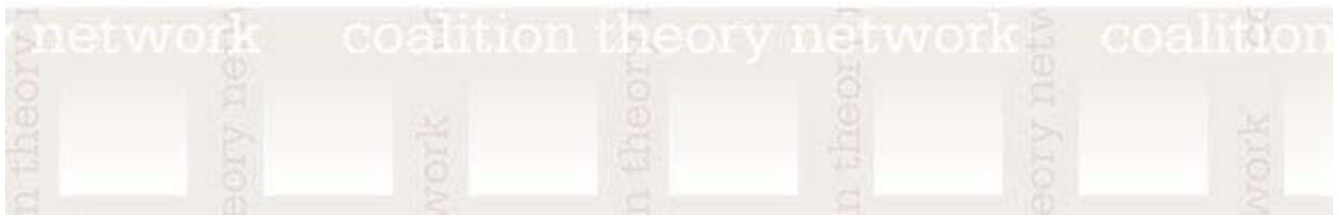


# Coalition Theory Network Newsletter

Issue No. 2

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## Editorial

by Carlo Carraro

Dear All,

This is the third issue of the CTN Newsletter. It is not as good as expected, even though I believe it can provide some useful information on the activities of the network and more generally on research on coalition theory. I am aware that preparing a good newsletter is very demanding and I am grateful to all CTN people who contributed to the realisation of this number. Nevertheless, I hope that a further effort can make the next issues of this newsletter even more useful to all of us.

As we aim to render the newsletter an instrument of dissemination even outside the network, I heartily suggest anybody who wishes to divulge information on coalition, game and network theory to use this instrument, as well as the website ([www.feem.it/ctn](http://www.feem.it/ctn)). Over the past few years we have experienced the advantages of a functioning communication structure, and the Network should follow these principles to grant visibility not only to CTN activities, but to all initiatives dedicated to a clearer understanding of the dynamics of the process of coalition and network formation.

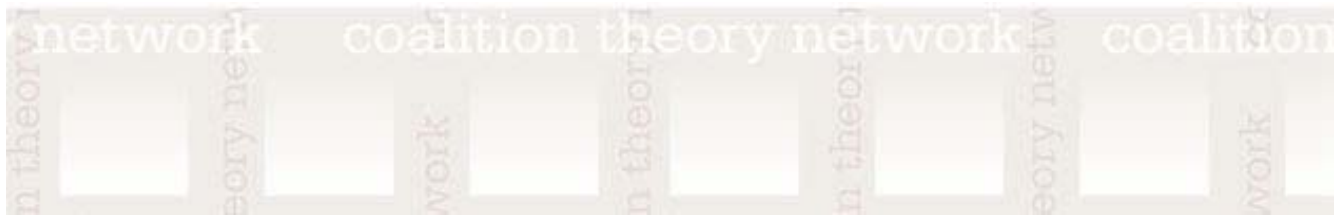
I would like to stress the success of the 9th Coalition Theory Workshop, held last January at the Univesitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The workshop was attended by many of the leading scholars in the field of coalition and network formation. Together with prestigious first time participations, such as that of Professor Bashkar Dutta of Warwick University (a new member of the network), we had the very welcome return of Prof. Debraj Ray of the New York University, who was one of the main contributors and promoters of the network, and of coalition theory in general, in its early stages.

This year's meeting was proposed with a specific title: Collective Decision Making and Institutional Design. And, as the title suggests, most of the contributions dealt with problems of network and collective choice.

The workshop confirmed the increasing interest of researchers for network structures, stressing their role in various contexts, ranging from the theory of learning, to the evolution of scientific collaborations, to the efficiency of banking intermediation. Network theory is a domain in which the need for applications of a theoretical framework is greatly felt, both because of the practical relevance of the issues being dealt with, as well as the extreme complexity of abstract investigation in this field. We can expect an increasing number of applied studies in this field of research to characterise future meetings. For the moment, the member institutions of the Coalition Theory Network wish to thank all attending scholars, researchers and students, and we look forward to meeting you all again at the next CTN meeting in Paris, January 2005.

Finally, I am happy to confirm the continuing initiative of the online paper submission to the CTN website: in this issue Sergio Currarini describes the contents of the latest papers accepted for publication in the FEEM "CTN Working Paper Series" and included in the Social Science Research Network (SSRN) Electronic Library. I believe that this initiative will improve the quality of research in coalition and game theory, while giving young researchers the chance to disseminate their work.

