



# Organisation of Workshops between Nancy & Saarbrücken

## Experiences & Suggestions

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Kick-Off Meeting INTERREG Project III C  
“Recherche sans Frontières/Forschen ohne Grenzen”



- ▶ Senior researcher in the group of **Prof. Siekmann** (AG Siekmann) which is composed of
  - ▶ 1 Sub-group in the Computer Science department of the Saarland University
    - (Logic, Deduction and Mathematical Assistance Systems)
  - ▶ 3 Sub-groups at the DFKI
    - (Formal Methods and Security, Multi-Agent Systems, and E-Learning)
- ▶ Together with **Christoph Benzmüller** I am leading the University sub-group (the  $\Omega$ MEGA-Group)
  - ▶ Involved in the **Collaborative Research Centre “Resource-adaptive cognitive processes”** (SFB 378)
- ▶ In 2004, I organised two workshops involving research groups from Nancy and Saarbrücken



- ▶ Between subgroups of
  - ▶ Saarbrücken: Informatics & Computational Linguistics Department (Saarland University), MPI for Informatics, German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI)
  - ▶ Nancy: LORIA (CNRS, INRIA, UHP Nancy 1, Nancy 2, INPL)
- ▶ Series of 5 workshops in 2003
  - ▶ Algorithm engineering for large problems 1 day
  - ▶ Prospects and Advances in the Syntax/Semantic Interface 2 days
  - ▶ Number Support of Exact Computational Geometry 1 day
  - ▶ Description Logic Day 1 day
  - ▶ Geometry and CAD 1 day
- ▶ Funding



- ▶ Two workshops in 2004
- ▶ Unification workshop between J. Siekmann and C. & H. Kirchner in the 80s which is an established international workshop now.
- ▶ Both organised by **Frédéric Blanqui** (Claude Kirchner, LORIA) and myself (Jörg Siekmann, Saarland University & DFKI)
  1. Nancy-Saarbrücken **Workshop on Logic, Proofs and Programs**
    - ▶ In Nancy, 17-18 June 2004
    - ▶  $\approx$  37 participants (21 from Nancy, 16 from Saarbrücken)
    - ▶ <http://protheo.loria.fr/workshops/saar04/>
  2. Nancy-Saarbrücken **Workshop on Logic, Deduction and Applications**
    - ▶ In Saarbrücken, 25-26 November 2004
    - ▶  $\approx$  34 participants (20 from Saarbrücken, 12 from Nancy, 2 from Metz)

# Structure of the Workshops



- ▶ Two-day workshops, open to all PhD students, researchers, post-docs etc. in the involved groups/departments
- ▶ Schedule:
  - ▶ First day: 10:00 – 12:30, 14:00 – 18:30  
Social dinner from 20:00
  - ▶ Second day: 9:00 – 12:30, 14:00 – 16:30
- ▶ Presentations:
  - ▶ Selected by Frédéric Blanqui and me
  - ▶ Careful to balance contributions of different groups
  - ▶ Slots of 45min
  - ▶ If appropriate, included presentations that are of more general interest (e.g. E-Learning environment ActiveMath)





## ▶ Organisation:

- ▶ **Travelling:** by private cars or institutional minibus
- ▶ **Lunch break:** No real lunch, cold dishes, close to the seminar room
- ▶ **Hotels:** selection by the organisers, but individual booking
- ▶ **Coffee Breaks:** 30 minutes

## ▶ Financing:

- ▶ No workshop fees
- ▶ Supported by **third-party project funding** (travel, dinner, lunches, hotels)
- ▶ DFKI and the **Collaborative Research Centre** (SFB 378, funded by DFG) helped a lot on the Saarbrücken side
- ▶ Overall **costs (estimated)** for lunches, dinner, coffee breaks, hotel and travel costs **≈ 2500 EUR**

(34 participants, 14 visiting)



- ▶ Results (to my knowledge and so far):
  - ▶ One french **PhD student** from Nancy as visiting researcher in Saarbrücken
  - ▶ One **national project proposal** on the Nancy side with explicit collaboration with Saarbrücken and with a goal to eventually prepare a common EU project.
  - ▶ One **similar national project proposal** on the Saarbücken side in preparation
  - ▶ Invitation of Saarbrücken researchers to a **theme day** at INRIA
  - ▶ Interest in evaluating and possibly employ **E-Learning** system ActiveMath
  - ▶ Personal contacts resulting in one **DEA student** from Nancy doing his "Mémoire de DEA" at the MPI
  - ▶ A **mailing list** 'saarlor' to exchange information about talks, seminars, workshops, master and phd subjects, or visiting and post-doc positions  
(not much in use yet)



- ▶ Topics of Workshops
  - ▶ Workshops with specific topics are good to initiate research cooperation between individuals/groups
  - ▶ Providing a forum for more general topics (like education) probably better to initiate cooperation at the institutional level
- ▶ Social aspects are important, especially to initiate research discussions and possible cooperations
  - ▶ Lunch and coffee breaks as well as a social dinner are not dead times
- ▶ Presentations:
  - ▶ slots 45 minutes are good in principle (to have detailed presentations, system demonstrations, to allow for time for discussions)
  - ▶ BUT: Not always used (young speaker tend to stick to the “conference standard” of 25+5 min)



- ▶ Alternative for presenting ongoing research
  - ▶ Posters (either in specific sessions or/and in parallel to the breaks)
  - ▶ Students and projects need anyway to prepare posters for the evaluation of their work
- ▶ Organisation & Progression
  - ▶ Having support for the organisation would help a lot to better concentrate on thematic matters
  - ▶ Due to the proximity of Nancy and Saarbrücken:
    - ▶ You got probably more attendees from either site
    - ▶ BUT: High flow of people due to teaching obligations and other duties.
- ▶ Financing:
  - ▶ It would be good if these activities need not be payed by project funding which are typically low and often also restricted to specific purposes.



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