

Latvia Section

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Getting Closer to Industry

- The nature of industry in Latvia (insufficient number of high-technology enterprises and low level of industrial development - mostly SMEs, SMEs do not recognize advantages from IEEE and do not support workers to be members of IEEE or any other large professional union) negatively affect the number and enthusiasm of industrial members.
- Latvia Section is expanding IEEE influence by collaboration with the largest professional associations (e.g., Latvian Information Technology and Telecommunications Association, Association of Latvian Electrical Engineering and Electronics Enterprises) in a way of sharing information about events, special guests' invitation from industry, industry sessions and posters at sponsored conferences and workshops, technical and financial sponsorship of events.
- To strengthen these relations this year it is planned to invite representative from industry to ExCom Industrial Ambassador' position.

Students and Young Professionals

Large number of Section's member from academia ensure high level of involvement and collaboration with students in Latvia. Section together with student branch are organizing:

- Annual summer schools and workshops for students and young professionals (e.g. School of Electrical Engineering & Power Electronics, Sociotechnical Systems Modeling summer school, Workshop on Advances in Information, Electronic and Electrical Engineering)
- local student paper contests (e.g. RTU Students Scientific and Technical Conference)
- Regular students visits to industrial and research institutions (e.g., contest for robots builders "Robotica", visits to Latvian Television, Incukalns natural gas storage)
- Collaboration trainings for secondary schools in electrical engineering and computer applications.

Section Vitality

Factors, affected Section vitality in 2014, not changed much in 2015 - "strong" US dollar, low level of incomes in Latvian economics, low level of industrial development, large number of IEEE members coming from academia, decreasing of interest in professional memberships and volunteering. Section continue to work in different ways:

- Student competition programs, which provides IEEE student membership to awardees
- New Senior Membership program
- Revitalizing several almost dormant chapters (EdSoc, RTU student branch)
- Increasing efforts from chapters and societies to encourage students and young professionals
- Regular face-to-face ExCom meetings, planning Sections activities and special events
- Direct mailing special events

Miscellaneous / Recommendations / Feedback

Co-organizing / co-sponsoring at least 3 international conferences and 5 local events yearly gives a good recognition level both locally and internationally.