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Geometry of genus 8 Nikulin surfaces and rationality of moduli

The talk deals with some explicit constructions of Nikulin surfaces, and of their moduli spaces, in low genus. In particular the talk will focus on the genus 8 case. In this case the moduli space is irreducible and its rationality is proven. The proof is related to the geometry of six nodal cubic threefolds, originally described by Corrado Segre.