

Serbia and Montenegro Section

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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.

Ongoing COVID-19 pandemic strongly impacted Section activities and the most of them migrated to online. Section officers were following all local measures for fighting the pandemic, which usually meant the limited travel and limitation on group activities indoor. Most of the section supported activities were, therefore shifted to online, but some of them were organized as hybrid and in-person. The regular Section Ex-Com meeting was organized as in-person event in december 2021, in Belgrade. Furthermore, IEEE Serbia and Montenegro Section 50th Anniversary Celebration was organized as hybrid event in december 2021, in Belgrade. Participants from the Section participated in-person. On the other side, region 8 director and director-elect, as well as the representatives of the sections from the region attended event online. On this occasion, plaques were given to individuals and universities who contributed to the development of the Section.



Last Section elections were organized in January of 2021, where the sections officers were elected for the period of 2021-2022. Elections for the new sections officers will be organized by the end of 2022. In year 2021, Section has met retention goal and received silver medal for outstanding retention performance. Additionally, at the end of the year section officers have participated in traditional group membership renewal process in order to try and retain a majority of the membership. The 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 29th TELFOR conference with more than 150 papers and 600 unique event participants online.

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.

Since the last report section SBs have retained their activities as usual. The membership base of 3 active SBs (SB Novi Sad, SB Belgrade and SB Niš) has been mostly retained, while some progress has been made in activating the SB in Podgorica. SB Niš successfully organized their annual event, IEEEESTEC conference in November 2021 in Niš. The promotional activities aimed at increasing the membership base are mostly in progress, while several technical events are expected in the following period. The SB members have been involved in several local events.

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 participated in different section activities. The activities continued on forming LM AG, while the SIGHT initiative is still in notion. The members AGs participated with different events within the section. The WIE affinity group took special place at IEEEESTESC 2021 conference, while members of YP affinity group also participated during conferences in Novi Sad. The section is continuously supporting SB, YP and WiE activities both technically and financially, but special activities need 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 most of the chapters submitted all reports for 2021 on time. The issue of reporting the activities on the vTools portal was discussed during the ExCom meetings 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. Most notable activities within the Section are related to the support of different conferences (most of which were held or will be online or in hybrid context) such as PoweElectronics 2021, ETRAN, IEEEESTEC, TREND, INFOTEH, ZINC, TELFOR. The activities on the formation of the IEEE Intelligent Transportation System Society have continued with the process currently pending the application (petition) process.

Industry

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

Similarly to the previous period, it is hard to foster industry relationship due to the ongoing pandemic, especially with the key events going virtual. The section is continuously being recognized as a reliable partner to the industry with several of the events strongly supported by the industry. Some events foster industry related session, in order to bring the academia closer to the industry. One such event was 29th TELFOR conference (fully virtual), where a special track was devoted to presentations of 16 industrial partners. 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 all of the traditional Section events and conferences that are being organized. For the 2022, several conferences have already been held (Trend), while ETRAN, ZINC, MECO, IEEEESTEC, TELFOR are pending. 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. Also, elections for the new sections officers will be organized by the end of 2022.

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