The 17th edition of the IEEE International Workshops on Enabling Technologies: Infrastructures for Collaborative Enterprises (WETICE 2008) has been held in Rome (for the second time in Italy). It has been hosted at the Department of Computer and Systems Sciences (DIS) of the University of Rome La Sapienza, conveniently located in the hearth of the city.


In addition, this edition has introduced a Showcase session devoted to the presentation of the different views and results produced by European Projects running in the context of Collaborative Working Technologies. This special session, with the presentation of six posters and product demos, has been one of the main elements of success of WETICE 2008, along with the high quality of the five keynotes and the fruitful discussion during both workshop and plenary sessions.

It is worth noting that the famous painting “The School of Athens” by the Italian Renaissance artist Raffaello, presented during the conference opening, has received a positive feedback from participants as an effective representation of the WETICE spirit. In our view, it should be considered as the icon that better captures the essence of the WETICE series of conferences.

The first plenary talk, entitled “Collaboration, Social Interaction and Social Protocols”, has been given by Prof. Juan Quemada from the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. This talk has presented and discussed the use of social protocols as a relevant support for social and collaborative software design. The second plenary talk, entitled “Cognitive processes and collaborative working technologies: The point of view of a psychologist”, has been given by Prof. Marta Olivetti Belardinelli, full professor of General Psychology at the University of Rome “La Sapienza. This talk has discussed the relationships between technological and cognitive aspects in the context of cognitive processing and collaborative intelligence. An innovative dynamic model requiring a combined objective- and subjective-oriented method for assessing accessibility and usability of the “cognitive web” has been presented. The third plenary talk, entitled “Virtual Development, Testing and Learning Platforms for the Integrated Development of Products and Production Systems”, has been given by Dr. Eberhard Blümel from the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation Magdeburg. This talk has given an impressive description of The Fraunhofer IFF Virtual Development and Training Centre (VDTC) that provides machinery and plant manufacturers VR based technology platforms upon which methods and tools employing digital technologies can be developed, tested and applied to exploit advanced forms of collaboration. The fourth plenary talk, entitled “Title Spatial Cognition: Agents between sensation and reality.” has been given by Prof. Christian Freksa, from Universitaet Bremen. This talk has described innovative approaches to the use of cognitive agents in terms of qualitative spatial reasoning concepts employed in the interaction between the different domains involved in spatial reasoning and spatial communication. The last plenary talk, entitled “Infrastructure and Collaborative Technologies: The Engineering Experience”, has been given by Dr. F. S. Nucci, from Engineering SpA, who presented the company’s
experiences in the Infrastructure and Collaborative Technologies domain, as well as the process that is carried out to transfer technology from the research into real life applications.

Many people contributed to the success of this year's WETICE. We would like to thank all of them. First of all, we would like to thank the WETICE Organizer, Prof. Sumitra Reddy, and the Finance Chair, Prof. Ramana Reddy, for their continual and essential overall management of WETICE events. We'd like to thank also Prof. L. Carlucci Aiello, director of the DIS, for supporting the hosting of WETICE at DIS, Dr. Massimo Mecella, assistant professor at DIS, for his help in setting-up and coordinating the event and Dr. Berta Buttarazzi, assistant professor at the University of Roma TorVergata, for her constant support to the general chairs.

Finally, WETICE 2008 would not have been possible without the effort of Matteo Patrignanelli, Daniele Pizziconi and Enrico Pavoni, who have helped a lot in arranging local activities.

Michele Angelaccio, Andrea D’Ambrogio
General Chairs, WETICE 2008
University of Roma TorVergata