

Croatia Section

Ana Katalinić Mucalo

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 March 2023 to July 2023 (increase of around 4.5%), getting to the steady saturated number of 700-800 members. The numbers are in general down compared to 2022 as the main result of trends influenced by EU funding to higher education institutions and the local change in legislation. In February and March, all members have been individually reminded and encouraged to renew their membership status.

Students

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

Student activities since last report:

- SBRI: continuation of successfully established "RiThinking STEM podcast" with additional 3 editions held; half-year member recruitment action
- SBOS: summer internships at Croatian "unicorn" company; co-organization of annual "iOS Academy"; social events; half-year member recruitment action
- SBZG: job interview workshop with Young Professionals; especially active student chapter of IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society now focused on contributing to Breaking the Surface 2023 conference; half-year member recruitment action
- Other lectures and workshops

Plan for the upcoming period:

- Conduct elections at the beginning of the academic year.
- 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:

- Interactive lecture on best practices in job interviews
- Interactive lecture on Euler's methods and C++ library by a PhD student
- 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 set plans to continue the series of successful podcast “ŽensCast”, promoting gender equality through success stories of women scientists and professionals.

Life Members

Since March 2023, our Life Members AG 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.

SIGHT

In the coming period SIGHT Group plans to coordinate an application for the expected IEEE HTB/SIGHT Projects Call for Proposals Focused on supporting humanitarian technologies in Croatia.

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 2023, a total of 28 events are reported so far.

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 three such events have been organized. 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 in preserving a steady number of members and a vibrant community. In 2023, Section is a technical co-sponsor of 10 conferences: SMAGRIMET 2023, ConTEL 2023, ELMAR 2023, ICECOM 2023, SISY 2023, SoftCOM 2023, SpliTech 2023, MeditCom 2023, CSF 2023 and MIPRO 2023 (compared to six in 2022). Full list is available at <https://www.ieee.hr/ieeesection/konferencije>. Special attention this year was put on 46th MIPRO ICT and Electronics Convention with the aim of attracting more members from industry. Additionally, we secured membership discount, speakers, volunteers, and several free tickets for industry-oriented Data Science Conference Adria 2023.

Planned activities

More details on the planned activities are reported under individual categories above. Significant focus is again put to students and revitalization on number of student members. We continue our plan to stimulate larger number of professional and informal networking events among members (including student members). We witness previously expected challenge this year in maintaining a steady number of members as a large wave of EU funding of industry-academia projects is reaching its ending period.

Our annual Gala dinner with Section awards, which has been for years the most successful networking event in Croatia, is scheduled to be held on 15 November 2023.

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