R8 Director   Vincenzo Piuri

Staying in Direct Touch with IEEE Region 8 Sections and Subsections - Final Report

The needs of our scientific and professional community are increasingly evolving. In 2021, the R8 OpCom and the Chair of the Sections Development and Vitality Committee felt that it was necessary to reinforce the interaction of R0 Officers with the local communities and make it more direct so as to timely stay connected.

A series of online meetings have been organized with the leaders of Sections, Subsections and Petition Subsections. In each meeting a small group has been invited so as to allow each participant to better point out achievements, best practices, needs, issues, problems, and aspirations. This allowed to better and more timely understand the evolving and emerging needs of each geographical areas and strategically plan for actions, all together, since nobody should be left behind. In each of these meetings, organizational units from a geographic area have been invited to facilitate the identification of similarities of activities, needs, problems in neighbors and, eventually, promote possible local cooperation for better serving our scientific and professional community.

The following Sections, Subsections and Petition Subsections participated: Alexandria, Austria, Bahrain, Botswana, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mauritius, Morocco, North Macedonia, Oman, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, UK and Ireland, Ukraine, Yemen, Zambia.

In the appendix, a list of open issues pointed out by some of the above organizational units is provided as critical points to be addressed as best as possible.

The organizers like to thank everybody who participated for the contributions and for the willingness to cooperate for the benefit of our scientific and professional community as well as for the society.

Appendix

No enough perceived value of being members
Make the value of membership more understandable
Difficult to engage YPs
Difficulties in increasing the membership
Difficult retention of students after graduations
Students do not see value in membership when the graduate and become YPs
Difficult to maintain members in industry and other organizations: benefits are less than in other areas
Limited involvement of industry
Lack of IEEE brand recognition in industry
Membership discounts in more countries by combining national association membership
Membership fees are high in some low-income country
Difficulties in paying membership fees by bank transfer or no credit cards
Use of mobile payment methods will facilitate paying membership fees
Difficult paying directly to IEEE in the USA
Periodic payment would be helpful
Group membership with support of sponsors (university/industry to which they belong)
Lack of recognizing excellence promoting to senior member
Connectivity of students from small villages
Financial crisis at country level: less income available
People may be leaving countries with economy crisis: lack of professionals and volunteers
People is demotivated by COVID and economy

Lack of interest or motivation from volunteers
Lack of time of volunteers
Volunteers have increased workload in their job due to remote working: less time for volunteering
Needs for further support to micro-volunteering
Lack of motivation to attract and engage students and student leaders
Decreased networking possibilities due to pandemic. Impacted students especially
Difficult to motivate volunteers
Difficult to find new volunteers
Difficult to find treasurer
Difficult to find officers
Difficult to find chairs of chapters and active volunteers
No enough perceived value of volunteering in IEEE
Significant volunteer effort is required for medium size events
Make VOLT more available to volunteers and capture practical experience, including diversities
More volunteer training
More training on using the IEEE tools
Training should be provided to Chapter officers if the Society or Technical Council does not provide it
Workshops to support effective nomination to Fellow
Support to Senior nominations
Encourage YPs to participate in volunteering without intimidating them with credentials

Reactivate section after COVID
Some chapters are not very active
Difficulties in engaging chapters
Difficult collaboration with other sections in R8
Difficult to organize a network of chapters of a Society or Technical Council in R8
Difficult to engage with some student branches
Weakness and low reliability of Internet service sometimes causes troubles to online events
Inform Section about events organized by Societies and Technical Councils as soon as submitted to MCE
Better coordination of event organizers with Sections
More best practices
Collaboration between Sections should be encouraged
Collaboration with Societies and Technical Councils should be encouraged
Conference technical co-sponsorship by Sections and MOU should occur before submission to MCE
More DLPs for students and YPs will be appreciated
Difficult to find DLPs by searching in many web sites
Online DLPs could help in increasing the attractiveness and easing access

WIE should increase visibility in public and media
Team building will be useful to increase interest and perceived value
Collaboration and recruitment from industry will increase perceived value
More networking activities
Lack of funds limits activities and therefore attractiveness and perceived value
Funding competitions may increase interest and attractiveness in students
Online competitions may facilitate access
Funding innovation projects may increase interest and attractiveness in YPs
Funding events of student branches
Soft skills and certification managed by IEEE and S/Cs should be more broadly publicized in Sections
Collaboration with big industries to financially support membership and facilitate volunteering
Student members attending different campuses of a University benefit from multiple student branches
Support students in writing proposals for events and activities
More social channels for communications to members and prospective members

Difficult to collect information in an automated way
L31 not filled properly and in time: L31 should be prefilled with information already available in vtools
MGA tools should be updated to make they more usable
Manual process for membership development activities
Membership development kit is not easy to get in some countries due to custom charges
R8 giveaway to support membership promotion
Difficult to create queries and views in OU analytics
Improve the organization of elections in chapters
Bureaucracy is too high
Volunteers do not report appropriately the activities, even if they are doing many
Increase awareness about submitting proposals for funding
Funding online activities

Financial report: NextGen complexity
Notification of the rebates is very late
Opening local bank accounts
Legally register IEEE to work with industries and government
No bank account is allowed in some countries if Section is not registered
Funds from abroad for projects are subject to tax in some countries if Section is not registered
Difficulties in financially managing the conference