



# ACTIVITY REPORT

ORP<sup>3</sup>, Valencia 6-10 September 2005

Rubén Ruiz García

September 2005

## CONTENTS

|     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| 1   | Committees .....  | 2  |
| 2   | Conference Organisation .....   | 3  |
| 2.1 | Website, Call for Papers and important dates.....                       | 3  |
| 2.2 | Reception and revision of papers.....                                   | 6  |
| 2.3 | Acceptance notifications, abstract books and final preparation tasks .. | 9  |
| 3   | Conference development .....  | 12 |
| 3.1 | Organisation details .....  | 12 |
| 3.2 | Accommodation and meals.....  | 14 |
| 3.3 | Social programme .....  | 15 |
| 3.4 | Financial details .....   | 19 |
| 4   | Conclusions and suggestions.....  | 20 |
| A.  | ANNEX: Attendants list .....  | 22 |

## 1 Committees

For the scientific committee we followed suggestions of the two previous chairs of the scientific committees of ORP3 2001 and ORP3 2003, Dr. Denis Bouyssou and Dr. Horst Hamacher. As a result we composed a sufficiently large committee that was finally formed by:

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| David Alcaide López de Pablo   | Spain         |
| Javier Alcaraz Soria           | Spain         |
| Ramón Álvarez Valdés Olaguibel | Spain         |
| Denis Bouyssou                 | France        |
| Fortunato Crespo Abril         | Spain         |
| Laureano Escudero Bueno        | Spain         |
| Horst W. Hamacher              | Germany       |
| Concepción Maroto Álvarez      | Spain (CHAIR) |
| Ethel Mokotoff Miguel          | Spain         |
| Luis Paquete                   | Germany       |
| Jesús Pastor Ciurana           | Spain         |
| Marie Claude Portmann          | France        |
| Joaquín Sicilia Rodríguez      | Spain         |
| Thomas Stützle                 | Germany       |
| Rubén Ruiz García              | Spain         |
| Enriqueta Vercher González     | Spain         |

For the organisation committee we followed the non-written rules that affect the OC of the ORP3, named that ORP3 must be organised by young OR researchers. In the end, the OC was formed by:

Andrés Carrión García  
Fortunato Crespo Abril  
José Miguel Carot Sierra  
Gerardo Minella

Juan Carlos García Díaz

José Jabaloyes Vivas

Rubén Ruiz García (CHAIR)

Eva Vallada Regalado (CO-CHAIR)

Elena Vázquez Barrachina

All of them assistant or associate professors of the Department of Applied Statistics and Operations Research from the Polytechnic University of Valencia. More precisely, Dr. Rubén Ruiz García, the chairman and main organiser as well as Eva Vallada, co-chairman, are below 30 years old.

Both committees were deemed sufficient for the forecasted tasks and proved to be at the end of the conference.

## 2 Conference Organisation

### 2.1 Website, Call for Papers and important dates

Dr. Rubén Ruiz attended both previous editions of the ORP3 both in Paris and Lambrecht. It was after the second conference in October 2003 where we applied for the organisation of the third edition.

Our contact person in the EURO has been Dr. Gulay Barbarosoglu with whom we had a continuous contact all the time.

The final organisation proposal was sent along with a detailed budget around June 2004 and accepted in the EURO meeting in Rhodes, Greece, in July 2004. From that moment, organisation of the conference started at full speed. As a matter of fact, the full web page of the conference was ready by mid October, 2004 and linked to the official domain <http://www.orp3.com> shortly afterwards. Some extracts of the conference web page can be seen in the following figures:



