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A Benchmark Framework for a Computational Argumentation Competition

Federico CERUTTI, Nir OREN, Hannes STRASS, Matthias THIMM, and Mauro VALLATI

Abstract. We introduce proba, a general benchmark framework for comparing abstract argumentation solvers.

Keywords. Argumentation, argumentation semantics, argumentation competition

1. Introduction

Computational models of argumentation are nowadays an active research discipline within Artificial Intelligence that has grown since beginning of the 90s [1]. Although the community is still quite young, compared to more matured research areas such as SAT solving and Logic Programming, there has been serious interest in its development due to its intuitive approach and similarities to human reasoning. However, research in Computational models of argumentation is still mostly theoretical in nature and is concerned with aspects such as abstract argumentation, semantics, structured argumentation, and dialogues, to name just a few. There are, however, already several existing domain-independent implementations such as ASPARTIX, CEGARTIX, ConArg, Dung-O-Matic, and Tweety, but so far there has been no organized and thorough comparison of different solvers, see [2] for some exception. Other research communities such as SAT solving, Logic Programming, and Planning showed that conducting competitions on problem solvers nurtures research and rapid development of effective algorithms and implementations. These competitions serve as a comparison platform for state-of-the-art research and have been proven to accelerate the evolution of a field from theoretical discussions to the development of applicable solutions. We argue that the time has come for a first competition on computational models of argumentation.

In this extended abstract we present proba (lat. “judge”), a general benchmark framework for comparing abstract argumentation solvers. This benchmark framework has been developed to serve as the comparison platform for a competition on compu-

1 Corresponding author
tational models of argumentation which is currently being organized and scheduled for
the year 2015. The aim of this framework is to easily compare different implementa-
tions for solving argumentation problems in terms of correctness and performance. The
framework provides a very general interface (command line and Java) that can be imple-
mented by a solver in order to be assessed by the framework. Currently, our framework
focuses on abstract argumentation but extensions to structured argumentation frame-
works is foreseen for the future.

2. Implementation Overview

probo is written in Java and publicly available at SourceForge\(^2\). It provides a sim-
ple interface that can be implemented by developers of abstract argumentation solvers
and supports comparison of solvers on a variety of semantics (conflict-free, admissi-
ble, complete, preferred, stable, semi-stable, grounded, CF2, ideal, stage), different com-
putational problems (e.g., enumerating extensions, deciding skeptical/credulous infer-
ence), and different file formats (e.g. trivial graph format, Aspartix). Solvers are asked to
solve problems on different argumentation graphs that have been either artificially gener-
ated using different randomization models, generated from other more general problems
(e.g. graphs that represent the factorization problem), or application-oriented problem
instances. Correctness of solutions is verified by the Tweety solver [4], which directly
implements the semantical definitions of the different types of extensions but is slow in
practice.

3. Discussion

We see our field as a promising field within Artificial Intelligence and believe that it is
high time to go beyond theoretical discussions and into implementations and applica-
tions. With our contribution and the idea of a competition on computational argumenta-
tion we aim at providing a common platform for comparing and evaluating practical
approaches within the field.

The benchmark framework probo is still under development but we aim at organiz-
ing a first competition on computational models of argumentation for the year 2015. A
description of the current command line interface used by probo can already been found
in our repository. We invite developers of abstract argumentation solvers to comment on
the framework and to get ready for the first competition.

References


\(^2\)https://sourceforge.net/projects/probo/