

# EUMAS 2008



## Sixth European Workshop on Multi-Agent Systems

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### General Information

The European Workshop on Multi-Agent Systems (EUMAS) is an annual workshop that takes place at changing places in Europe and aims at encouraging and supporting activity in the research and development of multi-agent systems, in academic and industrial efforts. The workshop is primarily intended as a European forum at which researchers and those interested in activities relating to research in the area of autonomous agents and multi-agent systems can meet, present (potentially preliminary) research results, problems, and issues in an open and informal but academic environment. The EUMAS workshop series was initiated in December 2003, at the University of Oxford (UK) as a merger from a number of related workshops and other scholarly activities that were taking place at both national and European levels.

The sixth edition of EUMAS took place in Bath, UK (18th – 19th December) with Julian Padget as General Chair (who in addition, together with Marina De Vos, was responsible for the local organization) and Franziska Klügl as Program Chair.

EUMAS 2008 received a total of 71 submissions from Europa, the United States, Brazil, Israel, Australia, Japan and Korea of which 40 were accepted as full and 11 as short papers. The program itself was organized in the parallel sessions, what had the convenient side-effect that in contrast to big conferences with a lot more sessions one was able to listen to most of the talks and to grasp new ideas as well as to get into interesting discussions with the other participants. For me the two sessions "IV.2: Norms and Institutions" and "VII.1: Organisation" were of particular interest and importance as in these sessions high quality talks about approaches and ideas were given that could be

integrated into my current work on the enforcement of norms in normative multi-agent systems.

### Invited Talks

The main conference included three invited talks. These were:

- *Marek Sergot*: "Norms, Action, and Agency in Multi-Agent Systems"
- *Nigel Franks*: "Individual and Collective Decision-Making: Lessons from House Hunting Rock Ants"
- *Niek Wijngaards*: "Actor-Agent Communities, A Next Paradigm Shift?"

For me the talk by Nigel Franks from the University of Bristol, who presented his research on collective problem solving and self organization in ant colonies, was especially interesting. Thus, although having the difficult task of presenting at the social dinner, he managed to draw everyone's attention by giving lively examples and by highlighting interconnections to the artificial intelligence research domain.

### Conference Venue and Social Program

The City of Bath is a UNESCO World Heritage site located in the south west of England. Founded by the Romans as a thermal spa, Bath became an important center of the wool industry in the Middle Ages. In the 18th century, under King George III, it developed into an elegant town with neoclassical Palladian buildings, which blend harmoniously with the Roman Baths & Pump Room – one of the finest ancient monuments in Europe and Britain's only hot spring. The Roman Baths served as great location for the Welcome Reception of the workshop. Unfortunately, one cannot bathe in the Roman Baths as the Romans did, but one can in the Thermae Bath Spa,

which uses the same warm, mineral-rich waters the Celts and Romans did 2.000 years ago.

The workshop itself took place at the University of Bath that is a leading UK University with an international reputation for quality teaching and research. The university campus is situated in the hills surrounding the city from which one has a beautiful look on the surrounding countryside as well as the city. One of the great advantages of the EUMAS 2008 workshop was that on-campus accommodation was provided and most workshop participants chose to stay on-campus. As a result, after the official day program, the everyone met in the evening and enjoyed the local bars and restaurants together, that proved that the British cuisine can be a lot better than its reputation.

### Future Events

Summing up, the EUMAS workshop is a great opportunity, especially for young researchers, to get in contact with different areas of agents and multi-agent systems and to present their ideas before an academic as well as industrial audience. That's why I'm particularly looking forward for the Seventh European Workshop on Multi-Agent Systems that will take place in Cyprus.

Detailed information about the EUMAS in general as well as the EUMAS 2008 can be found on the official web pages <http://www.eumas.org> and <http://eumas08.cs.bath.ac.uk>.

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