

Date of publication xxxx 00, 0000, date of current version xxxx 00, 0000.

Digital Object Identifier 10.1109/ACCESS.2017.DOI

Managing Constraints in Role Based **Access Control**

CARLO BLUNDO¹, STELVIO CIMATO², (SENIOR MEMBER, IEEE), AND LUISA SINISCALCHI³, Dipartimento di Scienze Aziendali - Management & Innovation Systems/DISA-MIS, Università di Salerno, Italy (e-mail: cblundo@unisa.it)

Corresponding author: Stelvio Cimato (e-mail: Stelvio.Cimato@unimi.it).

This paragraph of the first footnote will contain support information, including sponsor and financial support acknowledgment. For example, "This work was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce under Grant BS123456."

ABSTRACT Role-based access control (RBAC) is the most popular access control model currently adopted in several contexts to define security management. Constraints play a crucial role since they can drive the selection of the best representation of the organization's security policies when migrating towards an RBAC system. In this paper, we examine different types of constraints addressing both theoretical aspects and practical considerations. On one side, we define the constrained role mining problem for each constraint type, showing its complexity. On the other hand, we present efficient heuristics adapted to each class of constraints, all derived from the specialization of a general approach for role mining. We show that our techniques improve over previous proposals, offering a complete set of experimentations obtained after the application of the heuristics to standard real-world datasets.

INDEX TERMS Role Mining, RBAC, Constrained Role Mining

I. INTRODUCTION

The possibility of automatizing the process of selecting appropriate roles to define the organization of complex information systems has been one of the reasons for the success of role engineering. As introduced in the seminal paper in 1995 [6], role engineering has indeed the goal to output a Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) model where permissions to access restricted resources are not assigned to individuals but to groups of employees sharing the same role in the organization. The advantage of such a model is that security administration, in organizations with a large number of users, resources, and associated permissions, becomes more manageable and flexible.

On the other side, the cost of the transformation of a traditional system to one having an RBAC architecture can be very high. In general, two approaches can be pursued to correctly configure a set of appropriate roles: the topdown approach and the bottom-up approach. In the top-down approach, experts analyze the business processes and the relationships within the organization, decomposing complex tasks and units in more manageable groups sharing the same set of permissions [10], [28]. In the bottom-up approach, data mining techniques are used to analyze the existing userpermissions assignments. A (semi-)automatic role mining phase is started to identify a set of roles according to different organization goals [17], [19].

Role mining has attracted a lot of attention from academia and industry, with many tools and research efforts [32]. The problem has also been addressed using results from other related research fields such as boolean matrix decomposition [22], graph theory [9], [36], tiling problem for databases [35], and many others [25]. User permission relations can be easily represented using a binary matrix, where rows represent users, columns represent permissions, and each entry denotes the assigned permission to each user. So, the basic Role Mining Problem (RMP) consists of finding the least number of roles consistent with the starting situation and a valid decomposition of the original relation in two other relations associating permissions to roles and roles to users' assignments [1], [22]. A survey on the role mining problem describing numerous variants and the corresponding strategies for finding a valid role set has been given in [25].

In practice, some constraints must often be considered to define a set of roles compliant with the basic organization rules within a given company, such as limiting, for example, the number of permissions that can be included in a role. In

²Dipartimento di Informatica, Università degli studi di Milano, Italy. (e-mail: stelvio.cimato@unimi.it)

³Concordium Blockchain Research Center Aarhus University, Denmark (e-mail: lsiniscalchi@cs.au.dk



general, cardinality constraints are associated with different organizational contexts and policies and limit in some way the number of roles, or of permissions, or of users that can be selected after the role mining process. For such reasons, different kinds of constraints have been considered, such as role-usage cardinality constraint [16], where a restriction is posed on the maximum number of roles that can be assigned to any user, or considering the maximum number of permissions associated to a role [2], [18]. Other papers examined the permission-distribution cardinality constraint, which is the dual of the role-usage constraint and restricts the number of roles to which a permission can belong to [14]. Sometimes, multiple cardinality constraints have been considered [3], [14], [21], [24].

Together with cardinality constraints, separation of duty constraints (SoD) or statically mutually exclusive roles (SMER) have also been considered in the definition of the $RBAC_2$ model [31]. In this case, one user can be assigned to at most one role in a mutually exclusive set. These constraints are essential for preventing situations whenever a user is enabled to carry on multiple tasks that can lead to a conflict of interests, such as playing the role of the one that both authorizes a given action and controls that such an action can be allowed. Li et al. [20] proposed a technique to express SoD policies as SMER constraints. They showed the complexity of checking whether a given RBAC system satisfies a given set of SoD policies. Roy et al. [29] gave a model for the problem of assignment of a given set of users in an RBAC system satisfying multiple SMER constraints and described a solution based on integer linear programming. In [23], SoD constraints have been modeled introducing negative permissions in roles, meaning that the user can never exercise that permission. The approach called constraint aware role mining, is based on a boolean matrix decomposition method, extending [22].

In this paper, we focus on cardinality constraints. The contribution is twofold: on one side, we examine the basic types of cardinality constraints and give formal definitions addressing theoretical aspects, defining the associated constrained role mining problems, and analyzing their complexity. On the other side, we propose, for each type of constraint, an efficient heuristic derived from the specialization of an approach that has been presented solving the basic RMP [1] (i.e., we propose a unified framework for solving role mining problems with different cardinality constraints). A complete set of experiments testing our heuristics on real-world datasets show that our techniques improve over previous proposals in many cases. The evaluation takes into account different metrics and different indicators. The results are compared to the previously available heuristics.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we introduce the terminology and the basic definitions for RBAC and the associated RMP. In Section III, we formally define the constrained RMP for the different classes of constraints we consider. In particular we examine four classes: Permission-Usage Cardinality Constraint

(PUCC), User-Distribution Cardinality Constraint (UDCC), Role-Usage Cardinality Constraint (RUCC), and Permission-Distribution Cardinality Constraint (PDCC). In Section IV, we present our family of heuristics, adapting the general approach for the basic RMP to the different sets of constraints considered. In Section V, we present a complete set of experiments applying the heuristics to standard datasets and comparing their performance to other proposals. Finally, we draw some conclusions in Section VI.

II. ROLE MINING

In this section we briefly recall the basic definitions for the RBAC model and discuss the computational complexity of the ROLE MINING problem and of some of its variants.

A. RBAC DEFINITION

The notation we use is based on the NIST standard for Core Role-Based Access Control (Core RBAC, or RBAC 0), see [30] and [11]. We denote with $\mathcal{U} = \{u_1, \dots, u_n\}$ the set of users, $\mathcal{P} = \{p_1, \dots, p_m\}$ the set of permissions, and $\mathcal{R} = \{r_1, \dots, r_k\}$ the set of roles. The many-to-many mapping assignment relations we consider are: $\mathcal{UA} \subseteq \mathcal{U} \times \mathcal{R}$ that is user-to-role assignment relation; $\mathcal{PA} \subseteq \mathcal{R} \times \mathcal{P}$ that is role-to-permission assignment relation; and $\mathcal{UPA} \subseteq \mathcal{U} \times \mathcal{P}$ that is user-to-permission assignment relation.

Obviously, we can represent the assignment relations by binary matrices. For instance, by UA we denote the \mathcal{UA} 's matrix representation. The binary matrix UA satisfies $\mathrm{UA}[i][j]=1$ if and only if $(u_i,r_j)\in\mathcal{UA}$. This means that user u_i is assigned role r_j . In a similar way, we define the matrices PA, and UPA. In the next sections we use the following definitions:

$$\begin{split} \operatorname{AssignedRoles}_{\mathsf{U}}(u_i) &= \{r_j : (u_i, r_j) \in \mathcal{UA}\} \\ &= \{r_j : \operatorname{UA}[i][j] = 1\} \\ \operatorname{AssignedRoles}_{\mathsf{P}}(p_j) &= \{r_i : (r_i, p_j) \in \mathcal{PA}\} \\ &= \{r_i : \operatorname{PA}[i][j] = 1\} \\ \operatorname{AssignedUsers}(r_j) &= \{u_i : (u_i, r_j) \in \mathcal{UA}\} \\ &= \{u_i : \operatorname{UA}[i][j] = 1\} \\ \operatorname{AssignedPrms}_{\mathsf{R}}(r_i) &= \{p_j : (r_i, p_j) \in \mathcal{PA}\} \\ &= \{p_j : \operatorname{PA}[i][j] = 1\} \\ \operatorname{AssignedPrms}_{\mathsf{U}}(u_i) &= \{p_j : (u_i, p_j) \in \mathcal{UPA}\} \\ &= \{p_j : \operatorname{UPA}[i][j] = 1\} \end{split}$$

Given the $n \times m$ users-to-permissions assignment matrix UPA, the role mining problem (see [34], [9], and [12]) consists in finding a binary decomposition of UPA, that is an $n \times k$ binary matrix UA and a $k \times m$ binary matrix PA such that, UPA = UA \otimes PA, where, the operator \otimes is such that, for $i \in [n]$ and $j \in [m]$,

$$\mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = \bigvee_{h=1}^{k} (\mathtt{UA}[i][h] \land \mathtt{PA}[h][j]). \tag{1}$$

Therefore, in solving a role mining problem (see [34] and [9]), we are looking for a factorization of the matrix UPA.



Notice that, there are several matrices UA and PA satisfying (1). For instance, trivial solutions can be found considering the following cases: i) we set a role for each user, hence UA is the $n \times n$ identity matrix and PA = UPA; ii) we set a role for each permission, hence UA = UPA and PA is the $m \times m$ identity matrix. In particular, the role mining problem consists in finding a user-to-role assignment \mathcal{UA} and a role-to-permission assignment \mathcal{PA} such that the matrices UA and PA satisfy (1) and the number of columns (rows) of UA (PA) is minimized. The smallest value k for which UPA can be factorized as UA \otimes PA is referred to as the binary rank of UPA.

A candidate role consists of a set of permissions along with a user-to-role assignment. Hence, it can be described by a row of the matrix PA and a column of the matrix UA. The union of the candidate roles is referred to as candidate role-set and can be described by matrices PA and UA. A candidate role-set is complete if the permissions described by any UPA's row can be exactly covered by the union of some candidate roles. In other words, a candidate role-set is complete if and only if it is a solution of the equation $UPA = UA \otimes PA$. Hence, equivalently, the role mining problem consists in finding a complete candidate role-set having minimum cardinality. Following [26], we refer to the tuple $\rho = \langle \mathcal{U}, \mathcal{P}, \mathcal{UPA} \rangle$ as a configuration of an RBAC instance. Given a configuration ρ one wants to find an RBAC state $\gamma = \langle \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{UA}, \mathcal{PA} \rangle$ that is consistent with ρ , i.e., every user in \mathcal{U} has the same permissions in the RBAC state as in \mathcal{UPA} .

