

Bulgaria Section

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Getting Closer to Industry

- The local industry in Bulgaria does not value and back-up IEEE membership and the benefits for the members from industry are not clear. Industry managers also do not see benefits from cooperation with IEEE as they prefer access to marketing and management oriented publications compared to high level scientific papers. Because of that our few members from industry are coming from only several companies, having strong research and design laboratories. This year a new IRO, coming from the industry, was appointed in our Section Committee and it is expected that he will be able to change this stagnating situation.
- Bulgaria Section is having a very active collaboration with the National Union of the Electronics, Electrical and Communication Engineers (UEECE) and an agreement between IEEE and UEECE is re-signed every 3 years. We are planning to start a joint initiative with UEECE to try to improve our collaboration with the industry.
- Up to now very few activities, recommended in the IEEE IRO Manuals, are applicable in our situation.

Students and Young Professionals

- Last year a Project Electronics day: Future innovations depend on you, organized by the student branch and IEEE chapter members in city of Varna, was approved and funded by CASS. It included lectures and training of 132 high school students from 18 schools in 8 towns, considered as a primary target group for future engineering students. During the trainings (including design, implementation and measurement of different Arduino based circuits), students from the IEEE branch in TU Varna were mentoring the participants in their work. At the end of the training more than 80% of the participants declared in the survey their intention to enroll in electronics related engineering education in the future.
- In Bulgaria both, Industry and Academia are not considering the IEEE Membership (and the belonging to any other professional organizations) as a merit, but rather as your personal choice, so it is not bringing any carrier or other benefits. Our Section must increase its efforts to change this.
- We are expecting a considerable help from our newly established YP Affinity Group in our efforts to increase the student membership and to re-activate some dormant Student Branches.

Section Vitality

- Bulgaria Section ExCom is organizing the preparation of the membership renewal documentation and the collection and transfer to IEEE HQs of the membership fee of more than 70% of our members. Without this effort we shall lose a considerable part of our members.
- Bulgaria Section is supporting every year between 5 and 10 scientific conferences. Thus, more than half of the Section funds and most of the Chapters money are spent for such support. There are also Best-Paper-Awards financed by the Section. Our section supports at least one distinguished lecturer visit annually and co-finance many other similar visits.
- Having in mind the endless problems with the financial reporting, it will be almost impossible to recruit and to train a new volunteer for the Treasurer position. As this job requires special knowledge and qualification (not usual for engineers) especially in sections with many transactions, we will have to apply for an exception from the limitation of 4 and 6 years service for the section treasurer.
- IEEE HQs and R8 should reconsider the administrative burden of the Section ExComs, very often due to the extreme over-activity of some committees and other bodies, producing an enormous correspondence, huge documentation and quite unnecessary initiatives.

Miscellaneous / Recommendations / Feedback

- The above mentioned Project Electronics day: Future innovations depend on you, organized by the student branch and IEEE chapter members at the Technical University of Varna, approved and funded by CASS was an excellent initiative.
- Last two years the section was financial and technical co-sponsor of two IEEE conferences. We do hope this will increase the interest of the industry and academia to IEEE membership.
- This year we have a 20-years-anniversary of the IEEE Bulgaria Section. All co-sponsored by us conferences will become a place for celebration and for publicizing of our activities.