

# Report on ESOP 2010

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*Andrew D. Gordon, Programme Chair, March 17, 2010*

## Timeline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
01/10/2009	Author deadline: Abstract submission (received 149 abstracts)
02/10/2009	PC deadline: Start of paper bidding
08/10/2009	Author deadline: Paper submission deadline (received 121 papers)
08/10/2009	PC deadline: Deadline for bids on papers
09/10/2009	Chair deadline: Assignment of papers to PC members for main phase of reviewing
09/10/2009	Finalized the reviewing form
20/11/2009	PC deadline: first phase reviews, and start of rebuttal period
23/11/2009	Chair deadline: Assignment of papers for secondary phase of reviewing
27/11/2009	PC deadline: second phase reviews
30/11/2009	Start of five-day period of the PC meeting active discussion and decision making
04/12/2009	End of the PC meeting
11/12/2009	Chair deadline: Author notification
04/01/2010	Author deadline: Camera-ready versions
05/01/2010	Sent draft schedule of talks to ETAPS SC chair
15/01/2010	Uploaded proceedings-lncs6012.zip to ftp.springer.de
27/01/2010	Nominated papers for ETAPS awards (EASST, EATCS, EAPLS)
01/03/2010	Completed list of session chairs (PC members and invited speakers)
15/03/2010	<a href="#">LNCS 6012</a> became available online
22/03/2010	Day 1 of ESOP 2010
23/03/2010	Day 2 of ESOP 2010
24/03/2010	Day 3 of ESOP 2010

## Notes on the Process

- After consultations within the programming language research community, we raised the page limit for ESOP 2010 to be 20 pages in LNCS format. We did so because research papers in programming languages tend to be longer than the 15 pages taken as the limit in previous editions of ESOP.
- I didn't explicitly advertise ESOP, and relied on the ETAPS publicity chair. Submissions, of course, are clustered just before the deadline, so I worried a few days before, as there were very few submissions. But it was more than OK, in the end.
- I felt it necessary to have a hard deadline and somehow decided to set it in Samoa Time. This is truly silly for a European conference run by a European PC chair. Next time I'd use UTC.
- We received 121 submission, but one unfortunately exceeded the newly extended page limit, so we decided to reject it without review.

- I spent several hours worried about papers that had already appeared in workshops with proceedings; we should have an ETAPS-wide policy to help on this. An easy fix would have been to change "unpublished" to "unpublished at any refereed venue" in the call-for-papers.
- Simon Peyton Jones advised me not to try to be heroic and review papers myself. Following this advice I read every paper, cursorily, and made up a spreadsheet based on my impressions; I think this was useful in giving me a feel for the whole field, and I injected some of my comments into the discussions to seek confirmation or rebuttal of my first impressions from the actual reviewers.
- Still, there were some papers on which I had a conflict and hence felt constrained not to guide the discussion either way; rather than have the PC chair essentially silent on such papers, I'd recommend nominating some member of the committee to oversee such papers.
- We got three reviews for each paper in the first phase of reviewing, up to the rebuttal period. The purpose of the second phase of reviewing was to get additional reviewers on papers without any high confidence reviews. EasyChair was not particularly helpful and I had to write some scripts to find such papers. The additional reviews did help, I think, although it was tough on the PC to get expert reviewers in a short time. Still, I should have made clear in the reviewing form that a low confidence entry in the confidence field would be used as a vote to get another review.
- I found that EasyChair needs too many mouse clicks to get between papers.
- Without realizing, I set the reviewing deadline to be the same as the PLDI deadline and the US Thanksgiving Holiday, and so some reviewers were pushed for time. They had many weeks notice, though, and nobody actually complained. I fear there will always be some such clash.
- I was concerned about the cross-calibration problem. PC members tend to focus their time on their assigned papers, and only rarely express opinions on other papers. Hence only the PC chair can calibrate whether decisions are fair. Based on my reading of the papers, I had grouped the submissions into several large categories, eg, abstract interpretation, weak memory models, separation logic, etc, although there were many papers in categories on their own. Rather than do the cross-calibration between categories entirely myself, I tried to get PC members to volunteer to oversee categories. Nobody volunteered. A better strategy, described in Beppe Castagna's preface to ESOP 2009, is to be explicit about categories from early on, assign PC members, and to get the PC to rank submissions in each category.
- We had a five day discussion period, during which I did little else. There were easy accepts in days 1 and 2, but then we got bogged down in day 3 and 4. Initially I was worried we would take too long to accept papers, but after a while, I was concerned we would accept too many. By day 5 we had a draft programme, but we ended up having discussions over the weekend and into the early days of the following week about one or two contentious papers. I had built lots of contingency into the schedule by telling the PC I intended to reach a conclusion on the Friday a whole week before the notification date. So we used up some of the contingency. Still, I would recommend resolving any policy questions ahead of the five days. For example, we had to decide a policy on whether to consider papers previously published at workshops, and also whether to take up an offer from the SC chair to get more slots but at the cost of a parallel session. I'd also recommend against allowing PC authored submissions; it felt like I spent a lot of time on them proportionately, and since we were imposing higher standards on them, it unfortunately meant that none got accepted.
- The EasyChair features for creating a proceedings are great and saved a lot of trouble.
- Springer wants the proceedings uploaded 9 weeks before the conference.