B. RBAC COMPUTATIONAL COMPLEXITY

The computational complexity of the ROLE MINING problem (and of some of its variants) was considered in several papers (see, for instance, [34], [5], [9], and [35]). In this section we briefly recall some bounds on the computational complexity we need to establish our results. We start by recalling the definition of the decisional version of the general role mining problem.

Problem 1: (ROLE MINING) Given a set of users \mathcal{U} , a set of permissions \mathcal{P} , a user-permission assignment \mathcal{UPA} , and a positive integer $k < \min\{|\mathcal{U}|, |\mathcal{P}|\}$, are there a set of roles \mathcal{R} , a user-to-role assignment \mathcal{UA} , and a role-to-permission assignment \mathcal{PA} such that $|\mathcal{R}| \leq k$ and UPA = UA \otimes PA? Notice that requiring $k < \min\{|\mathcal{U}|, |\mathcal{P}|\}$ is not a limitation at all. Indeed, assuming $|\mathcal{U}| = n$ and $|\mathcal{P}| = m$, if $k \geq |\mathcal{U}|$, then a solution of the above problem is given by setting UA as the $n \times n$ identity matrix and PA = UPA (i.e., we set a role for each user); while, if $k \geq |\mathcal{P}|$, then a solution is given by setting UA as the $n \times n$ identity matrix and PA = UPA (i.e., we set a role for each permission), as previously discussed.

The optimization version of the ROLE MINING problem can be defined as follows.

Problem 2: (ROLE MINING OPTIMIZATION) Given \mathcal{U} , \mathcal{P} , and \mathcal{UPA} , what is the smallest integer $k \leq \min\{|\mathcal{U}|, |\mathcal{P}|\}$ for which there are \mathcal{R} , \mathcal{UA} , and \mathcal{PA} such that $|\mathcal{R}| = k$ and UPA = UA \otimes PA?

Next theorem, whose proof is trivial, holds.

Theorem 1: ROLE MINING OPTIMIZATION is NP-hard.

In [34] it was proved that ROLE MINING is NP-complete by showing that SET BASIS (see Problem SP7 in Garey and Johnson's book [13]) can be reduced to ROLE MINING. Stockmeyer [33] proved that SET BASIS is NP-complete by showing that VERTEX COVER can be reduced to SET BASIS. Therefore, since VERTEX COVER OPTIMIZATION is APX-complete [7] we have the following simple non-approximability result:

Theorem 2: The ROLE MINING OPTIMIZATION problem cannot be approximated within any constant factor in polynomial time unless P=NP.

III. CONSTRAINED ROLE MINING PROBLEM

In this section, we recall the definitions of different role mining problems where some constraints are enforced on the number of permissions in a role, on the number of roles a user can have, on the number of roles a permission is assigned to, and on the number of users a role can be assigned to. We show that all constrained role mining problems are NP-complete (and their optimization versions are NP-hard).

In [18] the authors considered a restriction on the number of permissions included in any role. They analyzed RBAC states where the size of each role cannot be larger than a given threshold (i.e., there is an upper bound t on the number of permissions that can included in any role). Such a problem is referred to as PERMISSION-USAGE CARDINALITY CONSTRAINT ROLE MINING problem. One has to find a binary decomposition of UPA = UA \otimes PA satisfying $|\{j: \text{PA}[i][j] = 1\}| \leq t$ for any row i of PA or, equivalently, $|\text{AssignedPrms}_{\mathbb{R}}(r)| \leq t$, for any $r \in \mathcal{R}$.

Setting an upper bound t on the number of roles a permission can be assigned to, we get the model proposed in [14],

referred to as the Permission-Distribution Cardinality Constraint Role Mining problem. In such a scenario each column of the matrix PA has to satisfy $|\{i: {\tt PA}[i][j]=1\}| \leq t$ or, equivalently, |AssignedRoles_P(p)| $\leq t$, for any $p \in \mathcal{P}$.

In [15], authors considered a restriction on the number of users to which any role can be assigned. They justified such a constraint stating that role administration becomes easier and more convenient to manage. Moreover, some organizations are naturally structured in such a way that only a maximum number of users can be assigned to a given role (e.g., the number of directors or managers could be fixed a priori). Hence, in [15] it was defined the USER-DISTRIBUTION CARDINALITY CONSTRAINT ROLE MINING problem. The constraint is established by asserting that each column of the matrix UA has to satisfy $|\{i: \mathrm{UA}[i][j]=1\}| \leq t$, or, equivalently, $|\mathrm{AssignedUsers}(r)| \leq t$, for any $r \in \mathcal{R}$.

Finally, role-usage constraint was considered in [16]. The authors analyzed the RBAC state where there is an upper bound t on the number of roles that can be assigned to each user. Such a limitation is enforced either due to security restrictions or to balance work distribution. Such a problem is referred to as ROLE-USAGE CARDINALITY CONSTRAINT ROLE MINING problem. In this case, each column i of the



matrix UA has to satisfy $|\{j: \mathrm{UA}[i][j] = 1\}| \leq t$ or, equivalently, $|\mathrm{AssignedRoles}_{\mathrm{II}}(u)| \leq t$, for any $u \in \mathcal{U}$.

We stress that in this paper, we consider each problem separately. In this case, it is immediate to see that each problem admits at least a trivial solution. For example in the case of UDCC and RUCC, it is easy to see that sound solutions are the ones consisting of a role defined and assigned to each user, each role including all the permissions guaranteed to her. In the case of PDCC, a trivial solution is the one where each role includes a single permission, and the so defined roles are assigned to users respecting the values contained in the UPA matrix. Finally, for the PUCC scenario, the permissions associated to a users are partitioned into sets of size at most t, such partitions determine the roles to assign to the user. Notice that, if we assume that more than one constraint must be satisfied simultaneously, then the problem may not have feasible solutions. For instance, this can happen if we consider both the PUCC and RUCC constraints. Indeed, assume that $|AssignedPrms_R(r)| \leq 2$, $|AssignedRoles_{II}(u)| \leq 3$, and there is a user u such that $|AssignedPrms_{II}(u)| = 7$, then it is immediate to see that both constraints cannot be satisfied.

The decisional version of the previous problems, referred to as PUCC, RUCC, PDCC, and UDCC, respectively, can be defined as follows.

Problem 3: Given a set of users \mathcal{U} , a set of permissions \mathcal{P} , a user-permission assignment, \mathcal{UPA} , and two positive integers t and k, with t>1 and $k<\min\{|\mathcal{U}|,|\mathcal{P}|\}$, are there a set of roles \mathcal{R} , a user-to-role assignment \mathcal{UA} , and a role-to-permission assignment \mathcal{PA} such that $|\mathcal{R}| \leq k$, UPA = UA \otimes PA, and:

```
PUCC: |\mathsf{AssignedPrms}_{\mathsf{R}}(r)| \leq t, for any r \in \mathcal{R}?
PDCC: |\mathsf{AssignedRoles}_{\mathsf{P}}(p)| \leq t, for any p \in \mathcal{P}?
UDCC: |\mathsf{AssignedUsers}(r)| \leq t, for any r \in \mathcal{R}?
RUCC: |\mathsf{AssignedRoles}_{\mathsf{U}}(u)| \leq t, for any u \in \mathcal{U}?
```

The optimization versions of the previous CARDINALITY CONSTRAINT ROLE MINING problems can be defined as follows.

Problem 4: Given a set of users \mathcal{U} , a set of permissions \mathcal{P} , a user-permission assignment \mathcal{UPA} , and a positive integer t>1, what is the smallest integer k for which there are a set of roles \mathcal{R} , a user-to-role assignment \mathcal{UA} , and a role-to-permission assignment \mathcal{PA} such that $|\mathcal{R}|=k$, UPA = UA \otimes PA, and:

```
PUCC OPT: |\mathsf{AssignedPrms}_R(r)| \le t, for any r \in \mathcal{R}? PDCC OPT: |\mathsf{AssignedRoles}_P(p)| \le t, for any p \in \mathcal{P}? UDCC OPT: |\mathsf{AssignedUsers}(r)| \le t, for any r \in \mathcal{R}? RUCC OPT: |\mathsf{AssignedRoles}_U(u)| \le t, for any u \in \mathcal{U}?
```

A. CONSTRAINED RBAC COMPUTATIONAL COMPLEXITY

In [2] it was proved that PUCC is NP-complete showing that PUCC (i.e., Problem 1) can be reduced to it. Using similar arguments, we can show that all the constrained role mining problems we have defined can be proved to be NP-complete.

Moreover, using the same approach as in Theorem 1, we can prove that all the constrained role mining problems are also NP-hard. Finally, the non-approximability result derives from Theorem 2 and from the reduction of ROLE MINING to all the constrained role mining problems. Therefore, the following theorems hold:

Theorem 3: PUCC, PDCC, UDCC, and RUCC are NP-complete.

Theorem 4: PUCC OPTIMIZATION, PDCC OPTIMIZATION, UDCC OPTIMIZATION, and RUCC OPTIMIZATION are NP-hard

Theorem 5: PUCC OPTIMIZATION, PDCC OPTIMIZATION, UDCC OPTIMIZATION, and RUCC OPTIMIZATION cannot be approximated within any constant factor in polynomial time unless P=NP.

Notice that in [14] RUCC is referred to as RUP and the authors, using a technique very similar to the one used in [2], also proved that RUCC (i.e., RUP) is NP-complete. Also in [14] the authors analysed PDCC's computational complexity and in the same way they proved that PDCC is NP-complete.

IV. HEURISTICS

In this section, we present the heuristics we have developed for all the versions of the constrained role mining problems described in Section II-B. We propose a unified framework for solving the role mining problems with different cardinality constraints. We start by describing the heuristic, referred to as RM, for the classical role mining problem (i.e., without considering any constraint). Then, we show how to adapt the RM heuristic to cope with the different types of constraints.

A. RM HEURISTIC

All the heuristics we propose derive from RM reported below, by properly adapting some procedures RM is based on (i.e., pickRole, selectUsers, and updateUC). Notice that the heuristic RM is an amended version of the SMA_R heuristic in [1]. RM takes in input the $n \times m$ user-to-permission assignment matrix UPA and outputs a complete candidate roleset represented by the pair of matrices (UA, PA) satisfying UPA = UA \otimes PA. We denote with $[\ell]$ the set of positive integers up to ℓ included (i.e., $[\ell] = \{1, 2, \dots, \ell\}$).

