

Highlights: International Symposium on the Analytic Hierarchy Process 2014

Valentina Ferretti

This summer Washington D.C. hosted a lively and sparkling International Symposium on the Analytic Hierarchy Process. ISAHP 2014 took place between June 29 and July 2 at the very heart of Washington's elegant and fascinating downtown.

The general theme of the symposium was "Beyond Decision Making", which was a reference to the idea that it is the time for AHP/ANP to go beyond the toolbox of multi-criteria decision-making experts and become a tool used by everyday decision makers. After all, this broad use was the original intention of AHP/ANP creator, Professor Thomas L. Saaty. He envisioned a methodology that would help the world be more rational when making decisions.

This year the event attracted the largest number of participants ever! More than 200 paper proposals were submitted, and about 230 participants took part in the symposium, coming from more than 40 countries (the largest number ever!). Within this truly international environment, approximately one third of the presenters were students. Indeed, the organizers made a special effort to involve Master's-level students, the next generation of AHP/ANP advocates, in this symposium. This was the first time that MBA students were targeted for participation in the symposium, and several panels were dedicated to this group of students.

The meeting felt like an AHP family reunion, and there was a festive mood in the air. This was also evident by the success of the Gala Dinner river cruise where the largest number of participants ever registered, and participants brought their friends and family with them. We reached the capacity of the glass boat reserved for the evening.

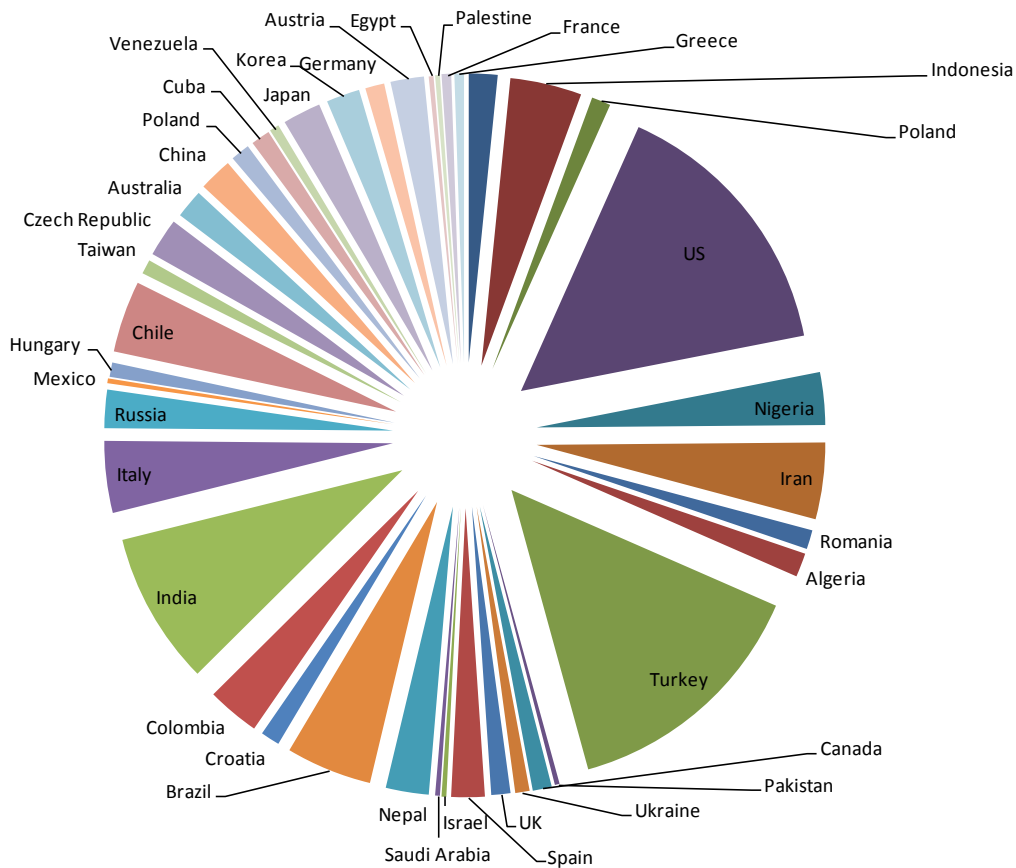


Figure 1. Countries who participated in the ISAHP 2014

This symposium was an exceptional opportunity to bring together researchers, teachers, students and users of AHP/ANP to share their research and experiences in decision making, by fostering a collage of interactions, catching up, discovery, debate, and enjoyment. All the organized sessions had the merit of providing very interesting applications in many different fields, ranging from conflict resolution to supply chain management, thus stimulating debate on further research methods to make better decisions and supplying important cues for future developments.

Moreover, this symposium also attracted the largest number of full paper submissions for publication opportunities for the 3 main sponsoring journals: the International Journal of Production Economics, the International Journal of the Analytic Hierarchy Process, and the International Journal of Management and Decision Making. The paper proposals covered the major areas of research in AHP/ANP, and provided solutions for current challenges in important areas of decision making.

If you were not able to attend the Symposium, you can learn about all of its interesting sessions at following this link: <http://www.isahp.org/>

Finally, a warm congratulation to the following award-winning paper proposals:

Best Application Paper Proposal

- “Using alignment with corporate strategy for the selection of a project portfolio based on ANP” by Mónica García-Melóna, Rocío Poveda-Bautistaa and José L. Del Valle M. (Academic Award)

- “Using ANP to design a living system like balanced operating model for intangible services” by Angela Minzoni and Eléonore Mounoud (Academic Award)

Best Session Student Paper Proposal

- “Best plant location for a manufacturing company: an Analytic Hierarchy Process approach” by Sayantoni Dey, Stephen Bosela, and Jakub Waksmundzki from Youngstown State University, U.S. (Best session proposal award in its session)
- “Carlow-Uganda initiative II: An AHP BOCR Decision Analysis” by Bethany Dorney, Elizabeth Kallenborn, Douglas Morgan, Shannon Robertson from Carlow University, Pittsburgh, PA, U.S. (Best session proposal award in its session)

The next ISAHP will take place in 2016, make sure you don't miss it!



Professor Thomas Saaty with Dr. Birsen Karpak (to his left) together with Youngstown State University MBA students who participated in the ISAHP 2014



A toast during the Gala dinner



The organizing committee (from left to right: Rozann Saaty, Birsen Karpak, Tom Saaty, Antonella Petrillo and Enrique Mu)

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