

Report on the 5th European National Assembly of ISSMGE

The Macedonian Association for Geotechnics (MAG) had the honor of hosting the 5th European National Assembly in Skopje. The one-day event convened leading experts, professionals, and representatives from 22 geotechnical societies from Europe. The assembly provided a platform for addressing some key issues, sharing insights, and charting the future trajectory of geotechnical engineering.



The event commenced with a welcoming address from representatives of MAG, including President Igor Peshevski and Vice President Dragan Dimitrievski, alongside Milorad Jovanovski, Vice-President At Large of the International Society for Rock Mechanics (ISRM). Their opening remarks underscored the importance of international collaboration and emphasized the increasing role of geotechnics in addressing contemporary engineering challenges. The morning session began with an introductory presentation by Lyesse Laloui, Vice-President for Europe of the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ISSMGE).



He provided an overview of the assembly's objectives, setting the tone for a day of fruitful discussions and engagements. A roundtable session followed, wherein member societies shared their activities and plans for the coming period. This exchange highlighted the diverse experiences within the European geotechnical community and provided a forum for discussing initiatives aimed at advancing the field.

Subsequently, updates on forthcoming conferences were presented. Helmut Schweiger, President of the Austrian Geotechnical Society, outlined the preparations for ICSMGE 2026, while Ozer Cinicioglu, President of the Turkish Geotechnical Society, announced plans for ICSMGE 2028. Other societies also presented their fruitful ongoing work.

The first working session concluded with a round discussion on subject “The Role of Geotechnical Societies in Maintaining the Interest of Young People” led by MAG President Igor Peshevski. This discussion emphasized the importance of engaging young engineers, particularly in light of the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence and machine learning. The focus was placed on creating opportunities for young professionals through dedicated programs and initiatives aimed at promoting geotechnical engineering. Member societies shared their valuable experiences.

Following the lunch break, participants visited the Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology (IZIIS) in Skopje. The representatives of IZIIS presented the institute’s facilities and state of art testing equipment, offering attendees a firsthand look at the practical applications of geotechnical research.



The afternoon sessions addressed several pressing topics. Prof. Loretta Batali presented joint efforts between ISSMGE and SC7 to implementation of the second generation of Eurocode 7. This session facilitated discussions on the importance of harmonized standards in geotechnical design across Europe.

Another key topic explored the challenges faced by smaller geotechnical societies and markets. Led by Igor Peshevski, the discussion focused on issues such as the inclusion of engineers from smaller nations, enhancing industry-university collaboration, and aspects of adapting pricing models for geotechnical services.

The assembly concluded with remarks by Lyesse Laloui, reflecting on Europe's role within ISSMGE and its global contributions to the field of geotechnics. Prof. Laloui's comments highlighted the critical need for continued efforts in fostering cooperation, innovation, and inclusivity.

The event concluded with a dinner at a traditional Macedonian restaurant, where participants had the opportunity to enjoy authentic local cuisine, engage in stimulating conversations, and create lasting memories.

