

Serbia and Montenegro Section**prof. dr Boris Dumnić****Section Vitality**

Please provide information about the date of last Section elections, date of next elections, and do you have the practice of Vice-Chair becoming the next Section Chair. Section ExCom meetings (list them and provide brief summary if appropriate). List the activities carried out to retain and recruit members and the results obtained.

All of the Section activities for the Serbia and Montenegro Section were highly impacted by the continuation of the Global pandemic. Section officers adapted to the situation, following all of the local measures for fighting the pandemic, where majority of the events (wherever possible) were held online. Towards the end of the year 2020, at the regular section Ex-Com meeting (that was held online), the sections elections were scheduled. In that regard, the last Section elections were finished in January of 2021, where the sections officers were selected for the period of 2021-2022. Section continued to support the events organized by different section chapters, affinity groups and student branches (both technically and financially), but most of the activities were performed online. One of the most recognizable annual event that was successfully held virtually was the 28th TELFOR conference with more than 100 papers and 600 unique event participants online. Additionally, at the end of the year section officers have participated in traditional group membership renewal process, where section had similar success to last year in retaining the membership count.

Students

List of Student Branches (SB) in your Section, the newly formed or dissolved SBs, if any since the last meeting reporting (Oct 2020). List the student meetings held and Section activities addressed to Students and Young Professionals.

Serbia and Montenegro Section has a very active student and young professional's membership base with 3 active SBs, 1 YP AG and currently 1 inactive SB that was given the inactive status during previous Region 8 meeting. Mostly, student activities continued regularly with special activities aimed at activating the SB Podgorica, through joint activities and co-ordination with the SB Novi Sad, SB Belgrade and SB Nis members. Additionally, SB and YP members had several strong, albeit virtual events on different topics such as smart cities, trainings, while colleagues from SB Nis held their annual IEEEESTEC conference as scheduled online. This growing student conference has attracted 100 authors from 16 different institutions worldwide.

Affinity Groups

List of Affinity Groups (YP, LM, WiE, SIGHT, etc.), list of SB AGs, newly formed or dissolved AGs/SB AGs, if any since the last meeting reporting (Oct 2020). List the activities intended to support affinity groups.

Within the section there are 2 active affinity groups WiE and YP that were active within different section activities. Currently there is no definitive plan of forming new affinity groups however there has been some interest in pursuing this further with SIGHT initiatives in the following period, while some preparation for the formation of LM AG has been arranged. WiE affinity group has actively participated in different activities and supported different conference, especially the IEEEESTEC conference where this affinity group provides one affirmative award targeted especially for WiE members. YP affinity group held several online activities online, with one lecture with the topic of smart cities that attracted a large number of attendees. The section is continuously supporting SB, YP and WiE activities both technically and financially, but special activities needs to be devised in order for YP membership to be retained and transferred over to the industry establishing the easier link for YPs between academia and the industry.

Chapters

List of Chapters and SB Chapters in your Section, the newly formed or dissolved Chapters, if any since the last meeting reporting (Oct 2020). Indicate how many have reported on time and received rebate. Highlight some of the activities.

There are 12 active chapters within the Section, 2 AGs and 3 active SBs (1 inactive), and out of all of those only 2 chapters (and inactive SB) did not receive the intended rebate. For those 2 chapters, the main issue was that they did not report their activities (even when enough activities were actually held) on the vTools portal in time. This has been thoroughly discussed during the ExCom meeting and we have taken some steps in order to make sure that activities within chapters are reported regularly in order to foster the Section activity and recognition, but also avoid similar drawbacks in the future. Most notable activities within the Section are related to the support of different conferences (most of which were held online) such as TELFOR, ETRAN, IEEEESTEC, TREND, INDEL, ZINC. Several of our chapters received the activity awards from their

respective global chapter representatives, for different DL activities, support in conference organization (SymOrg, ETCS, BC, ICC LA, etc.) and others. Consumer electronics chapter has had the name and slight organizational change (due to reorganization of the global chapter) and is now known as Consumer Technology Society. Currently, there are some activities directed at the formation of the IEEE Intelligent Transportation System Society within the Serbia and Montenegro section, there is a key number of members within the Section and the process is currently pending the application (petition) process.

Industry

List the activities carried out to foster relations with Industry and the results obtained.

Currently, it is very hard to foster the relationship with the industry and this is particularly the case due to ongoing pandemic worldwide that is constantly changing the industry environment. Nevertheless, the Section has managed to stay in contact with several leaders in the Industry in Serbia today, helping the IEEE Serbia and Montenegro section to become recognized as a reliable partners. With several promotional activities aimed at presenting the benefits for the individuals from the industry in IEEE, we have tried to further improve this relationship. Currently, there is no increase in the membership base from the industry. 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.

Activities since the last report

Highlight some of the activities in your Section, with special attention to the things that work well, and things that don't, so that your acquired know-how can be used by other Sections.

Current period of activities has been severely impacted by the ongoing pandemic and the limited availability of institutional capacities for fostering activities. The section members adapted holding most of their events online, with already mentioned conference events, chapter events, WiE, YP and SB events. One thing that worked well for the section every year, and even in these relatively problematic times has been the group membership renewal process, where academia centers have played a significant role in retaining the membership base. Equally as important, going further, will be the more active participation of section officers and ExCom in regard to activities reporting, where we noticed that vTools portal is not always used to its fullest potential. We plan to monitor more closely chapter reporting and often remind the chapters that they should submit activities reports in order to receive the rebate.

Planned activities

Highlight some of the future activities and initiatives in your Section.

Section is planning to continue the support of all of the traditional Section events and conferences that are being organized. For the 2021, there have been several conferences already scheduled such as ETRAN, TREND, PE2021, MIEL, EDS MQ, IEEEESTEC. The Section will sponsor these events technically, and for some of the events the Section has prepared financial support. Furthermore, one of the key activities will be the formation of the new IEEE Intelligent Transportation System Society within the Section. Most of the activities of officers will continue online, until the global pandemic settles and local measures for fighting the pandemic do not allow for different solutions.

How Region 8 can be of help to your Section, members, and activities

List any challenges you Section is facing and what support is required from the Region 8. Please, also, give us your suggestions for agenda items that you want to be discussed during the R8 Committee meeting.

The main challenge going forward is to maintain the operation of the Section during the pandemic conditions. 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). 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.

Any other issues of interest