ALGORITHM 1: RM

```
input: An n \times m user-to-permission assignment matrix
   UPA output: A decomposition (UA, PA) of UPA
  // Set of uncovered users
                     / Size of the current role-set
2
   while UC \neq \emptyset do
        (candidateRole, u) \leftarrow pickRole(UPA, UC)
        selU \leftarrow selectUsers(UPA, candidateRole, UC)
        k \leftarrow k+1 // Add new role to UA and PA foreach i in selU do UA[i][k] \leftarrow 1
 7
        foreach i in candidateRole do PA[k][i] \leftarrow 1
        \texttt{UC} \leftarrow \texttt{updateUC}(\texttt{UPA}, \texttt{UA}, \texttt{PA}, selU, \texttt{UC})
9
10 end
11 return (UA, PA)
```

The set UC denotes the uncovered users, i.e. the users having permissions not covered by the roles in the candidate



role-set represented by the pair of matrices UA and PA. At the beginning, UC includes the whole set \mathcal{U} , where users $\{u_1,\ldots,u_n\}$ are represented by their respective indices. The procedure pickRole returns a role candidateRole to be added to the candidate role-set along with the user (i.e., the row's index u of the UPA matrix) that determined such a role, while the procedure selectUsers returns all uncovered users that can be assigned to such a role (line 5 of RM). Notice that, the index u returned by procedure pickRole is not used at all in RM, but it will be useful for the heuristics in the constrained scenario. In lines 7-8, the matrices UA and PA are updated to reflect the fact that a new role has been added to the candidate role-set. Finally, in line 9, the procedure updateUC checks whether all permissions of some users in selU have been covered. In this case, the set UC of uncovered users is updated by removing the recently covered users.

More in detail, the procedure pickRole selects an uncovered user having the least number of assigned permissions, that is, it chooses, from UPA, a row whose index is in UC having the minimum amount of entries equal to one. Such a row represents a role to be added to the candidate role-set. In case more than one row in UPA has the minimum number of entries, say m_R , equal to one, pickRole returns the role represented by the row having a lower index in UPA. This choice is not a limitation at all, as during the subsequent iterations of the **while** statement, all rows of weight m_R will be eventually selected. Notice that the procedure pickRole could have returned the whole set of m_R -sized roles without affecting the final results (the procedure selectUsers should have changed as well), but in this way we have a framework that can be easily adapted to handle the more general case of constrained role mining.

The procedure selectUsers, on input the user-to-permission association (i.e., the matrix UPA), the set candidateRole representing the new role to be added to the candidate role-set, and the set of uncovered users UC, returns the set of uncovered users, the role represented by candidateRole can be assigned to (i.e., the set of users possessing all the permissions represented by candidateRole). In other words, the procedure selectUsers adds to the set candidateRole all indices $i \in UC$ such that $candidateRole \subseteq \{j : UPA[i][j] = 1\}$. In the following the procedure selectUsers will be adapted to handle constraints during the role mining process.

Finally, the procedure updateUC checks whether some users the new role has been assigned to (i.e., the users identified by selU) have all permissions covered. Such a procedure, for each $i \in selU$, checks whether $\mathtt{UPA}[i][j]$ is equal to $\bigvee_{h=1}^k (\mathtt{UA}[i][h] \wedge \mathtt{PA}[h][j])$, for all permissions $p_j \in \mathcal{P}$ and in this case it removes i from UC.

B. PUCC HEURISTICS

In this section, we consider the scenario presented in Section III, where a restriction on the number of permissions included in each role is imposed (i.e., we consider the PERMISSION-USAGE CARDINALITY CONSTRAINT ROLE MINING problem). Since we proved that finding an optimal solution to such a problem is NP-hard, we present some heuristics to mine, from a given initial configuration $\rho = \langle \mathcal{U}, \mathcal{P}, \mathcal{UPA} \rangle$, an RBAC state $\gamma = \langle \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{UA}, \mathcal{PA} \rangle$, where the size of each role is not larger than a given threshold, say t. The first heuristic we present is referred to as C_{RM} -PUCC_R and was firstly proposed in [2] under the name t-SMA_R. We describe its modified version below to fit our unified framework (i.e., the RM heuristic). The modification affects the way UPA's rows with minimum weight (i.e., users possessing the least number of permissions) are selected by pickRole.

ALGORITHM 2: pickRolepuco

```
input: The n \times m matrix UPA, its decomposition (UA, PA),
                  the set UC of uncovered users, and the threshold t
     output: A new role candidateRole and a user u owning it
     mnp \leftarrow \infty, u \leftarrow 0, candidateRole \leftarrow \emptyset
    k \leftarrow number \ of \ rows \ in \ PA for each i \ in \ UC \ do
                                                           // Number of roles
           \begin{array}{l} \textbf{if} \ |\{j: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}| < mnp \ \textbf{then} \\ | \ mnp \leftarrow |\{j: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}| \end{array}
                  u \leftarrow i
    end
     uncPerms \leftarrow \{j \in [m] : \mathtt{UPA}[u][j] = 1 \text{ and }
\bigvee_{h=1}^k (\mathtt{UA}[u][h] \land \mathtt{PA}[h][j]) = 0 \} 10 foreach j in uncPerms do
           candidateRole \leftarrow candidateRole \cup \{j\}

if |candidateRole| = t then break
11
12
13 end
14 return (candidateRole, u)
```

In [2], when more than one row in UPA has the minimum weight, a random row is picked, while, our heuristic selects the row having the smallest index. This strategy speeds up a bit the heuristic running time, while the quality of the solution is not degraded. Another way of selecting a row has also been proposed in [2], where the designed row is the one having the least number of permissions not covered by the roles already selected (i.e., the ones described by PA). In the case of unconstrained role mining, this does not affect the returned candidate role-set. In the case of constrained role mining (PUCC scenario), there are very few differences between the results obtained by selecting roles from the whole permissions associated with users or just from the uncovered ones. Therefore, we decided not to implement this strategy. We will exploit this strategy in Section IV-C when analyzing the PDCC scenario. In such a case, we will show that adding to the candidate role only uncovered permissions will reduce the size of the final candidate role-set.

The differences between $C_{RM}-PUCC_R$ and RM are concentrated on how one selects a role to be added to the candidate role-set. In $C_{RM}-PUCC_R$, roles are determined by the procedure $pickRole_{PUCC}$ previously described. Such

5

 $^{^1}$ To be more precise, the procedure pickRole returns the set of indices representing the permissions belonging to the candidate role r. Hence, $\{p_j \mid j \in candidateRole\}$ corresponds to AssignedPrms_R(r).



a procedure, as regards the corresponding one described in Section IV, takes as input also the matrices UA and PA computed so far and the parameter t representing the maximum number of permissions that any role can have and returns a role containing at most t permissions.

It is easy to see that heuristics C_{RM}-PUCC_R correctly returns a complete role set as it follows the same pattern as RM described in Section IV. We have only to show that pickRole_{PUCC} produces each time a new candidate role containing at maximum t permissions. The procedure first finds an uncovered user, identified by the row's index u, having the least number of assigned permissions (lines 3-8). Then, in line 9, it computes the set of uncovered permissions such a user possesses. Indeed, if such a user possesses permission p_i (i.e., UPA[u][j] = 1), but UA[u][h] \wedge PA[h][j] = 0, for each role r_h with $h \in [k]$, then it is immediate to verify that permission p_i has not been covered yet. More in detail, if $UA[u][h] \wedge PA[h][j] = 0$, then either permission p_j is assigned to role r_h (i.e, PA[h][j] = 1) and role r_h has not been assigned to the selected user (i.e., UA[u][h] = 0), or role r_h does not contain permission p_j (i.e, PA[h][j] = 0) and the selected user has role r_h (i.e, UA[u][h] = 1), or role r_h does not contain permission p_j (i.e, PA[h][j] = 0) and role r_h has not been assigned to u (i.e., UA[u][h] = 0). In any of the previous cases we have that p_i is not covered by the roles selected so far (i.e., PA) and the current user-to-role assignment (i.e., UA). Finally (see lines 10-13), procedure pickRole_{PUCC} selects at most t uncovered permissions possessed by u and assigns them to the candidate role represented by candidateRole.

Notice, that in lines 10-13, we decided to select the first up to t permissions, but any strategy could be used. We could have chosen any random t permissions or any up to t permissions belonging to the greatest number of users. We experimentally observed that a random choice does not improve the obtained solution. Indeed, the solutions we get have quite similar characteristics (i.e., about the same roleset size and similar Weighted Structural Complexity - to be defined later). Moreover, using the "best" t permissions can cover a larger part of UPA, but determining such t permissions could take a prohibitively large amount of time.

Another way to mine a role is to apply the method described by $pickRole_{PUCC}$ to UPA's columns by suitably adapting it to meet the cardinality constraint. This approach is similar to run the heuristic on the UPA's transpose looking for a UPA's covering by a subset of its columns. The idea is to select from UPA a column, say j-th column that corresponds to permission p_j , having the least number of ones. Then, we consider all users, say $\{u_{i_1},\ldots,u_{i_g}\}$, possessing permission p_j . Finally, the candidate role will include the first up to t permissions that belong to all users $\{u_{i_1},\ldots,u_{i_g}\}$. We will refer to such a heuristic by $C_{\text{RM}}-\text{PUCC}_{\mathbb{C}}$ (the subscript C stands for column), and we describe the modified $pickRole_{\text{PUCC}}$ procedure below.

