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# Neural Nets and Surroundings

22nd Italian Workshop on Neural Nets,  
WIRN 2012, May 17–19, Vietri sul Mare,  
Salerno, Italy

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# Preface

This volume collects a selection of contributions which has been presented at the 22nd Italian Workshop on Neural Networks, the yearly meeting of the Italian Society for Neural Networks (SIREN). The conference was held in Italy, Vietri sul Mare (Salerno), during May 17–19, 2012. The annual meeting of SIREN is sponsored by International Neural Network Society (INNS), European Neural Network Society (ENNS) and IEEE Computational Intelligence Society (CIS).

The workshop, and thus this book, is organized in three main components, two special sessions and a group of regular sessions featuring different aspects and point of views of artificial neural networks and natural intelligence, also including applications of present compelling interest.

More than 60 papers were presented at the Workshop, and most of them are reported here. The review process has been carried out in two steps, one before and one after the workshop in order to meet Publisher's requirements. The selection of the papers was made through peer-review process, where each submission was evaluated by at least two reviewers. The submitted papers were authored by peer scholars from different countries (the Italian component was anyway preponderant). The acceptance rate is thus high also because most of the attendees are involved in SIREN research and organization activities for more than 20 years. In addition to regular papers, the technical program featured keynote plenary lectures by some worldwide renowned scientist (Soo Young Lee, South Korea; Ganesh K. Venayagamoorthy, USA; Jacek Zurada, USA; Günther Palm, Germany; Alessandro Vinciarelli, UK; Danilo Mandic, UK). One of the two special sessions was supported by the EU-sponsored COST Action 2102 that closed his work on February 2011 even though the Members of the Action are still networking and collaborating in scientific activities.

The first Special Session explored the new frontiers and challenges in Smart Grid research and proposed a proficient discussion table for scientists joining the WIRN conference, whose expertise typically cover the research fields addressed in Smart Grid technology, as electrical and electronic engineering, computational intelligence, digital signal processing and telecommunications. The Session included two invited contributions and seven regular ones. The Session was particularly relevant because it introduced

some aspects of neural network applications not commonly known at the community in a field of growing interest.

The second Special Session was titled Computational Intelligence in Emotional or Affective Systems and was given in honour of John Taylor, the Editor-in-chief of the journal Neural Networks recently died. The Session featured two keynote lectures and 10 regular contributions. Computational Intelligence (CI) methods have shown great capabilities in modelling, prediction, and recognition tasks and a mature degree of understanding has been achieved in many application areas, in particular in complex multimodal systems supporting human-machine or human-human interaction. At the same time, the emotional issue has recently gained increasing attention in such complex systems due to its relevance in most common human tasks (like cognitive processes, perception, learning, communication and even “rational” decision-making) and therefore is highly relevant for the goal of human-like interaction with machines. The real challenge is taking advantage of the emotional characterization of humans to make the computer interfacing with them more natural and therefore useful. The scope of the session was to assess to what extent and how sophisticated computational intelligence tools developed so far might support the multidisciplinary research on the characterization of an appropriate system reaction to human emotions and expression in interactive scenarios.

We would like to thank all of the special sessions organizers, namely: Stefano Squartini, Rosario Carbone, Michele Scarpiniti, Francesco Piazza, Aurelio Uncini, Anna Esposito, Günther Palm.

The organization of an International Conference gathers for the efforts of several people involved. We would like to express our gratitude to everyone that has cooperate to the organization, by offering their commitment, energy and spare time to make this event a successful one.

May 2012

Bruno Apolloni  
Simone Bassis  
Anna Esposito  
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# Contents

## Part I: Algorithms

<b>Probability Learning and Soft Quantization in Bayesian Factor Graphs . . . .</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Francesco A.N. Palmieri, Alberto Cavallo</i>	
<b>Rival-Penalized Competitive Clustering: A Study and Comparison . . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Alberto Borghese, Wiliam Capraro</i>	
<b>An Interpretation of the Boundary Movement Method for Imbalanced Dataset Classification Based on Data Quality . . . . .</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Dario Malchiodi</i>	
<b>Genetic Algorithm Modeling with GPU Parallel Computing Technology . . .</b>	<b>29</b>
<i>Stefano Cavuoti, Mauro Garofalo, Massimo Brescia, Antonio Pescapè', Giuseppe Longo, Giorgio Ventre</i>	
<b>An Experimental Evaluation of Reservoir Computation for Ambient Assisted Living . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
<i>Davide Bacciu, Stefano Chessa, Claudio Gallicchio, Alessio Micheli, Paolo Barsocchi</i>	
<b>Balancing Recall and Precision in Stock Market Predictors Using Support Vector Machines . . . . .</b>	<b>51</b>
<i>Marco Lippi, Lorenzo Menconi, Marco Gori</i>	
<b>Measures of Brain Connectivity through Permutation Entropy in Epileptic Disorders . . . . .</b>	<b>59</b>
<i>Domenico Labate, Giuseppina Inuso, Gianluigi Occhiuto, Fabio La Foresta, Francesco C. Morabito</i>	
<b>A New System for Automatic Recognition of Italian Sign Language . . . . .</b>	<b>69</b>
<i>Marco Fagiani, Emanuele Principi, Stefano Squartini, Francesco Piazza</i>	



