Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence 2902

Edited by J. G. Carbonell and J. Siekmann

Subseries of Lecture Notes in Computer Science

Springer
Berlin
Heidelberg
New York
Hong Kong
London
Milan
Paris
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Fernando Moura Pires Salvador Abreu (Eds.)

Progress in Artificial Intelligence

11th Portuguese Conference
on Artificial Intelligence, EPIA 2003
Beja, Portugal, December 4-7, 2003
Proceedings

Springer

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Cataloging-in-Publication Data applied for

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek
Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <http://dnb.ddb.de>.

CR Subject Classification (1998): I.2, H.2, F.1, H.3, D.1.6

ISSN 0302-9743
ISBN 3-540-20589-6 Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg New York

Springer-Verlag is a part of Springer Science+Business Media

springeronline.com

Printed in Germany

Typesetting: Camera-ready by author, data conversion by PTP-Berlin, Protago-TeX-Production GmbH
Printed on acid-free paper SPIN: 10971338 06/3142 5 4 3 2 1 0

Preface

When we set about organizing EPIA 2003 in Porto during the APPIA meeting at the previous edition of the conference, EPIA 2001, it was decided that it would be organized by Fernando Moura Pires (Fajé) and myself. We chose Beja as the venue to host the conference, as it provided a good support infrastructure and Fernando had a good working relationship with several people at the Beja Polytechnic Institute.

Shortly thereafter, Fernando came to know that he was ailing from a disease that was to take his life in May 2003. As with many other projects in which he got involved, Fernando clung to the organization of this conference with dedication and perseverance, even while knowing that he might not see the results of his work. EPIA 2003 is a tribute to his work.

Taking up on the successful experience gained from EPIA 2001, we decided to structure EPIA 2003 as a set of five distinct workshops, roughly reflecting the panorama of AI research in Portugal. Special thanks are due to the organizers of each workshop, for the quality and timeliness of the work they carried out.

The conference was all the more interesting because of the eight invited presentations and tutorials, by Alexander Bockmayr, Amílcar Cardoso, Dario Floreano, Harold Boley, Pedro Domingos, Pieter Adriaans, Veronica Dahl and Vitor Santos Costa. There are short one-page abstracts included in these proceedings for some of these presentations.

This volume reflects the organization of the conference. There were a total of 119 articles submitted across the five workshops, of which 29 (24%) were selected as full-size papers and 21 (18%) as extended abstracts, one of which could not be presented for other reasons. These numbers indicate that the present model for EPIA is a sound one, particularly when compared with those for the two previous editions (1999 and 2001).

Submissions came from 24 different countries: 37 from Portugal, 11 each from Spain and South Korea, 6 each from Brazil, France and the US, and 5 or fewer from Australia, China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, The Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Tunisia, Turkey, Taiwan, the UK and Venezuela.

The contributions were distributed among the workshops as follows:

Workshop	Submitted	Full	Short	Total
ALEA	27	6	3	9
CLPS	13	4	2	6
EKDB	39	9	6	15
MAAII	18	5	3	8
NLTR	22	5	7	12
Total	119	29	21	50

Thanks are due to the program committee members and reviewers, without whose work the conference would not have been possible.

An acknowledgement is due to FACC/FCT (Portuguese governmental funding agency) for its financial support, to the Instituto Politécnico de Beja and to the Universidade de Évora. Other sponsors are publicly acknowledged on the conference's Web site (`http://www.di.uevora.pt/epia03/`).

Besides co-chairing one of the workshops, Paulo Quaresma assisted me in various organizational aspects of EPIA 2003, for which I am thankful. Special thanks go to the local organization, in particular to Isabel Sofia Brito and Raúl Moizão of ESTIG, Instituto Politécnico de Beja, for coordinating and mobilizing the necessary resources. The knowledge and efficiency of Mrs. Filipa Reis was essential in effectively organizing and managing the conference.

So long, Fajé,

September 2003 Salvador Abreu

Organization

EPIA 2003 was jointly organized by the Department of Computer Science, Universidade de Évora and the School of Technology and Management, Polytechnic Institute of Beja, under the auspices of APPIA (Associação Portuguesa para a Inteligência Artificial).

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