Figure 2: Web Home page

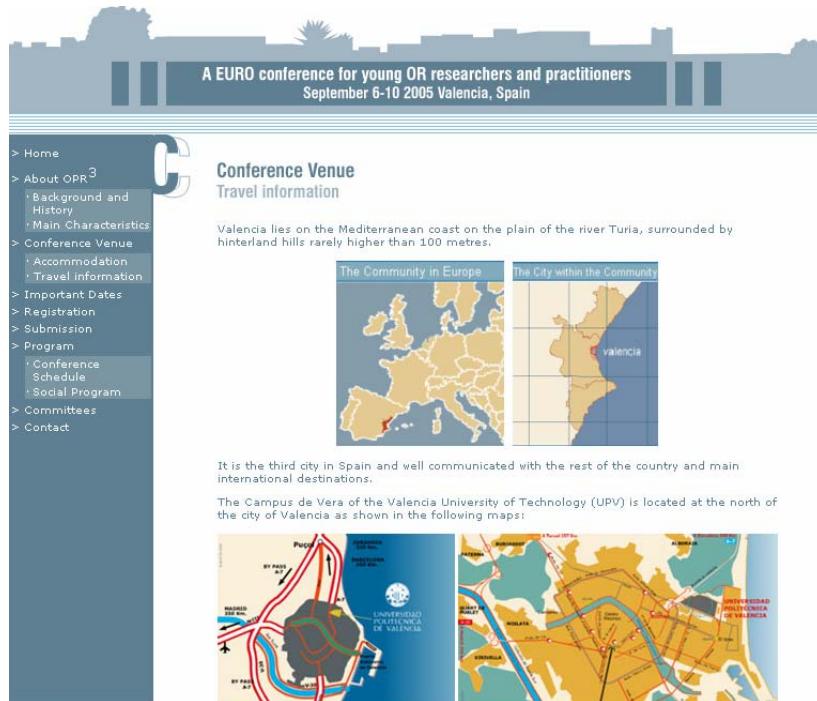


Figure 1: Web Page travel information section

A complete and thorough Call for Papers was issued to several dozens mailing lists and newsgroups containing thousands of researchers all over the world.

The Call for Papers was also made public in the EURO website as well as in all the major European OR societies. At the same time, the special issue was planned. We contacted Dr. Prof. Roman Słowiński, one of the chief editors of EJOR. A Call for Papers in EJOR web page was put forward and can be consulted in [http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/S03.cws\\_home/eor2](http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/S03.cws_home/eor2) (pictured in next Figure).

The screenshot shows the Elsevier website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Site map', and 'Regional Sites'. The main header features the Elsevier logo and the tagline 'Building Insights. Breaking Boundaries.' Below the header, a large orange banner highlights the 'Call for Papers' for the 'Special Issue on "The Youngest OR in Europe"'. To the right of the banner is a thumbnail image of an open book. On the left side, there's a sidebar with sections for 'Products' (Decision Sciences, Books, Journals, Subject news & events), 'Support & contact' (About Elsevier), and 'Select your view'. The main content area contains detailed information about the call for papers, including guest editors' names and affiliations, submission guidelines, and address for submissions. The text is presented in a clear, structured format with bullet points and small print details.

Figure 3: EJOR CfP for the special issue.

Several reminders were sent until one week before the submission deadline.

The important dates were the following:

February 11th 2005 deadline for paper submission

June 6th 2005 notification of acceptance

July 15th 2005 deadline for registration

The submission deadline was extended one full month due to popular demand.

Emails and short progress reports were sent by email to Dr. Gulay Barbarosoglu in the previous months to the conference along with a detailed progress report sent the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, 2005.

## 2.2 Reception and revision of papers

A few weeks after the Call for Papers was sent we started receiving papers for the conference. It has to be noted that it was made clear in the web page as well as in the Call for Papers itself that the submission was on the basis on full papers of publishable quality in an international journal.

