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Ensuring Building Stability with Intelligent Monitoring Systems

Levente Dimen
Department of Cadastre, Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering
"1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia
Alba Iulia, Romania
ldimen@uab.ro

Silvia Alexandra Dreghici
Department of Cadastre, Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering
"1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia
Alba Iulia, Romania
apopa@uab.ro

Andreea Begov Ungur
Department of Cadastre, Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering
"1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia
Alba Iulia, Romania
andreea.begov@uab.ro

Tudor Borsan
Department of Cadastre, Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering
"1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia
Alba Iulia, Romania
tborsan@uab.ro

***Abstract*—Building monitoring represents a systematic process of assessing the technical condition of structures to ensure stability and safe exploitation. Conventional monitoring methods typically rely on direct visual inspections and basic measurement tools, while special monitoring is applied when predefined thresholds are exceeded, involving targeted, periodic investigations of specific parameters related to structural stability. Recent advances in sensor technologies and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions enable continuous data acquisition, visualization through dashboards, and the implementation of automated alert mechanisms. By integrating data collection at the perception layer with advanced analysis and interpretation at the intelligent layer, modern monitoring systems provide comprehensive insights into building performance. This paper presents an overview of intelligent monitoring approaches, emphasizing the role of IoT-based solutions in enhancing building stability assessment and preventive maintenance.**

***Keywords*—building stability, intelligent monitoring system, sensors and IoT solutions, data acquisition, visualization and analysis**

I. Introduction (*Heading 1*)

In recent decades, the accelerating impacts of climate change have amplified natural and anthropogenic processes that affect ground stability. Phenomena such as soil subsidence, slope failure, flooding, and tectonic displacement induce structural deformations that may compromise the safety and serviceability of built environments. The affected domains extend beyond functional infrastructure to include assets of historical, cultural, and archaeological significance, where irreversible damage may result in partial or total collapse [1], [2].

Effective monitoring, therefore, becomes an indispensable component of modern construction management and urban resilience strategies. Monitoring involves systematic, repeated spatial measurements, followed by data recording, processing, and analysis to evaluate variations in structural response and ground conditions over time. The outcomes of such analyses directly support compliance with resistance, stability, and durability requirements established in structural and environmental engineering standards [1], [2].

Building deformation is rarely the result of a single causal factor. Rather, it typically arises from the interaction of multiple geotechnical, environmental, and construction-related influences, such as [3], [1], [4]: inhomogeneous geological formations and variable soil stratification, foundation design and ground elastic resistance, freeze–thaw cycles in foundation soils, seasonal variations in temperature and humidity, improper organization or management of construction sites, structural or engineering inaccuracies, fluctuations in groundwater levels, subsurface excavation or tunneling activities, and load effects from adjacent massive structures.

The complexity of these interdependencies underscores the need for integrated monitoring systems capable of correlating multi-source data to detect anomalies and forecast structural behavior. To ensure long-term building stability and functionality, interventions are categorized into three main types [5]:

- Maintenance works: routine interventions aimed at preserving technical condition through the repair or replacement of visible components, installations, and equipment.
- Restoration works: comprehensive interventions addressing significant deterioration, including structural repair, consolidation, or reinforcement. Such works are project-based and require ongoing verification to ensure quality and compatibility with the building's existing structural system.
- Modernization works: implemented when functional or performance requirements evolve during the building's lifespan. These include reconstruction, strengthening, or reconfiguration to improve safety and operational efficiency.

II. The Role of Monitoring in Climate Adaptation

The concept of continuous environmental and structural observation aligns with the objectives outlined by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), which defined nine societal benefit areas of Earth observation: disaster management, public health, energy resources, climate, water, weather, ecosystems, agriculture, and biodiversity. Within this global framework, structural monitoring contributes primarily to the domains of disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, and ecosystem protection [6].

Precise spatial and temporal monitoring enables the quantification of deformation rates, identification of instability zones, and development of predictive models that inform adaptation and mitigation strategies. Integration of intelligent monitoring systems - featuring sensor networks, satellite interferometry (InSAR), and data analytics - facilitates real-time decision-making and early-warning capabilities [2].

In Romania, the regulatory framework for structural behavior monitoring is defined by Government Decision No. 766/1997, which governs the assessment of building technical condition and operational capability. The framework establishes three primary stages:

- Monitoring During Exploitation: Identification and documentation of degradation processes.
- Intervention on Buildings: Execution of actions to maintain or improve operational capability.
- Post-Usage Phase: Safe demolition procedures, recovery of reusable materials, and assurance of environmental protection.