The procedure C-pickRole_{PUCC} first selects a column having the minimum number of entries equal to one (see lines 2-12). That is, it selects the permission that has been

ALGORITHM 3: C-pickRole_{PUCC}

```
input: The n \times m matrix UPA, the set UC of uncovered
               users, and the threshold t
    output: A new role candidateRole and a user u owning it
   mnu \leftarrow \infty, column \leftarrow 0, candidateRole \leftarrow \emptyset
  for j \leftarrow 1 to m do 

// Number of ones in column j 

nu \leftarrow |\{i: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}| 

// Number of uncov. users possessing
         uu \leftarrow |\{i : \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1 \text{ and } i \in \mathtt{UC}\}|
         if nu < mnu and uu > 0 then mnu \leftarrow nu
 9
                    Select uncovered permission p_j
10
               column \leftarrow j
12 end
13 assignedUsers \leftarrow \{i : \mathtt{UPA}[i][column] = 1\}
14 u \leftarrow \min(assignedUSers)
15 for j \leftarrow 1 to m do
         if assignedUsers \subseteq \{i : \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\} and
           |candidateRole| < t then
               candidateRole \leftarrow candidateRole \cup \{j\}
17
         end
18
19 end
20 return (candidateRole, u)
```

assigned to the minimum number of users. Notice that the selected column, say column j, must include at least an uncovered user. This condition is why we compute, in line 6, the number uu of uncovered users. Such value must be positive to consider column j; if all users possessing permission p_i have already been covered, it makes no sense to consider p_i . We could speed up the code in lines 2-12 by keeping track of uncovered columns as done for users by means of UC. In this way, we can avoid computing uu in line 6. We decided not to improve the running time of C-pickRolepucc to keep the code simpler and to avoid keeping track in other procedures of unnecessary variables (i.e., the ones related to the uncovered columns). Once the minimum weight column has been selected, procedure C-pickRolepucc computes the set of users possessing the permission associated to such a column (see line 13), then it looks for other permissions assigned to the same set of users (lines 15-19) and add them to candidateRole (see line 18). At most t permissions are added to candidateRole (see line 16). To keep all pickRoles procedures uniform, we have to return a user the *candidateRole* is assigned to. Hence, in line 14 we assign u the index with minimum value.

Notice that in line 13 we could select the users possessing permission p_j as $assignedUsers \leftarrow \{i \in UC : UPA[i][column] = 1\}$ (i.e., we do not add users that have previously been covered). However, some experiments show that such a choice does not change much the solution. For the sake of space, we omit the $C_{RM}-PUCC_C$'s proof of correctness. It is easy to see that also procedure $C-pickRole_{PUCC}$ always returns a candidate role including at most t permissions.

a: Related Works

Constraints on the number of permissions included in each role have been one of the first classes of constraints considered in literature [18]. The algorithm thereby presented,



denoted as Constrained RoleMiner (CRM), is derived from the ORCA approach [32] and is based on a clustering technique where clusters are formed based on users' permissions. Users who have the same set of permissions are placed in the same cluster. A role is created from a cluster that satisfies the cardinality constraint and has the highest number of associated users. The permissions associated with the selected role are then removed from the remaining clusters, which are also reordered according to the number of included uncovered permissions. Then, the procedure is recursively invoked.

C. PDCC HEURISTICS

In this section, we consider the scenario presented in Section III, where it was assumed that there is an upper bound t on the number of roles to which any permission can be assigned. We propose two heuristics referred to as $C_{\rm RM}$ —PDCC1 and $C_{\rm RM}$ —PDCC2, respectively. Our heuristics derive from RM by modifying the procedure pickRole. We consider two versions of such a procedure, the first one selects, as for the previous heuristics, the role from the matrix UPA (i.e., for each user u_i it considers all permissions assigned to u_i); while, the second one keeps track of the permissions assigned to u_i that have not been covered yet (referred to as uncovered permissions) and selects the role by considering the uncovered permissions. Such procedures are referred to as pickRole-PDCC1 and pickRole-PDCC2 and they are described below.

ALGORITHM 4: pickRole-PDCC₁

```
input: The matrix UPA, its decomposition (UA, PA), the
              uncovered users UC, the threshold t, and NR
              denoting the number of roles a permission has been
              assigned to
   output: The new candidateRole and user u possessing it
 1 mnp \leftarrow \infty, candidateRole \leftarrow \emptyset
1 mnp \leftarrow \infty, candidateRole \leftarrow \emptyset
1 Number of roles
   k \leftarrow number\ of\ rows\ in\ PA for each i in UC do //
                                 // Select minimum weight
         if |\{j : \text{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}| < mnp then
              mnp \leftarrow |\{j: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}|
 5
              u \leftarrow i
   end
   uncPerms \leftarrow \{j: \mathtt{UPA}[u][j] = 1 \text{ and }
                              \bigvee_{h=1\atop //}^k (\mathtt{UA}[u][h] \wedge \mathtt{PA}[h][j]) = 0 \} Form a candidate role
10
   foreach j in uncPerms do
11
         if NR[j] < t - 1 then
12
              candidateRole \leftarrow candidateRole \cup \{j\}
13
              uncPerms \leftarrow uncPerms \setminus \{j\}
14
15
              NR[j] \leftarrow NR[j] + 1
         end
   end
17
                  // NR[j] \ge t-1 for all j \in uncPerms
18
19
   if candidateRole = \emptyset then
         j' \leftarrow_R uncPerms
                                      // A random permission
20
         candateRole \leftarrow \{j'\}
21
         NR[j] \leftarrow NR[j] + 1
23 end
24 return (candidateRole, u)
```

Both procedures, with respect to the corresponding ones described in Section IV, take as inputs also the matrices UA and PA, the parameter t representing the maximum number

of roles a permission can be assigned to, and the vector NR denoting the number of roles a permission has been assigned to (e.g., NR[j] = d means that permission p_j has been assigned to d roles). Initially, NR[j] = 0 for all $j \in [m]$.

The procedure $pickRole-PDCC_2$ is almost identical to $pickRole-PDCC_1$. Indeed, they differ in line 4, where $pickRole-PDCC_1$ selects the minimum weight row, while, $pickRole-PDCC_2$ selects the row having the minimum number of uncovered permissions. More precisely, the procedure $pickRole-PDCC_2$ is obtained by substituting line 4 of $pickRole-PDCC_1$,

if
$$|\{j: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1\}| < mnp$$
 then

with
$$unc = \{j: \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] = 1 \ \text{ and } \\ \bigvee_{h=1}^k (\mathtt{UA}[i][h] \wedge \mathtt{PA}[h][j]) = 0\}$$
 if $|unc| < mnp$ then.

It is immediate to see that our heuristics C_{RM} -PDCC₁ and C_{RM}-PDCC₂ return a complete role-set as they both follow the same pattern as the procedure RM. Indeed, heuristics' correctness is based on the fact that procedures pickRole-PDCC1 and pickRole-PDCC2 never assign a permission to more than t roles. Let us analyze pickRole-PDCC1 (the same holds for pickRole-PDCC₂). The procedure pickRole-PDCC₁ in lines 3-8 selects an uncovered user having the least number of assigned permissions (such a user is represented by the variable u pointing to a UPA's row). These steps are identical to the ones of algorithms pickRole and pickRole pucc in Sections IV and IV-B, respectively. The variable uncPerms, see line 9, represents the permissions possessed by user uthat do not appear in any role already assigned to u (i.e., uncPerms represents the uncovered permissions of user u). To satisfy the PDCC constraint, in lines 11-17, we select from *uncPerms* only the permissions that have been already assigned to at most t-2 roles (see line 12). In line 13, we add such permissions to candidateRole and increment by one the number of roles such permissions have been assigned to (i.e., in line 15, for $j \in candidateRole$, we increment NR[i] by one). In this way, we ensure that all permissions represented by candidateRole have been assigned to at most t-1 roles, satisfying in this way the PDCC constraint. If all permissions in uncPerms have been already assigned to at least t-1 roles (equivalently, see line 19, candidateRoleis empty), then we form a role consisting of a unique permission randomly chosen in uncPerms and increment by one the number of roles it has been assigned to (see lines 19-23). Notice that any permission will never be assigned by $pickRole-PDCC_1$ to more than t roles; indeed permission p_j is assigned to a role either in line 13 or in line 21. In the former case, p_j is assigned to at most t-1 roles as we assign it to a role only if NR[j] < t-1. In the latter case, we create a role, consisting only of permission p_j , that will be assigned to all users possessing p_i . This implies that p_i will be covered in UPA and it will never appear in any subsequently discovered



uncPerms. In other words, a permission can be assigned to a *t*-th role only in lines 19-23. Once this is done, such a permission will not influence subsequent role formation.

a: Related Works

Harika et al. in [14] proposed a heuristic named Enforcing Role Usage Constraint and based on a bipartite graph representation of the user-permission matrix, extending the approach described in [9] (we will refer to such a heuristic as ERUC). The basic RMP is thereby mapped to the problem of finding a minimum biclique cover of the edges of the bipartite graph having as vertices the elements in set U, representing users, and the elements of the set P, representing permissions. An edge is then a pair (u,p), which represents the fact that user $u \in U$ has permission $p \in P$ as reported in the original UPA matrix. The heuristic selects only permission vertices covering the highest number of possible uncovered incident edges, respecting at each iteration the permission-distribution cardinality constraint.

Li et al. [21] also proposed a heuristic considering PDCC constraints. Their approach is based on the graph optimization theory described by Zhang et al. in [36]. It works by iteratively updating the role state after that the role update algorithm has selected a role pair. Graph optimization is used to define the role hierarchy, and weighted structural complexity drives the selection of the roles still verifying that the updated state satisfies the given constraints.

D. UDCC HEURISTICS

In this section, we consider the scenario presented in Section III, where a restriction on the number of users assigned to any given role was imposed. More precisely, it was assumed that there is an upper bound t on the number of users that can possess any given role. We propose two heuristics referred to as $C_{\rm RM}-{\rm UDCC_1}$ and $C_{\rm RM}-{\rm UDCC_2}$, respectively. The differences with RM are concentrated on how they select a candidateRole and on how they compute the set of uncovered users to whom to assign candidateRole. Both heuristics select such users by invoking the algorithm $selectUsers_{\rm UDCC}$. It takes as input the parameters t (the maximum number of users that a role can be assigned to) and u returned, in the case of $C_{\rm RM}-{\rm UDCC_1}$, by pickRole (see Section IV) and, in the case of $C_{\rm RM}-{\rm UDCC_2}$, by $pickRole-{\rm UDCC_2}$ described below.

The procedure selectUsers_udes not differ much from the corresponding one for the uncostrained role mining. The main difference is that it adds the user u, returned by either pickRole or pickRole-UDCC2, to the set candidateRole along with at most other t-1 indices $i \in UC\setminus\{u\}$ such that $candidateRole \subseteq \{j: UPA[i][j]=1\}$. The procedure pickRole-UDCC2 differs from algorithm pickRole in Section IV as it considers only uncovered permissions (i.e., it selects roles by analyzing permissions that have not been covered yet). Indeed, the set defined in line 4 contains all the permissions assigned to a given user that have not been covered yet by the candidate role-set rep-

```
ALGORITHM 5: pickRole-UDCC2
```

```
input: The n \times m matrix UPA, its decomposition (UA, PA),
   and the set UC of uncovered users output: The new role candidateRole and a user u
             possessing it
 u \leftarrow 0, candidateRole \leftarrow, mnp \leftarrow \infty
                                            // Number of roles
   k \leftarrow number\ of\ rows\ in\ PA
   foreach i in UC do
         uncPerms \leftarrow \{j : \mathtt{UPA}[i][j] =
          1 and \bigvee_{h=1}^{k} (\mathtt{UA}[i][h] \wedge \mathtt{PA}[h][j]) = 0
         if |uncPerms| < mpn then
 5
 6
              candidateRole \leftarrow uncPerms
              mnp \leftarrow |candidateRole|
 7
              u \leftarrow i
10 end
11 return (candidateRole, u)
```

resented by UA and PA (for the explanation that such sets comprise only uncovered permissions, we refer to the arguments following the description of algorithm pickRole_{PUCC} in Section IV-B).

