

Preface

In recent times Artificial Intelligence (AI) has proved to be a very fruitful research area whose results have found numerous real-life applications, in the areas of telecommunications, e-commerce, management, medicine, education, etc. The advent and rapid growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web have motivated further the interest and activity in this field, through the increasing demand for intelligent information systems.

This volume includes a collection of papers accepted for oral presentation at the 2nd Hellenic Conference on Artificial Intelligence (SETN 2002), organized by the Hellenic Society for Artificial Intelligence (EETN) and the Department of Informatics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), Greece. The conference was held in Thessaloniki, Greece, 11–12 April 2002, and it constituted the first attempt at establishing a regular Hellenic conference on Artificial Intelligence.

EETN was established in 1988 with the aim of organizing and promoting AI research among Greeks in Greece and abroad. Since its foundation, EETN has participated in the organization of various national and international events related to AI and its subfields, including the first Hellenic Symposium on Artificial Intelligence (SETN'96). EETN has also been a member society of the European Coordinating Committee on Artificial Intelligence (ECCAI) since 1996, and organized the advanced school on AI (ACAI'99).

The Department of Informatics of AUTH has been actively engaged in AI research for over 15 years through the Logic Programming & Intelligent Systems group and the Signal Processing group. Both groups have been publishing papers and have been involved in numerous research projects in the areas of Logic Programming, Constraint Solving, Knowledge-Based Systems, Planning, Machine Learning, Image/Video/Speech Processing, Neural Networks, Fuzzy Logic, Biometrics, Distance Learning, etc. Furthermore, the Signal Processing group organized the IEEE-sponsored International Conference on Image Processing (ICIP 2001).

The program of the conference included presentations of research results and applications from distinguished Greek scientists from all over the world. The submission of papers to the conference was overwhelming, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Each submitted paper was evaluated by two, and in some cases three, independent reviewers on the basis of their relevance to AI, originality, significance, technical soundness, and presentation. The selection was hard, as only 42 papers out of the 121 submitted were accepted for oral presentation and inclusion in this volume, after further discussion with the members of the Advisory Board.

The selected papers cover a broad range of AI topics, such as Knowledge Representation and Reasoning, Natural Language Processing, Human-Computer Interaction, Machine Learning, Machine Vision, Multiagent Systems, etc. In ad-

dition, the volume includes two talks given by Christos Papadimitriou (Berkeley University, U.S.A.) and John Mylopoulos (University of Toronto, Canada), the distinguished invited speakers of the conference.

The editors would like to thank all those who contributed to the success of SETN 2002. Especially, they would like to express their gratitude to the sponsors who supported the conference, the Organizing Committee, for implementing the conference schedule in a timely and flawless manner, the Advisory Board, the Program Committee, and the additional reviewers, for the time and effort spent in reviewing the papers, and the two invited speakers for their kind participation. Last but not least, the editors would like to thank all the authors who submitted papers to this conference and would like to invite them to participate in the next Hellenic Conference on Artificial Intelligence, as well.

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