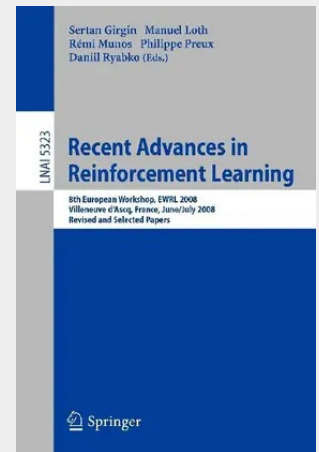


Recent Advances in Reinforcement Learning

8th European Workshop, EWRL 2008, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France, June 30-July 3, 2008,
Revised and Selected Papers

In the summer of 2008, reinforcement learning researchers from around the world gathered in the north of France for a week of talks and discussions on reinforcement learning, on how it could be made more efficient, applied to a broader range of applications, and utilized at more abstract and symbolic levels. As a participant in this 8th European Workshop on Reinforcement Learning, I was struck by both the quality and quantity of the presentations. There were four full days of short talks, over 50 in all, far more than there have been at any previous meeting on reinforcement learning in Europe, or indeed, anywhere else in the world. There was an air of excitement as substantial progress was reported in many areas including Computer Go, robotics, and other methods. Overall, the work reported seemed to me to be an excellent, broad, and representative sample of cutting-edge reinforcement learning research. Some of the best of it is collected and published in this volume. The workshop and the papers collected here provide evidence that the field of reinforcement learning remains vigorous and varied. It is appropriate to reflect on some of the reasons for this. One is that the field remains focused on a problem — sequential decision making — without prejudice as to solution methods. Another is the existence of a common terminology and body of theory.

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