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Pablo Noriega Javier Vázquez-Salceda
Guido Boella Olivier Boissier
Virginia Dignum Nicoletta Fornara
Eric Matson (Eds.)

Coordination, Organizations, Institutions, and Norms in Agent Systems II

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Volume Editors

Pablo Noriega
Instituto de Investigación en Inteligencia Artificial, CSIC, Barcelona, Spain
E-mail: pablo@iia.csic.es

Javier Vázquez-Salceda
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain, E-mail: jvazquez@lsi.upc.edu

Guido Boella
Università di Torino, Torino, Italy, E-mail: guido@di.unito.it

Olivier Boissier
Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines, Saint-Etienne, France
E-mail: Olivier.Boissier@emse.fr

Virginia Dignum
Universiteit Utrecht, Utrecht, The Netherlands, E-mail: virginia@cs.uu.nl

Nicoletta Fornara
Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Switzerland
E-mail: nicoletta.fornara@lu.unisi.ch

Eric Matson
Wright State University, Dayton, OH, USA, E-mail: eric.matson@wright.edu

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Preface

In recent years, social and organizational aspects of agency have become major research topics in MAS. Recent applications of MAS on Web services, grid computing and ubiquitous computing highlight the need for using these aspects in order to ensure social order within such environments. Openness, heterogeneity, and scalability of MAS, in turn, pose new demands on traditional MAS interaction models and bring forward the need to look into the environment where agents interact and at different ways of constraining or regulating interactions. Consequently, the view of coordination and governance has been expanding to entertain not only an agent-centric perspective but societal and organization-centric views as well.

The overall problem of analyzing the social, legal, economic, and technological dimensions of agent organizations, and the co-evolution of agent interactions, provide theoretically demanding and interdisciplinary research questions at different levels of abstraction. The MAS research community has addressed these issues from different perspectives that have gradually become more cohesive around the four notions in the title to the workshop: coordination, organization, institutions, and norms. The COIN workshops are thus designed to consolidate the subject by providing focus events that reach researchers from diverse communities working in related topics and facilitate more systematic discussion of themes that have been treated from various perspectives.

This year, the COIN workshops were hosted during AAMAS 2006, (on June 9, in Hakodate, Japan) and ECAI 2006 (on August 28, in Riva del Garda, Italy). The papers contained in this volume are the revised versions of a selection of those that were presented in these workshops.

We want to express our gratitude to the Program Committee members, the additional reviewers, the participants of workshops, and most particularly to the authors for their respective contributions. We also want to thank the organizers of the Fifth International Joint Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multi-agent Systems in Hakodate and of the 17th European Conference in Artificial Intelligence in Riva del Garda, for hosting and supporting the organization of the workshops. Finally, we would also like to acknowledge the encouragement and support from Springer, in the person of Alfred Hofmann, for the publication of this second volume of COIN workshops.

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| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Guido Boella | Università di Torino, Dipartimento di Informatica, Turin, Italy <code>guido@di.unito.it</code> |
| Olivier Boissier | Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines, Saint-Etienne, France, <code>Olivier.Boissier@emse.fr</code> |
| Virginia Dignum | Institute for Computing and Information Sciences, Utrecht University, The Netherlands, <code>virginia@cs.uu.nl</code> |
| Nicoletta Fornara | Università della Svizzera Italiana (University of Lugano) Faculty of Communication Sciences, Lugano, Switzerland <code>fornaran@lu.unisi.ch</code> |
| Eric Matson | Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, USA, <code>eric.matson@wright.edu</code> |
| Pablo Noriega | Instituto de Investigación en Inteligencia Artificial, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Barcelona, Spain <code>pablo@iiia.csic.es</code> |
| Javier Vázquez-Salceda | Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Departament de Llenguatges i Sistemes Informàtics, Barcelona, Spain <code>jvazquez@lsi.upc.edu</code> |

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