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Computers for Handicapped Persons

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PREFACE

For the fourth time now the International Conference on Computers for Handicapped Persons is taking place as a successful cooperation between the Austrian Computer Society and 'fortec', the Rehabilitation Engineering Group at the Vienna University of Technology. Again the conference is backed up by several national and international computer societies and related organizations (IFIP, CEPIS, BSC, GI, SI, ACM, IEEE). For me this international cooperation is an indicator for the worldwide importance of and interest in this topic.

The conference has been sponsored by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Environment, Youth and Family Affairs, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and the Arts, the Austrian Workers Compensation Board (AUVA), the Österreichische Postsparkasse (PSK), the Federation of Austrian Industrialists, and the Bank Austria.

Following the call for papers more than a hundred experts and research teams have submitted contributions for this conference. For the first time the conference organizers (i.e. the program committee and the organizing committee) decided to split up the contributions into four categories: preconference seminars, conference papers, scientific posters, and short reports that mainly cover ongoing projects and national activities.

After the reviewing process and the subsequent meeting of the program committee, six pre-conference seminars, 79 conference papers, nine scientific posters, and 13 short reports were accepted. This Lecture Notes in Computer Science (LNCS) volume presents all conference contributions except the pre-conference Seminars. The manuscripts for the seminars will be prepared by the seminar speakers as handouts for the seminar participants. In the appendix of the proceedings is a list of the seminars together with the addresses of the speakers.

The editorial is the right place to thank those persons who by their experience and dedication have contributed so much to the preparation of this conference. First of all I want to thank the members of the program committee who have done all the reviewing and by their comments helped to improve quite a number of papers:

Especially I would like to thank the two co-chairmen of the program committee: Prof. Wagner (University of Linz, Austria) who has not only been one of the main promotors of this and the past conferences but also made it possible for these proceedings to be published by Springer-Verlag and Geoff Busby (GEC Computer Services and British Computer Society) who in addition to all the reviewing work and despite his physical challenge came all the way from Great Britain to Vienna to join us at the program committee meeting.

Last but not least I want to thank the organizing committee headed by Dr. W. Grafendorfer (Secretary General of the Austrian Computer Society) who dedicated much effort, skill and time to make this 1994 conference possible. I know that for him and for the other members of the organizing committee (Dipl.-Ing. W. Kremser, Dipl.-Ing. F. P. Seiler, I. Sudra) the ICCHP is not just a conference like any other but a meeting that is worth special attention.

"Computers for Handicapped Persons" – for years the conference has sailed under this flag. It is a good and a challenging name. It expresses the belief that computers and computer science can do much in overcoming barriers imposed on persons with disabilities. If we, however, have a closer look at the real meaning of "handicap" the title could be misleading and should be modified. Handicap is defined as the the social result of an inpairment or disability. Therefore, it is our goal that, by using computers in the proper way, the handicaps will be eliminated even if the impairment remains unchanged. The conference title will not be changed in the future, but the true goal is and will be "Computers for Disabled Persons (to leave them) *no longer handicapped.*

Thanks to all the authors who have contributed to this 4th ICCHP. May every paper, poster or seminar be a step further in overcoming barriers and handicaps.

Wolfgang L. Zagler
Program Chair, 4th ICCHP 1994
Vienna University of Technology
July 1994

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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