This legislative model highlights the importance of a life-cycle approach to building management, emphasizing monitoring as a continuous process from construction to decommissioning.

III. Intelligent Systems For Building Monitoring

Current structural monitoring represents a systematic, continuous activity designed to observe and evaluate the technical condition of a building throughout its service life. The primary objective is to maintain stability and safety during exploitation, ensuring that the structure operates within prescribed technical and functional parameters [7], [2].

When monitored parameters exceed predefined thresholds, special monitoring procedures are activated. These consist of targeted, periodic investigations focusing on parameters directly related to the structure's stability and safety. Such procedures may be established during the design phase or subsequently through technical expertise, particularly when anomalies or disturbances are detected in the building's behavior [7], [2].

The architecture of an intelligent monitoring system typically comprises three interconnected layers (Fig. 1), each fulfilling a distinct operational function [7], [2], [8]:

- Perception layer: responsible for data acquisition from the physical environment. It provides dynamic, continuous information about the building and its surroundings through: structural and environmental sensors, geodetic and geotechnical instruments, remote sensing technologies, and ground-based observation stations. These devices collectively capture parameters such as displacement, vibration, temperature, humidity, and stress distribution.

- Transport layer: ensures real-time transmission of the collected data through various communication infrastructures. It integrates: local and wireless communication networks, edge and local servers, cloud-based storage and processing systems, remote access interfaces for authorized users. This layer guarantees secure, reliable, and uninterrupted data flow between the perception and intelligent layers.

- Intelligent layer: performs data processing, analysis, and interpretation, leveraging advanced computational technologies. Key functions include: timely storage and organization of large data volumes, analytical processing and pattern recognition, generation of diagnostic results and predictive insights, visualization through dashboards and interactive interfaces. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) algorithms enhances the system's capacity to detect abnormal patterns, predict failures, and issue early warnings.

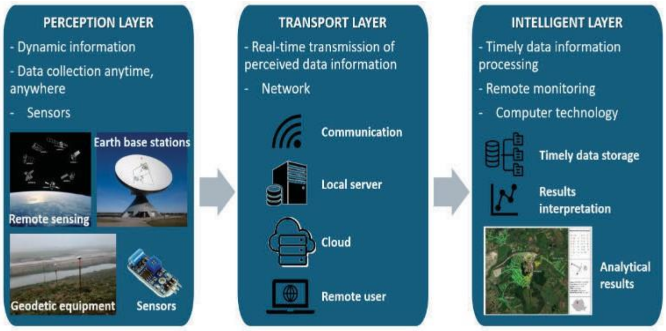

Fig. 1. Layers of the monitoring activity [2]

In the context of smart buildings, monitoring systems employ a diverse range of sensors to determine operational and environmental parameters in real time. Typical applications include [5]:

- Air quality monitoring
- Temperature and humidity control
- Ventilation management
- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Water supply and consumption monitoring
- Energy metering and optimization
- Real-time analytics for operational efficiency
- Predictive maintenance scheduling
- Connected computing for integrated system management

Modern monitoring frameworks increasingly rely on open platforms, which allow interoperability among heterogeneous devices and technologies, regardless of manufacturer. Such systems facilitate flexible configuration and gradual modernization of infrastructure by replacing obsolete or malfunctioning components with open-standard elements. This approach ensures cost-effectiveness, scalability, and technological independence, enabling users to select preferred suppliers and integrate new services seamlessly [3], [9], [4], [10].

The integration of sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) devices enables the automatic generation of interactive dashboards, graphical representations, and responsive rule sets that establish event triggers and alarm thresholds. These tools provide real-time situational awareness for facility managers, allowing for [3], [9], [4], [10]:

- Continuous supervision of structural health and occupant comfort
- Detection of anomalies or hazardous conditions
- Optimization of energy consumption and resource management
- Rapid response to operational incidents

By combining intelligent monitoring with open digital ecosystems, buildings evolve into adaptive, self-observing entities, capable of maintaining operational stability and efficiency under dynamic environmental and usage conditions.

A. *Data Collection*

The data collection phase, as shown in Table 1, integrates automated procedures to acquire environmental and structural information relevant to the technical condition and performance of a building. Routine monitoring is performed at regular intervals to evaluate the overall structural state of the site and maintain operational stability throughout its service life [7], [11], [5], [2].

