

# Preface

This volume contains the papers accepted for presentation at the Sixth European Conference on Planning, (ECP 2001) held in Toledo, Spain, on September 12–14, 2001. ECP continued the traditional high standards of AIPS and ECP as an archival forum for new research in the field of automated planning and scheduling. ECP conferences were organized since 1991. The papers included in this volume are those selected for plenary presentation at ECP 2001. They consist of long, short and demo papers, including those papers submitted to the special tracks on planning, scheduling, and their integration and plans, schedules and their robustness. Additional attention has been given to the problem of describing benchmarks from real world applications (two specific papers in these proceedings describe exactly this). All submissions were rigorously reviewed by the program committee, and this set of accepted papers reflects the program committee's high reviewing standards.

The papers present the latest advances in the field of automated planning and scheduling at 2001, ranging in scope from theoretical analyses of planning and scheduling problems and processes, to algorithms for planning and scheduling under various constraints and assumptions, and the empirical evaluation of planning and scheduling techniques. They reflect research trends in subareas such as optimal planning, probabilistic and nondeterministic planning, or new developments in heuristics for planning algorithms.

In addition to the oral presentation of these papers, the technical program of ECP included invited talks by two distinguished speakers: Héctor Geffner and Pascal Van Hentenryck. A third talk by Vladimir Lifschitz could not be given due to the unfortunate terrorist attacks at that time.

We would like to express our thanks to all of the members of the program committee, who did an outstanding job in reviewing the submis-

sions. We would like to thank the Local Organizing Committee, the members of the Scalab research group — especially those from the PLG group — for their efforts in organizing the events and activities of this conference, as well as for providing local arrangements and other support. Without their talent and dedication, and without the expertise and hard work of the Program Committee in reviewing the submitted papers, this conference would not have been possible. We would like to also greatly thank our sponsors: PLANET, European Network of Excellence on Planning; IP-CNR, Institute of Psychology of the Italian National Research Council; Universidad Carlos III de Madrid; Italian Association for Artificial Intelligence (AI\*IA); PLG Planning and Learning Group; PST, Planning and Scheduling Team at IPCNR; MCYT, Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología; AIJ, *Artificial Intelligence Journal*; and APSolve, A BTexaCT Technologies Company. Without the support of the sponsors, this conference would have never been held.

It has taken some years to publish these proceedings, and we appreciate the patience of the authors. Fortunately, it did not prevent several of the papers in these proceedings to receive the Influential Paper Award in recent ICAPS conferences. Also some of the ideas that have been pushed forward in this particular ECP have been demonstrated valid and consolidated up until recently (like the idea of special tracks, and the attention to applications and benchmarks). We hope that this volume maintains the tradition of past ECP-AIPS-ICAPS proceedings and becomes a valuable reference for researchers and practitioners in the field of automated planning and scheduling.

– *Amedeo Cesta and Daniel Borrajo*  
ECP 2001 Chairs