

PRESENTATION

by

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This Special Issue of the Italian Journal of Engineering Geology and Environment includes some of the papers that have been submitted to the 11th National Congress of Young Researchers in Engineering Geology (*11° Convegno Nazionale dei Giovani Ricercatori in Geologia Applicata*), organised by the Italian Association of Engineering and Environmental Geology (AIGA – *Associazione Italiana di Geologia Applicata e Ambientale*) together with the University of Basilicata and the Polytechnic University of Bari.

The National Congress of Young Researchers is an annual event, which first took place in Gargnano in 1991. It represents a fruitful forum of debate and consultation between young people engaged in engineering geology, a field of scientific and technological research that has a high social value and that ranges from risk mitigation to adequate assessment, protection, and management of georesources (primarily water and geothermal energy) to planning, design, engineering, and construction of structures and buildings, conservation of cultural heritage, and environmental protection. Participants in the Congress will have a unique opportunity to get to know one another and to establish relationships for scientific cooperation. As demonstrated in the thirty years that have elapsed since the first Gargnano Meeting, these relationships often evolve into firm and enduring friendships and future common academic studies.

The venue selected by AIGA's governing board for this year's Congress is Matera. This choice is founded on three main

considerations: i) paying appropriate tribute to Matera as the European Capital of Culture in 2019, by organising this scientific event; ii) stressing the key role of such inland areas as the one of Matera, which often remain at the margins of cultural and scientific events; in a physiographically diversified country like Italy, these areas represent environmental, cultural, and socio-economic assets, as tragically evidenced by the seismic sequence of 2016–2017 in central Italy; and, equally important, iii) returning to Basilicata, twenty six years after the third Congress, which was held in Potenza and organised by our colleagues from the University of Basilicata.

The papers collected in this volume report the latest and most innovative achievements by national teams of research on engineering geology. The increasingly important role that engineering geology is playing in geosciences, at both national and global level, makes us feel proud and committed to promoting opportunities for an increasingly effective and fertile dialogue between representatives of young generations.

In conclusion, we would like to express our deep satisfaction on attaining a challenging target: publishing this Special Issue, in digital format, in time to be circulated to all the participants in the Congress. We therefore wish to thank all the authors of the papers, the colleagues who submitted short contributions, the referees who carefully reviewed the manuscripts, as well as Dr. Tania Ruspandini and Dr. Luigi Stedile – members of the editorial staff of IJEGE – whose painstaking work has made this success possible.