ISSMGE FOUNDATION
REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Your Name: Diana Chami	***Your Organization:*** Université libre de bruxelles	***Date of report:*** 7/7/2026
Conference Title: International conference on soil mechanics and geotechnical engineering (ICSMGE26)	***Location of Conference:*** Vienna, Austria	***Dates of Conference:*** 14-19 june 2026

What you learned:

During the ICSMGE 2026 conference, I learned about recent developments in soil mechanics and geotechnical engineering, especially in relation to sustainable ground improvement, soil stabilization, and the use of alternative binders. The sessions directly related to my PhD research helped me better understand the importance of linking mechanical behavior with chemical and microstructural changes in treated soils.

In addition, I also attended presentations on topics that were not directly related to soil stabilization, such as foundation engineering, geotechnical monitoring, tunnelling, soil-structure interaction, and numerical modelling. I found these sessions particularly interesting because they broadened my understanding of the wider field of geotechnical engineering. They also allowed me to see how different geotechnical problems are approached in research and practice, and how experimental, numerical, and field-based methods can complement each other.

Overall, the conference helped me not only deepen my knowledge in my specific research area, but also gain a broader perspective on current challenges and innovations in geotechnical engineering.

People you met:

During the conference, I met researchers, professors, engineers, and PhD students working in the fields of soil mechanics, ground improvement, and sustainable geotechnical engineering. I had the opportunity to discuss with several participants who showed interest in my work. These exchanges allowed me to receive constructive feedback, compare my research approach with other ongoing studies, and identify possible future collaborations. Among the people I met: Prof. Marc Ballouz, Prof. Nuno Cristelo, Prof. Olivier Cuisinier, Rami Chalhoub, Prof. Grace Abou Jaoude, Prof. Lyes Laloui, Paola Arboleda.

Main features of conference:

The ICSMGE conference is a major international event in soil mechanics and geotechnical engineering, bringing together researchers, practitioners, industry representatives, and young engineers from around the world.

The programme included keynote lectures, state-of-the-art lectures, invited presentations, technical sessions, poster sessions, young engineers' sessions, and industrial exhibitions. These different formats allowed participants to engage with both leading experts and

early-career researchers, while creating opportunities for scientific discussion and professional exchange.
The topics covered reflected the broad scope of modern geotechnical engineering. They included ground improvement, sustainable soil stabilization, environmental geotechnics, unsaturated soils, laboratory and in-situ testing, numerical modelling, field monitoring, underground construction, deep foundations, offshore geotechnics, and energy geotechnics.
A key feature of the conference was the strong connection between research and practice. The technical sessions presented recent scientific advances, while the industrial exhibition showcased innovative technologies, equipment, and engineering applications. This combination provided a comprehensive overview of current developments and future challenges in the field.

Your comments on the conference:

The ICSMGE 2026 conference was extremely well organized, particularly given the scale of the event and the large number of participants. The overall logistics were smooth and efficient, from the registration process to the coordination of the technical sessions, poster presentations, exhibitions, and social events.
I particularly appreciated the clear organization of the sessions and the availability of a media center, where presenters could check and upload their presentations in advance. This helped ensure that the sessions ran smoothly and minimized technical difficulties during the presentations. The poster sessions were also well structured and provided a good environment for discussion and scientific exchange.
The conference venue was very well adapted to an international event of this size. It offered comfortable and accessible spaces for keynote lectures, parallel sessions, poster presentations, industrial exhibitions, and networking activities. The catering during coffee breaks and lunch periods was also of high quality and contributed to a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere.
Another important aspect was the strong presence of industrial exhibitors and company booths. These exhibitions provided an excellent opportunity to discover recent technologies, innovative equipment, and current engineering practices, while also encouraging interaction between academic research and industry.
Overall, the conference offered a highly stimulating environment for learning, scientific exchange, networking, and professional development. It was a very enriching experience that contributed positively to my doctoral research and to my broader understanding of the geotechnical engineering community.

Please attach short report (maximum 400 words) suitable for publication in the ISSMGE Bulletin:

The 21st International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering was an excellent opportunity to engage with the international geotechnical community and to learn about recent developments across a wide range of topics in geotechnical engineering. The conference brought together researchers, practitioners, and industry representatives from around the world, offering a rich technical programme that included keynote lectures, parallel technical sessions, poster presentations, young engineers' sessions, and industrial exhibitions.

One of the most valuable aspects of the conference was the diversity of the topics covered. While my PhD research focuses mainly on soil stabilization using alkali-activated materials, I had the opportunity to attend sessions on subjects both directly and indirectly related to my work. These included sustainable ground improvement, alkali-activated binders, biocementation, geo-environmental geotechnics, unsaturated soil behaviour, soil-structure interaction, underground construction, deep foundations, offshore geotechnics, physical modelling, and experimental geomechanics. Attending presentations outside my specific research topic was particularly enriching, as it allowed me to broaden my understanding of the wider field of geotechnical engineering and to see how different experimental, numerical, and field-based approaches are used to address complex engineering problems.

The keynote lectures were among the highlights of the conference. They provided inspiring perspectives on both the historical development of soil mechanics and the emerging challenges faced by the profession. In particular, the lectures on soil erosion, experimental geomechanics, and the relationship between the mechanical behaviour and microstructure of fine-grained soils were especially interesting and relevant to my scientific development.

During the conference, I also had the opportunity to present my own research through a poster and a two-minute oral presentation. The poster session allowed me to discuss my results with researchers and professionals working on related topics, and the feedback I received was very valuable for the continuation of my doctoral research.

Beyond the scientific programme, the conference provided excellent opportunities for networking and exchange. Discussions during poster sessions, coffee breaks, and social events helped me expand my professional network and identify new perspectives for future research.

I would like to thank the organizing committee for the excellent organization of the conference and the ISSMGE Foundation for its financial support, which made this enriching experience possible.

Photographs from Conference:



