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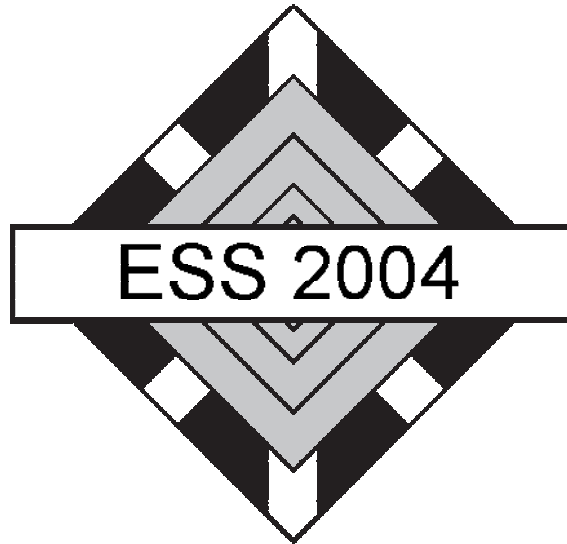
Additional copies of the Proceedings are available from:

The Society for Modelling and Simulation International (SCS),
P.O. Box 17900,
San Diego, CA 92177, USA.

ISBN: 1-56555-286-5

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2004

EUROPEAN SIMULATION SYMPOSIUM



EDITED BY

György Lipovszki
and István Molnár

October 17-20, Budapest, Hungary



Sponsored by The Society for Modelling and Simulation International

ISBN: 1-56555-286-5

Hosted by:

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Preface

In 2004 the Hungarian capital Budapest will receive for the second time an international conference organized by The Society for Computer Simulation [SCS]. Since the successful European Simulation Multiconference of 1996, hosted by the Budapest University of Economic Sciences, modeling and simulation activities significantly increased worldwide. New scientific results accelerated internal development in the field of modeling and simulation and as a consequence, new methodologies and tools were created and applied. Numerous applications demonstrated that modeling and simulation became an important methodology to study, design and also to optimize highly complex systems in different scientific areas.

Hosting an international conference in Budapest has been an important decision providing an opportunity for Hungarian researchers to present their new results and get informed about the mainstream research activities in surrounding European and international research institutes as well. In Hungary, universities and research institutes are leading the application development and the development of new simulation instruments and tools. Based on their results, companies employ different applications using the knowledge accumulated by the research institutes.

The European Simulation Symposium of 2004 reflects international trends and the development of the field of modeling and simulation and provides an exhibit of theoretical and practical results. Despite the increased number of related conferences and the tight schedule, over 60 papers were accepted giving a cross-sectional snapshot of the recent results of a broad range of international research. Moreover, most of the papers were submitted by Hungarian authors, demonstrating increased quantity and quality of educational and research activities. Beside the traditionally strong topics “Simulation Methodologies, Methods and Techniques” or “Discrete Simulation Languages and Tools”, papers of application-oriented tracks, especially “Simulation in Business, Economy, Finance and Commerce”, and “Simulation in Manufacturing” are also heavily represented. In order to support Hungarian microsimulation applications, a special topic has been organized in *Microsimulation*, extended with a special program entirely devoted to microsimulation practitioners. Furthermore, the conference program is enriched with additional round table discussion in *Simulation Education*. In addition to these events, ESS2004 will be organized in conjunction with the 8-th IEEE International Symposium on Distributed Simulation and Real Time Applications. The best papers of the conference will be published in a special issue of the *International Journal of Simulation, Systems Science and Technology*. Selected relevant papers will be published in the *Hungarian Economic Review* (Közgazdasági Szemle).

Let us say some words also about the host city of this conference! Budapest is the capital of Hungary, a new member-state of the European Union. The city has almost two million inhabitants and the 23 districts spread around both sides of the Danube. Budapest is also the educational, technological and cultural centre of Hungary. Budapest is famous for its Castle Hill District, which is part of the World Heritage and for its museums, where one can visit permanent and temporary exhibitions all year long. The Hungarian capital is also the centre of the country's theatrical and music life. Budapest has a great tradition in hosting special events and prestigious festivals: each of the four seasons has its own festival in Budapest. ESS'2004 has been organized in cooperation and hosted by the Budapest University of Technology and Economy with very active and friendly support of the leadership of the University. It has also been sponsored by ASIM and other European national simulation societies.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve in the team of international researchers made responsible for the conference organization. We would like to thank the track chairs and co-chairs, local track chairs and members of the International Program Committees for their active and self-contained work. We are grateful to Rainer Rimane for the initiation and promotion of the conference. We also would like to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed in different ways to the success of the conference especially to Martina-Maria Seidel, who devoted countless hours making sure that all organizational details are properly attended to.

On Behalf of the conference organization, we would like to WELCOME you at the **16th EUROPEAN SIMULATION SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION**, ESS 2004!
We sincerely hope you will profit from the time you spend in Budapest visiting the different events of the conference and enjoy your stay in Hungary.

Istvan Molnar
General Program Chair, ESS2004

Gyorgy Lipovszki
General Conference Chair, ESS2004

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