## Appendix: Statistics from EasyChair

### General Statistics

<b>Submissions</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Accepted</b>	30
<b>Acceptance rate</b>	0.25
<b>Reviews</b>	474
<b>External reviewers</b>	192
<b>External reviews</b>	228

### Reviewing

<b>reviews for a paper</b>	<b>number of papers</b>
<b>3</b>	38
<b>4</b>	56
<b>5</b>	20
<b>6</b>	6

## Statistics by Topic

topic	submissions	accepted	acceptance rate	PC members
intermediate languages				1
biologically-inspired languages	1		0.00	2
logic programming	1		0.00	1
partial evaluation	1		0.00	2
constraint programming	2		0.00	2
experimental evaluations	2		0.00	
rewriting systems	3		0.00	1
aspect-oriented programming	3		0.00	2
testing	3	1	0.33	3
run-time environments	4	1	0.25	
module systems	4	2	0.50	3
virtual machines	4	1	0.25	1
distributed and mobile languages	4	2	0.50	4
service-oriented computing	4	1	0.25	3
meta programming	5	1	0.20	
synchronous and real-time programming languages	6		0.00	1
denotational semantics	6	1	0.17	2
domain-specific languages	8	2	0.25	2
process algebras	11	1	0.09	8
programming techniques	12	1	0.08	3
program transformations	13	3	0.23	5
parallel programming	14	4	0.29	1
object-oriented programming	15	2	0.13	4
logical foundations	15	2	0.13	7
language-based security	16	5	0.31	11
concurrency theory	27	8	0.30	11
operational semantics	34	9	0.26	8
functional programming	35	11	0.31	8
static analysis	37	11	0.30	12
type systems	38	9	0.24	16
program verification	48	14	0.29	10

## Statistics by Country

country	authors	submitted	accepted	acceptance rate	PC members
<b>Argentina</b>	2	1.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Australia</b>	6	2.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Belgium</b>	4	1.83	0.33	0.18	
<b>Canada</b>	5	2.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>China</b>	9	4.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Cyprus</b>					1
<b>Denmark</b>					1
<b>Estonia</b>	3	2.00	1.00	0.50	
<b>France</b>	41	19.33	5.00	0.26	3
<b>France, Metropolitan</b>	1	1.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Germany</b>	18	9.83	3.50	0.36	3
<b>India</b>	3	0.75	0.75	1.00	
<b>Ireland</b>	4	2.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Israel</b>	1	0.33	0.00	0.00	
<b>Italy</b>	14	5.57	1.17	0.21	2
<b>Japan</b>	3	0.75	0.75	1.00	1
<b>Malta</b>	1	0.33	0.00	0.00	
<b>Netherlands</b>	6	2.83	0.00	0.00	1
<b>Portugal</b>	2	0.67	0.67	1.00	
<b>Romania</b>	2	1.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Singapore</b>	1	0.25	0.00	0.00	
<b>Spain</b>	4	1.33	0.00	0.00	
<b>Sweden</b>	7	3.00	1.00	0.33	1
<b>Switzerland</b>	7	3.42	0.33	0.10	
<b>Taiwan</b>	1	0.25	0.25	1.00	
<b>United Kingdom</b>	34	15.25	3.00	0.20	4
<b>United States</b>	91	38.93	12.25	0.31	7
<b>unknown</b>		0.33	0.00	0.00	