was an inspiring experience from which I have benefited greatly.