It is immediate to see that both heuristics $C_{RM}-UDCC_1$ and $C_{RM}-UDCC_2$ return a complete role-set as they follow the same pattern as heuristic RM and procedure $selectUsers_{UDCC}$ satisfies the UDCC constraint. Indeed, procedure $selectUsers_{UDCC}$ does not differ much from the corresponding one for the uncostrained role mining. The main difference is that $selectUsers_{UDCC}$ adds u, returned by pickRole and by pickRole-UDCC, to the set candidateRole along with at most other t-1 indices $i \in UC\setminus\{u\}$ such that $candidateRole\subseteq\{j: UPA[i][j]=1\}$. Then the candidate role is assigned to at most t users.

a: Related Works

In [15] three heuristics for the UDCC case have been presented, referred to as Algorithm 1, 2, and 3, respectively. All heuristics are based on the bipartite graph representation of the UPA matrix given in [9], where the role minimization problem is mapped to the problem of finding minimum biclique cover of the edges of the graph. The greedy algorithm thereby described has been modified in three different versions to limit the number of users assigned to each resulting role. The strategy to identify biclique in Algorithm 1 is to start selecting the vertex representing the user with a minimum amount of uncovered incident edges and assign him all the included permissions. Successively all the users with the same set of permissions are retrieved and ordered according to the minimum number of uncovered incident edges. A corresponding number of users is selected such that the constraint is satisfied. In Algorithm 2, the strategy starts selecting the vertex with the minimum number of uncovered incident edges, that can represent either a user or a permission. In the first case, when the selected vertex represents a user, then the users having the same permissions are assigned to that role until the maximum number allowed by the constraint is reached. If the selected vertex is a permission, similarly, the role is assigned to some users, not exceeding the limit specified by constraint. Finally, for Algorithm 3, the vertex



representing the permission with the minimum number of uncovered incident edges is selected, and all the users with that permission are chosen. If the number of users, say n, is above the constraint limit t, then all the combinations of t users out of n users are retrieved. For each combination, the permissions assigned to the t users are collected. The selected combination is the one that maximizes the number of covered permissions. Notice that the last strategy has an exponential running time. For this reason, for our comparison, we implemented Algorithm 1 and Algorithm 2, which are referred to as BC_1 and BC_2 , respectively.

E. RUCC HEURISTICS

In this section, we consider the scenario presented in Section III, where an upper bound t on the number of roles assigned to each user is assumed. Our heuristics, referred to as $C_{RM}-RUCC_R$ (roles are selected by considering UPA's rows) and $C_{RM}-RUCC_C$ (roles are selected by considering UPA's columns), are quite similar to RM. To select a candidate role we use pickRole in $C_{RM}-RUCC_R$ and $C-pickRole_{RUCC}$ in $C_{RM}-RUCC_C$. Notice that, $C-pickRole_{RUCC}$ is obtained from $C-pickRole_{PUCC}$ by removing from line 16 the test |candidateRole| < t (i.e., we set no limit on the role size). In our heuristics, we also change the way we compute the set of uncovered users the role returned by either pickRole or $C-pickRole_{RUCC}$ is assigned to. Such changes are described in the following selectUsers_RUCC} procedure.

```
 \begin{array}{c} \textbf{input} : \textbf{The matrix UPA}, \textbf{the set UC of uncovered users}, \textbf{the} \\ role \ candidate Role, \textbf{the user} \ u \textbf{ to assign} \\ candidate Role, \textbf{ and the threshold} \ t \\ \textbf{output:} \ \textbf{The set of users} \ selected Users \ possessing \textbf{ the role} \\ candidate Role \\ \textbf{1} \ selected Users \leftarrow \left\{u\right\} \\ \end{array}
```

ALGORITHM 6: selectUsers_{RUCC}

6 end7 return selectedUsers

It is easy to see that heuristics C_{RM}-RUCC_R and C_{RM} -RUCC_C return a complete role set as they follow the same pattern as RM described in Section IV. We have only to show that $selectUsers_{RUCC}$ assigns no more than t roles to any user in \mathcal{U} (i.e., any user in \mathcal{U} satisfies the role-usage constraint). Indeed, the procedure selectUsers_{RUCC} determines which users the role candidateRole can be assigned to. In particular, it will be assigned to user u (see line 1) and to any other user possessing all permissions included in candidateRole and having less than t-1 other roles (see lines 2-6). Notice that a user will be assigned the role represented by candidateRole only if she/he (i.e., the index representig her/him) belongs to selectedUsers. An index is added to such a set either in line 1 or in line 5. In the latter case, the user that will be assigned candidateRole already possesses at most t-2 roles. This implies that, when selectUsers_RUCC is invoked, any user in UC can possess at most t-1 roles. Hence, in line 1, by adding u to selectedUsers it will assign to u at most t roles, being candidateRole the last one as all uncovered permissions possessed by u will be covered by candidateRole. Indeed, candidateRole and u are returned by pickRole (C-pickRole_RUCC) and, accordingly to them, the permissions represented by candidateRole are all the permissions possessed by the user represented by u. Therefore, procedure selectUsers_RUCC guarantees that to any user are assigned at most t-1 roles unless the t-th role covers all his/her permissions.

a: Related Works

In [16], two approaches considering role usage cardinality constraints have been proposed, one denoted as Role Prioritybased Approach (RPA) and the second called Coverage of Permissions based Approach (CPA). In both heuristics, a role can be assigned to a user if the permissions it includes are a subset of the permissions required by that user, and those permissions have not already been assigned using another previously defined role. The starting set of candidate roles is the one generated according to the optimal boolean matrix decomposition strategy proposed in [22]. In RPA, roles are prioritized according to the number of included permissions. In CPA, roles are selected by considering the role with the largest number of permissions that are not yet assigned to that user by any other role. Each time, before the selection, the satisfaction of the role-usage cardinality constraint is checked. The reported experimental results show that RPA behaves better than CPA.

Similarly to what done for the permission-distribution constraint case, in [14], a heuristic named Enforcing Role Usage Constraint (EPDC) was proposed, based on the same construction of the bipartite graph representing the UPA matrix. The heuristic selects user vertices covering the greatest number of possible uncovered incident edges, respecting at each iteration the role-usage cardinality constraint.

V. EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION

In this section, we present the experimental evaluation of our heuristics by comparing the obtained results with the ones obtained using state of the art techniques. The goal is to validate our proposals, by showing that our heuristics' performances considering both the execution speed and the quality of the returned role set, are almost equivalent or improve over the state of the art heuristics. All heuristics have been implemented in Java and tested on a MacBook Pro running OS X 10.10 on a 2.7 GHz Intel Core i5 CPU having 8 GB 1867 MHz DDR3 RAM. In the evaluation, we use nine real-world datasets that have been widely used in literature for analyzing the performances of various role mining heuristics (see, for instance, [9], [14], [16], [18], [27]). Such real-world datasets, once available from HP Labs, were first used in [9]; their parameters are summarized in Table 1. The datasets Americas small and Americas large



have been obtained from Cisco firewalls granting access to the HP network to authenticated users (users' access depends on their profiles). Similar datasets are Apj and Emea. The Healthcare dataset was obtained from the US Veteran's Administration; the Domino data was from a Lotus Domino server; Customer is based on the access control graph obtained from the IT department of an HP customer. Finally, the Firewall 1 and Firewall 2 datasets are results of running an analysis algorithm on Checkpoint firewalls.

Dataset	$ \mathcal{U} $	$ \mathcal{P} $	$ \mathcal{UPA} $	min#P	max#P	min#U	max#U
Americas large	3485	10127	185294	1	733	1	2812
Americas small	3477	1587	105205	1	310	1	2866
Apj	2044	1164	6841	1	58	1	291
Emea	35	3046	7220	9	554	1	32
Healthcare	46	46	1486	7	46	3	45
Domino	79	231	730	1	209	1	52
Customer	10021	277	45427	1	25	1	4184
Firewall 1	365	709	31951	1	617	1	251
Firewall 2	325	590	36428	6	590	46	298

TABLE 1. Characteristics of the real-world datasets considered in this paper

More in details, for each dataset Table 1 specifies the number of users $|\mathcal{U}|$, the number of permissions $|\mathcal{P}|$, the number of user-to-permission assignments $|\mathcal{UPA}|$, the minimum and the maximum number of permissions assigned to a user (respectively, min#P and max#P), and the minimum and the maximum number of users that have the same permission $(respectively, min#U and max#U)^2$.

To compare the heuristics on the real-world datasets of Table 1, we take into account the number of roles generated by the heuristics, the execution time³ of the heuristics, and the Weighted Structural Complexity (WSC). The Weighted Structural Complexity measures the size of a Core RBAC state $\gamma = \langle \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{P}\mathcal{A} \rangle$ that is consistent with a given configuration $\rho = \langle \mathcal{U}, \mathcal{P}, \mathcal{UPA} \rangle$ of a Core RBAC instance. According to [19], [26] the Weighted Structural Complexity can be defined as follows.

Definition 1: Given $W = \langle w_r, w_u, w_p, w_h, w_d \rangle$, where $w_r, w_u, w_p, w_h, w_d \in \mathbb{Q}^+ \cup \{\infty\}$, the Weighted Structural Complexity (WSC) of an RBAC state γ , denoted by $wsc(\gamma, W)$, is computed as follow.

$$wsc(\gamma, W) = w_r \cdot |\mathcal{R}| + w_u \cdot |\mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}| + w_p \cdot |\mathcal{P}\mathcal{A}| + \qquad (2)$$

$$w_h \cdot |t_{reduce}(\mathcal{RH})| + w_d \cdot |\mathcal{DUPA}|$$
 (3)

The relation $\mathcal{RH} \subseteq \mathcal{R} \times \mathcal{R}$, called inheritance relation and denoted by \succeq , was introduced in [31] in defining Hierarchical RBAC (or RBAC 1). One has that $r_1 \succeq r_2$ (i.e, role r_1 inherits role r_2) if and only if all permissions assigned to r_2 are also assigned to r_1 and all users assigned to r_1 are also assigned to r_2 . The transitive reduction $t_{reduce}(\mathcal{RH})$ of the role hierarchy relation \mathcal{RH} is the minimum relation having the same transitive closure as \mathcal{RH} . For instance, $\{(r_1, r_2), (r_2, r_3)\}$ is the transitive reduction of $\{(r_1,r_2),(r_2,r_3),(r_1,r_3)\}$. The relation $\mathcal{DUPA}\subseteq\mathcal{U}\times\mathcal{P}$ represents a direct user-permission assignment relation useful when considering incomplete role-set where there are uncovered permissions in the matrix UPA. Notice that \mathcal{DUPA} is not considered in standard RBAC models [30]. Still, this approach is more general and can handle the exceptional situation where a role cannot explain an assignment of a permission to a user (or, in other words, it does not make sense to introduce for a user a role having single permission).

