Preface

The AIMSA conference series was first conceived in 1984 as a gathering of AI researchers and students from Eastern and Central Europe. Since then the conference has followed a biennial schedule of meetings in Bulgaria, attracting participants from a wider geographical area. Today, 20 years on, AIMSA is a thoroughly international conference, with contributions from most European countries and some from as far afield as the United States, Mexico and Brazil.

The AIMSA organizers are delighted to present you with another exciting program, covering most areas of Artificial Intelligence. In keeping with its mission to inform the research community and excite the commercial sector, AIMSA presents this year two invited contributions from world-leading European researchers working on cutting-edge AI research: Prof. Carole Goble, on the Semantic Web, and Prof. David House, on integrated speech and gestural synthesis. In addition, we present 26 contributions on topics covering almost all aspects of AI and bringing together basic and applied research. One of these, by Milos Kovačević and his colleagues on "Recognition of Common Areas in a Web Page Using a Visualisation Approach" was judged by reviewers to be the best submitted paper, and duly received the accolade of "Best Paper" of the Conference, with a special slot devoted to it in the program.

As Chair of the Program Committee, I am extremely grateful to those who so generously agreed to apply their expertise and valuable time to reviewing papers for the conference, and for their dedication in getting the best possible job done in what turned out to be a very short period of time.

Special thanks go to the local organizers, Danail Dochev and Gennady Agre, for their dedication and willingness to cooperate in solving problems each time it was necessary, and to Anja Wedberg and Jon Herring for their wonderful efficiency in administering the work of the Program Committee. I also gratefully acknowledge the role played by the team at Springer-Verlag in the production of these proceedings, and I thank the European Coordinating Committee for Artificial Intelligence (ECCAI), for their continued support of the conference.

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