All process was made electronically and the authors used the Word and LaTeX templates posted in the web for submission. The usage of templates assured a coherent and nice proceedings book (see next Figure for example)

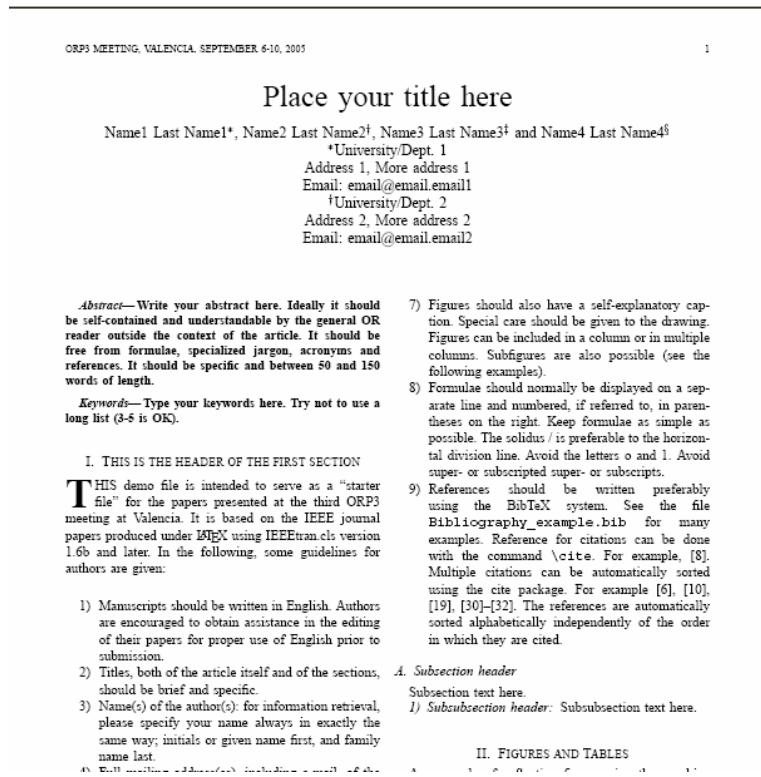


Figure 4: LaTeX template for complete papers.

By the end of the extended deadline we received a total of 62 complete papers, which was more than we expected. Considering that in the first edition a total of

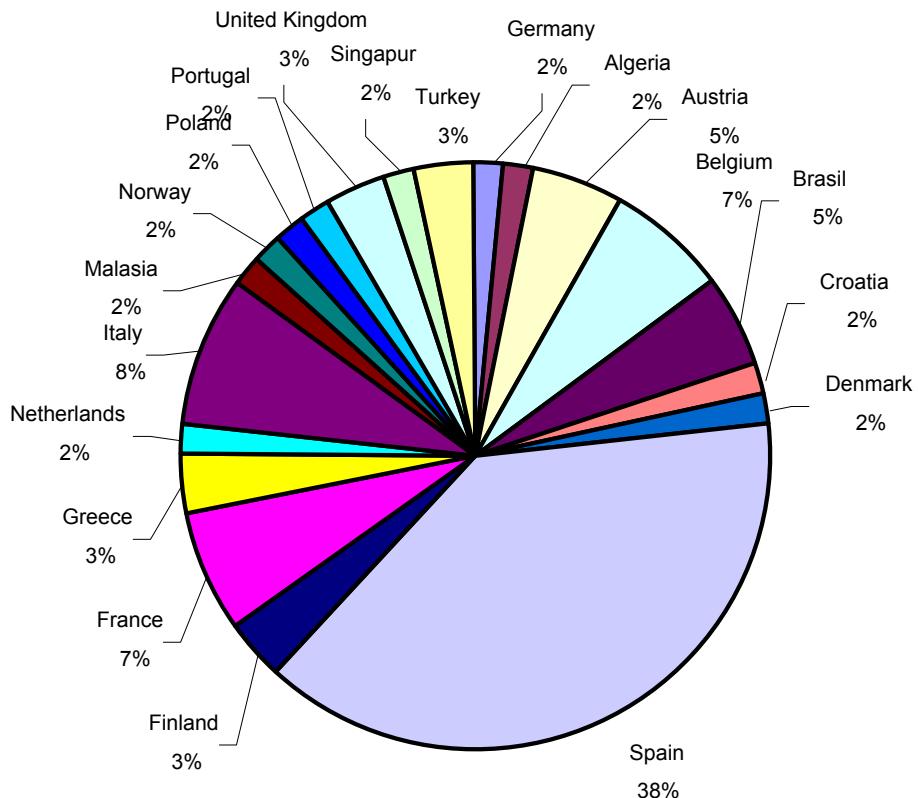
41 papers were received and that in the second edition 32 submissions were received we can consider this a good result.