Given a weight vector $W = \langle w_r, w_u, w_p, w_h, w_d \rangle$, one would like to find an RBAC state having the smallest Weighted Structural Complexity. Hence, different weight vectors encode different mining objectives and minimization goals. For example, by setting $W = \langle 1, 0, 0, \infty, \infty \rangle$ one wants to minimize the number of role forbidding role hierarchy and direct user-permission assignment; while setting $W = \langle 0, 1, 1, \infty, \infty \rangle$ one wants to minimize the number of assignments user-roles and role-permissions (this problem was referred to as min-edge role mining in [22]). In our case we set $W = \langle 1, 1, 1, 0, \infty \rangle$, because we want to compare heuristics that generate RBAC states exhibiting a complete role-set (i.e., we do not allow direct user-permission assignment) and we stick to the Core RBAC model, where hierarchy relations do not come into play (since our heuristics and the ones we compare with, do not generate roles hierarchies).

To set-up the experiments, for each scenario, we have to fix the constraint's values. In particular, for each dataset and each heuristic, we run three tests changing the constraint's value. To choose the values used in our tests, we consider the characteristics of the optimal solutions (Table 2) provided by [9]. Such solutions, except the one for the Customer dataset, are available from [9]'s authors upon request.

In Table 2, column $|\mathcal{R}|$ specifies the optimal number of roles in an unconstrained setting, the columns $\stackrel{min}{ppr}$ and $\stackrel{max}{ppr}$ represent, respectively, the minimum and the maximum number of permissions assigned to roles in the optimal candidate roleset. The constraint's values for the PUCC scenario will be set to the 20%, 50%, and 100% of ppr. Analogously, columns $\stackrel{min}{rpu}$ and $\stackrel{max}{rpu}$ represent the the minimum and the maximum number of roles assigned to users (to be used in the RUCC scenario). Similarly, in the PDDC scenario, the constraint's value will be limited by the values in the columns $\stackrel{min}{rpp}$ and $\stackrel{max}{rpp}$ corresponding, respectively, to the minimum and the maximum number of roles assigned to permissions. Finally, for the UDCC scenario, the columns $\stackrel{min}{upr}$ and $\stackrel{max}{upr}$ denote the range of the number of users that are assigned to each role in the optimal solution. Since, for the Customer dataset an optimal solution is not available, as upper bounds we use the values max # P and max # U given in Table 1.

In the following, using the datasets summarized in Table 1 and the upper bounds in Table 2, we compare the performances of the heuristics described Section IV for the various constrained role mining problems. We evaluated separately the heuristics dividing them according to the type of constraint (e.g., PUCC, RUCC, PDCC, and UDCC). In each

²Formally, min#P is defined as min{|AssignedPrms_U(u)| : $u \in \mathcal{U}$ }, we can define max#P, min#U, and max#U analogously.

³We point out that the reported execution times do not correspond to realworld times, but we use those data to compare CPU usage among different heuristics as it is irrespective of background process that might slow down the execution.



Dataset	$ \mathcal{R} $	$\mathop{ppr}\limits^{min}$	$\mathop{ppr}\limits^{max}$	$\overset{min}{rpu}$	\mathop{rpu}^{max}	$\stackrel{min}{rpp}$	$\mathop{rpp}\limits^{max}$	$\overset{min}{upr}$	$\displaystyle \mathop{upr}^{max}$
Americas large	398	1	733	1	4	1	129	1	2777
Americas small	178	1	263	1	12	1	43	1	2809
Apj	453	1	52	1	8	1	15	1	278
Emea	34	9	554	1	1	1	31	1	2
Healthcare	14	1	32	1	6	1	4	1	27
Domino	20	1	201	1	9	1	6	1	51
Customer	-	1	25	1	25	1	4184	1	4184
Firewall 1	66	1	395	1	9	1	18	1	203
Firewall 2	10	2	307	1	3	1	4	1	239

TABLE 2. Characteristics of optimal RBAC states (in red not optimal solutions)

table reporting heuristics' performances, the best results are highlighted in boldface. Table 3 summarizes the comparisons we made, where each heuristic takes as input the user-to-permission assignment matrix UPA, and constraints are satisfied during the role mining process.

Notice that, once a candidate role has been selected, all our heuristics assign the selected role to all users (with some limitations due the imposed constraint) possessing the permissions associated with the selected role. This assignment could be unnecessary as it could attribute to some user more roles than needed and, at the same time, increase the value of $|\mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}|$ (thus, consequently, it increases the Weighted Structural Complexity of the computed Core RBAC state). Hence, to avoid such unnecessary assignment, instead of modifying our heuristics, we devised a simple technique to reduce the value of $|\mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}|$. We define a post-processing phase, as done in previous works [4], where the RBAC state returned by our heuristics is modified by deleting redundant roles. More precisely, if the roles r and r' are assigned to a user $u \in \mathcal{U}$ and AssignedPrms_R $(r') \subset AssignedPrms_R(r)$, then we remove r' from u's role list. The number of overall generated roles is not affected, but $|\mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}|$ might be lowered. Although not optimized, the proposed technique is speedy and takes on average few milliseconds to complete on the RBAC states returned by our heuristics on the datasets listed in Table 1. On average, the time required to reduce $|\mathcal{U}\mathcal{A}|$ is much lower than the time needed to mine a candidate role-set. Hence, we do not report this algorithm's running time in the following sections when commenting on the experiments.

a: PUCC Scenario

For each dataset and each heuristic, we run three tests setting the constraint's value, respectively, to the 20%, 50%, and 100% of the maximum number of permissions assigned to roles in the optimal solution (Table 2). We compare the best solution provided by our heuristics with the one given by CRM. From Table 4, one can see that, concerning the size of the candidate role-set returned by the heuristics, in 11 tests out 27, our best heuristic returns a smaller role-set than CRM. For the Emea, Domino, and Firewall 1 datasets, the returned role-set has an equal size, while in the remaining 13 tests CRM returns a smaller role-set (notice that in 9 of such tests the role-set sizes are less than 5% apart).

If we consider heuristics' running time, we see that our

heuristics are much faster than CRM. In particular, for the Customer and Apj datasets, CRM is about, respectively, 300 times and 70 times slower than our fastest heuristic. Considering the WSC measure, it results that in 11 tests out of 27, our best heuristic has a smaller Weighted Structural Complexity than CRM, while in one experiment, the WSC is the same. Overall, our heuristics perform better than CRM.

b: PDCC Scenario

In the following we compare, on the real-world datasets summarized in Table 1, heuristic Enforce Permission Distribution Constraint (for short, EPDC in this paper) described in Section 4.2 of [14] and heuristics C_{RM} —PDCC₁ and C_{RM} —PDCC₂ described in Section IV-C. According to Table 5, it results that the three heuristics often returns a role-set having the same cardinality. Still, our heuristics are faster and, in general, produce a state having lower Weighted Structural Complexity. More in detail, considering our best heuristic, we have that in 18 tests out of 27 our heuristic and EPDC return a role-set of identical size, in 8 tests our role-set is smaller, while just in one test (second test for the Americas large dataset) EPDC returns a negligible smaller role-set (i.e., 1451 vs 1455 computed roles).

Our best heuristic is faster than EPDC in 23 tests out 27; for the remaining four tests, our best heuristic and EPDC exhibit the same running time. Such a comparison does not change much, even considering the slower heuristic between C_{RM} -PDCC₁ and C_{RM} -PDCC₂. For the Apj dataset, our best heuristic is about 20 times faster than EPDC. For the Americas large dataset, EPDC is from 34 to 54 times slower than both C_{RM} -PDCC₁ and C_{RM} -PDCC₂. Concerning the WSC measure, EPDC generates states with lower Weighted Structural Complexity than the best of our heuristics in two tests only and, in one of them (i.e., the second test on the Healthcare dataset), our WSC is just 2.5% bigger than the one obtained running EPDC. Hence, we can conclude that, in general, our proposed heuristics compute an RBAC state with better parameters than the one attained executing state of the art heuristics.

c: UDCC Scenario

In the following, we compare the performance of four heuristics for the UDCC scenario, namely heuristics BC_1 and BC_2 described in Section 4 of [15] and our heuristics $C_{\text{RM}} - \text{UDCC}_1$



Constraint		Heuristics
PUCC	CRM ([18], Sec. 3)	C _{RM} -PUCC _C , C _{RM} -PUCC _R (Sec. IV-B)
RUCC	ERUC ([14], Sec. 4.1)	C _{RM} -RUCC _R (Sec. IV-E)
PDCC	EPDC ([14], Sec. 4.2)	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁ , C _{RM} -PDCC ₂ (Sec. IV-C)
UDCC	BC ₁ , BC ₂ ([15], Sec. 4)	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁ , C _{RM} -UDCC ₂ (Sec. IV-D)

TABLE 3. Heuristics considered

		Role-set Size				Time		WSC			
Dataset	Heuristic	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	757	659	612	747	758	728	120369	122824	99913	
Americas large	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	617	509	430	433	419	347	62439	79198	107610	
	CRM	669	464	415	1845	2384	5166	48429	74184	92293	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	248	216	206	192	198	196	24538	24125	23242	
Americas small	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	227	217	226	181	151	157	11814	15740	21650	
	CRM	232	209	209	288	362	378	11533	10550	10550	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	505	478	466	74	65	62	11019	10980	10683	
Apj	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	492	480	475	34	32	30	5215	5747	5927	
	CRM	487	459	455	2175	2244	2325	5146	5065	5063	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	88	52	40	11	10	10	11820	11014	7677	
Emea	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	80	45	34	11	11	9	6848	6750	7280	
	CRM	100	50	34	11	12	11	4900	5938	7280	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	22	19	16	2	2	2	549	636	605	
Healthcare	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	18	15	16	1	1	1	494	383	499	
	CRM	86	39	14	2	2	2	858	651	351	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	29	26	23	1	1	1	1333	1414	1212	
Domino	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	27	24	20	1	1	1	631	667	758	
	CRM	30	22	20	1	1	1	781	577	761	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	289	278	276	536	248	292	133091	134387	134367	
Customer	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	664	1122	1154	246	219	216	43256	44604	45100	
	CRM	277	277	277	74668	80255	78917	45963	45963	45963	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	84	77	75	43	43	45	7181	6696	6510	
Firewall 1	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	77	73	72	44	41	41	3161	4745	5233	
	CRM	74	69	68	48	50	49	3250	3192	3190	
	C _{RM} -PUCC _C	21	14	11	47	45	47	2831	2752	2444	
Firewall 2	C _{RM} -PUCC _R	18	12	10	45	44	47	1793	1472	1365	
	CRM	22	14	10	45	44	47	2219	1942	1564	

TABLE 4. PUCC Framework

and C_{RM} —UDCC₂ described in Section IV-D. According to Table 4, considering the size of the computed role-set, in 9 tests out of 27, the best solution provided by heuristics BC₁ and BC₂ is smaller than the best solution returned by C_{RM} —UDCC₁ and C_{RM} —UDCC₂. Our heuristics are, in general, faster; indeed, they are in 11 tests quicker and just in one a bit slower. In the remaining cases, the fastest of both pairs of heuristics have the same running time.

