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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SURVEYORS  
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER  
VERMESSUNGSINGENIEURE

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## First FIG Young Surveyors Conference

More than 120 young surveyors from 40 countries joined the first FIG Young Surveyors Conference held in Rome, Italy, on 4 and 5 May 2012. A young surveyor is someone who is either less than 35 years of age, a student or within 10 years of graduating from a bachelor or master's degree in the profession. The network makes substantial use of social media, which was also prominent during this event.

The Young Surveyors Conference created a platform for young surveying professionals to explore common issues and identify future opportunities. The aims were to increase young surveyor participation in the FIG Commissions, to enable young surveyors to have a say in the future of both the profession and the FIG itself, and to offer a more informal platform for presentations than the traditional FIG conferences.

There was a strong focus on entrepreneurship. The debates were lively, rich in content and generally clustered around the current challenges and future perspectives. Overall it was felt that support for young surveyors must be improved, but also that young surveyors need to be proactive in seeking that support. The reasons for both challenges lie in the low visibility of surveying internationally. Low student numbers are a particular concern; while the use of crowdsourced data is growing, the development and management of society and land is only possible with the contribution of surveyors. In the field of land administration, a substantial demand for land professionals is expected, and similarly, the exponential adoption of survey technologies is driving many new survey applications.



The opening session of the Young Surveyors Conference.

Action is needed. Promotion of student opportunities and support – including international exchange, internships, mentoring and work placements – could help to promote student enrolments. Young surveyors might become more engaged with professional bodies and promoting surveying as a profession if adequately supported and encouraged by employers. Other opportunities, such as international professional and lecturer exchanges, will also serve to promote the profession and generate enthusiastic – and visible – emerging surveying professionals. People, projects, funding and passion all have to be connected to optimally promote the profession.

The conference brought inspiration. Participants were able to see at first hand the depth and breadth of the profession, and the many opportunities both locally and internationally. The need for surveyors is clear to us, but young surveyors will need to be innovative to secure the future of the profession. This calls for continuous learning. A global network of young surveyors has been created to facilitate this, and the broad participation of members

demonstrates their commitment to this future promise.

It was concluded that:

1. The FIG and Member Associations can best support young surveyors by devolving responsibility to young surveyors and supporting their engagement with the FIG.
2. Young surveyors regard the benefits of FIG as being the opportunities it provides through networking, knowledge-sharing, advocacy and professional standards.
3. The priorities for the FIG Young Surveyors network are communication, connections, motivation and inspiration.

The main sponsors of the FIG Young Surveyors Conference included Trimble Navigation and Esri (Platinum Sponsors of FIG Working Week 2012), Consiglio Nazionale Geometri e Geometri Laureati (CNGeGL) and Cassa Geometri. ◀

Kate Fairlie  
Chair FIG Young Surveyors Network

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