

Celebration of FIG's 140th Anniversary and Handover



FIG was founded in Paris on 18 July 1878 by delegates from seven national associations – Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain and Switzerland – and was known as the *Fédération Internationale des Géomètres*. This has since become anglicised to the International Federation of Surveyors. 2018 marks the 140th anniversary of FIG, which was celebrated in conjunction with

a handover ceremony from current president of FIG, Chryssy Potsiou (Greece, 2015-2018), to president-elect Rudolf Staiger (Germany, 2019-2022). Today FIG has become a very different, vibrant organisation with membership from more than 120 countries, but still with its original aim: to bring surveyors together in order to help each other and global society.

Cooperation between FIG, UIA and ECCE

From 7-9 November 2018, the Technical Chamber of Greece (TCG) hosted the TUF2018 event in cooperation with surveyors (FIG), architects (UIA), European engineers (ECCE) and the European Working Party on Land Administration (UNECE WPLA) with the theme of 'Economy, Society and Climate Change – the Impact of Megatrends in the Built Environment, Construction Industry and Real Estate'. Chryssy Potsiou had done a great job to ensure the success of this event. At the closing ceremony, a cooperation agreement was signed between UIA, FIG and ECCE by the three presidents.

Handover and celebration

The 140th anniversary celebration and handover ceremony was held on 9 November in festive surroundings at the Eugenides Foundation in Athens, Greece. Many FIG-related people travelled to Athens for the occasion, from Africa, Asia, the USA and Europe, and three honorary presidents attended. Juha Talvitie (Finland, 1991-1994) gave an interesting presentation on the development of FIG over the last 50 years, and competently chaired the handover ceremony. He described his own FIG experiences which go back to the 1960s and asked the audience to share details of their own FIG history (and it is also possible to do this on the FIG Facebook page...). Bob Foster (USA, 2000-2002) held a brilliant presentation on a higher ethic and 'looking back and looking ahead', and Holger Magel (Germany, 2003-2006) fascinated the audience with his speech on territorial justice – a new paradigm for the development of a country and the importance and relevance of rural areas. Representatives from Africa were Kwame Tenadu (Ghana), representing the Local Organising Committee for the FIG Working Week 2021, who talked about sustaining multilateralism in FIG for our common good, and Mansur Muhammad Kabir (Nigeria) who shared his African perspectives on enhancing the professional collaboration and strategic partnership in FIG. The very first FIG honorary ambassador, Clarissa Augustinus, pointed out the significant role of FIG and its presidents in the development and achievements of UN-Habitat/GLTN.

Chryssy Potsiou expressed her thanks for the four years she was at the helm of FIG, and the president-elect and other speakers praised her for her ability to bring people together.

Louise Friis-Hansen



Chryssy Potsiou, FIG president, together with honorary presidents Juha Talvitie, Robert Foster and Holger Magel, and president-elect Rudolf Staiger at the handover ceremony.