Carlo Carraro  
Editor



## About the papers published in the CTN WP Series

By Sergio Currarini, FEEM

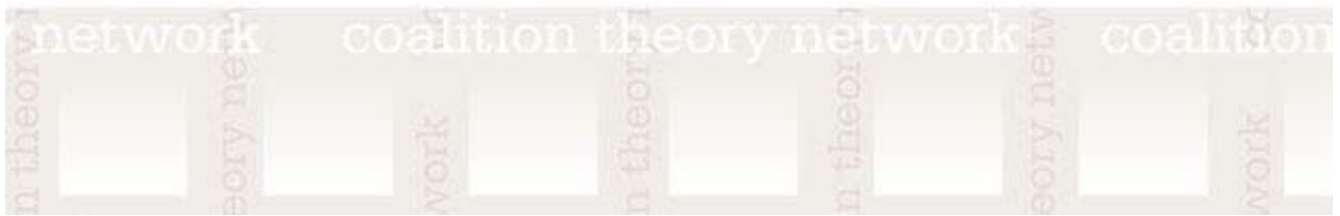
The Coalition Theory Series of “Feem Note di Lavoro” has published 17 papers in the first six months of 2004. Part of these are works that had been previously presented at the IX Coalition Theory Workshop held in Barcelona last 30-31 January. In accordance with the agreement reached by the CTN website and the Grandcoalition website, all these 17 papers appear in both websites.

Five papers deal with issues related to the role of coalition theory in politics. Three of these study the process of government formation in parliaments. The paper by Bandyopadhyay and Oak looks at the interaction between the incentives to form a party and to participate to mass elections and the process of coalition formation after seats have been assigned. One main finding of the paper is the possibility of disconnected equilibrium government coalitions, a new feature in the formal literature on government formation. Merlo, Eraslan and Diermeier focus instead on the role of bicameralism and on the effects of removing such institutional feature. In particular, the authors investigate the role of bicameralism in determining two features of equilibrium parliamentary coalitions: durability and composition. They find that only the composition of the government would be affected by the removal of bicameralism. This because the equilibrium effect of the change on durability is mediated by that on composition: although the removal of bicameralism would reduce the durability of each coalition, in equilibrium the composition of the government coalition changes, in such a way that the (partial equilibrium) effect on durability is offset. Finally, Garratt, Parco, Qin and Rapoport look at a simple three-party model of government formation, in which the bilateral links between parties are taken into account. The focus is here mainly on the experimental evidence of

equilibrium party formation, testing in particular the predictive power of the method of potential maximization, selecting a unique element from the set of Nash equilibria.

The paper by Ray, Eliaz and Razin studies a very interesting model of group decision making (voting), in which agents have to compare two alternatives. Agents face uncertainty, and perceive disagreement as the worst possible outcome. A crucial feature of the paper is the fact that agents can abstain from voting, and their abstention is counted as a vote for both alternatives. Therefore, given any majority rule, it may happen that neither alternative wins if too little players have abstained. In other terms, not abstaining may lead to the worst outcome if the supermajority rule is too demanding. This fact gives players characterized by less intense preferences for one alternative over the other an incentive to abstain, rather than risking disagreement. A voter is said to be aggressive if the threshold (in intensity of preferences) under which he abstains is low (he will more often risk disagreement). This threshold is endogenously given in equilibrium. The authors show the very interesting result that as the set of voters become large, equilibria with a tyranny of the minority appear. These equilibria are characterized by a more aggressive behaviour by the minority voters, who are able to have their preferred alternative passed with higher probability. Such equilibria never disappear as the group gets larger. For all sizes, however, equilibria with the majority alternative winning always exist.

The paper by Barberà and Jackson looks at the problem of designing voting rules for international economic unions. In particular, the authors consider two stage voting processes, in which countries representatives are elected in order to vote at the



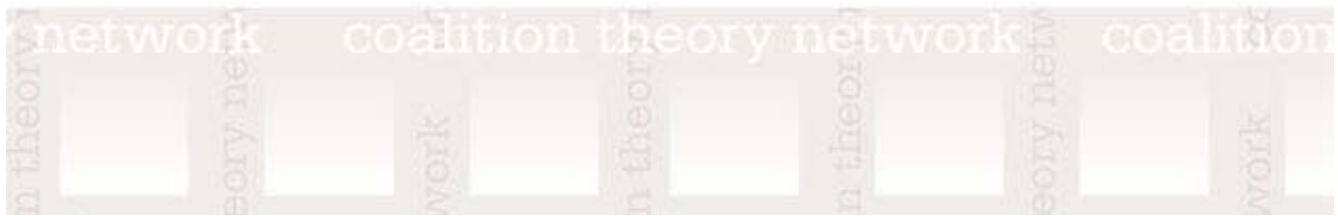
international level on “yes or no” type of issues (the authors think of a choice between the status quo and change). The main question addressed by the paper is how to decide the voting weights of each country when within countries preferences are not homogeneous. The authors find that total (expected) welfare is maximized when weights are proportional to the gap between a country’s preferences for a change and those for the status quo. Quite surprisingly, the decision about weights turns out to be independent from that about the majority to be adopted, which, instead, should depend on the general bias in favour of one of the alternatives. The authors also use their model to interpret the voting rules suggested for the EU at the Nice Intergovernmental Conference in 2000 and at the Constitutional Convention in 2003.