<b>Fall Detection Using an Ensemble of Learning Machines . . . . .</b>	<b>81</b>
<i>Simon Bulotta, Hassan Mahmoud, Francesco Masulli, Ernesto Palummeri, Stefano Rovetta</i>	

## Part II: Signal Processing

<b>PM<sub>10</sub> Forecasting Using Kernel Adaptive Filtering: An Italian Case Study . . . . .</b>	<b>93</b>
<i>Simone Scardapane, Danilo Comminiello, Michele Scarpiniti, Raffaele Parisi, Aurelio Uncini</i>	

<b>A Collaborative Filter Approach to Adaptive Noise Cancellation . . . . .</b>	<b>101</b>
<i>Michele Scarpiniti, Danilo Comminiello, Raffaele Parisi, Aurelio Uncini</i>	

<b>Waveform Variation of the Explosion-Quakes as a Function of the Eruptive Activity at Stromboli Volcano . . . . .</b>	<b>111</b>
<i>Antonietta M. Esposito, Luca D'Auria, Flora Giudicepietro, Marcello Martini</i>	

<b>Artificial Neural Network (ANN) Morphological Classification of Magnetic Resonance Imaging in Multiple Sclerosis . . . . .</b>	<b>121</b>
<i>Alessia Bramanti, Lilla Bonanno, Placido Bramanti, Pietro Lanzafame</i>	

<b>Neural Moving Object Detection by Pan-Tilt-Zoom Cameras . . . . .</b>	<b>129</b>
<i>Alessio Ferone, Lucia Maddalena, Alfredo Petrosino</i>	

<b>Control of Coffee Grinding with General Regression Neural Networks . . . . .</b>	<b>139</b>
<i>Luca Mesin, Diego Alberto, Eros Pasero</i>	

<b>Defects Detection in Pistachio Nuts Using Artificial Neural Networks . . . . .</b>	<b>147</b>
<i>Paolo Motto Ros, Eros Pasero</i>	

## Part III: Applications

<b>LVQ-Based Hand Gesture Recognition Using a Data Glove . . . . .</b>	<b>159</b>
<i>Francesco Camastra, Domenico De Felice</i>	

<b>Investigation of Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms Associated to Familial Combined Hyperlipidemia with Random Forests . . . . .</b>	<b>169</b>
<i>Antonino Staiano, Maria Donata Di Taranto, Elena Bloise, Maria Nicoletta D'Agostino, Antonietta D'Angelo, Gennaro Marotta, Marco Gentile, Fabrizio Jossa, Arcangelo Iannuzzi, Paolo Rubba, Giuliana Fortunato</i>	

<b>A Neural Procedure for Gene Function Prediction . . . . .</b>	<b>179</b>
<i>Marco Frasca, Alberto Bertoni, Andrea Sion</i>	

<b>Handwritten Digits Recognition by Bio-inspired Hierarchical Networks . . . . .</b>	<b>189</b>
<i>Antonio G. Zippo, Giuliana Gelsomino, Sara Nencini, Gabriele E.M. Biella</i>	

