

EDITORIAL

DECISION MAKING IN POLITICS AND BUSINESS

“Decision making in politics and business”: the title of this issue appears to sweep virtually the entire domain of operations research and decision analysis. Given the title of the journal, of which it constitutes an issue, this choice of title seems queer indeed. Yet, there is some sense to it. We leave, namely, aside some very important fields, such as the military, production management and technology, as well as the economy at large. Instead, we focus on some of the essential questions arising in both politics and business, where the latter is (rightly) conceived as related, ultimately, to the very down-to-earth problems of money-making, even if it is not reduced to purely financial aspects. Another important aspect of the papers contained in this issue – which, even though not explicitly announced in its title, should not be overlooked – is the consideration of multiple (and diverse in their character) agents in decision problems.

The first two papers directly concern politics. First, František Turnovec discusses the mechanisms of voting at the European level from the point of view of fairness, with respect to various constituencies, of various decision making bodies and procedures. Some rules that might enhance fairness and effectiveness, and thereby also European cohesion, are considered. The notion of fairness is itself, of course, a subject of debate. Then Jacek W. Mercik provides an analysis of the power-related characteristics of the right to veto, with which the president of Poland is vested. This question has recently – in November 2009 – gained much in importance in view of the new proposals, submitted by the current Prime Minister, aimed in particular at depriving the President of the right to veto.

The third paper, by Hanna Bury and Dariusz Wagner, is a methodological, or perhaps rather a technical, article concerning group decision procedures. It considers the case of ties in the votes of judges. Given the multiplicity of occasions on which decisions are made through committees, an effective approach to such a case is certainly welcome.

The following two papers come from one research team and they focus on methodological issues and solutions that are more related to business. The first of them, by Mariusz Kaleta and Eugeniusz Toczyłowski, relates also to the first two papers in the

issue in terms of the nature of the methodological tools applied (game theory). The paper by Izabela Żółtowska and Eugeniusz Toczyłowski concerns auctions, with an explicit example of an electric energy market. This article tries to provide some solutions applicable to such situations.

Another pair of papers devoted to a similar subject follows. This time the subject is the global market associated with greenhouse gas emissions and the Kyoto Protocol. In the first of these papers, Piotr Nowak and Maciej Romaniuk provide a mechanism that is potentially useful on the derivatives market related to GHG emissions. They consider fuzzy-theoretic concepts, introduced in view of the difficulties in establishing certain parameters of the situation. Next, Jarosław Stańczak shows an application of an evolutionary algorithm to the emission permits market.

Finally, the paper by Agnieszka Kowalska-Styczeń presents a simple simulation model that can be used to imitate the behaviour of consumers influenced by their direct social environment and advertising.

It should also be mentioned that the papers contained in this issue are a result of invitations sent to a selected group of participants of the traditional bi-annual conference of the Polish Operational and Systems Research Society, BOS, which took place in 2008 in Rembertów, just outside Warsaw. This meeting was co-organised by the Systems Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, a standing co-operating institution of the BOS conferences, as well as the National Defence Academy, the military university whose campus is located in Rembertów. For completeness, one should add that not all of the papers resulting from these invitations could be accommodated in the present issue. It is expected that 2–3 more papers originating from the same source shall appear in forthcoming issues of the quarterly, with appropriate reference given, related to their origins.

This Preface is also a suitable place for expressing gratitude to those who helped by their contribution to the assessment of papers submitted to this issue, to guarantee the quality of papers published. Thus, special thanks go to Jacek W. Mercik, along with Maria Ekes, Jan Gadomski, Gianfranco Gambarelli, Dariusz Gałtarek, Manfred J. Holler, Ignacy Kaliszewski, Adam Kasperski, Lech Kruś, Zbigniew Nahorski, Hannu Nurmi, Henryk Potrzebowski, Jean-Marie Proth, František Turnovec and Rudolf Vetschera.

It is certainly hoped that this special issue constitutes a valuable contribution both to the entire domain and to the particular narrower fields of discourse of the particular papers. With this hope, the issue is transmitted into the hands of the potential Reader.

Jan W. Owsinski
Guest Editor