All fields within a broad understanding of OR were acceptable but in order to start refereeing for each submission we made sure that all the two following points were satisfied:

- The first and main author of the paper was either a pre-doctoral researcher or a post doctoral researcher with no more than 2 years of post doctoral experience at the time of submission or a professional OR analyst with no more than 2 years of professional experience at the time of submission,
- The paper was not an extended abstract.

In order to ensure the first point we requested short Curriculum Vitae to all submitters and requested changes in the author ordering and/or confirmations that the young OR researcher was the main author of the paper.

At the end, only 2 papers were dropped since the main authors were senior researchers. 60 papers from 20 different countries were finally accepted for refereeing with a distribution shown in the next figure:



**Figure 5: Distribution of the received papers by country.**

It is worth mentioning that we received papers from outside Europe, more specifically from Brasil, Malasia, Singapur and Algeria.

All papers were sent to at least two referees. The refereeing process was long, difficult and exhausting. We used a simple textfile format for refereeing in which the different members of the SC could simply fill in the marks or impressions of the text. The fact that we were dealing with FULL papers (some of them of up to 30 pages) and the fact that we received papers from mostly all fields in OR (voting theory, reliability, non-linear programming, scheduling, routing...) made the process very complicated. The SC was overwhelmed and several external referees were contacted for help. Including the members of the SC, 37 people helped in producing the 120 reports needed in the revision process.

Once the reports were received we accepted papers on the basis of both referees answering minor or major modifications and papers were rejected if at least one referee rejected the paper. The borderline cases we dealt with in detail and in some cases additional reports were asked for. After conversations

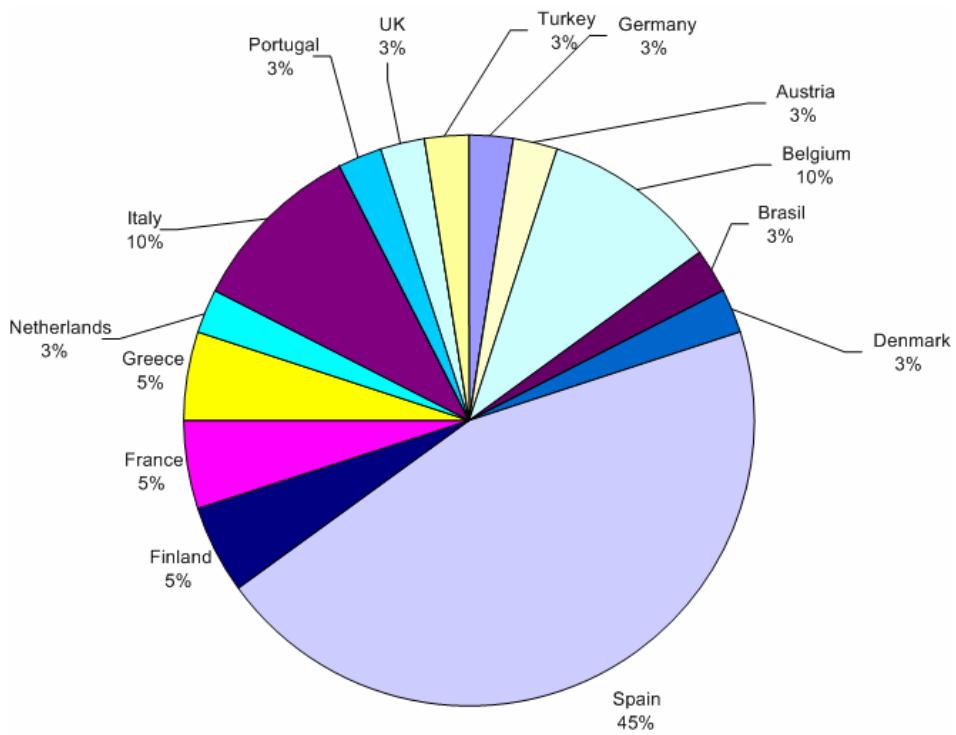
we had with Dr. Alexis Tsoukiàs in the ECCO 2005 meeting in Minsk we agreed in that we should make an effort and accept as many papers as possible since accepting only 25-27 papers as in previous editions would have resulted in a very large number of rejections, which, given the high quality of most received papers, would have been unfair.