Confirming a trend of the last few years, network theory has been the topic of a substantial number of papers submissions. Six papers on networks appear in the CTN Series of these first six months.

Of these, four have been presented at the January Workshop. The paper by Goyal, van der Leij and González examines a well known and debated feature of today’s integrated society, that goes under the name of “small world hypothesis”. This theory estimates that every pair of citizens in the world can be put in communication through a path of acquaintances of no more than 6-8 other world citizens. Goyal et al. test this type of hypothesis for the specific world of economics publishing scholars. The results say that in the 90s the world of publishing economists were much smaller than twenty years before, with much of the increased integration due to the emergence of stars, that allowed for short connecting path between most of the existing scholars. Arenas, Díaz-Guilera, Guimerà and Cabrales, look at the design problem generated by the complexity of information processing and decisions within large organizations, such as firms. They consider a problem in which decisions to be taken arrive randomly to the firm,

and can only be solved by one agent within the firm. Information flows, according to given rules, through the network that represents the internal organization of the firm. The authors study how to design the network in order to obtain optimal performances of the organization. They find that the optimal architecture clearly depends on the rate of arrival of problems to the firm. Low arrival rates require a centralized architecture (a star), while high arrival rates require more decentralized architectures, in which congestion is less serious. Design is also the topic of the paper by Bloch and Jackson, who study under which circumstances, different forms of side payments can lead to the formation of efficient networks. They consider a game of simultaneous network formation, and study increasingly powerful devices of money transfers among players, ranging from simple payoff demands for the formation (or deletion) of one’s own links, to demands related to the formation or deletion of all links in the network, to contingent demands, which may depend on other players actions in the game. They find that depending of the presence or absence of externalities, efficiency can be achieved by means of different types of transfers. In particular, in the absence of externalities, simple demand on one’s own links are sufficient for efficiency in equilibrium. If externalities are present, agents need to use demands on other players links or even contingent demands in order to achieve efficiency. Finally, Cartwright studies a model in which social networks have the role of determining the reference groups on which boundedly rational agents base their imitative strategies. This paper studies how agents can learn to play approximate Nash equilibria by means of imitation and innovation.

The other two papers on networks are by Bergantiños and Vidal-Puga, introducing the concept of “canonical form” for a cost spanning tree problem, and applying it to the formulation of “fair” cost sharing rules, and by Perez, in which the



network play the role of connecting (and coordinating) a set of subordinates that consider whether to revolt against their boss.

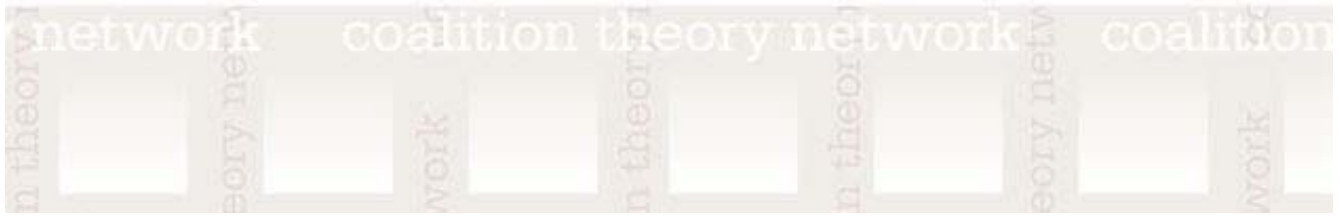
Five papers are dedicated to coalition formation. The work of Diamantoudi, Amir and Xue studies the long debated issue of merger profitability in oligopolies. Their work focuses on one new source of profitability for mergers, namely uncertainty on the side of non merging firms. Diamantoudi, Amir and Xue show that mergers can be profitable in equilibrium even when the fusion induces no efficiency gains at all for mergers. Cartels are also the topic of the paper by Escrihuela Villar. As in the previous paper, the objective is to provide an analytical explanation for the observed high degrees of collusion. In this case, the author looks at the interplay of two types of constraints that should be satisfying for a successful cartel agreement, and that relate to the incentives to participate in the cartel and to comply with the cartel prescriptions. The author shows that (IF?) the incentives to comply are taken into account, bigger mergers can be sustained in equilibrium.

