Meeting of COST Action IC1205 on Computational Social Choice

Oxford, United Kingdom

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Two Working Group Meetings of COST Action IC1205 on Computational Social Choice took place at Hertford College, Oxford, on 15–17 April 2013. The local organizer was Professor **Mike Wooldridge** (Department of Computer Science, Oxford).

A unique feature of the meeting is that scholars from various fields and corners are blended into a single group. The working group on approval voting specifically combines game theorists, economists, computer scientists, and social choice scholars. At this meeting, WG1 on approval voting has organized the following key speeches:

Jean-Francois Laslier (Department of Economics, Polytechnique, Paris) gave a talk about utilitarian and approval voting. Among others, he surveyed laboratory experiments performed by different authors on approval voting. In the experiments, participants vote, and their preferences over the outcomes are induced by monetary incentives. Three different social choice problems are typically studied: a divided society, a problem of split majority, and the standard one-dimensional Left-Right political space. In all cases, it is demonstrated that approval voting makes it easier, compared to other voting rules, for the society to reach consensual vote outcomes.

Joerg Rothe (Department of Computer Science, Duesseldorf) discussed manipulation and control for approval voting and other voting systems as two well-studied ways of influencing the outcome of elections. In his talk, the complexity of the corresponding problems was surveyed for a number of widely used voting systems, including approval voting, with a particular focus on the impact of domain restrictions (single-peakedness) of the given preference profiles.

Dura-Georg Granic (Department of Economics, Cologne) reported on the results of a series of experimental (laboratory) elections. He assessed and compared coordination failure rates of Approval Voting (AV), the Borda Count (BC), and Plurality Voting (PV) in a repeated divided majority setting. By offering voters additional opportunities to express their preferences, the multi-votes methods AV and BC facilitate coordination. They clearly outperform PV, coordination failures arise less frequently and coordination is more efficient. The observed superiority is even stronger with incomplete information. Individual voting behavior reveals a systematic reduction of strategic misrepresentation of preferences with less available information. However, the behavior suggests that strategic considerations play in general a very important role.

Finally, **Jerome Lang** (Paris Dauphine) presented work in progress on possible and necessary winners in single-winner and multi-winner approval voting.

For more information, visit the meeting homepage at: http://www.illc.uva.nl/COST-IC1205/oxford-2013/

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