Geotechnical monitoring constitutes a core component of this process, involving the use of specialized instrumentation to record ground displacements, stress–strain conditions, and other variables that influence both slope stability and structural response.

TABLE I. MONITORING INSTRUMENT AND METHODS APPLIED FOR ENSURING BUILDING STABILITY

Instrument & Method / Action	**Assessing Stability**	**Detecting Terrain Settlement**	**Early Warning System**	**Predictive Capabilities**
High-resolution topography	x	x		
Photogrammetry / Remote sensing	x	x		
Real-time geodetic measurements	x		x	x
Temperature sensors	x	x		x
Humidity sensors	x	x		x
Vibration sensors	x	x	x	

Recent technological developments - particularly those associated with the Internet of Things (IoT) - have transformed traditional monitoring methodologies. IoT-enabled systems overcome previous limitations such as low sampling frequency and the need for extensive manual data collection by enabling real-time, high-density measurements. This allows construction and maintenance teams to dynamically adjust operational parameters and techniques based on live data streams (Fig. 2) [2].

The integration of IoT technologies yields several significant benefits [7]:

- Continuous assessment of foundation ground stability
- Evaluation of support system integrity
- Optimization of design parameters through real-time feedback
- Improved scheduling of secondary lining installation
- Enhanced construction efficiency and safety

Through these capabilities, IoT-based monitoring supports proactive risk management and strengthens the long-term resilience of buildings and civil infrastructure [7].

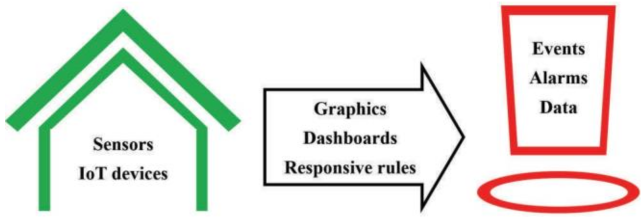

Fig. 2. Use of modern technologies in monitoring activities [2]

Beyond geotechnical measurements, monitoring of vibration effects - especially those generated by heavy traffic or industrial activity (Fig. 3) - is essential for ensuring building safety. Vibration sensors record both velocity and acceleration over time to characterize ground and structural motion. For reliable dynamic analysis, instruments should measure all three motion components (X, Y, Z) and be installed at a minimum of three representative locations [2]:

- The upper structure of the building
- The foundation level
- A nearby open-field reference site

Accurate interpretation of vibration data requires expert analysis to evaluate risk levels and to develop effective mitigation and reinforcement strategies [7], [5], [12], [2].

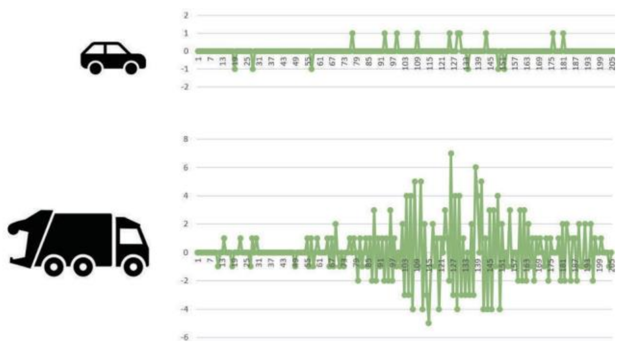

Fig. 3. Vibration caused by car vs. garbage truck

Although air temperature and humidity do not directly induce structural deformation, they exert a pronounced influence on foundation ground conditions, material integrity, and hydrological balance, all of which affect overall building stability [13], [14], [15].

Temperature is typically monitored both at the soil surface and within subsurface layers (commonly at depths of 60 cm or more) using specialized thermal probes. Empirical research demonstrates that surface temperature fluctuations can propagate to depths of up to 20 m, especially in porous or loosely compacted soils [16], [15].

Elevated temperatures cause thermal expansion of soil particles and enhance capillary rise and evaporation, altering the soil's moisture regime and potentially leading to drying and cracking of surface layers. Conversely, low temperatures induce contraction, and in regions exposed to freeze–thaw cycles, the process can generate frost heave or internal stress accumulation within the soil matrix, ultimately destabilizing the foundation or adjacent slopes [17], [16].

