

Guest Editorial

As chairman of the Programme Committee of the *18th International Conference Information Technology Interfaces*, once again I have the honour to act as guest editor in an issue of CIT and present a selection of papers presented at the conference. Last year I supplied the CIT readers with some basic information and with the history of ITI conferences. Therefore, this time only an update and some conference statistics may be sufficient. The conference was attended by 109 participants, where 27 of them came from 9 different countries and the rest were from Croatia. During four days 56 papers were presented, 27 of them by our foreign guests. Four invited speakers and a panel discussion completed the official part of the ITI conference activities. Simultaneously and already traditionally, the third meeting of biometrics BIOSTAT'96 was held and it was partly integrated with the ITI conference. Two invited lecturers from Austria held a biometrics school. Also, a workshop regarding the SAS system took place.

Description of the beautiful conference site and pleasant social activities will be left out on purpose, to intrigue the CIT readers who may hopefully, join us at some future ITI conference.

For this issue of CIT six papers were selected. It was a difficult task and we were conducted by the criteria of quality, relevance, representativeness and geographical diversity of authors' origins.

The first selected paper is by Zoran Dukić and Sven Lončarić and it deals with an object-oriented implementation of operations on general shapes in arbitrary dimensions. Follows a statistical topic by Reinhard Viertl regarding fuzzy approach to handle non-precise data. Non-precise data are distinguished from stochastic variations and measurement errors. Two papers by invited speakers are the next. An analysis of social networks, performed by an empirical procedure called block-modelling is described by Anuška Ferligoj. Johann Sölkner introduces frailty models in survival analysis as an expanding discipline in biostatistics and describes the related software. Marco Costantino, Russell J. Collingham and Richard G. Morgan submitted a paper about the extraction of financial data from financial news articles. It has been selected for this CIT issue as a representative for a group of remarkable conference articles concerning the natural language processing. It also addresses another important topic and that is the filtering of useful information from the ever-growing oversupply of unstructured data. And finally, the invited paper by Nuno Mamede and Pedro Soares about the algorithms and software for automated university timetabling has been selected as generally relevant and especially so for the academic community.

I apologise to many authors who have presented fine papers but my colleagues from the International Programme Committee and I had to obey strict CIT rules and single out just a few of them. I hope that this will not prevent the authors of other papers to continue their participation in the ITI conferences and my hope is, that some new ones will appear, also as a result of the CIT selection.

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