

View of Young Geotechnical Engineers

Report of XVIII EYGEC (18th European Young Geotechnical Engineers' Conference)

The XVIII EYGEC was held in Italy from 17 to 20 June 2007. The conference venue was the Excelsior Hotel La Fonte, where all delegates were also hosted. The conference was organised by the Technical University of Marche (UPM) in Ancona and the Italian Geotechnical Association (AGI), under the auspices of the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ISSMGE). The event was organised according to the usual familiar style, in order to enable free discussions and exchange knowledge and information among participants. Participation of the European countries was the largest in the history of the European Young Geotechnical Engineers' Conferences: 29 countries were represented by one or two delegates, for a total of 51 delegates nominated. 50 of them sent their papers and 47 attended the conference and gave their presentation. Most of delegates (about 70%) came from Universities or Research Institutes, whereas the others from professional world.

Conference programme and contents

The conference was structured in opening session, keynote lectures, delegates' sessions and closure. In the opening ceremony, Prof. Erio Pasqualini of the Technical University of Marche welcomed all participants also on behalf of the President of AGI. Then both the ISSMGE President, Prof. Pedro Seco e Pinto and the ISSMGE Vice-President for Europe, Prof. Roger Frank, gave their welcome and illustrated the role and terms of reference of ISSMGE and of international and regional technical committees, as well as the main conferences programmed for the near future. Four keynote lectures were given by Eminent Professors. All of them gave a fundamental contribution to the scientific and technical knowledge of participants. Prof. Michele Jamiolkowski (Technical University of Torino - Italy, ISSMGE Past President) delivered his lecture on "Safeguarding Venice Lagoon against High Tides"; in particular, he showed the selected solution against tides and discussed the geotechnical characterization of the heterogeneous subsoil of Venice lagoon and the main foundation problems (construction and settlements) of the anti-flood mobile barriers. Prof. William Van Impe (Ghent University - Belgium, ISSMGE Immediate Past President), illustrated a case of "Underwater Ground Improvement", as an earth dam foundation; after some considerations on the stage construction principles, the research activities for the optimising of the cement type of binders and the mixing method were deeply analysed, as well as the results of the monitoring of the dam structure. Prof. Pedro Seco e Pinto (LNEC Lisbon - Portugal, ISSMGE President) delivered his lecture on "New developments of tunnelling engineering", in which he clearly summarised critical aspects of design, construction, monitoring and performance of tunnels also in seismic conditions. The lecture by Prof. Roger Frank (ENPC Paris - France) titled "A few aspects of Eurocode 7 - Geotechnical Design", was mainly devoted to the significance of characteristic values of geotechnical parameters, ultimate limit states design approaches and serviceability limit states and deformations of structures. Presentations of the delegates were collected in six sessions: Landslides and Slope Stability (6 contributions), Dikes and Embankments (5), Foundations (13), Soil Behaviour and Modelling (13), Environmental Geotechnics (5), Soil Improvement (5). Contributions on Soil Behaviour and Modelling and on Environmental Geotechnics were almost only by delegates from academic world. At the end of each session a fruitful discussion was always held, with full participation of delegates and lecturers, and good interaction between theoretical and practical aspects. The closure of the conference by Prof. Seco e Pinto, Prof. Frank and Prof. Fratolocchi was the occasion to recognise that delegates had presented original works or researches of high level, both in traditional and innovative fields of geotechnical engineering. The organising committee, lecturers, chairmen and all delegates were warmly thanked.



Delegates, lecturers and organising people

Despite the busy conference schedule, the organising committee did not neglect social activities. A welcome dinner was organised the first day of the conference, during which delegates and lecturers could meet and enjoy together the atmosphere of the Portonovo Bay. The conference dinner was held on the beach, enjoying local fish cuisine, wines and music. All delegates, lecturers and organisers actively participated to this event, dancing and singing till late in the night.

Final remarks

All delegates and lecturers warmly recognised that the XVIII EYGEC was a successful event as it gave them the opportunity to exchange views and information, form new friendship and keep pleasant memories of the event. I would sincerely thank all of them for their active presence during the conference, which was the real key for this successful event. ISSMGE, AGI, UPM and Trevi Group are also sincerely thanked for their financial support.

Reported by Evelina Fratolocchi, chair of the XVIII EYGEC Organising Committee