

Croatia Section

Ana Katalinić Mučalo

Section Vitality

The Section holds 8 ExCom general assembly meetings per year (and many more topic-focused). The number of IEEE members of the IEEE Croatia Section was increasing steadily from October 2022 to February 2023 (increase of around 2%), getting to the steady saturated number of just over 800 members as peak value. The numbers are in general up compared to 2021 and are the highest since 2014. It is expected it will remain as such at the end of 2023 or slightly drop. The trends are influenced by EU funding to higher education institutions. All members have been individually reminded and encouraged to renew their membership status. The Section has elected new leadership for 2023-2024: Ana Katalinić Mučalo (Chair), Vinko Lešić (Vice-Chair), Tomislav Jagušt (Secretary) and Ana Milas (Treasurer).

Students

The Section has 3 active student branches (SBs), in the cities of Zagreb, Osijek and Rijeka.

Student activities since last report:

- SBRI: Women in Engineering Conference with 10 lectures, panel sessions and soft skills workshops; established "RiThinking STEM podcast" with 2 editions held; held 4 technical lectures
- SBOS: celebrated IEEE Day, initiated program of "I3E Academy" as series of programming workshops
- SBZG: elections held, several lectures organized by Ocean Engineering chapter in collaboration with Life Members and Robotics and Automation Chapter
- Other lectures and workshops

Plan for the upcoming period:

- Organize promotional activities and recruitment initiatives in student branches to increase student membership.
- Continue to support all annual national IEEE Students and Young Professionals events, workshops, and online activities; continue to enhance the virtual presence of our student branches and YP affinity group.
- Organize lectures, workshops and programming competitions that are part of IEEE, as well as support and/or participate in non-IEEE competitions; Continue with IEEE promotional activities to promote IEEE among students and faculty members.

Affinity Groups

The Section has 3 affinity groups and a SIGHT group. Their status is listed separately.

Young Professionals

Activities since the previous report:

- SYP Congress 2022 follow-up lessons learned together with three student branches
- Interactive lecture and workshop "ROS & DOCKER" of 4 different sessions in Rijeka (collaboration with local SB)
- Interactive lecture "Start Robot in Docker Container" held in Zagreb, coordinated by local SB
- Participated in meetings and activities of the Croatia Section, promoted Region 8 Young Professionals activities to members
- Support local student branches in organizing activities

Plan for the upcoming period:

- Help SB University of Zagreb to increase the number of volunteers
- Help SBs to recruit new members
- Continue to attend and contribute to Croatia Section meetings and activities
- Support and organize events within the IEEE Entrepreneurship program, attract core members in each student and young professionals community
- Continue to support workshops related to the industry for students and young engineers

Women in Engineering

WIE continued series of successful podcast “ŽensCast”, promoting gender equality through success stories of women scientists and professionals, with two editions since last reporting period: The Science of Bias and Perception, Autonomy and Drones. In total, there were 7 editions of the program.

Life Members

Our Life Members AG held two administrative meetings and organized four technical lectures with foreign renowned professors and industry experts on the topic of marine robotics and oceanic technologies, in collaboration with local Robotics and Automation Chapter and Ocean Engineering Student Chapter of Student Branch Zagreb.

Chapters

The Section has 20 chapters, 2 joint chapters, 10 student branch chapters, and 3 affinity groups. Last year 18 chapters and joint chapters as well as all affinity groups elected chapter officers for the term 2022-2023. All elections have been conducted on time and within the adequate timeframe to allow smooth transition between the past and upcoming chairs. At the end of 2022, officer elections were held in the remaining four chapters. All chapters and affinity groups are in good standing. In 2022, a total of 82 events was organized. All chapters and AGs organized at least the minimum of 2 events per year as required. Attention was paid to timely reporting of newly elected officers and event reporting.

Industry

In cooperation with the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, the Section’s Industry Ambassador continued the series of “business skills workshops” as the events of notable technical experts and entrepreneurs who hold highest leadership positions in Croatian companies. Since the last reporting period, additional six such events are organized, summing up the total of 13 such events in 2022. The program has proved to play major role in attracting industry and will continue in the upcoming period. Again, we plan to invite notable industry players to present their business experiences, primarily but not exclusively in the technology sector, and make themselves available for our members and student members for future possible networking and cooperation.

Activities since the last report

The ExCom carried out its regular meetings and succeeded to preserve steady number of members and a vibrant community. Our annual Gala dinner with Section awards, which has been for years the most successful networking event in Croatia but skipped for last two year, was held yet again on November 23, 2022, and has gathered 120 guests.

In 2022, Section was technical co-sponsor of six conferences: AMSE 2022, MIPRO 2022, SoftCOM 2022, ELMAR 2022, SpliTech 2022 and SST 2022. Two more are already scheduled for 2023: SMAGRIMET 2023 and ConTEL 2023. Full list is available at <https://www.ieee.hr/ieeesection/konferencije>.

More details on the held activities are reported under individual categories above.

Planned activities

More details on the planned activities are reported under individual categories above. Significant focus is put to students and implementing experiences and lessons learned from SYP Congress to new leadership. We continue our plan to stimulate larger number of professional and informal networking events among members. An initiative on this track is Data Science Conference Adria in May 2023. We see that the challenge this year will be to maintain steady number of members as a large wave of EU funding of industry-academia projects is reaching its ending period.

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

Keeping the role of facilitating information and opportunities from various OUs directly to local leadership in sections in timely manner, mainly the opportunities for students and young professionals.

Any other issues of interest