A more general analysis of coalition formation is contained in the paper by Bloch and Gomes, who study a dynamic game theoretic model in which agents have a twofold decision space at each stage of the game. On one side, agents decide choose strategies to be enacted in some underlying strategic form game describing the economic environment in which negotiations are embedded. On the other, agents form coalitions and take decisions with respect to their cooperative behaviour. It is crucial here that coalitions, differently from other previous papers on dynamic coalition formation and payoff division, are allowed to form without permanently leaving the game. Under this assumption, all players go on bargaining and sharing the gains from cooperation until such gains are exhausted. From this, the result that efficiency is always attained when outside options are pure (a condition related to the absence of spillovers across groups). When

such spillovers are present, however, inefficiency may be a persistent feature of all Markov perfect equilibria. The authors also provide interesting examples of the dynamics of coalition formation. In a public good game, agents are shown to reach efficiency in equilibrium (despite the impure outside options), but this may take two stages of negotiations. In a principal-agent model, the timing of efficiency depends on the type of externalities exerted by trades. If these are positive, efficiency is reached immediately. If these are negative, efficiency takes two steps of negotiations. The possibility of inefficient equilibria is illustrated in a game of market entry with synergies.

In third paper on coalition formation, Currarini and Marini study the effect of synergies on the existence of strong Nash equilibria of the gamma coalition formation game. This paper shows that if the players form coalitions solely to coordinate their actions in the underlying strategic form game (so that synergies are absent), then a strong Nash equilibrium always exists if the game is supermodular, and under a contraction assumption on reaction functions if the game is not supermodular. Finally, Caparrós, Hammoudi and Tazdaït try to extend the analysis of stable cartels to the case of heterogeneous players.

Hedonic games are a special class of games of coalition formation, in which players preferences are defined over their potential partners and, in the most general version, over the whole partition. The paper by Dimitrov, Borm, Hendrickx and Sung studies the non emptiness of the core in such games when players have a simple, though natural, way of valuing potential coalitions to which they might belong to. Players are supposed to view other players either as enemies or as friends. If more friends are always better, the strong core is shown to always be nonempty. If fewer enemies are always better, then the weak core is nonempty.



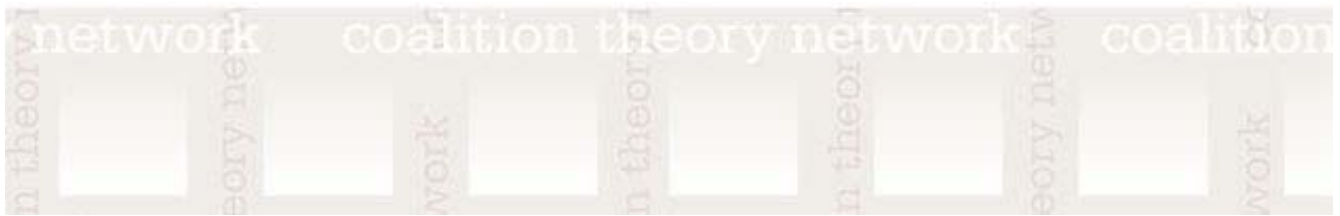
## New papers on coalition theory

### FEEM Working Papers

- 76.04 - [On the Weights of Nations: Assigning Voting Weights in a Heterogeneous Union](#)  
*Salvador Barberà, Matthew Jackson*
- 77.04 - [Optimal Information Transmission in Organizations: Search and Congestion](#)  
*Antonio Cabrales, Àlex Arenas, Albert Díaz-Guilera, Roger Guimerà*
- 78.04 - [Contracting with Externalities and Outside Options](#)  
*Francis Bloch, Armando Gomes*
- 79.04 - [Merger Performance under Uncertain Efficiency Gains](#)  
*Licun Xue, Rabah Amir, Effrosyni Diamantoudi*
- 80.04 - [The Formation of Networks with Transfers among Players](#)  
*Matthew Jackson, Francis Bloch*
- 81.04 - [Bicameralism and Government Formation](#)  
*Antonio Merlo, Daniel Diermeier, Hülya Eraslan*
- 82.04 - [Potential Maximization and Coalition Government Formation](#)  
*Rod Garratt, Cheng Zhong Qin, James Parco, Amnon Rapoport*
- 83.04 - [Group Decision-Making in the Shadow of Disagreement](#)  
*Kfir Eliaz, Debraj Ray, Ronny Razin*
- 84.04 - [Economics: An Emerging Small World?](#)  
*Sanjeen Goyal, Marco Van Der Leij, José Luis Moraga-González*
- 85.04 - [Learning to Play Approximate Nash Equilibria in Games with Many Players](#)  
*Edward Cartwright*

