

PREFACE

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the 2009 International Conference on Intelligent Systems and Knowledge Engineering (ISKE2009). ISKE2009 is the fourth in a series of conferences on Intelligent Systems and Knowledge Engineering. It follows the successful ISKE2006 in Shanghai, ISKE2007 in Chengdu, and ISKE2008 in Xiamen, China. ISKE2009 in Hasselt, Belgium, for the first time being held out of China, once again aims at covering state-of-the-art research and development in all aspects related to Intelligent Systems and Knowledge Engineering. The conference series gives both researchers and practitioners a unique opportunity to share and exchange their knowledge and ideas and to present their latest research results in various areas of Intelligent Systems and Knowledge Engineering.

This year we have specifically chosen “*Intelligent Decision Making Systems*” as our theme with three objectives in mind.

1. We believe that we need systems that can support or make decisions instead of systems that produce reports.
2. Today's decision makers should understand better the methods and techniques developed in our research community. They should understand the strengths and weakness of the methods.
3. We want to underscore the enormous applicability of intelligent decision making systems.

Overviewing the ISKE2009 proceedings, we have put a step forward but still have a long way to go. ISKE2009 received 152 online submissions from 26 countries and had 7 special sessions for the final program. The proceedings contained 107 final accepted papers and 1 invited lecture. All submitted papers went through a rigorous review process with an acceptance ratio of 70%.

Putting together the conference proceedings was a team effort. Special thanks are due to the authors for providing all the material; to the program committee and the external reviewers for peer reviewing papers and providing valuable suggestions; to the Organizing Committee and all the local volunteers, especially to Tamara Dewalque, Xiaolan Ji, Weili Zou and Chengxiang Hu for their excellent management work for ISKE2009; to Chelsea Chin (Editor at World Scientific Publishing Co.) for her excellent proofreading and corrections for the final version of this volume; and finally to our main organizer – Hasselt University and our sponsors – SCK•CEN, UGent, FWO in Belgium, and Southwest Jiaotong University in China for their continued support.

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