

Lebanon Section

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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?

IEEE Lebanon Section has a close cooperation with the industry In Lebanon for many years. Many MoU have been signed and renewed with many Lebanese and International companies The IEEE cooperation with Lebanese industry had a positive effect on IEEE Lebanon section:

- 1) Many Lebanese IEEE students were able to find internships and have different trainings because of this cooperation.
- 2) IEEE Lebanon section activities have been sponsored and supported by these companies.
- 3) Lebanese IEEE students and members are always invited to participate to the events and competitions organized by these companies.

But because of the health situation (CoVid19), the economic situation (devaluation of Lebanese pound) and the unstable security situation (No government, Beirut Explosion), the cooperation with industry during the last six months was nearly in hold. Never the less, IEEE LMAG Lebanon got a grant to spread awareness about renewable energy and connect residential and commercial sector entities with renewable energy producers and suppliers. This project led to deep cooperation with energy industry and providers. Also a MoU was signed with UNDP who are working on a similar project.

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?

IEEE Lebanon Section introduced last year a National competition among all Electrical and Electronic Engineering Students. Its goal is to maintain a connection between Electrical Engineering students from all institutes in Lebanon to IEEE. During this competition, presentations about IEEE and the benefits of being an IEEE member are clearly explained. This year it was planned online in August 2020. But because of Beirut Explosion that took place in August 4, 2020, this competition was canceled this year.

The second yearly big event targeting students and Young professionals in Lebanon and attracting them to IEEE event addressed to Student and Yong professional is the SYP Lebanon Congress is also a. The IEEE National day is also a big gathering where always new students discover IEEE. SYPLC'20 took place online in June 2020. Because it was online many young professional from outside Lebanon were able to follow it. This gave the event a regional dimension.

IEEE Day took place in many student branches. But all events was on line. These events were very successful and many students and young professional from different places in Lebanon participated to these days.

IEEE Lebanon section encouraged IEEE students to participate to IEEEE Xtreme 14, that took place for 24 hours on Saturday October 24, 2020. 16 teams from different student branches in Lebanon participated to this international IEEE event. One team from American University of Beirut was ranked 12th among the more than 4000 participating teams.

The Major negative point that is making us very worried about student recruiting is the financial situation and severe devaluation of Lebanese pound. This make the IEEE membership out of the reach of a big number of Lebanese students and we hope the IEEE will help is to be able to find a solution for the serious problem.

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?

The major challenge that we are facing is the actual bad economic situation in Lebanon. We are afraid currently of not being able to maintain a proper membership renewal process, which would directly affect membership retention. As it is known, IEEE Lebanon section has grown up quickly during the last years and has reached more than 1700 members in 2018 which lead to the reception of many membership retention awards. During the last few months, the economic situation has reached an alarming level which pushed Lebanese people to start a revolution against corruption and the reigning sectarian political system on October 17, 2019. As a direct consequence, withdrawals in foreign currency (especially US Dollars) increased dramatically as people feared a collapse of the banking system and a devaluation of the Lebanese Lira. To reduce bank runs and prevent the default of Lebanese banks, several restrictions were enforced including:

- Heavy limitations on cash withdrawals in foreign currency (small to none)
- No exchange from Lebanese pound to US Dollar using the official rate of 1515 LBP/USD. In that case, people have to rely on exchange offices with rate a exceeding 7500 LBP/USD
- Limitation or cancellation of the use of credit cards for online payments or payments outside Lebanon
- We have received many request from IEEE members to find a solution for the payment of their membership renewal fees.
- Other members especially students asked to waive them or alternatively help them with a reduction of the fees. The IEEE Lebanon Section is seriously concerned about losing a big portion of its members due to the current crisis.
- In addition, the IEEE executive committee decided to cancel or postpone all the events that have been set in the second part of 2020, especially the Lebanon section student completion that was programmed on August 2020. This was mainly due to Beirut explosion which is considered as third biggest explosion in history.
- This problem was reported clearly to the Region 8 Directors asking them to help us to find solutions regarding the membership renewal problems and we hope IEEE will help us to solve this problem.
- If not we are expecting a severe decrease of the number of IEEE members in Lebanon section.

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?

After the Beirut explosion, many IEEE volunteers were at the explosion place and helped in repairing the explosion area. IEEE SIGHT was in the foreground and the leader of those IEEE volunteers.

Elections are programmed on December 5, 2020. Once again we are afraid that because of the health situation (CoViD19) the government will not allow us to make elections and maybe elections will be postponed. Online election will solve the problem for chapters elections but not for the section executive committee election. In fact the IEEE Lebanon section executive committee is the same executive committee of the Lebanese Association that represent IEEE Lebanon section legally in Lebanon. This Association is ruled by the Lebanese associations Law that does not accept on line elections.

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

Bad Economic situation in Lebanon that made membership renewal very expensive and out of the reach of a big number of the actual members. We are looking forward for a solution from IEEE to our case.



IEEE Xtreme 14
October 24 2020



SYPLC'20

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youngprofessionals
Lebanon

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