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Residual stresses of welded I-sections and their influences on the stability behaviour of structural members

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Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering
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Preface

Residual stresses occur during the fabrication of steel members. These are caused by the introduction of thermal energy, non-uniform cooling processes and the consequent constraints in the steel members. Particularly for welded steel members, high thermal energies are applied locally, resulting in pronounced residual stress states. Firstly, during the production of the individual steel plates by flame cutting, and, secondly, by welding. Residual stresses have a significant impact on the structural performance of steel members. Thus, the cross-section capacity can be reduced due to local buckling effects, and the member stability behaviour is strongly influenced due to the development of yield zones and the consequent loss of stiffness. Two models are currently used for the representation of residual stresses of welded I-sections; the model according to ECCS from 1984 and the model according to EN 1993-1-4:2022. However, both models were derived from a limited database, which does not cover current fabrication processes, or the application range from mild steel to high-strength steel. Therefore, comprehensive investigations on residual stresses of welded steel members are reasonable.

The present research was written as a PhD thesis by Lukas Schaper and tackles the topic of residual stresses of welded I-sections. Based on comprehensive experimental investigations, influences on the residual stress distributions were carefully analysed. The findings were used to develop a general residual stress approach for I-sections that can be applied in both engineering science and practice. Furthermore, the influences of residual stresses on the cross-sectional behaviour and the structural stability behaviour were presented. The stability analyses showed that the consideration of an advanced residual stress approach leads to higher load-capacities of welded steel members. These outcomes can be adapted to current verification methods for members susceptible to stability failure by the adjustment of the imperfection factors. Thus, the results of this study, i.e. investigations on residual stresses and the load-bearing behaviour, are directly incorporated into common verification methods used in engineering practice.

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Markus Knobloch

Bochum, August 2024

Abstract

Welded I-sections enable tailored solutions adapted to the respective load situations of steel structures. Residual stresses arise during the fabrication process of welded steel members caused by locally introduced heating and non-uniform cooling processes. The material and the manufacturing process strongly affect these residual stresses. The range of materials for steel structures in civil engineering has been expanded by high strength steels in recent years. Further, new manufacturing technologies are available. Comprehensive investigations on residual stresses with respect to the material and the manufacturing process are still pending. Residual stresses significantly affect the stability behaviour of steel members. The superimposition of residual stresses with stresses resulting from external loads and 2nd order theory effects influences the development of the yield zones and, consequently, the load-displacement behaviour. The stability behaviour of steel columns and beams requires systematic investigations for new approaches to residual stresses.

This work has intended to investigate residual stresses of welded steel I-sections. The findings of these investigations facilitate an application for science and engineering practice. Influences of residual stresses on the stability behaviour of steel columns and beams have been comprehensively studied by means of experiments and simulations and considered in simplified verification methods.

An experimental program of residual stress measurements was systematically carried out to identify influencing parameters. In the next step, a comprehensive data set was built up and evaluated, containing the experimental results and extensive data collection from the literature. The residual stress distribution of welded I-sections is related to various parameters. With respect to the manufacturing process, the fabrication of the raw steel plates, i.e. thermal or non-thermal cutting techniques, markedly influences the residual stress distribution, while the consideration of the weld thickness is sufficient to take into account varying welding processes. The most decisive impact on the residual stress distribution was identified by the cross-section geometry. The steel grade had a non-proportional influence related to the yield strength. The residual stresses significantly affected the stability behaviour in the intermediate range of relative slendernesses. Advanced consideration of residual stresses in numerical simulations benefited the stability behaviour and resulted in higher ultimate loads. Based on the evaluation, a simplified residual stress approach was developed. To investigate the effect of residual stresses on the stability behaviour of steel members, the developed residual stress model was implemented for numerical simulations, and the load-bearing behaviour in the cases of local buckling, flexural buckling and lateral torsional buckling was thoroughly analysed. Finally, a parametric study enabled to check and revise simplified verification methods for steel columns and beams.

Kurzfassung

Geschweißte I-Profile ermöglichen maßgeschneiderte Lösungen, die an die jeweiligen Belastungssituationen von Stahlkonstruktionen angepasst sind. Während der Fertigung von geschweißten Stahlbauteilen entstehen durch lokal aufgebrachte thermische Energie und anschließende ungleichmäßige Abkühlvorgänge Eigenspannungen. Der Werkstoff und der Herstellungsprozess beeinflussen diese Eigenspannungen deutlich. In den letzten Jahren finden hochfeste Stähle und neue Herstellungsverfahren zunehmend Anwendung im Bauwesen. Umfassende Untersuchungen zum Einfluss des Werkstoffes und des Herstellungsprozesses auf Eigenspannungen geschweißter Stahlbauteile stehen noch aus. Weiterhin wirken sich Eigenspannungen maßgeblich auf das Stabilitätstragverhalten aus. Die Überlagerung von Eigenspannungen und Spannungen aus Schnittgrößen nach Theorie 2. Ordnung beeinflussen die Ausbildung von Fließzonen und somit das Last-Verformungsverhalten von Stahlbauteilen. Bei Verwendung von neuen Eigenspannungsansätzen sind systematische Untersuchungen zum Stabilitätsverhalten von Stahlstützen und -balken erforderlich.

Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wurden Eigenspannungen von Stahlbauteilen mit geschweißten I-Querschnitten untersucht. Die Ergebnisse dieser Untersuchungen ermöglichen eine Anwendung für Wissenschaft und Ingenieurpraxis. Der Einfluss von Eigenspannungen auf das Stabilitätsverhalten von Stahlstützen und -balken wurde basierend auf Experimenten und Simulationen umfassend untersucht und in vereinfachten Nachweisverfahren berücksichtigt.

Eigenspannungsmessungen wurden systematisch durchgeführt, um einflussnehmende Parameter zu identifizieren. Anschließend wurde eine umfassende Datenbasis von Eigenspannungsmessungen aus der Literatur erstellt und ausgewertet. Die Eigenspannungsverteilung von geschweißten I-Querschnitten hängt von zahlreichen Parametern ab. Bei der Fertigung von I-Querschnitten hat die Herstellung der einzelnen Bleche durch thermische oder nicht-thermische Verfahren einen deutlichen Einfluss auf die Eigenspannungsverteilung. Die Berücksichtigung der Schweißnahtdicke reicht aus, um Einflüsse der Schweißverfahren zu erfassen. Maßgebliche Auswirkungen auf die Eigenspannungsverteilung hat die Querschnittsgeometrie. Untersuchungen verschiedener Stahlgüten zeigten einen nicht-proportionalen Zusammenhang zwischen der Höhe der Eigenspannungen und der Streckgrenze des Stahls. Auf Grundlage dieser Auswertungen wurde ein vereinfachtes Eigenspannungsmodell entwickelt. Eigenspannungen beeinflussen erheblich das Stabilitätsverhalten im Bereich mittlerer Stab-schlankheiten. Eine Berücksichtigung von Eigenspannungen in fortgeschrittenen numerischen Simulationen begünstigt das Stabilitätsverhalten und führt zu höheren Traglasten. Um die Auswirkung von Eigenspannungen auf das Stabilitätsverhalten von Stahlbauteilen zu untersuchen, wurde das entwickelte Eigenspannungsmodell in numerische Simulationen implementiert und das Tragverhalten in den Fällen von lokalem Beulen, Biegeknicken und Biegedrillknicken eingehend analysiert. Abschließend ermöglichte eine Parameterstudie die Überprüfung und Überarbeitung vereinfachter Nachweisverfahren für Stahlstützen und -balken.

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Curriculum Vitae