MINUTES

**ECCAI General Assembly, Patras, Greece,
23 July 2008, 18:45-21:00**

ECCAI Board: Werner Horn (Chair), Marie-Odile Cordier, Gerhard Brewka, Hendrik Blockeel, Paolo Traverso (excused), Ulises Cortés

1. Welcome and Opening

Attendees: (see enclosed list): Board members WH, MOC, GB, HB, UC; Member society representatives (voting); non-voting guests to report on specific topics.
Minutes: HB

2. Minutes of the previous GA (Aug 2007)

The GA approves the Minutes of the previous GA.

3. Chairman's Report [WH]

The report, on paper, is handed out to the participants and discussed by WH. There are no comments. The full report is available at http://www.eccai.org/admin/chairreport_2008.pdf.

4. Treasurer's Report &

5. Budget for 2005 - 2008 [HB]

- The report is available at http://www.eccai.org/admin/ga_budget_2008.pdf
- HB presents the treasurer's report: income from membership fees, overview of 2007, and budget for 2008 and 2009. It is pointed out that membership numbers are again increasing in many societies.
- The report and budget are approved.

6. ECCAI travel grants [GB]

GB briefly explains about the travel grants. This year 15 were granted, while 25 were budgeted. GB suggests to make it better known to everyone that there are travel grants available.

7. ECCAI Dissertation Award [UC]

UC gives information about the dissertation award. The selection process is difficult for two reasons: it is difficult to find reviewers, and the quality of the work is in general very good so that there were again different very good candidates among which a winner had to be chosen. UC thanks the reviewers for their work.

8. ECCAI Fellows program [MOC]

- MOC explains the procedure: a selection committee of 7 members has selected the new fellows. The fellow lunch was held earlier today.
- WH points out that it is preferable not to have nominations of fellows who are not member of a national society. He asks approval of the following rule: only people who have been member of a national association for the last 3 years can be nominated. The rule is approved by the GA.
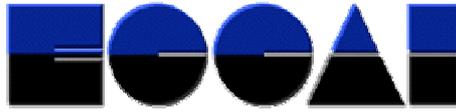
9.   ECAI 2008 Status Report

Malik Ghalab comments on the ECAI 2008 conference.

- Malik Ghallab presents some statistics: total number of submissions, number of accepted full papers (120) and posters (100), acceptance rate (23%). He expresses his satisfaction with these numbers. The format of ECAI is mostly similar to that of previous ECAIs. This year posters were presented also orally, as short presentations (5+5). This is a good format.

- There were separate deadlines for full papers and posters. Malik Ghallab finds that this was not a good idea: it adds complication and the extra deadline brought only 20 additional posters submissions. This procedure is not advised for next time.

- There was 1 week between paper submission deadline and the allocation of papers to area chairs: this went well. There were then 5 weeks for the review period: this was tight, but it worked well: there were very few late reviews. Next there was a 2 week discussion period. Malik Ghallab remarks that the discussion could be followed up better by the area chairs: some do this, but not all. Reviews were not always changed even if reviewers changed their mind. Area chairs could moderate the discussion better and make sure that reviews get updated. This is a detail though - overall the process worked well. There was 2 days time for author feedback on reviews. Not all authors reacted, even when discussion seemed possible; some 2/3 reacted. After a total of 8 weeks, notifications were sent on time. There were additionally 4 weeks for the authors to deliver the camera ready copy, and 1 more week for the organisers to deliver the copy to IOS Press. This 1 week turned out to be tight.

- Malik Ghallab remarks that having numerical scores on the evaluation forms is not a good thing. Authors tend to add up numbers and then disagree with the decision.

- Malik Ghallab is positive about the ConfMaster system: the person managing it is reactive. Some more documentation for reviewers might be good though.

- Summary of the recommendations: best have no separate deadline for posters and papers; keep short presentations of posters; avoid numbers in evaluation forms; insist that the area chairs follow up and moderate the discussion.

- There were about 400 reviewers and 27 Area Chairs. This number of area chairs was really needed. The maximum #papers per AC was usually 12-15 up to at most 27.

