

Modular Programming Languages

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The circle is closed. The European Modula-2 Conference was originally launched with the goal of increasing the popularity of Modula-2, a programming language created by Niklaus Wirth and his team at ETH Zurich as a successor of Pascal. For more than a decade, the conference has wandered through Europe, passing Bled, Slovenia, in 1987, Loughborough, UK, in 1990, Ulm, Germany, in 1994, and Linz, Austria, in 1997. Now, at the beginning of the new millennium, it is back at its roots in Zurich, Switzerland. While traveling through space and time, the conference has mutated. It has widened its scope and changed its name to Joint Modular Languages Conference (JMLC). With an invariant focus, though, on modular software construction in teaching, research, and "out there" in industry. This topic has never been more important than today, ironically not because of insufficient language support but, quite on the contrary, due to a truly confusing variety of modular concepts offered by modern languages: modules, packages, classes, and components, the newest and still controversial trend. "The recent notion of component is still very vaguely defined, so vaguely, in fact, that it almost seems advisable to ignore it." (Wirth in his article "Records, Modules, Objects, Classes, Components" in honor of Hoare's retirement in 1999). Clarification is needed.

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