

Bulgaria Section

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What activities/programs/initiatives work well in your Section to foster Industry Relations? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to improve Industry Relations? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Industry Relations? How are you going to continue to foster Industry Relations?

Up to now we could not find a successful approach to improve our relations with the Industry besides trying hard to recruit new IEEE members. Most of our volunteers are from the academia and a few of them have good relationship with the Industry. In fact there are not so many benefits of IEEE products to members from the industry besides the access to IEEE publications. This year we had a request from a private company for several memberships, but it can be regarded as an exception, not as a common practice. We try to serve these people in the best way. Unfortunately, our few members from the industry are very reluctant to participate in our activities, especially as volunteers. We encourage entrepreneurs and try to keep close relationship with industry. We try to disseminate best practice. In an interview with our member from the industry Krassimir Tonchev he said "I am proud that our technology is enjoyed by large airline companies". This is an example from our WEB site.

What activities/programs/initiatives work well in your Section to Attract and Support Future Members, e.g., Students and Young Professionals? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to better Attract and Support Future Members? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Attracting and Supporting Future Members? How are you going to continue to support Students and Young Professionals?

We try to attract attention even of under university students, to orient them to the engineering profession and scientific research and acquaint with the world engineering organization of IEEE. Our enthusiastic IEEE members from Varna TU led by Dr. Valentina Markova organized interesting meetings with gaming elements with them. To have a successful Student branch, it is necessary to have motivated Student Branch Counselor and several motivated and enthusiastic student members. Thus we have now only one really active Student Branch thanks to its Counselor Prof. Bedzev in our small but University town Shumen. The group is very motivated to organize different activities for students support and for social networking. Our Young Professionals Activity Group is very active. They are organizing very successful events.

What activities/programs/initiatives work well to drive the vitality and sustainability in your Section? What changes would be required by IEEE/the Region/your Section to improve Section vitality and sustainability? What were major successes since the last meeting in terms of Section Vitality? How are you going to continue to foster Section Vitality?

In March 2017 we organized joint meeting of Bulgarian Section Executive Committee with all Chapter's and Activities Officers. On this meeting the old Section Chair and Treasurer reported about last Section activities and financial state. The Chapter chairs gave short description of the state of their Chapters. At the end in discussion were detailed the main directions for more effectively organized, dynamic and influential work of the Section members as a leading and esteemed part of a truly transnational IEEE in the 2017.

Our continuous efforts for preparation of the membership renewal and membership fees collection and transferring of more than half of our members are the best activity to drive the vitality and sustainability in the Section. These activities, together with all the year-end reporting, are taking several months of the ExCom officers, but this is the only way to retain a considerable part of our members.

We are trying very hard to make our units following the rules about the terms of service and organizing elections according to these rules. The proper turnover of the officers is of crucial importance for the vitality of the organization. Last year we have succeeded to revitalize all chapters except one by taking the entire initiative in organization elections of their committees - from nomination to the voting procedures.

What are your recommendations to IEEE Region 8 and the Africa Area Chair Gloria Chuckwudebe to foster IEEE in Africa? How does your Section support IEEE Activities in Africa?

We think that Region 8 is making enough to help our African colleagues in their efforts to establish new sections and strengthen them. Particularly we have not good relationship with IEEE sections in Africa and we haven't enough information about the state there and to give recommendations in this situation it will be not a good practice.

What services and which kind of support would you expect for Region 8 and/or your section out of the new IEEE office in Vienna, Austria? How has the existence of this office influenced your section since its inauguration last year?

I have a long talk with one of the officers in Vienna Office in Sydney and I hope that we could organize joint event there.

Outstanding new initiatives, Special Achievements, Anniversaries.

We participated in organization of several events last year. One very successful scientific meeting was 40-th International Spring Seminar on Electronics Technology, organized in May 10-14, 2017 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The second event - the "Biomedical data acquisition and applications" workshop was organized by IEEE CAS/SSC Bulgarian Chapter and hosted by Telecommunications Department, Technical University of Varna. The event has been supported by the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society in the framework of the 2017 IEEE CASS Outreach Initiative (ID 751). The workshop supported the advance of students and young professionals involved in CASS-related research and technology development activities, facilitated their career planning and development, and engaged them in IEEE activities. Also, we have a proposition for restructuring, based on the activities which are continuously implementing at IEEE ED/SSC Chapter Varna, Bulgaria in the field of biomedical engineering. In particular the Joint IEEE ED/SSC Chapter Varna to become a Joint IEEE ED/SSC/EMBS Chapter.