

ORBEL

General Assembly meeting at KUL on Thursday Feb. 2nd, 2017 Annual report of activities in 2016

Dear Chairman, Dear Members of the Administration Board, Dear Members of ORBEL,

As now traditional I will first be giving headlines on the ORBEL 30 conference at UCL, the ORBEL and Wolsey awards 2016, and finally the 4OR publications.

The 30th yearly national ORBEL conference on Operations Research was organised by CORE at the occasion of its 50th year anniversary at UCL/Louvain-La-Neuve on Thursday & Friday January 28-29, 2016. Many thanks to the organising and scientific committees: the attendance was important with 124 participants including 70 PhD students. Three distinguished invited plenary speakers took the floor, Eva K. Lee of the H. Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology, USA, with the talk "Optimizing and Transforming the Healthcare System", and our two colleagues from CORE/UCL Yurii Nesterov with the talk "Convergent subgradient methods for nonsmooth convex minimization", and Laurence Wolsey with the talk "MIP Reformulations: From Lot-Sizing to Inventory Routing". The conference dinner took place in Louvain-La-Neuve in the restaurant Espaces Loungeitude renowned for its cozy atmosphere. The slightly negative conference result was taken over by CORE, and about 2.300 Euro membership fees were transferred to ORBEL.

The ORBEL and the Wolsey awards were also received during the CORE conference after the presentations of the nominees' works.

The ORBEL 2016 award sponsored by OM Partners with 1.000 EURO award is bestowed on the author(s) of a scientifically oriented Master's thesis presented in 2015. The jury, presided by Frits Spijksma, selected Kobe Geryl From UGent with the thesis entitled "Order acceptance in production planning", the supervisor was Tarik Aouam. Note that Frits will make propositions to modernise the rules of the award starting at this 2017 conference.

The Wolsey award is rewarded each year with an iPad and a full registration to the ORBEL conference to the author(s) of the best and most significant OR implementation contributing to Open-Source. The laureate for the Wolsey award 2016 was Filipe Brandão of Faculdade de Ciências of Universidade do Porto for the implementation of Vector Packing Solver (VPSolver), a multiple-choice vector packing solver based on an arc-flow formulation with graph compression.

Regarding 4OR, the Editor-In-Chief Yves Crama provided the following report:

Volume 14 of 4OR was published in 2016. It contains 446 pages, 4 invited surveys, 13 research papers, 1 industry paper, and 7 PhD thesis summaries (including 5 theses defended in Belgian universities). In the 4th issue, the editors-in-chief have published an editorial describing a recent cheating attempt, whereby a paper was submitted under a false identity. Unfortunately, all scientific journals observe that the number of cases of cheating (including

plagiarism and last-minute changes of authorship) has been steadily increasing in recent years. The rejection rate of 4OR remains extremely high, due to a large number of subpar or out-of-scope submissions. On the other hand, the quality of accepted papers is quite good, so that (for what it's worth) the impact factor of the journal is steadily increasing, reaching 1.37 at the time of this writing. The editorial board of the journal features one Editor-in-chief, three Associate editors and two senior editors affiliated with Belgian universities. Moreover, a new Belgian Associate editor has recently been appointed, namely, Dorothee Honhon teaching at the University of Texas in Dallas.

In 2016 several activities were organised by members of the ORBEL administration board, in particular:

- The "Railway Operations Research Seminar 'Put Passengers First' " was organised by Pieter Vansteenwegen at KUL, May 3, 2016. A financial support of 1000 euros has been provided by ORBEL.
- "StochMod 2016", the 6th international meeting of the EURO Working Group on Stochastic Modelling, July 11-13 2016 was organised at UCL, being also part of the 50th anniversary celebration of CORE. Philippe Chevalier was member of the scientific committee.
- Benelearn 25 the annual machine learning conference of Belgium and The Netherlands took place at KULAK in Kortrijk , September 12-13, 2016. Patrick De Causmaecker was member of the scientific committee;

EURO-News:

- The third EthOR award distinguishing outstanding work by young graduate OR researchers promoting ethical dimensions in OR-based studies was organised by the Euro Working Group "Ethics and OR", of which I am a board member, at the EURO 2016 Conference in Poznan, Poland, July 3-7 2016;
- ORBEL has introduced the application of Túlío Toffolo (KUL) for participating to ELAVIO XXI, Latin-American Summer School in Operations Research, to take place in Buenos Aires and Miramar (Argentina) from February 24th to March 4th, 2017. This application has been accepted by EURO. Congratulations!

To conclude this 2016 report I would like to thank you all for your contributions to our society, in particular our president Frits Spijksma also for organizing the ORBEL award and thinking about new rules; Bernard Fortz, our treasurer and liaison officer with EURO and IFORS; Yves Crama the Belgian 4OR editor-in-chief; Pieter Vansteenwegen for his active work as ORBEL secretary; Filip Van Utterbeek, hosting our meetings at the Royal Military Academy.

On behalf of our society I wish you all a very happy and successful year 2017!

Pierre Kunsch, Delegate Administrator