

would like to very specially acknowledge the tremendous work put in by the Conference Team and, most importantly, by the DISC secretary, Martha Otte.

The ECC will be organized in 2022, possibly as a hybrid event, by our colleagues from the Imperial College and University College of London in

London on July 12–15. See you in London in 2022!

Manuel Mazo Jr.
Henk Nijmeijer

The 29th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation

The 29th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation (MED 2021) was held virtually June 22–25, 2021. MED [the annual conference of the Mediterranean Control Association (MCA)], with Panos Antsaklis serving as the current president, brings together researchers in the area of control systems and automation from the Mediterranean countries that share technical interests and much more, including culture and history.

This edition stands out because it was first organized as a regular conference to be held in a nice resort on

the Adriatic Sea. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the conference venue was relocated to the Hotel Nicolaus in Bari, Italy, as a hybrid conference (held both virtually and in person). Finally, because of the continuing pandemic situation and the restrictions of the Italian government, which prohibited in-person conferences until July 2021, the event moved to a fully online virtual conference like (unfortunately) many other conferences.

A virtual event cannot fully replace the informal human contacts that are so rich and constitute the essence of such a scientific gathering. The editions taking place in Italy have always been a success for many reasons, and it

is a pity that, in 2021, MED attendees were not able to enjoy the culture, food, and sea in Italy.

The general chair and cochair for MED 2021 were Mariagrazia Dotoli, the Polytechnic of Bari, Italy, and Laura Giarre, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy.

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

The technical program was managed by Laura Giarre, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Elisa Franco, University of California at Los Angeles. The technical program consisted of three plenary lectures, five parallel tracks of regular and invited sessions, and one free panel,

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THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

MED 2021
 29th Mediterranean Conference on
 Control and Automation

General Co-Chair and Program Co-Chair   Laura Giarre University of Modena and Reggio Emilia Italy		General Chair   Mariagrazia Dotoli Polytechnic of Bari Italy		Program Co-Chair   Elisa Franco University of California Los Angeles	
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PROF. MARIAGRAZIA DOTOLI, GENERAL CHAIR

The Organizing Committee, led by General Chair Mariagrazia Dotoli and General Cochair Laura Giarre, composed only by women for the first time in the history of the Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation.



A view of Bari city, where the local staff operated.



The local staff showing team spirit at the conference closing session.

in addition to six preconference workshops and one free tutorial.

In response to the call for papers, 295 contributed and invited papers were received. All submissions went through a rigorous peer-review process, which was supervised by the members of the International Program Committee (IPC). As a result of this process, 200 regular papers and 24 presentation-only papers were accepted. Specifically, 83 of the accepted papers were submitted as part of 14 invited sessions. The corresponding authors of the 224 accepted papers were from 48 countries. All accepted technical contributions are already available on IEEE Xplore at <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/conhome/9480136/proceeding>.

The main topic of the conference was smart cities and smart systems. The presented papers covered subjects ranging from fundamental issues in linear and nonlinear systems to various applications of control engineering, including networked and multiagent systems, decision support systems, pandemic forecasting and mitigation strategies, intelligent energy management, and Industry 4.0, among others.

Three excellent plenary talks were included in the program. On the first day, Prof. Anna Stefanopoulou, University of Michigan, gave her talk, titled "FAST With Electric Vehicles." The speaker on the second day was

Prof. Anuradha Annaswamy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who presented "Towards Deep Decarbonization and Autonomous Power Grids." Finally, the plenary talk on the last day, "Distributed Optimal Control in Complex Multirobot and Energy Networks," was given by Prof. Giuseppe Notarstefano, University of Bologna, Italy. Their leitmotif was the impact that optimization and control approaches have on modern society, specifically in power systems and green mobility.

The conference also included a roundtable session, open to all participants, on the theme "Women and STEM: Opt Out or Lean In?," which was held on June 24. Photos and recordings of some of the MED 2021 events are available at <http://med2021.poliba.it/>.

WORKSHOPS

Six workshops and one tutorial were held as preconference sessions, covering several topics in control systems and research:

- » W1: Modeling and Control Tools for Sustainable and Connected Mobility in Smart Cities
- » W2: Control, Robotics, Sensing, and Artificial Intelligence for Precision Agriculture
- » W3: Management and Socioeconomic Impacts of Sustainable Mobility in Smart Cities

- » W4: Research and Innovation Development in the Gender Equality Perspective
- » W5: Toward Industry 5.0: Sustainable and Regenerative Economy With Focus on Smart Small Towns
- » W6: Modeling, Control, and Optimization of Flexible Devices for a Sustainable and Efficient Future Power Grid
- » T1 (for free): A User's Guide to Girls in Control—Tutorial for Colleagues, Instructors and Teachers on How to Prepare, Organize, and Run a GIC Workshop.

Thanks to the support of the MCA, MED 2021 offered Ph.D. students the opportunity to participate in the organized workshops free of charge.

ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

MED 2021 was sponsored by the MCA and the Polytechnic of Bari. The conference was technically cosponsored by the IEEE Control Systems Society, IEEE Robotics and Automation Society, IEEE Systems Man and Cybernetics Society, and IEEE Women in Engineering Affinity Group of the Italy Section. It was also supported by the Italian Society of Professors and Researchers in Automation.

The IPC members and the reviewers are deeply appreciated for their hard work. Without their efforts, such an event could not have been put together. Finally, special thanks to members of the Organizing Committee, which, for the first time in the

history of MED, was composed of all women. The effort of all committee members was extremely valuable, as they rapidly stepped up to accomplish new tasks, often with blurred lines between traditional positions, to produce high-quality results.

THE NEXT CONFERENCE

MED 2022 will take place in Athens, Greece, June 28–July 1, 2022. Visit the conference website at <https://www.med-control.org/med2022/> for more information.

Mariagrazia Dotoli

General Chair

Laura Giarré

General Cochair



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