### CODE Papers and Working Papers

- Barcelona Economics WP 119.2004  
[Sharing the Surplus: A Just and Efficient Proposal for Environments with Externalities](#)  
*Inès Macho-Stadler, David Pérez-Castrillo, and D. Wettstein*
- Barcelona Economics WP 123.2004  
Forming Efficient Networks  
*David Pérez-Castrillo and D. Wettstein*
- Barcelona Economics WP 128.2004  
[Locating Public Facilities by Majority: Stability, Consistency and Group Formation](#)  
*Salvador Barberà, Carmen Bevià*
- [Pairwise-Stability and Nash Equilibria in Network Formation](#)  
*Antoni Calvo-Armengol and Rabmi Ilkiliç*  
in progress



- ▣ [Who's Who in Crime Networks. Key Player Wanted](#)  
*Coralio Ballester, Antoni Calvó-Armengol and Yves Zenou*  
in progress
- ▣ [Social Networks and Labor Markets: Wage and Employment Dynamics and Inequality](#)  
*Antoni Calvó-Armengol and Matthew Jackson*  
in progress
- ▣ [Corporate Downsizing to Rebuild Team Spirit](#)  
*Antonio Cabrales and Antoni Calvó-Armengol*  
in progress

### **EUREQua Working Papers**

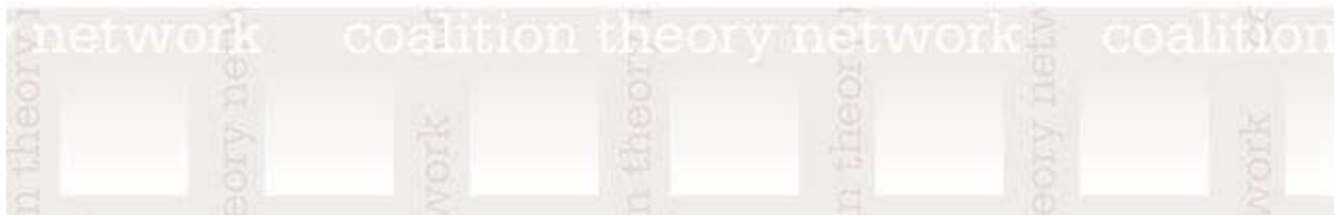
- ▣ 2004.06 - [A note on consensus and common knowledge of an aggregate of decisions](#)  
*Lucie Ménager*
- ▣ 2003.130 - [Existence, Uniqueness and Stability of a Set-Valued Concept](#)  
*Olivier Tercieux*

### **University of Warwick Working Papers**

- ▣ 697 - [Political Parties and Coalition Formation](#)  
*Amrita Dhillon*
- ▣ 698 - [Scoring Rule Voting Games and Dominance Solvability](#)  
*Lucia Buenrostro and Amrita Dhillon*
- ▣ 701 - [On Purification of Equilibrium in Bayesian Games and Ex-Post Nash Equilibrium](#)  
*Edward Cartwright, Myrna Wooders*
- ▣ 702 - [Farsightedly Basic Networks](#)  
*Frank H. Page, Myrna Wooders and Samir Kamut*

### **New papers that were recently posted at [www.grandcoalition.com](http://www.grandcoalition.com)**

- ▣ [The Formation of Networks with Transfers among Players](#)  
*Francis Bloch and Matthew O. Jackson*
- ▣ [Search and the Strategic Formation of Large Networks: When and Why do We See Power Laws and Small Worlds?](#)  
*Matthew O. Jackson and Brian Rogers*
- ▣ [Games of Capacity Manipulation in Hospital-Intern Markets](#)  
*Hideo Konishi and M. Utku Unver*  
Revised version - forthcoming in *Social Choice and Welfare*
- ▣ [An ANC Analytical Payoff Function for 3-Agent-Multistage-Games with Communication Structures](#)  
*Ricardo Nieva*



## Forthcoming events

### **Conference on Economic Design**

**Palma de Mallorca, Spain, June 29 - July 3, 2004**

<http://www.iae.csic.es/sed2004/#sub>

The 2004 conference on economic design (SED 2004) will be held at the Universitat de les Illes Balears in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, from June 29 (Tuesday) to July 3 (Saturday) under the joint organization of the Institut d'Anàlisi Econòmica -C.S.I.C of Barcelona and the Universitat de les Illes Balears. The scientific program will run from the morning of June 30 until the evening of July 2.