- WH thanks MG for his excellent work.

Nada Lavrac asks about participant numbers. Malik Ghallab replies that Nikos Fakotakis will report on this in a moment.

Nikos Fakotakis presents some statistics on the current conference.

- There are 671 participants, + some late registrations. Workshops attracted 458 participants, tutorials 30, STAIRS 22.

- The current estimate for the total income is 292220 euro, and for the total expenses 248701 euro. This yields an expected surplus of 43519 euro.

WH thanks Nikos Fakotakis and his team for the excellent performance on a very demanding job.

10.   ECAI 2010 (Lisbon) Progress Report [PT,GB]

Luis Antunes presents a progress report on ECAI 2010.

ECAI 2010 will be in Lisbon. The presentation mentions the members of the organising committee, maps of Lisbon, the conference site, hotels (at walking distance), inexpensive lodgings for students (student residence, youth hostel), pictures.

The budget is estimated as follows: for 600 participants, expenses are estimated at 277k euro, revenues 280k euro. Registration fees are 10% up compared to 2006.
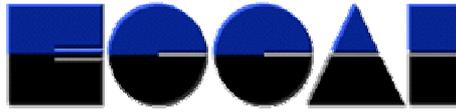
WH mentions that the banquet should not be counted as an expenditure unless also as an income, since participants pay extra for it. Costas Spyropoulos asks to revise the budget, which is currently very risky. Luis Antunes replies that the current estimates are rather defensive and the balance is likely to be more positive than currently estimated. A large amount of money (some 48k euro)should indeed be added to the income. Costas Spyropoulos replies that the expected number of participants is rather high, therefore the estimates are risky.

WH suggests that details should not be discussed here, but remarks that previously the break-even point was at 400 participants, now it's at 600, and finds this a bit worrying. WH says that if this is the official budget, ECCAI is very concerned. The organisers should plan for a budget with a break-even point quite below 600.

LA says he is more concerned about too many people (above 700 would cause logistic problems) than about too few.

There is some discussion about the registration fees: 10% more than in 2006 seems reasonable to WH, but Costas Spyropoulos thinks it is quite high.

WH points out we should come to a consolidated budget; the current proposal is not consolidated. Consolidation will happen later.

WH thanks Luis Antunes.

11. Selection of ECAI 2010 program chair

WH mentions the nomination of Michael Wooldridge. MW thanks the board for the nomination and presents himself with a brief bio including organisation and research activities. He likes the prospect of collaboration with the local organisers, whom he knows well.

MW is elected as program chair of ECAI 2010 by the General Assembly.

12. ECAI 2012 site election

Christian Bessiere presents a proposal to have ECAI 2012 in Montpellier, France. The proposed dates are August 20-24, 2012. The presentation includes maps, pictures of the city, an overview of accessibility of the location by plane, high speed train, car. An overview of accommodation options is given. Cheaper accommodation will be available for students, not downtown but 15-20' by tram.

WH thanks Christian Bessiere for the presentation of the bid.

The GA votes in favor of this proposal.

The British delegates mention that there is an interest in hosting ECAI 2014 in Cardiff, Wales.

13. Election of ECCAI board members

WH and UC have to step down from the board this year, after 6 years of service. WH explains that continuity in the board is desirable, and proposes to re-elect the other 4 members of the board. All members are re-elected, namely Gerd Brewka, Marie-Odile Cordier, Hendrik Blockeel and Paolo Traverso.

There are 9 nominees for 2 vacant positions. The nominees present themselves or are presented by colleagues. The secret voting procedure results as follows: Patrick Doherty (19 votes) and Grigoris Antoniou (15 votes) are elected by the General Assembly as the new board members. The other nominees got the following votes: Max Bramer (4), Vicent Botti (12), David Brée (6), Gintautas Dzemyda (0), Stefan Kozak (1), Dunja Mladenic (11), Vadim Stefanuk (0).

