

Bulgaria Section

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Getting Closer to Industry

- This year our new IRO is coming from the industry and we have expected that he will be able to improve our contacts with these colleagues. Up to now, it is not happening. It appeared to be very difficult to identify the members coming from the industry. All together, they are probably less than 40 and most of them are concentrated in only several companies, having strong research and design laboratories. The other problem is that even though the IRO is from some company, it does not make it easier for him to contact and organize members from other company or to contact their bosses. And, generally, the members from the industry are very reluctant to participate in our activities, especially as volunteers. This year, however, we have 3 elected officers coming from the industry. It seems that up to now very few actions, recommended in the IEEE IRO Manuals, are applicable in our situation.
- Bulgaria Section has an agreement between IEEE and the National Union of the Electronics, Electrical and Communication Engineers, we have a very active collaboration and now we are trying to start joint initiatives aiming an improvement of our contacts with the industry.

Students and Young Professionals

- Young Professionals AG was registered last March and they started very well, having already nominated and elected their officers and organized an introductory presentation at a scientific Conference. There is a strong core of YP members, that are well networked and we are expecting a considerable activity in this AG.
- To have a successful Student branch, it is necessary to have motivated Student Branch Counselor and several motivated and enthusiastic student members. Recently it is getting more and more difficult to find both. There are no volunteers for the counselor positions and we have problems in recruiting new student members as students are not attracted by the IEEE membership benefits available in our country. We are expecting a considerable help from the YP AG in our efforts to increase the student membership and to re-activate some dormant Student Branches. The group is very motivated to perform different activities for students support and social networking.

Section Vitality

- Besides all the effort to advertise IEEE and to recruit new members, Bulgaria Section ExCom is very active in organizing the preparation of the membership renewal documentation and in the collection and transferring of the membership fees of more than half of our members. It is a heavy burden for our ExCom officers, but without that we may lose a considerable part of our members.
- This year we are concentrating our efforts on revitalizing several almost dormant chapters by taking the entire initiative in organization of elections of their officers - from nomination to the voting procedures. The response from the chapter members was very good and now we have to organize an adequate training of all the newly elected officers as they know little about how to run a chapter.
- We have to be more persistent in following the rules about the terms of all section and chapter officers and to organize elections according to these rules. The proper turnover of the officers is of crucial importance for the vitality of the organization.

Miscellaneous / Recommendations / Feedback

- Technical or financial co-sponsoring of 5-6 conferences and endorsement of several more. Bulgaria Section is stimulating organizers of scientific conferences to apply for IEEE Co-sponsorship, it helps in preparation of the application and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and then it takes all the responsibilities as described in the Memorandum. This year we are working on two MOUs. Our section supports at least one DL visit annually and co-finances many other similar visits.
- After almost two years of negotiations and changes, the Bulgaria Section was finally registered and we have our Intercompany agreement.
- This year we have celebrated the 20-years-anniversary of our section and it was a good opportunity to increase the visibility of the section through posters in the universities and short presentations in the conferences co-sponsored by us. The events are taking part in parallel with 70 years anniversary of the Technical University of Sofia and 130 years anniversary of the National Federation of the Scientific - Engineering Unions.
- We have to find a way to motivate our section members to become IEEE senior members. Recently, the interest towards such membership elevation is very low even when some colleagues are nominated by the ExCom.