ISSMGE FOUNDATION
REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Your Name:	***Your Organization:***	***Date of report:***
Ihab Hosseiky Malaeb	LGES-Lebanese Geotechnical Engineers Society	03/07/2026
Conference Title: 8iYGEC – 8th International Young Geotechnical Engineers Conference	Location of Conference: Graz Austria	***Dates of Conference:*** June 11, 2026, to June 14, 2026

What you learned:
Overall, it was a great conference. Since the number of participants was not huge, it gave me a good opportunity to get in touch with many of the geotechnical engineers and the organizers, learn more about different topics, and also pick up some useful organization tips. On the technical side, I found the case studies particularly interesting, especially those dealing with challenging shoring systems and microtunneling projects from around the world. It was also valuable to hear about some of the ongoing tunneling research being carried out by other colleagues.

People you met:
During the conference, I had the chance to meet the ISSMGE President at the time, Marc Balouz, as well as Prof. Lidija Zdravkovic and S. Tirzaghi. I also met the three conference organizers (Univ.-Prof. Franz Tschuchnigg, Haris Felic, and Johannes Lel), along with multiple colleagues coming from different countries

Main features of conference:
The event was the 8th International Young Geotechnical Engineers Conference, an event dedicated specifically to young geotechnical engineers, with papers and presentations covering a wide range of geotechnical topics. The program featured three interesting keynote speakers, each addressing a different topic, together with parallel sessions in which young geotechnical engineers presented on various subjects.

Your comments on the conference:
The conference was held at TU Graz and was very well organized. Since only two or three participants are selected from each organization (country), it turned out to be a great opportunity to meet a diverse group of geotechnical engineers from around the world and to get a real sense of what fellow professionals are working on internationally.

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

I had the opportunity to attend the 8th International Young Geotechnical Engineers Conference (8iYGEC), held at TU Graz, Austria. Since only two or three young engineers are selected from each member organization, the group remained small enough to allow real conversations, and the atmosphere was noticeably collegial from day one. The program was built around three keynote lectures, each dedicated to a different theme, together with parallel sessions in which young engineers presented on a broad range of geotechnical topics. I particularly enjoyed the case studies on challenging shoring systems and microtunneling projects from different countries, as well as the presentations on ongoing tunneling research being carried out by fellow colleagues.

My own contribution was a paper titled *"Risk-Based Optimization of Proof-Load Test Protocols for Driven Piles: A Methodological Study."* The paper starts from a practical observation: current pile design codes are noticeably inconsistent when it comes to specifying how many proof-load tests should be performed and at what magnitude, which often leaves designers with prescriptive rules rather than reasoned choices. To address this, the paper develops a reliability-based, cost-benefit framework for optimizing both the number and the magnitude of proof-load tests on driven piles. A central feature of the methodology is a probabilistic treatment of within-site variability, in which the coefficient of variation (COV) is treated as an uncertain quantity and progressively updated using Bayesian methods as test results become available. The study shows how load testing measurably improves the assessed reliability of the foundation and supports more efficient, site-specific design decisions, so that testing becomes a genuine design tool rather than only a verification step.

Beyond the technical program, the conference was an excellent networking opportunity. Meeting the three organizers, the ISSMGE President at the time, and fellow engineers from a wide range of countries gave me a much broader view of how our profession is practiced internationally, and of the challenges young engineers are working on elsewhere. I left Graz with new contacts, several ideas worth exploring in future projects, and genuine appreciation for how well the event had been organized. I am sincerely thankful to the ISSMGE Foundation for supporting my participation.

Photographs from Conference: Insert here or attach to email




8TH iYGEC
GRAZ 2026
Risk-Based Optimization of Proof-Load Test Protocols for Driven Piles: A Methodological Study
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