

21th IFAC World Congress Berlin, Germany July 11-17 2020

From July 11-17-07 2020 the 21st IFAC World Congress successfully premiered for the first time ever as a virtual World Congress held in cyberspace. On top of excellent standard contributions from all areas covered by IFAC, the program featured highlights on the history of IFAC and history Automatic Control, on control education and outreach, as well as on control applications both in industry and in social systems.

The Global Live Track, spanned plenaries, keynotes, panel discussions, tutorials, demonstrator sessions, competitions, workshops, and unique social events, offering a total of more than 40 hours live-streamed elements accessible concurrently on 5 continents. The accepted papers were presented in the form of prerecorded videos that have been made available individually on-demand 24/7 in the Virtual Session Tracks. To facilitate discussions, we complemented all contributions with virtual forum rooms for mutual follow-on discussions.

A total of 4446 contributions have been submitted for possible inclusion to the IFAC 2020 World Congress. Besides regular contributions, proposals for

- 93 Open Invited Tracks
 - 77 Invited Sessions
 - 5 Tutorial Sessions
 - 34 Workshops
- had been received.

The 4237 submitted papers consisted of 3965 IFAC regular papers, 251 extended abstracts, and 21 survey papers. More than 977 contributions were sent for inclusion in open invited tracks, 412 contributions formed 77 proposed invited sessions - furthermore, 2 tutorial session papers, 30 demonstrator papers and 101 late-breaking results contributions were received.

The reviewing process had been conducted under the supervision of the International Program Committee Co-Chairs. They organized the reviewing and were supported by the nine IFAC Coordinating Committee Chairs, the 39 Technical Committees Chairs, 340 Technical Associate Editors, and more than 6553 reviewers! 13355 reviews were received as a result of 32290 review requests.

The reviewing process led to the acceptance of 3259 contributions, 66 Open Invited Tracks, 56 Invited Sessions, 5 Tutorial Sessions, and 22 Workshops. The 3109 scientific contributions are made up of 2898 IFAC-regular papers, 194 Extended Abstracts, and 17 Survey papers. Of those are 739 Open Invited Track contributions, 354 Invited Session papers, 2 Tutorial session papers, 29 Demonstrator papers, and 94 accepted Late Breaking Results contributions.

The acceptance rates are 69% for contributed papers, 75% for Open Invited Track papers, and 85% for Invited Session papers. This leads to an overall acceptance rate for articles published in IFAC-PapersOnLine of 73%.

The session size varied between 4 and 43 papers, with an average of 11 contributions per session. The IFAC-V 2020 Virtual Track opened on July 13. It remains open until 31 August 2020, allowing 24/7 on-demand viewing of the more than 3100 video presentations accompanied by the pdfs of the slides.

Finally, more than 3600 people participated in the virtual congress, with a maximum of 2450 logged in participants in a single day. More than 750 listeners joined the pre-congress workshops. And it was a truly international and global event, with participants from 82 countries. More than 18 TB of Internet traffic has been streamed, and more than 22000 paper downloads have been recorded until the end of the live congress week.

Furthermore global life and plenary tracks, competitions were offered. It's the first time a workshop „Girls in Control“ with international participants was organized for 100 Girls of the age 10 to 50 years in English, German, French Italian, Norwegian and Portugues.

Because of the working group „Diversity and Inclusion“ in the TC 9.5 a Committee was installed in IFAC.

This event was very well organized under difficult limit conditions.

The 22nd World Congress will take place 2023 in Yokohama (Japan).

P. Kopacek and A. Rommens (based on official reports).