

Invited key lecture

The Italian Young Geomorphologists' Group: Tracing back the history of a young researchers' initiative in the framework of the Italian Association of Physical Geography and Geomorphology (AIGeo)

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The Italian Association of Physical Geography and Geomorphology (AIGeo), started organizing initiatives addressed to young researchers in 2005, when the first official event was held in Djerba, Tunisia. Since then, the Executive Committee of the AIGeo has continuously paid particular attention to the young geomorphologists through a series of initiatives planned on a regular basis. Besides a reduced rate to be paid for being an AIGeo member, in particular, three have been the categories of initiatives addressed to the youngs (see also the dedicated section on the AIGeo website: www.aigeo.it):

- i) *Italian Young Geomorphologists' Days* - With a periodicity of 2 years, young geomorphologists are called to show the results of their researches during a dedicated congress, also open to foreign young geomorphologists, that contemplates also short courses and fieldtrips. Up to now, 8 editions have been organized since 2005 and the next one is in preparation for the Autumn, 2021;
- ii) *Stage for Young Geomorphologists* - Young geomorphologists are involved in practical activities like geomorphological mapping and monitoring techniques experimentation on the field. Up to now, 5 editions of the stage have been completed and the next one is in preparation for June, 2021 in cooperation with EGU and IAG;
- iii) *Grants for supporting the participation of young geomorphologists* to courses, workshops and congresses - These economic supports are provided following a selection according to the Curriculum Vitae and publications list of the candidates, and, where requested, the abstract to participate to the congress. Up to now several grants have been provided to youngs, more than 1 per year. In addition, during the 2015 and 2019 Young Geomorphologists' Days, specific grants to support the participation of foreign young researchers were delivered.

In 2013, during the *V Young Geomorphologists Day*, held in Rome, the first national representatives of the group (I. M. Bollati and F. Vergari) were selected by the Executive Committee. In 2015, the national representatives' group was widened inviting other 3 components (G. Amato, L. Coco and M. Prampolini) in order to assist in the organization of the growing number of initiatives. In the last years, the mutual participation to events organised by young researchers from other countries (e.g. Germany, Poland, France and Switzerland) have been strengthened. In 2019, the first formal election

of the new national representatives of the Italian Young Geomorphologists was held in Milan, during the *VIII Italian Young Geomorphologists' Days*. In this occasion, 4 new national representatives were elected: Mauro Bonasera (as coordinator and also invited member in the AIGeo Executive Committee), Ciro Cerrone (delegate for the international initiatives), Anna Masseroli and Mariacristina Prampolini. The great novelties introduced in the last years have been: i) the participation of the coordinator of the representatives to the Executive Committee meeting as spokesperson on behalf of the group; ii) the increase of the maximum age from 26 to 30 years for taking advantage of the AIGeo reduced rates, and iii) the preparation of a draft of an official Young Geomorphologists' Statute, to set all the above-mentioned activities of the Young geomorphologists' Group, as an implementation of the general AIGeo statute, to be proposed to the AIGeo Executive Committee. The last representatives are in charge until Autumn 2021 when new elections will be held during the *IX Italian Young Geomorphologists' Days* planned in Palermo.

Since 2013, a regular reportage of the activities, every 6 months, has been prepared by the national representatives and carried out within the AIGeo, during the meeting among the members of the association, in order to show the activities of the groups during each period. Each report is uploaded on the AIGeo website, in a dedicated section. Moreover, a shared file including the competences of each member of the group have been maintained as a sort of showcase to share own research experiences.

Since 2005 until 2020, a long and gradual path has characterized the growth of the *Italian Young Geomorphologists Group*. The contacts with foreign countries are progressively growing and the establishment of new collaborations with other national groups, who have been previously set or who have started to structure their own framework only recently, is welcome. Last but not least, the important support of the *International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG)* in pushing young researchers' activities revealed to be fundamental during the group growth.

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