14. Final report ACAI 2007

HB presents the ACAI 2007 final report. The report includes feedback from the students who have attended, in particular a suggestion to have in the summerschool some practical sessions or exercises to help students digest the materials. There are no comments on the report.
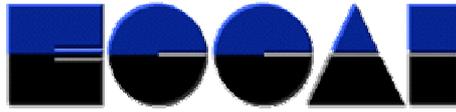
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15. ACAI 2009 summerschool proposal

Juan Augusto presents a proposal to have ACAI 2009 in Belfast, a week in August.   The topic would be Intelligent Decision Support. The General Assembly agrees with the proposal.

16. Status of AICom

Enrico Giunchiglia reports some statistics: number of submissions, acceptance rates, review times, etc. He mentions a number of issues that should be addressed, and plans to address them. In particular, it is suggested to assign specific research areas to the associate editors and to have more stringent rules on PhD thesis reports.

17. ECCAI membership fees for 2009

The membership fees remain unchanged.

18. Membership status of ECCAI societies

WH mentions that besides Norway, which is dormant, all member societies are active, and as mentioned before several are enjoying increasing membership numbers. Malta and Iceland have been approached but are currently not in a position to join ECCAI.
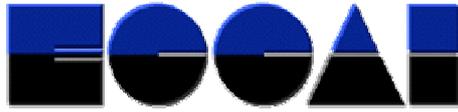
19. Date and location for the next GA

The next General Assembly will be held in Belfast during the ACAI summer school.

20. Any Other Business

The Board and the General Assembly thank WH and UC for their services.

21. Closing

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List of Delegates (voting)

Society	Votes	Name
ACIA (Catalonia)	1	Nuria Agell
ADUIS (Ukrain)	2	(no delegate)
AEPIA (Spain)	1	Lawrence Mandow
AFIA (France)	2	Marie-Odile Cordier
AIAI (Ireland)	2	Nic Wilson
AIIA (Italy)	2	Marco Schaerf, Piero Torasso
APPIA (Portugal)	2	Cesar Analide, Luis Antunes
BAIA (Bulgaria)	2	Preslav Nakov
BCS-SGAI (United Kingdom)	1	Miltos Petridis
BNVKI (Belgium/Netherlands)	2	Hendrik Blockeel
CSKI (Czech Republic)	2	(no delegate)
DAIS (Denmark)	2	(no delegate)
EETN (Greece)	2	George Vouros, Vangelis Karkaletsis
FAIS (Finland)	2	Tomi Janhunen
GI/KI (Germany)	2	Pascal Hitzler
IAAI (Israel)	2	Meirav Hadad, Sarit Kraus
LANO (Latvia)	2	(no delegate)
LIKS-AIS (Lithuania)	2	Gintautas Dzemyda
NJSZT (Hungary)	2	(no delegate)
ÖGAI (Austria)	2	Werner Horn
RAAI (Russia)	2	(no delegate)
SAIS (Sweden)	2	Martin Magnusson
SGAICO (Switzerland)	2	(no delegate)
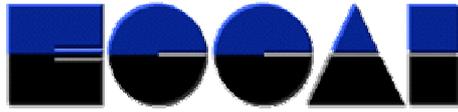
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SLAIS (Slovenia)	2	Nada Lavrac, Saso Dzeroski
SSAISB (United Kingdom)	1	Dimitar Kazakov
SSKI SAV (Slovak Republic)	2	Stefan Kozak

List of attendees (non-voting):

Function	Votes	Name
ECCAI Board	-	Gerhard Brewka
ECCAI Board	-	Ulises Cortes
ECAI 2008 - CC	-	Constantine Spyropoulos
ECAI 2008 - OCC	-	Nikolaos Fakotakis
ECAI 2008 - PCC	-	Malik Ghallab
ECAI 2010 - CC	-	Helder Coelho
ECAI 2010 - OCC	-	Luis Antunes
ECAI 2010 - OCC	-	Joao Balsa
ECAI 2010 – PCC nominee	-	Michael Wooldridge
ECAI 2012 – bid proposer	-	Christian Bessiere
ACAI 2009 – bid proposer	-	Juan Augusto
Board Nominee	-	Grigoris Antoniou