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Data-efficient representation learning for visual place recognition

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About the Author

María Leyva Vallina was born on February 23rd 1993, in La Pola Llaviana, within the region of Asturias, Spain.

For her undergraduate studies she joined the Degree on Software Engineering in the University of Oviedo, where she first had contact with machine learning, the field that she decided to pursue. In 2015 she enrolled in the MSc program in *Artificial Intelligence*, co-taught by the Polytechnic University of Catalonia, the University of Barcelona and the Rovira i Virgili University. There she received the guidance of Prof. Petia Radeva to write her MSc Thesis titled *Food related scene recognition in egocentric images*.

It was also thanks to Prof. Petia Radeva that she met Dr. Estefanía Talavera, who was then a PhD student under the guidance of Prof. Radeva and Prof. Nicolai Petkov. Estefanía suggested she applied to an open PhD position at the University of Groningen, which led to her moving to the Netherlands and joining the group of Intelligent Systems at the Bernoulli Institute of the University of Groningen. During the first two years of her stay in Groningen, she was part of the Trimbot2020 project, which was the foundation for her dissertation. Moreover, from 2019 to 2021 she was a member of the University Council of the University of Groningen, which allowed her to gain many insights into the institutional and bureaucratic inner workings of the university.

After five years and one pandemic in beautiful Groningen, María moved back to Asturias to join the Fundamental Research team of NielsenIQ, where she currently does research on machine learning on graphs and Large Language Models.

She balances her life and keeps her sanity by hiking, reading and cooking.