

This thesis presents a report on original research, published as conjoint work with Merschen and von Stengel in ENDM (2010). Our result shows a polynomial time algorithm to find a Nash equilibrium for a particular class of games, which was previously used by Savani and von Stengel (2006) as an example of exponential time for the classical Lemke-Howson algorithm for bimatrix games (1964).

It was conjectured that solving these games via the Lemke-Howson algorithm was complete in the class **PPAD** (Proof by Parity Argument, Directed version). A major motivation for the definition of this class by Papadimitriou (1994) was, in turn, to capture the pivoting technique of many results related to the Nash equilibrium, including the Lemke-Howson algorithm. A **PPAD**-completeness proof of the games we consider would have provided a traceable proof of the Daskalakis, Goldberg and Papadimitriou (2005) and Chen and Deng (2009) results about the **PPAD**-completeness of every normal form game. Our result of polynomial-time solvability, on the other hand, indicates the existence of a special class of games, unless **PPAD** = **P**.

Our proof exploits two results. The first one is the representation of the Nash equilibria of these games as a string of labels and an associated string of 0s and 1s satisfying some conditions, called *Gale conditions*, as seen in Savani and von Stengel (2006). The second one is the polynomial-time solvability of the problem of finding a perfect matching in a graph, solved by Edmonds (1965).

Further results by Merschen (2012) and Végh and von Stengel (2014) stemmed from our theorem. These proofs analysed the pivoting technique of the Lemke-Howson algorithm in the framework of the *Euler complexes* introduced by Edmonds (2005), and solved the open problem of the *sign* of the equilibrium found in polynomial time.