PREFACE

The 14th edition of the International Scientific Conference PEOPLE, BUILDINGS AND ENVIRONMENT (PBE2020) was organized by the Brno University of Technology, Faculty of Civil Engineering in cooperation with the Riga Technical University, Faculty of Civil Engineering. The conference was held in Brno, Czech Republic from 7th to 9th October 2020.

PBE is a middle-sized conference, convened biennially in order to address current research issues related to two main specific areas which are Economics and management of sustainable construction and Water and landscape engineering.

The original premise of holding the conference in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm was definitively cancelled by the Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 957, which declared a state of emergency from 5 October 2020 (just two days before the conference). On the basis of newly issued measures, mass-attendance events including conferences were restricted, unfortunately. The reason for the state of emergency was the worsening SARS-CoV-2 epidemic in the Czech Republic.

The Organizing Committee had to respond to this unfavourable situation (force majeure) and took following measures in a high time pressure: (a) the conference has been moved to Brno University of Technology for local delegates from Brno, (b) all the foreign participants were invited to take part in virtual way (MS Teams) due to the existing travel restrictions which prevented their physical presence at the conference. Hence, the conference has been changed to a virtual format.

Taking into consideration the development of the epidemic in the Czech Republic at the beginning of October 2020, it was clear that the situation would continue to be worsen and that the government will take further, more stringent measures to prevent the spread of the virus. Expert predictions showed a long-term assumption of an increase in the number of infected. Accordingly, it was clear that the conference would not be possible to be held in a traditional way not only by the end of the 2020, but most likely also during the winter and spring months of 2021. Postponing the conference for a longer period would mean obsolescence of the scientific outputs that the authors planned to publish in 2020. In order to ensure the timely publication of current results of scientific work and their sharing among the scientific community, it was decided to hold a virtual conference instead of the traditional one.

Under these extraordinary conditions and lack of time, the Editors of the 2020 edition have decided to do not realize traditional keynote lectures, instead to organize a virtual oral session involving general conference topic: sustainability in construction. In total, five presenters have participated in this session, each presenter had 15 minutes at disposal. Furthermore, authors were challenged to submit posters. These posters were available for all the conference delegates on a shared disk PBE2020 in the MS TEAMS environment already before the oral online session.
Discussion (Q&A) was ensured during both oral (collective) and poster („face-to-face“) online sessions. Thanks to the use of MS Teams platform, providing stable and secure communication and file sharing, it was possible to switch the conference into virtual format successfully.

Via these oral presentations and posters, 22 authors from 11 different countries (Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden) presented their papers. All the accepted papers underwent double blind peer review process that was carried out by the Editorial Committee in order to achieve high standard of the entire proceedings. In this connection, we would like to thank to all members of the Scientific Committee for their valuable contribution.

PBE2020 has provided multidisciplinary forum of knowledge, current research results as well as challenges for future research. This year, proceedings contains 10 published papers. Most of the papers that were presented at the conference highlighted the need to address sustainability topic in relation to construction. Among others, this may include issues of electricity consumption, spatial development, sustainability of waterways, heritage assessment and use of BIM in construction industry. Other papers dealt with
floods, performance assessment, risk analysis and flood hazard assessment or regional development issues.

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PBE2020 Editorial Committee
Carles Serrat, Jana Korytárová, Tomáš Hanák

Some of the Brno participants and Scientific/Organizing Committee members