Keynote speakers: Ariel Rubinstein - Tel Aviv University, Hugo Sonnenschein - University of Chicago

### ▣ **The Second World Congress of the Game Theory Society (Games 2004)**

**Marseille, France, July 5-9, 2004**

<http://www.gts2004.org/>

The Second World Congress of the Game Theory Society is the official Congress of the Game Theory Society which brings together economists, mathematicians, biologists, political scientists and computer scientists interested in game theory. The Congress happens every four years, and the Marseille meeting will follow up on Games 2000, held in Bilbao. This Conference will be a unique opportunity to discuss the latest theoretical and practical developments in game theory.

The Meeting will take place over five days. Every morning will be devoted to a plenary session, and some invited sessions. Contributed and poster sessions will take place in the afternoon. The plenary speakers are Michael Hearn (University of Pennsylvania), Eric Maskin (Institute for Advanced Studies), Ehud Lehrer (Tel Aviv University), David Levine (University of California, Los Angeles), Robert Wilson (Stanford University). The program Chair is Phil Reny (University of Chicago) and the local organizers are Francis Bloch and Alan Kirman (University of Aix-Marseille).

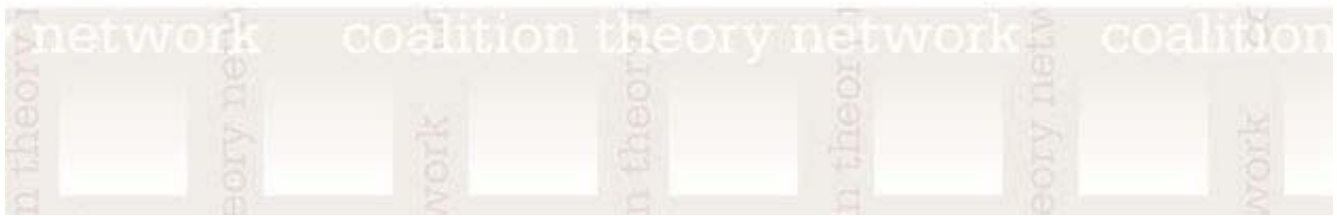
### ▣ **Sixth Spanish Meeting on Game Theory and Practice**

**Elche, Spain, July 12-14, 2004**

<http://www.gts2004.org/>

The number of Spanish game theorists has increased considerably in recent years. In 1994 it was decided to hold a Spanish Meeting on Game Theory every two years. The meetings in Bilbao (1994), Santiago de Compostela (1996) Barcelona (1998) and Valencia (2000), were a great success, with more than 100 presentations in each of them. This shows the good health of the many Spanish research groups in Game Theory and their growing international links. Moreover, Games 2000, the First Conference of the International Game Theory Society, was in Bilbao.

The Sixth Spanish Meeting will take place in Elche on July 12-14, 2004. The meeting continues the series of the alternate Italian and Spanish conferences on Game Theory. The Spanish Meeting is open to participants from all countries. Its areas of interest cover all aspects of Game Theory and its applications. The language of the Meeting is English, although there will be some sessions in Spanish.



- **The 15th Summer Festival on Game Theory**  
**Stony Brook University, New York, July 12-23, 2004**  
<http://www.gtcenter.org/Default.php>

From 1990 to 2003, the International Summer Festival on Game Theory at Stony Brook has been a renowned academic gathering of researchers from all over the world, bringing together both young and upcoming, as well as established, researchers for a week of intense activity. Talks focus on the theory as well as its applications.

Organisers: Shmuel Zamir - The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Amrita Dhillon - Queens College, CUNY and University of Warwick, Sandro Brusco - Department of Economics, SUNY Stony Brook, Giuseppe Lopomo - The Fuqua School of Business, Duke University.

- **Operations Research**  
**Tilburg University, The Netherlands, September 1-3, 2004**  
<http://center.uvt.nl/congres/>

The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration organises the Conference. Session 16 will be devoted to Econometrics, Game Theory and Mathematical Economics. Deadline for abstracts submission is on April 30, 2004.

- **Game Theory and Mathematical Economics**  
**Warsaw, Poland, September 6-10, 2004**  
<http://www.ipipan.waw.pl/~gtme2004/>

The conference, organised jointly by Stefan Banach International Mathematical Center ([www.impan.gov.pl/BC](http://www.impan.gov.pl/BC)) and Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences ([www.ipipan.waw.pl](http://www.ipipan.waw.pl)) will be held in the Banach Center in Warsaw. Invited lecturers: Igor Evstigneev, Hans Keiding, Stef Tijs, Rajiv Vohra, Peyton Young. Abstracts deadline submission is March 31, 2004.