Alongside temperature, soil moisture is a critical determinant of ground performance. Moisture levels are monitored through air humidity sensors (for ambient conditions) and soil conductivity probes, which infer water content based on the electrical conductivity of the soil. Data interpretation must consider both moisture content and soil permeability, as their interaction governs water movement through the soil profile [14], [18], [19].

Increased soil moisture leads to higher plasticity and reduced shear strength, particularly along slopes. The angle of internal friction, which reflects the soil's resistance to particle movement, decreases with rising water content, thereby diminishing slope stability and increasing the likelihood of landslides or creep phenomena [14], [18], [19].

A comprehensive understanding of the interactions among temperature, moisture, soil mechanics, and structural behavior (Fig. 4) is crucial for maintaining both safety and environmental sustainability. The use of advanced sensors, data fusion, and predictive analytics enables early identification of risk conditions and supports informed engineering interventions [20], [21], [22].

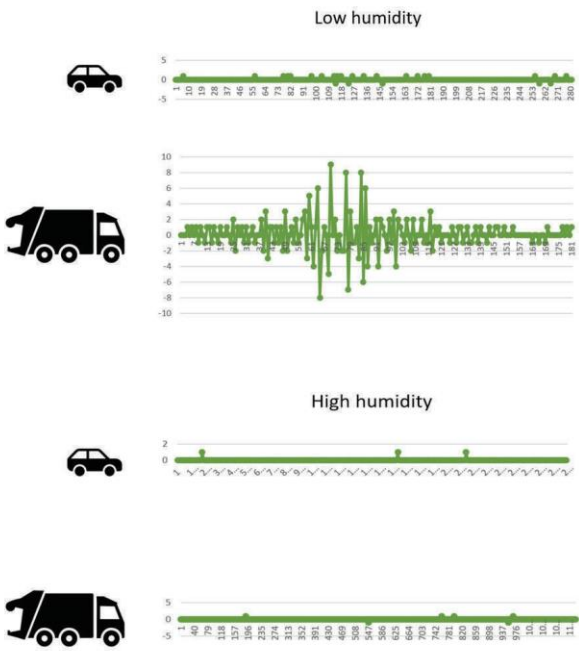

Fig. 4. Influence of humidity on vibration values

A modern monitoring network consists of a distributed array of sensors and data acquisition units, each independently recording regional parameters such as ground movement, vibration, and environmental variables. Stations communicate with a central processing computer via digital radio links, satellite communication, cellular modems, or IoT networks, enabling remote control, real-time assessment, and system synchronization [12], [23].

Integration with Global Positioning System (GPS) modules ensures precise time alignment among regional monitoring stations, which is critical for accurate temporal correlation and comparative analysis of recorded events [12], [23].

B. Data Transmission and Management

Data obtained from diverse sensors and monitoring instruments is integrated within a centralized management platform, typically a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system or an equivalent architecture. This platform enables continuous real-time monitoring and automatically generates alerts when abnormal parameters are detected, such as atypical seepage patterns or structural deformations [2], [7].

C. Data Analysis

To achieve a comprehensive evaluation, field-acquired data are integrated through specialized analytical software that consolidates outputs from multiple monitoring instruments. This integrated approach supports advanced stability assessments by enabling the identification of spatial and temporal patterns, the detection of emerging trends, and the early recognition of potential risk conditions [2].

For higher-level analysis, a three-dimensional model of the building can be useful. Given the inherent challenges of field data acquisition and the often limited distribution of measurement points, interpolation techniques are frequently applied to estimate values in unsampled regions. Modern modeling tools provide various interpolation algorithms, and selecting the most suitable method requires a detailed understanding of each algorithm's underlying assumptions, computational behavior, and the spatial characteristics of the available dataset [2].

The accuracy and reliability of the resulting three-dimensional model depend on multiple parameters, including contour sampling density, vertical contour spacing, grid resolution, terrain morphology, and the application of spatial filters. Recent advances in terrestrial measurement technologies - such as LiDAR scanning and high-precision photogrammetry - have significantly improved three-dimensional model precision, thereby enhancing their applicability for deformation monitoring and predictive modeling of future building behavior [2].

D. Reporting and Decision Making

Effective reporting constitutes a critical component of the monitoring process, involving the systematic compilation and synthesis of collected data into structured analytical outputs. These reports present findings in a clear and visually accessible format, commonly incorporating graphs, charts, and geospatial maps to illustrate temporal and spatial variations. In addition to descriptive analytics, reports provide interpretative insights on observed trends and anomalies, along with recommendations for mitigation strategies or further data collection initiatives. To ensure regulatory compliance, all reports must conform to relevant environmental and technical standards and be submitted to the appropriate authorities or oversight institutions [3], [4].