Concerning the WSC, our best heuristic returns in 11 tests a lower WSC value. In 8 tests out of 15, where either BC_1 or BC_2 returns smaller WSC values, the solution obtained by running our best heuristic is less than 5% apart of these WSC values (in five of such tests the differences are less than 2%). For the Emea and Americas small datasets, our best heuristic always performs better, or at least the same, than the best between BC_1 and BC_2 . Notice that, for the Emea dataset, the maximum number of users assigned to each role in the optimal solution is equal to 2. Hence, in the first two tests, we considered the constraint value t equal to one, while in the last test, we assumed t = 2.

d: RUCC Scenario

In the following we compare, on the real-world datasets (see Table 1), heuristic Enforce Role Usage Constraint (for short, ERUC in this paper) proposed in [14] (it corresponds to Algorithm 3 in [14]) and heuristics C_{RM} -RUCC_R and C_{RM} -RUCC_C described in Section IV-E. According to Table 7, it results that our best heuristic is faster than ERUC in 22 tests out of 27, while in the remaining 5 test the heuristics exhibit the same running time. In the last two experiments for the datasets Americas large, Americas small, and Apj, our best heuristic is from 10 to about 50 times faster than ERUC. Concerning the role-set size, our best heuristic returns a smaller role-set only in 3 tests out of 27 and in one case (i.e., last experiment for the Domino dataset) it returns a role-set of the same size than ERUC. Anyway, in 11 tests out of 27, the returned solution's size is less than 10% apart from the one computed by ERUC. The results are a bit more favorable when considering the WSC measure. In this case, in 7 tests out of 27, our best heuristic has a smaller WSC than ERUC.



		Role-set Size		Time			WSC			
Dataset	Heuristic	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	3055	1455	1023	2528	1814	799	103259	102023	97092
Americas large	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	3127	1493	1023	3499	1912	816	108842	102093	97270
	EPDC	3105	1451	1023	139026	62431	43430	123967	118641	110783
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	207	207	207	153	159	160	10450	10450	10450
Americas small	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	197	196	196	149	157	161	10248	10223	10223
	EPDC	207	207	207	747	729	783	11656	11656	11656
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	492	457	455	43	46	49	5178	5050	5044
Apj	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	494	456	454	39	41	43	5159	5045	5039
	EPDC	492	457	455	887	747	780	5341	5121	5115
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	290	74	37	48	10	11	7792	7360	7286
Emea	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	290	74	37	20	10	8	7792	7360	7286
	EPDC	290	74	37	89	15	13	8517	7365	7286
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	46	23	14	3	2	2	1578	399	352
Healthcare	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	46	23	14	3	3	2	1578	415	368
	EPDC	46	23	14	4	2	2	1578	389	369
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	231	123	20	31	2	1	1192	967	967
Domino	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	231	125	20	3	2	1	1192	953	953
	EPDC	231	123	20	5	3	1	1192	1030	761
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	276	276	276	471	193	174	45978	45978	45978
Customer	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	279	279	279	259	155	145	45944	45944	45944
	EPDC	276	276	276	869	768	825	45978	45978	45978
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	71	68	68	38	37	61	3228	3194	3194
Firewall 1	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	125	65	65	42	48	38	3411	3223	3223
	EPDC	71	68	68	58	76	53	3302	3273	3273
	C _{RM} -PDCC ₁	590	11	10	954	65	48	37608	1578	1564
Firewall 2	C _{RM} -PDCC ₂	590	38	10	1006	50	40	37608	1682	1494
	EPDC	590	11	10	954	58	78	37608	1578	1564

TABLE 5. PDCC Framework

VI. CONCLUSION

Constrained RBAC has been the object of several research works, having the goal to define a resulting set of roles directly usable for the organization of the structure under examination. In this paper, we focused on cardinality constraints, rigorously defining the theoretical aspects and computational complexity of the associated role mining problems, and providing a set of heuristics that is practically applicable in different contexts. We also reported a complete set of experiments obtained after the application of the heuristics to benchmark datasets and comparisons with the available results from previous literature. An open problem is how to efficiently measure the distance of the resulting configurations from the optimal constrained RBAC states, that has been recently addressed in [8] for the case of unconstrained RBAC. The extension of that approach to the constrained RBAC scenario could offer another metric to evaluate the quality of the proposed heuristics effectively.

REFERENCES

- Carlo Blundo and Stelvio Cimato. A simple role mining algorithm. In Proceedings of the 2010 ACM Symposium on Applied Computing, SAC '10, pages 1958–1962, New York, NY, USA, 2010. ACM.
- [2] Carlo Blundo and Stelvio Cimato. Constrained role mining. In STM 2012, 8th International Workshop on Security and Trust Management, Revised Selected Papers, volume 7783 of Lecture Notes in Computer Science, pages 289–304. Springer, 2013.
- [3] Carlo Blundo, Stelvio Cimato, and Luisa Siniscalchi. PRUCC-RM: permission-role-usage cardinality constrained role mining. In 41st IEEE Annual Computer Software and Applications Conference, COMPSAC 2017, Turin, Italy, July 4-8, 2017. Volume 2, pages 149–154, 2017.

- [4] Carlo Blundo, Stelvio Cimato, and Luisa Siniscalchi. Postprocessing in constrained role mining. In Hujun Yin, David Camacho, Paulo Novais, and Antonio J. Tallón-Ballesteros, editors, Intelligent Data Engineering and Automated Learning - IDEAL 2018 - 19th International Conference, Madrid, Spain, November 21-23, 2018, Proceedings, Part I, volume 11314 of Lecture Notes in Computer Science, pages 204–214. Springer, 2018.
- [5] Liang Chen and Jason Crampton. Set covering problems in role-based access control. In ESORICS 2009, Proceedings of 14th European Symposium on Research in Computer Security, volume 5789 of Lecture Notes in Computer Science, pages 689–704. Springer-Verlag, 2009.
- [6] Edward J. Coyne. Role engineering. In Charles E. Youman, Ravi S. Sandhu, and Edward J. Coyne, editors, Proceedings of the First ACM Workshop on Role-Based Access Control, RBAC 1995, Gaithersburg, MD, USA, November 30 December 2, 1995. ACM, 1995.
- [7] Irit Dinur and Samuel Safra. On the hardness of approximating minimum vertex cover. Annals of Mathematics, 162:2005, 2004.
- [8] L. Dong, K. Wu, and G. Tang. A data-centric approach to quality estimation of role mining results. IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security, 11(12):2678–2692, Dec 2016.
- [9] Alina Ene, William G. Horne, Nikola Milosavljevic, Prasad Rao, Robert Schreiber, and Robert Endre Tarjan. Fast exact and heuristic methods for role minimization problems. In Indrakshi Ray and Ninghui Li, editors, 13th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2008, Estes Park, CO, USA, June 11-13, 2008, Proceedings, pages 1-10. ACM, 2008.
- [10] E. B. Fernandez and J. C. Hawkins. Determining role rights from use cases. In Proceedings of the Second ACM Workshop on Role-Based Access Control, RBAC âĂŹ97, page 121âĂŞ125, New York, NY, USA, 1997. Association for Computing Machinery.
- [11] David F. Ferraiolo, Ravi S. Sandhu, Serban I. Gavrila, D. Richard Kuhn, and Ramaswamy Chandramouli. Proposed NIST standard for rolebased access control. ACM Transaction on Information System Security, 4(3):224–274, 2001.
- [12] Mario Frank, David A. Basin, and Joachim M. Buhmann. A class of probabilistic models for role engineering. In ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security, pages 299–310. ACM, 2008.
- [13] Michael R. Garey and David S. Johnson. Computers and Intractability, A



		Role-set Size				Time		WSC			
Dataset	Heuristic	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	
	BC ₁	420	417	416	456	489	462	93409	93340	93317	
Americas large	BC ₂	427	424	423	52541	51761	49883	106772	106703	106680	
Americas rarge	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	435	432	431	491	469	462	107725	107656	107633	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	420	417	416	514	476	468	93452	93263	93200	
	BC ₁	217	214	213	152	176	164	10977	10908	10885	
Americas small	BC ₂	225	216	213	3307	3036	3033	24493	24418	24393	
Americas sinan	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	231	227	226	158	156	164	22123	22027	22003	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	212	209	208	152	161	175	10885	10624	10537	
	BC ₁	466	458	456	42	46	44	5148	5062	5058	
Apj	BC ₂	473	458	456	2886	2996	3010	6739	6301	6209	
Αρj	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	596	492	476	42	45	43	6808	6061	5952	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	531	458	456	49	48	46	8972	5253	5057	
	BC ₁	35	35	34	10	10	11	7290	7290	7280	
Emea	BC ₂	35	35	34	17	16	17	7325	7325	7315	
Ellica	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	34	34	34	10	12	9	7280	7280	7280	
	$C_{RM}-UDCC_2$	34	34	34	9	9	9	7280	7280	7280	
	BC ₁	31	22	16	2	3	2	495	328	254	
Healthcare	BC ₂	21	21	15	2	2	2	670	646	512	
Treatment	$C_{RM}-UDCC_1$	30	26	18	2	2	2	909	782	574	
	$C_{RM}-UDCC_2$	39	26	17	2	2	2	588	392	346	
	BC ₁	31	22	21	1	1	1	783	765	763	
Domino	BC ₂	39	22	21	3	2	2	956	836	827	
Dominio	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	50	22	21	1	1	1	825	767	765	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	39	22	21	1	1	1	903	779	770	
	BC ₁	296	281	276	486	184	185	46018	45986	45978	
Customer	BC ₂	296	281	276	3967	4006	3593	46101	46021	45978	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	1698	1168	1154	309	236	215	153920	54745	45100	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	296	281	276	241	184	185	46101	46021	45978	
	BC ₁	92	79	72	44	44	44	3521	3291	3174	
Firewall 1	BC ₂	115	99	75	135	120	100	7760	8851	7019	
1 iicwaii i	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	115	92	82	43	44	43	9116	6708	5732	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	101	88	82	43	42	43	3668	3500	3676	
	BC ₁	19	12	11	46	50	50	1753	1823	1805	
Firewall 2	BC ₂	55	12	11	72	52	54	6990	1974	1957	
Filewali 2	C _{RM} -UDCC ₁	78	12	11	49	50	50	5097	1590	1572	
	C _{RM} -UDCC ₂	76	12	11	46	50	50	4982	1647	1630	