- **Eleventh International Symposium on Dynamic Games and Applications**  
**Ventana Canyon Resort, Tucson, Arizona, December 18-21, 2004**  
<http://www.sal.hut.fi/isdg/>

The International Symposium on Dynamic Games and Applications is a biennial professional event. The first one was held in 1984 in Haifa, Israel. It was followed by meetings in Williamsburg, USA (1986), Antibes, France (1988), Espoo, Finland (1990), Grimentz, Switzerland (1992), St. Jovite, Canada (1994), Kanagawa, Japan (1996), Maastricht, The Netherlands (1998), Adelaide, South Australia (2000), and St. Petersburg Russia (2002).

This symposium has been scheduled in the week following CDC Conference at Paradise Island, The Bahamas, December 14-17, 2004.

Participants will have an opportunity to hear state-of-the-art lectures on a wide range of game-theoretic models and applications with a particular emphasis on Evolutionary Game Theory.

## Visitors at CODE

by Conxa Iglesias, CODE

May 2004

### Alejandro Neme

Instituto de Matemática Aplicada-San Luis  
Universidad Nacional de San Luis  
Ejército de los Andes 950  
5700 San Luis  
Argentina  
Phone: 54-2652-422803  
Fax: 54-2652-430224  
e-mail: aneme@unsl.edu.ar

#### *Research interests*

Social Choice, Game Theory

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September 2003 - July 2004

### Yves Sprumont

CIREQ / Département de sciences économiques  
3150, rue Jean-Brillant, bureau C-6024  
C.P. 6128, succursale Centre-ville  
Montréal (Québec) H3C 3J7  
Canada  
Phone : (514) 343-2403  
Fax : (514) 343-5831  
e-mail: yves.sprumont@umontreal.ca

<http://www.cireq.umontreal.ca/personnel/sprumont.html>

#### *Research interests*

Econometrics, game theory.

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May 2004

### Gustavo Bergantiños

Facultade de Economicas  
Universidade de Vigo  
36200, Vigo. Pontevedra  
Spain  
Tel: + 34 986812497  
Fax: + 34 986812401  
E-mail: gbergant@uvigo.es  
<http://webs.uvigo.es/gbergant/>

#### *Research interests*

Social Choice, Game Theory

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February 2004

### Antonio Nicolò

Department of Economics  
University of Padua  
Via del Santo 33, 37123 Padua , Italy  
Phone: (+39) 049 827 4285  
Fax: (+39) 049 827 4211  
E-mail: antonio.nicolo@unipd.it

#### *Research interests*

Social Choice

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### Antoine Soubeyran

Greqam and Université de la Méditerranée, Aix-Marseille II  
Centre de la Vieille Charité  
2 rue de la Charité  
13002 Marseille  
FRANCE  
Phone: 04 91 14 07 70  
Fax: 04 91 90 02 27  
e-mail: soubey@romarin.univ-aix.fr

[http://www.vcharite.univ-mrs.fr/greqam/Organisa/perso\\_mp.htm](http://www.vcharite.univ-mrs.fr/greqam/Organisa/perso_mp.htm)



May 2004

### Shmuel Nitzan

Department of Economics  
Bar-Ilan University  
52900 Ramat-Gan, Israel  
Phone: (03) 531 8930, 531 8345/6  
Fax: (03) 535-3180  
E-mail: [nitzans@mail.biu.ac.il](mailto:nitzans@mail.biu.ac.il)  
<http://faculty.biu.ac.il/~nitzans/nitzan.htm>

#### Research interests

- Economics and Politics (Endogenous public policy, Contest theory)
- Voting Theory (Majority decisiveness, Erosion in the Majority Principle, The golden voting rule)
- Collective Decision Making
- Social Choice (Liberalism and expression of preference intensity)

58084 Hagen  
Germany  
E-mail: [michael.finus@fernuni-hagen.de](mailto:michael.finus@fernuni-hagen.de)



January, 2004

### Bhaskar Dutta

Department of Economics  
University of Warwick  
Coventry CV4 7AL - UK  
Phone: +44 (0)24 7652 3478  
Fax: +44 (0)24 7652 3032  
E-mail: [b.dutta@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:b.dutta@warwick.ac.uk)

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/dutta/>

#### Research Interests

- Formation of Groups and Networks
- Mechanism Design
- Cooperative Game Theory
- Political Economy
- Social Choice Theory

## Visitors at FEEM

by Silvia Bertolin, FEEM



### Michael Finus

Department of Economics, University of Hagen  
Profilstr. 8

Prof. Finus gave a series of lectures on coalition theory designed for our PhD students.

