

## Croatia Section

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### Getting Closer to Industry

- Industry members were motivated to attend events with industry related content relevant for their everyday jobs or career development. These include development of practical skills (e.g. presentation, networking or project management skills) promoted in various lectures with industry experts, sharing experience and knowledge from the industry peers ("IEEE Elevate" initiative), or career development ("IEEE Step" initiative).
- Also, the Croatia Section has established annual five awards, two of which are oriented towards industry:
  - IEEE Croatia Section Outstanding Engineer Award (for individual innovative contribution)
  - Friend of IEEE Croatia Section Award (awarded to a company or institution which fosters IEEE activities of its employees, as well as the Croatia Section in general).
- The value of IEEE publications, including IEEE Xplore is not considered as particularly high for industry members, especially for those who not involved in research or scientific activities. IEEE could encourage better collaboration between industry relations activities in the EU countries, promoting common EU market for projects and jobs, as well as collaboration with other professional groups in the area of electrical engineering.
- IEEE should additionally promote industry related activities within the IEEE sections (e.g. regular IRO meetings, sharing experience from other comparable countries or regions).

### Students and Young Professionals

- An annual congress bringing together all four Croatia Section student branches and members of Young Professionals Affinity Group (YP AG) has proven to be a very good practice in the Croatia Section. The congress gives an opportunity for:
  - Collaboration of student branches in the Section
  - Collaboration between YP AG and student branches
  - Transfer of knowledge to new IEEE student volunteers
  - Exchange of ideas, initiatives, and problem solutions.
- Also, some of our most active YP volunteers had been engaged in the work of YP AG, as they were still active as volunteers in the student branch but were approaching their graduation. This approach creates a network of volunteers spanning a wider age range (and very often diverse areas of expertise), who easily collaborate. It also helps students transition to YP volunteers, eventually ensuring there is a stable base of volunteers for both student branches and YP AG. While students are rather easy to attract, we expect the number of professional members would increase with ensuring the possibility of direct and short-term IEEE-only benefits and privileges.

### Section Vitality

- We are trying to keep the Croatia Section Vitality on a high level. Our activities follow the Section Vitality Checklist.
- The success of the Section is the result of the continuous work of our active Section officers/coordinators as well as the vitality of our chapters, affinity groups and student branches.
- The activities/programs/initiatives that work well to drive the vitality and sustainability in your Section include:
  - Meetings and workshops
  - Helping students and young professionals
  - Awards
  - Annual meeting/dinner.
- To improve Section vitality and sustainability the volunteers should train themselves. There is plenty of useful material at the IEEE Website. The Region should help in giving important concise guidelines to Section volunteers to help in Section operation.

### Miscellaneous / Recommendations / Feedback

- The best current practices in and recommendations from the Croatia Section include:
  - Taking care of members
  - Member retention and recruitment
  - Recruiting of new volunteers
  - Celebrating the IEEE Day
  - Inviting Distinguished Lecturers
  - Organizing IEEE conferences
  - Sponsoring local conferences
  - Having Section Awards
  - Organizing Pre-University education and STEM programs
  - Publishing the Croatia Section Newsletter
  - Involving members from industry.
- Special achievements include:
  - IEEE Student Branch of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek received the "Darrel Chong Student Activity Award" for the IEEEemadC project
  - Ivana Stupar received the "Region 8 Young Professionals Exceptional Volunteer Award 2014"
  - Josip Balen received the "Larry K. Wilson Regional Student Activities Award".