TABLE 6. UDCC Framework

- Guide to the Theory of NP-Completeness. W.H. Freeman and Company, New York, 1979.
- [14] Pullamsetty Harika, Marreddy Nagajyothi, John C. John, Shamik Sural, Jaideep Vaidya, and Vijayalakshmi Atluri. Meeting cardinality constraints in role mining. IEEE Trans. Dependable Sec. Comput., 12(1):71–84, 2015.
- [15] M. Hingankar and S. Sural. Towards role mining with restricted user-role assignment. In Wireless Communication, Vehicular Technology, Information Theory and Aerospace Electronic Systems Technology (Wireless VITAE), 2011 2nd International Conference on, pages 1–5, 2011.
- [16] John C. John, Shamik Sural, Vijayalakshmi Atluri, and Jaideep S. Vaidya. Role mining under role-usage cardinality constraint. In Dimitris Gritzalis, Steven Furnell, and Marianthi Theoharidou, editors, Information Security and Privacy Research, volume 376 of IFIP Advances in Information and Communication Technology, pages 150–161. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2012
- [17] Martin Kuhlmann, Dalia Shohat, and Gerhard Schimpf. Role mining - revealing business roles for security administration using data mining technology. In Elena Ferrari and David F. Ferraiolo, editors, 8th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2003, Villa Gallia, Como, Italy, June 2-3, 2003, Proceedings, pages 179–186. ACM, 2003.
- [18] Ravi Kumar, Shamik Sural, and Arobinda Gupta. Mining RBAC roles under cardinality constraint. In Proceedings of the 6th international conference on Information systems security, ICISS'10, pages 171–185, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2010. Springer-Verlag.
- [19] Ninghui Li, Ian Molloy, Qihua Wang, Elisa Bertino, Seraphin Calo, and Jorge Lobo. Role mining for engineering and optimizing role based access control systems. Technical report, Purdue University, 11 2007.
- [20] Ninghui Li, Mahesh V. Tripunitara, and Ziad Bizri. On mutually exclusive roles and separation-of-duty. ACM Trans. Inf. Syst. Secur., 10(2), May 2007
- [21] Ruixuan Li, Huaqing Li, Xiwu Gu, Yuhua Li, Wei Ye, and Xiaopu Ma.

- Role mining based on cardinality constraints. Concurr. Comput. : Pract. Exper., 27(12):3126–3144, August 2015.
- [22] Haibing Lu, Jaideep Vaidya, and Vijayalakshmi Atluri. Optimal boolean matrix decomposition: Application to role engineering. In Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on Data Engineering, ICDE 2008, April 7-12, 2008, Cancún, México, pages 297–306, 2008.
- [23] Haibing Lu, Jaideep Vaidya, Vijayalakshmi Atluri, and Yuan Hong. Constraint-aware role mining via extended boolean matrix decomposition. IEEE Trans. Dependable Secur. Comput., 9(5):655–669, September 2012.
- [24] Xiaopu Ma, Ruixuan Li, Hongwei Wang, and Huaqing Li. Role mining based on permission cardinality constraint and user cardinality constraint. Sec. and Commun. Netw., 8(13):2317–2328, September 2015.
- [25] Barsha Mitra, Shamik Sural, Jaideep Vaidya, and Vijayalakshmi Atluri. A survey of role mining. ACM Comput. Surv., 48(4):50:1–50:37, February 2016
- [26] Ian Molloy, Hong Chen, Tiancheng Li, Qihua Wang, Ninghui Li, Elisa Bertino, Seraphin B. Calo, and Jorge Lobo. Mining roles with semantic meanings. In Indrakshi Ray and Ninghui Li, editors, 13th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2008, Estes Park, CO, USA, June 11-13, 2008, Proceedings, pages 21–30. ACM, 2008.
- [27] Ian Molloy, Ninghui Li, Tiancheng Li, Ziqing Mao, Qihua Wang, and Jorge Lobo. Evaluating role mining algorithms. In Barbara Carminati and James Joshi, editors, 14th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2009, Stresa, Italy, June 3-5, 2009, Proceedings, pages 95–104. ACM, 2009.
- [28] Haio Roeckle, Gerhard Schimpf, and Rupert Weidinger. Process-oriented approach for role-finding to implement role-based security administration in a large industrial organization. In Proceedings of the Fifth ACM Workshop on Role-based Access Control, RBAC '00, pages 103–110, New York, NY, USA, 2000. ACM.
- [29] Arindam Roy, Shamik Sural, Arun Kumar Majumdar, Jaideep Vaidya, and Vijayalakshmi Atluri. On optimal employee assignment in constrained



		Role-set Size			Time		WSC			
Dataset	Heuristic	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%	20%	50%	100%
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	3485	432	432	697	451	550	192264	107585	107585
Americas large	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	3485	548	453	431	31316	34025	192264	99599	106561
	ERUC	432	429	415	479	23700	27749	107585	98323	94095
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	259	259	259	151	150	155	25488	25488	25488
Americas small	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	417	353	249	1650	2266	2306	25930	21849	17827
	ERUC	258	244	224	429	1592	1612	22723	18532	13984
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	2044	564	564	92	49	46	10929	6129	6129
Apj	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	2044	486	456	33	2094	1778	10929	5299	5223
	ERUC	564	470	457	75	1431	1535	6129	5372	5160
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	35	35	35	9	8	9	7290	7290	7290
Emea	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	35	35	35	43	9	10	7290	7290	7290
	ERUC	34	34	34	11	10	9	7280	7280	7280
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	46	18	18	1	2	2	1578	563	563
Healthcare	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	46	35	35	2	1	1	1578	503	521
	ERUC	18	15	15	2	1	1	563	263	298
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	79	23	23	1	1	1	888	739	739
Domino	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	79	21	20	2	1	1	888	757	755
	ERUC	23	20	20	2	1	1	739	762	761
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	5655	5655	5655	1890	1464	1440	49761	49761	49761
Customer	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	8984	4403	956	3345	3405	3143	62456	53557	46692
	ERUC	5027	2495	657	3156	5186	2609	51138	48928	46674
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	365	90	90	39	37	37	32681	7190	7190
Firewall 1	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	365	90	65	72	88	83	32681	5807	4426
	ERUC	90	85	71	47	77	75	7190	7207	4646
	C _{RM} -RUCC _R	325	325	11	41	40	39	37078	37078	1510
Firewall 2	C _{RM} -RUCC _C	325	325	10	77	47	48	37078	37078	1466
	ERUC	11	11	11	48	46	48	1510	1510	1548

TABLE 7. RUCC Framework

- role-based access control systems. ACM Trans. Manage. Inf. Syst., 7(4):10:1–10:24, December 2016.
- [30] Ravi Sandhu, David Ferraiolo, and Richard Kuhn. The nist model for role-based access control: Towards a unified standard. In Proceedings of the Fifth ACM Workshop on Role-based Access Control, RBAC '00, pages 47–63, New York, NY, USA, 2000. ACM.
- [31] Ravi S. Sandhu, Edward J. Coyne, Hal L. Feinstein, and Charles E. Youman. Role-based access control models. Computer, 29(2):38–47, February 1996.
- [32] Jürgen Schlegelmilch and Ulrike Steffens. Role mining with ORCA. In Elena Ferrari and Gail-Joon Ahn, editors, 10th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2005, Stockholm, Sweden, June 1-3, 2005, Proceedings, pages 168–176. ACM, 2005.
- [33] L. J. Stockmeyer. The minimal set basis problem is NP-complete. Technical Report RC 5431, IBM Research, May 1975.
- [34] Jaideep Vaidya, Vijayalakshmi Atluri, and Qi Guo. The role mining problem: finding a minimal descriptive set of roles. In Volkmar Lotz and Bhavani M. Thuraisingham, editors, 12th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2007, Sophia Antipolis, France, June 20-22, 2007, Proceedings, pages 175–184. ACM, 2007.
- [35] Jaideep Vaidya, Vijayalakshmi Atluri, and Qi Guo. The role mining problem: A formal perspective. ACM Trans. Inf. Syst. Secur., 13(3), 2010.
- [36] Dana Zhang, Kotagiri Ramamohanarao, and Tim Ebringer. Role engineering using graph optimisation. In Volkmar Lotz and Bhavani M. Thuraisingham, editors, 12th ACM Symposium on Access Control Models and Technologies, SACMAT 2007, Sophia Antipolis, France, June 20-22, 2007, Proceedings, pages 139–144. ACM, 2007.



CARLO BLUNDO obtained in 1995 his Ph.D. from the Università di Napoli, Italy. He is currently Full Professor of Computer Science at the Dipartimento di Scienze Aziendali - Management & Innovation Systems of Universitàli Salerno, Italy. His main research interests are Cryptography and Data Security. He has co-authored over 100 scientific publications.



STELVIO CIMATO is an Associate Professor at the Computer Science Department of the Università degli Studi di Milano. He got his Ph.D in Computer Science at University of Bologna, Italy in 1999. His main research interests are in the area of cryptography, network security, and Web applications. He has published several papers in the field and is active in the community, serving as member of the program committee of several international conferences in the area of cryptogra-

phy and data security. He is Senior Member of IEEE since 2017.



LUISA SINISCALCHI is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Aarhus University before she was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Salerno. Luisa completed the Ph.D. at the University of Salerno in March 2018. Her research is focused on various aspects of cryptography and data security.

VOLUME 4, 2016 15

0 0