He also held a seminar on May 20th, presenting his paper "Modesty Pays: Sometimes!" (available at

<http://www.feem.it/NR/rdonlyres/5A0B5EB2-B6E7-44A0-8179-8AFCD8A20495/1143/6804.pdf>

## Visitors at EUREQua

by Hubert Kempf, EUREQua



June 2004

### Frank H. Page, Jr.

Department of Finance  
University of Alabama  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
USA

Tel: +1 (205) 348-6097

FAX: +1 (205) 348-0590

E-mail: [fpage@cba.ua.edu](mailto:fpage@cba.ua.edu)

<http://www.cba.ua.edu/personnel/FrankPage.html>

#### *Research interests*

Financial Economics (Corporate Finance and Asset Pricing), Microeconomics and Game Theory, Public Economics



June, 2004

### Myrna Wooders

University of Warwick  
Department of Economics

Fax: +44 024 765 23032

Phone: +44 024 765 23796

E-mail: [M.Wooders@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:M.Wooders@warwick.ac.uk)

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/wooders/>

#### *Research interests*

Public economics, game theory and general equilibrium theory.



May, June 2004

### Stephen Morris

Department of Economics  
Yale University

Office Phone: +1 203 432 6903

Home Phone: +1 203 7858599

Fax: +001 203 432 6167

e-mail: [stephen.morris@yale.edu](mailto:stephen.morris@yale.edu)

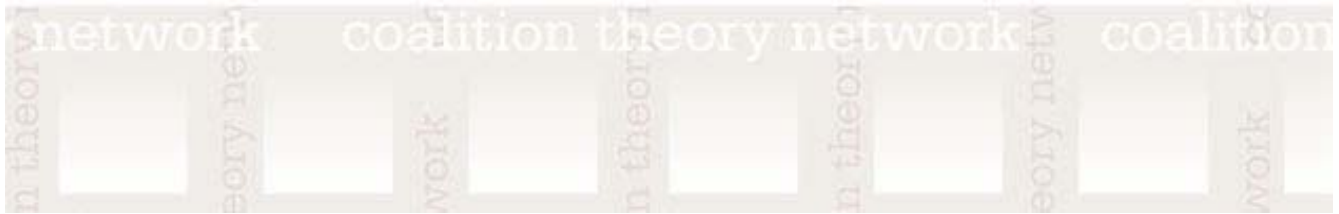
homepage: <http://www.econ.yale.edu/~smorris/>

#### *Research interests*

Microeconomics, Game Theory

Prof. Morris held a series of courses at EUREQua:

- « Coordination and Strategic Uncertainty »
- « Coordination and Public Information »
- « Theory of Global Games »
- « Risk and Wealth in a Model of Self-Fulfilling Currency Attacks »



## About CTN

The Coalition Theory Network (CTN) is an association of six high level scientific institutions, aimed at the advancement and the diffusion of research in the area of coalition formation. The six current members are: the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (CODE), the Center for Operation Research and Econometrics (CORE), the Équipe Universitaire de Recherche en Économie Quantitative (EUREQua), the Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM), the Université de Marseille (GREQAM), and the Department of Economics at University of Warwick.

## Members

### ▣ CODE

<http://pareto.uab.es/code>

Local coordinator:

**Carmen Bevià** - Associate Professor of Economics, Departament d'economia i d'història Econòmica, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona  
e-mail: [carmen.bevia@uab.es](mailto:carmen.bevia@uab.es)

### ▣ CORE

<http://www.core.ucl.ac.be/>

Local coordinator:

**Rabah Amir** - Professor, Université catholique de Louvain, Faculté des sciences économiques, sociales et politiques, Département des sciences économiques  
e-mail: [amir@core.ucl.ac.be](mailto:amir@core.ucl.ac.be)

### ▣ EUREQua

<http://eurequa.univ-paris1.fr/>

Local coordinator:

**Hubert Kempf** - Professor of Economics, Université Paris-1 Panthéon-Sorbonne  
e-mail: [kempf@univ-paris1.fr](mailto:kempf@univ-paris1.fr)

### ▣ FEEM

<http://www.feem.it>

Local coordinator:

**Carlo Carraro** - Professor of Economics, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia  
e-mail: [carlo.carraro@feem.it](mailto:carlo.carraro@feem.it)

### ▣ GREQAM

<http://durandal.cnrs-mrs.fr/GREQAM/Home.greqam.html>

Local coordinator:

**Francis Bloch** - Professor, Université de la Méditerranée, Ecole Supérieure de Mécanique de Marseille  
e-mail: [bloch@ehess.cnrs-mrs.fr](mailto:bloch@ehess.cnrs-mrs.fr)

### ▣ University of Warwick – Department of Economics

<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/economics/>

Local coordinator:

**Myrna Wooders** - Professor of Economics, University of Warwick  
e-mail: [M.Wooders@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:M.Wooders@warwick.ac.uk)