<b>Forecasting Net Migration by Functional Demographic Model . . . . .</b>	<b>201</b>
<i>Valeria D'Amato, Gabriella Piscopo, Maria Russolillo</i>	
<b>Simulation Framework in Fertility Projections . . . . .</b>	<b>209</b>
<i>Valeria D'Amato, Gabriella Piscopo, Maria Russolillo</i>	
<b>Building a Global Performance Indicator to Evaluate Academic Activity Using Fuzzy Measures . . . . .</b>	<b>217</b>
<i>Marta Cardin, Marco Corazza, Stefania Funari, Silvio Giove</i>	
<b>Testing the Weak Form Market Efficiency: Empirical Evidence from the Italian Stock Exchange . . . . .</b>	<b>227</b>
<i>Giuseppina Albano, Michele La Rocca, Cira Perna</i>	
<b>Part IV: Special Session on “Smart Grids: New Frontiers and Challenges”</b>	
<b>Real Time Techniques and Architectures for Maximizing the Power Produced by a Photovoltaic Array . . . . .</b>	<b>239</b>
<i>Giovanni Petrone, Francisco Jose Sánchez Pacheco, Giovanni Spagnuolo</i>	
<b>Sustainable Energy Microsystems for a Smart Grid . . . . .</b>	<b>259</b>
<i>Maria Carmen Falvo, Luigi Martirano, Danilo Sbordone</i>	
<b>SVM Methods for Optimal Management of a Virtual Power Plant . . . . .</b>	<b>271</b>
<i>Emanuele Crisostomi, Mauro Tucci, Marco Raugi</i>	
<b>Active Power Losses Constrained Optimization in Smart Grids by Genetic Algorithms . . . . .</b>	<b>279</b>
<i>Gian Luca Storti, Francesca Possemato, Maurizio Paschero, Silvio Alessandrini, Antonello Rizzi, Fabio Massimo Frattale Mascioli</i>	
<b>Solar Irradiation Forecasting for PV Systems by Fully Tuned Minimal RBF Neural Networks . . . . .</b>	<b>289</b>
<i>Lucio Ciabattini, Gianluca Ippoliti, Sauro Longhi, Matteo Pirro, Matteo Cavalletti</i>	
<b>Ontology-Based Device Configuration and Management for Smart Homes . . . . .</b>	<b>301</b>
<i>Michele Nucci, Marco Grassi, Francesco Piazza</i>	
<b>A Comparison between Different Optimization Techniques for Energy Scheduling in Smart Home Environment . . . . .</b>	<b>311</b>
<i>Francesco De Angelis, Matteo Boaro, Danilo Fuselli, Stefano Squartini, Francesco Piazza</i>	

## **Part V: Special Session on “Computational Intelligence in Emotional or Affective Systems”**

<b>Towards Emotion Recognition in Human Computer Interaction</b> . . . . .	323
<i>Günther Palm, Michael Glodek</i>	
<b>Towards Causal Modeling of Human Behavior</b> . . . . .	337
<i>Matteo Campo, Anna Polychroniou, Hugues Salamin, Maurizio Filippone, Alessandro Vinciarelli</i>	
<b>How Social Signal Processing (SSP) Can Help Assessment of Bonding Phenomena In Developmental Psychology?</b> . . . . .	345
<i>Emilie Delaherche, Sofiane Boucenna, Mohamed Chetouani, David Cohen</i>	
<b>Emotion and Complex Tasks: Writing Abilities in Young Graders</b> . . . . .	357
<i>Michaël Fartoukh, Lucile Chanquoy, Annie Piolat</i>	
<b>A Preliminary Study of Online Drawings and Dementia Diagnose</b> . . . . .	367
<i>Marcos Faundez-Zanuy, Enric Sesa-Nogueras, Josep Roure-Alcobe, Josep Garre-Olmo, Jiri Mekyska, Karmele Lopez-de-Ipiña, Anna Esposito</i>	
<b>Hand-Based Gender Recognition Using Biometric Dispersion Matcher</b> . . . . .	375
<i>Xavier Font-Aragonés, Marcos Faundez-Zanuy</i>	
<b>Revisiting AVEC 2011 – An Information Fusion Architecture</b> . . . . .	385
<i>Martin Schels, Michael Glodek, Friedhelm Schwenker, Günther Palm</i>	
<b>Discriminating Human vs. Stylized Emotional Faces: Recognition Accuracy in Young Children</b> . . . . .	395
<i>Anna Esposito, Maria Teresa Riviello, Vincenzo Capuano</i>	
<b>Emotional Status Determination in HCI Interface for the Paralyzed</b> . . . . .	405
<i>Rytis Maskeliunas, Vidas Raudonis, Paulius Lengvenis</i>	
<b>Emoticons Signal Expertise in Technical Web Forums</b> . . . . .	415
<i>Liliana Mamani Sanchez, Carl Vogel</i>	
<b>Machine Learning and Soft Computing Methodologies for Music Emotion Recognition</b> . . . . .	427
<i>Angelo Ciaramella, Giuseppe Vettigli</i>	
<b>Homo-Machina Visual Metaphors, Representations of Consciousness and Scientific Thinking</b> . . . . .	437
<i>Mauro Maldonato, Ilaria Anzoise</i>	
<b>Author Index</b> . . . . .	453