Authors of pre-selected papers were contacted for changes and given four weeks for modifications. Due to the extended deadline for submission, there was no time for a second round of refereeing and Dr. Rubén Ruiz checked out all revised papers for compliance against the referee's reports.

### ***2.3 Acceptance notifications, abstract books and final preparation tasks***

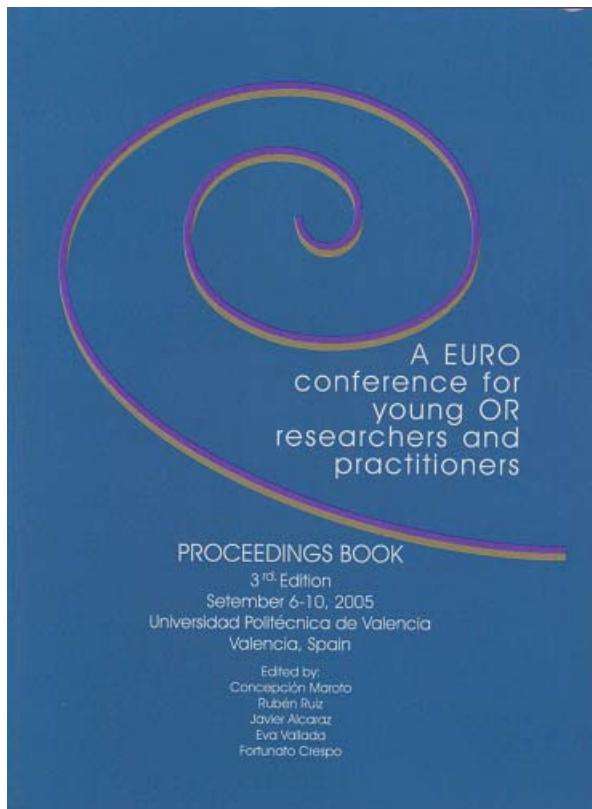
Final acceptance notification was given to the authors in time by the 6th of June.

Finally we accepted as many papers as it was possible given our most optimistic budget and accommodation availability. A total of 40 papers from 14 different countries were accepted. Since the majority of submissions were received from Spain and special funding was also received from the Spanish OR society, the majority of attendants were also from Spain as the next figure shows.



**Figure 6: Distribution of the accepted papers by country.**

From that moment we started with the composition of the abstracts book. Full papers with the same format were included into a nice volume with ISBN 84-689-3077-6. Special care was put into the composition and printing of the volume that was distributed to all attendants. The book also included a nice design that is shown in next Figure.



**Figure 7: Abstracts book portrait.**

We also adopted the discussant initiative as in the other ORP3 editions in which each presenter gets to discuss another presenter's paper. In this case we opted for giving presenters papers to discuss from other fields inside OR, in order to motivate and to enforce the learning of other areas inside OR.

