School Choice in Chile

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Abstract

Centralized school admission mechanisms are an attractive way of improving social welfare and fairness in large educational systems. In this paper we report the design and implementation of the newly established school choice system in Chile, where over 274,000 students applied to more than 6,400 schools. The Chilean system presents unprecedented design challenges that make it unique. On the one hand, it is a simultaneous nationwide system, making it one of the largest school choice problems worldwide. On the other hand, the system runs at all school levels, from Pre-K to 12th grade, raising at least two issues of outmost importance; namely, the system needs to guarantee their current seat to students applying for a school change, and the system has to favor the assignment of siblings to the same school. As in other systems around the world, we develop a model based on the celebrated Deferred Acceptance algorithm. The algorithm deals not only with the aforementioned issues, but also with further practical features such as soft-bounds and overlapping types. In this context, we analyze new stability definitions, present the results of its implementation and conduct simulations showing the benefits of the proposed innovations.