Editorial

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Biographical notes: Pavlos Delias is an Assistant Professor with Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Institute of Technology, Greece. He holds a jointly supervised PhD in Informatics from both Technical University of Crete and University Paris Dauphine. He has received multiple scholarships and awards during his studies as well as his following career. He self-declares his occupational and research field as: 'Applications of operational research in information systems' while his research interests are in the areas of process mining, workflow management, agent-based methodologies, and multicriteria analysis. He has contributed to numerous projects as a Research Associate, focusing on applying the principles of operational research to information systems design and use. He has also published several articles in journals and conference proceedings.

Hellenic Operational Research Society (HELORS) was founded nearly 50 years ago (in 1963) by pioneer Greek scientists aiming to promote teaching and use of operational research methodologies for the benefit of the Greek economy and society. HELORS was developed as a scientific society with an important presence in the scientific and economical life of Greece with 300 members and several activities. As a part of its efforts to promote and stimulate scientific research and disseminate knowledge at a national level, HELORS has created workgroups (WG), which include scholars and practitioners with similar research interests. A workgroup has goals such as: strengthen the network of its members, disseminate knowledge and information effectively, organise events, co-authoring publications and in general, take any initiative seems prosperous for the promotion of the WG's specific topic. The workgroup 'Multiple Criteria Decision Aid' focuses on the field of decision support and decision making while considering multiple criteria.

The 9th meeting of Multiple Criteria Decision Aid took place as part of a meeting series, realised over the previous years. We consider the success of those meetings as a clear sign of the intensive research by Greek scholars of the field. The aim of the 9th meeting was to allow scholars and practitioners of MCDA to present their work and share their research. The conference has been organised by Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Institute of Technology, and it was hold in its premises on 11–13 October 2012. The national community has demonstrated particular interest in submitting its research work and participating to the conference activities. Out of the thirty six articles initially submitted, four articles were finally selected for this special issue.

In the first paper, Evangelos Mitsakis, Josep-Maria Salanova Grau, Evangelia Chrysohoou, Iraklis Stamos and Georgia Aifadopoulou support the drivers' decisions about the choice of their preferred route, in order to execute their trips between

given origin and destination points. They focus on the cases of congested traffic conditions. They claim that under such conditions, the behaviour of all drivers regarding their route choices results to user equilibrium conditions. While analysing their method, they consider multiple criteria like distance, time and fuel consumption.

Vangelis Marinakis, Alexandra G. Papadopoulou, Haris Doukas and John Psarras put their emphasis on 'greening' rural communities economies. To this end they present an interactive supportive framework realised into web application, comprising of a tool for the elaboration of rural communities' sustainable energy action plan. The web tool provides the necessary support to the user, in order to significantly reduce the required elaboration time for the action plan's development. The tool supports the communities to develop and implement action plans as well as to elaborator of baseline CO_2 emission inventory at municipal level (boundaries, sectors, emission factors, etc).

In the next paper, Vassiliki Kazana, Angelos Kazaklis, Christos Stamatiou, Paraskevi Koutsona, Anastasia Boutsimea and Dimitrios Fotakis present a real case application of SWOT analysis, combined with k-means clustering and the TOPSIS approach to formulate, analyse and rank alternative strategies for sustainable forest policy and management in Northern Greece. Their work was conducted under the auspices of an EU LIFE+ programme. This work is an excellent argument that SWOT analysis in combination with the k-means clustering method and the TOPSIS approach provide a basic operational frame for the strategic forest planning environment towards sustainable forest management assessment.

The final paper of Jason Papathanasiou, Vassilis Kostoglou and Dimitris Petkos has a clear goal to provide insights on a target users group' demands and expectations and evaluate the level of trust towards cloud computing services. They evaluated a plethora of service providers over multiple criteria. The rationale of this work is to provide decision support under an academic setting. Therefore, they assess whether academics could integrate such services to their courses and along their communication with their students. In addition, they assess students' attitude towards cloud computing services use.

Being the guest editor of this issue, I would like to thank the authors of the papers and the anonymous reviewers for their time and efforts to fulfil this endeavour. I would also like especially to thank Professor John Wang, the Editor-in-Chief of *IJIDS*, for his trust, support, and confidence to a successful outcome.