Three tutorial speakers were invited for giving short tutorials at the conference: Dr. Denis Bouyssou (France), Dr. Thomas Stützle (Germany) and Dr. Laureano Escudero (Spain). Initially all three speakers accepted but in July, 2005 Dr. Laureano Escudero notified us that due to illness he declined the invitation. There was no time left for inviting a third speaker so finally two tutorials were given:

**"Topics in Stochastic Local Search"** given by Dr. Thomas Stützle

**"Operational Research and Decision Aiding"** given by Denis Bouyssou

### 3 Conference development

### **3.1 Organisation details**

The final program of the conference is shown in next Figure:

## **ORP<sup>3</sup> FINAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

**Figure 8: Schedule of the conference.**

All talks were plenary and were organised in sessions of 3-4 papers each. Every presenter had 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion which was deemed as enough but it could have been longer. We had a laptop as well as a desktop computer with a beamer for projections as well as an overhead transparencies projector and a modern opaque digital projector for all the presentations. The room was a limiting factor but we never exceeded the available capacity.

As it can be seen, accommodating 40 plenary talks in 3 days and a half was a difficult task. Due to initial commitments and availabilities it was impossible to take one additional day for the conference. As a result, tutorials were only 45

minutes long. Additionally, many sessions had 4 presentations which was a bit too hard.



Figure 9: One of the presenters.



Figure 10: Full room.

The coffee breaks were served in very nice atmosphere. In a special place called “La bodeguilla” or “The little tavern”.



Figure 11: Coffee breaks.

Overall, the participation in the sessions was very satisfactory. All attendants were in mostly all sessions and there were some interesting talks in the coffee breaks.

However, we would have wished more lively discussions for each paper. Overall, each discussant only had a couple of questions for each paper and not a real discussion. The present members of the SC and OC had to raise many questions in several occasions so to spark a discussion.

### **3.2 Accommodation and meals**

All meals were served in the Galileo Galilei college dormitory. It was a self service restaurant with two main courses among many choices and a dessert with everything included. There were absolutely no problems nor complaints even with the vegetarian or the non-pork diets for some assistants.

The accommodation was also in the college dormitory. The attendants had fully equipped double rooms (although some were accommodated in single rooms) with bathroom, desks and most amenities including free wireless connection and a 24/7 computer room at absolutely no charge. The college dormitory was at a mere 2 minutes walk or 200 meters from the conference venue. Sadly we have no pictures of it!

The two invited speakers as well as Joaquín Sicilia (from the Scientific Committee) were hosted in the college dormitory as well but in “professor” rooms.

### ***3.3 Social programme***

One of the main characteristics of the ORP3 is that it is organised by young OR researchers and aimed for young OR researchers. Therefore, a special and careful emphasis was put in the social program.

There were two main social events. On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> we visited Valencia city. Luckily we had no rain although the weather was a bit ugly. We had a bus and guide visit to Valencia with stops in the most important places. We also had a typical “horchata” (lion’s nut non-alcoholic cold beverage) in the old center of the city.



**Figure 12: The modern Ciutat de les Arts i les Ciències.**

It was a wonderful afternoon where the group was really together. Our intention was to have part of the social program the very first day so to make sure that all attendants knew each other from that point onwards.

On Friday we had a full afternoon for the social program. First we took a bus and visited one of the many wonderful beaches of Valencia. The weather was excellent and we had a wonderful time at the beach.



**Figure 13: At the beach.**

After the beach we head to the “L’Albufera” lagoon, one of the most important wetlands in the Land of Valencia. There we first visited a traditional valencian house or “Barraca” museum and then we had a wonderful boat visit and ride in the lagoon where we all enjoyed a beautiful sunset. The photos look like postcards!



Figure 15: At a “Barraca”, typical valencian house.



Figure 14: Beautiful sunset at the “L’Albufera” lagoon.

After the visit to the Lagoon we headed over to a typical valencian restaurant where we had the gala dinner. At this point we had a very nice group formed and everybody knew everybody. The dinner was actually a very enjoyable experience. We were a bit afraid about the special menu, a very typical valencian “Esgarraet” (cod with peppers) or “All i prebre” (mature eel with potatoes) as well as “Sepionet” (white cuttlefish) or “Clòtxines” (small sea

mussels) but everybody liked it. Of course we had strong valencian wine which helped us create the wonderful atmosphere!



