PREFACE

1.   Introduction

This book contains the proceedings of the 1992 international JURIX conference, held in The Hague, the Netherlands, on December 17. Five special reasons are worthwhile to be mentioned at the beginning of the conference and hence at the beginning of this book.

First, by this 1992 conference JURIX celebrates its fifth anniversary in the conference series. Since 1988 an international conference has been held annually. Second, the fifth conference is hosted in The Hague, in the Peace Palace, a place widely recognized as centre of legal expertise. Of course, JURIX is proud that on December 17, 1992, some room is given to computers in general and to legal knowledge based systems. Third, the main topic of the conference being *Information Technology and Law* addresses various important issues, for scientists as well as for society. Amongst them we find topics, such as policy making, political decision making, legislation, and their interrelations with computer science. Fourth, JURIX considers it an honour that the Minister of the Interior, C.I. Dales, will present the opening lecture on *Coordinating Information Technology in Administration.* Moreover, the JURIX Foundation is thankful for the participation of six prominent speakers, who will express their opinions on two important issues: *Information Technology and Sentencing* and *Information Technology in the Service of State Policy*. Fifth, it is our pleasure to stress that the topic of this conference is inspired by the activities of the (second) governmental committee (named after his chairman Professor Franken) on information technology and law.

2.   History

In 1986, some enthusiast scientists in the field of Law and Computer Science decided to have a regular exchange of ideas. The small working group so founded, consisted of researchers from several Dutch universities. The informal platform was quite a success, and in 1988 the participants chose for a formalisation of their activities. As a result, the Foundation for Legal Knowledge Systems (JURIX) was founded. JURIX is an acronym out of "JURIdische eXpertsystemen", although our members prefer to use the Dutch alternative "juridische kennissystemen".

The first JURIX conference was held in Amsterdam just one day after the official registration of the foundation. Along with the official presentation of a new research group on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Law at the University of Amsterdam, the topic of that first conference was *The Future of Dutch Research Programmes* (paradigms) in "legal informatics" (so called at that moment). Besides the discussion on terminological questions, the participants' differences in background explicitly showed the existing distinctions between the scopes of the lawyers and the computer scientists. Moreover, the different approaches of the teams were illustrated in a panel discussion. Obviously, the current research investigations on Law and Computer Science had started there and then.

Strengthened by the spin-off of the first conference, JURIX decided to have an international conference every year. To support the research directions it was agreed that each year a specific topic related to *legal* knowledge based systems should be chosen. The exchange of results and the distribution of information to a broad public were goals set in the early days. The next three conferences were held at the universities of Utrecht (1989), Leiden (1990) and Rotterdam (1991). Whilst the number of participants grew steadily, also more submissions came in as a response on the calls for papers; the list of participants became increasingly international (and even intercontinental). The subjects dealt with was altered every year: the *quality of applications* were explored in 1989, the *aims for research and development* were analysed in 1990 and the *problem of model-based legal reasoning* was tackled in 1991.

3. JURIX'92

In 1992, JURIX is actually having a small jubilee. In deciding on the topic for its fifth international conference, JURIX felt that this conference should focus more on the actual use of information technology (in law) and its implications for society. In order to reach a larger public, especially the persons involved in policy making, the topic of *Information Technology and Law* was chosen. In particular the use of information technology in public administration and legal practice was considered to be of prime importance.

Aiming at serious debates or even heated discussions, the programme committee has invited six speakers, all well-known for their original opinions and their willingness to express them. Moreover, it is hoped that they do not avoid any deep controversy, since *du choc des opinions a jaillit la verité.* After the address by the Minister, three sessions are scheduled. The first session deals with the question whether the use of information technology is of any use in the field of (penal) sentencing. The invited speakers are J.C.M. Leijten, L.C. Meijers and P.J. van Koppen. The second session raises the actual problem on privacy and the linking of databanks. There are the invited speakers: C.A. de Kam, J. Holvast and J.N. van Lunteren. Both sessions will be presided by Professor Franken, who also will moderate the discussion after the lectures. The third session, presided by the chairman of JURIX, Professor Van den Herik, will focus on two separate subjects. The first is about legislation and the support for policy making, the second handles the possible differences in (conceptual) information retrieval.

4. Acknowledgements

5. Jurix

Those who are interested in the activities of JURIX may contact our secretariat currently located at the university of Groningen, mr. C.N.J. de Vey Mestdagh, which address is listed in the referential list at the end of this book.

The Programme Committee of JURIX'92