

Serbia & Montenegro Section

Boris Dumnic

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?

Currently, it is very hard to foster the relationship with the industry, however the Section has a very good collaboration with several leaders in the Industry in Serbia today. In that regard, the promotional activities are aimed at presenting the benefits for the individuals from the industry in IEEE. However, a large increase in membership base is not yet to be expected. Some specific, targeted services that could be offered to the professionals in the industry may improve the industry relation and consequent activities. Nevertheless, most of the Section societies have good relationship with companies that often sponsor their events. Future activities, in the current situation, will aim at including more industry representatives to virtual and actual events.

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 Section is always supporting Student and Young professionals activities both technically and financially. The Section has very strong base in student membership in particular, with several notable events such as IEEEESTEC conference. Additionally, Student members adapted to the new situation a lot better, with several virtual events held between 3 active student centers. Additionally, student members from the Section participated at the Virtual SYP event. As for the Young professionals, while the interest is high in nearly graduated students, keeping this membership and translating it to industry membership is hard. This will require specific services offered to young professionals, but it will also offer an easier link between the academia and the industry.

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 Section is constantly promoting its activities and membership. The collective membership renewal will be starting soon and the Section will look to hold on to the existing membership base with few addition, mostly within the academia members. Furthermore, in the following period the formation of the new Society (Intelligent transport systems), and the membership base for the society is already formed, while the petition is in the preparation. This is expected to further increase the membership base, while diversifying the activities of the Section, and offering more possibilities for future growth.

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 chapter leadership always offer support to all chapters, affinity groups, student branches with their activities (whether technical or "hand-on"). Additionally, the Section sponsors financially several events annually, organized by different chapters. However, the activities in general have suffered in the previous period due to global pandemic and we tried to the best of our abilities to accommodate the planned activities in the new frame (some events were online, etc.). During the following period, the plan is to conduct officer election for the Section. Additionally, several chapters will also hold their elections within the section to establish new leadership. The section will try to further improve "online" activities in the following period, in order to overcome the difficulties with the global pandemic.

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

The main challenge going forward is to maintain the operation of the Section during the pandemic conditions. In the beginning it was very difficult to adjust to the new set of rules and regulations updated regularly. The most impactful change was in regard to travel, since the most notable activities within the section are related to different events hosting (local and international). As we adapted to online events, the activities within the section became more regular. In that regard, the most important challenge in the future could be to provide an adequate platform for knowledge and experience transfer, where people from academia and the industry could not only participate, but also establish a valuable network. Since "networking" is particularly hard in the time of the pandemic, developing a novel service that would offer a suitable alternative is not an easy task.