

Republic of Macedonia Section**Pero Latkoski**

List the activities carried out to foster relations with Industry and the results obtained. List the initiatives planned during the next 6 months and their expected outcomes. How can the Region help your Section in your industry-related activities?

Our section has a continuous problem with lower number of members coming from industry. This number is around 10% of the total members, leaving the other 90% with academia background. The main reason for this lays with our humble industry capacity, as well as because of the ever increasing brain-drain that is happening. Furthermore, the people from industry do not perceive the IEEE membership as such significant and daily life tangible necessity.

In order to foster the industry relations, last year we have appointed an industry relation ambassador (Mr. Jordan Kirkovik) who had an industry involvement. Due to his inactivity, we are planning to appoint a new person for this position in 2020, who will hopefully find a practical means to get the Section closer to our industry. The very first effort will be to determine the actual needs of the colleagues from the industry, and to identify their benefits in joining and actively participating the IEEE society. Then, our plan is to organize meetings with the industry managers and higher level executives to present the IEEE benefits and to recruit more members and volunteers among them. Our extended plan includes signing MoU agreements with companies for internship programs, which will result in IEEE-aware young people within the industry.

List the activities addressed to Students and/or Young Professionals and the results obtained. List the initiatives planned during the next 6 months and their expected outcomes. How can the Region help in your students and YP-related activities?

The work of our MD officer already gave significant results, especially among the students and young professionals. Our Section has received a golden medal for reaching both our goals for recruitment and retention in 2019. Our MD officer gives a special attention to the student membership recruitment and the retention by informing targeted students about the IEEE and by providing instructions and practical help for the students so they can easily pay the membership fee in our local currency. Also the participation in IEEEExtreme competition provides significant number of new members from computer society every year. The Young Professionals are very active in our Section, organizing several activities per year. The Section supports all these events.

List the activities carried out to retain and recruit members and the results obtained. List the initiatives planned during the next 6 months and their expected outcomes. How can the Region help in your membership-related activities?

We organize several social events per year such as the Annual meeting and the IEEE Day celebrations, inviting both IEEE members and non-members. These events significantly help to retain and recruit members. Our Facebook page is continuously updated with the forthcoming events (usually technical lectures organized by the chapters) and all interested colleagues are invited to join regardless they are members or not yet. Over 1000 people follow our posts about Section's activities. We have also appointed a Life Member Coordinator, an Education Activities officer and an Industry relation ambassador who will help in our goas to attract and support our future members. Every year we ask and receive a membership development kit from the IEEE central.

List the activities intended to support chapters, affinity groups, and student branches and the results obtained. List the related initiatives planned during the next 6 months and their expected outcomes. How can the Region help in your support to chapters, affinity groups, and student branches?

The Section initiated a new joint chapter named as the IEEE Republic of Macedonia Section Education, Robotics and Automation, and Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Joint Societies Chapter. The effective date of this chapter formation is August 17, 2019 with geo-code CH08119. The recorded new chapter chair is Nevena Ackovska. For all section's officer positions, we have successfully organized elections in November and December 2019. Most of the officers remain the same, as they have served so far only 2 years and are eligible for a second mandate. Our past officers are helping significantly, providing valuable experience in many aspects related to the Section Vitality. We are continuing with regular ExCom meetings where all the activities are planned. Section Facebook page is regularly updated with information about our efforts and activities. In order to achieve an increase in the visibility of our Section among the general public and in particular to foster the importance of our IEEE members' achievements, we have proposed an IEEE milestone named as "First control of a robot using brain signals", an event that has happened in 1988 at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering in Skopje (http://ieemilestones.ethw.org/Milestones_Status_Report). We have also prepared suitable gifts for our members as a part of our Member Loyalty Program recognition, including IEEE jacket pin for every member.

Challenges (with a focus on what support is required from Region 8)

At the moment, we believe that the Region 8 can support the visibility of IEEE, locally. R8 should provide some predefined methods and kits to the sections for emphasizing the benefits of IEEE in Europe. Some examples are: organizing some local (R8) volunteering events, providing R8 traveling grants, providing some more tangible benefits to the R8 members (for example some analogy to eBooks from IEEE-USA), etc. We need help in membership development, in general.