**Figure 16:** Gala dinner at a typical valencian restaurant. From left down-up to right up-down:  
Denis Bouyssou, Enrico Malaguti, Marta Flamini, Cyril Canon, Rim Kalai, Thijs Urlings,  
Manuel Iori, Jiun-Yu Yu and Jung-Fang Chiu.

It has to be mentioned that both invited speakers, Denis Bouyssou and Thomas Stützle did a great effort and stayed with us during all the conference. Members of the Scientific Committee also attended most of the social program events and shared nice and long conversations with the attendants.

### **3.4 Financial details**

Apart from the generous help from EURO and the 200 Euro conference fee we asked the following government bodies and authorities for financial help:

- National Ministry of Science and Education (year 2004 and year 2005)
- Regional Government of Valencia. Consellería d'Educació i Ciencia (year 2004 and year 2005)
- Polytechnic University of Valencia, UPV (year 2005)

As regards the national government, in both occasions officials answered that it was a very small conference and therefore no financial help was achieved.

The same story applies to the regional government of Valencia.

Finally, as regards the UPV we could not apply in year 2004 since the conference was in September 2005 and therefore it was not applicable. For year 2005 we only received a very small and marginal help that consisted mainly of reduced fees for internal amenities (rooms for the conference and things like that). No matter how we presented the papers the answer was more or less the same. Trying to obtain funds for such a small conference is problematic, to say the least.

Other small bodies like the School of Business administration, the Centro de Formación Postgrado and the Department of Statistics and Operations Research gave also some marginal funds. For example, the national statistics and operations research society of Spain (SEIO) provided 6 grants to its members in order to attend the conference. Only 5 people applied and from those 5 only 3 had their papers accepted. For these three people SEIO paid the conference fee so these 3 attendants only had to pay travel expenses. It was impossible to obtain more funds.

In any case, with the conference fees and the help provided by EURO we have managed so far to break even.

## 4 Conclusions and suggestions

ORP3 is a fine instrument. The atmosphere and the different characteristics make it an ideal place for young OR researchers. Attendants get to defend their first research work in a suitable place obtaining lots of feedback as a result and learning from others.

There are many, many positive aspects. I would say far too numerous to name them in this otherwise already very long report. Below there are just some extracts received in the email after the conference was done (we omitted the names)

"Dear Rubén,

I have now arrived safely back in ---. I would like to thank you and the organizing committee for a very successful conference both on a professional level as well as on the social level. In particular I would like to underline that the non-parallel session policy has implied that my knowledge of the context in which my own research is conducted has been increased significantly. A minor suggestion towards even further improvement for future conferences would be to have more but shorter breaks in the session. For example two times 15 min. in instead of one time 30 min.

Regarding the Social events I found them very successful. Another factor that facilitated the very pleasant and relaxed atmosphere, I think, was the fact that participants were accommodated in double rooms, and that all meals were eaten together. I would recommend that this strategy is adapted in future conferences.

So, finishing off, thank you again for a very successful conference in which I participated with great pleasure."

"Dear Rubén,

For me, the ORP3 conference has been a fantastic experience. The quality of the papers and presentations as well as the social program has been outstanding. I've had the opportunity to meet many young colleagues from all over Europe and I'm sure some contacts will remain. What I will particularly remember of you, is your interest in almost every presented paper and the many quality questions you asked. You have proven to me to be a great OR researcher and I certainly learnt something from you.

Thanks again,"

"Dear Mr. Ruiz,

My compliments for the organizing committee. You have been able to organize a very high-level conference, with good talks and an enjoyable social programme. The conference has both been very useful and amusing, so a high score on both objectives. I would also like to add that you and the sponsors have provided us with very much for 200 euros.