Based on the outcomes of the analytical assessment, management teams may implement corrective measures such as revising operational procedures, reinforcing structural components, or commissioning targeted investigations. Following each monitoring cycle, a system performance review should be conducted to evaluate data quality, measurement consistency, and network adequacy. These periodic evaluations may lead to strategic adjustments - such as the deployment of additional sensors, recalibration of existing equipment, or modification of data acquisition intervals - to enhance overall monitoring effectiveness [3], [4].

As monitoring technologies continue to evolve, the integration of advanced instrumentation, data analytics, and automation tools remains essential for improving measurement accuracy, operational efficiency, and decision-making reliability. Continuous innovation ensures that monitoring systems remain adaptable to emerging challenges and capable of supporting long-term structural stability and environmental sustainability.

CONCLUSIONS

The stability of buildings under evolving climatic and geotechnical conditions can no longer rely solely on traditional inspection methods. Intelligent monitoring systems, combining advanced sensing technologies and data analytics, provide an indispensable foundation for proactive maintenance, risk mitigation, and sustainable construction management. By integrating these systems into regulatory and operational frameworks, society can ensure the resilience of both modern and heritage structures against the accelerating challenges posed by climate change.

The assurance of building stability, durability, and sustainability depends on the continuous improvement and integration of modern, high-performance, and environmentally responsible monitoring instruments. Such systems must deliver precise, real-time data that enable proactive management of structural integrity while minimizing environmental impact and human resource demands. The adoption of these technologies enhances the ability to detect early signs of instability, optimize maintenance strategies, and ensure the long-term resilience of built environments.

Modern total stations equipped with automation and robotic control have revolutionized geodetic monitoring practices. They allow remote operation with minimal human intervention, thereby increasing safety and efficiency on construction sites. Automated tracking of targets, wireless data transmission, and real-time processing significantly improve measurement speed and precision. These instruments are essential for continuous deformation monitoring and high-frequency control of building displacement parameters.

UAV technology provides rapid, flexible, and cost-effective methods for surveying large or difficult-to-access areas. Equipped with high-resolution cameras and advanced multispectral or LiDAR sensors, UAVs capture detailed imagery and topographical data, enabling the generation of 3D terrain models, orthophotos, and volumetric analyses. These data products support the assessment of structural deformation, slope stability, and site evolution over time, contributing to both construction supervision and environmental monitoring.

The integration of robotics and AI in the monitoring process ensures enhanced site safety, autonomous operation, and intelligent decision-making. Robotic systems perform repetitive or hazardous tasks, collect sensor data, and analyze site conditions, while AI algorithms identify anomalies and predict potential failures. These technologies provide valuable insights into operational efficiency, site health, and risk management. In building operations, AI-enabled assistants can automate environmental controls, improve energy efficiency, and deliver personalized management services.

AR and VR technologies offer transformative capabilities in surveying, design visualization, and site management. AR applications enable the real-time overlay of spatial data onto physical environments, supporting on-site decision-making and facilitating the identification of structural deviations. VR environments provide immersive 3D representations of construction sites, enhancing the understanding of spatial relationships and enabling the evaluation of complex scenarios that are difficult to interpret through conventional 2D drawings or maps.

IoT-based ecosystems interconnect surveying and monitoring instruments into a cohesive digital framework that enables real-time data acquisition, transmission, and analysis. IoT integration improves equipment interoperability, data accuracy, and maintenance efficiency, allowing for seamless communication between field sensors, processing servers, and decision-support interfaces. The combination of IoT with cloud computing and AI-driven analytics transforms raw measurements into actionable intelligence, enabling continuous, automated assessment of structural performance.

The evolution of surveying and monitoring practices reflects a dual necessity:

- Technological advancement: continuous automation reduces the need for human intervention, increasing precision, repeatability, and efficiency in measurement processes.
- Professional skill development: despite technological progress, the expertise of surveyors remains crucial. Understanding complex datasets, interpreting geotechnical behavior, and ensuring the reliability of automated systems require advanced technical knowledge and analytical competence.

The synergy between advanced technologies and human expertise defines the next generation of intelligent monitoring systems, ensuring that the principles of accuracy, safety, and sustainability remain central to modern building stability management.

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