I have just one remark for further conferences. Maybe there could be breaks after each third instead of after each fourth presentation. During the last presentation in the session the concentration begins to fall away a little bit.

Kind regards"

"Dear Professor Ruiz

Thank you very much for organising such a wonderful conference for young Operational Researchers. It's really a great success! It's a fantastic experience for me and my wife for having this fruitful trip to Valencia. I would like to express my gratitude again for giving me such a chance to be part of you.

Wish you a nice weekend and a wonderful summer!

Regards,"

We omit many, many other congratulations that we received after the meeting. After reading all this we can feel proud of a seemingly good organisation.

It has, therefore, some aspects that we should try to improve over time. Some subjects are:

- The submission on the basis of full papers represents lots of work, both for interested attendants as well as for the scientific committee,
- The conference should try to accommodate more students and more talks in order to be able to take all interested young OR researchers and not just the elite subset. Attendants and not just presenters should be also given an opportunity (we could only accept 1 attendant while there were more than 20 people interested in attending). All this means a longer conference as it is close to impossible to accommodate more talks in the same time (attendants already said that it was probably too much),
- OR is an applied science and we should try to attract practitioners. In the second edition there were a couple of young OR analysts but none in this third edition,
- There are no written rules or procedures for the OC and SC. Most of this non written rules are currently obtained by contacting previous organisers,
- Organising ORP3 is a very arduous task, especially if one considers the limited number of attendants. Providing all meals, complete proceedings, accommodation and an active social program is very difficult. Furthermore, one does not have the added monetary benefits present when organising other conferences,
- It is complex to keep low conference fees and yet offer all meals and accommodation, while possible it will be difficult for more attendants unless the financial help given by EURO increases.

## A. ANNEX: Attendants list

The following table shows all the attendants to the conference.

|                 |                                    |                |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Isolina<br>José | Alberto Moralejo<br>Albiach Vicent | Spain<br>Spain |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|

|                 |                    |             |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Maria del Mar   | Alemany Díaz       | Spain       |
| Jeroen          | Beliën             | Belgium     |
| Cyril           | Canon              | France      |
| Lourdes         | Canós              | Spain       |
| Christian Holk  | Christiansen       | Denmark     |
| Michele         | Ciavotta           | Italy       |
| Raúl            | Cortés Fibla       | Spain       |
| Ana             | Debón              | Spain       |
| Maria           | Dementieva         | Finland     |
| Miguel Ángel    | Domínguez Ríos     | Spain       |
| Marta           | Flamini            | Italy       |
| Dorabela        | Gamboa             | Portugal    |
| Vinícius        | Garcia             | Brasil      |
| Estefanía       | García-Vázquez     | Spain       |
| David           | Gómez Cabrero      | Spain       |
| Dries           | Goossens           | Belgium     |
| José Miguel     | Gutiérrez Expósito | Spain       |
| César           | Gutiérrez Vaquero  | Spain       |
| Géraldine       | Heilporn           | Belgium     |
| Manuel          | Iori               | Italy       |
| Ángel Alejandro | Juan Pérez         | Spain       |
| Rim             | Kalaï              | France      |
| Amaia           | Lusa               | Spain       |
| Enrico          | Malaguti           | Italy       |
| Cristobal       | Miralles Insa      | Spain       |
| Alberto         | Olivares           | Spain       |
| Temel           | Öncan              | Turkey      |
| Apostolos       | Paralikas          | Greece      |
| Francisco       | Parreño            | Spain       |
| Federico        | Perea              | Spain       |
| Dwi Retnani     | Poetranto          | Germany     |
| Margaretha      | Preusser           | Austria     |
| Georgia         | Skintzi            | Greece      |
| Marcel          | Turkensteen        | Netherlands |
| Stijn           | Van de Vonder      | Belgium     |
| Fulgencia       | Villa              | Spain       |
| Iryna           | Yevseyeva          | Finland     |
| Jiun-Yu         | Yu                 | UK          |